



## **The Position of the Sublime Porte (the Ottoman Empire) toward the French Blockade of Algeria (1827–1830): An Organized Overview of Ottoman Diplomatic Action**

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### **Abstract:**

This article examines the position of the Ottoman Sublime Porte regarding the French naval blockade imposed on the Regency of Algiers between 1827 and 1830, through an analysis of the dimensions of Ottoman diplomatic action in response to French escalation, which culminated in military invasion and the fall of Algiers. The crisis began with the issue of accumulated debts owed by France to Algeria, and then escalated following the Fly Whisk incident in 1827, which France used as a pretext to impose a prolonged naval blockade on Algiers in preparation for its occupation. The article seeks to analyze the nature of the Ottoman position toward this crisis and to uncover the limits and reasons for Ottoman intervention, in light of the complex international circumstances in which the Ottoman Empire was operating, particularly its involvement in the Greek War of Independence, its conflict with Russia, and the repercussions of the Eastern Question. It also highlights the diplomatic efforts undertaken by the Sublime Porte through its envoys, such as Khalil Effendi and Tahir Pasha, to attempt to settle the dispute between France and Algiers through peaceful means, while clarifying the obstacles imposed by France to frustrate these efforts. The article concludes that the Ottoman Empire, despite recognizing its nominal sovereignty over Algiers and issuing diplomatic protests against the blockade, was unable to provide effective military support due to its internal conditions and international pressures. This situation allowed France to implement its colonial project and occupy Algeria in 1830, marking one of the most significant phases of Ottoman decline in the Islamic Maghreb.

**Keywords:** Ottoman Sublime Porte -Regency of Algiers -French naval blockade -Fly Whisk Incident (1827) - Ottoman diplomacy -France–Algiers conflict -Ottoman Empire decline – Eastern Question -Greek War of Independence -French occupation of Algeria (1830)

### **Introduction:**

The French naval blockade imposed on Algeria between 1827 and 1830 constituted one of the decisive turning points in the history of the Maghreb region, as it paved the way for the



French invasion and the fall of one of the oldest provinces of the Ottoman Empire in the Islamic West. Although Algeria had been considered an Ottoman Regency since the sixteenth century, the position of the Ottoman Empire toward this blockade raised numerous questions among historians, especially in light of the internal weakness and the decline of Ottoman authority over its peripheral territories during that period.

This historical phase raises important issues related to the nature of the relationship between the Ottoman Sultanate and the Regency of Algeria, as well as the limits of the political and military support provided in confronting the imminent French threat. Within this context, this article seeks to analyze the position of the Ottoman Empire regarding the French blockade, highlighting its political and military dimensions, its explicit and implicit motives, and its repercussions on the future of Algeria and the Maghreb region as a whole.

### **First: The French Naval Blockade of Algeria (1827–1830)**

The reasons that prompted France to launch the military campaign against Algeria were numerous, and France likely found in the famous Fly Whisk Incident the pretext it used to justify the occupation.<sup>1</sup>

#### **1- The Debt Issue and the Fly Whisk Incident:**

The debt issue in which France became involved as a result of importing grain from Algeria through the Bacri-Busnach Company, in order to confront the food crisis it experienced at the end of the eighteenth century, is considered one of the most serious issues that affected the course of relations between France and Algeria during the late Ottoman period.

In 1805, the Governor of Algiers, Ahmed Pasha, urged the French consul to have his government settle its debts owed to the aforementioned merchants, so that the company, in turn, could pay what it owed to the treasury of the Regency. However, the debts remained unresolved until Dey Hussein renewed the demand for them later.<sup>2</sup> It was customary for the consuls of the European states accredited in Algeria to visit the Dey to offer congratulations on the occasion of Bayram (Eid al-Fitr). The French and British consuls were always competing for precedence during such occasions, so the Dey decided to receive each of them separately in order to avoid any tension.

When the French consul, “Deval,” attended the Dey’s council, and since he did not master the Turkish language, Dey Hussein asked him about the reason for his government’s disregard in responding to the debt issue. Deval replied—in a manner that the Dey considered insulting—saying: “My government does not respond to a man like you.”<sup>3</sup> This response provoked the Dey’s anger, leading to a sharp dispute between the two parties, during which the Dey struck the consul with the fly whisk he was holding.<sup>4</sup> Some historians, however, argue that he did not actually strike him, but merely touched his shoulder as a sign that the audience had come to an end. Nevertheless, the French interpreted the act as an insult to the dignity of the consul, and consequently, to the honor of France<sup>5</sup>

Although Dey Hussein was not known to be a harsh man, Deval’s provocative response—especially during an official occasion and in the presence of the members of the Diwan—was considered a deliberate insult to the Dey and his dignity.<sup>6</sup> Moreover, what further aggravated



the situation, in addition to the debt disputes, were the suspicious actions carried out by Vice-Consul Deval and his brother, Alexandre Deval, which consisted in establishing facilities suspected of being intended for military purposes through supplying them with soldiers and cannons. Therefore, the Dey ordered the destruction of those installations.<sup>7</sup>

Although the Dey attempted to mitigate the impact of the incident and assured some of the French residents in Algeria that he had not intended to insult France, Consul Deval exaggerated the matter and submitted a distorted report to the French Council of State, requesting a long leave and contributing to the orchestration of the conspiracy against Algeria. Instead of examining the circumstances and verifying the truth of what had occurred, France engaged in escalation by sending the officer “Collet” at the head of ten warships, instructing him to extract an official apology from the Dey by force.

The French ships arrived on the Algerian coast on June 11, accompanied by Deval. The mission carried humiliating conditions, including the requirement that the Dey send an official delegation to the flagship “Collet” to present an apology. The delegation was to consist of senior officials such as the Wakil al-Haraj, the Ministers of Navy and Foreign Affairs, the Admiral of the Navy, the Port Officer, and the four chief secretaries. France also demanded that one hundred cannon shots be fired in salute to the French ships, and that the French flag be raised over the Dey’s palace and the city’s towers.<sup>8</sup>

It can therefore be argued that Consul Deval had received a green light from his government to engage in provocative and insulting behavior in the presence of the Dey, so that the incident could serve as a pretext for the invasion of Algeria.<sup>9</sup>“Simon Pfeiffer” supports this interpretation, noting that a French ship appeared on the horizon on the very day of the Fly Whisk Incident, as if it had been waiting for Deval to transport him immediately to France, which reinforces the hypothesis of prior collusion and premeditated planning.<sup>10</sup>

### **Second: The Course of the French Naval Blockade of Algeria (1827–1830)**

The French blockade of Algeria constituted one of the most important episodes in the aggressive policy adopted by France against the Regency of Algiers. It relied on imposing harsh conditions following the Fly Whisk Incident, using military force as its primary means.<sup>11</sup> France thus sought to impose special privileges on Algeria, thereby consolidating its dominance over the region.<sup>12</sup>

\*After the presentation of the unjust conditions included in the post-incident settlement, Dey Hussein rejected all the demands, mockingly stating: “I am surprised that the French did not also ask for my wife.” In a report sent to the Sultan, he expressed his anger, saying: “Such conditions are not the work of intelligent statesmen, but are rather the words of madmen.” Consequently, France imposed a naval blockade on the city of Algiers.

However, within France there was no political consensus regarding the decision to launch a military campaign. The Prime Minister faced strong domestic opposition, particularly in the context of the abolition of the National Guard and growing public discontent. At the same time, the Greek question preoccupied the French government, which was seeking coordination with Russia and Britain for a joint intervention with the Ottoman Sultan. Moreover, the French fleet stationed in the archipelago did not allow for serious



consideration of a direct expedition against Algeria. Therefore, the French government initially considered that the blockade alone would be sufficient to force Algeria to change its position.<sup>13</sup> France consequently severed its diplomatic relations with it and imposed a naval blockade.<sup>14</sup>

In the context of this blockade, Dey Hussein took several measures, including assigning the Bey of Constantine, Hadj Ahmed Bey, to seize the French installations in Annaba and El Kala.<sup>15</sup> From the beginning of the blockade, the French consul Deval showed enthusiasm for the idea of occupation, asserting the ease of carrying out a naval landing. He was supported in this by the naval commander Collet, but the higher French authorities considered a troop landing a risky option and preferred to maintain the blockade.<sup>16</sup>

The Algerians attempted to break the blockade from the Cape Kaskin area, but they were unsuccessful and were forced to withdraw. Unfortunately for Algeria during this crisis, its naval fleet was at that time خارج البلاد, participating alongside the Ottoman fleet in confronting the Greek Revolution, specifically in the Battle of Navarino on 20 October 1827, which led to the destruction of a large part of the Ottoman fleet. However, some historical sources suggest that the Algerian ships did not actually take part in that battle.<sup>17</sup>

Among the most notable battles that took place during the blockade was the engagement on 4 October 1827, when the Algerian fleet confronted its French counterpart under the command of Collet. The battle involved 11 Algerian ships against 4 French ships, as well as a large warship, a sailing vessel, and a brig. The battle lasted several hours and ended with the Algerian ships returning to port after inflicting damage on some French vessels.<sup>18</sup>

Meanwhile, "Clermont-Tonnerre" submitted a report to the French authorities calling for a direct military campaign against the city of Algiers, based on the political changes in Europe, and noting that major powers such as Russia and England would not oppose the operation, as long as France did not compete with them in eastern expansion. The report outlined several benefits that France could gain from such an intervention, and it was presented on 20 October 1827. However, the new Minister of Foreign Affairs, Count de La Ferronnays, was more concerned with the Eastern Question and considered the Algerian issue to be pointless and of little value, preferring to avoid conflict with England.<sup>19</sup>

Collet continued the blockade of Algiers until September 1829, after which he fell ill and was forced to leave his post. He was succeeded by the officer "La Bretonnière" to continue the blockade. In an attempt to break the blockade, four Algerian ships set sail, but they were unsuccessful and were forced to take refuge at Cape Kaskin.<sup>20</sup> Later, a French naval patrol consisting of six vessels was formed and stationed between Cape Tayeb (Tunisia) and the coasts of Italy, extending as far as the Balearic Islands. The number of French naval units in the Mediterranean eventually reached fifty vessels, in anticipation of any possible intervention by the Ottoman Empire or by competing European powers.<sup>21</sup>

The new French Foreign Minister was not in favor of the partition of Ottoman possessions. With the increasing costs, voices in France began to oppose the continuation of the blockade, especially as it cost France more than one million francs annually, without the blockade being effectively enforced or having a significant impact on the government of Dey Hussein.<sup>22</sup>



Significant damage was also inflicted on French ships. The naval engineer Charles Dupin noted in his memoirs that the enormous sums of money spent on the blockade were being wasted in chasing small boats whose value did not exceed 2,000 francs. Worse still, the blockade did not prevent Algerian corsairs (the Rais) from attacking French vessels.<sup>23</sup> As two French ships were seized in August in the port of Oran.<sup>24</sup>

Faced with the failure of the blockade to achieve its objectives, La Bretonnière returned to France and proposed to the Minister of the Navy, “Hyde de Neuville,” to send an envoy to the Dey for a third time in a new attempt to conclude a peace agreement. The minister approved the idea, and the envoy arrived in Algeria on 23 July 1829. Although the Dey initially refused to receive him, he later agreed to a meeting that lasted two hours, but he insisted on rejecting any declaration of a truce. According to “Carrot,” he even allegedly demanded that France gift him the ship “Albert,” in a sarcastic gesture.<sup>25</sup> When the ship “La Provence” left the port of Algiers, carrying the commander of the blockading fleet of the Algerian coasts and bearing the Dey’s response to the French conditions regarding a temporary truce, the parliamentary vessel came under artillery fire shortly after exiting the port. This occurred because it had approached too closely to the fortifications due to strong winds.<sup>26</sup>

### **Third: Ottoman Diplomatic Efforts to End the Blockade on Algeria (1827–1830)**

**1 - Reasons for the delay in Ottoman efforts to lift the blockade:** The purpose of presenting a brief overview of the Ottoman situation during the period of the blockade is to clarify the reasons behind the Empire’s failure to adopt a firm and decisive stance, particularly on the military level, regarding the Algerian issue.

Although the Ottoman Empire was closely following the developments of the conflict between France and Algeria during the nineteenth century, its preoccupation with the war against Greece<sup>27</sup> ...as well as the war with Russia, in addition to the conflict with Austria.<sup>28</sup>

...prevented it from intervening militarily to protect the Regency of Algiers. Therefore, the Ottoman Empire, during the period of the blockade, limited itself to attempting to address the crisis through diplomatic means.<sup>29</sup> This position is attributed to the Ottoman Empire’s involvement at the time in multiple and complex conflicts with European powers, within what is historically known as the “Eastern Question,” which refers to the set of problems associated with the internal decline of the Ottoman Empire, the revolts of its subject peoples, and the intense competition among European states over influence in Ottoman territories.<sup>30</sup> After the Greek crisis, another crisis broke out between Russia and the Ottoman Empire, coinciding with a series of military maneuvers that, overall, aimed to encircle Ottoman influence and contain it within the Mediterranean basin.<sup>31</sup> What further complicated the situation was the attack led by Muhammad Ali Pasha, the Governor of Egypt, on the Ottoman Empire’s territories, which led to a fundamental shift in the Empire’s relations with Europe, particularly with Russia, and contributed to weakening its regional and international position.<sup>32</sup>

Alongside these factors, one cannot overlook the cunning French role in keeping the Ottoman Sultan from directly intervening in the Algerian issue. The historian “John Sars” noted that



France, during its dispute with Algeria in 1827, was keen to avoid drawing the Sublime Porte into the conflict, out of nominal respect for the Sultan's symbolic status and out of fear of his actual power, particularly his potential influence over Algeria in the event of a joint military action against France. In this context, "John Sars" states: "This war represented France's greatest fear."<sup>33</sup>

It was stated in a letter from Dey Hussein to one of the Ottoman ministers (without a specified date) that explains the reason for Algeria's inability to provide support to the Ottoman Empire in its war against Russia. The letter refers to the suffocating blockade imposed on Algeria, the shortage of troops, and the interruption of supplies coming from Anatolia.

This letter highlights the extent of weakness affecting the Ottoman Empire, as it was requesting support from the Regency of Algiers at a time when Algeria itself was under blockade and suffering from severe internal shortages due to the French blockade.<sup>34</sup>

## **2: Ottoman Diplomatic Activity to Lift the Blockade on Algeria (1827–1830) - The Mission of Khلیل Effendi and the Intersection of Muhammad Ali–France Projects:**

Despite the existing disagreements between the Ottoman Empire and France due to the latter's campaign against Egypt, relations between the two sides improved after the signing of the peace treaty between France and the Regency of Algiers in 1801, which opened the way for a gradual rapprochement with the Sublime Porte. With the beginning of the naval blockade imposed on Algeria, the Ottoman Empire's interest in the Algerian issue increased, although it refrained from any direct military intervention.

The Ottoman Empire expressed its diplomatic protest against France's threat to declare war on Algeria through the Chief Secretary, in response to the memorandum submitted by the French ambassador in Istanbul, De Caimeneau, on 8 August 1827, which stated: "Since the Dey has further insulted the consul, the King of France is compelled to seek redress, threatening war in case of refusal." However, the Ottoman Chief Secretary strongly objected, emphasizing that France had no right to declare war or impose a blockade on Algeria without the knowledge of the Sublime Porte.<sup>35</sup>

However, the Ottoman Empire at that time was preoccupied with suppressing revolts, as previously mentioned. In a meeting chaired by the Grand Vizier and attended by the Minister of War, Khosrew Pasha, it was emphasized that there would be no actual intervention in the conflict that had arisen between France and the Regency of Algiers.<sup>36</sup>

However, the signing of the Treaty of Adrianople with Russia in September 1829 prompted the Ottoman Empire to reconsider its position regarding the Algerian issue.<sup>37</sup>

Some sources indicate that the Austrian ambassador was behind the initiation of Khلیل Effendi's mission, with two main objectives:

- First, to ensure that Dey Hussein remained neutral in the ongoing conflict between Austria and Morocco.
- Second, to prevent any strategic changes in the Mediterranean region during that period.<sup>38</sup>

The British ship *Pelouse* sailed toward Algeria carrying Khلیل Effendi, who arrived in the city on 29 November 1829. Upon his arrival, he insisted that the Dey send an envoy to France to



present an official apology for the “Fly Whisk Incident” and the “La Provence Incident,” but Dey Hussein strongly rejected this demand. Khلیل Effendi then wrote to Admiral Mahon, the commander of the blockade, informing him of the Dey’s final position.<sup>39</sup>

Khلیل Effendi conducted negotiations with both parties, but they did not lead to any result due to the unjust French conditions.<sup>40</sup> The French ambassador expressed his gratitude to the Ottoman Chief Secretary for this conciliatory attempt.

In early November, Count de Caimeneau requested a secret meeting with the Chief Secretary, which took place on 11 December 1829. During the meeting, De Caimeneau acknowledged the dependency of the Regency of Algiers on the Ottoman Empire, but noted that it had begun to disobey the Sultan’s orders. France demanded compensation for what it considered an insult to its ambassador. The memorandum also stated France’s decision to punish Algeria through a land and naval expedition, with the assistance of Muhammad Ali Pasha, the Governor of Egypt.<sup>41</sup> Thus, France did not take the Sublime Porte’s opinion into consideration in addressing the crisis; instead, it preferred to proceed with the expedition project proposed by Muhammad Ali Pasha, which was found suitable by the French minister Polignac. The prevailing belief in Paris was that the Ottoman Sultan would welcome this cooperation, especially in light of the conflict between him and the Regency of Algiers.<sup>42</sup> It was understood from that meeting that the French government would not reach a solution to lift its naval blockade of the city of Algiers, and it was hoping for a way to preserve its honor.<sup>43</sup> As for the Sublime Porte’s reaction to this, Argment Kouran states in his study that Pertiv Effendi<sup>44</sup> After reading the French memorandum, he stated that it was not permissible to send troops to a territory belonging to the Ottoman Empire. However, he would assign a Turkish official accompanied by a French one to advise the Algerians, despite Count de Caimeneau’s insistence on granting permission to the Governor of Egypt to carry out the expedition.<sup>45</sup>

This is, however, refuted by John Sarr, who stated that Pertiv Effendi did not initially express any objection to the French government’s project. However, after consulting with the British ambassador, Sir Robert Gordon, his position changed. This led John Sarr to speak of an implicit approval of the project, noting that the manner in which Count de Caimeneau reported the discussions made the French government believe that the Sublime Porte was supportive of its plan, a claim that the ambassador later explicitly denied.<sup>46</sup>

Muhammad Ali promised to grant privileges if he succeeded in taking control of North Africa on behalf of France, and to pay the Ottoman treasury the same tribute he paid for Egypt. However, the Ottoman Foreign Minister informed the British ambassador of the matter, and the ambassador warned him against it. Consequently, Sultan Mahmud II rejected the proposal.<sup>47</sup> The Ottoman Empire ultimately rejected the project after initially leaning toward it, as it was considered, in its view, to be contrary to Islamic law.<sup>48</sup> Despite the fact that France had offered it a financial reward.<sup>49</sup> Afterwards, England proposed a solution to the dispute through two commissions, one representing the Algerian side and the other the French side, which would meet in Algiers to study proposals for a settlement.<sup>50</sup>

\*\*Because the Sublime Porte was aware of the importance and sensitivity of the issue, Khulusi Pasha, the acting Grand Vizier, sent the English memorandum to the Minister of War



and then to Pertiv Effendi, the former Chief Secretary. After reviewing it, he approved the necessity of immediately sending Tahir Pasha and issuing a warning to Muhammad Ali to withdraw from the Algerian issue. He also ordered the preparation of a written response to the British ambassador regarding the decisions of the Ottoman Caliphate. In addition, it was unanimously agreed that the translator of the French embassy should be informed in advance of Tahir Pasha's departure to Algeria.

Meanwhile, negotiations were underway with Muhammad Ali to carry out a limited operation in Tripoli and Tunisia according to the new agreement, but these efforts ultimately failed. During this period, Sultan Mahmud II<sup>51</sup>

The Sultan ordered the matter to be examined by the Minister of the Navy, Khosrew Pasha, and the Chief Secretary, in order to develop a plan for the Ottoman state's response to the French ambassador's proposal regarding Algeria.<sup>52</sup> The Sublime Porte proposed to the French ambassador a solution to settle the dispute, which consisted of selecting two envoys—one Ottoman and the other French—to be sent to Algeria. However, the French ambassador excused himself from participating and only sent a letter with the Ottoman envoy. It was decided to dispatch an official to advise the Governor of Algeria, and that the Governor of Egypt would under no circumstances intervene in Algeria. A document dated 25 March 1830 from the Prime Ministry Archives in Istanbul records a letter concerning the dispatch of Tahir Pasha.<sup>53</sup> by the Sublime Porte to Algeria, granting him special powers to help bring an end to the crisis between the Regency of Algiers and France, which could lead to war between the two sides, through peaceful means.<sup>54</sup> **The efforts of the Ottoman envoy Tahir Pasha:** After these arrangements made by the Ottoman Sultan, the Ottoman envoy traveled to Algeria, having been provided with a letter addressed to Muhammad Ali requesting clarification regarding the project proposed to him by the French concerning the invasion of Algeria. The Ottoman Sultan also gave Tahir Pasha a detailed firman explaining the objectives expected from this mission.<sup>55</sup> England insisted that the Ottoman envoy should instruct the Dey to make concessions and show flexibility toward the French, as it feared for its own influence in the region.<sup>56</sup> **Although the translator of the French embassy informed the Sublime Porte on 16 March 1830** that his government had decided to send an army to Algeria, France nevertheless expressed hope that Tahir Pasha would resolve the dispute between the Dey and France. It reassured the Ottoman authorities that it would remain silent on the Algerian issue until a reply was received from the Pasha.<sup>57</sup> Tahir Pasha also carried a firman from the Imperial Divan addressed to the scholars of Algeria and the Regency of Algiers, calling for the dispute to be resolved and the issue settled without resorting to war. It further stated that after the return of Khلیل Effendi, the conflict was not the responsibility of one side alone.<sup>58</sup>

On 16 April 1830, the warship "Nasim Zafir" departed from Istanbul en route to Algeria, carrying the Ottoman envoy along with his private secretary and translator. Tahir Pasha was also carrying a letter from the French ambassador in Istanbul addressed to the French commander of the blockade in Algeria.<sup>59</sup> In the event that the commander of the blockade refused this, he was instructed to request the French government to appoint an official with полном authority to negotiate with Tahir Pasha and to enter the city of Algiers. If the



Algerian authorities considered the conditions to be unjust, then Tahir Pasha was to seek out the official sent by the French government.<sup>60</sup>

Tahir Pasha explained to the notable figures of Algiers the dangers that would result from war. He also reminded them of the Sultan's desire to resolve the crisis peacefully if the two sides failed to reach an agreement. He stated that, if no understanding was achieved, he would send a report to the Sublime Porte informing it of the situation and explaining the developments. However, before doing so, he was required to do everything in his power to resolve the crisis.<sup>61</sup> It was said that there were secret instructions given by the Sultan to Tahir Pasha, the content of which was to take control of authority and execute Dey Hussein if necessary. However, to this day, there are no documents confirming or disproving the authenticity of this claim.<sup>62</sup> Although Ahmad al-Jazaïri, an eyewitness, mentioned an account that may support this claim, stating that there were attempts to assassinate Hussein Dey by supporters of the peace settlement, which led the Dey to execute a large number of them.<sup>63</sup>

However, Tahir Pasha had previously received a letter from the French ambassador requesting assistance in entering Algiers. Nevertheless, the French blockade commander De Clairval was also prevented from doing so, and Hussein Pasha, according to Samih al-Tur, likewise barred his entry into Algiers. France feared this development, as if he were to enter and resolve the crisis, there would no longer be any justification for the ongoing conflict and the dream of invading Algeria would fade away. Consequently, he was forced to go to Tunisia.<sup>64</sup> However, the Tunisians also did not allow him to proceed to Algeria, as the French had informed them that if the Ottomans were to directly link the administration of Algeria to the Ottoman Empire, they would apply the same system in Tunisia and abolish the system of the Beys. Consequently, no ruler in Tunisia allowed him passage.<sup>65</sup>

Baron Alphonse Rousseau, in his *Tunisian Annals*, notes that afterwards Tahir Pasha returned on his ship to La Goulette, where he coincidentally encountered an Ottoman vessel carrying 200 Turkish soldiers sent by the Ottoman Empire for support. However, they had been forced by the French fleet to redirect their course toward Tunisia. The arrival of these soldiers created a tense and alarming situation in La Goulette, and Tahir Pasha even considered the possibility of overthrowing the Tunisian authorities.<sup>66</sup>

During his stay in Tunisia, the Bey sought to obstruct his contact with Algeria and advised him not to proceed with landing in Algerian territory, citing the prevalence of epidemics there. According to the provisions of the public health regulations, it was prohibited to allow anyone to travel or tour in an infected area. This measure was taken at the instigation of France, which saw Tahir Pasha's meeting with the Dey of Algiers as a failure of its project. It therefore warned the Bey of Tunis that it would impose a blockade on his kingdom if he allowed him to cross the Tunisian borders into Algeria. It also urged him to divert and dissuade him from heading to Algeria, which the Bey complied with, and the envoy of the Sublime Porte remained in Tunisia.<sup>67</sup> Thus, the French authorities forced Tahir Pasha to proceed to Toulon, on the orders of the Minister of the Navy, in order to achieve the objectives of the expedition, and also due to the strong hostility they harbored toward Tahir Pasha.<sup>68</sup>



The Ottoman envoy attempted throughout his stay to contact King Charles X of France in order to present the content of the Ottoman Sultan's instructions. However, the French authorities refused to recognize him and instead chose to detain him in the city of Toulon. This is confirmed by a letter from the French Minister of Foreign Affairs addressed to Tahir Pasha, which states: "You did not answer the first and essential question that I had the honor to put to you, and I know that you are fully empowered to negotiate with France on matters related to war."

Thus, Tahir Pasha had no choice but to inform the Sublime Porte of the outcome. However, the French administration sought to obstruct his mission, as they feared that if he succeeded in entering Algeria and convincing its people, the French plan for the conquest of Algeria would fail.<sup>69</sup>

France, uncertain of the outcome of its expedition in Algeria, did not exclude entering into negotiations with the Sublime Porte that would ensure the achievement of its objectives, or at least part of them. This is reflected in the letter sent by its Foreign Minister on 3 July to the commander of the expedition, "Duperré," in which he informed him of the mission for which Tahir Pasha had come. He also stated that the King's Council had considered that, in the event of negotiations over the Algerian question, "the Sublime Porte should cede to France the port of Annaba and the entire region located between the Sebas River on the Algerian-Tunisian border in the east, and the city of "Sotora" in the west, the Mediterranean Sea in the north, and the Sahara Desert in the south." Finally, the French Foreign Minister outlined in his letter the benefits that such a territory would bring to France and its people in the future.

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#### **Fourth: The French Military Invasion and the Fall of the Regency of Algiers (1830)**

In 1830, the King issued a general mobilization decree and, in his speech on 2 March 1830, announced his intention to attack Algeria, framing it as a response to the insult to French honor and a religious motive, claiming that the mission was also intended to protect Catholics. In a letter to the Pope of the Vatican, he described it as "the campaign against the land of the barbarians," and asserted that it served the interests of the entire Christian world.

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**France's Declaration of War on Algeria:** On 6 January 1830, the French government announced its decision to declare war on Algeria during a Council of Ministers meeting held in Paris, after a four-hour deliberation. The decision was then approved by King "Charles X" on 7 February. The order was issued along with instructions to the commander of the expedition, allowing for the acceptance of peace if offered by the Dey, but only under harsh conditions. France relied on the plan devised by Boutin. It also sent a memorandum to European governments informing them of the decision, accompanied by an explanation of the various justifications that led to it, while emphasizing that its war preparations targeted Algeria alone. Among the stated pretexts, the most prominent was the Fly Whisk Incident.<sup>72</sup>

The French fleet set sail from the port of "Toulon" on 25 May 1830 and stopped in the Bay of Palma in the Balearic Islands.<sup>73</sup> The sailing plan involved dividing the naval military units



into two groups moving in two parallel lines, with the expedition's ships distributed along their flanks on the right and left sides.<sup>74</sup> The overall military commander of the expedition was General de Bourmont.<sup>75</sup>

Dey Hussein was aware of the arrival of the expedition, as well as the location of its landing, through intelligence reports. However, his negligence in taking sufficient precautions to thwart the landing operations at Sidi Fredj, where he believed that the French expedition would not go beyond naval bombardment, as had been the case with previous European campaigns, contributed to the situation. This was further compounded by the poor selection of military commanders.<sup>76</sup> Afterwards, the Dey declared a general state of mobilization throughout the country and called for jihad against the French. He managed to gather around fifty thousand fighters: seven thousand from the Turkish militia, and about forty thousand volunteers who came from various regions of the country.<sup>77</sup>

He also informed the tribes and Arabs of the hostile intentions harbored by the French. He sent orders to the Bey of Oran to fortify the port, and likewise sent instructions to the Bey of Constantine to strengthen the defenses of the port of Annaba.<sup>78</sup>

However, the French forces were able to land on the coast without any serious opposition, and the Algerians missed their first opportunity to inflict damage and losses on the invading forces.<sup>79</sup>

On 14 June 1830, the French expedition landed on the beach of Sidi Fredj, consisting of 37,000 soldiers, 100 warships, and 500 transport vessels carrying supplies. The Algerian authorities believed that the French army would attack Algiers from the sea, so they prepared accordingly. However, the attack came from the rear, forcing them to modify their plan, which nevertheless did not succeed.<sup>80</sup>

**The Fall of the Regency of Algiers and the Signing of the Capitulation Agreement (1830)**<sup>81</sup> According to the account of Ahmad al-Jazairi, when the French forces landed at Sidi Fredj, they broke through the defenses and then set them on fire. This caused the city to be shaken, and fear and panic spread among those who were in it.<sup>82</sup> Afterwards, Commander de Bourmont established his headquarters at the zawiya of the marabout in Sidi Fredj, which overlooked the entire bay. Despite repeated attempts to attack the French forces, most of them failed, until the French succeeded in taking control of Fort "Moulay Hassan." At that point, the city of Algiers fell under their control, and chaos and rumors spread within it, while inhabitants began to flee.

At this stage, Dey "Hassan" gathered the country's notables, jurists, and other prominent figures, and explained to them the grave situation the country had reached, asking them for advice on how to deal with the crisis.<sup>83</sup> Under these circumstances, Dey Hussein was forced on 4 July 1830 to send his secretary Mustafa, accompanied by the British consul "St. John," to the French headquarters to negotiate with "de Bourmont." He responded by accepting the Dey's proposal, which called for surrender. After negotiations and the Dey's review, the treaty was signed on 5 July 1830.



After the French army took control of the city, a commission was formed to inventory the wealth of the “Casbah treasury,” after much of it had been looted during the assault. The commission recorded a total of 48,684,527 francs, including 247,000 gold coins.<sup>84</sup>

Dey Hussein then headed to Naples, accompanied by one hundred members of his family and entourage. He attempted to organize a military activity and return to Algeria, but he did not have sufficient capability, and he remained under French surveillance.

When the news reached the Sublime Porte, it became clear that the French government had feigned ignorance of Tahir Pasha’s mission and had deceived him in order to proceed with the occupation of Algeria.<sup>85</sup>

During his stay in Toulon, he repeatedly attempted to contact King Charles X of France in order to present the content of the Ottoman Sultan’s instructions. However, the French authorities refused to recognize him as an official envoy of the Sublime Porte and instead chose to detain him in Toulon. This is confirmed by a letter from the French Foreign Minister addressed to Tahir Pasha on 1 June 1830, which states: “You have not answered the first and essential question that I had the honor to put to you, in order for me to know whether you are fully empowered to negotiate with France on matters related to the war in Algeria.”<sup>86</sup>

Thus, France had deceived him until it implemented its plan and occupied the city of Algiers. Upon receiving news of the occupation of Algiers, the Sublime Porte was shaken by the violation of its territorial sovereignty. Charles-André Julien describes the Sublime Porte’s reaction to this infringement of its sovereignty as no more than a “formal protest.”<sup>87</sup>

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