

Dirassat & Abhath
The Arabic Journal of Human
and Social Sciences



مجلة دراسات وابحاث
المجلة العربية في العلوم الإنسانية
والاجتماعية

EISSN: 2253-0363
ISSN : 1112-9751

British Travellers to Morocco the dualism of Gibraltar and the Strait during the eighteenth and nineteenth Century

الرحالة البريطانيون إلى المغرب: ثنائية جبل طارق والمضيق
خلال القرنين الثامن عشر والتاسع عشر

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تاريخ القبول : 14 - 03 - 2024

تاريخ الاستلام: 27 - 12 - 2023

Abstract:

Morocco became of great interest to British travellers during the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries due to the English occupation of Gibraltar in 1704. The number of travellers exceeded fifty, compared to only two travellers during the pre-occupation period, the journey of Englishman John Smith and the Scottish William Lithgow, as part of their grand voyages. In addition, there were some journeys as part of embassies, diplomatic missions, and trade. From this, we can conclude that the British presence in Gibraltar, along with the resulting relations between Morocco and Britain, played a significant role in this increase of travel to Morocco.

Keywords: British travellers, Gibraltar, strait, morocco, England.

الملخص

أصبح المغرب محل اهتمام كبير للرحالة البريطانيين خلال القرنين الثامن عشر والتاسع عشر بسبب الاحتلال الإنجليزي لجبل طارق عام 1704. وقد تجاوز عدد المسافرين الخمسين مقابل مسافرين اثنين فقط خلال فترة ما قبل الاحتلال، وهي رحلة الإنجليزي جون سميث و الاسكتلندي ويليام ليثجو، كجزء من رحلاتهم الكبرى. بالإضافة إلى ذلك، كانت هناك بعض الرحلات كجزء من السفارات والبعثات الدبلوماسية والتجارة. ومن هذا يمكن أن نستنتج أن الوجود البريطاني في جبل طارق في توافد الرحالة البريطانيين عبر المضيق إلى المغرب.

الكلمات المفتاحية : الرحالة البريطانيين، جبل طارق، المضيق، المغرب، إنجلترا.

1. Introduction

Most likely the name Gibraltar goes back to Calpe or Calpi, which is a Phoenician name, and the reason for the name Gibraltar goes back to the Arab Muslim leader Tariq ibn Ziyad, who conquered Spain between 711 - 718 AD, so that the southern shore of Spain is located on a narrow peninsula near the entrance to the Mediterranean Sea, and the rock of Mt. Tariq is made up of a massive slab of limestone that covers around six square kilometers of Gibraltar's total size and is home to approximately thirty-four thousand inhabitants. English is the official language, and the population also speaks Spanish and some other languages such as Arabic and others. Gibraltar is divided into seven residential neighbourhoods, an international airport, a NATO military base, as well as the port controlling Gibraltar.

Moroccan-British relations after the English control of Gibraltar comprised a significant defining moment throughout the entire existence of Morocco, because of the presence of normal interests and a shared adversary. The English presence in Gibraltar after its occupation in 1704 Promotion brought the distance between the two nations closer. Then again, the distance of the Waterway (strait of Gibraltar) played a significant part. In the flood of English travellers to Morocco, no matter what the thought processes that drove them to visit Morocco, at whatever point we peruse the texts and texts connected with the English excursion around Morocco, we see that as the vast majority of these texts on their most memorable pages show significantly about the explorer's flight course from Gibraltar to Tangier, Morocco. In this case, the question arises did Gibraltar and strait play a role to increase British travellers? And For a deeper

understanding of this subject, few questions must be raised, here:

- What were the repercussions of the English occupation of Gibraltar on British travellers?
- What are the motives that helped the British travellers?
- Who are the most prominent travellers who crossed the strait?

In light of the foregoing, we attempted to introduce this review to determine the impression of English control of Gibraltar and the main English voyagers who crossed the waterway (strait) from Gibraltar to Morocco, which is the primary issue on which we assembled this article to determine the significance of the unfamiliar social talk of first contact, particularly because it addresses the other's perspective on Morocco, So we used the authentic methodology in introducing this review, remembering five major hiccups for building our article, beginning with the British explorers in the early seventeenth century, then the English control of Gibraltar, the elements that helped the explorers draw nearer to Morocco, and finally the British explorers and crossing the strait of Gibraltar to Morocco.

2. British Travellers in early seventeenth Century

The first recorded official contact between England and Morocco goes back to the early Thirteenth Century, when King John sent an Embassy to the fourth Sultan Mohamed Nassir, asking for an alliance against France and help against his enemies within Britain with the promise that if his request were granted, he would accept the Islam. According to Rogers, the details of this embassy were recorded by Mathew

Paris and later published and kept at Saint Alban.¹

Rather than deterring commercial and political interactions, Morocco's internecine wars aided in the development of tighter links between Morocco and England during the 16 and seventeenth centuries. Indeed, the reciprocal necessity for political alliances in the face of internal opposition or external threat brought the two countries together at times. Because of this, their connection is unexpectedly long². In this period and According to Richard Hakluyt,³ the first travel in modern history by James aldy in the ship called the lion of London in 1551, then after one year the second travel by James Thomas, while the first English resident Ambassador was appointed in 1577.⁴ Because of Morocco's crucial geographical location, the United Kingdom attempted to strengthen political, economic, and cultural ties with the country. This compelled The Sa'adi Sultan 'Abd al-Malik (1575-1578) to make regulations favoring English merchants in order to facilitate their economic activities. Some letters sent between Queen Elizabeth I and some of the Sa'adi sultans bear testament to the two countries' political and diplomatic ties. In 1637, Mohamed Ech-Cheikh sent the first Moroccan Ambassador to London to King Charles I with a message of peace and brotherhood. As a result, some historians think that Morocco was part of the informal Empire of Great Britain until 1904.⁵

In 1600, John Purry translated the most iconic book in geography, authored by Hassan el-wazzan in 1556, into English to become the only geographical reference at the time for anyone who wanted to learn more about the entire province. Despite the fact of its value in terms of scientific

information the book under the impact of the orientalism discourse had given a dumpy and unclear picture about its true matter the Barbary province and its inhabitants.⁶ According to the study prepared by Mr. Lambert Playfair and Dr. Robert Brown, which was published in London under the title Bibliography of Morocco from the earliest times to the end of 1891, we see that the number of English travelers reached two travels before the English colonization of Gibraltar.⁷

William Lithgow's voyage was in 1614. He begins by discussing the mode of dress, in which both sexes wear long pants and red or yellow shoes, with long robes of linen with dyes over their bodies, and the women wear a covering made of straw or tiny reeds on their heads to shade their faces from the sun. During his description of the city of Fez, he mentioned that it is one of the four most beautiful cities in the world through his travels, and he says that the inhabitants of this city are about a million people within a hundred and twenty thousand houses and about four hundred and eighty small mosques, and he says that the inhabitants of this city are about a million people within a hundred and twenty thousand houses and about four hundred and eighty small mosques, In the midst of a discourse about engineering, he compared the mosques constructed of gray marble to some geometric designs found in Italy.⁸

Similarly, John Smith travelled to Morocco, pausing in Gibraltar, Ceuta, and Tangier before arriving in Safi, where he met Henry Archer, a French veteran of war. When Moulay Ahmad took over as moors ruler, he had three sons: Moulay Sheikh, Moulay Zaidan, and Moulay Abu Fares. He is the most benign and honourable king who

reigned well in peace and abundance, even if his dominion was more ruthless in Africa..." He described the city of Fez during the time, mentioning mosques, schools, and doorways,⁹ when he mentioned: "Fez is a big city divided into two parts, the old Fez contains about 80,000 houses, and the other side is located beautifully on a river in the heart of Berber and on a part of the hills and plains, there are in this city 200 schools, 200 hotels, 400 water mills, 700 mosques, and it is surrounded by a wall with twelve gates".¹⁰

3. Gibraltar under English Colonization

Another fight fought to maintain Europe's balance of power was the war of Spanish succession. As the childless Charles II wrote in his will, Louis XIV intended to place his grandson on the Spanish throne. This prospective succession prompted William III, the States General, the Hapsburgs, and numerous other states to form the Grand Alliance in 1701. The reasoning was that the king of France could grow so powerful that Europe would be in risk of losing its independence due to the threat of universal monarchy. This was the official *casus belli* that the allied states used against the deceased king's clear will.¹¹

The year 1704 was the year of Blenheim, Marlborough's great victory that shattered Lewis the fourteenth's ambitions for global dominance. As stars fade in the light of dawn, so England's minor wins on land and sea were forgotten in the glare of this grand victory. And, while most men remember when Blenheim was won, few remember when Gibraltar was taken. However, it is disputed if the latter, despite being less well-known, was not the more important victory in terms of British interests. There was little direct advantage gained by England at the

Battle of Blenheim, but by capturing Gibraltar, she acquired leadership of the Mediterranean and the road to India.¹²

The fleet sailed from Tetouan and moored in Gibraltar Bay on July 21. Under the orders of the prince of Hess-Darmstadt, the marines, totaling 1,800, were then landed to the northward, on the isthmus, today known as the neutral ground, which connects the rock with the mainland. The garrison was prohibited from obtaining provisions from the interior as a result of this action..

The governor was summoned to surrender the bastion to Charles the third, King of Spain; however, the governor declared that he and his veterans were real and dedicated subjects of Their Natural Lord, Philip Fifth, and would die in defense of the fortress. Sir George Rock immediately gave the order to begin the attack, and rear admiral Byng, with one eighty-gun ship and fourteen ships, as well as rear admiral Vender-Dussen and six Dutch men of war, and some vessels under captain Hicks, took up their positions before daylight on the 23rd..¹³

A massive cannonade was now launched against the fortifications, and in five or six hours no fewer than fifteen thousand shots were fired, and the enemy, despite displaying magnificent bravery, was forced from their guns. As a result, on the 24th, this famed bastion fell into the hands of the attackers, and as a reminder, Gibraltar was seized in the same year as the Battle of Blenheim.¹⁴

Figure 01: The Anglo-Dutch fleet sailing into Gibraltar, 1704.¹⁵



In the Dutch town of Utrecht in April 1713, Louis XIV of France, his grandson Philip V of Spain, and the British queen Anne signed a peace pact. The accord effectively ended the Spanish succession conflict. In terms of security, the treaty provided significant benefits to the United Kingdom. France, the main European power of the time, legally acknowledged the government change that had occurred in Britain as a result of the glorious revolution of 1688, reducing French support for the exiled Stuart dynasty even further. Britain gained territory in North America as well as the strategically significant naval strongholds of Gibraltar and Minorca, both of which are located close to home.¹⁶

4. The Reasons that helped British Travellers

The abundance or rarity of travel accounts was conditioned by the flow of movements of travellers, which was in turn governed by different factors pertaining to the fluctuating political, economic, and cultural relations between Morocco and Great Britain. So, a chronological classification of the different travel accounts should take into consideration the constantly changing nature of those relations, with a special regard to the political conditions in each country.¹⁷

For instance, while the second half of the sixteenth century had only seven travellers to its credit, the last twenty years of the nineteenth century witnessed the rise of at least twenty six travellers and the production of more than fifty account.¹⁸ The reason for this can be understood through many points:

First: After the English occupation of Gibraltar, the region witnessed an increase in population through constant intermarriage with local Spanish girls to maintain the common language of English and Spanish. In addition to the additional influx from Minorca, Malta, and Moroccan Jews who came from Tetouan.¹⁹

Second: the experience of Sir John Drummond Hay, who was a representative of Britain and the Kingdom of the Netherlands in Morocco during the years 1846-1886, he played a major role through his famous agreement in 1856 AD, which revealed the extent of the size and strength of political and economic relations between Morocco and Britain.

Third: The excursions taken by persons whose voyage was not related to official bodies, but rather was motivated by subjective motives such as exploring new locations, taking undiscovered routes, and monitoring observations and descriptions that were unusual among prior travellers. Like what happened with Emily Keene and the others. The reasons of her coming to Morocco reflect from the early beginning a mind that was yearning to get away from a stifling Victorian milieu²⁰, Emily Keene's *My Life Story* is a unique travel account as it is written by an Englishwoman, which puts the travelogue in the ambit of female travel narratives. She married a Moorish notable, Sidi Al-Hadj Abd al-Salam, the

Shareef of Wazzan, spending, hence, more than four decades amongst the Moors in pre-protectorate Morocco or the “Land of the Furthest West”. For more than four decades, Keene managed to live on the cusp of two starkly different cultures, civilizations, religions and societies.²¹ Became a relevant figure in pre-colonial Moroccan history due to her involvement in British policy and to her philanthropic- medical initiatives during the late nineteenth and early twentieth century.²²

Similarly, Amelia Perrier stated that her goal in authoring *A Winter in Morocco* was to convey information about a place that many Britons were unfamiliar with. She wrote, "When I went there, I knew nothing about the country." Everything I saw was new and fascinating to me. And it is for that section of the reading public whose minds may be in the same blank state on the subject as mine was that I have written down my experiences in Morocco and described, as best I could, all that I saw and heard there, in the hope that it may provide some amusement, and perhaps a little instruction, to them as it did to me.²³

As for Elizabeth Murray, she was a homeless child. She only had her pen, which was her source of sustenance. She left England at the age of eighteen for Spain, then Gibraltar, and finally Morocco, where she expressed the reason for this by saying: “Spain and Gibraltar were two of the temptations offered to people looking to escape the gloom of England in the early winter months for the light and sunshine of the Mediterranean-washed regions. With such enticements to entice him and such opportunities before him, who wouldn't be a wanderer in November?”²⁴

5. Victorian Travellers Crossing the Strait

Crossing the strait of Gibraltar was not only considered a bridge to the opposite bank of the African continent. It was much more than a physical effort that British travellers could do. The feelings of crossing the strait were much stronger for each of them. Allan de button says: “the pleasure we got from the trip depends mostly on the mindset we travel with rather the destination or the route we take”.²⁵ Throughout the eighteenth and nineteenth century, many British travellers crossed the strait. The crossing used to take three to six hours due to the means of transport provided at that epoch. The colonel Keating was the first traveller who had crossed the strait.²⁶

The trip of Keating was followed by the young Scottish traveller Mungo Park in 1789. It took him six hours to reach Tangier. The trip was mainly for curing Moulay Abdesselam the son of the sultan Sidi Mohamed Ben Abdullah who was suffering from a hard disease that could barely lose his sight because of it. Thomas rescue in his turn before his first crossing of the strait he decided to read a lot about the front shore, their traditions, the faith they practice and its rituals. He was continually thinking about the myths and legends said about the mountains of Atlas. His trip lasted for almost four hours to step the shore of Tangier.²⁷

The Morocco city to the British visitor and tourist of the nineteenth century was such kind of inspirational experience that would enrich his story-telling, when he came back due to the total and radical change that the Maghreb citizen used to have when it is compared to that of the British. Wandering the narrow alleys of the Maghreb cities, visiting the monuments and

knowing more about the historical backgrounds of the ancient ruins was extremely motivating to write about.²⁸

The crossing was considered as a risky adventure and a step into the unknown. The European passenger feelings as soon as the step tangier land were much stronger that most of them wrote about as it was a ritual to practice. The brightness of the white colour that used to cover the buildings of tangier was the first hosting protocol that welcomes the visitors. The trips were not only for business and trade purposes they used to be also a kind of diplomatic expeditions as that of James Curtis in 1801ad who was officially requested by the general O'Hara to accompany the ambassador of the king's majesty.²⁹

In 1826, both George Beauclerk and doctor brown had arrived to provide a medical care for the sultan who has already invited them for that. The sultan refused to fill doctor brown in about the reasons that lie beyond the sickness of his majesty. He said that it could be a rational outcome of the continual contribution in wars or something else. The trip was planned to Tetuan but due

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On the other hand many British travellers had crossed the strait but none of them had written something about the experience of the crossing. For example, James Richardson who visited morocco 1848 starting from the strait of Gibraltar to tangier and Mogador (current Essaouira) and other Moroccan cities. The reason for not writing about the crossing and its wonderful feelings is that he was mainly aimed at cancelling slavery trade all over the world. He had made a special plea to the governor of

to the stormy weather the destination was changed into tangier. Beauclerk pointed out that tangier was the unique city that was much familiar to the Europeans from the opposite shore. The breath taking whiteness of its buildings flat roofs that were on top of each other a spitting image to the European graveyards. This beautiful Meta fore was a reflex to a state of wonder and astonishment. The distant look had given a romantic picture to the city from the seaport while Beauclerk had only seen it as a cemetery.³⁰

Though the crossing was just for few miles to reach the next shore, the feeling of astonishment was dominating the vast majority of travellers due to the apparent discrepancy specially the race factor and that what the Spanish traveller Domingo Badia (Ali Bey) had written a lot about. He described the distinction between the two banks as it was a gap of two millennia between the two races. Everybody used to know that the Spanish traveller had gone beyond the logic norms while saying that. The mutual and the frequent connection between the two country was owing to a bunch of reasons that impose themselves as rational outcome. Mogador to fight the widespread of this phenomenon.³²

On March 1888, the trip of the English traveller Joseph Thomson through the strait had given a new dimension which was completely different from the former ones. The trip was programmed in the evening so had combined between the feelings of fear and caution and the yearning for reaching his end. Joseph Thomson mentioned that at the beginning of the conversation: As the sun began to set in the west, we found ourselves on a choppy expanse of blue ocean. Europe was now behind us, and

Africa, with all of its promised delights, was ahead. Once we were out of the protective headlands, there was a brief moment of "tremendous motion" and "rueful throes," and then Africa welcomed us with open arms. As we sailed into Tangier's small bay, the sun was approaching the horizon.³³

6. Conclusion

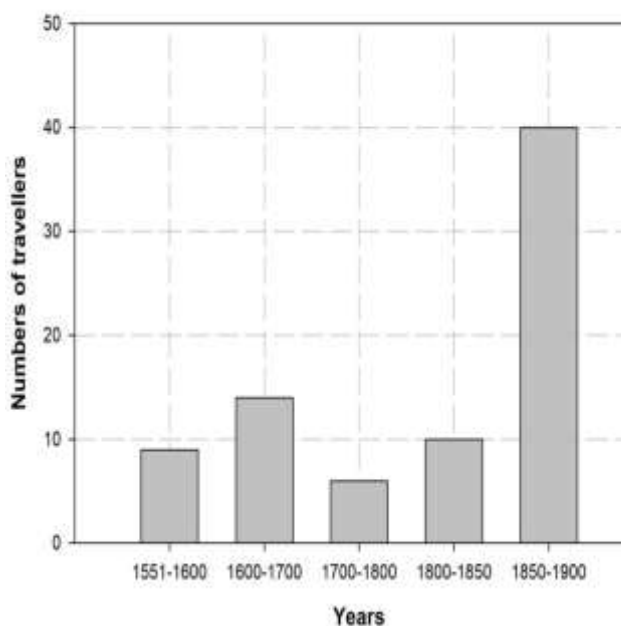
The British presence in Gibraltar played a role in attracting explorers to cross the strait. Additionally, the strong Moroccan-British relations during the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries were characterized by supplying commercial and military ships with water. Furthermore, the experience of Sir John Drummond Hay and the signing of the 1856 agreement granted privileges to British traders in Morocco during the latter half of the nineteenth century.

Though the purpose of seeking for new markets to develop its international commerce was one of its highest priorities, the British government had also coupled it with cultural and literary awareness about the morocco individual. This latter produced a large number of important documents concern humanities and social sciences. The British awareness in the morocco had gradually started over centuries which has become quite obvious in hundreds and thousands so scripts in forms of sermons, theatre, poem, history and geography, press and diplomatic reports, ethnographic research and other different genres of publications. The economic ends had never been a hinder for developing extra good connections with the other (Moorish Muslim individual) in terms of mutual dialogue. It was part and parcel of orientalism discourse from a very through and comprehensive perspective.

In the end, we can conclude that the geography of the mountain and its proximity had a significant influence on British explorers, making it a point of interest for them to discover the landmarks of this region, regardless of their varying motivations and objectives, whether related to religion, espionage, exploration, or others. Consequently, these travellers left behind their accounts of their journeys, starting from crossing the strait until their arrival in Morocco, where they stayed and recorded their observations and impressions about Morocco. It is important to approach these accounts with caution because they represent the foreign perspective on Morocco. I come back to the beginning of the article – British travellers to morocco: the dualism of Gibraltar and strait during the eighteenth and nineteenth century. We have seen that the British presence in Gibraltar he played a biggest role in this period. And to make it clear, we find that most travellers started from this rock. Did Gibraltar and strait play a role? / Yes pretty much.

7. Appendices:

Figure 02: represent the number of British travellers during in modern history (1551-1900)



Bar chart prepared by author

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