

# The Royal Tour of Prince Friedrich Karl of Prussia to the Eastern Mediterranean Region in 1883

## Prusya Prensi Friedrich Karl'ın Doğu Akdeniz Bölgesi'ne 1883 Yılında Gerçekleştirdiği Kraliyet Gezisi

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### ABSTRACT

When Ottoman-German relations started to flourish in the late 19<sup>th</sup> century, to be more specific in December 1882, the Berlin Embassy of the Ottoman Empire was informed that Prince Friedrich Karl of Prussia, nephew of the German Emperor Wilhelm II, would visit Egypt, Palestine, Syria, Smyrna and Istanbul. Thereupon, preparations were made for the prince's comfort and safety during the journey and Colonel Ahmed Bey and Major Ismail Bey, aides-de-camps of the Sultan, were chosen to escort the prince. During his tour of the Ottoman Empire between February 19 and March 24, 1883, Prince Friedrich Karl visited Jaffa, the holy city of Jerusalem, Mar Saba, the Dead Sea, Jericho, Nablus, Jenin, Nazareth, Acre, Sidon, Beirut, Damascus, and the ruins of Palmyra and Baalbek. This article analyzes the journey undertaken by the prince through reports and other documents prepared about the trip by Colonel Ahmed Bey and Major Ismail Bey, who were appointed by Sultan Abdul Hamid II to accompany the prince. The article also aims to give insight into the socio-economic conditions of the above-mentioned Eastern Mediterranean cities and archaeological ruins, as well as the historical buildings in the region, based on the archival sources dating to 1883.

**Keywords:** Friedrich Karl, The Ottoman Empire, The German Empire, Eastern Mediterranean, Royal Tour

### ÖZ

Osmanlı-Alman ilişkilerinin gelişmeye başladığı bir evrede Alman İmparatoru II. Wilhelm'in yeğeni Prusya Prensi Friedrich Karl'ın Mısır, Filistin, Suriye, İzmir ve İstanbul'u ziyaret edeceği 1882 yılının Aralık ayında Osmanlı İmparatorluğu'nun Berlin Büyükelçiliği'ne bildirilir. Bu nedenle, Prensin seyahat süresince rahatlığı ve güvenliği için hazırlıklar yapılır. Sultan II. Abdülhamid'in yaverlerinden Miralay Ahmed ve Binbaşı İsmail Beyler, Prensin maiyetine verilir. Prens Friedrich Karl, 19 Şubat-24 Mart 1883 tarihleri arasında Osmanlı ülkesine gerçekleştirdiği seyahatinde Yafa, Kudüs-i Şerif, Mar Saba, Bahr-i Lut, Eriha, Nablus, Cenin, Nasıra, Akka, Sayda, Beyrut, Şam-ı Şerif, Tedmür ve Baalbek harabelerini ziyaret eder. Bu çalışmada, II. Abdülhamid tarafından görevlendirilen ve Friedrich Karl'ın maiyetinde bulunan Miralay Ahmed ve Binbaşı İsmail Beylerin seyahat hakkında hazırladıkları rapor ve diğer evrakların irdelenmesi suretiyle Prensin seyahati ele alınmıştır. Çalışma, 1883 senesine tarihlenen arşiv kaynakları ışığında Doğu Akdeniz şehirlerinin sosyo-ekonomik durumlarının yanı sıra arkeolojik kalıntıları ve tarihi yapıları hakkında da çok değerli bilgiler sunmaktadır.

**Anahtar kelimeler:** Friedrich Karl, Osmanlı İmparatorluğu, Alman İmparatorluğu, Doğu Akdeniz, Kraliyet Turu

## Introduction

Due to the symbolic role of monarchies in a government members of royal families act like ambassadors to improve interstate relations. The country hosting a royal visitor usually takes the opportunity to promote touristic destinations in both written and visual media. The term ‘royal tour’ immediately calls to mind the British royal family today. However, the 19<sup>th</sup> century was an era of royal tours which were conducted by other European monarchs as well. The Holy Land, central to Jewish and Christian histories, was the primary destination of those journeys. The number of royal tours to the Holy Land began to increase from the middle of the 19<sup>th</sup> century because of developments in railway and marine transportation. During that period the kings and many crown princes of Austria, Britain, Belgium, Prussia, Italy, and Russia were among the royal visitors to the Holy Land.

The Ottoman Empire ruled Jerusalem and a large part of the Middle East from about 1516 to 1917. Therefore, as soon as the Foreign Ministry of the Ottoman Empire was informed of any royal travel, Ottoman authorities would start preparations on many levels. The construction, maintenance and repair of the roads or piers, the cleaning and the decoration of the streets, the preparation of the carriages, the appointment of the troop of guardsmen, attendants and interpreters, the arrangement of the welcome and the farewell ceremonies were among the preparations to be carried out at the first stage.<sup>1</sup>

German royal family members and monarchs such as the Prussian Crown Prince Friedrich Wilhelm (1869), Prince Friedrich Karl Nikolaus of Prussia (1883), Prince Henry of Prussia (1890) and Kaiser Wilhelm II (1898) visited the Holy Land mainly in order to strengthen the presence and influence of Germany in the region.<sup>2</sup> Although royal tours essentially consisted of visits to Jerusalem, Bethlehem, Nazareth, the Sea of Galilee and the other religious sites, national interests and the royal’s personal interests were also incorporated into the design of

1 İhsan Satiş, “Journey to the Holy Land: Jerusalem Travels of Some Emperors, Crown Princes and Dignitaries (1855-1901)”, *The Pursuit of History- International Periodical for History and Social Research*, 13 (2015), p. 246; Hasan Ali Polat and Aytuğ Arslan, “The Rise of Popular Tourism in the Holy Land: Thomas Cook and John Mason Cook’s Enterprise Skills That Shaped the Travel Industry”, *Tourism Management*, 75 (2019), p. 235.

2 Kobi Peled, “Germany in Jerusalem: The Inauguration of the Augusta Victoria Church and Hospice on the Mount of Olives in 1910”, *Israel Studies*, 21 (Indiana 2016), p. 70.

the itinerary. Therefore, the tour program could well include other cities and countries such as Italy, Greece, Egypt, and Turkey.<sup>3</sup>

Interstate correspondence and official reports are the main documents in which records of these tours can be found. This study is based on unpublished historical documents concerning the visit of Prince Friedrich Karl Nikolaus of Prussia to the Holy Land in 1883, copies of which were found by the authors at the Department of the Ottoman Archives in Istanbul, an institution affiliated to the Turkish Presidency State Archives of the Republic of Turkey. The aim of the study is to uncover more details of the prince's journey, which thus far has mainly been known from German resources, in the light of Ottoman archival documents now published for the first time.

### 1. A Short Biography of Prince Friedrich Karl of Prussia

Born in Berlin on March 20, 1828, Prince Friedrich Karl of Prussia was the son of Prince Charles of Prussia, the younger brother of the Emperor William.<sup>4</sup> Prince Friedrich wanted to be a soldier or sailor during his childhood. In 1846, he went to Bonn for his university education upon the request of his uncle King Frederick William IV of Prussia and his family.

3 Within the framework of these visits, which had an impact on the development of Ottoman-German relations, Wilhelm II's first visit to Istanbul took place in November 1889. Following Wilhelm II's accession to the throne in 1888, the "friendship" that started with Abdulhamid II's congratulations and mutual gifts was crowned with Wilhelm II's visit to Istanbul in 1889. For these visits and exchange of gifts, see İlonca Baytar, "Kaiser II. Wilhelm'in İstanbul'a Üç Ziyareti ve Hediyeler", *İki Dost Hükümdar: Sultan II. Abdülhamid, Kaiser II. Wilhem*, TBMM Milli Saraylar Daire Başkanlığı Yayınları, İstanbul 2010, p. 59-70; Hacer Topaktaş Üstüner, "Two Extraordinary Missions Welcoming the Tsar and the Kaiser during the Reign of Abdulhamid II", *Abdülhamid II and his Legacy: Studies in Honour of F. A. K. Yasamee*, The Isis Press, İstanbul 2019, p. 177-192. Wilhelm II made a trip to Jerusalem to attend the inauguration of the Erlöserkirche, which included important Ottoman cities such as İstanbul, Haifa, Jaffa, Jerusalem, Damascus and Beirut between October 18 and November 26, 1898. Necmettin Alkan, "Dış Siyasetin Bir Aracı Olarak Hükümdar Gezileri: Kaiser II. Wilhelm'in 1898 Şark Seyahati", *Osmanlı Araştırmaları*, XXXI (2008), p. 9-53; Hasan Ali Polat and Aytuğ Arslan, "The Rise of Popular Tourism in the Holy Land: Thomas Cook and John Mason Cook's Enterprise Skills That Shaped the Travel Industry", *Tourism Management*, 75 (2019), p. 234-240; Sibel Orhan, "Alman İmparatoru II. Wilhelm'in Weltpolitik Siyaseti Çerçevesinde Osmanlı Topraklarını İkinci Ziyareti (1898)", *Tarih Kültür ve Sanat Araştırmaları Dergisi*, 7/5 (2018), p. 651-665; Baytar, p. 71-78; for a study on Wilhelm II's visit through the diary of his host Mehmed Şakir Pasha, see Ö. Kürşad Karacagil, "II. Wilhelm'in Osmanlı İmparatorluğu'nu Ziyareti ve Mihmandarı Mehmed Şakir Paşa'nın Günlüğü (1898)", *İstanbul Üniversitesi Türkiyat Mecmuası*, 24 (2014), p. 73-97; for an analysis of the political, economic and religious reasons behind this journey, see İrfan Ertan, *The Orient Journey of Kaiser Wilhelm II (1898)*, Middle East Technical University, Unpublished master's thesis, Ankara 2018; Wilhelm II's first two visits took place in the reign of Sultan Abdülhamid II and his third visit was in the reign of Sultan Mehmed Reşad at the peak of the Turkish-German alliance during the First World War. About this visit, see Serpil Kirel and Oya Kasap Ortaklan, "Alman İmparatoru II. Wilhelm'in Osmanlı İmparatorluğu'nu Son Ziyareti (1917)", *Sineline: Sinema Araştırmaları Dergisi*, 9/1 (2018), p. 113-158; Baytar, p. 78-80. Also in 1901, Adalbert, son of the German Emperor Wilhelm II, travelled to Jaffa and Jerusalem. TC. Devlet Arşivleri Başkanlığı, Osmanlı Arşivi Dairesi/The Department of Ottoman Archives-Turkish Presidency State Archives of the Republic of Turkey. (BOA), Dâhiliye Nezareti Mektubî Kalemi Belgeleri/Ministry of Internal Affairs-The Documents of Letter Office (DH. MKT), 2554/123, 23 Teşrinievvel 1317 (5 November 1901); BOA., Yıldız, Hususî Maruzat/Petition, Records of Yıldız Palace (Y. A. HUS.), 422/6, 31 Teşrinievvel 1317 (13 November 1901).

4 Joseph Thomas, *The Universal Dictionary of Biography and Mythology*, Vol. 2, (New York: Cosimo Classics, 2009), p. 964.

He was to be the first university graduate prince in the family. At that point, Major Albrecht von Roon, who would later be Secretary of State for War, enabled him to have a military education<sup>5</sup>. The prince was named the ‘Red Prince’ because of the colour of his hussar’s uniform. In 1848, he joined the campaign against Denmark as an adjutant and was awarded a medal for his bravery and promoted to the position of major.<sup>6</sup> He was promoted to colonel in 1852, to brigadier general in 1854, and finally to major general in 1857. In 1859, because of the risk of war with France,<sup>7</sup> the prince engaged himself in examining the structure of the French army, and he published a work entitled “*Eine militrische Denkschrift von P. F. K.*” (A military memorandum by P.F.K.) The prince successfully commanded the Schleswig-Holstein War against Denmark in 1864. In the following years, his role in the Prussian victories against Austria-Hungary and France brought him the title of Field Marshal, a rank which had never been received before by any prince of the House of Prussia<sup>8</sup>. To his contemporaries, he never ceased to make efforts to contribute to the military profession and attached importance to the task of increasing the morale of the soldiers and to softening the military rules of the time.<sup>9</sup> He died of a heart attack on 15 June 1885.<sup>10</sup>

## 2. Preparations for the Prince’s Visit

Prince Friedrich Karl was often referred to by his people as the ‘Iron Prince’ because of his uncompromising personality and iron will when carrying out military duties. The prince was responsible for the inspection of all the German armies in peacetime. He lived in a palace in Potsdam and engaged himself in agriculture and hunting, which were two of his favorite activities. The prince’s most well-known trip is his journey to the Orient.<sup>11</sup>

In terms of Ottoman-German relations, the 1880s correspond to a period when the relations between the two countries were starting to improve. The situation at the end of the Ottoman-Russian War of 1877-1878 led the Ottomans to side with Germany and relations between the two states began to improve significantly, particularly after 1882.<sup>12</sup> The turning point was when, in December 1882, the Berlin Embassy of the Ottoman Empire was notified that Prince Friedrich Karl of Prussia, nephew of the German Emperor Wilhelm II, wished to visit

5 Wolfgang Foerster, *Prinz Friedrich Karl von Preussen-Denkwtirdigkeiten aus Seinem Leben*, (Stuttgart Leipzig: Deutsche Verlags Anstalt 1910), pp. 32-54.

6 Tom Buk-Swienty, *1864: The Forgotten War That Shaped Modern Europe*, (London: Profile Books 2015), p. 25.

7 Terence Zuber, “Friedrich Karl, Prince of Prussia”, Spencer C. Tucker (ed.), in *500 Great Military Leaders*, (California: ABC-CLIO 2015), p. 263.

8 “Death of the Red Prince”, *The New York Times*, June 16, 1885, p. 5; Graf Haeseler, *Zehn Jahre im Stabe des Prinzen Friedrich Karl*, Vol. II, (Berlin: E.S. Mittler & Sohn Knigliche Hofbuchhandlung 1912), p. 30.

9 “The Late Prince Frederick Charles of Prussia”, *The Queenslander*, July 04, 1885, p. 30.

10 Terence Zuber, “Friedrich Karl, Prince of Prussia (1828-1885)”, David T. Zabecki (ed.), in *Germany at War: 400 Years of Military History*, (California: ABC-CLIO 2014), p. 449.

11 Hauptmann Sprosser, *Deutschlands Heerfhrer (1640-1894) Verevigt in den Namen der Regiment und Bataillone des Deutschen Heeres*, (Leipzig: Ferdinadn Wirt Sohn Verlag 1895), pp. 174-177.

12 Franois Georgeon, *Sultan Abdlhamid*, trans. Ali Berkday, (İstanbul: İletiřim Yayınları 2012), p. 471.

Egypt, Palestine, Syria, Smyrna and Istanbul. In a letter sent by the Ottoman Ambassador of Berlin to the Ottoman Ministry of Foreign Affairs, it was stated that Prince Friedrich would carry out this visit to the Ottoman Empire under the name ‘Colonel Hans Zimmer’, and that he requested the authorization of a free pass for the length of his visit. In the same letter, it was also stated that the customs officers of the districts to be visited should be given orders to facilitate the prince’s pass under his pseudonym.<sup>13</sup> Another aspect of this visit was that it was unofficial, which is why it was not deemed suitable on Prussia’s part to ask the Sublime Porte for an officer to accompany the prince on his trip.<sup>14</sup>

The Ottoman Ministry of Foreign Affairs relayed the message sent by the Ottoman Embassy of Berlin and informed the Grand Viziership of the visit of the prince. A draft letter of protocol was prepared similar to the ones prepared for the counterparts of Prince Friedrich Karl of Prussia, in accordance with the imperial decree of Sultan Abdul Hamid II. According to the draft program, on the day of his arrival in Istanbul, the Prince was to be welcomed on a small boat at the *Tersane-i Amire*, and either the Hacı Hüseyin Vineyard or *Qasr-ı Hümayun* was to be allocated to him for his accommodation. An officer from one of the aides-de-camp of Abdul Hamid II was to accompany his cortège. A carriage and a small boat were also to be allocated to the prince. On the day following his arrival in Istanbul, he was to be accepted by the Sultan as per an imperial writ. A feast was to be organized in honor of the Prince at the *Mabeyn-i Hümayun* on a suitable day. He was to be visited by Ottoman ministers. He would visit the Imperial Palace, the Imperial Treasury, certain mosques and whichever other sights and locations he wished to visit. He would be invited to see the gardens of the Imperial Yıldız Palace and the Palace Stables, and a breakfast would be organized in the gardens. He was to appear before the Sultan before he left Istanbul. The Minister of General Protocol would board the boat while it was about to leave and see the Prince off after serving the compliments of the Sultan via his ambassadors to Germany<sup>15</sup> (fig. 1).

The above-mentioned letter was sent to the provinces of Aydın and Syria and to the Lieutenant Governor of Jerusalem, and the fact that the prince was to be shown respect and be provided with ease at every turn was notified to the provinces and the Lieutenant Governors.<sup>16</sup> Also, a telegram was sent to the Grand Viziership with the signature of Fotiadis, governor-general of Crete, stating that the German Colonel Kolev informed Fotiadis through a telegram that the prince would be visiting at the start of February.<sup>17</sup> However, the news that the prince had

13 BOA, İrade-Hariciye Nezareti/Decrees, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (İ. HR.), 288/18016 (December 20, 1882; December 30, 1882); BOA, Hariciye Nezareti, Tercüme Odası/The Documents of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Office of Translation (HR. TO.), 31/61 (December 20, 1882).

14 BOA, İrade-Dahiliye Nezareti/Decrees, the Ministry of Internal Affairs (İ. DH.), 873/69758 (February 2, 1883).

15 BOA, Y. A. HUS., 172/63 (January 10, 1883); BOA, Yıldız Esas Evrakı/Yıldız Palace Basic Records (Y. EE.), 89/28.

16 BOA, Y. A. HUS., 172/63 (January 9, 1883).

17 BOA, Y. A. HUS., 172/80 (January 13, 1883; January 23, 1883).

postponed his visit only reached them that very day.<sup>18</sup> The Berlin Embassy informed Istanbul that a visit would be made to Egypt. The prince would visit Egypt by traveling all the way down to the source of the River Nile and stay there until the end of February. It was not definite whether he would visit the Ottoman Empire after his visit to Egypt. Therefore, it was stated that, for the time being, it would be appropriate for the Ottoman authorities to cancel sending the aides-de-camp and sergeants that had been appointed for the visit.<sup>19</sup>

However, as soon as the news reached Istanbul that the prince had again decided to visit the Ottoman lands, preparations were resumed. It was decided to dispatch the aides-de-camp Colonel Ahmed Bey and Major Ismail Bey, the sergeants who had been appointed by Sultan Abdul Hamid II, and the officer selected by the Sublime Porte on Saturday, February 3, 1883, and to communicate to the Ministry of Finance the need to urgently allocate allowances for these persons and to send the amounts to the *Daire-i Kitâbet* (The Central Office for Correspondence) early the following day.<sup>20</sup> When Prince Friedrich Karl of Prussia was about to reach Syria Colonel Ahmed Bey and Major Ismail Bey would host the prince and accompany him throughout his ongoing visit for a smooth completion.<sup>21</sup> Thus, Colonel Ahmed Bey and Major Ismail Bey left Istanbul on the same day as stated above, and arrived in Jaffa on February 14.<sup>22</sup>

### 3. The Visit of Prince Friedrich Karl of Prussia

Colonel Geomar von Natzmer, Major Franz Xaver von Garnier and aide-de-camp Lieutenant Georg von Kalckstein accompanied Prince Friedrich Karl, who set off for the Holy Land from Berlin in the evening hours of 27 December 1882. They arrived in Trieste by train in order to board the *Hector*, a ship owned by the Lloyd Company, for the voyage to Egypt. On the 3<sup>rd</sup> of January the ship approached the port of Alexandria. After a sightseeing tour in the city, the prince and his entourage departed for Cairo by train, where they stayed at the Shepherd's Hotel. In Cairo, the prince was fascinated by the carpet bazaar, which was one of the main attractions for European tourists in the 19<sup>th</sup> century. Consul Baron von Saurma was invited to the hotel in the evening. He talked with the prince about the hunting activities around the Nile basin and invited him to take part in a hunting trip. The prince went hunting for three days. On the 6<sup>th</sup> of January, they visited the Pyramids. On the following day, the prince headed for Luxor on a ship named *Herodotus*. The port of Luxor was very crowded with European tourists, and they came across many tourist groups which were guided by Egyptian-Syrian tour guides. The prince arrived at the port of Jaffa on the 19<sup>th</sup> of February.<sup>23</sup>

18 BOA, İ. DH., 875/69879 (February 1, 1883).

19 BOA, İ. HR., 336/21680 (January 11, 1883); BOA, Y. A. HUS., 172/63 (January 11, 1883).

20 BOA, İ. DH., 875/69879 (February 1, 1883); BOA, Y. A. HUS., 172/63 (February 3, 1883).

21 BOA, Y. A. HUS., 172/63 (February 3, 1883).

22 BOA, Yıldız Perakende Evrakı, Yâverân ve Maiyyet-i Seniyye Erkân-ı Harbiye Dairesi/Yıldız Occasional Documents, Aides-de-camp and General Staff Office (Y. PRK. MYD.), 21/108 (April 3, 1883) lef. 2.

23 Heinrich Brugsch and Franz X. von Garnier, *Prinz Friedrich Karl im Morgenlande dargestellt von seinen Reisebegleitern*, (Frankfurt: Trowitzsch & Sohn 1884), p. 3.

The visit of Prince Friedrich Karl of Prussia to the Ottoman territory officially started with the departure of the German battleship *Cyclop* from Alexandria and its arrival at the port of Jaffa on Monday, 19 February 1883. As reported in the *Neue Freie Presse*, the Sultan informed the prince that he was their guest during his stay in the Ottoman lands.<sup>24</sup> A contract was made with Alexander Havard of Beirut to cover all kinds of costs for the visit, including transport, clothing and beverages as well as travel expenses. Hence, Alexander Havard purchased all the necessary items for the arrival at the port of Jaffa and made ready all the carriages and animals that were required at the port. When the *Cyclop* cast anchor at Jaffa, Rauf Pasha, Governor of Jerusalem, and the German Consul together with Colonel Ahmed Bey and Major Ismail Bey arrived at the ship via a small boat and were received into the presence of the royal prince. While in his presence, Colonel Ahmed Bey stated that the Sultan wished to cover all the costs of the prince's travel in the Ottoman lands. The prince first expressed his gratitude and said he had all that he needed, but later accepted the offer, which was repeated by the Sultan, with many thanks.<sup>25</sup> The Sultan's aide-de-camp made a formal salute to the prince and his attendants in French by saying, "We are here on behalf of the Sultan. His majesty the Sultan ordered us to accompany you as long as you are in Turkish territory. We have completed all the preparations for your visit to Jerusalem and are awaiting your orders". It is evident that the prince was very satisfied with the hospitality of the Ottoman dynasty.<sup>26</sup>

In the *Salzburger Volksblatt* dated March 15, 1883, it was reported that "the prince set foot on the Holy Land from the port of Jaffa on a day when the sea was very calm. He was accompanied to Jerusalem on horseback by Turkish soldiers and gendarmes in ceremonial attire. More than 10 thousand people from various nations gathered to see the prince. He was accompanied by two special guards sent by the Sultan from Istanbul".<sup>27</sup> The two officials mentioned in the news report were Colonel Ahmed Bey and Major Ismail Bey. The newspaper of *Die Presse* reported that after Jerusalem, the prince would head to Beirut and Syria to see Baalbek, Damascus and Palmyra.<sup>28</sup>

His Highness Prince Friedrich informed the welcoming delegation that he would pay his visit unofficially and without uniform and would not accept military ceremonies, receptions or celebrations. Following this, they boarded the boats and, after arriving in the village, departed for Jerusalem. As the distance between Jaffa and Jerusalem was ten hours, it was decided that traveling during the night would not be appropriate, so they stayed in tents erected in the Alterun district instead. Fully satisfied with the cleanliness of the tents, with the quality of the goods and with the taste of the food and drink during his stay, the royal prince extended his repeated gratitude to the Sultan by turning to Colonel Ahmed Bey and Major Ismail Bey.

24 "Zu Jerusalem", *Neue Freie Presse*, Nr. 6670, p. 6, March 23, 1883.

25 *BOA*, Y. PRK. MYD., 21/108 (April 3, 1883) lef. 2.

26 Brugsch and von Garnier, p. 123.

27 "Prinz Friedrich Karl von Preussen in Jerusalem", *Salzburger Volksblatt*, , Nr.61, p. 4, March 15, 1883.

28 "Reise des Prinzen Friedrich Karl", *Die Presse*, Nr. 50, p. 9, February 21, 1883.

After spending the night in Jaffa, they continued their journey at 03:30 the following morning (Tuesday, 20 February 1883). When they reached the village of Kalunia, an hour away from Jerusalem, the royal prince put on his uniform as a show of respect and homage to the holiness of Jerusalem and wore his First-Degree Ottoman Medal. His delegation wore their uniforms, too. Suleiman Pasha, the Governor of Jerusalem Rauf Pasha, some governors and consuls from various states, and the Greek and Armenian bishops were waiting to welcome the prince in their uniforms. Breakfast was to be taken in the food tents after the welcome ceremony. During breakfast, the royal Prince extended his wishes for the good health of Sultan Abdul Hamid II.<sup>29</sup> On the day of his arrival in Jaffa the royal Prince had already notified the Sultan in Istanbul of his safe and healthy arrival by means of a telegram. The Sultan sent a response, saying:

“The telegram informing me of your safe and healthy arrival in Jaffa was received with pleasure, and I wish you long life praying to God that the rest of your journey will be pleasant, too”<sup>30</sup> (fig. 2). On March 5, 1883, the newspaper *Eastern Express* reported the news of Prince Friedrich’s visit. An engineer named Frangieh from the Jerusalem district had previously renovated the road between Jaffa and Jerusalem for two weeks so that the carriage of the prince could pass smoothly. Nevertheless, it was not possible for the prince to arrive in Jerusalem completely without mishap or without the carriages being jolted. Accordingly, the newspaper article mentioned the importance of building a proper highway between the two cities. It also stated that Jerusalem was visited by thousands of Christians and Jews and by emperors, princes and other important persons, and that the bad conditions of the roads of such an important city in winter definitely gave a negative impression.<sup>31</sup>

The Royal Prince Friedrich entered Jerusalem after he had completed his breakfast. Meanwhile, as had been planned, the soldiers of the Sultan and the band greeted him and 21 cannon shots were fired from the castle. After entering the Jaffa Gate, the Prince and his entourage went directly to the Church of the Holy Sepulcher, which is believed to be where Jesus Christ was entombed. After this visit, they went to the guesthouse of the German Empire. Subsequently, they left the city borders from the Damascus Gate and spent the night in the tents prepared in this district<sup>32</sup> (figs. 3, 4). On Wednesday, February 21, 1883, the Prince went to the Church of the Holy Sepulcher to attend at a special religious ceremony with his delegation and without uniform. Then, he visited the Al-Aqsa Mosque and the old underground city walls of Sultan Suleiman, and returned to the tents. After lunch, he visited the Mount of Olives to see the holy place believed to be where Jesus Christ ascended to heaven. In this place a church had been constructed through the aid of a French woman and the building was reserved for Christian women. The garden was believed to be the place where Jesus Christ

29 BOA, Y. PRK. MYD., 21/108 (April 3, 1883) lef. 2.

30 BOA, Yıldız Perakende Evrakı, Tahrîrât-ı Ecnebiyye ve Mabeyn Mütcerimliği/Yıldız Occasional Documents, Foreign Correspondence and Palace Interpreter (Y. PRK. TKM.), 5/62 (February 20, 1883).

31 BOA, Y. PRK. TKM., 5/74 (March 5, 1883).

32 BOA, Y. PRK. MYD., 21/108 (April 3, 1883) lef. 2.



sat and the church surrounding the olive tree was where the Virgin Mary was entombed. The group returned to their tents in the evening. Some Germans who had gathered in front of the tent during the dinner sang after praising the prince, who extended his thanks after the military band had played some songs. He also had a meeting with Rauf Pasha, Governor of Jerusalem, and strictly requested the delivery of a plot of land in Jerusalem that had been promised to German immigrants. Rauf Pasha appropriately stated that another suitable plot of land would be delivered to them as the land in question was a controversial issue.<sup>33</sup> Prince Friedrich Karl brought this matter up when he returned to Germany. The Palace Minister of the prince visited the Ottoman Ambassador to Germany and stated that the land gifted to the prince during his visit to Jerusalem had not yet been delivered requesting that all necessary steps be taken to ensure this happened.<sup>34</sup>

The prince left the port of Jaffa by carriage. On their way, some horsemen wearing European dress approached them, and one of them asked the prince in German: “[...] Would you allow us to accompany you, Your Highness?” These people were members of the German Templar community who had left Württemberg fifteen years previously to establish a German colony in the vicinity of Jaffa. Soon after, tents were pitched on the road and a crown made of copper was placed on top of the prince’s tent. A worker of the Thomas Cook Travel Company was employed by the Sultan’s aides-de-camp to help Prince Friedrich Karl during his journey. This person was a Syriac Christian and had a good spoken command of many European languages. The following day, the prince and his attendants chose the horses they would be riding when they would enter the city. While the Prince preferred to be dressed like a Knight of Saint John, the other members of his entourage chose to wear Prussian military uniforms decorated with medals. Following their entry into Jerusalem, a welcoming ceremony was held, during which high-ranking Ottoman officers, consuls, several representatives of the churches and the notables of the city were present. Near the Jaffa Gate, the prince dismounted his horse and walked towards the Church of the Holy Sepulcher. The priest of the church welcomed the prince at the gate and showed the visitors all the sections of the building. Prince Friedrich Karl and his attendants became pilgrims under his guidance. They were also given information about the Muristan district of Jerusalem where the Knights Hospitaller, a Catholic military order, had emerged in the 11<sup>th</sup> century. The following day they visited the Mosque of Omar and spent the afternoon wandering around Jerusalem on horseback<sup>35</sup>.

Prince Friedrich and his delegation bid their farewell to the governor and pashas on Thursday, February 22, 1883, at 1:30 a.m., and departed for Bethlehem despite the heavy rain. On their way, they stopped to visit the Ottoman Boys’ Orphanage, which was constructed by Germans and could accommodate up to 200 boys. The prince offered small gifts to the children, who were lined up in order of height, and took a look at the ornaments they had made. He also

33 BOA, Y. PRK. MYD., 21/108 (April 3, 1883) lef. 3.

34 BOA, HR. TO., 32/21 (October 8, 1884).

35 Brugsch and von Garnier, p. 124.

visited the girls' school afterwards. When they reached Bethlehem, the prince went straight to the church constructed at the place where Jesus Christ had been born. The Greek Metropolitan Bishop held a religious ceremony in this church in Greek, wishing a long and healthy life to Sultan Abdul Hamid and to the prince. The latter then visited the tombs of some prophets and later received lunch in a school chamber constructed by a German missionary group. At 11:30 a.m., they reached a large church named Mar Saba, which had been constructed between two mountains. They sat down for some coffee in a chamber after visiting the church, during which time the Greek Bishop of Jerusalem and some other clergymen were also present. The prince asked these clergymen whether or not the Bedouin had ever attacked them. The bishop stated that "[...] the Governor Pasha did not permit any attacks from the Bedouin thanks to the military and public security forces by virtue of the Sultan". After this discussion, they went back to their tents to spend some free time. On Friday, February 23, 1883, at 1:30 p.m., they set out for the Dead Sea arriving four and a half hours later. Interested in hunting, the prince went on a small hunting trip and then swam in the Dead Sea. After dinner he stopped by the Jordan River which connects the Dead Sea and the Sea of Galilee. Afterwards, they set off for the village of Jericho. The prince moved on to hunt some more in the marshes he had seen ahead. As Colonel Ahmed Bey and his attendants were about to follow the prince, he told them that it was not necessary for them to follow him and allowed only a couple of cavalry men to accompany him.<sup>36</sup> Colonel Ahmed Bey and his attendants left the prince and went back to their camp which had been set up close to the waters of Ayn Sultan, a spot about an hour from the village of Jericho. However, despite the late hour, the prince had not returned. Accordingly, they searched for the royal prince with torches for three hours, upon which the villagers informed them that he had taken a different route, so they returned to their tents. Colonel Ahmed Bey and his attendants had been worn out and tired and their clothes had been ripped due to moving around the bushes. When the prince got back and saw the fatigue of Colonel Ahmed Bey and his attendants, he expressed his apologies and gratitude for the significant effort these men had made for his protection, and by taking them by hand he accompanied them to dinner.<sup>37</sup>

On the morning of Saturday, February 24, 1883, the Cavalry Gendarme of Jerusalem, who had travelled from Jaffa to Ayn Sultan in the escort of the prince, returned to Jerusalem. The royal prince departed together with the Circassian Cavalry gendarme team that had arrived from the city of Damascus. After traveling for four hours and while approaching the lunch tents prepared for them, the royal prince expressed his appreciation for the cavalry talents and the military capabilities of the Circassians. When a Bedouin hunter approached the tents after lunch, the prince was so amazed at the visor made of cloth in the Bedouin's hand with which he hunted birds that he took the Bedouin hunter with him and set off to hunt boar along the

36 BOA, Y. PRK. MYD., 21/108 (April 3, 1883) lef. 3.

37 BOA, Y. PRK. MYD., 21/108 (April 3, 1883) lef. 4.

Jordan River. Uncomfortable at the realization that the mountains in the district were locally known as Salit and that the Bedouins residing there were believed to be troublesome, Colonel Ahmed Bey expressed his wish that the prince be covertly followed. When the prince noticed after some time that he was being followed he quizzed the followers about it. In response, Colonel Ahmed Bey stated that “the prince’s safety had been entrusted to them”, and that they should not proceed any further and needed to go back to Abd al-Qadir, which would be their base. The royal Prince found this request appropriate, so they returned together. After spending the night in Abd al-Qadir, they set out on Sunday morning, February 25, 1883, and after five hours of journeying they stopped for an hour at a place called Jacob’s Well close to Nablus to have lunch. Subsequently, they arrived in the city of Nablus and stayed in the tents erected in the olive gardens in the north of the city. They left Nablus on Monday, February 26, 1883, and arrived in Sebastia, a village two hours away, where they visited the house of the Prophet John, which was partially in ruins and partially converted into a mosque. The Royal Prince purchased some of the old coins that the local people had been selling. They continued their journey and arrived in a village called Gibeah and spent an hour there having lunch. They took to the road again after lunch, but the strong winds and pelting rain made traveling inconvenient, as a result of which they reached the village of Jenin no earlier than midnight after a long and tiresome journey through swamps and mud.<sup>38</sup>

After spending the night in Jenin, they set out again on February 27, 1883. They reached the village of Selm at six o’clock after a four-and-a-half-hour journey through a storm. After resting there a while they had lunch and moved on and later arrived at the village of Nazareth. They stayed at a guest house that had been prepared for them called Casa Nova. The Royal Prince then headed northeast wanting to travel towards Damascus through the valleys of the River Jordan and the Sea of Galilee. They changed their mind on this route after receiving through telegram the news that the roads had been closed due to snow and mud. They opted for the Acre and Sidon roads instead. Although they wished to continue their journey the following day (Wednesday, February 28), this was not possible due to the terrible weather. When they could not continue any longer, the prince decided to visit some other places in Nazareth, including the church which was built on the site where Mother Mary had been annunciated. They commenced their journey after the weather condition improved on Thursday, March 1, and they reached the village of Shefa-‘Amr at six o’clock. They had lunch at an appropriate location, which was a girls’ school administered by French clerics. After lunch, at half past eleven, they arrived at a chamber of the government office in Acre, which had been prepared for accommodation. The Royal Prince rested for a short while and then visited a part of the ruined castle of Acre by the sea, the Church of St. John nearby and the Acre market. After the visit, the prince went to the chambers allocated to him and accepted Ahmed Bey from Sidon, Governor of Acre Sanjak, for lunch. They left

38 BOA, Y. PRK. MYD, 21/108 (April 3, 1883) lef. 4.

Acre on Friday, March 2, at 1:30 p.m., and after having lunch in the village of Nakora they arrived in the village of Sur around eleven. They visited some ancient ruins there, and then proceeded to the house prepared for their accommodation. They had expected to leave for Sidon the following day, but there were one or two rivers flowing from Mount Lebanon between Sur and Sidon which could have overflowed their banks. For this reason, Colonel Ahmed Bey and Major Ismail Bey asked the governor of Sidon for information en route. They did not receive a convincing answer. However, as the weather permitted, they decided to recommence their journey on Saturday, March 3. About fifteen Arab peasants who knew the route well had been sent ahead to ease their journey. The royal prince and his delegation easily passed the first river they encountered; however, both sides of the old bridge on the Qasim River, four hours from Sur, had flooded.<sup>39</sup> It was not easy to cross the bridge, so much so that one major and two servants in the delegation of the prince and the horses of Ismail Bey and about ten Circassian men slipped and fell into the waters, only being saved with great difficulty. After passing the river, at about seven o'clock, they stopped by the sea for an hour to eat under the woodlands called Aynü'l-Fazara. They reached the village of Sidon at eleven o'clock and stayed the night at a pretty mansion.<sup>40</sup>

The newspaper of *Salzburger Volksblatt* also reported on the arduous journey of the prince and his entourage from Jerusalem to Beirut: "The heavy rain started in Nazareth. The prince had to change his route to Damascus due to the heavy rain and had to continue along the coastal route. On 1 March they arrived safely in the coastal city of St. Jean d'Acre. On 2 March they reached the city of Tyrus, today known as Sur. On 3 March they reached Sidon and finally Beirut on 4 March. Until they reached Sidon, the weather conditions were not normal at all, on the contrary, it was very rainy and thunderous"<sup>41</sup>.

Leaving Sidon on Sunday, March 4, 1883, they had their lunch in the neighborhood of Damour, which was an orderly village that had many silk factories within the borders of Mount Lebanon, and travelled at about twelve o'clock to the Hotel Dorian, a popular spot for accommodation in Beirut. The royal prince said he would accept Rüstem Pasha, Governor of Mount Lebanon, on unofficial terms, thanks to their deep-rooted relations. Colonel Ahmed Bey and Major Ismail Bey told the prince that accepting Rüstem Pasha but not inviting the Governor of Syria, who was currently present in Beirut, and the Marshall Pashas of the 5<sup>th</sup> Army would not be appropriate. The prince accepted this advice and met first the Governor Pasha, and, after about fifteen minutes, Rüstem Pasha.

As the road to Damascus was blocked due to heavy snow in Mount Lebanon, the prince and his delegation were obliged to stay in Beirut on Monday and Tuesday. On these dates, in an encoded telegram sent from Izmir signed by Fotiadis and sent to the Ministry of Internal Affairs on March 6, 1883, it was stated that Prince Friedrich Karl would be welcomed with

39 BOA, Y. PRK. MYD, 21/108 (April 3, 1883) lef. 5.

40 BOA, Y. PRK. MYD, 21/108 (April 3, 1883) lef. 6.

41 *Salzburger Volksblatt*, Nr.69, p. 2, March 27, 1883.

a ceremony and be shown respect throughout his stay with a suitable location allocated by order of imperial decree.<sup>42</sup>

On those two days, the prince visited the Nahr al-Kalb River and the gardens built on the skirts of Mount Lebanon with Rüstem Pasha. The prince and his delegation got in their carriages on Wednesday, March 7, and after traveling for thirteen hours they arrived at the city of Damascus at midnight. They stayed at the Victoria Hotel prepared for them by the local administration. Prince Friedrich visited the mausoleum of Shaikh Akbar Mohiuddin Ibn Arabi, the Umayyad Mosque, the market, and some buildings constructed and embellished with Arabic architectural style on Thursday, March 8. After these visits, he visited the house of Emir Abdelkader El Djezairi, in response to which Emir Abdelkader paid a return visit to the prince at the hotel.<sup>43</sup>

On Friday morning March 9, 1883, they departed from Damascus. Thinking that the guards that had accompanied them until then would not be enough to ensure their safety against Bedouin groups whilst journeying through deserts, about 40 more Kurdish Cavalry Military Police joined the 30 or so Military Police of Circassian descent. They reached the village of Qutayfa at around ten o'clock after their departure and rested there. On Saturday March 10, after traveling for 3 hours, they took a break in the village of Jayrud to drink coffee at the house of Mehmed Ağa, who was the sheikh and the honorary military police lieutenant of the district. Due to the lack of water in the desert, five or six cavalry men joined the escort of the royal prince by order of the governorship of the Nabk district to provide water vats and camels, thus ensuring a water supply. They spent the night in the tents erected at the ruins of Khan al-Ahmar and resumed their journey on Sunday March 11. There was a cold and strong wind in the desert, and at around eleven they reached the tents by the waterfront just outside the village of Karieteyn. The Royal Prince was welcomed by the village sheikh Feyyaz Efendi and the two priests residing in the small town church. Sheikh Feyyaz Efendi offered the prince coffee in his house, but the prince politely turned it down as he was tired. In the evening, Colonel Ahmed Bey and Major Ismail Bey went to the house of Sheikh Feyyaz Efendi and had a conversation with him and the villagers. On Monday March 12, they took off early in the morning reaching the springs of Ayn al-Vüül at 11:30 a.m. where they stayed. It was such a rough night that the wind knocked over the tents of the prince and his delegation. The next day (Tuesday March 13), they traveled to a stream to the south of the village of Palmyra (Tedmur), where they pitched their tents and stayed. The Royal Prince visited the ruins of Palmyra on Wednesday, March 14, after which they returned to their tents and had a photo shoot together with the entire delegation<sup>44</sup> (fig. 5). Subsequently, the prince returned to the ruins with some

42 BOA, Dâhiliye Nezareti, Şifre Kalemî/The Documents of the Ministry of Internal Affairs, Office of Coded Telegrams (DH. ŞFR.), 116/26 (March 6, 1883).

43 BOA, Y. PRK. MYD., 21/108 (April 3, 1883) lef. 6.

44 İstanbul Büyükşehir Belediyesi Atatürk Kitaplığı/Atatürk Library of Metropolitan Municipality of Istanbul, Bel\_Mtf\_003581.

foremen and had them dig up some places, at which point they found a marble plate that was six meters in length and two meters in height. This plate was engraved with laws written in Greek and Chaldean from the time when the territory was under Byzantine administration. While he was still in Palmyra, the Director of Palmyra Mehmed Şükrü Efendi from Beşiktaş, Istanbul, and Ebu'l Farisi, the district sheikh, visited the prince.<sup>45</sup>

On Thursday, March 15, 1883, the prince and his delegation, together with the Circassian cavalries, had another photo shoot at the Damascus Gate of the ruins of Palmyra. After this, they returned to their tents and had lunch. The chieftain of a Bedouin clan of about five to six thousand members that were passing through the desert visited the Royal Prince and received praises from him. After lunch, the prince revisited the ruins of Palmyra and had a tour around. Afterwards, he went to the house of the village sheikh of Palmyra, Ebu'l Farisi. They took shelter in a nearby mill due to the strong storm, and dinner was served there. They got back on the road on Friday, March 26. It was after four and a half hours that they encountered a Bedouin tribe with about 200 tents. They met the clan chieftain and went on to camp in the Bedouin tents for lunch. The royal prince invited the clan chieftain to the lunch table, and asked him to eat with him according to their customs. The Sheikh Efendi started eating superbly with knives and forks, which amazed everybody. They departed after lunch and stopped off in the middle of the desert at twelve o'clock. The weather was so cold that the water in the bottles had almost frozen. On Saturday, March 17, they carried on and after having lunch in the desert they reached the village of Karieteyn at eleven o'clock in the evening. They were planning to leave for Baalbek the following day, so there was no need to keep such a high number of cavalrymen from then on. That is why they decided to send back the Kurdish team who had been in the escort. On Sunday, March 18, the Royal Prince thanked the Kurdish ranks who had lined up to salute him and left after he bid them farewell. In the evening, they reached the village of Burj on the skirts of the mountain range of Mount Lebanon, or the Anti-Lebanon, and stayed the night there. On Monday, March 19, they travelled through the valley between the Anti-Lebanon Mountains and Mount Lebanon and reached the village of Ras Baalbek to spend the night. The following day was a special day for the prince as it was his birthday. Colonel Ahmed Bey, Major Ismail Bey, and the whole delegation wished the prince a happy birthday and he was extremely happy with the good wishes. After a seven-and-a-half-hour long trip, they reached Baalbek at around 9:30 in the evening. They were met there by the governor of the town, Mahmut Bey.<sup>46</sup> They went straight to the ruins of Baalbek and spent time there until midnight. That night they stayed at the Hotel Palmyra and the following day (Wednesday, March 21) they no longer needed cavalrymen as they would drive to Beirut. This is why they decided to send the Circassian cavalries back to Damascus. The Royal Prince presented both military policemen, Lieutenant

45 BOA, Y. PRK. MYD., 21/108 (April 3, 1883) lef. 7.

46 BOA, Y. PRK. MYD., 21/108 (April 3, 1883) lef. 8.

Hakkı Efendi and Lieutenant Cahhud Bey, who had commandeered the Circassians, with a watch worth 31 lira and a photo of the prince. Also, he purchased a sword from one of the Circassians to keep as a souvenir. They departed in carriages on the same day. When they approached Beirut at 7:30 p.m., they stopped by the tents erected by Rüstem Pasha, where the prince got out of the carriage and went into the tent to have coffee with him, and bid farewell to Rüstem Pasha. They reached Beirut at around twelve. As Thursday, March 22 was the birthday of the German Crown Prince Friedrich, the German battleship was embellished and even a few cannon balls were fired. Friedrich Karl's birthday was March 20. The sources mention that the celebration was repeated. No doubt a superb celebration was organised, though with a two-day delay. After the ceremony on the battleship, the prince and his delegation went to a hotel where they had lunch. During lunch the prince told Colonel Ahmed Bey and Major Ismail Bey that he had been very satisfied with the treatment they had received throughout the visit and that he was sorry to depart. After bidding the Governor Pasha and Colonel Ahmed Bey farewell, he gave them a letter extending his gratitude to Sultan Abdul Hamid II and then sailed on to Athens on the German battleship.<sup>47</sup>

Prince Friedrich Karl and his attendants returned to Berlin on a cruiser called *Nymphe*. The farewell ceremony was held at the port on the 22<sup>nd</sup> of March at 10 o'clock in the morning. The ship later anchored at the ports of Rhodes and Piraeus. Heinrich Schliemann visited the prince on board and invited him to see the treasure of Troia. The prince visited the house of Heinrich Schliemann in response to this invitation. The ship entered the harbors of Sicily and Naples, where the prince visited the ancient cities and museums. Prince Friedrich Karl left the ship near Pisa and continued his journey by train. They arrived in Berlin on 11 April 1883<sup>48</sup>. According to the *Kölnische Zeitung*, the prince got off the train at Grosssbeeren station to meet his family. From there he went to the family cemetery and visited the graves of his parents. He arrived in Berlin in the afternoon.<sup>49</sup>

Colonel Ahmed Bey and Major Ismail Bey, who had accompanied the Prince, returned to Istanbul with an allowance of 250 lira given to them by officials of the Syrian province to cover promissory notes.<sup>50</sup> Following his return to Germany, Prince Friedrich Karl continued to express his gratitude at every turn for the attention and care provided by the Ottoman Sultan and administrators throughout his journey. For instance, in a discussion he had with the Ottoman Ambassador to Berlin on April 17<sup>th</sup>, 1883, he stated that he had been very pleased and grateful for the respect and esteem shown to him by the Sultan. Stating that he had also been very pleased with the response given to the thank-you letter he had sent to Sultan Abdul Hamid II, he employed the Ambassador as an officer to relay his gratitude.<sup>51</sup> Over the

47 BOA, Y. PRK. MYD, 21/108 (April 3, 1883) lef. 9.

48 Brugsch and von Garnier, p. 222-239.

49 *Kölnische Zeitung*, Nr.101, p. 2, April 12, 1883.

50 BOA, İ. DH., 883/70441 (April 13, 1883).

51 BOA, Y. A. HUS., 173/51 (April 17, 1883); BOA, Y. A. HUS., 173/67 (April 21, 1883).

following days, the German Emperor Wilhelm decorated the persons who had accompanied Prince Friedrich on his tour with medals and honors. Accordingly, Major Ismail Bey who was the aide-de-camp of Sultan Abdul Hamid II was decorated with the Order of the Red Eagle (Officiary), Military Police Major Hakkı Bey with the Royal Order of the Crown (Officiary), Military Police Lieutenant Canhud Bey with the Royal Order of the Crown (Chevalier); Veli Ağa and Mehmed Ağa, who were sergeants in the Military Police Imperial Force and Çerkes Ahmed Ağa and Mustafa Ağa, who went to Syria and Jerusalem as escorts to the prince, were decorated with the Red Eagle medal<sup>52</sup> (fig. 6).

The sad news of the demise of Prince Friedrich reached Istanbul a day after the event via the Ottoman Embassy in Berlin. Prince Friedrich Karl of Prussia had passed away in the hunting lodge of the Jagdschloss Glienicke Palace in Potsdam on the morning of June 15, 1885.<sup>53</sup>

Upon receiving word of the prince's passing, Sultan Abdul Hamid II immediately sent a telegram of condolence to the German Emperor Wilhelm II, and expressed his sorrow on the passing of His Royal Highness Friedrich Karl of Prussia.<sup>54</sup> A similar telegram was also sent to the German Prince Gillum. The latter responded with a telegram sent back to Sultan Abdul Hamid, stating his acceptance of the Sultan's condolences and his gratitude for the expressions of sorrow.<sup>55</sup>

#### 4. The Socio-Economic Conditions of the Cities

A report dated April 3, 1883, signed by Colonel Ahmed Bey and Major Ismail Bey, describes Prince Friedrich's visit in detail and gives information on the socio-economic conditions of the cities within the scope of that tour. The first stop on the trip had been Jaffa. According to the report, Jaffa was the port and the gate of Palestine, located on the shores of the Mediterranean. Its population was around 8,000 and one-fifth of them were Christians. Its exports primarily included oranges, olive oil, and grains on a limited scale. The volume of trade was large compared to the size of the settlement. Colonel Ahmed Bey and Major Ismail Bey also gave some information about Jaffa. For instance, Jaffa did not have a proper port to host ships. This was why ships used to pass on and did not stop by in stormy weather. It was difficult to reach the port even in calm weather due to the rocks in the sea. This situation adversely affected trade. If the streets of Jaffa had been better organized and if an attractive port had been constructed, it would have developed very rapidly like Beirut or Smyrna. There were around 1,000 German immigrants in the settlement and they used to live in two orderly neighborhoods in the north of the village. These German immigrants were occupied with trade, agriculture and religious services, and the local administrators were very fond of them thanks to their regular tax payments. There was even one Russian baron among those people,

52 BOA, HR. TO., 143/15 (May 24, 1883); BOA, İ. HR., 289/18178 (May 24, 1883).

53 BOA, HR. TO., 32/60 (June 16, 1885).

54 BOA, Yıldız, Name-i Hümayunlar/The Royal Letters, Records of Yıldız Palace (Y. PRK. NMH.), 3/26.

55 BOA, Y. PRK. NMH., 3/17 (June 18, 1885).



who had constructed a hospital for the poor and a nice garden around his own house. He was praised for his services which were of benefit to the country.<sup>56</sup>

The most important of the locations that the prince visited was the holy city of Jerusalem and valuable information on the city was given in the report which stated that Jerusalem was situated in a very valuable location with regards to religion and history as it was the house of prophets and of significant events. The Temple Mount and the Al-Aqsa Mosque, and many other holy places were situated there. However, the condition of Jerusalem was very bad when the prince visited it. It was in ruins and the roads were very dirty. This was not due to the laziness of the local administration. Jerusalem was surrounded by an old city wall, and its houses and the streets were very narrow and close to each other as it used to be back in ancient history. Renovating and cleaning these places was a difficult task. The local administration did not have such power. A local administration was in fact considered a successful one so long as it prevented ‘the corruption among Christians and consuls’ and stopped the fights and deaths of subordinates due to the ‘penetration of priests into churches’, and only if it could ensure the safety of the region. Rauf Pasha, Governor of Jerusalem, had successfully carried out this duty. An offer had been made to organize a dedicated commission consisting of engineers and other officers who could devote their time to the renovation of Jerusalem, and to appoint them to the region. According to the report, the population of Jerusalem was around 25,000, of which 12,000 were Jews, 7,000 Muslims and the rest Catholics, Orthodox Greeks, Armenians, and Protestants. Its vegetation was very poor as it was located in a rocky region. The Dead Sea was in this province and its waters were salty and very bitter. None of the subaqueous animals could live in it. The main trade conducted by the locals was only with foreign visitors. There was a type of plant in the sandy meadow in the north which Egyptian peasants collected, burned and dried, and shipped to Jaffa via camels in order to sell to Europeans. Europeans made eye liner from these ashes. They also produced oil from a substance called asphaltite, which Egyptian peasants sold to tradesmen after transporting it to Jaffa on camels. The commercial products of the Dead Sea valley were ashes, asphaltite, and salt. There were two obstacles preventing the growth of these industries. One of the reasons was the lack of proper roads to Jerusalem and the second was that the location was too hot for people to settle down. The mountain range at the east of the Dead Sea was home to some rebellious Bedouin tribes. There were many apple and pear trees there, but they seemed strange. When apples and pears that seemed mature were picked, they would explode when squashed and were empty inside.<sup>57</sup>

The report also gives some facts and useful tips about the River Jordan. For example, it states that the Jordan was a fast-flowing river that connected the Sea of Galilee and the Dead Sea. It was deemed holy by Christians as they believed that it was the river where Jesus Christ had been baptized. Every year it attracted thousands of visitors who got baptized in it. His

56 BOA, Y. PRK. MYD., 21/108 (April 3, 1883) lef. 2.

57 BOA, Y. PRK. MYD., 21/108 (April 3, 1883) lef. 3-4.

Holiness Abdelkader had a prayer room and a tavern constructed on the fertile north side of the Jordan, but they were in ruins at the time of the prince's visit. The river was not surrounded by any areas of settlement due to a fear of attack from the Bedouins.

Included in the report are some suggestions. For example, if the prayer room and tavern constructed by His Holiness Abdelkader were renovated and protected by an adequate number of soldiers and if a competent sheikh and an officer were appointed there, many rebel Bedouin might shortly be integrated into civilization and they might become obedient. In this way, the building would thrive and the state treasury would receive more contributions. After these suggestions, a European practice was also discussed in the report. Accordingly, Protestants and European missionaries constructed many churches and schools in the region, and they sought to convert indigenous communities to Christianity by offering them Western education and discipline.<sup>58</sup>

Nablus was the center of the Belka Sanjak within the Syrian Province. Its population was about 1,600 of which 600 were Greeks, 200 Samiri and the rest Muslims. This village was fruitful and fertile; the main products they exported were cotton, olive oil and soap. The village of Sebastia used to be the capital city of the Bene Israel tribe in ancient times. At the time of writing the report, it was comprised of 60 houses and 400 people, all of whom were Muslims. The ancient monuments included the house of the Prophet John, which was in ruins, and additionally, there were many marble columns outside the village. It was estimated that these used to be the famous gates of the Bene Israel Kings.<sup>59</sup>

The town of Nazareth was a center of governorship subject to the Acre Sanjak. Its houses and roads were proper, and its hardworking people earned their living from agriculture. This was the most modern place among the other towns of Palestine. Its population was 7,000. There were 2,000 Muslims, 600 Greeks, 1,500 Latins and 200 Maronites. There was a Protestant School on a high hill outside the city borders and a church at the site of the annunciation to Mother Mary. There was another village called Haifa. This was the most appropriate location for a port on the Syrian shores. A great port could have been constructed at a low cost. Haifa hosted about 2,000 German immigrants and they lived in a very attractive and organized neighborhood. The village of Acre was surrounded with a fortification wall. On the seafront it was old and in ruins, so it was useless. The fortifications on the land were sturdy and closer to contemporary styles. The village had a population of about 10,000 and three-fourths of them were Muslims and the rest were Christians and Jews. They mostly exported linen, tobacco and grains. Sur was a location under the governorship of Acre which was built around 2750 BC where Egyptians, Phoenicians and Greeks reigned. It had great historical importance as it was the gateway for many battles. It had a population of 500, all of whom were Muslims. Sidon was under the governorship of Beirut. Its population was around 9,000 to 10,000. There

58 BOA, Y. PRK. MYD., 21/108 (April 3, 1883) lef. 4.

59 BOA, Y. PRK. MYD., 21/108 (April 3, 1883) lef. 4.

were 7,500 Muslims, 600 Maronites, 800 Roman Catholics and the rest were Jews. Their roads were proper and clean. The weather was pleasant and its oranges were very popular in and around Syria.<sup>60</sup>

Beirut, the gateway to Damascus, also featured in the report. Its nature and climate were very nice. It had proper vehicle roads and new buildings. The levels of trade, wealth and intelligence in society were very advanced. Its population was approximately 4 times bigger compared to 20 years previously. The reason for the surge in population was the fact that proper vehicle roads had been built between Damascus and Beirut twenty years earlier. Silk and fabric were the main exports of Beirut. However, this trade was seriously hit by the high interest shown by people in the silk fabric sent from China after the Suez Canal had been opened and silk worms had become diseased. Beirut had a large military post, a military hospital and an Ottoman military junior high school. Jesuits, Protestants, Americans and the British also had schools there. It was estimated that there were 400 tutors and teachers, and about 14,000 students in Beirut. Although the majority of the population of Beirut spoke French and English, they spoke Arabic as well, and they worked hard to improve the Arabic language. The population of Beirut was around 80,000 half of which were Muslim, 13,000 were Orthodox, 15,000 were Maronites, 300 were Roman Catholic and the rest were American Protestants and Jews. What Beirut strongly needed was for a port to be constructed. Although this was a known fact by the Province, it was unknown as to when it should commence. Mount Lebanon was altogether a different place in the Syrian region in terms of order and zoning. This was a result of Rüstem Pasha's extraordinary efforts. According to the references in the report, Rüstem Pasha had been successfully governing the city with a population of 300,000 for ten years with about 400 infantries and 40 cavalries, and was loyal to the Sultan. Another important city in the region was Damascus and although Damascus was a large city, its roads and other locations required reorganization and renovation.<sup>61</sup>

The information given in the report on the desert in this region is accompanied by some suggestions. According to the report, although the desert was quite fertile, people could not settle there due to the lack of water and the attacks of the Bedouins. If water sources could be constructed at various points in order to irrigate the land, and if military forces could preserve public order, the region would quickly start to prosper as much as the Syria province. In this way, the Bedouin in the deserts could also be civilized as a group, without using weapons.<sup>62</sup>

Colonel Ahmed Bey and Major Ismail Bey also provided some information on the ruins of the region in the report. They mentioned that, although the founders of Palmyra were unknown, it was known that the place had been ruled by the Romans, Greeks and the Prophet Suleiman. A large palace constructed in the middle of a desert of no rocks, yet built of marble columns and large rocks from far away, is in theory beyond human capabilities. Palmyra's

60 BOA, Y. PRK. MYD., 21/108 (April 3, 1883) lef. 5.

61 BOA, Y. PRK. MYD., 21/108 (April 3, 1883) lef. 6.

62 BOA, Y. PRK. MYD., 21/108 (April 3, 1883) lef. 7.

population was about 500 and had one governor and four military police teams. It was not possible to protect the place from Bedouins with only four teams, so the police force had to be strengthened to protect the public. The village of Palmyra was subject to Syria in terms of military defence, but it had to report to the Aleppo province administratively. The information on the ruins of Baalbek is similar to that on Palmyra. A 30 meter long, 4 meter high and 2.5 meter wide building had been constructed by placing large rocks on top of each other.<sup>63</sup>

The report concludes with some recommendations for the region. Colonel Ahmed Bey and Major Ismail Bey stated that roads, bridges, and other zoning activities had not yet been completed in a large part of the Syria province, through which many travellers needed to pass. They also stated that they regretted seeing the region so empty and that society was left to live in an ignorant and nomadic way in such a fertile and fruitful location. Moreover, they emphasized that it would be suitable for this location of such significant physical and moral importance to be done up in the shortest possible time and that the final decision belonged to the Sultan.<sup>64</sup>

## Conclusion

The German Prince Friedrich Karl organized a visit to the Ottoman Empire between 19 February and 24 March 1883. Istanbul was due to have been included in the travel program when it was first drafted; however, the Royal Prince completed his tour without visiting the imperial capital. He visited Jaffa, Jerusalem, Nablus, Acre, Sur, Sidon, Beirut, Damascus, Palmyra and Baalbek during his travels. He visited the holy locations and historical places. The journey was completed smoothly despite potential problems due to bad weather conditions. The prince was greatly interested in the ruins of Palmyra, which he visited and even had excavations done there. All the logistics of the tour were covered by Alexander Havard from Beirut. Colonel Ahmed Bey and Major Ismail Bey, who were the aides-de-camp of the Sultan, escorted Prince Friedrich throughout his visit. The royal prince was extremely satisfied with those who escorted him and he awarded them afterwards with medals and honors from the German Empire.

One other thing to mention regarding this visit is that both Colonel Ahmed Bey and Major Ismail Bey carried out an extraordinary amount of work. Beyond successfully realizing their duties, they also drafted a daily report describing the entire journey in detail. This report was submitted to the Yıldız Palace and - as stated previously - it included very satisfying information on the visit. Moreover, the report is also very valuable as it includes information on the socio-economic conditions of the visited locations and is not limited to the travels of the prince.

An important dimension of the visit of the German Prince Friedrich Karl was that it contributed considerably to Ottoman-German relations. Back in this period, Sultan Abdul

63 BOA, Y. PRK. MYD., 21/108 (April 3, 1883) lef. 7-9.

64 BOA, Y. PRK. MYD., 21/108 (April 3, 1883) lef. 10.

Hamid II approached the Germans step by step as per a balanced political stance. Accordingly, six years after Friedrich Karl, the German Emperor Wilhelm II organized a visit to the East in 1889 and this visit contributed to the economic prestige of Germany in the Ottoman Empire and the Eastern Mediterranean region in general. The aforementioned visit of Friedrich Karl is therefore a precursor of the visit to the East dated 1889 and of its forthcoming impact.

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## Figures

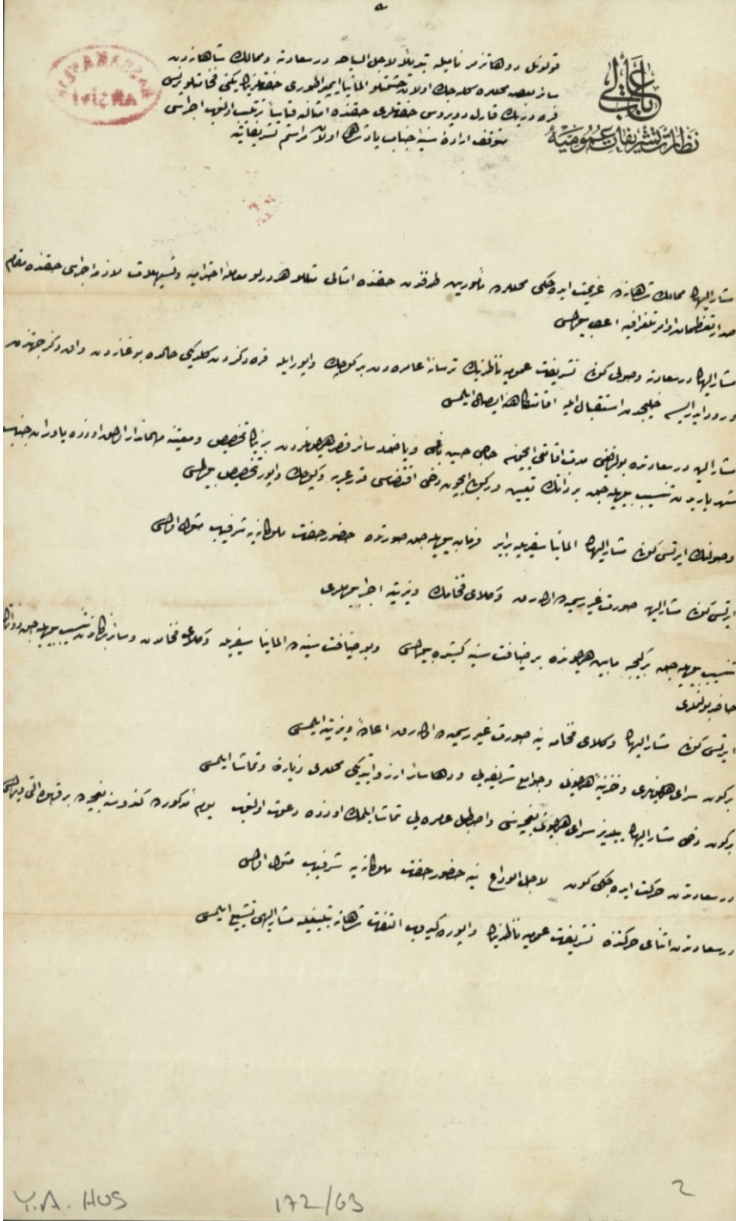
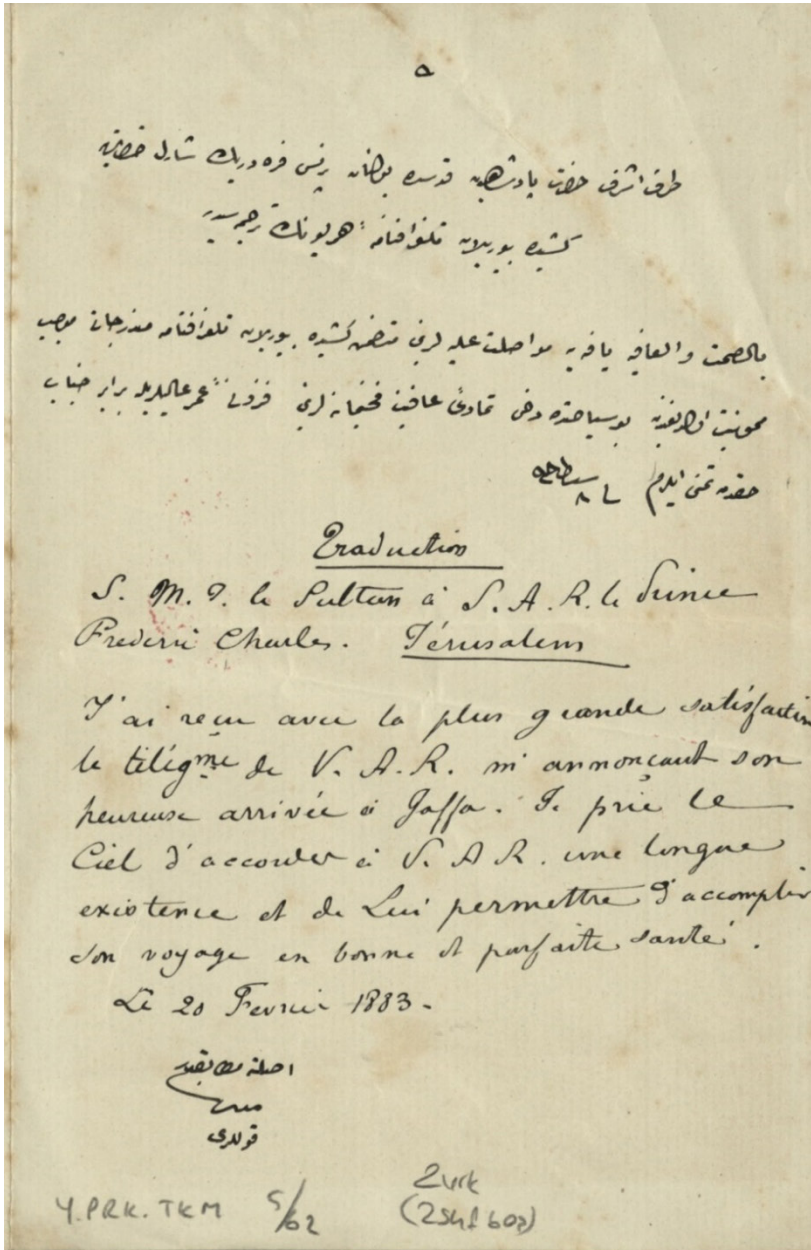


Figure 1: Program Prepared for the Unrealized Visit of the Prince to Istanbul (BOA, Y. A. HUS., 172/63).





**Figure 2:** The Notification to Sultan Abdul Hamid II about the Prince’s Approach to Jaffa and the Sultan’s Reply (BOA. Y. PRK. TMK. 5/62).

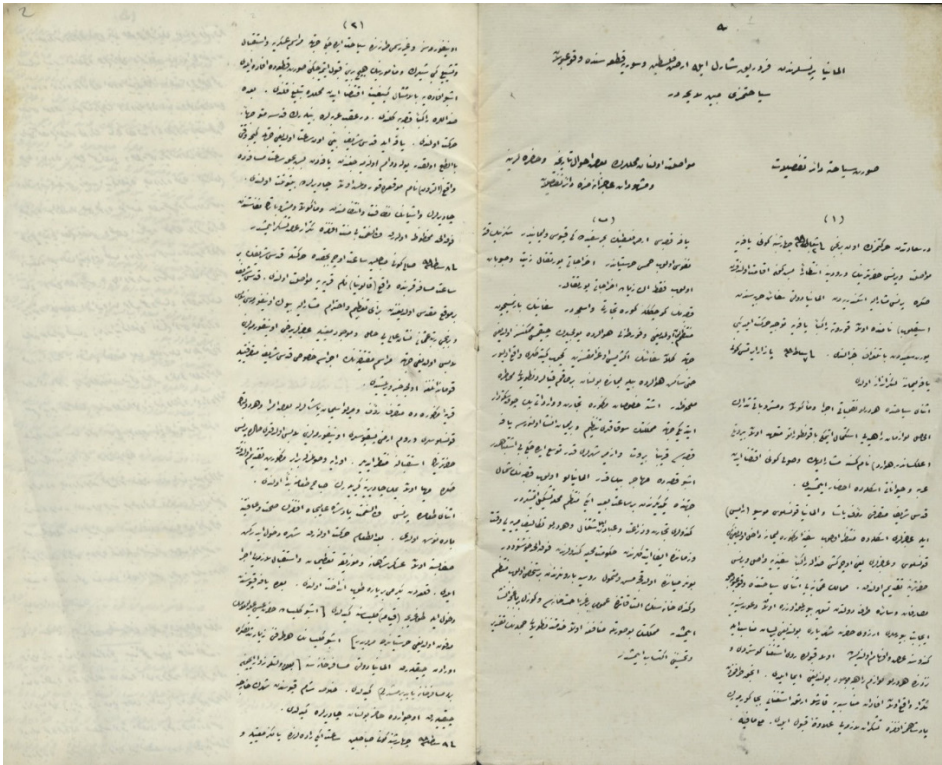


Figure 3: The First Pages of the Daily Report about the Prince’s Journey Written by Colonel Ahmed Bey and Major Ismail (BOA, Y. PRK. MYD, 21/108).





**Figure 5:** The Tents Erected for the Prince and His Delegation around the Ruins of Palmyra (İstanbul Büyükşehir Belediyesi Atatürk Kitaplığı/Atatürk Library of Metropolitan Municipality of Istanbul, Bel\_Mtf\_003581)

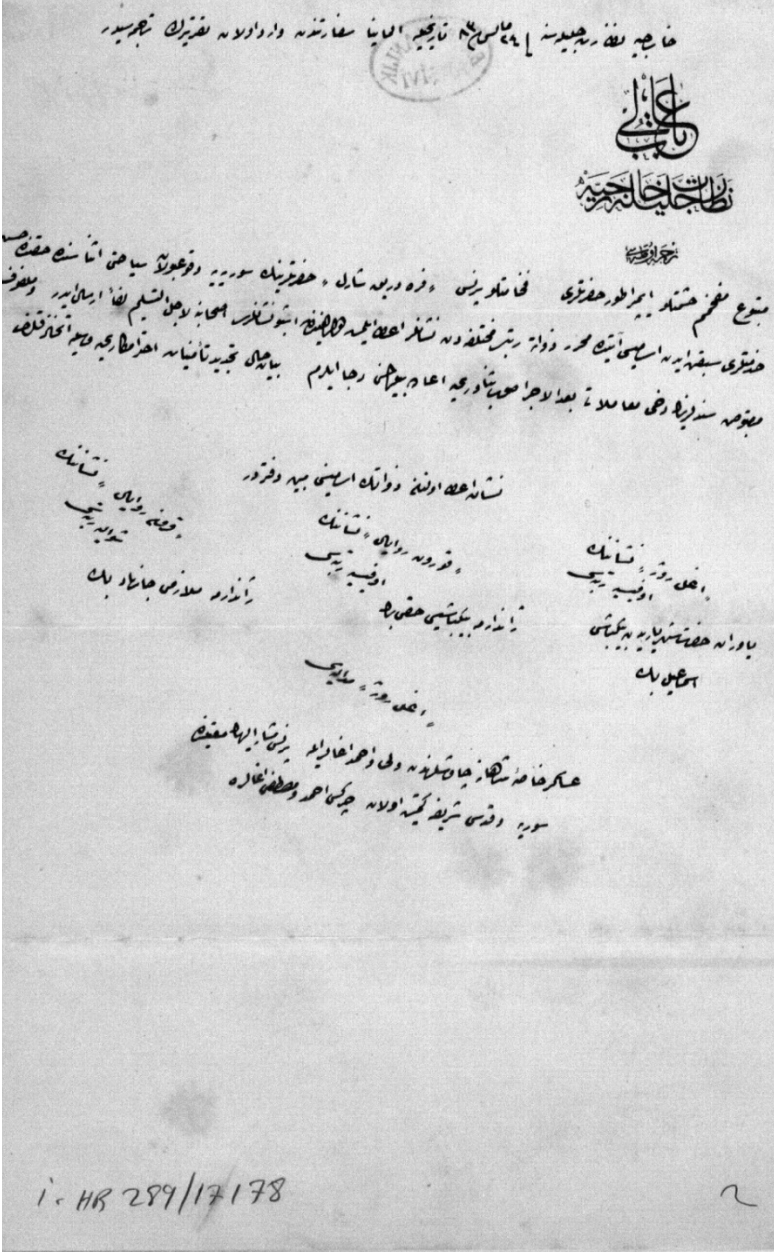


Figure. 6. The German Empire Decorating Colonel Ahmed Bey and Major İsmail with Medals and Honors for Their Service to the Prince Friedrich Karl of Prussia (BOA, İ. HR, 289/18178).

