

Traces of Orientalist Discourse in World War I: Memoirs of Two British War Prisoners on Ottoman Turkey

Birinci Dünya Savaşı İngiliz Tutsakların Anıları ve Şarkiyatçı Söylem

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Abstract

This paper explores the representation of the Ottoman Empire in the memoirs of two English captives - John Still and Harry Coghill Watson Bishop. First, the paper discusses the idea of the orient in European history through Edward Said's theory of Orientalism. Secondly, this study examines the reflection of the orientalist discourse in Still's and Bishops' captivity accounts during World War I when they fought against the Ottoman soldiers. Still participated in World War I and was held as a prisoner of war until the end of the Great War, and during his captivity in Turkey, he kept a record of his observations and feelings about the Ottoman Empire. He published *A Prisoner in Turkey* as an account of his captivity. On the other hand, Bishop fought in the Kut-Al Amara battles as a second lieutenant in the Indian Army in the early days of the war. He was also taken as a captive on the 29th of April 1916. Through a long journey from Bagdad to Ankara, he reached Kastamonu and stayed there as a prisoner of war for almost two years during which he wrote memoirs about his captivity in Turkey.

Keywords: Orientalism, World War I, captivity, war memoir, John Still, H.C.W. Bishop.

Öz

Bu makalenin amacı, John Still ve H.C.W. Bishop isimli iki İngiliz askerinin esaret anılarında kullandıkları şarkiyatçı söylemi analiz etmektir. Makalenin başında Avrupa tarihindeki şarkiyatçı söylemin izleri tartışılacaktır. Bu tartışma Edward Said'in oluşturduğu Orientalizm teorisi üzerinden yapılacaktır. Makalenin bir sonraki bölümünde Osmanlı İmparatorluğuna karşı savaşan Britanya asıllı askerlerin izlenimlerinden örnekler verilecektir. Son olarak da makalenin konusunu oluşturan iki İngiliz askerinin esaret anılarında şarkiyatçı söylemin nasıl kullanıldığı açıklanacaktır. Still, Birinci Dünya Savaşı'nda Çanakkale cephesinde Osmanlı ordusuna karşı savaşan ve 1915'te Anafartalar'da Türklerin eline esir düşen 5 askerden biridir. Esareti Dünya Savaşının sonuna kadar devam etmiştir. Esaret anılarında Osmanlı Devleti, memurlar ve Türk toplumu konusunda kayıt tutmuştur. Anılarını daha sonra *A Prisoner in Turkey* başlığı ile yayımlamıştır. Harry Coghill Watson Bishop, Türklere karşı Kut-Al Amara cephesinde savaşan ve burada esir düşen diğer bir İngiliz askerdir. İngiliz ordusuna Hindistan taburundan katılanlar arasındadır. 29 Nisan 1916 tarihinde esir düşmüştür. Esareti sırasında Bağdat üzerinden Ankara'ya ulaşmıştır. Ankara'dan Kastamonu'ya götürülmüş ve burada 2 yıl esir olarak kalmıştır. Bishop da esaret anılarını yazmış ve yayımlamıştır.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Birinci Dünya Savaşı, esaret, anı yazını, John Still, H.C.W. Bishop.

Introduction

The earliest examples of the conflict between European and Asian civilizations existed in the works of ancient writers such as Aristophanes, Aeschylus, and Herodotus. For example, *The History of Herodotus*, written in 440 B.C., reflects the earliest Europeans' idea of the Orient. Herodotus writes about his observations and descriptions of Egypt, Asia, and Africa. He provides an account of the Egyptians' gender norms, religious ceremonies, clothing styles, gods, feasts, holy animals, burial, mummification practices and kings. Herodotus argues that the Egyptian world is entirely different from Europe in terms of traditions, geography, and climate. He writes: "In other countries, the priests have long hair, in Egypt, their heads are shaven; elsewhere it is customary, in mourning, for near relations to cut their hair; the Egyptians, who wear no hair at any other time, when they lose a relative, they let their beards and the hair of their heads grow long" (Herodotus 238). The unfamiliar and strange customs of the Egyptians are the focal point of the book, discriminating the Asian from the rest of the world. Thus, the representations based on discrimination of the other dominate the overall discourse of Herodotus' *History*, which is regarded as the earliest text reflecting the image of the East. Herodotus's work is an early example for the European view of the orient. Greeks and Persians had been in contact and on-going conflict. The Greeks served as doctors, engineers, mercenaries and artists in the Persian Empire (Balcer 261-62). Contrary to their close relationships, the "Persian Other" was portrayed by the Greeks as childlike figures. Aristophanes creates oriental characters such as the Scythian archer in *Thesmophoriazusa* or Triballos, the Thracian god of Birds, in *Birds*. He presents such characters with a broken language, unintelligent mind, lustful and savage nature (Bravo 60). By doing so, he draws the line between Greeks and Persians based on a binary opposition.

The conflict between European and Asian cultures is intensified with the advent of Islam after the 7th century across a vast geographical area in the Middle East, Persia, and North Africa. When Islamic states conquered several important places of Christianity, the Europeans responded with the Crusade campaigns. The Europeans felt more depressed and insecure when the Ottoman power extended its border to the middle of Europe. Conquering Constantinople, the Balkans, as well as besieging Vienne, the Easterners, especially the Turks, posed the most significant threat to the European civilisation until the 17th century. The European response to the Ottoman advancement was military and cultural. The Medieval polemics on Islam and Muslim were revived and the stereotypes re-created to compensate the loss and defeat. For instance, English playwright Shakespeare reiterates the common stereotypes in his plays. Some of his plays, such as *Hamlet*, *Othello*, and *The Tempest*, include the stereotypes of the Orientals. There are diverse and binary characters in *Othello* and *The Tempest*: black Africans, and Moors as vulgar, and white Europeans as civilized. In *The Tempest*, while Caliban represents uncivilised, uneducated, deprived savage, Prospero, the white European, is depicted as a civilised, educated and righteous ruler. In *Othello*, the protagonist is portrayed as a strange Moor, an honourable commander in Venice, only to turn into "an honourable murderer at the end of

the play” (153). Similarly, in *Hamlet*, the protagonist, Hamlet, states that “if the rest of my fortunes turn Turk” (Shakespeare, *Hamlet* 104) to emphasize the “evil change of his fortune” as Christians turn Turk. As a result, the Oriental characters in such canonical works reflect the early examples of the oriental discourse that embodies the binary opposition.

Theoretical Background

Said develops comprehensive argument on the European idea of the orient in his seminal work *Orientalism*. Said constructs his theory with reference to the rise of the European colonial extension and power in Africa and Asia. Emphasizing the relation between power and knowledge, Said uses Foucault’s theory of discursive practices. In *The Archaeology of Knowledge*, Foucault studies statements and their relationships, and for him, it is not simple to create a new statement because “it exists under positive conditions of a complex group of relations” (Foucault 44). Said refers to earlier studies and practices to analyse the contingency between different studies, readers, and discourses about the Orient, claiming that such contingency “constitutes an analysable formation” (Said 20). The bond between discourses, images, and descriptions of the Orient enables these writers to add a piece to the Oriental pictorial chain. For this reason, Said states that the bond of Oriental issues creates an “enormously systematic discipline,” and it makes the Orient “not a free subject of thought or action” but a subject related to the former works (Said 3). Since it is not possible to cover the “author’s involvement as a human subject in his circumstances” completely, the reader may face identity conflict (11). It can be said that portraying the Orient takes place under the existing Western images. The Europeans represent the “mysteries” of the East “to the West” (21). Therefore, the Orient is pushed into the background about Western matters.

The discourse formed and maintained by the Orientalist creates an academic field. Said argues that this academic side of Orientalism empowers the oriental discourse. The European scholarship embodies such discourse using certain stereotypes consistently. Said explains the academic aspect of the Orientalism as follows:

In the depths of this Oriental stage stands a prodigious cultural repertoire whose individual items evoke a fabulously rich world: the Sphinx, Cleopatra, Eden, Troy, Sodom and Gomorrah, Astarte, Isis and Osiris, Sheba, Babylon, the Genii, the Magi, Nineveh, Prester John, Mahomet, and dozens more; settings, in some cases names only, half-imagined, half-known; monsters, devils, heroes; terrors, pleasures, desires. (63)

In *Orientalism*, Said also claims that the Oriental discourse stems from power efficiency. Again, he relies on Foucault’s idea of power and knowledge. In *Discipline and Punish: The Birth of the Prison*, Foucault destroys the conventional

idea of knowledge. According to the conventional belief, “knowledge can exist only where power relations are suspended and that knowledge can develop only outside its injunctions, its demands and its interest” (Foucault 27). In other words, knowledge improves itself independently from power, for “knowledge does not merely mask, serve or expose power” (Kenan 14). Contrary to the conventional thought, power and knowledge complete each other because, to Foucault, knowledge is influenced by power and those who know also have power or vice versa.

Power and knowledge have a strong relationship that dominates the Oriental discourse and image. To illustrate this, Said introduces a discussion of a lecture which Arthur James Balfour, a British statesman, gave at the House of Commons. In his speech, Balfour attempts to justify the British hegemony in Egypt. However, he does not rationalise the British rule based on economic or political power, but on the in-depth knowledge that the English administrators have about Egypt’s history. Said explains Balfour’s speech over Egypt, and shows how he justifies the nomination as follows:

Knowledge to Balfour means surveying a civilization from its origins to its prime to its decline—and of course, it means being able to do that. Knowledge means rising above immediacy, beyond self, into the foreign and distant. The object of such knowledge is inherently vulnerable to scrutiny; this object is a "fact" which, if it develops, changes, or otherwise transforms itself in the way that civilizations frequently do, nevertheless is fundamentally, even ontologically stable. To have such knowledge of such a thing is to dominate it, to have authority over it. And authority here means for "us" to deny autonomy to "it"—the Oriental country—since we know it and it exists, in a sense, as we know it. (32)

Although the Europeans are outsiders in the Orient, they act as if they have much more say in governing than the natives do. To Balfour, all through history, the Orient is shown to have failed to develop and remains primitive. Thus, Egypt has no right to judge or speak about western intervention. The knowledge about the Orient makes the West superior over the far and foreign East. The Orient is supposed to remain silent since the Europeans see its inhabitants inferior. Therefore, Europe acts, decides, governs, shapes, and speaks for her. Said writes: “There are Westerners, and there are Orientals. The former dominate; the latter must be dominated, which usually means having their land occupied, their internal affairs rigidly controlled, their blood and treasure put at the disposal of one or another Western power” (36).

The Oriental discourse derived from knowledge and power relationships paves the way for the formation of two conflicting statements between the East and the West. Europe classifies the Oriental discourse by comparing their traditions, customs, and policies with those in the Orient with the intent of gaining authority over the Orient. The traditional Oriental discourse suggests two qualities: it simultaneously emphasizes the European superiority and the inferiority of the Orient. To illustrate this point, Said cites from Cromer’s speech about Egypt. As Balfour does, Cromer, the British representative in Egypt,

depicts the Orient and decides for the Orient thanks to his “knowledge”. In contrast to Balfour, Cromer’s Oriental ideas stand out, since he had experienced in the East, both in India and in Egypt, for a couple of years. He pictures Oriental peoples as “intrigue, cunning, inveterate liars and lethargic and suspicious” (38). The Europeans, on the other hand, are “reasoners, natural logicians” (38). Said links the two opposite discourses to the “political vision of reality,” adding that this attitude sharpens “the difference between the familiar (Europe, the West, ‘us’) and the strange (the Orient, the East, ‘them’)” (43). Thus, the opposite statements place the West in the superior race status, but it “others” the East as an inferior race.

The accounts of the European captives are widely read by the public and such accounts are not free from an imperialist point of view. The accounts that embody European superiority over the Eastern world take further attention. Yet, the same is not true about the captives who may face conversion in the alien world of the enemy. Captives whose family provide the ransom or politically important captives may be emancipated (Matar, *Captives* 153). The rest should suffer captivity. The suffering captives ostracize the enemy because of social and cultural differences. The Europeans captivated by Turk reiterate the common images and stereotypes about the orient. The “terrible” Turks live in luxury at “labyrinthine palaces and courts, have glamorous love affairs, and dangerous liaisons” (Matar, *Captives* 194). The *One Thousand and One Nights* stories are transformed into captivity context to meet the expectations of the public. As Matar suggests, “the sweet rural scene ... charming groves add pathos and misery to the slaves chained” (*Captives* 195). The beautiful and panoramic geography of the East is in contrast with the violent, vulgar, primitive and lascivious image of the easterners. The nature and the people are discriminated against and alienated to one another. This dichotomy is an imperial attitude which implies the natural lack of relationship between people and space. This ideology embodies a cynical desire to justify the imperial conquest. While the East represents an uncivilized nation, the West becomes civilized and has the right to dominate the Eastern space. Although Matar and Said discuss the different sides of the East, they meet on the common ground about the stereotyped image of the East. In both accounts, the Western writers’ or captives’ discourses end up with the same conclusion; that is, the East is alien and passive, so the domination of the West is the “right” intervention. As the West has increased its colonial power in different parts of the world, its influence can be marked in every genre of imaginative work, even the captivity story.

Orientalist Outlook of Two Captives: John Still and H.C.W. Bishop

Until the mid-1916, Britain failed to win any great victory both on the West and Eastern fronts. The Gallipoli campaign ended up with a great disaster on the first days of 1916; the battles in Kut came to an end with the capture of the whole

British army, of about 25,000 troops, in April of the same year. During these battles, many a British soldier found the opportunity to apply their school-learned knowledge to the place and the native people, as well as reveal their true feelings about these places and people. Many of them participated in this war with a centuries-old dream about the East. Patrick Huston Shaw-Stewart remarked his true feelings in a letter to Ronald Knox: "I shall take Constantinople and avenge the Byzantine Empire" (Hassal 319). Rupert Brooke, John Masefield, and Captain MacKenzie were also educated men fighting in the Dardanelles to realise the crusade dream. A priest defined this war as the final crusade, stating that Constantinople would come under the rule of Christians (Riley-Smith 78). Rupert Brooke and Patrick Shaw-Stewart were fellow officers in the same company heading for Gallipoli. En route to their destination, their troopship called at Skyros Island. Prime Minister Herbert Asquith's son, Arthur Asquith ('Oc') and Patrick Shaw-Stewart paid a visit to a village on the island, having "so vivid and deep information about the place where the native peasants lived that they impertinently inquired their familiarity with the ancient stories. [... but] later finding out that the Greek they spoke was very different from that of the ancient one" (Güllübağ 60). They knew more about the island than the native inhabitants. From *On the Road to Kut*, which is a war-memoir by an anonymous British soldier, we learn about the battles in Mesopotamia and about the Karbala Battle. The work recounts the Mesopotamian Battle from a soldier's first-hand experience. The soldier witnesses the Mesopotamian Battle from the beginning to the surrender of the British army at Kut-al Amara. The author has fascinatingly detailed knowledge of the history of this corner of the world. He refers to "Karbala," a significant event in Islamic History, and provides detailed information about the struggle between Sunni and Shia people (Anonymous 83-5). Captain Reynardson, a regimental officer in the Mesopotamian Battle, describes his observation in *Mesopotamia 1914-15*. Reynardson has in mind both the Oriental history of Mesopotamia and fairy tales of Baghdad. He reflects on his view of *One Thousand and One Nights* and the early Islamic history. He writes about Basra and the tragedy of Husain and his followers at Karbala (Reynardson 43-4). Also, he states that the fairy tales of "the gorgeous East" still exist, and the life of "the garrulous barber and his six brothers" might be staged in the dim street (Reynardson 46). Through the domination of Mesopotamia, they would obtain the economic wealth of the East, as well as the fantastic side of Mesopotamia. Besides, he compares the Turkish and British rules in Mesopotamia. He believes that this region would turn into a better place under the English dominance. Turks are "undesirable characters," turning the place into a mess and the East is economically, socially, and politically corrupt (40). Thus, his military expedition constitutes a journey in search of the fantastic Oriental world and its history.

Brooke and Stewart fought as an army official against Turks. Their imperial desire and colonial ambitions are obvious in the style and form of their memoirs. There are also infantry who fought against the Ottomans in different fronts. John Still was a Lieutenant in the 6th East Yorks when they attacked the hill in Anafarta from Suvla Bay on the 9th of August, 1915 (Still 27). Five soldiers

reached the hill, but they were captured by the Turks before the Dardanelles Campaign was over (29). Then, his captivity began in Turkey, and he was held as a prisoner of war until the end of the Great War. During his captivity, he stayed in Ankara and Afyon. He kept a record of his observations and feelings about the Ottoman Empire, the political system, Turkish officers, and people in Turkey, published in his first-hand experience book entitled *A Prisoner in Turkey*. He also wrote poems during his captivity, and his poems appeared in *Poems in Captivity*. After the war, he was rewarded for participating in World War I with “the Victory Medal”.¹ Still reflects the unbearable condition of the war and captivity related to the war in his accounts which include certain similarities with the other British prisoners’ perspectives about the Turks and the Ottoman Empire. This hostile perspective prevailing in Still’s works against the enemy needs further discussion.

Studies on World War I primarily focus on the reasons and results of the war, as well as its impact on different nations. However, the real fighters or actors, in other words, soldiers and captives, remained in the background. They were the first-hand witnesses, but they remained the unvoiced side of the war. While the states had many expectations regarding the war, the soldiers’ awareness about the colonial expectations needs to be studied. Thus, both Harry Coghill Watson Bishop and John Still’s accounts will shed light on the imperial desire of the British prisoners in World War I in the Oriental Ottoman Empire.

The common stereotypes on the East are reiterated in the captivity accounts of the British captives. Matar states that the British conquered India through “Eurocentric” discourse and legitimised their colonization (Matar, *Moors* 17). England calls the Turks deceitful as they describe American-Indian (13). This image also dominates in *A Prisoner in Turkey*. Still remarks that, in Turkey, officers give orders, but they do not follow them strictly, and they know that rules have been broken. To explain the loose Turkish system, he draws lines for both the Turkish and the British. While the British line is strict and difficult to bend, the Turkish line goes up and down (Still 123). Furthermore, he adds that the broken law and order system coming from the past of the Empire leads to its collapse (123). Besides, Still depicts the Turks as liars and likens the attitudes of the Turks to “gilded villainy” as they would break promises often (42). Furthermore, Still emphasizes the superior identity of the Western nation over the Turks. Related to the flexibility in law and order, Still has trouble understanding how the Turks managed to govern a long-standing Empire, but that “all real organisations such as it was, has been done by Greeks, Armenians and Jews, by subject people, slaves, half-breeds and poly-breeds” (125). He finds it mysterious for the Turks “to run an Empire” and he believes that the military accomplishments by the Turks were through “the supports of the Germans” (125). He portrays Turks in a passive light, which gives Western powers the legal right to govern the systems and properties of the East. As a result of corrupted

¹Record Details for John Still, <https://www.forces-war-records.co.uk/>. Accessed 19 May 2019.

systems, the existence of the enemy is only possible with the intervention of the West.

The moral corruption of the Muslim Turkish soldier is compared to the Christian manner of the German soldier. Even though the Germans were the enemy of the English, they became friends during their captivity in Turkey. Still underlines the brotherhood between Westerners in Turkey. He compares both Turkish and German soldiers in terms of their attitudes towards prisoners. First, he states that both Germans and the Turks mistreat prisoners of war, but the prisoners under the German rule are exposed to better conditions. He compares the condition of the prisoners of war in Turkey and Germany from a story of a prisoner:

The only prisoner we ever had who had been a prisoner in Germany too during this war he had escaped from there and been recaptured said that the difference in treatment between the worst places in Germany and Turkey was this: in Germany, the men were ill-treated until they became ill, and were then put into the hospital; in Turkey, they were ill-treated until they became ill and were then ill-treated more until they died. (Still 185)

Concerning the cruel nature of the Turks, he tells of a British captive story. In that story, the man is given sterilized bandage for its leg, but he finds out later that it is second hand and involves some lice (Still 138). Still dehumanises the Turks with such stories. Still, when the Turks take action, the darker side of them shows up. Thus, the different attitudes towards Armenians underline the polarised discourse between the East and the West again. Although Still deals with dehumanization and the primitiveness of the Turks, he does not touch on the religious discourse or the so-called homosexuality among the Turks. Homosexuality is used as a tool in such cases to “distance, dehumanize, and ultimately render the Other” (Matar, *Moors* 109).

At the end of the war, Still thinks that the systems of the Ottoman Empire are about to die, and recovery seems impossible to him because “they have no aptitude for wider forms of business and banking, building and organizing, or any form of creative work” (Still 244-45). The Turks have reached the end of the road with the Ottoman Empire, and they are far away from the industrial and superior conditions of the West. Still explains the distance of the two nations’ development with the image of a cliff. England is on the top of this cliff, and the Ottoman Empire remains at the bottom (245). The comparison of the Turkish and British systems gives the right to England to intervene in the Turkish economic systems. He states:

The only future for Turkey seems to be for the whole race to go back to the land until from the soil there rises middle-class able overtime to produce rulers of men. In the meantime, some European Power or America should have a mandate, not only the League of Nations’ mandate, but the Turks’ mandate, to do for them the things they cannot do; to provide judges and governors, railway and postal controllers, and

to officer the police force. I believe they would, by British or Americans, be the easiest people on earth to rule. (247)

In addition to John Still, Harry Coghill Watson Bishop fought in Kut-Al Amara battles as a second lieutenant in the Indian Army in the early days of the war. Bishop arrived in Basra on the 2nd of October 1915, and he was taken captive on the 29th of April in 1916. Through a long journey from Bagdad to Ankara, he reached Kastamonu and stayed there as a prisoner of war for almost two years.

Bishop touches on the deceptive identity of the Turks without considering the circumstances. He is biased and far from being impartial: The flexible identity of the Turks, in a negative sense, dominates his memoir, *A Kut Prisoner*. The otherness of the East is one of the main features used by European writers who had colonial dreams about the Orient. Even in the powerful era of the Ottoman Empire, they expressed the real intention through stereotyped discourses. In their Oriental texts, while positive discourses describe the West, the derogatory language identifies the East. Matar explains how they justify the colonisation through the othering discourse: “They maintain their sense of national superiority over the undefeated Moors and Turk ... sustain the Eurocentric version of themselves they had developed during their conquest of the Indians” (Matar, *Moors* 17). The stereotyped discourse includes derogatory statements like dehumanization, cruelty, deceptiveness of the Turks. While this discourse separates the West from the East, it emphasizes the superiority of Europe over the Orient. In Bagdad, Bishop complains about a similar matter. He states that “we had been promised furnished quarters but found bare floors and empty rooms” (Bishop 42). This issue is emphasized several times in Bishop’s account where he remarks the ineffective captivity rules in Turkey:

The Turks used to put up numbers of rules for our benefit. These were written out in the best English the interpreter could achieve, which was never very clear. As a rule, we did not pay very much attention to them, and they, on the other hand, never seemed to care either. The rule was on the board, and, if any officious officer was to come round from Constantinople, he could always be shown it, and assumed it was strictly obeyed. (91-2)

Bishop underlines that the Turks lack the ability to manage their resources and system. A Western power, like Germany, can manage it easily. Bishop does not explicitly emphasise the Turks’ incapability of managing the empire or its military forces. However, he emphasizes the inadequacy of the Turks in running their resources and the superior ability of Western powers. In this respect, the statement about the industrial decline fits the colonial discourse.

Also, he deals with the inability of the Turks’ running the natural sources and substructure. While they move from Bagdad to Kastamonu, they pass by a railway station. He states that “everything in connection with the railway was naturally German, and of a substantial description” (Bishop 44-5). When he is in

Russia, he observes how Russians manage their natural supplies in comparison to the Turks. “One of the most striking contrasts to Turkey was the magnificent fruit on sale, grapes, pears and peaches, all cultivated with great skill” (Bishop 223).

To Bishop, the Turks act bravely against the enemy in the battlefield, but they turn into a villain when they bring the enemy under control. However, throughout his captivity, he generalizes the Turks with an othering image. Even though the Turkish outlaws help him escape from captivity, his discourse does not go beyond the othering image. He calls these new people “arkhadash-comrades” (Bishop 180). These people treat the British captive politely and even they find a hiding place among Turks. The outlaws also kill Turkish soldiers while they help them escape from Turkey. When in Russia, Bishop remarks his gratitude to the outlaws: “No men could have acted more pluckily in rescuing us in the first place or taken more trouble over our comfort and welfare during the weeks we spent with them in the hills and woods; and never shall we forget how much we owe them” (226-27).

Finally, Bishop deals with the subject of the Turkish language and its insignificant place among languages. Bishop indicates that “a good many studied various languages, but Turkish was not very popular, as no one expected ever to want it again when once they had left the country” (Bishop 96). To Bishop, the Turks are inferior, so he displays a reluctance to learn the other’s language and does not make any efforts in that direction. He resists to the Turkish world and has a firm and restricted picture in his mind about the Turks.

Conclusion

British infantry and lieutenants who fought against the Ottoman Empire in different fronts reflected similar imperial ambition in their memoirs. Their accounts do not openly reflect the imperial domination over the Ottoman territories; they use orientalist discourse to justify the colonization of the Ottoman Empire. They developed arguments based on “civilized-Britain” and “primitive-Ottoman” in their memoirs. Although the conditions became better in time, the captives underscored the rarity of decent conditions and they continued to dehumanize the Ottoman people in their published accounts. The reflection of such an attitude obviously implied and reflected the existing imperial ambitions. Comparing the Christian [German] enemy with the Muslims, they emphasized the humanitarian and civil manner of the Christian enemy and the violence of the Ottoman officials. While Bishop and Still did not express the idea of the British economic interests in Turkey explicitly, they foregrounded the imperial ambition on the discourse of otherness. Bishop did not openly suggest domination, but Still openly argued for the British intervention in the Ottoman Empire.

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