

THE MOROCCAN CRISES (1905-1911) AND THE POLICIES IMPLEMENTED BY THE OTTOMAN EMPIRE DURING THE CRISES

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Abstract

In the quarter of a century before the First World War, there were numerous economic and political developments that shaped the Allied and Entente blocs. The Moroccan crisis holds a decisive place within these developments. The struggle of the Western Powers to share Morocco at the beginning of the 20th century was at the center of the crisis. The unequal bilateral relations developed between the Ottoman Empire and the Western Powers during the process of opening up to capitalism influenced the foreign policy as well as the economic policies of the state. In this study, the economic, political and social foundations of the policies followed by the Ottoman Empire during the crisis in Morocco, which was both its neighbor in terms of its domination area and its ideological rival in the Islamic world, are discussed using primary sources. In this context, the aim of the study is to reveal whether the Ottoman Empire, depending on its perception of threat, tried to implement a set of reactive, preventive, and supportive policies towards Morocco in terms of military, political, or economic aspects. The findings of the study show that the policies implemented are carried out on a political and military basis and through indirect channels. As a matter of fact, the Ottoman Empire's approach to the Moroccan crises was shaped by Pan-Islamist policies under the influence of Germany, the preservation of its sovereign rights in North Africa, the protection of its subjects in the region, and the question of nationality and the repercussions of the Franco-German rivalry in Morocco on the Ottoman country.

Keywords: Entente Cordiale, Moroccan Crises, Ottoman Empire, Pan-Islamism, Franco-German Rivalry.

Öz

Fas Krizleri (1905-1911) ve Osmanlı Devleti'nin Kriz Sürecinde Takip Ettiği Politikalar

Birinci Dünya Savaşı'ndan önceki çeyrek asırlık sürede İttifak ve İtilaf bloklarını şekillendiren çok sayıda ekonomik ve politik gelişme yaşanmıştır. Fas krizleri de bu gelişmeler içerisinde belirleyici bir yere sahiptir. Krizin temelinde Batılı güçlerin 20. yüzyılın başında Fas'a yönelik paylaşım mücadelesi yer almaktadır. Osmanlı Devleti'nin kapitalizme açılma sürecinde Batılı güçlerle geliştirdiği eşitsiz ikili ilişkiler, devletin ekonomi politikaları ile birlikte dış politikasını

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da etkisi altına almıştır. Bu çalışmada Osmanlı Devleti'nin hem hakimiyet sahası itibariyle komşusu olan hem de İslam dünyası içerisinde ideolojik olarak rakibi bulunan Fas'ta yaşanan kriz sürecinde takip ettiği politikaların ekonomik, siyasi ve sosyal temelleri birincil kaynaklar kullanılarak ele alınmaktadır. Bu bağlamda çalışmanın amacı ilgili süreçte Osmanlı Devleti'nin tehdit algısına bağlı olarak askeri, siyasi yahut iktisadi açılardan tepkisel, önleyici ve Fas'a yönelik destekleyici herhangi bir politika demetini hayata geçirme çabasında olup olmadığını ortaya koymaktır. Çalışmanın bulguları, takip edilen politikaların siyasi ve askeri temelde ve dolaylı kanallar üzerinden yürütüldüğünü göstermektedir. Nitekim Osmanlı Devleti'nin Fas Krizleri'ne olan yaklaşımı, Almanya'nın nüfuzu altında Pan-İslamist politikalar, Kuzey Afrika'daki hükümler haklarının muhafazası, bölgedeki tebaasının himayesi ve tabiiyet sorunsalı ile Fas'taki Fransız-Alman rekabetinin Osmanlı ülkesindeki yansımaları tarafından şekillendirilmiştir.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Entente Cordiale, Fas Krizleri, Osmanlı Devleti, Pan-İslamizm, Fransız-Alman rekabeti.

Introduction

The last 25-30 years before World War I corresponded to a period of general economic expansion except for the short-term crises in 1900 and 1907. Britain, which was the leader in terms of trade, politics, and finance throughout much of the 19th century, lost its global dominance by the end of the century due to intense competition from the United States and Germany. This economic competition began to manifest itself in the political and military areas as well during the period of imperialism, which witnessed the most intense form of colonial expansionism¹. The division of Europe into hostile blocs took nearly a quarter of a century, from the formation of the Triple Alliance (1882) to the completion of the Triple Entente (1907). The power balance in the first half of the 19th century reflected a stable and established equilibrium known as the Concert of Europe, where the security of each major power was conceived as dependent on maintaining the existing balance among themselves, as envisioned by the Bismarck System. However, after the collapse of the Bismarck system in the 1880s, a new power balance emerged, characterized by a variable nature based on military, political, and economic equilibrium between mutual blocs, including colonial arrangements and conflicts. In this sense, this period is also referred to as an unstable balance in terms of relations between imperialist powers². Nevertheless, the increasing engagement of major powers with developments outside of Europe during this period helped to channel intra-continental tensions into the international arena. However, due to the inability to fully dominate states such as China, the Ottoman Empire, and Iran, which were scenes of territorial disputes, colonial territories began to diminish, and areas where Western powers could channel their increasing populations, industrial powers, and evolving warfare technologies shifted from overseas regions to the proximity of Europe, such as North Africa, the Balkans, the Middle East—in short, the Ottoman geography and its surroundings³.

¹ Pommery 1956, p. 12–36.

² Sander 1996, p. 111-113.

³ Sander 2007, p. 196.

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In the process leading up to World War I, numerous developments occurred as a result of efforts by the parties to expand their economic and political spheres of influence and strengthen their existing influences, leading to the formation of blocs⁴. While the Boer Wars, Boxer Rebellion, Fashoda Crisis, Bosnia-Herzegovina Crisis, Macedonian Question, and Balkan Wars stand out among these developments, a series of crises in North Africa also hold significance due to intensifying conflicts between blocs. The Entente Cordiale signed between England and France in 1904 and the Moroccan Crises of 1905 and 1911, which strengthened the power of this alliance against German initiatives, are among these developments⁵. Despite all these developments, non-European issues served as a lightning rod, diverting the attention of major powers away from the dangerous conflicts of interest within the concert of Europe and did not play a decisive role in leading to war among them. The inability of the great powers to deal with the Eastern Question dealt a blow to the peaceful functioning of the European state system⁶.

The aim of this study is to reveal the policies pursued by the Ottoman Empire in the face of imperialist conflicts of interest in this geography, where it once ruled in the surrounding regions and in which it was not a subject but went through similar processes. Studies in the literature focus on the struggle of the Ottoman Empire against the imperialist attempts of the Western powers in North Africa, the division fights between the Western powers, and the historical background of individual regional developments. The preventive, collective, and interdependent reactions of states that went through similar peripheralization processes depending on their threat perception are often ignored. Thus, it will contribute to the literature by moving beyond the history of the relations between the two states or the policies of the Ottoman Empire in North Africa. The fact that Morocco is both a rival and a co-religionist with the Ottoman Empire due to their different sectarian affiliations, and that the Ottoman Empire is the leader of the Sunni bloc in the Islamic geography even if it is gradually weakening, makes the findings of the study even more meaningful. Accordingly, the following chapters first discuss the background of the first and second Moroccan crises and then examine how the Ottoman Empire positioned itself in the power struggle in the region and the policies it pursued. The last section presents the findings.

1. The Economic and Political Situation of Morocco at the Beginning of the 20th Century

Morocco, which was formally independent without becoming an official colony due to the struggle between Western powers, remained a weak and underdeveloped country throughout the 19th century⁷. The economic situation of the country can be characterized by the political instability that emerged due to the decline of the central

⁴ Bartlett 1996, p. 111–113.

⁵ Cook 2005, p. 21; Sander 2003, p. 339.

⁶ Bridge and Bullen 2005, p. 180-181.

⁷ Lutskiy 2011, p. 267.

authority. The main cause of this political instability is the implementation of a foreign fiscal system through the reforms carried out at the beginning of the 20th century, which led to a significant decrease in tax revenues due to the reaction of social groups who found this situation contrary to Islamic law. This situation not only weakened the central authority's control over the tribes but also resulted in budget deficits caused by uncontrolled spending of the bureaucracy and the control of customs and trade policies by Western financiers⁸. By the last quarter of the century, the precariousness of life, the lack of means of transportation and communication, underdeveloped ports, and government policies that imposed severe restrictions on private property kept Morocco a relatively unexplored territory. Nevertheless, the country earned a reputation as a natural resource-rich country with rich mineral deposits and fertile land. Indeed, according to the book written by Jean Hess (1862-1926) in 1903, also known as the Yellow Book, there is no region more fertile and richer than Morocco. The Atlas Mountains are rich in minerals. Despite its poor governance, Morocco has the potential to play a decisive role in international economic relations. The contrast between economic realities and possibilities motivated the struggle for political gains and made Morocco attractive to capitalist countries⁹.

With the signing of the Madrid Convention among thirteen states that were trading partners with Morocco in 1880, the Sultan promised to effectively protect the nationals of foreign states and implement the most favored nation principle for all parties¹⁰. Additionally, during the last quarter of the century, some developments established colonial connections with Morocco. The system of capitulations and patronage was granted to many countries, Westerners were given the right to acquire real estate, and some countries, notably Britain, France, and Spain, seized many points in Morocco as bases¹¹. Although commercial activities were supported by infrastructure investments before World War I, specific sources of income fell under the control of Western institutions. For example, the control of the coasts was taken over by the *Controleurs de la Dette*, and thus, with the control established over foreign loans, debt payments gained regularity. Import and export taxes were placed under the control of the *Comité de Travaux Publics*, leading to improvements in the collection and expenditure of taxes¹². After the 1911 French invasion, closer contact with Western civilization brought about a marked change in the tastes and habits of the population, and the desire for a larger share of the expanding trade led to fierce competition between the Western powers¹³.

⁸ *The Times*, "The Morocco Conference", 02.02.1906, 3.

⁹ Anderson 1930, p. 1-4; Hess 1903, pp. 95, 269.

¹⁰ Armaoğlu 1997, p. 436.

¹¹ Lutskiy 2011, p. 268-270.

¹² *The Times*, "Public Works in Morocco", 16.08.1910, p. 5.

¹³ Keltie 1915, p. 1135-1136; FO, Diplomatic and Consular Reports No. 5036 1913, p. 16-17.

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2. The First Moroccan Crisis (1904-1906)

The Moroccan Crisis contains all the elements of other crises on the road to the Great War: the struggle for colonial gains, competition for trade and investment, national pride, diplomacy laced with the threat of war, mutual fear, and the balance of power¹⁴. The origins of the crisis can be traced back to the revolt of Kavalalı Mehmet Ali Pasha (1769-1849) when the imperial powers' policies in the Near East and North Africa intersected in the context of conflicts of interest between Britain and France. The French intervention in Morocco because Algerian rebels were using Morocco as a base pitted Britain and France against each other, and the alienation between the two countries deepened with the invasion of Egypt by Britain in 1882. When France began to face problems in its forward-looking policies in Morocco with the seizure of several oases near the Algerian border in 1900, it started to seek grounds for cooperation with Britain¹⁵.

With the agreement signed between England and France in 1904, known as the "Entente Cordiale," England granted France the right to make economic, financial, and military improvements in Morocco without changing its political status. According to the secret provisions of the agreement, in the event of the end of the Sultan's sovereignty, the region on the Mediterranean coast of Morocco starting from the east of Melilla and extending to the Atlantic coast would be left to Spain. In this way, Britain ensured that a weak Spain rather than a strong France would oppose Gibraltar, which was under its control. One of the significant reasons for Britain, which could have risked war with France for the integrity of Morocco at the beginning of the century, to change its traditional attitude was to break France's alliance with Russia. The agreement was reciprocal in the sense that France recognized Britain's rights in Egypt. The treaty is crucial in the sense that it eliminated the ongoing colonial conflicts between the two countries. In addition, the balance established against Germany's superiority in Europe was completed with this agreement¹⁶. The agreement guaranteeing French and Spanish claims in Morocco was signed only six months after the Entente Cordiale in October 1904. This agreement confirmed some of the provisions of the Entente Cordiale and divided Morocco into French and Spanish spheres of influence despite its supposed independence¹⁷.

Delcassé's (1852-1923) appointment as foreign minister in 1904 was also crucial in the shift of French expansionist policies towards Morocco. Within the framework of the French foreign policy led by Delcassé, the Sultan of Morocco was forced to accept a comprehensive reform plan for the police force, banks, and the army to be carried out with French technical, financial, and military assistance¹⁸. Although an article in the Newspaper Sun dated June 5, 1904, suggested that the Moroccan ruler should be

¹⁴ Anderson 1930, pp. 1-4.

¹⁵ Bridge and Bullen 2005, p. 98 – 272.

¹⁶ Ülman 1972, p. 153-154; *The Minneapolis Journal*, "France Plans to Annex Morocco", 17.09.1903, p. 1; Massie 1995, p. 293; Keltie 1906, p. 1158.

¹⁷ Cambridge University Press 1912, p. 116-120.

¹⁸ Williamson 1969, p. 30; Presidential Ottoman Archives (BOA), *Y. A. HUS*, 484/30.

pressured via a Muslim government through Egypt or the Ottoman Empire¹⁹ following the Entente Cordiale, France sent a delegation to Morocco and proposed to cooperate, emphasizing the necessity of the progressive reforms it intended to carry out. However, by the time the mission was ready to begin its mission, circumstances in Morocco had turned against France; the Sultan convened a council of notables that would reject the French demands, appointed bureaucrats who were anti-French, and dismissed those who were pro-French, and the locals began aggressive activities against foreigners²⁰.

Before the end of 1904, the political turmoil in Morocco led Western powers to realize that the last independent state on the African continent could no longer maintain law and order²¹. However, the increasing insecurity of foreigners and the Sultan's escalating need for loans marked the end of Morocco's independence. This disorder provided Spain and France, who were concerned that the rebellion might spread to their colonies, the opportunity to intervene²². The necessity to gauge the strength of the Anglo-French alliance and the position it sought to gain in the Islamic world prompted Germany to become involved in the Moroccan Crisis. Germany's policy towards Morocco emphasized an open-door policy and equal trading conditions for all nations, rather than territorial acquisition. In March 1905, the German Emperor visited Tangier and made statements regarding the independence of Morocco and Germany's readiness to provide the necessary assistance in this regard²³.

These discourses were perceived as a challenge to France and marked the beginning of the Crisis. During the implementation phase of the Entente Cordiale, the training of the Moroccan army by French officers, the handover of customs to French inspectors, the French control of Moroccan finances, and the transformation of Morocco into a French vassal state similar to Tunisia, as reported in the French press, were interpreted as undermining German interests in Morocco. Encouraged by Wilhelm II's (1859-1941) speech in Tangier, the Sultan of Morocco refused to hand over the army and customs to France and demanded that the issue be discussed at an international conference²⁴. Thus, while Germany sought to prevent the solidification of the Entente Cordiale, it also demonstrated to France that it could not be ignored in Morocco and, based on the Madrid Conference of 1880, proposed that the Moroccan Question be addressed in an international conference²⁵.

By maintaining an appearance of absolute legality and impartiality, the German government aimed to break the alliances between France and other powers, particularly

¹⁹ *The Sun*, "The Immense Spiritual Power Behind the Sultan", 05.06.1904, p. 7.

²⁰ Anderson 1930, pp. 128–130; *The Times*, "French Aims in Morocco", 20.03.1905, p. 5; *The Times*, "The Powers and Morocco", 13.06.1905, p. 3.

²¹ Massie 1995, p. 293; *The Washington Post*, "Crisis in Morocco", 29.12.1904, p. 1.

²² *The Washington Post*, "Morocco Situation Grave", 24.12.1904, p. 4; Anderson 1930, pp. 1–4; *The Times*, "France and Morocco", 08.09.1905, p. 3.

²³ Williamson 1969 p. 30–32; Ülman 1972, p. 155–156; Anderson 1930, pp. 181–195; *The Manchester Guardian*, "The German View of Morocco", 15.04.1905, p. 7.

²⁴ Armaoğlu 1997, pp. 458–481.

²⁵ Massie 1995, pp. 294–295.

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Britain, or at least to bring the outcomes of existing alliances to the consideration of the United States. However, the United States intended to maintain the balance of power in Europe and reduce the likelihood of a European war by temporarily substituting its influence for Russia's. Consequently, the U.S. interest in the future of Morocco was determined rationally and neutrally by the Monroe Doctrine. Britain, on the other hand, perceived the Tangier incident as a deliberate maneuver to undermine the Anglo-French friendship from the outset. Concerns about the future of the Entente and the possibility of Germany gaining a port in Morocco hardened Britain's stance against Germany's initiative in Morocco²⁶.

It was reported in London that the German ambassador in Istanbul, Baron von Biberstein (1842-1912), urgently advised Sultan Abdulhamid II (1842-1918) upon Emperor William's instructions to arrange a Pan-Islamic alliance with Morocco. Although Abdulhamid II supported this idea, he told the German ambassador that the first step should be taken by Morocco. During Emperor William's visit to Tangier, it was also reported that he contacted the uncle of the Moroccan Sultan and recommended abandoning religious competition with the Ottoman Empire and instead advised unity²⁷. The Tabah Incident (1906), known as the revival of Pan-Islamist fanaticism against Western powers among Muslims in Egypt, Tripoli, and Sudan, and the riots and assassinations against the two Western powers that ruled over Muslims, the British and the French, put these two powers on high alert to strengthen their diplomatic alliance²⁸. The event that ended the first phase of the crisis was the resignation of Foreign Minister Delcassé, who was strongly supported by Britain and was behind the policy of intimidation and anti-Germanism pursued by France over Morocco²⁹. Although Delcassé's resignation was perceived as a success for Germany, it exposed the opposition of Italy and the United States to German imperialist expansion and, together with Russia's offers of cooperation to its Entente partners, led to the de facto end of Weltpolitik and Germany's increasing alienation in Europe³⁰.

In June 1905, the German government sent a circular to the parties of the Madrid Conference of 1880, stating that every state had the right to be treated as the most favored country according to Article 17 of the Conference. The circular also stated that France's actions in Morocco violated the relevant article. After lengthy and contentious negotiations, on July 8, 1905, the two governments agreed on the program of the conference on the conditions that France's legitimate interests in Morocco would not be jeopardized or pursued for any purpose contrary to France's treaty rights, that France's rights arising from the long border between Algeria and Morocco would be recognized, and that reforms in Morocco would be compatible with Morocco's political and

²⁶ Williamson 1969, p. 33 – 37; Anderson 1930, p. 196–200; Pratt 1972, p. 252; *The Sun*, “Spain and Morocco”, 03.01.1903, p. 1.

²⁷ *The Minneapolis Journal*, “Pan-Islamic Union”, 08.04.1905, p. 2.

²⁸ *The Times*, “The Pan-Islamic Agitation”, 20.07.1906, p. 5.

²⁹ Pratt 1972, p. 252.

³⁰ Herwig and Trask 2014, p. 60.

economic independence³¹. The Algeiras Conference began on January 16, 1906, and concluded on April 7, 1906. The outcomes of the conference were determined by the requirements of international relations and the interests of the Western powers rather than the needs of Morocco³². Apart from an agreement on arms trafficking and customs and a declaration on the levying of taxes, the Treaty of Algeiras contains three chapters. The first part is a declaration on the organization of the police force, which will be French in Rabat, Mogador, Safi, and Magazan, Spanish in Tetuan and Larash, and mixed in Casablanca and Tangier. A Moroccan State Bank will be established, which will be the money-issuing institution and treasury of the Sharif Empire, and whose capital will be provided equally among the states represented at the conference. With the declaration of public works and services, the procedures and conditions of public works concessions are determined. During the negotiations, it was agreed that the police force, which had been a source of controversy, would be under the authority of the Sultan and would be chosen by Makhzen from Muslim Moors. Spanish and French officers would support the Sultan in the organization of the police force for five years. The tax called *tertib*, meaning tax reform, would be extended to all subjects with a few exceptions. A multinational committee would determine the value of taxable commodities at Moorish customs. In order to apply the principle of economic freedom equally, the parties to the treaty have declared that public services cannot be transferred in favor of any private interest³³. It was anticipated that the policy practices envisaged within the framework of the provisions stated in the treaty would serve as precedents for the Ottoman Empire and other weakened nations to follow a similar path in the subsequent period³⁴.

According to Germany's calculations, France would be compelled to withdraw from Morocco, reassess the benefits of its alliance with Britain, and ultimately consider aligning with Germany in a continental alliance. Germany's bluff, which avoided the risk of war over Morocco, failed to achieve its intended impact and did not succeed in weakening the Anglo-French alliance. Although this was not an outright defeat, France's economic influence over Morocco remained intact, and Germany's aspirations for a reconfiguration of the existing alliances were not realized³⁵. The repercussions of the First Moroccan Crisis are significant for the functioning of the European state system. The perception that Germany was attempting to establish dominance over the entire state system led to the transformation of the Anglo-French alliance from a non-European arrangement into an explicitly anti-German coalition. The crisis marked a pivotal moment in the transition from the flexible and multipolar nature of the European alliance system, which had obscured the boundaries of international conflicts since the 1890s, to a more simplified yet perilously confrontational and bipolar system³⁶.

³¹ Anderson 1930, p. 234–258; *The Times*, “The Powers and the Morocco Conference”, 01.08.1905, p. 5.

³² Anderson 1930, p. 397–404.

³³ Sagay 1972, p. 39.; Cambridge University Press 1907, p. 47-78; Keltie 1906, p. 1158.

³⁴ *The New York Daily Tribune*, “The Moroccan Treaty”, 28.06.1906, p. 2.

³⁵ Sander 2003, p. 628–632; Feuchtwanger 2001, p. 140-142.

³⁶ Anderson 1930, p. 259–278; Bridge and Bullen 2005, p. 282–286; McDermott 2014, pp. 107-8.

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3. The Second Moroccan Crisis (1911)

The Second Moroccan Crisis, also known as the Agadir Crisis, broke out due to the internal turmoil in Morocco, as in the first crisis. The state of anarchy that Sultan Abdulaziz's (1881-1943) rule had plunged the country into, the Sultan's extravagant spending, the mortgaging of customs revenues, unsatisfactory relations with Western states, Makhzen's absolute inability to maintain order, and the corruption it had fallen into led the people to mobilize and Sultan Abdulaziz was overthrown by his brother Abdulhafiz (1875-1937) as a result of a civil war that bankrupted the state treasury. Since the Treaty of Algeciras was signed by Abdulaziz, Western states, especially France, were hesitant to recognize Abdulhafiz's rule³⁷. Germany, on the other hand, which officially declared that Abdulhafiz, who proclaimed his sultanate in Tangier, should be recognized, refrained from any subsequent intervention as its intervention in the previous crisis had further strengthened the Anglo-French alliance³⁸. While a fugitive incident in the French unit in Morocco in 1908 had the potential to create tension between the two sides, Germany's shift towards the East due to the crisis in the Balkans helped to prevent the escalation of tension. Germany, considering France's presence in Morocco as an inevitable situation, chose to pursue economic privileges in Morocco instead. Germany's moderate attitude in the process resulted in the signing of the Treaty of February 9, 1909. Due to the agreement, Spain's share in the construction of Moroccan railroads was determined as 5%, France's share as 30%, and Germany's share as 35%, 5% of which belonged to Austria-Hungary. Thus, the bilateral relations between France and Germany were partially stabilized in Morocco³⁹. But the détente did not last long. The main problem for Germany was that it could not benefit from commercial concessions. Although the Germans thought that they could overcome the limitations of the Treaty of Algeciras with the cooperation of the French, the French were not willing to cooperate⁴⁰.

In 1909, the attacks on Spanish railroad workers and the subsequent unrest in Melilla led to a resurgence of internal disturbances in Morocco. Spain dispatched a substantial force to the region, and the escalating conflicts culminated in Spain's occupation of the territory extending from Ras Kebdana in the east to Zeluan in the south. Following protracted negotiations, a convention was signed between Morocco and Spain. According to the main provisions of the agreement, the Sultan was to appoint a high commissioner with jurisdiction over the Spanish-occupied territory, who would work in collaboration with the Spanish-appointed high commissioner. Until order was restored, Spanish forces would maintain their presence in the occupied territories. Markets would be established in the territories of neighboring tribes, with market taxes collected under Spanish control. Additionally, Spain would receive a war reparation of

³⁷ Tanin, "Telgraflar", 17.09.1908, p. 3-4; *The Times*, "Coup D'Etat in Morocco", 06.05.1907, p. 5; *The Times*, "The Rival Sultans in Morocco" 20.08.1908, p. 3; *The Florence Bulletin*, "France Threatens to Use Force Against Morocco", 31.08.1905, p. 3.

³⁸ BOA, *Y. PRK. EŞA*, 51/78, 18.01.1908; Tanin, "Devletlerin Nokta-i Nazarı", 26.09.1908, p. 5.

³⁹ Ülman 1972, p. 191; *The Times*, "The Senate Committee and Morocco", 28.12.1911, p. 3.

⁴⁰ Massie 1995, p. 582.

£240,740 for the murder of Spanish miners by rebels, compensated through mining revenues⁴¹. After a brief period of calm, conflicts intensified once again. France and Spain demanded reparations for the damages caused by the civil war resulting from Abdulhafiz's power struggle. When Sultan Abdulhafiz imposed new taxes to meet these compensation demands, Berbers and some tribes, aggrieved by the heavier taxes and increasing foreign influence, revolted against Abdulhafiz. They seized Meknes, besieged Fes, and declared his brother Zeynelabidin as Sultan in place of Abdulhafiz⁴². According to the Treaty of Algeciras, each of the great powers had the right to intervene when the safety of life and property of its citizens was in jeopardy. Consequently, when events spiraled out of control and trade with caravans was interrupted, French troops entered Fez in April-May and occupied the city. In the following June, the Spaniards entered Larache and Qasr and took control⁴³. Germany tacitly supported Spain's military deployment in an effort to bring the Moroccan Question back to the agenda⁴⁴.

During the Algeciras Conference and the eventual treaty, France and Spain sought to safeguard their interests in Morocco and prevent any other power from establishing a political, military, or economic foothold in the region. Although the Treaty established an open-door policy, this arrangement ultimately benefited France and Spain due to their military control in Morocco. Nevertheless, the challenges both countries encountered in reforming Morocco led to confrontations between them, providing Germany with an opportunity to intervene⁴⁵. Despite the Treaty of February 9, 1909, the German government dispatched the cruiser Panther to Agadir, ostensibly citing unrest between German companies and local tribes in southern Morocco, particularly in Agadir, in July 1911. In this context, Germany's intervention was portrayed as the protection of commercial interests, even though it had political implications. The German government anticipated that Russia would be unable to provide adequate support for a French colony in Africa, while Britain became increasingly uneasy with Germany's wait-and-see policy. This unease stemmed from two primary concerns. First, Germany's acquisition of a naval station on the Atlantic coast of Morocco could threaten Britain's sea routes to South Africa and the Cape of Good Hope. Second, Germany's attempt to humiliate France by dividing Morocco or seizing a share of another French colony, as it had done at Algeciras, could severely damage Britain's alliance with France. Additionally, there was a fear that a French retreat would perpetuate German hegemony in continental Europe⁴⁶.

⁴¹ Keltie 1911, p. 1023-1024.

⁴² Keltie 1912, p. 1038; Türkiye Diyanet Vakfı 1988, p. 206-207.

⁴³ Keltie 1912, 1038; Massie 1995, p. 582; FO, Diplomatic and Consular Reports No. 5006 1912, p. 5.

⁴⁴ *Tanin*, "Paris Muhabir-i Mahsusumuzdan", 25.10.1909, p. 2.

⁴⁵ Anderson 1930, p. 397-404; *Tanin*, "Fas ve İran", 19.07.1910, p. 1; *The Times*, "France and Spain in Morocco", 25.03.1911, p. 3.

⁴⁶ Feuchtwanger 2001, p. 156-158; Armaoğlu 1997, p. 458-481; Massie 1995, p. 583-591; *The Times*, "German Action in Morocco", 03.07.1911, p. 8.

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Fearing a partial occupation of Morocco, France and Germany commenced negotiations regarding concessions; in exchange for Morocco, Germany demanded the complete cession of the French Congo due to disputes between its colony, Cameroon, and the French Congo. Both parties were under pressure from nationalist public opinion during the negotiation process. In essence, Morocco became a political barometer between these two states. The prolonged and at times contentious negotiation process culminated in the crisis known as Black Monday at the Berlin Stock Exchange in Germany on September 2, 1911⁴⁷. Following three months of negotiations between France and Germany, Germany acquiesced to France's establishment of a de facto protectorate regime over Morocco⁴⁸. This agreement, known as the Treaty of Morocco, is an expanded version of the Franco-German Treaty of February 1909. Through this treaty, Germany reiterated that its interests in Morocco were purely economic and that it would not oppose France's military, financial, and administrative actions regarding the reforms it planned to implement in Morocco⁴⁹. In return, Germany secured extensive guarantees of absolute equality with France in economic and commercial matters in Morocco, as well as the transfer of a 160,000 km² area in the French Congo to itself. Germany also ceded a small piece of land from its colony, Cameroon, to France in exchange for territorial gains in the Congo⁵⁰.

In April 1912, another treaty was signed between France and the Sultan of Morocco, delineating the Sultan's future position and Morocco's relations with France, thereby formalizing the French protectorate over Morocco. Fez was declared the capital of the Moroccan Protectorate in July 1913. Negotiations concerning the rights of France and Spain in Morocco were concluded with the Treaty of Madrid, signed on November 27, 1912. Tangier and its surrounding area of approximately 360 km² were designated as a special international zone⁵¹.

The Second Moroccan Crisis marked a significant turning point in the relations between Germany, Britain, and France. By rekindling British concerns about a German threat to French independence, the crisis strengthened the Anglo-French entente in several ways. Britain, as usual, was willing to negotiate agreements with France and Russia but remained indifferent to Germany's political agreement demands, which effectively implied a non-aggression pact. The absolute and relative rise of German industry and trade led Britain to continue perceiving Germany as a threat to its prosperity. A wave of anger against German aggression swept across France, hardening French attitudes towards all international issues⁵². The German gains in the final

⁴⁷ Armaoğlu 1997, p. 458–481; Massie 1995, p. 583–591; *Tanin*, “Siyaset-i Hariciye”, 08.09.1908, p. 6; *The Times*, “The Negotiation Between France and Spain”, 14.11.1911, p. 5; *The Times*, “The Negotiation Between France and Spain”, 16.11.1911, p. 5.

⁴⁸ Armaoğlu 1997, p. 458–481.

⁴⁹ *The Times*, “The Franco-German Treaties”, 04.11.1911, p. 3.

⁵⁰ Keltie 1912, p. 1038; Ülman 1972, p. 192; *The Times*, “Franco-German Agreement Concluded”, 03.11.1911, p. 8.

⁵¹ Keltie 1914, p. 5; *The Times*, “The Franco-German Treaties”, 30.10.1911, p. 5.

⁵² Bridge and Bullen 2005, p. 303–305; Armaoğlu 1997, p. 458–481.

agreement of November 1911 were disappointing. Despite its grand display of power, Germany relinquished all its claims to Morocco, and its sole gain was the transfer of an insignificant piece of land from the French Congo to the German colony of Cameroon. It failed to secure a base in the Atlantic or to expel the French from Fez⁵³. This outcome led to a reevaluation of the efficacy of Weltpolitik and Flottenpolitik, fostering the belief that Germany could only achieve its objectives through a general war⁵⁴. Even more concerning was the shift in Germany's priorities away from African issues towards focusing on imperialist concerns in more volatile regions, encompassing the Ottoman Empire as a whole and the Balkan states, through which the communication line from Berlin to Baghdad passes⁵⁵.

A remarkable observation emerges from both crises: Germany, having belatedly achieved political unification and thus delayed its entry into the colonial race, failed to weaken the alliance bonds from which it had been excluded. Throughout this period, Germany consistently sought to undermine the confidence of Britain, France, and later, Russia, in order to reduce the risk of encirclement from both east and west by land and sea. However, Germany's often over-ambitious and unrealistic actions not only failed to weaken the Franco-British alliance but actually served to strengthen it. This led to the gradual expansion of the alliance bloc to include Russia and Italy. As a result, Germany emerged from the process with no tangible gains. Given the military and economic weaknesses of its supporting allies, especially the declining Austro-Hungarian Empire, Germany was forced to rely as much as possible on the artificial bulwarks it had built up in the Islamic world through its association with the Ottoman Empire.

4. The Policies Followed by the Ottoman Empire During the Crises

The relations between the Ottoman Empire and the Moroccan Sultanate began in the 16th century, during the reign of Sultan Suleyman (1494-1566), following the conquest of Algeria. Although the Ottoman rule over all of North Africa, except Morocco, exerted significant pressure on Morocco, this pressure diminished during the stagnation period. With the rise of the Sharif dynasties in Morocco, the Moroccan sultans avoided official relations with the Ottomans in Algeria and Tunisia for an extended period. The primary reason for this was that the Moroccan sultans, at least theoretically, considered themselves the true heirs of the Islamic caliphs, claiming descent from the Prophet's family. Conversely, the Ottoman sultans, who claimed the caliphate by virtue of their possession of the holy relics and the Hejaz, did not meet this condition because they were Turks. Border disputes between Algeria and Morocco and conflicts involving Moroccan and Ottoman-protected merchant ships in the Mediterranean further strained relations between the two countries⁵⁶.

Western powers generally aimed to prevent the establishment of closer ties between the Ottoman Empire and Morocco. However, the acceleration of colonial

⁵³ Feuchtwanger 2001, p. 156–158; Massie 1995, p. 583–591.

⁵⁴ Bartlett 1996, p. 121–159.

⁵⁵ Bridge and Bullen 2005, p. 306–310.

⁵⁶ Burke 1972, p. 101; Ceran 2013, pp. 440, 779; Uzunçarşılı 2016, p. 166.

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activities by Western powers highlighted the necessity of improving relations between the two states. Particularly during the reign of Sultan Abdulhamid II, considerable importance was placed on developing political relations with Morocco, alongside other Islamic countries. Before 1902, the Ottomans sought to establish contact with Morocco to create a strategic counterbalance to Western powers' interests in their territories, but Makhzen, wary of entanglement in the Eastern Question, declined this overture. Nevertheless, the closeness of relations between the two countries at the beginning of the 20th century is evidenced by the donation of 184,600 francs (876,851 kurus 5 para) provided by the Emir of Morocco for the construction of the Hejaz Railway. During the Second Constitutional Era, relations between the two states concentrated more on a military dimension⁵⁷. Following the Young Turk Revolution, the Committee of Union and Progress's continuation of Abdulhamid II's policy of Islamic unity and the reforms implemented thereafter were closely monitored by Moroccan elites, leading to a rapprochement between the Ottoman Empire and Morocco⁵⁸.

The reason that heightened the Ottoman Empire's vigilance during the Moroccan Crises was the differing approaches of Western countries towards Morocco in the pre-crisis period. In this regard, the report submitted to the Mabeyn-i Humayun on January 7, 1903, by Tevfik Pasha (1843-1936), Attaché of Brussels, is of great significance. The report evaluates the measures taken by Western powers and their military forces in the region during the rebellion led by Sheikh Bukhara in 1903 against the reforms implemented by Moulay Abdulaziz in Morocco with the assistance of British, Italian, and French advisers. Due to the potential spread and amplification of the revolt, the British relocated some of their forces from Malta to Gibraltar, preparing to deploy them to Tangier. The French transferred troops from southern and eastern Algeria to the Moroccan border to prevent the rebellion from spreading to Algeria and to avert British intervention from limiting France's sphere of influence. Spain, which held Melilla and Ceuta on the northern coast of Morocco, increased its troops at these points to seven thousand and organized a fleet in Cadiz Port. Italy, encouraged by the deteriorating position of the Ottoman Empire in Macedonia and Albania, perceived the spread of the rebellion as an opportunity to occupy Tripoli and began dispatching troops. Consequently, the turmoil in Morocco, and the ensuing struggle for intervention and partition, rendered the Maghreb issue intolerable for the Ottoman Empire, particularly in terms of territorial integrity⁵⁹.

It can be stated that Germany's political and economic influence in the Ottoman Empire was more pronounced prior to World War I. This influence also manifested itself during the Moroccan Crises and was acknowledged by the foreign press. In fact, the Times, on July 19, 1906, stated that without the approval or advice of German Emperor Wilhelm, it seemed impossible for Abdulhamid II to take any initiative regarding the Moroccan Question. This indicates a relationship of mutual interest. The

⁵⁷ Yeşilmen 2018, p. 113–114; Burke 1972, p. 102; BOA, *BEO*. 1990/149199, 02.02.1903; BOA, *BEO*. 1993/149432, 07.02.1903.

⁵⁸ Bilge 1992, p. 59; Burke 1972, p. 109–111.

⁵⁹ BOA, *Y. MTV*, 238/28, 07.01.1903

maintenance of the political status quo in the Ottoman Empire was crucial for Germany's interests, particularly concerning the Baghdad Railroad⁶⁰. However, Germany did not consent to the Ottoman Empire's request to participate in the Algeciras Conference since it had not taken part in the Madrid Conference of 1880. In the West, this request was interpreted as Sultan Abdulhamid's desire to revive the Tripoli and Cyrenaica Question. In the event that the Second Moroccan Crisis led to the renewal of the Algeciras Conference, the Ottoman Empire considered participating to re-establish its influence in the Maghreb and preserve its rights in the region, but the crisis concluded with the signing of a new treaty between Germany and France⁶¹. Although the Ottoman Empire could not be involved in the negotiations for the resolution of the Second Moroccan Crisis, Germany ensured that the issue of the Balkans did not interfere in the negotiations, thus preventing any concessions detrimental to the Ottoman Empire⁶². The verbal notification of the Treaty of 1911, which ended the Second Moroccan Crisis, to the Ottoman Empire by Germany created disappointment within the Ottoman government; the government left the notification unanswered, considering it inappropriate to ratify a treaty that compromised the independence of Morocco⁶³.

The factors determining the position of the Ottoman Empire during the Moroccan Crises and the policies pursued during the process can be analyzed in four points: the impact of the rivalry between Germany and France over Morocco on the Ottoman Empire, the preservation of the Ottoman Empire's sovereign rights in North Africa, the influence of Pan-Islamist policies pursued by the Ottoman Empire in cooperation with Germany in the region, and the status of Ottoman subjects in the region along with issues of patronage and subordination. These elements are intertwined at various points, most evidently in Tripoli, the last Ottoman territory in North Africa. As can be evaluated in the first article, the significant issues that influenced France's Ottoman policy during the Moroccan Crises included the Ottoman railroad concessions, the prominent role of the French in the Ottoman Public Debt Administration, the diplomatic advantage provided to France by the Entente Cordiale, and the role of France in the reforms to be carried out in Macedonia⁶⁴. France, which sought to establish a protectorate over Morocco, signed several agreements to eliminate the states it viewed as rivals. The most decisive of these was the Entente Cordiale signed with Britain, but a treaty was also signed with Italy in 1900. In summary, the treaty stated that Italy's actions in Tripoli would not be interfered with in return for not opposing France's attempts to secure the western border of Algeria. Italy then obtained Britain's conditional consent to settle in Tripoli with the treaty it signed in 1902. Although the

⁶⁰ *The Times*, "The Pan-Islamic Agitation", 19.07.1906, p. 5; *The Times*, "Morocco and the Baghdad Railway", 09.04.1907, p. 8.

⁶¹ BOA, *Y. PRK. TŞF*, 7/119, 10.02.1906; BOA, *HR. SYS*, 404/36, 23.08.1911; p. 8; *The Times*, "The Powers and Morocco", 13.06.1905, p. 3.

⁶² *Sabah*, "Türkiye ve Fas Meselesi", 11.07.1911, p. 2.

⁶³ BOA, *BEO*, 3965/297303, 06.12.1911; BOA, *BEO*, 4025/301825, 08.04.1912.

⁶⁴ Kent 1996, p. 145.

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Ottoman Empire attempted to cooperate with France against the bilateral agreements made by Italy within the framework of its ambitions in Tripoli, these efforts were unsuccessful⁶⁵.

Reports from Ottoman commanders in the region as early as 1904 indicated that Italy, encouraged by the Entente Cordiale, was intensifying its activities in Tripolitania⁶⁶. Italy, which established close relations with Britain and France to protect its interests in the Mediterranean and with Germany to maintain its interests in continental Europe, perceived sending delegates to the Algeciras Conference as a means to impose its ambitions for Tripoli on Western states. However, the issue was resolved when the Italian Foreign Minister clarified that the conference program was devoted exclusively to Morocco's stability and none of the participants intended to raise unrelated issues⁶⁷. Shortly before the resolution of the Second Moroccan Crisis, Italy's actions towards Tripoli again aroused suspicion in the Ottoman government. Consequently, Rıfat Pasha (1862-1925), the Minister of Foreign Affairs, wrote to the embassies in Paris, London, Vienna, Berlin, and St. Petersburg, requesting an investigation into Italy's activities in European countries⁶⁸. During a meeting with the German Minister of Foreign Affairs, Kiderlin (1852-1912), Berlin's ambassador Osman Nizami Pasha (1856-1939) was informed that Italy had aligned with France in pursuing their ambitions in Tripolitania during the Algeciras Conference. Kiderlin also mentioned that there was an expectation in the Italian public regarding Tripolitania, and due to inconsistencies in their foreign policies, it was difficult to predict what kind of policy they would pursue. The views of Galip Bey (1849-1919), Charge d'Affaires in Athens, who was in France, were consistent with those of Osman Nizami Pasha. According to Galip Bey, Austria, which intended to seize Bosnia-Herzegovina, would not oppose Italy's possible invasion of Tripoli, and Russia, which aimed to extend the disintegration process to other parts of the Ottoman Empire, would remain silent. At this point, only the support of France, which preferred to be neighbors with the Ottoman Empire rather than Italy in Africa, and Britain, which favored the status quo in the East, could be obtained. Another development that aroused suspicion within the Ottoman government during the process was the leaking to the press by the Italian Telegraph Company of a concession to Italy during the negotiations between France and Germany over Morocco. In response to the Ottoman government's request for information, the German Foreign Office replied that there was no question of any concession to Italy or any other state⁶⁹.

Another factor that shaped France's policies towards the Ottoman Empire during the Moroccan Crises was the disruption of French initiatives aimed at establishing absolute influence over Morocco due to German intervention. This intervention led to

⁶⁵ Çaycı 1970, p. 119–123; Cezar 1972, p. 3468–3469.

⁶⁶ BOA, *Y. A. HUS*, 485/94, 05.04.1904; BOA, *BEO*, 2320/173997, 27.04.1904.

⁶⁷ BOA, *Y. A. HUS*, 499/56, 06.02.1906.

⁶⁸ BOA, *HR. SYS*, 1549/5, 15.08.1911.

⁶⁹ BOA, *HR. SYS*, 1548/38, 20.08.1911; BOA, *HR. SYS*, 1548/54, 02.08.1911; BOA, *HR. SYS*, 1549/5, 15.08.1911.

the issue being opened for negotiation at an international conference, while Germany secured the Baghdad Railway concession. Consequently, this situation prompted France to adopt a more stringent policy towards the Ottoman Empire. In February 1906, France decided to hold the Ottoman Empire accountable for the damages it had incurred in Morocco, as communicated to the Ottoman government by the Ambassador of Paris with an important note⁷⁰. For Germany, which had multidimensional economic, military, and political interests in the Ottoman Empire, the Baghdad railways were envisioned as an extension of the Central European economic bloc under German patronage, raising hopes that Germany would secure a significant sphere of influence extending to the Persian Gulf following the collapse of the Ottoman Empire⁷¹. In addition to this threat, the reforms carried out in Macedonia and the capture by a Turkish garrison of the town of Bilma, one of the most important points of the Kawar Oasis located on the caravan route between Lake Chad and Tripolitania in the Central Sahara, severing the connection between Niger and the French territories on the eastern shore of Lake Chad, led the French government to reconsider its policy towards the Ottoman Empire. Relying on its controlling power over the Ottoman money markets, France abandoned the laissez-faire policy previously adopted and put forward new conditions regulating the Ottoman government's access to the money markets, so the Ottomans could meet their financial needs in consultation with French investors⁷². One of these conditions was the appointment of a foreign control officer to the Court of Exchequer (Divan-ı Muhasebat) with France's consent required for such appointments. When the Ottoman government refused to accept this condition, the French press stated that the Ottoman government would eventually become dependent on them. In response to this attitude of France, Tanin, an influential newspaper of the period, argued that the Franco-German rivalry over Morocco was influential in France's negative attitude towards the Ottomans, but that France should understand that the Ottoman Empire would not become a second Morocco⁷³.

Apart from Tripoli, another region where the Ottoman Empire attempted to protect its sovereign rights after the signing of the Entente Cordiale was Egypt, which, at least formally, belonged to the Ottoman Empire. Immediately after the signing of the treaty, a meeting on the subject was organized at the Assembly of Ministers with the participation of the Grand Vizier and Sheikhulislam. In the text of the memorandum, which was discussed in the Assembly and subsequently resolved and telegraphed to the Ottoman ambassadors in England and France, it was stated that the Ottoman Empire had been assured of the protection of the sovereign rights of the Ottoman Sultan over Egypt during the temporary British occupation of Egypt, that England had extended its occupation of Egypt for an indefinite period, and that while the Ottoman Empire had been informed about the debts incurred by the khedives of Egypt, no application had been made during the signing of a treaty of alliance between England and France. Here,

⁷⁰ BOA, Y. PRK. EŞA, 49/2, 28.02.1906.

⁷¹ Feuchtwanger 2001, p. 170–174.

⁷² Kent 1996, p. 147; *The New York Times*, “A Turkish Move in Africa”, 12.04.1902, p. 9.

⁷³ *Tanin*, “Siyasiyat”, 29.10.1910, p. 1.

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the Ottoman government's demand for guarantees stemmed from the fact that it still considered Egypt a part of the state⁷⁴. In response to the Ottoman State's request for clarification, the British and French foreign ministries stated that the agreement did not violate the sovereignty law of the Ottoman Empire, did not demand any change in the political status quo of Egypt, and did not contain any article that nullified the Ottoman edicts; therefore, there was no reason to notify the Ottoman government in advance⁷⁵. Nevertheless, the Ottoman Empire sent a letter to its ambassadors in both states, instructing them to avoid any attempts to change the Ottoman sovereignty over Egypt⁷⁶.

Another element linking the Moroccan Crises with the policies pursued by the Ottoman Empire is the intensive implementation of Pan-Islamist policies initiated by Sultan Abdulhamid II and continued by the Committee of Union and Progress following the Second Constitutional Monarchy. With the support of Germany, these policies posed a threat to French and circuitously British interests in the region. Even before the signing of the Entente Cordiale, the foreign press frequently mentioned certain movements in the region. In February 1903, the Times reported a movement in favor of the Ottoman Empire among Muslims in Morocco and North Africa. Similarly, in October of the same year, the Times noted that the German Emperor had advised Sultan Abdulhamid II to take initiatives to increase his influence in Morocco as the Caliph of the Islamic world, although the Sultan did not heed this advice⁷⁷. By 1905, Germany, leveraging the Ottoman Empire's influence on the Islamic world, intensified its efforts to disrupt the alliance between Britain and France over the Moroccan Question and to consolidate its interests in the region. A crucial development in this regard was the letter incident. German Emperor Wilhelm requested Sultan Abdulhamid to write a letter to the Emir of Morocco, emphasizing that the Emperor was the sole friend of the Islamic world. This letter, to be written in Arabic and kept completely confidential, would provide some advice to the Emir of Morocco and convey Germany's friendship to the Moroccan people. The advisory letter, which also included issues to be negotiated at the Algeiras Conference, would state that Germany supports the preservation of the status quo in both Morocco and Islamic countries bordering the Mediterranean. It would emphasize the importance of not entrusting the police force and banking reforms to a single state, thus preventing Morocco from falling under the influence of a single nation. After the incident was published in the Journal d'Italia newspaper, the Italian government, through the Ottoman ambassador in Rome, requested an explanation from the Ottoman government. In response to the accusations made by the European press, the Ottoman government issued a retraction and announced that it had launched an investigation. The government also stated that the alleged letter was a fabrication under the circumstances of the time and would not be in the interests of the Emir of Morocco⁷⁸.

⁷⁴ BOA, *Y. A. RES*, 125/76, 17.04.1904; BOA, *Y. MRZ. d*, 12206, 20.04.1904.

⁷⁵ BOA, *Y. A. HUS*, 471/121, 29.04.1904.

⁷⁶ BOA, *BEO*, 2491/186807, 25.01.1905.

⁷⁷ BOA, *Y. A. HUS*, 442/71, 22.02.1903; BOA, *HR. SYS*, 2870/47, 05.10.1903.

⁷⁸ BOA, *Y. PRK. TŞF*, 7/119, 10.02.1906; BOA, *Y. A. HUS*, 500/99, 24.03.1905; BOA, *İ. HUS*, 139/58, 16.03. 1906; BOA, *BEO*, 2782/208629, 17.03.1906.

In its issue dated May 24, 1905, the Russian *Novoye Vremya* Newspaper stated that Britain was so preoccupied with Japan that it overlooked German policy, and that the German Emperor had gained significant reputation in the Islamic world after his visit to Jerusalem. The newspaper noted that with his stance on the Moroccan Question, he was not only trying to protect German citizens in Morocco but also to maintain this reputation. According to the newspaper, Germany's diplomatic initiatives through the Ottoman Empire and Morocco caused the 60 million Indian Muslims to glorify the Ottoman-Moroccan cooperation⁷⁹. As a matter of fact, Germany's efforts bore fruit, and especially after the Algeciras Conference, revolts and assassinations against Britain and France began to manifest, particularly in North Africa. There was also the potential for some tribes in Morocco to rise on religious grounds and launch a jihad against France and Britain. This situation was also mentioned by anti-Ottoman groups during the Algeciras Conference. According to Britain and France, the incitement of the people in the region by the Ottoman Empire within the framework of Pan-Islamist policies and the German Emperor's visit to Tangier and declaration of support for the Muslims were pivotal in these events. They argued that the tensions in Egypt, which was the intersection point of Eastern and Western Muslims, were indicative of this influence. The Denshawai Incident, a turning point in British dominance over Egypt that resulted in the execution of many Islamic scholars, also stemmed from the provocations caused by this policy. Similarly, the events known as the Tabah Incident on a larger scale led to the revival of Muslim fanaticism in Egypt, Tripoli, and Sudan, posing a serious threat to British and French interests. Over time, with the influence of German agents present in the region for exploratory purposes, this threat began to spread to West Africa⁸⁰.

France and Britain initiated an investigation to determine the religious authority in the region to prevent any rebellion and jihad activities against them in Morocco. The investigation revealed that in most of the mosques in the region, khutbahs were read in the name of the Ottoman Sultan and some in the name of the Emir of Morocco. The fact that the Emir of Morocco is a descendant of the Prophet allows him to be recognized by the sheikhs and sheriffs in the region as having the right to declare jihad. However, in the case of the rebellion of the Beni-Znaten tribe, it was revealed that the Ottoman Empire encouraged Muslim committees in the region to counteract the growing Western influence in the Province of Rumelia. Additionally, a German citizen based in Cairo conveyed Germany's support against France and Britain through an Arabic letter sent to the Emir of Morocco, indicating Germany's attempts to incite Muslims against its rivals⁸¹. Another measure taken by the Western powers was the renewal of the Brussels Convention to prohibit the arms trade, which was also discussed at the Algeciras Conference and had previously been the subject of the Brussels Convention of 1890. The convention focused on the slave trade and the prohibition of the arms trade in the region between 20 degrees North and 22 degrees South latitudes. However, the convention was deemed ineffective, and its renewal was demanded, particularly by

⁷⁹ BOA, *Y. PRK. EŞA*, 47/68, 24.05.1905.

⁸⁰ *The Times*, "The Pan-Islamic Agitation", 20.07.1906; BOA, *Y. PRK. AZI*, 51/22, 24.05.1905.

⁸¹ BOA, *Y. A. HUS*, 517/142, 13.01.1908; BOA, *HR. SYS*, 399/46, 19.12.1907.

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Britain. The states party to the treaty decided to take measures to restrict the export, stockpiling, manufacturing, and transportation of explosive weapons and ammunition. Additionally, unless granted exceptions, the parties agreed to refrain from providing arms to the indigenous population. The purchase and sale of weapons in designated areas would be monitored by an international institution. While the prohibited zone for arms trade extended to the Red Sea, the Arabian Sea, and the Persian Gulf, an exception was made for Morocco, Algeria, and Tunisia, which were French colonies and subject to colonization attempts by France. In response, the Ottoman Empire requested that Tripoli and Benghazi be exempted, but this request was not accepted⁸².

Following the 1908 Revolution, the Young Turks sought to strengthen their influence over the Islamic world in general and Morocco in particular by continuing the pan-Islamist propaganda policies pursued during the reign of Abdulhamid II. As the initial enthusiasm for the revolution waned and the Young Turk regime faced domestic difficulties, its eagerness to support the resistance in Morocco diminished. However, relations between the Ottoman Empire and Morocco became closer after anti-colonial nationalism replaced Pan-Islamism⁸³. Under the patronage of Enver Pasha (1881-1922) and with German financial support, assistance for the Muslim resistance continued through unofficial channels. This effort aimed not only to bolster the Ottoman Empire against the divisive forces of nationalism but also to create turmoil for the British and French empires by inciting unrest among Muslims⁸⁴. At the beginning of the 20th century, Morocco, facing the direct threat of France and Spain, established contact with the Ottoman Empire through Egypt. A secret society organized in Egypt, aiming to prevent the invasion of Morocco by France, sought to propagate the idea of Ottoman-Islamic unity with German support. Similarly, the Ottoman War Fund, administered from Istanbul and supported by the Germans, played a significant role in organizing resistance movements against the Western powers, especially the French, in Morocco⁸⁵.

In 1908, after Abdulhafiz overthrew his brother Abdulaziz and ascended to the throne, efforts were made to break Morocco's diplomatic isolation. In 1909, intermediaries attempted to request qualified Muslim military instructors from the Committee of Union and Progress (CUP) government to modernize the Moroccan Army and reduce Morocco's dependence on the French military mission. The Moroccan government envisioned this request as the beginning of diplomatic relations with the Ottoman government. This request was accepted, and in 1909, a 12-member military delegation consisting of former officers of the Egyptian and Ottoman armies was sent to Morocco. These soldiers were enrolled by Makhzen as commanders of military units and dispatched to tribes in the north of the country⁸⁶. However, the arrival of the Ottoman military delegation in Morocco became the subject of a new dispute involving the rights of Ottoman subjects in the region. Previously, Germany had suggested the

⁸² BOA, *HR. HMŞ. İŞO*, 44/29, 9.03.1909.

⁸³ Karpát 2005, p. 497.

⁸⁴ Burke 1972, p. 109–111.

⁸⁵ Bilge 1992, p. 59; Burke 1972, p. 109–111.

⁸⁶ Burke 1972, p. 109–111; Karpát 2005, p. 497.

employment of Arabic-speaking soldiers from a third country in Morocco through the Ottoman Empire. The issue of whether or not Ottoman troops were officially sent to Morocco necessitated an investigation by the Ottoman authorities⁸⁷. Abdulhafiz initially denied summoning Ottoman officers, whom he had brought to Morocco through an officer in Istanbul, for employment in the army; he later declared that the employment of Ottoman officers would not impact the military situation of France in Morocco⁸⁸. Since this practice by the Moroccan Sultan was seen as a violation of the military service treaties between France and Morocco, the French government began to pressure both Morocco and the Ottoman government to recall the officers⁸⁹.

As a result of the investigations carried out by the Ottoman government, it was stated that no officers were sent to Morocco officially and that the government had no information about the officers who went to the region on their own⁹⁰. Later, it was claimed that the Ottoman officers who went to Morocco were students of the Mekteb-i Harbiye who had failed the officer exam and deserted to Morocco⁹¹. When the Sultan of Morocco hesitated to recall the officers, the French gave the Sultan a 48-hour deadline for the return of the Ottoman soldiers and applied pressure, particularly regarding loans⁹². Unable to withstand French pressure, the Sultan was compelled to recall the Ottoman officers. However, some of these officers returned to Morocco in 1912 and played an influential role in the resistance movement against the French occupation. Similarly, many Moroccans studying in Egypt joined Pan-Islamist organizations and participated in the anti-colonial movement⁹³.

The final issue that shaped the position and policies of the Ottoman Empire during the Moroccan Crises was the protection of the rights of Ottoman subjects in the region and issues of nationality. This concern was closely related to the Pan-Islamist policies pursued by the Ottoman Empire in the region with the support of Germany, as well as the involvement of Ottoman officers serving in Morocco. During the Second Moroccan Crisis, the intensification of Ottoman and German propaganda aimed at mobilizing resistance against the French occupation became a source of concern for the Entente Powers. The Ottoman Empire's involvement in anti-French activities in Morocco elicited a reaction from France, which endeavored to expel all Ottoman subjects serving in Morocco from the country⁹⁴. A fundamental issue that exacerbated the problems for Ottoman subjects in the region was the absence of Ottoman

⁸⁷ BOA, *Y. PRK. TŞF*, 7/119, 10.02.1906.

⁸⁸ *Sabah*, "Fas'ta Osmanlı Zabitleri", 05.03.1910, p. 3; *Sabah*, "Türk Zabitani ve Fas Ordusu", 14.12.1909, p. 3.

⁸⁹ *Sabah*, "Türk Zabitani ve Fas Ordusu", 14.12.1909, p. 3; Burke 1972, p. 109–111.

⁹⁰ BOA, *HR. SYS*, 404/28, 10.02.1910; BOA, *HR. SFR.3*, 609/22, 03.02.1910; BOA, *HR. SFR.4*, 843/63, 03.02.1910.

⁹¹ *Sabah*, "Fas'da Osmanlı Zabitleri", 05.01.1910, p. 3.

⁹² *The Times*, "Mulai Hafid and the French", 01.03.1910, p. 5; *Sabah*, "Fas'da Osmanlı Zabitleri", 27.07.1910, p. 3.

⁹³ Karpas 2005, p. 497.

⁹⁴ Yeşilmen 2018, p. 124.

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representation in Morocco, even at the consulate level. The situation of Ahmed bin Abdullah, an Ottoman citizen from Aleppo engaged in trade in Morocco, provides significant insight into the condition of Ottoman citizens and Ottoman-Moroccan relations following the overthrow of Sultan Abdulaziz and his replacement by Abdulhafiz. In his petition to the Ottoman Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Ahmed stated that there were more than two thousand Ottoman subjects engaged in trade and similar activities in Morocco. He emphasized the necessity of protecting the rights of Ottoman subjects in the chaotic environment following the Algeciras Conference and highlighted that, despite the presence of ambassadors and consuls from Western states in the region, the Ottoman Empire, as an Islamic state, did not even have a representative at the level of a consul in Morocco. According to Ahmed's statements, while traveling from Marrakech to Sevan in 1906 with a caravan of 40 camels, he was attacked by bandits, and his merchandise was looted. Unable to continue his activities for two trading periods due to his lack of capital, Ahmed's losses amounted to 40 thousand francs. When he did not receive a response from the Moroccan government regarding compensation for his losses, he initially sought help from Germany and then from Britain through the Ottoman government, but these efforts were unavailing⁹⁵.

Another factor that brought up the issue of protecting Ottoman subjects in the region was France's attempt to expand its influence in Morocco in the area of public order. Tahir, one of the Ottoman officers who had previously served in Morocco and was later dismissed due to French pressure, sought to go to Tangier, a city open to trade by the decisions taken at the Algeciras Conference, to publish a newspaper and attend the opening of a school after his dismissal. However, upon his arrival in Tangier, he was taken to Oran in Algeria and imprisoned following the intervention of the French Embassy. Tahir, who later crossed to Spain with the support of the British consul, wrote a letter of protest claiming that he was prevented from trading in an area open to trade and imprisoned without cause. He demanded protection and compensation from the Ottoman government. In response to Tahir's demands, the Ottoman government, emphasizing the necessity of preserving Ottoman law in Morocco, requested the Ministry of Foreign Affairs to have the matter investigated by a friendly country with an embassy in the region and to protect Tahir based on the information obtained from the investigation⁹⁶. The investigation concluded that the French embassy's intervention against Tahir was justified by the possibility of him establishing an association and leading an anti-French group after the end of his military duty⁹⁷. Eventually, the Ottoman government considered it appropriate to demand the support of a third state in response to the demands of Ottoman subjects residing in Morocco for the establishment of a consulship and the increasing issues regarding their protection. Therefore, the Ottoman government deemed it appropriate to provide the Ottoman subjects in Morocco with protection, even temporarily, by the representatives of a foreign power. The Ottoman government thought that Britain would be more suitable for this patronage,

⁹⁵ BOA, *HR. H*, 500/7, 13.06.1911; BOA, *HR. TH*, 381/31, 11.09.1911.

⁹⁶ BOA, *HR. SYS*, 404/35, 16.08.1911, pp. 1, 4, 16.

⁹⁷ BOA, *HR. SYS*, 404/35, 16.08.1911, p. 5.

considering the exceptional position of Morocco in the current political situation⁹⁸. The British Foreign Office accepted this request but responded that since the Ottoman Empire was not a party to the Madrid Convention of 1880, the extent of British protection would be limited⁹⁹.

As the imperialist struggle in North Africa intensified, the Moroccan Crises became an issue of nationality for the Ottoman Empire, as the number of people from the region seeking to switch to Ottoman nationality increased. This issue manifested mostly after the end of the Second Moroccan Crisis. It can be stated that there was a demographic movement from Morocco to the Ottoman Empire's territories in North Africa. This is evidenced by the concentration of nationality demands in Tripoli and Benghazi. Due to the increasing demands, the mutasarrif of Benghazi sought an opinion in a letter to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. The response stated that Morocco was an independent government and had never been under Ottoman sovereignty, and that the Ottoman Empire had no claims in this regard. It further stated that, according to international law principles, Moroccans should be considered as foreign nationals. Therefore, those from Morocco seeking Ottoman nationality and registration should be treated according to the Citizenship Law, and if they came as muhajir, they should be treated according to the provisions of the relevant law¹⁰⁰.

Following the 1913 agreement between Spain and France, which divided Morocco into zones of influence between the two states, changes occurred in the treatment of those seeking to move from Morocco to Ottoman territory and nationality. To prevent diplomatic claims, the 22nd and 23rd articles of the treaty, controversial for the Ottoman Empire, stated that complaints made by nationals of third countries against Moroccan officials or individuals acting on their behalf would be resolved by the consul of Spain and France or the consul of the respective state. If these consuls were not present, the issue would be referred to the government determined by both parties. The discourse of preventing diplomatic claims seems to have been added to prevent Ottoman and possibly German intervention¹⁰¹. The Ottoman Empire, by not recognizing the relevant provisions, refused to accept that Moroccans in their territory would be under the protection of the Spanish embassy and consulates, deciding instead to apply the general legal principles of European states for the Moroccan population. After the outbreak of World War I, as the Ottoman Empire and France were on opposite fronts, all contracts and treaties between them and the rights arising from capitulations were deemed invalid. In this context, since Morocco was still considered a sovereign state, Moroccans in the Ottoman Empire were subject to the general legal principles of European states, but as they were under the protection of the Islamic Caliphate, no third state's protection was accepted¹⁰².

⁹⁸ *Sabah*, "Fas'ta Osmanlılar", 27.01.1911, p. 2; BOA, *HR. SFR.3*, 654/103, 21.05.1911.

⁹⁹ BOA, *HR. SFR.3*, 654/103, 21.05.1911.

¹⁰⁰ BOA, *DH. SN. THR*, 24/52, 09.09.1911.

¹⁰¹ BOA, *BEO*, 4149/311157, 02.03.1913.

¹⁰² BOA, *BEO*, 4338/325289, 18.02.1915.

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Conclusion

The Moroccan Crises were a result of the shifting imperialist conflicts of interest between opposing blocs, which were characteristic of the post-Bismarckian period, marked by military, political, and economic balances. These conflicts included economic factors such as the race for colonial gains, commercial interests, and the acquisition of new investment areas. The proximity of the conflict zone to Europe indicated that the states vying for control over Morocco would eventually be drawn into a global war. Indeed, shortly after the end of the crises, World War I broke out. The primary reasons for the emergence of the crisis included Germany's delayed entry into the colonial race due to the late completion of its political unification, its emergence as a global economic power by the end of the 19th century, its efforts to implement a more expansionist *Weltpolitik* instead of the multiple balance policy pursued by Bismarck, and its attempts to nullify the Anglo-French alliance agreement in almost every field. The political turmoil in Morocco, despite its economic potential, also paved the way for the war of partition. Additionally, Morocco's geographical location attracted the involvement of many Western powers, including France, Britain, Germany, Spain, Italy, and Portugal. Although the crises that shaped the European alliance system and affected the Ottoman Empire seemed to be resolved with the Algeiras Treaty of 1906 and the Germany-France Treaty of 1911, they had consequences that damaged the national pride of the parties involved and led them to pursue more aggressive policies. The first crisis reduced the multipolarity of the alliance systems to a bipolarity with Germany on the opposite side. After the second crisis, mutual frustrations led to a relentless arms race and a focus on more explosive territorial imperialist concerns, culminating in the outbreak of World War I, which included the Balkan territories of the Ottoman Empire.

Prior to the 20th century, the relations between the Ottoman Empire and Morocco were strained due to the tension caused by Ottoman rule in North Africa and the mutual claims of the Caliphate by parties belonging to different sects of the same religion. Imperialist interventions at the beginning of the century contributed to a sense of cooperation. Both Morocco and the Ottoman Empire experienced a similar process of encirclement. Throughout the 19th century, the Ottoman Empire was forced to grant commercial and financial privileges to citizens of foreign states through capitulations and unequal bilateral trade agreements, implement liberal reforms in areas with a high concentration of non-Muslim Ottoman subjects under Western coercion, and put the state's financial resources at the disposal of foreign capital partnerships. This process weakened the ties between the Ottoman Empire and its subjects and divided the country into spheres of influence by Western powers.

The Ottoman Empire could not play a decisive role in the Moroccan Crises as it could not carry its military, economic, and political power of previous centuries into the Modern Period. This was also due to the fact that political and economic ties were not sufficiently strengthened in the long term before the crisis, in the face of religious ideological struggle and mutual suspicion. Although partially mentioned in the text, the Ottoman Empire was dealing with issues in North Africa and the Balkans during this period. Efforts to preserve sovereignty rights in Egypt can be seen as futile attempts on a piece of land that had already been lost. Similarly, the attempts towards Tripolitania

stemmed from the effort to maintain a piece of land connected to the homeland, which was difficult to establish direct contact with, surrounded, and already divided among Western powers through mutual interest agreements. In every attempt towards North Africa, the state was forced to seek guarantees for the preservation of its weakening legitimacy in the region, yet it was left out of the negotiations and agreements that took place in the process of incorporating North Africa into the colonial empires of the Western powers. In this sense, its attempts to become an influential and decisive actor in the process were frustrated and pacified by the prioritization of German interests in the region.

Although the Ottoman Empire's attitude towards the German-French Treaty of 1911 clearly showed that it did not welcome an imperialist intervention in a Muslim country and prioritized international law over colonialist treaties with binding provisions, its policies during the process were shaped more by political and military dimensions, partly due to German influence. Nevertheless, it is evident that the Pan-Islamic policies seriously threatened the interests of Britain and France in the region and managed to ignite a weak spark that would continue in the future across the Muslim geography from India to Morocco. Although the Moroccan Crisis ended with Germany and France exchanging insignificant pieces of land in Africa and did not provide any tangible benefit beyond the escalation of tensions before the World War, from the Ottoman perspective, it is clear that the initiatives started during the reign of Sultan Abdülhamid II and continued under the Union and Progress Party (İttihat ve Terakki) were insufficient for the Ottoman Empire to maintain its presence in the region.

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