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**Abdel-Raouf Sinno. *Deutsche Interessen in Syrien und Palästina 1841-1898.* (Studien zum modernen Islamischen Orient, number 3.) Berlin: Baalbek, 1982, pp. xix, 437. DM 36.**

Following the Egyptian occupation (1832-40) of those parts of the Ottoman empire commonly referred to as Syria and Palestine, European and American missionary activity, commercial and political interests, and scientific and Biblical studies in the area increased. Recent monographs have focused on American, British, Russian, Austrian, and French involvement in the region in the mid- to late nineteenth century but have ignored or viewed tangentially the interest of the German states prior to confederation and, subsequently, the German empire. Although Gad Bensinger in his dissertation, "Palestine in German Thought and Action, 1871-1914" (1971), considered aspects of German activity in the region, an incisive study remained to be undertaken.

Setting out to fill this void, Abdel-Raouf Sinno has given the most detailed look at the subject but has failed to analyze it fully and has virtually omitted consideration of the activities of the *Templerkolonien*, and German archaeologists and exploratory associations, as well as the German relationship to Jewish aspirations in Palestine.

Sinno concludes that Germans had neither extensive interests nor unqualified successes in Syria and Palestine in the nineteenth century. Between 1841 and 1898, no systematic German policy emerged to transform the region into a German sphere of influence. Momentum for a German presence, especially prior to 1880, came primarily from German religious groups, to which two-thirds of this volume is devoted. Yet Sinno suggests that the extent of the work undertaken by those groups benefited from the willingness of the German state(s) and public to help prepare the way and to provide backing.

The book commences with a somewhat limited study of the development of the Anglo-Prussian bishopric in Jerusalem, which lasted from 1841 to 1886. Sinno then proceeds with a detailed examination of the German Protestant missionary endeavors in Palestine and Syria that followed the bishopric's establishment. One chapter treats the more limited efforts of German Catholic organizations. The author offers copious information about German-run hospitals, schools, a leper colony, hospices, agricultural communities, vocational training programs, and orphanages, including their finances and organization. By considering each missionary enterprise individually, in often overwhelming detail, Sinno's study becomes ponderous, loses analytical depth and obscures overall relationships. Clearly, conversions were sparse. The missionaries' lasting legacy became those charitable works that received Ottoman approval. Sinno believes that those works helped prepare the way for subsequent strengthening of German economic and diplomatic ties with the Ottoman empire.

The final third of the book addresses German commercial, diplomatic, and colonial interests in the region, which increased after 1880. Presented somewhat chronologically, the discussion here is more thoughtful. The relationship between German trade with Syria and Palestine and internal German economic conditions, diplomatic considerations, colonial interests, and the policies of Otto von Bismarck and William II is presented. Sinno leaves no doubt that, although German trade with the region was expanding, it was of no real consequence to the German empire, accounting for only 0.2% percent of its foreign trade by 1900. The work concludes with visit of William II to Palestine and Syria in 1898, which is viewed as significant because it encouraged German economic concessions elsewhere in the Sultan's domain.

Sinno leans heavily on published annual reports, periodicals, and special histories produced by the various religiously oriented organizations. He makes occasional reference to Prussian, imperial German, and British unpublished diplomatic documents. With regard to trade statistics, Sinno ignores the useful published British commercial statistical abstracts. A map and a full subject index, not one limited to the names of individuals, would have enhanced the book

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