



French General Charles de Gaulle, the Bey of Tunis, and French General Charles Mast in the courtyard of the bey's summer palace in Carthage, Tunisia, in June 1943. PHOTO BY MARJORY COLLINS/U.S. OFFICE OF WAR INFORMATION.

An increasing proportion of Special Operations Forces (SOF) have an interest in Africa, and especially the Maghreb, which borders the Mediterranean and is where the Arab Spring started. In this monograph, Dr. Roby Barrett provides a regional historical analysis of how the people of Tunisia, Algeria, and Morocco have developed their views toward government legitimacy and religious authorities. SOF personnel from the U.S. and other countries have to be particularly mindful of the area's French colonial legacy (one of many attempts by outside powers to control these countries), as well as the dichotomy between coastal and interior populations, when considering how foreign involvement in the region and democratic institutions may be perceived by its inhabitants. This publication is an important look at how and why past efforts at secular democracy have failed in this region, and why they are likely to do so for the foreseeable future.

**Joint Special Operations University**  
**7701 Tampa Point Boulevard**  
**MacDill AFB, FL 33621**

<https://jsou.libguides.com/jsoupublications>



ISBN 978-1-941715-21-5

JSOU Report 17-3

Tunisia, Algeria, and Morocco: Change in the Maghreb

Barrett



**JOINT SPECIAL OPERATIONS UNIVERSITY**



## ***Tunisia, Algeria, and Morocco: Change, Instability, and Continuity in the Maghreb***

**Roby Barrett, Ph.D.**

JSOU Report 17-3



## Joint Special Operations University and the Center for Special Operations Studies and Research

The Joint Special Operations University (JSOU) provides its publications to contribute toward expanding the body of knowledge about joint special operations. JSOU publications advance the insights and recommendations of national security professionals and the Special Operations Forces (SOF) students and leaders for consideration by the SOF community and defense leadership.

JSOU is the educational component of the United States Special Operations Command (USSOCOM), MacDill Air Force Base, Florida. The JSOU mission is to educate SOF executive, senior, and intermediate leaders and selected other national and international security decision makers, both military and civilian, through teaching, outreach, and research in the science and art of joint special operations. JSOU provides education to the men and women of SOF and to those who enable the SOF mission in a joint and interagency environment.

JSOU conducts research through its Center for Special Operations Studies and Research (CSOSR) where efforts center upon the USSOCOM mission:

**USSOCOM mission.** USSOCOM synchronizes the planning of Special Operations and provides Special Operations Forces to support persistent, networked, and distributed Geographic Combatant Command operations in order to protect and advance our Nation's interests.

Press publications are available for download from the JSOU Library web page located at <https://jsou.libguides.com/jsoupublications>.

## Joint Special Operations University

Brian A. Maher, Ed.D., SES, *President*

Francis X. Reidy, *Interim Director, Center for Special Operations Studies and Research*

Robert Nalepa, Lieutenant Colonel, U.S. Air Force, Ret., *Editor in Chief*

Lisa Sheldon, B.A., Advertising, *JSOU Press Editor*

Cindy Snyder, B.A., Mass Communications/Journalism, *Assistant JSOU Press Editor*

### *Resident Senior Fellows*

Peter McCabe, Ph.D., Political Science, Colonel, U.S. Air Force, Ret.

Will Irwin, MMAS, Lieutenant Colonel, U.S. Army, Ret.

Paul Lieber, Ph.D., Mass Communication & Public Affairs

David Ellis, Ph.D., International Relations, Comparative Politics

### Editorial Advisory Board

Roby C. Barrett  
Ph.D., Middle Eastern & South Asian History  
*Public Policy Center Middle East Institute and  
JSOU Senior Fellow*

James J.F. Forest  
Ph.D., Higher Education Administration  
*Associate Professor, School of Criminology and  
Justice Studies, University of Massachusetts  
Lowell and JSOU Senior Fellow*

Mario Forestier  
Chief Warrant Officer, U.S. Army, Ret.  
*Director, Joint Special Operations Command  
Center for Counterterrorism Studies*

Thomas H. Henriksen  
Ph.D., History  
*Hoover Institution, Stanford University  
and JSOU Senior Fellow*

Bernd Horn  
Colonel, Canadian Dept. of National Defence, Ret.  
Ph.D., War Studies  
*Director, CANSOFCOM Education and  
Research Centre*

Russell D. Howard  
Brigadier General, U.S. Army, Ret.

John D. Jogerst  
Colonel, U.S. Air Force, Ret.

James Kiras  
Ph.D., History  
*School of Advanced Air and Space Studies,  
Air University and JSOU Associate Fellow*

William W. Mendel  
Colonel, U.S. Army, Ret.  
*JSOU Senior Fellow*

Alvaro de Souza Pinheiro  
Major General, Brazilian Army, Ret.  
*JSOU Associate Fellow*

James F. Powers, Jr.  
Colonel, U.S. Army, Ret.  
*JSOU Senior Fellow*

Bryan C. Price  
Lieutenant Colonel, U.S. Army  
Ph.D., Political Science  
*Director, Combating Terrorism Center at  
West Point*

Richard H. Shultz, Jr.  
Ph.D., Political Science  
*Director, International Security  
Studies Program, The Fletcher School,  
Tufts University and JSOU Senior Fellow*

Robert G. Spulak, Jr.  
Ph.D., Physics/Nuclear Engineering  
*Sandia National Laboratories  
and JSOU Associate Fellow*

Jessica Glicken Turnley  
Ph.D., Cultural Anthropology  
*Galisteo Consulting Group  
and JSOU Senior Fellow*

Rich Yarger  
Ph.D., History  
*JSOU Senior Fellow*



*Tunisia, Algeria, and Morocco:  
Change, Instability, and  
Continuity in the Maghreb*

*Roby Barrett, Ph.D.*

**JSOU Report 17-3**  
*The JSOU Press*  
*MacDill Air Force Base, Florida*  
*2017*



Comments about this publication are invited and should be forwarded to the Director of the Center for Special Operations Studies and Research, Joint Special Operations University, 7701 Tampa Point Blvd., MacDill AFB, FL 33621.

\*\*\*\*\*

The JSOU Center for Special Operations Studies and Research (CSOSR) is currently accepting written works relevant to special operations for potential publication. For more information, please contact the CSOSR Director at [jsou\\_research@socom.mil](mailto:jsou_research@socom.mil). Thank you for your interest in the JSOU Press.

\*\*\*\*\*

This work was cleared for public release; distribution is unlimited.

Printed in June 2017.

ISBN 978-1-941715-21-5

The views expressed in this publication are entirely those of the author and do not necessarily reflect the views, policy, or position of the United States Government, Department of Defense, United States Special Operations Command, or the Joint Special Operations University.

Authors are granted academic freedom provided their work does not disclose classified information, jeopardize operations security, or misrepresent official U.S. policy. Such academic freedom empowers authors to offer new and sometimes controversial perspectives in the interest of furthering debate on key issues.

### ***Recent Publications of the JSOU Press***

**A Social Marketing Analysis for Suicide Prevention Initiatives in USSOCOM: A Framework for Future Research and Success**, JSOU Report 17-2, R. Craig Lefebvre, Ph.D.

**A Unified Theory for Special Operations**, JSOU Report 17-1, Richard W. Rubright, Ph.D.

**IS and Cultural Genocide: Antiquities Trafficking in the Terrorist State**, JSOU Report 16-11, Russell D. Howard, Marc D. Elliott, and Jonathan R. Prohov

**Cultural Intelligence for Special Forces Personnel**, JSOU Report 16-10, Russell D. Howard, Greta Hanson, and Carly Laywell

**Training Surrogate Forces in International Humanitarian Law: Lessons from Peru, Colombia, El Salvador, and Iraq**, JSOU Report 16-9, Patrick Paterson

**On the cover.** Students (top) defy a longtime ban on protests in Algiers to march to the government's headquarters and demand the resignation of the education minister in April 2011, and Tunisian protestors (bottom left) attend a demonstration demanding a new government free of officials of the ousted regime of former president Zine el Abidine Ben Ali in January 2011. MAP BY THE U.S. CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY; PHOTOS BY LOUIZA AMMI/ABACAPRESS.COM/NEWSCOM (TOP) AND NASSER NOURI/XINHUA NEWS AGENCY/NEWSCOM (BOTTOM LEFT).

**Back cover.** French General Charles de Gaulle, the Bey of Tunis, and French General Charles Mast in the courtyard of the bey's summer palace in Carthage, Tunisia, in June 1943. PHOTO BY MARJORY COLLINS/U.S. OFFICE OF WAR INFORMATION.

# Contents

From the Director .....vii

Foreword .....ix

About the Author .....xi

Introduction ..... 1

1. The Maghreb: Incubator for Revolt ..... 9

2. The Maghreb and the Imperial Construct ..... 27

3. Independence Movements and the National States:  
1930–2011 ..... 45

4. Conclusion: 2011 and the Future ..... 81

Appendix: Acronym List ..... 101

Endnotes..... 103





# From the Director

**D**r. Roby Barrett's latest contribution, his eighth JSOU Press title since 2009, adds to a collection of country and area studies about the Gulf region and northern Africa. His examination of the Maghreb is a welcomed addition. As in his other monographs, he offers historical and scholarly analysis, informed by more than three decades of first-hand experience interacting with key actors in the region. Each title may be read as a single work but they are also joined by a common thread of shared history and integrated themes. The collection, including this monograph, serve as a quick-to-need primer for Special Operations Forces (SOF) and policymakers involved in the region.

Taken together, Dr. Barrett's research spans separate organizational perspectives of multiple theatre special operations commands and State Department bureaus. His description of history and trends provide a framework to appreciate the complexities of current politics and conflict. His projections have proven to be on point and often run counter to popular forecasts. Dr. Barrett is a consistent advocate for smaller SOF' engagements, especially when successful nation-building and large conventional force solutions are unlikely or unfeasible. I encourage readers who are concerned with bringing security and stability to the greater Middle East and North Africa to examine all of his JSOU Press titles.

Francis X. Reidy  
Interim Director, Center for Special Operations Studies and Research



# Foreword

Dr. Roby Barrett's *Tunisia, Algeria, and Morocco: Change, Instability, and Continuity in the Maghreb* is a regional history monograph relevant to Special Operations Forces' (SOF) understanding of how the people of Tunisia, Algeria, and Morocco have developed their views toward government legitimacy and religious authorities. SOF personnel (from the U.S. and other countries) have to be particularly mindful of the area's French colonial legacy, as well as the dichotomy between coastal and interior populations, when considering how foreign involvement in the region and democratic institutions may be perceived by its inhabitants. This monograph will surely benefit the increasing proportion of SOF who have an interest in Africa.

While the future need not resemble the past, there is much the SOF community can draw from this historical analysis that helps anticipate events in this region. Western proponents of democratic state-building may find disturbing the author's arguments that only an authoritarian approach will be effective in controlling parts of these countries, and that "Western secularism in the Maghreb, and for that matter the Middle East, has failed," however, the author provides ample support for these views. In addition, Dr. Barrett provides critiques of state-building theory and of the over-emphasis on the Westphalian nation-state system to frame Western approaches to problems and potential solutions in the Maghreb.

The detailed scope and breadth of this historical analysis is definitely its strongest asset. SOF personnel will benefit from learning about the region's history and the many attempts by outside powers to control these countries. Dr. Barrett has provided an excellent and thoughtful review of historical events and developments that are most relevant to SOF personnel gaining an understanding of political, military, and cultural issues in the Maghreb. Dr. Barrett provides ample support for his arguments about how and why current or past efforts at secular democracy have failed in this region, and why they are likely to do so for the foreseeable future.

This monograph has value to both the military and policy world. It is not only a good explanation of the history of the Maghreb, but its greatest value is its succinctness in analyzing and presenting the current chaotic regional situation. It should be of interest to strategists, planners, and leaders involved in the future of U.S. policy in the region.

Peter M. McCabe, Ph.D., Colonel USAF (Ret.)  
Resident Senior Fellow, Center for Special Operations Studies and Research

## About the Author

Dr. Roby C. Barrett is a Senior Fellow at the Joint Special Operations University, United States Special Operations Command (USSOCOM), where he also has been an instructor for applied intelligence, and a scholar at the Middle East Institute, Washington, D.C. He provides subject matter expertise to United States Special Operations Command Central (SOCCENT) and supports various U.S. government organizations, including the Office of the Secretary of Defense, National Defense University, the State Department, and various organizations within the intelligence community. He is the author of *The Gulf and the Struggle for Hegemony: Arabs, Iranians, and the West in Conflict*, a policy, history, and reference work on the entire Arabian Gulf region. In addition to numerous JSOU monographs, including *Saudi Arabia: Modernity, Stability, and the Twenty-First Century Monarchy* and *The Collapse of Iraq and Syria: The End of the Colonial Construct in the Greater Levant*, Dr. Barrett authored *The Greater Middle East and the Cold War: U.S. Foreign Policy Under Eisenhower and Kennedy*.



Dr. Barrett has more than 40 years of government, academic, and business experience in Africa and the Middle East. A former Foreign Service Officer in the Middle East, he also is an expert on the cultural and political dynamics of the region and historical Islamic and political development, as well as terrorism issues. Initially trained as a Soviet and Russian specialist, Dr. Barrett brings unique insights to his evaluations of regenerated competition between Russia, China, and the United States in the Middle East and Africa. His posting, projects, and other assignments included North and West Africa, the Levant, the Arabian Gulf, and Southeast Asia.

He has been a featured presenter on Middle East affairs at USSOCOM and SOCCENT. From 2010 to 2012, he was a visiting professor at the Royal Saudi Arabian Command and Staff School War Course. He has been a featured expert at the German Council on Foreign Relations and with Germany's Bundeswehr. Dr. Barrett also served as a Senior Fellow on Gulf affairs at the U.S. Air Force Special Operations School. In 2007–2008, he supported the

101st Airborne Division in the U.S. and Iraq. He has spoken at numerous Middle East conferences, including the Bahrain Ministry of the Interior Gulf Security Forum, the opening of the King Abdullah II Special Operations Training Center, and the Bahrain SOF Conference.

Dr. Barrett holds a Ph.D. in Middle Eastern and South Asian history from the University of Texas at Austin. He was an Eisenhower-Roberts fellow at the Eisenhower Institute in Washington, D.C., a Rotary International Fellow at the Russian and East European Institute at the University of Munich, and a Scottish Rite Research fellow at Oxford University. He is a graduate of the Foreign Service Institute's intensive two-year Arab Language and Middle East Area Studies program and attended the Counterterrorism Tactics Course and the special operations courses.

## Introduction

In the second decade of the 21st century, an examination of the political landscape of the Arab Middle East reveals that the façade of the artificial divisions imposed largely by Western colonialism and their indigenous enablers is disappearing. Particularly in the West, the reality behind the façade is challenging to understand. The collapse of so-called nation-states in Syria, Iraq, Yemen, and Libya has called into question Western perceptions of state structure, as well as the efficacy of Western approaches to policy implementation. While the proto-Western republics of the regime collapsed, the monarchies survived intact. With one exception, the republics either returned to authoritarian rule, as in the case of Egypt, or descended into chaos, as in Syria, Iraq, Yemen, and Libya.

It is in this environment that the burden falls increasingly on Special Operations Forces (SOF) and other government organizations to be the policy tool that shores up allies, attempts to keep the lid on the chaos, plays a growing role in attempting to restore stability, and protects U.S. interests. The old traditional lines of responsibility between the State Department, the U.S. Agency for International Development, and the military have blurred, particularly now that entire regions are deemed too dangerous or inaccessible to the civilian agencies. Given this expanding role, understanding the political, economic, and socio-cultural milieu at a much deeper level is critical not only for evaluating tactical situations and players, but for understanding within the policy scheme what is actually possible and what is a pipe dream. It is immensely important that the military and SOF feedback—from the boots on the ground—be reflected in policy thinking. For that to happen effectively, SOF personnel must have an understanding of the deeper, broader context with which they are attempting to deal. While Syria, Iraq, Yemen, and Libya grab the headlines, another series of challenges loom that will demand support for traditional regimes, attempts to create political stability where it has collapsed, and finally, consideration of the potential for the emergence of instability that could rival anything heretofore seen in the region. All of this could occur within one region—the Maghreb. This study is a beginning point for SOF to understand that critical region and consider

what requirements the pressures and instability in the future may add to the long list of SOF responsibilities.

In some respects, the Maghreb—Tunisia, Algeria, and Morocco—have avoided the worst of the upheaval that has rocked the Arab world over the last five years. This is ironic for several reasons. The 2011 revolt in Tunisia was the catalyst that brought revolts and protests across the region. Its government now struggles with creating a democratic state that melds secular and Islamist groups, while fighting off radical jihadist attempts to overthrow the government and institute a fundamentalist Islamic state. In Morocco, the monarchy is now viewed as an example of traditionalist stability. Algeria, through oil wealth and repression, survived a bloody Islamist revolt in the 1990s and is attempting to control a gigantic and incredibly heterogeneous geopolitical environment with a crippled political system and repression. With respect to the problems facing the region, nothing is settled.

Like the rest of the Arab world, the events in the Maghreb underscore the deficiencies of traditional Western political analysis and its fixation on Westphalian order (i.e., the concept of the nation-state based on Western-style nationalism). It also highlights the fallacies of modernization theory, as promoted since the 1950s, as a path for stability in the developing world. Modernization theory as a pillar of nation-building held that strategic application of aid and development resources would bring states to an economic ‘takeoff point’ that would foster political stability and democracy. In *Tunisia since Independence*, Clement Henry Moore provides an example of modernization theory by arguing, “Tunisia’s ruling Neo-Destour Party has achieved possibly the most effective regime in the Afro-Asian world for leading its people toward a modern society.”<sup>11</sup> In retrospect, it is clear that the durability of the system envisioned by the founder of the Neo-Dustur Party and the President for Life of Tunisia, Habib Bourguiba, had more to do with Western wishful thinking than an understanding of the geopolitical and socio-cultural milieu in which Bourguiba’s Tunisia functioned. Tunisia devolved into a police state that imploded on itself. In fact, modernization, particularly education and secularization, spawned the forces that undid it.

Lisa Anderson, former president of American University of Cairo and a member of the Council on Foreign Relations, hits the nail squarely on the head stating, “Indeed, both the historical and the structural context of political behavior are striking by their absence in early modernization theory.”<sup>12</sup> During the 1970s, political scientists took the ‘traditions and dependence’



approach to explain the Middle East in terms of colonialism and neo-colonialism. Those that predicted democratization and attempted to relegate anti-Western attitudes to marginal ‘primitive’ traditionalism found themselves confronted with the absolute failure of not only democratic movements but also of pan-Arab secularism and the rise of fundamentalist Islam. All of this has led many analysts to the conclusion that history has to be the bedrock of any understanding of the region and that Western theory and prejudices only tend to cloud understanding.<sup>3</sup> To borrow from what Michael Hudson postulated about the future of the Arab Middle East in the 1990s and his expectation for an “era of turbulence,” the real stability issue is political “legitimacy.”<sup>4</sup>

Why are Westphalia and modernization theory and its weaknesses important to SOF in the field? Both form the basis for Western ideas about how the Arab world, and the rest of the developing world, should progress, and both form a Western-centric straightjacket of sorts in which U.S. policy is encased. The U.S. cannot effectively deal with a situation that does not conform to the Westphalian theory of the nation-state, and it repeatedly returns to the idea that there is a way, if done correctly, for developing states to modernize in preconceived Western patterns—state-building theory. Confronted with the failure of both of those concepts, the task of attempting to salvage some stability from a given situation has a propensity to fall on the shoulders of the military, in general, and SOF, in particular. Understanding the historical context and applying that understanding to the contemporary reality provides a pathway both to understanding problems and challenges and providing timely and accurate feedback, not just with regard to tactical operations, but with regard to more strategic policy directions and realities.

## **Past, Present, and Future**

The Maghreb is a model for understanding how the historical context connects to the contemporary reality and likely projects into the future by examining three different types of regimes—would-be secular democratic, traditional monarchial, and secular repressive—respectively Tunisia, Morocco, and Algeria. Each emerged from the last five years intact, but the threats to stability remain. They are inherent in the makeup of each of the states. This study places the Maghreb and the contemporary states within their particular historical context and examines them with an eye toward

the future of political, economic, and social development. The Maghreb is a region in which centrifugal forces that played havoc across the Middle East began. It is a region whose current relative stability is likely to be severely tested. A traditional area of strong French influence, the Maghreb in the future will require ever-increasing levels of U.S. involvement in consort with its Paris allies to prevent the fragmentation that that has already splintered Libya and shaken the stability of North Africa.

Recently, in *Foreign Policy*, an article entitled “Morocco’s Outlaw Country Is the Heartland of Global Terrorism” described: “The lines connecting the complex web of kinship and friendship ties across national borders are start-

---

*The Maghreb has a much more robust history of ‘jihadist’ movements than any of the conservative states of the Arab Middle East.*

---

ing to resemble a Jackson Pollock drip painting with a disturbing message” of “deadly terrorist plots from conception through to execution.”<sup>5</sup>

This alarmist analytical thrust is something of an exaggeration—but only just. The catalyst for the instability that now engulfs much of the Arab World is North African in origin—

Tunisian to be more specific. Those that decry Wahhabi and Saudi Arabian influence in the contemporary Maghreb display a striking lack of awareness of the region. The Maghreb has a much more robust history of ‘jihadist’ movements than any of the conservative states of the Arab Middle East.

There is a tradition of militant Islamic reform movements that goes back almost to the introduction of Islam itself. In fact, the Wahhabi reform movement, a part of the Hanbali *madhab* (school of law and ideology), was predated by almost six centuries by the Zahiri *madhab*. Theologically and ideologically, the Zahiri and Hanbali movements were based almost exclusively in the Koran and al-Hadith; they were marked by militancy and Salafist ideology.<sup>6</sup> These movements thrived in the fertile soil of factional, tribal, and clan conflict in the Maghreb. Islamic doctrine provided the mantra for legitimacy that justified clan, tribal, and ethnic ambitions for power and influence. In fact, challenges to government control today are a 21st-century version of what Umayyad, Abbasid, Ottoman, and French administrators and commanders saw over the centuries. They are also an indication of the things to come.

Why limit this study to the Maghreb? Libya is in chaos and the ongoing conflict between the Egyptian government and its Islamist opponents

continues as an issue that some believe is yet to be decided. First and foremost, the Maghreb—Tunisia, Algeria, and Morocco—are fundamentally, geopolitically, and socio-culturally different from Egypt and Libya. Eastern Libya in particular is merely the logical extension of the Egyptian frontiers. In the best of times, it was a buffer against Saharan threats to upper Egypt and the Nile Valley, and in the worst of times, its fragmentation magnifies the threat. Despite his more problematic policies and practices, Muammar Gaddafi's Libya formed a buffer, a *march*, if you will, for Egypt against destabilizing forces from the West and a dam against the flood of illegal immigration from Africa to Europe. As we will see, the Maghreb has always been viewed as 'different' from its two neighbors to the east.

This study takes a more holistic perspective on the Maghreb and its components. The Maghreb constitutes a general geopolitical region where three different political structures are faced with surviving the natural and time-honored forces that have consistently destabilized the area. Each country is using a different approach to the same problem of stability in a period of tectonic economic and social change that threatens to inundate its political structures, and yet they survive. The cartographic lines drawn by the European powers on the map of North Africa basically reflect a French colonial land-grab as opposed to the problems inherent in administration. The ancient Roman *limes*, a defensive system, protected the coast from the uncontrollable interior and has many similarities to contemporary attempts to define borders bequeathed by colonial policies. This administrative system borrowed from the Romans constituted an ancient political construct that, for the most part, ran east-west.<sup>7</sup> The socio-cultural structure of North Africa, the Sahara, and sub-Saharan regions approximates this same construct. As a result, security structures, then and now, tend to follow a roughly horizontal, or east-west, axis, given that threats to coastal security, stability, and prosperity almost always have emerged from the interior. To further complicate this geopolitical reality, traditional north-south trading routes form pathways whereby, not just commerce and goods, but ideas and peoples flow—colonial borders meant and mean nothing. As E.W. Bovill explained in the classic *The Golden Trade of the Moors*, "Northern Africa is divided into a series of natural zones running roughly parallel to each other from west to east."<sup>8</sup> Boundaries fluctuated with attempts to control this trade.

During the last half of the 20th century, some trappings of modernity—primarily improved communication—both mitigated and aggravated the

stratification. Those beyond the coastal zones now understood that they were being shortchanged. Sharp differences remain between the horizontal social and cultural layering and the north-south political structures of the Maghreb's governments. West Africa provides another even more dramatic example. There, geographically narrow colonial positions along the coast tend to drive vertical north-south political constructs. The colonial experience in both North Africa and West Africa aligned the political structure of the northern and southern edges of the Sahara in such a way that the borders fail to reflect the socio-cultural reality. Political control flowed from the coast to the interior. Now, in the 21st century, instability is the price for this vertical alignment.

Chapter 1 of this study focuses on the pre-Islamic heritage of the Maghreb, particularly Roman rule and how the Maghreb differed from Egypt and Cyrenaica and Tripolitania in Libya. The discussion then shifts to the Islamic conquest and how the Maghreb became a focal point for sectarian Islamic resistance to the great Umayyad and Abbasid empires. This underscores a developing motif or pattern of political behavior in the region. The destruction of the Umayyad Caliphate and the rise of the Abbasids in Baghdad in 750 brought a more decentralized approach to administration through a series of emirates—the Rustamids (777–909), the Idrisids (789–920), and the Aghlabids (800–909). The tribal and ideological contrasts between these groups further emphasizes the Maghreb's role as an incubator of ideological sectarianism.

Chapter 2 begins with the Ottoman period, and then focuses on the European colonial conquest of the Maghreb and the implications of French rule. Tunisia and Morocco ultimately became French protectorates with an eye toward integration into the metropole. Algeria became a province in Metropolitan France. This narrative looks at the imposition of Western political constructs as they came into conflict with traditional Islamic and tribal socio-cultural paradigms. It examines French colonial thinking and the political decisions made to enhance control. This chapter focuses particularly on the French experiences in the world wars and the decisions to maintain their empire in the Maghreb against impossible odds, as well as the contribution that the colonial experience made to the challenges facing the states of the region today.

Chapter 3 focuses on the emergence of independent states and the challenges that each have faced since 1945. Part one discusses Tunisia, perhaps

the most fortunate of the Maghreb states. Tunisia's particular geographic location and physical structure—a more limited area to the south—provides the potential for more stability over the longer term. It is not an accident the incident that set off the 'Arab Spring' began in the south. The south and the western mountains have historically provided flashpoints for unrest and instability. Democracy might take hold in the coastal regions, but only if moderate political elements form a bulwark against radicalism from the western interior and south. The discussion of Morocco illustrates that, even after centuries of independence, many believed that the days of its monarchy were numbered. The monarchy has been resilient and fortunate; it now faces perhaps its most critical growing challenge in the form of nascent insurgencies spawned by al-Qaeda and the rise of the Islamic State of Iraq and Syria (ISIS). Algeria forms the last part of this trilogy. After its violent struggle for independence from France, the Front de Libération Nationale (National Liberation Front or FLN) victory seemed to fulfill the promise of national liberation, and yet in the 1990s, the FLN government faced the prospect of defeat at the ballot box and Islamist control or dictatorship. In a brutal civil war, the Algerian government crushed the Islamist opposition, bringing an uneasy—and likely temporary—peace. Obviously, given the political challenges of its size, diversity, and geographic location, the ability of Algeria to maintain its stability is fraught with issues.

The conclusion connects the political, economic, and social threads that have created the contemporary Maghreb. It explores the contradictions of the sectarian, ethnic, and socio-cultural reality. There is a lesson in this contradiction for the West. The issue is not just terrorism and security. North Africa from Egypt to Morocco constitutes a buffer against population pressures from Saharan and sub-Saharan Africa inundating the Mediterranean community. The collapse of Libya breached that buffer, resulting in a flood of refugees and associated security problems. A similar breakdown of control in the Maghreb would make the situation exponentially worse; thus the state structures, no matter how problematic or even artificial, are the best option for stability. Should they fail, and they very well might, then it is critical the contemporary situation be viewed not through the lens of the colonial constructs and the states that followed, but through the deeper perspective of a region steeped in resistance, Salafi fundamentalism, militant Sufi orders, and major Islamic movements that have shaped not only the Maghreb, but the Middle East and Europe, as well.



# 1. The Maghreb: Incubator for Revolt

The setting of the Maghreb in its pre-Islamic and early Islamic context is important in the contemporary context for several reasons, but two stand out. First, what we are experiencing now and are likely to experience in the future is not new. The Maghreb, especially the hinterland, has been an incubator for resistance, revolt, and revolution since the beginning of recorded history. Particularly under Islam, factions that appeared to be insignificant leveraged the physical and sociological environment of the Maghreb to produce political and ideological explosions, some of which reordered the Arab and Mediterranean worlds. It is a paradigm that needs to lodge in the back of SOF minds as new challenges are encountered in the region. Second, and most important, are the issues of credibility and analysis. To most peoples of the Maghreb, the past is important because it defines who they are relative to allies and adversaries in the region. SOF personnel interfacing with indigenous allies simply require a historical political, economic, and socio-cultural baseline for credibility.

From an analytical point of view, knowledge allows SOF to better understand their Maghrebi counterparts in political and social terms as they interact with them. In the Middle East, how a people view the past says a lot about how they view the present. None of this is possible without a baseline understanding of past. In terms of contemporary analysis, the 70 years since WWII and the beginning of the nation-state concept in the Maghreb, is a historical blink. To understand what the Maghreb is today and how Tunisians, Moroccans, and Algerians see themselves and the Mediterranean world requires some level of knowledge about Carthaginians, Romans, Almoravids, and Almohads. That history also is an indicator of how some Islamic groups see their European neighbors—an increasingly critical security issue. The story of the Maghreb begins roughly 2,500 years ago with the rise of the Carthaginian Empire, based on the coast in Tunis.

## Phoenicians, Carthaginians, Romans, and Byzantines

This study begins with a glimpse of the Mediterranean world 2,500–3,000 years ago, emphasizing that for millennia, events in Lebanon or Egypt or Italy or France were interconnected to the Maghreb—that has not changed.

Beginning as early as 1,500 years before the common epoch (BCE), the Phoenicians from bases in Lebanon became the preeminent trading power, establishing commercial centers throughout the Mediterranean Basin, including outposts in modern-day Tunisia, Algeria, and Morocco. According to multiple ancient historians, who often took some liberties with interpretation, a renegade Phoenician Queen Elissa (a.k.a. Dido) fled Tyre with her retainers and established Carthage. Carthage, in an alliance with local Berbers, eventually absorbed the Phoenician outposts and cities of the western Mediterranean and took control of the trans-Saharan trade routes. With their Berber allies, they also fended off challenges by the various Greek city-states and their trading ‘factories’ (outposts) on the coast.<sup>9</sup>

In 509 BCE, Carthage concluded a treaty with the new Roman Republic because the Greeks threatened both. In the 3rd century BCE, the alliance soured when both Carthaginian and Roman expeditions moved to displace strategic Greek colonies in Sicily. In three Punic wars between 264 and 146 BCE, the western Mediterranean witnessed military campaigns that are still studied today. Rome became a naval power and conquered the entire Mediterranean basin. During the second Punic War (218–201 BCE), the Carthaginian general Hannibal invaded Italy and defeated a massive Roman army at Cannae in 216 BCE. Carthage was eventually defeated by Scipio Africanus, yet it continued to attempt to assert control. At this point, the Numidians, a Berber tribe led by King Masinissa and allied with the Romans, expanded their territory at Carthage’s expense. The Carthaginians allied with another Berber confederation, the Mauretanians, and moved against Rome’s Berber allies. At this point, Rome had had enough. A Roman expeditionary force utterly destroyed Carthage in 146 BCE.

The drama in the Maghreb was only beginning for the Romans. The Numidians now became entangled in the politics of Rome itself. Numidian factions sided for and against Marius and Sulla in their struggle to control Rome. Later, Numidian factions supported Pompey against Julius Caesar. Under Octavian (Augustus Caesar), the client kingdoms in North Africa came to an end and the territories were integrated into the empire. The Romans suppressed Berber revolts, but never subjugated them.<sup>10</sup> It was not a matter of ‘if’ a new revolt would occur, but rather ‘when’ and ‘what’ form it would take. This situation became a harbinger of things to come—something with which we can identify in the contemporary age. Inside the defensive system of the limes, a Roman world developed, complete with magnificent



cities and agriculture on a scale that could feed Rome. Outside the limes, Berber tribes and their Saharan, and even sub-Saharan, allies held sway. Rome could launch an expedition deep into the hinterland, but it could not sustain control or change the strategic dynamic one iota.<sup>11</sup> Eventually, control returned to local rulers and tribal leaders who pursued their own interests, often at the expense of the Romanized littoral.

The limes, with their fortified bases and guard posts with berms and roads linking them, remind the observer of 21st century attempts at border control and counterterrorism operations. As Bovill suggests: “The defensive zone of the Roman *limes* was advanced to the foothills of what must have appeared to be an admirable natural line of defence. It was perhaps only then that it became evident to the Romans that there was no apparent limit to their commitments.” In fact, the Romans only succeeded in antagonizing the tribes: “The desert became both a refuge and a recruiting ground for all who rebelled against Rome.”<sup>12</sup> As the empire declined, North African revolts became more frequent and Berber incursions increasingly unstoppable.

The collapse of Roman authority in the 5th century brought the Vandals—a Romanized, Germanic tribe—to the Maghreb. The Byzantines (Romans) quickly reconquered the coastal areas but this created a Berber-Christianity ideological problem that has a parallel within the Islamic community today. The Berbers were heavily Donatist Christian and the Vandals were Arian Christian. Arian and, particularly, Donatist beliefs were viewed as heresies by both the Roman Church and Byzantine Church. In fact, Saint Augustine, born in present-day Algeria, spent much of his career inveighing against the Donatists. The Byzantine restoration brought heavy taxation, decreased prosperity, and ideologically motivated Orthodox Christian persecution. This inflamed the Berber countryside and, even near the coast, towns and farming communities were fortified against raiders.<sup>13</sup> The divide between the hinterland and the coast persevered no matter who was in control, with the hinterland having its own particular ideological overlay to justify resistance. Ideological struggles within the Christian community undermined grassroots support for the Byzantine administrations. In the seventh century, these

---

*The divide between the hinterland and the coast persevered no matter who was in control, with the hinterland having its own particular ideological overlay to justify resistance.*

---

animosities would reveal themselves in an astonishing chain of events that, on the surface at least, changed the face of the North Africa.

## The Coming of Islam

The ease and rapidity of the conquest was stunning, but it was not revolutionary in the sense that the language of society changed but the realities of power and ruler remained very much the same. Like the destruction of Sassanian Persia, the conquest of Egypt began as a *ghazi*, or raid, and escalated into a full-blown invasion and occupation. In Egypt, the Muslim presence was a thin veneer overlaying a Christian Coptic society. The Coptic community was the target of vicious, systematic persecution by the Byzantine Christian authorities. The situation was so repressive that the Muslim practice of allowing relative freedom of worship for the *dhimmi*, or ‘people of the book,’ along with the payment of the *jizya*, a tax on Christians and Jews, seemed far preferable. By 642, from bases in Palestine and Syria, Amr ibn al-‘As had taken Egypt. From their new military base at Fustat (Cairo), Arab armies moved west, taking both Cyrenaica and Tripolitania by 643. At that point, Caliph Umar halted the westward thrust of his armies.

Caliph Umar was assassinated in 644 and Uthman ibn Affan, the third Rashidun caliph, succeeded him and authorized a raid into Ifriqiya (Tunisia). Abdullah ibn al-Sa’d became governor of Egypt and achieved a limited victory over the Byzantines. The *ghazi* prolonged Byzantine control over Carthage because the exarch (Byzantine governor) of Carthage, Gregory, had declared himself emperor and challenged imperial control. The Arabs killed him in battle, allowing Constantinople to reassert some control.<sup>14</sup> Nevertheless, the weakness of the Byzantine position became clear. Plans to renew the offensive fell victim to discord within the Muslim leadership.<sup>15</sup> In 656, Uthman was assassinated by people working for al-Sa’d. In 661, Ali ibn Abi Talib, the fourth caliph and first Shi’a imam, fell victim to a Kharijite assassin. This would have significant implications for the Maghreb.<sup>16</sup>

At this point, the Umayyad Caliphate headed by Mu’awiya ibn Abi Sufian (r. 661–680) took control of the Muslim community (*umma*) from Damascus. In 670, the Umayyad commander, Uqba ibn Nafi al-Fihri (622–683) established a strategic garrison town—Kairouan—on the model of Fustat and Kufa (southern Iraq). Kairouan was a base of operations against the Byzantines on the coast, but it also served as a buffer against the Berber tribes.

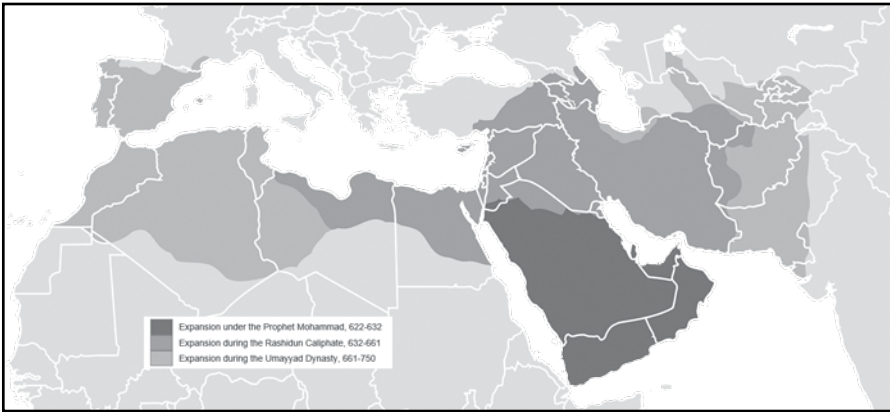


Figure 1. The expansion of Islam in the age of the Caliphates.

SOURCE: BRIAN SZYMANSKI

Uqba's brutal policies against the Berbers created determined resistance. Abu al-Muhajir Dinar (d. 683) replaced Uqba and attempted a carrot-and-stick approach to create alliances with the Berber tribes. After political infighting, Uqba regained his position and pushed westward, only to be killed in an ambush in 683 by a combined force of Byzantines and Berbers, led by the Berber chief, Kusaila.<sup>17</sup> Kusaila ruled Ifriqiya from Kairouan for three years. In 686, the original Arab commander in Ifriqiya, Ibn Qais, defeated the Byzantines and killed Kusaila, but only narrowly maintained control of Kairouan.<sup>18</sup> Once again, the primary resistance to the invasion was not the imperial forces, but rather the ability of the Berber or indigenous tribes to resist encroachment.

With Kusaila dead, the resistance shifted to the Berber tribes led by al-Kahina (Dihya), a prophetess and queen of the Aures Berbers. Immensely charismatic and said to have mastered 'magic,' al-Kahina and her immediate tribe practiced Judaism. She united the tribes and crushed the Arab armies, driving them back to Tripolitania. She ruled for five years virtually unmolested. A new Arab commander, Hassan ibn al-Numan al-Ghassani, began a series of campaigns in 692 that met with mixed success until, in 698, he captured Carthage for the final time and founded a new city, Tunis, nearby. Having eliminated the Byzantines, al-Ghassani began a systematic campaign that destroyed al-Kahina and her army, but tribal resistance, particularly from the Sanhaja Berbers, prevented penetration to the south. A

new Egyptian governor, Musa ibn Nusayr, pushed the Arab conquest across the Maghreb to the Atlantic.<sup>19</sup>

In 711, Tariq ibn Ziyad (d. 720) became the commander of Musa ibn Nusayr's armies. There has been a debate about his origins—Persia, Arab, or as most believe, Berber. There can be no debate about his accomplishments. Using a Berber army stiffened by Arab cadres, many of them Yemeni, he crossed into Spain at Gibraltar (Jabal Tariq) and destroyed the Visigoth Empire (418–720), killing King Roderic.<sup>20</sup> Tariq's relatively small army now controlled the entire Iberian Peninsula, leaving the Arab commanders dependent on the support of their Berber converts.<sup>21</sup> Over the next two decades, Muslim armies advanced into France. In 732, near Tours, France, a Muslim expeditionary force under the Arab governor of Al-Andalus, Abd-al-Rahman al-Ghafiqi, was decisively defeated by Charles Martel. In the aftermath, Martel would claim the title King of the Franks.<sup>22</sup> Losses in the Muslim expeditionary force were so severe that Muslim historians referred to the battle site as *Balat al-Shuhada*, or path of the martyrs.<sup>23</sup> Arab advances had been stopped before on numerous occasions only to regroup later—this situation was an exception. Umayyad rule had created instability across the empire. Success bred its own problems.

## The Islamic Maghreb Fractures

Under the Umayyads, the Arabs viewed non-Arabs as second-class Muslims. During the conquest of Spain, the Arab commanders and soldiers were rewarded with land and other grants, and systematically discriminated against the Berbers who were the bulk of the army. In North Africa, former Byzantine coastal elements sided with the Arabs against the tribal Berbers and received preferential treatment. For many of the Berbers, it was now obvious that the Arabs despised and exploited them. The Berbers exploded in revolt across Spain (Al-Andalus) and the Maghreb. Expansion into Europe ended because the Arab armies were needed for the occupation of North Africa as Berber unrest grew. Facing growing security difficulties, Hassan ibn al-Numan is said to have commented, “The conquest of Africa is an impossible thing.”<sup>24</sup>

The Umayyads were exclusively Arab and viewed new converts as *muwali*, or clients, as opposed to full members of the Muslim *umma*. This problem was endemic across the empire. The Berbers, although removed from the

seat of revolt in Mesopotamia and the Levant, nevertheless significantly weakened Umayyad control. In 720, Yazid ibn Abi Muslim became the governor of the Maghreb. He continued the extreme repression practiced by his predecessors. When Yazid demanded that his Berber guards be tattooed as his personal property, they revolted and killed him.<sup>25</sup> In 739, a general revolt erupted in the Maghreb, lasting more than three years. In 741, the Berbers defeated an Arab army sent to subdue them and took control of Spain. It took the intervention of battle-hardened Syrian and Yemeni troops in 742 to suppress the rebellion.<sup>26</sup>

In 749–750, the Abbasid revolt overthrew the Umayyad Caliphate—it was a revolt of the *mulawi* that added to the confusion in the Maghreb and Spain. The focus of the contending factions was on the east and the Levant, not on the western periphery. To further complicate matters, a member of the Umayyad ruling family, Abd-al-Rahman ibn Mu'awiya (d. 788), had escaped. He made his way first to North Africa, and then on to Spain. He exploited the confusion, recruiting Yemeni Arab troops and *muwali* soldiers, and by 756, he had established himself as the Umayyad emir of Muslim Spain. The Abbasids lacked the 'reach' to challenge him, but not the Berbers. The Umayyads would sustain their position in Spain as emirs, and later as caliphs, of Cordoba from 756–1031, but they never expanded their rule to the Maghreb because Berber animosity and resistance to the Umayyads ran deep.<sup>27</sup>

It was at this point that the Berbers turned to a new source of ideological inspiration—Kharijite teachings. The name itself comes from the Arabic verb *kharaj*, to leave or go out, and refers to the unwillingness of the Kharijites to compromise their principles in confronting the Umayyads. A Kharijite assassinated Caliph Ali ibn Abi Talib in 661 for compromising with the Umayyads. Kharijites also figured prominently in the revolt that toppled the Umayyads in 750. Despite their key role, the Abbasids persecuted the Kharijites, who established themselves in remote places in the Islamic world and continued to resist domination.

One particular group, the Ibadis, was more successful than most. Oman would produce an Ibadi imamate, or region ruled by an imam, that lasted into the 20th century and a sultanate that still exists. In the Maghreb, two Ibadi states emerged: the Sufrite state centered on the Zanata Berber tribes and the Rustamid state in the mountains south of Tangier.<sup>28</sup> The Berbers were attracted to the egalitarian concepts inherently a part of Kharijite

Ibadi beliefs. In particular, the idea that ‘any righteous Muslim’ could rule the *umma* appealed to the persecuted Berbers. There was also a connection between the Christian experience of the region and the Ibadi ideological structure. The Donatist belief structure shared an ‘ethical intransigence’ and obsession with ‘authority and legitimacy’ with the Kharijites. Therefore, as Christian Donatists converted to Islam, they brought their socio-cultural and ideological predispositions with them—the mantras of ideological superiority and persecution.<sup>29</sup> The Kharijite states endured until they were displaced by the Almoravids (al-Murabitun) in the 11th century.

In the Maghreb, the Kharijite states were not the only fallout from the Islamic conflicts. In 785, Idris ibn Abdullah (d. 791), a direct descendant of Ali ibn Abi Talib (the first Shi’a imam and the fourth Rashidun caliph), escaped to Morocco after an unsuccessful Shi’a revolt in Medina against the Abbasids.<sup>30</sup> Idris was said to be a Zaydi Shi’a. The Zaydis were followers of the Zayd, the son of the fourth Shi’a imam, Zaynu li Abi Din. They believed that any descendant of Ali (the Alid line) who was learned and pious could become the imam, and that believers had a responsibility to resist unjust rulers.<sup>31</sup> The Awraba Berbers, who had fought the Umayyads with Kusaila, recognized him as their imam, and he quickly expanded the Idrisi control and founded the first Islamic state in the western Maghreb. Idris was assassinated at the specific orders of the Abbasid caliph, Harun al-Rashid (786–809). The Idrisi established Fez as their capital. Assailed by internal disputes and the Aghlabid vassals (subjects) of the Abbasids, the Idrisi state eventually fractured into small city-states.<sup>32</sup>

The Aghlabid dynasty (800–909) in Tunisia (Ifriqiya) was a direct outgrowth of the Umayyad collapse. Unable to control the west, the Abbasids desperately needed a breakwater to protect Egypt and the east from the unrest surging out of the Maghreb. To that end, in 800, Caliph Harun al-Rashid appointed Ibrahim ibn al-Aglab, originally the Sunni Abbasid governor, as the hereditary emir of Ifriqiya in return for his fealty.<sup>33</sup> In 827, the Aghlabids entered Sicily at the request of the rebellious Byzantine governor and progressively extended their control. In 837, they besieged Naples, and even threatened Rome in 846.<sup>34</sup> The dynasty reached its height in the mid-ninth century, and declined steadily until being subsumed by the Fatimids in the early 10th century.

This limited explanation of the confusion and complexities of the Maghreb in the eighth century is a snapshot of the actual reality. The

Maghreb was a fertile field for political and social unrest legitimized by the ideology of splintered Islamic groups and movements. The maintenance of any central authority was always problematic and ceaselessly challenged. The coastal areas and towns were islands of relative order in a sea of tribal chaos. Resistance to authority and a sense of victimization were the two themes that permeated the Berber and nomadic tribal experience. Out of this experience, in the 10th and 11th centuries, new Islamic movements emerged that challenge the fundamental order of the Islamic world.

---

*The Maghreb was a fertile field for political and social unrest legitimized by the ideology of splintered Islamic groups and movements.*

---

## The Fatimids

The Fatimids (909–1171) serve as a cautionary tale about the Maghreb and the transnational nature of ideology that resonates today. How does a virulent movement suddenly appear where it has never before existed and rapidly spread to threaten the existing order? In 892, a Yemeni from Sanaa, Abu Abdullah al-Hussein bin Ahmad (also known as al-Shi'i), converted to Ismaili 'Sevener' Shi'ism while living in southern Iraq. He returned to Yemen and studied under Ibn Hawshab Mansur al-Yaman. Both were disciples of Abdullah al-Mahdi, the Yemeni Ismaili imam. In 892, while on the *hajj* (the pilgrimage to Mecca), he met Kutama Berber pilgrims. Apparently the Kutama had some familiarity with Ismaili beliefs because two missionaries (*da'is*) sent by the sixth Imam, Ja'far al-Sadiq, had sojourned there. Ibn Hawshab instructed al-Shi'i to return with the pilgrims to the Maghreb and convert the Kutama.<sup>35</sup>

The assignment was challenging. The Maghreb was heavily Kharijite, and the Aghlabids were from the Sunni Maliki *madhab* and exceptionally hostile to alternate views. Nevertheless, the general lack of control in the Maghreb provided an opportunity to preach and recruit. In just a decade, al-Shi'i's strict teaching and discipline had transformed the Kutama into a disciplined, motivated instrument of conquest. In 903, al-Shi'i launched a series of military campaigns that ended Aghlabid rule in Ifriqiya and Algeria. When the offensive began, al-Shi'i sent word to the Ismaili imam, al-Mahdi, to join him from Cairo. His armies captured Kairouan, the Aghlabid capital,

in 909. The Aghlabid leader fled to Egypt. Having consolidated his position in Ifriqiya, al-Shi'i set off to the west and eliminated the Ibadi Kharijite Rustamid emirate (777–909) at Tahart. In January 910, al-Mahdi (now known as Abu Muhammad Abdullah) was proclaimed *al-imam al-mahdi bi'llah* (the imam rightly guided by God) and *amir al-mu'minin* (commander of the faithful) in the mosques of Kairouan. In effect, the Kutama had provided the means for a Shi'a caliphate to emerge in the stronghold of Maliki Sunni Islam. Theologically, for the Ismailis, the event heralded the end of the Seventh Imam's occultation and ushered in a new Islamic era.<sup>36</sup>

In less than 20 years, the Ismailis went from a small hunted minority to control of a state with the military might to back it up. They used “deep-rooted social ills” and the promise of justice to gain support. There was an added incentive, as Saunders put it: “In North Africa, the Berbers of the great Katama (sic.) confederation hated the racial arrogance of the Arabs of the towns.”<sup>37</sup> This is not to say that establishing control in Ifriqiya was easy. They faced challenges from the Abbasids, the Umayyads of Spain, the Byzantines, the Qaramati of Bahrain, as well as the Sunni, Kharijite, and Berber tribes of the Maghreb. What had been a revolutionary movement now had to effectively wield power—a decidedly different proposition. Caliph al-Mahdi and al-Shi'i soon came into conflict. Fearing the latter's influence with the Kutama, al-Mahdi arrested and executed al-Shi'i and his brother. This sparked a limited rebellion that was quickly quelled. The preeminence of the Kutama in the Fatimid structure created problems with the Ibadi Zanata Berbers in the far western Maghreb. They often found support from the Sunni Umayyads in Spain under their proclaimed caliph, Abd-ar-Rahman III (r. 929–961). Also in the west, the remnants of the Idrisid dynasty resisted control. Having inherited Sicily, the Fatimids faced persistent challenges from the Byzantines and others.<sup>38</sup>

In 969, under Caliph Abu Tamim Maad al-Mu'izz li-Din Allah (r. 953–975), the Ismailis conquered Egypt, establishing a new city at Fustat and naming it Cairo (‘the victorious’). The conquest of Egypt was viewed as an intermediate step that would take them to victory over the Abbasids in Baghdad. Their success created a crisis in Abbasid Baghdad and a focus on discrediting the Ismailis.<sup>39</sup> In fact, a theologian, Abu Hamid al-Ghazali (1055–1111), perhaps the second most important influence on Islam after the Prophet Muhammad, was engaged for much of his Baghdad career in countering Fatimid claims to legitimate caliphal authority.<sup>40</sup> Cairo became



the Fatimid capital and the headquarters for a new sophisticated administrative system. It also became a center for learning and the arts. In the early 970s, the Fatimids founded al-Azhar University, still functioning today, as a center for multi-sectarian Islamic learning. Their governing system was one generally based on merit more than ideology; therefore, there was every conceivable type of Muslim in the administration, as well as Christians and Jews. The Red Sea became a Fatimid lake, and the trade routes to India and the East made Cairo a critical trading link with Europe.<sup>41</sup>

In the Maghreb, the success to the east brought commensurate unraveling in the Maghreb under Caliph Abu Ali al-Mansur al-Hakim (r. 996–1021). While Berbers enabled the Fatimid triumph, positions of influence in the army and government went increasingly to Turkic elites from the east. Caliph al-Hakim came to the throne as a minor, and his vizier, Abd-al-Futut Barjawan, ruled as caliph. Confronted by Berber revolts, Barjawan's policy of suppression alienated many of the core Berber supporters for the regime. In desperation, the Fatimids in Cairo turned to Hammad ibn Buluggin (r. 1014–1028) to rule as their vassal in the central Maghreb, where he founded the Hammadid dynasty (1014–1052). With Sanhaja Berber support, he betrayed the Fatimids, adopting Sunni Islam and recognizing the Abbasids as the rightful caliphs. Powerless to intervene, the Fatimids watched a reassertion of Berber independence.<sup>42</sup>

Three centuries had passed since the Arab invasions and yet the region continued to defy political and social subjugation. For the conquerors, control was fleeting at best. The slightest provocation was invitation to revolt. By the mid-11th century, the Maghreb consisted more or less of three parts: the Zirid state in Ifriqiya (Tunisia); the weak Hammadid dynasty in the center (Algeria); and the various Berber tribal areas to the west in what is now Morocco. The Zirids are a prime example of the loss of control. Seeing opportunity to rid themselves of Fatimid rule, they announced their fealty to the Abbasids in Baghdad, infuriating the caliph in Cairo. The Hammadids, a rival of the Zirids, essentially took the same tack with Cairo, aligning themselves with anyone who could assist them in maintaining their independence. At this point, the Zirids reverted to Fatimid suzerainty to justify their attempts to conquer the Hammadids. In the west, the Zanata Berbers lacked the cohesion to be called a state.

Frustrated, the Fatimid caliph found a new ally to punish the Hammadids—the Bani Hilal. The Bani Hilal were a large Bedouin tribe located on

the borders of upper Fatimid Egypt. On the condition that they would leave Egypt, the caliph offered them his blessings to raid the Maghreb<sup>43</sup> (some historians called it a migration<sup>44</sup>). The Hilal, and other tribes that moved with them, attacked friend and foe alike. Abu Zayid Abd-al-Rahman ibn Khaldun al-Hadrami (Ibn Khaldun; 1332–1406) called them, “An army of locust, they destroyed everything in their path.”<sup>45</sup> They devastated the countryside and economy. The invasion also shifted Saharan trading routes to the east, further impoverishing the region. After the initial onslaught, the Arabs settled into tribal districts with local sheikhs in nominal control, and the eastern Maghreb ceased to have any political cohesion. Change was coming.

## The Almoravids

The Almoravid (1040–1147) was the first of two indigenous dynasties that would emerge in succession to unify the Maghreb. The situation created traumatic social and economic shifts among the Berber tribes. The Zanata Berbers

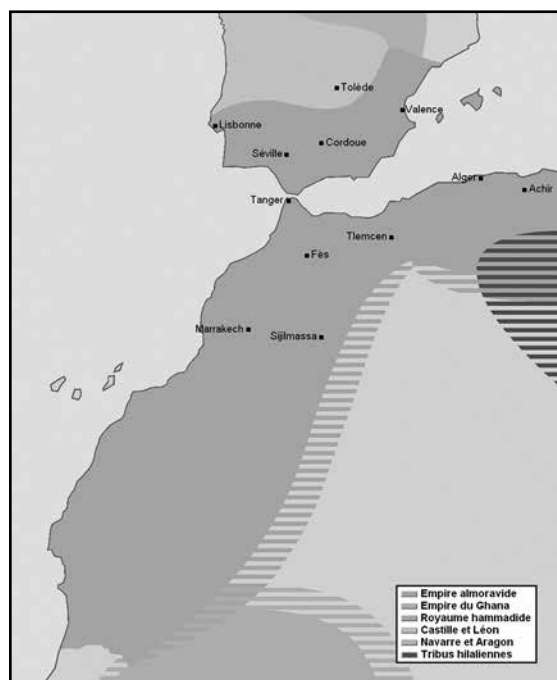


Figure 2. The Almoravid empire.

SOURCE: OMAR TOONS

controlled the northern ends of the trans-Saharan routes and the Sudanic state of Ghana, and cut the Sanhaja, and thus the Kutama, off from the south outlets. Caught between Zanata domination in the north and Sudanese-ruled Ghana, the pressure created an opening for something new. The spark came from Yahya ibn Ibrahim, Sanhaja tribal chieftain, and Abdullah ibn Yasin, a teacher and student of Islamic law. Backed by Ibn Ibrahim, who had just returned from the *hadj*, Ibn Yasin called for

a return to strict Sunni Islamic practice. As with the Kutama, the imposition of discipline and the legitimacy flowing from the religious message transformed the Sanhaja into a potent military force. This is a repetitive pattern—the marriage of temporal necessity and leadership to an ideological justification and motivator.<sup>46</sup> Having stamped out the Kharijite beliefs in the region, the Almoravids now turned to converting Ghana to their strict form of Maliki Islam.<sup>47</sup>

From their early beginnings near the Senegal River in the south, the message spread and recruits flowed into the *ribats*, or monastic-like military forts, a process not unlike what is being witnessed today among militants. Led by the Lamtuna clan of the Sanhaja, the al-Murabitun moved north against the Zanata and their impious ways and south against the pagan Africans that blocked their access to the southern trade routes. Heretical Berber tribes were brought to heel. Under their greatest leader, Yusuf ibn Tashfin (r. 1061–1106), they conquered most of Morocco and western Algeria. Marrakesh became their capital. This surge of Islamic revivalism and military power had far-reaching consequences. In Spain, the fragmented *taifa* (independent) Muslim states were on the verge of being overcome by the Christian Reconquista. Out of desperation, because they looked down on the Berbers, the *taifa* called on Ibn Tashfin for help and, at the Battle of Zallaqa in 1086, he decisively defeated the forces of King Alfonso VI of Leon and Castile, halting the Christian advance.<sup>48</sup>

There was a price—Ibn Tashfin systematically took control of the Muslim principalities and incorporated them into the Almoravid Empire. It was not a happy marriage; the sophisticated culture of Spain was sacked by fundamentalists from the Maghreb, sparking revolts. Nevertheless, the Almoravid Empire now stretched from the Senegal River to central Spain. Conquest was one thing; rule another. By 1140, rebellions in Spain forced them to withdraw and resentments in the Maghreb brought the predictable attempts to undermine their power.<sup>49</sup> As the empire became more polyglot, they used Christian mercenaries, African slave cavalry, and Spanish scribes, poets, architects, and administrators, bringing their claims to Islamic purity under attack. The fact that Sunni Maliki legal scholars provided the ideological justification for rule did not sit well with Shi'a and Kharijite Berber tribes. It became a transcultural Berber empire dominated by the traditional Maliki Islamic practice.<sup>50</sup> It also laid the foundations for an even more potent revivalist state that would follow.

## The Almohads

In the mid-12th century, the Almoravids faced another more potent challenge from the Sahara, as Morocco demonstrated its ability to generate an expansionist Salafist Islamic movement. Muhammad ibn Abdullah ibn Tumart (r.

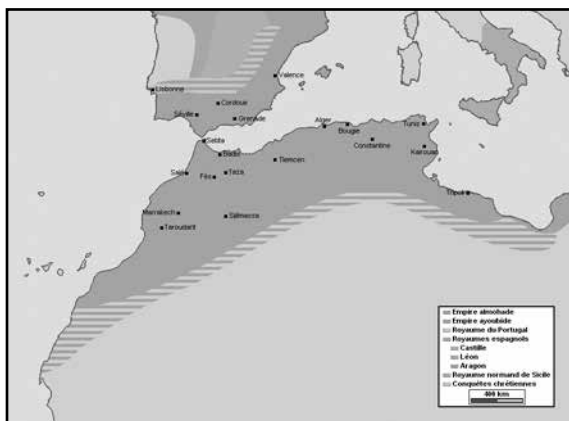


Figure 3. The Almohad empire.  
SOURCE: OMAR TOONS

1121–1130), a scholar from southern Morocco, who had made the hajj and studied in Damascus and Baghdad, returned home to preach a message of reform and revivalism. He claimed to be the *Mahdi* and preached that the corruption and impiety of the Almoravids was to be resisted. Ibn Tumart understood the system of tribal loyalty in the

Maghreb was not static. In displacing the Almoravids, he exploited political and social fractures in a way that did not disrupt societal loyalties; he redirected toward a more ideological purpose and ultimate loyalty to himself as the *Mahdi* or *Sheikh—Mashuk* (sheikh of sheikhs).<sup>51</sup> Esposito speculates that there was an element of highland Berber disdain for the lowland Berber Sanhaja, who were the backbone of Almoravid rule. No matter the cause, under their second leader, Abd-al-Mu'min, the Almohads (or al-Muwahidun) systematically undermined the military of the Almoravids, capturing their capital, Marrakesh, in 1147. The Almohads displaced the Almoravids in Spain and defeated Alfonso VII's attempt to take advantage of the intra-Islamic struggle. In 1151, Abd-al-Mu'min organized two large expeditions and ended Hammadid rule in what is now Algeria, and then drove a Norman army from Naples out of Ifriqiya. The Maghreb and Muslim Spain were once again unified under a single ruler.<sup>52</sup>

Despite their astounding success, they failed to establish a state based on the *Zahiri madhab* of Sunni Islamic law. In the ninth century, two schools of Islamic thought emerged that rejected human reason in the interpretation of law (only the literal words of the Koran and Sunnah were to be used): the

Hanbali school, founded by Ahmad ibn Hanbali (780–855) and from which the Wahhabi reform movement sprang in the 18th century, and the Zahiri school, established by Dawud ibn Ali al-Zahiri (819–891). Their differences were slight. The Zahiri believed that the meaning of the literal text could not be extrapolated at all. The Hanbalis believed that things clearly implied by the text were included. When the theological hair-splitting was done, the differences between the application of Zahiri Islam and Hanbali, or for that matter Wahhabi, Islam were almost non-existent. What this means is that an ultra-conservative Sunni Islamic state existed in the Maghreb well before one ever took root in Arabia.<sup>53</sup> Their vision of an ideologically unified state, like the Fatamids and the Almoravids, failed. Ruling the Maghreb required compromises, and while some of their ideas may have survived in different forms, their ability to maintain and control a state failed.

In the 13th century, the Almohads precipitously declined. In 1212, a Christian coalition in Spain destroyed a powerful Almohad army at Las Navas de Tolosa. It was the beginning of the end for Muslim Spain. In the Maghreb, the governor of Tunisia declared his independence and broke away from Almohad control. In the south, Bedouin from the Sahara, the Marinids, allied with their Zanata Berber cousins and detached swathes of southern Morocco. They occupied Marrakesh in 1269 and effectively ended the Almohad rule, establishing a new capital at Fez.<sup>54</sup> Muslim reverses in Spain changed the trading and commercial structure in the Mediterranean. Venetian and Genoese trade proceeded into the Atlantic and along the coast of Africa as Muslim control further fragmented.<sup>55</sup> By the 14th century, the severely reduced Muslim presence in Spain meant that Islamic dynasties and rulers of the Maghreb took an inward turn, focusing on stability and survival.

### **The Maghreb: 1269–1517**

For a period of more than two centuries, a series of Berber-dominated smaller Maghreb states competed for local control. Marinids (1244–1465) partially dominated the west. They supported the Muslims of Spain in resisting the Reconquista. Because of their Saharan origins, they were looked down on as uncouth nomads. Despite ferocious resistance, they controlled the urban areas, but never the tribal countryside. In the 15th century, the Marinids were replaced by the Wattasid dynasty (1472–1554).<sup>56</sup> In the central Maghreb,

the so-called Zayyanid dynasty (1236–1550) actually represented no state at all. The Bani Abdul Wad of the Zanata Berbers was the largest tribal group, but they could not effectively rule it. Briefly, during the early 14th century, it appeared that a functioning state might emerge in what is now Algeria, only to be undermined by the Marinids in Morocco and the Hafsids in Tunis. As Marquette University history professor Phillip Naylor put it, “Of the three post-Almohadean Maghribi dynasties that emerged in this new political trilateralism, the Zayyanids were the most vulnerable.”<sup>57</sup>

In many respects, the Hafsids (1227–1574) of Ifriqiya were more cohesive. They retained much of their military organization and administration. They utilized the mobile military or administrative camp to maintain control and collect taxes—the *mahalla*.<sup>58</sup> The instability of the state threatened the dynasty on several occasions. In the late 13th century, the Maranids occupied Tunis. When the occupation failed, Hafsid control was restored. In the 14th and 15th centuries, Hafsid Tunisia underwent a renaissance, largely due to the longevity and good sense of two emirs, Abu Faris (1394–1434) and Abu ‘Amr Uthman (1435–1488). Political stability brought economic prosperity. Uthman’s death brought a power struggle that completely undermined the state. By the 16th century, Tunis had become a prize in the struggle between Spain and the Ottoman Turks for control of the Mediterranean, and the subsequent Ottoman occupation would bring the dynasty to an end. The Maghreb became part of an imperial game that ultimately brought European occupation.

## Summary

In this examination of the Maghreb, three historical themes point to critical contemporary issues. First is the issue of control. Outsiders, no matter how powerful or ruthless, fail to gain anything more than superficial control. The Maghreb could be conquered but not controlled. In the end, occupation always cost more than it was worth. To repeat Hassan ibn al-Numan’s conclusion, “The conquest of Africa is an impossible thing.”<sup>59</sup> Second, the Maghreb was fertile ground for revivalist fundamentalist religion. In the Christian era, Donatists and Arians fought the corrupt influences of orthodoxy. In the Islamic period, almost every brand of revolutionary or oppositionist Islam was represented—the Ibadi Kharijites, the Ismailis, Zaydis, Zahiri, and the

conflicts between the Malikis and Hanafis. It was a breeding ground for ideologies that threaten the status quo.

The final issue is that of stability. Ibn Khaldun was the first to systematically assess the political and social structure of the Maghreb. His interpretation saw waves of invaders emerging from the desert unified by *asabiyya*, social and tribal cohesion, conquering and displacing corrupt regimes. This is a challenging concept that lies outside theoretical Western concepts of good governance and merit-based rule. Arab societies are based on patronage. Identifying the point at which patronage becomes corruption is challenging because, from a sociological point of view, it occurs gradually, often imperceptibly, in its early stages. Ibn Khaldun viewed urban development as the highest form of human achievement, but argued that the urban environment ruling groups paved the way for the next revolt.<sup>60</sup> Certainly, in this short narrative covering a millennium, Ibn Khaldun's judgments ring remarkably true. In a period of 300 years, Islamic sectarianism produced untold numbers of revolts and insurrections, and three large Islamic empires—the Fatimids, the Almoravids, and the Almohads. This was made possible by the fractured nature of society and the unbridgeable gulf between the coasts and the hinterland as a place of revolt and revolution. The contemporary implication is obvious and, as we go forward, the historical progression will have direct implications for the 21st century.





## 2. The Maghreb and the Imperial Construct

In the 16th century, the Mediterranean community underwent a series of changes that would set the contours of political, economic, and social development for more than 400 years. The Maghreb faced concerted imperial efforts to subdue and incorporate it into their systems. It was within the transcultural Ottoman system that the Maghreb found a paradigm that matched its fractured reality. Later, it would be in the French colonial system where the Westernized ideas of nationhood and identity emerged that have colored the politics of the 20th century. This study focuses on two general issues: (1) an explanation of the Ottoman system and how it functioned, and (2) the impact of the French colonial system and implications for today.

A brief explanation of the Ottoman system is critical because it provided a flexible structure within which the aggregate parts of the Maghreb could

float in a political, economic, and socio-cultural equilibrium with only modest intervention from the imperial center in Istanbul. It is the flexibility of the equilibrium that complicates this narrative because while the details of local rule in the Maghreb were, in many cases, chaotic, the overarching system was not. In short, as long as imperial pre-

rogatives were maintained, the Sublime Porte (central government) cared little for the details of how it was achieved. This allowed for a significant level of local autonomy and initiative. This narrative looks first at how the Ottomans arrived in the Maghreb. It also demonstrates the interconnectivity

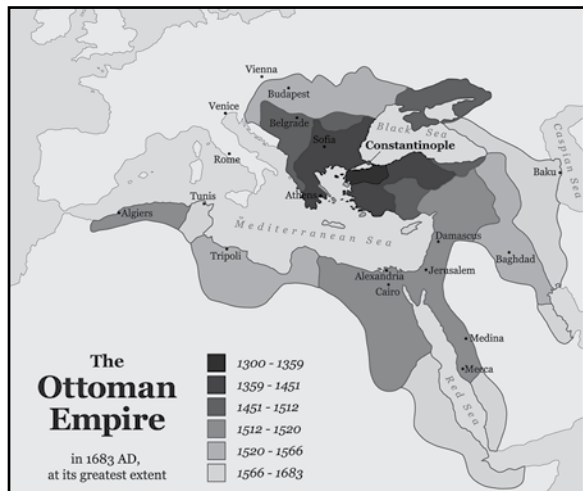


Figure 4. The expansion of the Ottoman Empire.  
SOURCE: SHUTTERSTOCK/PETER HERMES FURIAN

of the Mediterranean world both then and now. The Ottomans, like the Romans and Phoenicians before them, focused on controlling the coasts and pacifying the interior.

In 1453, the Ottomans captured Constantinople, the capital of the Byzantine Empire. From this new capital, now named Istanbul, they embarked on military campaigns that made them a European power. By the late 14th century, tribal and sectarian groups in eastern Anatolia (Turkey), most notably the Qizilbash, who were heterodox Shi'a and resisted Ottoman pacification, involved themselves in Ottoman succession issues. After 1500, the situation became more acute. In Persia, the Safaviyya, a militant Sufi order with Ismaili inclinations, took control. Ismail I, the first Safavid shah, sponsored rival claimants to the Ottoman throne. The details of the political machinations and military campaigns that began with the reign of Selim I (r. 1512–1520), also known as 'The Grim,' provide excellent insight not only into the Ottomans and the Safavids, but also into their triangular relationship with the Sunni Mamluks who ruled Egypt. Selim overthrew his father, Sultan Bayezid II, who supported a rival sibling for the throne. The Qizilbash and the Safavids supported rivals, as well. In 1514, to secure his position, Selim destroyed the Persian Safavid army and its Qizilbash allies at the Battle of Chaldiran, and almost captured Shah Ismail. He then turned on the Safavid allies, the Sunni Mamluks. By 1517, the Ottomans defeated the Mamluks and conquered not only Egypt, but also the entire Hejaz in Arabia, including the holy cities of Mecca and Medina, the Levant, the Red Sea coast into Yemen, and parts of the Arabian Gulf littoral as far south as the Omani borderlands. Viewed holistically, these conquests fundamentally changed the scope and nature of Ottoman imperial 'interests.'

In his campaigns, Selim used the Sunni *ulema* to provide justification for his war on the Shi'a apostates in Persia, and then later on their Sunni Mamluk allies in Egypt. The rapid defeats of both the Safavids and Mamluks completely changed the dynamics of Ottoman policy. Their claim to a caliphate was enhanced by the conquest of the Hejaz in Arabia, including the holy cities of Mecca and Medina. Ideological issues aside, the geopolitical implications of the thrust to the east were little short of revolutionary. Ottoman interests also expanded into the western Mediterranean and the Maghreb. The maritime trade and political polices were now interconnected, particularly since their principal adversaries, whether in the Atlantic, the Mediterranean, or the Indian Ocean, were Portugal and/or Spain.<sup>61</sup> The Islamic

Maghreb became a bulwark against Spanish imperial encroachment—the front line in trade and shooting wars to project influence and power.

## The Ottoman Maghreb

Although Islamic ideology provided the justification for conquest, the Ottomans rarely forced their version of Islam on their subjects. Ottoman administration reflected, to the degree possible, the ethnic and sectarian makeup of provinces and districts of the empire. In Egypt, the Ottomans installed the defeated Mamluks as administrators and incorporated the Mamluk army into Ottoman service. While the Sunni notable

---

*Ottoman administration reflected, to the degree possible, the ethnic and sectarian makeup of provinces and districts of the empire.*

---

elites resided at the top of the Ottoman pecking order, the administration, including senior advisors, were Muslims, Christians, Jews, and others, based on ability and not, as a rule, on ethnic or sectarian backgrounds. This approach to rule was remarkably well-suited for the Maghreb. In the late 15th and early 16th centuries, as Hafsid power declined in Tunis, the coastal population centers emerged as more or less autonomous city-states. They had their own agriculture and served as trading centers, with much of their wealth coming from privateering (corsairs). The armed maritime activities had political and ideological overtones.

In 1492, the Spanish crown conquered Granada, completing the Reconquista. In 1502, Muslims in Granada revolted against Christian persecution, forced conversions, and other practices of Cardinal Francisco Jimenez de Cisneros.<sup>62</sup> Several of the Maghrebi corsairs supported the Muslim revolt and, combined with their depredations, provoked Spain. Cardinal Cisneros came up with a counter-strategy employing a Spanish corsair, Pedro Navarro. Navarro captured the major ports at Mers al-Kebir, Oran, Algiers, and Tripoli. By 1510 to 1511, the key cities on the Maghreb coast were in Spanish hands or paying tribute to Spain.<sup>63</sup> The fractured Islamic nature of the political hinterland meant that Spanish control never penetrated far beyond the coast. They established several *presidios* to the more valuable ports, but control was limited. This also emphasized the divisions between the urban coastal culture and that of the interior. Some Western-centric historians lamented that Spain had missed the opportunity to establish a Spanish North

Africa as the natural counterbalance to the Ottoman maritime zone in the east. Ferdinand Braudel, in *The Mediterranean*, stated, “[Spain’s] failure to pursue the war on the other side of the Mediterranean is one of the great missed opportunities of history.” He argued that it made Gibraltar a “frontier” and “severed” the links between Spain and North Africa.<sup>64</sup> This is a typical Western-centric misinterpretation of Spanish possibilities in the Maghreb. Even at its height of power, Spain was fortunate to be able to hold the coastal enclaves, much less take control of the Maghreb.

In an attempt to combat Spanish incursions, the Hafsids allied with the Barbarossa brothers—Aruj, Khayr al-Din, and Ishaq—who operated from the island of Djerba off the Tunisian coast. In 1516, the brothers, who were the most famous of the corsairs, became involved with the citizens of Algiers, the Ottoman Porte, and attempts to expel the Spanish. In 1518, Aruj, who had lost an arm fighting the Spanish, was killed.<sup>65</sup> Vowing revenge against the Spanish, Khayr al-Din, now the Ottoman governor of Algiers, focused on reducing the Spanish fortification at Penon, which blocked the harbor. In 1518, facing a Spanish counterattack, Khayr al-Din requested Ottoman assistance. Selim I made the pirate the representative of the Sublime Porte on the Maghreb coast. Ottoman troops and artillery assisted Khayr al-Din’s efforts to stabilize his position at Algiers. Finally, in 1529, he gained sustained control of the city, executed his opponents, and dismantled the Spanish fortification at Penon.<sup>66</sup> Use of ‘privateers’ became a signature policy and an integrated part of Ottoman naval strategy in the Mediterranean.

Success bred more Ottoman assistance. Suleiman the Magnificent made Khayr al-Din an admiral in the Ottoman fleet, and provided him the resources to invade Ifriqiya and take Tunis, Kairouan, and Bizerte. Charles V (r. 1519–1555), the Holy Roman Emperor, managed temporarily to restore Hafsid rule in Ifriqiya and threaten Algiers, but by the late 16th century, the Ottomans dominated the Maghreb through regencies in Algiers, Tunis, and Tripoli. The ports were home to some of the most famous corsairs of the age. They not only extended Ottoman sway through their maritime exploits, but at times they intervened in the interior and in Morocco. The Ottoman Sultan was supreme, but in practice, the regencies acted independently.

Of the regencies, Algiers was the most powerful, influential, and successful. The Algerian nationalist historian Ahmed Tawfiq al-Madani described Algiers as the “Algerian Ottoman Republic,” an overstatement that nevertheless reflects the level of independence exercised within the Ottoman

structure. Algiers became the showplace of the Mediterranean. Contemporary chroniclers used words like ‘surprised’ and were ‘astonished’ by the ‘diversity’ that pervaded Algiers. In 1571, even the Habsburg victory over Ottoman naval forces at Lepanto failed to undermine Ottoman resiliency. Just three years later, the Ottomans mounted a land and sea expedition that, once and for all, overwhelmed the Habsburg-backed Hafsids in Tunis, creating rulers that actually outlived the Ottomans. Even as late as the 18th century, it was said that the periodic French, British, and Dutch bombardments, a reaction to the corsairs, did little to dent commerce.<sup>67</sup> Sustained control did not extend into the interior. Islamic Sufi brotherhoods—the Darqawiyya, Qadiriyya, and Tijaniyya, to name three—systematically incited opposition to the Ottomans, emerging as serious threats to the coastal regencies, pitting the rural and montane Maghreb against the coastal order. As a result, Ottoman control, like that of the Carthaginians, Romans, and Arabs, held little sway just a few short miles from the coast.

### Morocco’s Independent Path

In Morocco, political development took a different path, perhaps because of a shared imperial Islamic path or perhaps because its Western and Saharan roots insulated it from political forces that might have destroyed it. In the early 16th century, Morocco was entirely geopolitically positioned to receive the brunt of Portuguese and Spanish imperial expansion. Between 1497 and 1515, to secure their Asian trading routes around Africa, the Portuguese took Melilla, Agadir, Safi, and Azemmour. They also laid siege to Marrakesh. Taking coastal settlements, or even Marrakesh, was one thing, but holding them was another. It was more trouble than it was worth. Thus, when the Bani Saad, claiming descent from Fatima and Ali ibn Abi Talib, stood in resistance, the tribes of southern Morocco rallied to their banners. The Christians dismantled the Wattasid dynasty, but when Muhammad al-Qaim (d. 1518) united the Sufis, *marabouts*, and the southern tribes against the Portuguese and Spanish, it was a different proposition.<sup>68</sup>

The Sadis, as they became known, captured Marrakesh in 1524 and Fez in 1549.<sup>69</sup> In the interim, they expelled the Portuguese from Agadir. Sadi rule (1549–1654) established Morocco as an independent state. Having curbed Iberian-based Christian expansion, the Sadis attempted to eradicate all remaining Wattasid influence. The Wattasids asked for Ottoman assistance,

and together they captured Fez in 1554. Nevertheless, the Sadis effectively ended the Wattasid dynasty by killing its leader. Sultan Muhammad al-Shaykh (r. 1542–1557) pursued a middle path between Madrid and Istanbul that left Morocco unmolested. Proclaiming himself the *Mahdi*, he focused on the suppression of the Sufis, *marabouts*, and various Sufi brotherhoods, like the Yusufiyya.<sup>70</sup> In his view, the populist religious leaders were “ignorant” troublemakers, and matters as important as religion should be limited to an educated elite.<sup>71</sup> By the time of his assassination by the Ottomans in 1557, he had confirmed Moroccan independence. His foreign policy reflected his confidence, demanding that any Ottoman cities or forts in Morocco captured by the Spanish be turned over to him.<sup>72</sup>

The sultan’s assassination plunged Morocco into political chaos over succession, and the Ottomans were as big a threat as ever. The next ruler, Sultan Abu Muhammad Abdullah al-Ghalib (r. 1557–1574), was shrewd. First, he restored the religious leaders, including Abu al-Abbas al-Samlali of the powerful Jazuli order, to their previous positions in return for their recognition of the sultan as the paramount religious authority. The Jazuli were bitter rivals of the Qadiriyya order supported by the Ottomans. Second, he dropped attempts to create a Moroccan-Spanish alliance to mollify Istanbul. At the same time, Al-Ghalib maintained his understandings with Spain and refused to provide material support to the Morisco (Muslim) rebellion (1568–1570) in Spain. Third, as for succession, he attempted to follow the Ottoman practice of killing all his potential rivals to the throne. It was only partially successful given that his brothers wisely stayed out of reach in Ottoman territory.<sup>73</sup>

The policy appeared to secure Moroccan independence on multiple fronts—that is, until the new Portuguese monarch, King Sebastian (r. 1557–1578), embarked on a grandiose plan to create a Maghrebi empire. When al-Ghalib died in 1574, Portugal attempted to intervene in the succession. In a strange alliance, the Ottomans and Spanish jointly supported their own claimant. In 1578, Sebastian invaded Morocco at the head of an army to secure rule for his claimant. At the Battle of Wadi al-Makhazin, also known as the battle of the three kings, the Sadis were triumphant—King Sebastian was killed, his claimant drowned, and the new Sadi sultan, Abd-al-Malik, suffered an apparent heart attack. Abd-al-Malik’s brother, Ahmed al-Mansur (r. 1578–1603) became sultan, thus ending the succession crisis.<sup>74</sup>

Al-Mansur’s reign was the pinnacle of Sadi rule in Morocco. In international affairs, his diplomacy from Istanbul to Madrid protected Moroccan

independence. He created a sophisticated government structure, called the *makhzan*, placing the administrative functions under central control. He designated *bilad al-siba* a separate administrative structure to deal with territory under nominal control. Al-Mansur grasped the limitations that the geopolitical environment placed on Morocco. Blocked by Spain and Portugal in the north, and the Ottomans in the east, al-Mansur, despite opposition from the *ulema*, moved south, defeating the Songhay Empire in Mali and occupying Timbuktu and Gao. Unfortunately, the war actually destroyed the trade that al-Mansur was attempting to control, resulting in a Moroccan withdrawal in the early 17th century.<sup>75</sup>

Under al-Mansur, the Sadi state built impressive mosques, particularly Bab Dukkala and Mu'assim in Marrakesh. In the urban centers, there were prosperous Jewish quarters, and in the capital, even a hospital for Christian slaves. The palaces and tombs tended to reflect the ornate Mamluk style of architecture. The *madrassas* became centers for learning that attracted scholars from al-Andalus, across the Sahara, and to Arabia. It was a golden age that was totally dependent on the specific ruler. Disintegration and dislocation followed al-Mansur's death, as rival claimants, local rulers, and sectarian groups vied for control. Ports, like Rabat and Salé, declared their independence and launched their corsairs. Waves of pandemics reduced the population drastically. The Sadi state fractured, and control and stability in Morocco suffered.<sup>76</sup> The Sadi state finally collapsed in the face of a new dynasty, the Alawis.

The Sunni Alawis rule Morocco today. They claim direct descent from the Prophet through Hasan, the oldest son of Ali ibn Talib, the fourth Rashidun caliph of the Sunnis or the first Shi'a imam.<sup>77</sup> In 1664, Ahmad Mulay al-Rashid (r. 1664–1672) conquered Morocco and restored political control. The Alawi armies, comprised of *abid* (slave soldiers), crushed all opposition. Under Abd-al-Nasr Mulay Ismail (r. 1672–1727), the Alawi state recaptured several coastal enclaves held by the Spanish and moved into the southern Sahel, occupying much of Mauritania and controlling both ends of the trans-Saharan trade. Mulay Ismail maintained absolute authoritarian control in the face of numerous attempts by rivals to undermine him. The *ulema* in Fez attempted to declare the *abid* an institution in violation of Islamic law, and Mulay Ismail struck back, outlawing the *ulema*. Once again, state structure became so intertwined with the personage of the ruler that on Ismail's death, political control fractured. Mulay Abdullah ibn Ismail was deposed and

restored on five different occasions between 1728 and 1757. The *abid* usurped the power of the rulers and ruled Morocco for parts of three decades.<sup>78</sup>

In 1757, Sultan Muhammad (III) bin Abdullah (r. 1757–1790) restored order by disbanding the *abid*. After the brief rule of Yazid (r. 1790–1792), Mulay Sulayman (r. 1792–1822) came to power. His rule corresponded to the heyday of the first Saudi state, in which the Wahhabi emirs captured and occupied Mecca and Medina. Influenced by Wahhabi reform, the sultan denounced and repressed Sufis, *marabouts*, and the Darqawiyya brotherhood. Using the mantle of religious ideology, Sulayman repressed the primary internal opposition to political centralization. Ideologically, fundamentalist Islam isolated Morocco from European influences that increasingly encroached on North Africa and the Maghreb.<sup>79</sup>

In the late 18th century, all of North Africa faced mounting European pressure. The invasion of Egypt in 1798 exposed not only the weakness of the Mamluks, but also demonstrated the impotence of the Ottoman system. Short-lived as the occupation was, it set in motion a chain of events that would overlay the external façade of North Africa and the Maghreb with

---

*In the late 18th century, all of North Africa faced mounting European pressure.*

---

yet another, even more alien, external political framework. In the Maghreb, Morocco attempted to protect its independence through an inward political and ideological turn by embracing Hanbali Islam. The Ottomans and their erstwhile regencies in Algiers, Tunis, and

Tripoli attempted to reassert their control in the face of growing encroachment. It was losing the struggle.

## North Africa and the New Imperial Order

The new rulers of Egypt modeled their state and modernization on the West. The ascendance of Western imperialism and, more specifically, French colonialism in the Maghreb was an outgrowth of the Napoleonic invasion. The British removal of the French from Egypt brought an Ottoman attempt to reassert their control and end Mamluk autonomy. In 1803, the Ottoman Albanian units, sent to Egypt to reestablish control, rebelled. By 1805, Muhammad Ali Pasha (Mehmet Ali), the Albanian commander, ruled Egypt. He would prove to be the most formidable ruler of Egypt since Fatimid Caliph Hakim.



By the early 19th century, the British protected a weak Sublime Porte as the ideal buffer between British India and the designs of other imperial European powers. Early on, it became apparent that Muhammad Ali intended not only to establish himself as the power in the Red Sea region and Arabia, but also to take control in Istanbul. To undermine the pasha's control, the British occupied Alexandria, but eventually withdrew. Between 1807 and 1811, Muhammad Ali ruthlessly expanded his control. He neutralized the Islamic clergy by confiscating their property, leaving them impoverished. Then, in 1811, he invited all of the Mamluk elite to a banquet at the citadel where they were massacred—ending two-and-a-half centuries of Mamluk power. He opened Egypt to European—particularly French—business interests, undermining the power of the Egyptian commercial elites, and used his increased revenues to create a modern army and navy replete with a Turko-Circassian officer corps. He recaptured Mecca and Medina from the Wahhabis and, in 1818, destroyed the first Saudi state. In theory, he was the Ottoman viceroy; in practice, he was the independent ruler of Egypt with designs on the Levant and Istanbul itself. Fearing French influence and the viceroy's ambitions, the British spent the next three decades focused on limiting Egyptian expansion.

## Algeria and the French Colonial Structure

The rise of Muhammad Ali in Egypt had a decisive influence on the Maghreb, severing the last vestiges of Ottoman suzerainty. In 1816, a combined Anglo-Dutch fleet entered Algiers harbor under a white flag, then commenced a ferocious bombardment of the city's fortifications—the European powers no longer countenanced piracy along the Maghrebi coast. By 1830, various commercial disagreements had escalated to the point that Husayn Dey (r. 1818–1830) slapped the French consul with a fly whisk out of frustration. The diplomatic incident led to a French blockade. Charles X of France, who was deeply unpopular, saw the Algerian crisis as a domestic political opportunity.

In June 1830, the French landed 37,000 troops, overwhelmed the Ottomans and removed the *dey*. In Paris, the political ploy failed and the Revolution of 1830 overthrew Charles X and dumped the Algerian problem on Louis-Phillippe, the new French king. Louis-Phillippe commissioned a study that offered classic 19th-century rationales for the colonization of Algeria. It provided the French with significant military leverage in the western

Mediterranean, as well as markets for manufacturing. There was also the responsibility of the French “civilizing mission.”<sup>80</sup> Most importantly, the Algerian occupation was immensely popular and enhanced Louis-Phillippe’s legitimacy. By 1834, Algerian colonization had become official French policy despite the fact that it was officially described as a ‘limited occupation.’ By 1840, most of the coast was in French hands.

The French learned the same lesson that previous ‘conquerors’ had learned in the Maghreb—the invasion was relatively simple, occupation more difficult, and control virtually impossible. Ahmed Dey, a former Ottoman ruler, fought the French on the coast and then retreated to the interior, continuing to resist. The *marabouts* and the Sufi brotherhoods resisted. Emir Abd-al-Qadir (1807–1883), the leader of the Sufi Qadiriyya brotherhood, defeated the French in 1835 in western Algeria, and in the 1837 Treaty of Tafna, he forced

---

*The French learned the same lesson that previous ‘conquerors’ had learned in the Maghreb—the invasion was relatively simple, occupation more difficult, and control virtually impossible.*

---

the French to recognize his authority over western and central Algeria. Abd-al-Qadir adopted the language of jihad in an attempt to unify the disparate tribes and religious groups.<sup>81</sup> War broke out again in the 1840s, and a massive French army of more 100,000 men, under Marshal Thomas-Robert Bugeaud, finally defeated and captured Abd-al-Qadir after chasing him into Morocco. He became the symbol of Algerian resistance,

admired by Algerians and French alike. As one French general wrote, “Abdelkader was emir because Liberty had entrusted him with her sword ... unhappy son of the desert, future generations will honour your name.”<sup>82</sup>

Bugeaud was the founder of French Algeria. He created the *Bureaux arabes* as a government department to mediate between the indigenous population and the French settlers. Policy was, of course, a contradiction. On the one hand, there were those in the bureau who were both arabophone and berberophone, and then there were the bureaucrats who knew neither the language nor the culture. This was set against the brutality of an unrestrained counterinsurgency and confiscation of land for sale to settlers at cut-rate prices. As Bugeaud put it, “Where there is fresh water and fertile land, there one must locate colons [colonial farmers or plantation owners], without concerning oneself to whom these lands belong.”<sup>83</sup> The funds from the sale of confiscated land defrayed the costs of the war and occupation.

Between 1850 and 1871, the French fought serial Berber rebellions. Nevertheless, by 1870, the *pied noir* or colon population of Algeria had risen to 200,000.<sup>84</sup> In 1871, the Great Kabyle Revolt led by the Rahmaniyya Sufi order almost unhinged French control. Its defeat resulted in the confiscation of thousands of hectares of land by the French. The resistance to the French was so determined that nationalists would later argue that the French never actually fully conquered Algeria.<sup>85</sup>

In France, democracy empowered the Algerian settler class by allowing them to place direct pressure on the French government to support their position. The Revolution of 1848 created a constitution that declared Algeria an integral part of French territory. In effect, French law and administration was the law of land. It removed the *Bureaux arabes* from the administration, limiting their responsibilities to the 'military zones' of the interior. The application of French law and administration applied only to French settlers, not indigenous Algerians, whether Berbers or Arabs. The colons fiercely resisted any attempt to broaden citizenship. The French system of land confiscation and repression undermined and impoverished the indigenous population and replaced it with nothing.

Even during the Second Empire, when Napoleon III ordered tribal lands returned and safeguarded, his policies were gradually undermined as the parliamentary faction in Paris gained more power. By the end of the empire, the French government decreed that tribal lands were to be broken up and handed to individuals for ownership. Because of debt and poverty, this opened the lands to European exploitation. This reality sparked the rebellion of 1871. The conclusion of the rebellion meant that the colons ruled Algeria virtually unhindered. The entire legal system was tilted against native Algerians in that Islamic and tribal law held sway only in internal civil matters—marriage, inheritance, gifts, etc. French law dominated all other aspects of Algerian life and criminal justice was meted out only by French juries. In criminal cases, the Algerians were subject to the *Code de l'Indigénat* of 1881, which provided for streamlined punishment, internment, confiscations, and collective punishment for non-French Algerians. The system in which the French were to bring 'civilization' and 'Gallicize' Algeria was actually a tool for colon hegemony and apartheid.<sup>86</sup>

The economy was fundamentally a colonial structure. Commerce was based on a commodity-for-manufactured-goods system. In Algeria, only the colon class, the *pied noir*, could participate in the system because of the

impoverishment of the indigenous population. Algeria furnished agricultural and mining products, and the political system placed most arable land in the hands of the Europeans—not just French, but also Italians, Greeks, Spaniards, and a very small group of co-opted Algerians who were given the French citizenship denied to most of the population. This system created a large landless peasantry but also increased agricultural output significantly.<sup>87</sup>

The land tenure practices in the Warnier Law of 1873 removed collective ownership in favor of individual plots. The indigenous population, function-

ing at a subsistence level, thus often had to sell their land, leaving the former landowners and their families in poverty. Agriculturally, mechanization required capital in a system that was largely limited to the colons; therefore, on indigenously owned agricultural land, the production fell by almost 75 percent. What educational system existed for

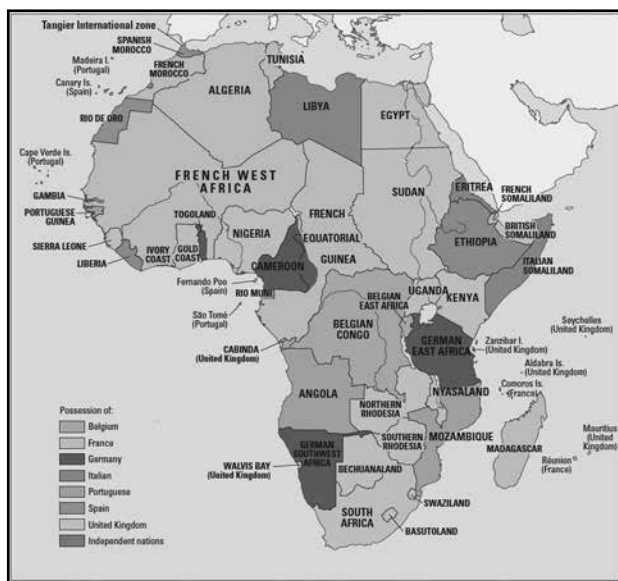


Figure 5. Colonization of Africa through 1912.

SOURCE: THE WORLD BANK

Algerians produced a very thin veneer of elites in a sea of poverty and dispossession. It exposed the bitter contradiction between the ideals of liberty and nation and the reality of French rule.<sup>88</sup> The French system virtually guaranteed an explosion. By the 1930s, desperation coalesced into resistance.

## Tunisia and Morocco: The Protectorate System

Between 1830 and 1875, as the French attempted to consolidate their position in Algeria, Tunisia remained a part of the Ottoman Empire, in theory. In reality, Tunisia functioned as an independent state. In 1869, confronted

by creditors, the bey agreed to a *Protectorat a trois* in which Britain, France, and Italy administered the country's finances and development projects. Of course, economic administration required political control. At the Congress of Berlin in 1878, a series of European disputes were adjudicated, particularly as they related to the European powers and the Ottoman Empire. France was given a free hand in Tunisia, while the British received similar *carte blanche* in Egypt.

In 1818, to consolidate its position, the French landed an army of 36,000 troops and forced the bey to sign the Treaty of Bardo. Under the terms of the treaty, France assumed responsibility for Tunisia's foreign affairs and internal security while guaranteeing the position of ruling dynasty. Clauses in the treaty gave the French an opening to take over the government entirely under certain circumstances. Shortly after the French occupation, a series of tribal uprisings destabilized the country, forcing the French to send more troops to quell the revolt against 'intruders.' The bey was forced to sign a supplemental agreement that became the Treaty of La Marsa, transforming Tunisia into a French protectorate.<sup>89</sup>

There was support for an outright takeover of Tunisia à la Algeria, but with the Algerian revolt of 1871 and the headaches associated with the country's administration and the colons, there was strong opposition to such an expensive administrative system in Tunisia. Tunisia was suited for agricultural, mining, and development project exploitation, but not as much for settlement. In addition, the French believed that by exercising control through the protectorate, the system would be more acceptable to the local population—Paris wanted to limit the potential for the revolts and to avoid a 'new Algeria.' In the Tunisian system, the bey ruled in theory, but the resident general approved all actions. French officials controlled the key ministries and the *caïd* class of indigenous local rulers was co-opted into the system. The *caïds* received a percentage of taxes collected and were allowed to usurp land and mete out justice as long as they maintained control. Thus, the interests of the *caïds* and those of the French coincided. Over time, the *caïds* found themselves politically isolated and targeted by the resistance movements. Nevertheless, this reliance on the local notables for control blunted attempts by French colons to take over in Tunisia as they had in Algeria.<sup>90</sup>

In Morocco, the pattern of occupation and control followed the Tunisian model. The sultan, in theory, ruled the entire state, with the most of the Berber tribal confederations recognizing his role. In reality, many areas

functioned autonomously. Modernization efforts led to Western economic encroachments that led to capitulations over sovereignty, which in turn led to debt and foreign intervention. Revolts against Sultan Abd-al-Aziz (r. 1894–1907) created instability that also tempted European intervention. By 1900, the French government was in the process of establishing a legal framework for intervention with the other foreign powers, particularly Spain, Italy, and Britain. The Germans resisted, almost sparking a general war in 1904. Eventually the French prevailed and, by 1911, Paris exercised a full protectorate over Morocco.

The sultan, bending to the political winds, merely made the most of it by making a personal land grab of huge estates and extracting enormous payments for his part in the new arrangement.<sup>91</sup> Once again, establishing a protectorate was one thing; controlling it was another. By 1912, the French administration behind the façade of the sultan faced serious revolts. Although uncoordinated, a rebellion of Moroccan troops in Fez against their French instructors left the city in Moroccan hands for a brief period. To regain control, the French ended any pretense of a behind-the-scenes role and named General Hubert Lyautey as High Commissioner. Lyautey forced the sultan to abdicate in favor of his brother Youssef, and then set about taming the unrest with a skillful combination of force and co-option. In 1912, the *marabout* El Hiba, with the mountain Berber population behind him, declared himself sultan and occupied Marrakesh.<sup>92</sup>

The revolt was put down, but instead of employing drastic measures like those in the aftermath of the 1871 revolt in Algeria, Lyautey pacified using a show of force while protecting the rights of the *cadis* and notables. This policy of recognizing and rewarding local rulers was particularly important in the south. The French administration allowed the notables, like Thami al-Glaoui, to amass great power and wealth, and protected their positions as long as they cooperated. The position of the sultan was maintained, along with that of the traditional ruling class. The sultanate and the traditional government structure remained intact, including the tribal and *caid* leadership in the south. This contributed to the overall stability as a traditional Maghrebi polity was maintained. As one observer put it, “Morocco is a cow which the caids milk while the French hold its horns.”<sup>93</sup> The French protectorate system differed in one significant aspect from that of the British in Malaya or India: indirect rule involved much more intensive French supervision of the local rulers. The protectorates were merely a stage on the path to full

integration with France. While any number of officials and military officers strongly advised against any such development, the pervasive presence of French administrators in the administrations of both Morocco and Tunisia nurtured the idea of full annexation.

## Identity and Resistance: The Early 20th Century in the Maghreb

Roughly speaking, prior to 1900, opposition to French rule in the Maghreb, was crushed if it was organized, or devolved into disorganized, uncoordinated local eruptions. By 1900, the nucleus of resistance began to emerge, not surprisingly from some of the very institutions and ideas that the French themselves promoted. In Tunisia in 1907, the *Le Tunisien* newspaper emerged, edited by a local lawyer, Ali Bach-Hamba. In 1908, the Jeunes Tunisiens (Young Tunisians) organization, modeled on the Ottoman Young Turk movement emerged as a loose association with political overtones. The Young Tunisians asserted their loyalty to France, but demanded reforms including a constitution, tax reform, educational improvements, and the right to elect representatives to the Consultative Conference. In 1911, colons accused the organization of inciting unrest over a dispute related to a cemetery near Tunis, and the newspaper and organization were disbanded. The Tunisian movement nevertheless inspired a similar Young Algerians movement, which demanded the right to enter the ‘French city’ and share the same rights as Frenchmen. In effect, the limited educational opportunities offered to indigenous Algerians had created a small literate elite who, when exposed to the ideas of the French Revolution, asked the simple question, ‘Why not us?’ This educated elite was, in effect, ‘French,’ and demanded the rights of Frenchmen. The colon community opposed any possibility of such a development because, carried to its logical conclusion, it meant that Algeria and Tunisia would be ruled by Algerians and Tunisians.

WWI lit the fuse that eventually led to the end of colonialism—an outcome not evident at the time. The war in Europe was fought not only by the states of the Central Powers and the Allies, but also by their colonies and empires. The Maghreb provided hundreds of thousands of soldiers and workers for the war effort in Europe.

---

*WWI lit the fuse that eventually led to the end of colonialism—an outcome not evident at the time.*

---

For the most part, the Maghreb remained quiet and loyal to France during



war. However, the war clearly impacted society. Rising prices and shortages complicated by stagnant wages added to social tensions. Politically, an Arab uprising in the Hejaz and Levant captured the imagination of the peoples of the Maghreb. The Allies own propaganda—‘fighting for democracy’—called into question the issue of French colonialism, as did Woodrow Wilson’s pronouncements on self-determination. The situation in the Maghreb stood in direct contradiction to stated propaganda of the Allies.

During the war, to prevent disruptions in Algerian recruiting, Premier Georges Clemenceau promised broad reforms. In particular, he promised citizenship or naturalization with the retention of Muslim sectarian identity. In 1919, the reality of ‘reforms’ was disappointing, including the rejection of identity retention. The disappointment among young Algerians, many of whom had fought for France, was real, but there was no agreement on a common course of action. The realization that they would have to seek justice, not as French citizens, but as citizens of Morocco, Algeria, or Tunisia, had not yet taken shape. The colon structure stifled any real progress. By the end of the war, the colons themselves were only 20 percent French. More spoke Spanish than French. There were large numbers of Italians and Maltese. The French described the *pied noir* as *mediterraneens-et-demi*. This reality also explained their attitudes toward metropolitan France, colored by “resentment, love, disdain and an inferiority complex with the undertones of superiority that so often accompany it.”<sup>94</sup> Given their estrangement from the metropole and the Algerians, the colons saw reactionary intransigence as the only means to maintain their privileged position.

When Emir Khaled, a grandson of Abd-al-Kader who had served with distinction on the Western Front, presented modest political demands on behalf of the *evolves*, or new Algerian elite, he was vehemently attacked in the colon press and left Algeria in disgust. Even General Lyautey commented, “Our policy is criminal.”<sup>95</sup> In 1927, the *Federation des Elus Indigenes*, led by Dr. Muhammad Saleh Bendjelloul and Ferhat Abbas, provided a new vehicle for the *evolves’* protest. As late as 1936, the organization’s activities and polemics still refused to use the term ‘Algerian nation,’ and instead sought reform within the French structure. The colons blocked any move that might have led to citizenship for Algerians on an equal footing with the French, and by the mid-1930s, other voices began to be heard. An Islamic reform movement led by Abdelhamid Ben Badis called for a return to the ‘true’ Islam. Islamic schools were founded and a renewed focus on Islamic education



ensued. The issue of religious reform quickly became political because the opponents of the movement, the *marabouts* and their brotherhoods, were accused of collaboration with the French. Published in 1931, a nationalist history of Algeria spread widely by the mid-1930s. It bluntly stated: "Islam is our religion, Algeria is our fatherland, and Arabic is our language."

In Tunisia, the end of WWI saw the rise of a new, more broadly based political organization, the Dustur (Detour) party. In 1925, the Dustur joined with trade unions and other progressive groups to make political demands on the French administration. By 1930, the French administration had alienated large sections of the Arab-Muslim elite. A new leader had emerged, Habib Bourguiba, and Dustur had morphed into the Neo-Dustur Party. During the 1930s, the party's calls for political independence became more strident. The Neo-Dustur became a lightning rod for French fears about unrest and political demands. The colons and the French administration braced for the potential explosion. The Neo-Dustur was a party of the masses, but it was urban based; the rural population had not yet been politicized.

The situation in Morocco was different. First and foremost, General Lyautey's policies had reinforced the traditional institutions of society by allowing the Moroccans to share in the administration and by supporting traditional Islamic institutions. As a result, liberation movements in Morocco were attached to Islam. The Salafiyya reform movement called for a return to the real Islam, directing its criticism toward the Sufi brotherhoods and their practices. The Salafiyya only took on national movement trappings after the *Dahir Berbere* was promulgated by the sultan in 1930. In effect, the *dahir* attempted to split the Arab population from the Berber and use the latter for political leverage. A national opposition emerged, and in the 1930s, it challenged the French administration and the sultan on numerous levels. In 1936, protests and demonstrations by the Moroccan Action Committee resulted in arrests and suppression of political movements. The opposition countered this first by using the Salafiyya as a front for reform, and then by founding a secret party, the National Party for Realization of the Reforms (NPRR). The NPRR's activities resulted in the arrest of its executive committee and the deportation of its leadership. The stage was set in Morocco for the independence movements that would follow on the heels of WWII.<sup>96</sup>

## Summary

Under imperial rule, the Maghreb had two distinctly different experiences. Ottoman rule, for the most part, allowed a local system to function without interference. The Ottomans might impose a governor, but they were more likely to use local notables to manage the system. In addition, the Ottomans were Muslim and their administration avoided the worst aspects of Western colonial rule and prejudice. Under the Ottomans, the Maghreb was allowed to retain identity in a system that roughly paralleled the historical experi-

---

*The impacts of the French conquest and rule brought the realization among the young and educated that there was no future with France, and that only through independence could the promise of French liberal reform be realized.*

---

ence. The impacts of the French conquest and rule brought the realization among the young and educated that there was no future with France, and that only through independence could the promise of French liberal reform be realized. The populations of Tunisia, Morocco, and Algeria arrived at that conclusion via different paths. Because of the administration of General Lyautey, the traditionalist Moroccan structure resulted in an Islamic movement toward independence.

In Tunisia, the nationalist movement turned against both the French and their co-opted tools, the traditional *caid* leadership and the monarchy. In Algeria, the idea that it was a part of France and that, as such, all its peoples should enjoy the benefits of French citizenship delayed the realization that independence was the only path toward any form of equality before the law.

### 3. Independence Movements and the National States: 1930–2011

The end of the WWII did not bring an immediate end to the colonial structure in the Maghreb, but it made independence inevitable. The defeat by Nazi Germany undermined French authority in the eyes of the indigenous independence groups in North Africa. The weakness of post-war French governments also encouraged resistance across the Maghreb. In hindsight, it appears foolhardy that the French attempted to maintain the protectorates at all. However, a deeper examination underscores what can only be described as the logic of domestic political bankruptcy. To understand the emergence of the independent states of the Maghreb, one must first examine the nature of the French Fourth Republic (1946–1958).

The Fourth Republic had 21 different administrations under six different political parties with too many coalitions to enumerate. General Charles de Gaulle, who headed the Provisional Government of the French Republic from 1944 to 1946, vehemently opposed its parliamentary structure as an extension of the Third Republic (1870–1940), the unstable system of the interwar years that was crushed by Nazi Germany in 1940. De Gaulle believed that only a strong presidential system could insure the stability of the state. The political struggle over the post-war government was fundamentally between Gaullists and the Left. The center-right parties were largely discredited because of their collaboration with the Germans.

In 1946, the Socialists and Communists outmaneuvered de Gaulle on the new constitution, causing him to resign. The leftists were, in turn, outmaneuvered by the center-right parties who forced a rewrite of the constitution. The political maneuvering resulted in a strange alliance between the Popular Republican Movement (MRP), or Christian-Democrats (center-right), and the leftists, Socialists and Communists. The alliance left the Gaullists and the more conservative parties out in the political cold. This odd alliance forced through the new constitution. The Fourth Republic was no more stable than the coalition that produced it. In 1947, because of irreconcilable differences between the MRP and leftists, a center-right alliance that included the MRP, the Gaullists, and the other conservative parties took power. It set the stage

for frequent government changes, political instability, and an ongoing conflict over colonial policy.

Despite the political instability, the period of the Fourth Republic was a time of great social and economic growth and progress in European France, and a move toward European economic integration. However, colonial policy and the question of decolonization became a defining policy issue between the political right and left. Conservative French politicians would, time and again, invoke the threat of leftist and Communist influence at home to secure support from its allies for maintaining colonial structures abroad. Indochina was the most prominent example, but the argument was used for the Maghreb, as well. As protectorates, Tunisia and Morocco maintained their monarchies and their pseudo-independence, which did not protect them from colonial exploitation. In Algeria, the large colon population, coupled with incorporation into the French metropole, meant that, in theory, the separation or independence of Algeria was tantamount to the secession of Normandy or Provence. Between 1946 and 1958, the politics of the Maghreb and that of the Fourth Republic were inseparable in the sense that each were driven by the other and by pan-Arab nationalism. The gauntlet through which the fully independent states of the Maghreb emerged would set the course for political, economic, and social development into the 21st century. This chapter outlines the emergence of the national states, and compares and contrasts their political development up to the uprisings of 2011.

## **Tunisia: 1930–2011**

The discussion of Tunisia as an independent state requires a brief look back. In the 1930s, the Dustur Party split and the Neo-Dustur, and its leader Habib Bourguiba, emerged. Bourguiba defined Tunisian politics for more than seven decades. The Dustur metaphorically looked back to an idealized Islamic past and rejected the Westernization that had come with the French protectorate; the Neo-Dustur represented the younger generation and were, in fact, products of that Westernization. There was a clear Islamic component to the Neo-Dustur, as well. Many of the religious, political, and social ideas of Islamic reformers, like Muhammad Abduh and the Salafiyya movement of the 19th and early 20th centuries, found their way into Neo-Dustur policies. However, because the Neo-Dustur was secular and wrote the history of the independence movement, the Islamic contribution was minimized or

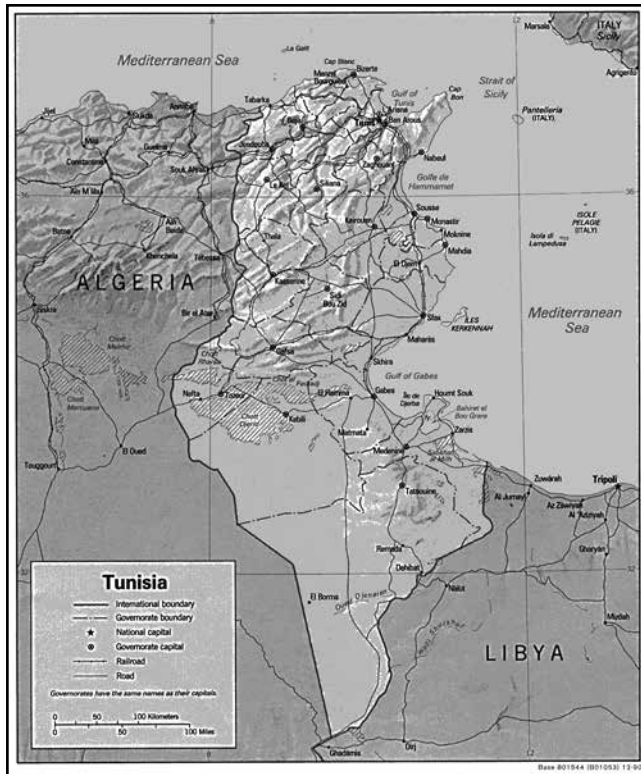


Figure 6. Modern-day Tunisia. SOURCE: CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY

ignored completely, despite the fact that the opening shot of the Neo-Dustur's campaign for dominance was in defense of Tunisia's Islamic heritage.<sup>97</sup>

In 1930, the Catholic Church received permission from the French Third Republic and Tunisian government of Ahmed (II) ibn Ali Bey (r. 1929–1942) to hold the 30th International Eucharistic Congress in Carthage. Parades with Catholic youths dressed as Crusaders, attempts to convert Muslims, and the Papal legate's characterization of Islam in North Africa as "fourteen centuries of desolation and death" brought protests, strikes, and condemnation from religious and secular Tunisians alike. The Neo-Dustur challenged the entire concept, calling it an affront to "Tunisia's Muslim personality." Before the furor over the eucharist celebration had subsided, the French President created another gaffe by stating that the protectorate in Tunisia had embodied the "highest humanitarian principles." This was followed in 1933 by a dispute over an attempt to bury a naturalized French citizen in a Muslim

cemetery.<sup>98</sup> Despite its largely secular leadership, the Neo-Dustur took up the defense of Tunisia's national Islamic culture, increasing their credibility.

The global Depression provided additional political inroads for the new party. Attempts by French authorities were frustrated by the Tunisians and the instability within the Third Republic. As governments changed, so did policies toward the independence movements. In prison under one French government, the Neo-Dustur would find themselves out of jail and free to publicly organize under the next. The Neo-Dustur had cells throughout the country, including at the major universities. With rising educational standards among women, the party also broached gender issues, but with a keen ear to the broader implications that it might have on political support in the broader, more conservative traditionalist society.<sup>99</sup> In 1938, the collapse of the Popular Front government in Paris resulted in broad repression of political dissent. In 1939, Bourguiba and much of the Neo-Dustur found themselves imprisoned in southern France. The war in Europe actually weakened the Neo-Dustur. French policy did not change under the Vichy and some party members concluded that cooperation with the Germans was the best course of action. This was common, particularly in the Middle East and North Africa, because the Arabs, whether in Egypt, Iraq, or Palestine, saw a German victory as the pathway to independence.

With the political opposition in prison or in hiding, support for independence came from an unexpected source. In 1942, Mohammed (VII) Moncef Bey came to the Tunisian throne. He asserted his independence by blocking Vichy propaganda against Tunisian Jews. When Vichy commanders negotiated a cease-fire with invading Allied forces, provoking a German occupation, Moncef Bey took a neutral stance between the warring powers and used his leverage on the Germans to appoint the first truly Tunisian cabinet since the beginning of the protectorate. Following the Allied victory in North Africa, the French removed Moncef Bey for being a 'German collaborator,' replacing him with his cousin Mohammed (VIII) Amin Bey (r. 1943–1956).

The Germans freed the Neo-Dustur prisoners held in France and transferred them to Italy, using some of them to broadcast anti-French, pro-German propaganda to their countrymen—most refused, most notably including Bourguiba, who staunchly believed that the path to independence was through an Allied victory. The Free French, no less than their Vichy opponents, were intent on maintaining the protectorate and made a concerted attempt to vilify Bourguiba and the Neo-Dustur. The attempt largely

failed because Bourguiba's wife and son convinced key American diplomats that he was not pro-German, but rather a Tunisian nationalist. In 1943, the Germans, through their Italian allies, repatriated Bourguiba to Tunisia, hoping that he would prove to be a thorn in the side of the Free French. A struggle between the Communist Party of Tunisia (PCT) and the Neo-Dustur ensued. The PCT, because of its ties to the French Communists and Moscow, supported 'solidarity' between France and its 'dependencies'; the Neo-Dustur supported independence, and an alignment with the Americans and British to obtain it. Once again, Bourguiba played the Islamic card to gain an advantage and differentiate Neo-Dustur policy from that of the Communists, portraying the latter as a foreign, anti-Islamic ideology.

With regard to the protectorate, what followed was a series of political maneuvers by the Neo-Dustur to bring internal and international pressure on Paris. In 1945, Bourguiba solicited the help of the newly formed League of Arab States. In 1947, he joined with Moroccan and Algerian nationalists in the Comité de Liberation d'Afrique du Nord, led by Moroccan resistance leader Abd al-Karim. In 1947, labor unrest and strikes brought violent confrontations that pushed labor and the illegal Neo-Dustur toward an alliance. The Neo-Dustur became the dominant opposition organization. It also began to attract some in the business community and civil service who saw the 'handwriting on the wall' vis-à-vis France's ability to maintain the protectorate. With Bourguiba in exile, Salah Ben Yusuf, the secretary-general of Neo-Dustur, established the party as the only viable opposition interlocutor with the French administration. In 1948, when Moncef Bey died, his followers had nowhere to turn but to the party. At this point, Ben Yusuf pointedly warned the French that they could either establish a clear path to end the protectorate or face the consequences of violent political explosion.<sup>100</sup>

From Cairo, Bourguiba fretted that his absence was hurting his own position and that Ben Yusuf might provoke a premature clash with the French that the Neo-Dustur had no chance of winning. He drafted a detailed Neo-Dustur policy paper calling for an end to French rule and oversight. The French accepted the paper, rejecting only the demand that 'co-sovereignty' end. Co-sovereignty was the concept that the French colon community in Tunisia used to rule itself on equal footing with that of the Tunisians, despite the fact that the colons amounted to only four percent of the population. It was at this point that Paris appointed a new secretary-general, Louis Perillier (r. 1950–1952). Perillier created a cabinet split between French colons

and Tunisians, sparking a huge outcry from French nationalists. In February 1951, he unveiled a plan to create a fully Tunisian cabinet with a prime minister whose power could not be revoked by the secretary-general. The Neo-Dustur rejected the plan because it did not offer enough, and the French colons rejected it because it offered too much.<sup>101</sup>

The French government responded by replacing Perillier with Jean de Hautecloque (1952–1953), a politician known for his ties to conservative elements in the Rassemblement (colon) party. Bourguiba called for his followers to prepare for combat: “A revolt is going to develop and blood is going to flow.” The secretary-general’s reaction created almost total chaos. Arrests of Neo-Dustur leaders resulted in riots and confrontations that left rioters, innocent civilians, police, and soldiers dead. French Foreign Legion search-and-destroy operations in Cap Bon targeted rebels and locals alike, enflaming the entire country against the French. Increasingly desperate to control the situation, Hautecloque forced the king to dismiss the cabinet and the prime minister. Whatever benefit Hautecloque gained was temporary, as Tunisia dissolved into a war between colon terrorist gangs like the Main Rouge and groups of Tunisian *fellagha* attacking French farms, communications links, and security forces. French reprisals brought increased violence. Hautecloque’s departure in 1953 signaled the failure of French policy to stabilize the situation. By mid-1954, the *fellagha* had emerged as a potent guerilla force that tied down thousands of French soldiers. It had become apparent to all but the most obtuse that France could not stay, and that in going, it would have to work with the Neo-Dustur and its leader, Habib Bourguiba.<sup>102</sup>

The cause of Tunisian independence was greatly aided by factors external to France. First, and foremost, as the crisis in Tunisia reached a fever pitch in 1953–1954, France’s position in Indochina collapsed with Dien Bien Phu. In addition, in North Africa, Libyan independence and the consolidation of power by Gamal Abdel Nasser in Egypt foreshadowed a potential escalation in the Tunisian conflict with which France was ill-prepared to deal. In the Maghreb itself, Morocco was in revolt, as was Algeria. The new French prime minister, Pierre Mendes-France, head of the Radical Party, headed a center-left coalition that included the Communists. Mendes-France negotiated the withdrawal of French forces from Indochina over the vociferous opposition of conservative political elements. With regard to Tunisia, Mendes-France initiated talks with Bourguiba, which led to an agreement of ‘internal autonomy’ for Tunisia. The terms of the agreement created a split



within the Neo-Dustur, with the opposition led by Ben Yusuf. Under pressure from Bourguiba elements, Ben Yusuf fled to Cairo and embraced the pan-Arab politics of Nasser, while attacking Bourguiba for selling out for a 'partial victory.' At this point, Bourguiba received a political gift. In Morocco, negotiations resulted in the restoration of nationalist King Muhammad V, deposed two years earlier. In early March 1955, under pressure, France terminated its protectorate over Morocco. Bourguiba quickly demanded the same for Tunisia, and on 20 March, France terminated its protectorate and Tunisia was fully independent.<sup>103</sup>

After more than 20 years of struggle, Bourguiba and the Neo-Dustur had removed French rule. They sought to create a unified state by healing political divisions and promoting social and economic development. The problems were challenging, but only one proved insurmountable—the disparity between the coastal areas inside the old Roman limes and the interior. From Cairo, Ben Yusuf's anti-Bourguiba message continued to resonate in the hinterland, not because of the ideological content of the message, but because it offered a justification for the interior's struggle against the littoral. The Neo-Dustur now struggled against the *fellagha* in the south and west.

---

*The problems were challenging, but only one proved insurmountable—the disparity between the coastal areas inside the old Roman limes and the interior.*

---

The continuing resistance from Yusufists shocked Bourguiba, who immediately intimidated the bey into calling an election where the Neo-Dustur prepared the lists. Predictably, the Neo-Dustur won all the seats in the Constituent Assembly. Abstention rates were high. In Tunis, they were 41 percent. In Jerba, in the south, abstention exceeded 70 percent. Bourguiba secured the assistance of French police and army units. He also established a 'special court' where opponents of the regime and former Tunisian supporters of the protectorate were stripped of their property, imprisoned, and politically discredited. Ironically, in 1957, Bourguiba used the authority of the bey to promulgate a new constitution that ended the monarchy. The new system created the equivalent of a 'presidential monarchy,' with all the reins of power in Bourguiba's hands.<sup>104</sup>

From an institutional point of view, the changes to the judicial code were little short of revolutionary. The dual sharia court system of the Hanafi and Maliki *madhabs* that had functioned in Tunisia was abolished. In the

Personal Status Code, women were given new rights—divorce, approval of arranged marriages, child custody rights, and inheritance—and were required to contribute to the maintenance of the household, resources permitting. Polygamy was outlawed as was ‘male repudiation,’ and minimum marriage ages were set. Bourguiba argued that through *ijtihad* (a legal term for independent reasoning), adherence to Islamic traditions and culture did not lessen the desire or necessity for Tunisia to embrace modernity. Religious conservatives disagreed and criticized Bourguiba for undermining Islam. From Cairo, Ben Yusuf accused him of “prohibiting what God has authorized and authorizing what God has prohibited.”<sup>105</sup>

There were programs supporting an end to traditional dress. As female literacy and education rose, fertility rates fell. The government also created a bilingual system of Arabic and French. To allay traditionalist concerns, Bourguiba demanded a *fatwa* of support from the Grand Mufti of Tunis, and when an acceptable one was not forthcoming, he was removed. The Neo-Dustur also urged Tunisians to ignore the Ramadan fast. This sparked serious rioting, particularly in Kairouan and the interior. The *ulema* rejected the government’s position that the reforms were a logical extension of *ijtihad*; in retaliation, Bourguiba attacked the *ulema* as corrupt and confiscated the wealth of the religious charities. Increasingly, the secularization of Tunisian society created problems with the traditionalists that served to highlight the traditional split between the coastal regions and the interior. The struggle was cast increasingly in terms of traditional Islamic society versus the Westernized secular state.

During the 1960s, Neo-Dustur rule faced a series of challenges—both external and internal. Sparked by the revolt in Algeria, a series of armed clashes between French troops still stationed in Tunisia and the government resulted in scores of casualties and the withdrawal of French forces in 1963. Ongoing pressure came from radical Arab nationalists like Nasser and others, who derided the government for its pro-Western policies. The withdrawal of the French military also resulted in a mass exodus of critical French technical and administrative talent from Tunisia. This damaged development and the economy, and prompted a shift in policy that became known as ‘Neo-Dustur socialism,’ and led to the first Ten-Year Plan (1962–1971). In 1964, the Neo-Dustur was renamed the Parti Socialiste Dusturien (PSD). The plan produced few of the benefits in the agricultural or industrial sector that had been projected, and the steady growth in tourism was a mixed

blessing. Often inundated by tourists in inappropriate attire (or none at all) who were totally ignorant of, and insensitive to, traditional Tunisian modes of behavior, the tourist industry produced hard currency, but the division between traditional and secular Tunisians threatened to become a political, economic, and social chasm.<sup>106</sup>

In the early 1970s, isolation at the top of the Neo-Dustur and calls for reform from the ranks and leadership led to a party crisis. Analysts, who called Tunisia the best managed, most legitimate regime in the Arab Middle East, were troubled by the repression of dissent and the National Assembly declaring Bourguiba president for life. The modernization fit a Western model, but the politics increasingly resembled autocratic rule in the rest of the region. Modernization did not appear to be leading toward democracy.<sup>107</sup> A 1976 change in the constitution was indicative of party priorities. The old constitution read: "liberty, order, and justice." The new constitution read: "order, liberty, and justice."

Socialism was scrapped for a market approach. The industry and jobs that emerged created low-wage jobs that brought a migration from the countryside to the urban areas. As a result, economic cycles often resulted in unemployment rates that exceeded 20 percent in the cities. Among young males, it approached 50 percent. There was simply no pathway for the government to match the rapid population increases with opportunity and jobs; thus, emigration became a safety valve for unemployment at home and a source of hard currency from abroad. Sociologically speaking, the very classes of individuals that migrated to the cities were those most susceptible to nativist arguments about the causes of their economic plight. By 1978 and 1979, labor unrest and an attempt to spark a revolution at Gafsa in the south rocked the government, displaying the fragility of the regime and the inability of the now factionalized party to unify and deal with the situation.<sup>108</sup>

Bourguiba, in failing health, appointed Muhammad Mzali as prime minister. Known for his loyalty to the president, Mzali pursued a series of political 'reforms' that opened the political system to multi-party participation without ceding any real power. Because of prohibitions on activities, the participating parties were largely ineffective. At the same time, the PSD leadership became increasingly concerned about the emerging popularity of the Mouvement de la Tendance Islamique (MTI). The failing economy, coupled with the hostility to traditional Islamic social constructs within the broader regional context of rising Islamic fundamentalism, posed a challenge

to the government. Social and economic unrest undermined Mzali, and in 1986, Bourguiba recalled General Zine al-Abidine Ben Ali from a diplomatic posting abroad and made him director of national security. Ben Ali had successfully repressed the disturbances of 1978 and 1979.<sup>109</sup> Ben Ali and Mzali attempted to suppress the MTI, enhancing MTI's standing among the political opposition. Frustrated, Bourguiba appointed Ben Ali to the post of prime minister in October 1987 and one month later, in November, Ben Ali had the ailing president declared incompetent to rule and took over the government.<sup>110</sup>

Ben Ali became head of the party, whose name changed to Rassemblement Constitutionnel Démocratique (RCD), and the new head of state. Ben Ali systematically appointed his own people to key positions in the party and removed or marginalized those loyal to the former leader. In an attempt to mend fences with the traditionalists and Islamist opposition, he made a highly publicized pilgrimage to Mecca and invited the MTI to make inputs into a new statement of government policy. While the Personal Status Code remained in effect, the new National Pact asserted the Arab and Islamic nature of Tunisian society and culture, and called for greater ties with the Arab and Islamic world. The MTI joined the political milieu, but because of the secular legal requirements had to change its name to the *Hizb al-Nahda*, or Renaissance Party; the party remained excluded from providing lists of candidates because of its Islamist agenda. In the 1989 elections, Ben Ali used Bourguiba's model from the 1956 election to exclude the opposition and maintain absolute RCD control. However, the necessity of excluding the MTI served as recognition that a new center of political power had emerged in Tunisia, one that would challenge Ben Ali and the RCD.<sup>111</sup>

Challenged by the Islamists, during the Gulf War (1990–1991), the Ben Ali regime objected to the presence of foreign troops in Saudi Arabia and called for an Arab solution to the standoff. This position cost him Western and Gulf Arab support, but was popular on the Tunisian street. Then, events in Algeria undermined the Islamist cause in Tunisia. In 1990, the Islamic Salvation Front (FIS) emerged as a real political threat to the FLN, which had ruled Algeria since independence. The FIS won in municipal elections, and in December 1991, was ahead in balloting in legislative elections. Alarmed, the Algerian army deposed the president and cancelled the elections. A vicious civil war ensued in which tens of thousands died. The close ties between al-Nahda, the old MTI, and the Algerian Islamists allowed Ben Ali to suppress

Tunisian Islamists. The economic situation for Tunisians was deteriorating across the board, but the fear of chaos on the scale of Algeria garnered support for repressive policies.<sup>112</sup> The RCD began to function less as a party and more as a security apparatus for the regime and government.<sup>113</sup>

Ironically, it would be Ben Ali's economic policies that eventually undermined the regime. During the 1990s and into the first decade of the 2000s, the Tunisian economy functioned relatively well. Tunisia achieved the highest level of per capita income of all the Arab states with the exception of those in the Gulf; however, the prosperity was uneven. The hinterland did not share to the same degree in the prosperity, feeding the dichotomy with the coastal areas that had always plagued stability in *Ifrikiya*. With prosperity came inflation, and with inflation came corruption that permeated the entire regime top to bottom. Post-colonial Tunisia had never experienced anything like it—from Ben Ali and his family down to local police, the corruption was shocking. The regime lost all legitimacy in the eyes of common Tunisians.

From Bourguiba to Ben Ali, the Tunisian republic was an exercise in the autocracy behind the thin façade of political pluralism. The republic represented an experiment in the creation of a Western-style, secular nation-state through modernization and control from above. Both leaders viewed authoritarianism and control as the only possible means of implementation. Yet no amount of modernization or control could overcome the fundamental differences between the urban-coastal society and the hinterland. From the beginning of the republic, the south and west were either in revolt or simmering on the verge of it. From the Yusufists to the spark of 2011, the fundamental dichotomy of the geopolitical reality threatened the stability and the survival of the state.

This reality found further ideological and cultural legitimacy through Islam. The secular Tunisian state, despite its attempts to justify Westernization and modernization by borrowing Islamic concepts like *ijtihad*, viewed Islam and the traditionalist society as an impediment to its programs and a threat to its survival. By the second decade of the 21st century, the Islamists, like the secular nationalists of the 1950s, had become the voice that demanded reform and justice, albeit based on a return to Islamic principles and practice. To say that the popularity of the Islamic message is a byproduct of economic deprivation is only true in part. There exists a real sense of identity and something to be rediscovered following the six decades of attempts to Westernize and secularize. How that past is imagined is another issue,

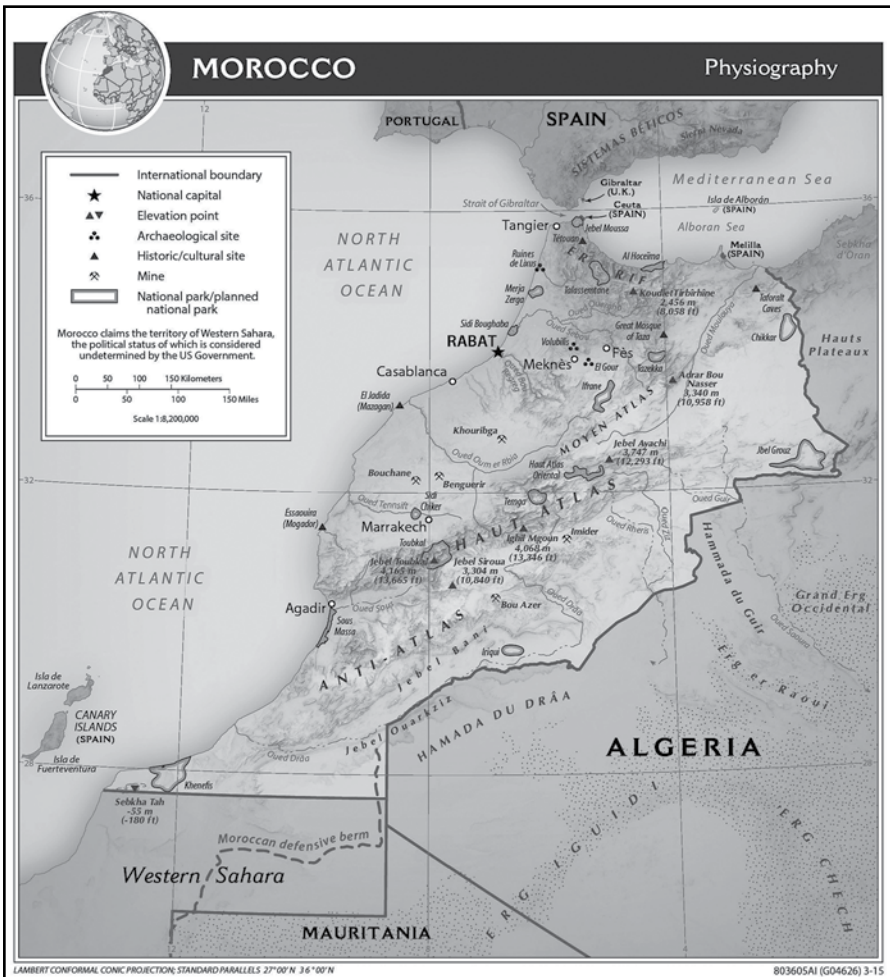


Figure 7. Modern-day Morocco. SOURCE: CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY

but the desire to restore a society—perhaps any society—that is perceived as more just is real.

**Morocco: 1930 to 2011**

While the Moroccan and Tunisian experiences were similar to a point—both retained their monarchies—their experiences diverged sharply by the 1950s. Morocco lacked Tunisia’s secularist traditions and was more tied to the Saharan political dynamic. Tunis was more integrated into the Ottoman

structure. The Almoravid and Almohad heritage and the independent monarchies provided Morocco with a past that neither Tunisia nor Algeria could duplicate. Morocco emerged as a more fully independent polity, albeit a beleaguered one at times. By the time of the French conquest in the early 20th century, the Moroccan *makhzan*, or ruling elite, had lost control of vast areas, but their claims to them and the political heritage were still very real. Therefore, when the French conquered Morocco, they were dealing with political and economic elites that were far established and a more defined political and cultural context.

The 'definition' or 'identity,' as we have learned, was further reinforced among the Moroccan elites by the French administration. Morocco teetered on the brink of chaos. A series of crises and interventions in 1904 and 1905 almost sparked a European war, with the Germans challenging the French and Spanish. The problem was a weak central government at one level and an uncontrollable countryside at another. By 1907, the political elites, fearing escalating instability, moved to depose Sultan Abd-al-Aziz and replace him with his older brother Abd-al-Hafiz ibn Hassan (r. 1907–1912). Political control was further undermined by the fact that the colons in Algeria sought to take control of commercial routes that had traditionally terminated in Fez. The

---

*A consensus emerged in Paris that only the incorporation of Morocco into the French colonial construct could insure order across the Maghreb.*

---

French Trans-Saharan railroad provided a terminus that provided much of the Moroccan interior with a better connection through Algeria to the coast at Oran. This weakened *makhzan* control in the south. A consensus emerged in Paris that only the incorporation of Morocco into the French colonial construct could insure order across the Maghreb.

In 1912, with the Treaty of Fez, the French made Morocco a protectorate and dethroned Sultan Abd-al-Hafiz. The French government appointed General Hubert Lyautey as High Commissioner. Lyautey instituted a colonial system of indirect control in Indochina, and since 1903, had been the architect of a policy of French military and colonial expansion from Algeria (largely hidden from Paris) that pushed 200 miles into the interior of Morocco and undermined Sultan Abd-al-Aziz's attempts to maintain control. Lyautey believed that the only effective and efficient way to maintain control of colonial possessions was through indirect rule.<sup>114</sup>



The ink was hardly dry on the Treaty of Fez when resistance erupted against the protectorate. Anyone considered ‘foreign,’ including Moroccan Jews, found themselves the target of mobs and rebellious irregulars. At this point, Lyautey resurrected the Alawi dynasty and forced the *ulema* to appoint Mawlay Yusuf ibn Hassan (r. 1912–1927) as sultan. Lyautey was, in many respects, the French embodiment of his British colonial contemporary, Lord Frederick John Dealtry Lugard, the last British governor of the Northern Nigeria Protectorate (r. 1912–1914) and the first governor general of Nigeria (r. 1914–1919) and his ideas of a colonial ‘dual mandate.’ Lyautey returned the *makhzan* to its former position of prestige, but with all the refinements of civilization that French commercial interests could bring to Morocco. There would be absolute French control, but not French rule. As one traveler remarked, “At the Moorish court, scarcely a European is to be seen.” The system worked—for a time.<sup>115</sup>

WWI had a profound effect on Morocco. The protectorate remained more or less quiet during the war. Lyautey maintained control. Thousands of Moroccans were conscripted or volunteered to fight on the Western Front or to support military operations as laborers. Thousands more went to France to work in the factories. They returned with ideas and skills that threatened French rule. The French also found themselves haunted by a bargain struck in their rush to consolidate the protectorate. Paris had created a ‘sublease’ of northern Morocco to Spain in 1912. Spanish attempts to expand control into the Rif Mountains aroused tribal opposition, and from that opposition emerged Muhammad ibn Abd-al-Karim al-Khattabi (Abd-al-Karim) (1882–1963). The son of prominent qadi (a Sharia court judge) and part of the Spanish colonial administration, Abd-al-Karim rebelled in 1921. Put succinctly, Abd-al-Karim and his *rifian* fighters defeated the Spanish and established the Republic of the Rif. This alarmed the French, sidelined Lyautey, and gave Marshal Phillipe Pétain, leader of the French military, free rein to crush the revolt. Pétain used poison gas, tanks, and aircraft. By 1926, Spain and France had defeated Abd-al-Karim, who became a rallying point for Moroccan independence from his exile on Reunion Island. Later, from Cairo, he presided over the Liberation Committee of the Arab West.<sup>116</sup>

In 1930, the same year as the Eucharist conference in Tunis, the French decided to issue the first of a series of *Berber Dahirs* (decrees). These decrees created two systems of codes within the protectorate—one linked to the sultan and the *ulema* in Fez, and the other for Berbers that relied on Berber



tradition and tribal leadership. Despite opposition, Sultan Mawlay Yusuf signed the decrees. They were seen as a *de jure* attempt by the French to divide the Moroccan body politic, (forget the fact that differences really existed) and provoked widespread opposition, radicalizing the Moroccan elite. Stunned by the reaction, the French backed down, but now the problem of the protectorate had been internationalized. Pronouncements against the attempt to 'de-Islamicize' Morocco, not unlike the position taken by the secular Neo-Dustur in Tunisia, became a focal point for opposition to French rule. In Morocco, the language of opposition and nationalism was Islam—organizations like *zawiya* and *taifa* and the use of words like *sha'ab*, *qawmiyya*, and *umma* represented an attempt to bridge social and cultural differences in the nationalist cause. The new monarch, Muhammad V ibn Yusuf (r. 1927–1953, 1955–1962), became the focal point for this nationalist surge. The Plan of Reforms in 1934 demanded the recognition of the 'Arabness' of Morocco. Surprisingly, the plan did not call for independence or question the sultan's authority, but it was an attack on the attitudes and racism inherent in the French colonial system.<sup>117</sup> This would prove to be the last chance for the French system to survive.

In Spanish Morocco, there was a marriage of convenience between the Moroccan nationalists and the regime of General Francisco Franco. Franco's entire revolt against the Republican government in Madrid was based in Morocco, and Moroccan troops formed the backbone of the Nationalist war in Spain. As a result, Franco pandered to the Moroccan nationalists in the north and used his brilliant colonial administrator in the region, Colonel Juan Beigbeder, to maintain good relations with Abdelkhalek Torres, the head of the Party of National Reform. These policies embarrassed France. As for Abdelkhalek, some argued that he was partial to fascist ideology, and others that he was a romantic who saw in Spain and northern Morocco the opportunity to recreate Al-Andalus. Most likely, like his Iraqi, Palestinian, Egyptian, and Tunisian counterparts, he saw Hitler and the fascists as a means to escape colonial domination.<sup>118</sup>

As with Tunisia, WWII weakened French control. The fact that the Vichy government was headed by Marshal Pétain, who had subdued Abd-al-Kadir in 1926, only heightened Moroccan antipathy. In addition, Muhammad V absolutely refused to sign the decree to ghettoize Moroccan Jews. His position was motivated as much by resistance to the Vichy edicts as by humanitarian issues, but it was nevertheless a courageous stance. The entrance of

the American army into Morocco and the administration of Major General George S. Patton quickly shifted any remaining loyalty from the Vichy to the Americans. Unfortunately, despite Roosevelt's pronouncements about an end to the protectorate, rule eventually reverted to the French. In Morocco, as in Indochina and other places, the U.S. government was far more interested in the domestic political problems of its European allies, particularly the French, than in bringing independence to European colonies.<sup>119</sup> That being said, the Moroccans were encouraged by the pronouncements, which spurred political agitation for independence.<sup>120</sup>

General de Gaulle made it clear that he intended to "safeguard the empire," and the Americans made it clear that Moroccan nationalists were on their own. Nevertheless, 1944 represented a turning point for Morocco. In January, the Hizb al-Istiqlal (Independence Party) issued a Manifesto of Independence and the center of political gravity shifted to Rabat, linking the urban, middle-class trade unionists and urban working class. There was one other critical development: despite some disagreement, the leaders of the independence movement came to view the monarchy as the political institution around which the independence movement could coalesce. "Popular enchantment with the near-mystical image of the Sharifian ruler had immense value that could be harnessed to the nationalist cause."<sup>121</sup>

After the war, as the French attempted to reestablish control, the independence movements in French and Spanish Morocco merged. In 1947, Muhammad V announced his support for an Arab, Islamic, and unified Morocco. The popular acclaim—the so-called 'monarchy fever'—upset the French colonial administration. The sultan stepped back from armed confrontation, but continued to support the nationalist cause, which now included the most powerful labor union. The French reaction was predictable—repression, which only strengthened the nationalist cause and the determination to be done with the protectorate.

Finally, exasperated with Muhammad V's refusal to cooperate, the French decided to rid themselves of the monarch.<sup>122</sup> The French used old enemies of the Alawi Thami al-Glaoui, one of the so-called 'Lords of the Atlas,' and Abd-al-Hayy al-Kattani, whose family had long opposed the sultans. In August 1953, tribesmen loyal to the conspirators and French military units surrounded the palace and sent the royal family into exile on Madagascar. The entire nationalist cause coalesced around the plight of the royal family. De Gaulle called the French government move "stupidity," stating that the

monarch would return. To make matters worse, French Foreign Minister Georges Bidault called it a “war of civilizations,” a “fight of the Cross against the Crescent.” Others attempted to connect the sultan to communism through Istiqlal. In France, it solidified the opposition to the retention of Algeria. Internationally, the French government faced a storm of protest. Then, nine months later, the catastrophe at Dien Bien Phu in Indochina not only undermined the government in Paris but also demoralized Moroccan troops returning from the East. They joined the independence movement in droves. Strikes, sabotage, and attacks on French settlers and their supporters multiplied. Right-wing settler groups assassinated prominent Moroccan nationalists. The Moroccan Army of Liberation (ALN) emerged and began larger scale attacks on police and security units. In the end, Paris had no choice but to negotiate with the sultan, who returned to Morocco in November 1955.<sup>123</sup>

Muhammad V was enthusiastically received upon his return, but the honeymoon was short-lived. As in Tunisia, Morocco was composed of multiple constituencies with their own agendas. In March 1956, France agreed to end the protectorate. Spain agreed to withdraw from the north, but not from the Spanish Sahara. Istiqlal felt that the growing political alliance between the monarchy and the conservative rural elements and leaders threatened to sideline their aspirations. The party was literally and figuratively at war with itself and its political opponents. The king reconsidered the whole idea of a constitutional monarchy. Istiqlal split into a progressive and a revolutionary wing. By 1959, it was apparent that the king—who controlled the army, the security services, and the ministry of interior—had no intention of relinquishing control. The military, now under the command of Crown Prince Hassan, was largely Berber and rural in origin and had a decided antipathy for Istiqlal and the urban elites. The king allowed French forces to remain in the country, creating a situation where the Moroccan military received assistance in pacification operations. The system was based on an alliance between the monarch and the landed notables.<sup>124</sup>

---

*As in Tunisia, Morocco was composed of multiple constituencies with their own agendas.*

---

By Muhammad V’s death in March 1961, the Crown Prince, now Hassan II, controlled the military and security services. In the political realm, rule was a balancing act between factions vying for power and a patronage system

controlled by the king. For those supporting constitutional monarchy, it was frustrating but probably unworkable. Hassan II managed to maintain the stability of the monarchy despite the rise of pan-Arab nationalism. He concentrated more power in the monarchy and courted France, Spain, and the United States for security assistance. Hassan II's political skill kept the various political parties at bay and maintained exclusive royal authority. In the mid-1960s, demands for political liberalization from Mehdi Ben Barka and the National Union of Popular Forces met repression. In exile, Ben Barka would literally 'disappear' on a Paris street in 1965 with Hassan II claiming no prior knowledge of the incident. That same year, riots and demonstrations from student organizations brought school closures, the suspension of the Constitution of 1962, and the declaration of a state of emergency. Rule after 1965 was secured through the military and security services.<sup>125</sup>

In the early 1970s, as the economy worsened and suffering became widespread, even the loyalty of the military cracked. In 1971, an attempted coup by military cadets almost succeeded, and then in 1972, the attempted assassination of the king and crown prince by air force officers, who attempted to shoot down his personal jet, resulted from a plot by his own security chief. Observers believed that Hassan's rule was on life support. Shaken, he reorganized the military and security services, placing them under his direct control, and then renewed his ties to the conservative religious establishment. Concluding that secularism had failed him, he turned to the more traditional elements of Moroccan society and identified a 'national cause' to refocus the frustrations of the general population. Spain's withdrawal from the Sahara offered just the opportunity. In the Green March, Morocco moved to take control of the former Spanish colony. A costly war that became a part of the Cold War confrontation, it provided legitimacy at a critical point, but pitted Morocco against its neighbor Algeria and undermined any unity in the Maghreb.<sup>126</sup>

Hassan II was a shrewd practitioner of Moroccan politics. Following the coup attempts, the king concluded that the inviolable position of the monarchy could be maintained despite expressions of opposition, as long as the latter occurred within certain boundaries. In 1975, the government announced that opposition parties of the left, long outlawed, would be allowed to join the political milieu. During the next decade, other parties emerged and the rise of political Islam added a new element. Accommodating the Islamists was simplified because, unlike in Tunisia and Algeria where

the governments were decidedly secular, the monarchy had always had a religious tone—the king was the ‘commander of the faithful.’ The government’s problem centered on how to harness a force that could easily spiral out of control. In sharp contrast to Algeria, or even Tunisia, Hassan II created a place in the political spectrum for Islamic expression while defining the limits of opposition. During the 1980s, the reemergence of Berber identity also became an issue and the king became the defender of Berber rights. There was government support for groups advocating Berber rights.<sup>127</sup> The new political environment was somewhat chaotic, but it allowed the king to define the parameters for political participation and balance the competing groups against each other. Some decried it as a subversion of the political process; however, it maintained stability and civil order. In the 1990s, next door in Algeria, the alternative to control and political balance became all too apparent—outright chaos and civil war.

In foreign policy, Hassan generally supported U.S. policies in the region and received political and military support and economic aid in return. There were always economic issues, and the restructuring of the economy in the late 1980s was particularly difficult. To handle its huge debt, the government worked with the World Bank and the European Economic Community, reforming and privatizing the economy. Morocco emerged in the 1990s with a two-tiered workforce—one based on the educated middle class, and one where common workers did not share in the benefits created by economic reform. This labor and social pressure had a safety valve: more than four million Moroccans became migrant workers in Europe. Hassan II’s reign defined the Moroccan monarchy. In 1999, millions poured into the streets at his funeral, and as Susan Miller put it, “While his people may have not always loved their king, they had become enamored of the concept of Kingship, seeing it as the governmental form that best suited their needs as a nation, albeit with a long list of complaints, caveats, and modifications.”<sup>128</sup>

On his father’s death, Muhammad VI assumed the throne and wasted little time in setting a course designed to change the perception of the monarchy. Some of it was cosmetic—a more accessible monarch appearing in public with his family. Part of it was to heal the wounds of the past—a commission to look into the repression under his father, with the proviso that his father was not to be mentioned nor names given. In this regard, he fired his father’s interior minister, Driss Basri, because of his association with the repression. He visited the Rif, an area avoided by his father, in an

effort to bring it back into the political fold. He addressed the Berber issue without undermining the Islamic-Arab basis for the state. He joined the anti-terrorism efforts of the West, and in the process discovered that a radical group, Salafiyya Jihadiyya had cells spread around the country. Bombings in Casablanca led to a concerted propaganda and counterterrorism campaign that left thousands of populist preachers and their followers in jail. A new family law significantly increased women's right, including giving them equal status in the courts. Despite the changes, there was a growing realization that the political process was an arranged affair controlled by the *makhzan*. In the 2007 election, this prompted a low voter turnout and a cynicism about politics and political parties. The calm of Muhammad VI's reign—stability without his father's repression—heightened the shock of 2011.<sup>129</sup>

In achieving independence and maintaining stability, the Moroccan experience provides another example of the durability of traditional forms and institutions in the Arab world. The concept of 'Allah, Watan, Malik'

---

*In achieving independence and maintaining stability, the Moroccan experience provides another example of the durability of traditional forms and institutions in the Arab world.*

---

(God, country, king) conveys a legitimacy and a resiliency that allows not only for orderly transfers of power, but also provides the bonds for the maintenance of stability. Where westernized political constructs have failed, the monarchies have maintained their legitimacy and primacy. In the case of Morocco, this is all the more significant because, unlike

the Arab Gulf, the monarchy has survived without the ability to pour oil on troubled waters. In the case of Morocco, the monarchy was the symbol of the independence movement. In a fractured political landscape, it was the pivotal institution around which the state emerged. It has continued to be the primary institution that provided the cohesion and stability that has allowed Morocco to escape the political upheaval that has marked the region for the last five years. As the challenges mount, the monarchy is likely the only institutional approach that offers a real chance of navigating the vicissitudes that are to come.

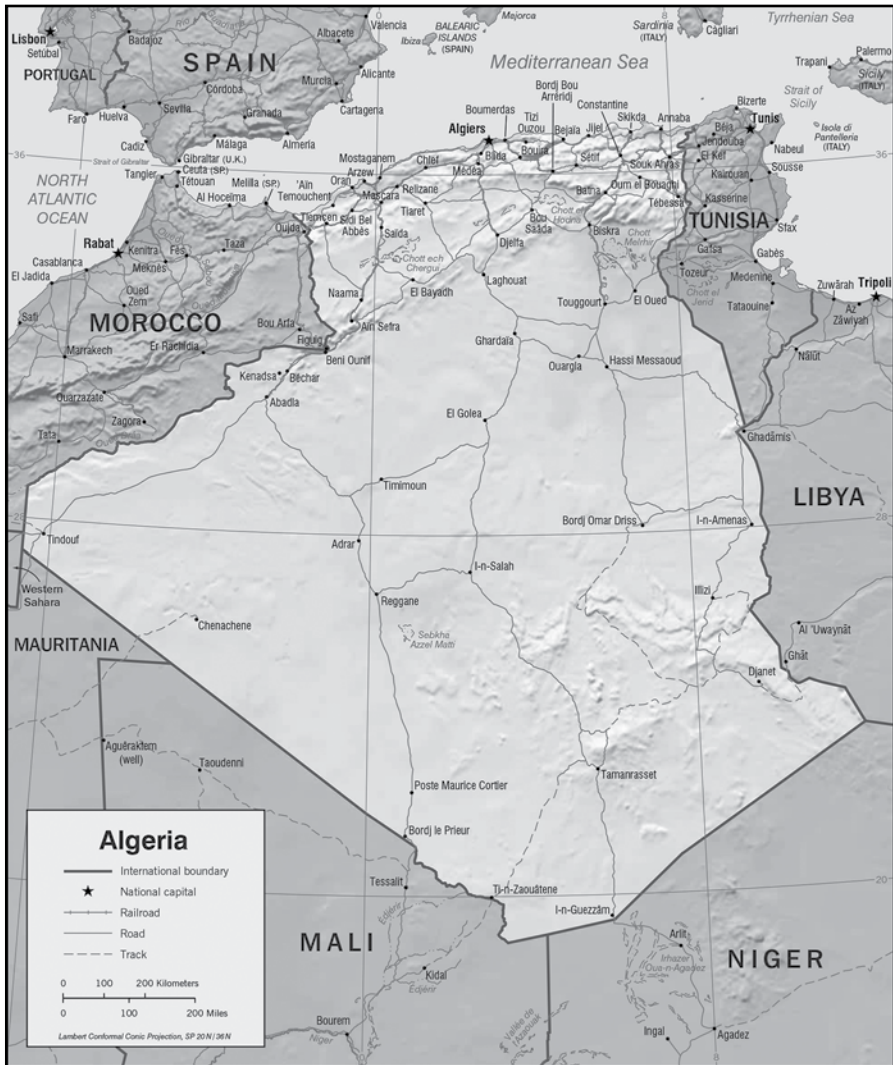


Figure 8. Modern-day Algeria. SOURCE: CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY

## Algeria and the Struggle for Independence

In the Maghreb, the Algerian experience is, without a doubt, the most dramatic and complex. Geopolitically and socio-culturally, Algeria is the least coherent of the Maghreb states. As previously discussed, in the aftermath of WWI, the colons managed to block any changes in the status quo. In 1936,



they prevented a vote in the National Assembly on giving citizenship to 20,000 Algerians without changing their Muslim status. This obstructionism led to more demands. What might have sufficed in 1919 was no longer sufficient in the 1940s.

In 1943, Ferhat Abbas published a Manifesto of the Algerian People, calling for autonomy. General de Gaulle, head of the Free French government-in-exile, granted citizenship without a change in sectarian status to many Algerians. The Algerian nationalists saw it as too little, too late. They formed the Friends of the Manifesto and Liberty (AML) led by Messali Hadj. In May 1945, AML participated in a V-E Day celebration. Their display of forbidden nationalist banners resulted in a confrontation that spiraled into a full-blown insurrection. Between 7,000 and 40,000 Algerians died in air strikes, security sweeps, and naval bombardments, along with about 100 colons. Thousands of arrests, including that of Messali Hadj, and trials followed. The revolt linked the impoverished rural Algerian to the political activism of the urban centers, and for the first time, created a consensus national movement calling for independence.<sup>130</sup>

In the aftermath of the revolt, a new organic law emerged, creating an independent Algerian assembly. There were to be 30 Algerian representatives in the Assembly and 14 in the upper house, or Council of the Republic. Despite boycotts and turmoil, Messali Hadj, recently released from prison, formed a new party, the Movement for the Triumph of Liberty and Democracy (MTLD), and managed to capture five seats in the Assembly. In 1947, the Algerian delegation pushed for an “Algerian Republic federated with Tunisia and Morocco within the framework of a French Union.”<sup>131</sup> The colon faction opposed any change and the MTLD rejected the notion that the French should decide the future of Algeria.

The assembly rejected these ideas and passed a new organic law in September 1947. The law granted citizenship without restriction to all citizens of Algeria, but it created two lists—one for colons and one for everyone else—for representation in the National Assembly. Each list consisted of 15 places. Half a million voters of ‘French civil status’ received the same representation as 1.5 million voters of ‘local legal status.’ The law was merely the old system reconfigured to present a façade of reform. The MTLD, which had rejected any French law, won all of the key municipal elections in Algeria. Shocked, the French government sent hardliner Marcel-Edmond Naegelen as the new governor-general. In the 1948 provincial elections, Naegelen intimidated



voters, stuffed ballot boxes, and arrested candidates. These practices were repeated in elections in 1949, 1951, 1953, and 1954. It became apparent to most Algerians that there was no viable political path to political power or justice.<sup>132</sup>

While the MTL D pursued the frustrating political course, the Parti du Peuple Algerien established a clandestine wing, the Organisation Speciale (OS), with the goal of forming a nucleus for revolutionary action. The OS began recruiting, and by 1949 had almost 1,500 fighters. They also robbed banks to finance their organization. In 1950, security forces crushed the organization with a series of arrests, including its leader Ahmed Ben Bella, who would eventually become the first president of the new Algerian republic. The revolutionary movement was as fractured as the political landscape—class issues, ethnic issues, and Berber against Arab, threatened to split the movement.

---

*The revolutionary movement was as fractured as the political landscape—class issues, ethnic issues, and Berber against Arab, threatened to split the movement.*

---

The conflicts brought paralysis to the movement, and many members of the OS moved to create a ‘third force.’ They adopted the name, Comité Révolutionnaire d’Unité et d’Action (CRUA). CRUA decided that the political process offered no hope for succession and laid a course for revolution.<sup>133</sup>

On 1 November 1954, with only a skeleton plan and military structure, CRUA declared war on France. Its declaration called for “the restoration of the sovereign, democratic, and social Algerian state within the framework of Islamic principles.” It created the FLN and called for a revolt against French rule. The beginning was costly; arrests and deaths of movement leaders pointed to its early demise. Fortunately for the FLN, the French responded with indiscriminate force, including mass arrests of MTL D centrists. The government drove new recruits into the open arms of the revolution. Prime Minister Pierre Mendes-France had extricated France from Indochina and understood that Tunisia and Morocco would likely go their course, but he believed that suppression of the revolutionaries and reform would suffice to maintain a French Algeria. Whatever his intentions, it was too late and when his government fell, followed by a conservative one, what little chance that had existed evaporated.<sup>134</sup>

At this juncture, key FLN commanders decided to provoke the kind of French reaction that would result in mass mobilization. The colons had been

little affected by the conflict; Youssef Zighout and Lakhdar Ben Tobbal, the commanders in the FLN's district two, decided to change this. In a series of attacks, the so-called Phillipeville massacres of August 1955, FLN guerrillas killed 123 Europeans and Algerian sympathizers—men, women, and children. The French reaction was predictably draconian. The FLN had about 200 active members in the region at the time of the attacks. The French claimed that they killed almost 1,300 guerrillas, and the FLN claimed that the total number of casualties among Algerians was more than 12,000. No matter whose numbers were correct, Zighout and Ben Tobbal judged correctly—there was no turning back for either side after Phillipeville. The middle ground was gone.

By 1956, the Algerian revolution could reasonably claim the support or sympathy of hundreds of thousands of Algerians. The revolutionary campaign focused on Algerians who supported the French. By 1956, six Muslims died at FLN hands for every European. The FLN also eliminated other revolutionary groups that might challenge its primacy, including the Communist Party. On the international front, Ben Bella and others found support in Cairo from Nasser's revolutionary regime, and from the Non-Aligned Movement at the Bandung Conference of 1955. The FLN also managed to put Algeria on the agenda of the United Nations General Assembly. To meet the new demands of a national movement, the FLN held the Soummam Congress in the fall of 1956 and reorganized the FLN, establishing an executive committee to oversee and execute its plans.<sup>135</sup>

The committee, and most prominently Abane Ramdane, its head, faced the prospect of counteracting the growing efficiency of the French counter-insurgency effort. The FLN launched the Battle of Algiers with bombings and attacks on civilians, including women and children, to undermine confidence in the French government to provoke an indiscriminate reaction. A strike was called to paralyze the city. General Jacques Massu instituted a reign of counterterror that broke the strike and eventually broke the urban terrorist organizations through a ruthless program of torture and intimidation. The FLN tactics horrified some Algerians. Operationally, it was disaster for the FLN. Security forces crushed their organization and forced the key central committee members to flee to Tunisia, where they were bitterly criticized for their tactics. The French erected barriers and fences to prevent infiltration and pursued the survivors into now independent Tunisia and Morocco. Strategically, the struggle for Algiers exposed the brutality on both

sides, drew attention to the struggle, and brought international pressure for a solution. Within the FLN, the military commanders, Abdelhafid Boussouf and Houari Boumediene, took over the leadership. In late 1957, they assassinated Abane for his opposition to the changes.<sup>136</sup>

Increasingly, reluctance on the part of Fourth Republic politicians to support the army's tactics in Algeria drove the French military in Algeria and the colons into an uneasy alliance. In April 1958, both the colons and the army revolted, naming General Massu as the president of a Committee of Public Safety. The French government collapsed, calling on General de Gaulle to deal with the situation. De Gaulle, out of power since 1946, exacted a price. He would rule by decree for six months and submit a new constitution based on the presidential system that he had advocated in 1946. The politicians accepted. De Gaulle quickly flew to Algiers and gained the confidence of the army and the colons. In retrospect, de Gaulle's declaration was ambiguous. "As of today, France considers that in all of Algeria there is only a single category of inhabitants: There are only full-fledged Frenchmen ... with the same rights and the same duties." There are indications that by 1957, he privately believed that only independence for Algeria would rid France of this problem. Nevertheless, he hoped for a face saving "association."<sup>137</sup>

De Gaulle's success in getting the Muslim population to participate in elections provoked an FLN wave of violence in France and the formation of an FLN provisional government. Between 1958 and 1962, the lack of a political solution prompted de Gaulle to support self-determination for Algeria after peace had been restored. He rejected FLN participation, but it was the first sign of compromise on the part of the French. The colons reacted by threatening revolt and the army teetered on the brink of supporting them. From 1960 to 1962, de Gaulle struggled with the problem of arriving at a political solution without provoking a mutiny in the army. In 1961, the Organisation de l'Armée Secrète emerged and staged an attempted coup in Algiers. It collapsed within days when the French army remained loyal to the government. The path was now clear for self-determination.<sup>138</sup>

The problem now was the lack of a political consensus within the FLN. Most scholars discuss the issue of the divided political landscape in terms of the Algerian colonial experience, where the colon administration prevented the formation of a mass national movement. The problem actually ran much deeper, reflecting the fractured historical context of Algeria. There is almost no point in Algerian history with a cohesive political center that

possessed uncontested control of the area and encompassed the geographic area delineated as the modern state. From earliest times, control focused on the individual coastal cities and their immediate environs. Control was always tenuous when extended in any depth from the coastal areas. There were conflicting interests and rivalries. When this reality is coupled with the physical footprint of contemporary Algeria, the problem of political cohesion

---

*In the case of revolutionary Algeria, 'national unity' was based on opposition to the French and little else.*

---

becomes even more complex. In the case of revolutionary Algeria, 'national unity' was based on opposition to the French and little else.

Once France was willing to discuss self-determination, the political, economic, and socio-cultural differences within the FLN reemerged. The conflict came in multiple forms—party conflicts, ideological conflicts, conflicts between central, regional, and local leadership, military-civilian conflicts, and personal conflicts. It reflected the lack of cohesion of Algeria as a whole. At a party conference in Tripoli, the leadership attempted to paper over the differences, but it had become apparent that the military wing intended to have the final say. Attempts to curb the military's influence proved unsuccessful. Boumediene aligned himself increasingly with the imprisoned Ben Bella. Signed on 18 March 1962, the agreement that ended French rule reflected virtually every demand made by the FLN at the Soummam Congress in 1956. On 25 April, following the signing of the Evian Accords, de Gaulle told his cabinet, "Napoleon said that in love the only victory is flight. In the matter of decolonization also, the only victory is to go away."<sup>139</sup> French opponents of the agreement commented, "This government has required four years of war to impose on its adversary the solution which was precisely his final objective." De Gaulle told his cabinet the next day to move on, "As for France, it will be necessary for her now to interest herself in something else."<sup>140</sup>

On 1 July 1962, Algerians voted for independence. During the first five years of the republic, the struggle for power was tribal—literally based on 'clans' within the movement, the FLN, and the military. Ben Bella emerged as the head of government and shored up his position against his rivals. As the colons left, workers in many cases took over their farms and factories and kept them functioning. Many leftists believed that this was the beginning of a new socialist era, and Ben Bella supported it as a means of broadening his

powerbase. It was a myth that quickly collapsed. The Constitution of 1963 was promulgated along the lines proposed by Ben Bella. Algeria was to be a socialist state, Arabic was the official language, and Islam the official religion. The FLN was the only legal political organization, and running unopposed, Ben Bella was elected the first president. Some experts wryly noted that a multi-party system was simply not feasible since there would have been one party for every politician. The complications of a border war with Morocco and factional infighting led Ben Bella to narrow his base to only those he could trust. The factionalism continued and sacred FLN pronouncements like the Algiers Charter merely served as a screen for the power struggles within the party. Ben Bella concentrated power in his own hands and his inner circle—it paralyzed the government and the economy.<sup>141</sup>

Ben Bella's highhanded rule brought a revolt in late 1963 from the Socialist Forces Front and backed by the military commander in the Kabylia. When it collapsed, Ben Bella's political opponent on the left, Mohammed Boudiaf, the leader of the Parti de la Révolution Socialiste (PRS), was first imprisoned and then fled to Morocco. He would make a dramatic reentry into Algeria in 1992. On the right, the Association of Algerian Ulema and its leader, Bachir Ibrahimi, refused to work within the confines of the Ministry of Religious Affairs, arguing that the ministry had nothing to do with promoting Islam, but rather focused on making Muslims compliant to Ben Bella's 'state Islam.' The greatest potential problem from the Islamists was the al-Qiyam religious association formed in 1964 by Abassi Madani, Ahmed Sahnoun, and Abdelatif Soltani. This group was associated with the Muslim Brotherhood through Soltani's relationships in Egypt that dated from 1953, and more ominously, it became enamored with the militant views of Sayyid Qutb—the intellectual godfather of radical violent Islamic thought. They viewed the Ben Bella regime as a front that talked about Islam, but in reality was a godless state, leading Muslims to a new *jahiliya*, the state of man before the coming of the Prophet. To cap his accomplishments, Ben Bella blundered into a border war with Morocco over the town of Figuig, resulting in an Algerian defeat.<sup>142</sup>

The only 'clan' that Ben Bella did not control was the military Boumedienne clan. Ben Bella saw the threat from the military or ALN, and moved to discredit and purge its supporters from the government. The oft-used refrain was that the army was composed "of petit-bourgeois types and anti-revolution opportunists" who only joined when the FLN victory became

obvious. Frictions grew, and a military coup on 19 June 1965 removed Ben Bella.<sup>143</sup> A Revolutionary Council took over, with Boumedienne as head of government. The council was dominated by the Oujda clan.<sup>144</sup> Boumedienne promulgated a call for “egalitarianism, social justice and Muslim values,” or ‘Islamopopulism.’ He quickly installed a security state model. Opposition of all types, including from exiles, was eliminated by his Stasi KGB-trained security service. In 1967, former PRS leader Mohamed Khider was assassinated in Madrid and Krim Belkacem was strangled in his Frankfurt hotel room. The regime wanted opponents to know that it had a long reach.<sup>145</sup>

The military suspended the Constitution of 1963 and transformed the party into an apparatus that executed the will of the Council. In turn, the membership of the Council was sharply reduced from 26 to 9 members to centralize and simplify decision-making. Even insignificant issues at the local level were decided by the Council. There were only two real paths for political promotion—the government or the party bureaucracy. After 10 years in power, the leadership decided to issue a new statement of policy, the 1976 National Charter. The Charter provided for a new constitution, but no fundamental change in the way the government functioned. It reinforced centralization under Boumedienne’s control. In foreign policy, ideological commitment to non-alignment did not prevent the U.S. from becoming one of Algeria’s largest trading partners. In the region, Algeria represented the ‘radical’ ideological alternative to Tunisian moderation and Moroccan

conservatism. As a result, Algeria relied on the Soviet Union for military aid.

---

*The Algerian focus on industrialization through infusions of oil created a ‘command economy’ following an East Bloc model that achieved few of its economic or social goals.*

---

The government attempted to follow socialist models for the economy. Industrialization was favored over the agricultural sector. The attempted industrial leap reflected unrealistic plan targets, common in centralized controlled economies, and the neglect of the agricultural sector led to

imbalances and underperformance there, as well. The leadership in the early 1970s focused on the financial aspects of the benefits of the oil. Boumedienne believed that this would provide the means for Algeria to develop the infrastructure and institutions of a modern state. The flood of revenue produced the façade of modernity without the structural changes to maintain it.<sup>146</sup> The Algerian focus on industrialization through infusions of oil created a

'command economy' following an East Bloc model that achieved few of its economic or social goals.

From a socio-cultural perspective, the revolution was also conflicted. Arabic was the national language, but the FLN leadership was a product of the French education system. To placate conservative traditionalists, the Ministry of Religious Affairs required that Modern Standard Arabic replace French, but there were not enough teachers. Arabic teachers were imported from Egypt and the Gulf, and brought with them the ideas of the Muslim Brotherhood and other fundamentalists. French remained the language of social and economic success. In fact, the lofty economic goals required Western languages and French, not Arabic.<sup>147</sup> Then there was the issue of Berber culture. What did it mean to be Berber in a state that was allegedly Arabizing and where French was necessary for success? Stressing Arabization and Islam in a basically socialist, secular state only emphasized the existing cleavages with enormous consequences.<sup>148</sup>

The Berbers became more assertive through organizations like the Mouvement Culturel Berbère, focusing on Berber rights. The FLN Arabizers attempted to restrict the organizations' access, including radio and television time, in predominantly Berber regions. The Minister of Culture, Ahmed Taleb-Ibrahimi, claimed that the Berbers were in reality descendants of the Arabs—an ethnological assertion so fallacious that it does not warrant a response. The Islamist organizations, like al-Qiyam, rejected Boumedienne's attempts to link Islam and socialism, and leaders like Soltani posed questions about what it meant to be a real Muslim.<sup>149</sup>

Following Boumedienne's death in December 1978, Chadli Bendjedid was elected president. The economic performance of the Boumedienne years was not encouraging. Even with the oil revenue, the government was hard-pressed to meet the minimum economic requirements for stability given the exploding population. Tensions over the FLN monopoly on power and policies escalated in the 1980s. There was opposition from economic liberals and leftists, as well as Islamic fundamentalists. Growing friction between Arabized Algeria and francophone-led elements to strike and demonstrate. In attempting to dismantle the Boumedienne francophone system, the Bendjedid government turned to the Arabizers because they tended to be Islamic traditionalists. Ironically, the government saw the Islamist political wave as something they wanted to co-opt. The secularism of the revolutionary generation had failed to deliver the 'good life,' and increasingly, tracts and

preaching began to demand a 'just' Islamic society based on sharia, not the National Charter. Then came the economic crisis of the 1980s and the collapse of oil prices. The wheels of stability could no longer be greased.<sup>150</sup>

The economic crisis brought riots and student unrest in 1985, 1986, and 1987. To the Algerian street, merchants and government officials were enriching themselves at the expense of the general population.<sup>151</sup> In October 1988, strikes became almost continuous, and troops and security forces resorted to live ammunition to quell the disturbances. Hundreds of mostly young men were killed and thousands were arrested and tortured. Stunned, the general population reacted with fury to the slaughter, blaming the military and the regime. The formation of illegal organizations mushroomed. Frightened, Bendjedid offered to have an elected parliament and make the government responsible to it. There was considerable opposition from the FLN cadres, whose positions were threatened. Nevertheless, in February 1989, voters approved a new constitution that guaranteed fundamental rights to the population. At the same time, female rights were not mentioned and the role of Islam was made more specific. The FIS, a coalition of Islamic political groups, emerged and Bendjedid, in a calculated move, recognized the party, even though it violated several prohibitions in the new constitution.<sup>152</sup> In 1989, the FLN welcomed back exiles and used Islamic rhetoric in its programs and propaganda. Many saw it as rejuvenated and capable of holding its own in the elections of 1990.<sup>153</sup>

On 12 June 1990, in local and regional elections, FIS swept the secular parties, taking 54 percent of the vote. FIS won on the backs of the young, educated, Arabic-speaking population that resented the francophone elites. In local and regional affairs, the FIS was in control. Was it a victory for FIS or a defeat for the FLN? The FLN was bankrupt and could no longer compete at the polls. FIS channeled disaffection with the FLN into a victory. FIS also made France an issue, placing the FLN on the side of the former colonial power.<sup>154</sup> Still in control of the National Assembly, the FLN attempted to gerrymander the political system and retain control at the national level. It aggressively fomented dissension within the Islamic movement, creating new Islamic parties. FIS protests became a full-scale assault on the authority of the state. It was at the time of the occupation of Kuwait and Operation DESERT STORM, and Sheikh Ali Belhaj criticized the army for not aiding Iraq, saying, "The Algerian Army and the War in the Gulf: a lion when it fights Islamists and an ostrich in a time of war."<sup>155</sup>



After compromises failed, the FIS leadership demanded a full Islamic state. In the December election, the FIS won a resounding victory, making it obvious that in the second round they would dominate the National Assembly. Despite pressure from FLN cadres, Bendjedid was determined to hold the election, come what may. The military saw such a course as a disaster. In January 1991, Chief of Staff Abdelmalek Guenaiza and the FLN opposition confronted Bendjedid and forced him to resign.<sup>156</sup> The military formed a High Council of State (HCE) and annulled the election of December 1990. The army also outlawed FIS and arrested its leadership. This sparked a decade of warfare with multiple Islamic groups in which more than 150,000 Algerians died. The French were drawn into the struggle because of their commercial ties with the FLN.

The war was deluge of murders, car bombs, airplane hijackings, and other mayhem. The security forces responded with what some called a “war of annihilation,” exacerbated by the inability or unwillingness of security forces to distinguish between militants and non-violent Islamists.<sup>157</sup> The Groupe Islamique Armé (GIA), composed of fighters returned from Afghanistan and other volunteers, formed the backbone of the resistance. The GIA targeted FLN officials, the Islamic Salvation Army (AIS) that also fought the FLN, other Islamists, Jews, and particularly foreign non-combatants because of the publicity value. FLN security units and shadowy militia groups eliminated GIA, AIS, and Groupe Salafiste pour

---

*The security forces responded with what some called a “war of annihilation,” exacerbated by the inability or unwillingness of security forces to distinguish between militants and non-violent Islamists.*

---

la Prédication et le Combat (GSPC) militants, as well as opponents of the regime and moderates around which opposition to the government might coalesce. Both sides blamed the other for atrocities. The cynical believed that the regime wanted the increased violence because the state of emergency allowed it to stifle protest against the existing order.<sup>158</sup>

Increasingly desperate, the FLN turned to Boudiaf in a bizarre attempt to regain some legitimacy and credibility. The army officers who had upended the FIS election results reached out to their old antagonist, Mohamed Boudiaf, asking him to return to Algeria and head the HCE. In February 1992, Boudiaf accepted and immediately returned to Algeria. Many viewed him as Algeria’s chance to realize the goals of the revolution 30 years before.

Boudiaf recognized immediately that he lacked a power base—in fact, he lacked real name recognition to all but the FLN old guard.<sup>159</sup> He stated that Algeria faced three crises, “a moral crisis, a spiritual crisis and an identity crisis,” which had divided the country against itself. He immediately worked to obtain foreign assistance, liberalize the petroleum sector, and initiate an anti-corruption campaign. In the latter, one of the first high-profile arrests was General Mustapha Belloucif, an insider in the Oujda ruling cabal. Boudiaf’s policies rattled the powers-that-be, raising questions about how far he would be allowed to go. Then on 29 June 1992, he was assassinated while giving a speech in Annaba, a port city in the east. The assassin was a member of Boudiaf’s security detail who quickly confessed that he was a secret Islamist and had acted alone.<sup>160</sup>

The sensational nature of an assassination caught on live video aside, the circumstances of Boudiaf’s death sparked speculation. The Islamic opposition applauded Boudiaf’s death because he was seen as an ally of the military in crushing the opposition. He had made it plain in his speeches that he had no tolerance for “a closed Islam, which harks back to 13 or 14 centuries ago,” a pointed attack on the Salifists. The HCE declared another state of emergency to deal with the Islamists. Westerners and Westernized elites viewed it as an assault on secularism and the state, blaming ‘Islamic Jihad.’<sup>161</sup> Others saw his elimination as a plot arranged by those threatened by his anti-corruption programs.<sup>162</sup> No matter what the case, the situation demonstrated the impotency of the government’s attempts to gain credibility. The FLN was either incompetent or complicit—the result was the same. The FLN regime had no pathway to legitimacy and no future if it did not survive, hence the civil war became an existential struggle.

In 1994, the HCE dissolved, recognizing that some path had to be found out of the current morass. Liamine Zeroual, the defense minister, assumed the presidency. He pursued a policy of ‘re-democratization,’ calling elections in 1995. In 1996, a new constitution was drafted. Although violence intensified in 1997 and 1998, the move toward a functioning political system continued.<sup>163</sup> Zeroual held new elections in April 1999. There were problems, but Abdelaziz Bouteflika, an FLN protégé of Boumedienne, was elected. His offer of amnesty was partially successful. The amnesty, police operations, and internal disputes gutted GIA, which became a non-factor. By 2000, it was clear that the insurgency had lost much of its potency. Under Bouteflika, Algeria recouped some of its lost international prestige. He received

strong mandates to remain in office, but problems continued. In 2007, the GSPC became al-Qaeda in the Islamic Maghreb and rocked Algiers with a string of suicide bombings that has once again pushed the government toward an authoritarian posture.<sup>164</sup> When the uprising of 2011 swept Tunisia, Egypt, and Libya, the government acted quickly, using its petroleum wealth to undermine protests. The memory of the 1990s *fitna* (distress) also dampened enthusiasm for another round of chaos and instability. As the second decade of the 21st century dawned, nothing had been settled in Algeria.

## Summary

Independence in the Maghreb provided three distinct cases for regime formation and survival in the region. Tunisia, Morocco, and Algeria reflected three different approaches to political, economic, and social development. The Neo-Dustur and Habib Bourguiba used Islam and Tunisia's Islamic heritage as a cudgel with which to bash the colonial administration and gain independence, but once that goal was attained, the Tunisian government dissolved the monarchy and sought to replace traditional Islamic practice with Western political and social practice. The promise of Westernization, whether in its liberal capitalist or socialist collective mode, in the end failed to produce benefits for the bulk of the population. The approach was not necessarily flawed, but rather it had applicability in only a limited political sphere. Historically, the differences between the Tunisian or *Ifriqiyan* coastal areas and the interior of west and south prevented real integration. Even after independence, resistance continued in the south from the Yusufist movement. This was in part due to the political rivalry between Ben Yusuf and Bourguiba and ideological differences, but it also flowed from the fundamental social and cultural differences that set the regions apart. In fact, the south never saw itself as a part of the political and social milieu of the coast.

When Ben Ali displaced Bourguiba and moved to a market-driven Westernized kleptocracy, it exacerbated the coastal-interior tensions and contributed to the explosion of 2011. Despite Ben Ali's superficial gestures to the Islamic communities, the Bourguibist state was secular and fundamentally hostile to political Islam. In addition, the Ben Ali clan lacked a pathway to transfer political power legitimately to a new ruler. Hence, Ben Ali attempted to perpetuate the *malikiyyat juhurriyya*, or republican monarchy, by grooming his sons. Not surprisingly, the spark that unraveled the regime came

from the southern interior. In Tunisia, there are fundamental political, economic, and socio-cultural problems imposed by the geopolitical reality, and in the aftermath of 2011, there is no reason to believe that this will change. Whatever political party or coalition comes to dominate Tunisia, it will, of necessity, have its primary base of support in the coastal regions and urban centers. The regional social differences, economic realities of the Tunisian economy, and the disadvantaged position of the south and interior will create an environment where resistance, most likely in the form of radical Islamic movements, will continue. The issue is less a matter of ideology (i.e., Islam) than of unsolvable economic and social differences that have always existed.

Geopolitically, Morocco has an even more complex problem than Tunisia. Regional differences are more pronounced—the coastal regions, the Rif, the Sahara and the eastern interior are all starkly different. Nevertheless, Morocco has a significant political edge. It has a history of independent Islamic revivalism. In the Middle Ages, two cohesive Islamic empires—the Almoravids and the Almohads—emerged from Morocco. Depending on the talents of the ruler, the Alawi state functioned well at times. Rulers had a history of legitimacy. When rulers were weak and the political situation chaotic, the institutions were still recognizable. French Protectorate policy under General Lyautey insured not only the survival of the monarchy, but also the survival of traditional political and socio-cultural institutions. As a result, the monarchy became the vehicle for the independence movement as much as the political parties, like Istiqlal.

Muhammad V's role as the catalyst that pushed the French to withdraw provided a legitimacy to the movement that connected it to Morocco's traditional Islamic past. The role of the monarchy, and the king as the 'commander of the faithful,' buffered the independent state from many of the problems faced by the secular Neo-Dustur. There were problems, but as Islamic political activism grew, it was far more difficult to paint the monarch, even the worldly Hassan II, as un-Islamic. The Sunni political view of *sulta* (political authority), namely that rule itself was a manifestation of legitimacy, provided Hassan II added legitimacy during the 'iron hand' period of his rule. During the last 15 years of Hassan's reign, he embraced emerging Islamic movements, pursued a traditional Moroccan imperialist policy in the Sahara, and focused on issues like Berber rights. The monarchy had the flexibility to broaden his base of support to accommodate new political realities. As important as rule itself, the monarchy provided a means for the

legitimate, orderly transfer of power. Muhammad VI's claim to traditional Islamic legitimacy allowed the monarchy to survive the events of 2011 by making modest accommodations with the opposition. Where the ruling structure of the secular party system in Tunisia collapsed, the monarchical tradition in Morocco survived.

The protectorate arrangements for Tunisia and Morocco allowed for a transition to independence in a relatively straightforward way. This was not the case in Algeria. The geopolitical footprint of Algeria creates an environment that is significantly more challenging. In addition, Algeria lacks the historical cohesion. Centralized rule in Algeria was, at all times, ephemeral. The coastal enclaves functioned as city-states based on maritime trade and local rulers. Thus, the French move into Algeria in 1830 took on a different character—Algeria became a part of metropolitan France and the colon influence drove the political discourse both within Algeria and with the government in Paris. It was, in effect, apartheid government by the colons for the colons. In addition, French colonial policy expanded the borders of Algeria to the south, making the social and ethnic stratification of Algeria by far the most complex in the Maghreb.

This reality meant that independence could only come to Algeria through violent revolution. The colon state and French rule brought disparate factions together that likely would have been at odds in any other situation. After independence was won, the fractured political, economic, and social construct of Algeria became apparent, even within the FLN ruling party. Groups vying for control within the party were referred to as clans and were often centered on specific geographic areas or ethnic groups. The Kabyle region furnished much of the support of the ruling faction within the FLN, and their francophone heritage became an increasing source of friction with other groups as the republic pursued an official policy of Arabization. For Algeria, the combination of French colonial policy and the historically fractured nature of the region created an environment where survival of central control required an overtly coercive state, even when supplemented by extensive petroleum and gas reserves.

Despite these resources, the Algerian state was almost undone. Although the official religion was Islam and the language Arabic, Algeria was, in fact, a secular state ruled by a Westernized francophone elite. It was not only secular, but also socialist, and looked to the Eastern Bloc for philosophy and approaches to rule. Central planning drove a faltering economy, requiring

infusions of petrodollars to keep it functioning. The instability of the 1980s and the Islamic revolt of the 1990s resulted in part from the economic morass of poor planning and low oil prices, as well as political alienation from the ruling FLN. When the president, Bendjedid, attempted to institute real political reforms, the prospect of the Islamists taking control of the government prompted a military coup and a bloody Islamist revolt. This, in turn, brought military rule, the provisional government, and election of Bouteflika in 1999. In the first decade of the 21st century, rising oil prices allowed the government to artificially pump up the economy, although none of the underlying political and economic dynamics had changed. Algeria avoided a serious popular eruption in 2011 by using its petroleum wealth and repression, but

political, economic, and social dysfunction continued to afflict the state.

---

*No matter what the form of government—Islamist, secular, or monarchy—the states of the Maghreb face problems and challenges that likely exceed what has heretofore occurred.*

---

In the post-2011 environment, the ability of the government to sustain prosperity and stability is being challenged. No matter what the form of government—Islamist, secular, or monarchy—the states of the Maghreb face problems and challenges that likely exceed what has heretofore occurred.

There is a new challenge as well. As security problems have increased and emigration increasingly has become an issue in Europe, the migrant- or emigrant-worker safety valve for poor economic opportunity at home will likely become less available. There is going to be more pressure on the governments of Maghreb to deliver a better life in an environment that mitigates against significant improvement. None of the states of the region have been able to change the dynamic of uneven development and friction between the hinterland and coastal areas, or between groups that are ethnically and culturally divergent. In the last chapter, this study discusses the last five years and the implications for the future, including the spillover of the Maghreb's political, economic, and social problems into the European context and its implications for security.

## 4. Conclusion: 2011 and the Future

In early 2011, the Maghreb provided the spark for the so-called Arab Spring revolts. Tensions and unrest in Tunisia exploded following the self-immolation of a street vendor, and the resulting political chaos brought the rapid collapse of the Ben Ali government. The unrest quickly spread across much of the Arab world, and the calls for change increased. Resistance movements materialized and governments fell across the region. Many, particularly in the West, believed that a wave of democracy had finally broken across the Arab Middle East. The dictators were gone or teetering, and it was only a matter of time before a new order emerged in the region. The view that liberal Western-style democracy would somehow take root where it had never existed before proved to be largely naïve. Within a relatively short period of time, chaos, civil war, and collapse, or an authoritarian order in the form of the military or Islamists, became the primary options. The majority of the regimes that truly survived the chaos were the traditional monarchies and emirates.

The Maghreb, the region that provided the catalyst for the explosion in the first place, provides a laboratory for understanding the upheaval. Since 2011, what we have seen in the Maghreb is that the ideological underpinnings of opposition and revolt, adjusted to 21st-century norms, remain more or less consistent with the past. Political alienation, economic deprivation, and social divisions came to a head, and the political order scrambled to adjust. In Tunisia, the chasm between the coast, and the interior and south toppled Ben Ali, and created a more unstable but more representative political milieu. It has been besieged by radicals using

---

*The Maghreb, the region that provided the catalyst for the explosion in the first place, provides a laboratory for understanding the upheaval.*

---

fundamentalist interpretations of Islam to justify revolt. In Morocco, the monarchy, behind the motto of ‘God, Country, and King,’ claimed traditional Islamic legitimacy, balancing the disparate political landscape while struggling to control economic and social problems. In Algeria in the 1990s, the FLN demonstrated the lengths to which it would go to stay in power. Challenged by political opponents and radical militant Islamists from the

Sahara to Algiers, the FLN has more resources to deal with problems, but faces a more complex geopolitical and socio-cultural reality.

Finally, the entire Maghreb has been the beneficiary of the worker and immigration policies that have made the European Union a safety valve for poor economic performance, unemployment, and rapid population growth. Emigration has provided a source of funds through remittances that have helped to shore up the region. Now, the social and cultural divisions, and inability to assimilate disparate groups that have historically plagued Tunisia, Morocco, and Algeria are affecting Europe. North African ghettos and shrinking economic opportunity combined with social isolation have created a small, but determined, group of frustrated youths who have borrowed various radical Islamic ideologies as a justification for terror attacks in Europe. This reality does not portend well for the continued availability of the 'European safety valve,' and the states of the Maghreb will likely face a changed relationship with Europe as a result.

Immigration has become a key issue as European populations lash out against what they see a threat to their own national identities. The collapse of Libya, although not part of the Maghreb and not included in this discussion, demonstrates that the states of North Africa form a dam that allows for orderly, stable relations with Europe. When that dam is breached, as in the case of Libya, the situation may require radical new thinking, in human terms alone, about how to manage the relationship. For that reason, state survival—whether politically legitimate in eyes of Western idealists or not—is critical to the stability of the Mediterranean basin, and likely to Europe itself. The question for this concluding chapter is: What has 2011 wrought and what does the future look like?

## **Tunisia: 2011 and Beyond**

In Tunisia, the inability to bridge the economic and social gap between the coast and the interior (particularly the southern and western interiors) ignited a revolution. For the common people in Ben Ali's kleptocracy, even their minimal subsistence was threatened. The issue of replacing the authoritarian regime was problematic, in that decidedly secular middle and upper class Tunisia had to accommodate emerging Islamic political groups. Elections in October 2011 brought Rashid Ghannushi, the leader of the Islamist al-Nahda Party, to power in a coalition with two secular parties, the Congress



for the Republic (CPR) and the Forum Démocratique pour le Travail et les Libertés (FDTL). Moncef Marzouki (a CPR member) was interim president, Hamadi Jebali (of al-Nahda) was prime minister, and Mustapha Ben Jaafar (an FDTL member) was president of the National Constituent Assembly (NCA). The primary obstacle to rule was the radical Salafists. In the ruling coalition, al-Nahda, the Islamist element, had responsibility for bringing the Salafists into the political fold. Their efforts failed. Ansar al-Sharia in Tunisia (AAS-T) made it clear that they would be satisfied with nothing less than a fully Islamic Tunisia, as defined by themselves. Kairouan, and the Grand Mosque there, became the focal point of Salafi radicalism.<sup>165</sup>

In June 2012, Salafists and their supporters, bussed in from the south, besieged Manouba University to protest rumors that the new constitution would give women the same rights as men.<sup>166</sup> In 2013, AAS-T assassinated Chokri Belaid, a secular politician and critic of al-Nahda's refusal to rein in the radical Salafis.<sup>167</sup> The group struck again in July, assassinating Mohamed Brahmi, another secular politician and critic.<sup>168</sup> At this point, protesters and parliamentarians demanded a national unity government and the outlawing of AAS-T—they achieved both.<sup>169</sup>

In January 2014, the NCA approved a new constitution making Arabic the national language and Islam the state religion, but also guaranteeing equal treatment for women, and civil and political rights. Mehdi Jooma became prime minister.<sup>170</sup> In 2015, Habib Essid, a former member of Ben Ali's government and minister of the interior, was chosen by the NCA as prime minister because of his experience in security and economics.<sup>171</sup> In 2015, two separate attacks, one at the Bardo Museum in Tunis and the other at a beach resort in Sousse, killed scores of foreign tourists, resulting the reinstatement of the state of emergency powers.<sup>172</sup> In addition, Tunisia received additional security and military aid from the West, and just a few days after the Sousse attack, a U.S. airstrike in Libya killed Seifallah Ben Hassine, the leader of AAS-T, the organization responsible for the attacks.<sup>173</sup> The prime minister called it a war with the terrorists.

The level of the threat was something heretofore unseen in Tunisia, requiring a rethinking of security policy. In security reviews following the 2015 attacks, several security officials were arrested and more than 100 officers fired for links or sympathies with radical organizations. It reflected the unwillingness of the al-Nahda government to deal firmly with Islamic radicalism.<sup>174</sup> Despite a new government aggressiveness, radical Islamic

organizations still operate in the mountainous regions of the west, along the Algerian border, and in the south, adjacent to their training bases and sanctuaries in Libya. Multiple security improvements are underway, including a berm in south, the new limes, and more aggressive operations on the Algerian border.

The determination on the part of the Tunisian government to deal with the terrorism problem notwithstanding, limited success will likely flow from these efforts. Experts have called the efforts a ‘Band-Aid’ because of the difficulties in preventing local radicalization, the motivation behind several of the attacks. Among other things, ‘experts’ talk about a ‘structural’ solution, including economic development and the healing of social and cultural cleavages within the society.<sup>175</sup> These suggestions may have theoretical efficacy, but in practical terms, they represent a fundamental ignorance and inability to come to terms with the reality of the Tunisian context.

Every ruling group that has attempted to maintain stability in *Ifriqiya* (Tunisia) has faced the problem of controlling and integrating the interior south and west with the coastal areas, and every group has failed. The talk of fences and berms and increased aggressive security patrolling were no doubt the same discussions that Roman commanders held in the first century. In fact, the parallels between the Roman limes and what is being attempted today is amazing. The fact that, historically, the mountains to the west in the areas bordering present-day Algeria were always a source of threats and instability to the settled coastal region has not changed.

In the Christian era, the North African interior was a hotbed of sectarian resistance, from Donatist and Arian splinter groups to the imposed orthodoxy of Rome or the Byzantines. In the early Islamic era, the regions of the south and west became hotbeds of Berber resistance to rule from the coast. In the Islamic era, the isolation and discontent of the people in the interior and their hostility to the coastal societies meant they harbored sectarian rebels like the Kharijites—the very label applied to the Islamic State and al-Qaeda by orthodox Muslim scholars—and, in the case of the Fatimids, the first Shi’a caliphate that dominated Egypt, the Red Sea, and the eastern Mediterranean for 150 years. The great Kairouan mosque often became a center for ideological legitimacy among those opposed to the ruling order. Thus, the recent use of the Kairouan mosque and religious schools by radical Islamists as centers for indoctrination and organization is part of a tradition that dates back centuries as the government moves to control it. In the

colonial era, the south and west resisted French colonial domination, and after independence, Bourguiba's split with Ben Yusuf resulted in an ongoing insurgency on the southern and western borders requiring the help of French security forces to subdue the Yusufists.

Those same regions were ripe for exploitation by neighboring states hostile to Bourguiba. At different times, the Algerians and the Libyans both were responsible for unrest in the south and east—a 1980 incident in the Gafsa provides an excellent example. Libyan-backed dissidents entered Tunisia from the Algerian border regions and attempted to incite a general rebellion against the Bourguiba regime. In light of this history, should anyone be surprised that the spark and unrest that undermined the Ben Ali regime came from the Tunisian interior, or that Salafist radicals in AAS-T or the Islamic State find recruits and are able to mount an insurgency from Tunisia's southern and western areas, and along its porous borders with the former state of Libya, as well as Algerian regions seldom if ever controlled by the FLN government in Algiers? The answer is obvious.

This brings the discussion back to the issue of Tunisia and the way forward. Development and integration of the south and interior is a 'pipe dream' pursued for millennia. Historically, there has been neither the will nor the resources to do anything more than keep a lid on the region. Given birth rates, economic pressures on the government in Tunis, the instability affecting both of its neighbors, and perhaps most importantly, the reality of the geopolitical and socio-cultural differences between the interior and coast, no realistic possibility of integrating the interior and south exists. The return of large numbers of fighters from Syria and Iraq also has the potential to have a dramatic effect on the security situation. That said, as the situation in Libya has amply demonstrated, the West, and particularly Europeans, need to make certain that state structure—preferably pro-Western state structure—continues in the coastal regions and that control, albeit at times contested, continues in the interior.

For the state to survive, the real focus has to be on stability and development in the large urban centers and the littoral. Whether the political party in control is Islamist, secular, or a national front, the priority will ultimately have to be the same: namely, there may be considerable rhetoric and some additional investment in the south and interior, but in the end, the limitations on funding and the priorities will bring a focus on the coastal regions. That development has to be protected from the instability emanating from

regions that are fundamentally different from the core of the Tunisian state and society if the state is to survive.

## Morocco: 2011 and Beyond

In Morocco, the events of 2011 in Tunisia brought demonstrations from what was described as the ‘Movement for Change.’ There were predictable demands—a new constitution, reduced royal power, and an independent judiciary. From the sidelines, many analysts predicted that events would follow the same course as in Tunisia and Egypt. They missed the mark. The monarchy and Muhammad VI’s role as ‘defender of the faithful’ seems archaic to the uninformed, but it has real resonance. In Tunisia, Ben Ali was viewed as a corrupt policeman who headed little more than a crime family. In Morocco, the monarchy has been the defender of Moroccan independence and head of a political system within the Islamic tradition. In simplistic terms, the ability of protesters to attack the secular government in Tunisia, from the right for being un-Islamic and from the left for being a tool of the wealthy, was simple. In Morocco, the monarch had legitimacy in the face of attacks, from Islamists or from the left, because it had been a progressive driver in the effort to modernize the country. Therefore, when Muhammad VI offered reforms and a more open political system, the propensity to follow the lead of the monarch, regardless of frustration with the *makhzan*, trumped those that wanted to upend the system.

Another factor entered the equation, as well—Islamic political theory; instability and chaos are more feared than authoritarianism. The images from Cairo and Tunis dampened appetites for revolutionary change. In April

---

*Another factor entered the equation, as well—Islamic political theory; instability and chaos are more feared than authoritarianism.*

---

2011, al-Qaeda in the Islamic Maghreb carried out a bombing in Marrakesh. Whatever their goal, terrorism reinforced the position of the monarch. Muhammad VI appointed a committee to rewrite the constitution and was criticized by many for not creating some kind of national assembly to undertake the task. The bombings and instability across the region muted most of

the criticism of the monarch’s approach. The Moroccan system survived in large part because it represented stability and, in theory, a traditional Islamic system of rule.<sup>176</sup>

The new constitution gave additional powers to the prime minister. He now had the power to dissolve the lower house of parliament and preside over the council of ministers in the absence of the king. The king agreed to nominate the prime minister from the political party that held the most seats in the *majlis* (house of parliament). At the same time, the monarch preserved virtually all of his prerogatives—command of the armed forces, appointment of key military and security personnel, appointment of judges, and appointment of key officials in state-owned enterprises. The king also remained ‘inviolable.’ The monarchy retained control over any decisions of importance, including laws enacted by the *majlis*. The new constitution gave legal status to the Berber identity and adopted Berber as the official language of Morocco alongside Arabic. When the constitution was put to a referendum in July 2011, it was estimated that 70 percent of the population participated, with something approaching unanimous approval.

In elections, the Islamist Justice and Development Party (PJD) won the largest bloc of seats in the *majlis* and Muhammad VI appointed its leader, Abdelilah Benkirane, as prime minister. The prime minister negotiated a coalition, the National Rally of Independents (RNI), with two other parties and has focused on corruption and development issues.<sup>177</sup> One of the largest obstacles to investment and development is the amount of funding required to maintain control of the Western Sahara—there is no indication that this situation is going to improve. Politically, Morocco can hardly accept a solution that entails a withdrawal. Benkirane is a modernist and democratic Islamist who sees secularism as a threat to the integrity and identity of Morocco, but famously stated that the PJD was “not interested in the length of women’s skirts.”<sup>178</sup> Benkirane has shown a high degree of sophistication in how the RNI approaches the issue of reform with the king. There have been no public confrontations and the system seems to have worked well. The RNI has apparently influenced the Justice and Charity Party, a more strident Islamist group that opposed the new constitution and the designation of the king as ‘defender of the faithful,’ to pursue their goals politically and not by challenging the monarchy.<sup>179</sup> This political position of the Islamists is in part a recognition of the strength of the position of the monarchy and its general popularity.

While Morocco faces terrorism threats, particularly from Moroccan nationals associated with ISIS who might return to their homeland, the reaction to it has sparked a debate. Some assert that Moroccan authorities

have been “taking advantage” of the security threat to extend anti-terrorism laws and their authority. Mohammed Masbah, writing for the Carnegie Endowment, stated: “First and foremost, the Ministry of Interior wants to send a message to the prime minister—and consequently the PJD—that due to the terrorism threat, the security forces should be free from their oversight.” Those that hold this view believe that the reaction to security threats is disproportional to the threat.<sup>180</sup> The terrorist attacks in Paris in 2015 and Brussels in 2016, perpetrated by terrorists of European citizenship and Moroccan descent, sparked a round of articles on the role of Moroccans in international terrorism. It has also brought new attention to the Rif. The article calls the Rif the “heartland of global terrorism,” a title that is more hyperbole than journalism, but nevertheless, it touches on an issue that both the Europeans and the Moroccans will have to address—the perception that immigrants, even second-generation European offspring, represent a threat.<sup>181</sup> Muhammad VI’s move to make Berber an official language and to court the Berbers as group under the special protection of the monarch aside, the Rif remains a potential flash point to both Moroccan and Algerian stability. In addition, the fact that Sheikh Ali Belhadj, the founder of FIS in Algeria, is based in Morocco and allowed to speak out against the Algerian government is another sore point in relations.<sup>182</sup>

The Moroccan government insists that it has found the ‘third way,’ a path between reform and instability. Of course, those that support Western-style democratic reform disagree and believe that the price of stability has been too high. In terms of Moroccan history, reformist calls for democracy have the distinct ring of naiveté. Morocco has its problems, but the traditional form of rule, with its authoritarianism, is certainly a better option than what has occurred in much of the rest of the region. For Western consumption, Moroccan officials cite what they call a “process of democratization” and “gradual reform.”<sup>183</sup> The potential for abuse of the system aside, Morocco without the monarchy would disintegrate into the chaos of the late 19th and early 20th centuries—it is the overarching canopy of the monarchy that allows the *makhzan* to claim legitimacy over the disparate parts of the geopolitical and socio-cultural elements that comprise the Moroccan state. Frankly, the monarchy has done a far better job of maintaining stability without the eruptions that have faced Tunisia and certainly Algeria. Lyautey understood this, and so have the rulers since Muhammad V. The potential

remains that some set of events could cause the political and security situation to spin out of control, but it appears unlikely.<sup>184</sup>

## Algeria: 2011 and Beyond

The one crucial factor that differentiated the Algerian reaction to 2011 from the reactions in Tunisia, Egypt, and Libya was the ‘Red Decade’ from 1993–2003; the civil war traumatized the country. The National Coordination for Change and Democracy, headed by Abdenmour Ali-Yahia and activist Said Saadi, called for demonstrations, but no mass uprising occurred. When President Bouteflika announced the government would accede to the protesters’ demands and end the state of emergency in effect since 1992, the opposition movement fell apart. Coupled with promises of more free expression in the media, more jobs for the young people, a crackdown on corruption, and salary increases for government workers, the feared unrest dissipated.<sup>185</sup> The government also provided free housing, low-interest loans, and outright payments to the citizenry to alleviate economic pressure and to forestall an eruption—it worked. Activists argue that the Algerian regime has steadily eroded the liberalizing changes made in 2011 and that the overall social and economic situation continues to be grim. The security state is omnipresent, but stability has brought relatively good relations with the West and a model security state in a region in turmoil.<sup>186</sup>

There was speculation that Bouteflika’s health would prevent him from running for the presidency in 2014. This was not the case. He is still in office, described as “aging, ailing and barely able to speak.”<sup>187</sup> Nevertheless, he provides the façade behind which the FLN maintains its hold. There is a decided difference between control in Algeria and control in Morocco. The Algerian government lacks the legitimacy of a traditional regime, like that of Morocco, and in the *fitna* of the 1990s, the army showed that it was unwilling to accept any political situation that might compromise its position—unlike the army in Tunisia. It is a country so large that it cannot be effectively controlled, as demonstrated by the capture of the Tiguertourine gas facility in 2013. It faces increasing Islamist influence and lacks new leaders that could guide a transition out of the current system. What it has is the memory of 200,000 killed in the decade of rebellion, and oil wealth to tamp down threats from political, economic, or social unrest.<sup>188</sup> Poverty and unemployment remain high, and government corruption and poor public services are notorious,

but the so-called revolutions that failed in Egypt, Libya, Yemen, and Syria, in addition to Algeria's own experience, are a reminder of the enormous risk of chaos.<sup>189</sup>

Nevertheless, the lack of credibility and legitimacy of the Algerian government and FLN undermines any attempts to counter increasingly radical Salafi discourse. Understandably, the government fears any loss of control; therefore, Islamic groups—moderate Islamist or non-violent Salafi—that cooperate with the government are viewed as stooges and find themselves discredited. As the political, economic, and social stagnation continues under the FLN, non-violent movements will increasingly lose ground to

---

*As the political, economic, and social stagnation continues under the FLN, non-violent movements will increasingly lose ground to those advocating a radical course of action.*

---

those advocating a radical course of action. The new government mantra of promoting what the Algerian minister for religious affairs refers to as the 'Andalusia' model undermines moderation. The Salafis and others view it as another government ploy to maintain control, and the more radical see the

model as un-Islamic. It is an impasse, and to break the impasse in favor of more moderate groups would require a real relinquishment of some power—a risk the FLN is not willing to take. While this approach in theory might have benefits, those advocating it are likely wasting their breath.<sup>190</sup> Perhaps, younger FLN members might be convinced to take a different path, but for the time being, they appear to have no voice in policy.

In considering present-day Algeria within its historical context, no government has ever held sway over the area contained within its current borders. Neither the French, who created modern Algeria, nor the FLN, who are attempting to maintain it, have exercised definitive central control. In looking back, stability in what is now called Algeria occurred in the relatively limited confines of the coastal regions and was limited to the immediate regions around independently ruled ports. The dynasties of the past were weak entities involved in feuding with their neighbors. An Algerian state like Tunisia and Morocco never really existed. Morocco spawned not only the current monarchy, but also the Almoravids and Almohads of an earlier age. Tunisia was a monarchy and structure until the 1950s.

The geographic area now labelled on the map as Algeria has always been a source of instability in North Africa. Therefore, the question arises: If not



the FLN, then who? The Islamists would likely have more legitimacy than the FLN, but any transition would be difficult if not chaotic and violent, and the outcome uncertain. Another alternative is a fractured political topography, like that of Libya, with the nightmare of mass migration. In all likelihood, Algeria cannot be held together as a state without an authoritarian government. Without authoritarian central control, Algeria has greater potential to become a second Libya than any of the other Maghreb states, and that would be a disaster not only for the Maghreb, but also for the Mediterranean community as well. Given this reality and the chaos now afflicting the region, the continued rule of the FLN, limping from one demonstration or protest to the next, responding with infusions of petrodollars and repression, has been viewed as the least of all evils for the interests of the West, the Maghreb, and even the Algerian people.

However, this may not suffice for much longer. President Bouteflika has not been seen for more than a year. *Le pouvoir* (the power), the shadowy FLN clique of military, political, and economic leaders running Algeria, seemed to be locked in a power struggle to replace the ailing president. Senior leaders were pushed from power, including General Mohamed 'Toufik' Mediène, the former head of the security and intelligence service, the Département du Renseignement et de la Sécurité (DRS). The DRS was dissolved and replaced by three separate organizations reporting directly to the president, or to whomever is acting on his behalf. At the same time, the power of General Ahmed Gaid Saleh, the army chief of staff, has grown. As the economic situation worsens and oil prices slump, there is speculation that more changes are afoot.<sup>191</sup> That said, it is unlikely that the FLN has plans to relinquish any real power to the opposition.

Tunisia, Morocco, and Algeria have become central to many of the critical global and regional issues related to stability, terrorism, and immigration. During the second half of the 20th century, the assumption was that each of the states would move toward a more secular, Westernized political, economic, and social structure, and real constitutional government. These views ignored the geopolitical reality of the region on the one hand and the socio-cultural reality on the other. This association of a nation-state with the landmass included within the borders drawn by the colonial powers dismissed the contradictions inherent in any state in the Maghreb. This idea that Western liberal democratic institutions would allow for the interaction of the various contending factions in the states of the Maghreb proved to be

a false hope. In fact, it was Tunisia, the most secular of states in the region, that ignited the explosion of 2011 and then struggled to overcome the resulting chaos. It was Morocco, with its traditional political structure and its tie to Islamic legitimacy, that navigated the vicissitudes of the late 20th and early 21st centuries. And, finally, Algeria fought its insurgency in the 'Red Decade' of the 1990s, and in the 21st century, floats the battered FLN ship of state on a sea of petroleum.

## **The Maghreb: Stability and the Future**

Each of the states of the Maghreb learned the same lessons in somewhat differing ways. The fundamental division between the coast and the hinterland constitutes a real barrier to national political, economic, and social integration. Neither Western liberal nor planned socialist approaches to ideology and economics have mended the gap. Every group that has ruled or attempted to rule in the Maghreb from the beginning of recorded history has come to terms with that fact. Ibn Khaldun, the great Arab social historian of North Africa, would no doubt laugh at the attempts to integrate the settled coast with the interior factions and tribes. To maintain territorial control and order, the states of the Maghreb have had to fall back on authoritarian state structures. Morocco is an authoritarian monarchy. Algeria is an authoritarian socialist state. Even Tunisia, with its attempt to find a democratic pathway to the future, finds itself having to resort to more authoritarian methods for survival against the Islamists of the interior. To blame authoritarianism on political structures and rulers is to miss the point. Rule reflected the geographic and socio-cultural reality. As the Carthaginians, Romans, and Arabs knew, the more one attempts to extend control to the south, then the more forces of instability affect the political structure. The response is a more authoritarian regime.

To assume that another system or political group could control the hinterland with anything other than an authoritarian approach ignores the lessons of the past. The last lesson is that, at some point, all of the regimes of the Maghreb will have to come to terms with a reassertion of Islam and Islamic traditions in their political and social spheres. Tunisia is going through the throes of experimenting with exactly what that means in a state that has been the most secular in the Arab world. With its tradition of 'God, Country, and King,' Morocco has managed to handle the transition of Islamist

participation better than the secular states. Finally, Algeria's aborted experiment with an accommodation with the Islamists will be repeated at some point in the future when the FLN finally adjusts to the fact that it will have no option. That said, there is no reason to believe that the Islamists will be any more united or any less authoritarian than the secular predecessors in the FLN, because Islamic movements merely overlay and reflect the complex geopolitical, socioeconomic, and cultural reality of the region.<sup>192</sup> By definition, stability will flow from the security services, not political consensus. For the time being, survival of state structures, no matter how imperfect, authoritarian, or internally fragmented, is the only real option to prevent further chaos in the Maghreb and the Mediterranean basin.

---

*To assume that another system or political group could control the hinterland with anything other than an authoritarian approach ignores the lessons of the past.*

---

In 1992, lamenting the authoritarian rule, the conflicts of the region, and the failure of Western political ideals to take root, Elie Kedourie stated, "Such seems to be the outcome of nearly two centuries of contact with Western political institutions and ideals, which one generation after another has passionately wished to emulate, and tirelessly worked to make a reality in the Middle East." Pointing out that under the Islamists like Khomeini, subjects fared no better, Kedourie described it "as an endeavor to discard the old ways, which have ceased to satisfy and to replace them with something modern, eye-catching, and attractive. The torment does not seem likely to end soon."<sup>193</sup> In fact, the level of "torment" was unimaginable. For all the good intentions, Western political institutions and rules of governance are just that, 'Western.' In other words, the conflict is not about programs or policies, but about what the basis for political discourse will be in the future. Socialist or capitalist, they are secular, Western, and foreign, and can only be maintained through authoritarian methods. Some Islamists that hark back to an imaginary 'purer' past are no less authoritarian.

Rashid al-Ghannushi argues in "Westernization and the Inevitability of Dictatorship," that Westernization inevitably leads to dictatorship in North Africa because the language spoken by the ruling elite is foreign to the ruled masses, and that Islam as a political and social vehicle can bridge the gap.<sup>194</sup> Western secularism in the Maghreb, and for that matter the Middle East, has failed—an objective fact, but whether or not Islam is a bridge to a more

stable future or merely the same elitist authoritarianism supported by just another ideology, is yet to be seen. Given this reality, the West is not in a position to take high-minded risks, stability and control is likely the best for which to hope. The models are actually the same for governance—an elite manipulating the levers of power for control. It then becomes a matter of which ruling groups are least objectionable and most efficient at maintaining stability and control.

In the Western security system, despite significant U.S. military aid, the Maghreb has traditionally been an area of French military responsibility. That said, the American role in support of the French and indigenous forces is growing. The French military is under increasing pressure because of its foreign commitments and the terrorism problem at home. Over the next decade, the U.S. role in the Maghreb will only grow, and as that happens, it is important that SOF have a basic understanding of the relationship between the Maghreb's context and the contemporary reality. There is no more likelihood that the states of the region—Tunisia, Algeria, and Morocco—will eliminate the instability and security threats around them; but they can contain them with help from their allies. It is no more likely that U.S. or French military involvement will be any more successful than that of the Romans, Byzantines, Arab armies, Ottomans, or French in controlling the area within the current borders. Nevertheless, like those commanders in the past, a judicious, conservative approach to involvement in the Maghreb can yield a level of stability that prevents the collapse of the polities of the region and a new Iraq, Syria, Yemen, or Libya.

## **The Maghreb: Strategic Interests and Policy in Practical Terms**

When viewed within the broader North African context, the Maghreb provides a clear subset of the practical policy challenges of the broader Middle East and South Asia region—'Morocco to Bangladesh.' Although this study focuses on the Maghreb, the political structure of North Africa, from Cairo to Rabat, displays examples of the full range of policy and security challenges in the region. Egypt, a cohesive national state, will undoubtedly survive as a state as it has for five millennia—the political structure, no matter who is at the top, will be reliant on the military and security services. Libya, a colonial creation not unlike Iraq and Syria, has disintegrated. In the Maghreb, stability, in the form of 'state structure,' is under constant threat from the

forces of disintegration and disorder. For SOF, as for the remainder of the U.S. foreign policy and military establishment, it is time to think about the growing role of the U.S. and what is likely to emerge out of the historical context of the Maghreb.

As this study makes clear, the usual narrative offered by the West about economic development, civil society, and development of democratic institutions ignores not only the reality of the contemporary situation, but also the lessons that should have been learned about fundamental instability—the structural societal conflicts—that have afflicted the region for millennia. In a recent conversation with a senior Maghrebi security official, he shook his head when asked about the possibility of a solution to the fundamental division between the coastal and urban areas and the hinterland. “The idea that the coast and hills (*jibaal*) can be reconciled is simply not attainable.”<sup>195</sup>

Despite this obvious lack of a fundamental solution, a realistic view of the region must be accepted if any workable policies are to emerge. The security challenges for the West in general, and more specifically for Europe, require preservation of existing state structure

---

*The security challenges for the West in general, and more specifically for Europe, require preservation of existing state structure and control.*

---

and control. Those structures are more likely than not to be in direct conflict with Western political, economic, and social ideals. That said, it must be pointed out that alternatives to the current political structures are also in direct conflict, as well.

From a broader North African perspective, setting aside Egypt, Libya provides an excellent example of the results of the collapse of state control. Perhaps the Gadhafi regime could have survived, but the collapse opened the door to the reemergence of the socially and culturally autonomous elements hidden behind the artificial colonial construct created by the Italians and perpetuated by the West in the aftermath of WWII. Unable to deal with the political, economic, and social reality that underlay the Libyan state and the fallout from its destruction, the West finds itself mired in the conflict of the pre-colonial reality and struggling to regain some semblance of control to stem terrorism and uncontrolled emigration that threaten not only North Africa, but Western Europe, as well. Libya is an excellent example of what the loss of authoritarian control can bring. The policy challenge for the U.S. (and SOF) becomes one of reconstituting control and authority,

but within the context of a fragmented, regionalized political, social, and cultural mosaic. It is exactly the type of environment that the U.S. foreign policy and military structure is least equipped to handle. It devolves into a ‘whack-a-mole’ counterterrorism operation supported by attempts to reconstitute weak central control.

Moving westward finds three states with differing security challenges and political structures—Tunisia, Algeria, and Morocco. They appear to be almost models of stability when compared to the chaotic situation in what was formerly Gadhafi’s Libya. However, that ‘stability’ comes at a cost. Therefore, the first and most important challenge for U.S. and Western policy makers is the maintenance of a state structure—any state structure—that offers central control. The alternative is another potential Libya.

One state has the potential of achieving over the long-term something that approaches a functioning Western-style democracy—Tunisia. However, the political structure is under constant pressure from Islamist radicals and from the fundamental societal split between the coast and the interior. Democracy and civil society must be tempered with increasing authoritarian control in the interior. This is the historical conundrum that has afflicted stability in *Ifriqiya* since the time of the Carthaginians. At that time, the Tunisian interior was, in effect, a security zone. The only real course of action is a bifurcated policy that pursues a democratic state based on rule of law for the urban and coastal areas, and a system of control that relies more heavily on security services and authoritarian control beyond the old Roman limes.

There is little choice but to pursue policies that treat the south differently from the rest of the country. From a SOF and counterterrorism perspective, this challenge requires a recognition that perpetuating state control, and not democracy or civil society, is a primary goal. The focus is on protecting the urban, coastal population and the economic base, particularly the tourism industry, from terrorism. Additionally, Westernized, secular, even democratic, institutions that can function in the coastal and urban areas should be encouraged.

In Algeria, the situation is entirely different from Tunisia. The maintenance of the state structure is still the priority, but the state is dominated by the FLN, a remnant of the Nasserist, secular Arab nationalist era of the 1960s and 1970s. A tight-knit political group maintains control of a gigantic and inherently unstable geographic region. This control is a function of intimidation, and when necessary, outright state terrorism against those elements

that threaten state control. The civil war of the 1990s is an excellent example of the lengths to which the state will go to maintain its control.

Maintenance of the state structure, no matter how artificial or authoritarian, is preferable to collapse and chaos. Perhaps there are elements within the FLN that are willing to gamble on new moves to broaden the political base of the regime and pursue real economic and social reforms. But from their perspective, it would be a daunting, frightening step to contemplate any loss of control, even in circumstances where the alternative appeared to portend eventual revolution and perhaps collapse. Here again, Algeria requires a dual policy—support for the current regime and the maintenance of state structure, and an awareness of the fragility of the FLN regime and a willingness to encourage it to broaden its base. The objective would be to prevent a deluge of refugees or a significant uptick in terrorism as result of state collapse. SOF need to have real potential scenarios on the shelf and plans for dealing with the contingencies.

The Moroccan experience reflects the survival of traditionalism and monarchical legitimacy in the Maghreb, but in many respects, it symbolizes the durability of monarchy in the region in general. The monarchies of the Arab Middle East have done substantially better than the Western-style republics from the perspective of maintaining stability and political legitimacy. There is a propensity to attribute this to oil wealth, despite the fact these monarchies were established and survived in a volatile region for almost two centuries before oil was discovered. Since the 16th century, monarchy has been the vehicle for independence and stability. It does not mean the current Moroccan monarchy cannot collapse, but it does infer such a collapse is unlikely.

The mid-range and longer-term prospects for stability in Morocco are perhaps the best in the region. There are myriad problems and challenges, given the growing population and the pressure to expand the economy; nevertheless, the monarch has legitimacy as ‘defender of the faithful,’ which allows the regime political and social flexibility that neither the FLN in Algeria, nor the secular parties in Tunisia possess. Muhammad VI has legitimacy as a Muslim ruler who serves as a buffer against both Islamist political parties and radical jihadist movements. In the case of Morocco, U.S. policy since 2008 reflects a recognition of this danger and has migrated to a more nuanced view of monarchical authoritarianism. In practical terms, U.S.

cooperation with and support for the government of Morocco will continue and likely increase.

From a policy perspective, Western interests must focus on the reality that central control and the maintenance of state structures—no matter what

---

*Because the three state structures are fundamentally different, understanding the historical context of each is fundamental to being able to effectively work to support the primary U.S. and Western strategic interests.*

---

form they might take—are the priority. No one wants another Syria, Iraq, or Libya. Because the three state structures are fundamentally different, understanding the historical context of each is fundamental to being able to effectively work to support the primary U.S. and Western strategic interests. For the U.S. and for SOF, this understanding is increasingly important as direct involvement in Tunisia and Morocco grows. Despite Algeria being principally a French area of influence, what happens in Algeria will have a profound effect

on the security and stability of its two North African neighbors. Particularly for SOF, the contradictions of the region need to become a part of the educational process.

With security and state structure as a given priority, the education issue becomes even more important. As this study explains, each state has a decidedly different historical experience reflected in the contemporary situation, and each state will likely have a different future flowing from the present. Each must be considered, understood, and supported through an individual unique historical experience. At the same time, the region is interconnected to a degree that the events in one country often have a profound impact on the others. Arguably, the most troubled state in the region—Algeria—has the potential to unravel stability and security for both Tunisia and Morocco should it fail. For intelligence officers, planners, and operators, giving some thought to the Maghreb and the conflicted context from which the present day reality has sprung is likely a solid investment in anticipating the future.

Institutionally, this reality creates a challenging situation for the U.S. military and foreign policy establishment—for discussions to begin in earnest (that is, without another major event in the region) would require some organization to take the initiative. Everyone is stretched thin and there will likely not be much support. The more interesting, and likely more effective, approach would be an effort by SOF to informally engage the State



Department, the embassies, regional contacts, and our allies, particularly the French, in discussions to gain a better appreciation for the challenges and their thinking on what will likely come next and how it should be handled. A modest effort and investment might yield significant benefits in the future.↑



## Appendix: Acronym List

<b>AAS-T</b>	Ansar al-Sharia in Tunisia
<b>AIS</b>	Islamic Salvation Army
<b>ALN</b>	Moroccan Army of Liberation
<b>AML</b>	Friends of the Manifesto and Liberty
<b>BCE</b>	before the common epoch
<b>CPR</b>	Congress for the Republic
<b>CRUA</b>	Comité Révolutionnaire d'Unité et d'Action
<b>DRS</b>	Département du Renseignement et de la Sécurité
<b>FIS</b>	Islamic Salvation Front
<b>FLN</b>	Front de Libération Nationale
<b>FDTL</b>	Forum Démocratique pour le Travail et les Libertés
<b>GIA</b>	Groupe Islamique Armé
<b>GSPC</b>	Groupe Salafiste pour la Prédication et le Combat
<b>HCE</b>	High Council of State
<b>ISIS</b>	Islamic State of Iraq and Syria
<b>MRP</b>	Popular Republican Movement
<b>MTI</b>	Mouvement de la Tendance Islamique
<b>MTLD</b>	Movement for the Triumph of Liberty and Democracy
<b>NCA</b>	National Constituent Assembly
<b>NPRR</b>	National Party for Realization of the Reforms
<b>OS</b>	Organisation Speciale
<b>PCT</b>	Communist Party of Tunisia

<b>PJD</b>	Islamist Justice and Development Party
<b>PRS</b>	Parti de la Révolution Socialiste
<b>PSD</b>	Parti Socialiste Dusturien
<b>RCD</b>	Rassemblement Constitutionnel Démocratique
<b>RNI</b>	National Rally of Independents
<b>SOF</b>	Special Operations Forces

## Endnotes

1. Clement Henry Moore, *Tunisia Since Independence: The Dynamics of One-Party Government* (Westport, CT: Greenwood Press, 1982), 145. For more on modernization theory, also see: George Lenczowski, *American Presidents and the Middle East* (Durham, N.C.: Duke University Press, 1990), 73; Walt W. Rostow and Max F. Millikan, *A Proposal: Key to an Effective Foreign Policy* (New York: Harper & Brothers Publishers, 1957), 44–48, 140–141; Walt W. Rostow, *The Process of Economic Growth* (New York: W.W. Norton & Company, 1962); and William R. Polk, “The Nature of Modernization: The Middle East and North Africa,” *Foreign Affairs* 44, no. 1 (October 1965): 101. Post–World War II, modernization theory became fundamental to U.S. attempts to use Western-centric ideas and theories to recreate the developing world in a form that fell in line with Western interests or ideals. Walt Rostow argued that economic growth and military/security assistance would allow such progress in the developing world. These ideas have been a key element in U.S. foreign policy as well as counterinsurgency and stability operations thinking for almost 70 years, and contributed mightily to the most visible failures of U.S. foreign policy since World War II. In 1965, William Polk described the leadership of the Middle East and North Africa that he believed would lead to Westernization along secular, if not pro-Western, lines as the “new men” of the region—secular leaders who, as it turned out, devolved into dictators or whose regimes collapsed in Islamic traditionalism.
2. Lisa Anderson, “Policy-Making and Theory Building: American Political Science and the Islamic Middle East,” in *Theory, Politics and the Arab World: Critical Responses*, edited by Hisham Sharabi (New York: Routledge, 1990), 57.
3. *Ibid.*, 56.
4. Michael C. Hudson, “State, Society, and Legitimacy: An Essay on Arab Political Prospects in the 1990s,” in *The Next Arab Decade: Alternative Futures*, edited by Hisham Sharabi (Boulder, CO: Westview Press, 1988), 36–37.
5. Leela Jacinto, “Morocco’s Outlaw Country Is the Heartland of Global Terrorism,” *Foreign Policy*, 7 April 2016, <http://foreignpolicy.com/2016/04/07/the-rif-connection-belgium-brussels-morocco-abdeslam/>.
6. Jamil Muhammad Abun-Nasr, *A History of the Maghrib in the Islamic Period* (London: Cambridge University Press, 1993), 87–89.
7. Theodor Mommsen, *The Provinces of the Roman Empire: From Caesar to Diocletian* (New York: Barnes & Noble Publishing, 1996), 1: fn 1, 122–123. See also Roger Collins, *Early Medieval Spain: Unity in Diversity, 400–1000* (New York: Macmillan, 1983), 9. *Limes* is a term that the Romans used to denote a military, not necessarily an imperial, frontier. The word is derived from the Roman *limites*, or land boundary drawn by man, thus *limes* denoted a man-made boundary that included posts or forts and roads, creating the ability to patrol it. It was also associated with a road embankment or berm, in modern parlance, that was often

fortified on both sides, given its advanced position and vulnerability to attack. It also moved as administration or necessity dictated. The Romans used limes in North Africa, Germany, Spain, and Britain.

8. E.W. Bovill, *The Golden Trade of the Moors* (London: Oxford University Press, 1968), 1.
9. Philip C. Naylor, *North Africa: A History from Antiquity to the Present* (Austin: University of Texas Press, 2015), 25–29.
10. Mommsen, *The Provinces of the Roman Empire*, 2: 305–309.
11. Ralph A. Austen, *Trans-Saharan Africa in World History* (London: Oxford University Press, 2010), 13–14. The Roman historian Tacitus referred to them as “a wild race incessantly occupied in robbing their neighbors.”
12. Bovill, *Golden Trade*, 29.
13. Harold D. Nelson, ed., *Tunisia, a country study* (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Army/American University Foreign Area Studies, 1987), 12–13. There were similar problems in Egypt where Byzantine administrators and church officials persecuted Coptic Christians as heretics.
14. George Ostrogorsky, *History of the Byzantine State* (New Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers University Press, 1969), 118.
15. Charles-André Julien, *History of North Africa: From the Arab Conquest to 1830* (New York: Praeger Publishers, 1970), 5–10.
16. Hugh Kennedy, *The Prophet and the Age of the Caliphates: The Islamic Near East from the Sixth to the Eleventh Century* (London: Longman, 1994), 69–81.
17. Jonathan Conant, *Staying Roman: Conquest and Identity in Africa and the Mediterranean, 439–700* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2012), 280–281.
18. P.M. Holt, Ann K.S. Lambton, and Bernard Lewis, eds., *The Cambridge History of Islam*, Vol. 2, *The Further Islamic Lands, Islamic Society and Civilization* (London: Cambridge University Press, 1970), 213–214.
19. Ostrogorsky, *History of the Byzantine State*, 140–141, 158.
20. Anwar G. Chejne, *Muslim Spain: Its History and Culture* (St. Paul: University of Minnesota Press, 1974), 7–9. After a reconnaissance by Tafir ibn Mulluk, one of his lieutenants, Musa ibn Nasyr, gave Tariq permission to cross the straits and engage the Visigoths. Chejne stated that Tariq, upon reaching Spain, burned his boats and told his men that unless they could fly, they could either fight the Visigoths and win or die. Stories like this tend to be apocryphal, but it does fit with the view that the Tariq expedition was not a *ghazi*, or raid, but an invasion for conquest.
21. Joseph F. O’Callaghan, *A History of Medieval Spain* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1975), 93–94. See also Collins, *Early Medieval Spain*, 152–153.
22. Jabril Faraj, ed., “October 10 0732 AD: The Battle of Tours (Poitiers),” *The World History Project*, accessed 4 January 2016, <https://worldhistoryproject.org/732/10/10/the-battle-of-tours-poitiers>.

23. J.J. Saunders, *A History of Medieval Islam* (London: Routledge, 1965), 92. In the West, the battle was of enormous significance because it paved the way for Charles Martel's grandson, Charlemagne, to be named Emperor of the Holy Roman Empire in 800.
24. Julien, *History of North Africa*, 19.
25. Abun-Nasr, *Maghrib*, 34–35.
26. Hugh Kennedy, *Muslim Spain and Portugal: A Political History of al-Andalus* (London: Longman Press, 1996), 24–25.
27. Kennedy, *Muslim Spain and Portugal*, 30–38.
28. Thomas Park and Aomar Boum, *Historical Dictionary of Morocco* (London: The Scarecrow Press, Inc., 1996), 124–125.
29. Naylor, *North Africa*, 68–69.
30. Ira M. Lapidus, *A History of Islamic Societies* (London: Cambridge University Press, 1988), 372.
31. Moojan Momen, *An Introduction to Shi'i Islam: The History and Doctrines of Twelver Shi'ism* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1985), 49.
32. Marshall G.S. Hodgson, *The Venture of Islam: Conscience and History in a World Civilization*, vol. 1, *The Classical Age of Islam* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1974), 492.
33. Holt, Lambton, and Lewis, *The Cambridge History of Islam*, Vol. 2, 214–218.
34. Naylor, *North Africa*, 71. Naylor points out that the Normans adopted Muslim culture to the point that Roger II of Naples and his grandson, Frederick II, who became Holy Roman Emperor, were labelled: "The two baptized sultans of Sicily." Frederick spoke Arabic fluently and maintained Arab experts on mapping and astronomy at his court.
35. Farhad Daftary, *The Isma'ilis: Their History and Doctrines* (London: Cambridge University Press, 2007), 123, 126.
36. Taqi al-Din al-Maqrizi, *Itti'az al-hunafa' bi-akhbar al a'imma al-Fatimiyyin al-khulafa'*, trans. Shainool Jiwa in *Towards a Shi'i Mediterranean Empire: Fatimid Egypt and the Founding of Cairo* (London: I.B. Tauris & Co. Ltd., 2009), 6–11.
37. Saunders, *Medieval Islam*, 129.
38. Daftary, *The Isma'ilis*, 141–143.
39. Shafique N. Virani, *The Ismailis in the Middle Ages: A History of Survival, A Search for Salvation* (London: Oxford University Press, 2007), 5–7.
40. Farouk Mitha, *Al-Ghazali and the Ismailis: A Debate on Reason and Authority in Medieval Islam* (London: I.B. Tauris & Co. Ltd., 2001), 13–27.
41. Farhad Daftary, *A Short History of the Ismailis: Traditions of a Muslim Community* (Princeton, NJ: Markus Wiener Publishers, 1998): 65.
42. Julien, *History of North Africa*, 66–74.

43. I. Hrbek, ed., *General History of Africa*, Vol. 3, *Africa from the Seventh to the Eleventh Century* (London: UNESCO and James Currey Ltd., 1992), 172–175.
44. Lapidus, *Islamic Societies*, 370.
45. Ibn Khaldun, *Histoire des Berbères*, William McGuckin de Slane, trans. (Algiers: Imprimerie du Gouvernement, 1851), quoted in Julien, *History of North Africa*, 72.
46. Lapidus, *Islamic Societies*, 372.
47. James A. Miller, “Trading Through Islam: The Interconnections of Sijilmasa, Ghana and the Almoravid Movement,” in *North Africa, Islam and the Mediterranean World: From the Almoravids to the Algerian War*, ed. Julia Clancy-Smith (London: Frank Cass, 2001), 32–33.
48. Chejne, *Muslim Spain*, 69–83.
49. John L. Esposito, ed., *The Oxford History of Islam* (London: The Oxford University Press, 1999), 49–50.
50. Lapidus, *Islamic Societies*, 373–374.
51. Allen J. Fromherz, *The Almohads: The Rise of an Islamic Empire* (London: I.B. Tauris & Co. Ltd., 2011), 58–59.
52. Esposito, *History of Islam*, 51.
53. John O. Voll (professor, Georgetown University), in conversation with the author, 15 April 2016.
54. Clifford Edmund Bosworth, *The New Islamic Dynasties: A Chronological and Genealogical Manual* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2004), 42.
55. Bailey W. Diffie, *Prelude to Empire: Portugal Overseas before Henry the Navigator* (Lincoln, NE: University of Nebraska Press, 1960), 50–51.
56. Abun-Nasr, *Maghrib*, 104–107.
57. Naylor, *North Africa*, 98.
58. Dalenda Larguèche, “The Mahalla: The Origins of Beylical Sovereignty in Ottoman Tunisia during the Early Modern Period,” in *North Africa, Islam and the Mediterranean World: From the Almoravids to the Algerian War*, ed. Julia Clancy-Smith (London: Frank Cass, 2001), 108–109.
59. Julien, *History of North Africa*, 19.
60. Ibn Khaldun, *The Muqaddimah: An Introduction to History*, trans. Franz Rosenthal (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1981), x–xii.
61. In 1497–1499, Vasco de Gama opened the trading route around Africa to India. In securing that route and its trade, the Portuguese established trading centers along the African coast and closed both the Bab al-Mandeb, the entrance to the Red Sea, and the Straits of Hormuz, the entrance to the Arabian Gulf, to competing trade. The empire stretched from Lisbon to its trading center at Nagasaki in Japan.



62. Cisneros was supported by Queen Isabella, well known for her hostility to any opposition to the Spanish version of the Roman Catholic Church and the Inquisition. Cisneros' appointment as cardinal was a result of an arrangement with Rome and the Spanish Pope Rodrigo de Borgia (Alexander VI), the former cardinal and archbishop of Valencia.
63. Stephan and Nandy Ronart, *Concise Encyclopaedia of Arabic Civilization: The Arab West* (Amsterdam: Djambatan, 1966), 158–159.
64. Fernand Braudel, *The Mediterranean and the Mediterranean World in the Age of Phillip II* (New York: Harper Collins Press, 1966), 80.
65. Stephen Clissold, *The Barbary Slaves* (New York: Barnes & Noble, 1977), 24–25.
66. “Barbarossa Pirates,” *Caldwell Genealogy*, <http://caldwellgenealogy.com/the-myths-legends/barbarossa-pirates/>.
67. Ronart, *Concise Encyclopaedia*, 160.
68. L.W. Adamec, *Islam: A Historical Companion* (Stroud, GL, UK: Tempus Publishing Ltd., 2007), 173. The term marabout has two meanings. In this context, it refers to a religious saint and his descendants who often bestow blessings (*barakah*) on followers or pilgrims at a holy site or tomb of a saint. It is generally a Sufi practice that is reviled by Salafis and Wahabis. The term can also specifically refer to the inhabitants of a *ribat*—a military and religious outpost associated with the Almoravids.
69. Nevill Barbour, “North West Africa from the 15th–19th Centuries,” in *The Last Great Muslim Empires: History of the Muslim World*, trans. F.R.C. Bagley, (Leiden: E.J. Brill, 1969), 102–103.
70. Ronart, *Concise Encyclopaedia*, 336–337.
71. Dahiru Yahya, *Morocco in the Sixteenth Century: Problems and Patterns in African Foreign Policy* (Atlantic Highlands, NJ: Humanities Press, 1981), 25–27.
72. Ibid.
73. Ibid., 28–30.
74. Marvine Howe, *Morocco: The Islamist Awakening and Other Challenges* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2005), 60–61.
75. Naylor, *North Africa*, 128.
76. Barbour, “North West Africa,” 105.
77. Adamec, *Islam*, 44.
78. Barbour, “North West Africa,” 50–51.
79. Susan Gilson Miller, *A History of Modern Morocco* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2013), 8–10.
80. Naylor, *North Africa*, 153.
81. Ralph A. Austen, *Trans-Saharan Africa in World History* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2010), 128–130.

82. Benjamin Stora, *Algeria 1830-2000: A Short History*, trans. Jane Marie Todd (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2004), 4–5.
83. Alistair Horne, *A Savage War of Peace: Algeria 1954–1962* (New York: Penguin Books, 1979), 30.
84. *Ibid.*, 32.
85. Naylor, *North Africa*, 155.
86. Rudolf von Albertini and Albert Wirtz, *European Colonial Rule, 1880–1940: The Impact of the West on India, Southeast Asia, and Africa*, trans. John G. Williamson (Westport, CT: Greenwood Press, 1982), 260.
87. Charles Issawi, *An Economic History of the Middle East and North Africa* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1982), 4–5.
88. Von Albertini and Wirtz, *European Colonial Rule*, 268. Auguste Hurbert Warrier was a deputy from Algeria elected to the French National Assembly in 1871, where he served until he died in 1875. His legislative programs were designed to encourage French immigration to Algeria and open up the province for economic exploitation.
89. Von Albertini and Wirtz, *European Colonial Rule*, 260.
90. *Ibid.*
91. Abun-Nasr, *Maghrib*, 313.
92. *Ibid.*
93. Von Albertini and Wirtz, *European Colonial Rule*, 265.
94. Horne, *Savage War*, 51–53.
95. Von Albertini and Wirtz, *European Colonial Rule*, 284.
96. Miller, *Modern Morocco*, 29–36. See also, Von Albertini and Wirtz, *European Colonial Rule*, 289–291 and Douglas Porch, *The Conquest of Morocco: A History* (New York: Fromm International Publishing, 1986), 293–295.
97. Kenneth Perkins, *Tunisia: Crossroads of the Islamic and European Worlds* (Boulder, CO: Westview Press, 1986), 92, 94, 177.
98. Kenneth Perkins, *A History of Modern Tunisia* (London: Cambridge University Press, 2014), 95–97.
99. Robert Rinehart, “Historical Setting,” in *Tunisia: a country study*, Harold D. Nelson, ed., 41–48. See also Perkins, *Modern Tunisia*, 103–104.
100. Perkins, *Modern Tunisia*, 120–122.
101. Rinehart, “Historical Setting,” 48–50.
102. Perkins, *Modern Tunisia*, 127, 130.
103. *Ibid.*, 131–134.
104. Michael Willis, *Politics and Power in the Maghreb: Algeria, Tunisia and Morocco from Independence to the Arab Spring* (London: Oxford University Press, 2014), 38–40.

105. Kenneth Perkins, "Playing the Islamic Card: The Use and Abuse of Religion in Tunisian Politics," in *The Making of the Tunisian Revolution: Contexts, Architects, Prospects*, ed. Nouri Gana (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press Ltd, 2013), 62.
106. Rinehart, "Historical Setting," 55–58.
107. Alan Richards and John Waterbury, *A Political Economy of the Middle East* (Boulder, CO: Westview Press, 1998), 280–281.
108. Rinehart, "Historical Setting," 64–68.
109. Alex Stark, "Arab Exceptionalism? Tunisia's Islamic Movement," *E-International Relations*, 31 January 2011, <http://www.e-ir.info/2011/01/31/arab-exceptionalism-tunisia's-islamist-movement/>
110. Paul Delaney, "Senile Bourguiba Described in Tunis," *The New York Times*, 9 November 1987, <http://www.nytimes.com/1987/11/09/world/senile-bourguiba-described-in-tunis.html?scp=2&sq=senile%20bourguiba&st=cse>Senile.
111. Perkins, *Modern Tunisia*, 188–189, 192–198.
112. Ibid., 198–199.
113. Neji Ali Dhakouani, "Tunisia Ruling Party (RCD) and the Road to Democracy," *Nawaat*, 20 January 2011, <http://nawaat.org/portail/2011/01/20/tunisia-ruling-party-rcd-and-the-road-to-democracy/>.
114. Miller, *Modern Morocco*, 70–71. General Lyautey was one of the few French colonial administrators that did not believe that Morocco and Tunisia would be incorporated into Metropolitan France as in the Algerian model. He believed that, at some point in the future, they would reemerge as independent states, and he sought to pursue a system of administration that anticipated that eventual outcome and that would result in very close ties between the independent states and Paris.
115. Ibid., 90–91. Lyautey saw the protectorate system as period of tutelage as opposed to a permanent state of European domination. He believed that, at some point, the colonial system would pass and it was his duty to create an indigenous system that would replace it. It was almost identical in many ways to Lord Lugard's views as expressed in his 1922 publication, *The Dual Mandate in British Tropical Africa*.
116. Porch, *The Conquest of Morocco*, 296–297.
117. Miller, *Modern Morocco*, 130–133.
118. Ibid., 136–138.
119. Howe, *Morocco*, 69–70.
120. Ronart, *Concise Encyclopaedia*, 257–258.
121. Ibid., 271–272.
122. Willis, *Politics and Power*, 29–30.
123. Miller, *Modern Morocco*, 153.
124. Willis, *Politics and Power*, 41–45.

125. Ibid., 54–56.
126. Jerome B. Weiner, “The Green March in Historical Perspective,” *Middle East Journal* 33, no. 1 (Winter 1979): 20–33, <http://www.jstor.org/stable/4325817>.
127. Paul Adrian Raymond, “Morocco’s Berbers urge broader reforms,” *Al Jazeera*, 6 May 2014, <http://www.aljazeera.com/indepth/features/2014/03/moroccos-berbers-urge-broader-reforms-2014357321228806.htm>. See also Emma Schwartz, “Morocco’s Berbers Reclaims Their Language and Their Indigenous Culture,” *U.S. News and World Report*, 13 March 2008, <http://www.usnews.com/news/world/articles/2008/03/13/moroccos-berbers-reclaim-their-language-and-their-indigenous-culture->.
128. Miller, *Modern Morocco*, 212.
129. Anouar Boukhars, “The Politics of North African Salafism,” Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, 1 April 2016, <http://carnegieendowment.org/2016/04/01/politics-of-north-african-salafism-pub-63209>.
130. John Ruedy, *Modern Algeria: The Origins and Development of a Nation* (Bloomington, IN: University of Indiana Press, 2005), 149–150.
131. Ruedy, *Modern Algeria*, 151.
132. Stora, *Algeria*, 25–27.
133. Willis, *Politics and Power*, 30–32. See also Ronart, *Concise Encyclopaedia*, 71–72; and Nazih N. Ayubi, *Over-stating the Arab State: Politics and Society in the Middle East* (London: I.B. Tauris & Co. Ltd., 1995), 122–123.
134. Horne, *Savage War*, 88–127.
135. Ted Morgan, *My Battle of Algiers: A Memoir* (Washington, D.C.: Smithsonian Books, 2005), 23–27. See also, Ruedy, *Modern Algeria*, 167.
136. Irwin M. Wall, *France, the United States, and the Algerian War* (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 2001), 67–69.
137. Charles G. Cogan, *Charles de Gaulle: A Brief Biography with Documents* (New York: Bedford/St. Martin’s Press, 1996), 116–117.
138. Wall, *France, the United States, and the Algerian War*, 178–191, 228.
139. Cogan, *Charles de Gaulle*, 116–117.
140. Horne, *Savage War*, 52–53.
141. Martin Evans and John Phillips, *Algeria: Anger of the Dispossessed* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2007), 74–80.
142. Evans and Phillips, *Algeria*, 77–78.
143. Ruedy, *Modern Algeria*, 195–207.
144. Roger Owen, *State, Power, and Politics in the Making of the Modern Middle East* (London: Routledge, 1992), 46.
145. Evans and Phillips, *Algeria*, 76–78, 81.
146. Georges Corm, *Fragmentation of the Middle East: The Last Thirty Years*, trans. Raj Isar, Selina Cohen, and Margaret Owen (London: Hutchinson, 1988), 78–79.

147. Evans and Phillips, *Algeria*, 86–87.
148. Ruedy, *Modern Algeria*, 201–230.
149. Evans and Phillips, *Algeria*, 86–87, 92–93.
150. Ruedy, *Modern Algeria*, 244–247.
151. Stora, *Algeria*, 193–194.
152. François Burgat and William Dowell, *The Islamic Movement in North Africa* (Austin, TX: Center for Middle Eastern Studies, University of Texas at Austin, 1997), 269–274.
153. Bahgat Korany, “From Revolution to Domestication: The Foreign Policy of Algeria,” in *The Foreign Policies of Arab States: The Challenge of Change*, eds. Bahgat Korany and Ali E. Hillal Dessouki (Boulder, CO: Westview Press, 1991), 112–113.
154. Burgat and Dowell, *Islamic Movement in North Africa*, 279–281.
155. *Ibid.*, 289–293.
156. Stora, *Algeria*, 210–211.
157. *Ibid.*, 216–226.
158. Evans and Phillips, *Algeria*, 259–262.
159. Robert Fisk, *Robert Fisk on Algeria: 1992–2013* (London: The Independent Print Limited, 2013), 21–22.
160. Evans and Phillips, *Algeria*, 174–180.
161. Fisk, *On Algeria*, 28–37.
162. Evans and Phillips, *Algeria*, 177–182.
163. *Ibid.*, 213–223.
164. Naylor, *North Africa*, 225–228.
165. “Thousands of radical Salafis urge bigger role for Islam in Tunisia,” *FaithWorld* (blog), Reuters, 21 May 2012, <http://blogs.reuters.com/faithworld/2012/05/21/thousands-of-radical-salafis-urge-bigger-role-for-islam-in-tunisia/>.
166. Suzanne Daley, “Tensions on a Campus Mirror Turbulence in a New Tunisia,” *The New York Times*, 11 June 2012, [http://www.nytimes.com/2012/06/12/world/africa/tensions-at-manouba-university-mirror-turbulence-in-tunisia.html?\\_r=0](http://www.nytimes.com/2012/06/12/world/africa/tensions-at-manouba-university-mirror-turbulence-in-tunisia.html?_r=0).
167. Eileen Byrne, “Tunisian opposition leader shot dead,” *The Guardian*, 6 February 2013, <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2013/feb/06/tunisian-politician-shot-dead>.
168. Carlotta Gall, “Second Opposition Leader Assassinated in Tunisia,” *The New York Times*, 25 July 2013, <http://www.nytimes.com/2013/07/26/world/middleeast/second-opposition-leader-killed-in-tunisia.html>.
169. “Tunisia declares Ansar al-Sharia a terrorist group,” *BBC*, 27 August 2013, <http://www.bbc.com/news/world-africa-23853241>.

170. Sahar Ghoussoub, trans., "The best and worst of Tunisia's new constitution," *Al-Monitor*, 29 January 2014, <http://www.al-monitor.com/pulse/politics/2014/01/tunisia-constitution-drafting-best-worst.html>.
171. Reuters, "Habib Essid nominated as Tunisian prime minister," *The Guardian*, 5 January 2015, <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2015/jan/05/habib-essid-tunisian-prime-minister>.
172. Carlotta Gall, "State of Emergency Is Declared in Tunisia," *The New York Times*, 4 July 2015, <http://www.nytimes.com/2015/07/05/world/africa/state-of-emergency-is-declared-in-tunisia.html>.
173. Carlotta Gall and Eric Schmitt, "Jihadist From Tunisia Died in Strike in Libya, U.S. Official Says," *The New York Times*, 2 July 2015, <http://www.nytimes.com/2015/07/03/world/africa/jihadist-from-tunisia-died-in-strike-in-libya-us-official-says.html>.
174. "Tunisia sacks 110 security officers for ties with terrorist organizations," *The North Africa Post*, 18 September 2015, <http://northafricapost.com/9245-tunisia-sacks-110-security-officers-for-ties-with-terrorist-organizations.html>.
175. Alessandro Bruno, "Tunisia's Terrorism Problem Goes Beyond Islamic State," *Geopolitical Monitor*, 14 July 2015, <https://www.geopoliticalmonitor.com/tunisia-terrorism-problem-goes-beyond-islamic-state/>.
176. Only in Bahrain, a special case because of the Shi'a-Sunni divide, did it appear that a traditional form of government might succumb to protests, but that did not happen either.
177. Naylor, *North Africa*, 263–265.
178. "Benkiran: Le Maroc a besoin d'une autre âme, islamiste," *Le Parisien*, 25 November 2011, <http://www.leparisien.fr/international/benkiran-le-maroc-a-besoin-d-une-autre-ame-islamiste-25-11-2011-1738359.php>.
179. Camille Tawil, "Morocco's Stability in the Wake of the Arab Spring," *CTC Sentinel*, 23 May 2013, <https://www.ctc.usma.edu/posts/moroccos-stability-in-the-wake-of-the-arab-spring>.
180. Mohammed Masbah, "Taking Advantage of Morocco's Security Threat," *Sada*, Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, 10 October 2014, <http://carnegieendowment.org/sada/56903>.
181. Jacinto, "Morocco's Outlaw Country Is the Heartland of Global Terrorism." See also: Akbar Ahmed and Harrison Akins, "The plight of the Rif: Morocco's restive northern periphery," *Al Jazeera*, 28 September 2012, <http://www.aljazeera.com/indepth/opinion/2012/09/201292410333182505.html>. See also: Mohamed Daadaoui, "In Defense of the Rif and the Pitfalls of Parachute Journalism," *World Post*, 11 April 2016, [http://www.huffingtonpost.com/mohamed-daadaoui/in-defense-of-the-rif-and\\_b\\_9655064.html](http://www.huffingtonpost.com/mohamed-daadaoui/in-defense-of-the-rif-and_b_9655064.html). Daadaoui takes exception to the depiction of the Rif as any more of a hotbed of terrorist activity than other regions.

182. Dinah Lakehal, "Ali Belhadj Calls for Opening Morocco-Algeria Borders," *Morocco World News*, 7 June 2016, <http://www.moroccoworldnews.com/2016/06/188448/ali-belhadj-open-the-morocco-algeria-border/>.
183. Leila Fadel, "Morocco Boasts Stability, But Critics Say The Price Is High," *NPR News*, 17 April 2016, <http://www.npr.org/sections/parallels/2016/04/17/474368034/morocco-boasts-stability-but-critics-say-the-price-is-high>.
184. Charlotte Bozonnet, "Political stability in Morocco cannot silence the murmurs of discontent," *The Guardian*, 9 March 2015, <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2015/mar/09/morocco-reform-protest-arab-spring>.
185. Martin Evans, "Algerian Specificities: Algeria's Place in the 2011 Arab Revolutions," *Muftah*, 2 March 2011, <http://muftah.org/algerian-specificities-algerias-place-in-the-2011-arab-revolutions-by-martin-evans/#V4AZi1c4mi4>.
186. Kamel Daoud, "The Algerian Exception," *The New York Times*, 29 May 2015, [http://www.nytimes.com/2015/05/30/opinion/the-algerian-exception.html?\\_r=0](http://www.nytimes.com/2015/05/30/opinion/the-algerian-exception.html?_r=0).
187. Ibid.
188. Ibid.
189. "Algeria Profile—Overview," *BBC*, 6 May 2016, <http://www.bbc.com/news/world-africa-14118853>.
190. Anouar Boukhars, "'Quietist' and 'Firebrand' Salafism in Algeria," Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, 24 November 2015, <http://carnegieendowment.org/2015/11/24/quietist-and-firebrand-salafism-in-algeria-pub-62075>.
191. "Algeria: Who is in charge?" *The Economist*, 4 February 2016, <http://www.economist.com/news/middle-east-and-africa/21690070-rumours-swirl-around-ailing-president-who-charge>.
192. Simon Bromley, *Rethinking Middle East Politics* (Austin, TX: University of Texas Press, 1994), 178–179.
193. Elie Kedourie, *Politics in the Middle East* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1992), 324–325.
194. John O. Voll, "Sultans, Saints, and Presidents: The Islamic Community and the State in North Africa," in *Islam, Democracy and the State in North Africa*, ed. John P. Entelis (Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press, 1997), 10–11.
195. Senior Maghrebi security official tasked with counterterrorism strategies, in conversation with the author in September 2016.

