

Title: European Explorations of Africa during the 18th and 19th Centuries: Motives, Routes, Means, and Colonial Impact

Termzi Mohamed

Doctoral Student, Laboratory of the Scientific and Cultural Heritage of the Tamanrasset Region, University of Amin AL-Akkal EL Haj Moussa Akhamouk - Tamanrasset, Algeria. Email : termzi.mohammed@univ-tam.dz

Nouacer Abderrahmane

Doctor, Laboratory of the Scientific and Cultural Heritage of the Tamanrasset Region, University of Amin AL-Akkal EL Haj Moussa Akhamouk - Tamanrasset, Algeria. Email: nouacerabd@gmail.com

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Abstract

European Explorations of Africa: Motives, Methods, and Impacts (18th–19th Centuries) This study explores European expeditions in Africa during the 18th and 19th centuries, focusing on their motives, methods, and impacts. It examines Europe's economic ambitions for natural resources and new trade routes, political goals of territorial expansion and influence, and scientific interests in exploring and documenting Africa's environmental and cultural diversity. The study analyzes strategies used by European powers, including treaties with local leaders, military interventions, and colonial rule, both direct and indirect. It also highlights the role of scientific and diplomatic missions in supporting expansionist objectives. Furthermore, it assesses the profound impacts on Africa, such as economic exploitation, social disruptions, and cultural changes through the spread of European languages, religions, and customs. By reviewing historical evidence, the study offers a comprehensive analysis of how these explorations shaped Africa's history and intercontinental relations.

Keywords: Motives, Explorations, Transformations, Treaties, West Africa.

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Introduction:

The European explorations of Africa during the 18th and 19th centuries represent one of the most transformative episodes in modern history. As European powers expanded their maritime capabilities and imperial ambitions, Africa became a focal point of exploration, conquest, and control. These expeditions were not merely geographic journeys but were driven by strategic objectives that included economic gain, political expansion, and scientific curiosity. The goals of exploration encompassed the search for new trade routes, access to raw materials, and the spread of European cultural and religious ideals.

The impact of these explorations was far-reaching, laying the groundwork for European colonization and fundamentally altering the continent's political, economic, and cultural landscape. The establishment of colonial rule led to widespread resource extraction, the reorganization of African economies to suit European interests, and the imposition of foreign administrative, educational, and cultural systems. While some technological and infrastructural advancements were introduced, the negative repercussions—such as exploitation, social disruption, cultural erosion, and long-lasting economic dependency—were significant and enduring.

This study aims to provide a comprehensive and critical analysis of the European explorations of Africa during the 18th and 19th centuries by addressing the following core questions:

- What were the primary motivations behind European explorations of Africa during the 18th and 19th centuries?

This question explores the complex interplay of economic, political, scientific, and religious factors that inspired European nations to undertake extensive voyages into the African interior.

- What strategies and methods did European powers employ in exploring Africa and expanding their influence?

This part of the study investigates the various tactics used by European powers to achieve their goals, including the use of treaties and diplomacy, military intervention, missionary work, and the exploitation of internal rivalries among African societies.

- What were the economic, social, and cultural impacts of European explorations on African societies?

This inquiry evaluates the multifaceted consequences of European expansion, including the transformation of African economies, shifts in social structures, and the deep cultural changes imposed on indigenous populations.

By analyzing the motivations, strategies, and consequences of European explorations, this research seeks to deepen our understanding of the colonial encounter and its long-term implications for African development and identity. It also aims to shed light on the historical roots of modern challenges faced by many African nations today.

Motivations of European Explorers and Travelers

The motives and objectives behind exploratory journeys varied depending on the explorers themselves and the entities that supported them. Some were driven by a spirit of adventure, seeking to uncover the unknown, discover the unfamiliar, and break away from the ordinary. Others pursued wealth and material gain, aiming to profit through trade or by securing specific rewards.

Religious motivations also played a significant role for certain explorers and travelers, who took it upon themselves to spread their faith in newly discovered lands. Additionally, intellectual curiosity and a desire to advance scientific and geographical knowledge inspired others to fill the gaps in the understanding of Africa's interior regions. Finally, some were drawn by colonial ambitions, exploring new territories to serve the commercial interests of their nations or to gather intelligence as a prelude to domination and control—embodying the notion that “to know people is to control and lead them.”

Considering these broad motivations and objectives, explorers and travelers included scholars, missionaries, travel enthusiasts, and adventurers driven by a passion for risk, eager to learn about the conditions of various peoples and lands.

These general motivations applied to European explorers, whose efforts during the 19th century were largely focused on the African continent. Their pursuits ranged from satisfying scientific curiosity, advancing religious missions, combating slavery, to

facilitating conquest and colonization. (Mourre, 1986, p. 78)

Categories of European Explorers

European explorers can generally be classified into two distinct categories: professional explorers and accidental explorers. A professional explorer is someone who embraces exploration as a vocation or passion, undertaking multiple significant journeys, thereby earning the title of “explorer” in the truest sense. In contrast, an accidental explorer refers to individuals who became involved in exploration by circumstance—such as shipwreck survivors, military officers, or administrative officials tasked with surveying specific regions. Often, these assigned expeditions were conducted to serve commercial or political interests.

These classifications apply notably to French explorers, including those who ventured into the lands of the *Bidhan* (Mauritania) during the 19th century. Records identify nineteen individuals among them, comprising adventurous civilians, commercial agents, military officers, and specialized scholars.

These explorers can further be categorized into two groups: seasoned explorers and ordinary explorers. The category of seasoned explorers—both civilian and military—includes those who embarked on multiple major expeditions, with at least one significant journey to their name. Among the civilian explorers, notable figures include Mollien, Caillié, Raffinel, Panet, Bou El Mogdad, Blanchet, Soleillet, Douls, Gruvel, and Chudeau. As for the military, this category features only the naval officer Mage, who, in addition to his expedition across the Bidhan territories of Mauritania, undertook an extensive journey through Western Sudan. His travels were later published in 1861 under the title *Journey to Western Sudan* (Senegambia-Niger).

This nuanced distinction between professional and incidental exploration highlights the diverse motivations and experiences that shaped the trajectory of European expeditions in Africa. (Mage, 1868, p. 233)

The Second Category of Explorers

The second category comprises individuals regarded merely as “explorers” rather than seasoned adventurers. This distinction is due to the limited scope of their exploratory missions, as they did not

undertake extensive journeys and were often assigned these tasks rather than pursuing exploration as a professional calling.

This group includes military figures such as Caille, Fulcrand, Vincent, Bourrel, and Alioune

Sall, alongside civilian explorers like Soller, Donnet, and Fabert.

Their contributions, though more restricted in scale, were often integral to specific expeditions, typically serving administrative, military, or commercial objectives rather than stemming from personal ambition or scientific curiosity. (Ben Mohameden, 2006, p. 115)

The Industrial Revolution and Its Impact on Geographical Explorations in Africa

The Industrial Revolution played a significant role in stimulating exploratory expeditions, particularly through advancements in transportation and communication, improvements in printing and publishing technologies, the emergence of geographical societies, and the intensification of colonial expansion.

1. Advancements in Transportation and Communication

The use of steam power to operate factory machinery and propel locomotives and ships marked a major achievement of the Industrial Revolution. This development encouraged the construction of thousands of kilometers of railways, representing a significant leap in land transportation.

Maritime transport also experienced profound transformations. The generation of steam power enabled its application not only in the operation of ships but also in shipbuilding itself. The development of shipbuilding techniques led to the emergence of steam-powered vessels capable of carrying thousands of passengers and transporting tens of thousands of tons of cargo.

The use of steam energy derived from coal, alongside the rise of petroleum-based electric power, spurred the growth of iron industries. Gradually, iron replaced wood in ship construction, resulting in sturdier vessels capable of withstanding harsh weather conditions. This evolution allowed for faster, more secure global connectivity.

Naturally, these advancements in transportation across Europe—driven by the spread of steam engines, the utilization of electricity and petroleum derivatives, and the invention of the internal combustion engine—encouraged and facilitated geographical discoveries and exploratory missions.

2. Printing and Publishing

Another key development stemming from the Industrial Revolution was the evolution of printing and publishing technologies. Printing presses became widespread, with significant technical improvements enhancing efficiency. The paper and ink industries also advanced, leading to reduced printing costs and increased accessibility.

The bourgeoisie eagerly supported authors and intellectuals, promoting the dissemination of ideas advocating innovation and change—ideals that aligned with the ambitions of this rising class, which sought to secure its place through scientific knowledge and control over economic resources.

Travelers' and explorers' writings greatly benefited from this context. Their accounts were rapidly published, gaining widespread popularity and strengthening the connection between Western public opinion and the exploits of explorers. For instance, Mollien's expedition (1816–1818) was published the following year, quickly reaching a broad audience. (Mollien, 1822, p. 125)

The work was republished in 1830. Similarly, Caillié's journey across the Sahara, which lasted from 1824 to 1828, was also published in 1830. (Caillié, 1989, p. p 291 et 373)

Most exploratory journeys and reports were published either as printed works or in specialized journals that emerged during the 19th century, increasing significantly in the second half of the century with the support of geographical societies.

3. Geographical Societies

These societies began to appear in the first half of the 19th century. (Lejeune, 1993, p. 118)

As evident from their names, these societies, founded by some scientists, researchers, and politicians, were focused on geographical studies and explorations across various regions of the world, aiming to fill the gaps, especially in many of Africa's interior regions.

After France's defeat in 1870 during its war with Germany, the rise of national sentiment triggered a new wave of geographical societies across different French cities. The emergence of these geographical societies played a significant role in propelling the movement of geographical discoveries. These societies supported explorers and travelers, particularly young people passionate about travel and adventure.

Geographical societies provided the necessary funding for certain explorers and travelers and offered financial rewards for those who made the first discoveries in a particular region. (Edmé François, 1830, pp. pp. 355-357)

In addition to providing them with guidance, advice, and necessary scientific tools, these societies contributed throughout the 19th century to covering news about geographical discoveries. As a result, the reports and journeys of explorers would reach readers in France immediately after the journey concluded. For instance, explorer Léopold Panet barely completed his journey between Senegal and Morocco through Mauritania in 1850, spending four months in France, when the naval journal published the text of his journey. (Panet, 1850, pp. pp. 379-445, 473-554)

The same applies to Captain Mage's journey to the Tagant region, which concluded in 1860. (Mage E. , 1860, p. 29) , It was published in the same year, as well as Bourrel's journeys. (Dominique Bourrel, 1860, pp. Bourrel, 1861, pp. 510-545, 11-77) , Vincent and the majority of other travelers and explorers. (Vincent, 1860, pp. pp. 17-33, 49-64)

Geographical societies eagerly received the reports and journeys of explorers, hastening to publish them in specialized journals that were issued at the time.

4. Journals

It is not surprising that the arrival of travelers Mollien and Caillié in the region coincided with the publication of one of the most important of these journals, *Annals of Travel*. However, the most significant of these journals remains the *Journal of the Paris Geographical Society*, which began publication in 1826.

At the beginning of the 1860s, a period considered a turning point in the history of French discoveries in the region, two other journals emerged that

played a role as significant as the aforementioned ones: *Around the World* and *The Geographical Journal*.

Furthermore, the *Colonial Journal* was equally important. This journal began appearing in 1832 and went through multiple name changes over the century. It was called the *Algerian Colonial Journal* between 1856 and 1880, then the *Colonial Marine Journal* between 1881 and 1886, and finally, it was renamed *The Marine Journal* in 1887.

Most geographical societies issued their own journals, similar to the *Paris Geographical Society Journal*. These various publications contributed to covering and encouraging the discovery movement, which, by the last quarter of the 19th century, became a race against time to expand colonial control over the region. (*Annales des Voyages*, 1816-1865, p. P70)

European Explorations of Africa During the 18th and 19th Centuries

Europe's interest in geographical discoveries grew during the 18th and 19th centuries due to the pressing need for the natural resources that Africa abounded with, aiming to satisfy Europe's economy, which was thirsty for raw materials like labor. This was a consequence of the Industrial Revolution in Europe during the late 18th century and the following decades, particularly in Britain, France, and later in the Netherlands, Belgium, and Spain. The exploration movement in Africa during this period was part of the intellectual revival Europe experienced at the time. However, this movement was not purely scientific but also had a materialistic character, as the exploratory journeys resulted in numerous benefits for Europe, which led to competition and rivalry in research and discovery.

When we examine the academic material of the specified period, it is difficult for researchers to distinguish between the geographical movement aimed at exploring Africa and the colonial movement aimed at exploiting the continent's resources. However, we can distinguish between two phases of geographical exploration in Africa during this period:

1. Scientific Geographical Discovery Phase: This phase aimed to understand Africa in its various natural and human aspects, among others. It extended from the 18th century to the mid-19th cen-

tury. In this phase, the explorers' motives were purely scientific due to the few works and accurate information they provided regarding geographical exploration of the continent.

2. Colonial Geographical Discovery Phase: In this phase, scientific motives receded, and colonial motives emerged, aimed at infiltration, domination, exploitation, and settlement. This phase began in the mid-19th century.

When discussing European geographical discoveries in Africa during this period, it is important to acknowledge the significant role played by European geographical societies in promoting exploration and advancing the science of geography. One of the most notable European exploration societies founded at the end of the 18th century was the *British African Society*, whose establishment is credited to Sir Joseph Banks, a supporter of the British geographical discovery movement. (Cam, 1983, p. p. 86.)

In the 19th century, the *Paris Geographical Society* was one of the most prominent associations that played a significant role in reviving the French exploration movement. The 19th century is considered the era of establishing exploratory geographical societies, which played a major role in discovering the interior of Africa. (El-Gohary, 1976, p. p. 208.)

Despite the goals that led to the establishment of these European geographical societies, they made a significant contribution to the advancement of geography and map-making. While Europeans explored the African coasts in the late 15th century, the interior regions of the continent, including its forests, rivers, and deserts, remained unknown to them for many centuries. Their knowledge of Africa was limited to the information recorded by the traveler Hassan al-Wazzan (known as "Leo Africanus") about the places he visited or wrote about, in addition to some isolated and unorganized individual European attempts.

The reasons for European ignorance of the interior of Africa can be traced to several factors, including:

- The Islamic barrier in North Africa, which prevented European attempts to penetrate deeper into the continent.
- The vast and challenging Sahara Desert, which acted as an obstacle for European explorers due to

their lack of knowledge of its difficult and intricate paths. (Cam, 1983, p. 86)

- The dry coastal geography of the African coasts, characterized by few inlets and irregularities, hinders the establishment of seaports.

British Geographical Discoveries in Africa during the 18th and 19th Centuries

Despite Britain's strategic position overlooking the Atlantic Ocean, it entered the field of geographical exploration later than Portugal, Spain, and the Netherlands. The British navy relied on piracy against Spanish ships coming from the New World, carrying precious metals, which led to a conflict with Spain that ultimately resulted in British naval supremacy. This dominance encouraged Britain to embark on exploratory ventures.

John Cabot's expedition is considered the first British mission in geographical discoveries. (Saleh, 2009, p. 91)

As for the African continent, British presence in the western part of the continent began in the 16th century, specifically at the mouth of the Gambia River, along the coasts of Sierra Leone, the Gold Coast (Ghana), and Nigeria. Britain used these regions as centers for the thriving slave trade at the time. The British did not focus on exploring the interior of Africa until the arrival of Benjamin Disraeli to power. Prior to this, their attention was centered on maintaining a presence along the Atlantic coastal strip. However, British policy regarding geographical exploration of Africa changed after Disraeli became Prime Minister in 1874, where he worked to encourage exploration and expansion along the coastal strip.

In 1850, Britain purchased the Danish trading stations along the Gold Coast after the Danes ceded them due to threats from the Ashanti army. Britain was able to assert its dominance over the entire Gold Coast, especially after the rise of the palm oil trade.

Among the prominent British explorers who started their journeys from the Gold Coast in the field of geographical discoveries in Africa during the 18th and 19th centuries are:

1 James Bruce

James Bruce is credited with directing the major exploration movement towards Africa. His goal was to solve the mystery of the Nile River and the Niger River, as he believed they were connected. Bruce began his journey in 1768, traveling first to Jeddah, then crossing the Red Sea to arrive at the port of Massawa. From there, he traveled to Gondar, the capital of Ethiopia. Bruce successfully forged relationships with Ethiopian kings, and after a grueling exploratory journey, he reached Lake Tana, which is considered the source of the Blue Nile. Bruce was able to explore parts of the eastern, western, and southern shores of the lake, where he witnessed the Nile emerging from the southern outlet of the lake. Bruce was greatly impressed by the massive lake, and this exploratory journey enabled him to write a book documenting his observations. He felt immense joy upon making this significant discovery, as he was the first European to reach this point.

2. Henry Salt:

In the early 18th century, Henry Salt was sent by the British government to explore parts of Ethiopia as well as the Zanzibar Coast. In 1822, he sent other explorers to the eastern and western coasts of Africa south of the equator, where they stayed for four years and mapped the region with great precision. (Riyad, 1965, p. 111)

3. Mungo Park

Mungo Park is considered one of the most prominent British explorers. He began his exploratory journey in 1795 after being commissioned by the African Association. He arrived at the Gambia coast, where he stayed for several months and learned the Mandingo language, spoken by one of the significant Muslim tribes in the interior of Africa. In 1796, he embarked on his expedition with a local guide and received a warm welcome in the areas he visited due to his white skin. However, this reception changed as he ventured deeper into the African interior, where he was subjected to assault and theft. Despite these challenges, he continued his journey and reached Segou in 1796, where he drank from the great Niger River. In 1804, Park completed his exploration with a larger team, aiming to discover the mouth of the Niger River. (Riyad, 1965, p. 121)

However, he was attacked by African bandits, which led to his death before he could fulfill his dream.

4. David Livingstone

David Livingstone is considered one of the most prominent British explorers who focused on exploring the southern part of the African continent. He spent 34 years exploring these regions. He began his journey in 1840 from Cape Town, covering a distance of 1,100 kilometers inland, reaching Kuruman and Kolobeng. His goal was to reach the Kalahari Desert, which had not been reached by Europeans before, and also to visit Lake Ngami, which he had heard much about. During his journey, Livingstone encountered the Bushmen tribes for the first time. In 1850, Livingstone began another exploratory journey with his wife and children, during which they were struck by the widespread malaria. Despite the challenges, they continued their journey and reached the Linyanti River, one of the tributaries of the Zambezi River. Livingstone left his family to continue his progress north-east, where he became the first European to discover the Zambezi River. He also reached the port of Luanda on the western coast of the continent and explored vast areas, including the Victoria Falls, which he named after Queen Victoria. (Ibrahim, 2000, p. 220)

French Geographical Discoveries in Africa during the 18th and 19th Centuries

Although France had achieved its unity early and established a centralized government and national army, it was one of the countries that was delayed in the field of geographical discoveries compared to its neighbor Spain. This delay was due to France's focus on securing its political stability and borders in Europe, which forced it to engage in wars with Italy due to French expansion at the expense of Italian territories. (Nawar & Mahmoud Mohamed, 1999, p. 74)

One of the most prominent French figures who encouraged geographic exploration was Cardinal Richelieu, the Prime Minister during the reign of King Louis XIII, and Colbert, the economic minister during the reign of King Louis XIV. Richelieu was able to build a powerful navy to protect French interests and venture into exploration outside Europe, similar to Portugal, Spain, and the Netherlands. As for Colbert, he established the French East India Company, increased the number of French ships from 20 in 1661 to 140, and created an administration that linked the navy, trade, and military. (Saleh, 2009, p. 88)

The French presence in Africa began when the first central base in the region was established, represented by the Saint-Louis center in 1638. The Paris Geographical Society, founded in 1821, played a significant role in the exploration of many interior regions of Africa. (Abad, 2010/2011, pp. p. 105-108)

One of the most notable discoveries was the arrival at the strategic city of Timbuktu, achieved by René Caillié, after the French government offered a reward of 10,000 French francs to the first explorer who could travel from Algeria to Senegal, passing through Timbuktu. French military explorers, who gained experience in dealing with local populations and establishing relationships with them, played a significant role in facilitating French expansion in Africa.

Prominent French explorers in Africa:

Léopold Banié

He was an officer in the French army in Senegal, where he learned Arabic and Pulaar. Thanks to his experience, Banié disguised himself as a merchant and left Saint-Louis heading north, reaching Chinguetti in 1852, before continuing his journey to Marseille. (Abad, 2010/2011, pp. 115-140)

Banié provided a detailed description of the region and recommended that his government invest in it and form alliances with local chiefs to secure the profitable trade in gold, ostrich feathers, and ivory.

Abdon - Eugène Mage (1830-1869)

He is considered one of the most important military explorers, especially in West Sudan. He spent a long period in the region, discovering vast areas in Senegal and Upper Niger. He also established relationships with the grandson of Al-Hajj Umar al-Futi, Sheikh Ahmad Tidjani.

Paul Soleillet (1842-1886)

He is regarded as one of the leading French explorers in Africa, similar to British and American explorers. Soleillet undertook many exploratory journeys across the African continent, from the Algerian desert to Eastern Africa. He provided an accurate description of the city of Laghouat, its population, and industries. Soleillet also forged ties with tribal leaders to facilitate trade relations with France. He discovered resource-rich areas, mapped them for the French government, and authored several works

on geographic exploration, such as *Exploration of the Central Desert* and *The Future of France in Africa*.

Parfait Louis Monti (1855-1925)

He is considered the last French explorer in West Africa. He began his journey at the head of an expedition consisting of French and Senegalese members, traveling through capitals connected from Senegal to Libya, passing through the Niger Basin and Chad. He achieved remarkable results, earning the French Government's Legion of Honor.

De Brazza

A French military officer, he was sent by the French government on an exploratory mission to the Congo River and surrounding regions. He made several trips between 1874 and 1877, discovering the mouth of the Congo River and meeting the explorer Stanley in Brazzaville. His land discoveries paved the way for the establishment of French Congo as a colony and contributed to French colonial expansion in Africa. (Ibrahim, 2000, p. 217.)

European Explorers and Exploratory Adventures at the End of the 18th Century

At the end of the 18th century, the Bianzan regions of West Africa saw a notable influx of European travelers and explorers, especially the French. This influx was driven by colonial policies aimed at strengthening French influence in the Senegal River Basin and countering European competitors such as the British and the Dutch. Despite this competition, European presence in the region was not exclusive to the French; Britain also entered the Bianzan lands through exploratory expeditions.

Explorer Joseph Alexander Le Prator

Joseph Alexander Le Prator is considered one of the leading French explorers who contributed significantly to enhancing French presence in the Bianzan areas. His primary goal was to confront British and Dutch competition and solidify French control over the gum arabic trade. Le Prator left behind detailed memoirs on commercial activities in the region, noting the importance of the trade in gum arabic, ivory, gold, and slaves. (Ben Mohameden, 2006, pp. 69-70.)

Explorer Dominique Lamerl

In 1779, the French explorer Dominique Lamerl led an exploratory journey to the Senegal River Basin, where he visited Bianzan trade points and engaged in trade exchanges with local salt traders. In his book *"Africa and the African People from the Perspective of All Their Connections with Our Trade and Colonies,"* he provided an insightful account of the economic and social dynamics within the region, emphasizing the role of local powers like the Trarza Emirate and the competition between European forces over trade routes and resources. Lamerl's observations contributed to the understanding of European-African trade relations during the colonial era. (Ben Mohameden, 2006, p. 71)

Explorer Jean-Baptiste Leonard Durand

The French explorer Jean-Baptiste Leonard Durand arrived in the Senegal River Basin in early 1785. Durand's journey focused on exploring the trade networks and political structures of the region. His observations highlighted the intricate interactions between local African powers and European traders. He meticulously documented the geographical features and the socio-political landscapes, emphasizing the cultural richness and diversity he encountered. Durand's work remains an important part of the historical understanding of European exploration and the dynamics of West African societies during the late 18th century. (Abad, 2010/2011, p. 64.)

Durand conducted an exploratory tour of the river trade points and established trade relations with some of the prominent chiefs of the Bidanī tribes. He signed two treaties with local leaders, which included a provision to cease trade dealings with the British along the Atlantic coast. Durand also described the relationship between the Bidanī and their neighboring Zanj populations, highlighting the peaceful coexistence between the Dar Mankur tribes (such as Ido al-Hajj) and the Zanj communities. His observations showcased the cooperative nature of inter-tribal relations, which was a significant aspect of local dynamics during that period. (Ben Mohameden, 2006, p. 74)

Pierre Raymond de Brisson was one of the survivors of the shipwreck of a French vessel on the Mauritanian shores near the Arguin Island in 1785. After being captured by the Bidanī tribes, Brisson spent approximately fourteen months in the region, which allowed him the opportunity to travel and

visit many places. He wrote a valuable book detailing his experience with the Bidanī, highlighting daily life and the hardships he faced during his captivity.

Xavier Colbry visited the Senegal River Basin at the end of 1785, focusing his visit on river trade points such as the Jineh area. Colbry wrote about the gum arabic trade and its prices, as well as the taxes that Europeans paid to the Bidanī. He also described life in the Sahara Desert and the activities of the Bidanī community, noting their ownership of horses, sheep, and cattle.

Philippe de Fenelon Geoffroy was the last of the French explorers to visit the region in the eighteenth century. He conducted his exploratory tour between 1785 and 1788, providing valuable information about the most important Bidanī tribes and their influence, especially along the left bank of the Senegal River. He mentioned that some of the Bidanī served as advisors in the kingdoms of Damel and Kayor, and noted their involvement in negotiations regarding the cession of the Cape Verde Islands to France. (Ben Mohameden, 2006, pp. 74-78.)

The granting of the Cape Verde Islands to France occurred during a period of significant European exploration and colonial expansion, which was motivated by economic interests and the desire to strengthen European maritime power.

Results of European Geographical Discoveries in Africa During the 18th and 19th Centuries

The geographical discoveries of the European explorers in Africa during the 18th and 19th centuries had profound consequences that benefitted Europe while proving detrimental to the African peoples and lands explored. The explorers provided detailed information, including maps and statistics, about the political, economic, and social conditions of the countries they explored. This information laid the groundwork for European colonization of Africa. Notable results in the geographical domain include:

Discovery of the Source and Mouth of the Nile:

One of the most significant challenges faced by the explorers was the discovery of the source and mouth of the Nile River. Despite many attempts, conclusive results were not achieved until the 19th century, when James Bruce decided to trace the

Nile to determine its source. This endeavor marked a major breakthrough in geographical knowledge and had far-reaching implications, both in terms of scientific achievement and colonial ambitions. (Ali, 1913, p. 57.)

The discovery of the source and mouth of the Niger River was closely associated with numerous explorers and exploration societies, particularly the Royal Geographical Society of Britain. (Mohamed, 2010, p. 52), Henry Barth was able to solve the mystery of the Niger River between 1852 and 1884. (Mukhlless & Ibrahim Jaber, 2020, p. 7)

The discovery of the source and mouth of the Zambezi River is closely associated with the explorer David Livingstone, whose goal was to reach the Kalahari Desert and Lake Ngami. Livingstone began his exploratory journey in 1850, and despite the malaria that affected him and his family, he was the first to discover the Zambezi River. (Ibrahim, 2000, p. 220)

The discovery of the source and mouth of the Senegal and Gambia rivers is attributed to the British explorer Richard Jobson. French explorers such as Gustav Nachtigal and Paul de Chaillu also contributed valuable information about the region. (Mukhlless & Ibrahim Jaber, 2020, p. 8)

The discovery of the source and mouth of the Congo River is considered one of the last major river explorations in Africa. It is closely associated with the Irish explorer Henry Morton Stanley, who was commissioned by the Royal Geographical Society of Britain for an exploratory journey in 1874. Stanley successfully discovered the Lualaba River and confirmed its connection to the Congo River, leading to the establishment of the Belgian Congo colony. (al-Jamal & Abdullah Abdul-Razzaq, 2002, pp. 35-36)

The Atrocities of European Explorations in Sub-Saharan Africa and the Accompanying Genocides

Since the late 15th century, the African continent, particularly Sub-Saharan Africa, has witnessed a wave of European geographical explorations that led to unprecedented violence and exploitation. These explorations were not merely scientific expeditions; rather, they marked the initial phase of a bloody colonization based on murder, slavery, and economic exploitation.

This phase began with Portuguese voyages led by Prince Henry the Navigator, who sponsored naval campaigns along the west African coasts in search of gold and slaves. The indigenous populations were subjected to organized human hunts, during which thousands of Africans were captured and transported to Europe as slaves (Dubigny, 1982, p. 47)

Over time, especially during the 19th century with the "Scramble for Africa," the explorations turned into large-scale invasions led by European powers such as Britain, France, Belgium, and Germany. This phase was accompanied by horrific human rights violations, including genocide against entire tribes and populations. One of the most brutal examples occurred in the Free Congo under King Leopold II of Belgium, where between 8 and 10 million people were killed due to forced labor and the brutal violence associated with rubber production (Hobsbawm, 2009, p. p. 149)

One form of genocide involved the exploitation of local populations as forced labor under extremely brutal conditions. Workers who failed to meet pro-

duction quotas had their limbs amputated, while villages that resisted were burned to the ground, with their men, women, and children killed (Hochschild, 2007, p. p104)

Moreover, European explorations led to the spread of epidemics and famines that were unknown on such a scale before, due to the disruption of the indigenous agricultural and economic patterns, resulting in a catastrophic decline in their populations. In Namibia, for example, German forces, led by General Lothar von Trotha, committed massacres against the Herero and Nama tribes, where authorities issued orders to exterminate all Herero, including women and children. This resulted in the deaths of approximately 80% of the Herero and 50% of the Nama between 1904-1908. (Petra, 2014, p. 88)

Overall, the European explorations and the subsequent colonization of Sub-Saharan Africa can only be described as a systematic genocide, during which millions of people were exterminated, and entire civilizations and societies were destroyed, all in the service of European economic and political ambitions devoid of mercy (Rodney, 2010, p. 65)

The Destructive Impact of European Explorations and the Resistances of Sub-Saharan Africa

During the 19th and 20th centuries, European explorations of Africa were accompanied by numerous atrocities that had catastrophic effects on the indigenous populations of Sub-Saharan Africa. These atrocities included genocide, the brutal exploitation of natural and human resources, and the violent suppression of popular resistances.

Table: The Destructive Aspects of European Explorations and African Resistances

Event/Topic	Details	Date
The Genocide of the Herero and Nama in Namibia	Germany committed genocide against the Herero and Nama peoples, resulting in the deaths of between 65,000 and 100,000 individuals.	1904-1908 (Ben Taher, p. 102)
The Congo Massacres under Leopold II	Over 10 million Africans were killed through murder, forced labor, and famine during King Leopold II's personal rule over the Congo.	1885-1908 (Hoch, 1985, p. 145)
Smoke Asphyxiation Massacres	Colonial forces resorted to using smoke asphyxiation in	19th century

	caves against hiding populations, particularly in Algeria and Morocco.	(Braudel, 1993, p. p78)
The Resistance of Samori Ture	Samori Ture established a vast empire and engaged in fierce battles against French colonial forces before his capture in 1898.	1882-1898 (Rahman, 2007, p. 201)
The Zanj Rebellion	A major uprising of Black laborers in southern Iraq against white slave owners, which later inspired liberation movements in Africa.	869-883 AD (Al-Salabi, 2005, p. 312)

Despite the devastating impact of European explorations, which radically reshaped the fabric of African societies, the peoples of Sub-Saharan Africa confronted these injustices through heroic resistances that left an indelible legacy in history.

Conclusion

The European explorations of Africa during the 18th and 19th centuries are among the most significant periods that shaped both the modern history of the African continent and the world. These explorations aimed to open new horizons for European powers in the search for resources and new markets, as well as to establish political and economic dominance over large areas of Africa. This study comprehensively addressed the underlying motivations behind these explorations, the methods used by European powers to achieve their goals, and the economic, social, and cultural impacts resulting from them.

The motivations behind European explorations of Africa were varied, with economic ambitions at the forefront. European powers sought to discover and exploit Africa's rich natural resources, such as gold, diamonds, and precious minerals. In addition, there were political motivations related to territorial expansion and the exertion of European influence over the largest possible area of African land, in the context of competition among major European powers such as Britain, France, Germany, and Belgium.

Scientific and cultural motivations also played a role in these explorations, as European explorers were keen on studying the geography, flora, fauna, and

peoples of the continent. Many books and reports were published documenting these journeys and discoveries, which contributed to increasing European knowledge of Africa and piqued the curiosity of further explorers.

European powers employed a variety of methods to achieve their goals in Africa. These methods included signing agreements and treaties with local leaders, exploiting internal conflicts and divisions among African tribes and peoples, and using military force to impose control. European powers also relied on scientific and diplomatic missions to establish relations with local communities, paving the way for the introduction of European administrative and economic systems.

The European explorations led to radical changes in the economic and social structures of Africa. New economic systems were established under the control of European powers, where African natural resources were exploited to serve European interests. This led to the distortion of local economies and the destruction of many traditional industries.

Socially, these explorations and subsequent colonization resulted in significant changes to the demographic makeup, with the spread of European diseases, increased rates of forced migration, and coerced labor. There were also changes in social and cultural structures, as African identities and cultures

were influenced by European culture, with the spread of European languages and religion.

The significance of this study lies in providing a comprehensive and integrated understanding of an important historical period in the history of Africa and the world. By analyzing the motivations, methods, and impacts, we can better understand the factors that contributed to shaping modern African history and the challenges faced by African peoples due to these explorations. This study contributes to enriching historical knowledge and raising awareness of the importance of historical events and their impact on the present and future.

The European explorations of Africa during the 18th and 19th centuries form a historically rich period full of lessons and insights. By understanding and analyzing this period scientifically and comprehensively, we can not only reconsider our shared history but also contribute to building a better future based on mutual understanding and cooperation. The study of history is a powerful tool for understanding the present and shaping the future, and through this study, we hope to make a meaningful contribution in this field.

European explorations of Africa are not just historical events but are part of the present we live in. Their effects are still tangible in international relations, economic and social structures, and culture. By enhancing our understanding of this period, we can build better bridges of communication between peoples, promote international cooperation, and achieve sustainable development that respects human rights and supports cultural diversity.

We hope this study will serve as an impetus for further research and analysis, helping to shed light on both the dark and bright aspects of this historical period, ultimately assisting in building a bright and sustainable future for the African continent and the world.

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