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French-British Rivalry Over Sudan 1896-1899

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Abstract

During the latter part of the 1800s, Sudan experienced intense competition from other colonial powers over control over its political and economic capabilities. These powers sought to use Sudan's advantageous location and geography to further their own goals in the region. Britain was leading the charge among these powers, and at this point, France had become Britain's traditional adversary in an attempt to gain dominance over Sudan. This was the height of European colonial rivalry in East Africa between Britain and France.

The British and French armies had been racing since 1896 to establish their claims to the Sudan and its coast. In 1898, the French army entered South Sudan under the leadership of a Senegalese soldier campaign, seizing the "Fashoda" in July 1898. The British hurriedly ordered the Egyptian army in Sudan to retaliate, and if diplomatic efforts had not resolved the issue after the Treaty of Sudan was signed in 1899 and France had given up its claims in the Upper Nile, war would have broken out.

Keywords: Sudan, colonialism, France, Britain, Fashoda.

Introduction

The French sought to control the area extending from the White Nile River to the Upper Nile River basin in order to exclude Britain from the Black Nile. This imperialist territorial conflict between Britain and France in East Africa began in 1896, at the height of the colonial rivalry over Sudan in the late nineteenth century. The French plans to control Sudan nearly resulted in a war between France and Britain, but it ended with a diplomatic victory for the British.

The study was organized into three main areas. The first area examined Sudan's precolonial conditions and the political unrest brought on by Egypt's unfit rule; the second area focused on the beginnings of the British-French rivalry for Sudan, which resulted from both nations realizing how important this country was; the third area focused on the French and British campaign on Fashoda, which was to spark a war between the two parties. The study was organized into three main areas. The first area examined Sudan's pre-colonial conditions and the political unrest brought on by Egypt's unfit rule; the second area focused on the beginnings of the British-French rivalry for Sudan, which

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resulted from both nations realizing how important this country was; the third area focused on the French and British campaign on Fashoda, which was to spark a war between the two parties.

First: The conditions of Sudan before the colonial competition

Since the first half of the nineteenth century, Sudan has been ruled by Egypt, which was then occupied by the British following the Orabi movement in 1882 (Rafi'i, 1949, p. 69). During this time, leaders from outside of Sudan ruined the situation and abused the rule in accordance with a plan that was created for them based on a general plan that secures the interests of the colonizers and achieves their goal. At that point, missionaries were sent throughout the nation and populated the area, particularly southern Sudan (Mahmoud, 1981, 33).

After Britain occupied Egypt, its eyes turned to Sudan and it seems that it had planned this in advance and the British Consul General in Egypt, Lord Cromer, confirmed that Sudan could be separated from the rest of the Egyptian issue from the economic and strategic aspects (Mudassir, 1971, 54), and Britain initially wished not to invade Sudan from Egypt to cut off the way for Egyptian influence in Sudan, but it was forced to do so because of the French advance towards Africa From the south, Belgium closed the line between the south and the Great Lakes to British forces in Equatorial East Africa, hence it is clear that Britain wanted to acquire Sudan away from Egyptian intervention (Abdelaziz, 1960, 62).

In front of these events that were taking place in the country, it was necessary to establish an Islamic movement in reaction to what happened to overthrow and correct the situation, and eliminate all corruption, and many movements have arisen in that period in most parts of the Islamic world, including the Mahdist movement (Sergei, 1994, 58), which men rallied around and fell into their hands the cities of El-Obeid, the center of Kordofan in 1883, and the Nuba Mountains and the Mahdist moved towards Khartoum and was besieged, to be controlled in January 1885. Gordon was killed, the governor-general of Sudan, and then the British and Egyptians withdrew from Sudan and this withdrawal had great meaning (Mahmoud, 1981, 34).

The fall of Egyptian rule in Sudan in the early eighties of the nineteenth century left a huge political and military vacuum in that country, and as the Mahdist state was facing enormous challenges from the possibilities of external invasion and internal revolutions, but it certainly could not play this role fully in its south for a number of reasons, including the lack of acceptance of those parties to the Mahdi rule, as well as the weakness of the capabilities of the Mahdist state, and the growing ambitions of European imperialism in Africa in general in those The Era (Labib, 1969, 163).

There is no doubt that Sudan, with its vast area and abundant bounties (Dabakh, 1899, 11) was a desirable target for the developing colonial powers in those regions, hence the bitter race of those colonial powers towards control of Sudan, and this race led to violent diplomatic clashes that almost turned in some stages into a

tangle of arms and a military clash between the two largest colonial powers in the world at the time, Britain and France (Labib, 1969, 163).

Second: The roots of the British-French rivalry over Sudan

Under the Egyptian withdrawal from Sudan in 1885, all the areas that belonged to Sudan, Somalia and Eritrea, were evacuated from Egyptian soldiers, and they became empty areas that the Ottoman Empire cannot fill this vacuum, so the colonial countries rushed and dissolved in the region each country in a certain spot that was allocated to it according to secret agreements, so Italy occupied Eritrea and South Somalia,

Britain took northern Somalia, and France strategic Djibouti area at the entrance to the Red Sea (Mahmoud, 1981, 36).

Britain sought during the last quarter of the nineteenth century to implement the Cape Town Cairo railway project or the Cairo-Cape project, in an attempt to link the properties of the British Empire in African countries with a continuous line from Cape Town in South Africa to Cairo in Egypt, and in order to achieve this goal slowed down in leaving Egypt and continued its occupation indefinitely and the implementation of this project at that time means the removal of French influence from the Nile Valley (Shawky, 1992, 216).

The British played an active role in securing the southern states of the African continent on behalf of the British Empire to draw a continuous line from the British Crown Subject from north to south, and the railways would have been a crucial element in this scheme to unify British possessions, facilitate and enable the army to move quickly towards hotbeds of tension or war, support settlements and promote trade ., 1992, 217).

The French planned to send a mission from its areas of influence in Central Africa to march east from Bahr el Ghazal and end up placing the French flag in the upper Nile The French government has used the views of the French engineer Barmet, who was working in the service of the Egyptian government had throwna hole at the French Institute in Cairo about the problems of watersheds and the importance of dams on the Sobat River and the White Nile to control irrigation operations, As a result of the discussions that took place on the importance of controlling the entire Nile Basin, Britain's fears of France's silence were confirmed, so Ellen Bering Cromer wrote his famous memo about the exclusion of French activity in the Nile Basin (Faisal, 1996, 180).

The French government, under the influence of Delcassier, Assistant Secretary for Colonial Affairs, became seriously considering the implementation of its project, which would destabilize Britain's position in Egypt through armed intervention in South Sudan. On the fifteenth of May 1893, those interested in implementing the plan met at the Elysee Palace and reviewed the situation in South Sudan. The Nile, and it was agreed that the expedition would place the French flag on Fashoda as this would nullify any claim or planning by Britain in the Upper Nile (Muhammad, 1997, 181).

Rumors circulated in London about the Hanotto sending a campaign to the middle of the Nile, and Sir Edward Grey, Undersecretary of the British Foreign Office, said that this action would not be friendly if France did it, and the British government feared a French campaign in the region, so Lord Rosiri sent in 1895 to Lord Cromer many questions and inquiries about the situation, But the French government has already decided to send a campaign to the upper Nile and cut off the African continent from west to east, and the French parliament allocated one million eight hundred thousand francs to defend French interests in Africa, which raised a major problem in relations between the major colonial powers in what was called the Fashoda incident (My Mind, 2009, 136).

Third: The French and British Campaign against Fashoda

The French government in the nineties of the nineteenth century was fully engaged in colonial projects, although the alliance with Russia may despair France from a German attack on its territory, the objection to the dispersal of forces may weaken it, in addition to that, the French-Russian alliance has allowed the two partners to be in a better position compared to Britain, and the policy of the French Ministry of Foreign Affairs was directed to seize the opportunity to scramble on the continent of Africa to re-raise the Egyptian issue, after Britain announced Its occupation of Egypt would be temporary, but the Dongola campaign with the recaptured part of Sudan not linked to Egypt confirmed the British government's intention to make its occupation of Egypt eternal (Nagham, 2023, 638).

On the other hand, Britain feared the increase in France's influence after the war alliance between

it and Russia on the fourth of January 1894 (Al-Srouji, 1998, 393) and its occupation of Sudan (Ahmed, 1981, 143) through Abyssinia or Bahr el Ghazal, and for this it thought in late 1895 to recover Sudan, and when the French government learned of this thinking, it strongly opposed because it did not recognize what Britain has.From a center in Egypt (Al-Srouji, 1998, 393).

Britain succeeded in obtaining the approval of the countries of the tripartite alliance Germany, Austria and Italy to send a campaign to restore Sudan to pay Egypt the amount of one million pounds to spend on it, but France and Russia have opposed it and protested to load the Egyptian budget this new burden, and the British government tried to appease both Russia and France not to raise obstacles against it in Egypt, but did not succeed in that decided to send a sentence

France decided to solve this problem in its own way (Srouji, 1998, 393).

At the same time, a French war expedition led by the French commander Marchand was sent to shake on the upper Nile via Congo-Brazzaville, relying on the support of Belgium (Hamidi, 2002, 95), and at that

time an Egyptian army was formed under British command in order to reoccupy Sudan. The army numbered about twenty thousand soldiers under the command of Sir Herbert Kitchener. Sardar al-Jaysh al-Masri (al-Srouji, 1998, 395).

The French government decided in February 1896, as a result of the urging of Captain Marchand, one of Monty's assistants, to entrust him with leading a new expedition to the Upper Nile through West Africa, the main purpose of which was to establish direct contact between the French Congo and Abyssinia, and the secret goal was to find a French point in the Upper Nile, to serve as an exchange paper in France that would allow it, when needed, to participate in the center of power to settle the Egyptian problem and obtain concessions from Britain (Nagham, 2023, 639).

Marchand arrived on July 22, 1896, to Luangu on the coast of West Africa accompanied by eight officers, a doctor, a translator, twelve non-commissioned officers, two hundred Senegalese soldiers and two small ships, during which the French public was not aware of the efforts of the French government in this direction or what Marchand saved, and before that in April 1896, the British government began to carry out what it called the Dongola campaign.), by sending units of the Egyptian army led by British officers and under the command of Major General Kitchener to occupy the northern part of Sudan, then reinforced these Egyptian forces and sent a few English battalions to participate in this campaign before entering Omdurman and Khartoum (Nagham, 2023, 639).

On this basis, the Egyptian army gathered in the south in the area of Halfa and on the first of May 1896 was given orders to advance in the land of Sudan and on the same day there was a collision between a patrol of this army and a force of Sudanese and the battle of Farka occurred on June 7, 1896 and the number of Sudanese was not more than three thousand while the entire Egyptian army was ten thousand, the result was that eight hundred of the Sudanese were killed, so the rest of the army retreated towards Secret contacts were made between British officers and the notables of "Kordofan" to restore Egyptian rule, but the Egyptian army was hit by the disaster of the spread of cholera among its members, and on September 23, 1896, Dongola was controlled without resistance (Al-Srouji, 1998, 395).

On the other hand, the French forces moved until they reached the city of Fashoda on September 6, 1898 after a three-year march, and the arrival of the French campaign was about ten days before the arrival of the Egyptian army, and France hoped to help its friends Al-Ahbash located east of Fashoda, and the choice of Fashoda for this purpose is a key to Egypt for its geographical location at the confluence of the Sobat River so that it can be easily accessed, so the strongest possibilities were that the army that moved from the Mediterranean Sea heading South and the expedition, which moved from the Atlantic

to east, must meet before the end of 1898 and any encounter would cause a clash between Britain and France.

British public opinion revolted and demanded to fight France at the same time France has stuck to its position and claimed that it has the same rights as the British in Sudan, and show Britain beyond any doubt that France is determined to line in the march towards the upper Nile and occupy it and there were signs indicating that France will work to establish facilities on the Nile under which to control the Nile waters, The dangers to Egyptian agriculture if the facility were built were explained by a French engineer who worked for the Egyptian government in a lecture at the Egyptian Geographical Society (Ahmed, 1981, 145).

The two parties have entered into legal discussions with the refutation of arguments and evidence that support their respective positions, and the opinion of the French Foreign Minister was that Sudan is a land without an owner or a permissible king, and that Egypt lost Sudan a long time ago and that Britain itself treated Sudan on this basis opened in the name of the Equatoria Directorate and the country of Uganda , and that it is not fair to distance France from the Nile, while the Germans and Balhiks are allowed to cut

Parts of Sudan Despite the small forces of Marchand, he succeeded in seizing the Bahr el Ghazal Directorate (mental, @@@, 138).

Following Kitchener's victory over the Mahdists in the Battle of Omdurman on the third of September 1898, and after entering the city of Khartoum, he learned of the existence of the Marchand mission in Fashoda, so he hurried to go there by river ships at the head of Egyptian forces equipped with modern weapons, if compared to what Marchand had weapons and military equipment, in order to return the Fashoda area to Egyptian rule and then English control, Kitchener occupied the Dunk area on the fifteenth of September 1898. , about 450 km south of Khartoum, led to a minor clash with the Mahdists, led by Prince Said to the Kitchener's capture of the Sudanese ship and the eleven river boats that the prince was piloting (Nagham, 2023, 640).

The British-Egyptian forces became on September 8, 1898, about 20 km from Fashoda, in the meantime the media ban that was imposed by the French government on the news of the Marchand mission and its activity was raised, and the French public opinion revolted after being informed of the news that there was a French campaign led by Marchand and another English led by Kitcher, which far outweighs the Marchand mission in number and in number, which did not take the character of a military campaign, so the French press and French public opinion suspended hopes The new French Foreign Minister Delcassier, who replaced Hanotau in the new French government formed by Brisson on June 28, 1898, should exercise an intelligent and determined policy and better support the Marchand mission in Fashoda (Nagham, 2023, 641).

After the Battle of Karari, in which Kinsher defeated the armies of the Mahdist state in Omdurman and the British expeditionary forces entered the city of Khartoum, Kinshner marched on September 21, 1898 with some of his troops in the White Nile in Fashoda and met with Marchan and told him that the presence of the French in Fashoda and in the Nile Valley is an explicit infringement on the rights of Egypt and Britain, and that according to the orders given to him, he established the argument for the occupation of France to Fashoda and raise the French flag in the Khedivial property, Major Marchand replied that he was a military and had nothing but obedience and the order he received from his government in the occupation of Bahr el Ghazal and Fashoda, and Kischer replied that he was ordered by his government to raise the Egyptian flag in Fashoda, Major Marchand replied that he did not mind raising the Egyptian flag on Fashoda, Provided that the French flag remains in place (Naoum, 1981, 941).

News of the meeting between Marchand and Kitchener was not published until after the British newspaper The Times published its proceedings on September 27, 1898, and the

next day the French Foreign Minister Delcassé summoned the British ambassador to Paris, Adamon Monson. He told him that Marchand was not authorized to address political problems that could only be settled among diplomats, and rejected the urgent British request to withdraw the Marchand mission immediately from Fashoda on the pretext that he was waiting for the arrival of the Marchand report before starting negotiations, and criticized the French charge d'affaires in London Geoffray (Geoffray (Geoffray) The British press that tried to delude the British public that the stability of the French in Fashoda is an attack on the interests of Egypt and Britain in the Upper Nile region (Nagham, 2023, 642).

In the face of these attempts to negotiate the clouds Marchand mission, the British response came firmly that after the military operations that took place under the leadership of Kitchener in the Upper Nile, all the lands that belonged to Mahdi Muhammad Ahmed had been transferred to the Egyptian and English governments under the right of conquest, and that the British government believed that this right was not subject to discussion, and this was followed by the entry of Britain and France into legal discussions about the right of conquest, with each presenting arguments in support of this (Nagham, 2023, 643).

Ketcher presented the matter to the Egyptian government, which officially objected through its Egyptian Foreign Minister Boutros Ghali (Naoum, 1981, 943), who pressured him by the British government to clarify his government's position, so he sent a memorandum stating that "the Khedive government never had the idea of recovering the directorates of Sudan and that the Egyptian government worked in the British talks on Fashoda, and therefore it asks the The British government made efforts to recognize Egypt's rights in all the districts it occupied until the Mahdi revolt).

There was no clash between the two parties because the issue was being discussed at the highest diplomatic levels and almost led the widow to war between the two countries because of Fashoda The French government has made several efforts with Britain, so the French ambassador in London de Courcelles offered his government's readiness to summon Marchand to return from the same route from which he came if England agrees to enter into negotiations to divide Sudan between the two countries on the basis that it is a permissible king, but Salciore rejected this proposal and the British newspapers launched a fierce campaign Against France and put Marchand as an intruder and must be expelled from the region as informed the British government Delcassier, who was at the head of the French Foreign Ministry on the eighth of September 1898 that the intervention of France in the Nile Valley unfriendly act, but Marchand has embarrassed his position in Fashoda and despaired of the arrival of supplies and military reinforcements from French Somalia.

If we compare the French and British positions regarding the Fashoda incident, we will notice that France's position was weaker than Britain, at the time when the news arrived from Paris with the arrival of Marchand and Kitchener to Fashoda, the Dervos case appeared, which threatened the position of the Prime Minister of France, so that the French Minister of the Navy announced that France is experiencing a real crisis until the closure of the case file, as well as Marchand suffered from the weakness of his strength, while Britain, which owned the strongest war fleet in the world at the time (Abd Al-Tawab, 2009, 18)

Although European political circles were expecting a war between France and Britain because of Kitchener's insistence on lowering the French flag raised at Fashoda, the presence of Delcassier, the French foreign minister, and his vigorous policy towards understanding with Britain saved the situation, and accordingly France ordered its commander to withdraw in November 1898 and vacated it on December 11, 1898 and returned to France (Joaquim, 1984, 7).

The French government called Britain to determine the regions of the two states in March 1899 concluded a treaty to settle the dispute raised by the campaign of Marchand (Jules, d.t., 120) signed by Lord "Salisbury" for the British government and Paul Cambon for the French government This treaty includes four articles Article III of which defined the areas of influence of the two states from the Congo to Tripoli west and be the areas of French influence to the east and northeast, Article IV also stipulates that the commissioners of the two countries shall carry out the work of determination, and as a result of this treaty, the areas of influence of France have been determined on the following territories: Starting from the meeting point of the water line that flows in the direction of the Congo River and this line continues until this water line converges in the parallel circle (11) and from this point (Helmy, 2008, 288) The Kingdom of Wadi at the point of line from the point of convergence from present-day Chad instead of Sudan .

France owns the lands that end in the parallel circle (15), which originally deducts from the section that was considered in 1882 Ayala Darfur and the lands that lie between the longitudes of 21 and 23 west, and the area of France, which under this treaty took its place north of the circle (15) parallel, starting from the point of convergence from the northeast and north between the circles of longitude 16 and 24 north and the line that extends along the circle (22) to connect with Darfur located north of Circle of latitude 15 is considered under the rule and disposal of France (Helmy, 2008, 288).

The two groups divided their areas of influence in the Central African region (Obangi-Chari) with a line separating the Nile and the Congo (the water division line) that France would take the Arab regions and Britain would annex the eastern regions, and thus this treaty allowed France to extend its control over eastern and northern Chad, including the regions of Ouadai, Bagrame, Kanem and Bruno. The Darfur and Bahr el Ghazal regions of Egypt After the signing of this treaty, the French government stopped discussing the subject of the British occupation of Egypt in the French Parliament, and when the Ottoman Empire learned of the text of this treaty, the Sublime Porte took the initiative on March 28, 1899 to inform his ambassadors in Britain and France that the areas left to French influence under the Treaty of March 1899 caused damage. Turkish interests in these areas (Helmy, 2008, 289).

The Sublime Porte asked his ambassador to present this subject to the French and British Foreign Ministers and to inquire from them about the text of this treaty The Sublime Porte decided to send a note of protest to London and Paris, on May 19, 1899, the Ottoman Empire's travel to Paris submitted a note of protest to the Minister of Foreign Affairs of France and on June 5, 1899, France submitted its answer to the memorandum of this protest and is summarized in that these areas

It was not affiliated with any state, according to its claim, so the discussion of France moved and imposed its control over it (Helmy, 2008, 289).

With the solution of the crisis of Fashoda, settlements occurred that were pending in other African fields, and all colonial problems in the African continent were settled at the end of the nineteenth century and the beginning of the twentieth century, as Sudan was entered under the second rule if Britain could not control Sudan for various reasons (Shawky, 1996-343).

Although Sudan was conquered in the name of Egypt and told Marchand in its name to evacuate Fashoda or be exposed to the risk of war (Bashir, 1969, 29), and after the restoration of Sudan, a charter was concluded between Britain and Egypt granting them by virtue of the conquest in which they cooperated the right to participate in the administration of Sudan equally, and Cromer and his competent men drew up the draft of this agreement, which was known as the bilateral rule agreement, and was signed on January 19, 1899 (Shawky, 1996, 75).

Conclusion

• The French were forced to withdraw from Sudan due to the fear of war that was evident in Europe, the British withstood while both empires stood on the brink of war due to heated rhetoric on both sides, and the French withdrew under intense pressure, which ensured British-Egyptian control of the region.

• The status quo was recognized by both sides through an agreement between the two countries recognizing British control of Egypt, while France became the dominant power in Morocco, and ultimately, France failed to achieve its main objectives.

• France did not expect that the attempt to provoke Britain through the occupation of Fashoda would provoke it to the extent that Britain would resort to escalation and war against it, nor was France fully prepared to bear the effects of the occupation of the Fashoda area, which affects Britain's interests in Sudan, especially its military preparations compared to the British side.

• Although the occupation of Fashoda represents a direct threat to Britain's colonial interests in Sudan, both sides came to the conviction that the war would have physical effects, foremost of which was the depletion of their naval military power, at a time when German naval power was increasing in strength and arsenal.

• The French government believed in the need to use diplomatic methods to resolve the crisis, especially after noting that the British government is determined to address the crisis on military bases if necessary, and the Fashoda crisis harmed France's international reputation and status, but it opened the door to the use of diplomatic methods to settle differences with Britain, especially the conclusion of the amicable agreement in 1904.

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