

## “The Jinnee and the Magic Bottle”

### *Fritz Grobba and the German Middle Eastern Policy 1900–1945*

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The subject of this essay is an evaluation of German Middle Eastern policy from 1900 to 1945 in light of a recently discovered retrospective account by one of its key players. For a quarter century, Dr. Fritz Grobba was the foremost German envoy to the Middle East. As a dragoman and a lawyer, he was raised in two traditions. First, the German Middle Eastern policy was only secondary to policies concerning Europe and America. Thus, it was a tool of politics to prevent undesirable coalitions in Central Europe by keeping the Eastern Question open and placing Berlin in the position of mediator. Grobba applied this principle as a minister to Kabul, and to a lesser degree in Baghdad and ar-Riyād. There he leaned more toward finding a genuine German Middle Eastern peace policy. The personal conflict in which he thus found himself was partially alleviated when Berlin changed course to a primary Middle Eastern war policy after 1939. Then, Nazi policy makers were ready to sacrifice (after the projected fall of Moscow) two of the main pillars of German Middle Eastern policy: the maintenance of the status quo and the renunciation of territorial claims in the region.

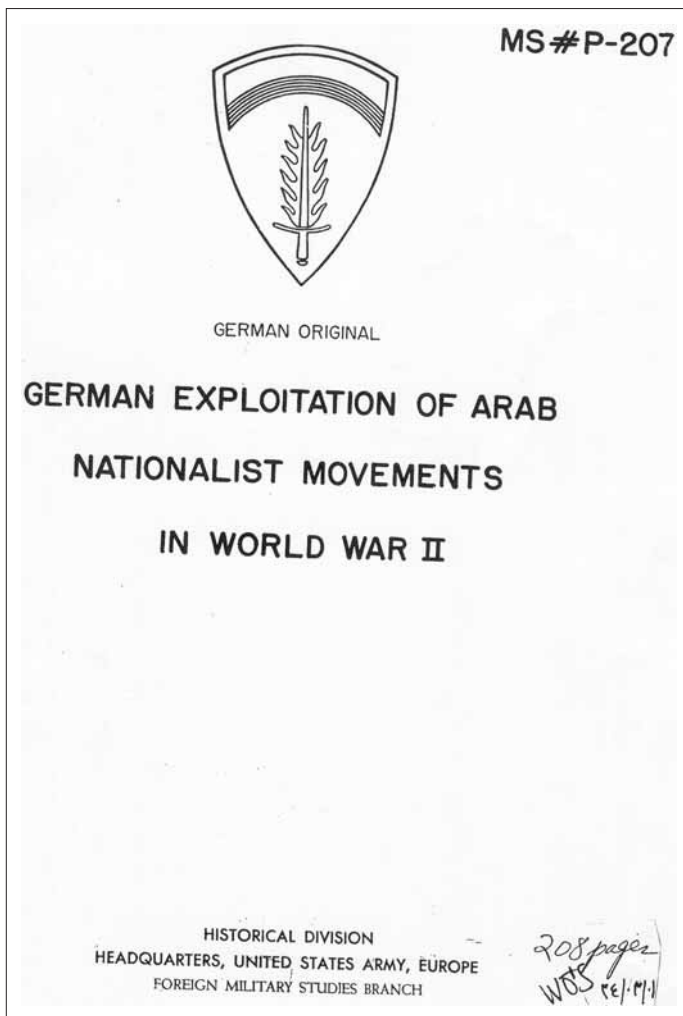
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In his capacity as Foreign Office Plenipotentiary for Arab Affairs and head of the Arab Committee, Grobba also applied the second tradition, the use of Islam for political aims. He released weekly talks for Arabic broadcasts from Germany to the Middle East and coached Grand Mufti Amīn al-Husainī in declaring a Holy War against the Allies. Thus Grobba uncorked a magic bottle of warfare under cover of religion. Although he did not distance himself from Nazi ideology after the war, he criticized the German Middle Eastern policy. Upon his release as a Soviet prisoner of war in 1955, he found a world divided by the Cold War. As the West contained the spread of totalitarian regimes, he decided to share his experiences with the West Germans and the Americans. Through this knowledge transfer to Washington, the foremost German diplomat in the Middle East became involved in German Middle Eastern policy once again. Here is a chronology of salient points in Dr. Grobba's life:

- |            |   |
|------------|---|
| 07/18/1886 | Born in Gartz/Oder, Pomerania   |
| 09/02/1973 | Died in Bonn, Bad Godesberg   |
| 1908–1913  | University of Berlin, Law and Oriental Languages (Arabic, Turkish)          |
| 1913       | Jerusalem, dragoman—Dragomanatseleve—at German Consular General             |
| 1914–1918  | Palestine, commander of an Arab POW unit, Kressenstein's orderly            |
| July 1921  | Second State Examination, becomes a civil servant, rank of vice consul      |
| 09/06/1922 | Berlin, enters Foreign Office, Wilhelmstraße, Department of Law             |
| 01/29/1923 | Foreign Office, changes to Department of Oriental Affairs                   |
| 12/16/1923 | Kabul, envoy ad interim, establishes the first German Diplomatic Mission    |
| 10/01/1926 | Joins the Department III (Persia, Afghanistan, India) of the Foreign Office |

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- 03/24/1932 Baghdad, becomes the first German envoy to Iraq
- 02/13/1939 Jidda, becomes the first German Envoy to Saudi Arabia
- 09/06/1939 Returns to Berlin after break of relations; serves with Wilhelm Keppler
- May 1941 Special envoy to Iraq, travels Berlin-Baghdad-Berlin, from May 6 to June 6
- Feb. 1942 Berlin, Plenipotentiary of the Foreign Office for the Arab Countries; coach of exiled Grand Mufti of Jerusalem who calls for a jihad
- 12/24/1942 Berlin, loses position and gets order: "No engagement in Arab politics"
- 02/13/1943 Paris, German Archive Commission, tries Arab politics again
- 06/10/1944 Berlin, Foreign Office, receives his early retirement
- 1944–1945 Dresden, joins Saxon government, responsible for war industry
- 1945 Meiningen, public prosecutor, Russians imprison him as spy
- 1955 Returns from the Soviet Union to West Germany
- 1956 Stuttgart, writes supplement to "German Exploitation of Arab Nationalist Movements in World War II" as requested by the former general Franz Halder
- 07/29/1957 His eighty-two page supplement is ready: "P-207" is now 300 pages long
- 03/03/1958 Guest of King Sa'ūd, intends to establish a German-Arab Society in Bonn



**Figure 7.** The cover sheet of “MS#P-207” by former Generals Walter Warlimont and Hellmuth Felmy to which Fritz Grobba added his supplement in 1957 for the U.S. Army.

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- 1959 Moves to Bonn, Bad Godesberg, as informal advisor
- Sept. 1963 Last trip to Iraq, Syria, and Lebanon
- 1967 Memoirs, *Men and Power in the Orient*, published in Göttingen

What was the state of literature? Besides a few works and Grobba's memoirs published in the 1960s,<sup>1</sup> only a handful of studies have appeared since. The most important of these is a book of essays by Uriel Dann that deals with Grobba's mission to Afghanistan, Iraq, and Saudi Arabia.<sup>2</sup> Francis R. Nicosia has written the best foreign overview so far on Fritz Grobba.<sup>3</sup>

Edgar Flacker published his source work in *Fritz Grobba and Nazi Germany's Middle Eastern Policy*.<sup>4</sup> A French point of view is expressed in Chantal Metzger's *L'Empire colonial français dans la stratégie du Troisième Reich*.<sup>5</sup> There are also revelations about looted gold transactions by Nazi Germany with Turkey<sup>6</sup> and new studies by Gerhard Höpp<sup>7</sup> that touch on the German Middle Eastern policy (Middle East include the Near East).

Nevertheless, a research gap remains. A comprehensive modern study of the Middle East and Nazi Germany based on Near Eastern and European sources is still missing. Such a work should not only cover German policies with regard to Arabs, Jews, Turks, and Persians, but it should also take due account of German Middle Eastern paradigms and guidelines,<sup>8</sup> and the Middle East policy of the great power of the twentieth century, the United States. This book remains to be written.<sup>9</sup> There are no new Arabic source studies that cover the policies of Middle Eastern countries with regard to Nazi Germany based on Middle Eastern records, although various of case studies were published by Israel Gershony,<sup>10</sup> Wajīh 'Abd as-Sādiq 'Atīq,<sup>11</sup> and Fahd Bin 'Abdallah as-Simmārī in the 1990s.<sup>12</sup>

Today, the gleaning of European archives for Fritz Grobba is nearing its end. Fresh insights are to be expected from Middle Eastern archives, especially those of Iraq, Syria, Saudi Arabia, Turkey, Egypt, and Israel, as well as collections in the United States, including the captured enemy property in the National Archives with unique German records.

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This essay focuses on German Middle Eastern policies, Fritz Grobba's life, the origin, contents, and circumstances of his knowledge transfer to the United States in 1957 which can be considered as his most important reflection in retrospect. I also discuss here the allied reactions to Grobba's activities. Important records have been discovered recently.

### **German Middle Eastern Paradigms and Guidelines at 1900**

The German Middle Eastern policy had its origin in the period after the founding of the German Empire in 1871. Chancellor Otto von Bismarck outlined Germany's essential foreign policy position before the Parliament in 1888:<sup>13</sup>

- a) Situated in the heart of Europe, Germany was vulnerable to multiple warfronts at one time.
- b) A particular threat existed for Germany from possible coalitions between neighboring states like France and Russia [we may add Great Britain here].
- c) Germany always needed to take care not to provoke others to invade it.

The main geopolitical problem was this: by maintaining a level of power sufficient to oppose her three potential adversaries, Germany might have provoked them into viewing German power as too great for each of one of them alone. The arms race among the four major powers in Europe created lasting instability. The one in the middle felt threatened by possible coalitions that needed to be disrupted to prevent a multiple-front war. To this end, Bismarck regarded the Eastern Question on the periphery of Europe as a welcome means of disrupting undesirable coalitions surrounding Germany. The Eastern Question at that time boiled down to which European power would get what out of the declining Ottoman Empire. If we take Bismarck's words and the policy of Emperor Wilhelm II, we find guidelines of German Middle Eastern policy in 1900 as standard explanations for problems and approaches to solve them:

- 1) The web of peace for a German world policy was to be put up at the edges of Europe.

- 2) By keeping the Eastern Question open, Berlin placed itself in a position from which to manipulate the coalitions of its adversaries and to mediate its neighbors' disputes at the periphery.
- 3) The two main pillars of German Middle Eastern policy center on maintaining the status quo in the Middle East and renouncing any acquisition of colonies or territories in the region.<sup>15</sup>

But the most striking paradigm of German Middle Eastern policy at the beginning of the twentieth century was that, although it was a very direct, active policy, it was secondary and non-imperial. In the hierarchy of policy-making factors, German European and American policy always ranked first, and the German Middle Eastern policy was primarily a means for disrupting antagonistic European coalitions through manipulating the Eastern Question. This was to change during World War I.<sup>16</sup>

### **Middle Eastern Guidelines in the Republic of Weimar and Nazi Germany**

Allied with the Ottoman Empire during World War I, Berlin's primary Middle East war policy was directed against France, Russia, and Britain. The German Foreign Office or Wilhelmstraße (named for the street on which the German Foreign Office was located) developed a special strategy of inciting people against their rulers by "Islamic revolts." The mastermind of this dual concept, "war by riots" in the hinterland and "war by troops" on the front, was Max von Oppenheim, whose bureau was hosted by the Foreign Office.<sup>17</sup> At the same time, Fritz Grobba, a young lieutenant and intellectual in his late twenties, was gathering valuable experiences in Palestine as commander of an Arab unit of prisoners of war.<sup>18</sup>

With Germany's defeat and the dismemberment of the Ottoman Empire, the situation changed drastically.<sup>19</sup> The League of Nations regulated the Eastern Question without regard for Berlin's world policy or German participation in the French and British Mandatory regimes.

The German Foreign Office returned to a secondary German Middle East peace policy upholding the status quo and renouncing territo-

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rial claims in the region. Germany's interests in the Middle East were purely economic and cultural. However, Germany did become a critical factor in promoting national independence in the areas of the European empires. New countries like the Republic of Turkey appeared.<sup>20</sup> Others, like the Kingdom of Egypt, were greatly disappointed by the Mandatory regime of old European powers in the former Arab parts of the Ottoman Empire like Palestine. As anti-Semitism was on the rise in Europe, the Balfour Declaration promised a national homeland for Jews in Palestine. The conflict intensified in that area.

In 1923 Grobba advanced to the position of German envoy to Afghanistan. He became the classic case of a diplomat who used Kabul as a basis for a secondary Middle East peace policy. His primary concern was not then developing the bilateral aims of Germany and Afghanistan but changing his host's relations with third parties, like Soviet Russia, Great Britain, and India, in the German interest.<sup>21</sup>

In the 1930s other newly independent countries appeared, like the monarchies of Saudi Arabia and Iraq. But after the ending of the Caliphate they all lacked an "Islamic umbrella," a greater union that the Ottoman Empire used to provide. Again it was Fritz Grobba who became the first German envoy to Baghdad in 1932. Ten years later, he advanced to first Plenipotentiary of the Foreign Office for Arab Countries, having also been appointed envoy to Saudi Arabia in 1939. By 1943, however, his promising career met with a sudden end because of intrigues.

How did the guidelines of the Nazi German Middle Eastern policy change in this period?

- 1) Berlin pursued once again a secondary Middle East policy in its search for world domination, ready to sacrifice the previous pillars, those of upholding the status quo and of renouncing all territorial acquisitions in the region. From 1941 to 1943, Germany, in alliance with Italy, changed to a primary Middle East war policy directed against the main Allies, Great Britain, the United States, and the Soviet Union.
- 2) The Middle East was regarded as a war zone, but not as a zone for German settlements or colonies. At first Hitler left this region to Mussolini. In the case of a German-



Italian victory, they would establish a dictatorship over the region. There is no doubt that had the plan succeeded, Jews in the Middle East would have met with the same fate as those in Europe. In a second step in 1941, Hitler approved preliminary designs on the Middle East, to be developed after the fall of Moscow. Germans planned a Greater Arab Union that would be dependent on Germany and Italy.

- 3) Germany again advanced the concept of Islamic Holy War, a jihad, by instigating revolts among Arabs and other Muslims against the British, French, and Russians. With the help of leaders like the Grand Mufti Hājī Amīn al-Husainī, the Germans recruited some Muslim troops.

This secondary and primary Middle Eastern policy was the frame for Grobba's mission to the Middle East. A learned and devoted civil servant, he had a great affinity for the local population, especially Turks and Arabs, among whom he made many friends. Besides being an admirer of their history, culture, and civilization, he was able to adapt the Foreign Office rules and games to good advantage at his posts in the Middle East. He was consulted not only by German military leaders, but also by leaders in Egypt, Iraq, Saudi Arabia and Palestine. In the thirties he had already gained an almost legendary stature in the region, as Dr. Günther Pawelke, his deputy in Baghdad, has testified.<sup>22</sup>

### **The Origin of Fritz Grobba's Supplement to "P-207" after World War II**

To examine the circumstances under which Grobba wrote the supplement (hereafter also briefly called study) to the manuscript "German Exploitation of Arab Nationalist Movements in World War II" (see its cover sheet, figure 2) it is necessary to return to the literature discussed above. There are two main groups of sources, records from administrations in Germany and other countries until 1945, and published or unpublished sources produced by the former actors in memoirs and diaries. Many of these papers, which appeared after World War II, were compiled either as evidence for the Nuremberg tribunals or with the aim of diffusing the facts. In general, the published memoirs are similar to

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the human memory that dislikes unpleasant things out of the past. Fritz Grobba's memoirs of 1967, *Men and Power in the Orient*, are no exception. But his study, written ten years earlier, shows far more accuracy and offers insights that are not in his memoirs.<sup>23</sup>

This unpublished, unique record is free of any direct political purpose, for it was written in 1957 long after the close of the trials. Thus, unlike Grobba's memoirs, the study was not meant to influence public opinion. On the contrary, his manuscript was for internal use. An explanation of its origins makes it clear. His diplomatic career came to a sudden halt in 1943 and he was transferred to the German Archive Commission in Paris. Since he tried there again to engage himself in Arab politics, especially to influence the Algerians to establish a committee for the liberation of their country from the French, a *hai'at at-tahrīr*, he was swiftly removed to Berlin in 1944, and later to Dresden. There he worked in Saxony's war industry.

After the war, newspapers called for persons with legal training and without a Nazi record to be engaged as lawyers. Since Fritz Grobba had not been a member of the Nazi party, he responded to the call and served as public prosecutor in the town of Meiningen, but the Russians imprisoned him and deported him to their country. When he returned in 1955 at the age of sixty-nine, he was asked by the former general Franz Halder to write a political commentary on an essay entitled "German Exploitation of Arab Nationalist Movements during World War II." Halder, a former chief of the General Staff who had been dismissed by Hitler in late 1942 and had published a book *Hitler as a General* in 1949, was then employed by the Historical Division of the U.S. Army in Europe. One of his projects was to solicit contributions from German officers for the Army's Foreign Military Studies Branch.

With regard to the Middle East, Halder had already engaged the former generals Hellmuth Felmy and Walter Warlimont to write about Germany's exploitation of Arab nationalist movements during World War II. Felmy was the chief of staff for German Middle Eastern affairs,<sup>24</sup> and Warlimont was one of the chief planners at military headquarters. The two finished a 208-page report in 1955 while Grobba was still a prisoner in Soviet Russia. After his return, as soon as his condition permitted, Fritz Grobba wrote an 82-page commentary as a supplement to the generals' report. It includes valuable additions and

clarifications, wrote Franz Halder in his foreword to the supplement (see the foreword to document 2).

The now 300-page manuscript on how the Germans exploited Arab nationalists during World War II—or vice versa—by the former outstanding German diplomat and the two former generals passed on to the U.S. Army,<sup>25</sup> called there “MS # P-207,” and has remained unpublished until today.<sup>26</sup> Moreover, its existence is still widely unknown.<sup>27</sup> Besides the three main papers, this document “MS # P-207” contains:

- Additional supportive material;<sup>28</sup>
- Letters by witnesses, for instance soldiers of Middle Eastern origin in the German army or service like Fauzī Qāwuqjī;
- Several key documents,<sup>29</sup> maps,<sup>30</sup> timetables;<sup>31</sup>
- Overviews of sources and names of the interviewed participants, among them Arabs like Mahmūd Rifāʿī of Baghdad; several members of German intelligence services like Hans Antonius, Leopold Bürkner, Hans Freund, Paul Leverkuehn,<sup>32</sup> Edgar Scholtz, Bernd Schulze-Holthus;
- Other evaluations of former generals like Hasso von Wedel, and of the former diplomats Joachim von Geldern, Günther Pawelke, Rudolf Rahn, Ernst Woermann.<sup>33</sup>

The circumstances under which they told Felmy and Warlimont their stories were those of the postwar geopolitical configuration of the Cold War with new power players in the Middle East, such as the United States, the Soviet Union, and China.<sup>34</sup> There was no intention of publishing these accounts. Fritz Grobba wrote his part after the Suez crises. The Suez war showed for the first time that conflicts in the Middle East could lead to World War III through the use of weapons of mass destruction, including ballistic nuclear missiles.<sup>35</sup>

Thus, it is not surprising that these former German generals and veteran Orient experts became unique sources for the West in the fight against totalitarian regimes in the divided Europe and their spread to the Middle East. There are indications that Grobba served as advisor to the West German intelligence service, the Bundesnachrichtendienst.

We will know this for sure in the future, for there are still some top-secret folders on Dr. Fritz Grobba in the Political Archive of the German Foreign Office to be declassified. Other sources, especially those held by the West German intelligence service, are still out of the reach of researchers.<sup>36</sup>

### **Fritz Grobba's Retrospective of 1957 and His Activities during World War II**

When Fritz Grobba wrote his political commentary on Felmy's and Warlimont's texts about the "German exploitation of Arab nationalist movements in World War II," his memory was better than it was ten years later when he wrote his memoirs, *Men and Power in the Orient*.

It is worthwhile to take a closer look at three of the main points he makes in the study of 1957. First, Grobba maintains that the Arab nationalist movement was essentially pro-German. When the Arabs were not granted their independence as promised after World War I, they placed their hopes on Germany. Arabs and Germans saw in the British and French their common enemies (according to the slogan *'adū 'aduwī sahbī*—the enemy of my enemy is my friend).

However, in Grobba's eyes, this relation was clouded by German anti-Semitism and racial approaches, which complicated his diplomatic mission.<sup>37</sup> Fritz Grobba's complaint against racial doctrines was merely practical, inasmuch as they impeded his mission to the region. But he was not a member of the Nazi party (since he had been rejected as a Freemason). Nevertheless, he pursued the Nazi foreign policy guidelines effectively and did not distance himself from Nazi ideology even twelve years after the end of the war, despite more knowledge of the Holocaust. At least, he had the chance to do so in his study. Thus, the question remains whether he did grasp the anti-human nature of approaches to the foreign policy that divided humankind into "higher" and "lower" races.

Fritz Grobba frequently emphasized his basic disagreement with Berlin's Middle Eastern policy. He explained: "The rejection of every unilateral German initiative in the Arab region was due to the fact that Hitler's enemies in the Foreign Office worked against any expanding the war to the Middle East. In part, they didn't recognize the opportunity there, and in part they obstructed it."<sup>38</sup> Moreover, he noted, he always looked for a German Middle East peace policy that would be guided by

genuine German *and* Middle Eastern interests, whereas Berlin saw the region merely as a secondary means for its primary Central European world policy.<sup>39</sup>

Francis R. Nicosia rightly remarked: “For Grobba the Middle East was an end in itself, an area in which he wished Germany to promote her exports and investments, show respect for British interests, place less emphasis on promoting Zionist emigration from Germany to Palestine, and more on publicly supporting Arab nationalism, and show much less deference to Italian ambitions. The German government, on the other hand, viewed the region as a convenient means to reach more important goals in Europe.”<sup>40</sup> This is an expression of the main conflict between the primary policy—Europe and the world—and the secondary policy toward the Middle East.

This is also a continuation of Bismarck’s traditional Middle Eastern policy. It was basically a secondary policy, though an active and direct one. But it was a policy subordinated to more important priorities like Europe, the United States, and Asian powers like Japan. Fritz Grobba was anchored in that tradition, but he opposed it later. He saw many possibilities of a primary bilateral policy toward the newly independent countries. And he criticized European empires in the Middle East in the era of imperialism and the following Mandatory regime. He went also through two major shifts to a primary Middle Eastern war policy during both world wars.

As a man who was at home in Arabic as well as in Turkish, Grobba bemoaned the foreign minister’s misperception of Arab nationalist movements. How could Joachim von Ribbentrop have handed the Arab region over to the Italians as he did in the Tripartite Pact of September 27, 1940, he asked. This Middle Eastern envoy wrote: “Hitler and Ribbentrop displayed total disinterest for Arab aspirations, Hitler by rejecting the Grand Mufti’s request for recognition of the independence of the Arab countries, and Ribbentrop by concluding a pact with Count Ciano designating the Arab countries as a priority sphere for Italian interests ... It can be said that in the Second World War the Arab movement made more concerted attempts to exploit Germany than did Germany to exploit the Arab movement.”<sup>41</sup> This was his central conclusion (see his final remarks in document 3).

Then, Fritz Grobba underlined, since Hitler was at the peak of power after the fall of Paris 1940, he would have done better to engage British

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troops at their softest spot, in the Afro-Asiatic region. All this “war by troops” and “war by riots” aimed at using Islam for military and political aims. Grobba claimed, it went on with the help of Arab nationalist leaders as the Grand Mufti of Jerusalem Hajj Amīn al-Husainī and the exiled Iraqi Prime Minister Rashīd ‘Alī al-Kailanī, the Iraqi whose short reign in Baghdad was the “missed chance” for Germany to organize the next war on British influenced territory and at the same time cutting off the route to India.<sup>42</sup>

In short, Russia as the next theater of war was a mistake; the Middle East would have been a better choice. Fritz Grobba explained his thesis: “The Iraq conflict offered Germany a unique opportunity to gain a foothold behind the British frontline in the Middle East from which to launch a very effective pincer operation against Egypt and the Caucasus. Successful German operations in Iraq and Egypt would have opened the way to India and, by posing a serious threat to India, would have created favorable conditions for an agreement with England.... This opportunity was not recognized in time by influential policy makers at the Foreign Office and the Army High Command, and was, due in part to their opposition to Hitler, consciously not seized upon. The lack of understanding of the Middle East on the part of high-level German military leaders and the opportunities arising from exploiting the indigenous movements for the German war strategy had already come to the fore in the First World War.”<sup>43</sup>

Moreover, Fritz Grobba revealed details of the Foreign Office’s payments to Muslim nationalists like Amīn al-Husainī and Rashīd ‘Alī al-Kailanī. For them the Foreign Office released a declaration of German sympathy for the Arab independence on October 21, 1940.<sup>44</sup> The Foreign Office paid or established several Islamic institutions like the Pan-Islamic weekly *Islam* in Switzerland, the Central Islamic Institute in Berlin, and the Dresden-based “Mullah School” for the training of Islamic leaders for troops and for the planned Greater Turkestan.<sup>45</sup>

Basically, the talk of the “missed opportunity”<sup>46</sup> in the Middle East was an old theme from World War I as Germans wondered why they had lost the war. Some used to argue that having attacked the heavily fortified French at Verdun in 1916 was the big mistake. Instead they should have turned against weaker spots in Southeastern Europe to advance to the borders of India. Nevertheless, Germany continued its policy of using Islam for jihad.<sup>47</sup> In this regard Hitler acknowledged in

his final days: “A bold policy of friendship with Islam,” he lamented, “had still been possible until 1941, stopping the war against England: London could manage its Empire, and Berlin would eradicate Bolshevism.”<sup>48</sup>

However, Grobba was also responsible for this Middle Eastern policy.<sup>49</sup> But after 1939 Germany had no longer diplomatic representations in the Arab region. The only areas that remained open to Germany were Turkey, and after the fall of France, the Vichy-controlled territories like Syria,<sup>50</sup> and, for a short time during the spring of 1941, Iraq.

When Fritz Grobba returned to Berlin from Baghdad, he drafted several foreign policy plans for the Arab region in his capacity, from February 1942 on, as plenipotentiary for Arab countries and head of the Arab Committee. Within the Foreign Office, the Arab Committee issued weekly guidelines for German radio broadcasts in Arabic. Here is an example of his style: “British propaganda is failing,” Fritz Grobba argued at the end of 1942. “His Majesty’s Ambassador to Madrid, Sir Samuel Hoare, praised the Anglo-Saxon crusaders against the infidels and he spoke ill of Sultan Salāh ad-Dīn.” These words of the supreme Christianity, Grobba claimed, hurt not only the feelings of Muslims as allied soldiers, but also of all Muslims. One should only remember, he declared, how the British behaved in the Middle East and that they are today friends of the anti-religious Bolsheviks: “Who still trusts Hoares words?”<sup>51</sup>

With such inflammatory Arabic broadcasts, Fritz Grobba used Islam for German propaganda. Whether it made an impact on the Allies can be gauged from two American documents. The U.S. coordinator of information originated the first document (see document 1, “Axis propaganda in the Moslem World”). This secret service was a forerunner of the Office of Strategic Services (OSS). The agency was concerned with the German-Arabic broadcasts of “Radio Zeesen,” named after a village near Berlin.<sup>52</sup> As shown, the Arab Committee of the Foreign Office determined the content of the Arabic broadcasts. Therefore as head of the committee, Grobba was responsible for the contents. I shall return later to the second document produced by the OSS from American-British files.

The U.S. coordinator of information drew this conclusion about the German propaganda in the Muslim world at the end of 1941: “The Arabs are united on one general purpose, to free their world from the

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domination of French and British masters. Some Arabs are blinded to Italian imperialism and to German domination of Europe by their anxiety to get rid of the foreign control. This arises not only from a desire to play all European powers off against each other but from a naiveté which assumes that anyone who is against their masters is a friend of the Muslims. They fail to realize that, in case of a British defeat, there would be a substitution of Axis for the British or the French domination.”

Regarding the targets of the propaganda, the Americans distinguished sentiments and feelings on which the Germans relied. Therefore, the anti-British sentiment has two causes: The British support of Jews in Palestine and of other minorities for the apparent purpose of dividing and ruling the Arab states and is the reluctance of Britain to grant independence to mandated territories. This made it easy for Axis propaganda to stir up Arab nationalist sentiments. On the other hand, the anti-American sentiment resulted from expressed sympathies of American officials with political Zionism in Palestine and America's increasingly close alliance with Britain. All these factors, the Americans concluded, were fully exploited by Radio Zeesen in broadcasts to the Near East and India.

In the anti-Jewish feeling, maintained the American coordinator, anti-Semitism had an important effect on the Arabs. There could be no doubt that the situation created by the Zionist program in Palestine caused the position of Jews to deteriorate throughout the Arab world. There were too many Jews in Palestine and abroad who adhered to this attitude, according to William B. Ziff:<sup>53</sup> “The Jews are entering Palestine by divine right and intend to make the Arabs go back to the desert where they came from.” Radio Zeesen had recently been reading anti-Jewish passages from the Koran, emphasizing that the Jews are the enemies of Islam.

The American analysis of the German-Arabic propaganda also elaborates on anti-French and anti-Bolshevik feelings. All this, the coordinator of information concluded, appealed to conservative Muslims from Morocco to India. The acquisition of independence by Iraq and Egypt only after years of rebellion convinced Arabs that force was the only means by which they could extract from the British what they regarded as their rights. An illustration of the strength of this attitude was the Arab population's support of the Mufti Amīn al-Husainī, who was



the apostle of force against the British. What success the Axis powers had in playing to that state of mind could be judged from the fact that the Mufti was now in Berlin. Recently Radio Zeesen had been playing up the alleged suppression of Muslim minorities in Russia (a British ally at the time); another curious anti-British blast from Zeesen accused the British of being pagans like pre-Islamic Arabs and thus the natural enemies of Islam. The announcement that Britain was stripping Arab countries and India of food is often repeated by Zeesen, which added that Britain meant to sacrifice millions of Indian and Arab lives in a vain attempt to resist the Axis. All in all, we can see here that Grobba's Arab Committee had an impact, especially through the German-Arabic broadcasts into the Muslim world.<sup>54</sup>

I turn now to the second document that illustrates here the impact of Fritz Grobba's activities to the Allies. A secret communication, it was circulated within the OSS. It reflects the indirect impact of Grobba's propaganda and the Allies' reaction. The most critical time for the Middle East was between mid-1940 and mid-1942. British troops capitulated in at-Tubruq and General Erwin Rommel advanced with his German-Italian troops into Egypt. Then, the (Anglo-American) Joint Psychological Warfare Committee discussed the problem of how to use Islam and its leading figures for warfare in North Africa.

One member of the Warfare Committee suggested enlisting the legendary leaders 'Abd al-Karīm of Morocco and Idrīs as-Sanūsī of Libya and Tripolitania. He reminded the members of the Warfare Committee that in World War I German propaganda was not totally unsuccessful, at least as far as stirring up trouble among the Muslim Berber tribes who resisted Spanish and French penetration is concerned. According to the document, the Warfare Committee concluded: "Under the tutelage of the United Nations, and more especially that of the United States, these two [Arab leaders, 'Abd al-Karīm and Idrīs as-Sanūsī] can make the Mediterranean safe for the Allies. Equally important is the influence that such a move will have throughout the Muslim world. From India to the Atlantic, Allah will be praised, and the Allies will receive the plaudits and the support of the faithful."<sup>55</sup>

The head of the OSS, William J. Donovan, approved further investigation into this project, whereas General Kroner pointed out the possible far-reaching effects, especially the possibility of a Christian-Muslim war. Thus, General Wedemeyer, chief of the Strategy and Policy Group

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of the War Department at the Pentagon, was very reluctant to submit the proposal of using the two Arab leaders to General Dwight D. Eisenhower. It was only when intelligence of the Mufti Amīn al-Husainī's service to the Axis became known that the OSS looked for a counterpart to the Mufti on the allied side. But this was not an easy task since not every Arab leader could have claimed direct descent from the Prophet Muhammad, as the Mufti did. Moreover, the former American Military Attaché to Cairo referred to the Mufti in mid-May 1941 as a religious authority and the "greatest leader of the Arab peoples alive." General Bonner F. Fellers, who was also an advisor to the OSS, did evaluate the possible results of the Mufti declaring a Holy War for the Axis: it would be an anti-Jewish, not a religious war. Amīn al-Husainī was a religious figure turned political, concluded the General.<sup>56</sup>

But the discussion within the OSS and the suggested choice of 'Abd al-Karīm as a potential asset for the Allies brought up a really big question: "Will he be of use to the war effort, or will his release be like that of a Jinnee out of the magic bottle?" The German Islam policy as a part of the Middle East policy and Fritz Grobba's propaganda apparently pushed the Allies toward a matching policy, not only defining a non-religious war in religious terms, but adopting a concept similar to that of "war by proxy." Fortunately, it did not come to that, nor did such a policy determine the Allies' actions. Max von Oppenheim's jihad concept, born in World War I and forwarded by him again in 1940, was further developed by Fritz Grobba for using Islam for political aims. It remained, at least until 1945, a concept made in Germany.

### Conclusions

German politicians used the Eastern Question for their secondary peace and primary war policies in the Middle East. It was also a tool for Berlin to gain a central position from which to manipulate the alliances of other European neighbors, thus to mediate or facilitate their disputes in that region. The policy was based on three main pillars: Maintenance of the status quo, renunciation of any territorial acquisitions, and the diplomacy of mediation.

The politicians in Berlin came to realize that a peace web in the "German world policy" would have to be established at the edges of Europe, especially in the Balkans and in the Middle East. Nevertheless,

Kaiser Wilhelm's policy, including his scheme to use Islam to instigate a war by troops and war by riots, failed. It was a ruthless policy that would incite others through religious propaganda without much German effort or expense.

This was the kind of thinking in which Fritz Grobba was educated. A devoted envoy to the Middle East for twenty-five years, he pursued a more subtle approach toward using Islam for political purposes. But his efforts did not pay off. As before, Muslims remained in World War II thinking subjects. While some followed his tactic, the best<sup>57</sup> kept aloof from the proposed proxy war by minds, troops, and riots. Grobba drew about this a frank, and to a certain degree self-critical picture in his report for the U.S. Army in 1957. But he widened the magic bottleneck, tempting the Allies to do the same. That Jinnee would eventually turn against them: Natives directed the same tool against the infidels. But the resistance of the Allies, including natives, spared the Middle East from a brutal experience.

Some questions and tasks remain. What did the Americans do with the studies gathered by Franz Halder? Did Fritz Grobba's knowledge have an impact? Did it in some way touch or influence the new shaping of the American Middle Eastern<sup>58</sup> policy after the Suez war? Furthermore, how did West Germany use Grobba's experiences in building her Middle Eastern institutions and intelligence services in the fifties and sixties?

On the other side of the divide, how did the East Germans react to this policy and to Fritz Grobba's new activities, such as his attempt to establish a German-Arab Friendship Society in 1958<sup>59</sup> or his visits to several Arab capitals, among them Baghdad in September 1963? Did the Israelis watch him closely, and was there even any kind of cooperation, as some suggested?<sup>60</sup> How influential was Grobba's legacy for the German Cold War in the Middle East, for the main conflict there, and for the role of Islam in the foreign policy?

For Fritz Grobba, a primary German Middle Eastern peace policy was never realized. The Republic of Weimar had to obey the Treaty of Versailles, and Nazi Germany ultimately switched to a primary war policy aimed at world hegemony. After 1945 the chances for a primary peace policy vanished with a global Cold War and with shooting wars in the Middle East. Both Germanies were occupied, not sovereign states free to pursue a unilateral Middle Eastern policy. Whereas Bonn fol-

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lowed a Washingtonian Middle Eastern policy, East Berlin toed the line of the Kremlin. Both power blocs made the Middle East a battlefield for unsolved European problems.<sup>61</sup>

Since the fall of the Iron Curtain in 1989 and with Germany and Europe unified, there is, for the first time since 1871, a chance for a genuine primary German Middle Eastern peace policy. But it is uncertain whether or not the capabilities will developed for military intervention. Challenges to Berlin's new approach to the Middle East and conflicts with Washington are very likely. In a positive sense, Berlin has to reposition itself in Europe and towards the transatlantic alliance.

The field is still open to researchers. For example, a comprehensive study remains to be written on the United States, the Middle East, and Nazi Germany that will also shed light on a period of acute German awareness of the Orient and the Middle East, the German Orient founding years between 1884 and 1914.<sup>62</sup> This was a time when Germany intensified its relations to the Middle East at all levels.

The study "P-207," in which Fritz Grobba and two former generals, Hellmuth Felmy and Walter Warlimont, outlined their Middle Eastern experiences should be edited and made available in print. As Franz Halder underlined, the two former German generals had this message for the U.S. Army in the mid-1950s: An effective Middle Eastern policy requires experienced experts with insider knowledge based on their knowledge of regional languages, developed and ready means of intervention, and a well-placed secret service.

It is not unlikely that Fritz Grobba was asked to write a similar report during his ten-year imprisonment in the Soviet Union. If this report could be located somewhere in Moscow, a comparison could be made between his report to the Russians and that to the Americans.

Finally, it is high time for a biography of Dr. Fritz Grobba that will take full account of Middle Eastern sources and of the life of his remarkable deputy in Baghdad, Dr. Günther Pawelke. He was also not a member of the Nazi party and became in the early fifties the first West German Ambassador to Cairo.<sup>63</sup> Their lives would provide a unique glimpse into German Middle Eastern policies between 1886 and 1976, from Imperial Germany to the Weimar Republic to Nazi Germany and to the Federal Republic. Both were raised in the German tradition of not seeking colonies or making territorial claims in that region, but working to maintain the status quo. Thus, Germany stands out among the Euro-

pean powers. Moreover, it mediated disputes between her neighbors over areas on the periphery of Europe.

Grobba faithfully executed this Middle Eastern policy within the changing frameworks of a secondary peace and a primary war policy. As a devoted civil servant with great affinity for the people and culture of the Middle East, his struggle for a genuine primary peace policy was never realized. Instead he played a key role in promoting a concept of proxy war by Islamic riots and units, or war by revolution in the enemy's hinterland, that was truly made in Germany.

When Generals Felmy and Warlimont concluded their study MS # P-207 in late 1955, the veteran Orient expert of the German Foreign Office and former envoy to Iraq, Dr. Fritz Grobba, had just returned to West Germany from imprisonment in the Soviet Union. His absence had been painfully noted during work on the study since it was clear that, due to his personal experience, he must have the most profound knowledge of the political circumstances of the subject matter. Because he was in poor health after ten years of imprisonment, it was only in the spring of 1956 that it was possible to interview him.

As soon as his condition permitted, Dr. Grobba took on the task of reviewing the report by Generals Felmy and Warlimont from a political perspective and to supplement it where necessary. The result of his work has been added in its original version to the study MS # P-207 as a supplement. Besides the material in the list of sources, the author had available to him personal notes that had been safeguarded in Berlin during his imprisonment. However, it is hardly surprising that his commentary, in part, bears the mark of very personal character.

**Document 2.** Foreword by former General Franz Halder to Fritz Grobba's supplement of the study "MS # P-207" by former Generals Felmy and Warlimont for the U.S. Army, translated by Brigitte M. Goldstein.

According to its original conception, the study MS # P-207 was to touch on political matters inasmuch as they helped to make clear the concept "Arab nationalist movements" in order to highlight the atmosphere in which the inadequate and unsuccessful military efforts on the part of the Germans were undertaken. Dr. Grobba's original report essentially remains within this framework and includes valuable additions and clarifications from his personal experiences to the facts uncovered by Generals Felmy and Warlimont. It explains especially the lack of interest and understanding on the part of the highest-level German leadership for the Arab question and shows the personal and organizational inadequacies of the German leadership. Here it is necessary to bear with an occasional discussion of details that reaches far beyond the subject and is colored by a very personal perspective. The details the author contributes to the Arab point of view are very informative with regard to furthering an understanding of the internal tensions within the Arab world and the Arabic national character as manifested in the actions of the main players involved.

The critical reader will, under the impression of these descriptions, be able to meet the depiction of the reticence on the part of the policy-making German agencies and personalities with some understanding of the Arab question and will regard the author's overall assessment as laid down in the first paragraph of his concluding observations (next page [document 3, "Grobba's final remarks"]) with some reservations. The statement by General Warlimont (page 60) cited in the supplement, that none of the studies on the operations of the German army or those of the Tank Commander Rommel mention anything about a possible exploitation of the Arab nationalist movements, is quite true. But it must be added that the Higher Command of the Wehrmacht (OKW) under Hitler's influence had reserved for itself all decisions on broad policy questions and jealously guarded against any intrusion into its sphere of any proposals and suggestions by Rommel's Tank Command (AOK).

Signed: Franz Halder [1957]

*Document 2, continued*

The Iraq conflict offered Germany a unique opportunity to gain a foothold behind the British frontline in the Middle East from which to launch a very effective pincer operation against Egypt and the Caucasus. Successful German operations in Iraq and Egypt would have opened the way to India and, by posing a serious threat to India, would have created favorable conditions for an agreement with England. Churchill writes about the Iraq conflict: "Hitler certainly rejected a brilliant opportunity to gain a great prize in the Middle East with a minimum of investment."<sup>1</sup>

This opportunity was not recognized in time by influential policy makers at the Foreign Office and the Army High Command, and was, due in part to their opposition to Hitler, consciously not seized upon. The lack of understanding of the Middle East on the part of high-level German military leaders and the opportunities arising from exploiting the indigenous movements for the German war strategy had already come to the fore in the First World War. The then German commander of the Sinai front, General Kreß von Kressenstein, writes in his book<sup>2</sup>: "How much we still lack at the beginning of the war any recognition that the modern war is fought not alone by soldiers, but also through a close cooperation of all departments, can be seen from the fact that nobody at the German embassy in Constantinople informed me, before I took over my command in the Arabic provinces, that an Arab question existed which influenced to a high degree the internal politics of Turkey, and that I too did not think about requesting the information from the embassy."<sup>2</sup>

And Churchill writes in his book about the First World War that Falkenhayn had made a fateful error at the end of the summer of 1916 by attacking the strongest enemy in its strongest spot (Verdun). If he had instead turned against his weak opponents in Southeastern Europe, he could have advanced to the borders of India with 15 to 20 divisions, whereby he would have breached the blockade of Germany, tied down entire British and Indian armies in Egypt, Mesopotamia, and India, and could have spread

**Document 3.** Fritz Grobba's final remarks in his supplement to "MS # P-207" [1957], translated by Brigitte M. Goldstein.

the glory of the German eagle and the feeling of coming changes among the peoples of Asia.<sup>3</sup>

With regard to the Second World War, General Warlimont states in his report: "As all the more peculiar, it remains to note the fact that in the numerous surviving studies of the operations of the High Command of the Army as well as of Tank Commander Rommel no single mention is made anywhere of the Arabs' sympathies for the German cause, let alone of the exploitation of the Arab indigenous movement."<sup>4</sup>

The chief of the foreign counterintelligence department, Admiral Canaris, due to his opposition to Hitler, failed to provide the German High Command with information that could have served as a basis for strategic planning.

The policy-making authorities of the Foreign Office were only interested in a policy with regard to Europe and North America, not in the Middle East, let alone in the the Arab world. Furthermore, State Secretary Weizsäcker, Under State Secretary Woermann, and Ambassador Hentig, as opponents to Hitler, also opposed the expansion of the war to the Arabic sphere.

It is true that "no German Lawrence appeared who would have been up to the great task on the basis of personal knowledge and strength."<sup>5</sup> But the following must be taken into consideration:

1. Lawrence as a personality is very controversial;<sup>6</sup>
2. Lawrence's importance was more in the area of literature than in the military and political;
3. Lawrence had a wealth of gold and arms at his disposal without which he would not have been able to make any headway among the Bedouins of Hedjaz;
4. Behind him stood the intelligent and powerful Churchill, while the German civil servants who spoke in favor of the Arabs were called "amateur

*Document 3, continued*



diplomats” by State Secretary Weizsäcker and “Arabomans” by the Under State Secretary.<sup>7</sup>

Hitler and Ribbentrop displayed total disinterest for Arab aspirations, Hitler by rejecting the Grand Mufti’s request for recognition of the independence of the Arab countries, and Ribbentrop by concluding a pact with Count Ciano designating the Arab countries as a priority sphere for Italian interests.<sup>8</sup>

The Arab movement emerged from the Second World War greatly strengthened. Several Arab countries, which were still under the Mandate or colonies, gained their independence at the end of the war (Syria, Lebanon, Jordan, Tunis, and Morocco). Egypt freed itself from British military occupation. A strong bond for the Arab movement constitutes a common hostility toward Israel, the common interest for Algeria in its fight for independence, and the feeling of solidarity with Nasser.

The Arabs’ sympathies for Germany meanwhile were further strengthened, since the Germans were the Arabs’ brothers in arms during the Second World War, and since German blood was shed on Arab soil.

It can be said that, during the Second World War, the Arab movement made more concerted attempts to exploit Germany than did Germany to exploit the Arab movement.

Notes:

1. Cited in Franz von Papen, *Der Wahrheit eine Gasse*, p. 540.
2. “With the Turks to the Suez Canal,” p. 31.
3. Winston S. Churchill, *The World Crisis, 1916–1918*, part I, p. 79.
4. Warlimont, p. 154.
5. *Ibid.*, 181,
6. Compare Richard Aldington, *The Case of T. E. Lawrence*.
7. Von Weizsäcker, *Erinnerungen*, p. 335, 35.
8. *Ibid.*, 65; Warlimont, p. 133.

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### Notes

1. For the state of the literature see Wolfgang G. Schwanitz, *Gold, Bankiers und Diplomaten. Zur Geschichte der Deutschen Orientbank* (Berlin, 2002), 16–158.
2. Yehuda L. Wallach, “The Weimar Republic and the Middle East: Salient Points,” in *The Great Powers in the Middle East 1919–1939*, ed. Uriel Dann (New York, 1988), 271–73; Andreas Hillgruber, “The Third Reich and the Near and Middle East, 1933–1939,” in *ibid.*, 274–82; and Bernard Lewis, “Epilogue to a Period,” in *ibid.*, 419–25.
3. Francis R. Nicosia, “Fritz Grobba and the Middle East Policy of the Third Reich,” in *National and International Politics in the Middle East*, ed. Edward Ingram (London, 1986), 206–28; see also: Francis R. Nicosia, “‘Drang nach Osten’ Continued? Germany and Afghanistan during the Weimar Republic,” in *Journal of Contemporary History* 32, no. 2 (1997): 235–57.
4. Edgar Flacker, *Fritz Grobba and Nazi Germany’s Middle Eastern Policy, 1933–1942* (London, 1998); see also his bibliography 376–82.
5. Chantal Metzger, *L’Empire colonial français dans la stratégie du Troisième Reich 1936–1945* (Brussels, 2002), 2 vols.
6. Wolfgang G. Schwanitz, “Research Project on the History of the German Orientbank,” *DAVO-News* (Mainz) 10 (September 1999): 61–62.
7. Gerhard Höpp, “Der Koran als ‘Geheime Reichssache.’ Bruchstücke deutscher Is-lampolitik zwischen 1938 und 1945,” in *Gnosisforschung und Religionsgeschichte*, ed. Holger Preißler and Hubert Seiwert (Marburg, 1994), 435–46; Gerhard Höpp, “Araber im Zweiten Weltkrieg—Kollaboration oder Patriotismus?” in *Jenseits der Legenden: Araber, Juden, Deutsche*, ed. Wolfgang Schwanitz (Berlin, 1994), 86–92; Gerhard Höpp, “Der Gefangene im Dreieck. Zum Bild Amin al-Husseinis in Wissenschaft und Publizistik seit 1941. Ein bio-bibliographischer Abriß,” in *Eine umstrittene Figur, Hadj Amin al-Husseini, Mufti von Jerusalem*, ed. Rainer Zimmer-Winkel (Trier, 1999), 5–23; Gerhard Höpp, *Mufti-Papiere. Briefe, Memoranden, Reden und Aufrufe Amin al-Husainis aus dem Exil, 1940–1945* (Berlin, 2001).
8. For a discussion of guidelines and paradigms see Wolfgang G. Schwanitz, “Paradigms of the Near East policy in Bonn and East Berlin,” *DAVO-News* (Mainz) 13 (February 2001): 51–55. I was inspired by L. Carl Brown’s remarkable book and I tried to apply some of the rules he sets down to Germany with regard to the Middle East. See L. Carl Brown, *International Politics and the Middle East* (Princeton, N.J., 1984).
9. Wolfgang G. Schwanitz, “The U.S., the Third Reich and the Near East: The Case of Germany and Egypt,” *DAVO-News* (Mainz) 8 (September 1998): 91–94.
10. Israel Gershoni, “Confronting Nazism in Egypt. Tawfiq al-Hakim’s Anti-Totalitarianism 1938–1945,” *Tel Aviver Jahrbuch für deutsche Geschichte* 1997: 121–50.
11. Wagih ‘Abd as-Sādiq ‘Atīq, *Al-Jaish al-Misrī wa al-almān fī athna’ al-Harb al-‘Alamīya ath-Thaniya* [The Egyptian Army and the Germans during World War II] (Cairo, 1993).
12. Fahd Bin ‘Abdallah As-Simmārī, *Al-Malik ‘Abd al-‘Azīz wa Almāniya 1926–1939* (King ‘Abd al-‘Azīz and Germany 1926–1939) (Beirut, 2001).

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13. Heinz Wolter, ed., "Bismarck im Reichstag, 06.02.1988.," in *Otto von Bismarck. Dokumente seines Lebens 1815–1898*, ed. Heinz Wolter (Leipzig, 1989), 401–402.
14. For an explanation of the Eastern Question with the main focus on internal regional factors in the declining Ottoman Empire before and during World War I and on Germany's role see Efraim Karsh and Inari Karsh, *Empires of the Sand. The Struggle for mastery in the Middle East 1789–1923* (Cambridge, U.K., 1999). For a diplomatic history with main focus on the Great Powers and on extraregional factors see Gregor Schöllgen, *Imperialismus und Gleichgewicht. Deutschland, England und die orientalische Frage 1871–1914* (Munich, 2000).
15. Respecting the colonies or similar territories of other powers has been a longstanding Prussian tradition as can be seen from an order given by Friedrich Wilhelm von Brandenburg in 1680. See Ulrich Van der Heyden, *Rote Adler an Afrikas Küste* (Berlin, 2001), 15; Axel Fichtner, *Die völker- und staatsrechtliche Stellung der deutschen Kolonialgesellschaften des 19. Jahrhunderts* (Frankfurt am Main, 2002), 63–92.
16. For an overview see Donald M. McKale, *War by Revolution. Germany and Great Britain in the Middle East in the Era of World War I* (Ohio, 1998).
17. Compare "Die Nachrichtenstelle für den Orient und Max Freiherr von Oppenheim," in *Weltgeschichtliche Mosaiksplitter. Erlebnisse und Erinnerungen eines kaiserlichen Dragomans*, ed. Karl Friedrich Schabinger, Freiherr von Schowingen (Baden-Baden, 1967), 115–55.
18. For overviews about POW and case studies see Gerhard Höpp and Brigitte Reinwald, eds., *Fremdeinsätze. Afrikaner und Asiaten in europäischen Kriegen, 1914–1945* (Berlin, 2000).
19. L. Carl Brown, ed. *Imperial Legacy: The Ottoman Imprint on the Balkans and the Middle East* (New York, 1996).
20. For the special role of Turkey see Bernard Lewis, *The Emergence of Modern Turkey* (New York, 2002).
21. Fritz Grobba, *Männer und Mächte im Orient* (Göttingen, 1967).
22. But see the quite different picture that Grobba's notorious rival, Werner Otto von Hentig, drew in his review of Grobba's memoirs: "Ein Korb von Ibn Saud. Als Diplomat für Kaiser und Hitler im Nahen Osten," *Die Zeit*, 03.29.1968.
23. I wish to thank Udo Grobba of Bad Homburg for his kind explanations regarding the life of his father given to me in late August 2002.
24. Oberkommando der Wehrmacht [German High Command], Weisung [Order] 32, Dienstweisung für Sonderstab F. (General der Flieger Felmy) [Service Order for Special Staff F.], Führer Headquarters, June 21, 1941, signed Chef des Oberkommandos der Wehrmacht, Wilhelm Keitel: "Special Staff F is the central organization responsible for all questions regarding the Arab world. It is to be consulted in all planning and strategic measures in the Arab areas."
25. U.S. National Archives II, MD ( USArchII), Record Group (RG) 338, Historical Division, Headquarters, U.S. Army Europe, Record of the U.S. Army Commands, Foreign Military Studies, FMS, Mss. P-207, "German exploitation of Arab nationalist movements in World War II" by Franz Halder (introduction, 1955, 1957), Hellmuth Felmy (study 1955), Walter Warlimont (study, 1955), and Fritz Grobba (supplement, 1957), 300 pp. As a general rule, the English- and German-language

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- versions of the Foreign Military Studies (FMS) manuscripts for the Ethint-, A-, B-, and C-series are available on microfiche. For the P-, and T-series manuscripts, only the English-language versions are available. For the English-language version of P-207 see USArchII, RG290, 35/34/02, Box 77, 117 pp. Whereas this study of Warlimont and Felmy is available in English and on microfiche (indicated by the letter P), Grobba's supplement is not available in English nor on microfiche.
26. A first overview on "P-207" see Wolfgang G. Schwanitz, "Nahostpolitische Retrospektive Dr. Fritz Grobba (1886–1973)," *DAVO-Nachrichten*, (Mainz) 14 (August 2001): 53–56.
  27. That "MS # P-207" ("MS" for "manuscript") with Grobba's supplement is fairly unknown was seen at the German-American conference at the panel "Germany and the Middle East, 1919–1943" in Washington, D. C. in late 2001. See my report in *Orient* 42, no. 4 (2001): 585–90. Even a thorough source study on Grobba does not contain "P-207." See Edgar Flacker, *Fritz Grobba and Nazi Germany's Middle Eastern Policy, 1933–1942* (London, 1998); see his bibliography 376–82. For the only published mention on the role of Franz Halder and the existence of such studies made in the mid-fifties for the U. S. Government see "Franz Halder's Historical Division" in Wilhelm von Schramm, *Der Geheimdienst in Europa 1937–1945* (Munich, 1980), 29. He did not reveal his source, but wrote that all such studies remained unpublished. I am very grateful to Tim Mulligan of the National Archives II, and to Hans-Ulrich Seidt of the German Embassy in Washington, D. C., for their kind help in locating related studies, including "P-207." Martin Kröger mentioned recently Grobba's supplement: Martin Kröger, "Max von Oppenheim: Mit Eifer ein Fremder im Auswärtigen Dienst," in *Faszination Orient. Max von Oppenheim: Forscher, Sammler, Diplomat*, ed. Gabriele Teichmann and Gisela Völger (Köln, 2001), 107–39.
  28. Supportive documents: 1. X-411: Werner Otto von Hentig's Report on Syria (Top Secret: Greater Arabia and the Situation in Syria), February 26, 1941, 6 pages.; 2. Rahn Report about the German Mission to Syria, May 9 to July 11, 1941. C-043: Report Greiner about the Supreme Command; 4. C-043: Eastern nationals in the German Army.
  29. Orders given by Hitler with regard to the Near East and Middle East: "Führer-Lagebesprechungen" 1942 (deutscher Zusammendruck); "Führerweisungen," Weisung Nr. 30: "Mittelmeerkrieg: Unterstützung des Irak und der Araber 1941 (Mittlerer Orient), 23.05.1941," Nr. 32, and order "Special Mission of General Felmy."
  30. "Orientierungsmappe Mittlerer Osten," August 1941 (OKL/5)."
  31. "Zeittafel May 6, 1941 to February/May 1945," 101–106.
  32. Paul Leverkuehn, *German Military Intelligence* (London, 1954); see also Paul Leverkuehn, *Der geheime Nachrichtendienst der deutschen Wehrmacht im Krieg* (Frankfurt am Main, 1964).
  33. See the names of co-workers in "Verzeichnis der Mitarbeiter," "MS # P-207," V–VII.
  34. For the situation in the Middle East until 1955 see Fritz Steppat, "Regionale Sicherheitsbestrebungen im Mittleren Osten," in his *Islam als Partner* (Würzburg, 2001), 15–54.

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35. Wolfgang G. Schwanitz, "West- und ostdeutsche Bemühungen um das Aswân-Hochdamm-Projekt und die Nationalisierung der Sueskanalfirma 1956," in *125 Jahre Sueskanal. Lauchhammers Eisenguss am Nil*, ed. Wolfgang G. Schwanitz (Hildesheim, 1998), 218–240.
36. For the general archival situation see Mary Ellen Reese, *Der deutsche Geheimdienst. Organisation Gehlen* (Berlin, 1992).
37. USArchII, RG 338, FMS, "P-207," Fritz Grobba, "Die deutsche Ausnutzung der arabischen Eingeborenenbewegung im Zweiten Weltkrieg," with an introduction by General Franz Halder, "Supplement" (Stuttgart, 1957), 17.
38. USArchII, RG 338, FMS, "P-207," Grobba, *ibid.*, 37–38, 81; "However, Hitler opponents State Secretary von Weizsäcker, Undersecretary of State Woermann, and Ambassador von Hentig were opposed to an expansion of the war to the Arab areas."
39. USArchII, RG 338, FMS, "P-207," Grobba, *ibid.*, 81: "The policy makers at the Foreign Office were only interested in Europe and North America, not in the Middle East, let alone the Arab world."
40. Nicosia, *Fritz Grobba*, 224.
41. USArchII, RG 338, FMS, "P-207," Grobba, *ibid.*, 81–82.
42. For the Axis powers and India see also Jan Kuhlmann, *Subhas Chandra Bose und die Indienpolitik der Achsenmächte* (Berlin, 2003).
43. USArchII, RG 338, FMS, "P-207," Grobba, *ibid.*, 79.
44. Gerhard Höpp, "Nicht aus 'Alf zuliebe, sondern aus Hass gegen Mu'awiya.' Zum Ringen um die 'Arabien-Erklärung' der Achsenmächte 1940–1942," *Asien, Afrika, Lateinamerika* 27 (1999): 569–87.
45. USArchII, RG 338, FMS, "P-207," Grobba, *ibid.*, 69, 73.
46. For a plausible argument against the "missed chance" see Andreas Hillgruber, *Third Reich and Middle East*, 274–82.
47. For Jihad in general see: Rudolph Peters, *Jihad in Classical and Modern times* (Princeton, N. J., 1996). In particular see Herbert Landolin Müller, *Islam, gihâd (Heiliger Krieg) und Deutsches Reich* (Frankfurt am Main, 1991).
48. Jochachim C. Fest, *Hitler. Eine Biographie* (Berlin, 1997), 1011.
49. For Grobba's positions in the hierarchy of the Foreign Office and Middle East related commissions see USArchII, T120, roll 28, serial 41, frames 28202ff.; Politische Abteilung, U.St.S.Pol.Nr.959, Aufzeichnung über Fragen des Vorderen Orients, Geheim, Berlin, 06.11.1941, Anhang "Sonderaufträge für die Angelegenheiten des Vorderen Orients" (Keppler, Grobba, von Hentig, and colleagues).
50. USArchII, RG 338, Chief of Military History, Foreign Studies Branch, DC, X-411, Hentig Report on Syria, Greater Arabia and the situation in Syria, February 26, 1941.
51. USArchII, T120, roll 392, serial 930, frames 297916ff., special files of Envoy Ettl who was attached for services to the Grand Mufti of Jerusalem, Arabien-Komitee, Gesandter Dr. F. Grobba, 38. Meeting, December 3, 1942, topics of the talks November 26 to December 2, 1942, topic 9: "The Christian Thesis of English Propaganda," 5–6.
52. Radio Zeesen was the German shortwave broadcasting station near Berlin-Königswusterhausen. The Propaganda Ministry had supervised the station since April

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- 1933; in September 1939 it came under the direction of a department of the Foreign Office headed by Ernst Wilhelm Bohle. It had several transmitters in Athens and Tunis from 1940 to 1942. Among the Arab native speakers was also Habib Birgiba, later the president of Tunisia. See also Herbert Schröder, *Ein Sender erobert die Welt* (Essen, 1940).
53. The text here, see the following footnote, mentions William B. Ziff's book, *The Rape of Palestine* (New York and Toronto, 1938).
  54. For an American analysis of the content of the German Arabic broadcasts guided by Grobba see USArchII, RG 165, Box 3061, Coordinator of Information, Washington, D.C., December 23, 1941, "Axis Propaganda in the Muslim World," 6 pages.
  55. USArchII, RG 218, Box 59, Joint Psychological Warfare Committee, 'Abd al-Karim of the Rif, JPWC 21st meeting, 03.08.1942, secret note from Secretary A.H. Othank, August 1, 1942, discussions, memoranda to Generals Handy and Smith, and investigation request to O.S.S., the Joint Chiefs of Staff, secret, Washington, D.C., August 4, 1942.
  56. USArchII, RG 165, Box 3055, To Secretary of War, State Department, "Amin el Husseiny and a Muslim Holy War" by Bonner F. Fellers, confidential, Cairo, May 19, 1941. Compare it with the description of the Grand Mufti for Hitler: USArchII, T120, roll 63, serial 71, frames 50682 ff., "Der Großmufti von Jerusalem," Berlin, November 28, 1941, signed Grobba, four pages.
  57. Israel Gershoni, "Egyptian Liberalism in an Age of 'Crisis of Orientation': *Al-Risāla's* Reaction to Fascism and Nazism, 1933–39, *International Journal of Middle Eastern Studies* 31 (1999): 551–76. For mixed feelings among Egyptian officers like Anwar as-Sadat see also Bernard Lewis, *A Middle East Mosaic* (New York, 2000), 314–16.
  58. Bernard Lewis, "The United States, Turkey and Iran," in *The Middle East and the United States. Perceptions and Politics*, ed. Shaked Haim and Itamar Rabinovich (New Brunswick, N. J., 1980), 165–80.
  59. For the German-Arab Society of East Berlin see Wolfgang G. Schwanitz, "Streng vertraulich? Aus den Akten der Deutsch-Arabischen Gesellschaft 1958–1969," in *Berlin-Kairo: Damals und heute*. (Berlin, 1991), 85–104.
  60. Brentjes saw an early cooperation between the secret services of Israel and the Federal Republic of Germany, on the German side often with the same cast of characters as the one active before 1945 with an old spirit; see Burchard Brentjes, *Geheimoperation Nahost. Zur Vorgeschichte der Zusammenarbeit von Mossad und BND* (Berlin, 2001). For the Middle East-related continuity of personnel at the Foreign Office before and after 1945 see my review "Biographical Encyclopaedia of the German Foreign Office, 1871–1945," *Orient* 43, no. 1 (2002): 120–23.
  61. For the topic on making the Middle East a battlefield for unsolved European problems during the Cold War, see for the German case Wolfgang G. Schwanitz, *Deutsche in Nahost 1946–1965: Sozialgeschichte nach Akten und Interviews* (Frankfurt am Main, 1998), vols. 1 and 2.
  62. For an explanation and timetable of Deutsche Orientgründerjahre see August Bebel, *Die Mohammedanisch-Arabische Kulturperiode* (Berlin, 1999), 8, 52, 180–83, 188.

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63. Wolfgang G. Schwanitz, "Doppelte deutsche Gesandte in Kairo 1953–1963," in *Misr wa Almāniya fī al-Qirnain at-tāsi'a 'ashr wa al-'Ishrīn fī dhaw' al-Wathā'iq* [Egypt and Germany in the Nineteenth and Twentieth Centuries as Reflected in the Archives], ed. Wajīh 'Abd as-Sādiq 'Atīq and Wolfgang G. Schwanitz (Cairo, 1998), 158–215; for Pawelke see also *DAVO-News* December 2002: 16, 62–63.