

The role of exploratory expeditions, scientific missions, and missionary work in the French expansion into the Hoggar region

Termzi Mohamed et Abdulrahman Nawaser

University of Amin AL-Akhal EL Haj Moussa Akhamouk - Tamanrasset, Algeria
The Laboratory of the Scientific and Cultural Heritage of the Tamanghest Region.
TERMZI.Mohammed@univ-tam.dz / nouacerabd@gmail.com
Researcher 1's phone: 0673633229 / Researcher 2's phone: 0674426144

Abstract

During the 19th century, the Sahara Desert, the world's largest desert, became a focal point of interest for European colonial powers, especially France, which sought to expand its influence in North and West Africa. France began sending exploratory missions to the Sahara with the goal of gathering geographical and ethnographic information, exploring the terrain, and searching for natural resources such as minerals and water. Among the famous French explorers who ventured into the Sahara were Henri Duveyrier and René Caillié, who contributed to detailed mapping and provided comprehensive reports on the region's nature and inhabitants. In this context of colonial interest in the Sahara, the Algerian Sahara, particularly the mountainous region of Hoggar (Hoggar Mountains), became a special focus for French exploratory and scientific missions. The Hoggar region is one of the most rugged and historically significant desert areas in Algeria. Exploratory missions played a crucial role in strengthening French presence in Hoggar by collecting vital information on its geography, climate, and natural resources. Additionally, scientific missions aimed to study the region's biological and cultural diversity, helping the French government gain a deeper understanding of how to control and manage these lands. Missionary expeditions aimed to spread Christianity among the local population in Hoggar, using religion as a means to reinforce French cultural and political influence. While some locals cooperated with the French to achieve mutual interests, the missionary efforts also faced resistance from those who clung to their religious customs and traditions. These exploratory, scientific, and missionary efforts had long-term impacts on Hoggar, altering the region's social, economic, and cultural structure and contributing to the entrenchment of French dominance. Ultimately, this study aims to provide a comprehensive analysis of the role played by exploratory missions, scientific expeditions, and missionary activities in French expansion in the Hoggar region and to assess their profound effects on local communities and the region's cultural and social fabric.

Résumé

Au XIXe siècle, le Sahara, le plus grand désert du monde, est devenu un point focal pour les puissances coloniales européennes, en particulier la France, qui cherchait à étendre son influence en Afrique du Nord et de l'Ouest. La France a lancé des expéditions d'exploration dans le Sahara afin de collecter des informations géographiques et ethnographiques, d'étudier le terrain et de rechercher des ressources naturelles telles que les minerais et l'eau. Parmi les explorateurs français les plus célèbres ayant exploré le Sahara figurent Henri Duveyrier et René Caillié, qui ont largement contribué à la cartographie détaillée et à la rédaction de rapports exhaustifs sur le paysage et les habitants de la région. Dans le contexte de l'intérêt colonial pour le Sahara, le désert algérien, et en particulier la région montagneuse du Hoggar, a attiré une attention particulière de la part des missions d'exploration et scientifiques françaises. Le Hoggar est l'une des régions désertiques les plus accidentées et historiquement importantes d'Algérie. Les campagnes d'exploration ont joué un rôle essentiel dans la consolidation de la présence française au Hoggar, les explorateurs ayant recueilli des informations cruciales sur la géographie, le climat et les ressources naturelles de la région. Par ailleurs, les missions scientifiques visaient à étudier la biodiversité et la diversité culturelle de la région, offrant au gouvernement français une compréhension plus approfondie de la manière de gouverner et d'exploiter ces terres. Les missions missionnaires, quant à elles, avaient pour objectif de diffuser le christianisme parmi les populations

locales du Hoggar, en utilisant la religion comme un outil pour renforcer l'influence culturelle et politique française. Bien que certains habitants aient collaboré avec les Français pour des intérêts communs, les missions missionnaires ont également rencontré une résistance de la part des populations locales attachées à leurs coutumes et traditions religieuses. Ces activités d'exploration, scientifiques et missionnaires ont laissé un impact durable sur le Hoggar, transformant les structures sociales, économiques et culturelles de la région et consolidant la domination française. Enfin, cette étude vise à fournir une analyse approfondie du rôle joué par les campagnes d'exploration, les missions scientifiques et missionnaires dans l'expansion française dans la région du Hoggar, tout en évaluant leurs impacts profonds sur les communautés locales ainsi que sur le tissu culturel et social de la région.

Introduction

The Sahara Desert is one of the largest deserts in the world, spanning numerous African countries, including Algeria, Morocco, Tunisia, Libya, Egypt, Sudan, Chad, Niger, and Mali. Known for its harsh environment and challenging terrain, the Sahara has long been an enigmatic and alluring region for travellers and explorers throughout history. In the 19th century, the Sahara drew increasing interest from European colonial powers, particularly France, which sought to expand its influence in North and West Africa. Exploratory missions to the Sahara were aimed at uncovering unknown territories, gathering geographical and ethnological information, and opening new trade routes. These expeditions began in the 19th century, involving prominent French travelers and explorers such as Henri Duveyrier and René Caillié, who documented their journeys and provided detailed reports on the geographical features and social life of the regions they visited.

Amid France's colonial interest in the Sahara, the Algerian Sahara emerged as a key focus for exploratory, scientific, and missionary missions. The Algerian Sahara is notable for the Hoggar region, a mountainous area in southern Algeria characterized by its rugged terrain and rich historical significance. The Hoggar became a primary target for French exploratory missions, as France sought to understand the geographical and cultural composition of the region as part of its colonial strategy. Exploratory expeditions played a pivotal role in strengthening France's presence in the Hoggar. Explorers collected critical information on geography, climate, and natural resources. Additionally, scientific missions aimed to study the region's biodiversity and cultural diversity, providing the French government with a deeper understanding of how to control and manage these territories. To structure this study scientifically, it was necessary to formulate a central research problem:

Research Problem

What role did exploratory campaigns, scientific missions, and missionary efforts play in French expansion into the Hoggar region, and how did they contribute to the consolidation of French dominance in the area? To address this research problem, the study poses several subsidiary questions:

1. What were the most significant exploratory campaigns and scientific missions sent by France to the Hoggar region?
2. How did the geographical and ethnological information gathered during these campaigns contribute to planning French expansion?
3. What were the religious and political objectives of missionary missions in the Hoggar, and how did they affect the local population?
4. How did the local population respond to French exploratory campaigns and missionary efforts, and what were their reactions to the French presence?

European Interests in the African Sahara

Europeans paid significant attention to the Algerian Sahara, a region previously unknown to them. However, thanks to the endeavors of adventurers, they were able to explore the area, uncover its mysteries, and understand its various geographical features. While the Romans and Greeks were pioneers in this regard, their knowledge remained insufficient. This gap motivated Europeans to dispatch exploratory missions beginning in the 15th century. One notable expedition involved a southern adventurer who journeyed to the Niger Basin via the Touat region in 1499 CE. This marked the opening of European competition for the African continent, particularly during the late 18th and early 19th centuries. These efforts were driven by various objectives, including addressing their informational deficiencies and seeking to dominate trade routes. Additionally, scientific competition among European powers further fueled their interest in the Sahara.ⁱ

To achieve this goal, several geographical and scientific societies were established to organize and finance exploratory missions. Among the most prominent was the "African Association," founded in England in 1788. Its objective was to gather sufficient information and map desert routes to control trade. The association's establishment coincided with the journey of John Ledyard, who attempted a scientific expedition across the continent from east to west. However, he died before completing his journey. Numerous subsequent expeditions also failed until the Scottish adventurer Mungo Park succeeded partially in 1796. Park traversed part of Sudan and reached the banks of the Niger River, marking a relative success. As for Frederick Horneman (F. Horneman), the African Association tasked him with continuing Mungo Park's work. Horneman arrived in Cairo in 1798, intending to travel to Fezzan and Murzuk. However, the French invasion of Egypt in the same year, led by Napoleon Bonaparte, caused disruptions. Horneman sought assistance from orientalist accompanying Napoleon's campaign, who facilitated his mission. Napoleon himself showed interest in Horneman's work and provided support. Horneman's journey began in 1798, during which he disguised his true identity. This allowed him to explore Siwa Oasis and leave Cairo two months later en route to Murzuk. Upon departing Murzuk, he was attacked by the Tuareg, narrowly escaping death. His journey ended at the Niger River, where he passed away. Horneman is remembered as the first European to cross the Sahara.

In 1818, the British government launched an expedition led by Joseph Ritchie, who served as secretary to the British Embassy in Paris. Ritchie's journey started in Tripoli, heading toward Murzuk, the capital of Fezzan. However, the expedition could not proceed further due to Ritchie's death. Subsequently, another British official expedition ventured south to the city of Ghat. This, too, failed to reach Lake Chad, as its leader, Dr. Oudney, died in 1824.ⁱⁱ

Geographical Societies and European Exploration of the Sahara

To achieve the goals of controlling trade and desert regions, several geographical and scientific societies were established to fund exploratory missions. Among the most prominent was the **African Association**, founded in England in 1788 with the aim of gathering sufficient information about desert routes. The establishment of the association coincided with the expedition of **John Ledyard**, who planned a scientific journey from East to West Africa. However, he passed away before completing it. Despite the failure of many subsequent expeditions, the Scottish adventurer **Mungo Park** succeeded in 1796 in traversing part of Sudan and reaching the banks of the Niger River, achieving relative success on his journey.

Frederick Horneman's Expedition

The African Association tasked the explorer Frederick **Horneman** with continuing Mungo Park's work. Horneman arrived in Cairo in 1798, intending to travel to Fezzan and Murzuk. However, the French invasion of Egypt led by Napoleon Bonaparte forced him to collaborate with orientalist accompanying the French campaign. Napoleon himself took an interest in Horneman's mission and offered support to facilitate it. Horneman began his expedition in 1798, disguising his identity to avoid suspicion. He first traveled to the Siwa Oasis and then left Cairo two months later toward Murzuk. During his departure from Murzuk, he was attacked by the Tuareg and narrowly escaped death. Horneman managed to reach the Niger, the final point of his journey, where he passed away. He is remembered in history as the first European to cross the Sahara Desert. ⁱⁱⁱ

British Expeditions

In 1818, the British government organized an exploratory mission led by **Joseph Ritchie**, who served as secretary to the British Embassy in Paris. The expedition set out from Tripoli, heading toward Murzuk, the capital of Fezzan, but it was halted following Ritchie's death. Subsequently, another official mission was dispatched southward and reached the city of Ghat. However, this expedition also failed to achieve its objectives due to the death of its leader, Dr. Oudney, in 1824, before reaching Lake Chad. ^{iv} In January 1825, one of the British exploratory missions returned to Tripoli after failing to achieve its objectives. However, the British were undeterred and organized another expedition led by **Major Alexander Gordon Laing** to explore further regions in Africa. The expedition set out from Tripoli, passing through the in Salah region, and faced numerous adventures and challenges. Despite fierce attacks by the Tuareg of the area, Laing managed to reach the city of Timbuktu in 1826. Nevertheless, Laing was unable to complete his mission due to ongoing assaults by the Tuareg, which hindered his progress and ultimately led to the failure of his expedition to achieve its full objectives. ^v

Exploratory Missions to the Algerian Sahara

France moved swiftly to strengthen its influence in southern Algeria, aiming to achieve maximum control over the region through intensive efforts in conquest, colonization, and exploitation. To accomplish these goals, French authorities dispatched numerous spies to the area for information gathering and exploration. These spies focused on studying the political, economic, and social aspects of southern Algeria, enabling them to build a comprehensive knowledge base about the region and its inhabitants. Additionally, the area witnessed the arrival of numerous French adventurers who played a pivotal role in exploring the Sahara and expanding French influence in the region. ^{vi}

French Explorations in the Algerian Sahara

French exploration of the Algerian Sahara began with the journey of René Caillié, who played a significant role in opening the desert to European interests. Between 1828 and 1829, Caillié successfully traveled from Senegal to Timbuktu, becoming the first European to venture deep into the Algerian Sahara. His return route took him through Tafilalt to Morocco, passing through Fez, Rabat, and Tangier. Caillié provided detailed reports on the geography, customs, and traditions of the region, fueling French colonial ambitions. Despite his deteriorating health upon his return, the French consul refused to assist him, forcing him to seek aid in Tangier, where he was received by the French consul there. Later, upon his return to France, Caillié was honored by the Geographical Society for his achievements and for reaching Timbuktu.

The Second British Attempt to Reach Timbuktu

Seven years after Caillié's journey, English doctor John Davidson made a second attempt to reach Timbuktu. Unlike Caillié, Davidson began his expedition from North Africa rather than West Africa. He arrived in Tangier in 1815, then proceeded to Marrakesh before continuing toward the desert. Despite repeated warnings from the British consul about the dangers he might face, Davidson insisted on pursuing his mission. After a year of preparation in Tangier, he set out across the Sahara but was killed in the Erg Iguid region in 1890. Later, his brother published the remnants of his unfinished work in London, documenting his incomplete exploratory efforts.^{vii} Despite the challenges and attacks faced by French exploratory missions from the inhabitants of the desert, particularly the Tuareg of Hoggar, France persisted in its expansionist agenda. These efforts were strengthened by dispatching explorers to various regions of the Algerian Sahara, especially after the mid-19th century.

The Expeditions of Heinrich Barth

Heinrich Barth was one of the most prominent explorers contributing to the exploration of southern Algeria. He undertook two key expeditions:

-First Expedition (1847): Barth initiated his incursion into the Saharan regions.

-Second Expedition (1855): Barth departed from Tripoli to Ghadames, then to Ghat, and subsequently reached Chad and Timbuktu via Gourara, Touat, and Tadmait. He was accompanied by his friends Richardson and Overweg, both of whom lost their lives during the journey.

The Expedition of Eduard Vogel

During the same period, Eduard Vogel embarked on an exploratory mission starting from Tripoli toward the Algerian Sahara. However, his journey ended with his death in the city of El Oued in 1856.

Henri Duveyrier's Significant Exploration of Southern Algeria

Henri Duveyrier undertook a major exploration of the southern regions:

- Initially, Duveyrier conducted reconnaissance in the town of Kolea before officially starting from Skikda on May 6, 1857.

- He traveled to Biskra via Constantine and Batna, where he stayed briefly. On June 1, he departed for El Guerrara in the M'zab Valley, reaching Ghardaia on June 21. There, he met with the Tuareg and sought to establish relations with them to pave the way for French influence in the lands of the Tuareg and Hoggar.

- On August 28, Duveyrier left Metlili and advanced to El Menia on September 1. However, he faced threats from the local inhabitants, forcing him to retreat to Laghouat and eventually return to Constantine to rest.

In 1858, Duveyrier set out for the Souf Valley upon the request of the Governor-General of Algeria, who tasked him with exploring the lands of the Tuareg and furthering French influence in the region.^{viii}

The Signing of the Ghadames Treaty

Duveyrier traveled to Ghadames, where he met Sheikh Othman, one of the prominent Tuareg leaders. He spent an extended period there, familiarizing himself with the traditions and cultural heritage of the region. Duveyrier provided valuable information about the northern Tuareg and the local inhabitants, which assisted France in laying the groundwork for

negotiations and the signing of the Ghadames Treaty, establishing the foundation for French expansion in the region.^{ix}

France's Exploration Efforts in the Sahara

France pursued the exploration of the Sahara with determination, aiming to control trade routes and exploit its underground resources. As part of these efforts, a French expedition was sent to Ghadames in 1845, comprising several prominent figures, including Merchar, Polignac, Faton, Dr. Hoffman, and Ismail Boudierba.

The Ghadames Agreement with the Tuareg

On November 29 of the same year, the French expedition succeeded in reaching an agreement with a Tuareg delegation led by Ikhno Khen. The negotiations resulted in several significant points, including:

1. Ensuring the freedom of Tuareg trade activities, preserving their traditional commerce.
2. Guaranteeing the safety of French negotiators during their presence in desert regions.
3. Opening trade routes for the French, paving the way for enhanced French influence in the Algerian Sahara.

This agreement represented a critical step in France's strategy to penetrate the depths of the Sahara, facilitating relationships with local tribes and laying the groundwork for its colonial objectives.^x Between 1830 and 1849, French exploratory campaigns expanded significantly, bolstered by substantial support from scientific institutions, particularly the Paris Geographical Society. The French government equipped this society with scientific expeditions to explore the Algerian Sahara and other desert regions of Africa. The French colonial administration provided vital information about the African Sahara, including the Algerian Sahara, which indirectly strengthened French expansion plans. This information formed the basis for strategic decisions aimed at dominating the desert and exploiting its natural resources.

Significant Exploratory Expeditions During French Expansion

Among the expeditions coinciding with the French military expansion in the Sahara was Gerhard Rohlfs' journey in 1865. This expedition was particularly important, as Rohlfs traversed the regions of Touat, Tsabit, Sali, and in Salah, becoming the first European to travel from the Mediterranean coast in the north to the Ghanaian coast in the south. Additionally, Pellegrino Matteucci and Alfonso Maria Massari conducted exploratory missions across Africa from east to west, gathering previously unknown information about the desert regions.^{xi}

Paul Soleillet's Expedition (1892)

In 1892, Paul Soleillet undertook an exploratory journey to Algeria, which was particularly significant in surveying various regions of the Algerian Sahara. Soleillet provided valuable information about the "Tademaït Plateau" and its surroundings, facilitating French colonial expansion into the Hoggar region.

French Occupation of the Sahara

The data collected by French exploratory missions made the occupation of the Sahara an inevitable step. These expeditions revealed the Sahara's subsurface and surface wealth, integrating it into France's colonial ambitions during that period.^{xii}

French Interest in the Algerian Sahara

The French paid considerable attention to the Algerian Sahara due to its strategic importance in expanding their colonial presence across African territories and exploiting the region's natural resources. This interest drove them to venture deep into the Algerian desert to strengthen their control and ensure the continuity of their colonial expansion.

Exploratory Missions and Missionary Expeditions

Before the colonization of Algeria, France sent several exploratory missions under various pretexts, such as trade and tourism, initially without aiming to expand their military influence into the Algerian Sahara. However, in 1824, the region witnessed France's first significant foray into the desert's depths, led by René Caillié, who traversed from Senegal to Timbuktu, paving the way for further explorations.

Duveyrier Henri's Expedition

Duveyrier Henri's expedition stands out as one of the most notable exploratory missions of the period, surrounded by extensive historical accounts, some bordering on legend. Before embarking on his official journeys, Duveyrier undertook a reconnaissance trip to the city of Koléa, where he was met with cautious reception by the locals.

On May 8, 1859, Duveyrier began his official desert expedition from Skikda, traveling through Constantine and Batna, eventually reaching Biskra in early June. By June 13, he arrived in El Guerrara in the M'zab region, continuing his journey to Ghardaïa on June 21. From there, he advanced to Metlili, where he established connections with the Tuareg population and local inhabitants.

By September 1, Duveyrier reached El Menia, encountering treatment similar to that in Koléa. Upon his return to Biskra, the Governor-General of Algeria assigned him the task of preparing for a mission to the Tuareg lands. He departed for El Oued and then headed to Ghadames, arriving there on September 11, 1860. Duveyrier stayed in Ghadames until December, immersing himself in the customs and traditions of the local population.^{xiii}

The Railway Project

The idea of the railway project dates back to the second half of the nineteenth century, where it was proposed to build a railway line extending from Algiers to Bou Saada and Ouargla, with main branches leading to Tunisia, Tripoli, Ain Salah, and the Hoggar region. The work was supposed to begin in 1853, but the international circumstances France was facing at the time prevented the project from being implemented. In 1875, another proposal emerged to extend the railway line from Algiers to Touat and Aïr. This was officially commissioned in 1878 to establish the boundaries for the project, but it was unable to progress beyond the area of Laghouat.^{xiv}

Henry Duveyrier wrote extensively about the Tuareg people within the context of his social study and the social structure of this ethnic group. In his works, he examined the Tuareg from a complex social perspective, reflecting a significant interplay between ethnic, cultural, and economic factors. He noted that the Tuareg society was divided into several social classes, starting with the nobles, who held a high status, followed by the servants who were tasked with tending to the goats. At the bottom of the social hierarchy were the *iklan* or slaves, who were enslaved as a result of raids or the capture of caravans.^{xv}

Duveyrier noted that the Tuareg people are famous for being "veiled," a practice that reflects part of their cultural identity, alongside traditions that involve the passing of titles and rights through lineage. Although the Tuaregs consider themselves a nation of mixed and

intertwined origins, they have maintained a social cohesion that expresses unity within diversity.^{xvi}

Duveyrier also discussed the symbolic meaning of Tuareg titles such as "Amohagh" and "Amouchagh," which translate to "warrior," "free," and "noble." He highlighted the pride the Tuaregs take in their identity and social status. Through his studies, Duveyrier provided a comprehensive picture of Tuareg social life, where cultural, religious, and economic factors intertwined to create a complex and independent fabric in the heart of the Sahara Desert.^{xvii}

4. Exploratory Expeditions to the Hoggar Region: Their Role and Impact

The French began to turn their attention to the Algerian desert in general, and to the Hoggar region in particular, after it became a stronghold for rebels who fled from the north following the establishment of colonial control over all regions. Therefore, France's interest in the Algerian desert was not coincidental but carried hidden objectives and apparent pretexts, manifested in what they referred to as "exploration" to study the unknown desert environment.^{xviii} This was represented in three stages:

A. Scientific Expeditions

At the forefront of these expeditions was René Caillié, who was highly admired by the French for his significant travels. Caillié had been passionate about travel from a young age. He was the first Frenchman to venture deep into the desert, traveling from Senegal to the city of Timbuktu, and then returning through Tuat and Tafilalt to Fes, Rabat, and then Tangier. Through these journeys, he provided France with crucial information.^{xix} It later helped them to penetrate the southern part of Algeria and expand into the African desert.^{xx}

Henri Barth also followed the same path as René Caillié. He embarked on a journey from Tripoli on March 25, 1850, passing through many desert regions along with his companions.^{xxi} They passed through the Tassili Plateau, which Barth mentioned as being at a high elevation from the beginning of his journey. After two days of traveling, Barth and his companions reached the Asio well, a pivotal point between "Kilazger" and "Kil Oui." This area serves as a junction for caravan routes heading to Ghadames, Touat, and Hoggar. The French benefited greatly from the valuable information he provided, which aided in their expansion into the desert region. However, some of the details he shared about the Tuaregs were not entirely accurate.^{xxii}

B - Political and Economic Missions

"Henri Duveyrier" undertook a journey to the lands of the northern Tuaregs, during which he studied their natural, geographical, and social features. This journey lasted for three years (1859-1862).^{xxiii} In 1855, the Governor General of Algeria extended an invitation to a notable figure named "Sheikh Osman," who had connections with many Tuareg tribes. He became a guide for French expeditions in the desert and provided "Duveyrier" with assistance, offering valuable information about the life of the Tuaregs. Thus, the French administration was always seeking to connect its center in North Africa with its colonies in Sub-Saharan Africa. It began to search for areas of influence in the regions bordering Algeria, especially after occupying areas in West Africa. To achieve this, France embarked on an exploratory journey to the southern regions.^{xxiv}

In October 1879, De Freycinet decided to assign Lieutenant Flatters the task of exploring the desert route from Algeria to Niger and Chad. The expedition consisted of 150 people and set out on March 25, 1880, from Ouargla to Lake Manguin, where they mapped a large portion of the Tuareg region of Agger. However, they hastened their return on May 11 of

the same year due to resistance from the Tuareg.^{xxv} Despite the failure of the first expedition, "Flatterz" renewed the journey and made a second attempt in December 1880. He left Ouargla with 11 Frenchmen, 49 local soldiers, 32 camel drivers, 8 Shaanba men, and 4 Tuaregs. He reached the "Amgid" area on January 12, 1881, and then the "Tamasent" area, which he approached closely.^{xxvi}

The "Flatterz" expedition quickly reached "Bir el-Gharma" on February 16. There, they were attacked by the Tuareg guides, and "Flatterz" and his companions were killed. One of the outcomes of this expedition was the identification of the caravan routes between Laqli'a and Ouargla, Ain Salah and Adlas, as well as Ghatt and Ghadames.^{xxvii} However, this only added to the failure of the French leaders, as they experienced disappointment for nearly 20 years, which remained a strong concern in their minds as they ventured deeper into the desert.^{xxviii}

Despite the "Forreau-Lamy" campaign between 1898 and 1900, which is considered one of the most significant of all, they attempted in 1897 to reach "Aïr" through the Hoggar. However, the Tuareg confronted them, forcing them to cut short their journey and return to avoid meeting the same fate as Flatterz.^{xxix}

Missionary Expeditions

After the arrival of Cardinal Lavigerie in Algeria on May 15, 1867, some of his main objectives were:

- To make Algeria a gateway for the evangelization of Africa.
- To revive the Roman Christian glory in the region.
- To make missionary work a cornerstone of the colonial construction.^{xxx}

The next step was for Father Charles de Foucauld to request permission to visit the lands of the Tuareg from his spiritual leader, Father Huvelin, after discussing the matter with his colleague Laperrine. He received approval and support from his leader Huvelin, and all that remained was to wait for the right opportunity for the journey. De Foucauld summarized his mission to the Hoggar in two main objectives:

- Expanding French influence in the Hoggar.
- Integrating the inhabitants of the Hoggar into French civilization and converting them to Christianity.^{xxxi} He sees that these two factors are interconnected and cannot be separated, as he explicitly stated in the following text:

"... The first matter is the establishment of the French system and Western civilization in our empire in North Africa... The second matter is missionary work..."^{xxxii}

Due to "De Foucauld's" passion for exploring the "Tuareg" region, he had the opportunity in 1905, when "Labreyn" convinced him to accompany him on an exploratory trip through the Tuareg tribes and the neighboring areas of the Hoggar, which the French had already controlled.^{xxxiii}

We can observe that "De Foucauld" had privileges that could not be granted to any other priest, as he expressed: "...Labreen has the ability to facilitate my entry and settlement, he allowed me to accompany him on the patrol... I believe that such facilities could not be granted to any other priest but me..."^{xxxiv} Thus, the journey in which Father de Foucauld participated took on a purely political character; however, it provided him with valuable scientific observations about the desert, including works on geology, topography, and even weather conditions, among other studies.^{xxxv}

In light of this background, the instructions issued by the head of the Ain Salah branch on behalf of the French government to Musa Ak Amestan, the Amunicipal of the Hoggar, reaffirmed this approach. The instructions included ten points, later known as the Ain Salah Treaty of 1904, which formed the framework for local cooperation to serve French colonial interests.^{xxxvi} After the signing of the Ain Salah Treaty, which was somewhat ambiguous in its terms, the French commander La Bérine directed harsh criticisms at the leader of the Ain Salah administrative post. These criticisms emphasized the necessity of treating the Kel Ahaggar as a defeated party after the Battle of "Tite," stressing the imposition of complete submission, whether voluntary or forced, rather than merely symbolic allegiance.^{xxxvii}

La Bérine believed that colonial policies should be implemented with greater firmness, including the imposition of taxes for the benefit of the French government as a means of solidifying control and demonstrating power. This approach reflected internal tensions among colonial leaders regarding how to manage relations with the local tribes in the Sahara, highlighting the contrast between diplomatic rhetoric and the repressive colonial policies in practice.

Foucault continued what had been started with La Bérine and Lieutenant Rousseau in the Hoggar region, visiting several other places such as "Tine Touine, Tazrouk, Adels," before returning to Ain Salah and then to Bani Abbas on January 24, 1905, without being able to settle in the Hoggar. This was because La Bérine forbade him from doing so, as expressed in his statement:

"... La Bérine will leave me here if he meets Musa Aménokal of the Hoggar, whom he promised to visit a month ago. We are expecting him every day, but he hasn't arrived yet... If Musa doesn't join us, La Bérine doesn't want to leave me in the Hoggar; there are many risks..." Foucault made a second visit in 1905 and settled in the Hoggar during this trip. He clarified this in his statement:

"...Thanks to Christ, my settlement was made possible in Tamanrasset and anywhere in the Hoggar... I chose Tamanrasset, a village with twenty huts [houses]..."^{xxxviii}

In a festive atmosphere, Captain Dino introduced Charles de Foucauld to Moussa Ag Amastane, placing him directly under his protection. During the meeting, de Foucauld expressed his desire to study the Tuareg language and culture, which represented a step towards realizing his great dream of establishing a temple in the heart of the desert.^{xxxix} He established a house of worship and a place to receive guests and treat the sick. In the first phase, he focused on integrating into the lives of the Tuareg people—women, men, and children. His knowledge of the local dialect greatly helped in his interactions with them. He began teaching them things they were unaware of, such as sewing and weaving, in an effort to gain their trust and affection. The second phase involved converting them to Christianity and preparing them to accept French colonization.^{xl}

The Tuaregs of the Hoggar saw de Foucauld, or what they called in the local language "Akli-In-Ghissa", working hard to establish the image of a peaceful, loving, and charitable monk. He succeeded in building many friendships with some of the tribes, which helped him gather a great deal of information about the region.^{xli} He also compiled a French-Tuareg dictionary to assist European missionaries in the region. Additionally, he collected and translated Tuareg poetry and prose into French.^{xlii} The first task he undertook was translating the Bible into the Targui language even before settling down, as he mentioned in his words: "I have completed the translation of the Bible into the Targui language..."^{xliii} In 1916, a group of rebels was formed in the city of "Ghat" with the goal of attacking the French in the Sahara.

They moved towards "Gant," where they took control of the city and captured 440 French soldiers, as well as some French officers.^{xliv}

They devised a plan to eliminate Father De Foucauld in Tamanrasset. Led by a man named "Babeh" or "Gablelli," a group of rebels headed to the fortress where he resided and assassinated him. They took advantage of his postal courier, who was deceived, to gain access to the weapons he possessed. This occurred on December 1, 1916, marking the beginning of large-scale movements and uprisings in the Hoggar region and most parts of the Sahara.^{xlv}

Colonial Expansion and Local Resistances

The "Cottnest" Campaign

After the death of the Amanokal Ahitaghel in late 1899, the Hoggar region witnessed a power struggle between Atci Ag Amellal and Mohammed Ag Ourzig. The "Amgharen" Senate intervened to choose a new Amanokal, with Bakta and Ghabdin serving as witnesses to the dispute. The latter cut his turban (shash) into two pieces and placed one piece on the head of each claimant, saying: "Each of you is Amanokal." This led to chaos in the region, which persisted throughout that period and eventually resulted in the entry of the French into the area. The French battalion managed to enter Aïn Sefra and establish a small military outpost on December 31, 1899. From there, the settlement became a base for reconnaissance and a launch point toward the Hoggar. Atci wrote to the French commander stationed in Aïn Sefra, saying: "If you come to the Hoggar, I will destroy you, and if you stop my caravans from going to Tadikelt, I will cut down all the palm trees in the oasis."

Cottnest sent Mohammed Ag Mesiss to gather intelligence on the Hoggar region, where he met Baba Ag Temklas in the Imider area and asked him questions that revealed Ag Mesiss' intentions.^{xlvi} France considered this action as a main pretext for entering the Ahaggar region, thus repeating a scenario similar to the "fan incident." This was further supported by another pretext in March 1902, when a group of Tuaregs attacked the caravan of "Fatima Ag Missis," which was coming from "In Salah." The news reached the commander of the In Salah post, who assembled a group of "Maharese" (camel riders) from the northern desert tribes with the assistance of Laperine.^{xlvii} He found the opportune moment to occupy the Ahaggar and recruit the people of Tidikelt under the pretext of avenging the Tuareg who had long plundered their trade caravans across the desert. The captain, head of the military detachment, formed a military unit of 130 soldiers under the command of Lieutenant Cottenis, divided into four squads:

- The first squad: 40 soldiers from the Chaâmbas of Ain Salah
- The second squad: 30 men from the Ouled Dahmane, led by their chief and the squad leader
- The third squad: 20 men from the Ouled Yahya, led by their chief and squad leader "Doro," in addition to 10 men from the Ouled Bahmou
- The fourth squad: 10 men from the Aïzi tribe, led by their chief and squad leader Abdelkader Ben Abdelkader, along with 10 men from the Ouled Mokhtar and 10 men from the Zawiya tribe.^{xlviii}

They left Ain Salah on March 23, 1902, initially heading east, then south through "Amguid" and the "Ighrghar" valley until they reached Idles. The French army employed the scorched earth policy, which had been applied by General Bigeaud in the northern region immediately after the occupation. "Cottenis" was able to seize the area of Tazrouk, and from there, he moved towards the "Tin Tarbin" area, where he encountered resistance from the Ait

Luwin tribe. The unit then proceeded to "Taghout," located 60 km south of Tamanrasset, arriving there by midday. While a squad of skilled cavalymen was sent to scout the area, news arrived that the rest of the group had come under a fierce attack by the Tuareg. However, the battle did not last long due to the disparity in strength between the two sides.^{xlix}

This led to the death of two French soldiers, and the unit continued its march, entering Tamanrasset on May 6, 1902, feeling surrounded by danger from all sides. It was reported that the Tuareg were gathering from the tribes of "Daq Agali, Tajjie Milit, Asqamaran, Aklun Tawsit, and many other Ahaggar tribes." These gatherings were preparing for the Battle of "Tit."^l

Local Resistance.

The Tuareg have been distinguished by their bravery, nobility, strength, and advancement—traits they have been known for since ancient times, as history attests. Ibn Hawqal describes them: "...they possess courage, audacity, horsemanship on camels, swiftness in running, toughness, and an in-depth understanding of the desert's landscapes and its paths. Their sense of direction is unparalleled, and only those who are similar to them or strive to match their pace can rival it..."^{li}

The Battle of "Ténissa":

This battle stands as one of the largest confrontations in the Hoggar region during 1902, under the leadership of Amenokal "Moussa Ag Amastan," who ruled from 1902 to 1921. Despite the significant disparity in equipment and manpower, the insurgents managed to persevere.^{lii} The Cotnest campaign reached Tamanrasset on May 5, 1902, and then advanced toward Tite on May 7 at 3:30 PM, where it was confronted by the Tuareg army led by Sidi Mohammed Ag Othman. The two forces clashed in the Battle of "Tenessa," where the Tuareg army emerged from Wadi Amsel and attacked the French. During the skirmish, Cotnest sustained injuries to his shoulders. The confrontation lasted about five hours, during which the Tuareg forces were defeated, resulting in numerous casualties and injuries.

After the battle, as usual, France downplayed its losses, reporting only three fatalities: Si Abdelmajid bin Si Ismail from Touggourt, Mokhtar bin Al-Hajj Bouhafis from Ain Salah, and Al-Hajj Mokhtar Weld Della from Ain Salah, along with ten wounded. On the side of the Tuareg rebels, the battle left 71 martyrs, with an additional 12 killed during the pursuit led by Kir Douro, bringing the total to 96 martyrs.^{liii} The mujahid "Ourzig Chenani," in an interview I conducted with him, provided a list of some participants in the Battle of "Tit" from the tribes: "Kel Ghela," "Deg Agali," "Akouh N'Tehli," "Askemaren," "Kel Tazoult," "Akalan N'Toussi," and "Aït Lewin."^{liiv}

The Battle of Elaman:

According to a report by Captain De Pommier, the military operations launched by France in the Hoggar region were a response to the assassination of Charles de Foucauld, prompting the French to decide on retaliation. Consequently, the region no longer experienced the tranquility it had previously enjoyed.^{liv} A battalion of the French army set out from "Taghouhat" in search of "Abba Ag Ghbali," who was responsible for the killing of Father Charles de Foucauld. At the same time, "Abba" and his groups were heading toward "Taghouhat," where they were joined by other groups. The French army pursued them, moving towards Tazrouk, then to "Terehtin," followed by "Armes Ramas," and eventually reaching "Tin-Hert" before arriving at "El-Aman." It was "Abbarjaghlo" who led them to this location, a narrow valley not far from the city of Tamanrasset, which became the site of the Battle of "El-

Aman," named after the valley itself. The resistance fighters, numbering 150, had a strategic position between the mountains compared to the forces of Captain Massu.^{lvi}

The battle took place on May 5, 1917, during which Captain "Massot" was injured and handed over command to "Consta." The fighting continued into the night, resulting in casualties among the French forces, and Captain "Massot" and his remaining troops withdrew from the Elamen area. The main reasons behind this battle included:

- A response to France, emphasizing that the conflict with Musa Ag Mistan was a matter concerning his tribe and some others, and did not involve them.
- The battle was also a response to the Senussi movement's propaganda aimed at expelling the "infidels" from Muslim lands.
- The battle demonstrated the ability of the Hoggar tribes to break the isolation and lift the siege imposed by France on the region to keep it out of the events of World War I.

Battle of Tehrak Binkar (In-eker): This battle took place on June 15, 1917, just two months after the Battle of Elamen. The people of the Hoggar engaged in another confrontation with the French in "Wadi Tehrak," near the "Inker" region north of Ain Amguel. The revolutionaries attacked a French patrol assigned to return the mail that had arrived at Ain Salah. When the patrol reached "Inker," they found the camel carrying the mail, but not the mail carrier. They began tracking the man's whereabouts, only to be ambushed by a large group of revolutionaries, estimated at between 200 and 300 men on camels. They were forced to retreat to the mountains to defend themselves. The battle raged for hours, resulting in many French soldiers being killed, with the patrol commander, "Petri," wounded, and the surviving members fleeing.^{lvii} Thus, the resistance of the inhabitants of the Hoggar region against French presence did not cease, but rather evolved into a new form of guerrilla warfare against French caravans in the area, continuing until the end of World War I. After that, the resistance gradually weakened as France ensured a period of calm in the northern regions of the country and shifted its focus towards the south, especially after the elimination of the Tuareg opposition. The resistance of the inhabitants of Hoggar to the French colonial presence in the region left significant results, which can be summarized in the following points:

1. The Tuareg uprising and the unity among tribes, which gave the resistance a national character in opposing colonial expansion.
2. The rejection of the French plan for territorial division in the Greater South, which the French administration had heavily relied upon.
3. The firm refusal of the cultural and religious assimilation policy pursued by Charles de Foucauld after his settlement in Tamanrasset, with the Tuareg's firm attachment to their land and the affirmation of Algeria's borders in the Greater South.^{lviii}

Conclusion:

European explorations in Africa during the 18th and 19th centuries are considered historical events that drastically changed the course of the African continent, politically, economically, and socially. These explorations played a pivotal role in paving the way for European colonization, leaving long-lasting effects on the continent's future.

Explorations Paving the Way for Colonization:

It is clear that European explorations were not merely innocent expeditions but were part of a colonial project aimed at enhancing European dominance over Africa. The main

objective of these expeditions was to exploit Africa's natural resources and markets to support the European industrial revolution.

Economic and Political Motives:

The primary motive behind the European explorations was economic, as colonial powers sought to secure new resources. Politically, these expeditions were part of the competition among European powers to expand their influence and colonies. These economic and political motivations were intertwined with cultural and scientific ambitions, which aimed to discover unknown regions and study African societies.

Strategies Used:

European powers employed flexible strategies to expand their control, using agreements and treaties as primary tools, which allowed them to impose influence on African tribes. In cases where peaceful methods failed, military forces, supported by technological superiority, were used to gain control over African lands.

Economic Impact:

The European explorations reshaped African economies, making them dependent on European markets. This shift led to the decline of traditional economic systems in Africa, transforming many African societies into producers of raw materials for colonial powers, thus impoverishing local communities.

Social and Cultural Impact:

Colonization led to changes in the structure of African societies by imposing European education and culture. Local cultural identities were undermined, and social divisions arose as educated elites were favored over other members of society. The spread of Christianity and the use of European languages contributed to changing African societies on both cultural and religious levels.

Political Impact:

European explorations laid the foundation for a period of imperial control, with Africa being divided among colonial powers during the Berlin Conference of 1884-1885. This division established the modern political borders of African states, contributing to the conflicts and struggles that continue to affect the continent. In the Hoggar region, European explorations served as a precursor to French colonization in southern Algeria. Exploratory missions and scientific expeditions played a major role in providing geographical and religious reports about the area, which paved the way for French colonial expansion in the Hoggar. The main objective was to control the region for its natural and economic resources. The Hoggar region witnessed continuous resistance against French presence, with the Tuareg tribes uniting in their fight against colonial expansion. The resistance of the Hoggar inhabitants had a national character, expressing their rejection of colonial domination and attempts to impose military and political control. This led to the unification of the Hoggar tribes against their common enemies.

Guerrilla Warfare Strategy Against French Forces:

The resistance in the Hoggar region primarily relied on the guerrilla warfare strategy, which was executed by the Tuareg tribes against French military convoys. This strategy effectively disrupted French forces and made it difficult for them to gain full control over the region, slowing down the progress of French colonization.

French Military Power and Colonial Expansion:

France employed excessive military force in an attempt to suppress the resistance in Hoggar, launching massive military campaigns against the Tuareg, such as the Battle of "Tit" and the Battle of "Ilaman." Despite the technological and military superiority of the French forces, the resistance remained strong, demonstrating the Tuareg's ability to confront French expansion for a prolonged period.

Social and Cultural Impacts on the People of Hoggar:

The French presence in the Hoggar region had significant impacts on the cultural and religious identities of the local population. France imposed European education and culture, aiming to spread Christianity. This led to shifts in the social structures within the Hoggar communities, where the educated elite were favored over the rest of the population.

French Expansion and the Political Geography of the Region:

The military campaigns in Hoggar resulted in a fundamental change to the region's geography, as the French drew new borders that separated the Tuareg tribes and restricted their movements. These borders laid the foundation for the reorganization of the region, causing ongoing conflicts between the Hoggar people and the French colonizers.

Economic Impacts of French Colonization in Hoggar:

French colonization in Hoggar led to the intensive exploitation of the region's natural resources, contributing to the impoverishment of the local population and the deterioration of their economic structure. The region was made dependent on the French colonial economy, with the resources of Hoggar being drained to serve French economic interests.

Through these events, it can be concluded that the resistance of the people of Hoggar to French colonial presence was organized and impactful, characterized by tribal unity and guerrilla warfare. Despite the military defeats faced by the resistance, it set an example of resilience in the face of colonialism. Although the French eventually took control of Hoggar, the impact of the resistance had a lasting effect on shaping the national identity of the region's people and their rejection of colonial dominance.

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