

## THE IMPACT OF THE FRENCH REVOLUTION ON THE OTTOMAN-SPANISH RELATIONS

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### ÖZET

Osmanlı ve İspanya Devletleri 16. yüzyıl boyunca Akdeniz'in siyasi kontrolü için mücadele etmişler ancak yüzyılın sonunda her iki devlet de siyasi önceliklerini yeniden belirleyerek Akdeniz merkezli çatışmayı terketmişlerdi. Osmanlılar ve İspanyollar 17. ve 18. yüzyıllarda siyasi ve askeri güçlerini büyük ölçüde kaybettiler ve İngiltere, Fransa ve Rusya gibi büyük güçlerin meydan okumalarıyla karşılaştılar. İspanya ancak 1782 yılında imzalanan Dostluk ve Ticaret Antlaşması ile Osmanlı Devleti ile ilişkilerini yeniden kurabildi. Osmanlılar ise bu antlaşmayı 18.yüzyılın sonunda Akdeniz'de beliren Rus tehdidine karşı bir güvence olarak gördüler. Fransız İhtilali bu dönemde yaşanan en önemli gelişme olarak Avrupa'da sosyal, ekonomik, siyasi ve diplomatik hayata doğrudan etki etmiştir. Yüzyıllardır İngiliz karşıtı politikalar benimseyen İspanya ihtilal Fransa'sı ile ittifak yapmayı tercih etmiştir. Napoleon'un Osmanlı egemenliğindeki Mısır'ı istila hareketına İspanyol gemilerinin de destek olması ve İstanbul'daki İspanyol elçisinin Fransızlara yardım etmesi Osmanlı-İspanyol ilişkilerinde önemli bir kırılma noktası oldu. Fransız İhtilali'nin ve Napoleon'un Mısır'ı istilasının yarattığı gerginlik İstanbul'da Fransız yanlısı ve karşıtı yabancı temsilciler arasında diplomatik bir savaş yaşanmasına sebep oldu. Bu çalışma Fransız ihtilalinin ve sonrasında değişen uluslararası dengelerin Osmanlı-İspanya ilişkilerine etkilerini incelemeyi amaçlamaktadır.

**Anahtar Kelimeler:** Osmanlı, İspanya, Fransız İhtilali, Napoleon, Boulogny, Correl, Elgin.

### ABSTRACT

The Ottoman and Spanish Empires struggled for the control of the Mediterranean throughout the entire 16th century. However, they preferred to re-set their political objectives and left the struggle for the Mediterranean in the late 16th century. The Ottomans and Spanish lost their political and military powers in the 17th and 18th centuries and they were challenged by the new great powers namely Britain, France and Russia. Spain managed to re-establish her diplomatic relations with the Ottomans by the Treaty of Peace and Trade in 1782. The Ottomans, on the other hand, saw this treaty as a document that contributed their security in the Mediterranean against the increasing Russian naval activities. The French Revolution, as the most important development in this period, effected social, economic, political and diplomatic life in Europe. Spain which followed anti-British policies, made an alliance with the revolutionary France. However, Napoleon's invasion of Egypt and the pro-French acts of the Spanish ambassador in Istanbul was an important breaking point in the Ottoman-Spanish relations. The French Revolution and Napoleon's invasion of Egypt caused a diplomatic battle between the pro-French and anti-French diplomats. This article aims to understand the effects of the French Revolution and the new balance of power on the Ottoman-Spanish relations.

**Key Words:** Ottoman, Spanish, the French Revolution, Napoleon, Boulogny, Correl, Elgin.

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### INTRODUCTION

This article aims to understand the impact of the French Revolution on the Ottoman-Spanish diplomatic relations in the late 18th and the early 19th centuries. Although there is an immense academic study on the 16th century and the imperial struggle between the Ottoman and Spanish Empires, it is very difficult to see academic studies on the Ottoman-Spanish relations in the 18th and 19th centuries except the socio-economic comparisons. There is no study which examines the Ottoman-Spanish diplomatic relations in the 18th century and in addition, we could not see any research that reviews Napoleon's invasion of Egypt within the framework of the Ottoman-Spanish relations. I would try to reveal the effect of the Franco-Spanish alliance and the diplomatic crisis which caused the deportation of pro-French diplomatic representatives in Istanbul, including Don Juan de Boulogny, the Spanish ambassador.

The main source on the Mediterranean in the 16th century is undoubtedly the Mediterranean and the Mediterranean World in the Age of Philip II by Fernand Braudel. Unfortunately it is limited to the 16th century<sup>1</sup>. Andrew C. Hess has important studies on the Ottoman-Spanish struggle in the Mediterranean in the 16th century but they are again limited to 16th century and it focuses on North Africa. Muzaffer Arıkan and Paulino Toledo have important works in the field of Ottoman-Spanish relations, they are based on the documents from the Spanish archives but they cover the 14th-16th centuries.<sup>2</sup> Leopold von Ranke wrote on the Ottoman and the Spanish Empires in the 16th and 17th centuries<sup>3</sup> but it is far from satisfying today's standards of the science of history. Ali Sinan Küneralp studied on the Ottoman diplomatic representation in Spain in the 19th and early 20th centuries<sup>4</sup> but it is out of my topic. I have examined Tarih-i Cevdet for the negotiations of the Ottoman-Spanish peace talks in the late 18th century since it gives a detailed information on the subject and a copy of the Ottoman-Spanish treaty<sup>5</sup>. In addition, *the Institute of Cervantes* gave me the Spanish version of the Treaty of Peace and Trade which was signed in 1782 between the Ottoman-Spanish Empires<sup>6</sup>. Zinkeisen in his monumental work, *Geschichte des Osmanischen Reiches in Europa* gives a detailed information on the events in Istanbul after the French Revolution.<sup>7</sup>

I used *İspanya Ahkâm Defteri* from the Ottoman archives but I could not find an Ahidnâme Defteri which has a record of capitulations for the Spanish Empire, while there are multiple volumes of Ahidnâme Defteri for Venice, France and England. In addition to the *İspanya Ahkâm Defteri*, I tried to use some other

<sup>1</sup> . See Fernand Braudel, *The Mediterranean and the Mediterranean World in the Age of Philip II*, vol. I-II, trans. Sian Reynolds (London: Fontana/Collins, 1976).

<sup>2</sup> Muzaffer Arıkan and Paulino Toledo, *XIV.-XVI. Yüzyıllarda Türk-İspanyol İlişkileri ve Denizcilik Tarihimize İlgili İspanyol Belgeleri* (Ankara: Deniz Kuvvetleri Komutanlığı Karargah Basımevi, 1995).

<sup>3</sup> See Leopold von Ranke, "Onaltıncı ve Onyedinci Asırda Osmanlılar ve İspanya Krallığı," in *Batu Dillerinde Osmanlı Tarihleri*, vol. VI (İstanbul: Türkiye Yayınevi, 1971).

<sup>4</sup> Ali Sinan Küneralp, "İspanya'da Osmanlı Temsilciliği ve Osmanlı-İspanyol Münasebetleri (1857-1922)," *Türk Kültürü Araştırmaları*, XI-XIV, (1973-1975): 161-175.

<sup>5</sup> Ahmet Cevdet, *Tarih-i Cevdet*, vol. II (İstanbul: Matbaa-i Osmaniye, 1891).

<sup>6</sup> I am grateful to Instituto Cervantes Estambul and its former director Pablo Martin Asuero for sharing his expertise on the Ottoman-Spanish relations and granting me a scholarship for my spanish education. He was also kind enough to provide me a copy of spanish version of Ottoman-Spanish peace treaty. See *Articulos De Paz y Comercio Ajustados Con La Puerta Otomana en Constantinopla a 14 de septiembre de 1782 por el ministro plenipotenciario de S.M. el Sr. D.Juan de Boulogny y el de la misma Puerta El Haggi Seid Muhamed Baxa, gran visir. En virtud de los plenos poderes que se comunicaron y canjearon reciprocamente cuyos articulos fueron ratificados por el Rey Nuestro Senor en 24 de diciembre se 1782 y por la Puerta en 24 de Abril de 1783 y sus ratificaciones canjeadas en Constantinopla el mismo dia 24 de abril, habiendo llegado a Madrid de la Puerta en noviembre del propio ano.* (Madrid, Imprenta Real, 1783).

<sup>7</sup> I have to thank Prof. Dr. Kemal Beydilli for the translation of german text of Zinkeisen and his exceptional help in my research. J. W. Zinkeisen, *Geschichte des Osmanischen Reiches in Europa* (Gotha: 1863), vol. VII.

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records from the *Cevdet – Hariciye Tasnifi* and *Hatt-ı Hümayun* in the archives. However, it is very difficult to see a general picture of the Ottoman-Spanish diplomatic relations since these documents surprisingly focused on the local and individual events.

This study aims to be an introduction to the Ottoman-Spanish diplomatic relations in the late 18<sup>th</sup> and early 19<sup>th</sup> centuries. Although, 19<sup>th</sup> century and the diplomatic reforms were studied, we could not see a perspective which examines Napoleon's invasion of Egypt within the framework of Ottoman-Spanish relations. In the academic field, it is possible to see lack of studies on this subject. For example, there is no separate study which examines the mission of Don Juan de Boulogny, the first Spanish ambassador in Istanbul and his deportation. It is possible to find some information in general histories such as Zinkeisen and Jorga but this article aims to bring a new perspective to the Ottoman-Spanish relations.

### **THE OTTOMAN-SPANISH RELATIONS UNTIL THE LATE 18TH CENTURY**

The Ottoman-Spanish relations have a long history, we could see the Catalan commercial and military activity in the Mediterranean before the Ottomans. However, the relations has gained its unique nature by the rise of the great empires in this region. When the Spanish Kingdom became a part of the Habsburg Empire, it faced “the Ottoman problem” in its North African frontier. In addition, the Ottomans struggled with the Habsburg Spain for the control of the Mediterranean. In order to have a better understanding of the Ottoman-Spanish relations we may divide this engagement into two periods; the first period covers the imperial rivalry in the Mediterranean and the second one was the period of re-approachment and peace after 1782.

In the first period, I would try to summarize the Ottoman-Spanish relations until the 18th century in order to draw a picture of the past. That was a period of imperial struggle and naval warfare in the Western Mediterranean and North Africa. The major point in this chapter would be the Battle of Lepanto on October 7, 1571 and the following period of disengagement. Then, in the second period, I would try to analyse the Ottoman-Spanish relations after 1782 and the period of embassy of Don Juan de Buligny, the first permanent representative of Spain in Istanbul. I will try to show some documents from the Ottoman archives to have a better understanding of the period of embassy of de Boulogny. And then, I would examine the effects of the French Revolution on the Ottoman-Spanish relations and their diplomacy in the late 18th and early 19th centuries. The focus of my article would be limited to early 19th century and it solely aims to understand the reasons of change in the Spanish diplomacy towards the Ottoman Empire after the French Revolution.

As I stated in the main part of my article, I would try to analyze the effects of the French Revolution on the Ottoman-Spanish relations. After the revolution, France challenged the established monarchies and promote liberal thoughts in 1789. Spain, in the beginning, joined the anti-French coalitions but she was unsuccessful and lost some of her territories. In 1796, Spain preferred to make an alliance with the revolutionary French against the British due to anti-British feelings. As a result, Spain joined the French coalition and took position against the anti-French camp. I will try to reveal the consequences of the pro-French policies of Spain when Napoleon invaded Egypt and France became an enemy of the Ottoman Empire in 1798.

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### **The Period of Imperial Rivalry**

Although there were facts of Catalan commercial and military activity in the Eastern Mediterranean<sup>8</sup>, I would examine the imperial struggle between the Ottoman and Spanish Empires which could be perceived as another example of confrontation between the East and the West. The Ottoman-Spanish interaction in the 16th century was a reflection of the Ottoman-Habsburg confrontation because the Habsburg prince Karl was crowned as Carlos I in 1516 and became the King of Spain.<sup>9</sup> After a while, Carlos was elected as the Holy Roman Emperor, and re-crowned as Karl V in 1519.<sup>10</sup> And as a result, the Habsburgs had the control of the Spanish Kingdom along with their other European domains. Karl V used this new advantage to balance the increasing Ottoman activity in the Mediterranean. The struggle for the European front was carried by the Austrian branch of the Habsburg Empire, while the Spanish branch was determined to sweep away the all Ottoman presence in North Africa and the Western Mediterranean. The Ottomans and Spanish Empires mobilized most of their sources in the battle against each other and the land battles was fought in North Africa while the waters of the Mediterranean became the grave of the sailors of the Ottomans and Spanish.

North Africa was the main field of battle because of the critical proximity to the Western Mediterranean and the Spanish ports. After the appointment of Barbaros Hayreddin Paşa as the grand admiral<sup>11</sup>, the Ottomans had adopted a more aggressive stand in the Western Mediterranean. The Ottoman strongholds of Algeria and Tunis formed a constant threat to the Spanish Empire because Algeria was the base of the Ottoman attacks to the eastern shores of Spain while Tunis was controlling the waterway until Sicily. For that reason, Karl V concentrated his attacks on this region in order to remove all the Ottoman presence in North Africa.<sup>12</sup>

In the late 15th and 16th centuries, the Ottoman Empire needed to create a strong navy in order to extent her expansion in the Mediterranean basin. During the reigns of Mehmed II and Beyazid II the Ottoman navy was expanded and organized with specific strategic needs such as the support missions for the army, coastal patrol and corsair activities.<sup>13</sup> The only thing that determines the limits of the naval operations was the limited technology of the galley warfare. The Mediterranean galleys were small and fast but their operational capability was determined by their load of fresh water. In addition the campaigning season ends by October due to the storms. These storms could easily destroy the large fleets, and that is why the navies tried to avoid to sail in this deadly season.<sup>14</sup> Within that framework we can see that it was not possible to launch long-range naval operations without the solid supply centers which were located in North Africa and Italy. The Ottomans used their North African

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<sup>8</sup> A group of Catalan soldiers served for the Byzantine Empire against the Ottomans in the beginning of the 14<sup>th</sup> century see Muzaffer Arıkan and Paulino Toledo, *XIV.-XVI. Yüzyıllarda Türk-İspanyol İlişkileri...* 24 and also Catalans had a district for their trade colony in Constantinople in 1451. See Robert Mantran, *İstanbul Tarihi*, trans. Teoman Tunçdoğan (İstanbul: İletişim Yayınları, 2001), 179.

<sup>9</sup> Stephen J. Lee, *Avrupa Tarihinden Kesitler 1494-1789*, trans. Ertürk Demirel (Ankara: Dost Kitabevi, 2004), 59.

<sup>10</sup> Lee, 30.

<sup>11</sup> Nicolae Jorga, *Osmanlı İmparatorluğu Tarihi*, vol. II, trans. Nilüfer Epçeli, ed. Kemal Beydilli (İstanbul: Yeditepe Yayınevi, 2005), 317-318.

<sup>12</sup> Andrew C. Hess, *The Forgotten Frontier: A History of the Sixteenth-Century Ibero-African Frontier* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1978), 72-73 and also see Muzaffer Arıkan and Paulino Toledo, *XIV.-XVI. Yüzyıllarda Türk-İspanyol İlişkileri...* 37-38.

<sup>13</sup> Palmira Brummett, *Ottoman Seapower and Levantine Diplomacy in the Age of Discovery* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1994), 89-98.

<sup>14</sup> Hess, 85.

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bases while the Spanish depended on their strongholds in Italia and Sicily in the war.

In 1556, Karl V left the throne, and divided his lands between his brother and son. Karl V left Austria, Bohemia, Hungary and Croatia to his brother Ferdinand, the throne of Spain, the Spanish Netherlands and Italian estates were left to his son, Philip.<sup>15</sup> After 1556, the struggle against the Ottomans in the Mediterranean was carried on by Philip II. Although Philip II inherited many problems such as the rising Protestantism and hostility from England and France, he decided to solve the Ottoman problem first. That is why, Philip II organized an attacks to Gerba, near Tripoli but the Spanish forces failed.<sup>16</sup> The Ottomans, as a response, decided to have a campaign on Malta but they could not achieve their goal.<sup>17</sup> On the other hand, the Ottomans utilized all the possibilities against the Habsburg Empire and its Spanish branch. For example, they had connections with the Protestants who were fighting against the Catholic Habsburgs in Netherlands and also communicated with the Moriscos who were Muslims in Spain, in order to coordinate their efforts against the Catholic Spanish Empire.<sup>18</sup>

The Morisco uprising broke out in Spain and it spread quickly in 1568. Although the Ottomans could not send the navy for a full-scale invasion of Iberian peninsula, they supported the Moriscos with men and weapons. For that reason the uprising could continue until 1570 when Don Juan de Austria, commander of the Mediterranean fleet, managed to suppress the revolt.<sup>19</sup> However, the Ottomans used this power gap to invade Tunis in 1569.<sup>20</sup> In addition, the Ottomans decided to seize Cyprus to strengthen their sovereignty in the Eastern Mediterranean. Although the Ottomans were successful from the military point of view, their political stand was damaged because it caused a shift in the Venetian diplomacy towards the anti-Ottoman camp and as a result, they decided to take a part in the Holy League with Spanish against the Ottoman Empire.

The Battle of Lepanto which took place on October 7, 1571<sup>21</sup>, was the last major confrontation between the Ottoman and Spanish Empires. From the military point of view, the battle itself was undoubtedly a crushing defeat for the Ottomans since they lost most of their galleys and more importantly experienced sailors. Only 30 of the Ottoman galleys managed to escape under the command of Uluç Ali Paşa, and later they would form the core of the new Ottoman

<sup>15</sup> John Merriman, *A History of Modern Europe: From the Renaissance to the Present* (New York and London: W. W. Norton and Company, 2004), 188.

<sup>16</sup> Lee, 72.

<sup>17</sup> The Ottoman attack on Malta had two main objective. Firstly, the Christian corsairs and their base had to be eliminated and secondly the safety of the muslim pilgrims who were going to the Holy Lands had to provided. In the end, the Ottomans failed to seize the island. See Hess, 84-85.

<sup>18</sup> The Ottoman interventions played an important role in the official recognition of Protestantism. See A. Fisher Galati, *Türk Cihadı ve Alman Protestanlığı, 1551-1555*, trans. Neval Öke (İstanbul: Türk Dünyası Araştırmaları Vakfı, 1992), 133.

<sup>19</sup> 1568-1570, the Muslim population of Spain revolted because of the Christianization policies of Philip II, he ordered the Muslim population to wear Spanish clothes, speak Spanish (Castillian) and adopt Christian customs. The Ottoman Empire ordered the governor of Algeria to assist the rebels. See Andrew C. Hess, *The Moriscos: An Ottoman Fifth Column in Sixteenth Century Spain*, "The American Historical Review", vol. 74, no.1 (October, 1968), 5,15 and also see Hüseyin Serdar Tabakoğlu, "Osmanlı ile İspanya Müslümanları arasındaki İlişkiler," *Kültür: Üç Aylık Kültür, Sanat, Araştırma Dergisi, Endülüs Özel Sayısı* (Fall, 2007), 23-25.

<sup>20</sup> Hess, *the Forgotten Frontier*, 89.

<sup>21</sup> John F. Guilmarin, "The Tactics of the Battle of Lepanto Clarified: The Impact of Social, Economic and Political Factors on Sixteenth Century Galley Warfare," *New Aspects of Naval History: Selected Papers at the Fourth Naval History Symposium, United States Naval Academy 25-26 October 1979*, edited by Craig I. Symonds (Annapolis, Maryland: the United States Naval Institute, 1981), 10.

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armada.<sup>22</sup> However, this victory did not bring any additional political advantage to the Holy League because Venice had to make peace with the Ottomans on March 7, 1573.<sup>23</sup> On the other hand, the Spanish was willing to continue the engagement with the Ottomans and that is why Don Juan de Austria invaded Tunis but the Ottomans quickly retailed next year. The navy sailed under the command of Sinan Paşa and Tunis was re-conquered in 1574.<sup>24</sup> As a result, the Ottomans managed to restore their damaged imperial prestige and strengthen their position in North Africa. However, the Spanish decided to set the lines here and focus its western frontier rather than the eastern one.<sup>25</sup>

The capture of Tunis by the Ottomans marked the end of large-scale Ottoman-Spanish struggle in the Mediterranean since they decided to re-set their priorities. The Spanish Empire had to deal with the England and France which were challenging her maritime empire and threaten her commercial links with America. In addition, the Dutch Revolt became a permanent problem since the Spanish forces failed to suppress the uprising.<sup>26</sup> It caused an immense burden on the Spanish treasure and the empire was becoming weaker due to the prolonged conflicts with several enemies. On the other hand, the Ottomans did not wish to resume expensive naval campaigns in the Mediterranean. In stead, they used all their forces to defeat the Safevid Iran at the end of the 16th century. In conclusion, the both Ottomans and Spanish left the struggle for the Mediterranean for their new objectives.<sup>27</sup> The Ottomans and Spanish agreed on a truce rather than a formal peace in 1578.<sup>28</sup> Although there were some initiatives to sign a peace treaty by the Spanish, these were prevented by the English ambassadors in the Sublime Port.<sup>29</sup>

### ***Transformation in the 17th and 18th Centuries***

In 17th and 18th centuries the Ottoman and Spanish Empires had lost their primary roles in the world politics mainly because of the change in the historical conjuncture.<sup>30</sup> As Braudel emphasized that although the Mediterranean did not lost its commercial importance immediately, it began to decline in the late 16th century.<sup>31</sup> The Atlantic Ocean replaced the Mediterranean as the center of economic and political struggle because of its commercial importance. Newly rising powers such as England, France and Dutch dominated this struggle in the Atlantic and challenged the Spanish power in Americas. The Ottomans, on the other hand, faced the Russian as well as Austrian aggression because they were both willing to change the status quo

<sup>22</sup> Guilmartin, 10 and Nicolae Jorga, *Osmanlı İmparatorluğu Tarihi*, vol. III, trans. Nilüfer Epeçeli, ed. Kemal Beydilli (İstanbul: Yeditepe Yayınevi, 2005), 137 and Muzaffer Arıkan and Paulino Toledo, *XIV.-XVI. Yüzyıllarda Türk-İspanyol İlişkileri...* 39.

<sup>23</sup> Venice chosed to end the hostilities with the Ottomans because the Venetian trade in Levant was harmed by the constant warfare and it became increasingly difficult to feed the Venetian settlements without the Ottoman grain. See Fernand Braudel, *The Mediterranean and the Mediterranean World in the Age of Philip II*, vol. II, trans. Sian Reynolds (London: Fontana/Collins, 1976), 1125.

<sup>24</sup> Hess, *The Forgotten Frontier*, 95.

<sup>25</sup> Philip II could not afford to fight in both Netherlands and the Mediterranean because the financial situation of his empire did not allow that. See Hess, *The Forgotten Frontier*, 95.

<sup>26</sup> Merriman, 211-214.

<sup>27</sup> In the Ottoman Empire, the pro-Mediterranean camp, leaded by Sokullu Mehmet Paşa was overwhelmed by their political rivals and they promoted the need of a campaign towards the East. See Hess, *The Forgotten Frontier*, 98-99.

<sup>28</sup> Kemal Beydilli, "İspanya," in *Türkiye Diyanet Vakfı İslâm Ansiklopedisi*, vol. 23 (İstanbul: Türkiye Diyanet Vakfı Yayınevi, 2001), 165.

<sup>29</sup> Akdes Nimet Kurat, *Türk-İngiliz Münasebetlerinin Başlangıcı ve Gelişmesi (1553-1610)* (Ankara: Türk Tarih Kurumu Basımevi, 1953), 154-157.

<sup>30</sup> The Ottomans and Spanish were no longer respected as the great powers of once and in stead they became vulnerable against the foreign threats. See Leopold von Ranke, "Onaltıncı ve Onyedinci Asırda Osmanlılar ve İspanya Krallığı," in *Batı Dillerinde Osmanlı Tarihleri*, vol. VI (İstanbul: Türkiye Yayınevi, 1971), 118.

<sup>31</sup> Braudel, 1186.

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in their borders at the expense of the Ottomans. In this period, the Ottoman and Spanish Empires had to face similar problems due to their similar natures.

Spain had financial difficulties because the maintenance of an overseas empire was a quite costly job. Although there were important revenues from colonies in America, they were not enough to cover the expenses of prolonged armed conflicts with several countries. In the 16th century, Castile, as the core of the Spanish Empire contributed this aim in terms of gold and manpower. However, it became increasingly difficult for Castile to keep this role in the 17th century.<sup>32</sup> In addition to the financial problems, the trade with America and even the internal trade of Spain was under the foreign control because the national production could not compete with the foreign production, especially French industry. In the end, Spain was an importer of manufactures and an exporter of raw materials in the overall 17th century.<sup>33</sup> In this period England and France gained the control of the international trade in the Atlantic.

In addition to her economic problems, Spain faced the fact that maintaining an empire was increasingly becoming difficult because the population which was declining, and the wealth of Spain simply was not enough to finance the needs of a large empire and that caused the new taxes and loans from foreign merchants because there was no other way to feed the military machine of the Spanish Empire. So, the Spanish had established an artificial empire that was based on not solid, regular incomes but irregular taxes, foreign loans and silver from Americas. The reformers in Spain tried to increase state revenues in agriculture and commerce but they could not be sustained.<sup>34</sup> The war of the Spanish Succession in 1701-1713 ended the Spanish position as a primary actor in the European politics.<sup>35</sup> However, the Treaty of Utrecht determined that the Bourbon monarchy would replace the Habsburgs in Spain, and under the Bourbons, Spain lived a period of development and economic revival. The central government was reformed for executive efficiency and traditional views on the commercial activities were tried to be changed and the trade was encouraged in terms of mentality.<sup>36</sup>

In the 17th century the Ottoman Empire was still one of the main powers in Europe but their power was also challenged and they were forced to begin to "negotiate"<sup>37</sup> with the European powers rather than dictating treaties. The last major Ottoman offensive in Europe aimed Vienna, the capital of the Austrian Empire but this offensive caused the formation of the Holy Alliance against the Ottomans. The Battle of Vienna in 1683 and the following Wars of Holy Alliance which resulted in the Treaty of Karlowitz in 1699<sup>38</sup> seriously damaged the Ottoman reputation and they began to question themselves to reveal what was going wrong with the Empire. They felt a strong need to restore their military and economic institutions in order to maintain their position in Europe.

In the 18th century, the Ottoman Empire was threatened by the Russian and Austrian advance. The long and devastating wars caused a major burden on the Ottoman treasure. And especially after the Treaty of Küçük Kaynarca in

<sup>32</sup> John H. Elliot, "The Decline of Spain," *Past and Present*, no. 20 (November, 1961), 56-60.

<sup>33</sup> Henry Kamen, "The Decline of Spain: A Historical Myth?," *Past and Present*, No. 81 (November, 1978), 24-30.

<sup>34</sup> Merriman, 211-221.

<sup>35</sup> Spain had to turn over some of her territories to Austria, and Britain acquired from Spain Gibraltar and the island of Minorca in the Mediterranean. See Beydilli "İspanya", 164.

<sup>36</sup> "Spain," *Encyclopedia Britannica*. 2007. Encyclopedia Britannica Online. 6 November 2007, [www.britannica.com/ed/article-70425](http://www.britannica.com/ed/article-70425).

<sup>37</sup> The Ottoman Empire began to "negotiate" peace with the Austrians by the treaty of Zitvotorok in 1606 and as a result of this treaty, the Ottomans had to accept the title of "Kaiser" for the Austrian ruler and accept them as their equals. See Jorga, vol. III, 285-286.

<sup>38</sup> Nicolae Jorga, *Osmanlı İmparatorluğu Tarihi*, vol. IV, trans. Nilüfer Epçeli, ed. Kemal Beydilli, (İstanbul: Yeditepe Yayınevi, 2005), 231.

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1774, the Ottomans realized the importance of reforms in the military and financial institutions.<sup>39</sup> The military, economic and bureaucratic system of the Ottomans felt the need to transform itself and began reforms as the Bourbons did in Spain. In the late 18th century the reformation of the state was the main problem due to the military defeats that could not be tolerated anymore. These military disasters caused the beginning of an era of reformation called as "Nizam-ı Cedid" in the Ottoman history. In this period, many Ottoman statesmen prepared official reform reports in which they proposed their suggestions to Sultan Selim III. For example, the artillery and other technical classes had to be reformed, western experts had to be called in order to modernize the training and education of the technical branches of the army, the financial and bureaucratic structure of the state had to be reformed in order to finance these military reforms and even the reform in the central organization of state was suggested in order to rationalize the administration.<sup>40</sup> In addition, it was a period of adaptation to new roles in world politics and that is why the Ottomans also decided to adopt a new way of diplomacy in which they made alliances with European powers and used the balance of power in their favor.<sup>41</sup>

In conclusion, in this period the Ottomans tried to protect the status quo in their western border against the Austrian-Russian aggression when the Spanish worked to prevent any British or Dutch intervention to her Atlantic links. The Ottoman and Spanish statesmen were aware of their changing positions and in order to restore their former glory, they proposed several measures to their courts. The Spanish proposed that the taxation had to be reformed, the agricultural production had to be increased and lastly the royal expenses had to be limited.<sup>42</sup> On the other hand, as I emphasized before, the Ottoman statesmen showed a similar mentality to solve their problems. They argued that the expenses had to be controlled, the incomes had to be increased. We could see that the Ottomans and Spanish were aware of their changing positions and they tried to slow down this process by the reforms and the modernization of their old state structure.

### ***The Ottoman Diplomacy in the late 18th Century***

The Ottoman Empire was the target of expanding Russia in the 18th century. This aggressive Russian policy was promoted by the Peter the Great. He knew that Russia was a land-locked country and it needs to be saved from its isolation. Therefore, he fought with Poland, Sweden and the Ottoman Empire in order to reach the seas. In 1696, Russian forces managed to capture port of Azov which was gateway to the Black Sea, but the Ottomans defeated Peter the Great in 1711 and forced the Russians to surrender Azov.<sup>43</sup> When Peter the Great was stopped by the Ottoman resistance, he directed his efforts on the Sweden and Poland to control the Baltic Sea.<sup>44</sup>

Peter's policy to expand towards the Baltic and the Black Sea became the main element of the Russian foreign policy and it was carried on by his successors. Russia continued to face the Swedish opposition in the Baltic front while the Ottomans blocked the southern route for the centuries. However, the Ottoman-Russian War of 1768-1774 realized the Russian dreams when the

<sup>39</sup> Kemal Beydilli, "Küçük Kaynarca'dan Tanzimat'a Islahat Düşünceleri," *İlmi Araştırmalar*, vol. 8 (İstanbul, 1999), 26.

<sup>40</sup> Beydilli, "Küçük Kaynarca'dan...", 26-45.

<sup>41</sup> Beydilli, "Küçük Kaynarca'dan...", 53 and also see Ömer Kürkçüoğlu "The Adoption and Use of Permanent Diplomacy," in *Ottoman Diplomacy: Conventional or Unconventional?* Ed. A. Nuri Yurdusev (Hampshire: Palgrave Macmillan, 2004), 131-132.

<sup>42</sup> Elliot, 65.

<sup>43</sup> Merriman, 298.

<sup>44</sup> Merriman, 299.

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Khanate of Crimea was given its independency and thus it became an easier prey for the Russian Empire by the Treaty of Küçük Kaynarca in 1774. In addition, this war caused two important shocks<sup>45</sup> for the Ottomans and these shocks forced them to re-think their policies and set new diplomatic objectives. These shocks were the Battle of Çeşme, the first Russian initiative in the Mediterranean and the loss of Crimea with the large muslim population. The Ottoman Empire realized that she needs allies in her battle with the Russians because the Ottoman military was no longer able to restrain the Russian aggression by itself.<sup>46</sup>

The Ottoman Empire had been suffering from the over-expansion and it became increasingly difficult for them to fight on multiple fronts and that is why the new allies had to balance the Russian and Austrian aggression. There were three major fronts that the Ottomans encountered with the Russian and Austrian attacks. They were the Mediterranean, the south-eastern Europe and the Baltic (because of the Russian naval bases). The Baltic front may be controlled by Sweden which had a proven military. The first treaty of alliance with Sweden had been signed in 1740<sup>47</sup> and a second one could serve the Ottoman needs in the late 18th century. The second treaty of alliance with Sweden was signed in 1789.<sup>48</sup> There were mainly two reasons for this alliance. First reason was to create deterrence against the Russians by creating a joint front. And secondly, Sweden may keep the Russian fleet in Baltic if she managed to control the Strait of Sunit.

The Ottomans also faced problems in the south-eastern Europe because of the Russian as well as Austrian aggression. Prussia was one of the strongest military powers in Europe and an alliance may create the necessary deterrence against the Russian and Austrian attempts. The treaty of alliance with Prussia was signed in 1790. This alliance provided the Prussian support for both the Russian and Austrian aggression and that is why it was an incredible diplomatic success.<sup>49</sup> The Mediterranean front became a reality after the Battle of Çeşme in 1770 because prior to this date, there were no Russian naval activity.

The need for a third pillar which would cover the Mediterranean front, forced the Ottomans to welcome the Spanish envoy who wished to normalize relations in 1779. If they could convince the Spanish representatives to sign an alliance, it would end the Russian naval activity in the Mediterranean.<sup>50</sup> In conclusion, we may see that most of the problems were caused by the Russian and Austrian expansionist policies. The Ottomans determined to prevent the Russian expansion by a system of alliance which had three main pillars namely Spain, Sweden and Prussia, since there was no chance to resist the enemies alone. Although there was no evidence of a grand plan, we could say that the

<sup>45</sup> The first shock came when the Russian fleet managed to enter the Mediterranean and was able to destroy the Ottoman fleet at Çeşme in 1770. And the second one occurred when Crimea became independent, the Ottomans lost this territory with huge muslim population, this incident caused demoralization in the Ottoman Empire. See Hasan Şahin, "Kaynarca'dan (1774) Paris Barışına (1856) Kadar Şark Meselesi Perspektifinde Osmanlı-Rus Münasebetlerine Genel Bir Bakış," in *Türkler*, vol. XII, (Ankara: Yeni Türkiye Yayınları, 2002), 531-532.

<sup>46</sup> Thomas Naff, "Reform and the Conduct of Ottoman Diplomacy in the Reign of Selim III, 1789-1807," *The Journal of American Oriental Society*, (1963), 310.

<sup>47</sup> Uzunçarşılı, vol. IV, part, I, 294.

<sup>48</sup> Uzunçarşılı, vol. IV, part, I, 543-546.

<sup>49</sup> Kemal Beydilli, *1790 Osmanlı-Prusya İttifakı: Meydana Gelişi, Tahlili, Tatbiki* (İstanbul: İstanbul Üniversitesi Yayınları, 1984), 67-70, the Ottoman-Prussian alliance was also important because it was the first mutual defensive treaty signed with a Christian power, see Ali İbrahim Savaş, "Genel Hatlarıyla Osmanlı Diplomasisi," in *Osmanlı*, vol. I (Ankara: Yeni Türkiye Yayınları, 1999), 655.

<sup>50</sup> Although the British controlled the Gibraltar, the Spanish forces may disturb any Russian attempt to enter into the Mediterranean.

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Ottomans used all possibilities and most of their diplomatic skills to create a joint front against Russia as well as Austria.

### ***The Re-establishment of Ottoman-Spanish Relations***

Carlos III, the former king of Two Sicilies became the King of Spain in 1759. As an enlightened Bourbon monarch Carlos III was aware of the importance of trade and commercial development. When he was the king of Two Sicilies, he had initiated the normalization of the Ottoman-Sicilian relations and signed a Treaty of Trade and Friendship (Ahidnâme) in 1740.<sup>51</sup> When he became King of Spain, he wished to normalize the Ottoman-Spanish relations too and establish direct commercial link with Levant without intermediaries like Britain and France. Carlos III started his first initiative during the reign of Mustafa II and sent an envoy for that purpose but the negotiations ended because of the death of Koca Ragıp Paşa who was responsible for the Ottoman-Spanish talks in 1763.<sup>52</sup> A second attempt occurred in 1779 when Carlos III sent his representative Don Juan de Bouligny<sup>53</sup> to the Sublime Porte to begin negotiations<sup>54</sup>.

The Spanish side had mainly two expectations from this re-approachment. Firstly, the establishment of direct political and commercial relations with the Ottomans became a necessity to avoid the unnecessary intermediaries. The second expectation was the prevention of attacks of the North African gazis to their ships and shores.<sup>55</sup> The Ottomans, on the other hand, had a different agenda which was dominated by the security concerns. However, they decided to start talks to further understand the Spanish position and search for possible "political" benefits from such a re-approachment. In addition, they could not afford to alienate Spain which had partial control of the Strait of Gibraltar, especially after the increasing Russian naval activity in the Mediterranean. At the end, the Ottomans decided to use this opportunity and tried to sign an alliance with Spain against the Russians. The Spanish envoy had no instruction to sign an alliance, but the Ottomans based their argument on the need of *reciprocity*. According to them if the Spanish would have the peace and right of trade in the Ottoman waters, the Ottomans should have a treaty of alliance or neutrality at least.

The Spanish envoy, Don Juan de Bouligny insisted that the Treaty of Peace and Trade which was signed with the Two Sicily in 1740 should be the basis of the negotiations.<sup>56</sup> However, the Ottomans pointed out that the Two Sicilies was a relatively small state and that is why nothing was expected from it, but Spain as a major power may offer something in return of friendly relations. Reisül-Küttâb Abdürrezzak Efendi stated the Ottoman demands as the closure of the Strait of Gibraltar<sup>57</sup> and the release of the Muslim prisoners in Spain.

<sup>51</sup> İsmail Hakkı Uzunçarşılı, *Osmanlı Tarihi*, vol. IV, part II (Ankara: Türk Tarih Kurumu Basımevi, 1983), 240.

<sup>52</sup> Ahmet Cevdet, *Tarih-i Cevdet*, vol. II (İstanbul: Matbaa-i Osmaniye, 1891), 184.

<sup>53</sup> Bouligny family had an interesting story, his family engaged in commercial activity and slave trade. His brother Jose was unsuccessful in his merchant career, his other brother Francisco was an officer and by time became the governor of Louisiana. They were the sons of Juan Bouligny from Marseille and Maria Paret from Alicante. See <http://www.cervantesvirtual.com/servlet/SirveObras/01371307544582795222257/p0000001.htm>, May 7, 2007.

<sup>54</sup> For a detailed analysis of the negotiations see Hüseyin Serdar Tabakoğlu, "The Re-Establishment of the Ottoman-Spanish Relations in 1782," *Turkish Studies: International Periodical for the Languages, Literature and History of Turkish or Turkic*, [www.turkishstudies.net](http://www.turkishstudies.net), (ed. Atabey Kılıç, Sibel Üst), vol. 2/3 (Summer 2007), 510-515.

<sup>55</sup> ...para contener las regencias de Africa... todo el norte de Africa dependia directa o indirectamente de Estambul... See Antonio Dominguez Ortiz, *Carlos III y la Espana de la Ilustracion* (Madrid: Alianza Editorial, 1990), 111-112 and also see Luis M. E. Recio, Agustin G. Enciso, *Historia de Espana: Los Borbones en el Siglo XVIII (1700-1808)*, (Madrid: Editorial Gredos, 1991), 638-639.

<sup>56</sup> Cevdet, II, 184.

<sup>57</sup> Bouligny said that Spain could not control the Strait of Gibraltar due to lack of power. See Cevdet, II, 184-185.

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When Halil Hamid Efendi became Reisü'l-Küttab, he asked the opinion of the other statesmen in a meeting which was gathered to discuss the issue of Crimea in August 1779. However, the discussions were inconclusive and they decided to ask the opinion of Sadrazam.<sup>58</sup> Meanwhile Spain declared war on the British which was fighting with the Bourbon France because of the colonies and Spain besieged the British forces at Gibraltar. Despite of Boulogny's efforts to use the besieged Gibraltar in negotiations, the Ottomans did not accept to bargain on a place which was still under the British occupation. The Ottomans who saw no prospect of benefit, had adopted a policy of slowing down the negotiations and they had no news from Boulogny for a while.

7-8 months later, Boulogny reappeared with two questions. He asked the position of ships in open waters, what should be their attitude towards each other and secondly he wished to have an imperial order to prevent the attacks of gazis in North Africa. However, the Ottoman side argued that Kaptan-ı Derya was responsible for these matters and they should wait him to return Istanbul.<sup>59</sup> When Süleyman Fevzi Efendi became Reisü'l-Küttab, Boulogny insisted on the matter of an imperial order for the gazis in North Africa and demanded the extension of the Treaty of Peace and Trade signed with the Two Sicilies so that it would include Spain.<sup>60</sup> The Ottomans rejected these proposals and repeated their view on an alliance, "a written document" that shows the friendship of Spain.

The negotiations were carried on by the new Reisü'l Küttab Hayri Efendi in 1782 and the Swedish chargé d'affaire was assigned to help the negotiations by the King of Sweden. The Swedish dragoman Ignatius M. D'Ohhson attended the meetings. After the long and exhausting negotiations, Boulogny and the Ottoman side agreed on the main principles on the Treaty of Peace and Trade along with the Treaty of Neutrality in which the Spanish Empire accepted to not to help the enemies of the Ottomans. When Boulogny had a confirmation from Madrid, the Ottomans finally signed the Treaty of Peace and Trade with Spain on September 14, 1782 along with a Treaty of Neutrality.<sup>61</sup> According to the Treaty of Neutrality, the Ottomans would not help the enemies of Spain except Moracco and Yemen which were the muslim states and Islam ordered to help them in any condition. Spain would not assist the enemies of the Ottoman Empire except Bourbon France and the Two Sicilies and would remain neutral. In addition, the Ottoman-Spanish agreement would be noticed to the North Africans and the Ottomans would issue an order that states friendly relations with Spain is desired. The attacks of the Christian corsairs would be prevented by Spain.<sup>62</sup> Don Juan de Boulogny became the first Spanish ambassador in Istanbul. In 1784, a small the Spanish fleet under the command of Gabriel de Aristizabal brought the gifts from Don Carlos III to the Sultan Abdülhamid I.<sup>63</sup>

<sup>58</sup> Cevdet, II, 185.

<sup>59</sup> Cevdet, II, 186-187.

<sup>60</sup> Cevdet, II, 187-188.

<sup>61</sup> "... En Constantinopla a 14 Septiembre de 1782." See *Articulos De Paz y Comercio Ajustados Con La Puerta Otomana en Constantinopla a 14 de septiembre de 1782 por el ministro plenipotenciario de S.M. el Sr. D. Juan de Boulogny y el de la misma Puerta El Haggi Seid Muhamed Baxa, gran visir. En virtud de los plenos poderes que se comunicaron y canjearon reciprocamente cuyos articulos fueron ratificados por el Rey Nuestro Senor en 24 de diciembre se 1782 y por la Puerta en 24 de Abril de 1783 y sus ratificaciones canjeadas en Constantinopla el mismo dia 24 de abril, habiendo llegado a Madrid de la Puerta en noviembre del propio ano.* (Madrid, Imprenta Real, 1783) for the Turkish version of the text see Cevdet II, 338-343 and Mahmud Mesud Paşa, *Muahadat Mecmuası*, vol. I, İstanbul: 1294 (1877), 212-223.

<sup>62</sup> Cevdet, II, 200.

<sup>63</sup> Eloy Martin Corrales, "İspanya-Osmanlı İlişkileri, 18. ve 19. Yüzyıllar," in *İspanya-Türkiye: 16. Yüzyıldan 21. Yüzyıla Rekabet ve Dostluk*, ed. Pablo Martin Asuero, trans. Peral Bayaz Çarum (İstanbul: Kitap Yayınevi, 2006), 236-237, in addition, the Ottomans issued several orders to commanders in the Ottoman ports and fortifications to provide needs of the

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When Bouligny became the first permanent representative of Spain in Istanbul, he quickly realized his difficult mission. First of all, he had to establish the embassy from nothing and he noticed that there were no educated Spanish translators available for this mission. Bouligny informed the King that the translators were the key elements in relations with the Sublime Porte because they were the intermediaries between the foreign embassies and the Ottoman government.<sup>64</sup> Due to lack of educated Spanish personnel Bouligny worked with non-Muslim Ottomans and Italians as professional translators. However, Bouligny continued his efforts to raise Spanish translators and that is why he proposed that a "school of language" for Spanish boys should be established in Istanbul so that they would learn the Turkish customs and traditions as well.<sup>65</sup>

In addition, Bouligny tried to create a network of consulates in important cities of the Ottoman Empire.<sup>66</sup> When he began to organize the embassy and his staff, Bouligny faced an immense burden of work, because he was asked to write reports on the general status of the Ottoman Empire.<sup>67</sup> On the other hand, Bouligny's communication with Spain was not always easy. For example, some of his possessions and more importantly diplomatic documents were stolen in Edirne region by bandits. He immediately informed the Ottoman authorities and the Ottomans issued few orders for the military and administrative officials of Edirne to catch and punish the brigands who were responsible for that incident.<sup>68</sup> The Ottomans, on the other hand, also showed some acts of good will. For instance, the Ottoman government released 40 Spanish prisoners and arranged their safe-return to Spain by ordering the officials, commanders and more importantly North African gazis in the Mediterranean not to disturb them.<sup>69</sup>

In conclusion, the original aim of the Spanish mission was to establish direct political and economic relations with the Ottoman Empire and the prevention of the attacks of the gazis in North Africa. On the other hand, the Ottomans had no immediate concern or benefit in normalizing relations with Spain. They stated that they needed a political benefit and they achieved their goal when the Spanish side finally agreed to sign a Treaty of Neutrality along with the Treaty of Peace and Trade in 1782. That was an important diplomatic success in which all the Ottoman tactics and tricks were used. Although it was not an alliance, it was perceived as an alliance between the Ottoman and Spanish Empires by the European powers which claimed that there were secret articles within this treaty. As a result, the Ottoman-Spanish re-approachment psychologically created an effect of alliance and caused an important deterrence against the Russian plans in the Mediterranean.<sup>70</sup>

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four Spanish vessels which were bringing the presents for the Sultan. See Başbakanlık Osmanlı Arşivi, *İspanya Ahkâm Defteri*, A.DVNS.DVE.d 047/2, p.4, order 7 and 8.

<sup>64</sup> Antonio Jurado Aceituno, "Bir Filolog Olarak Dragoman," in *İspanya-Türkiye: 16. Yüzyıldan 21. Yüzyıla Rekabet ve Dostluk*, ed. Pablo Martín Asuero, trans. Peral Bayaz Çarum (İstanbul: Kitap Yayınevi, 2006), 218-219.

<sup>65</sup> Aceituno, 219.

<sup>66</sup> Bouligny asked the Ottoman government to approve the Spanish consulates and their translators. The Ottomans approved some of the names after the necessary investigation. See Başbakanlık Osmanlı Arşivi, *İspanya Ahkâm Defteri*, A.DVNS.DVE.d 047/2, p.4, order 5, another document shows the Spanish demand to open a consulate in Aleppo since there were Spanish subjects and merchants. See *ibid.* p.5, order 11.

<sup>67</sup> Aceituno, 223.

<sup>68</sup> Başbakanlık Osmanlı Arşivi, *İspanya Ahkâm Defteri*, A.DVNS.DVE.d 047/2, p.4, order 9.

<sup>69</sup> Başbakanlık Osmanlı Arşivi, *İspanya Ahkâm Defteri*, A.DVNS.DVE.d 047/2, p.4-5, order 10.

<sup>70</sup> Although there was no alliance, the Ottomans continued to seek military benefits and bought 133.386 kg. of gunpowder from Spain in 1783. See Gabor Agoston, Barut, *Top ve Tüfek: Osmanlı İmparatorluğu'nun Askeri Gücü ve Silah Sanayisi*, trans. Tanju Akad. (İstanbul: Kitap Yayınevi, 2006), 210-215.

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### **The Ottoman-Austrian and Ottoman-Russian Wars (1787-1792)**

The Ottoman-Spanish agreement especially gained importance during the Ottoman-Russian and the Ottoman-Austrian Wars (1787-1792). In order to convince the Spanish Empire to cooperate with the Ottomans against the Russians, Ahmed Vasıf Efendi was sent to Spain in 1787.<sup>71</sup> His mission was to ensure the closure of the Strait of Gibraltar against a possible Russian initiative because the Ottomans were remembering the disaster at the Battle of Çeşme and they intended to prevent a second disaster in the Mediterranean. In addition to Ahmed Vasıf Efendi who was sent to Spain, Ahmed Azmi Efendi was sent to Morocco for the same purpose.<sup>72</sup> The Spanish Empire was willing to mediate between the Ottomans and the Russian-Austrian camp. For that purpose the Spanish ambassador Don Juan de Boulogny offered his helps.<sup>73</sup>

Although the Ottoman-Prussian alliance did not work in the war, Frederick Wilhelm II, King of Prussia put pressure on the Austrians and forced them to accept the peace conditions which they were not satisfied with. As a result, the Austrians signed the Treaty of Zıştovi on August 4, 1791.<sup>74</sup> The Russians, on the other hand, accepted the peace with the Ottomans by the Treaty of Yaş on January 9, 1792.<sup>75</sup> Although the Ottomans could not get Crimea back, they successfully avoided from the further territorial losses after poorly fought battle. As a result, we may analyse that the new Ottoman diplomacy was successful in finding allies and the Prussian and Sweden alliances played their positive roles in the war and more importantly in the peace negotiations with the Russians and Austrians.

### **The French Revolution and change in the diplomacy**

The French Revolution was a great development because it completely changed the existing social, economic, political and diplomatic relations in Europe. It destroyed ancient regime and challenged monarchies. After the French Revolution, major European powers formed an alliance against the revolution. At the end of the 18th century there were two main blocs. The first one was the French bloc with her allies and client states like Holland, Denmark, Sweden and Spain (since 1796). On the other hand, enemies of the French bloc were the Great Britain, Austria, Prussia, Russia and Naples.<sup>76</sup>

The Ottoman Empire preferred to remain neutral and closely watched the developments in Europe. Naturally, Istanbul, as the capital of a neutral power became a diplomatic battleground for the French and British diplomats. The Ottomans, reforming their diplomatic abilities, adopted themselves to the new situation. In the process of modernization, Reis'ül-Küttâb had adopted the role of foreign minister. His mission was to provide the balance in relations with the rival powers because the Ottomans did not wish to alienate the French or British. The Ottoman government provided the information that it needed by its consulates in Europe and more importantly by the foreign embassies in Istanbul. The dragomans, official translators, were the main elements between

<sup>71</sup> See Hadiye Tuncer and Hüner Tuncer, *Osmanlı Diplomasisi ve Sefaretnameler* (Ankara: Ümit Yayıncılık, 1997), 85-94 and Beydilli, "İspanya", 168.

<sup>72</sup> Ibid.

<sup>73</sup> Ibid. And see Başbakanlık Osmanlı Arşivi, *Cevdet Hariciye*, no. 8860.

<sup>74</sup> Nicolae Jorga, *Osmanlı İmparatorluğu Tarihi*, vol. V, trans. Nilüfer Epçeli, ed. Kemal Beydilli (İstanbul: Yeditepe Yayınevi, 2005), 93.

<sup>75</sup> Jorga, vol. V, 96.

<sup>76</sup> Alexander H. De Groot, "Dragomans' Careers: Change of Status in Some Families Connected with the British and Dutch Embassies at Istanbul 1785-1829," in *Turkology Update Leiden Project Working Papers Archive*, [www.let.leidenuniv.nl/tcimo/tulp/Research/ahdg3.pdf](http://www.let.leidenuniv.nl/tcimo/tulp/Research/ahdg3.pdf), January 10, 2008, 2.

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the embassies and the Ottoman government and they provided the necessary information.<sup>77</sup>

The Spanish Empire, as other monarchies of Europe was very uncomfortable with this new revolutionary France. In the beginning, like the Ottomans, the Spanish preferred to remain neutral. However, after the execution of the French monarch Louis XVI, Spain joined the first anti-French coalition and declared war on France in 1793. However, the Spanish forces were defeated and the French invaded Bilbao, San Sebastian and Figueres. Spain was forced to make peace in 1795. Manuel de Godoy, the prime minister of Spain, realized that the neutrality between the British and French forces was impossible and decided to approach France for an alliance.<sup>78</sup>

The Spanish Empire signed alliance with the revolutionary France by the Treaty of San Ildefonso against the British in 1796. The main reason for this alliance was the anti-British feelings in Spain. However, we should not forget that as a Catholic Monarchy, Spain did not have any sympathy for the French Revolution or its ideology. On the other hand, the British damaged the Spanish interests in America and Gibraltar since the 16th century.<sup>79</sup> From the French point of view, the Spanish navy was the main asset that encouraged them for such an alliance because if they managed to merge with the Spanish navy, the French armada would finally balance the British forces in the Mediterranean. The united French-Spanish armada supported the French invasion of Egypt in 1798, but there serious communication problems in the command structure of these forces which was one of the reasons of failure of the Egyptian campaign.<sup>80</sup>

The Ottoman Empire entered into war with the revolutionary France when they invaded Egypt which was an Ottoman territory. Although the Spanish forces supported this invasion, there was no official declaration of war on Spain. The French ambassador Ruffin was imprisoned in Yedikule, and as a result Don Juan de Boulogny, the Spanish ambassador took the responsibility of protecting the French interests and worked for the release of Ruffin.<sup>81</sup> The Ottoman government which was unhappy from the Spanish assistance to Napoleon, asked Boulogny the following questions; "*Did the Spanish government know the French plans to invade Egypt? Who is the target of the Spanish alliance with France?*" And finally "*What is the situation of the Spanish vessels within the French navy? Do they have any official order to sail separately?*" The Ottomans were concerned because the Spanish vessels would be targeted if they sail with the French.<sup>82</sup>

Boulogny as a response to these questions, stated that he did not have any knowledge on the naval activities but the King of Spain wished to preserve the friendly relations with the Ottomans. On the other hand, the Ottoman government had serious doubts because the intelligence showed that the Spanish were under the influence of France. In addition, the Spanish consulates in the Mediterranean were acting suspicious and there was an intelligence which showed that they were helping the French vessels by providing their logistic needs.<sup>83</sup>

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<sup>77</sup> Ibid. And native Dragomans also fulfilled several missions in foreign embassies, they even acted as professional advisors who had the knowledge of Istanbul and power centers but in time, foreign representatives preferred to educate national translators for security concerns. See G. R. Berridge "Dragomans and Oriental Secretaries in the British Embassy in Istanbul," in *Ottoman Diplomacy: Conventional or Unconventional?* Ed. A. Nuri Yurdusev (Hampshire: Palgrave Macmillan, 2004), 151-159.

<sup>78</sup> "Spain." *Encyclopedia Britannica*. 2007. Encyclopedia Britannica online. 6 Nov. 2007. <http://www.britannica.com/eb/article-70426>.

<sup>79</sup> Godechot, Hyslop, Dowd, *The Napoleonic Era in Europe* (New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1971), 104.

<sup>80</sup> Ibid. 105.

<sup>81</sup> J. W. Zinkeisen, *Geschichte des Osmanischen Reiches in Europa* (GOR), vol. VII, 62.

<sup>82</sup> Zinkeisen, GOR, VII, 63.

<sup>83</sup> Ibid.

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As a result of this intelligence and the pressures of the British and Russian ambassadors, Lord Elgin and General Tamara, the Ottoman government gave a diplomatic note to Spain on October 1, 1799. It stated that the Ottoman government was always loyal to the agreement with the Spanish which was signed in 1782, and although Spain was an ally of France, the Ottoman Empire would keep the friendly relations. However, the Spanish representative Boulogny became a "servant" of the French cause and he was working on the behalf of the French interests, and his acts were probably out of instructions which were given by the Spanish government. Boulogny was claimed to have ordered the Spanish consulates to assist the French vessels by providing them the Ottoman goods and products. That is why, Don Juan de Boulogny was declared *persona non grata* by the accusation of being a French collaborator, and asked to leave within two weeks in 1799.<sup>84</sup>

The wish for his re-assignment was told to the Spanish authorities by the channel of the Ottoman representative in Vienna. The Ottoman ambassador İbrahim Afif informed the Spanish representative in Vienna for the matter and asked Boulogny's re-assignment. He and his Swedish and Dutch colleagues, D'Ohson and Van Dedem<sup>85</sup> were deported in the same year by the same accusation.<sup>86</sup> We may understand that Spain, Dutch and Sweden were all under French influence and the anti-French coalition, mainly Britain and Russia played an effective role by forcing the Ottomans to deport them.

#### ***The new Spanish Ambassador, Chevalier de Correl***

After Boulogny's departure, the Spanish Empire appointed Chevalier de Correl who was the Spanish chargé d'affaires in Hague, as their new ambassador to the Sublime Porte on May 1800.<sup>87</sup> But his arrival was delayed by the British and Russian ambassadors who argued that the new Spanish ambassador may help the Ottoman-French peace which was not desired by the anti-French camp. When Chevalier de Correl arrived Berlin, he asked the King of Prussia to instruct the Prussian representative in Istanbul, von Knobelsdorf to help him in his mission of peace.<sup>88</sup> The King of Prussia gave the necessary order to his representative in the Sublime Porte because he wished to help the evacuation of Egypt.

On the other hand, the British and Russian views were quite different than the Prussian ones because they opposed the Spanish mediation for the Ottoman-French peace. As a result, the Ottomans informed von Knobelsdorf that she was not ready to accept the new Spanish ambassador and preferred to wait for the consent of her allies namely Britain and Russia.<sup>89</sup> The Ottoman government wished to have a positive stand to accept the new ambassador but this was prevented by the British-Russian diplomatic note.

According to their diplomatic note, the British and Russian governments stated that they had no objection of Correl as a person but it was clear that the Spanish representatives were acting on the behalf of the French interests. And finally, if the Ottoman government was determined to accept the new Spanish ambassador, she should know that the British and Russian policies would change accordingly. Reisü'l-Küttab asked von Knobelsdorf to convince the

<sup>84</sup> Zinkeisen, GOR, VII, 64 and also see Başbakanlık Osmanlı Arşivi, *Hatt-ı Hümayun*, no. 5836.

<sup>85</sup> Baron Frederik Gysbert van Dedem van de Gelder was in Istanbul since August 1785. He was known as sympathetic to the French revolutionary ideas and a francophile politician. See Alexander H. De Groot, "Dragomans' Careers...", 3-7.

<sup>86</sup> Beydilli, "İspanya", 168.

<sup>87</sup> Zinkeisen, GOR, VII, 65.

<sup>88</sup> Zinkeisen, GOR, VII, 66.

<sup>89</sup> Ibid.

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British and Russian representatives.<sup>90</sup> As a result, the Russian representative re-evaluated his stand and asked the Ottomans to wait before accepting Correl. However, the British representative Lord Elgin<sup>91</sup> did not change his stand and even argued that a pro-French ambassador in Istanbul may lead a revolution (!) and cause a shift in the Ottoman diplomacy towards the French camp.<sup>92</sup>

Although the British representative continued to work against the arrival of Correl, the Prussian ambassador von Knobelsdorf also increased his efforts to convince the British on this matter. On the other hand, there were also some arguments that the British wished to delay the evacuation of Egypt by French forces in order to invade the territory themselves.<sup>93</sup> These arguments also disturbed the Russians and as a result, they changed their policy and sent new instructions to their representative in Istanbul to cooperate with von Knobelsdorf. At the end, Chevalier de Correl who was waiting in Vienna, was allowed to come to Istanbul on November, 1800. Lord Elgin protested.<sup>94</sup>

Despite of the protests by the English representative, Correl leaved Vienna on April and finally arrived to Istanbul on May, 1801.<sup>95</sup> He was settled in Istanbul by the help of von Knobelsdorf and soon accepted by the Ottoman government. On the other hand, time showed that it was not worth to all those diplomatic struggle because even the French did not trust the new ambassador and when the Ottomans understood that Correl could not help them in peace efforts, he quickly lost his influence in the Sublime Porte.<sup>96</sup> The Ottomans signed the Peace Treaty of Amiens with France on March 1802.<sup>97</sup>

The diplomatic struggle in Istanbul reached its peak when the French forces invaded Egypt in 1798. The pro-French diplomats including Ruffin, Boulogny, Van Dedem and D'Ohhson struggled against the British and Russian representatives, Lord Elgin and General Tamara. They pressured the Ottomans to deport the pro-French ambassadors and they achieved this goal when the Ottoman Empire deported the Spanish, Swedish and Dutch diplomats. On the other hand, the Prussian representative von Knobelsdorf preferred to have a neutral stand between them and tried to help the Ottoman-French peace. After the deportation of the pro-French ambassadors, Lord Elgin and General Tamara continued their work to prevent the arrival of the new Spanish ambassador, Chevalier de Correl because they believed that a pro-French name in Istanbul may lead the Ottoman-French approachment. The Ottomans who could not afford to lost allies, delayed the arrival of the new Spanish representative. However, the Russian representative changed his stand because the Russians thought that a prolonged French invasion in Egypt may turn a British one in the long-run.

### **CONCLUSION**

In conclusion, the Ottoman and Spanish Empires dominated the European politics by their imperial rivalry in the 16th century. North Africa and Mediterranean became their battlegrounds for a century. The Battle of Lepanto was undoubtedly a turning point in this struggle because after this battle Spain showed reluctance to continue her engagement with the Ottomans. However, the Ottomans could not end the hostilities with Spain after a major defeat and they

<sup>90</sup> Zinkeisen, GOR, VII, 68.

<sup>91</sup> Ambassador from November 1799 to January 1803. See Alexander H. De Groot, "Dragomans' Careers...", 3.

<sup>92</sup> Zinkeisen, GOR, VII, 68.

<sup>93</sup> Zinkeisen, GOR, VII, 69.

<sup>94</sup> Başbakanlık Osmanlı Arşivi, *Cevdet Hariciye*, no. 7433.

<sup>95</sup> Beydilli, *Ibid*.

<sup>96</sup> Zinkeisen, GOR, VII, 69.

<sup>97</sup> Jorga, V, 130.

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retailed at Tunis in order to restore their damaged imperial prestige and reputation. After this final Ottoman victory in the Mediterranean, they were ready to make a honourable disengagement.

The Ottomans and the Spanish decided to leave this struggle at the same time because they re-set their priorities. Spain preferred to fight with England and suppress the Dutch revolt while the Ottomans were concentrating all their sources against the Safevid Iran which was a political as well as ideological threat to the Ottoman Empire. In the 17th and 18th centuries, as von Ranke wrote, the Ottoman and Spanish Empires were longer respected as the great powers of once but they became vulnerable to foreign threats. They initiated reform programs at the same period in order to re-organize their old state structure and better adopt themselves into the new age.

In the late 18th century, the King of Spain, Carlos III initiated the re-establishment of the Ottoman-Spanish relations by sending his envoy, Don Juan de Bouligny. The Spanish envoy had two main objective. First, the normalization of the relations and then the prevention of the attacks of the gazis in North Africa. The Ottoman, on the other hand, had different expectation from the re-establishment of relations with Spain. They seek a political benefit in return of the Treaty of Peace and Trade and they achieved their goal when the Spanish side agreed on the Treaty of Neutrality.

The Ottomans had serious military problems in the late 18th century. That is why, they decided to reform their foreign policy as well. They adopted an active diplomacy in order to find allies against the Russian and Austrian aggression. In this period, the Ottomans opened their first embassies in London, Berlin and Vienna. The Ottomans managed to form a system of alliance which was composed of three pillars. The first pillar was the Treaty of Neutrality which was signed with the Spain in 1782. Although it was not an alliance, it was perceived as an alliance by the European powers who claimed that there were secret articles within this treaty. As a result, the Ottoman-Spanish re-approachment psychologically created an effect of alliance and managed to create deterrence against the Russian plans of aggression in the Mediterranean.

The second pillar was the Ottoman-Swedish alliance which was signed in 1789. This alliance aimed the Ottoman-Swedish cooperation against the common enemy, Russia. The Ottomans needed to hold the Russian navy in its Baltic bases in order to avoid a second disaster like Çeşme. This alliance fulfilled this mission in the Ottoman-Russian and the Ottoman-Austrian Wars (1787-1792). In this war, the Swedish forces managed to close the Strait of Sunnt and hold the Russian navy in the Baltic waters. The third and last pillar was the Ottoman-Prussian alliance which was signed in 1790. The Ottomans approached Prussia because it was strong in terms of military power and may create the necessary deterrence against both Austria and Russia. Although Prussians did not enter the war, they successfully put pressure on Austria and forced her to accept the peace conditions with the Ottomans.

The French Revolution was an important development that also forced the Russians to make peace with the Ottomans. The revolution destroyed the old regime and challenged the monarchs in Europe. Although Spain was a part of first coalition against the French in 1793, they decided to make an alliance with the revolutionary France in 1796 due to the anti-British feelings. The Spanish navy joined the French armada and they balanced the British forces in the Mediterranean.

The Spanish vessels assisted Napoleon's attack on Egypt in 1798. The Ottoman Empire protested this situations by diplomatic notes but she did not declare war on Spain. On the other hand, the Spanish ambassador, Don Juan

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de Boulogny was accused to have ordered the Spanish consulates to assist the French forces and that is why he was declared *persona non grata*. The Ottomans, however wished to state that this incident would not harm the friendship with Spain, and the new Spanish ambassador, Chevalier de Correl was finally accepted in 1801 and the Ottoman-Spanish relations survived the French Revolution.

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