

## **THE FRANCO-BRITISH CONFLICT AFTER THE WITHDRAWAL OF THE FRENCH CAMPAIGN FROM EGYPT (1801-1807), AN ANALYTICAL STUDY**

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### **Abstract**

The English campaign on Alexandria in 1807 was linked to the international conflict that emerged in the aftermath of the French Revolution of 1789, and the subsequent international alliances and Anglo-French conflicts that led to Napoleon's campaign on Egypt (1798-1801), which ended with the Amiens Agreement in March 1802.

This research deals with the Franco-British conflict after the French campaign (1801-1807), which intensified after the advent of the campaign to Egypt, where Britain, exhausted at war, finally decided to negotiate. In March 1802, France and Britain signed the Treaty of Amiens, which returned Egypt to the Ottoman Sultan. Following the Treaty of Paris concluded on June 26, 1802, diplomatic relations between France and the Sublime Porte were restored, but the English took possession of Malta, and there was no way for them to abandon it. Possessing India, which was the base of their empires, they kept in Egypt 4,430 English soldiers, while the misfortune of Egypt was that it was torn between the conflicts of the Turks and the Mamluks, and the castles and fortresses were suffering from great destruction and ruin.

All these reasons prompted Great Britain to decide to implement what it had previously decided to invade Egypt in 1807 to limit Napoleon's influence and so that Egypt would not fall again into the hands of the French.

The research deals with the Franco-British conflict, the European alliance against France, and the English campaign against Alexandria.

**Keywords:** The Franco-British conflict, the French campaign, Egypt, the Treaty of Amiens, the Treaty of Paris, the English campaign on Alexandria.

### **1. Franco-British conflict**

Back in France, at the time of Brumaire's coup in 1799<sup>1</sup>[1], [2], the republic's armies had been driven out of Italy, but it had halted a multifaceted attack on France by the armies of

Russia, Austria and Britain, and Napoleon led the French armies back into northern Italy and defeated Austria at the Battle of Marengo<sup>ii</sup>[3] in June 1800. Subsequent defeats in Germany prompted Austria to sign the Peace of Luneville<sup>iii</sup>[4] in February 1801. Deprived of its allies for a second time, war-weary Britain finally decided to negotiate, and in March 1802, France and Britain signed the Treaty of Amiens, which returned Egypt to the Ottoman sultan, and for the first time Once 10 years ago Europe was at peace, but Britain violated the treaty by failing to evacuate the island of Malta as promised. Following the Treaty of Paris concluded on June 26, 1802, diplomatic relations between France and the Sublime Porte were restored, but the English took possession of Malta, and there was no way for them to abandon it, their possession of India, which was the base of their empire[5].

On August 22, 1802, Bonaparte assigned Colonel Sebastiani as ambassador to the Ottoman Empire, with a commercial mission in both Egypt and Syria. Cairo, which he arrived on October 24, and Bonaparte concluded with conviction that Egypt's misfortune had made it torn between the disputes of the Turks and the Mamluks, and if it had hastened the evacuation of the English from it, as there were 4,430 Englishmen<sup>iv</sup> in Alexandria, and 16,000 soldiers representing the Turkish army, but many of them They flee and flee, and besides that, there were 3000 or 4000 Mamluks who were under the leadership of three senior Mamluk princes, and there is a report included in the Monterrey newspaper in its issue issued on January 30, 1803, showing a great feeling that the presence of the English in Malta means that they will not stop monitoring Egypt[6].

Once again, British naval power thwarted Napoleon's attempt to take the war directly into British soil, and there was little actual fighting until Britain was able to form a new Continental Alliance in 1805. At the Battle of Trafalgar<sup>v</sup>[7], [8] on October 21, 1805, British naval artillery destroyed the French and Spanish fleets. , ending all idea of invasion, Napoleon turned instead against the allies of Britain, Russia and Austria. He surprised the Austrians at Ulm<sup>vi</sup>[9], and then decisively destroyed them at the Battle of Austerlitz<sup>vii</sup>[10] on December 2, 1805, perhaps an achievement. Under the Treaty of Pressburg<sup>viii</sup>[11], which French Foreign Minister Charles-Maurice de Talleyrand criticized as being too harsh, Austria paid a large indemnity, ceded the provinces of Venice and Tyrol, and allowed Napoleon to abolish the Holy Roman Empire[12].

The campaign against the Russian army in Europe led to a bloody stalemate at the Battle of Eylau<sup>ix</sup>[13] on February 8, 1807, leaving Napoleon in a perilous strait and extremely weak supply lines. However, when fighting resumed, the French prevailed at the Battle of Friedland<sup>x</sup>[13] on June 14, 1807, and Tsar Alexander I called for peace<sup>xi</sup>[14], [15], [16]. The Treaty of Tilsit<sup>xiii</sup>[17], [18], negotiated by the two emperors, divided Europe into two influential regions. Napoleon pledged to help the Russians against their Ottoman opponents and Alexander promised cooperation against Britain. Napoleon was now free to reorganize Europe, established his vassals on the thrones of their kingdoms, and established the Rhine Union[19].

Nevertheless, Napoleon met Tsar Alexander I of Russia at Tilsit, and during the military parade of the two emperors the artillery soldiers shouted excitedly: Long live the Emperor of the West, Long live the Emperor of the East. Everyone was amazed at this great spectacle: Europe is divided between two powerful empresses. Although the artillerymen represented the Imperial Guard, they were not, on one side or both, very familiar with the world of foreign policy, and perhaps their earlier shout was an expression of what they really wished. But historians less accepting of this view considered this scene a privileged evidence to rely on in confirming the belief that in Tilsit the two emperors divided Europe. This interpretation is not correct; It is sufficient to avoid being drawn into this error that we follow the facts and read the texts. This was not the moment when Europe was divided; It was unlikely to be divided between two allied emperors, and the Treaty of Tilsit clearly shows the emperor of the West rushing towards the East. The other fact is that Russia was expelled from all the areas it occupied on the Mediterranean. We read in the correspondences of Napoleon, shortly after signing the Treaty of Tilsit, about his great haste to disperse the Russian ships in the Mediterranean towards the Black Sea or towards the Baltic Sea[6].

In the broader context, from 1811, it became clear that Napoleon was not keeping to his team the terms of the Treaty of Tilsit, including the arrangement that Russia would wage war against Turkey, and Napoleon, and the promise that French aid would be at hand. However, after a long election campaign, it became clear that the French would not provide any support, because they refused to do so for the entirety of the war. These growing tensions led Napoleon to make the decision to invade Russia, after Napoleon had properly beaten the Austrians only a few months earlier.

However, Britain was isolated from French military power. By now Britain had seized most of the French merchants' cargo from the high seas, and in desperation the French merchants sold most of their ships to the neutral parties, allowing the United States to overtake France by the size of its merchant fleet. But after his string of military victories, Napoleon believed he could stop British trade by closing the continent off to its ships and products. With limited opportunities to sell manufactured goods, he believes, the British economy will suffer from overproduction and unemployment, while the lack of foreign gold to drive British exports will bankrupt the Treasury. With France moving to Britain's foreign markets, the economic crisis will push her government to seek peace. Accordingly, Napoleon launched the Continental System: in the Berlin Decree of November 1806, British trade with all countries under French influence, including British products transported by neutral shipping, was prohibited. When the British responded by requiring all neutral ships to stop at British ports for inspections and licenses, Napoleon threatened to seize any ships that stopped in English ports. Thus, an all-out naval war broke out against the neutrals[19].

## **2. European alliance against France**

Europe had been in turmoil since the start of the French Revolutionary Wars in 1792, and after five years of war the French Republic defeated the First Coalition in 1797, an alliance made up of Austria, Prussia, Great Britain, Spain, and various Italian nations. A second coalition was formed in 1798, led by Britain, Austria, and Russia, and included the Ottoman Empire, Portugal, and Naples, but by 1801 this alliance had also been defeated, leaving Britain the only opponent to the new French consul government. In March 1802, France and Britain agreed to end hostilities by the Treaty of Amiens, and for the first time in ten years, all of Europe was at peace. But many problems persisted between the two sides, making the treaty more difficult to implement, and in May 1803, Britain declared war on France.

The Battle of Austerlitz, also known as the Battle of the Three Emperors, one of the most important and decisive conflicts of the Napoleonic Wars, took place on December 2, 1805, and is widely considered Napoleon Bonaparte's greatest victory, as the French Great Army defeated the most numerous Russian and Austrian army. Under the leadership of Alexander I and Franz II (Francis II)<sup>xiii</sup>. The battle brought a swift end to the War of the



Third Coalition, with the Austrians signing the Treaty of Pressburg later that month. The battle is often cited as a tactical masterpiece[10].

In December 1804, the Anglo-Swedish Agreement led to the creation of the Third Alliance, with British Prime Minister William Pitt the Younger spending the years 1804 and 1805 in a flurry of diplomatic activity geared toward forming a new alliance against France, and by April 1805 Britain and Russia had signed the alliance, and Austria was eager On revenge against France after the latter defeated her twice recently, she joined the alliance after several months.

Before the formation of the Third Coalition, Napoleon had assembled an invasion force called the Army of England around six camps at Boulogne in northern France. Napoleon had intended to use this invasion force to strike England<sup>xiv</sup> [20], and although she had never invaded England, Napoleon's forces received meticulous and valuable training for any potential military operation. The men at Boulogne formed the core of what Napoleon later called the Great Army. At first this French army had about 200,000 men divided into seven legions, which were large field units containing 36 to 40 cannons. In addition to these forces, Napoleon created a cavalry reserve of 22,000, divided into two divisions of cavalry and four divisions of cavalry (Dragon), one division of improvised cavalry and one division of light cavalry, all supported by 24 artillery pieces. By 1805, the large army had grown to a force of 350,000 men, who were well equipped and trained and commanded by competent officers[13].

The disastrous Allied defeat rocked Franz II's confidence in the British-led war. France and Austria immediately agreed to an armistice and were soon followed by the signing of the Treaty of Pressburg on December 26. The victory at Austerlitz allowed the creation of the Confederation of the Rhine, a group of German states intended as a buffer zone between France and Europe Central. The Confederation of the Rhine rendered the Holy Roman Empire virtually useless, so the latter collapsed in 1806 after Franz abdicated the imperial throne, keeping Franz I of Austria as his only official title. But these achievements did not establish a lasting peace on the continent. Prussian concerns about growing French influence in Central Europe sparked the War of the Fourth Coalition in 1806.

Napoleon's victory at Austerlitz came to overthrow the Holy Germanic Empire, and to establish the Empire of the West. As the empire of the West had not yet completed its circle of expansion, the new tsar immediately decided to turn again to the East: he began



the war against Prussia in the year 1806, then entered into a conflict with Russia with the same intensity as the conflict it had before with England, and from this began The eastern issue presents itself[6]. In the midst of these events, Sebastiani, who had been promoted to the rank of general, was sent to Istanbul as ambassador to France, in 1806, and his main task was to draw Turkey into the war against Russia, which he actually succeeded in, as the Sultan's forces were placed on the Danube.

But the English fleet attacked Istanbul, but Sebastiani, in view of the turmoil that afflicted the city in the wake of this unexpected threat, made the city in a state of defense, while the ministers of the Ottoman Sultan procrastinated for a long time to enter into negotiations with the English ambassador, the city walls were fortified, and artillery batteries were repaired. and supplying it with ammunition. After a few days, the English ships turned back, with the cannons of the Dardanelles castles attacking them. During their retreat, the British lost a number of victims. In fact, it was not easy to achieve the capture of a city like Istanbul through a sudden military attack, as the British imagined. All these reasons prompted Great Britain to decide to implement what it had previously decided to invade Egypt in 1807 to limit Napoleon's influence and so that Egypt would not fall again into the hands of the French.

### **3. The English campaign on Alexandria**

The English campaign on Alexandria in 1807 [21],[22], [23] was linked to the international conflict that emerged in the aftermath of the French Revolution of 1789, and the subsequent international alliances and Anglo-French conflicts that led to Napoleon's campaign against Egypt (1798-1801)[24], [25],[26], which ended with the Amiens Agreement in March 1802. But the conflict soon resumed once others joined the Third International Alliance in which the Ottoman-French rapprochement occurred, and therefore, [27], [28], [29], [30],both England and Russia directed their efforts to pressure the Ottoman Empire, which led to directing the English campaign to Alexandria in 1807. In the context of the Anglo-Ottoman War, England directed a campaign of 5,000 soldiers led by General Alexander Mackenzie Fraser[31], [32], for the occupation of Alexandria to secure a base of operations against the Ottoman Empire in the Mediterranean, as part of a larger strategy against the Franco-Ottoman alliance [28].



The Anglo-Ottoman War (1807-1808) was part of the Napoleonic Wars. During the War of the Third Alliance between the United Kingdom, Russia, Prussia and Sweden against the First French Empire, in the summer of 1806, Count Sebastiani, Napoleon's first ambassador to the Ottoman Empire, was able to persuade the Ottomans to cancel all special privileges granted to Russia in 1805, restricting the opening of the Turkish Straits (Dardanelles) to French warships. In return, Napoleon promised to help the Sultan quell the rebellion in Serbia and restore the territories lost by the Ottoman Empire. After the Russian army entered Moldova and Achaia in 1806, the Ottomans declared war on Russia[33].

During Operation Dardanelles in September 1806, Britain pressured Sultan Selim III to expel Count Sebastiani, declare war on France, cede the Danube kingdoms to Russia, and hand over the Ottoman fleet, and the forts on the Dardanelles, to the Royal Navy. After Selim refused this ultimatum, a British fleet led by Vice-Admiral Sir John Thomas Duckworth<sup>xv</sup>[34],[35], [36], entered the Dardanelles on February 19, 1807, and destroyed the Ottoman naval force in the Sea of Marmara, and anchored in front of Astana. But the Ottomans installed their powerful cannons and fortified their fortifications with the help of Count Sebastiani and French engineers, forcing the British warships to sail again to the Mediterranean on March 3, 1807.

On March 16, 1807, Britain stripped of a campaign against Egypt, and occupied Alexandria, but the Egyptians defeated it in Rosetta, and forced her to leave after six months. Also, France did not provide sufficient military support to the Ottomans in their violent war with Russia, and Napoleon failed to force Russia to an armistice agreement in 1807. Therefore, on January 5, 1809[37], [33], the Ottoman government concluded the Treaty of Dardanelles with Britain, and the English landing in Egypt was in the spring of 1807, through a preventive action inspired by the immediate desire to thwart the ambitions and supposed plans of France in this country, and it also had another reason that gave birth to the events of the military campaign in 1807, the desire to occupy Egypt. In order to understand the full meaning, it is necessary to return to the campaign of Bonaparte, and to indicate, the course of the policy of Great Britain from the time it was preparing to occupy Egypt as an ally of the Sultan until the day when it appeared in opposition to the Porte [38].



## **Conclusions**

- This research deals with the Franco-British conflict after the French campaign (1801-1807), which intensified after the advent of the campaign to Egypt, where Britain, exhausted in war, finally decided to negotiate.
- The French campaign against Egypt was a major cause of the Franco-British conflict. Although France and Britain signed the Treaty of Amiens in March 1802, which returned Egypt to the Ottoman Sultan, diplomatic relations between France and the Sublime Porte returned, following the Treaty of Paris concluded on June 26, 1802, but the English acquired Malta, and then began their control of the Mediterranean, and the English considered this a necessary condition to secure their possession of India, which was the base of their empire.
- Where they kept in Egypt 4,430 English soldiers, while Egypt's misfortune was to make it torn between the conflicts of the Turks and the Mamluks, and the castles and fortresses were suffering from great destruction and devastation.
- The English campaign on Alexandria in 1807 was linked to the international conflict that emerged in the aftermath of the French Revolution of 1789, and the subsequent international alliances and Anglo-French conflicts that led to Napoleon's campaign on Egypt (1798-1801), which ended with the Amiens Agreement in March 1802.
- On March 16, 1807, Britain stripped of a campaign against Egypt, and occupied Alexandria, but the Egyptians defeated it in Rosetta, and forced her to leave after six months.
- The descent of the British to Egypt in March 1807, through a preventive action inspired by the immediate desire to thwart the ambitions and supposed plans of France in this country, and had also another reason that gave birth to the events of the military campaign in 1807, is the desire to occupy Egypt.
- In order to understand the full meaning, it is necessary to return to the campaign of Bonaparte, and to point out, the course of the policy of Great Britain from the time she was preparing to occupy Egypt as an ally of the Sultan until the day she appeared in opposition to the Porte.



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## Notes

<sup>i</sup>The Brumaire coup occurred on November 19, 1799. It was the 18th Brumaire, the eighth year under the French Republican calendar. He overthrew the government of the Directoire, replaced him with the French Consulate, and brought General Napoleon Bonaparte to power as France's first consul.

<sup>ii</sup>The Battle of Marengo took place between France and Austria in 1800, in which the French armies led by Napoleon Bonaparte were victorious, forcing Austria to sign the Treaty of Lunéville in 1801, and the results were France's capture of all the borders between it and the Rhine River, and Austria's withdrawal from Italy for good.

<sup>iii</sup>Treaty of Lunéville: or the Peace of Lunéville, concluded between France and Austria on February 9, 1801, during the reign of First Consul Napoleon Bonaparte.

<sup>iv</sup>The English forces in Egypt consisted of two armies: the first, about 15,000 fighters, led by Sir John Healy Hutchinson, occupied Alexandria, Rashid and Damanhour, and there was an army coming from India through the Red Sea, numbering about 6,000 fighters, and its general camp in Giza.

<sup>v</sup>The Battle of Trafalgar is a naval battle that took place between the English fleet led by Admiral Horatio Nelson against the allied French and Spanish fleets under the command of French Admiral Pierre Charles Villeneuve on October 21, 1805 near Cape Trafalgar in Cadiz, southwest Spain. The last attempt by Napoleonic France to challenge English supremacy over the seas.

<sup>vi</sup>Ulm is a German city located on the Danube River.

<sup>vii</sup>The Battle of Austerlitz took place near the town of Austerlitz in the Austrian Empire (today in Slavkov or Brna in the Czech Republic).

<sup>viii</sup>The Treaty of Pressburg refers to four peace treaties concluded at Pressburg (now Bratislava in Slovakia). The most famous of these treaties is the Fourth Peace of Pressburg in 1805 during the Napoleonic Wars, which ended the Third War of the Alliance.

<sup>ix</sup>The Battle of Eylau on February 7-8, 1807, was a bloody and inconclusive battle between Napoleon's Great Army and the Imperial Russian Army near the town of Eylau in East Prussia. This battle was one of the battles fought during the War of the Fourth Coalition, part of the Napoleonic Wars.

<sup>x</sup>The Battle of Friedland June 14, 1807 saw Napoleon's army decisively defeat the army of Count von Bennigsen of Russia. Ended the War of the Fourth Coalition (1806-1807) against Napoleon. The French took control of the battlefield and the Russian army retreated across the Wonna River, drowning in it many soldiers trying to escape.

<sup>xi</sup>The foreign policy of Tsar Alexander Pavlovich, the fourteenth emperor of Russia, was moderate, and he tried to establish a friendship with France and Britain that did not last long, and Napoleon Bonaparte declared war on Russia in 1812. The French invasion of Russia was a turning point in the Napoleonic Wars, as Napoleon's goal was From the war, he was forcing Tsar Alexander I of Russia to stop trade with Britain, which, in his opinion, would have prompted her to accept peace with France.

<sup>xii</sup>The Two Treaties of Tilsit : Two treaties were concluded in Tilsit by Emperor Napoleon I on July 7, 1807, after his victory in the Battle of Friedland. The first treaty was concluded on July 7 between Tsar Alexander I of Russia and Emperor Napoleon Bonaparte, while the second treaty between France and Prussia was concluded on July 9, the treaties of Tilsit e ending the War of the Fourth Coalition. After apparently friendly

negotiations, they signed not only a treaty but an alliance. Alexander pledged to mediate peace between England and France, and if he failed to do so, he would join France against England. This pledge delighted Napoleon because he judged that cooperation with Russia in the siege of England was far more important than his acquisition of more lands.

<sup>xiii</sup>Franz II was the last Holy Roman Emperor from 1792 until August 6, 1806, after the Holy Roman Empire dissolved the German nation due to his crushing defeat at the hands of the First French Empire at the Battle of Austerlitz, in 1804 he established the Austrian Empire, thus becoming the first Emperor of Austria, which he ruled until his death in 1835.

<sup>xiv</sup>The Army of England (Armée d'Angleterre) is one of the armies of the Republic, formed to fight against a united Europe. On October 26, 1797, the Directoire government decided to assemble a new army for the conquest of Great Britain. Since until the end of December this army had not been assembled, 40,000 men were withdrawn from the army of Italy, 10,000 from the armies of the Rhine and Mainz, and Napoleon Bonaparte was appointed head-general of this army, and at the same time, General Desaix, acting The commander, by decree of January 14, 1800, as of January 17, took the name Army of the West.

<sup>xv</sup>John Thomas Duckworth, 1<sup>st</sup> Baron in General Command (February 9, 1748 – August 31, 1817) was an officer in the Royal Navy, appointed second in the Mediterranean Fleet in 1805, commanding the squadron protecting the transports of the Alexandria campaign in 1807, but had to withdraw after five months due to lack of supplies. Duckworth summed up this campaign by saying: Our government is of the wretched determination of sending 5,000 soldiers, without a fleet, to Alexandria.