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THESIS

**THE EFFECTS OF GERMAN MILITARY COMMISSION
AND BALKAN WARS ON THE REORGANIZATION AND
MODERNIZATION OF THE OTTOMAN ARMY**

by

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December 2013

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WARS ON THE REORGANIZATION AND MODERNIZATION OF THE
OTTOMAN ARMY**

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ABSTRACT

This thesis investigates the consequences of the Ottoman Army reform initiatives from the establishment of German Military Commission (1882–1918) to the outbreak of World War I (1914–1918). The Ottoman Army undertook huge change, supported by the German Military Commission, for the survival of the Empire. During this period, the results of the Balkan Wars (1912–1913) provided a critical impetus to accomplish these reforms efforts.

The effects of the German Military Commission and Balkan Wars on the Ottoman Army have not been studied by scholars in detail. Furthermore, most of the literature about this period only focuses on the Balkan Wars and German Military Commission separately; however, it is crucial to consider these subjects together to evaluate the effectiveness of the reform initiatives correctly. This thesis research uses a historical study approach to attempt to fill this lacuna.

Generally speaking, this examination of the German Military Commission and Balkan Wars will provide a broader view on military reforms between 1882 and 1914. Although these initiatives were not enough to improve the Ottoman Army because of wars (Balkan Wars and World War I) and Ottoman financial problems, this period was the watershed for the Ottoman Army in terms of military renaissance.

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to the founder of the Turkish Republic, Mustafa Kemal Atatürk, his comrades, our martyrs, veterans, and all the people who dedicated their lives and sacrificed themselves for the sake of my country.

I. INTRODUCTION

The aim of this thesis is to explore the consequences of the Ottoman Army reform initiatives from the establishment of German Military Commission (1882–1918) to the outbreak of World War I (1914–1918). The Ottoman Army undertook huge change supported by the German Military Commission (GMC) for the survival of the Empire. The results of the Balkan Wars (1912–1913) were a critical stimulus in accomplishing these reforms efforts. The primary problem this study seeks to investigate is how the GMC and the Balkan Wars influenced the reorganization and modernization of the Ottoman Army.

The effects of GMC and Balkan Wars on the reorganization and modernization of the Ottoman Army are not studied by Turkish and English speaking scholars in detail and they are rarely studied jointly. However, it is crucial to consider these two subjects together to evaluate the effectiveness of the reform initiatives correctly. What is missing from the existing literature is a complete study on how the GMC and the Balkan Wars together shaped this reorganization and modernization process. This thesis research will fill this lacuna. In his book *Defeat in Detail: The Ottoman Army in the Balkans*, Edward J. Erickson stresses the importance of military reform efforts supported by the GMC in his book:

The world has taken very little note of the growth of military efficiency and professionalism within the Ottoman Army during the first and second decades of twentieth century. At the time, and subsequently, much of the Ottoman Army's success (such as it was) was attributed to the effect of German advisers. Sometimes even their battlefield successes were simply written off to the poor tactics of their enemies or fortunate circumstances.¹

This study will help us to understand successful military examples such as the Dardanelles and Kut'ül Ammare campaigns against Britain in World War I and the Turkish Independence War against Greek, French, Italian, and Armenian forces between 1919 and 1922. It is essential to note that the heroes and commanders of these wars were

¹ Edward J. Erickson, *Defeat in Detail: The Ottoman Army in the Balkans, 1912–1913* (Connecticut: Greenwood Publishing Group, 2003), 344.

the officers who graduated from Military Academy based on a German model. Mustafa Kemal Atatürk, Mustafa Fevzi Çakmak, İsmet İnönü, and Musa Kazım Karabekir were among the best-known and outstanding examples of this new officer corps. These future key commanders of armies, corps and divisions between 1912 and 1922 were taught in accordance with German way of thinking. Mustafa Kemal Atatürk and his comrades were able to convert the Sultan's Army into the new Turkish Nationalist Army by inheriting all German based structure, training, and weapons. This examination of the GMC and Balkan Wars will provide a broader view on military reforms between 1882 and 1914. This period was the watershed for the Ottoman Army in terms of military renaissance.

This thesis puts forth two main hypotheses. The first is that, the GMC played a great role in the reorganization and modernization of the Ottoman Army between 1882 and 1914 in many fields: military organization, war planning and maneuvers, conscription, armament, military drills and exercises, tactics and concepts, military education and training. The second is that, the Balkan Wars were also very important for the Ottoman Army. The Ottoman Army carried out remarkable military reforms within a limited time before World War I.

I will use a historical study approach for my thesis. At first, I will look at the historical background of the GMC and its influence on the Ottoman Army. Second, I will explore the extent to which the reform initiatives of the Ottoman Army were effective and how this German Military Commission directed and shaped the reorganization process of the Ottoman Army. Moreover, I will also examine how the results of Balkan wars accelerated military reform efforts.

The thesis will begin with an introduction to the historical background as to why there was a need for military reforms in the Ottoman Army. The first chapter will describe the roots of German influence and the establishment of GMC in the Ottoman Army. This section will also examine military reform initiatives such as the changes in the military education and establishment of new military schools, rearmament of the Ottoman Army with new weapons from Germany, and the new officer corps.

The second chapter will trace the reorganization of the Ottoman Army in 1910, examining the effects of the Japanese role model, the Constitutional Revolution of 1908, and the Counter-Revolutionary Uprising of 1909. This section will also inspect the main problems of the Ottoman Army such as military education and training, politicization, conscription, war planning and maneuvers. In the end, I will emphasize the radical changes that the Ottoman Army underwent in this period.

The third chapter will look at the effects of the Balkan Wars in the reorganization of the Ottoman Army. At first, this section will include institutional responses to the defeat, the intellectual and emotional climate after Balkan wars. In addition to this analysis, the section will also examine the Ottoman Army initiatives between 1913 and 1914.

The concluding chapter will analyze the effects of German Military Commission and Balkan Wars on the reorganization and modernization of the Ottoman Army. It will look at how these reforms initiatives were effective and practical.

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II. THE ORIGIN OF THE GERMAN MILITARY COMMISSION AND ITS EARLY EFFORTS

A. INTRODUCTION

The Treaty of Karlowitz on 26 January 1699 not only changed the balance of power between the Ottoman Empire and other great powers in Europe, but it also created huge shockwaves among Ottoman officials who recognized that the military defeat was due to inadequate technological weapons and training.² This treaty was the starting point of the Ottoman decline period (1699–1792). As a response to this defeat, the Ottoman Empire began carrying out military reforms with the assistance of foreign countries, especially France and Prussia, under Sultan Selim III (1789–1807) and Mahmud II (1808–1839). The Gülhane edict of 1839 (Tanzimat Fermanı) and the Ottoman reform edict of 1856 (Islahat Fermanı) were also critical Ottoman initiatives for the future of the Ottoman Empire.³ The Ottoman Empire tried to adopt Western military training, education and weapons to improve the army. However, these limited reform efforts could not provide sufficient solutions for all the deficiencies of the Ottoman Army.⁴

In addition to Karlowitz, the treaty of Ayastefanos, signed in Berlin in 1878, was another indicator of Ottoman decline in military power. Following the defeat dealt by Russia in 1878, Abdulhamid II (1876–1909) also realized the Ottoman Empire needed further reform and greater aid from European countries.⁵ Trusting Prussia more than other European powers, Abdulhamid II asked the Prussians for military support, and thus the GMC was established in the Ottoman Empire in 1882. It operated until the end of World War I. This commission contributed to the Ottoman Army in many fields: conscription system, reorganization of the army, German rearmament, modernization of

² Christopher Tuck, “All Innovation Leads to Hellfire: Military Reform and the Ottoman Empire in the Eighteenth Century,” *The Journal of Strategic Studies* 31, no.3 (June 2008): 467.

³ Musa Çadırcı, *Dördüncü Askeri Tarih Semineri: II. Abdulhamid Döneminde Osmanlı Ordusu* (Ankara: Genelkurmay Basımevi, 1989), 36–40.

⁴ Avigdor Levy, “Military Reform and the Problem of Centralization in the Ottoman Empire in the 18th Century,” *Middle Eastern Studies* 18, no. 3 (1982), 232; F.A.K.

⁵ Rıfat Uçarol, *Siyasi Tarih: İkinci Meşrutîye ve Dönemin Önemli Olayları, 1908–1914* (İstanbul: Der Publishing, 2008), 421–431.

the War Academy and the introduction of military exercises. Colmar Freiherr von der Goltz was one of the most important German military advisors, serving twelve years in the Ottoman Army and participating actively in the Commission's reform efforts. Nevertheless, the influence of German officers on the Army was extensive, having influenced an entire generation of officers. The historian M. Şükrü Hanioglu has emphasized the importance of the officer corps at this time in Ottoman history, noting, "The educated officer corps that emerged in the years after the 1883 reforms, and especially the staff officers, formed the backbone of the Committee of Union and Progress (CUP)'s military wing and provided the leadership of the Young Turk Revolution on the ground."⁶

B. THE ROOTS OF GERMAN INFLUENCE IN THE OTTOMAN ARMY

The roots of the German influence on the Ottoman Army dated back to the period of Sultan Mustafa III (1757–1774). Before this period, it is very difficult to find specific evidence that shows the existence of German officers in the Ottoman Empire. In his book *The German-Ottoman Alliance and Military Aid in the World War I*, Veli Yılmaz also shows a picture of German officers by dividing the German officers into six categories in accordance with their arrival and service as shown in Table 1.⁷

Table 1. German Officers in the Ottoman Empire and the Republic of Turkey.

NO	MAIN CATEGORIES	TIME PERIOD
1	Pre-Moltke and Moltke's Period	1756–1839
2	Post Moltke's Period until Goltz	1838–1882
3	Colmar von der Goltz's Period	1882–1913
4	Liman Von Sanders's Period	1913–1918
5	World War I Period	1914–1918
6	German Military Advisers' Period after WWI	1925–1939

⁶ M. Şükrü Hanioglu, *Atatürk: An Intellectual Biography* (New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 2011), 40–41.

⁷ Veli Yılmaz, *1'inci Dünya Harbi'nde Türk-Alman İttifakı ve Askeri Yardımlar* (İstanbul: Cem Ofset Matbacılık Sanayi A.Ş., 1993), 33.

Furthermore, a book by Israeli historian Jehuda L. Wallach, *The Anatomy of Military Aid: German Military Commission in Turkey 1835–1919*, is the most comprehensive book about the German military aid in the Ottoman Army. In his book, Wallach mentions that Sultan Mustafa III also requested German officers from Friedrich II (1740–1786); however, the number of these officers or duration of their stay is unknown.⁸ After Mustafa III, Selim III also invited German Colonel von Goetze for artillery inspection in 1798. During Mahmud II's period, the first German Military Commission came in 1836; however, this was not effective until 1882.⁹ One of the key figures was Captain Helmuth von Moltke. His task was to observe and help the Ottoman military officials in the reorganization of the Ottoman Army. Since he made a remarkable impression, the Sultan invited five more Prussian officers. Moltke examined the state of the Ottoman military might and noted that “the Ottoman military was an army on the European model with Russian jackets, French regulations, Belgian weapons, Turkish caps, Hungarian saddles, English swords, and instructors from all nations.”¹⁰

Although Moltke and other German officers worked to improve the Ottoman Army, they were not able to provide a solution due to the dominant French influence in the military. However, Moltke was effective in establishing the first Ottoman reserve organization (Redif) based on the Prussian model.¹¹ After Moltke finished his task in the Ottoman Empire, the GMC was inactive until 1882. Between 1838 and 1882, 1st Lt. Von Kuczkowski was the most famous military adviser.¹² Germany sent nearly 23 officers to the Ottoman Empire between 1835 and 1883.¹³

⁸ Jehuda L. Wallach, *Bir Askeri Yardımın Anatomisi: Türkiye’de Prusya-Alman Heyetleri 1835–1919*, trans. Fahri Çeliker (Ankara: Genelkurmay Basımevi, 1985), 15.

⁹ İlber Ortaylı, *Osmanlı İmparatorluğunda Alman Nüfuzu* (İstanbul: Birleşik Yayıncılık ve Ticaret Limited Şirketi, 1983), 71–72.

¹⁰ James Madison McGarity, *Foreign Influence on the Ottoman Turkish Army, 1880–1918* (Michigan: University Microfilms, 1968), 16.

¹¹ McGarity, *Foreign Influence on the Ottoman Turkish Army*, 20–21.

¹² Zeynep Güler, *Osmanlı Ordusunun Modernleşmesinde Von Der Goltz Paşa’nın Rolü* (Mersin: Sosyal Bilimler Enstitüsü, 2007), 86–87.

¹³ Mervin Albert Griffiths, *The Reorganization of the Ottoman Army under Abdulhamid II, 1880–1897* (Michigan: University Films International Arbor, 1966), 44.

C. THE OTTOMAN RUSSIAN WAR, 1877–78

The Ottoman-Russian War (1877–78) had a remarkable effect on the Ottoman Empire in terms of understanding the need for the modernization of the Ottoman Army at least for survival. In the 1870s, Russia perceived the Ottoman Empire as a main threat to its goals in the Balkans and Asia. Russia wanted to control the Black Sea, the straits and the Balkans, and reach the Mediterranean. Moreover, Russia wanted to protect the rights of Christians and Slavic people in the Ottoman Empire. In Asia, the Ottoman Empire began to warn Muslim countries about the upcoming Russian attacks by sending a delegation. Russia viewed this Ottoman policy as a new obstacle. Therefore, Russia declared war against the Ottoman Empire on 24 April 1877. At that time, France, the United Kingdom, the Austro-Hungarian Empire and Germany declared their neutrality. The Ottoman Empire lacked any war plans against Russia and was not ready for this war, especially as it started with two main eastern and western fronts: the Balkans and East Anatolia. Gazi Ahmet Muhtar Pasha and his troops fought against Russian troops well, and forced Russian troops to retreat to the Caucasus.¹⁴

Moreover, Abdulhamid II declared a Holy War in an attempt to get more people and money from the Muslim population and other countries. Although he declared himself as a Gazi,¹⁵ he was not able to attract all the Muslim population and get enough resources to support the troops.¹⁶ Since the Ottoman Empire could not support its troops on the eastern front logistically, Gazi Ahmet Muhtar Pasha did not prevent the Russian troops from occupying Erzurum. On the western front, Russian forces could not capture Plevna in Bulgaria due to a very strong defense by Gazi Osman Pasha and his troops. The Ottoman troops struggled bravely, and this siege continued for several months. While Gazi Osman Pasha tried to split the Russian encirclement, he was taken prisoner on 10

¹⁴ Uçarol, *Siyasi Tarih: İkinci Meşrutîye ve Dönemin Önemli Olayları*, 373–375.

¹⁵ Turkish Language Institution, “Turkish Dictionary,” http://www.tdk.gov.tr/index.php?option=com_gts, Gazi was a title that was given to Sultan (Emperor) of the Ottoman Empire or commanders in the Ottoman Army who showed outstanding performance in wars for the sake of the Empire: Gazi Sultan Murat, Gazi Mustafa Kemal Atatürk.

¹⁶ Stanford J. Shaw and Ezel Kural Shaw, *History of the Ottoman Empire and Modern Turkey: Reform, Revolution, and Republic: The Rise of Modern Turkey, 1880–1975* (London: The Syndics of the Cambridge University Press, 1977), 183.

December 1877. The Russian troops advanced rapidly, capturing Edirne, and approached nearer to Çatalca in İstanbul. Finally, the Ottoman Empire had to ask Russia for a ceasefire agreement.¹⁷

The Ayastefanos (Yeşilköy) peace treaty was signed on 3 March 1878. As a result of this treaty, the Ottoman Empire had to recognize the independence of Serbia, Montenegro and Romania. It also included the autonomy of Bulgaria, the further reforms in Epirus, Thessalia and Armenia by the Ottoman Empire, and relinquishment of Batum, Kars, Ardahan and Doğubeyazıt to Russia. Moreover, the Bulgarian state was put under the control of Russia for two years. The provisions of the Ayastefanos Treaty shocked the European powers, especially the United Kingdom and Austro-Hungarian Empire. These countries were concerned with Russian becoming more powerful not only in the central Europe, but also in Asia. This was the so-called “Eastern Question.” Therefore, they organized another conference in Berlin to discuss the treaty with the participants from the Ottoman Empire, the United Kingdom, France, Germany, Russia, the Austro-Hungarian Empire and Italy. They agreed on the Berlin Treaty and signed it on 13 July 1878 in place of the Ayastefanos Treaty. As a result of this new treaty, Romania, Serbia and Montenegro maintained their independence, but the size of their territories was reduced. Bulgaria was divided into two parts. The southern part was put under the control of the Ottoman Empire with a Christian governor. Related to this intervention, the United Kingdom occupied Cyprus on 4 June 1878, and the Austro-Hungarian Empire invaded Bosnia Herzegovina in the same year.¹⁸

In the end, the Ottoman Empire lost 212,000 km² of its territory and 5.5 million people.¹⁹ At that time, the economy of the Ottoman Empire had worsened. There was a huge deficit growing between income and expenses. In order to pay the debts regularly, an international committee for Ottoman external debts (Düyunu Umumiye İdare Meclisi) was established in İstanbul on 20 December 1881. The committee consisted of seven

¹⁷ Uçarol, *Siyasi Tarih: İkinci Meşrutîye ve Dönemin Önemli Olayları*, 377.

¹⁸ Erik J. Zürcher, *Turkey: A Modern History* (London: I.B. Tauris & Co., 1993), 75.

¹⁹ Hüseyin Işık, “İkinci Meşrutîyetin İlanında ve Korunmasında Silahlı Kuvvetlerimizin Rolü,” *İkinci Askeri Tarih Semineri* (Ankara: Genelkurmay Basımevi, 1985), 44.

delegates: two from the Ottoman Empire and one each from Italy, the United Kingdom, France, the Netherlands, Germany and the Austro-Hungarian Empire.²⁰ Moreover, Erik J. Zürcher mentions the emotional climate in the Ottoman Empire after the 1877–78 war in his book, *Turkey: A Modern History*:

The areas lost to the empire in the central Europe up to now had not as a rule had large Muslim populations. In 1877–78, for the first time, areas where a considerable part of the population was Muslim and Turkish came under foreign occupation, a foreign occupation, moreover, that turned a blind eye to, even assisted in, wholesale killings of Muslim villagers. The result was about a million people fled. Many returned to their homes after the war, but about 500.000 of them remained refugees (mucahir). As many as 260.000 were killed or died of disease and starvation. Many of the survivors ended up in İstanbul, but many more were resettled with great difficulty, contributing to the anti-Christian feeling that became such a force in the late nineteenth century.

After the Russian defeat, Abdulhamid II organized the High Inspection Commission for the Army to find a solution for the development of the Ottoman Army in 1880. This Commission worked under the Sultan and Gazi Ahmed Muhtar Pasha with forty high ranking officers. This Commission worked to provide new recommendations by examining the Ottoman and foreign armies until the 1897 war with Greece. It made several recommendations to the Sultan by taking German Army as an example. First, it proposed an increase in the strength of the Ottoman Army from 500,000 to 800,000. Second, they recommended a new conscription law including non-Muslims. However, the Sultan disagreed with this law since he thought that this application would harm the unity of the Ottoman Army. After the foundation of the GMC, a few German officers were also assigned to this commission to give technical advice.²¹ Though not all the Commission's suggestions were accepted, it was successful enough that yet another GMC of even greater significance would follow it.

²⁰ Uçarol, *Siyasi Tarih: İkinci Meşrutîye ve Dönemin Önemli Olayları*, 449.

²¹ Griffiths, *The Reorganization of the Ottoman Army under Abdulhamid II*, 44–49.

D. THE ESTABLISHMENT OF THE GERMAN MILITARY COMMISSION

Before the establishment of the GMC, there were French officers who were dealing the modernization of the Ottoman Army; however, France withdrew its officers due to the French-German War in 1870. The Ottoman Empire again asked France to send its officers to İstanbul for military aid shortly after the Russian defeat in 1877. France did not accept this invitation; therefore, the Ottoman Empire searched for another foreign country.²² France invaded Tunisia in 1881, England occupied Egypt and Sudan in 1882, Italy had been working to get more terrain from Ethiopia since 1870 and the Austro-Hungarian Empire occupied Bosnia-Herzegovina to prevent Serbian annexation of the Adriatic coast. Due to these main factors, the Ottoman Empire approached Germany for military assistance.²³ In his *Political Memoir (Siyasi Hatıratım)*, Abdulhamid II emphasized his close interest in Germany and Kaiser Wilhelm I and noted:

I had different reasons why I preferred Germany instead of France. The Kaiser's personality was enough for me to gain my sympathy. He was an admirable, trustworthy, and beloved person. He improved his country to a great scale. Actually, Germans are closer to Turks than the French. Germans like the Ottomans are slow in action, but loyal, honest, hardworking, and stubborn people. The French are also assiduous, but not persistent like Germans. Finally, the French do not look as lovely as they did in the past. The French annexation of Tunisia and their Republican government had a very critical effect on this subject.²⁴

Eventually, Abdulhamid II decided to make his request for military aid from Prussia in 1880 by taking these critical issues into consideration. At first, he sent his French advisor, Colonel Dreyse, to the German Ambassador, Graf Hatzfeldt, to convey his invitation to Kanzler Bismarck. After receiving this invitation, Bismarck wrote a letter including his thoughts to Kaiser Wilhelm I about the German Military Commission. First, he mentioned that Germany would not come across any political pressure in return for this commission. Second, German officers would be more experienced and well treated

²² Rifat Önsoy, *Türk-Alman İktisadi Münasebetleri (1871–1914)* (İstanbul: Ünal Matbaası, 1982), 93–94.

²³ Carl Max Kartepeter, “Ottoman Military Reform During the Late Tanzimat: The Prussian General Von Der Goltz and the Ottoman Army,” in *The Ottoman Turks: Nomad Kingdom to World Empire* (1991), 248–249.

²⁴ Sultan Abdulhamid, *Siyasi Hatıratım: Harici Siyaset* (İstanbul: Dergah Yayınları, 1974), 137–138.

during their task. Third, Germany would have a great influence on the Ottoman Empire which may have future benefits. Fourth, Germany would get credible intelligence about the current events in the Ottoman Empire from their own officers at any time. Fifth, he also noted that Germany would influence the political and military life in the Ottoman Empire in accordance with its benefits as soon as it got intelligence in a timely manner.²⁵ Moreover, Germany wanted to sell its weapons for the rearmament of the Ottoman Army.²⁶ Eventually, Germany officially announced that four officers (named in Table 2) were appointed to the Ottoman Empire on 11 April 1882.²⁷

Table 2. The Officers in the 1st German Military Commission in 1882.²⁸

NO	RANK	NAME	PREVIOUS ASSIGNMENT IN GERMANY
1	Staff Colonel	Kachler	2nd Light Cavalier Regiment
2	Infantry Captain	Kamphoevener	3rd Infantry Regiment in Hannover
3	Cavalier Captain	Hobe	1st Dragon Regiment in Silesia
4	Artillery Captain	Ristow	2nd Field Artillery Regiment in Pommerania

As soon as the first official GMC came to İstanbul, they started examining the general structure of the Ottoman army and evaluating the deficiencies of the Ottoman Army. Upon inspecting the military outside of İstanbul, the Commission found that the officers and recruits were not only able to get their salaries regularly but also lacked supplies. The Commission insisted that the basic needs of soldiers should be met before the reorganization process of the Ottoman Army.²⁹ After undertaking a six-month study, they gave a proposal to the Sultan including some recommendations (see Table 3).

²⁵ Necmettin Alkan, “II. Abdulhamid Devrinde İstihdam Edilen İlk Alman Askeri Heyetinin Komutanı Otto Von Kahler ve Her İki Tarafın Beklentileri,” *Tarih Dergisi* 43 (2006), 151–152.

²⁶ Önsoy, *Türk-Alman İktisadi Münasebetleri (1871–1914)*, 97.

²⁷ Jehuda L. Wallach, *Bir Askeri Yardımın Anatomisi*: 24–31. During Abdulhamid II period, German was interested in the Ottoman Army, English with Navy, and French with Gendarme Forces. Cengiz Özkan, “İkinci Meşrutiyet Dönemi Dış Politika Ortamı ve Askeri Yapının Evrimi,” *4’üncü Askeri Tarih Semineri Bildirileri* (Ankara: Genelkurmay Basımevi, 1989), 27.

²⁸ Alkan, “II. Abdulhamid Devrinde İstihdam Edilen İlk Alman Askeri Heyetinin Komutanı Otto Von Kahler ve Her İki Tarafın Beklentileri,” 157.

²⁹ Güler, *Osmanlı Ordusunun Modernleşmesinde Von Der Goltz Paşa’nın Rolü*, 93.

Table 3. The Proposal by the 1st German Military Commission.³⁰

NO	OBSERVATIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS
1	Organization of the reserve forces (Redif) into army corps within the existing corps structure and reorganization of the units which were spread too far out for effective training and mobilization.
2	Establishment of an effective system of cadres of regular army officers and men in the reserve units for training, administration and to facilitate mobilization.
3	Formulation of war plans, mobilization plans and ordre de bataille
4	Development and training of General Staff at all levels of command, who would be proficient in theory as well as practice.
5	Improvement in the course of the instruction at the Military Academy and an increase in the number of graduates. Institution of field exercises for students, who were deficient in practical knowledge under the existing system.
6	Establishment of a system of supply and resupply of material to support the army in time of war, and the stocking of war reserve supplies in peacetime.
7	An inventory of all animals which could be used for military service.
8	Institution of good communications systems.
9	Development of regular tactical training and maneuvers.
10	Formulation of German model units in İstanbul, which would be used to train key officers in new tactical and organizational concepts.

Since there were some organizational problems in the Ottoman Army and inadequate money for reform, these proposals were not put into practice. Moreover, as the Ottoman military officials were not very interested in these recommendations, the Ottoman Army did not start the reorganization process.³¹ At that time, Abdulhamid II again asked Germany for another officer to conduct reforms in military education. Finally, Major Baron Colmar von der Goltz was assigned to the Ottoman Empire, and he came to İstanbul on 18 June 1883.³² After General Kahler, who had served as the associate chief of the Ottoman General Staff, died in 1885 Lt. Col. Goltz became the head of the GMC in his place.³³ Goltz had served in the German Army as a brilliant staff officer with capabilities in military training and strategic thinking comparable to Moltke

³⁰ Griffiths, *The Reorganization of the Ottoman Army under Abdulhamid II*, 55.

³¹ Griffiths, *The Reorganization of the Ottoman Army under Abdulhamid II*, 54–57.

³² Güler, *Osmanlı Ordusunun Modernleşmesinde Von Der Goltz Paşa'nın Rolü*, 142.

³³ Ulrich Triumpener, "German Officers in the Ottoman Empire, 1880–1918: Some Comments on their Background, Functions, and Accomplishments," *Germany and the Middle East 1835–1939: International Symposium* (April 1975), 4–5.

and Schlieffen.³⁴ The actual reason for his assignment was his contradictory thoughts on the German military structure. In other words, he was exiled to İstanbul.³⁵ Goltz accepted his assignment in the Ottoman Empire for three reasons. First, he did not get along well with the German Ministry of War and the military cabinet. Second, he liked traveling and discovering new geography. Third, he wanted to rest for a while in İstanbul. His first task would be the reorganization of military schools and the modernization of military education between 1883 and 1886.³⁶

E. THE REORGANIZATION OF THE OTTOMAN ARMY, 1886–97

After Goltz's contract was over in 1886, Abdulhamid II asked him to extend his assignment. He told the Sultan that he wanted to serve in the Ottoman Army under the condition that he would get an active role in the reorganization process. Therefore, the Sultan put him in charge of a new Commission for Reorganization in 1886. During this period, he worked with two high-ranking officers: Muzaffer Pasha and Veli Rıza Pasha in this commission.³⁷ In addition to this, he was promoted to Major General and assigned as the deputy chief of General Staff in the Ottoman Army.³⁸ After Goltz worked on the necessary changes and developments, the document for reorganization of the Ottoman Army was published in 1886. However, this document did not lead to remarkable changes, just a few improvements and modifications. The structure of the armies remained intact. In the organization of each army, there were seven infantry regiments, seven independent battalions, seven cavalry battalions, one field artillery regiment, one castle (Kale) artillery regiment and one engineer regiment. Goltz changed this organization based on a German army structure of 1866. In the new organization of each army, there were two infantry divisions (two brigades consisting of two regiments and one independent battalion), one cavalry division (three brigades including two regiments), one artillery regiment with five

³⁴ Oğuz Turan, "Von der Goltz Paşa'nın Stratejik Düşünceleri ve Eseleri," in *20. Yüzyıl Başına Kadar Türk Askeri Eğitiminin Tarihi Gelişimi* (Ekim 1983): 27.

³⁵ Güler, *Osmanlı Ordusunun Modernleşmesinde Von Der Goltz Paşa'nın Rolü*, 142.

³⁶ Ramazan Çalık, "Colmar Freiherr Von Der Goltz (Paşa) ve Bazı Görüşleri," *Atatürk Araştırma Dergisi*, Sayı 36 (Kasım 1996): 4.

³⁷ Griffiths, *The Reorganization of the Ottoman Army under Abdulhamid II*, 70–71.

³⁸ Güler, *Osmanlı Ordusunun Modernleşmesinde Von Der Goltz Paşa'nın Rolü*, 149–150.

batteries, one transportation battalion, one engineer battalion and one telegraph company. There was no corps headquarters in peacetime, but it would be established in wartime periods. In each army district, two Redif (reserve) divisions and one Mustahfiz (also reserve military units consists of soldiers who finished their Redif service) corps, if needed, would be constituted.³⁹

Furthermore, the Ottoman Empire purchased 1000 German field cannons in 1890 to strengthen its artillery. Therefore, it established an artillery division including three brigades in the 1st, 2nd, 3rd, 4th and 5th Armies. Two howitzer regiments were formed and assigned to the 2nd and 3rd Armies. The 15th Division in Tripolis including four previous regiments and the 16th Division in the Hejaz were created. Two railroad battalions including four companies were added to the organization in 1898.⁴⁰ Moreover, the reorganization of the Hamidiye cavalry in 1890 strengthened the manpower of the Ottoman Army. The main goal for this new structure was to counter any possible Russian attack to the Ottoman borders. The first cavalry regiments were formed in Van, Bitlis and Erzurum, including local tribal people. The number of cavalry forces in a regiment ranged from 768 to 1,152. The new Hamidiye cavalry forces grew in size: 40 regiments in 1892, 56 in 1893 and 63 in 1899.⁴¹ In addition to these developments, the Ottoman Empire ordered telegrams assets from France, and they established a signal company and new engineer companies in each army. The General Staff also published key laws, such as the law for the organization and protection of Redif depots (Redif Debboyları Kanunu) in 1885, the law for transportation (Tedarik-i Vasait-i Nakliye-i Askeriye Kanunnamesi) in 1889, the law for mobilization procedures (Seferberlik Nizamnamesi) in 1890 and the law for military management (İdare ve Muhasebe-i Askeriye Nizamnamesi) in 1888.⁴²

³⁹ Erol Uğur, "Von der Goltz Paşa'nın 1883–1895 Yılları Arasında Türkiye'deki Hizmetleri," 20. *Yüzyıl Başına Kadar Türk Askeri Eğitiminin Tarihi Gelişimi* (Ekim 1983), 22.

⁴⁰ İhsan Hün, *Osmanlı Ordusunda Genelkurmayın Ne Suretle Teşekkül Ettiği ve Geçirdiği Safhalar* (İstanbul: Genelkurmay Başkanlığı Basımevi, 1952), 82–83.

⁴¹ Shaw, *History of the Ottoman Empire and Modern Turkey: Reform, Revolution, and Republic*, 245–246.

⁴² Griffiths, *The Reorganization of the Ottoman Army under Abdulhamid II*, 83.

The Ottoman General Staff published three critical documents between 1886 and 1887 for the modernization and reorganization of the Ottoman Army. First, a new conscription law was published in 1886. According to this new law, recruitment would take place once each year, and six army regions were defined as the conscription centers for their regions. This led to the creation of 192 recruitment centers in the Ottoman Empire. Every center would have a conscription committee consisting of military and civilian personnel. It was compulsory for all conscription committees to send their reports to the central army headquarters in İstanbul. All Muslim male people at the age of twenty were required to perform their military service. However, there were some exemptions from the military service. The new law did not change the traditional exemptions such as all residents of Galata, Eyyub and Üsküdar in İstanbul. In addition to these cities, Skutari in Albania, Yemen, Hejaz, the Sancak of Nedjd in Basra, Tripoli and the Sancak of Bengazi in North Africa were also exempt. The immigrant Tatars and Circassians were included in the new law for recruitment. The total number for exemptions reached 8,000,000 people. Thus, 17,000,000 Muslim men remained for military service. However, the exemption of all religious students and scholars was also continued by this law. In a nutshell, the recruitment of the Ottoman Army was again based on the Muslim people in the Empire. Abdulhamid II wanted to keep the unity and readiness of the Muslim people by giving some orders such as distribution of the principles of Islam and religious instructions to the troops in 1886.⁴³ H. Nezir Akmeşe mentions Goltz's contribution to the changes in this new law in her book *The Birth of Modern Turkey*, noting: "Goltz was also responsible for drafting a new law on recruitment, issued in December 1886. This set the term of military service at 20 years, of which six would be served in the Nizamiye, six in the Redif, and eight in the Müstahfiz. Every able-bodied Muslim male was made liable for military service at the age of twenty, though as previously, actual recruitment would be by lot."⁴⁴

⁴³ Griffiths, *The Reorganization of the Ottoman Army under Abdulhamid II*, 72–76.

⁴⁴ Handan Nezir Akmeşe, *The Birth of Modern Turkey: The Ottoman Military and the March to World War I* (New York: I.B.Tauris & Co.Ltd., 2005), 23; Nizamiye is the name given to the regular Ottoman Army, Redif and Mustahfiz are the names used for the forces in the Ottoman Reserve Army.

Second, Abdulhamid II organized another commission to obtain detailed information about the actual inventory of Ottoman Army districts in 1886. Finally, this commission was able to collect all necessary data about the exact number of military materials such as personnel, weapons, ships, depot stores and even shoes. This complete inventory provided a real picture of the Ottoman physical resources. As a result of this inventory, most storage lacked sufficient resources for the military units in the region. There was a great inconsistency in the size of each army (See Table 4).⁴⁵

Table 4. The Ottoman Army Military Strength in 1886.⁴⁶

ARMIES	REGULAR FORCES		REDİF		MUSTAHFIZ	
	Officers	Officers	Assigned	Unassigned	Assigned	Unassigned
1st Army	1.881	1.881	71.316	51.264	36.143	26.529
2nd Army	1.175	1.175	69.543	47.358	30.837	27.045
3rd Army	1.375	1.375	75.319	50.668	36.987	32.860
4th Army	1.234	1.234	81.139	43.913	40.885	25.340
5th Army	1.257	1.257	52.198	32.743	27.156	19.687
6th Army	933	933	12.586	10.368	7.468	8.983
7th Army	684	684	NONE ASSIGNED			
Tripoli	383	383				
Crete	142	142				

Third, the General Staff published another document regulating the new distribution of military forces based on a European model in 1887. It was planned that every army would consist of 30,000 men, and each army district would have one Nizamiye, two Redif, and one Mustahfiz unit. The size of each army district would reach 120,000 during war time. However, it was difficult to equate the size of each army due to the different distribution of the Ottoman population throughout the Empire.⁴⁷

In addition to these three main documents, the Ottoman military also worked to update military plans. Historically, Russia had been a threat to the Ottoman Empire; however, the war plan focused on the defense of the Ottoman territory by following a

⁴⁵ Griffiths, *The Reorganization of the Ottoman Army under Abdulhamid II*, 76.

⁴⁶ Griffiths, *The Reorganization of the Ottoman Army under Abdulhamid II*, 78.

⁴⁷ Griffiths, *The Reorganization of the Ottoman Army under Abdulhamid II*, 77.

neutral foreign policy. Therefore, the new mobilization plan accepted Russia both as friend and foe, and other states as enemies. The new plan also manifested new Russian or Austrian alliances in case of any possible wars. According to this new plan, the first six armies would serve as the mobile army with their reserve units. The 7th Army and other military units in Tripoli and Crete would remain ready for any kinds of conflict. The first four armies would establish the defense line, and the 5th Army would serve as a general reserve for frontline units. The 6th Army would serve not only as a reserve unit for the 4th Army, but also as an observation unit against Persian forces.⁴⁸ During the planning process of these documents, Goltz participated in the commissions and had an active role in this role. The Second President of the Turkish Republic İsmet İnönü mentioned the German influence and Goltz's contribution in his memoir, noting that "during Abdulhamid II's period, the military system and education were based on mainly a German model, and Colmar von der Goltz worked on the reorganization of the Ottoman Army and modernization of military education."⁴⁹ The 1897 Ottoman-Greek war was a good showcase for how the Ottoman Army had evolved within just a decade. Goltz's pupils at the War Academy such as Hasan Rıza, Pertev Demirhan and Yakup Şevki Subaşı were among of the most successful figures during this campaign.⁵⁰ Moreover, Goltz himself prepared the 1886 campaign plan against Greece that was used in the 1897 Ottoman-Greek War.⁵¹

F. THE REARMAMENT PROCESS OF THE OTTOMAN ARMY

The rearmament of the Ottoman Army was one of the most decisive changes in the modernization process. However, German armament efforts had started before the establishment of the GMC in 1882. The Ottoman Empire purchased German weapons

⁴⁸ Griffiths, *The Reorganization of the Ottoman Army under Abdulhamid II*, 82.

⁴⁹ İsmet İnönü, *Hatıralar* (Ankara: Bilgi Yayınevi, 1985), 21.

⁵⁰ Güney Belendir, "Von der Goltz Paşa'nın Türk Ordusundaki Hizmetleri ve Yetişmesinde Katkısı Olduğu Şahsiyetler," *20. Yüzyıl Başına Kadar Türk Askeri Eğitiminin Tarihi Gelişimi* (Ekim 1983): 63.

⁵¹ Uğur, *Von der Goltz Paşa'nın 1883–1895 Yılları Arasında Türkiye'deki Hizmetleri*, 20.

between 1873 and 1879.⁵² During the nineteenth century, it was very common to see American, French, English and later German arms in the Ottoman Empire. Jonathan Grant describes these diverse armaments thusly:

Based on an analysis of the patterns of the Ottoman arms and equipment purchases, it is possible to establish a periodization consisting of four phases: (1) circa 1850–1855, when domestic arms production waned as reliance on imports for the bulk of defense items grew; (2) 1885–95, marked by the preference for Germany in both military and naval orders; (3) 1898–1907, the period of renewal of naval orders from Britain and France while Germany continued as the preferred supplier for land forces; and (4) 1908–14, when Britain was preeminent in Ottoman naval orders and the Franco-German rivalry in military orders ended in the selection of Germany.⁵³

In the first decade of the nineteenth century, Prussian and French officers were training Ottoman officers while the U.S. and European arms companies were dealing with the weapon sales. France was one of the leading countries in the Ottoman foreign arms imports until the 1880s. In addition to this, the United States also became interested in these arms sales shortly after the American Civil War (1861–1865). Since there were many weapons left from the Civil War, and European countries were busy with wars on their own continents, the United States exported 114,000 Enfield and 125,000 Springfield rifles that cost nearly 303,190 Ottoman liras in 1869. The weapons and ammunition sales constituted 79.5 percent of exports between the United States and the Ottoman Empire at this period. Moreover, this number increased to 90 percent in the first years of Abdulhamid II. After German officers became active in the reorganization and modernization process in the Ottoman Army, a rivalry between the U.S. and German arms companies was initiated between 1877 and 1883. The U.S. portion in the Ottoman arms export decreased dramatically from 97 percent (1,025,056 Ottoman Liras) to 3 percent (138,496 Ottoman Liras) within these six years.⁵⁴

⁵² Kemal Beydilli, “II. Abdulhamit Devrinde Gelen İlk Alman Askeri Heyeti Hakkında,” *İstanbul Üniversitesi Edebiyat Fakültesi Tarih Dergisi*, Ord. Prof. İ. Hakkı Uzunçarşılı Hatıra Sayısı (1979): 484–485.

⁵³ Jonathan Grant, “The Sword of the Sultan: Ottoman Arms Imports, 1854–1914,” *The Journal of Military History* 66, no. 1 (2002): 11.

⁵⁴ Önsoy, *Türk-Alman İktisadi Münasebetleri (1871–1914)*, 95.

Before the official establishment of the GMC in 1882, the German officers became effective in convincing the Ottoman officials to choose German companies instead of U.S. or French firms in the rearmament and fortification process. At that time, German companies such as Krupp, Mauser and Loewe had ample weapons left in storage after wars with Denmark, Austro-Hungary and France were over in the 1870s.⁵⁵ With the assistance of German officers, the Ottoman Empire ordered nearly 500 Krupp cannons at a cost of 1,000,000 Ottoman Liras that kept Krupp from going bankrupt in July 1873. At the same time, Krupp also sold its artilleries to Russia. Indeed, the 1877–78 war between Russia and the Ottoman Empire became a Krupp war.⁵⁶

After Colmar von der Goltz started his task in the Ottoman Army, he also became very influential in German arms sales. In June 1885, the Ottoman Empire ordered 500 Krupp cannons for 11,000, 000 DM to use in the fortification of the Dardanelles against English and Russian assaults. Goltz submitted a report to the Ottoman officials about the defense of the Ottoman territory. In that report, he emphasized the need for field cannons and mortar. Therefore, the Empire again ordered 426 field cannons and sixty mortars from the Krupp Company in February 1886. The Empire continued importing arms that cost 16,219,000 DM from Germany between 1885 and 1887. In order to meet this increasing debt for the arms imports, the Ottoman Bank had to get 120,5 million DM from other countries to pay its debt of 64.8 million DM to German arms companies.⁵⁷ In his book *The Turkish-German Economic Relations (1871–1914)*, Rifat Önsoy remarks upon the increasing arms sales (indicated in Table 5) pointing out the effect of the GMC and especially Goltz.

⁵⁵ Önsoy, *Türk-Alman İktisadi Münasebetleri (1871–1914)*, 95–96.

⁵⁶ Lothar Rathmann, *Alman Emperyalizimin Türkiye'ye Girişi: Berlin-Bağdat* (İstanbul: Bilge Uluslararası Yayıncılık, 2001), 30–31.

⁵⁷ Mehmet Beşirli, “II Abdulhamid Döneminde Osmanlı Ordusunda Alman Silahları,” *Sosyal Bilimler Enstitüsü Dergisi* 1 No.16 (2004): 125–127.

Table 5. German Weapon Orders in the Ottoman Empire, 1887–98.⁵⁸

NO	YEAR	THE COSTS OF ARMS ORDERS
1	1887	110.000 Ottoman Liras
2	1889	350.000 Ottoman Liras
3	1890	480.300 Ottoman Liras
4	1891	318.000 Ottoman Liras
5	1892	547.500 Ottoman Liras
6	1893	780.000 Ottoman Liras
7	1894	324.350 Ottoman Liras
8	1895	664.000 Ottoman Liras
9	1896	237.000 Ottoman Liras
10	1897	90.000 Ottoman Liras
11	1898	270.000 Ottoman Liras

Furthermore, Hans von Kiesling emphasized the Ottoman armament with German weapons noting that “in place of France and England, the former suppliers (of military hardware) to Ottoman Turkey, Germany stepped in. Mauser supplied the small caliber weapons, Krupp, the new field pieces (artillery), and Schichau provided the Ottoman navy with the torpedo boats.”⁵⁹ In addition to Goltz’s influence in the Ottoman Army, Kaiser Wilhem II’s visit to İstanbul had another effect on German arms imports in 1889. As a result of this visit, Sultan Abdulhamid II agreed to purchase new German weapons to protect Macedonian and Balkan territories.⁶⁰ To affect Muslim people, the Kaiser also declared himself as the friend of the world’s 300 million Muslims during his visit in Damascus.⁶¹ The Ottoman Empire ordered nearly 250,000 rifles from German Mauser/Loewe and a torpedo from the German Elbing Company that cost 15,3 million DM German arms sales continued between 1891 and 1894 during the financial crisis in the German arms industry. The Mauser and Loewe companies were able to survive by the means of their weapon sales. The Ottoman Empire purchased nearly 4,000 Flinta and

⁵⁸ Önsoy, *Türk-Alman İktisadi Münasebetleri (1871–1914)*, 98–99.

⁵⁹ Carl Max Kortepeter, “Ottoman Military Reform During the Late Tanzimat; The Prussian General Von Der Goltz and the Ottoman Army,” in *The Ottoman Turks: Nomad Kingdom to World Empire* (1991), 258.

⁶⁰ Mehmet Beşirli, “Birinci Dünya Savaşı Öncesinde Türk Ordusunun Top Mühimmatı Alımında Pazar Mücadelesi: Alman Friedrich Krupp Firması ve Rakipleri,” *Türkiyat Araştırmaları Dergisi*, Sayı 15 (Bahar 2004): 178–179.

⁶¹ Zürcher, *Turkey: A Modern History*, 82.

745,000 Mauser rifles that cost 46,3 million DM. In addition to this, the Loewe Company got an order of 100 million cartridges from the Ottoman Empire.⁶² The owner of the Loewe arms factory, Ludwig Loewe, thanked Goltz for his interest and support to his company and asked him to become a partner in his factory.⁶³ McGarity has also emphasized the growth of the German-Ottoman economic relations in his book *Foreign Influence on the Ottoman Turkish Army (1880–1918)*, in which he notes that “during the period 1888–1900, Germany’s exports into Turkey rose from 2,300,000 DM to 30,400,000 DM, and her imports from 11,700,000 DM to 34,400,000 DM.”⁶⁴ The allocation of 6,100,000 Ottoman Liras from the general budget (19,000,000 Ottoman Liras) in 1891 showed clearly how the German arms sales reached a higher level in the Ottoman Empire.⁶⁵ Generally speaking, the Ottoman rearmament policy was based on importation, and German firms obtained a monopoly on the arms sales since 1885 with the assistance of German Military Commission.⁶⁶

G. GERMAN ECONOMIC PENETRATION: THE BAGHDAD RAILROAD

To paint the full picture of Ottoman-German relations apart from arms sales, it is crucial to consider the German interest in building railroads, especially the Baghdad railroad. In the early years of Abdulhamid II’s reign, Austrian, French and English companies were constructing the railroads. The length of existing railroads was 1780 kilometers until 1880. However, due to financial problems and ongoing wars, railroad construction was halted. In the late 1880s, Abdulhamid II decided to extend the lines; however, the Ottoman Empire was not able to complete this project on its own.⁶⁷ At that time, the Sultan trusted Germany and preferred the German Deutsche Bank instead of other European companies. Abdulhamid II noted in his memoir about his railroad policy:

⁶² Mehmet Beşirli, “II Abdulhamid Döneminde Osmanlı Ordusunda Alman Silahları,” 127.

⁶³ Önsoy, *Türk-Alman İktisadi Münasebetleri (1871–1914)*, 100.

⁶⁴ McGarity, *Foreign Influence on the Ottoman Turkish Army, 1880–1918*, 40.

⁶⁵ Ortaylı, *Osmanlı İmparatorluğunda Alman Nüfuzu*, 73.

⁶⁶ Griffiths, *The Reorganization of the Ottoman Army under Abdulhamid II*, 67.

⁶⁷ Rathmann, *Alman Emperyalizimin Türkiye’ye Girişi: Berlin-Bağdat*, 40.

Since railroads will provide a great opportunity for us to transport our troops rapidly, they have a strategic importance. In this regard, they are crucial. However, it is obvious that they will also make the Ottoman invasion easy for our enemies. Therefore, I don't agree with the railway construction of border provinces. Among all great powers, we can trust Germans in terms of railway construction since they only care about the financial issues of this project.⁶⁸

Eventually, the German Deutsche Bank got the right to extend the İstanbul Haydarpaşa-Ankara railroad to at first Ankara, then Baghdad on 4 October 1888.⁶⁹ Besides, it had the opportunity to operate this 2,000-kilometer long railroad for 99 years and access the natural sources within 20 kilometers of the Haydarpaşa-Ankara railroad.⁷⁰ Kazım Karabekir cites Wilhem II's quote in his book, *The Turkish-German Relations throughout History*, providing a colorful example of German interest, noting: "Germany entered the global market late. All colonies were shared. There were no places left for Germany in Africa. The places that Germany could colonize were the Islamic countries. Germany would get them colonized and I would wear a fez if needed."⁷¹

Furthermore, Şevket Pamuk analyzes the dramatic shift in the Ottoman market in favor of Germany with statistical information in his book, *Foreign Trade, Foreign Capital and the Peripheralization of the Ottoman Empire, 1830 -1913*, stating:

By 1913, Ottoman imports from Germany had exceeded £ 5 million, a tenfold increase from their mid-1880 levels, while Ottoman exports to Germany reached over £ 3 million, a fifteen fold increase over their low levels of around £ 200.000 in the mid 1880's. Germany's share in the Ottoman imports had increased from 2.4 percent in 1880–2 to 14.8 percent in 1911–13 while its share in Ottoman exports increased from 0.5 percent in 1880–2 to 11.9 percent in 1911–13 giving Germany the second largest share in total Ottoman trade in 1913.⁷²

⁶⁸ Abdulhamid, *Siyasi Hatıratım*, 139.

⁶⁹ Shaw, *History of the Ottoman Empire and Modern Turkey: Reform, Revolution, and Republic*, 226–227.

⁷⁰ Rathmann, *Alman Emperyalizimin Türkiye'ye Girişi: Berlin-Bağdat*, 40–41.

⁷¹ Kazım Karabekir, *Tarih Boyunca Türk-Alman İlişkileri* (İstanbul: Emre Yayınları, 2001), 155

⁷² Şevket Pamuk, *Foreign Trade, Foreign Capital and the Peripheralization of the Ottoman Empire, 1830 -1913* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1974), 52.

Generally speaking, arms sales and Baghdad railroad construction were two main German economic penetrations. The members of the GMC, especially Goltz, became effective to choose Germany. These two moves led to a significant increase not only in imports, but also in exports between the Ottoman Empire and Germany.

H. THE DEVELOPMENTS IN MILITARY EDUCATION

In addition to the rearmament of the Ottoman Army, the GMC dealt with military education. Goltz was one of the leading German figures in this period. In the 1880s, the Military Academy had some deficiencies in terms of quality and quantity. It had nearly 1,000 graduates by 1883, and 100 officers graduated from the Academy every year. The total number of active Ottoman officers in the army in 1884 was 9,810; with reserve officers this number stretched to 30,000. The graduates from the Military Academy were not enough; therefore, there were officers without any regular military education to fill this huge gap. While Goltz worked to increase the number of graduates, he also tried to update the curriculum of the Military Academy. During this period, the Ottoman Military Academy was divided into two schools: Military School and General Staff College. It was compulsory to follow cavalry or infantry training for three years. A few officers were selected for another three-year long education in the General Staff College of the school. These officers were divided into main groups: scientific and military.⁷³ The scientific section of the Military Academy would be discontinued in 1895 (see Table 6).⁷⁴

Table 6. The Graduates of the Military Academy, 1887–98.⁷⁵

OFFICERS	1887	1888	1890	1891	1892	1894	1895	1897	1898
Staff (Scientific)	7	6	5	5	2	DISCONTINUED			
Staff (Military)	7	5	4	10	9	9	13	17	32
Infantry	78	110	80	75	145	189	407	477	499
Cavalry	13	16	24	27	35	65	59	72	72

⁷³ Griffiths, *The Reorganization of the Ottoman Army under Abdulhamid II*, 93–102.

⁷⁴ Güler, *Osmanlı Ordusunun Modernleşmesinde Von Der Goltz Paşa'nın Rolü*, 171.

⁷⁵ Griffiths, *The Reorganization of the Ottoman Army under Abdulhamid II*, 105.

During the 1880s, the methodology of the military education was based on theory from French manuals without any military drills. The curriculum of the Military Academy consisted of engineering classes such as calculus, architecture, and topography. There were three compulsory classes for cadets: fortifications, the history of modern battles and of the Balkan Wars (taught in the French language), and the Turkish language.⁷⁶ Goltz was also aware of these insufficient field applications in the military education system not only in schools, but also in the military units and noted:

The troops remained in their barracks and limited themselves to the immediate drill grounds and were without any field training or practice. Target practice was no longer held, no field service, and even the simplest exercises of the largest units had been given up. I have, after 1883, when I first reached Turkey, only once seen a complete infantry battalion at drill at Arnautkioj [Arnavutköy] on the Bosphorus. The military school at Pankaldi alone made an exception. The coming together of officers, even if only for purposes of instruction, was impossible. These were at once reported at the palace of the Sultan as conspiracies. This espionage extended to all places and points. Everyone stayed in his barracks or at home and carried out listlessly and dumbly the daily formal drill, and always along the same way. The higher commands did not dare to see their troops, and more, they hardly knew them, and the troops did not know them. The one who made no impression on his subordinates, carried out exactly the regulations and bothered himself neither about his officers nor his men obtained the reputation of being a loyal and trustworthy man, one who had no pride and one who could be depended upon. The Sultan wanted the army to feel itself weak till the moment when his word would give it strength. It is hard for an outsider to form a picture of those times. At best it may be characterized, as was done for me by an energetic Turkish friend, “We show the world the remarkable spectacle of a whole people imprisoned.”⁷⁷

In addition to the increase in the numbers of the Ottoman officers, Goltz also worked to update the curriculum and plans of military education in parallel with the German Kriegsschule for the Ottoman Military Academy and Berlin Kriegs-Academie for the Ottoman Staff College. He added new courses into Staff College such as “Applied Tactics,” “A Critical History of Warfare,” “Field Fortifications,” “Fortification Warfare,”

⁷⁶ Kortepeter, “Ottoman Military Reform During the Late Tanzimat,” 254.

⁷⁷ Field-Marshal-General Frhrn. Von Der Goltz, “The Army of Rejuvenated Turkey,” *Journal of the Military Service Institution of the United States* LII, no. CLXXXI (January-February 1913): 3.

“Weapon Skills,” “History of Military Science,” “Military Literature” and “Army Organization.” Goltz also dealt with textbooks in the Military Academy. He produced textbooks that together added up to over 4,000 (see Table 7 for a sample selection).⁷⁸

Table 7. Goltz’s Military Manuals for the Ottoman Military Academy.⁷⁹

NO	THE NAMES OF MILITARY MANUALS
1	Leadership of General Staff Service in War and Peace
2	Applied General Staff Service in Maps
3	Applied General Staff Service in Terrain
4	Handbooks of Tactics
5	Manual of Field Service (in 2 volumes)
6	Fortification Warfare
7	General Themes for Service Instruction

Based on Goltz’s proposal, a significant reform also took place in the extension of the curriculum of the Engineering School (Mühendishane-i Berri-i Hümayun) to five years. He also removed theoretical classes from the curriculum and added more practical classes. After the students had common classes in the first three years, they were divided into branches: engineering and artillery. Since he believed that the Ottoman Army needed more engineers and artillery officers, he also tried to increase the number of graduates of the Engineering School.⁸⁰ These improvements were a renaissance in Ottoman military education.⁸¹ Thus, day by day the Ottoman Army began to resemble the German Army with a new officer corps developing based on the German model. In 1894, fifteen percent of the officers in the Ottoman Army had a professional military education.⁸² These officers who had this German-style education would be very effective in the

⁷⁸ Kartepeter, “Ottoman Military Reform Dring the Late Tanzimat: The Prussian General Von Der Goltz and the Ottoman Army,” 254–257.

⁷⁹ Kartepeter, “Ottoman Military Reform Dring the Late Tanzimat,” 257.

⁸⁰ Mustafa Ergün and Tayip Duman, “19. Yüzyılda Osmanlı Askeri Okullarının Ders Programları ve Ders Kitapları,” *Yeni Türkiye*, Sayı 7 (1996), 496–497.

⁸¹ Beydilli, “II. Abdulhamit Devrinde Gelen İlk Alman Askeri Heyeti Hakkında,” 254–255.

⁸² Glen W. Swanson, War, Technology, and Society in the Ottoman Empire from the Reign of Abdulhamid II to 1913: Mahmud Sevket and German Military Mission,” *War, Techonology, and Society in the Middle East*, (1975), 368.

administration of the Ottoman Army in the first quarter of the twentieth century.⁸³ Carl Max Kartepeter has emphasized Goltz's influence in the emergence of the new Ottoman officer corps in his article, "Ottoman Military Reform during the Late Tanzimat: The Prussian General Von Der Goltz and the Ottoman Army," and noted that "the contribution of Goltz to late Ottoman society has particular relevance to students of Turkish history because the writings and teachings of Goltz Pasha directly influenced morally and technologically an entire generation of Turkish leaders who came to maturity during the Young Turk and Atatürk eras of modern times."⁸⁴

Furthermore, Goltz was influential in areas beyond military education. First, he instructed the princes of Abdulhamid II based on the training in the Ottoman military schools. Second, he tried to print maps and organize staff officer trips with field exercises for the first time.⁸⁵ He was innovative in printing maps and organizing staff officer trips with field exercise. (He worked for seven years to map the territory of Istanbul to a 1/100,000 scale.) By the end of Goltz's assignment in the Ottoman Army, the number of maps with 1/210,000 scale of European Ottoman lands reached 64 and those of the Anatolian side of İstanbul reached 60. Third, he worked to abolish corporal punishment and establish a dietary regimen for the Ottoman officers in the military schools. Fourth, he also instructed the Ottoman officers who would be teaching in the Military Academy.⁸⁶ For instance, Ahmed Rıza worked as an instructor in the Military Academy between 1886 and 1887, Ahmed İzzet and Mehmed Hadi taught "Strategy and Military Geography" between 1887 and 1890, Mahmud Şevket taught "Technical Weapons and Firing Theory" since 1883, Mahmud Muhtar instructed "the Duties of Staff Officers" in the Staff College between 1895 and 1897, and Pertev Demirhan also taught "General Staff Duties, Applied Tactics, and Military History." The first generation of Goltz's

⁸³ Necmettin Alkan, "II. Abdulhamid Devrinde İstihdam Edilen İlk Alman Askeri Heyetinin Komutanı Otto Von Kahler ve Her İki Tarafın Beklentileri," *Tarih Dergisi* 43 (2006): 153.

⁸⁴ Kartepeter, "Ottoman Military Reform Dring the Late Tanzimat: The Prussian General Von Der Goltz and the Ottoman Army," 260.

⁸⁵ Nurettin Tarsan, "General Feld Marschall Colmar Freiherr Von Der Goltz'un Türkiye Yaşamı ve Hizmetleri," *20. Yüzyıl Başına Kadar Türk Askeri Eğitiminin Tarihi Gelişimi* (Ekim 1983): 41.

⁸⁶ Kemal Turhan, *Türk-Alman Eğitim İlişkilerinin Tarihi Gelişimi* (İstanbul: Bayrak Matbaası, 2000), 147-154.

pupils became the instructors to introduce Goltz's ideas to the new generations in the Military Academy. Thus, Goltz's influence in the Ottoman Army continued after he left the Ottoman Empire in 1896.⁸⁷ In addition to his efforts, 12 Ottoman officers were sent to Germany for further education in both 1882 and 1886.⁸⁸ Goltz had a very close relationship with his students in the Military Academy. A retired General Pertev Demirhan also stressed his intimate and friendly relationships in his book, *Goltz Pasha's Memory*, and noted, "I had very close relationships with Goltz since I was a staff captain. We were like father and son. After my father died in 1904, he [Goltz] became my dad."⁸⁹

I. THE INCREASING MILITARY EXPENDITURES

The increasing demand for the purchase of German arms and efforts for modernization and reorganization process of the Ottoman Army created a heavy burden on the Ottoman economy. Therefore, the Ottoman Empire continued to decline economically. The Ottoman Empire had to borrow 150,000 Ottoman Liras from the Imperial Ottoman Bank to pay the salaries of the personnel of the Army and Navy prior to Ramadan in 1885. In 1888, it became too difficult for the Ottoman Army to find 25,000 Ottoman Liras to pay contractors. Goltz also mentioned that Abdulhamid had to refuse to pay for the German arms for the fortification of İstanbul in the same year. There were riots among troops who were not able to receive their salaries regularly. The increasing military expenditure forced Abdulhamid to ask for a feasibility study to decrease the size of the Ottoman regular army from 250,000 to 130,000 men. The Ottoman Empire had to pay officers in arrears due to the huge gap between income and increasing military expenditures (see Table 8).⁹⁰

⁸⁷ Akmeşe, *The Birth of Modern Turkey*, 25.

⁸⁸ Hün, *Osmanlı Ordusunda Genelkurmayın Ne Suretle Teşekkül Ettiği ve Geçirdiği Safhalar*, 81.

⁸⁹ Emekli General Pertev Demirhan, *Goltz Paşanın Hatırası ve Hal Tercümesi* (İstanbul: Kara Kuvvetleri Basımevi, 1953), 5.

⁹⁰ Griffiths, *The Reorganization of the Ottoman Army under Abdulhamid II*, 86–88.

Table 8. The Ottoman Income versus Military Expenditures, 1886–95.⁹¹

NO	YEAR	INCOME	ARMY	TOTAL DEFENSE
1	1886	18.500.000	6.100.000	8.900.000
2	1887	19.300.000	5.500.000	9.200.000
3	1888	18.100.000	5.100.000	8.400.000
4	1889	19.000.000	5.400.000	8.600.000
5	1890	19.000.000	5.500.000	8.700.000
6	1891	18.900.000	5.800.000	9.000.000
7	1892	18.400.000	5.300.000	8.500.000
8	1893	18.300.000	5.300.000	8.700.000
9	1894	17.900.000	7.400.000	10.300.000

J. CONCLUSION

The 1877–78 Ottoman-Russian War presented clear evidence for the Ottoman officials that military reforms were inevitably necessary for the survival of the Ottoman Empire. Therefore, Abdulhamid II needed to ask Germany for military aid officially. The GMC started working in the Ottoman Army with four officers in 1882. There was no specific progress apart from observations and recommendations until 1886. As a response to Abdulhamid II's request for a military instructor in 1885, Germany assigned Von der Goltz to the Ottoman Army from 1883 until 1895.

The Ottoman Army underwent significant changes with the assistance of the GMC. First, they published the document for the reorganization of the Ottoman Army in 1886. According to this new plan, the number of armies stayed intact; however, the components of each army were organized in accordance with a German army.⁹² Moreover, the reorganization of the Hamidiye cavalry in 1890 strengthened the manpower to counter a possible Russian attack to the Ottoman borders. Second, they issued a new conscription law in 1886. In line with this new law, six army regions were selected as the recruitment center and conscription would take place once in a year. It became compulsory for all Muslim people at the age of 20 to perform their military service. However, there were no changes in the exemptions. Third, Abdulhamid II

⁹¹ McGarity, *Foreign Influence on the Ottoman Turkish Army, 1880–1918*, 181.

⁹² Uğur, “Von der Goltz Paşa'nın 1883–1895 Yılları Arasında Türkiye'deki Hizmetleri,” 22.

wanted to evaluate the real physical power of the Ottoman Army by ordering an inventory in all military units in the same year. At the end of this inventory, it became evident that the Ottoman Army lacked sufficient materials and had inadequate manpower for a possible war or conflict. Furthermore, the Ottoman Army published another document to strengthen each army with this new distribution based on a European model. Fourth, the Army also updated its war plans based on a neutral policy towards European countries.⁹³ Fifth, the Ottoman Empire worked on the rearmament process of the Ottoman Army. The Ottoman Empire preferred to import arms from Germany rather than the United States, France and England with guidance from the GMC. The arms, especially Krupp canons and rifles, became readily available in military units.⁹⁴ Sixth, Ottomans also made changes in the Ottoman military education by updating the curriculum of the War Academy, sending officers to Germany, introducing new practical classes and publishing military manuals in Turkish.⁹⁵ During the planning process of these documents, Goltz participated in the commissions and had an active role in the reform process. James Madison McGarity also stressed the contribution of Goltz to the Ottoman Army in the modernization and reorganization process and noted:

Despite all the adverse conditions under which von der Goltz worked, he achieved a great deal during his first thirteen years in Turkey. By 1895 the Turkish Army had an improved inspection system, a more cohesive staff, a reserve program, a military academy, other military schools, a topographical archive and a comprehensive recruiting scheme. Additionally, the infantry and the artillery were rearmed and plans of possible campaign for almost every contingency were developed.⁹⁶

The Ottoman Empire tried to develop its army by introducing new military reforms with the guidance of the GMC during the last decade of the nineteenth century. There were many action items that were planned for the development of the Ottoman Army; however, the change did not come quickly for several reasons. First, every change

⁹³ Griffiths, *The Reorganization of the Ottoman Army under Abdulhamid II*, 72–82.

⁹⁴ Mehmet Beşirli, “II Abdulhamid Döneminde Osmanlı Ordusunda Alman Silahları,” *Sosyal Bilimler Enstitüsü Dergisi* 1, no.16 (2004): 125–127.

⁹⁵ Kartepeter, “Ottoman Military Reform During the Late Tanzimat: The Prussian General Von Der Goltz and the Ottoman Army,” 254–257.

⁹⁶ McGarity, *Foreign Influence on the Ottoman Turkish Army, 1880–1918*, 37.

was based on Abdulhamid II's approval. Although he had a great interest in these reforms, he did not favor most of the reforms due to his distrust of the Ottoman Army and suspicion of dethronement. Second, the application of these changes required money, but the financial status of the Ottoman economy worsened after 1885. After the 1877–78 War, the Ottoman External Debt Commission was established to control the income and expenditures. Nevertheless, the Ottoman external debt increased due to the extensive purchase of German arms. At this time, Germany establishment a monopoly on arms sales and achieved several opportunities, such as the construction of Baghdad railway.⁹⁷

Although there was a lack of insufficient support for the application of these military reforms, crucial changes in military education in 1886 bore fruit with the emergence of a new Ottoman officer corps in the early decades of the Ottoman Empire. The officers who graduated after the years of reform played an important role in the next chapter of Turkish history.

⁹⁷ Griffiths, *The Reorganization of the Ottoman Army under Abdulhamid II*, 84–85.

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III. THE EFFECT OF THE GERMAN MILITARY COMMISSION IN THE REORGANIZATION OF THE OTTOMAN ARMY IN 1910

A. INTRODUCTION

Following the defeat suffered at the hands of Russia in 1878, Abdulhamid II realized the Ottoman Empire needed reforms and aid from European countries. During the last quarter of the nineteenth century, France invaded Tunisia in 1881, England occupied Egypt and Sudan in 1882, Italy had been working to get more terrain from Ethiopia since 1870 and the Austro-Hungarian Empire had been exerting its influence over the Balkans. Due to these main factors, the Ottoman Empire approached Germany for military assistance.⁹⁸ After its defeat by Russia in 1878, the Ottoman Empire undertook the reform of its armed forces. However, this transformation was uneven because the Ottomans continued to repeat earlier mistakes. Because the changes were ill-adapted, the Empire did not accomplish the necessary and permanent reforms.

In order to balance the German influence, the Ottoman Empire also asked France for military assistance. Nevertheless, France did not accept this invitation. Consequently, the GMC consisting of four German officers came to Istanbul in 1882.⁹⁹ Abdulhamid II wanted to use Germany's influence to protect the Empire from Russia and England.¹⁰⁰ The roots of this partnership dated back to the period of Sultan Selim III. He invited Colonel von Goetze for artillery inspection. During Mahmud II's period, the first GMC came in 1836; however, this was not effective until 1882.¹⁰¹

The Japanese victory over Russia between 1904 and 1905 recommended a new solution for the modernization of the Ottoman Army without leaving the Ottoman

⁹⁸ Rıfat UÇAROL, *Siyasi Tarih: İkinci Meşrutîye ve Dönemin Önemli Olayları, 1908–1914* (İstanbul: Der Publishing, 2008), 421–431.

⁹⁹ Mesut UYAR and Edward J. Erickson, *A Military History of the Ottomans: From Osman to Atatürk* (California: Praeger Security International, 2009), 205.

¹⁰⁰ F.A.K. Yasamee, *Ottoman Diplomacy: Abdulhamid II and the Great Powers 1878–1888* (İstanbul: The Isis Press, 1996), 74.

¹⁰¹ İlber Ortaylı, *Osmanlı İmparatorluğunda Alman Nüfuzu* (İstanbul: Birleşik Yayıncılık ve Ticaret Limited Şirketi, 1983) 71–72.

traditional values.¹⁰² Before the reorganization period in 1910, there were two major events that affected the course of reform activities: the 1908 Constitutional Revolution and the 31 March Incident. First, the Revolution introduced the Constitutional regime again and led to the politicization problem of the army. Second, the 31 March Incident resulted in the dethronement of Abdulhamid II.¹⁰³

Moreover, the Ottoman Army underwent critical changes in the General Staff structure, military education and training, war planning and maneuvers. The GMC had a very critical role in the reorganization process of the Ottoman Army by taking the Japanese Army as a role model. The Ottoman Empire again called Colmar von der Goltz. With the help of Goltz and a close coordination between the Chief of General Staff and the Minister of War, the Ottoman Army carried out significant changes such as the establishment of the Supreme Military Council, the conversion of seven old armies to four inspectorates, the introduction of a triangle-shaped structure instead of square-shaped structure and the emergence of the corps structure. The Japanese case gave an inspiration for the Ottoman military officials. However, these changes required more time and sufficient sources. It was estimated that the new organization with full support of officers, conscripts, surplus and weapons would be effective by 1917.¹⁰⁴

B. THE JAPANESE ARMY AS A ROLE MODEL

The Japanese role model recommended a new solution for the reorganization of the Ottoman Army with a combination of modernization and traditional values. The Russo-Japanese War of 1904–1905 showed that a non-Western country could defeat a more powerful Western army with the support of physical and moral force. The Ottoman Army sent Colonel Pertev Demirhan to examine the war from the Japanese side and he

¹⁰² Handan Nezir Akmeşe, *The Birth of Modern Turkey: The Ottoman Military and the March to World War I* (New York: I.B. Tauris & Co., 2005), 28.

¹⁰³ Bernard Lewis, *The Emergence of Modern Turkey* (London: Oxford Univ. Press, 1969), 211–217; After 31 March Incident, the Action Army established security. The Parliament opened and decided to dethrone Abdülhamid II due to his responsibility for uprising. Later, they approved his brother V. Mehmet as the new Emperor on 27 April 1909.)

¹⁰⁴ Akmeşe, *The Birth of Modern Turkey*, 108–124.

finally arrived there in October 1904.¹⁰⁵ He became an observer to the Third Japanese Army under General Nogi. During the war, he was able to observe the siege of Port Arthur and the battle of Mukden at first hand. After he finished his task, he returned to İstanbul in January 1906. During this campaign, Colonel Pertev regularly corresponded with Goltz. He stressed the importance of moral factors that led to this Japanese victory over Russia.¹⁰⁶ After this war, Goltz replied to Colonel Pertev:

We can learn a lot from the Japanese Army and nation. Japanese victories indeed surprised the world. Before this war began, I used to think that, in good positions, would be able to repel Russian attacks, but I had not thought that the Japanese themselves could attack the Russians and rip them out from strong positions. The reason for this is their moral strength, which, unfortunately, we Europeans have started to regard as unimportant. Among the European nations, obtaining material gains has become the ideal... virtues, such as courage, love of fatherland, the idea of personal honor, which once had been regarded as holy by us, now are everywhere despised...At every opportunity, peace is advocated, which as time goes by, causes people not to want war anymore, and eventually, will leave them weak in front of small but brave nations, as the Persians once had to submit to the Greeks and the Romans to the Germans.. You are a witness to this war, even though not as a warrior. This is why you should be pleased with your luck. After these several years, when you go back to your country, show your nation the Japanese example and explain to them that as long as one is determined and anxious, one, even though weak, can be victorious. The Turkish nation is not lacking in moral foundations...¹⁰⁷

The Russo-Japanese War offered a good example of how a struggle between a non-European nation and a Great Power could result in favor of Japan. The cadets also accepted this war as a perfect example of how a theory could be put into practice and followed the news with a keen interest. İsmet İnönü, once said, “The 1905 Russo-Japanese war took place when I was a student at the Staff Course. Every cadet in the school followed the war with huge interest. In terms of what we had been taught and our aims for the future, Japanese success over the Russians was an important exemplar for

¹⁰⁵ Renee Worringer, *Comparing Perceptions: Japan As Archetype For Ottoman Modernity, 1876–1918* (Illinois: Chicago University Press, 2001), 95.

¹⁰⁶ Akmeşe, *The Birth of Modern Turkey*, 28.

¹⁰⁷ Akmeşe, *The Birth of Modern Turkey*, 29.

us.”¹⁰⁸ The Ottoman officials started evaluating Japanese combat effectiveness by writing books and articles (see Table 9 for some sample publications).

Table 9. Publications about the Russo-Japanese War.¹⁰⁹

AUTHOR	MILITARY PUBLICATIONS
Major Osman Senai and Captain Ali Fuad Erden	The Russo-Japanese War of 1904–1905
Major Pertev Demirhan	Material and Moral Lessons Drawn from the Russo-Japanese War and the Causes of the Japanese Victory: A Nation’s Good Fortune Is in Its Own Power
AUTHOR	ARTICLES PUBLISHED IN JOURNAL “ASKER”
Goltz Pasha,	“Discovery of the Future-the Morality of the East”
Major Ali Rıza,	“The Moral Effects of Warfare, General Observations on the Russo-Japanese War,”
Lieutenant- Colonel Reşit Galip,	“What was one of the causes of the Russian Defeat in the Manchurian War?”
Major Ali Fuad,	“Lessons Drawn from the Far Eastern War”

These studies were read by the cadets in the War College and active duty officers. Colonel Pertev and Goltz thought that the main reasons of the Japanese victory were the martial abilities of the Japanese nation and the close connection between the army and nation. Generally speaking, the nation became an army at war. Since the Japanese international achievement presented a changed world order, this victory gave an impetus for the modernization of the Ottoman Army by taking the Japanese case as a role model. While Colonel Pertev was on his way to the Ottoman Empire, he wrote to Goltz that “the awakening of the yellow race and its entry into the great contest of world domination will place its imprint on the 20th century.”¹¹⁰ In addition to these publications, the Ottoman War Academy Press published German General Staff officer Major Freiherr von Luttwitz’s military history and commentary, *Japanese Assault Tactics in the Last East Asia Campaign in 1906*. Mustafa Kemal also translated Russian Naval Officer Vladimir Semenov’s detailed personal account of the Russo-Japanese battle at Tsushima in 1912.

¹⁰⁸ Akmeşe, *The Birth of Modern Turkey*, 30.

¹⁰⁹ Akmeşe, *The Birth of Modern Turkey*, 72–73.

¹¹⁰ Akmeşe, *The Birth of Modern Turkey*, 30.

This work included the battle formations, as well as some statistical information about the Russian and Japanese naval forces.¹¹¹ The Ottoman Army started examining the roots of the rapid modernization process in Japan that led to this success. After the war with China ended 1895, a Japanese observer asserted, “We can be satisfied only after becoming equal to the Germans in the army and the British in the navy.”¹¹² Thus, the Japanese directly initiated the reform activities. At first, the Japanese Army took the German Army as a role model for its reorganization and modernization. Moreover, the Japanese Navy took the British Navy as a role model. Second, they invited German and French military experts for training and giving advice about purchasing new weapons for the army. Third, German military manuals were translated into Japanese, and the military started carrying out exercises in the German style. Fourth, they sent their officers to study in Germany and France. Fifth, it became compulsory for the cadets in the War College to learn German, French and also Russian in order to understand and comprehend the Western manuals. In the Navy School, the cadets started learning English. By these methods, the Japanese Army and Navy improved themselves over a period of 30–35 years. However, they were also able to keep their traditional values and identity in spite of the Western influence. In 1890, the Emperor passed a declaration called “The Law of Morals” and stated, “All of you should respect and show loyalty to your partners, brothers (or sisters) and friends. In every respect, be loyal to simplicity and try to be helpful to everybody as much as you can... Be loyal to the State and the laws of the fatherland... When required, be prepared to die for your Emperor... That is the testament which had been left to me by ancestors... And to obey its judgments is a must both for you and your children and grandchildren.”¹¹³ After examining the Japanese reorganization process, the Ottoman Empire found many similarities between the Japanese and Ottoman Army (see Table 10).

¹¹¹ Renee Worringer, *Comparing Perceptions: Japan As Archetype For Ottoman Modernity*, 234.

¹¹² Handan Nazar Akmeşe, “Japanese Nations in Arms: A Role Model for Militarist Nationalism in the Ottoman Army, 1905–14,” *Princeton Papers: Interdisciplinary of Middle East Studies* 14, no. 1 (2007): 72–74.

¹¹³ Akmeşe, “Japanese Nations in Arms,” 75.

Table 10. Similarities between the Japanese and Ottoman Army.¹¹⁴

FEATURES	JAPANESE ARMY	OTTOMAN ARMY
German military commission	X	X
Reorganization based on German model	X	X
German style education system	X	X
German style training	X	X
Translation German publications	X	X
Sending officers to Germany	X	X
German style warfare	X	X
German as a second language in war college for officers	X	X
Purchasing German armament	X	X
Innate martial abilities	X	X
Traditional patriotic values for defense of fatherland	The Confucian ideology and Bushido tradition	The Islamic Jihad and Gaza
Common morale for self-sacrifice and devotion	Japanese ritual suicide (harakiri)	Muslim martyrdom (Şahadet)

The Ottoman Army reached three conclusions from this Japanese case. First, innate martial abilities and moral values were still important in modern warfare. Second, a non-European nation could modernize its army very rapidly and successfully. Third, this reorganization process did not require leaving traditional national values that kept the Empire strong and united. These three conclusions triggered an impetus for reorganization activities before and after the 1908 Revolution with a combination of traditional values and modern improvements.¹¹⁵ In addition to modernization, Colonel Pertev also suggested that the Ottoman Empire should concentrate on education and training of youngsters who would serve in the Ottoman Army. He noted that “if we, like the Japanese, starting from the primary school, teach our children ‘love of fatherland’ and ‘martial spirit,’ and if, in the army, we train them as heroes who are ready to die for the Sultan, fatherland, and nation, then the Ottoman Army will fear no-one in the world

¹¹⁴ Akmeşe, “Japanese Nations in Arms,” 74–75.

¹¹⁵ Akmeşe, “Japanese Nations in Arms,” 66.

except Almighty God.”¹¹⁶ Moreover, after the Japanese victory, there was a lot of news about this success. In *Şurayı-Ümmet*, the Ottoman newspaper, at the Committee of Union and Progress (CUP) in 1904, an author noted, “We should take note of Japan, this nation which has become rivals with the Great Powers in thirty to forty years. One should pay attention to that – that a nation not separating patriotic public spirit and the good of homeland from its life is surely such that sustaining wounds, setting out any type of danger that threatens its existence, it certainly preserves its national independence. The Japanese successes of Port Arthur... are a product of this patriotic zeal.”¹¹⁷

C. THE CONSTITUTIONAL REVOLUTION OF 1908

After Abdulhamid II closed the Parliament on 14 February 1878 due to ongoing war against Russia, some groups began to emerge in favor of the declaration of the Constitutional regime again. At first, the Imperial Medical School cadets founded the Ottoman Union Committee in 1889. Then, a group of young officers including Lieutenant Mustafa Kemal formed a secret organization in January 1905 under the name of Fatherland and Liberty. Furthermore, Mustafa Kemal was in touch with Cemil Pasha, the military governor of Macedonia and Talat, a local postal official. He formed these two people in a branch of Damascus under the name of the Ottoman Freedom Society. In general, there were two leading groups under two different leaders with opposite opinions about the political structure of the Constitution in the Ottoman Empire: Prince Sabahattin and Ali Rıza. The First Young Turks Congress was held in Paris on 4–9 February 1902; however, they were not able to reach a consensus for a union. Eventually, only Ali Rıza’s faction agreed with the Young Turks in February 1907 and decided to unite their efforts under the Committee of Union and Progress. On December 27–29 December 1907, they held the Second Young Turks Congress in Paris with Ali Rıza, Prince Sabahattin factions and other opposition groups for the same aim. In the final declaration of the Congress,

¹¹⁶ Akmeşe, “Japanese Nations in Arms,” 79.

¹¹⁷ Renee Worringer, “Sick Man of Europe or Japan of the Near East?: Constructing Ottoman Modernity in the Hamidian and Young Turk Eras,” *International Middle East Studies* 36 (2004): 207.

they all agreed that the Sultan had to be dethroned and the regime had to be changed into a constitutional and representative government at any cost.¹¹⁸

There were critical international events related to the future of the Ottoman Empire. First, Russia lost the war against Japan in 1904–05 and concentrated on the Balkans and the Ottoman Straits again. Second, Russia and England signed a treaty on 8–9 June 1908 in the Reval meeting. According to the information in the press, England allowed Russia to dismember the Ottoman Empire and control the Straits. These two major events gave an impetus for the Revolution. At first, Senior Captain Niyazi from the 3rd Army with his soldiers rebelled against the Sultan on 3 July 1908. This action triggered military and civilian protests and demonstrations calling for the reinstatement of the Constitutional regime and spread to Macedonia. In addition, the CUP also declared the Second Constitutional Regime in Selanik and Manastır.¹¹⁹ Since Abdulhamid II had been receiving many telegrams stating that an army consisting of 100,000 men would come to İstanbul for his dethronement and people in Rumelia would obey the heir to throne in place of him, he had to restore the Constitution on 23 July 1908.¹²⁰ This victory was the success of Mektepli officers (training officers who graduated from Military Academy) in the CUP. After the Revolution, the CUP had nearly 2,500 members, and 70 percent of them were officers ranging from second lieutenant to colonel, mainly from the 2nd and 3rd Armies.¹²¹ It was stated in a journal, *Şura-yı Ümmet*, about the CUP and the Ottoman Army on 19 October 1908 that “the CUP fears only God, works for the salvation of our esteemed nation, and does not refrain any sacrifice for the preservation of our constitution! In order to accomplish this important and sacred duty the CUP depends on the help of God and the army and navy which are the protectors of freedom! The two powers, the CUP and the Ottoman Armed Forces can annihilate the supporters of tyranny

¹¹⁸ Stanford J. Shaw and Ezel Kural Shaw, *History of the Ottoman Empire, Volume II: Reform, Revolution, and Republic: The Rise of Modern Turkey, 1808–1975* (London: Cambridge University Press, 1997), 263–267.

¹¹⁹ UYAR and Erickson, *A Military History of the Ottomans: From Osman to Atatürk*, 217–218.

¹²⁰ Ali İhsan GENCER and Sabahattin ÖZEL, *The History of Turkish Revolution* (İstanbul: Der Publishing, 2011), 29.

¹²¹ M. Şükrü Hanioglu, “Civil-Military Relations in the Second Constitutional Period, 1908–18,” *Turkish Studies* 12 No.2 (2011), 181.

at any time with a devastating blow.”¹²² After the Revolution, there were important events such as the annexation of Bosnia and Herzegovina by the Austro-Hungarian Empire on 5 October 1908, the independence of Bulgaria and the unification of Crete with Greece on the same day. The most critical event was the 31 March Incident that affected the internal affairs of the Ottoman Empire.¹²³

D. THE COUNTER-REVOLUTIONARY UPRISING: 31 MARCH INCIDENT

After the 1908 Revolution, the first elections in 30 years were held. The CUP was very successful in this campaign and got 50 percent of 288 seats due to its well-organized structure throughout the Ottoman Empire. However, in the beginning of 1909, groups that showed opposition to this new order began to come together to resist. There were several opposition groups to the CUP and new regime. First, the Ahrar Party lost the election and was against the CUP activities. Second, there was opposition from religious groups: the lower ulema, students of religious schools (medrese), and religious extremists such as Derviş Vahdeti, members of Muhammadan Union. Third, civil servants who lost their jobs after the Revolution and some unsatisfied Alaylı officers (regimental officers who had risen from the ranks and become officers at an older age) that lost their critical positions in the Ottoman Army due to Mektepli officers were among the opponent groups.¹²⁴ Moreover, General Mahmud Muhtar Pasha removed nearly 1,400 Alaylı officers from their posts. By mid-November 1908, some of Alaylı officers tried to hold demonstrations. To prevent these activities, very critical Alaylı officers like the Commander of the 1st Cavalry Division and four officers were arrested.¹²⁵ On 3 April 1909, Derviş Vahdeti made a speech to his supporters at Hagia Sophia Square and asked for the restoration of the Sheriat and removal of the CUP policies. On 6 April 1909, Hasan Fehmi, the anti-Unionist editor, was killed and his funeral became the core of anti-CUP demonstrations. In his newspaper, Derviş Vahdeti wrote of Hasan Fehmi’s death,

¹²² Hanioglu, “Civil-Military Relations in the Second Constitutional Period,” 182.

¹²³ Rifat Uçarol, *Siyasi Tarih*, 467–479.

¹²⁴ Erik Jan Zürcher, *Turkey A Modern History: The Second Constitutional Period, 1908–18* (New York: I.B. Tauris & Co., 1993), 94–98.

¹²⁵ M. Naim Tufan, *Rise of The Young Turks: Politics, The Military and Ottoman Collapse* (New York: I.B. Tauris & Co., 2000), 157.

“Here is cruelty! Here is constitution! The remedy is a general consensus of opinion. The nation expects the immediate assistance of her soldiers.”¹²⁶ This event triggered the mutiny. On the night of 12 April 1909, the battalions of Macedonian troops set up a rebellion to demand the rebuilding of Sheriat and arrested their officers. More troops, students from religious schools, ulema members, and Alaylı officers joined the mutiny and marched to the Parliament. They claimed the restoration of Sheriat, resignation of the government, and reassignment of Alaylı officers to their posts. In a response to these demands, Hüseyin Hilmi Pasha resigned.¹²⁷

To suppress this mutiny, the CUP responded decisively and rapidly by organizing an “Action Army (Hareket Ordusu)” on 15 April 1909. Mustafa Kemal (Atatürk) named this Army and became the Chief of Staff of the Action Army. The Action Army under the command of Mahmud Şevket Pasha entered İstanbul and did not encounter much resistance and took the control of the city very easily.¹²⁸ According to the CUP, Abdulhamid II and Derviş Vahdeti and members of Muhammadan Union were the key leaders of this mutiny against the new order.¹²⁹ The Ottoman Empire declared martial law and established two courts. Those who were in charge of this mutiny like Derviş Vahdeti and several rebels were convicted and executed in these courts. After the Action Army established security, the Parliament decided to dethrone Abdülhamid II and approved his brother Mehmet V (1909–1918) as the new Emperor on 27 April 1909.¹³⁰

E. THE POLITICIZATION PROBLEM IN THE OTTOMAN ARMY

The 1908 Revolution and the Counter-Revolution attempt (31 March Incident) in 1909 pointed out the politicization problem in the Ottoman Army. At that time, senior commanders like Ahmet İzzet Pasha and Mahmud Şevket Pasha also agreed that the

¹²⁶ A.L. Macfice, *The End of Ottoman Empire 1908–1923* (United Kingdom: Addison Wesley Longman Limited, 1998), 50.

¹²⁷ Rıfat Uçarol, *Siyasi Tarih*, 478.

¹²⁸ M. Şükrü Hanioglu, *A Brief History of The Late Ottoman Empire* (New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 2008), 155.

¹²⁹ Erik Jan Zürcher, *Turkey A Modern History*, 99.

¹³⁰ Rıfat UÇAROL, *Siyasi Tarih*, 479.

military should stay out of politics. After they overpowered the Counter-Revolution, they made an official announcement to warn officers to keep themselves out of politics. Furthermore, Mahmud Şevket Pasha made a speech to the officers of the 2nd Army about the politicization problem. However, these attempts did not present a permanent solution. After Goltz visited the 3rd Army, he described this army as a “Military Republic.”¹³¹

During the 31 March Incident, it was found that Alaylı officers supported the mutinous demonstration. Therefore, Mektepli officers were not satisfied with their actions. In addition to this, Alaylı officers showed resistance to the reorganization process and wanted to continue the old structure to keep their position. At that time, there were no laws or regulations for age limits and tenure of military ranks. The Supreme Military Council started introducing new rules for reducing the role of the Alaylı officers in the modernization process. First, they passed “The Law for Age Limitation” on June 1909 (see Table 11). As a result of this law, nearly 7,500 Alaylı officers were retired.¹³²

Table 11. The Age Limitations for Military Ranks in the Ottoman Armed Forces.¹³³

RANKS	AGE LIMITS
2nd and 1st Lieutenant (Teğmen-Üsteğmen)	41
Captain (Yüzbaşı)	46
Major (Binbaşı)	52
Lt. Colonel (Yarbay-Kaymakam)	55
Colonel (Albay-Miralay)	58
Brigadier General (Tuğgeneral-Mirliva)	60
Major Gen. (Ferik) and Lt. Gen. (Birinci Ferik)	65
Marshall (Mareşal-Müşir)	68

Second, they passed “The Law for the Purge of Military Ranks” on 7 August 1909. This law necessitated compulsory military service during tenure within every rank. The aim of this law was to purge the Hamidian regime influence in the army. There were

¹³¹ Akmeşe, “Japanese Nations in Arms,” 115.

¹³² Edward J. Erickson, *Defeat in Detail: The Ottoman Army in the Balkans, 1912–1913* (Connecticut: Greenwood Publishing Group, 2003), 23.

¹³³ Nejat Eralp, “İkinci Meşrutiyet’te Silahlı Kuvvetler ile İlgili Üç Önemli Kanun,” *4’üncü Askeri Tarih Semineri Bildirileri* (Ankara: Genelkurmay Basımevi, 1989), 125.

many officers who got early promotions based on palace confirmation rather than professionalism. However, the law also included early promotions for the officers who showed outstanding performance in internal rebellions or external wars. Third, they passed “The Law for Establishment of Commissions of Inspection” to investigate individuals who had applied to become reserve officers due to health problems on 22 August 1909. Fourth, they passed “The Law for the Payment of Pensions to Retired Officers.” This law provided an opportunity for active officers to resign. By the means of these four laws, the Ottoman Army tried to professionalize their army by filling positions with Mektepli officers.¹³⁴ In addition to the struggle between Mektepli and Alayli officers in the army, there was no decisive reform policy due to rapid appointments of French and German-trained officers to the Minister of War (see Table 12).

Table 12. Ottoman Ministers of War, 1908–14.

MINISTER OF WAR	APPOINTED	RELIEVED	REMARKS
Rüşti Pasha	22 July 1908	7 August 1908	
Recep Pasha	7 August 1908	9 August 1908	
Ali Rıza Pasha	27 August 1908	10 February 1909	
Nazim Pasha	10 February 1909	12 February 1909	
Ali Rıza Pasha	13 February 1909	14 April 1909	2nd Appointment
İbrahim Ethem Pasha	14 April 1909	28 April 1909	
Salih Hulusi Pasha	28 April 1909	12 January 1910	
Mahmut Şevket Pasha	12 January 1910	9 July 1912	
Hurşit Pasha	9 July 1912	29 July 1912	Deputy Minister of War
Nazim Pasha	29 July 1912	23 January 1913	2nd Appointment and assassinated
Mahmut Şevket Pasha	23 January 1913	11 June 1913	2nd Appointment and assassinated
Ahmet İzzet Pasha	18 June 1913	5 November 1913	
Çürüksulu Mahmut Pasha	5 November 1913	3 January 1914	Deputy Minister of War
Enver Pasha	3 January 1914	4 November 1918	

This lack of continuity had a negative effect for the future of the reforms. For instance, Nazim Pasha who served as the Minister of War was a French-trained officer and studied at the French Military Academy. On the other hand, Mahmud Şevket Pasha was a German-trained officer and Goltz’s student at the Military Academy. Therefore,

¹³⁴ Erickson, *Defeat in Detail*, 23–24.

these two different generations tried to create their command styles in the Ottoman Army. While Nazim Pasha considered France for purchasing weapons like French Schneider field guns, other German-trained officers focused on the German model. Although, there many changes in the assignments in the War Ministry, Ahmet İzzet Pasha served as the Chief of General Staff between 15 August 1908 and 1 January 1914. Consequently, Ahmet İzzet Pasha's constant task duration speed up the military reforms and reorganization process with his great determination.¹³⁵

F. THE CONSCRIPTION PROBLEM IN THE OTTOMAN ARMY

The Ottoman Army had a sophisticated system of recruitment by the means of a conscription system that was taken as a model from the German Army. The conscription process of the Ottoman Army was not a universal system due to collective and individual exemptions. At first, women, non-Muslims (formally after the Reform Edict in 1856-*Islahat Fermanı*, but in effect in 1909), residents of Mecca and Medina, students in religious schools (*medrese*), and members of vocational groups (top civil servants, judges, muftis, etc.) were exempt from the military service. The Ottoman Empire was not able to draft 26 percent of its population due to this collective exemption. Furthermore, there were individual exemptions. First, among these would be an individual known as “Muinsiz” who had no one to look after his mother, or if married, his wife. In short, a “breadwinner” had the right to an exemption. Second, those who could get out of a conscript for six years would be exempt and join the Reserve Army. Third, those who could find someone to serve for them would be excluded according to the first conscription law in 1848. Moreover, the 1870 regulations presented another opportunity for those who did not want to do military service by cash payment-in-lieu of service called “*bedel-i nakdi*.”¹³⁶

To organize the conscription system, the Ottoman Empire started carrying out reforms such as the “The Reform Edict of *Gülhane*” on 3 November 1839. This reform

¹³⁵ Erickson, *Defeat in Detail*, 22–23.

¹³⁶ Erik Jan Zürcher, “The Ottoman Conscription System, 1844–1914,” *International Review of Social History* 43 No.3 (1998): 445–445.

edict provided a new army conscription system for Muslims and equality for all Sultan's subjects including non-Muslims.¹³⁷ In addition to this reform, the Ottoman Empire declared another reform edict (Islahat Fermanı) on 18 February 1856. By the means of this reform, all Muslim and non-Muslim subjects became equal in terms of military service, education and public utility.¹³⁸ Since the spiritual combat power of the army heavily depended on religious motives, the Ottoman military officials thought the military service with non-Muslims would demoralize soldiers. For instance, it was very common for Muslim Ottoman soldiers to attack the enemy while shouting, "Allah Allah" and "Allahüekber- God is Great." However, these reforms did not bear their fruits in the conscription system. Since non-Muslims still had the right to pay military payment-in-lieu called "bedel-i askeri." In addition to this, the 1870 regulations excluded non-Muslims from their compulsory military service. Its first article states that "all of the Muslim population of the well-protected domains of His Majesty is personally obliged to fulfill the military service which is incumbent on them."¹³⁹ Since the Ottoman Empire published the Reform Edict (Islahat Fermanı) to prevent interference of the Great Powers in its internal affairs by claiming the non-Muslims' rights, the conscription of non-Muslims just remained on paper until 1909.¹⁴⁰

After the establishment of the Constitutional regime in 1908, the Young Turks published in their governmental program that the conscription system should be universal including all the subjects of the Ottoman Empire. Therefore, they passed "The Law for Abolishment of Non-Muslims' Exemption from Military Service" in July 1909. Before this law was passed, there was a parliamentary debate about the exemption of students of religious schools. In spite of opposition by the ulema, military service became compulsory for them. Union Deputy Arif İsmet Bey reprimanded the ulema by saying, "While you are lounging in leisure in the corners of the medrese, the army remains hungry and destitute in the frontiers, and military officers are giving their lives along the

¹³⁷ Erik Jan Zürcher, *Turkey A Modern History: The Era of Tanzimat, 1839–71* (New York: I.B. Tauris & Co., 1993), 51.

¹³⁸ Rıfat UÇAROL, *Political History*, 233–234.

¹³⁹ Erik Jan Zürcher, "The Ottoman Conscription System," 446.

¹⁴⁰ Rıfat UÇAROL, *Political History*, 235.

borders in order to defend you.”¹⁴¹ However, the previous conditions for exemption such as payment and Muinsiz were still available. In October 1909, the Ottoman Army ordered the universal recruitment. Non-Muslim groups in Ottoman society did not pay great attention to this campaign. Greeks, Bulgarians, Syrians and Armenians asked for separate units, kitchens and some measures for religious worship activities. In a response to these demands, Hüseyin Cahit, a famous Unionist journalist, noted that “soldiers do whatever they think is appropriate. After all, if the Russian government conscripted Muslims and non-Muslims at the same time without any difficulty, the Turkish government could do the same.”¹⁴² Despite all these attempts, the number of non-Muslims’ recruited was lower than expected. These people found new ways for exemptions by leaving the Ottoman Empire or obtaining a foreign passport. Those who did not leave or get a passport paid the cash payment-in-lieu for their exemptions.¹⁴³ Nevertheless, the Ottoman government did not trust them and used them in the supply units. Moreover, they did not have any will for serving in the Ottoman Army. Therefore, the Ottoman conscription system failed due to exemptions, and it remained an army consisting of Muslim peasants both in Anatolia and parts of the Balkans.¹⁴⁴

G. THE OTTOMAN GENERAL STAFF AND ITS STAFF OFFICERS

In 1909 under a new Chief of General Staff, Ahmet İzzet Pasha, the Ottoman General Staff was reorganized to guide the military reform attempts based on four divisions: operations, intelligence, army organization, and mapping.¹⁴⁵ The original structure of the German General Staff was directly copied.¹⁴⁶

¹⁴¹ Amit Benin, “Politics, Military Conscription, and Religious Education in the Late Ottoman Empire,” *International J. Middle East Studies* 38 (2006), 295.

¹⁴² Akmeşe, *The Birth of Modern Turkey*, 114.

¹⁴³ Erik Jan Zürcher, “The Ottoman Conscription System,” 447.

¹⁴⁴ F.A.K. Yasamee, “Some Military Problems Faced by the Ottoman Empire at the Beginning of the 20th Century,” *KOK Social and Strategic Research Journal*, Ottoman Special Edition, 2000, 73.

¹⁴⁵ Erickson, *Defeat in Detail*, 55.

¹⁴⁶ Martin Kitchen, *The German Officer Corps 1890–1914* (London: Clarendon Press, 1968), 5.

In addition to this, the Assistant Chief of General staff was also established to help the Chief of General Staff in the main headquarters.¹⁴⁷ During this period, the German model was adopted for the general staff officer selection system, the structure of War Academy and its curriculum.¹⁴⁸ In order to meet current operational and tactical planning needs, the Ottoman General Staff again reorganized its structure before the Balkan Wars (see Table 13). The Ottoman General Staff created several positions for staff officers at army, corps and division levels under the operational, intelligence, quartermaster, personnel and administration branches by 1911. However, some of these positions were left empty due to an insufficient number of staff officers.¹⁴⁹

Table 13. The Ottoman General Staff and its Functions before the Balkan Wars.¹⁵⁰

DIVISION	APPOINTED	FUNCTIONS
1st Division	Staff Colonel Pertev	Operations: Training and maneuvers
2nd Division	Staff Colonel Ali Rıza	Intelligence: Foreign army organization, military attaché
3rd Division	Staff Colonel Ziya	Planning: regulations, mobilization, security, Jandarma coordination, force posture
4th Division	Staff Colonel Tevfik	Administration of peacetime organization and realignment (the unfinished organizational changes of 1910)
5th Division	Staff Lt. Col.Fevzi	Administration: Budget, retirement, and soldiers' rights
6th Division	Brig. Gen. Kamil Pasha	The promotion and internal and external (foreign armies) assignment of the officers of the General Staff corps
7th Division	Brig. Gen. Zeki Pasha	Topography, mapping and technical support

¹⁴⁷ Erickson, *Defeat in Detail*, 55.

¹⁴⁸ Edward J. Erickson, "From Kirkilisse to the Great Offensive Turkish Operational Encirclement Planing, 1912–1922," *Middle Eastern Studies* 40, no. 1 (Jan.,2004): 45.

¹⁴⁹ Erickson, *Defeat in Detail*, 56.

¹⁵⁰ Erickson, *Defeat in Detail*, 57–58.

The Ottoman General Staff concentrated its efforts on the War Academy and its curriculum. The War Academy was founded in 1834 and based on a French model.¹⁵¹ However, the GMC was very effective in revising the curriculum of the War Academy by introducing German military manuals, operational and tactical means through a three-year education. At the end of the course, the War Academy sent Staff officers to military units as the German staff officers did in their staff officer course. After the Ottoman officers finished the War Academy successfully, the Ottoman General Staff gave them a three-year early promotion. Furthermore, they also wore red stripes to show their status just as German staff officers wore in their country. (Today, Turkish officers still wear red stripes after they graduate from the War College.) The reorganization of the Ottoman General Staff and its staff officers was a reflection of the GMC.¹⁵²

H. MILITARY EDUCATION AND TRAINING

The military education for officers and training for conscripts was a very important problem before the reorganization of the Ottoman Army. At that time, most of the officers, especially Alaylı officers did not get formal basic training and achieved their ranks in terms of their military service. There was a small group of officers who were sent to Germany to study. However, these German-trained officers were assigned to the Ottoman General Staff for administrative tasks. Therefore, they did not use their German training experience in military units. To solve these problems, Ahmet İzzet Pasha started a revolution by setting up a new General-Inspectorate of Education and Training to centralize all training and educational efforts under a specific organization in July 1909. Then, a separate Staff College was founded and put under the control of the General Staff in August 1909.¹⁵³

Before then, all staff officers were chosen from among the best cadets and completed a three-year long education in the War College, and these staff officers were

¹⁵¹ Mesut UYAR and A. Kadir VAROGLU, "In Search of Modernity and Rationality: The Evolution of Turkish Military Academy Curricula in a Historical Perspective," *Armed Forces & Society* 35, no. 1 (Fall 2008): 187–191.

¹⁵² Erickson, *Defeat in Detail*, 56–57.

¹⁵³ Akmeşe, *The Birth of Modern Turkey*, 118.

just dealing with administrative work and not sent into the field to serve. This lack of service as a commanding officer in regimental units created weakness in their leadership and planning skills. Therefore, Ahmed İzzet Pasha made some changes in the General Staff selection system. According to his orders, staff officers were not selected directly from the best graduates of War Academy; rather the distinguished and experienced officers who work in the military units for two to five years were selected.¹⁵⁴ Moreover, he introduced model regiment troops of infantry, artillery and cavalry in the districts of the four armies after coordinating with Goltz and Mahmud Şevket Pasha. The Ottoman Army put a German officer in charge of commanding these model regiments. Moreover, more officers and soldiers worked within these regiments for short periods as an orientation to the new model.¹⁵⁵

Furthermore, Ahmet İzzet Pasha ordered the update of the curriculum by introducing forbidden subjects of the Hamidian regime such as Ottoman military history, unconventional warfare and political history.¹⁵⁶ He opened the infantry and artillery shooting schools for raising specialists for military units.¹⁵⁷ He also insisted that the cadets in the military schools should spend time on the application of military tactics rather than theoretical courses. It was the first time that the Ottoman army started to conduct exercises that were based on real scenarios with units higher than battalion level. In these exercises, the units used live fire for the first time along with the modern tactics. All modern weapons were introduced to officers and soldiers through these military changes. It became very popular to have military command post exercises and staff trips at the divisional and corps level.¹⁵⁸

¹⁵⁴ Yüksel Kanar and Süheyl İzzet Furgaç, *Ahmet İzzet Pasha, Feryadım (My Outcry)* (İstanbul: Nehir Publishing, 1993), 46.

¹⁵⁵ Glen W. Swanson, "War, Technology and Society in the Ottoman Empire from the Reign of Abdulhamid II to 1913, Mahmud Şevket Pasha and German Military Commission," *War, Technology and Society in the Middle East* (1975): 378.

¹⁵⁶ UYAR and VAROGLU, "The Evolution of Turkish Military Academy Curricula," 187–191.

¹⁵⁷ Akmeşe, *The Birth of Modern Turkey*, 118.

¹⁵⁸ UYAR and VAROGLU, "The Evolution of Turkish Military Academy Curricula," 187–191.

R. H. Wilson has also stressed these improvements in the military training and maneuvers based on the German model in his article “The Army of Turkey,” noting:

... But since the proclamation of the constitution on June 23, 1908, has rendered the people hopeful of changed conditions in the future, these bands have ceased their depredations and the regiments have returned to their stations. Since then an activity quite unusual has prevailed throughout the army; garrison maneuvers have been planned and systematically carried out at Salonica, Uskub, Monastır, Serres and even at Constantinople [Istanbul]. The infantry has just received its new drill regulations, which are similar to those adopted by the German Army after the Russo-Japanese War; they were put in use at once. The Cavalry is being trained in field-service; men and horses are subjected to a regular course of training.... The artillery is hastening the issue of the material of the new model 75 mm. Krupp field-gun, orders having been given for the holding of target practice in each regiment and by each battery. This was a radical change in the method of instruction of the troops who, before the revolution, seldom left their barracks, where they were exercised only in close order formations.¹⁵⁹

Moreover, there was another problem in the education and training of reservist officers. The Ottoman officials started talking about this issue in the Senate (Meclis-Ayan) in 18 January 1910. At that time, Ahmet Muhtar Pasha stated that “mobilized armies face big problems. The primary reason for this is the shortage of officers... Some of them, due to several causes, cannot come to their duties, others fall sick, and the third reason is the lack of cadres... When war starts, change of climate, wounds and deaths result in a shortage of officers...that is why there were times when sergeants commanded companies. Yet, the authorities know that ... this is really harmful... Because of that it is essential that reserve officers should be trained in advance... There is undoubtedly a need for a corps for Reserve Officers.”¹⁶⁰ Ahmet Izzet Pasha agreed with Ahmet Muhtar Pasha. Finally, they passed “The Law for Reserve Officers” on 19 April 1910. According to this new law, those who graduated from institutions and high school, as well as non-commissioned officers (NCOs), would apply to become reservist officers. In addition to training improvements for reservists, the training system for the Nizam was also

¹⁵⁹ R. H. Wilson, “The Army of Turkey,” *Journal of the Military Service Institution of the United States* 48 (1911): 289.

¹⁶⁰ Akmeşe, *The Birth of Modern Turkey*, 118.

developed by introducing live exercise and maneuvers at higher levels. However, the full reorganization of the Ottoman Army with trained and educated officers and reservists would be realized by 1917.¹⁶¹

I. WAR PLANNING AND MANEUVERS

Since Sultan Abdulhamid II always perceived the Ottoman Army as a potential threat to his position, he took measures to keep the military too weak. First, he forbade maneuvers and live exercises. Second, he did not let the army use modern European weapons and stored those weapons in depots and ordered that the army would use them only in case of an emergency after his approval. Moreover, the training and war preparation activities of the army were minimal. Half of reservists did not have any training. The Ottoman General Staff did not have any updated plans for mobilization before 1908. The current situation of the Ottoman Army could not meet any conventional fighting effectiveness.¹⁶² Goltz also noted about the state of the Ottoman Army:

Up to 1908 the Turkish Army lay as if in chains. Anyone who might be poetically inclined might compare it to “Sleeping Beauty.” Sultan Abdulhamid II spoke indeed of his good intentions for it, and it is not impossible that in the early days of his reign he was actually concerned about it. His unholy distrust, however, never let him come either to a definite decision or to any actual action. Along the line of reorganization several things were done, as, for example, the legal regulating of the time of service, questions as to recruiting and administrative subdivisions. But he allowed nothing to happen concerning the training and strengthening of the troops serving with the colors, for he lived in constant fear of pronunciamientos, which no one in the army thought of, in the decades after the unhappy Russian War. Every powerful emotion, no matter how well (it was) intended, was considered dangerous and ruthlessly put under foot. The concepts of patriotism and nationality were looked upon as forbidden fruits. Even the remembrance of the heroic times of the people was to be gradually rooted out of the hearts of the coming generation. It was during the time that I was on duty as the inspector-general of military training in Constantinople [İstanbul] that almost all study of history was interdicted in the several military schools. The army was to be nothing but a dumb and suitable tool in the hands of the Sultan, without any of its own endeavors. The Sultan lived in the reprehensible error that one could

¹⁶¹ Akmeşe, *The Birth of Modern Turkey*, 119.

¹⁶² F.A.K. Yasamee, “Some Military Problems Faced by the Ottoman Empire,” 73.

destroy all love of action and initiative and then later at opportune moments awaken it again by command. On account of this error the army in many still suffers from this.¹⁶³

After Ahmet İzzet Pasha became the Chief of Staff, he started dealing with two problems of the Ottoman Army: war planning and maneuvers. In June 1908, Goltz informed Sultan Abdulhamid II that the possible threat of the Ottoman Empire would be Bulgaria with its 192,000 soldiers. Therefore, Ahmed İzzet Pasha initiated the fortification of Edirne. Upon Goltz's warnings about Bulgaria, the Chief of General Staff started working on the war plans in 1908. The Ottoman General Staff finished 12 war plans by 1912 (see Table 14).¹⁶⁴

Table 14. Ottoman Campaign Plans.¹⁶⁵

NO	POTENTIAL ENEMY
1	Bulgaria
2	Bulgaria and Greece
3	Greece
4	Bulgaria, Serbia, and Montenegro
5	Bulgaria, Greece, Serbia, and Montenegro
6	Serbia and Montenegro
7	Montenegro
8	Italy or a major power
9	Austria-Hungary
10	Russia
11	Russia and Bulgaria
12	Russia and a Balkan coalition (excluding Bulgaria)

Furthermore, they also planned to carry out live exercises at different levels: army corps and divisions. First, they held army corps maneuvers under the command of Goltz in the autumn of 1909. The plan for this exercise was based on a Bulgarian invasion on the Balkans. It was the first exercise of the Ottoman Army for 30 years.¹⁶⁶ At that time,

¹⁶³ Field-Marshal-General Frhrn. Von Der Goltz, "The Army of Rejuvenated Turkey," *Journal of the Military Service Institution of the United States* LII, no. CLXXXI (January-February 1913): 2.

¹⁶⁴ Edward J. Erickson, *Defeat in Detail*, 62.

¹⁶⁵ Edward J. Erickson, *Defeat in Detail*, 62.

¹⁶⁶ Akmeşe, *The Birth of Modern Turkey*, 119.

Mustafa Kemal was serving as a captain in Macedonia and dealing with the military training and planning of the 3rd Army. The military exercise was based on Mustafa Kemal's plan that Goltz liked very much. During this military exercise, they worked very closely.¹⁶⁷ However, there were some problems in the maneuvers: improper use of cavalry and artillery, lack of skills in using maps, deployment of reserve units at the wrong time. Second, they had an army level exercise including 1st and 2nd Armies in the autumn of 1910. The scenario of the maneuvers was based on the Bulgarian threat. They made a generic scenario including West (Bulgarians) and East (Turkish) armies. There was lack of soldiers in the number of troops due to plague and cholera. Therefore, the number of troops decreased from 70,000 to 40,000. At the end of the exercise, the Ottoman Army's key leaders including Goltz found weaknesses, such as lack of leadership for officers, and the problem of insufficient railway transportation for rapid mobilization and delivery of surplus and ammunition.¹⁶⁸ With these two major maneuvers, Goltz started testing his own division structure called "combined division," consisting of one infantry brigade, one cavalry brigade and one artillery regiment. In addition to the combined division, they tested other various structures of divisions that would shape the reorganization of the Ottoman Army on 9 July 1910.¹⁶⁹ Third, they planned to carry out another exercise in the autumn of 1911. However, they had to cancel it due to funding problems and the war against Italy in September 1911.¹⁷⁰

J. THE REORGANIZATION OF THE OTTOMAN ARMY IN 1910

The organization of the Ottoman Army was divided into two main parts: the Active Army and the Reserve Army. The main structure of the army consisted of the standing army and three different reservists, such as the İhtiyat, Redif, and Müstahfız, which were based on age and length of service. The standing army consisted of full-time conscripts called Muvazzaf troops who served for three years. After Muvazzaf troops

¹⁶⁷ Nurettin Tursan, "Generalfeldmarshall Colmar Freiherr Von Der Goltz'un Türkiye Yaşamı ve Hizmetleri," *20. Yüzyıl Başına Kadar Türk Askeri Eğitiminin Tarihi Gelişimi* (Ekim 1983), 39–40.

¹⁶⁸ Akmeşe, *The Birth of Modern Turkey*, 119–120.

¹⁶⁹ Edward J. Erickson, *Defeat in Detail*, 26.

¹⁷⁰ Akmeşe, *The Birth of Modern Turkey*, 119–120.

finished their task, they became members of İhtiyat for six years. The Reserve Army was also divided into two parts: Redif and Müstahfiz. At first, the people who finished their Muvazzaf and İhtiyat services, and reservists who were not taken to the Active Army, joined the Redif for nine years. Last, the people who finished their Redif service became the Mustahfiz for two years. In peacetime, the Active Army and the Redif forces were organized into military units; however, the Mustahfiz units did not have any military structure. The organization of the Ottoman Army had not changed since 1880 and had four weaknesses.¹⁷¹ First, the Ottoman Army was not able to benefit from the manpower of the Ottoman Empire fully due to exemptions for non-Muslims. Second, the Ottoman Army had difficulty in mobilization due to lack of transportation systems and distance between the active armies in the frontier regions and reservists. Third, the divisional structural organization of the Ottoman Army did not meet the tactical and operational needs of the battlefield. Forth, there were many problems in logistics and combat support service.¹⁷² To solve these problems, the GMC had been working on the reform activities since 1882. This commission initiated several reforms in education and training. However, Abdulhamid's paranoia of military revolt and dethronement prevented the success of these initiatives. When Goltz came to the Ottoman Empire for a short visit in June 1908, he realized that the Ottoman Army had grown worse since he left in 1895. There were serious problems in planning, organization, supplies and equipment. After he returned to Germany, he told the German Chief General Staff that "the Turkish Army has more the character of a militia or a levy, than that of an army organized and trained on European lines.... However, many good qualities may inhere in the raw material of which the Turkish army is composed, it is not to be counted upon in the event of war, until a change of government and system occurs. I can only warn against taking into account somehow as a helper."¹⁷³

¹⁷¹ F.A.K. Yasamee, "Some Military Problems Faced by the Ottoman Empire," 72.

¹⁷² Akmeşe, *The Birth of Modern Turkey*, 110.

¹⁷³ F.A.K. Yasamee, "Colmar Freiherr von der Goltz and the Rebirth of the Ottoman Empire," *Diplomacy & Statecraft* 9, No.2 (July 1998):109.

After the suppression of the Counter-Revolution in 1909 by Mektepli officers, the Ottoman Army became the core of the internal politics. At that time, two German-trained generals took high ranking positions in the Ottoman Army. First, Mahmud Şevket Pasha became the Inspector of the 1st, 2nd, and 3rd Armies on 18 May 1909, and the Minister of War between 25 January 1910 and 9 July 1912. Second, Ahmed İzzet Pasha became the Chief of General Staff between mid-1908 and February 1911.¹⁷⁴ These two reformist generals and their old instructor Colmar Von der Goltz became responsible for the reorganization process after the 1908 Revolution.¹⁷⁵ The first thing that Mahmud İzzet Pasha did after he became the Chief of General Staff was to search for a means for inviting Goltz and more German officers to the Ottoman Empire for the military reforms.¹⁷⁶ The new Sultan, Mehmed Reşad, send an official invitation to Goltz for his aid. Goltz accepted and came to İstanbul on 12 July 1909 to participate in the reorganization process. However, his task would not be full time, just part time for four months in the year. He would continue working in the German Army for the other eight months. They started carrying out the reorganizational changes immediately. First, they abolished the Sultan's personal military staff since it presented an authority over armed forces and acted as an agent between the Sultan and military leaders such as the Minister of War and the Chief of Staff.¹⁷⁷ In place of this military staff, they established a Supreme Military Council on 14 August 1909 at the War Ministry. The members of the newly founded organization were the War Minister, Goltz as a Vice President, the Chief of General Staff, the Inspectors of the 1st, 2nd and 3rd Armies and the general commanding the First Army Corps. This Council became the core of the reorganization process and served as a board for selection of new generals and appointments to military units. Moreover, the War Minister got the responsibility for giving advice to the Cabinet and Parliament.¹⁷⁸

¹⁷⁴ Akmeşe, *The Birth of Modern Turkey*, 108.

¹⁷⁵ Glen W. Swanson, "War, Technology and Society in the Ottoman Empire from the Reign of Abdulhamid II to 1913, 374.

¹⁷⁶ Yüksel Kanar and Süheyl İzzet Furgaç, *Ahmet İzzet Pasha, Feryadım (My Outcry)* (İstanbul: Nehir Publishing, 1993), 61

¹⁷⁷ Akmeşe, *The Birth of Modern Turkey*, 108–109.

¹⁷⁸ Tufan, *Rise of The Young Turks*, 164.

The Military Council published “The Law for the Reorganization of the Ottoman Army” on 9 July 1910. The new regulation did not change the Active, Reserve Armies, Nizamiye, Redif and Müstahfiz troops. The old Hamidiye cavalry kept its position under the name “Tribal Cavalry Units.”¹⁷⁹ Furthermore, the structure and location of the Nizamiye troops remained the same, and they put the Army Inspection Officers in charge of conducting training and organizing expedition tasks.¹⁸⁰ Apart from shallow ameliorations, there were very radical changes. First, they converted the old seven armies into four Nizamiye army inspectorates, with their headquarters in İstanbul, Salonika, Erzincan and Baghdad, and six Redif Army Inspectorates with their headquarters in İstanbul, Salonika, Erzincan, Baghdad, Damascus and İzmir. In addition to this new army inspectorate structure, there were an independent army corps in Yemen, and three independent divisions in Asir, Tripolitania and the Hijaz. They also removed the cavalry and artillery divisions and distributed them to the new army corps. The size of units was increased from 32 to 43 of Nizamiye divisions and 33 to 54 of Redif divisions.¹⁸¹

Second, the Ottoman Army had a new type of European army corps structure with new changes. They based their corps model on three divisions instead of two divisions. The total number of this corps was 41,000 men and 6,700 animals. However, the Ottoman Army needed new officers, animals and armaments to equip these units. Therefore, they had to postpone the implementation until 8 January 1911.¹⁸²

Third, the dramatic change took place at the divisional level. With the help of Colman von der Goltz, the Ottoman Army decided to abandon brigade headquarters from the original division structure. They also agreed to convert the current square structure that included two brigades and two regiments into a triangle structure consisting of just three regiments. They also add an artillery regiment consisting of three battalions to this new triangle-shaped division for fire support. Due to this radical change, the number of

¹⁷⁹ Akmeşe, *The Birth of Modern Turkey*, 110.

¹⁸⁰ Hülya Toker, “Turkish Army from the Ottoman Period until Today,” *Revue Internationale D’histoire Militaire: International Review of Military History* 87 (2007), 111.

¹⁸¹ Akmeşe, *The Birth of Modern Turkey*, 111.

¹⁸² Erickson, *Defeat in Detail*, 27

infantry battalions decreased from 16 to 9. Moreover, they also included a typical rifle battalion that was based on the Jager battalions in the German Army and a musical band for morale. This new Turkish-style division structure introduced a new solution for the tactical problems in trench warfare. Germany was the first country that adopted this Turkish structure to its own army in 1915. Every combat army in Europe adopted this model by 1918. This basic Turkish division organization is still very important in the current structure of modern armies in the world. In addition to these changes, they also increased Redif formations to gain more combat effectiveness. They also reorganized their structure to make them compatible with each other.¹⁸³ At the end of this reorganization process, the Ottoman military doctrine completely resembled the German military doctrine. Edward Erickson has acknowledged the German effect in this period, noting in his book *Defeat in Detail* that “every plan, every march table, every logistics planning matrix, every tactical template was based on a German organizational model that was now obsolete.”¹⁸⁴

K. CONCLUSION

The Ottoman Empire tried to modernize, focusing especially on its army after the periods of Sultan III and Mahmud II. However, these initiatives did not have a long-lasting effect on the Ottoman Army. After the Ottoman Empire lost the war against Russia in 1877–78, it became apparent that there was an immediate need for the modernization of the Ottoman Army. Therefore, the best choice at that time was the GMC that arrived in 1882. Due to Abdulhamid II’s paranoia of dethronement, he did not let the army use European weapons, which ordered be put in depots, and forbade all military exercises with live fire. Therefore, the Ottoman Empire was not able to improve itself radically until his dethronement.¹⁸⁵

The Japanese success over Russia proved that a non-European country could defeat one of the Great Powers in the world by adopting European military reforms

¹⁸³ Edward J. Erickson, *Ottoman Army Effectiveness in World War I: A Comparative Study* (New York: Taylor & Francis Group, 2007), 178–179.

¹⁸⁴ Erickson, *Defeat in Detail*, 32.

¹⁸⁵ UYAR and VAROGLU, “The Evolution of Turkish Military Academy Curricula,” 187–191.

without losing its traditional values. The Ottoman Empire started searching for the reasons for this success. They started publishing many books and articles on this subject. There were some similarities between the Japanese and Ottoman Army such as the GMC, innate martial abilities and traditional patriotic values for defense of the fatherland; the Confucian ideology and Bushido tradition; the Islamic Jihad and Gaza. These common values gave an impetus for the Ottoman Empire to carry out modernization activities without any doubt.¹⁸⁶

The 1908 Revolution and 31 March Incident were turning points for the Ottoman Army. After Abdulhamid II lost his power, the Minister of War, Mahmud Şevket Pasha, and the Chief of Staff directly started the reforms for the reorganization. They also called Goltz at the Sultan's official invitation. First, they were interested in the politicization problem of the Ottoman Army. Since Alaylı officers showed resistance to modernization and participated in the 31 March Incident, they both agreed to eliminate these officers from the Army. The Supreme Military Council started establishing new laws for age limits, the purge of military ranks, the establishment of Commissions of Inspection, and the Law for the Payment of Pensions to Retired Officers. As a result of these laws, nearly 7,500 Alaylı officers were forced to retire.¹⁸⁷ Second, since the Ottoman Empire was not able to use the full manpower of its population, they worked on a universal conscription system. Therefore, "The Law for Abolishment of Non-Muslims' Exemption from Military Service" was passed in July 1909. However, non-Muslims tried to leave the country, obtain a foreign passport or pay the cash payment-in-lieu for their exemptions. Consequently, the Ottoman Army again depended on the Muslim peasants.¹⁸⁸ Third, reforms concentrated on the Ottoman General Staff and its staff officers. The Ottoman General Staff was reorganized under four divisions: operations, intelligence, army organization and mapping; the new organization was based on the German model.¹⁸⁹ Fourth, reforms also dealt with military education for officers and training for conscripts.

¹⁸⁶ Akmeşe, *The Birth of Modern Turkey*, 72–73.

¹⁸⁷ Erickson, *Defeat in Detail*, 23–24.

¹⁸⁸ Erik Jan Zürcher, "The Ottoman Conscription System," 447.

¹⁸⁹ Erickson, *Defeat in Detail*, 55.

To solve these problems, Ahmet İzzet Pasha started a revolution by setting up a new General-Inspectorate of Education and Training to centralize all training and education. Then, a separate Staff College was founded and put under the control of the General Staff in August 1909.¹⁹⁰ The Ottoman Army finally started carrying out live exercises with European weapons.¹⁹¹ They also placed importance on the training of reserve officers and passed “The Law for Reserve Officers” on 19 April 1910.¹⁹² Fifth, reforms focused on the war planning and maneuvers. The Ottoman General Staff finished 12 war plans by 1912.¹⁹³ They also planned to carry out live exercises at different levels: army corps and divisions. They held two major exercises in 1909 and 1910, but they had to cancel the next exercise due to funding constraints and the Italian war.¹⁹⁴

Moreover, Ahmet İzzet Pasha and the Ottoman General Staff began to work on the reorganization of the Ottoman Army. At first, they established the Supreme Military Court under War Ministry to coordinate these issues at first hand instead of Sultan’s personal military staff. Goltz became the vice president of this Council. The Military Council published “The Law for the Reorganization of the Ottoman Army” on 9 July 1910. First, they had four Nizamiye Army Inspectorates and six Redif Army Inspectorates instead of the seven former armies. There was an independent army corps in Yemen and three independent divisions in Asir, Tripolitania and the Hijaz. They also removed the cavalry and artillery divisions and distributed them to the new army corps.¹⁹⁵ Second, the Ottoman Army had a new type of European army corps structure with new changes. They based their corps model on three divisions instead of two divisions.¹⁹⁶ Third, they also agreed to convert the current square structure that included two brigades and two regiments into a triangle structure consisting of just three regiments. They also added an artillery regiment consisting of three battalions to this new

¹⁹⁰ Akmeşe, *The Birth of Modern Turkey*, 118.

¹⁹¹ UYAR and VAROGLU, “The Evolution of Turkish Military Academy Curricula,” 187–191.

¹⁹² Akmeşe, *The Birth of Modern Turkey*, 119.

¹⁹³ Edward J. Erickson, *Defeat in Detail*, 62.

¹⁹⁴ Akmeşe, *The Birth of Modern Turkey*, 119–120.

¹⁹⁵ Akmeşe, *The Birth of Modern Turkey*, 111.

¹⁹⁶ Erickson, *Defeat in Detail*, 27

triangle-shaped division for fire support. This new Turkish model for division structure would be the great solution to trench warfare.¹⁹⁷

The changes in the different areas of the Ottoman Army were notable with the guidance of the GMC. This new organization with full support of officers, conscripts, ammunition and weapons would be put into practice by 1917. Goltz emphasized the need for more time and sufficient sources, noting:

The entire reorganization is extremely pliable and expansive, though a greater part of the divisions are not fully organized as yet, but for the present consist only of control cadres for the prospective complete battalions. It is a great burden for the Ministry of War, as all organizations beyond a battalion must be newly constituted. It will not be easy to find the uncommonly large number of higher leaders who are in position to properly handle the divisions and army corps. When, however, the reorganization be complete it will form an exceptionally large framework for a much greater army on a war footing. The idea to bring in all available forces irrespective of their condition and nationality forms the basis of the entire work.¹⁹⁸

Generally speaking, the Italian War in 1911 and Balkan Wars in 1912–13 would prevent the success of these initiatives, leaving the reorganization of the Ottoman Army unfinished. These deficiencies would lead to disaster for the Ottoman Army during the Balkan Wars. Consequently, there was still a need for reform for the survival of the Empire. The new Minister of War, Enver Pasha, would be one of the most important figures in the modernization and reorganization process of the Ottoman Army until the outbreak of the World War I.

¹⁹⁷ Erickson, *Ottoman Army Effectiveness in World War I*, 178–179.

¹⁹⁸ Goltz, “The Army of Rejuvenated Turkey,” 9.

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IV. THE EFFECT OF BALKAN WARS IN THE REORGANIZATION OF THE OTTOMAN ARMY

A. INTRODUCTION

The results of the Balkan Wars produced more shockwaves in comparison to the results of Ottoman-Russian War (1877–78) not only within the military, but also in society.¹⁹⁹ The support of society was absent during the reorganization process of the Ottoman Army in the last decade of the nineteenth century. The emotional climate of refugees and wounded soldiers in the provinces after the Balkan Wars aroused the hatred and revenge that triggered the people's attention to this process with national awakening movements. It was a collective notion that the modernization and mobilization of the army and society became a distinctive national objective. Since the Ottoman society characterized this movement as being a final, life or death struggle, it supported the reforms without any hesitation.²⁰⁰

The Ottoman military officials and GMC played active roles in the rebirth of the Ottoman Army in the context of military renaissance from the ashes of the disastrous Balkan Wars to achieving modern combat effectiveness with the support of society. In 1913, the Ottoman Empire asked Germany to expand the number of members of the commission. The new commission, established under the command of Liman von der Sanders, focused on the training, military education, inspection and reorganization of General Staff. The number increased nearly to 70 in 1914.²⁰¹

Furthermore, Ahmed İzzet Pasha and Enver Pasha became very effective in carrying out huge changes within a limited period time before World War I. Ahmed İzzet Pasha focused on the reorganization of the Ottoman Army in 1913 and abolished the Redif forces. His successor, Enver Pasha, carried out radical changes to solve the

¹⁹⁹ A.L. Macfie, *The End of the Ottoman Empire, 1908–1923* (New York: Addison Wesley Longman Limited, 1998), 76.

²⁰⁰ Mustafa Aksakal, *The Ottoman Road to War in 1914: The Ottoman Empire and the First World War I* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2008), 20–22.

²⁰¹ Zeynep Güler, *Osmanlı Ordusunun Modernleşmesinde Von Der Goltz Paşa'nın Rolü* (Mersin: Sosyal Bilimler Enstitüsü, 2007), 206.

problems of the Balkan Wars. His tasks were rejuvenating the Ottoman Army by removing 1,300 older officers, updating war plans, reopening the Military Academy, executing maneuvers and establishing training sites. These improvements showed credible evidence of how the Ottoman Army became a learning organization and rapidly dealt with the deficiencies of the army.²⁰² Edward J. Erickson also emphasized this undertaking in the Ottoman Army as a response to the defeat of the Balkan Wars, noting:

In actuality, this period was marked by a frenzy of military activity on the part of the Turks aimed at restructuring their army and increasing its combat effectiveness in light of the lessons learned from the Balkan Wars. Although the Europeans were aware of the huge reorganization of the Ottoman Army, they remained largely unaware of the many smaller initiatives in the development of improved training, combined arms tactics, dynamic leadership, staff work, and the standardization of tactical operating procedures. Moreover, the West failed to recognize the effect that such endeavors would have on the Ottoman Army.²⁰³

B. THE BALKAN WARS, 1912–13

The Balkan Wars had a critical impact on Ottoman military officials and society in recognizing the need for rapid military developments and the struggle for existence of the Ottoman Empire. It became obvious that the Empire could easily collapse unless necessary changes were carried out as soon as possible. Balkan countries such as Bulgaria, Serbia, Montenegro and Greece set out in a secret alliance against the Ottoman Empire to take advantage of its vulnerability due to the Tripolitania War and a revolt in Yemen in 1911.²⁰⁴ The Balkan states declared their mobilization on 30 September 1912, and the Ottoman Empire did the same on 1 October to prepare itself for impending war.²⁰⁵ The four states announced their terms to the Ottoman Empire prior to the Balkan Wars. First, they asked for autonomy under Belgian and Swiss governors. Second,

²⁰² Edward J. Erickson, *Ottoman Army Effectiveness in World War I: A Comparative Study* (New York: Routledge, 2007), 9–12.

²⁰³ Erickson, *Ottoman Army Effectiveness in World War I*, 8.

²⁰⁴ Gül Tokay, “The Origins of the Balkan Wars: A Reinterpretation,” *War and Nationalism: The Balkan Wars, 1912–1913, and Their Sociopolitical Implications* (Salt Lake City: University of Utah Press, 2013), 182.

²⁰⁵ Ernst Christian Helmrich, *The Diplomacy of the Balkan Wars, 1912–1913* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1938), 105–114.

Christian people would perform their military service in these provinces and under the command of Christian officers. Third, they wanted the Ottoman Empire to initiate necessary reforms within six months and stop the mobilization unilaterally. Eventually, the Ottoman Empire did not accept these terms, and the Balkan states declared war on the Ottomans on 17 October 1912.²⁰⁶

The Ottoman Empire was caught unprepared for the war, but the Balkan states had been modernizing their armies with the assistance of European countries in terms of manpower and weapons for at least 25 years. In his article “Armies Defeated before They Took the Field: The Ottoman Mobilization of October 1912,” Feroze Yasamee offered a summary of mistakes that the Ottoman Army made prior to the Balkan Wars:

The officers of the Ottoman general staff were familiar with Helmut von Moltke’s warning that errors in an army’s initial deployment could rarely be put right in the subsequent of campaign. In the event, the Ottoman mobilization and deployment of October 1912 proved to be a catalogue of errors, amounting to self-inflicted defeat before a shot had been fired, except against Montenegro. Poor planning was partly to blame, as were unlucky circumstances and various inefficiencies; but so was a hastily improvised strategy, which aggravated the effects of all these failings and placed the Ottoman army in a false position from the start.²⁰⁷

Furthermore, the declaration of war by the Balkan states aroused a deep hatred and anger towards these countries. There were some journals and newspapers that were published in the provinces of the Ottoman Empire, especially in İzmir and İstanbul, in favor of war against the Balkan states.²⁰⁸ Moreover, the Union and Progress Cabinet organized several demonstrations to gain support for this policy on the Balkan issue. Two major meetings that consisted of mostly university students took place in İstanbul on 4 and 7 October 1912. The most famous motto during these events was “Assault Filibe and

²⁰⁶ Sina Akşin, *Turkey From Empire to Revolutionary Republic: The Emergence of the Turkish Nation from 1789 to Present* (New York: New York University Press, 2007), 74–75.

²⁰⁷ Feroze Yasamee, “Armies Defeated before They Took the Field: The Ottoman Mobilization of October 1912,” *War and Nationalism: The Balkan Wars, 1912–1913, and Their Sociopolitical Implications* (Salt Lake City: University of Utah Press, 2013), 251.

²⁰⁸ Zeki Arıkan, “Balkan Savaşı ve Kamuoyu,” *4’üncü Askeri Tarih Semineri Bildirileri* (Ankara: Genelkurmay Basımevi, 1989), 168–171.

Attack Sofia.”²⁰⁹ However, the Ottoman Empire mobilized only 290,000 soldiers while the Balkan states had nearly 474,000 soldiers. Moreover, the Ottoman Army in the Balkans was divided into fronts: Eastern Theater (115,000 men) and Western Theater (175,000).²¹⁰

In the First Balkan War, the war plan of the Ottoman Empire was based on offense rather than defense. It was totally contrary to the plans that were revised by Goltz before 1912. The Commander of the Ottoman troops in the Balkans, Abdullah Pasha, warned the Cabinet that there were no adequate weapons, uniforms, ammunition or supplies. He mentioned that it would be too difficult for them to stop the Balkan states under these circumstances. On the other hand, the War Minister, Nazım Pasha, trusted the Ottoman Army and proclaimed that “less than a week after the proclamation of war the Ottoman flag will be seen Filibe and Sofia.”²¹¹ However, the result was not what Nazım Pasha predicted. Apart from some minor success at Scutari and Janina, the Ottoman troops were defeated by Serbia at Kosovo and Kumanova and by Bulgaria at Kırklareli and Lüleburgaz. The Bulgarian army was able to come to the Çatalca line within two weeks. Furthermore, it is notable that the Ottoman Army used the doctrine of the operational encirclement battle of annihilation against Bulgaria and Serbia. This doctrine, including decisive defeat of the enemy, was a reflection of the German style. However, these initiatives were in vain due to lack of manpower in divisions, artillery support, bad weather conditions and incompetent reserve forces.²¹²

Consequently, the Ottoman Empire asked Bulgaria for a ceasefire agreement on 12 November 1912. Since both sides were exhausted due to heavy losses, they all accepted the peace conference in London. As a result of this conference, the London treaty was signed. According to this truce, the Midye-Enez line was accepted as the new

²⁰⁹ Yücel Aktar, “1912 Yılı Harp Mitingleri ve Balkan Harbi’ne Etkileri,” *4’üncü Askeri Tarih Semineri Bildirileri* (Ankara: Genelkurmay Basımevi, 1989), 115–121.

²¹⁰ Kemal Soyupak and Hüseyin Kabasakal, “The Turkish Army in the First Balkan War,” *East Central European Society and the Balkan Wars* (1987): 159.

²¹¹ Handan Nezir Akmeşe, *The Birth of Modern Turkey: The Ottoman Military and the March to World War I* (New York: I.B.Tauris & Co.Ltd., 2005), 126.

²¹² Edward J. Erickson, “From Kirkilisse to the Great Offensive Turkish Operational Encirclement Planning, 1912–1922” *Middle Eastern Studies* 40, no. 1 (2004): 45–64.

borderline between the Ottoman Empire and the Balkan states. There was only a 27,000 km² territory left in Europe for the Ottoman Empire.²¹³

After the First Balkan War, some members of the Union and Progress were not satisfied with the decision of Cabinet to concede Adrianpole (Edirne) to Bulgaria. Therefore, the Young Turks staged a coup d'état to change the Cabinet members. Enver Pasha was one of the key figures in this activity, and he asked Kamil Pasha to resign from his post. At that time, the War Minister was killed by Yakup Cemil. Ultimately, this coup made new changes in the Cabinet and Mahmud Şevket Pasha became the Grand Vizier and War Minister. At that time, Balkan states had a dispute over the partition of Ottoman territory, especially Macedonia. Among these countries, Bulgaria became more powerful and another alliance was formed against Bulgaria. The Bulgarian attack on Greece and Serbia initiated the Second Balkan War. To take advantage of this war, the Ottoman troops advanced to retrieve Edirne.²¹⁴

Enver Pasha was the commander of the military unit that captured Edirne again. At the end of the second war, Bulgaria lost at all fronts. Finally, Bulgaria signed a treaty with the Ottoman Empire and agreed to give Dimetoka and Edirne back. Enver Pasha became very famous in the Second Balkan Wars, and this victory presented a good opportunity for his promotion not only in the military, but also in politics. He expressed his feelings about Edirne by saying, "I am as happy as a child, not because the entire Islamic world admires me, but because I am pleased with myself. I was the only person who could enter Edirne in a single night."²¹⁵ Although the Ottoman army managed to seize Edirne, the Empire faced with some problems. In his article "Warfare and Nationalism: The Balkan Wars as a Catalyst for Homogenization," M. Hakan Yavuz emphasized that the heavy casualties of the Balkan Wars created territory and population change in the Empire (see Table 15) and stressed the loss of Balkan cities, noting:

²¹³ Mustafa Gencer, *Jöntürk Modernizmi ve "Alman Ruhu,"* (İstanbul: İletişim Yayınları, 2003, 56–61.

²¹⁴ Richard C. Hall, *The Balkan Wars, 1912–1913: Prelude to the First World War* (London: Routledge, 2000), 77–79.

²¹⁵ Charles D. Haley, "The Desperate Ottoman: Enver Paşa and the German Empire-I," *Middle Eastern Studies* 30, no. 1 (1994): 22.

The Ottoman state lost most of its major remaining Balkan urban centers, such as Salonika (Thessaloniki), Manastır, Priştine/Pristina, and Üsküp/Skopje. The loss of Salonika, which was the center of Young Turk movement, proved to be the most painful. Moreover, Salonika was the most critical commercial and transportation hub for the rest of Balkans. Its port was significant for reaching the hinterland of southern Europe. After all its glories, and the legacy left in term of architecture, music, food, thought, and politics, the Ottoman presence had definitely perished in the Balkans.²¹⁶

Table 15. Before and After the Balkan Wars: Territory and Population Change.²¹⁷

COUNTRIES	TERRITORY		POPULATION	
	BEFORE	AFTER	BEFORE	AFTER
BULGARIA	33,647	43,3310	4,337,516	4,476,006
GREECE	25,014	41,933	2,666,000	4,363,000
SERBIA	18,650	33,891	2,911,701	4,527,992
MONTENEGRO	3,474	5,603	250,000	500,000
TURKEY IN EUROPE	65,350	10,882	6,130,200	1,891,000

During the Balkan Wars, there were 24 German officers in the Ottoman Army. At first, Germany wanted its officers to get combat experience since they were not able to get any for 41 years. However, the participation of German officers in the Balkan Wars would affect German neutrality. Eventually, they solved this problem by denationalizing six volunteer German officers and getting them Ottoman citizenship.²¹⁸ These six German officers were not very effective in either one of the Balkan Wars. Major von Lossow and Captain Endres criticized the Ottoman performance during the war. They mentioned that the resurrection of the Ottoman Army would need more time.²¹⁹

²¹⁶ M. Hakan Yavuz, “Warfare and Nationalism: The Balkan Wars as a Catalyst for Homogenization” *War and Nationalism: The Balkan Wars, 1912–1913, and Their Sociopolitical Implications* (Salt Lake City: University of Utah Press, 2013), 56.

²¹⁷ Ibid., 58.

²¹⁸ Fahri Çeliker, “Osmanlı İmparatorluğundaki Alman Askeri Heyetlerinin Balkan Harbi ve Birinci Dünya Harbi’ndeki Tutum ve Etkileri,” *4’üncü Askeri Tarih Semineri Bildirileri* (Ankara: Genelkurmay Basımevi, 1989): 138.

²¹⁹ Ulrich Trumpener, “German Military Involvement in the First Balkan War,” *East Central European Society and Balkan Wars* (1987): 355–357.

C. THE MAJOR REASONS FOR THE DEFEAT IN THE BALKAN WARS

After their defeat in the Balkan Wars, the Ottoman and German officers in the Ottoman Army started evaluating the reasons that caused the Ottoman Empire to lose the war. One of the Ottoman officers, Major Asım Gündüz, published his book, *Why Were We Defeated in the Balkan Wars*, to point out the sources for the defeat, including inadequate military preparations prior to the war, mistakes in tactical warfare, late mobilization of the Ottoman troops to fill the cadres and lack of morale. He also emphasized the improper use of artillery and infantry forces, lack of support between active and reserve units and the effect of untrained soldiers and deficient officers during the war.²²⁰

In the winter of 1913, Staff Major Mehmet Nuri Conker lectured in a 1st Infantry Division training conference called “Officer and Commander.” In that lecture, he asserted similar problems of the Ottoman Army in Balkan Wars as those Asım Gündüz mentioned in his book. Nuri Conker also stressed the important characteristics of a commander, the necessity of an offensive spirit and initiative in combat. In May 1914, Staff Lieutenant Colonel Mustafa Kemal wrote a book, *Officer and Commander: A Friend’s Private View*, as a response to Nuri Conker’s lecture. In the introduction to his book, Mustafa Kemal included the report that he gave to his Corps commander on 30 June 1911 about the incompetence of division and regiment commanders in military units. He believed that these inept leaders would not be able to command their troops in the battlefield. He emphasized the role of an educated, skillful, devoted and honorable officer. Kemal added that the commander should gain his subordinates’ trust and support his soldiers in any case. In the last part of the book, he listed two major components of war: offensive spirit and initiative to support Conker’s argument. Both Mustafa Kemal and Nuri Conker commented on the issues that the Ottoman Army lacked during the course of the Balkan Wars.²²¹ In addition to Asım Gündüz, Nuri Conker and Mustafa Kemal, the Commander of Vardar Army Corps General Zeki Pasha also emphasized the indifference and lack of devotion among the soldiers and noted that “despite the very limited number of our losses and casualties, our defeat mainly resulted from the officers remaining indifferent to their

²²⁰ Erickson, *Ottoman Army Effectiveness in World War I*, 8.

²²¹ Mustafa Kemal, *Zabit ve Kumandan ile Hasbihal* (Ankara: Kültür Yayınlar, 1962), 3–30.

duties ... and particularly from the ineffectiveness of decisions and influence in the chain of command, and instead of devotion to duty, occupying themselves with other things than military.”²²²

In addition to Ottoman officers, German officers also became very interested in searching for the reasons that led this huge disaster. Field Marshall Von der Goltz was one of the key German officers who examined the Ottoman ineffectiveness during the war. He also emphasized efforts for military reforms since 1908 and the unfinished reorganization prior to the Balkan Wars and noted his thoughts in an article in *The Fortnightly Review*:

A long period of tranquility would have been necessary in order to reap the full advantages of the system. Instead, however, there was a succession of insurrections in various parts of the extensive Empire, and these again and again interrupted training. Consequent upon the triennial period of active service which obtains in the Ottoman Army, the latest reserve levy, liable to serve with the colors in the event of war, dated from the reign of Abdulhamid—that is to say, it was for the most part untrained. Owing to the haste with which mobilization had necessarily to be carried out, it was unavoidable that troops should be utilized merely to fill gaps and altogether irrespective of the circumstance of whether or not they had been properly trained. Accordingly, the army which we have seen vanquished by the Allies was, in reality, an army of recruits, and deficient, moreover, in officers. An army of this kind, which is to be compared to a hastily-called-up militia, may be, if properly prepared for the aim in view, a force effective for defense. That it was unequal to the task of taking the offensive against a numerically superior army which had enjoyed twenty-seven years’ preparation for war cannot be denied. And we should not forget that it was required to take the field at an unfavorable season of the year, and with the drawbacks of bad roads and insufficient commissariat and ammunition. To such a venture there could be no other end than defeat. It was altogether too premature to test the strength of the new Turkish Army in actual warfare.²²³

İmhof Pasha who dealt with the development of Ottoman artillery also focused on the factors that affected the Ottoman Army. He underlined the effect of political officers, lack of experienced leaders, improper system for delivering orders from a higher to lower

²²² Akmeşe, *The Birth of Modern Turkey*, 130.

²²³ Imhof Pasa, “A German View of the Turkish Defeat,” *The Fortnightly Review* 93 (1913): 976–7.

levels and inadequate intelligence. He also pointed out the supply problems. First, he mentioned scarce food and water that led to poor morale among soldiers. Second, he discussed insufficient ammunition for the artillery units and mentioned that some reserve units came to the battlefield without any guns. Third, he stressed that there was a great shortage of hospital medicine supplies. There was no way to get the wounded soldiers on the battlefield.²²⁴ Besides, he noted in an article in *The Fortnightly Review*:

I would, therefore, simply set forth the following points: The reserve troops were not acquainted with the handling of their weapons; the artillery did not know how to use their guns; the Redifs were short of officers; over a quarter of the Nizam troops consisted of untrained men; the premature disbandment of the old Alajlis (the so-called troopers) was a mistake; while the firing of the Anatolian troops, who adhered to the old system, was ineffective. There was a great shortage of officers (altogether there were, roughly, no less than 8,000 officers' post unfilled); the placing of men in position, and their ability when in position, were defective; and finally, the influence of foreign instructors, both in the Army and the Navy, was suppressed.²²⁵

Another German instructor, Major Otto von Lossow, who served as a staff officer in Abdullah Pasha's headquarter during the Balkan Wars similarly touched upon inadequate training of reserve forces and noted that "the Turkish army was not an army, but a leaderless, undisciplined, inexperienced, unfed, unorganized great human crowd, which—without any influence from the enemy—was about to fall apart itself. The enemy added the last drop which caused the vessel to overflow."²²⁶ The German officer, Lt.Col. Viet, who served in Salih Pasha's Cavalry Division, mentioned the bad weather conditions that affected the transportation of Ottoman soldier and supply units.²²⁷

Mesut Uyar tried to evaluate the major deficiencies of the Ottoman Army in his article, "The Ottoman Military Renaissance: Confronting the Balkan Defeats." He mentioned the politicization of the army, problems in the armament, insufficient supplies and lack of absolute obedience. He also stressed that the Ottoman Army had to engage in

²²⁴ Imhof Pasa, "A German View of the Turkish Defeat," 979–984.

²²⁵ Imhof Pasa, "A German View of the Turkish Defeat," 980.

²²⁶ Akmeşe, *The Birth of Modern Turkey*, 132.

²²⁷ Akmeşe, *The Birth of Modern Turkey*, 130.

this war with its unfinished reorganization process of the military units. Some of the officers were just appointed to their units before the outbreak of war.²²⁸

Rıfat Uçarol mentions two critical mistakes of the Ottoman Army prior to the Balkan Wars in his article “The Problems of Demobilization and Declaration of Mobilization prior to Balkan Wars.” First, the Sait Pasha government thought that there was no need to have an enormous number of soldiers for the Ottoman Army; therefore, the Cabinet ordered a decrease in the size of Nizamiye battalions to 240–280 soldiers, and demobilized the soldiers who enlisted in 1908 and had finished three-year-long military service on 29 July 1912. Moreover, this Cabinet also decided to disband supply soldiers and allowed the soldiers of Redif units in Uşak, İzmir, Aydın, Denizli and Konya to go to their hometown for harvest. The number of demobilized Redif units and supply soldiers was 75,000, which was equivalent to one third of the Ottoman manpower during peacetime.²²⁹

At that time, Balkan states were getting ready for a war against the Ottoman Empire. Nevertheless, the fact that the Ottoman Empire even allowed Serbia to use its territory for the transfer of weapons that would be used in Balkan Wars gave clear evidence of inadequate intelligence about the preparation process of the Balkan states. Besides, the Ottoman General Staff submitted a report about the current condition of the Ottoman Army on 29 September 1912 and emphasized the fatigue of soldiers and at least a five-year long term for rearmament of the army in terms of manpower and weapons. Due to lack of information about upcoming war, the Cabinet declared the half mobilization on 22 September and total mobilization on 1 October 1912—just eight days before the outbreak of Balkan Wars. Rıfat Uçarol noted that late mobilization and demobilization of 75,000 supply and Redif soldiers created huge problems during the course of the Balkan Wars in terms of manpower.²³⁰

²²⁸ Mesut Uyar, “Osmanlı Askeri Rönesansı: Balkan Bozgunu ile Yüzleşmek,” *Türkiye Günlüğü*, Sayı 110 (2012): 65–74.

²²⁹ Rıfat UÇAROL, “Balkan Savaşı Öncesinde Terhis Olayı ve Seferberlik İlanı Sorunu,” *4’üncü Askeri Tarih Semineri Bildirileri* (Ankara: Genelkurmay Basımevi, 1989): 264–271.

²³⁰ UÇAROL, “Balkan Savaşı Öncesinde Terhis Olayı ve Seferberlik İlanı Sorunu,” 271–277.

Furthermore, Handan Nezir Akmeşe has highlighted two main factors that caused this setback for the Ottoman Army. First, she emphasizes the ongoing conflict between Alaylı and Mektepli officers. The Ottoman soldiers did not want to serve under the command of Mektepli officers since they were familiar with Alaylı officers. This unfamiliarity created a significant gap with mutual distrust. Therefore, some Redif units ran away from their military units during the campaign. Second, Nezir Akmeşe mentions that the recruitment of non-Muslim soldiers into the Ottoman Army began to destroy the unity of the troops. Most non-Muslims deserted to enemy lines.²³¹

In addition to these historians, Oya Dağlar Macar points out the effect of medical epidemics in the Balkan Wars in her article “Epidemic Diseases on the Thracian Front of the Ottoman Empire during the Balkan Wars.” She mentions these diseases became widespread and affected not only the Ottoman Empire, but also Balkan states during the wars. Among these diseases, cholera was the worst one for the Ottoman soldiers. Moreover, she stresses the real impact of these diseases, noting:

It would be wrong to evaluate the losses merely as military: many civilians from both Ottoman Thrace and Bulgaria died because of cholera, dysentery, typhoid fever, typhus, smallpox, and intestinal diseases during the war. Even though the real figures are not known, it is estimated that the total loss of the Ottoman population during this war was approximately 100,000–120,000. It is claimed that 50,000 of these died due to their wounds, while 75,000 died because of disease. The extreme loss removed one of the last remaining supporters of the Ottoman Empire and accelerated the process of disintegration.²³²

D. THE INTELLECTUAL AND EMOTIONAL CLIMATE IN THE OTTOMAN EMPIRE

As mentioned earlier, the tremendous losses suffered in the Balkan Wars affected Ottoman society as well as the military. The defeat meant the loss of 80 percent of the European territory that had been part of the Ottoman Empire, home to a population of

²³¹ Akmeşe, *The Birth of Modern Turkey*, 132.

²³² Oya Dağlar Macar, “Epidemic Diseases on the Thracian Front of the Ottoman Empire during the Balkan Wars,” *War and Nationalism: The Balkan Wars, 1912–1913, and Their Sociopolitical Implications* (Salt Lake City: University of Utah Press, 2013), 294.

over 4 million. It accounted for 16 percent of the Empire at that time.²³³ To provide a picture of İstanbul after the Balkan Wars, Glen W. Swanson cites the British ambassador's report in his article "A Note on the Socio-Economic Structure and Its Response to the Balkan War of 1912." Swanson notes:

Add to this the terror inspired by the dread of cholera and other epidemic diseases, the large influx of refugee peasants and the enormous numbers of sick and wounded soldiers that are constantly being brought into the city and the wonder is that Pera [Beyoğlu, a district in İstanbul] especially with its constitutional liability to panic, still goes about its ordinary affairs. At one moment I think there can be little doubt that the Christian population secretly looked forward to the coming of the Bulgars, but at present I believe that both Christians and Moslems will be very much relieved if both armies can be kept outside.²³⁴

The results of this defeat made it clear that the Ottoman Empire should make modern and radical changes in the areas of modern state and society: military, financial, industrial strength, administrative efficiency and also a newly educated generation whose desire to defend the state with a vigorous feeling of patriotism. People started talking about its current situation in the street, press, and chamber. The modernization and mobilization of the Ottoman Army would appear as the most important initiative among the areas of improvements. Moreover, military and political leaders characterized this national awakening movement as engaged in a final, life or death struggle. By August 1914, the public was acquainted with the reforms and values that their political and military leaders addressed for the sake of the restoration of the Ottoman Empire. It was a collective notion among the press, publications and public that if the Ottoman Empire was to live longer, it should survive in an honorable manner. Therefore, the public was ready to internalize this sense of patriotism and devote themselves to the protection of the Ottoman Empire.²³⁵

²³³ Aksakal, *The Ottoman Road to War in 1914*, 22.

²³⁴ Glen W. Swanson, "A Note on the Socio-Economic Structure and Its Response to the Balkan War of 1912," *Middle Eastern Studies* 14, no. 1 (1978): 121.

²³⁵ Aksakal, *The Ottoman Road to War in 1914*, 20–24.

There were many examples of the national awakening movement in demonstrations and publications of the day. *The Great Yearning* was one of the most important journals that elucidated the emotional and intellectual environment shaped during and after the Balkan Wars. It was first published in March 1913 in İstanbul. The journal stated that its aim was to encourage the full awareness of the national consciousness. By the means of the actions for the national awakening movement, the political and military leaders found a ready audience for the modernization and mobilization of the Ottomans that was much different from the period of Sultan III, Mahmud II and Abdulhamid II.²³⁶

Furthermore, there were also semi-official aid societies such as the Ottoman Red Crescent Society, the Ottoman Navy League and the Committee of National Defense. These societies helped the government expand its political influence over society to promote patriotism and public involvement in benevolent activities. These actions led to the mobilization of society towards the patriotic and militaristic lines for the reconstruction of the Ottoman army.²³⁷

E. THE REORGANIZATION OF THE OTTOMAN ARMY, 1913–14

As a result of the Balkan Wars, the Ottoman Army lost 36 active and reserve infantry divisions and six army corps headquarters. In total, the army lost not only 250,000 men, but also equipment and supplies. Moreover, the Ottoman Empire lost its critical provinces such as Albania, Macedonia, Kosova and Epirus. Ahmet İzzet Pasha and Enver Pasha were two important figures in the subsequent reorganization initiatives (see Table 16).

²³⁶ Aksakal, *The Ottoman Road to War in 1914*, 36–40.

²³⁷ Nadir Özbek, “Defining the Public Sphere during the late Ottoman Empire: War, Mass Mobilization and the Young Turk Regime (1908–18),” *Middle Eastern Studies* 43, No.5 (September 2007): 795–809.

Table 16. Ottoman Army Initiatives, 1913–14.²³⁸

DATE	INITIATIVE
Autumn 1913	Publication of “Why Were We Defeated in the Balkan Wars?” and “Officer and Commander: A Friend’s Private View”
11 December 1913	Reorganization of the Ottoman Army: Eliminated reserve divisions, realigned army areas, and created cadre divisions
3 January 1914	Involuntary retirement of 1,300 elderly or incompetent officers; accelerated promotion of young combat officers.
14 March 1914	General Orders No.1: detailed standardized training guidance that stressed leadership, fire power, and combined arms.
7 April 1914	100% revision of war plans (based on the new organization)
14 April 1914	Establishment of centralized training sites and schools.
21 April 1914	General Orders No.7: Ottoman War Academy reopened
24 May 1914	General Orders No.9: standardization of reports and war diaries
June 1914	Establishment of pure triangular divisions: elimination of the rifle battalions.

At first, Ahmed İzzet Pasha recognized the need for the reorganization of the army immediately and started carrying out a distinctive reestablishment of the Ottoman Army named the New Organization of Regular Forces in Army and Independent Corps and Divisional Areas (Yeni Teşkilat-i Askeriye Nizamnamesine Göre Ordu, Bağımsız Kolordu ve Tümen Bölgeleriye) on 11 December 1913. The general structure of the Ottoman Army was divided into three parts: an active force (Nizamiye), a reserve force (İhtiyat), and a territorial force (Muhafız). Ahmet İzzet Pasha abolished the reserve system named Redif owing to its insufficient and unsatisfactory performance during the Balkan Wars.²³⁹ The general organization of the Ottoman Army consisted of twelve army corps, one independent army corps and two independent infantry divisions.²⁴⁰ However, the Light Cavalry Redif forces stayed intact in place of the Hamidiye Cavalry that was abolished on 17 August 1910. These units consisted of seven cavalry brigades and three independent regiments. These forces were formed into four cavalry divisions

²³⁸ Erickson, *Ottoman Army Effectiveness in World War I*, 153.

²³⁹ Erickson, *Ottoman Army Effectiveness in World War I*, 9.

²⁴⁰ Hülya Toker, “Turkish Army from the Ottoman Period until Today,” *International Review of Military History* 87 (2007): 111.

under the command of the 3rd Army after 1912.²⁴¹ Furthermore, Ahmet İzzet Pasha formed 38 active infantry divisions without any reserve units. The inspectorate system of the Ottoman Army stayed under the same conditions; however, its responsibility shifted from training and maintenance to troop training at regiment and battalion levels.²⁴²

On January 1914, the Young Turk Committee of Union and Progress replaced Ahmet İzzet Pasha with Enver Pasha. At the beginning of his administration, Enver Pasha was very interested in the reorganization and modernization in accordance with the major problems of the Ottoman Army. Before this duty, he had been assigned to Germany as a military attaché between 1909 and 1911. His post had given him a great chance to examine the German Army closely, and he had established a personal relationship with German military and civilian officials, especially the Kaiser. He sent a postcard to his sister, Hasene Hanım, in which he mentioned, “Yesterday I watched the parade of one of the German Army corps with 33,000 soldiers marching. It is so excellent that it makes one’s mouth water.”²⁴³ This postcard pointed out his strong admiration for German military might and organization.

Enver Pasha’s first action as Minister of War was to make 1,300 long-time officers retire from the army to terminate the ongoing conflict between Alaylı and Mektepli officers. He thought that they not only objected to the Cabinet, but also would try to prevent the military reforms.²⁴⁴ There were two field marshals, three lieutenant generals, 30 major generals, 95 brigadier generals, 184 colonels, 236 lieutenant colonels and majors, and 800 captains and lieutenants. In their places, the War Ministry appointed young and skilled officers.²⁴⁵

²⁴¹ Edward J. Erickson, *Order to Die: A History of the Ottoman Army in the First World War* (Connecticut: Greenwood Press, 2001), 5–6.

²⁴² Edward J. Erickson, *Defeat in Detail: The Ottoman Army in the Balkans, 1912–1913* (Connecticut: Greenwood Press, 2003): 338–339.

²⁴³ Şuhnaz Yılmaz, “An Ottoman Warrior Abroad: Enver Paşa as an Expatriate,” *Middle Eastern Studies* 35, no. 4 (1990): 43.

²⁴⁴ Erickson, *Ottoman Army Effectiveness in World War I*, 10.

²⁴⁵ Erickson, *Defeat in Detail*, 340.

Furthermore, on 14 March 1914, Enver Pasha released his General Order No. 1 consisting of two chapters: battle and general instructions. In the first chapter, Enver Pasha described the qualifications for leadership, reconnaissance, marching, attack and defense. He mentioned the importance of directing the army in the front for the officers and the reconnaissance to collect intelligence about upcoming maneuvers of enemy. He emphasized the marching order for the military units considering the structure: front, body and back. He stressed the optimal location of a commander from which he could control his units and evaluate his decision making process for counterattacks in case of any ambush. In addition to this, Enver Pasha considered the use of reserve units not only for offense, but also in defense. According to him, the commander should know where to locate and use his reserve units.²⁴⁶

In the second chapter, he gave detailed information about officers, exercise, rations, the use of cavalry and machine guns, preparations for trench warfare, conducting fire, abandoning exterior battles and also regarding medical support. He focused mainly on the roles of the officers and privates. He also mentioned the importance of the large scale training exercise for battle maneuvers under severe weather conditions.²⁴⁷

To conduct fire more efficiently, he ordered that every military unit would have two pennants to show their current position in the battlefield. He also instructed the 1st Corps to test the usage of an earthen-colored flag and two others with artillery and infantry units. The earthen-colored flag would be the signal of artillery fire for all companies entering the battlefield. They would also use red and white pennants to show artillery locations. By means of the new pennant system, the commander would be aware of the tactical deployment of his units and prevent infantry from being exposed to artillery friendly fire. In addition to his orders, Enver Pasha also instructed that military units would carry out exercises to test themselves on how to plan, organize and implement to break contact with the enemy. As a last point, he mentioned that the medical unit would be at the frontline. With General Order No.1, Enver Pasha summarized the essential and vital precautions that a commander should consider both in

²⁴⁶ Erickson, *Ottoman Army Effectiveness in World War I*, 168–169.

²⁴⁷ Erickson, *Ottoman Army Effectiveness in World War I*, 170.

exercises and on the battlefield.²⁴⁸ The Ottoman Army was also ordered to start large-scale maneuvers with heavy artillery to execute Enver Pasha's orders on the battlefield. At the end of every exercise, all military units would send an action overview report to the General Staff annually on May 1. However, World War I hindered these efforts for military exercise.²⁴⁹

Moreover, Enver Pasha started the resurrection of the military education system by establishing three training centers in Istanbul, Erzincan and Edirne. On 14 April 1914, he put these centers under the command of the 1st, 4th and 10th Corps. Enver Pasha reopened the Ottoman War Academy by releasing General Order No.7 on 21 April 1914 and put the academy under the supervision of German officer Bronsatt von Schellendorf.²⁵⁰ The Ottoman Army expanded the length of the course in the War Academy from two weeks to three months. The cadets had an opportunity to shoot rifles and pistols with real bullets. Enver Pasha also decided to eliminate rifle (Nişancı) regiments and battalions from the organization of the Ottoman Army due to incompetent performance in reconnaissance in the Balkan Wars in the summer of 1914.²⁵¹

On May 1914, the Ottoman General Staff published General Order No.9: Standardization of Reports and War Diaries under Secret Classification Level. The format was divided into seven sections: orders, reports, and operations; missions; logistics; personnel and animals; special trials and experiments; and also special instructions. It was necessary to send the completed war diaries to the Ottoman General Staff quarterly. Moreover, the format of battle and situation reports was organized in the Ottoman Army's Instructions for Field Service.²⁵²

To find solutions to the action items shown in the Asım Gündüz's book, the Ottoman General Staff started a complete revision of war plans based on the new organization under the supervision of German Colonel Fitz Bronsart von Schellendorf

²⁴⁸ Erickson, *Ottoman Army Effectiveness in World War I*, 171–172.

²⁴⁹ Erickson, *Defeat in Detail*, 342.

²⁵⁰ Erickson, *Ottoman Army Effectiveness in World War I*, 11.

²⁵¹ Erickson, *Defeat in Detail*, 340–342.

²⁵² Erickson, *Ottoman Army Effectiveness in World War I*, 10.

who became the Second Assistant Chief of the Ottoman General Staff. A single decisive war plan was approved to replace the 12 separate war plans. There was also a spare war plan for mobilization and concentration. Since the old plans showed themselves useless in the Balkan Wars, the new single war plan that was not based on a timeline marked a very radical change in the Ottoman's war planning procedures.²⁵³

In addition to these reforms, the Ottoman Empire also dealt with rearmament and filling the gap in the cadres of the Ottoman Army to reach its pre-war strength in terms of manpower and weaponry. First, the divisions of the Ottoman Army were filled with experienced veterans from the Balkan Wars. After mobilization was over, the General Staff formed the infantry regiments with artillery, cavalry, engineers, and also gendarme units. These regiments exercised the multi-echelon training as a part of a division or a corps.²⁵⁴ These new organized military units were led by brave, skillful, experienced and also combat-tested key leaders (see Table 17).

Table 17. Selected Key Officers, Ottoman 3rd Corps, 1914–15.²⁵⁵

OFFICER	3rd CORPS ASSIGNMENT	BALKAN WAR ASSIGNMENT
Lt.Col.Fahrettin	3th Corps Chief of Staff	General Staff Officer, Ottoman GS
Capt.Remzi	3th Corps Staff Officer	Chief of Staff, Edirne fortress,
Lt.Baki	Aide de Camp to Esat	General Staff Officer, West Army
Col.Halil Sami	Commander, 9th Infantry Division	Commander, 5th Rifle Regiment
Maj.Hulusi	Chief of Staff, 9th Infantry Division	Commander, Gümülcine Redif Regiment
Lt.Col. M.Şefik	Commander, 27th Infantry Regiment	Commander, Salonika Redif Division
Lt.Col.M.Kemal	Commander, 19th Infantry Regiment	Chief of Operations, Gallipoli Army
Maj.Avni	Commander, 57th Infantry Regiment	Chief of Staff, 21st Infantry Division

²⁵³ Erickson, *Ottoman Army Effectiveness in World War I*, 11.

²⁵⁴ Erickson, *Ottoman Army Effectiveness in World War I*, 157–8

²⁵⁵ Erickson, *Ottoman Army Effectiveness in World War I*, 29.

Second, the Ottoman Empire again preferred Germany for the arms sales. A German officer Major Lossow presented a report, "Thoughts on the Reform of the Ottoman Army." As a result of this report and German influence, the Ottoman Empire started purchasing new weapons and ammunition from Germany and France in 1913 to equip its army fully.²⁵⁶ The Ottoman Empire decided to purchase 376 mountain guns, fifty million bullets, two submarines, and six torpedo boats from France in February 1914. Moreover, the Empire ordered 200 field guns, 100 Maxim guns, 200,000 Mauser rifles, 150 million bullets and 1,000 Krupp naval guns of various calibers from Germany in the summer of 1914. The Krupp Company got the authorization for the reconstruction of the Dardanelles and Bosphorus.²⁵⁷

F. THE GERMAN MILITARY COMMISSION IN 1913

The Ottoman Empire again asked Germany to expand the GMC to remedy the operational and tactical problems of the Ottoman Army in the Balkan Wars. However, it is not clear whether this GMC was founded by pressure from German Ambassador von Wangenheim and Military Attaché von Strempel or the initiative of the Young Turks government, especially the Grand Vizier Mahmud Sevket Pasha.²⁵⁸ Von Wangenheim believed that "the power which controlled the army would always be the strongest in Turkey... No anti-German government would be able to keep itself in power if the army is controlled by us... Also to entrust Germany with the reform of the system of education opens before us as yet unseen possibilities to imbue the Turkish people with German spirit, and through the machinery of the Turkish State, to achieve tasks, the resources for which until we ourselves have had to furnish German schools in Turkey."²⁵⁹

²⁵⁶ Rifat Önsoy, *Türk-Alman İktisadi Münasebetleri (1871–1914)* (İstanbul: Ünal Matbaası, 1982), 102–3.

²⁵⁷ Jonathan Grant, "The Sword of the Sultan: Ottoman Arms Import, 1854–1914," *The Journal of Military History* 66, no. 1 (2002): 33.

²⁵⁸ Jehuda L. Wallach, *Bir Askeri Yardımın Anatomisi: Türkiye’de Prusya-Alman Heyetleri 1835–1919*, translated by Fahri Çeliker (Ankara: Genelkurmay Basımevi, 1985), 111.

²⁵⁹ Robert J. Kerner, "The Mission of Liman Von Der Sanders," *The Slavonic Review* 6 (1927): 15.

In addition to German efforts to expand the GMC, Ahmed İzzet Pasha also mentioned that Mahmud Şevket Pasha had been talking to German officials for the establishment of the commission under a high ranking general. However, Ahmed İzzet Pasha was against this plan. Nevertheless, Mahmud Şevket Pasha significantly preferred Germany due to the 30-year long German influence in the Ottoman Army, noting:

As regards our army, I don't think we must hesitate any longer to adopt the methods of the Germans. For more than thirty years we have had German instructors in our army, our corps of officers is trained entirely on German lines, and our army is absolutely familiar with the spirit of German training and military education. It is quite impossible to change all that now. I therefore intend to send for a German military mission on the grand scale and, if necessary, I shall even appoint a German general to command a Turkish army corps, place all German staff and regimental officers in command of every unit comprising it, and in this way form a new model army corps. The staff and regimental officers of the other corps would have to be posted to this corps for a definite period in order to expand and complete their training. I will also have this mission accompanied by many specialists whose task it will be to reorganize the various departments of the War Office, the General Staff, and the military schools and factories. I think that we shall have no occasion for a war for a long time, and I will therefore reduce the cadres as much as possible and restore the peace establishment, so that we can affect economies which enable me to meet the expenses of the reorganization mission. I will give the Turkish world an army which will certainly be small but, on the other hand, well organized and trained. In time of war it will not be difficult to bring this army up to maximum strength by expanding the cadres. I am now inquiring of the Germans on what terms they would be prepared to send us some such mission, and consider it advisable to leave the question of their conditions entirely to them.²⁶⁰

Finally, Germany and the Ottoman Empire agreed on a new GMC under Major General Liman von der Sanders. He came to İstanbul on 14 December 1913. The Ottoman Empire gave some privileges to the von der Sanders' Commission. First, Sanders would be the chief of all German officers in the Ottoman Empire. Second, the officers in the commission would inspect all military units and organize staff trips. Third, all military schools and training centers would be under his responsibility. Fourth,

²⁶⁰ James Madison McGarity, *Foreign Influence on the Ottoman Turkish Army, 1880–1918* (Michigan: University Microfilms Inc, 1968), 74.

Sanders would command the 1st Corps and have the same power of inflicting punishment similar to those of an Ottoman corps commander.²⁶¹ Fifth, Sanders would be a member of the Ottoman Military Council and effective in the promotion of generals and possess a prior veto on issues such as reorganization, armament, military education and training, supply, conscription and mobilization. Sixth, he would be second in the hierarchy of the Ottoman Army; however, if the Chief of General Staff was older than him, Sanders would be the third person. Seventh, he would also act as the chief of the Reform Commission in the Ottoman Army.²⁶² After Sanders started his work, he stated that his primary mission was to reform the Ottoman Army. By the end of the 1914, the military mission played a great role in the implementation of the German-Ottoman alliance treaty.²⁶³ In addition to this, the GMC made some changes in the organization of the General Staff, and German officers were assigned as the chief of every branch. During this period, von Bronsart Pasha acted as the first assistant chief of the General Staff. Most German officers also taught at the War Academy and served in the German model regiments. Major Ali İhsan, Kazım Karabekir and İsmet İnönü were appointed as deputy chief of the first three branches of the General Staff.²⁶⁴

Sanders did not have a good bond with Enver Pasha and German Ambassador Wangenheim. After Enver Pasha abolished the Ottoman War Council without consulting with Sanders, the relationship became worse. Since the Ottoman military officials ordered the exchange of the untrained and unequipped soldiers for better ones, it was very difficult for Sanders to evaluate the current condition of the Ottoman Army in terms of manpower and equipment during his inspections. He inspected a division in Çorlu and found several shortages in this unit. First, there was a huge problem in paying the salaries to officers and conscripts that decreased morale among troops. Second, most of soldiers needed uniforms, boots and weapons. Third, this division lacked any regular training, and

²⁶¹ Robert J. Kerner, "The Mission of Liman Von Der Sanders," *The Slavonic Review* 6 (1927): 24.

²⁶² Jehuda L. Wallach, *Bir Askeri Yardımın Anatomisi: Türkiye'de Prusya-Alman Heyetleri 1835–1919*, trans. Fahri Çeliker (Ankara: Genelkurmay Basımevi, 1985), 113–115.

²⁶³ Ulrich Trumpener, "Liman Von Sanders and the German-Ottoman Alliance," *Journal of Contemporary History* 1, No.4 (1966): 179–182.

²⁶⁴ İsmet İnönü, *Hatıralar* (Ankara: Bilgi Yayınevi, 1985): 87–88.

soldiers became very weak due to hunger. Fourth, there was a big issue in sanitation not only in the barracks, but also in the medical units. As a result of his inspection, Sanders asked Enver Pasha to dismiss the division commander; however, Enver Pasha did not change the commander. This event created another crack between Enver Pasha and Sanders.²⁶⁵ Moreover, Sanders' relationship with Wangenheim deteriorated so much that he wrote a letter to Kaiser for a change in the commission. Wangenheim wrote, "Liman has completely severed his personal relations with me and persecutes the entire staff of the embassy with the most incredible chicanery... Goltz would be a relief for Turkey, the embassy and the military mission itself."²⁶⁶

By the summer of 1914, the military mission reached the size of 70 (30 officers and 40 men)²⁶⁷ and consisted of three sections: command group, operational and training assignments (see Table 18).²⁶⁸

²⁶⁵ James Madison McGarity, *Foreign Influence on the Ottoman Turkish Army, 1880–1918* (Michigan: University Microfilms Inc, 1968), 79–81.

²⁶⁶ Ulrich Trumpener, *Germany and the Ottoman Empire, 1914–1918* (New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1968), 74.

²⁶⁷ Erickson, "From Kirkilisse to the Great Offensive Turkish Operational Encirclement Planning," 45–46.

²⁶⁸ Güler, *Osmanlı Ordusunun Modernleşmesinde Von Der Goltz Paşa'nın Rolü*, 206.

Table 18. Von Der Sanders' German Military Commission.²⁶⁹

Command Group	Operational Assignments	Training Assignments
1 commander: dual role as the corps commander	1 corps commander	3 General Staff officers (Field grade)
	1 division commander	1 director, Staff College
1 General Staff officer (Field grade)	1 advisor-Rifle regiment	2 instructor, Staff College
2 aides-de-camp	1 advisor-Cavalry regiment	1 director,
3 other officers	1 advisor-Field Artillery Regiment	1 director, Infantry School
	1 advisor-Communications	1 director, Field Artillery School
		1 director, Heavy Artillery School
	Technical advice: Railroads, Motorization, Telephones, Telegraphs, Engineers, Logistics and Ordnance.	1 director, Cavalry School
		1 officer-Junior Officer School
		6 officers-2 Corps Headquarters
		2 commanders, Demonstration Regiment
		10 officers for technical advice
		1 military doctor
		1 director, Gymnastics School
		3 commanders for NCO Schools

To show the instant change in the army, Sanders organized a parade for the anniversary of the Constitution in İstanbul in July 1914. This parade consisted of disciplined Ottoman troops with beautiful uniforms and equipment. However, this parade did not display the original condition of the Ottoman Army. To organize one field artillery and cavalry regiment for the parade, the Ottoman officials tried to collect animals and uniforms from all the other parts of the Empire.²⁷⁰ In a nutshell, the effect of this commission was very limited within the military units in İstanbul due to its short

²⁶⁹ Edward J. Erickson, *Ordered to Die: A History of the Ottoman Army in the First World War* (Connecticut: Greenwood Press, 2001), 12.

²⁷⁰ İlber Ortaylı, *İkinci Abdulhamit Döneminde Osmanlı İmparatorluğunda Alman Nüfuzu* (Ankara: Ankara Üniversitesi Basımevi, 1981): 71–72.

term which lasted until World War I, disagreement with Enver Pasha, and Ottoman financial problems. Therefore, this commission was not able to carry out the radical changes in the reorganization and modernization process of the Ottoman Army.

G. THE EFFECTS OF THE BALKAN WARS ON THE OTTOMAN EMPIRE

The Balkan Wars were an example of the first total war that had two significant effects on the Ottoman Empire: emergence of the Young Turk triumvirate of 1913–18 and the rise of Turkish nationalism in place of Ottomanism. First, Cemal Pasha, Talat Pasha and Enver Pasha became very politically active in the Ottoman Cabinet after the military coup on 23 January 1913. Enver Pasha became more influential in the politics of the Ottoman Empire among these people after the retrieval of Edirne in the Second Balkan War in 1913 and his marriage with an Ottoman princess, Naciye Sultan, in 1914. He was accepted as a national hero.²⁷¹

Second, the military confrontation between the Ottoman Empire and Balkan states caused cracks in the boundaries of Ottoman society. Before the Balkan War, the Ottoman officials accepted the ideology of a secular multi-ethnic Ottoman nationality. Although the Ottoman Empire did not declare jihad (holy war) against the Balkan Wars to maintain stability between Muslim and non-Muslim soldiers, the concept of Ottomanism was not enough to hold all Ottoman populations under the same umbrella.²⁷² Mesut Uyar and Edward Erickson point to the non-Muslims' performance in the war to present specific evidence as to why Ottoman policy failed, noting:

The much-hoped-for reform of recruitment of non-Muslims embarrassed its avid supporters when an important percentage of them evaded the service. Instead, an important percentage of them volunteered for armies or the militias of Balkan states. ... As could be expected, the desertion rates of non-Muslim recruits set record highs. They fled or surrendered at the first opportunity, which verified the suspicions that Muslim soldiers held toward them.²⁷³

²⁷¹ Macfie, *The End of the Ottoman Empire, 1908–1923*, 76–84.

²⁷² Eyal Ginio, "Mobilizing the Ottoman Nation during the Balkan Wars (1912–1913): Awakening from the Ottoman Dream," *War in History* (2005), 158.

²⁷³ Mesut Uyar and Edward J. Erickson, *A Military History of the Ottomans: From Osman to Atatürk* (Santa Barbara: Prager Security International, 2009), 235.

Due to the defeat and non-Muslims' performance during the war, people started asking questions: Who are we? And who are the others? This suspicion, distrust and sense of revenge among the Muslim and Turkish people against Balkan states undermined the ideology of Ottomanism. The Ottoman Empire started searching for new symbols and images to meet the patriotic approach, entering the period of 1914–18 with the notion of Islamic Ottomanism to achieve support from other Muslim countries. Their effort failed, however, due to the effect of Arab nationalism. In the new concept of Islamic Ottomanism, non-Muslim people were not included. On the other hand, CUP also started searching for a new symbol after the Second Constitutional regime in 1908. They thought that the new image could be Turkish Nationalism.²⁷⁴ Ziya Gökalp (1876–1924) and Yusuf Akçura (1879–1935) were two of the most important figures who worked to develop Turkish nationalism in Ottoman society.²⁷⁵

In her article “Ottoman Disintegration in the Balkans and Its Repercussions,” Sevtap Demirci touched upon the new Ottoman identity—Turkism as a new symbol for the sake of the Ottoman Empire—and stated:

Analyzing the disintegration effects internally shows that the Young Turks' desperate efforts to keep the different elements of the Empire intact around the idea of ‘Ottomanism’ proved fruitless. The Balkan Wars made it clear that this ideal had come to an end and needed to be replaced by a new ideal that was limited in scope, legitimate, and obtainable: ‘Turkism.’ The Ottoman identity was abandoned or reshaped in another form: ‘Turkishness.’ The concept of a ‘Turkish nation’ and/or ‘Nationalists’ started to be expressed more openly during the Nationalist struggle after the collapse of the empire following World War I.²⁷⁶

To instill patriotism and nationalism in the youth and unite the people after the Balkan Wars, the Ottoman Cabinet decided to use education by Turkish intellectuals as a new tool. In her article “The Traumatic Legacy of the Balkan Wars for Turkish

²⁷⁴ Ginio, “Mobilizing the Ottoman Nation during the Balkan Wars,” 156–177.

²⁷⁵ Standford J. Shaw and Ezel Kural Shaw, *History of the Ottoman Empire and Modern Turkey: Reform, Revolution, and Republic: The Rise of Modern Turkey, 1880–1975* (London: the Syndics of the Cambridge University Press, 1977), 301–302.

²⁷⁶ Sevtap Demirci, “Ottoman Disintegration in the Balkans and Its Repercussions,” *War and Nationalism: The Balkan Wars, 1912–1913, and Their Sociopolitical Implications* (Salt Lake City: University of Utah Press, 2013), 566.

Intellectuals,” Funda Selçuk Şirin emphasizes the impact of these wars on Ottoman society and further argues that “the Balkan Wars in this sense also played a role in uniting the people. Functionalizing the trauma of the war in the process of nation-building, the Turkish intellectuals’ recourse to the common idiom of the necessity not to forget the Balkan experiences contributed to the growing symbiotic link between ‘remembering’ and ‘waking up.’”²⁷⁷ In addition to this, Handan Nezir Akmeşe also mentions an extract from a school geography manual in her book *The Birth of Modern Turkey*, noting:

In 1912, the Balkan states allied against the Ottoman government... In the meantime, they shed the blood of many innocent Muslim and Turkish people. Many women and children were massacred regardless. Villages were burnt down. Now in the Balkans under each stone, there lay thousands of dead bodies, with eyes and stomachs carved out, awaiting revenge... It is our duty to our fatherland, as sons of the fatherland, to restore our stolen rights, and to work to take revenge for many innocent people whose blood were shed in abundance. Then let us work to instill that sense of revenge, love of fatherland and sense of sacrifice for it.²⁷⁸

H. CONCLUSION

The disastrous results of the Balkan Wars necessitated a reinvigoration of the Ottoman Army. In this case, the Ottoman Empire tried not to repeat the same mistakes as those seen under Sultan Selim III, Mahmut II and Abdulhamid II. The most important factor was self-criticism and a learning opportunity from previous failures in the Balkan Wars. These actions paved the way for the modernization and mobilization of the Ottoman Army within a limited time period before World War I (1914–1918).

Ahmed İzzet Pasha and Enver Pasha were two important figures in this period who worked to ameliorate the problems of the Ottoman Army in the Balkan Wars. It began when Ahmed İzzet Pasha published a document calling for reorganization. According to this document, the Ottoman Army should be divided into three main

²⁷⁷ Funda Selçuk Şirin “The Traumatic Legacy of the Balkan Wars for Turkish Intellectuals,” *War and Nationalism: The Balkan Wars, 1912–1913, and Their Sociopolitical Implications* (Salt Lake City: University of Utah Press, 2013), 697.

²⁷⁸ Akmeşe, *The Birth of Modern Turkey*, 163.

components: active, reserve and territorial forces. At the same time, he called for the abolishment of the Redif forces due to their incompetent performance.²⁷⁹

In addition to Ahmed İzzet Pasha, Enver Pasha also focused on this reorganization process after he became the War Minister and Chief of General Staff on January 1914. At first, he ordered the retirement of 1,300 elderly and incompetent officers. He published general orders to emphasize the military leadership, fire power, and combined arms. Moreover, he also dealt with the revising the 12 existing war plans into one. He also tried to improve the combat effectiveness of the Ottoman Army by rebuilding divisions, reactivating the Ottoman Military Academy, standardizing reports and war diaries, rearmament with German and French arms, introduction of large-scale maneuvers and establishing three training sites at Istanbul, Erzincan and Edirne.²⁸⁰ Enver Pasha also decided to remove rifle (Nişancı) regiments and battalions from the organization of the Ottoman Army due to their inadequate performance in the Balkan Wars.²⁸¹ These changes within a limited time were very remarkable for the survival of the Ottoman Empire. Lt. Col. Cunliffe Owen, the British military attaché, summarized these military developments on 10 October 1914 and noted:

Very considerable progress is being made in efficiency, and it will be far superior to that in existence before the Balkan War. The continuous training which is being steadily given to the troops and the time which has elapsed for the deliberate organization of mobilization and administrative arrangements must cause the Turkish forces to be now regarded as a factor in Balkan settlements to be taken seriously into account.²⁸²

During this period, the German military mission also participated in the reorganization process of the Ottoman Army between 1912 and 1913. The Ottoman Empire asked Germany officially to expand the commission in terms of command group, operational and training assignment. Therefore, a new commission under the command of

²⁷⁹ Erickson, *Ottoman Army Effectiveness in World War I*, 9.

²⁸⁰ Erickson, *Ottoman Army Effectiveness in World War I*, 9–11.

²⁸¹ Erickson, *Defeat in Detail*, 340–342.

²⁸² Erickson, *Ottoman Army Effectiveness in World War I*, 14.

Liman von der Sanders was established on 14 December 1913.²⁸³ Nevertheless, Sanders' disparities with Enver Pasha, its short duration and Ottoman economic problems were main issues that affected the activities of the commission. Furthermore, Sanders made inspections in military units, and some German officers were assigned to the General Staff and worked as instructors at the Military Academy.²⁸⁴ Eventually, they carried out limited actions within İstanbul.

Moreover, a national awakening movement took shape in the Ottoman Empire, under the slogan "Honor or Death," after the huge losses in the Balkan Wars. The government also established social clubs in order to expand its influence on the public for militarization and modernization. As a consequence, the public encouraged and supported the government to modernize the Ottoman Army for survival. Apart from early reforms, there was a ready audience for the reforms.²⁸⁵ In addition to national awakening movements, the heavy losses of the Balkan Wars led to two major changes: the triumvirate period and the emergence of Turkish nationalism. First, the military coup in 1913 gave opportunities for Cemal, Talat and Enver Pasha. They would be effective until 1918.²⁸⁶ Second, the Ottoman version of a secular, multi-ethnic and multi-religious state collapsed due to four hostile Balkan states and huge desertions of non-Muslim soldiers during the war. Therefore, the Ottoman Empire began to consider new symbols: Islamic Ottomanism and Turkish nationalism.²⁸⁷

Generally speaking, World War I would prevent the success of these military reforms that were carried out in a limited time period by Ahmed İzzet Pasha and Enver Pasha. These reform activities remained as an unfinished reorganization and modernization process without enough conscription, training and weapons. Edward J. Erickson has emphasized the unfinished reorganization process of the Ottoman Army in 1914, stressing that "the reorganization of the Turkish forces in 1914 was comprehensive

²⁸³ Güler, *Osmanlı Ordusunun Modernleşmesinde Von Der Goltz Paşa'nın Rolü*, 206.

²⁸⁴ İsmet İnönü, *Hatıralar*, 87–88.

²⁸⁵ Aksakal, *The Ottoman Road to War in 1914*, 20–24.

²⁸⁶ Macfie, *The End of the Ottoman Empire*, 76–84.

²⁸⁷ Ginio, "Mobilizing the Ottoman Nation during the Balkan Wars (1912–1913)" 175.

and was designed to return the army back to its pre-Balkan garrison locations and also to rebuild the divisional and corps base of the army. This was a gigantic undertaking and was incomplete on the eve of the First World War.”²⁸⁸

²⁸⁸ Edward J. Erickson, *Order to Die: A History of the Ottoman Army in the First World War* (Connecticut: Greenwood Press, 2001), 10.

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V. CONCLUSION AND ANALYSIS

“Those who do not learn from history are doomed to repeat it,”²⁸⁹ wrote George Santayana. The Ottoman Empire had undergone uneven transformation of its armed forces following its defeat by Russia in 1878; the cause of its failure was that it repeated earlier same mistakes. Therefore, the Empire did not accomplish the necessary and permanent reforms with the ill-adapted changes. However, the Ottoman Empire was able to survive in World War I due to the reorganization and modernization process of the Ottoman Army that began in 1880s and its ability to learn from the past, especially the Ottoman-Russian War (1877–78) and Balkan Wars (1912–13). Scholar Edward Erickson stresses the condition of the Ottoman troops after World War I to emphasize the effect of the Balkan Wars experiences stating:

Europe would discount the Turks in the careful calculations of the balance of power in the fatal summer of 1914. When they joined with Germany in an alliance, they were seen as a liability and as easy prey. Few observers, if any, viewed the Turks as a viable military power. However, in November 1918, even after the collapse of Russia, Bulgaria, and Austria-Hungary, the munitions in the French Army and the German Navy, and after the ejection of the Serbian and Romanian armies from their homelands, the Ottoman Army, although battered beyond recognition, was still on its feet and in the field. This was due largely to the hard-worn experiences of the Balkan Wars and the Ottoman Army’s ability to learn from its mistakes. It was a magnificent accomplishment.²⁹⁰

The Ottoman-Russian War had a critical impact not only on military leaders, but also on politicians who realized the urgent need for rapid modernization of the Ottoman Army to protect Ottoman territory against its enemies. They all believed that the more army got powerful, the more powerful the army grew, the more opportunity the Ottoman Empire would have to survive. Therefore, the Ottoman Army became the core site for reforms and served as an engine for change. In his article “The Legacy and Impacts of the Defeat in the Balkan Wars of 1912–1913 on the Psychological Makeup of the Turkish

²⁸⁹ The Quotation Pages, “George Santayana Quotes,” accessed September 2, 2012, <http://www.quotationpage.com/quote/2042.html>.

²⁹⁰ Edward J. Erickson, *Defeat in Detail: The Ottoman Army in the Balkans, 1912–1913* (Connecticut: Greenwood Press, 2003): 344.

Officer Corps,” Doğan Akyaz also emphasized the modernization and reorganization of the Ottoman Army in accordance with Western armies as a big tool for the survival of the Ottoman Empire noting:

The Ottoman military was one of institutions at the core of Ottoman modernization; the notion that the state could renew its previous strength and glory by linking to the modernization of the military was especially popular during the transfer of military technology from the West. In this respect the modernization of the military also resituated the military at the receiving end of many other nonmilitary influences. The Western culture and the accumulated knowledge it embodied entered the Ottoman realm through the military. Thus, the military, to be modernized so that state could renew its strength, not only started gaining a new outlook but also turned to be one of the institutions that initiated the evolution of the Ottoman state.²⁹¹

To remedy the problems of the Ottoman Empire, Abdulhamid II decided to modernize and reorganize the army by taking a Western army as an example. Due to Russian, French, English, and Austrian-Hungarian hostilities, he preferred the German Army. Therefore, he officially asked Germany to establish a GMC in 1880. Eventually, Kaiser Wilhelm I accepted this request and assigned four German officers in the Ottoman Army in 1882. The main task of this commission was to inspect the Ottoman Army in detail and inform the Sultan their observations and recommendations. Since the Ottoman Army had structural problems and insufficient sources, the Ottoman Empire was not able to implement these changes until 1885. After the head of the GMC General Kahler died, Germany assigned Lt. Col. Colmar von der Goltz from 1883 until 1895.²⁹²

The GMC started working actively in many fields. First, they published a document for the reorganization of the Ottoman Army in 1886. Second, they worked on a conscription law including the establishment of recruiting centers and setting the age for soldiers in 1886. Third, this commission also worked on the rearmament process of the Ottoman Army by importing German arms. Fourth, they updated the curriculum of the

²⁹¹ Doğan Akyaz, “The Legacy and Impacts of the Defeat in the Balkan Wars of 1912–1913 on the Psychological Makeup of the Turkish Officer Corps,” *War and Nationalism: The Balkan Wars, 1912–1913, and Their Sociopolitical Implications* (Salt Lake City: University of Utah Press, 2013), 740.

²⁹² Carl Max Kartepeter, “Ottoman Military Reform During the Late Tanzimat: The Prussian General Von Der Goltz and the Ottoman Army,” *The Ottoman Turks: Nomad Kingdom to World Empire* (1991), 248–249.

War Academy with German instructors, translated German manuals, and initiated military exercises. During this period, Goltz became the most influential German officer in the Ottoman Empire and worked to train future commanders of the Ottoman Army with modern military education that was based on German Military Academy. However, these military reforms were not put into practice completely as planned due to inadequate sources, increasing external debts, and Abdulhamid II's mistrust to the Ottoman Army. Overall, the GMC became effective in the first decade of the 20th century.²⁹³ In his book *The Reorganization of the Ottoman Army under Abdulhamid II*, Mervin Albert Griffiths sums up the changes of Abdulhamid II's period noting:

The military policy of Abdulhamid had an impact upon the existing Ottoman Empire and the future Turkish Republic in three important respects. The first of these was the development of an army which differed from the army of the Tanzimat in strength, organization, weapons, and training. The second stemmed from the introduction of the German military influence, which bridged the Young Turk Revolution of 1908 and continued through World War I. The third, which resulted from the Sultan's progressive attitude toward military education, was in the creation of a new class of officers, whose influence upon the course of Turkish history has been felt down to the present day.²⁹⁴

The Russo-Japanese War (1904–05) presented specific evidence to the Ottoman Empire that a non-European army could rejuvenate itself without leaving behind traditional values. The Ottoman officials also believed that they could improve the army by taking the Japanese case as an example. Moreover, there were similarities between these two armies: the establishment of GMC, innate martial abilities, and patriotic values for the defense of homeland. Handan Nezir Akmeşe also touches upon the Japanese as an example for the Ottoman Army noting that “Japan's success over the Russians in the war of 1904–1905 was invoked as justification of this view. The Japanese, it was argued, had combined their indigenous moral values with imitation of Western technical

²⁹³ Mervin Albert Griffiths, *The Reorganization of the Ottoman Army under Abdulhamid II, 1880–1897* (Michigan: University Films International Arbor, 1966), 72–82.

²⁹⁴ Griffiths, *The Reorganization of the Ottoman Army under Abdulhamid II, 1880–1897*, 150.

improvements, and thereby achieved their current power and status: they were the nation that the Turks should look up to and follow.”²⁹⁵

Furthermore, there were two critical events that took place in the Ottoman Empire: the 1908 Revolution and 31 March Incident (a 1909 uprising of reactionaries in İstanbul against the 1908 Revolution). In 1908, the new Young Turk government opened the Ottoman Parliament that was closed in 1878 and Abdulhamid II was replaced with Mehmet V (1909–1918). The Minister of War Mahmud Şevket Pasha became more powerful in the modernization and reorganization process of the Ottoman Army. Second, 7,500 Alaylı officers were retired due to new age limit law, but the real reason for their forced retirement was their participation in 31 March Incident. To lead the necessary changes, the new government officially asked Goltz again to come to İstanbul in 1909. Consequently, Goltz agreed to work part time (four months per year) in the army and helped Ottoman officials in the reorganization process. The Ottoman Army underwent significant changes with the GMC. The Ottoman Military Council published “The Law for the Reorganization of the Ottoman Army” on 9 July 1910. It was a comprehensive military reform. First, they reorganized the existing seven armies into four Nizamiye (Active) army inspectorates. Second, the organization of an Ottoman division was modified from a square structure to a triangular one. The new Turkish division was unique to the Ottoman Army. Other European armies would adopt this structure and organized themselves in accordance with the Turkish version by 1918. Third, they updated twelve war plans to counter possible enemy attacks. Fourth, the Ottoman Army started having military exercises and maneuvers at the division and corps level. Although the Ottoman Empire made many structural changes, the Italian War (1911) and Balkan Wars (1912–13) would interrupt these reforms and leave the reorganization unfinished.²⁹⁶ In his book *The Ottoman Army in the Balkan Wars*, Willard M. Vickers pointed out the lack of time and manpower affecting the reorganization process noting:

²⁹⁵ Handan Nezir Akmeşe, *The Birth of Modern Turkey: The Ottoman Military and the March to World War I* (New York: I.B.Tauris & Co., 2005), 150.

²⁹⁶ Edward J. Erickson, *Ottoman Army Effectiveness in World War I: A Comparative Study* (New York: Routledge, 2007), 178–180.

Thus, we see the Ottoman Army in a relatively dangerous position. It was impossible to modernize in a few years, but reforms were initiated and a determined effort was made. There was a critical shortage of experienced personnel at all grades. The internal and external troubles absorbed the best troops... In face of all this the Army experienced a reorganization in 1911 that was accomplished at a stroke. Now the Ottoman Army was composed of new troops, and the Empire stood nakedly exposed to the belligerent demands of the Balkan States.²⁹⁷

In addition to the Ottoman-Russian War (1877–78), the Balkan Wars also had a remarkable impact not only on the Ottoman officials (especially military leaders and politicians), but also on the society. The early military efforts did not get any support from Ottoman society until 1910s. However, people in Anatolia, particularly refugees and wounded, felt the results of this disastrous defeat. These consequences aroused hatred and the demand for revenge for the Balkan Wars and shaped the national awakening movements. Therefore, there was huge support from the society that military reforms should be done to improve the Ottoman Army.²⁹⁸

There were two main figures that focused on the reorganization and modernization of the Ottoman Army: Ahmed İzzet Pasha and Enver Pasha. In 1913, Ahmed İzzet Pasha published a document for the reorganization of the Ottoman Army. As a result of this document, he abolished the Redif forces and divided the army into three main parts: active, reserve, and territorial forces. The Ottoman Empire asked Germany to assign German officers under a new commission to advise the Ottoman Army in this process. Germany accepted this offer and established another GMC under the command of Liman von Sanders on 14 December 1913. However, this commission did not perform efficiently due to World War I, but German officers participated in military reforms as advisors. Furthermore, Enver Pasha became more powerful in this period. He grew famous for his victory over Edirne in the Second Balkan Wars, the military coup in 1912, and his marriage to the Sultan's niece. In 1914, he became the War Minister and Chief of General Staff. He immediately started working to ameliorate the

²⁹⁷ Willard M. Vickers, *The Ottoman Army in the Balkan Wars* (New Jersey: Princeton University Department of Oriental Studies, 1957), 70.

²⁹⁸ Mustafa Aksakal, *The Ottoman Road to War in 1914: The Ottoman Empire and the First World War I* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2008), 20–22.

problems of the Ottoman Army. First, Enver Pasha ordered the retirement of 1,300 Alayli officers who had always opposed to the military reforms. Second, a single new and flexible war plan replaced the existing twelve. Third, Enver Pasha worked on the rearmament of the army by using mainly German arms. Fourth, he ordered the removal of the rifle regiments and battalions from the Ottoman general corps and division structure due to their incompetent performance. Fifth, he organized large military exercises and founded three training sites at İstanbul, Edirne, and Erzincan. These military reforms were a tremendous undertaking at that time. However, these actions by Ahmed İzzet Pasha and Enver Pasha were in vain due to World War I. The Ottoman Army needed more time, weapons, soldiers, and resources to fulfill these changes.²⁹⁹

Overall, it is obvious that the Ottoman Empire tried to reorganize and modernize its army between 1882 and 1914. During this thirty-two long period, the GMC and Balkan Wars became effective in this military reform process. Although these military developments were remarkable, the Ottoman Empire was not able to find a clear solution to its ongoing military problems. However, there were some important results. First, a new officer class with European military education was formed. These officers became combat tested leaders (especially in the Italian and Balkan Wars) until the Independence War and acted actively for the future of Turkish Republic. David B. Ralston has emphasized the role of this new officer corps with European education in the creation of the Turkish Republic, noting that “of all the institutions of the Ottoman Empire, the army had benefitted more than most from the effects of Europeanizing reform. If such a program of reform had been unable to save the Empire from ultimate collapse, it did at least endow a large number of the officer corps with a ‘modern,’ secular outlook. Possessed of resilience and public spirit, they furnished the vitalizing the impetus in the creation of a new political existence of Turkish people.”³⁰⁰

²⁹⁹ Edward J. Erickson, *Defeat in Detail: The Ottoman Army in the Balkans, 1912–1913* (Westport, Connecticut: Greenwood Press, 2003), 340–342.

³⁰⁰ David B. Ralston, *Importing the European Army: The Introduction of European Military Techniques and Institutions into the Extra-European World, 1600–1914* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1990), 77.

Second, German military style became widespread in terms of military tactics, weaponry, and military education. James Madison has also touched upon the German role in the modernization and reorganization process of the Ottoman Army, mentioning that “it is obvious that a definite foreign influence continued in the Ottoman Turkish Army during the time frame 1880–1918. It is also obvious that the main foreign influence on the Turkish Army came from Germany during those years. In fact, for all intents and purposes the foreign activities with the Ottoman Army during this period could be termed as an almost complete German show with Berlin supplying advice, money, and in many instances military and political policy.”³⁰¹ Eventually, the Ottoman Army became more powerful and was much improved. The English historian, Sir Edwin Pears commented on the condition of Turkish soldiers in Samsun to point out the changes in the Ottoman Army before World War, noting

I was especially impressed by the extraordinary activity of the army when in June, 1914, I went to deliver the Commencement Address at the great American College at Marsovan. When I landed at Samsun I found Turkish soldiers everywhere being carefully and thoroughly drilled. During my two days’ drive into the interior we saw them encamped upon the hills, and everywhere occupied. The Turkish soldier was no longer the lethargic creature that I had known for forty years in time of peace. The discipline was evidently stricter, and the officers in particular left the impression that they expected soon to be called upon top march.³⁰²

During World War I, there were successful military examples such as the Dardanelles and Kut’ül Ammare campaign against the British. However, the Ottoman Army was defeated by the Russians in Caucasia and by the British in Iraq, and Palestine due to lack of strength, poor logistics, and transportation as well as bad weather conditions.³⁰³ Although the Ottoman Army had lost the war, there were great examples of leadership, organizational architecture, operational and tactical effectiveness. World War I experience presented that the Ottoman Army needed permanent reforms. This war

³⁰¹ James Madison McGarity, *Foreign Influence on the Ottoman Turkish Army, 1880–1918* (Michigan: University Microfilms Inc, 1968), 128.

³⁰² Edwin Pears, *Forty Years in Constantinople: The Recollections of Sir Edwin Pears 1873–1915 with 16 Illustrations* (New York: D. Appleton and Ccompany, 1916), 340–341.

³⁰³ Erik Jan Zürcher, *Turkey A Modern History*, 118–119.

also prevented the success of Enver Pasha's reforms due to unfinished reorganization with untrained soldiers, inadequate weapons, and lack of time. In spite of the defeat, the commanders of the Turkish Independence War such as Mustafa Kemal, İsmet İnönü, Kazım Karabekir, and Fevzi Çakmak became combat tested leaders during this period.³⁰⁴ At the end of the war, the Ottoman Army stood on its feet due to the lessons learned from the Balkan Wars. In his article "Lessons Learned from the Balkan Wars," Edward Erickson tried to find specific evidence for how the Ottoman Army was able to stay active at the end of World War I and stressed the importance of Balkan Wars in addition to the role of German Military Commission and Mustafa Kemal Atatürk. He writes,

Our wisdom regarding this question tends to give credit to German generals and tenaciously tough Turkish soldiers as well as the singular leadership of Mustafa Kemal Atatürk. This is a simplistic and incomplete answer, however, because it fails to address the Ottoman army as an institution fighting a multifront war against industrialized and powerful enemies. Here is what I think I have learned in a very roundabout way over a ten-year period. The Ottoman army was competitive and resilient in World War I because of its defeat in the Balkan Wars and the subsequent "putting the army right" as a result of the "lessons learned" from those earlier struggles. In effect, the lasting impact of the Balkan Wars for the Ottoman army was its prolonged survival in World War I.³⁰⁵

An analysis of the reorganization and modernization process of the Ottoman Army between 1880 and 1914 without considering the impact of the German Military Commission and Balkan Wars would be incomplete since they had a significant and combined effect on military reforms. Therefore, it is essential to evaluate their contribution that led to success of Turkish Independence War and creation of Turkish Republic. It is still questionable whether the Turkish people would be able to win this war without having had these experiences.

³⁰⁴ Mesut Uyar and Edward J. Erickson, *A Military History of the Ottomans: From Osman to Atatürk* (California: Praeger Security International, 2009), 283.

³⁰⁵ Edward J. Erickson, "Lessons Learned from the Balkan Wars," *War and Nationalism: The Balkan Wars, 1912–1913, and Their Sociopolitical Implications* (Salt Lake City: University of Utah Press, 2013), 17.

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