

Competing Visions of Area Studies in the Interwar Period: The School of Oriental Languages in Berlin

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Focusing on the Seminar for Oriental Languages in Berlin, the article explores competing visions on the role of area studies between two prominent Orientalists in the interwar period. It shows that tensions between blue-sky research, applied research and the provision of educational services were at the centre of this argument. In sketching the development of

the academic community of Orientalists since Germany's imperial period, it will be argued that concepts of area studies continued to be linked to visions of nationalist and expansionist foreign policies, even after 1918.

Keywords: Area Studies; Oriental Studies; Islamic Studies; Interwar Period

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Introduction

This article addresses the controversial development of the School for Oriental Languages (SOL) in Berlin between its founding in 1887 and the end of the Weimar Republic. The school was founded in order to provide training in "Oriental languages" for diplomats in the imperial service. Although the institution was funded by the Foreign Office and the Prussian Ministry of Culture, it had initially not been founded for the education of colonial officers. But once it began operating, the Imperial Colonial Office turned it into a training school for colonial personnel. Providing vocational training in languages and "colonial Realien," the SOL attracted scholars who called for a reorientation in Orientalist scholarship, aiming to study the contemporary Middle East instead of adhering to philological methods. Those Orientalists interested in the "contemporary Middle East" and in the "study of Islam" profited from a close cooperation with the imperial government. The extensive use of SOL graduates for intelligence and military service during WWI highlights the close connections of German area studies with imperial interests. With the

end of the German Empire, a public debate on the future of the SOL emerged that critically addressed the institution's self-conception.

In focusing on two leading protagonists in this context, the Orientalists Georg Kampffmeyer¹ and Carl Heinrich Becker,² the paper picks up on a debate around the question of how closely area studies should be related to political, military and economic interests after the First World War.³ Although the debate between the two scholars entailed a strong local and personal dimension, its arguments were exemplary for a larger debate on the role of area studies in consequence of Germany's defeat in the First World War. By illustrating those arguments, the article contributes to the under researched history of German area studies before 1933 (Brahm and Meissner 263). It shows how political affiliations and personal convictions influenced Becker's and Kampffmeyer's conceptions of area studies. It will be argued that both concepts were intertwined with visions of nationalist and expansionist foreign policies, representing intellectual currents popular in the interwar period.

Oriental Studies during Germany's Imperial Period

Members of the academic community of Orientalists were actively involved in shap-

ing the landscape of Oriental studies during Germany's imperial period. Developed out of a subsidiary discipline of theology into a linguistic science by the early 19th century, Orientalist scholarship had for over a century—in accordance with the Humboldtian ideal—produced Orientalists who were working on “ancient and long dead cultures” (Marchand 350). Those scholars at German universities studied languages of ancient civilization through the analysis of classical texts. Hardly any of them had travelled to the respective region in order to study contemporary developments or to collect material. Until the end of the 19th century material sources collected by missionaries and travellers remained the only available material for extensive studies in the field (Habermas 136).

Towards the end of the 19th century some scholars started to discard this intellectual tradition and began studying contemporary developments in the Middle East. Among them was Martin Hartmann⁴ who had studied Semitic studies at the University of Leipzig with Heinrich Leberecht Fleischer, a scholar famous for his Arabic philological training. Hartmann travelled to the Ottoman Empire in 1874 after finishing his doctorate and took up a career as a professional translator (dragoman)⁵ in Constantinople. Two years

later he took up a post at the German embassy in Beirut where he spent another eleven years. During this time, Hartmann studied colloquial Arabic and travelled extensively in the region. His outstanding command of Arabic brought him back to Berlin in 1887 where he took up the position as lecturer for Arabic at the newly founded SOL (Kramer 284).

After Germany's entry into the era of “Weltpolitik,” there was a growing demand for people who were able to negotiate or translate in business negotiations and political affairs. Reportedly, this need for experts had been brought forward most prominently in 1883 by Chancellor Bismarck who had noticed the lack of an adequate Chinese translator in official business negotiations and had subsequently suggested educating officials in the Foreign Service in Asiatic languages and cultures (Marchand 350; Burchardt 64; Morgenroth 7).

Funded by the Foreign Office and the Prussian Ministry of Culture, the SOL became the leading institution in the training of colonial personnel.

The aim of instruction was not wide-ranging *Bildung*, but unabashedly practical training; it cultivated students who aimed chiefly at business careers, careers as colonial officers, postal workers, and overseas military per-

sonnel, not at all the same sorts who frequented the philosophical faculty. (Marchand 351)

The curriculum was initially limited to Asiatic languages (Chinese, Japanese, Hindi, Arabic, Persian, Turkish, Swahili), but was gradually extended to include African languages of the German colonies. In addition to language courses, the SOL offered courses in “colonial Realien,” which included courses on tropical medicine, customs, law, and the geography of German colonies. According to Burchardt, the SOL

was not created in response to the needs of colonial policy. Once it was there, however, it was used by the relevant departments in the training of young officials and officers in the colonies. (Burchardt 103)⁶

In 1908 the SOL lost its status as the only institution providing training for colonial personnel, because the Secretary for Colonial Affairs and head of the Imperial Colonial Office Bernhard Dernburg founded the Colonial Institute in Hamburg (HCI) together with local merchants. Administered by the Imperial Colonial Office in Berlin, the merchants of Hamburg asserted their influence through a businessmen’s advisory board (Marchand 353). In terms of structure and organisation, the HCI was similar to the SOL (Ruppenthal, *Kolonialismus* 173), although the curricula

focused more strongly on research and did not stick to teaching languages and “colonial Realien” only.

The Emergence of Islamic Studies in Berlin and Hamburg

Both institutions, the SOL and the HCI, were until 1918 the leading institutions for the training of colonial personnel and key institutions for promoting the study of the contemporary Middle East and Islam. At the SOL, Martin Hartmann taught the first course of Islamic studies beginning in 1910 and in Hamburg, Carl Heinrich Becker promoted the study of Islam.⁷ Both were “proponents of a new kind of cultural history, one that played down philology in favour of history, sociology and political ideas” (Marchand 353; Mangold 256-73). Becker was appointed as the first director of the Colonial Institute and held the chair of “History and Culture of the Orient” until 1913.

The ideal, and only candidate, for its position in Islamic History and Civilization was Carl Heinrich Becker, assistant professor at the University of Heidelberg, who had taught Germany’s first lecture course on modern Islam in 1906-1907. In negotiations over the position, Becker insisted that his purview be the cultural, not the linguistic, world of Islam and that languages at

the HKI would be taught without the technical apparatus demanded in comparative Semitic studies. This time saved could be spent on *Realien*: institutions, customs, art, and geography. (Marchand 353)

Scholars like Becker and Hartmann offered their expertise readily for imperial research projects. Both participated (Becker in 1908, Hartmann in 1911) in a research project by the imperial government, which undertook a survey on the spread of Islam in German colonies in Africa. Both studies were never published, but reflected a shift in methodology of Oriental studies, which based analysis on empirical material collected by scholars themselves (Habermas 137). The cooperation between scholars and the imperial government on the one hand provided researchers with empirical sources, and on the other hand brought recognition for the relevance of “studying Islam.” Scholars who turned to the study of Islam were outsiders in the field of Oriental studies, but they realized early enough that “Islam was marketable during the colonial era” (Wokoeck 181).

Kampffmeyer, a student and colleague of Hartmann at the SOL, was another major figure in pushing the study of Islam and contemporary Middle Eastern studies. His role in the establishment of Moroccan studies at the SOL is a perfect example of

how scholarship and political ambitions went hand in hand. It shows that German Orientalist scholarship was as much attracted to political power as French or British Orientalist scholarship, as stressed by Edward Said (19). However, German Orientalism and its hegemonic sites need to be investigated in a national and imperial framework rather than in a colonial one (Jenkins, "German Orientalism" 99). Following a political agenda known as "pénétration pacifique," Germany strove to gain political influence in the Middle East by using cultural institutions as a forerunner for establishing economic and political ties in the region.

In the wake of the first Morocco Crisis (1905/1906), in which the German Empire aimed at gaining influence in Morocco, Kampffmeyer received funding from the Prussian government for research on Moroccan culture and language. This eventually resulted in the establishment of Moroccan studies at the SOL and the foundation of the German-Morocco Library (Haarmann 63). Kampffmeyer turned himself into an expert on Moroccan affairs acting as consultant for the Foreign Office (Pritsch 5).

Although Islamic studies as a new discipline was institutionalized only after the First World War, already before and during the First World War the study of Islam

and the contemporary Middle East gained new ground. The launch of new academic journals and the founding of new professional associations in Hamburg and Berlin mirrored this development. In 1910 Becker founded the journal *Der Islam*, which published on philological as well as sociological or cultural topics (Rohde 128, Marchand 362). It represented a shift away from a longstanding Orientalist institution, the "German Oriental Society" (*Deutsche Morgenländische Gesellschaft*). In 1912, Hartmann founded the association "German Association for Islamic Studies" (*Deutsche Gesellschaft für Islamkunde*) in Berlin, which edited the journal *Die Welt des Islams* (WI) with a focus on contemporary issues. The political agenda of the association was programmatically expressed by Hartmann's colleague Kampffmeyer in the first edition of WI in 1913:

If I am not mistaken, we in Germany are faced with a partial transformation of our oriental scholarship. No longer do we sit by lonely little lamps, so far away from the real world in our little libraries; we too have stepped outside and feel the life pulsing through our people as a whole. [...] We want the doing of useful things no longer to be an embarrassment. In their pursuit, we can also demonstrate thoroughness (Marchand 333).

The material presented here shows that the emergence of Islamic studies as a new field within Oriental studies was closely tied to imperial ambitions of the German Empire. Scholars like Hartmann and Kampffmeyer at the SOL and Becker at the HCI profited from a close cooperation with governmental institutions. They readily provided expertise which in return gained them recognition and funding for the study of the contemporary Orient and Islam. Thus, the First World War caused a fragmentation of the academic community of Orientalists in Germany along competing views concerning the profile of the disciplinary field.

First World War: Conflicting Views in the Academic Community

During the First World War the alliance between Germany and the Ottoman Empire gave the field of Oriental studies some unprecedented public attention. Expertise on the Middle East was in high demand and war requirements completely changed the work of scholars at the SOL, but also at other universities.⁸

For instance, lecturers at the SOL were responsible for censoring letters written in non-European languages by prisoners of war (POWs). Among them was Kampffmeyer, who was responsible for censoring letters of Moroccan POWs and served as

an advisor and translator in the so-called “Halfmoon Camp,” which was located close to Berlin and held most of the North African prisoners of war (Höpp 58-59). Those activities were coordinated by the newly founded Intelligence Bureau for the East in Berlin, which managed the propaganda efforts in and outside Germany with the help of Orientalists like Kampffmeyer, Eugen Mittwoch and many others.⁹ It was responsible for the propaganda towards the so-called “Orient” as part of a wider “revolution programme” which aimed at stirring up insurrections in territories of the Entente powers (Jenkins, “Fritz Fischer’s ‘Programme for Revolution’” 398). Part of this programme run by the Foreign Office and the Political Section of the Reserve Command Staff was the so-called “Jihad campaign,” which aimed at stirring an insurrection of Muslim peoples in territories controlled by the wartime enemies through a call to “Jihad” made by the Ottoman Sultan in November 1914. Orientalists were active in secret missions abroad, wrote enthusiastic propaganda brochures for the Intelligence Bureau for the East or even publicly promoted the German-Ottoman alliance:

By engaging in intelligence-gathering activities, scholars tried to prove their utility for the national cause, but in general Orientalists were of much less

importance than any German or Turkish diplomat, military officer or political leader in the political campaign towards the “Orient.” (Marchand 448)

Becker gave numerous lectures on Islam during the war and portrayed the long-standing relationship between Germany and the Ottoman Empire in publications like *Deutschland und der Islam* in 1915 (Marchand 449). In his controversy with the Dutch Orientalist Snouck Hurgronje, Becker positioned himself as an intellectual promoter of German interests in the Middle East, calling for a foreign cultural policy based on cultural cooperation (Van Ess 31). Reflecting his rising influence, in 1916 Becker was appointed as an advisor to the Prussian Cultural Ministry for the reform of area studies (Müller 166).

With Becker’s new position in politics, conflicts in the academic community of Orientalists intensified. While Orientalists based at the SOL like Hartmann, Kampffmeyer, and Mittwoch worked intensively “on the ground” (i.e. with local propagandists at the Intelligence Bureau for the East), Becker became a promoter of “Islamkunde” on an intellectual and political level. In this period Becker and Kampffmeyer articulated differing opinions concerning the future development of the disciplinary field. After the First World War they be-

came opponents in a debate on area studies. The *Deutsche Gesellschaft für Islamkunde* (DGI), which initially encompassed all German-speaking Orientalists working on contemporary Islam, was the stage for this controversy. The association focussed on activities like setting up a library and organizing lectures in Berlin, which aimed at providing expertise (economic, political affairs) for politicians engaged in the region. Funded by the Imperial Colonial Office, the DGI developed from an academic association into a platform providing foreign expertise for economic and political purposes only (Mangold 279).

After the death of Hartmann in 1918, Becker became the head of the DGI. When Kampffmeyer took over in 1920, their rivaling positions took shape. Becker aimed at fusing the DGI with the Berlin section of the German Oriental Society in order to strengthen the scientific character of the association. This move reflected his wider ambitions of reforming Oriental studies, as it had existed during the war, into a methodologically sound academic discipline and not merely a provider of policy expertise. Kampffmeyer opposed those plans wherever possible and argued that Oriental studies could only profit from contact with the “living Orientals,” and that scholars needed to provide expertise in the region without any restrictions. In the

interwar period, which will be the focus of the following section, those opposing views on the role of area studies were carved out in the debate over the reform of the SOL.

Reforming Area Studies in the Interwar Period

During the interwar years the social and political climate in Germany was marked by economic crisis. This was in part an effect of the Versailles Treaty, in which Germany was held responsible for the outbreak of the First World War and was obligated to pay financial reparations. For the SOL the loss of German colonies in the wake of the war had a far-reaching effect, as its main purpose, i.e. the education of colonial staff, became obsolete. The subject “colonial Realien” was no longer taught at the SOL and the demand for African languages was in decline, too. Instead, the SOL during the interwar period turned to teaching mainly European languages and was discredited by some critics as a publicly financed language school.¹⁰

At the same time, the Foreign Office (FO) became a federal body and was restructured internally. The Ministry altered the formation of its dragomans and ended its institutional cooperation with the SOL. It created a separate cultural department

and changed its cultural policy as well as its instruments. Due to the defeat in WWI, German cultural policy was no longer seen merely as a forerunner for economic and political relations, but as a distinct political field of agitation. It aimed at maintaining cultural ties (art, music) with foreign cultural institutions and at supporting German citizens or schools abroad (Düwell 48; Ruppenthal, “Kolonialabteilung”). At the same time, the FO pursued a revisionist colonial policy in international relations backed by a lobby of revisionist colonialist circles, which aimed at keeping alive a “colonial spirit” in society (Pogge von Strandmann 286). Those circles aimed at once again turning the SOL into an institute for colonial studies.

The reform of the SOL became the focus of public attention. The debate centered on the question of how closely area studies should be related to political, military and economic interests. In his position as personal consultant for university affairs in the Prussian Ministry for Culture (1916-1921), as State-Secretary in the Prussian Ministry for Culture (1921), and as Prussian Minister of Culture (1925-1930), Becker fought for a large-scale educational and university reform. He aimed at closing down philologically oriented Sanskrit chairs and at integrating culturally oriented “area studies” at universities (Müller

353). Initially formulated in 1917, Becker's conception of area studies was broad in its outlook and meant to educate every citizen in foreign affairs (“Denkschrift”). Conceptualized as a newly established discipline for regular students and citizens, he suggested separating area studies from the practical training of civil servants. He thus aimed at increasing the university's independence from governmental affairs (514-16). Becker suggested decentralizing the provision of foreign expertise by turning specific university chairs into specialized institutions spread all over the country, for instance, a center for Latin American studies in Cologne (Brahm and Meissner 264).

His ambitions to reform the SOL were rooted in his conviction that area studies should be centered in the university. Contemporary affairs—be it with regard to Oriental studies or to German society—were his central concern. While Becker was successful in the establishment of the first chairs of sociology and the foundation of the *German Academy for Politics* in Berlin in 1920, his reform plans for the SOL failed. His plan was to integrate parts of the seminar into the university. The idea was initially backed by the Foreign Office and by colleagues at the SOL, but was dismissed in autumn 1923 for financial reasons. Kampffmeyer and Palme opened the con-

troversty over the future of the SOL in a series of publications, which often entailed personal assaults on university professors in general. Becker did not answer those assaults in public, but personal papers and letters show how offended Becker felt by Kampffmeyer's articulations (Müller 364), which will be elaborated on in the following section.

Competing Visions of Area Studies

The two rival concepts of area studies were brought forward in the form of newspaper articles and in small publications. Becker's position was backed in a publication by Otto Franke, a former colleague of Becker in Hamburg and leading professor for Sinology in Berlin.¹¹ Franke's conception of area studies supported Becker's plans to install the subject at the university. Supporters of this view—mostly established professors—aimed at expanding on the historical-philological method to include contemporary issues in teaching and research at universities (Franke, *Das Seminar* 5-24).

Kampffmeyer together with his colleague Anton Palme, both still based at the SOL, opposed Becker's plans. Both came up with the concept of "studying nations" (*Nationenwissenschaft*), which was to be taught at a future "Academy for Foreign Affairs" (*Auslandshochschule*), envisaged

as an extension of the SOL. They argued that the study of foreign languages was crucial for making contemporary developments in politics, economics and societies abroad accessible for experts. In those conceptions a close cooperation with native speaking colleagues at the SOL or with Arab students in Berlin was deemed essential for gaining knowledge on non-European societies. Kampffmeyer's well-known personal engagement with the Muslim community in Berlin therefore served a specific purpose, and it went far beyond professional conventions in the field (Höpp, *Orientalist* 46). For instance, in 1926 Kampffmeyer founded an association (*Hilfsbund für arabische Studierende*), which supported Arab students in Berlin financially and politically (46-47). An institutional expansion of the SOL would not only have secured Kampffmeyer's and Palme's positions, but even might have turned their status of lecturers into professors, which was another demand disguised behind a conceptual debate.

In his publications Kampffmeyer created a distorted binary opposition between the universities allegedly sticking exclusively to the historical-philological method and the SOL which he presented as the only institution able to provide expertise on the contemporary MENA region (Kampffmeyer, "Die Reform").

A comparison of the competing visions for area studies promoted by Becker and Kampffmeyer as reflected in the debate on the reform of the SOL shows that these differences of opinion went beyond personal rivalries. They represented competing strategies for the future development of the disciplinary field and also implied political differences.

Becker's intention to strengthen the university and to turn area studies into a field rooted in the university was based on his democratic convictions, which envisioned area studies to offer knowledge without any claims of utility. Becker did not deny that experts should offer expertise for a national cause, but generally speaking, he did not envision area studies as a field of applied knowledge mainly serving political ends. Embedded in his larger educational reform plans, Becker was convinced that raising levels of knowledge on foreign countries in German society was a national goal in and of itself, which would eventually help to prevent another catastrophe as the First World War.

In contrast, Kampffmeyer and Palme unabashedly argued that expert knowledge on foreign countries should serve political and economic ends, thus distancing themselves from academic knowledge production at universities. Kampffmeyer's agitations against Becker had a strong

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anti-intellectual tone. His conception of *Nationenwissenschaften* was rooted in a conservative political agenda and centered on the category of "race" (*Volk*). Kampffmeyer thus represents an intellectual strand which gained more and more importance in the interwar period. His engagement on behalf of Arab students in Berlin apparently was apparently motivated by nationalist considerations, rather than constituting only an act of solidarity. Supporting Arab claims for national self-determination equally followed a German nationalist agenda designed to weaken the influence of France and Britain in the MENA region and to showcase Germany's ostensibly benevolent engagement with the Muslim world.

Kampffmeyer's and Palme's plans for turning the SOL into a distinct institution eventually came close to being realized in 1924, when the Prussian Landtag voted in favor of transforming the SOL into a so-called *Auslandshochschule*. But the plan was put on hold for political reasons and only realized in 1935 under the Nazi regime as part of its efforts to incorporate area studies into its power structures. Becker did not witness this transformation, as he died in 1933. However, the correspondence between Mittwoch and the Prussian Ministry indicates that behind the scenes, Becker was nevertheless pulling

strings in order to promote a more scientifically based curriculum at the SOL. His powerful position in the Ministry allowed him to install Franz Babinger as a lecturer for contemporary Islamic studies at the SOL (1921-1924) and later as a professor at the Friedrich-Wilhelm University in Berlin (1924-1934). Although Becker failed to reform the SOL in the interwar period, he succeeded in establishing a chair for Islamic studies in 1929 for Babinger in Berlin, making him one of the "founding fathers" of Islamic studies in Germany (Wokoec 165-66).

Conclusion

This article illustrated how closely the emergence of the field of Islamic studies during the first decades of the 20th century was entangled with the German imperial project. As an academic community of Orientalists working on the contemporary Middle East coalesced in Germany during this period, competing positions regarding the profile of area studies evolved. Conflicts between Becker and Kampffmeyer emerged already during the First World War, when Becker's promotion into the Prussian Ministry of Culture turned him into an influential figure regarding the reform of area studies. Besides holding this position, his ambitions to provide expertise on Islam in lib-

eral, academic circles contrasted with Kampffmeyer's engagement "on the ground" working in the service-oriented field as translator. Kampffmeyer's support for Arab students in Berlin in the 1920's was viewed critically by his colleagues, as such an engagement contradicted professional norms of the time and added to an image of Kampffmeyer as a querulous person. His conception of area studies centered on language as the key for understanding non-European cultures. In his anti-intellectual attacks on university professors, represented by Becker, Kampffmeyer moved towards a völkisch-nationalist argumentation, which became more influential at German universities after 1924/25. Kampffmeyer's approach followed a nationalist conception of science as providing academic services for the fatherland.

Although Becker's agenda of reforming Oriental studies as area studies with a sound methodology and clearly defined aims followed a nationalist line of thought as well, in contrast to Kampffmeyer's it was rooted in a democratic belief, according to which educating the masses in foreign affairs would eventually help to prevent a further traumatic experience like the First World War.

Notes

¹ (1864-1936): 1883 study of Philosophy, Theology, Semitic and Roman languages at the universities of Bern, Lausanne, Florence, Berlin; 1892 dissertation in Leipzig with A. Socin; 1900 habilitation in Marburg, 1906 lecturer at SOL for Moroccan, Egyptian dialect.

² (1876-1933): 1895 study of Semitic studies in Lausanne, Heidelberg, Berlin; 1900-1902 international travels to the Middle East (Egypt, Syria, Palestine); 1902 habilitation in Heidelberg; 1908-1913 First Director of the Colonial Institute Chair of History and Culture of the Orient; 1913-1916 Professor in Bonn; 1916-1921 personal consultant for university affairs in the Prussian Ministry for Culture; 1921 State-Secretary in the Prussian Ministry for Culture; 1925-1930 Minister of Culture in Prussia; 1930 Chair for Islamic studies in Berlin.

³ The disciplinary forerunner of area studies were in Germany the field of "Auslandswissenschaften" and "Auslandskunde" (Brahm and Meissner).

⁴ Hartmann, Martin (1851-1918): 1875 dissertation in Leipzig with H. L. Fleischer; 1876-1887 Dragoman in Beirut; 1887 Lecturer at SOL for colloquial Arabic; 1912 Co-founder of Deutsche Gesellschaft für Islamkunde (DGI).

⁵ A dragoman can be understood as a professional translator in the service of the government specialized in Arabic, Turkish and Persian languages.

⁶ The seminar contributed to colonial rule in German colonies by providing training for hundreds of colonial officers until 1914. Among its most prominent graduates were the governors of East Africa, Gustav Adolf Graf von Götzen (1901-1906) and Heinrich Schnee (1912-1919), as well as Julius Graf von Zech von Neuhofen who governed the colony of Togo from 1905-1910 (Marchand 351).

⁷ During the interwar period the term "gegenwartsbezogene Islamkunde" was used synonymously with "Islamwissenschaft" and sporadically as "Islamistik" (Wokoeck 165).

⁸ The curriculum of the SOL was affected by war requirements, too. The teaching of some languages among them Moroccan-Arabic was given up because of little demand or because language instructors had been recruited for military service (Stoecker 44). Instead, war-relevant languages (Russian, Polish, Turkish) for military or medical personnel were offered for free (Sachau III). Especially Turkish classes saw a huge increase in student's enrolment in the winter term 1915/1916, which corresponded with a wider enthusiasm for Turkish studies resulting in the foundation of numerous cultural associations or university chairs for Oriental studies (Marchand 45; Hanisch 58).

⁹ The activities of the Intelligence Bureau were concentrated on the production of propagandist material to be distributed at the camps, at the Western front and in the region itself. Leaflets in Arabic were produced to convince French colonial soldiers to cross over to the German side and the journal *al-Jihad* was published in Arabic for Muslim POWs. Initially, the German strategy had envisioned to send Muslim POWs to fight along with Ottoman fellow soldiers at the Mesopotamian front, but this idea was given up in 1916 and propaganda efforts concentrated on publishing activities. The Intelligence Bureau for the East was headed by Eugen Mittwoch until 1918, who became in 1920 the director of the SOL.

¹⁰ Teaching was restricted until 1929 to the subjects technology, missionary work and the study of newspapers. No diploma in African languages was given after 1918 and numbers of students in African languages remained relatively low during the Weimar Republic. Chinese, Japanese, Arabic, and Turkish were continuously taught, but student numbers never reached the pre-war peak again (Morgenroth 17). European languages (English, Spanish, French, and Russian) were in great demand.

¹¹ Otto Franke held the first chair for "Sprachen und Geschichten Ostasiens" in 1910 in Hamburg. Trained at SOL in Berlin, Franke had served as the translator for the *Deutsche Kaiserliche Gesandtschaft* in Peking and in consulates in China. See further Franke, *Erinnerungen*.

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