

Baalbek, Image & Monument 1898-1998, ed. By H el ene Sader, Thomas Scheffler and Angelika Neuwirth, Beirut 1998.

## THE EMPEROR’S VISIT TO THE EAST AS REFLECTED IN CONTEMPORARY ARABIC JOURNALISM

Abdel-Raouf Sinno

One of the significant events of late nineteenth-century German - Ottoman relations was the second journey of Emperor William II to the Ottoman Empire in 1898<sup>1</sup> which this time included a visit of the major cities of Greater Syria (Bilad ash-Sham). The importance of this event was not only due to the proclamation of the monarch’s goals, namely, to go on a pilgrimage to the Holy Land and to inaugurate German establishments in Palestine; the visit also reflected the new course of the Emperor’s world-politics (*Weltpolitik*) to secure for his country “ *Platz an der Sonne* “<sup>2</sup>.

On the eve of the Emperor’s journey, Germany’s commercial, economic and cultural penetration into the Ottoman Empire had strongly increased; Ottoman soldiers had been trained by German officers and arm supplies largely been brought from Germany. By pursuing such a “ *penetration pacifique* “ on the one hand, and by avoiding direct colonial policy towards the Sultan’s possessions on the other hand, Germany was able to build up her political influence in Istanbul which even surpassed the positions of the other Powers in the Ottoman capital.<sup>3</sup>

Already before William II started his journey, the event was eagerly discussed by the international press. With regard to Arabic newspapers,

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<sup>1</sup> For further informations on the first journey of William II to the Ottoman Empire in 1889 see C.A.v. Engelbrechten, *Kaiser Wilhelms Orientreise und deren Bedeutung f ur den deutschen Handel. Neue Bahnen und Wege f ur den deutschen Ausfuhrhandel*, Berlin 1890.

<sup>2</sup> Fritz Fischer, *Griff nach der Weltmacht. Die Kriegszielpolitik des kaiserlichen Deutschland 1914/18*, [1961], 4. ed., D usseldorf 1971, S. 16ff.

<sup>3</sup> For more details on this subject see capitals x and xi of my book *Deutsche Interessen in Syrien und Pal stina 1841-1898*, Berlin 1982, 253-299.

special attention was paid to the function and the consequences of the journey, because it was announced to take place shortly after Germany's silence on the Armenian massacres (1895) and the Ottomans' victory over the Greeks (1897), the latter above all thanks to German instructions and weapons<sup>4</sup>.

This article will focus on the reports of the Arabic press concerning the journey of William II, yet without investigating the accuracy of these reports as this would need another study. Because journalism was more and better developed in Egypt and Syria than in any other Arab region, newspapers from these two countries were used as the main source for this article. Through the analysis of these newspapers' informations one can recognize that the Egyptian press ( in particular, al-Ahram and al- Muqattam ) sharply differed from that the Syrian one. On the whole, Egypt's press was very critical of German's political and colonial ambitions in the Ottoman Empire, of the Ottoman Administration and, last not least, of the Sultan himself who was taken responsible for the enormous expenditures of the journey<sup>5</sup>. Only al-Mu'ayyad did not take a critical position. Syrian press, on the other hand, being under direct Ottoman rule and subject to censorship or self-control, reflected the official standpoint of the Ottoman Government.

### **Goals of the journey: Pilgrimage, friendship or colonial purpose?**

The journey of Emperor William II to the East was welcomed by the majority of Arabic newspapers, notwithstanding Egyptian criticism. They called for a warm reception of the Emperor whose visit would give voice to the cordial relations between the German and the Ottoman nation. Most newspapers underlined the immediate purpose of the journey as being the pilgrimage to the Holy Land and the consecration of the Redeemer's Church in Jerusalem. The Lebanese newspaper Lisan al-Hal stated that Jerusalem as the cradle of Christianity attracted the German Emperor, and that it was this Holy City which moved German monarchs to visit it in order

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<sup>4</sup> William Miller, *The Ottoman Empire and Its Successors*, [1913], New Impression , London :Frank Cass: 1966, 431.; Jehuda L. Wallah, *Anatomie einer Milit?rhilfe*, D?sseldorf : Droste 1976, 104-106,114.

<sup>5</sup> Critics on 'Abd al-Hamid extravagance regarding the journey, see both articles of al-Muqattam: *Nahhab Wahhab*, no. 2832, July 20, 1898, 1-2; *Madha yaqulu al-Imbratur fina*, no. 2924, Nov. 5, 1898.

to gain benediction.<sup>6</sup>

Furthermore, Arabic papers paid attention to the Emperor's personality and his dynasty. He was characterized as "*one of the greatest monarchs of the world*"<sup>7</sup> who was "*the descendant of the Hohenzollern dynasty filled with widespread glory and sublime and luminous honour*".<sup>8</sup> The Emperor was further described as "*a great Protestant emperor famous for his boldness and courage*"<sup>9</sup>, and from his people "*a living nation*", one could only expect a brilliant future.<sup>10</sup>

German - Ottoman friendship was another important subject discussed and commented by the press. William II was presented as "*the best friend of the great Sultan*" and "*the most sincere and loyal monarch in his friendship towards the Sublime and Imperial Majesty*"<sup>11</sup> and this through "*word and action*".<sup>12</sup> Some newspapers considered the enthusiastic reception of the Emperor in evidence of the obedience on the part of the Ottoman nation to the desires of the Sultan - this nation which returns "*gratitude with more gratitude*."<sup>13</sup>; "*if he (i.e., the Sultan) liked something, she (i.e., the nation) would also like it, if he had a distaste for something, she would also have it.*"<sup>14</sup>

Comments on the journey as uttered by the Arabic press apparently exaggerated the political consequences of this event. Some papers considered it as a sign of political understanding and alliance between the German and the Ottoman nation<sup>15</sup>. These positive mutual relations which became even stronger through the journey were described as "*a filled glass pouring out love, friendship and loyalty.*"<sup>16</sup>

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<sup>6</sup> Lisan- al Hal, nos. 2954, Oct. 29, 1898, 3; 2968, Nov. 16, 1898, 1.

<sup>7</sup> Al-Ahram, no. 6257, Oct. 21, 1898, 1.

<sup>8</sup> Al-Mashriq, *Ziyarat muluk Hohenzollern li-l-aradi al-muqaddasa*, 22 (1898), 1050-51.

<sup>9</sup> Al-Ahram, no. 6208, Aug. 25, 1898, 1.

<sup>10</sup> Al-Mausu'at, *al- Alman fi midmar al- Hayat*, 3 (1898), 91.

<sup>11</sup> Al-Misbah, nos. 1269, Aug. 27, 1898, 1; 1276, Oct. 15, 1898, p 1; 1278, Nov. 5, 1898, 1.

<sup>12</sup> Lisan al-Hal, no. 2968, Nov. 16, 1898, 2.

<sup>13</sup> Thamarat al- Funun, no. 1206, Nov. 14, 1898, 1.

<sup>14</sup> Al-Ahram, no. 6257, Oct. 21, 1898, 1.

<sup>15</sup> Lisan al- Hal, no. 2949, Oct. 24, 1898, 1.

<sup>16</sup> Ibid. no. 2968, Nov. 16, 1898, 1

The Egyptian newspaper al-Mu'ayyad regarded the journey as “ *an alliance*” between William II, being “ *the greatest ruler of the West and the dean of Europe* “, and ‘Abd al-Hamid, being “ *the prince of all believers and the dean of all Muslims.*“<sup>17</sup> For the Lebanese paper Thamarat al-Funun the warm reception of the German Emperor in Palestine and Syria showed the people’s consent to Germany’s friendly policy towards the Ottoman Sultan.<sup>18</sup> This Policy happened to take place at a time when European Powers were working on the dismemberment of the Ottoman territories, so the comment of al-Mu’ayyad<sup>19</sup>.

Just before William II started his journey to the East, the same newspaper had published an article by an Ottoman author stating that the military and industrial progress of Germany on the one hand, and the European colonial ambitions of Ottoman possessions on the other hand would constitute the main reasons of Ottoman approaches to Germany. Referring to this Ottoman policy, the author of the article called on Germany to win over Ottoman sympathies for the promotion of German trade and the use of the Ottoman Empire as an ally in any future European conflict. Finally he concluded that mutual assistance would matter most of all for the two countries.<sup>20</sup>

The welcome of “ *political friendship* “ between Germany and the Ottoman Empire was heavily opposed by the Egyptian papers al- Ahram and al-Muqattam. Both criticized German policy concerning the “ Egyptian question “ (i.e., the British occupation) as well as German attempts to usurp Ottoman territories in Asia Minor and on the Syrian coast. Germany was also accused of planning to settle German peasants on Ottoman land, to place Ottoman trade under her control, to gain economic concessions, and to absorb the wealth of the country. Al-Ahram interpreted the journey as purely political and economic enterprise and refused to regard it as a kind of alliance between two states. Because Germany was only working for her own concerns, such an alliance would be nothing else than an “ *illusion* “.

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<sup>17</sup> Al-Mu’ayyad, Sept. 24, 1898, 2. Because of the damaged condition of this newspaper collection, which is deposited in the *Dar al-Kutub al-Qaumiyyah* in Cairo, it is sometimes impossible to quote the number of the issue.

<sup>18</sup> Thamarat al-Funun, no. 1206, Nov. 14, 1898, 1-4.

<sup>19</sup> Al- Mu’ayyad, no. 2614, Nov. 7, 1898, 1.

<sup>20</sup> Al-Mu’ayyad, Sept. 24, 1898, 1-2.

The newspaper went on stating that Germany's moral support to the Ottoman Empire with regard to the upheaval in Crete was not efficient, so that in the following the Ottomans were forced to retire their troops from Thessaly in Central Greece<sup>21</sup>. In the end of the article, al-Ahram rejected again " *German friendship* " by saying: " *We hate to be like the fish eating the bait in the hook which shortly after will muzzle us, or like the bird sowing the seed over the trap set up for us.* " <sup>22</sup>

As for al-Muqattam, it focused on the German attitude towards the Egyptian question and stressed the covert (ulterior) political and economic ambitions of the journey, which included the protectorate over German Catholics in the East, thereby undermining the French position in the region, and the control of the Syrian coast. The newspaper called in question " *our new friend* " (i.e., Germany) who concealed the colonial motives behind friendship.<sup>23</sup>

These " warnings " of " *German friendship* " were accepted with caution by the Lebanese paper al-Huda. According to its opinion, it could be true that Germany had colonial goals in the Ottoman Empire, but the Great Powers, i.e., France and Russia, would never let her achieve these goals<sup>24</sup>. As for the Egyptian newspaper al-Mu'ayyad, approaches between the German and the Ottoman governments were defended and rumours that William II was " *an adherent of the Crescent* " and encouraged the Muslims after the incidents in Armenia and Crete were rejected.<sup>25</sup> With regard to the Egyptian question, the paper wrote that the German Emperor did not yet make his final decision. It was expected that not too far in the future " *Germany would become one of the strongest opponents to England's presence in Egypt.* " <sup>26</sup>

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<sup>21</sup> Al-Ahram, no. 6163, July 4, 1898, 1; nos. 6155, June 24, 1898, 1; 6261, Oct. 26, 1898, 1.

<sup>22</sup> Ibid. no. 6155, June 24, 1898, 1.

<sup>23</sup> Al-Muqattam, nos. 2918, Oct. 29, 1898, 1; 2929, Nov. 11, 1898, 1; 2937, Nov. 21, 1898, 1; 2945, Nov. 30, 1898, 1.

<sup>24</sup> Al-Huda, vol., 1, 35, Oct. 18, 1898, 12-13.

<sup>25</sup> Al-Mu'ayyad, no. 2614, Nov. 7, 1898, 1.

<sup>26</sup> Ibid., Oct. 4, 1898, 1.

## Preparations for the journey

As the visit of the German monarch to the East was regarded an extraordinary event, the Ottoman government had to take special measures concerning security, organization, selection of residences for the Emperor, reception delegations, welcome orations and improvement of infrastructure in the Ottoman cities.

From the beginning, Sultan 'Abd al-Hamid had declared his willingness to bear all expenses of the journey and place it under Ottoman supervision, this being in conformity with Oriental hospitality. However, the German Emperor refused this offer and preferred to charge the company Thomas Cook and Son with all the journey's necessities<sup>27</sup>. Thus, everything (such as carpets, tents, utensils) was bought by the company on the Syrian market and local employees (interpreters, cooks, servants, mule-drivers, ect.) engaged. The firm had also to cover the financial needs of the Emperor during his tour.<sup>28</sup> Shortly before he started his journey, horses and vehicles had been transported from Berlin to Palestine<sup>29</sup>.

After the announcement of the journey, Sultan 'Abd-al-Hamid prepared a suitable place for his guest inside the Yildiz Kiosk, which became furnished with the most beautiful Oriental fittings. The place was situated not far from the one which the Emperor occupied during his first visit to Istanbul in 1889<sup>30</sup>.

Furthermore, the Sultan charged Munir Pasha, the chief of the Protocol, with the preparations for the Emperor's visit to Istanbul, the first station of the guest in the Ottoman Empire<sup>31</sup>. Subsequently, a delegation of high Ottoman officials including several ministers was formed which would receive the Emperor on his arrival at the Dardanelles.<sup>32</sup> Another delegation led by Shakir Pasha, chief of the military staff, had to accompany the

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<sup>27</sup> Al-Muqattam, no. 2856, Aug. 18, 1898, 1.

<sup>28</sup> Al-Misbah, nos. 1269, Aug. 27, 1898, 1-2; 1280, Nov. 19, 1898, 1; Al-Ahram, 6212, Aug. 30, 1898, 1.

<sup>29</sup> Lisan al-Hal, no. 2932, Oct. 4, 1898, 1.

<sup>30</sup> Al-Ahram, no. 6262, Oct. 27, 1898, 1.

<sup>31</sup> Al-Misbah, no. 1269, Aug. 27, 1898, 1.

<sup>32</sup> Al-Ahram, no. 6258, Oct. 23, 1898, 2; Thamarat al-Funun, no. 1204, Oct. 31, 1898, 1.

Emperor during his tour through Greater Syria.<sup>33</sup> In order to be always in touch with the latest news, the Sultan ordered the journalist Ahmad Rasim Bey to participate in the Emperor's round-trip<sup>34</sup>. At the same time, fifteen foreign and Arab journalists came to the main cities of Bilad ash-Sham to cover the event of the Emperor's visit.<sup>35</sup>

In the Provinces of Syria and Beirut and in the district (*Mutasarrifiyyat*) of Mount Lebanon three committees were established by the respective political heads, Nazim Pasha, Rashid Pasha and Na'um Pasha<sup>36</sup>, in order to organize preparatory measures for the arrival of the Emperor. Afterwards, these committees nominated reception delegations composed of high military and civil officials as well as some local notables.<sup>37</sup>

Some ships of the Ottoman navy were prepared for the reception of the Emperor's yacht on its entrance in the Dardanelles, others provided for accompanying his sea convoy to Haifa and Beirut, with an Ottoman delegation on board. Many warships were renewed and repainted.<sup>38</sup> Apart from this, Ottoman forces started training programmes for the reception, others for parades in Istanbul, Beirut and Damascus. A cavalry regiment landed in Haifa to welcome the German guest and then escort him to Jaffa and Jerusalem.<sup>39</sup> According to Arabic reports, the Ottoman soldiers, between 15.000 to 30.000 person, were clothed for the time with new uniforms<sup>40</sup>.

By the time of the journey, the Austrian Empress had been assassinated by an Italian anarchist. Because of rumours that the German Emperor might be the next victim during his trip through Egypt<sup>41</sup> and Palestine, a special

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<sup>33</sup> Al-Misbah, no. 1278, Nov. 5, 1898, 1-2.

<sup>34</sup> Misbah ash-Sharq, Nov. 2, 1898, 2.

<sup>35</sup> Al-Bashir, no. 1357, Oct.31, 1898, 2.

<sup>36</sup> Al-Misbah, no.1269, Aug. 27, 1898, 2.

<sup>37</sup> Al-Ahram, no. 6261, Oct. 26, 1898, 1; al-Misbah, nos.1275, Oct.8, 1898, 1. 1278, Nov.5, 1898, 2; al-Muqattam, no.2934, Nov. 17, 1898, 2.

<sup>38</sup> Thamarat al-Funun, no. 1204, Oct. 31, 1898, 1; Tarablus, no. 279, Oct. 13, 1898, 1.

<sup>39</sup> Al-Ahram, nos. 6258, Oct. 23, 1898, 2; 6261, oct. 26, 1898, 1.

<sup>40</sup> Lisan al-Hal, no. 2944, Oct. 18, 1898, 1; al-Muqattam, no. 2928, Nov. 10, 1898, 2.

<sup>41</sup> In the beginning, it was scheduled that William II would visit Egypt after Syria. However, the plan was cancelled in the last minute, thereby causing many comments by the Arab press. Some papers speculated on an attempt of assassination the Emperor would be exposed to in Egypt;

guard of 500 soldiers was provided for his personal protection.<sup>42</sup> Another 4.000 soldiers were stationed on the road from Beirut to Damascus to safeguard the guest and his suite. In Jerusalem, where the Emperor had spend some nights outside of the city, he gave out for himself every night a secret pass-word before entering the camp, which was watched by 25 patrols.<sup>43</sup> In addition, a large number of secret policemen was drawn up in the Syrian cities and ports.<sup>44</sup> On October 16, 1898, al-Ahram reported the arrival of 12 German secret detectives at Jaffa and Jerusalem.<sup>45</sup> Suspected foreigners, in particular from Italy, were arrested in the Ottoman capital and in major Syria cities. Italian and Greek sailors were not allowed to leave their ships in Syrian ports.<sup>46</sup> As a measure of precaution, also members of the Young Turks were put under arrest in Istanbul.<sup>47</sup>

All of these preparations for the Emperor's visit to Syria were meticulously reported by the Arabic press. From Haifa to Jaffa and Jerusalem, and from Beirut to Damascus and Baalbek, all sorts of decoration were to be seen. German and Ottoman flags with the crown of the eagle and the tughra, triumphal arches and banners of salute in honour of the guest and the host (i.e., the German Emperor and the Ottoman Sultan) were raised<sup>48</sup>. In Damascus, the public was called to hold a celebration for three days. The number of flags raised in this city amounted to 28.000.<sup>49</sup> In Beirut, the Gas Company illuminated the port where the yacht of the Emperor was to come to anchor. A great cupola was erected in the centre of the pier. Similar measures were also carried out in Mount Lebanon. From the Shuf district to

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according to others, for ex. al-Huda, vol. 1, no. 35, Oct. 18, 1898, 12-13 the Emperor feared that his visit to Egypt could be interpreted as a recognition of the sovereignty of the Khedive and the British, which would irritate the Ottoman Sultan. Al-Mu'ayyad, Nov. 15, 1898, 1, commented the cancellation of the visit as having a political reason, i.e., "*not letting Britain exploit it for the consolidation of her influence in Egypt*". Moreover, the paper regarded the German policy "*as a proof that British rule over Egypt was not corresponding with German interests.*"

<sup>42</sup> Al-Ahram, no. 6258, Oct. 23, 1898, 2.

<sup>43</sup> Ibid. nos. 6280, Nov. 17, 1898, 1; 6274, Nov. 10, 1898, 2.

<sup>44</sup> Al-Muqattam, no. 2923, Nov. 14, 1898, 1-2; Lisan al-Hal, nos. 2941, Nov. 14, 1898,1; 2956, Nov. 2, 1898, 1.

<sup>45</sup> Al-Ahram, no. 6261, Oct. 26, 1898, 1.

<sup>46</sup> Al-Muqattam, nos. 2903, Oct. 12, 1898, 1; 2920, Nov. 1, 1898, 1; Lisan al-Hal, no. 2956, Nov. 2, 1898, 1; al-Ahram, no. 6257, Oct. 21, 1898, 1.

<sup>47</sup> Al-Muqattam, no. 2903, Oct. 12, 1898, 1.

<sup>48</sup> Al-Ahram, nos. 6161, Oct. 26, 1898, 1; 6273, Nov. 9, 1898, 1.

<sup>49</sup> Al-Ahram, no. 6281, Nov. 18, 1898, 1.



the Sannin mountain, every location was illuminated. The governor ordered the inhabitants of villages facing the Mediterranean sea to hold celebrations by the display of fireworks.<sup>50</sup> Also Jaffa and Saron were magnificent illuminated and decorated. The same held true for Jerusalem<sup>51</sup>.

With regard to accommodation, the Emperor was expected to take up quarters either on his yacht, in military palaces, or in camps. Consequently, measures were taken to prepare the military sarail in Damascus by furnishing it with the most beautiful fittings<sup>52</sup>. In 'Alayh and Mu'allaqat-Zahlah, camps were set up for the Emperor's rest during his travel by train from Beirut to Damascus. The camp at 'Alayh was surrounded by ceders, pines and other trees which had been cut only for this purpose.<sup>53</sup> In Jerusalem, a camp of 75 tents was erected on an area of 10 feddan outside the city-walls; the tent of the Emperor was decorated with the imperial crown and mound on its top.<sup>54</sup> The tents for the Emperor and his wife as well as some others were sent to Jerusalem by order of the Sultan<sup>55</sup>. As for Baalbek, where the Emperor was to spend one night, the citadel was cleaned and prepared for setting up tents inside of its walls.<sup>56</sup>

In all cities of Syria, in which the visitor was expected, roads became repaired or reconstructed, and walls of public and private buildings as well as shops repainted.<sup>57</sup> In Damascus, the street from al-Baramikah trainstation to the al-Marjah quarter was repaired, 5.000 shops and 2.000 square metres of walls repainted.<sup>58</sup> In Beirut, streets from the port to the railway station in *an-Nahr* were recovered with sands.<sup>59</sup> Likewise, in Palestine communications were improved and constructed; thus, for example, a new road was built between Jerusalem and the Mount of Olives so that the Emperor's coaches be able to pass. Many old houses were

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<sup>50</sup> Al-Misbah, no. 1278, Nov. 5, 1898, 2; Lisan al-Hal, no. 2954 (sic), Oct. 31, 1898, 2; al-Bashir, no. 1358, Nov.7, 1898, 2; al-Ahram, no. 6275, Nov. 11, 1898, 1.

<sup>51</sup> Lisan al-Hal, no. 2958, Nov. 4, 1898, 1.

<sup>52</sup> Al-Bashir, no. 1359, Nov. 12, 1898, 2.

<sup>53</sup> Lisan al-Hal, no. 2954 (sic), Oct. 31, 1898, 2; al-Ahram, no. 6280, Nov. 17, 1898, 1.

<sup>54</sup> Al-Ahram, nos. 6267, Nov.2, 1898, 1; 6273, Nov. 9, 1898, 1.

<sup>55</sup> Thamarat al-Funun, no. 1204, Oct. 31, 1898, 7.

<sup>56</sup> Al-Ahram, 6257, Oct. 21, 1898, 1.

<sup>57</sup> Thamarat al-Funun, no. 1204, Oct. 31, 1898, 7.

<sup>58</sup> Al-Bashir, no. 1359, Nov.12, 1898, 1.

<sup>59</sup> Al-Misbah, no. 1278, Nov. 5, 1898, 2.

pulled down in Jerusalem, Beirut and Baalbek in order to widen the streets for the visitor's convoy.<sup>60</sup> In Haifa, a pier of 70 metres length was constructed for his yacht to come to anchor.<sup>61</sup> Finally, three trains were put at the disposal of William II and his entourage to go from Beirut to Damascus<sup>62</sup>, and in Baalbek stables for horses and large parking place for the Emperor's vehicles set up. Also the water tank of this location was cleaned.<sup>63</sup>

### **Stations of the journey**

The first stop of the Emperor's tour through the Orient was the Ottoman capital Istanbul. From there he went by sea to Palestine to visit its main places, going on with yacht to Beirut and from there by train to Damascus and Baalbek. Finally, he returned via Beirut to his home country. The whole journey lasted from 16 October to 12 November.

#### **Istanbul (16 October to 22 October)**

On Monday, Oct. 16, the German Emperor William II arrived at the Dardanelles, on board of his yacht "*Hohenzollern*". He was accompanied by his wife, the Empress Auguste Victoria, and by Foreign Minister Bülow and other high officials, plus his retinue. 110 musicians and singers needed for the inauguration ceremony of the Redeemer's Church and some photographers also belonged to the Emperor's team.<sup>64</sup>

When the "*Hohenzollern*" reached the Dardanelles, the ship was welcomed by the Sultan's yacht "*'Izz ad-Din*", with an Ottoman delegation on board of it. At the same time, guns from Ottoman warships and fortresses were firing salute the German guests. Due to a sudden high wind and storm, the Emperor's yacht was forced to postpone landing for the next day.

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<sup>60</sup> Al-Muqattam, nos. 2856, Aug. 18, 1898, 1; 2928, Nov. 10, 1898, 2; al-Ahram, no. 6257, Oct. 21, 1898, 2.

<sup>61</sup> Al-Misbah, no. 1269, Aug. 27, 1898, 2.

<sup>62</sup> Thamarat al-Funun, nos. 1205, Nov. 7, 1898, 6; 1206, Nov. 14, 1898, 2; al-Misbah, no. 1276, Oct. 15, 1898, 1.

<sup>63</sup> Al-Ahram, no. 6257, Oct. 21, 1898, 1.

<sup>64</sup> Al-Nashrah al-'Usbu'iyah, *Akhbar*, 1702, Sept. 10, 1898, 306.

On Tuesday morning, Sultan 'Abd al-Hamid and his court awaited the guests at the Dolmabahce Palace. From there, the two monarchs proceeded in a great convoy through the main streets of the Ottoman capital, which was crowded with spectators and soldiers. During his stay, the Emperor met the Sultan three times <sup>65</sup>. His official visiting programme was scheduled as following: party dinners and receptions, sightseeing of the city (the Golden Horn, the Walls, the Great Market, the Aya Sofya Mosque, the Mosque of Sultan Ahmad, Topkapi Serail), visits of the Hereke factory famous for carpet production and of German institutions, such as the Embassy, the Club, the School and the Hospital. <sup>66</sup>

The Emperor's programme reached its peak when he witnessed the Sultan's going to Friday prayer in the Hamidiyyah Mosque (*Selamlık*). Another extraordinary event was a great military parade in honour of the German guest who was deeply impressed by the discipline of the Ottoman soldiers. <sup>67</sup>

On the day of departure to Palestine, many Arabic newspapers reported on the moving and emotional farewell. Thamarat al-Funun wrote that the Sultan, the Emperor and the Empress stopped talking for a moment, while tears were falling down from the eyes of the latter. She praised the Sultan and his people for their hospitality, kindness and moral behaviour. <sup>68</sup>

### **Palestine (25 October to 4 November)**

On Tuesday, Oct. 25, William II arrived at the port of Haifa on board of his yacht, where he was welcomed by the Governors of Syria, Beirut and Acre as well as some 20.000 of the local population. The artillery of Acre was firing salute to the guest <sup>69</sup>. His tour through Palestine lasted 10 days including the visit of Haifa, Jaffa, Jerusalem, Bethlehem and some archeological sites. In every place he was given a warm and friendly

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<sup>65</sup> Al-Mu'ayyad, no.2614, Nov. 7, 1898,1.

<sup>66</sup> On William II's movements in Istanbul, see Thamarat al-Funun, nos. 1204, Oct. 31, 1898, 1-2; 1205, Nov. 7, 1898, 3-5; Lisan al-Hal, no. 2954 (sic), Oct. 31, 1898, 1-2.

<sup>67</sup> For more informations on the *Selamlık* and the military parade, see al-Ahram, no. 6265, Nov. 31, 1898, 1. Compare with al-Bashir, no. 1358, Nov.7, 1898,1; al-Muqattam, no. 2920, Nov.1, 1898, 1.

<sup>68</sup> Thamarat al-Funun, no. 1206, Nov. 14, 1898, 6.

<sup>69</sup> Al-Bashir, no. 1357, Oct. 31, 1898, 2; Thamarat al-Funun, no. 1204, Oct. 31, 1898, 2.

reception <sup>70</sup>.

During his sojourn in Haifa, the Emperor visited Mount Carmel, the German Consulate at Haifa, the monasteries of the Catholic nuns and the religious establishments of the Protestants. <sup>71</sup> He received Father Biever, director of the German Catholic colony at Tabighah <sup>72</sup>, and also met the German Templars in their establishments. <sup>73</sup>

On October 26, the Emperor left Haifa on horseback to go to Jaffa. He passed by 'Atlit and Caesarea to visit their archeological remains and then stopped at Burj al-Khayl for spending the night there <sup>74</sup>. Next morning, while going on to Jaffa, he witnessed cavalry games of the Hauja' Bedouins <sup>75</sup>. At his arrival at Jaffa in the evening, he was cordially received by an Ottoman delegation, the city's high-ranking religious dignitaries ('*ulama*') and the Templar colonists headed by the German consul. <sup>76</sup>

Having visited al-Latrun on Friday, Oct. 28, and stayed there overnight, on the next day the Emperor's convoy entered Jerusalem, being saluted by gunfiring and music from all sides. Thamarat al-Funun reported that some 200.000 people were waiting for the Emperor along the way from Jaffa to Jerusalem. <sup>77</sup> Throughout Saturday and Sunday, William II was busy with his programme. He visited the Church of the Holy Sepulcher, meeting there welcome speeches from the Latin, the Armenian and the Orthodox Patriarch. With regard to this event, al-Muqattam stated that the Pope had ordered all seniors of the Catholic Church in Palestine to treat the German monarch as a "*usual*", i.e., non-Catholic person, as the canonical laws of the Church prohibited to do other than this. <sup>78</sup> Thereafter, the Emperor paid a visit to the Lutheran Christmas Church at Bethlehem; then he inaugurated the German Evangelical Church in this town. Furthermore, he

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<sup>70</sup> Lisan al-Hal, nos. 2954 (sic), Oct. 31, 1898, 1-2; 2958, Nov. 4, 1898, 1-2; 2960, Nov. 7, 1898, 1-2.

<sup>71</sup> Thamarat al-Funun, no. 1204, Oct. 31, 1898, 3.

<sup>72</sup> Al-Bashir, no. 1359, Nov. 12, 1898, 1.

<sup>73</sup> Al-Muqattam, no. 2922, Nov. 3, 1898, 1.

<sup>74</sup> Al-Ahram, no. 6267, Nov. 2, 1898, 1.

<sup>75</sup> Thamarat al-Funun, no.1204, Oct. 31, 1898, 4.

<sup>76</sup> Al-Ahram, no.6267, Nov. 2, 1898, 1.

<sup>77</sup> Thamarat al-Funun, no. 1204, Oct. 31, 1898, 4.

<sup>78</sup> Al-Muqattam, no. 2919, Oct.31, 1898, 1.

visited the Mount of Olives in Jerusalem as well as the Anglican Church of Saint Georges.

The consecration of the Redeemer's Church in Jerusalem on Monday morning, October 31, constituted the realization of the William's II religious motive for his journey to Palestine <sup>79</sup>. Al-Nashrah al-Ushbu'iyyah stated that the Emperor himself had chosen this date for the consecration, as it was the same as the one of the beginning of the Lutheran Reformation in Germany (31 October 1517).<sup>80</sup> In the afternoon of the same day, William II came to the David's Tomb to receive there a piece of land " *Coenaculum* " <sup>81</sup> granted to him from the Sultan. On this occasion, the Emperor promised to build a church on this ground for his Catholic countrymen. <sup>82</sup> This promise was meant to express the Emperor's policy of equality towards his people, treating adherents of Protestantism and of Catholicism in the same way. Later on, William II visited the Armenian monastery and the Orthodox Patriarchate. To conclude his programme in Jerusalem, he went to see the Noble Sanctuary (*al-Haram ash-Sharif*), the Aqsa Mosque and the Rock, Sulaiman's Fountains, the German Hospital, the Syrian Orphanage, and the Tombs of the (Mamluk) Sultans. <sup>83</sup>

### **Beirut - Damascus – Baalbek (5 November to 12 November)**

After his journey through Palestine, William II returned by train to the port of Jaffa where he embarked for Beirut. On Saturday morning, November 5, he reached the Lebanese city. Its port was crowded with 50.000 people to welcome the Emperor, among them many students who had a holiday for this special event. On the following day, an Ottoman delegation headed by Shakir Pasha and Rashid Bey accompanied by 'Abd al-Qadir Qabbani, chief of the Municipality of Beirut, paid a visit to the Emperor on his yacht and presented him with Oriental textiles

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<sup>79</sup> The history of the German Evangelical Church in Jerusalem goes back to 1869, when the Crownprince Frederick William had received this piece of land by the Sultan. Architectural design was done from 1871 to 1874, but construction only started in 1892, see al-Nashrah al-Ushbu'iyyah, *al-Kanisah al-Injiliyyah fi-l -Quds ash-Sharif*, no.1702, Sept. 10, 1898, 304.

<sup>80</sup> Al-Nashrah al-Ushbu'iyyah, no. 1702, 304.

<sup>81</sup> For more details on the *Coenaculum*, see my book, *Deutsche Interessen*, 222-224.

<sup>82</sup> Lisan al-Hal, no. 2960, Nov. 7, 1898, 1.

<sup>83</sup> Al-Ahram, no. 6274, Nov. 10, 1898, 1-2.

inscribed with sayings in memory of his visit to Beirut.<sup>84</sup>

After lunch with the delegation, the Emperor went on land to visit the city. At the Prussian Hospital he met the American physicians who worked there, while his wife, the Empress, paid a visit to the kaiserswerth school. Later on, William II turned to the military barracks to take part in a parade<sup>85</sup>, and then went on to the military garden at al-Hurj quarter (al-Hadiqah al-Faruqiyyah)<sup>86</sup>.

From Beirut the journey was continued by train to Damascus on Monday, October 7. . All along the way, the Emperor was welcomed by officials and local people who set up decorations in their towns and villages, as it happened everywhere during the journey. In 'Alayh, William II was received by the Governor Na 'um Pasha, while the German and the Ottoman hymns were played. When coming to Mu'allaqat - Zahlah, William II was awaited by some 60.000 people. One of the triumphal arches set up there was decorated with slogans in honour of the Sultan and his quest.<sup>87</sup>

After lunch at al- Mu'allaqah , the Emperor went on reaching the Baramikah trainstation of Damascus in the evening. He entered the city on horseback, while his wife rode in a wagon through the streets. Salutes of gunfiring and enthusiastic shouting of crowds of spectators could be heard from all sides. William II passed by the Tekke of Sultan Selim and then to the Jisr al-Hadid (*Iron Bridge*) where many students from military and civil schools applauded the visitor. Finally, he entered the military sarail where he was to lodge during his stay in Damascus.<sup>88</sup> The newspaper al-Muqattam described the reception of the Emperor as a very warm and cordial event, stating that people had demonstrated joy and happiness to an extent which the Orient had never experienced before.<sup>89</sup>

Will stayed until Thursday morning, Nov. 9, in Damascus. His visiting

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<sup>84</sup> Al-Bashir, no. 1358, Nov. 7, 1898, 2; Thamarat al-Funun, no. 1205, Nov. 7, 1898, 2; al-Misbah, no. 1269, Aug. 27, 1898, 1; al-Ahram, no. 6276, Nov. 12, 1898, 1.

<sup>85</sup> Lisan al-Hal, no. 2960, Nov.7, 1898, 2.

<sup>86</sup> Thamarat al-Funun, no. 1206, Nov. 14, 1898, 5; al-Misbah, no. 1279, Nov. 12, 1898, 1.

<sup>87</sup> Al-Bashir, no. 1359, Nov. 12, 1898, 1.

<sup>88</sup> Al-Misbah, no. 1280, Nov. 19, 1898, 1-2; Thamarat al-Funun, no. 1206, Nov. 14, 1898, 2.

<sup>89</sup> Al-Muqattam, no. 2933, Nov. 16, 1898, 1.

programme comprised the Umayyah Mosque, the Tomb of Sultan Salah ad-Din, the 'Azm Palace as well houses of Jubran Shamiyyah<sup>90</sup>, Nazim Pasha, and Lütticke, the German vice-consul at Damascus. The Emperor also made a tour through the city, mounted Jabal Qasyun, and witnessed cavalry games and military parades in al-Marja. His wife paid a visit to the town of Dummar, On Nov. 7, a great dinner sponsored by the city's municipality was offered to the guests.<sup>91</sup>

Escorted by 1.000 Arab horsemen s<sup>92</sup>, the Emperor left Damascus on Nov. 10, for Baalbek where he arrived at sunset. Inside of the citadel a night camp had been prepared for him, not far from the Temple of the Sun. The visit to Baalbek was exactly scheduled for the moment when the full moon would light the temple.<sup>93</sup> William II walked through the citadel with music and the German hymn being performed.<sup>94</sup> One of the daughters of Habib Pasha Mutran<sup>95</sup> (Victoria) gave an address in French to welcome the Emperor's wife. She praised her by saying: "*The Temple of Baalbek is looking upon you as the greatest crowned head ever seen since 1.500 years, bowing out of esteem with all his past glories in view of your present glory.*"<sup>96</sup>

On the following day (Friday, Nov. 11), Mikha'il Aluf , a man of letters, presented the Emperor his book on Baalbek<sup>97</sup>. Then, William II lifted the curtain from a stone plate manufactured at the order of the Sultan to memorize the Emperor's visit to Baalbek. This stone plate consisted of white marble (4 □ 2 meters), surrounded by black and white mosaic stones and divided into two equal halves each of it wearing the distinguished Ottoman and German emblems plus inscriptions in both languages saying:

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<sup>90</sup> The Emperor's father was quest in the house of Shamiyyah, during his visit to Damascus in 1869, see al-Ahram, no. 6281, Nov. 18, 1898, 1.

<sup>91</sup> Al-Muqattam, nos. 2933, Nov. 16, 1898, 1; 2934, Nov. 17, 1898, 2; 2936, Nov. 19, 1898, 1; al-Bashir, no. 1359, Nov. 12, 1898, 2; al-Nashrah al-Usubu'iyah, *Ziyarat Jalalat Imbratur Almaniya wa- l-Imbraturah li-Filastin wa Surriyyah*, no. 1715, Dec.10, 1898, 427-429.

<sup>92</sup> Al-Muqattam, no. 2936, Nov. 19, 1898, 1.

<sup>93</sup> Tarablus, no. 279, Oct. 13, 1898, 1.

<sup>94</sup> Lisan al-Hal, no. 2966, Nov. 14, 1898, 1.

<sup>95</sup> Lebanese politician and one of the people of the Arab Renaissance.

<sup>96</sup> Al-Ahram, no. 6283, Nov. 21, 1898, 2.

<sup>97</sup> Mikha'il Aluf al-Ba'albaki, *Tarikh Ba'albak*, 4.ed., Beirut 1926.

“ *In memory of the solid allegiance between His Majesty, the Sultan, the Conqueror, ‘Abd al-Hamid Khan II, and His Majesty, the Emperor William II.*”<sup>98</sup> Although the stone plate was fixed at the vestibule through which one entered the citadel, the Emperor preferred its setting opposite to the famous pillars of the Temple of Jupiter. So he hit the favoured location three times, using a golden pick. At this moment, the court photographer took many pictures of the Emperor who was standing in front of the stone plate. After this ceremony William II continued his visit of the ruins of Baalbek, watching the Temple of Venus and the Phoenician wall.<sup>99</sup>

The sejour at Baalbek was the last station of the Emperor’s journey. Thereafter, he left via al-Mu’allaqah and ‘Alayh for Beirut. On Saturday, Nov. 12, he returned from there on board of his ship to his home country. Al-Ahram wrote the following: “ *So this great journey came to its end - a journey which will remain for history an everlasting memory and a grand influence.* “<sup>100</sup>

### **Public addresses of the Emperor**

William’s II speeches held during his journey focused on three issues: the warm reception he met due to German - Ottoman friendship, the support given to German presence in the Ottoman Empire, and his loyalty towards the Muslims and the Sultan as their Caliph.

According to Arabic newspaper reports, the Emperor took every chance to demonstrate his gratitude for the welcome he received. At one time, he compared the treatment experienced during his tour from the Sultan to “ *a kindness of a father to his son.* “<sup>101</sup> He also made clear that the friendship of his father, Frederick William, towards the Sultanate was strengthened through his own journey and the “ *delicious fruits* “ resulting from it. Furthermore, he underlined “ *that the two nations which are different in terms of race and religion can hold together through loyalty and mutual support.* “<sup>102</sup> As seen by the Emperor, these German - Ottoman cordial

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<sup>98</sup> Lisan al-Hal, no. 2966, Nov. 14, 1898, 1; Compare with al-Misbah, no. 1279, Nov.12, 1898, 2.

<sup>99</sup> Lisan al-Hal, no.2966, Nov. 14, 1898, 1; Thamarat al-Funun, no. 1206, Nov. 14, 1898, 4.

<sup>100</sup> Al-Ahram, 6283, Nov. 21, 1898, 2.

<sup>101</sup> Thamarat al-Funun, no. 1204, Oct. 31, 1898, 3.

<sup>102</sup> From the Emperor’s speech at the German Embassy in Istanbul, al-Bashir, no. 1357, Oct.31,



relations opened him the doors to Palestine and let him go on a pilgrimage to the Holy Land. Commenting his “ *peaceful policy* “, he criticized, during his speech at the Redeemer’s Church, the Crusaders for having invaded Palestine by sword, whereas he entered by peace.<sup>103</sup>

On the eve of his departure from Beirut to Germany, William II asked the Ottoman delegation to tell the Sultan that he would never forget this journey and always respect the friendship between him and ‘Abd al-Hamid, wishing him “ *a long life full of progress and success.* “<sup>104</sup>

The Emperor’s satisfaction did not only result from the official measures of the Ottoman government to make his visit successful. He was also deeply touched by “ *the feelings and sympathies* “ shown by the Ottoman people. To him, the way he was honoured in Beirut clearly demonstrated the people’s belief in the German - Ottoman friendship.<sup>105</sup> With regard to his reception in Damascus, William II stated that “ *never since his accession to the throne he had experienced a warm welcome to his public visits comparable to the one shown by the people of Damascus* “.<sup>106</sup> Turning to the governor Nazim Pasha, he said: “ *If an emperor wants to see great respect and honour, he should come to Damascus.* “<sup>107</sup> As reported by Khalil Sarkis, owner of Lisan al-Hal, the Emperor said about his admiration of Damascus: “ *Nothing is more beautiful on earth than Damascus.* ”<sup>108</sup> These sorts of speeches were transformed into rumours according to which the Emperor had said never to have experienced an enthusiastic welcome as in the Ottoman Empire, with the exception of the day when he was enthroned. Another rumour made him to have said in Damascus: “ *Let may people of 40 millions of Germans come to these lands to learn how monarchs are welcomed in the East.* “<sup>109</sup>

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1898,1; al-Muqattam, no. 2915, Oct.26, 1898, 1.

<sup>103</sup> Al-Ahram, no. 6274, Nov. 10, 1898, 1.

<sup>104</sup> Al-Misbah, no. 1281, Nov. 26, 1898, 1-2.

<sup>105</sup> Conversation between the Emperor and the Ottoman delegation, shortly before departing to Germany, al-Misbah, nos. 1279, Nov. 12, 1898, 1;1281, Nov. 26, 1898, 1-2.

<sup>106</sup> Al-Muqattam, no. 2936, Nov. 19, 1898, 1.

<sup>107</sup> Al-Bashir, no. 1359, Nov. 12, 1898, 2.

<sup>108</sup> *Ash-Sham qabla mi’at ‘Am. Rihlat al-Imbratur Ghalyum ath-Thani Imbratur Almaniya wa qarinatuhu ila Filastin wa Surriyyah.* Sajjala waqa’i’aha Khalil Sarkis, ‘ania biha Hasan al-Samahi Suwaydan, Tab‘ah 2, Dimashq 1997, 5.

<sup>109</sup> Thamarat al-Funun, no. 1206, Nov. 14, 1898, 4.

On the other hand, the speeches now and again pointed at the successful results of German policy towards the Orient. William II regarded the number of Ottoman students in German schools as a proof of success of German culture, “ *a victory for the German element.* ”<sup>110</sup> During his visit to Istanbul he considered his policy to be “ *a source of blessing* ” for the German residents in the Ottoman Empire<sup>111</sup>, as they could profit from this by obtaining “ *high state positions.*”<sup>112</sup> When meeting the Templars of Palestine, the Emperor was pleased to learn that they did not give up their patriotism. He assured them to firmly cooperate with the Sultan for securing their future.<sup>113</sup> For William II, this emphasis on Patriotism also implied a policy of treating his people equally, irrespective of their confessional belonging. The issue was clearly demonstrated by the Emperor’s promise at the David’s Tomb that “ *as he had built a church for the German Protestants, he would also build one for the German Catholic on this piece of land* ” granted to him by the Sultan.<sup>114</sup> The Emperor stressed his readiness to protect his German Catholics<sup>115</sup> and called them “ *to always trust in his imperial protection, whenever and wherever they need it.*”<sup>116</sup>

Apart from all what had been said about the Emperor’s speeches, the two he delivered in Damascus at the Tomb of Salah-ad-Din on October 7, and during the dinner at the same day offered by the Municipality were regarded as the most political events during the whole journey. Both speeches attracted the local as well as the international press<sup>117</sup>. On Tuesday morning, Nov.7, the Emperor visited the Tomb of Salah ad-Din, on top of which a garland of flowers was deposited by his wife. The garland was decorated with a banner, saying in Arabic: “ *William II, Emperor of Germany and King of Prussia, in memory of the hero Sultan Salah ad-Din* ”

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<sup>110</sup> Al-Muqattam, no. 2916, Oct. 27, 1898, 1.

<sup>111</sup> Conversation between the Emperor and the German community in Istanbul, al-Ahram, no. 6262, Oct. 27, 1898,1.

<sup>112</sup> Al-Muqattam, no. 2916, Oct. 27, 1898, 1.

<sup>113</sup> Al-Muqattam, nos. 2922, Nov. 3, 1898, 1; 2928, Nov. 10, 1898, 1; 2934, Nov. 17, 1898, 2.

<sup>114</sup> Al-Nashrah al-Usbu’iyyah, *Ziyarat Imbratur Almaniya ,wa- l-Imbraturah ila Filastin wa Surriyyah*, no. 1712, Nov. 19, 1898, 400-401.

<sup>115</sup> Al-Manar, *Athar ‘an Imbratur Almaniya ( fi ash-Sham wa-l-Quds)*, vol. 1, part 36, 1315/1316, 713.

<sup>116</sup> From the Emperor’s speech in Haifa, answering Biever, director of the German Catholic Hospice at Tabighah, al-Bashir, no. 1359, Nov. 12, 1898, 1.

<sup>117</sup>.See my study on the echo of the journey in the international press, “ in prep.”.

*al-Ayyubi*.”<sup>118</sup> Both al-Manar and al-Mu’ayyad reported correspondingly that the Emperor abode in silence and spread his hands as if to invoke mercy on the dead. Then he said that Salah ad-Din was the great sign of his time, due to his boldness, justice and noble nature.<sup>119</sup>

This utterance of the Emperor was not made incidentally, but well-considered. On the evening at the same day he was honoured by the dinner already mentioned. On this occasion, a young man called Salim Thabit delivered a speech on Muslim-Christian coexistence in the Ottoman Empire, followed by another address from Shaykh Muhammad ‘Ali al-Kuzbari who spoke on behalf of the people of Damascus. Al-Kuzbari welcomed the German Emperor by pointing at the friendship between him and the Sultan and by speaking of “ *the white hand and the help* “ of the Emperor to the Ottoman nation; for these deeds he would always have a place in the hearts of the Ottomans and the Muslims.<sup>120</sup>

Answering to these respectful words of al-Kuzbari, William II declared his pleasure to be “ *in a city of someone who was the greatest hero of all past rulers, the noble man whose rank increased by teaching his enemies how heroes ought to be; the fearless fighter, the great Sultan Salah ad-Din al-Ayyubi* “. Then he added: “ *May His Highness, the powerful Sultan ‘Abd al-Hamid Khan II, and the 300 millions of Muslims firmly bound by His exalted Caliphate and spread all over the earth be sure that the German Emperor will always remain their most sincere friend.*”<sup>121</sup>

This speech took great effect on the Muslims of Bilad ash-Sham<sup>122</sup>: First, because the Emperor praised a unique military and political leader who had defended the *Dar al-Islam* against the Crusaders; and second, because he referred to the Islamic Caliphate represented by ‘Abd al-Hamid and to the bonds of Panislamism which intensified the links of the Muslims to the Caliphate. Commenting the speech, al-Manar interpreted the Emperor’s reason for praising Salah al-Din as follows: “ *William II is a warrior because*

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<sup>118</sup> Thamarat al-Funun, no. 1206, Nov. 14, 1898, 2.

<sup>119</sup> Al-Manar, *Athar ‘an Imbratur Almaniya*, vol. 1, part 36, 711; al-Mu’ayyad, no. 2623, Nov. 17, 1898, 1.

<sup>120</sup> Lisan al-Hal, no. 2965, Nov. 12, 1898, 2.

<sup>121</sup> Thamarat al-Funun, no. 1207, Nov. 21, 1898, 1-2.

<sup>122</sup> Al-Muqattam, no. 2936, Nov. 19, 1898, 1.

*he is leader of the best army of the world. Salah ad-Din was the best warrior of his time. It is typical of man," the journal added " , that somebody distinguished by something will pay respect to his equal, even if he was his enemy ... in wars, the brave feels sorry for the brave when he is killed, even if through his sword ..."* <sup>123</sup> Al-Mu'ayyad remarked that the honourable characteristics of Salah ad-Din attracted the German Emperor like a magnet so that he became like him, "*although William II was propagating Christianity in the 19<sup>th</sup> century, while Salah al-Din was protecting and propagating Islam in the 12<sup>th</sup> century.*" <sup>124</sup>

Reporting on the present of chandeliers to the Tomb of Salah ad-Din by William II shortly after the outbreak of World war I, the Damascus newspaper Ababil recalled the Emperor's visit to the Tomb of Salah ad-Din in 1898 and raised the question, whether this happened because the Emperor was fascinated by Salah ad-Din's knowledge and arts of warship or "*because he had understood the basis of the Islamic religion and been convinced of it as being the true m and the right path.*" <sup>125</sup>

Concerning the other speech at the dinner delivered by Salim Thabit, the Emperor called for the speaker the next day to tell him: "*The weight (i.e. meaning) of your speech yesterday came to me in my dreams.*" <sup>126</sup> In the opinion of the journal al-Jami'ah al-'uthmaniyyah, the words of the Emperor were meant political because he wanted to express his admiration for the Muslim-Christian coexistence in the Ottoman Empire and the situation of its Christian residents compared to the situation of the religious minorities living under colonial rule- this being in contrast to what as publicized by western media. The journal stated that William II was struck by Ottomanism because it secured the safety of the state from inside, and by Panislamism because it strenghtened the spiritual bonds between the Caliphate and the Muslims all over the world so that enemies would habe to take them into consideration. The journal further wrote that the Emperor's attitude was

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<sup>123</sup> Al-Manar, *Athar 'an Imbratur Almaniya*, vol. 1., part 36, 714-715.

<sup>124</sup> Al-Mu`ayyad, no. 2623, Nov. 17, 1898, 1.

<sup>125</sup> Ababil, Dec. 21, 1914, 2. This document was found in: *politisches Archiv des Ausw?rtigen Amt - Bonn* , Türkei 177, Libanon, R 14032, l?ztved an Wagenheim, Damaskus Dec. 22, 1914, A 2046. Unfortunately I could not find any further information on this paper.

<sup>126</sup> Al-Ahram, no. 6282, Nov. 19, 1898, 1.

pretty useful for Panislamism, in particular because he did not consider it dangerous. On the other hand, the journal made clear that the Emperor also profited by the Panislamic Movement as “ *it is not something small to gain the friendship of 300 millions of Muslims* “. The paper came to the conclusion that history will judge of William II in the future: “ *At the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> and the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> centuries, Germany was ruled by a young monarch whose greatness and justice detested to join the greedy vultures flying eagerly over the lands of the Ottoman Empire.*” <sup>127</sup>

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<sup>127</sup> Al-Jami‘ah al-‘Uthmaniyyah, *al-Imbratur Ghiliyum wa- l-Jami‘ah al-‘Uthmaniyyah wa- l-Islamiyyah*, Part 2, April 1, 1899, 18-19.