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Circulations dans la péninsule Arabique pendant la Première Guerre mondiale

Circulations dans la péninsule Arabique et la mer Rouge

The “very real bogey”. The Stotzingen-Neufeld Mission to the Hijāz (1916)

Le « véritable intrus ». La mission Stotzingen-Neufeld au Hedjaz (1916)

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Résumés

English Français

In World War I Germany adopted a policy to incite uprisings in the Muslim world (Holy War “made in Germany”) against the Entente, especially Britain. In this context several propaganda missions were conducted. The task of the Stotzingen-Neufeld mission was to establish a propaganda center in the Yemen from where agitation in East Africa (Sudan, Abyssinia, Somalia) was to be carried out. The undertaking was poorly and hastily prepared. Furthermore, Jamāl Pasha’s delaying tactics contributed to its eventual failure. If the Stotzingen-Neufeld mission achieved anything, it was that it prompted Ḥusayn b. ‘Alī, the Sharīf of Mecca, to announce the Revolt prematurely. The article deals with the planning and financing of the operation, the composition of the group, the different stages of the expedition, as well as its relations with the Ottoman authorities. The material used includes sources from the British National Archives and the German Foreign Office.

Durant la Première Guerre mondiale, l’Allemagne développa des politiques destinées à inciter les musulmans à se révolter contre les pays de l’Entente, en particulier l’Angleterre, dans une Guerre Sainte « made in Germany ». Parmi les diverses missions de propagande menées, l’objectif de la mission Stotzingen-Neufeld était d’établir un centre de propagande au Yémen pour répandre l’agitation en Afrique de l’Est (Soudan, Abyssinie, Somalie). L’entreprise fut préparée à la hâte et avec peu de moyens, mais ce sont surtout les manœuvres dilatoires de Jamāl Pacha, le très puissant commandant de la 4^e Armée ottomane au Levant, qui contribuèrent à son échec final. Il restera cependant à son actif d’avoir précipité Ḥusayn b. ‘Alī, le chérif de La Mecque, à proclamer la Grande Révolte arabe. À partir de sources tirées des Archives nationales britanniques et des archives du ministère des Affaires étrangères allemand, l’article traite de la planification et du financement de l’opération, de la composition

de la mission, des différentes étapes de l'expédition, ainsi que des relations de la mission avec les autorités ottomanes.

Entrées d'index

Mots-clés : Première Guerre mondiale, Révolte arabe, Ḥusayn b. 'Alī, jihad, Jamāl Pasha, voyage, Hedjaz, Allemagne

Keywords : World War I, Arab Revolt, Ḥusayn b. 'Alī, Jamāl Pasha, jihad, Hijāz, Germany

Texte intégral

Introduction

- 1 Islam played a major role in the strategies of the opponents in the Middle East in World War I. Already in the late 19th century, Sultan Abdülhamid, based upon his claim to be caliph of all Muslims (*umma*), had developed Pan-Islam (*ittihād-i islām*) as a state doctrine. Although primarily espousing Turkish nationalism, the Young Turk leadership also utilized Pan-Islam for wartime mobilization. In November 1914 the Shaykh ül-Islām proclaimed Holy War (*jihād*). The German government was seeking ways to destabilize Russian and British rule in the Near East and Western Asia by inciting Muslim revolt (also known as the *jihād* “made in Germany”).¹ German proponents of *jihād* failed to perceive the significance of ethnic differences, local loyalties and power ambitions, as well as — among Arab Muslims — the negative experience of Ottoman rule.
- 2 The “Memorandum for the revolutionization of the Islamic territories of our foes”, penned by Baron Max von Oppenheim in October 1914, outlined a program for German-Ottoman strategies. The holy war declared against the Entente would lead to throwing off “alien rule”. To this aim, apart from warfare proper, mixed propaganda and military campaigns would be carried out in certain areas of the Middle East. With regard to the Hijāz and the Yemen, according to Oppenheim’s scheme, German posts facilitating such work should be established in places such as Ma‘ān, Jidda, Yanbu‘ and Ḥudayda.² British and Italian footholds across the Red Sea in Sudan, Eritrea, and Abyssinia clashed with German interests further south; thus they became target areas for such operations.
- 3 A series of German expeditions to the Hijāz had several common objectives. They were to assess public opinion and the loyalties of those in power. A second charge was to develop and spread propaganda for the central powers. A third function of the missions was to recruit agents to dispatch to Sudan and Abyssinia to carry out agitation against England. There were at least two such missions.³
- 4 The hopes placed in these expeditions were not shared by all involved officials, not to mention that the Ottoman “comrade in arms” disapproved of them. Moreover, there was confusion and bickering over responsibilities and authority in the various departments of the relevant ministries (Foreign Office, Colonial Office and General Staff). The embassy in Istanbul and especially its military section were not properly (or not at all) informed about the planning and sending of expeditions.⁴ The activities which were to grow out of Oppenheim’s program suffered from a lack of organization and resources.⁵ Ultimately, the German expeditions were failures to the extent that they did not bring about the hoped for Muslim revolts and destabilization of British rule. But the missions aroused among the British an excessive “feeling of being threatened”⁶ or created, in the words of Lawrence, “the very real bogey”.⁷
- 5 In this series of operations, the Stotzingen-Neufeld mission was the last, at a time when the expectations connected with the expeditions had diminished.⁸ Though this

mission has not gone unnoticed by historiography, most of the relevant writings devote just a few lines or pages to it and, more importantly, have taken into account only a limited number of the available primary sources. Therefore, the aim of this article is to combine the existent information, to reconstruct the origins, chronology, course, itinerary and results of the mission in order to attempt a comprehensive assessment.⁹

The origins of the Stotzingen-Neufeld mission: Neufeld's one man-expedition to Medina (July–September 1915)

6 The first steps leading to what was later to become the Stotzingen-Neufeld mission were taken at the end of 1915. The operation was initially conceived to be undertaken by Karl Neufeld, the once famous “prisoner of the Khalīfa”¹⁰, probably as a continuation of his aborted trip to and stay in Medina from June to September 1915.

7 Neufeld's fact-finding and propaganda trip was the only expedition which actually made it to Medina.¹¹ His task was to fight his way through to the Sudan via Medina and the Yemen in order to spread propaganda in favor of the German-Turkish alliance. For Neufeld, his stay in Medina combined both the personal experience of the *hajj* and his political mission. He was able to gain the confidence of the locals and to convince them that he had been a Muslim for thirty years, known by the name of Shaykh ‘Abd Allāh Nawfal (the Arabized version of Neufeld) al-*Almānī*. Neufeld easily made contacts with scholars and notables in Medina with whom he discussed the war in Europe and the battles at the Dardanelles. His stay in Medina ended abruptly when he was called back by the Governor of Syria who had full powers in military and civilian affairs, Jamāl Pasha, on September 1, 1915. This did not come as a complete surprise to Neufeld. Although the Ottoman authorities had never been officially notified of Neufeld's mission, it could not long be kept a secret that a German, even long Arabized and a convert to Islam, was staying in Medina.

8 In December 1915, three months after Neufeld's abrupt recall from Medina by Jamāl Pasha, a sequel to Neufeld's aborted mission was being planned in Wilhelmstrasse, the German Foreign Office.¹² Neufeld was to travel through Arabia and Abyssinia to Sudan in order to stir up anti-British sentiment there. From South-West Arabia Sudanese merchants would be recruited and dispatched to their home country and Abyssinia with instructions to spread propaganda for the German-Turkish alliance and advocate for the liberation of Muslim peoples. These emissaries would promulgate the Ottomans' declaration of *jihād*. Several potential “propagandists” in Abyssinia were designated for Neufeld to contact after consultations with the German envoy in Addis Ababa. Shaykh ‘Alī in Darfur, who had already joined the Holy War against Britain, would be his contact in the Sudan.¹³ Furthermore, Neufeld would establish communication with the German colonial troops in East Africa.¹⁴

9 Dr. Curt Prüfer of the consulate in Jerusalem was to supervise Neufeld's mission. Prüfer, however, had doubts about Neufeld's ability to take up activities in the Hijāz after being “thrown out” a couple of months earlier. The Ottoman authorities, he reckoned, would probably give permission for Neufeld's trip through Arabia, but his notoriety in the Hijāz could endanger the expedition.¹⁵ Prüfer's reservations pertained not only to Neufeld, but to the entire strategy of revolutionization which he had already declared a “fiasco” and a “tragicomedy” in February 1915.¹⁶ Although Rudolf Nadolny, a diplomat working at the General Staff of the German Army, had wished to retain him as controller,¹⁷ Prüfer was able to successfully refuse the assignment.

10 In any case, it was decided that Neufeld would report to Captain Hans von Ramsay.¹⁸ In 1915 Neufeld was engaged as a translator in von Ramsay's "Special Drill Commando" to tap water in the Sinai Peninsula.¹⁹ The plan was for Neufeld to accompany Ramsay as a translator, and from there to travel as a "private person", in an attempt to conceal the official character of his mission. It was Neufeld's responsibility to apply to the Ottoman authorities for permission to travel, citing as reason that he wished to visit his destitute wife who had returned to her Abyssinian native land.²⁰ That Nadolny accepted the pretext is indicative of the perplexity of German policy regarding Arabia after the failure of the preceding expeditions. Nadolny's optimistic expectation that the Ottoman government could "hardly" refuse Neufeld's petition, appears naive in retrospect as he had just been thrown out of Medina a half year earlier and warned by Jamāl.²¹ The reasons for this cover-up were evidently that — as in the case of Neufeld's trip to Medina in 1915 — the strategists in Berlin feared that the undertaking would be forbidden by Jamāl. The length of Neufeld's expedition was projected as six months and its costs estimated at 20,000 marks. Neufeld was exhorted to proceed cautiously and especially to avoid creating any "friction" with the Ottoman authorities.²²

11 In a letter to his counterpart at the Foreign Office, the Undersecretary of the Imperial Colonial Office, Solf, voiced his concern (which Nadolny shared) about whether Neufeld, although overall suited for the mission, would be able to advance to the potential allies, the Beni Shangul tribe, in Abyssinia and incite them to revolt. Solf argued that an "expedition leader" was needed, i.e. Neufeld should not be solely responsible for the operation in all its phases. Solf emphasized the precarious situation of German troops in East Africa; "arousing an insurgency in the Sudan" would tie down English forces and could relieve the German troops.²³

12 Six weeks later the Colonial Office withdrew from the project because, although the Ottoman authorities²⁴ had agreed to the establishment of a German intelligence center in South Arabia under Major Othmar Freiherr von Stotzingen, the Sharīf of Mecca had refused permission to cross the Hijāz.²⁵ Solf further argued that the active support of the Turks could not be expected, so that the chances of the expedition succeeding were very low.

From one-man enterprise to the Stotzingen-Neufeld mission

13 After the withdrawal of the Colonial Office, preparations continued in the Foreign Office and the General Staff, with certain modifications taking place. The project was given a boost when the German military attaché in Constantinople Otto von Lossow reported that Minister of War Enver Pasha, on a visit to Medina, would support Neufeld's transit through the Hijāz.²⁶ Nadolny interpreted this as meaning that Enver would approve the set up of a wireless station, which would ensure the transmission of information from these distant areas to Germany.²⁷ After the Colonial Office had backed out, the aim was to adhere to "the earlier plan" which was "to have only Baron Major von Stotzingen and a Foreign Office official in charge of setting up the radio station". A wireless operator would be responsible for technical aspects of the station. According to Nadolny, "the operation would then be concerned only with the smaller scope of propaganda".²⁸ Consequently, there must have been three schemes for what later became the Stotzingen-Neufeld mission: a one-man mission by Neufeld, conceived as a sequel to his aborted trip to Medina in 1915; an ambitious and large-scale undertaking with an estimated cost of 1.5 million marks; and finally, a leaner version of the latter at the expense of roughly 180,000 marks.

14 In the meantime Neufeld had compiled a 16-page memorandum in which he outlined the possibilities for agitation in the Hijāz, drawing on his experiences in

Medina the previous year.²⁹ It was in keeping with his method of operation then that he intended to arrange sessions with selected people (quasi disseminators) as this would be more effective than working with the “newsrooms” (*Nachrichtensäle*).³⁰ His main local co-worker was to be the well-known Pan-Islamist Šāliḥ al-Tūnīsī³¹ who, along with Shaykh Ḥamdān, was pro-German and an accomplished speaker. Saʿīd Maʿmūn Abū al-Faḍl, who had been employed at the “*Nachrichtenstelle für den Orient*” for some time, would reactivate, with a pro-German stance, a discontinued newspaper entitled *al-Madīna al-Munawwara* which he had founded.³²

15 At this stage of the operation, two things may strike the reader of the files. First of all, there was a lack of coordination. There was hardly any common approach, but rather, much confusion of plans and persons. Secondly, there is a conspicuous lack of concrete and precise instructions. For example, how were agents to be recruited on the spot and propaganda carried out? Was there any information about the Hijāz and the Red Sea region available, and if so, what kind of information (geographical, linguistic, anthropological)? Were there maps, manuals, and dictionaries?³³ At least they are nowhere mentioned in the files of the Foreign Office.

16 Departure would be on March 15 by which time the wireless station would be ready. It was not considered a serious obstacle that neither Neufeld nor Stotzingen could speak Turkish. Further members of the expedition were NCO (or sergeant) Georg Schmidt, one or two radio operators, a certain Indian *shaykh* called ‘Abd al-Wāḥid,³⁴ as well as Saʿīd Maʿmūn Abū al-Faḍl. In Damascus Dragoman Diehl of the local German consulate would join the group.³⁵ In contrast to the one-man enterprise, the costs now amounted to 150,000 and 18,500 for Neufeld’s mission in Africa.³⁶

17 Ḥudayda was chosen as the location for the wireless station; this would be staffed by an officer as head, a representative of the Foreign Office and two radio operators. Their task was to transmit news to and from the Sudan, Abyssinia, Eritrea, Darfur and Somaliland. They were to educate the population about the military situation in Europe and, by exploiting the notion of Holy War against the English, French and Italians, start an insurgency. The population should be goaded into attacking monuments, radio stations and railways of the enemies.³⁷

18 There was a possibility now that the group and their baggage would travel with an Ottoman detachment that was going to be deployed to the Yemen as reinforcement. The Germans would be required to wear Ottoman uniforms and not speak any Arabic during the trip in order to avoid suspicion.³⁸

From Berlin to Damascus, March 15– April 10, 1916

19 The final preparations were now made for departure. 180,000 marks in English gold coins and silver Maria Theresa Thalers were handed over to Stotzingen.³⁹ The Arabic-language propaganda material, presumably crucial to the operation, was not ready until August, so the group had to leave without it.⁴⁰

20 Stotzingen boarded the Balkan train on March 15, 1916, and arrived two days later in Istanbul.⁴¹ Here he was joined by the Indian Muḥammad b. Yūsuf, who would function as agent for potential propaganda campaigns in the Sudan.⁴² In the meantime, however, the tasks and objectives of the mission were once again modified. According to the revised version, the expedition’s goal was exclusively “military”, namely to forge a link to German East Africa. Without the approval by Ottoman authorities, the mission members were to desist from “political propaganda” in Arabia.⁴³ Saʿīd Maʿmūn Abū al-Faḍl had to remain in Istanbul because the Ottoman government had not given its approval for him to resume publication of the newspaper *al-Madīna al-Munawwara*.⁴⁴ Talks between military

attaché Lossow and Ottoman officials failed to clarify the travel route in Arabia. On March 26 or 27 the mission set off from the Haydarpaşa station by the Anatolian Railway,⁴⁵ accompanied by the detachment of Khayrī Bey⁴⁶ which was to travel to the Yemen (*Yemen müfrezesi*).⁴⁷ Concerning the actual number of soldiers, details differ considerably. Whereas British sources mention 3,000-3,500 soldiers,⁴⁸ Stotzingen reported that he had only 245 of whom 35 had already deserted before reaching Aleppo.⁴⁹ The detachment carried quick-firing battery and machine guns — along with parts of the wireless station and Stotzingen’s cash. Khayrī Bey’s force probably arrived in Medina in separate units between May 8 and May 13,⁵⁰ but his detachment was never to reach its final destination. It was merged with the Hijāz Expeditionary Force under the command of Fakhri Pasha and constituted an unintended, but welcome reinforcement of Medina’s Ottoman garrison.

21 After reaching Pozantı in the Taurus Mountains, the train terminus at the time, the Stotzingen group continued their journey by car to Tarsus. Khayrī’s unit had been split up by transport problems, so that by April 6 only half of the men had assembled in Aleppo.⁵¹ Stotzingen arrived in Damascus on April 10.⁵²

Damascus, April 10–May 2, 1916: Jamāl’s delaying tactics and Fayṣal ’s initiation to the mission

22 Unpleasant news from Istanbul was awaiting Stotzingen in Damascus. According to a cable from Lossow, Enver was not going to allow Neufeld’s trip through Mecca and Medina because his presence would endanger his companions. He should leave the party to the north of Medina, perhaps as early as Ma’ān. From there he should cross the northern part of the Red Sea and fight his own way to Africa.⁵³ To make things worse, at the headquarters of the 4th Army, Jamāl’s chief of staff, Colonel Alī Fu’ād (Erden), claimed to know nothing of the planned journey to the Yemen and demanded a written authorization by the Ottoman government. This was exactly what had been sought and denied in Istanbul.⁵⁴ The Baron was then received by Jamāl, who appeared to be “offended” that Stotzingen’s mission had not been discussed with him. Jamāl declared categorically that Christians were not permitted to enter Mecca and Medina.⁵⁵ Nevertheless, the expedition could attempt to reach Luḥayya, 150 kms north of Ḥudayda, through al-Wajh and Jidda by boat. This was unlikely, however, due to British control of the coastline. After talking with Jamāl, ‘Alī Fu’ād added that a journey through the Hijāz could not be kept secret and could lead to an “Arab rebellion”. He claimed that such a journey might be interpreted by the Arabs as meaning that “Germany was more important to the Turks than Islam.”⁵⁶ ‘Alī Fu’ād also raised his doubts regarding the efficacy of setting up a radio station in Ḥudayda, as there was no telegraphic connection between Sana'a and Istanbul. Stotzingen, however, knew this to be untrue, because he already had permission from Enver to make use of the Sana'a-Istanbul connection.⁵⁷

23 During their three-week stay in Damascus, Jamāl appeared bent on delaying the expedition and if possible on preventing it, citing religious reasons, danger to the security of the mission and “internal political matters”.⁵⁸ Other reasons for the stalling tactics were that Jamāl did not want the Germans to discover the weakness of Ottoman rule in the region and he most certainly wanted to prevent German officials from establishing independent contacts with local powers.⁵⁹ While the men of the mission were repairing the damaged pylon of the radio station,⁶⁰ Stotzingen made the acquaintance of Fayṣal, who was still in Damascus, officially as an ally, but in fact as a sort of “hostage” of Jamāl who had already some doubts about his intentions.⁶¹ Stotzingen saw no harm in telling him about the German mission and Khayrī’s

detachment.⁶²

24 On April 18, the promised message arrived from Istanbul which must have been approved by Enver that the mission should travel with Khayrī's unit. Jamāl refused to allow this, citing safety concerns, as the situation in Medina was unclear and the journey was fraught with risks.⁶³ It was left to Stotzingen's discretion to take an alternative route by train to al-'Ulā, from there with a government escort to al-Wajh and then by *sanbūk* over Yanbu' and Jidda to Qunfudha; from there they would have to try to hook up with Khayrī.⁶⁴ It was obvious that Enver and Jamāl were not on the same page regarding Arabian policies — in particular the mission — and that the latter was ignoring orders from the War Ministry. In the struggle over the travel route Jamāl was finally able to prevail over Enver.⁶⁵

25 So the mission would travel on the Hijāz Railway with Khayrī's group. In al-'Ulā Stotzingen's people would turn south in the direction of the Red Sea and march by camel to al-Wajh. There the plan was to rent boats for the trip to Qunfudha. There Stotzingen would meet the detachment and then march with them along the coast to the Yemen, a distance of nearly a thousand kilometers.⁶⁶ Thus ended the deliberate confusion and delaying tactics of the Ottoman authorities which contributed to the failure of the mission.

From Damascus via al-'Ulā to Yanbu', May 2–May 23, 1916

26 After three weeks of waiting in Damascus, the train with Stotzingen's group⁶⁷ and Khayrī's detachment along with the radio equipment departed from the Hijāz Railway station.⁶⁸ One of Jamāl's secret policemen was also on board.⁶⁹ Several days earlier Neufeld had travelled ahead to al-'Ulā with his bride.⁷⁰ On the evening of May 4 Stotzingen arrived there as well. The promised transport animals and the gendarmerie escort were not yet available. Again several days went by before on May 7 or 8 the caravan, consisting of 37 camels, could set off for al-Wajh.⁷¹ On May 12 they reached al-Wajh, where they departed by boat for Umm Lajj, which they reached on May 17.⁷² The group continued their journey to Yanbu' overland. Stotzingen was astonished that the Ottoman local authorities were thoroughly accommodating.⁷³ Wherever they went the caravan made a great stir; Neufeld's experience in dealing with the local population proved advantageous to the expedition.⁷⁴

27 Ten days later, around May 22, the expedition reached Yanbu'.⁷⁵ Scarcely had they arrived when it was reported that a German marine officer and six companions had arrived in Jidda, which was on the way of the mission, and had set off for Yanbu'.⁷⁶ Upon consultation with the *qaymaqam* (district governor, *qā'im maqām*) Stotzingen decided to wait for the group to arrive in order to collect information about the route they had travelled. Soon rumors were doing the rounds that the marines had been attacked and killed by Bedouins. Stotzingen sent messengers towards Jidda to investigate the matter. In a complete failure to recognize the Sharifians' true intentions, he sent the letter of recommendation given to him by Fayṣal in Damascus, to the latter's father in Mecca with a request for support.⁷⁷ Finally, the rumors about the German soldiers were verified.⁷⁸ Their fate demonstrated that Jamāl's warnings were not pure inventions.

28 When at the end of May unrest among Bedouin tribes was reported, the authorities reinforced the city defenses. A British warship was sighted before Yanbu'.⁷⁹ The ship was the R.I.M.S. *Dufferin*, with Stotzingen's and Neufeld's opponents from the Arab Bureau: Storrs, Hogarth and Cornwallis.⁸⁰ At about the same time that Stotzingen arrived in Yanbu', Ḥusayn informed the surprised British that he intended to proclaim the insurrection ahead of time. His son 'Abd Allāh would explain the

particulars to a British representative during a meeting on the coast of the Hijāz. As a result, Storrs, Hogarth and Cornwallis set out from Cairo. They sailed to the vicinity of Yanbu‘ where they arrived around June 3. It was here that they heard of the mission for the first time.⁸¹ A few days later, on June 6, Storrs, Cornwallis und Hogarth met Zayd, the youngest son of Ḥusayn, outside Jidda. He revealed to them that his brothers had raised the banner of revolt around Medina the day before and that Mecca would follow within three days. Meanwhile, Stotzingen received orders from Medina that the party would have to stay in Yanbu‘ for the time being.⁸² On June 9, the order of the *muhāfiẓ* of Medina arrived, directing them to turn back by way of al-Wajh and al-‘Ulā.⁸³ On June 12, Stotzingen and his men⁸⁴ were forced to quit Yanbu‘ with “heavy hearts”⁸⁵ and “in haste”, leaving their entire baggage behind. Stotzingen had the cipher code burned so that it would not fall into the hands of unauthorized persons, whether Ottoman officials or rebels. Only in Umm Lajj⁸⁶ did they board a *sanbūk* and reach al-Wajh within three days. On the last leg of the journey they were escorted by Shaykh Sulaymān, the chief of the Billī tribe.⁸⁷ Stotzingen, Neufeld, his wife and possibly one or two other Germans reached al-‘Ulā on June 26 and went on by train to Damascus on June 29 or 30.⁸⁸ Other members of the mission returned in mysterious circumstances at the end of August.⁸⁹ Thus the expedition found a relatively happy ending, considering the overall situation and dangers.⁹⁰

The aftermath

29 Stotzingen does not seem to have taken stock of his mission. He did compile a list of desiderata and problems to keep in mind in case of a new expedition. He argues that without Jamāl’s approval and support, any operation was doomed to fail, something that Oppenheim had already declared a prerequisite for the success of any revolutionization policies.⁹¹ Stotzingen touched upon the political circumstances at the time in Syria which had compromised his mission. Inflation, inadequate provisions and Jamāl’s despotic rule had so embittered the population that they carried this embitterment over to the Germans. Furthermore, the Ottomans had alienated potential allies such as Sulaymān Pasha, the chief of the Billī.⁹² Stotzingen also submitted an assessment of his travel companions.⁹³ Dragoman Diehl had exhibited eagerness but had not been of much assistance, as he spoke only Moroccan Arabic and not the Arabic spoken in the Hijāz. It seems strange that Neufeld was not employed as a translator, considering his mastery of Sudanese Arabic and Upper Egyptian Arabic, both dialects related to the Hijāzi dialect. However, since Neufeld had travelled separately, at least in part, his expertise had not always been available.⁹⁴

30 It only remains to relate the fate of the mission members. Stotzingen and Schmidt were assigned to the canal expeditionary corps under Kress von Kressenstein. Stotzingen took part in the battle of Romani as leader of the fourth group of the corps.⁹⁵

31 After his return from the Hijāz, Neufeld stayed in Damascus until the beginning of November. There he penned several reports on the revolt in the Hijāz, the personality and policies of Jamāl as well as a proposal to review the work of Oppenheim’s “Reading Rooms” (*Nachrichtensäle*) where the local population could have access to the most recent news of the war.⁹⁶ These reports qualify Stotzingen’s remarks about Neufeld being largely useless. To be sure, Neufeld did not have a talent for analytical thinking.⁹⁷ The Foreign Office dispatches are hardly more substantial than Neufeld’s reports, albeit better worded. Despite his limitations, he was the only “revolutionization agent” who, at least on his trip to Medina in 1915, had actually reached his destination and carried out propaganda work; however, this does not

seem to have been appreciated in Berlin.

32 Neufeld judged Ottoman policies harshly. The revolt was a direct result, he wrote, of mistakes and failures, especially by Jamāl, which had led to a catastrophic economic situation. Of these, the discontinuation of the supply trains to Medina was the most disastrous because provision of the population in the Hijāz depended on them to a large extent. Neufeld focused especially on the government's erratic policy vis-à-vis the Bedouins. Tribes which should have been punished for misdeeds were instead rewarded. On the other hand, tribes who were loyal were ignored or treated unfavorably.⁹⁸ Neufeld identified a lack of understanding between Turks and Arabs and an attempt by the Turks to transform Arabs into Turks.⁹⁹ He felt also that Sharīf Ḥusayn, whose power depended on the Bedouins, had made an error in collaborating with the British,¹⁰⁰ and that the best thing to do was to try to get them on the Ottoman government's side.¹⁰¹

33 Neufeld also underlined that Jamāl's policy and personality and especially his "aversion against German cooperation" had led to the abortion of the Stotzingen mission.¹⁰² Finally, Neufeld was to offer his services for new missions. He wished to continue the work, which he had begun in 1915 by persuading Bedouin tribes to stay in the Ottoman-German camp. Furthermore, he proposed that an inspector review the Reading Rooms — and there is no doubt that he thought he was the right man for the job.¹⁰³

34 As far as we know, Neufeld was never to return to the Middle East: the relevant authorities had ranked him as "unsuitable" after the Stotzingen mission.¹⁰⁴ It has to be pointed out, however, that the mission generated some retroactive fear among the British when they were handed over papers lost by some of the mission members during their flight,¹⁰⁵ and especially Stotzingen's notebook, at the beginning of August 1916.¹⁰⁶ With a fairly complete understanding of the many problems the Germans had faced, including Turkish opposition, the British still expressed consternation about the potential threats posed by the mission.¹⁰⁷ This tendency to magnify the danger of the mission was evident in later publications.¹⁰⁸ In 1920, Hogarth was still sure that the German undertaking could have caused great harm to the British in South Arabia and beyond.¹⁰⁹ In 1928 again, the official British publication concerning World War I painted a grim picture of the threats to the British position,¹¹⁰ and French observer Colonel Brémond published a similar assessment.¹¹¹

Conclusion

35 In the German Foreign Office's efforts to promote *jihād* and to publicize German support for this aim, Stotzingen and Neufeld undertook the journey to Arabia. Their objective was to disseminate propaganda and facilitate the flow of information to and from East Africa and Germany. It was hoped that the mission would influence the outcome of the battle for loyalty of the Arabs of the Peninsula. Thus, travel itself became a tool for propaganda. The German documents convey the image of an inadequately planned, shaky enterprise with contradictory tasks that were repeatedly modified en route. The plans and actions of the Office in Berlin and the members of the mission reveal an astonishing lack of understanding of the complex and fractured relationships between the main actors: Germans, Ottomans and Arabs (for example, the actual stance of the Sharifians) and the difficulties of coordinating and communicating during the mission to all concerned.

36 The failures of communication between the German and Turkish allies as well as among the Turks themselves, the problems inherent in the circulation of the group and their equipment in the Arabian Peninsula were compounded by the simple fact that the Turks felt it was dangerous to publicize their alliance with the German

“unbelievers”. Moreover, the Ottomans were suspicious of Germany’s aims. Therefore, the Ottomans wished to present the mission –if at all – as being under their control. While Enver seems to have only reluctantly given permission for the expedition, Jamāl intended to delay or even prevent it. In Yanbu‘ Stotzingen and his people were detained. The outbreak of the Arab Revolt ended the mission. If the Stotzingen group had achieved anything, it was that it – along with Khayrī’s detachment – prompted Ḥusayn to proclaim the revolt prematurely as it had originally been scheduled for August.¹¹² This is not to say that the mission was a total failure. It had at least forced the British to devote considerable resources to counter the dangers of enemy efforts to foment revolutions in its territories and spheres of influence. Ironically, however, instead of a Muslim uprising against the British, a revolt was proclaimed against the Ottomans and their German ally. As Bury remarked: “[...] a wrongly-invoked ‘jihad’, like a mishandled musket, can recoil heavily [...]”¹¹³ The *jihād* “made in Germany” did not materialize, but the “bogey of Jihad” (Lawrence) kept the British actively engaged to defeat it.

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Notes

1 HURGRONJE, 1915; SCHWANITZ, 2003; LÜDKE, 2005; AKSAKAL, 2011.

2 EPKENHANS, 2001, p. 121-125, 135; Cf. the studies of OBERHAUS, LÜDKE, MCKALE and others.

3 In October/November 1914 Bernhard Moritz, an Arabist, made it to Jidda where he managed to distribute propaganda material. Perhaps the most important result was that he identified the Sharifians as “friends of England”, in contrast to the judgements of Oppenheim and German diplomats about the rulers in the Hijāz. See WILL, 2012, p. 232-235; MCMEEKIN, 2010, p. 146-147; MCKALE 1998, p. 170-172; EPKENHANS, 2001, p. 124. Although it is true that the writer Max Roloff, at the same time as Moritz, was entrusted with a mission to Mecca disguised as a Muslim, it is highly probable that he never travelled to the Hijāz and that his report was a fabrication. See LÜDKE, 2005, p. 149-152, who takes Roloff’s claims at face value. MCKALE, 1998, p. 62; WILL, 2012, p. 235-236 and MCMEEKIN, 2010, p. 97, express grave doubts regarding the authenticity of Roloff’s travels. While the well-known Africa specialist Leo Frobenius with his numerous travelling companions managed to cross the Red Sea, he came only as far as Eritrea and did not reach his target destination, Abyssinia, where he was to persuade the emperor to enter the war on the side of the central powers. The most thorough treatment of Frobenius’ mission is by DA RIVA, 2009, and her contribution in this issue. Cf. also WILL, 2012, p. 236-240; MCKALE, 1998, p. 64-65; MCMEEKIN, 2010, p. 245-253.

4 WILL, 2012, p. 230.

5 SEIDT, 2002, p. 56-57.

6 WILL, 2012, p. 303.

7 LAWRENCE, 1939, p. 159, cited by MORSEY, 1976, p. 73.

8 WILL, 2012, p. 246.

9 Oberhaus’ assertion that the mission has been thoroughly described on the basis of German archival records, is more or less correct. However, the German files provide an important, yet limited approach to the subject. Apart from the German files, the earliest reference to the mission, i.e. simultaneously with the unfolding of the mission, is to be found in the reports of the Arab Bureau and other British records. The mission was then mentioned in an article of HOGARTH (1920), the official British account of WWI (MACMUNN/FALLS, 1928) and in LAWRENCE’s book (1965, p. 94 and 157). The chief of the French military mission in the Hijāz, Général Brémond, erroneously referred to Stotzingen as the leader of the Ottoman detachment (*Yemen müfrezesi*) with the destination Hudayda (BRÉMOND, 1931, p. 30). STORRS (1937) mentioned the mission in his memoirs. HOLZHAUSEN (1935–36) most probably had his knowledge of the expedition from a participant. ANTONIUS referred to it in 1938 (1965, p. 191, 194, and 208-210). HELMENSCHDORFER (1972, p. 59-66, p. 70-71 and 75-77), in a non-scholarly book, had the privilege of using Stotzingen’s unpublished recollections. The first scholarly treatment is in MORSEY’s book (1976, p. 84-86, on the basis of several German and British records) which remains till today the most succinct characterization of the expedition. The remarks in WINSTONE’s book (1982, p. 269-278) have to be taken with a pinch of salt because he fills gaps in the documentation with conjectures. NEULEN (1991, p. 177-179) relied exclusively on Holzhausen’s article. PETERS (1994, p. 360) has a few lines on the expedition, mainly based on the speculative remarks made by Winstone. MCKALE (1998, p. 172-175, and 177-178) is to date the most balanced account due to the use of both British and German sources and because he puts it in a larger context. LÜDKE (2005, p. 177-185) deserves recognition for providing the most complete account of the mission so far, but only on the basis of the German Foreign Office records. MOHS (2008, p. 41-42, and 182-183) gives a rather incomplete picture because she bases her hypothesis solely on the reports in *Arab Bulletin*. MCMEEKIN (2010, p. 296, 298, 308-309, and 312) used two files from the German Foreign Office, but relied otherwise on MCKALE. Finally, WILL (2012, p. 246-249) offers a concise summary of the fate of Stotzingen’s mission on the basis of a limited number of documents

from the British and German Foreign Offices.

10 Neufeld was born in Western Prussia and died in July 1918 near Berlin. He left the University of Leipzig without a degree and established himself first in Cairo in 1880 as entrepreneur and interpreter for the British army and in the mid-eighties in Aswān. On a business trip to Kurdufān (1887) he was taken prisoner by supporters of the Mahdiyya and carried off to Umm Durmān where he spent twelve years, mostly in chains; he is often mistakenly referred to as “prisoner of the Mahdi”, although the Mahdi was already two years dead when Neufeld was captured. He was liberated during the reconquest of the Sudan under Kitchener in 1898. Subsequently he wrote his memoirs of his years in imprisonment in Cairo and settled again in Aswān with his Abyssinian wife with whom he had two children (he had been married to a British nurse, Emma Neufeld née Netherton, in Cairo with whom he had one daughter). After the outbreak of WWI, Neufeld was expelled from Egypt by the British as a national of an enemy country. He then became involved in the German missions described here. By the time of his death in 1918, he seems to have been largely forgotten.

11 His “*Tagebuch*” (diary) about his journey and stay in Medina is included in file R 21141, L 368668-831, PA-AA (Politisches Archiv des Auswärtigen Amtes, Berlin). LÜDKE (2005), p. 170-177, offers a summary.

12 MCKALE, 1993, p. 250, note 29.

13 His resistance was crushed by British troops until the end of 1916.

14 “Instruction for Herr Carl Neufeld”, PA-AA R 21138, January 4, 1916.

15 PA-AA, R 21138, L 368017, December 19, 1915.

16 HANISCH, 2014, p. 181-182.

17 PA-AA, R 21138, January 4, 1916.

18 “Instruction for Herr Carl Neufeld”. HOLZHAUSEN, 1957, p. 160.

19 *Armeezeitung Jildirim* No 18, July 18, 1918. HELMENSCHDORFER, 1972, p. 60. I found the reference to this book in the Internet-Forum www.Panzer-Archiv.de, in which several authors trace the German expeditions in Arabia and Africa. Of significance here are three chapters in his book, because Helmschdorfer had access to Stotzingen’s notes about his experiences on the mission. These notes reconstructed events from memory after he lost his diary in the battle at the Suez Canal.

20 PA-AA, R 21138, January 4, 1916.

21 PA-AA, R 21138, January 21, 1916.

22 “Instruction for Herr Carl Neufeld”, PA-AA, R 21138, January 4, 1916.

23 PA-AA, R 21138, January 21, 1916.

24 The term “Ottoman authorities” most probably refers to Enver Pasha’s War Ministry. However, WINSTONE’s assertion that Enver was the “instigator” (p. 271) of the undertaking, is not supported by the German sources.

25 This is the earliest mention of Stotzingen. He became the leader of the mission; for this reason, in most sources and studies the mission is named after him. It is only in several British reports that the expedition was called “Stotzingen-Neufeld Mission to Arabia”: *Arab Bulletin* No. 13, 1 August 1916. Stotzingen was the scion of a noble house long established in South-West Germany, west of Lake Constance. He was allegedly born April 15, 1867 and died in June 1923. He acted as leader (at the rank of Major) of the 1. Garde-Landwehr Eskadron at the eastern front in 1915 (forum.panzer-archiv.de, 28. und 31.10.2014; *Arab Bulletin* No. 13, p. 133) when he was called to the General Staff in Berlin at the end of February 1916. There he was told by captain (reserve) Rudolf Nadolny, later German ambassador in Ankara and Moscow, that he was to head a mission charged with establishing a wireless station in South-West Arabia. Cf. HOLZHAUSEN, 1935–36, p. 560.

26 STROHMEIER, 2013, p. 197-201.

27 It was only in 1916 that the radio station in Nauen/Brandenburg ensured communication with Istanbul and Damascus, and it was of great importance to set up a station in South Arabia.

28 PA-AA, R 21139, L 368102, March 7, 1916.

29 PA-AA, R 21139, L 368107-9, March 9, 1916, and the attached memorandum.

30 “Newsrooms” were to convey a favourable picture of the war situation, to promote the goals of the German-Turkish alliance and to counteract the propaganda of the entente. The idea goes back to OPPENHEIM, 1917.

31 HEINE, 1982, p. 89-95.

32 In the German archival records, he is referred to as “Menuin”.

33 From the diary kept by a member of the Stotzingen-Neufeld mission, most probably

Stotzingen himself (but ascribed to Grobba by the *Arab Bulletin*), it can be gleaned that there existed a basic knowledge about several aspects of the journey. It mentions several books about South Arabia (e.g. BURY, 1915), Abyssinia and Kordofan, has a German-Arabic vocabulary and a list of Italian words with their German equivalents. Other information regarding the sympathies of tribes and their *shaykhs*, telegraph stations and the number of Italian forces in Eritrea seem to have been jotted down en route.

34 LÜDKE, 2005, 179; it is doubtful if this person is identical with Muḥammad Yūsuf who was later hired in Istanbul.

35 HOLZHAUSEN, 1935–36, p. 560; *Arab Bulletin* No. 22, p. 271.

36 160,000 marks (after subtracting a sum of German marks) were made available in English, Ottoman or French currency and partially in Maria Theresa Thaler.

37 PA-AA, R 21139, L 368158-62, undated (approx. March 12, 1916, MS). Cf. Nadolny's instruction for Stotzingen PA-AA, R 21139, L 368144-6.

38 PA-AA, R 21139, L 368130, 368143, March 11, 1916.

39 HELMENS DORFER, 1972, p. 62; HOLZHAUSEN, 1935–36, p. 561.

40 PA-AA, R 21142, A 21227, August 10, 1916.

41 *Arab Bulletin* No. 13, p. 133; HOLZHAUSEN, 1935-1936, p. 561; HELMENS DORFER, 1972, p. 62.

42 HELMENS DORFER, 1972, p. 62; PA-AA, R 21139, March 31, 1916; PA-AA, R 21142, Stotzingen to Blankenburg, Section Policy of General Staff, April 4, 1916; PA-AA, R 21142, Stotzingen's sixth report, Damascus, July 16, 1916.

43 PA-AA, R 21139, A 7306, Metternich to Foreign Office, March 19, 1916.

44 HOLZHAUSEN, 1935-1936, p. 561; HELMENS DORFER, 1972, p. 62.

45 PA-AA, R 21139, Embassy Constantinople to Bethmann Hollweg, March 31, 1916; *Arab Bulletin*, p. 133.

46 A major (*binbaşı*) hailing from Gharyān in North-Western Libya. He had been an advisor to King Ḥabībullah in the reorganization of the Afghan army; it was he who welcomed Niedermayer and Hentig when they arrived in Kabul: STEWART, 2014, p. 70.

47 *Arab Bulletin* No. 22, 19 September 1916, p. 263; General Staff, War Office, 1918, p. 31, included in FO 882/7.

48 *Arab Bulletin*, No. 22, 19 September 1916, p. 263, 270, 272; MACMUNN/FALLS, 1928, p. 228-230.

49 PA-AA, R 21142, A 13299, Stotzingen's first report (Damascus April 11), May 15, 1916; HELMENS DORFER, 1972, p. 63.

50 *Arab Bulletin* No. 22, 19 September 1916, p. 270.

51 *Arab Bulletin* No. 13, 1 August 1916, p. 133; HELMENS DORFER, 1972, p. 63.

52 HOLZHAUSEN, 1935–36, p. 563.

53 PA-AA, R 21139, L 368218, Lossow to Consulate Damascus, March 31, 1916.

54 That the expedition had objectives other than those put forth by the Embassy in Constantinople (to establish communication with German East Africa), emerges clearly from Stotzingen's report: "I mentioned [to Ali Fuad] as purpose [of the journey] *only* [emphasis is mine] the establishment of a line of communication between East Africa and Germany", Stotzingen's first report.

55 Stotzingen, seventh report, PA-AA, R 21142, Jerusalem, September 14, 1916; Cf. HOLZHAUSEN, 1935–36, p. 563-4.

56 PA-AA, R 21142, A 13299, Stotzingen's first report, Damascus, April 11, 1916.

57 PA-AA, R 21142, A 13299, second report of Stotzingen, Damascus, April 15, 1916.

58 PA-AA, R 21142, A 14705, Stotzingen's fourth report, al-'Ulā May 5.

59 PA-AA, R 21142, A 13299, Stotzingen's third report, Damascus, April 23, 1916.

60 *Arab Bulletin* No. 13, 1 August 1916, p. 133; HELMENS DORFER, 1972, p. 63.

61 PA-AA, R 13878, Loytved Hardegg to Ambassador von Wolff-Metternich, Damascus, August 6, 1916.

62 Fayṣal was told by Stotzingen "[...] that, from the Yemen, arms and ammunition were to be shipped across to Abyssinia, and an anti-foreign war begun in that country. He himself was going afterwards to German East Africa." *Arab Bulletin* No. 42, 15 February 1917, p. 78; ANTONIUS, 1965, p. 209; HOLZHAUSEN, 1935–36, p. 564: "Emir Feisal approached the German officer with well-played amiability. He provided him with a number of letters of

recommendation, including one to his father, the Grand Sherif.” Stotzingen’s naive divulging of secrets seems to confirm the assessment found in the *Arab Bulletin* No. 22, 19 September 1916, p. 271: “It must be pointed out that Stotzingen seems to have been remarkably ignorant of Arab politics.” Stotzingen should have known, or to be more precise, had not been informed that Ḥusayn and his sons were “friends of England”, as Bernhard Moritz had stated in his report of his travels in the Hejaz at the end of 1914: WILL, 2010, p. 234. It is not surprising that Stotzingen did not see through Fayṣal’s acting, since more prominent “oriental experts”, such as Oppenheim, had already been taken in by Fayṣal.

63 PA-AA, R 21139, Lossow to Section Policy General Staff, April 23, 1916, L 368278.

64 HOLZHAUSEN, 1935–36, p. 564, considered Jamāl’s reservations legitimate in as much as they referred to the transit through Medina: “[...] the journey of the German mission (would have) ended most surely in a catastrophe. However, Djemal’s behaviour concerning the bypassing to the east of the forbidden territory was wrong and dictated by envy. By this route the mission would have reached the territory of the Shammar Bedouins, whose chief, Emir Ibn Reshid took a distinctly pro-Turkish stance [...] The delay however, brought about by Djemal’s resistance and the time-consuming negotiations, doomed the enterprise.”

65 *Arab Bulletin*, No. 13, 1 August 1916, p. 134 and especially 139: “Enver acts independently of Jemal, but is unwilling or unable to coerce him in his proper province.”

66 HOLZHAUSEN, 1935–36, p. 564.

67 If Fritz Grobba belonged to the group, is controversial. Grobba is nowhere mentioned in the reports of the mission’s flight from Yanbu‘ where there are only Stotzingen, Neufeld and his wife on the one hand, and four other people (*Arab Bulletin* No. 13, 1 August 1916, p. 135) which might be Kolber, Diel, the servant and Jamāl’s watchdog. Studies on Grobba and his memoirs do not mention his participation. However, WINSTONE, 1982 (p. 272ff.) emphasizes Grobba’s involvement.

68 HELMENS DORFER, 1972, p. 64, has as day of departure May 2.

69 The *Arab Bulletin* No. 13, 1 August 1916, p. 134.

70 PA-AA, R 21142, Embassy Constantinople to Foreign Office, May 4, 1916; See also PA-AA, R 21142, Stotzingen’s fourth report, al-‘Ulā May 5.

71 PA-AA, R 21142, fifth report by Stotzingen, “Yambo el-bahr”, May 23, 1916. The camels were rented from the Billī (also called Balī) Bedouins, who were loyal to the government: *Arab Bulletin* No. 13, 1 August 1916, p. 134; HOLZHAUSEN, 1935–36, p. 565. The leader of the escort was Khalīl ‘Alī Efendi, commander of the gendarmerie in al-Wajh, who accompanied the group on the way back from al-Wajh to al-‘Ulā: PA-AA, R 21442, A 21231. Stotzingen’s remark contradicts Holzhausen’s claim that the caravan was escorted by the Billī under Sulaymān from al-Wajh to al-‘Ulā. The center of the Billī was around al-Wajh, whereas famous warrior chief and British ally ‘Awdā’s sphere of influence was further south between Rābigh and Jidda.

72 PA-AA, R 21142, Stotzingen’s fifth report. The expedition was accompanied here by Riḍā Ḥusnī Efendi, the harbor master of al-Wajh. However, according to HELMENS DORFER, 1972, p. 65, SAD 138/17/1-10 and (almost identical) *Arab Bulletin* No. 13, 1 August 1916, p. 134, they travelled from al-Wajh to Umm Lajj on Billī camels and from there to Yanbu‘ on Juhayna camels.

73 PA-AA, R 21142, Stotzingen’s fifth report, May 23, 1916. According to Stotzingen the local authorities in the Hijāz knew nothing of a travel ban for non-Muslims in the coastal areas of the Hijāz, something upon which Jamāl had insisted. HOLZHAUSEN, 1935–36, p. 565.

74 HOLZHAUSEN, 1935–36, p. 565.

75 The latest date for Stotzingen’s arrival in Yanbu‘ is May 23, for his fifth report was sent on that day. HOLZHAUSEN, 1935–36, p. 565; PA-AA, R 21142, A 17997, July 6, 1916.

76 PA-AA, R 21142, A 15615, Loytved in Damascus to Embassy Constantinople, June 8, 1916. According to Stotzingen in a note from Yanbu‘ dated May 26, these men were von Möller and eight others.

77 HOLZHAUSEN, 1935–36, p. 565; HELMENS DORFER, 1972, p. 75.

78 PA-AA, R 21142, Lossow to Section Policy General Staff, July 6, 1916: “Lieutenant Commander v. Müller (sic, must be Möller, MS) and his comrades who were killed by Bedouins near Jidda, are victims of this conflict [between the Bedouins in the Hijāz and the Ottoman government, MS].”

79 HELMENS DORFER, 1972, p. 75.

80 On June 4: *Arab Bulletin* No. 13, 1 August 1916, p. 133.

81 HOGARTH, 1991, p. 5.

82 PA-AA, R 21142, A 15615, Loytved to Embassy Constantinople, June 7, 1916.

83 PA-AA, R 21142, sixth report. Stotzingen reported this to the embassy in Constantinople

the same day. In a commentary by the consulate in Damascus it was said: “[...] the Hejaz Bedouins are in open conflict with the Turkish government, probably instigated by England [...]”. In the German missions in Istanbul and Damascus they had been aware since June 7 (i.e. immediately after the beginning of the revolt) of Jamāl’s order that Stotzingen and his people should return from Yanbu‘ with an escort, if their continued journey south proved impossible. On June 8 it became known in Damascus that Stotzingen was stuck in Yanbu‘. See also HELMENS DORFER, 1972, p. 76; HOLZHAUSEN, 1935–36, p. 566.

84 Only he himself, Neufeld and his wife, possibly also Diel and Kolber. Diel’s servant and Muḥammad Yūsuf followed later, see below. There is no mention of other members in the German Foreign Office files, Holzhausen and Helmensdorfer so that the alleged murder of two Germans to which the *Arab Bulletin* refers, is most probably incorrect.

85 As Stotzingen confided to his diary, HELMENS DORFER, 1972, p. 76.

86 Arrival June 11 according to *Arab Bulletin* No. 13, 1 August 1916, p. 135.

87 HOLZHAUSEN, 1935–36, p. 566. For the loyalty of Sulaymān (Sulaymān Rifāḍa or Rufāḍa with full name: HOGARTH, 1978, p. 57) *vis-à-vis* the Ottomans, see LAWRENCE, 1965, p. 119. In spite of his loyalty, he was snubbed by the government and was courted only after the Revolt, an example of the erratic policy of the government as criticized by Neufeld: PA-AA, R 13879, Neufeld to Captain Blankenburg, Section Policy of General Staff, October 8, 1916; PA-AA, R 21142, Stotzingen’s seventh report, Jerusalem, September 14, 1916 (also in R 13879). The Juhayna were close allies and relatives of the Billī: HOGARTH, 1978, p. 37.

88 PA-AA, R 21142, Embassy Constantinople to Foreign Office, June 28, 1916; HOLZHAUSEN, 1935–36, p. 566-567; HELMENS DORFER, 1972, p. 77.

89 *Arab Bulletin* No. 13, 1 August 1916, p. 135; PA-AA, R 21142, seventh report by Stotzingen; HOGARTH, 1978, p. 7.

90 HOLZHAUSEN, 1935–36, p. 566: “Stotzingen at times no longer (believed) that the expedition would be able to escape in one piece from the inferNo.”

91 PA-AA, R 21142, sixth report by Stotzingen; HOLZHAUSEN, 1935–36, p. 567 notes that “[...] [the mission] was prepared until autumn 1916 to attempt a new advance to South Arabia [...]”. However, it remains a mystery, how such an advance could have succeeded after Arab rebels and British forces had taken control of large parts of the coastal stretch between Yanbu‘ and Jidda. Moreover, the eastern bypassing of the Hijāz had become more difficult.

92 PA-AA, R 21142, seventh report.

93 PA-AA, R 21142, sixth report.

94 Stotzingen assessed Neufeld in his sixth report (PA-AA, R 21142, Damascus, July 16, 1916).

95 After the war Stotzingen emigrated to Brazil; he died June 2, 1923, at the ancestral seat of his family in Steiſslingen near Lake Constance: HELMENS DORFER, 1972, p. 77; *Freiburger Zeitung* digital June 5, 1923.

96 PA-AA, R 13879, K 196936 ff.

97 Martin Hartmann did not rate Neufeld’s skills highly: “The reports by Mr. Neufeld which I have seen, suffer from the defect of empty talk”, PA-AA, R 21142, Hartmann to Mittwoch, Berlin, December 23, 1916.

98 PA-AA, R 13879, K 196938-196942, Neufeld to Captain Blankenburg, Section Policy General Staff, Damascus, October 8, 1916.

99 PA-AA, R 13879, K 196959, “Impressions C. Neufeld about the revolt in the Hijāz, Jamāl Pasha and intelligence service during his stay in Damascus.”

100 PA-AA, R 13879, K 196943-51.

101 In his experience the Bedouins wished for a “Bedouin-Pasha”, and Sulaymān Pasha, the chief of the Billī, was the right man for such an office; the Sultan would be recognized as sovereign, but there would be no direct control by government officials. An amnesty would present the government in a favorable light. After his return to Damascus in late June 1916, Neufeld spoke with people who had fled Medina where Fakhrī Pasha now had the say. They complained about “Turkish soldiers”, and the excesses they had committed. Neufeld commented: “The Bedouins appreciate that the Ottoman commanders in the field are doing their utmost to stop these excesses, but their officers hardly support them in doing so”: PA-AA, R 13879, K 196953-59. Loytved was less optimistic regarding the situation than Neufeld. He cabled to the Embassy that the “Bedouins taking the side of the government” would not help; what would be decisive was the military strength of the Turks and the “soldiers who were in the British’s pay” and generally the outcome of the war. On the other hand, in agreement with Neufeld, Loytved thinks that an attempt should be made to win over the Bedouins with “money, grain and propaganda”: PA-AA, R 13878, Consulate Damascus to Embassy Constantinople, August 6, 1916.

102 PA-AA, R 13879, K 196962-196964.

103 PA-AA, R 13879, K 196968-70.

104 Mittwoch, the head of the “*Nachrichtenstelle für den Orient*”, and the Foreign Office advised against an assignment: PA-AA, R 21142, A 35892, December 23 and 29, 1916. Between 1917 and 1918 Neufeld worked for the so-called “decommission committee” (“*Niederlegungskommission*”) of the German military administration in Belgium. He became seriously ill and was taken to the sanatorium in Beelitz southwest of Berlin. Two weeks before his death Neufeld proposed that he participate in a new mission to Arabia, demonstrating that even, as it were, on his death bed he had lost none of his adventurousness. He died of pneumonia on July 2, 1918, in Beelitz and was buried in an unnamed grave at the local Protestant cemetery. Neufeld’s curriculum vitae in *Der Neue Orient* III/8 (July 30, 1918), p. 391-392; PA-AA, R 13881, K 197127-131, June 15, 1918.

105 SAD 160/1/99, Hogarth to Wingate, 27 July, 1916.

106 Thus, the authors of the *Arab Bulletin* could only speculate in No. 13, 1 August 1916, p. 135-137: “That so distinguished a Staff Officer as Von Stotzingen and so useful an agent as Neufeld should have been sent by a difficult and hazardous route towards the Yemen argues that there was more in contemplation than mere wireless telegraphy; though it is possible that an installation (perhaps in connection with submarines) was part of the mission of Von Stotzingen and his immediate subordinates. While the former was doubtless intended also to direct Ali Said Pasha’s efforts against Aden (*sic*), Neufeld, one cannot but suspect, was to have gone farther, either to the East Indies or to Somaliland or Abyssinia.”

107 *Arab Bulletin* No. 22, 19 September 1916, p. 272: “The discovery of Khairy Bey’s detachment changes for us the whole aspect and character of Von (*sic*) Stotzingen’s Mission. Instead of a handful of German adventurers trying to sneak past our patrols, and set up a wireless station in Southern Arabia, we have now an Ottoman Expeditionary Force bound for the Yemen and beyond, on a mixed military and political charter, with a senior German Staff Officer at the head of it, and a German wireless detachment to keep in touch with conditions at home and in Africa. The seriousness of their purpose is shown by the scale of the undertaking. There is no case on record hitherto of such a Turkish force marching the length of Arabia. They were going to reestablish Turkish domination in the Peninsula, and to be an object lesson to the Arabs of the undiminished might of Turkey.”

108 MORSEY (1976, p. 84) most succinctly got to the heart of the matter when he wrote: “It is too much honour for Stotzingen’s small group to evaluate the Arab revolt as a ‘complete success’ and to justify the huge amounts of money which Britain paid in support of the Arabs [...] since it crushed the mission.”

109 HOGARTH, 1991, p. 5. It was not only the Stotzingen-Neufeld mission whose dangers were exaggerated; in general, enemy schemes were “[...] inserted retroactively into a narrative of narrowly averted apocalypse”, SATIA, 2008, p. 352.

110 MACMUNN/FALLS, 1928, p. 228.

111 BRÉMOND, 1931, p. 30.

112 “It was arrival of this force (which McMahan calls “Ottoman Expeditionary Force under Baron von Stotzingen and Kheiri Bey”, MS) that compelled the Sherif in self-defence to revolt sooner than he had intended and his action has undoubtedly saved us from trouble [...]”, McMahan to Sirdar (Wingate, MS), SAD 140/4/38-39, September 17, 1916.

113 BURY, 1919, p. 75. Prüfer came to same assessment: “After the loss of Mecca, the already quite problematic Holy War became a complete farce, and may still turn against Constantinople”, PA-AA, R 20099, Prüfer to Weber, August 18, 1916, cited by HANISCH, 2014, p. 189.

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