

## German economic penetration into Ottoman space through the Berlin-Baghdad Railway Project 1903

### La pénétration économique allemande dans l'espace ottoman grâce au projet de chemin de fer Berlin-Bagdad en 1903

التغلغل الإقتصادي الألماني في الفضاء العثماني من خلال مشروع سكة حديد برلين بغداد  
1903.

خليل بوختالة\*.

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#### Abstract:

The world of the 19th century is the world of geostrategic changes that cast its shadow over the 20th century, given the emergence of Germany on the international scene and urged it from its place within the so-called eastern issue, and the conditions for the completion of German unity in 1871 on the one hand, and the nature of European relations on the other hand that He made the issue of German penetration in the political, economic, military, and even cultural spheres distinct from others by means of penetration leading to the German Ottoman alliance in the First World War in 1914.

.Keywords: Railway, Abdelhamid II, Guillaume II, Baghdad, Berlin, German Empire, Ottoman Empire, Penetration

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### الملخص العربي:

كان الفضاء العثماني في نهاية القرن التاسع عشر وبداية القرن العشرين جزء مهم من تفاعلات العلاقات الدولية فيما عرف بالمسألة الشرقية. مع إكمال الوحدة الألمانية سنة 1871، صار تشكيل إمبراطورية ذات نفوذ عالمي وفي الفضاء العثماني الهدف الأكبر عند الألمان، حيث شكل مشروع حديد سكة برلين بغداد حلقة مهمة في هذا التوجه ضمن الصراع الأوروبي. ولم يكتمل المشروع رغم التحالف الألماني العثماني في الحرب العالمية الأولى كون الدولتين خرجتا منهزمتين بعد الحرب. -الكلمات المفتاحية: سكة الحديد، عبد الحميد الثاني، غليوم الثاني، بغداد، برلين، الإمبراطورية الألمانية، الإمبراطورية العثمانية، التغلغل.

### Introduction :

One of the most important areas of historical research is the controversy over the origins of historical events relating to human. It has many features. First, it comes from the start to international politics and its details relating to countries and peoples, and that these fears still shape our reality today and look forward to it tomorrow. Second, discussions about the international personality with the accumulation of variables over time, and thirdly, discussions about historical developments, their shape and their actors.

### 01-Eastern question: Backgrounds, borders, and international actors:

The international attractions between the Ottomans and the European powers between the Treaty of Kainarja 1774 and the Treaty of Lausanne 1923, were at the centre of the Eastern question: the question of Orthodox, Christian minorities, as well as the Mediterranean, Indian Ocean, the search for influence, strategic positioning, and colonial competition. as well as the East's struggle with the West and civilizational and religious backgrounds.

The German Empire defined three stages for the Reich (in German it means state or empire):

- First Reich 962 to 1806. The German nation was part of the Holy Roman Empire.
- The Second Reich ran from 1871 to 1918, in which the German Empire was formed.
- The Third Reich between 1933 and 1945.

Our study will be in the second period of German history.

02-The path to the political unity and formation of the European personality of Germany  
1871 :

Metternich ( Klemens von Metternich, in full Klemens Wenzel Nepomuk Lothar, Fürst von Metternich-Winneburg-Beilstein, (born May 15, 1773, Coblenz, Archbishopric of Trier [Germany]—died June 11, 1859, Vienna, Austria), Austrian statesman, minister of foreign affairs (1809–48), and a champion of conservatism, who helped form the victorious alliance against Napoleon I and who restored Austria as a leading European power, hosting the Congress of Vienna in 1814-1815.) ( See :<https://www.britannica.com/biography/Klemens-von-Metternich>.)

had a central role in the diplomacy of the Concert of Europe from 1815 to 1822 during this time , Tsar Alexander i comminded the dominant Russian Army , Viscount Castlereagh negotiated for Britain while Frederick William 3, Chancellor Hardenberg and foreing Minister Christian Gunther von Bernstorff (1818-1832) represented Prussia .Bbernstorff has been called the first modern Prussian Foreing Minister by some historians. But Prussia was the weakest of the great powers of Europe ( William Young , 2010 , p 15. )

Given the profound changes brought about by the Napoleonic period in Europe to the goal of political engineering for the Austrian Prime Minister Metternich, the European field from Russia to Spain will witness a new stage in European relations, so that the ground will pave the way for the marginalized new powers looking for a place within the adult, including Russia, the nucleus of formation Modern Germany.

Bismark's ( Otto von Bismarck, in full Otto Eduard Leopold, Fürst (prince) von Bismarck, Graf (count) von Bismarck-Schönhausen, Herzog (duke) von Lauenburg, (born April 1, 1815,

Schönhausen, Altmark, Prussia [Germany]—died July 30, 1898, Friedrichsruh, near Hamburg), prime minister of Prussia (1862–73, 1873–90) and founder and first chancellor (1871–90) of the German Empire. Once the empire was established, he actively and skillfully pursued pacific policies in foreign affairs, succeeding in preserving the peace in Europe for about two decades. But in domestic policies his patrimony was less benign, for he failed to rise above the authoritarian proclivities of the landed squirearchy to which he was born.) In : <https://www.britannica.com/biography/Otto-von-Bismarck>

(See : James Wycliffe Headlam, Bismarck and the Foundation of the German Empire, G.P putnam's son, London. 1899. Pp 01-13( wars with Austria and the greater part of the German Confederation 1866 and with France (1870-71) led to German unification. The army that had decided outcome of these wars was the army of so-called Roon reform, carried out between 1859 and 1863. It is no exaggeration to argue that the army reform was pushed through by Wilhelm, prince regent since 1861, Albrecht von Roon as minister of war, and Bismarck, using procedures that dragged the country into its greatest political and constitutional crisis since the revolutionary era (1848-50). ( Stig Förster, Jorg Nagler, 2002, P 263.)

We find that the philosophy of the war for the sake of expansion and the accompanying strengthening of the economic relations between the political units of Germany is the predominant nature of the process of unification.

In 1815 Prussia (Prussia, in European history, any of certain areas of eastern and central Europe, respectively (1) the land of the Prussians on the southeastern coast of the Baltic Sea, which came under Polish and German rule in the Middle Ages, (2) the kingdom ruled from 1701 by the German Hohenzollern dynasty.

(See : <https://www.britannica.com/search?query=Prussia>)

acquired the valuable Rhine provinces, where the industrial revolution was just beginning. the growing industries in the west (Rhineland, Westphalia, Saar) and the secondary

industrial district in the east (upper Silesia) provided the economic and material basis for Prussia's emergence as the founding and hegemonial state of the new German Empire in 1871. (Immanuel geiss, , 2002 ; p8)

In order for Germany to reach the group of the greats in Europe, we find that it has taken a great path to wars with its neighbors, to securing the western borders with France.

Note the fairly consistent ratios: 1:4 against Denmark. 1:5 against Austria, and another way to measure casualties is as a percentage of total present strength. For example, Boehn argues that in 1864 the number of dead on either Austrian or Prussian side did not go above 0.5 per cent of present strength. In 1866, Prussia's strength for Prussia. 2.7 per cent for Austria, in 1870. With much larger forces, the German Army casualties were not above these figures. The problem here is in determining present strength.

2- The Ottoman Empire and Germany in the international balance in the late 19th century and the beginning of the twentieth century:

The Eastern question was shaped in the period of Ottoman geopolitical weight decline as rising European colonial powers, including Germany, began to consider building a German empire with expansionist ambitions towards the Ottoman depth. Important factors in international interaction.

2.1-German ambition in the international environment and the balances of the Eastern question have escalated:

In the period of European colonial competition over the property of the sick man, especially with regard to Russian ambitions in the Balkans and the Ottoman straits, and the ambition of Bosnia and Herzegovina in the Balkans, a feeling of mistrust prevailed on the part of the Ottomans towards most of the European powers.

Abdulhamid II thought about regaining the support of Germany, which seemed to be the only power that did not seem to have ambitions for Ottoman territory.

## 2.2-Geopolitical position with German and Ottoman interests in the early nineteenth century:

German interests in the East (an ancient expression that has its own peculiarities through historical eras. What is meant here is the Ottoman space, which actually began to represent the Islamic East after the coup in the scales with European powers after the conquest of Constantinople in 1453, and from it trends of the expansion of the Ottoman space towards the West and the South in particular.

until World War I had many ramifications, although they had started relatively from other interests of other European countries in that region. They took from the eighties of the nineteenth century a special trend under the slogan of crawling towards the East.( "drang nach dem osten" :

(F. Dvornik,1943, pp 129-145.)

and this of course is due to the division of German interests in the region. Their conflict with the interests of other imperial states and their influence on the geopolitical and geostrategic and their impact on them.

Since fatigue started in the Ottoman Sultanate at the end of the seventeenth century, and appears clearly in the next two centuries, political history and literature has appeared in the so-called "Eastern Question"( is a description of the multiple relations between the Ottoman Empire and the various powers of the West European , whose geostrategic and civilizational interests are intertwined in the Ottoman space and can be confined between 1453-1923.)

which briefly included all the problems associated with the internal collapse of the Sultanate and the revolutions of the peoples that ruled it, and conflict European interests and overlapping in the Ottoman Empire, and the intervention of the major powers in the process of the Ottoman collapse.

03-The determinants of the German foreign policy in European borders and the Ottoman space :

The Ottoman space between the three continents has been, since the important rise of the Ottoman power in the fifteenth century, the focus of attention of the European Christian Club and from it ambitious emerging powers such as a united Germany.

Global market forces may have affected the eighteenth century Ottoman economy more powerfully than state policies .France and Britain competed with Holland, Spain, and Portugal over controlling and exploiting areas around the world. Britain established dominance in India in the second half of the eighteenth century ; the United States achieved independence in 1776. These and other global developments challenged Ottoman power across Asia , the Middle East, North Africa, and Europe(Nina Berman, Nina Auguste Berman , 2011, p 113(

Here we see that the clash of the Europeans with the Ottomans was within the limits of the power of the Ottoman Empire by securing its trade east through the eastern straits and west through the Mediterranean.

With regard to German historiography it may be said that for more than a century the ..principle of the primacy of foreign policy.. was considered as a fundamental truth, not only among professional historians, but also by the public.Ranke' s famous statement that the international structure of a state is conditioned by its foreign relations remained for a long period almost undisputed ; the example of Bismark seemed to have confirmed it absolutely (Wolfgang, Mommsen, 1973, p3)

In trying to explain the foreign policy of the Second Empire, generations of historians have tended to subscribe to the pronouncements of Bismark and his successors, who regarded Germany's diplomacy as being primarily determined by her exposed geographical position and pressures exerted on her frontiers by other powers. The primacy of foreign policy , the Bismarckians 'nightmares of hostile coalitions', were assumed to explain not only the supposedly defensive character of German foreign policy between 1871 and 1914, but also to account for the country's heavy emphasis on military preparedness (V. R. Berghahn, 1987, p 29(

though hindsight can offer us the benefit of peering into the national situations of the European powers, perhaps Europe did not know Germany was really the most powerful on the Continent. France, the loser in the Franco-Prussian War, may have been out of picture, and Russia, the backward giant, may not have had too much credibility; however, Great Britain was the great question mark. Britain controlled an enormous colonial empire, its industrial economy was aging but still unrivaled, its political system was supreme and the country was at peace because of it. Germany may have felt it ruled the Continent, but it could not rival England. These three elements, domestic political concerns, a historical context that seemed to assure victory, and a perceived need to justify its power, combined to propel Germany into an aggressive and risky foreign policy, both within Europe and the colonial world.

### 2.3- Economic partners with Germany:

Before the Berlin Congress, he had the idea that Germany had only economic interests and not political interests in the Ottoman Empire.

The relations between Germany and the Ottoman Empire increasingly deepened. The two visits of Kaiser Wilhelm II in 1889 and 1898 particularly served as strong catalysts for the mutual sympathies and interests. In connection to this was the German's intensified economic and financial engagement in the Ottoman Empire, to which the prestigious construction of the Baghdad Railway can attest. In the Middle East, the German Reich thus found an operational field for an economically and culturally oriented 'peaceful imperialism. German-Ottoman relations reached to peak during the reign Abdulhamid II prior to the foundation of Germany's National Unity, the relations during the reign of Bismarck came closer; but Bismarck was a pacifist and did not want to get involved in the Eastern Question. We believe that the young German state had its philosophy based on the continuation of unity before the clash with European projects, and this is what the architect of the unit Bismarck thought.



The Ottoman Empire intensified its military ties with Germany after signing a peace and friendship treaty with the Kingdom of Prussia in 1790, especially under the reign of Abdülhamid II. The alliance was not the only characteristic of the relationship between the Ottoman Empire and Germany during the First World War; they have also cooperated on several extensive investment projects, such as the construction of the Istanbul-Baghdad railway.

The 19th century is considered the start of a recognizable era in German-Ottoman relations that quickly moved towards a long history of military and technical cooperation, especially after German political unity of 1871. This was imposed by the equilibrium conditions in the international conflict, which was extended to commercial and cultural fields over time.

So Abdul Hamid II sought an international alliances outside the enemies such as France and Britain which aspired to expand the Ottoman geographic, so the destination to Germany as an ally was justified by what could stand with the Ottomans in this period.

It seems that German economic policies and strategies in the international ocean wanted to stabilize Ottoman space in all its components in order to link it to the growing German economy before and after political unity.

The size of the German railway network tripled between 1850 and 1870, reaching a length of 19,500 km. (عبد الرؤوف سنو، ألمانيا و الإسلام، 2007، ص 39)

German economists aspired to make Iraq Germany's stock of grain and cotton, so Germany refused to divide the Ottoman State (kazim karabejir, 2001, p151)

The year 1890 marked an important turning point in the economic and commercial relations between the two states, with the signing of a trade agreement that provided for a reduction in the customs ratio of (720) some kind of German and Ottoman goods from the two countries) Ilber ortayli, 2003, p59)

3-Technical card and information about the project:

The idea of construction dates back to 1782, when, after his journey to the East, the English engineer Sullivan saw the need to revive the land line between India and Europe known as the Silk Road (عزة آقبيق، 2010، ص 199)

In the late 19th century, before the signing of the Baghdad Railway contract, the length of the railways in the Ottoman Empire was about 2,726 km, and at the end of the reign of Sultan Abdul Hamid II, the length of these lines reached 12,000 km (سيف الدين أرباجي، 2011، ص 48)

The completion contract for the Ottoman Empire was signed by The Minister of Commerce and Public Works Mr. Mental Pasha. The General Manager of the German Ottoman Anatolian Iron Company, Mr. Kurt Zander, is from Germany.

The line is generally made up of main and other sublines.

The line is 2,500 km long and 144.5 cm wide.

Completion period is 8 years. It cost 550 million Francs worth 27 million Ottoman pounds. (عبد العزيز الشناوي، 1986، ص 1362)

4-Ottomans and Germans' objectives of the project:

4.1-The Ottomans' objectives of the project:

- The military objective by securing eastern Anatolia, Iraq and the Arabian Gulf.

Attempting to send international trade to India.

Transporting agricultural products from the eastern side of the state to Anatolia at a lower cost.

4.2-The Germans' objectives of the project:

- Trying to drain the population surplus towards the Ottoman Empire due to population growth.

- Trying to isolate the Ottoman Empire from the Eastern issue and strengthen relations with it.

After the Defeat of the Germans in World War I, its role in the East declined dramatically, as well as the weakness and disintegration of the Ottoman Empire. With French and British

companies entering the project, it became multi-stock and the project was delayed due to the war.

## CONCLUSION

At the end, we can summarise the following results:

The international situation at the end of the nineteenth century and the beginning of the twentieth century forced the Germans and the Ottomans to establish multiple relations, including economic relations.

The German ambition was the result of international competition for expansion in the vital Ottoman space of influence.

The unfinished Berlin-Baghdad railway project is the most important image of German influence in the Ottoman space.

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