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OUR BULLETIN

This is the first issue of this scientific bulletin published by the Institute of African Studies—Cairo University.

The goal of this bulletin as apparent from the essays published here is purely academic. It is to publish recent researches either done by the specialized staff of the institute or by others. These researches deal with the different aspects of the continent of Africa.

Our Institute views this bulletin as a complement to its scientific mission, because—as a specialized institute, it aims foremost to encourage studies dealing with our continent and also to publish all new research and findings about it. Its aim is also to exchange this knowledge with other Institutes and Universities or other scientific bodies either in African Countries or anywhere else all over the world.

As we welcome this exchange of knowledge which serves our combined efforts, we hope that these studies about the African Continent, its inhabitants their activities, their civilization and their contributions towards the progress of mankind may always develop and grow.

Our Bulletin will be issued annually in June, but we hope that in the near future two issues will appear each year.

Editor

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AU UNPUBLISHED DOCUMENT
IN THE HISTORY OF THE ANGLO-FRENCH
COMPETITION FOR THE DOMINATION
IN UPPER NILE

وثيقة غير منشورة عن تاريخ الصراع الانجليزي - الفرنسي
على السيادة في اعالي النيل

هذه الوثيقة خطاب كتبه مارشان في فاشودة للماجور جاكسون البريطاني في أكتوبر ١٨٩٨ . (الأصل محفوظ بمكتبة المعهد) وتشير الوثيقة لعديد من الأحداث منها : أن قوات جاكسون في فاشودة كانت كلها من المصريين ، وأن بعثة مارشان كانت تضم طبيبا متخصصا في امراض المناطق الحارة التي كانت من أعقد مشكلات الأوربيين في افريقيا . كما يلاحظ قلق مارشان على الامدادات التي كان ينتظرها اذ كان يخشى من أن تلقى مصر حملة جسي على بحر الغزال (١٨٨٠ - ١٨٨١) ، وهذه تبين محاولة كتشنر عرقلة وصول امدادات الفرنسيين الى فاشودة حتى يجعل اقامتهم هناك غير محتملة ، واخيرا تلقى الوثيقة اضاء على العلاقات الانجليزية الفرنسية في تلك الفترة وأهداف فرنسا من بعثتها هذه .

A Photograph of the Original Manuscript :

Fachoda 2 octobre 1898 -

(23)

A Monsieur le Commandant
Jackson Bay - Fachoda -

J'ai bien reçu votre honore
lettre Monsieur le Kamakura,
et j'ai été heureux de savoir que
celui de vos officiers égyptiens qui
est malade, n'est pas en danger -

Je vous remercie, pour l'avenir,
l'offre de mettre à votre disposition
pour les cas graves, notre médecin -
Le Docteur Guily, médecin de la
Marine française est une spécialiste
des maladies coloniales et il est
l'auteur de plusieurs découvertes
importantes dans la pathologie
indigène aux Colonies - Je souhaite
très vivement, cela va sans dire, que
vous n'ayez jamais besoin de son
intervention, mais il sera toujours
à votre pleine disposition si par
malheur le cas se présentait -

Je profite de cette occasion
pour vous remercier d'avoir bien
voulue me faire donner des nouvelles
de la lettre que j'adressais au
Commandant de la Commission
française - Je suis très sûr que
les intentions françaises et dont on a
parlé l'année dernière à l'Assemblée
S'entendent, il ne saurait donc
se produire de regrettable -

Je suis très inquiet du
retard de notre commission que
j'attendais à Fachoda du 27 au
28 - j'ai grand peur qu'elle ne
soit arrêtée par les barages de
grands roseaux qui en étoient en
formation déjà dans le Bahr el
Ghazal, entre le confluent du
Bahr el Arab et celui du Sobek -
Le souvenir du désastre de
l'expédition Gessi en 1870/71, me
fait penser de nombreuses nuits
depuis quelques jours - Les passages
sont toujours très dangereux -

*Voilà après Commandant,
les moments de ma candidature
qui s'écoulent —*



A Copy of the Manuscript in Print :

Fachoda 2 Octobre 1898.

A Monsieur le Commandant.

Jackson Bey-Fachoda.

J'ai bien reçu votre honorée lettre Monsieur le Kaimakan, et j'ai été heureux de savoir que celui de vos officiers égyptiens qui est malade, n'est pas en danger.

Je vous renouvelle, pour l'avenir, l'offre de mettre à votre disposition pour les cas graves, notre médecin-Le docteur Emily, médecin de la marine française est un spécialiste des maladies coloniales et il est l'auteur de plusieurs découvertes importantes dans la pathologie médicale aux colonies-je souhaite très vivement, cela va sans dire, que vous si ayez jamais besoin de son intervention, mais il sera toujours à votre pleine disposition si par malheur le cas se présistrait.

Je profite de cette occasion pour vous remercier d'avoir bien voulu me faire donner des nouvelles de la lettre que j'envoyais au commandant de la canonnière française. Je crois qu'avec les précautions prises et dont m'a parlé Monsieur le Capitaine Stanton, il ne saurait rien se produire de regrettable.

Je suis assez inquiet du retard de notre canonnière que j'attendais à Fachoda du 25 au 28. J'ai grand peur qu'elle ne soit arrêtée par les barrages de grands roscaux qui en Août se formaient déjà dans le Bahr Al Ghazal, entre le confluent du Bahr El Arab et celui du Soueh.

Le souvenir du disastre de l'expédition Gessi 1880/81 me fait passer de mauvaises nuits depuis quelques jours. Ces parages sont toujours très dangereux.

Veillez agrier Commandant, les assurances de ma consideration très distinguée.

Marchand.

The Manuscript :

The manuscript published here, on which we are going to shed light and summarise the issues it leads us to, is a letter from Marchand dated 2 October 1898.

It was written in Fashoda to Major Jackson the British leader whom the Sirdar of the Egyptian army Sir Herbert Kitchener had left at the head of a troop of Egyptian and Sudanese Soldiers ⁽¹⁾.

The original manuscript is kept in the library of the Institute of African Studies, Cairo University among other original documents dealing with the events of the Sudan during this period. It testifies many important facts and opens the discussion of some other problems concerning the events of the Sudan and the condition of England in Egypt and the Anglo-French relations during this period .

Before discussing its contents, we have to deal with the circumstances in which it was sent.

Marchand's expedition and the Circumstances related to the document published here :

France was able during the 19th Century to form a big empire in Africa. It began by the occupation of Algeria in 1830. After this the French extended their influence to Tunisia and Morocco in North Africa and to what was called «French West Africa» in West Africa. They also extended their influence to «French Equatorial Africa» .

Thus, the French Empire extended from Algeria to Congo and from Dakar to the western borders of the Sudan. As to the East of the continent, they occupied what is known by the name of the French Somalil and, this besides the island of Madagascar. These Territories could be estimated at one sixth of the total survey of the whole continent.

(1) Many of the documents, concerning the history of the Sudan during that period are reserved in the (Central Building for Documents) at Khartoum, but some of these documents had found their way out of the Sudan for example those which are found in the library of the School of Oriental Studies in Durham University in England. This library contains Sir Reginald Wingate's papers who has played an important role in the history of the Sudan from 1884 to 1916.

The French set their eyes on the Nile Valley especially because they found other European colonisers as Leopold II King of Belgium trying to extend his power from Congo to the Nile Valley.

The French and Belgians greed led to a new problem in the relations between the imperialistic countries concerning the Sudan and upper Nile.

As for the Belgians, the government of the Congo Free State has, on 12 May 1893 ; made an agreement with England according to which England had lent to the Free Congo a great part of Bahr al Ghazal and the Belgians began to occupy this Area. (1)

France threatened to use force and a French troop under the leadership of Monteil was sent to drive the Belgians away from the Upper Ubangi.

Victor Liotard lead another troop eastwards to the Nile. But France and Belgium came to an agreement in 14 August 1894, according to which France was not to oppose the Belgian's occupation to (Lado's barrier) rent to her by England while the Belgians agreed to evacuate territories which hindered the French from moving towards the Nile.

This Franco-Belgian agreement which aimed at extending each country's influence over the Nile reviewed the problem of the Sudan's position after the Mahdism Revolution.

Is the Sudan to be considered no man's land «Res Nullius», or is it legally under the supreme power of the Sultan and the Kediye is its legal governor ?

The French government however began thinking deeply from 1896 onwards of extending its domination towards the Nile Valley. To fulfill this purpose it was decided that two expeditions might be sent - one from the East and the other from the West.

It is worth noticing here that when France opposed the Anglo-Belgian's agreement of 12th 1894, she built her opposition on the fact that Egypt has the legal right on the Sudan. Hanotaux, the French Foreign Minister in 1895 declared that the Sudan is still legally under the authority of the Sultan and that the Khedive is its legal governor.

(1) Mohamed Foad Sukry : Egypt and Sudan and the history of the political unity of the Nile Valley in the nineteenth century (1958). pp. 451—462.

As for the expedition which was to move from East towards the Nile Valley France sent Mr. Lagard, the French governor of the Somal to Adis Ababa to try to gain Menelek's approval to facilitate the march of this expedition through Ethiopia towards the Nile.⁽¹⁾

England, knowing of such French activity in Ethiopia, sent Rennell Rodd to try to sign an agreement with Menelek aiming at preventing France from fulfilling its purposes.⁽²⁾

France however succeeded to move an expedition under the leadership of Bonchanps from the east. This expedition reached the Sobat at the end of December 1897 and thus became 100 miles far from Fashoda, but it could not go further because of the lack of provisions and was obliged to return.

France made another attempt and sent another expedition under the leadership of Faivre who reached the Nile on 22nd June 1898.

As for the west, France prepared another expedition under the leadership of Marchand the writer of the document published here.⁽³⁾

Marchand had left France on May 1896 and reached Loango in the French Congo with eight officers and 120 soldiers and after that he reached Brazaville and advanced towards the Ubangi River.

The mission did not go by land because of the swamps of Bahr al Ghazal but carried her small fleet through the Ubangi to the Nile and was obliged to cross the vast swamps of Bahr al Ghazal and went down the Nile till it reached Fashoda at five o'clock p.m. on Sunday 10th July 1898, and raised the French flag over the ruins of the old Egyptian fortress there.⁽⁴⁾

We may wonder about France's purposes from sending such an expedition.

Did France aim at settling there and taking the position as a point linking its territories in the East with those in the west of the continent ?

(1) Gabriel Hanotaux et Alfred Martineau : Histoire des Colonies Françaises (Tome IV, Paris 1931), p. 585.

(2) See : Rodd, J. Rennell : Social and Diplomatic Memoires (1922).

(3) Jean Baptiste Marchand was born on 22nd November 1863. He was appointed as an assistant lieutenant in the French army. He fought in the Senegal. In 1902 he was promoted as a colonel. He took part in the First World War and was promoted in 1917 to general. He died on 14th January 1934.

(4) Hanotaux, et Martineau : Op. cit. p. 522

We have to notice that, at that time the importance of the Nile and of the domination over its upper parts began to be clear.

Or was their purpose nothing but to oblige England to come to an agreement concerning the Egyptian problem taking advantage of its existence in this territory between the white Nile and Sobat to oblige England to start negotiations about its future projects concerning Egypt ?

Or did France want to be an obstacle and prevent, if possible, English projects which aimed at linking Egypt with the Cape of Good Hope, as well as their possessions in East of Africa with those of the Royal Niger Company in the West ? ⁽¹⁾

In casting a look at the phases of this crisis, we may shed light on the French objectives behind this mission.

On 20th August 1898 a fight took place between the French and the Dervishes who sent a steamer to Omdurman to ask for reinforcements and provisions. This steamer reached Omdurman on 9 September 1898 after the dervishes, defeat and thus they found there the Sirdar instead of the Khalifah.

Kitchener, as soon as he became sure of the French occupation of Fashoda, hastened on 10th September to the south. He was instructed to try to convince Marchand that his presence in the Nile Valley is an infringement of the rights both of Great Britain and of the Khedive ⁽²⁾.

On 18th September (1898) Kitchener was at the Joors of Fashoda and on 19th September sent a letter to Marchand announcing his victory over the Khalifah in Omdurman and to tell him of his presence.

In Marchand's reply to Kitchener, after congratulating him on his victory over the Khalifah, the former stated that in accordance with the instructions from his government, he occupied Bahr Al Ghazal and the land west of the Nile up to Fashoda. He told him that he fought with the Dervishes on 25 August and was victorious over them and thus he freed the Shuluk's country from their domination and signed a treaty with the chief of the Shuluks who placed his country to the west of the White Nile under French protection.

(1) Mangin, General : Lettres de la Mission Marchand (Revue de deux Mondes, September 15, 1931).

N.B. : Mangin was a member of Marchand's mission.

(2) Shibeika, Mekki : The Independent Sudan (N.Y. 1957), p. 431.

On 1st September 1898 Kitchener entered Fashoda, met Marchand and a flaming discussion between the two leaders was about to lead to the use of force, but at last the two agreed to await orders from their governments, and Marchand could not resist the hoisting of the Egyptian Flag on the ruins of an old fortification, about 500 yards south of the French flag.

Kitchener left at Fashoda a Sudanese batalion under the command of Major Jackson and went southwards, for he expected that the Abyssinians might have reached the Subat. He reached a point where the Subat and the White Nile meet and there established a garrison, and thus made sure that Marchand was cut off from the interior and that he was beseiged at Fashoda.

The letter previously mentioned and which is published here is from Marchand to Major Jackson the English commander.

The contents of the letter :

In this letter Marchand mentions that he has received Jackson's letter and that he was glad to know that the Egyptian officer who was ill in his battalion, has become better and was not then in danger. He says that he puts at the command of the English battalion the French doctor «Emily» who is specialised in the diseases of tropical regions.

Marchand adds that he is anxious because the armed steamer and supplies he expected to reach Fashoda between 25th & 28th of September have failed to reach it. He said that he was afraid that something wrong might have happened to the expected steamer and that his fear increased as he remembered what happened to Gessi Pasha in 1880/1881 in the dangerous swamps of Bahr Al Ghazal.

This document explain many events :

1st It was written on 2nd October 1899. Marchand, as we have said before, has reached Fashoda on 10th July 1898 while Kitchener was near the doors of Fashoda on 18th September 1898 and entered the town on 21 September.

The document thus was written twelve days after Kitchener's arrival to Fashoda and after his departure southwards leaving Major Jackson in command at Fashoda with a Sudanese battalion.

(2) See : Emily, J. : Mission Marchand 1896—1899 (1913).

2nd This document is a clear evidence that there were Egyptian soldiers and officers in the battalion left at Fashoda. It is clear that England's share in the battles of the restoration of the Sudan was not more than a few officers at the head of the campaign, though this was the basis on which it claimed her rights in what was called the condominium agreement between the British government and the government of the Khedive of Egypt.

3rd This document sheds light on the Anglo-French relations in particular and the relations of the colonial powers in general, during this period. The Anglo-French relations had at that time reached a serious point and there was fear of a coming dispute between the two powers. Fashoda's crisis in fact started a series of negotiations between the two powers. Salisbury the English foreign minister, Sir Edmond Monson the British ambassador on one hand and M. Delcassé, the French foreign minister on the other hand played an important part and at last ended by the agreement between France and England in 1904 called «Entente Cordiale», and this agreement has affected and destined the policy of the two countries for a long time after.

All these facts indicate that France's main purpose from her campaign on Fashoda was to oblige England to discuss the question of Egypt as well as to seize the chance to discuss the foreign policies of the two countries.

4th Marchand mentioned his anxiety about the delay of the ammunitions and supplies which he expected to come. As we know Marchand hastened to occupy the Subat and according to the instructions of his government he prevented any ammunitions or supplies from reaching Marchand, and gave way only to the mostly needed provisions to reach him for only the preservation of his life and the lives of his men. England hoped that this would oblige France to send instructions to her officer to withdraw from Fashoda.

5th Marchand in his letter referred to the events of Gessi's campaign in the dangerous region of Bahr Al Ghazal during the years 1880 and 1881.

Romulo Gessi, as we know was an Italian. He was a friend of Gordon and took part with him in the Crimean War. When Gordon became ruler of the Equatorial Province in 1874 after Samuel Baker, he administered to Gessi many affairs in Bahr Al Ghazal. Gessi made a tour in lake Albert and was able to draw a map of it ⁽¹⁾.

(1) See, General Stone's Report about the Geographical discoveries in the years, 1874—1876.

When Gordon became general ruler of the Sudan in the year 1877, he appointed many foreigners in the Sudan. Gessi was appointed as a Mudir (governor) in Bahr Al Ghazal and was asked to put an end to the revolt of Soliman El Zobeir. He could defeat him and Soliman and many of his family and soldiers were put to death after their surrender in July 1879.

But Gessi returned to Khartoum ill and fatigued in January 1881, then he returned to Egypt. When he reached Suez on 28 March 1881, he was taken to the French hospital there but died two days later.

He records his speculations and adventures in the Sudan in an important book titled «seven Years in the Sudan-London 1892».

6th There are some other facts related to this document which we must mention.

We know that France could not oblige England to start negotiations with her before giving orders to Marchand to withdraw from Fashoda. Although the French foreign minister insisted that he could not submit to what would be the humiliation of France and insult to its national honour, yet England even refused the French proposal that an order might be sent to Marchand including a hint that the two governments would negotiate sooner about the relations between them. France was forced at last to recall Marchand.

The factors that led France at last to have this decision may be summarised as follows :—

1. There was no doubt that England would not give way and would not accept any French proposals for future negotiations so long as the French expedition was at Fashoda.

2. The sad state of Marchand and his men because he was cut off from the interior, and because his water transport was inadequate ; all this in addition to the shortage of ammunition and supplies.

3. Perhaps Russia, which was at that time France's ally persuaded her not to reach the point of war with Britain because of Fashoda.

4. The circumstances in France itself and France's relations with other countries let her think deeply about the results of such dispute with England.

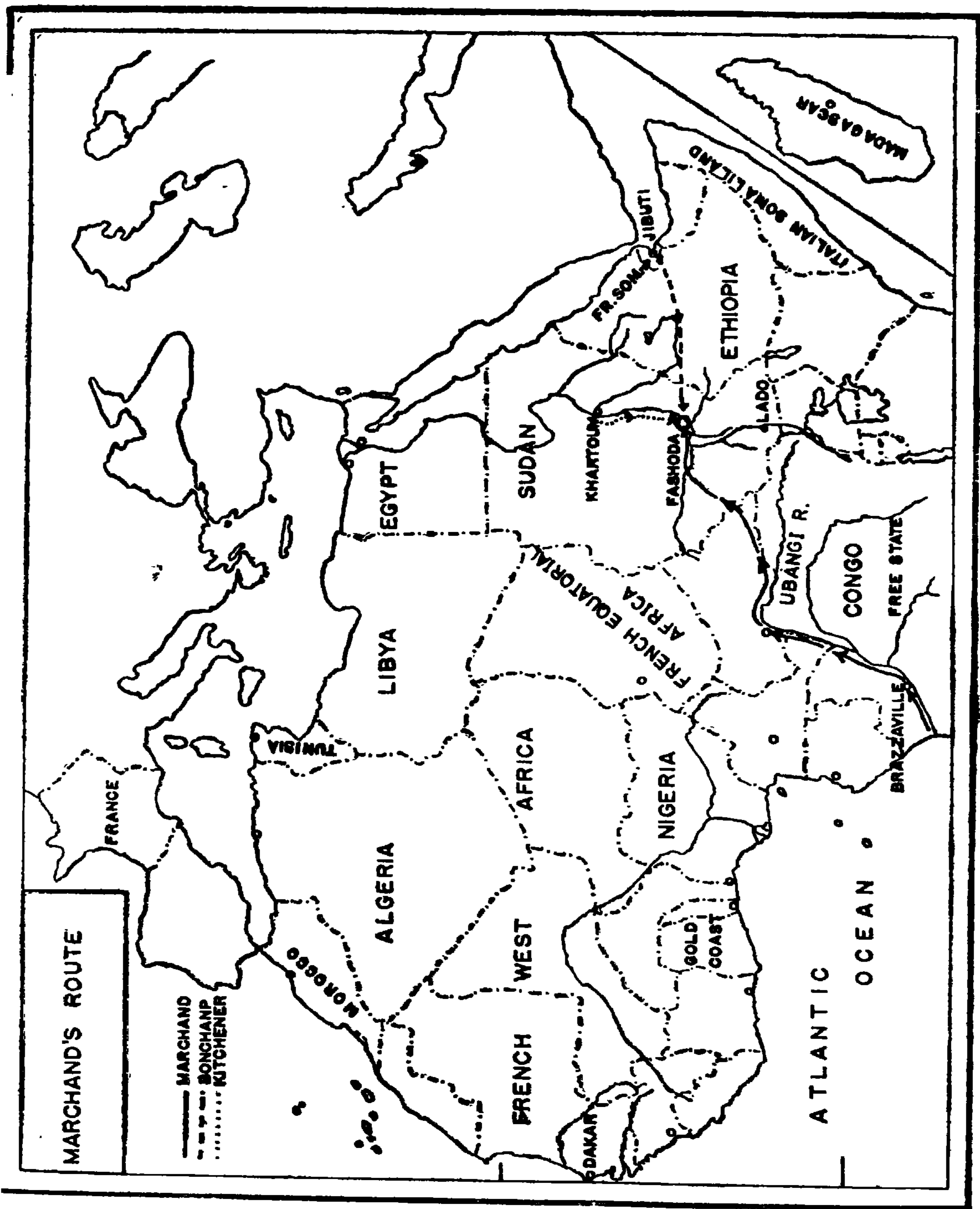
5. At that time, France began to think that it was better for her to come to an agreement with England. The French foreign minister Delcassé had announced during his discussions with the British ambassador in Paris concerning Fashoda's crisis, that France prefers English friendship to that of Russia.

At last the French Foreign Minister who was irritated by the behaviour of Marchand who had quitted Fashoda without permission and came to Cairo leaving his soldiers — sent his orders to Marchand to go back to Fashoda and withdraw his soldiers.

On the 4th of November 1898, Salisbury sent to E. Monson, the British ambassador this telegram.

« The French ambassador informed me to day that the decision had been taken by his Government to withdraw Marchand's party from Fashoda and to send him back there to carry out that decision and that orders to that effect had been sent to Cairo ».

Dr. Shawky El-Gamal



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