

Reflections on Resistance and Accommodation in Morocco During the Great War, 1914-1918

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On August 3, 1914 Germany declared war on France. The next day it invaded Belgium and Great Britain, coming to Belgium's aid, declared war on Germany. Within the next few days the crisis which had developed in Europe following the assassination on June 28, 1914, of the Austro-Hungarian Archduke Franz Ferdinand and his wife, the countess Sofia, in Sarajevo by Gavrilo Princip, a Bosnian Serb separatist, plunged Europe and much of the world into the Great War of 1914-18. Very few if any witnesses to these developments imagined that the war would last very long and no one had any idea of the enormous human, economic, political, and psychological damage and costs this conflict would impose before an armistice was finally agreed on November, 1918.¹

In August, 1914 Morocco was still a divided country, not yet fully controlled by either its French or Spanish "Protectors" or its government. In 1912 the government of the country (the *makhzen*) had been forced to accept European tutelage from France and Spain. The largest portion of the country—its central and southern parts—came under French control by the Treaty of Fez (30 March, 1912), concluded between the Moroccan sultan Mawlāy 'Abd al-Ḥafīdh (r. 1908-12) and Eugène Regnault, France's minister in Tangier. Separately, France had reluctantly granted Spain control over approximately 20,00 square kilometers in the north of the country in a zone stretching roughly from al-'Araish on the Atlantic Coast to the Moulouya River near the Algerian Border. Spain was also given control over several enclaves on the Saharan Atlantic coast at Sidi Ifni, Tarfaya, and in what is known today as the Western Sahara.² These arrangements between Spain and France were

1. There are thousands of works on the history of the Great War. Several of which I have found especially useful as a general orientation to the conflict and its chronology are: David Stevenson, *1914-1918: The History of the First World War* (London: Penguin Books, 2004); Hew Strachan, *The First World War* (London: Penguin Books, 2003); H.P. Willmott, *World War I* (New York: Dorling Kindersley Publishing, Inc., 2003/2006).

2. Both "Protectorates" were to a large degree fictional, but the French protectorate, at least in its early years, was less so than the Spanish protectorate. As Charles Pennell indicated even in official descriptions of public administration he found "There is no practical interest in discussing whether the *Khalifa* (The Sultan of Morocco's viceroy in Tetouan, the capital of the Spanish Zone) is coordinate with or subordinate to the (Spanish) High Commissioner, since his every act presupposes the consent of the High Commissioner." Quoted in Pennell's *Morocco since 1830: A History* (London: Hurst & Company, 2000), 167.

formalized after long and arduous negotiations in the Treaty of Madrid of 27 November, 1912.

As a Protectorate the Moroccan government (*makhzen*) was obliged to cede the management of military, diplomatic, and financial affairs to France and Spain and was to accept their tutelage and assistance in the reorganization of the government and the country, as well as toward the extension, with French and Spanish military and political assistance, of the central government's control over the entire territory that was nominally, at least, known as Morocco. When war broke out in Europe, and questions of neutrality and belligerency came into play. The Moroccan government was in the anomalous position of still being technically and legally a sovereign country, ruled by the 'Alawi sultan, who had not declared war on Germany or Austro-Hungary, but whose human and natural resources were in part under the control of a neutral country (Spain) and in part under the control of one of the war's principal belligerents (France). Both the new sultan, Mawlāy Yūsūf bin al-Ḥasan (r. 1912-27) and the French protectorate authorities, led since April, 1912, by France's first Resident General in Morocco, General (later Marshal) Louis Hubert Gonzalve Lyautey, were energetic in ignoring these legal and diplomatic fine points in order to serve their mutual interests. The question of neutrality was frequently raised by the French who were greatly concerned throughout the war about the flow of money, arms and German agents through Spain to several resistance groups in the French zone,³ but it never impeded the flow of men and material to France, nor the arbitrary actions of French and Moroccan government authorities, who in any case were acting under martial law, against anyone who was deemed a threat of any kind to the French war effort.

France ordered general mobilization on August 1, 1914. These orders were extended to Morocco on August 4th. Paris ordered General Lyautey to pull French forces involved in the conquest and control of the interior back to the Atlantic coast and to send immediately to France about one half of the Occupation Corps stationed in Morocco. In August, 1914 this corps numbered some 80.000 men.⁴ These men were experienced, battle-hardened troops: Zouaves, French Chasseurs, Algerian and Tunisian Tirailleurs (infantry), plus

3. Gunther Mai, *Die Marokko-Deutschen 1873-1918* (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 2014), 739-67; Albert Bartels, *Fighting the French in Morocco*. Trans. H.J. Stenning (London: Alston Rivers, Ltd., 1932), passim.

4. Mohamed Bekraoui, *Les Marocains dans la Grande Guerre, 1914-1918* (Casablanca: Imprimerie Najah al-Jadida (for La Commission Marocaine d'Histoire Militaire 2009), 103; Daniel Rivet, *Lyautey et l'institution du Protectorat français au Maroc, 1912-1925*. 3 vols., (Paris: Éditions l'Harmattan, 1988), Vol. II, 8-9.

some cavalry, artillery and support units.⁵ In addition, perhaps with the hope that the more seasoned regulars would not be taken in such numbers, or of sending Sharifian military units he feared might mutiny or desert in the context of France's drawdown of regular forces in Morocco, Lyautey persuaded an at first skeptical French Minister of War, Alexandre Millerand to "take my five (Tirailleurs Marocain) battalions and my five (*Spahis* Marocains) squadrons (cavalry)," assuring the minister that "They are marvelous; you will ask for more of them from me."⁶ Pressed hard for trained manpower to confront the expected German offensive, the minister agreed. Hence, in mid-August, a Moroccan force of some 4000 men regrouped into two regiments of infantry (tirailleurs Marocains and a regiment of cavalry (*Spahis*) left Morocco for France.⁷

The Moroccan Army

The Moroccan troops sent to France in 1914 were part of the new Sharifian army, the *Troupes Auxiliaires Marocaines* (TAM), an infantry and cavalry force, trained and led by French officers and non-commissioned officers from the French colonial forces in Tunisia and Algeria. The core of the TAM was made up of troops that had served in the Moroccan army prior to the installation of the protectorate in 1912. France and other European countries maintained military training missions in Morocco since the reign of sultan Mawlāy al-Ḥassan (1873-94). The largest of these missions was French and its number, as well as the scope of its training and supervision roles steadily grew to the point where in 1910, under the direction of Lt. Col. Emile Mangin, commander of the French military mission in Morocco, French officers, in effect, took over management of the army and assumed command of *makhzen* troops in the field.⁸ Moroccans in and out of the government and army deeply resented this takeover and this resentment intensified during the early weeks and months of the French Protectorate (March, 1912) to the point where the army mutinied (April 17, 1912), killing many of their French officer/instructors and touching off riots in the city of Fez and fueling a growing rural rebellion against French takeover in the tribes surrounding that city and eventually in much of northern Morocco in 1912-1913.⁹

5. Bekraoui, *Les Marocains dans la Grande Guerre*, 105.

6. Moshe Gershovich, *French Military Rule in Morocco: Colonialism and Its Consequences* (London: Frank Cass, 2000) 172.

7. Bekraoui, *Les Marocains dans le Grande Guerre*, 109.

8. Bahija Simou, *Les réformes militaires au Maroc de 1844 a 1912* (Rabat: Publications de la Faculté des Lettres et des Sciences Humaines), 1995, especially 395-460.

9. Rivet, *Lyautey et l'institution du Protectorat français*, I, 130-5.

The French were greatly alarmed at the violence of the mutiny and the tribal revolts, particularly since the violence seemed to be more specifically targeted at Frenchmen, not any longer a more general response to foreign/Christian takeover. Lyautey, newly arrived to take up his appointment as the Protectorate's first Resident General, confided to the Protectorate's Secretary General, Count de Saint-Aulaire, in April 1912, his impression that the uprisings then in progress in Morocco "were less concentrated" than the Rivet, *L'Institution de Protectorat Hafiziya* (1907-8) and without a single leader, but "more intense." He thought the resistance, rural and urban was "patriotic." It was no longer (simply) "a *jihād* against French invasion, but an ultimate and desperate defensive outburst in the presence of the invader." "Those who know this country, (he said) have never seen an upsurge of fanaticism and xenophobia so profound and so generalized."¹⁰

The French response was predictably harsh. The old Sharifian army was disbanded (May 16, 1912). Many of the Moroccan troops from the *tabors* (regiments) that had mutinied (@ 4 of the 6 *tabors* stationed in Fez) fled to the countryside where they made themselves useful to tribal rebels, highly motivated, but sorely in need of modern military skills that could help them successfully oppose the French forces arrayed against them. Some were captured by the French forces that had intervened to put down the mutiny and the tribal uprising. Forty-eight were executed by firing squad, others were exiled to their native regions. General Moinier, commander of the French occupation forces, formally disbanded the remains of the Sharifian army by decree published on May 16, 1912. All of the 'askars of the old army and their officers were discharged. Veterans who had not participated in the Fez mutiny were invited to apply for reengagement in the sultan's new army –the Troupes Auxiliaires Marocaines (TAM)– on an individual basis. No Moroccans, including officers from the old army, would be engaged as officers. Moroccan officers could re-enlist in TAM, but only as non-commissioned officers. The command of TAM was made up of French officers and non-commissioned officers from France's native units in Algeria and Tunisia.¹¹

General Moinier and the French cadres proceeded with the organization of TAM with misgivings. At first they insisted the TAM battalions be small (200 officers and men) units of infantry and cavalry which could not include artillery and other technical services. Moinier himself did not want them dealing with explosives or trained in the use of artillery, a service invaluable

10. Letter from Lyautey to Saint-Aulaire, 24 June, 1912, quoted in Rivet, *Lyautey et l'institution du Protectorat français*, I, 125.

11. Gershovich, *French Military*, 171.

in conquest operations, but under the exclusive command of French officers.¹² However, the reconstruction of the sultanate necessitated providing the new sultan with a professional armed force. In addition, as conquest was still very much in progress and was being carried out in the name of the sultanate and its government, Moroccan troops were needed in the field to assert the legitimacy of conquest operations as operations by the Moroccan government (assisted by France, of course) to secure its authority over the country. To meet these requirements and to provide additional troops for the campaigns in progress, Lyautey authorized (13 November, 1912) the participation of TAM units in military operations, and the TAM were gradually expanded in number and technical capacity. By 1913, they had already distinguished themselves as capable soldiers in battle against stubborn resistance forces in the Middle Atlas Mountains and elsewhere in the country. However, the specter of the calamitous uprisings and military mutiny in and around Fez in April of 1912 still hung over them. The Protectorate's military command were not so sanguine (as Lyautey) about so soon putting their trust in the new Moroccan army. Most of the French commanders continued to see Moroccan soldiers as "treacherous" and "undisciplined." Even though it was well known that not all of the old army had mutinied against its French officers, and that some *'askars* had actually intervened to protect their French instructors, the "stigmatization of Moroccan soldiers would prevail within the French military establishment for many years. It would be erased only at the expense of the thousands of Moroccan casualties who fell in defense of France during the 1914-1918 war."¹³

Deployment to France

In August, 1914 the TAM numbered 8320 men. About half of this number was reorganized into two regiments of infantry (*Tirailleurs*) and one regiment of cavalry (*Spahis*), placed under the command of General Ditte, and transferred to France, arriving in Bordeaux and Sete in mid-August.¹⁴ By the end of August they were deployed with elements of the VI French army north and east of Paris. They were in the thick of the first stages of the Battle of the Marne (5-12 September), where they participated in the assaults against German positions in the area of the Ourcq River and canal near Meaux. They gained much acclaim for their "furious attacks" against General Kluck's First Army at Chauconin-Neufmontiers, Penchard, and Chaudon Crouy, where they played an important part in General Maunoury and his VI Army's successful

12. Ibid.

13. Ibid.

14. Bekraoui, *Les Marocains dans la Grande Guerre*, 108-9.

effort to block and turn the German advance on Paris, a victory which proved to be one of the most pivotal of the war.¹⁵ In these and subsequent battles, including the monumental slaughter at Verdun (1916), the Somme (1916), and Chemin des Dames (1917) the Moroccan troops repeatedly distinguished themselves, both in the eyes of the French and their German adversaries for their courage and fierceness in attack and steadfastness under heavy fire.¹⁶ The French Minister of War, Alexandre Millerand, publicly praised the Moroccans as being “among the best (troops) in the French army.”¹⁷ Even staunchly pro-colonial voices like that of the *Comité de l’Afrique Française* and the *Comité du Maroc* expressed their admiration and surprise that the Moroccan regiments fought so well beside the best regiments in the French army just two years after their revolt against their French instructors in Fez had put their utility and reliability so deeply into question.¹⁸

The Moroccan’s valorous performance on the battlefields of France was achieved at a staggering cost in lives. In the first few days of the Battle of the Marne the Moroccan force lost 80% of its order of battle in killed and wounded. The unit thus had to be withdrawn from the front and reorganized and augmented with new recruits from Morocco. After September, 1914 the Moroccan troops were regrouped into a single regiment called the *Premier Régiment de Marche de Tirailleurs Marocains* (1st RMTM). This regiment carried the Moroccan standard (with the red field and the green Seal of Solomon in the center, which became the Moroccan flag in 1915) in the campaigns mentioned above and many others. They would emerge from the war as one of the most decorated units in the French army and many individual soldiers received decorations in the course of their service as well.¹⁹ In 1918, a second RMTM was formed. It too distinguished itself in combat during the last year of the war and returned to Morocco in 1919 with regimental honors and many individual decorations as well.²⁰ The Moroccan cavalry (*Spahis*) sent to France were regrouped in January of 1915 into the 1st *Régiment de Marche de Spahis Marocains* (1st RMSM). They were deployed as reserve infantry on the Western Front until 1917, when they were transferred to the L’Armée de

15. Jean-Pierre Riera and Christophe Touron, *Anal: frères d’armes marocains dans les deux guerres mondiales*. Mohammedia: Senso Unico Éditions, 2008, 29. This work provides a basic narrative of the campaigns and achievements of the Moroccan soldiers during the war. It is also lavishly illustrated with rare photos of these troops in the field.

16. *Ibid.*, 30-59.

17. Quoted in Bekraoui, *Les Marocains dans le Grande Guerre*, 113.

18. *Bulletin du Comité de L’Afrique Française*, (hereinafter: *L’Afrique Française*). (January-February, 1919): 60.

19. *Ibid.*, 56-60.

20. *Ibid.*, 60.

L'Orient in Salonica, Greece. As part of this force they saw action in Bulgaria, Serbia, and Albania. At the time of the Armistice (November, 1918) they were sent to Hungary to participate in the suppression of the Bela Kun Movement. In 1919 they were stationed in Constantinople and then transferred to the Levant to be part of the French occupation of Syria.²¹

By war's end Morocco had sent 45,000 regular soldiers of the sharifian army to fight in France and in the Orient. Of these some 12,000 were killed or missing in action and 17,000 were wounded. Morocco also sent 35,000 men to France as workers to fill jobs in French factories and other sectors in need of manpower due to the massive demands made on Frenchmen for military service.²²

In addition to the large numbers of Moroccans recruited for military and civilian service in Europe, the Protectorate authorities recruited and deployed a substantial number of auxiliary forces from tribes submitted to the authority of the new sultan, Mawlāy Yūssūf ibn al-Ḥassan and his government, which, after March, 1912 operated under and with French authority. In fact, well before the imposition of the French/Spanish protectorate, French occupation forces operating in the Chaouia (the hinterland of Casablanca), after their landing in Casablanca in 1907, began in 1908 to recruit local *Goumiers* and *Mokhaznis*²³ to assist them, and hence the *makhzen*, in organizing and policing recently submitted tribes in the area. These auxiliaries assisted the French native affairs officers in many roles: as providers of intelligence, as political agents, constabulary forces, body guards, and military units sufficiently armed and organized to successfully intervene if dissidence reappeared. Lyautey saw them as ideal for holding territory at low cost in French treasure and regular army troops; as a way to legitimate and reinforce the *makhzen's* authority while putting a Moroccan face on French conquest.²⁴ From July, 1914 to June, 1919, French troops, as well as troops from Senegal, Tunisia, and Algeria, and locally recruited Moroccan auxiliaries suffered significant

21. Gershovich, *French Military*, 173-4.

22. Bekraoui, *Les Marocains dans le Grande Guerre*, 128.

23. *Goum* "is a small irregular unit numbering 150-170 men, composed mostly of native North African recruits with a skeleton of French personnel, hence the term "mixed" *goums*. The term originates from the Arabic word *qawm*, which in contemporary context of nineteenth century Algeria meant a tribal group." Definition quoted from Moshe Gershovich, *French Military*, xvi. A *Mokhazni* (Lit. an agent of the *makhzen* or government) in Morocco was a soldier or orderly attached to the Native Affairs Office (*Office des Affaires Indigènes*).

24. Driss Maghraoui, "From 'Tribal Anarchy' to 'Military Order': the Moroccan Troops in the Context of Colonial Morocco," in *Quaderni di Oriente Moderno*, XXIII (LXXXIV), n.s., 5 (2004): 232-233.

casualties²⁵ in the course of combat against tenacious resistance forces all around the core area of the country already held by the French/Moroccan government when the war broke out in 1914.²⁶

The Problem of Collaboration and Resistance

As historian Susan G. Miller points out in her recent book on the history of Morocco, the presence and performance of Moroccan soldiers especially, but also Moroccan workers, in France, throughout the war, revealed “a situation that was ironic,” in that, “while tens of thousands of Moroccan soldiers were fighting and dying alongside Frenchmen in the trenches of the Western Front, their brothers and cousins were battling other Frenchmen in the valleys of the Middle Atlas, in the Rif Mountains, and in the High Atlas.”²⁷ Increasingly, they were battling other Moroccans as well, as the *Goums* took on more of the burden of conquest.

This irony raises a great many questions about why they were there and performed so well for a country that was in the process of conquering their homeland and subjecting their sultan to a French system of colonial control. In reflecting on such questions, it quickly becomes apparent that contrary to the prevailing nationalist narrative regarding resistance and collaboration, the early period of the Protectorate, particularly the years just preceding and during the Great War (1908-18) Moroccans were on many levels were living through a critical period of hiatus between the pre-Protectorate and Protectorate, during which they faced a deep political, military, and cultural crisis triggered by the French occupation of Oujda in the east and landing of French troops at Casablanca and commencement of their conquest of the Chaouia in the west. Very quickly it was apparent to many that the military superiority of the French made successfully resisting them by force of arms with the military forces and armaments available to the Moroccan government at the time highly unlikely. The courage and ferocity of Moroccans who defied this calculation

25. European and indigenous forces killed in these campaigns totaled: 122 Officers, 190 Non-commissioned Officers, and 2121 soldiers. French official sources quoted in *L'Afrique Française*, September-October, 1919, 267.

26. This included areas that had been brought under French control north and west of the Moulouya river and the Atlas Mountains and extending down the Atlantic coast to Agadir and the Sous River valley, including Taroudant. The region therefore included all of Morocco's historic capital cities, its new capital, Rabat, and the increasingly important port city of Casablanca. This area did not include the areas under the Spanish protectorate. The status of Tangier was not determined until 1923, when England, France, and Spain agreed to place the city under an international administration, nominally under the suzerainty of the Moroccan sultan. For Tangier, see Susan Miller, *A History of Morocco*, 88; for a useful map of this region: William A. Hoisington, Jr., *Lyautey and the French Conquest of Morocco* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1995), x-xi.

27. Susan G. Miller, *A History of Modern Morocco* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2013), 103.

cannot be denied, but time and time again it was French artillery and rapid-fire weapons that carried the day.²⁸ At close order combat the Moroccans were easily a match for their adversaries. However, the opportunity of getting close enough to the enemy to engage in hand-to-hand combat, or to expose them to lethal fire from the obsolete weaponry available to them was much reduced or eliminated by the lethal technology that the French could bring to bear on the battlefield. Armed resistance, motivated by a strong sense of religious duty to defend the *umma* (the community of Muslim believers) combined with a strong commitment to the defense of tribal territory and resources also motivated determined resistance to French advances in the Chaouia and elsewhere. However, simultaneous with the military confrontations came political arrangements designed to make collaboration with the French a plausible alternative to the devastation and deprivation assured by continued military confrontation. Resistance groups in the Middle and High Atlas regions, as well as a full-blown *jihād*ist movement, led by Aḥmad al-Hiba (d. 1919), son of Mā' al-'Aynayn (d. 1910) rejected such notions of giving up the armed struggle out of hand.²⁹

Some of these groups would fight on into the 1930s at which time urban nationalists began to assert themselves as the primary opposition to the ever harsher burden of French control, and by which time, even though their respective movements were no longer a serious threat to the Protectorate, their leadership became for the nationalist generation useful as mobilizing myths.³⁰

But a great many Moroccans, albeit under duress, after the initial enthusiasm for *jihād* subsided, and following its failure to stop the French advance in both rural and urban areas of the central and northern part of the country, had to reassess their options and reconsider the possibility of collaboration with the French authorities which, though humiliating and morally problematical, might indeed be advantageous, and a more effective way than warfare to defend vital interests.³¹ General Lyautey, the Protectorate's first Resident General, was most eager to find collaborators, not simply

28. Charles-Joseph-Alexandre, Cornet, *A la Conquête du Maroc Sud avec la Colonne Mangin, 1912-1913* (Paris: Librairie Plon, 3rd ed., 1914), *passim*.

29. For example, the Qaid Raḥa al-Najim al-Lakhsassi (1867/68-1962) whose life in the *makhzen* and then in the resistance with Aḥmad al-Hiba and Marebbi Rabbuh is recorded by Muḥammad al-Mukhtār as-Sūsī in his *al-Ma'sul*, 20 vols., (Casablanca: Matb'at al-Jam'a, 1961), Vol. XX, 5-175.

30. Abdallah Laroui, *Esquisses Historiques* (Casablanca: Centre Culturel Arabe, 1992), 106.

31. An example might be the life and career of Mohand N'Hamoucha, recounted by Edmund Burke, III, "Mohand N'Hamoucha: Middle Atlas Berber" in *Struggle and Survival in the Modern Middle East*, Edmund Burke, III and David N. Yaghoubian, eds., 2nd Ed (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2006), 89-102.

because any imperial system requires them to function, but especially because his concept of imperial tutelage –the Protectorate– would be impossible to implement without the collaboration of the Moroccan government, armed forces, and the country’s cultural, economic, and political elites. It should be noted here that the word collaboration does not carry with it the pejorative connotations that the word would acquire in later years. During the first decade of the Protectorate, perhaps as late as 1925, the word was used more to denote “working jointly with” someone for mutual benefit. It was not freighted with the moral stigma and would accrue to it in later nationalist usage.³²

When one considers the context of military and civilian collaboration with the French war effort, 1914-18, one is struck by its great variety. Military service, especially military service of such remarkable quality, was certainly one of the most conspicuous forms of collaboration, and the sacrifices made by Moroccan soldiers for France were not actions born of tentative commitment, but they were only the most salient form of collaboration. Collaboration occurred at all levels of society: from the Sultan himself to the most junior *goumier* or *mokhazni*. Tribal *qaid*s, *qadis*, the ‘*ulama* and leaders of sufi brotherhoods all in their own ways sought a place in the new system instituted by French power and authority. It is also quite clear that collaboration did not begin with the Great War, although the pressures on French resources and manpower engendered by the Great War intensified the Protectorate’s search for less-expensive and effective local ways to accomplish the extension and consolidation of its control over the whole country. Its policy of “the Great Qaid” in the southern part of Morocco is an example. Al-Madani and Ḥajj al-Thāmī al- Glāwī, ‘Abd al-Mālik al-Mtouggui, Tayyib al-Gundāffī, and ‘Umar al-‘Abdi, among others, sought to continue their role as regional lords nominally working on behalf of the *makhzen*, a practice begun in the late nineteenth century. General Lyautey was more than pleased to mobilize their extensive influence and considerable armed force to extend *makhzen* authority over the Atlas and southern regions and specifically to repel and then to serve as a barrier to the expansion of al-Hiba’s movement northward. Their operations to achieve these ends were the ideal of Protectorate/*makhzen* collaboration: “operations carried out by native means under very discrete French guidance and support, (but) always under the sharifian label.”³³ At the same time, the Great Qaid found this collaboration useful as a means

32. Ronald Robinson, “Non-European Foundations of European Imperialism: Sketch for a Theory of Collaboration,” in *Studies in the Theory of Imperialism*, Roger Owen and Bob Sutcliffe, eds., (London: Longman Group, 1972), 117-42; Maghraoui, “From ‘Tribal Anarchy’ to ‘Military Order,’” 227.

33. Robin Bidwell, *Morocco Under Colonial Rule* (London: Frank Cass, 1973), 107.

for extending their authority within in their respective regions and to expand beyond them, all the while increasing their personal fortunes and political influence in Rabat. Their mutually beneficial collaboration would continue throughout the Protectorate, although in its later years their political ambitions and closeness to a now much more repressive Protectorate government brought them into conflict with both the sultan (Mohammed V) and the nationalists. Thus their collaboration was transformed from being a source of benefit for the Protectorate, the sultanate, and the Grand Qaids into a grab for power with treacherous and treasonous implications, which associated the Great Caids with the most pejorative meaning of the term collaboration.³⁴

The paucity of documentation does not permit us to know much with any degree of certainty about the precise motives and calculations that went into the decisions of many thousands of Moroccans to subordinate their intuitive and eminently justified desire to defend their religion and their country by force of arms to a more collaborative relationship with the French occupation and Protectorate. Reconsideration of armed resistance in the light of the demonstrably devastating technological gap between the two sides and the persistent inability of resisting groups to coalesce into a united effort against the French were no doubt factors for many.³⁵ Many others were torn between the offer of an apparently more secure, possibly prosperous, existence under French tutelage and the moral obligation to continue *jihād* in defense of the community of believers against foreign/Christian attack. A good idea of the agonizing process of making this choice can be had from the autobiographical recollections of Qa'id al-Najim al-Lakhssasi, a senior *makhzen* military officer who, after much deliberation, decided to leave his sultan's service and join the resistance movement of Aḥmad al-Hiba.³⁶ Researchers have discovered a few letters home from North African workers and troops serving in France during the war. French postal censors found a good many of these letters too "sensitive" to be allowed to pass. Hence a number of them have been preserved in French archival collections. Unfortunately, this source is much more useful for Algeria and Tunisia than for Morocco, as a high illiteracy rate

34. For the Glawis: Gavin Maxwell, *Lords of the Atlas: The Rise and Fall of the House of Glaoua, 1893-1956* (New York: The Lyons Press, 2000).

35. For example, the recalibrations among Moroccans regarding adherence to the resistance movement of al-Hiba after the crushing defeat of his army at Sidi Bou Othman (near Marrakesh) by a French force under the command of Colonel Charles Mangin on 5 September, 1912, see: Muḥammad al-Mukhtār as-Sūsī, *Autour d'une Table d'hôte*. Trans. Alain Rousillon (Rabat: Publications du Centre Tarik Ibn Ziad, 2003), 154-65; C-J-A Cornet, *A la Conquête du Maroc Sud avec la Colonne Mangin, 1912-1913* (Paris: Librairie Plon, 3rd ed. 1914), 42-4; Burke III, "Mohand N'Hamoucha: Middle Atlas Berber," 89-102.

36. as-Sūsī, *al-Ma'asul*, XX, 77-101.

and, for Morocco, an apparent lack of interest in writing home greatly limited the availability of this sort of material. What has survived of it is remarkably free of complaints of racism, mistreatment, and the blatant inequality of treatment of North African soldiers compared to their French “brothers” in arms. Mostly they spoke of “unfamiliar food, beastly weather, and a burning desire to return home.”³⁷ Study of this period thus remains heavily dependent on French sources, official and unofficial, most of which are suffused with orientalist views on the Islam and Muslims, racial and cultural biases toward North Africans, an unquestioning assumption that French rule was equivalent to modern civilization and human progress, and an epistemological fantasy that tradition and modern cannot be evolving, interacting categories: the former represented by Morocco and latter by France. Yet, even with these limitations, a study that is willing to look beyond the standard paradigms of nationalism and resistance can glean from these sources a more nuanced sense of how Moroccans came to making choices that –at times heroically and at great personal sacrifice– served France, Morocco, and their own individual interests at the same time.³⁸

Collaboration and Rational Choice

Reflections on the early history of Franco-Spanish conquest and then the installation of the French/Spanish Protectorates, reveal a period of extreme political, economic, and cultural turmoil and uncertainty where individual actors and groups were called on to make choices and assessments within new and uncertain frameworks. It was a period during which themes such as loyalty to a nation, reference to non-Islamic standards for moral guidance, and engagement in a political system regulated by a constitution were just beginning to make their appearance. They did not yet have the certainty of definition and exclusion that they would take on some fifteen to twenty years later. Cooperation with the new French regime and the support of it when it came under attack in 1914-18, seemed to many a rational choice, not a pleasant one, but certainly not a treasonous one. It was a choice that seemed

37. Richard S. Fogarty, *Race and War in France: Colonial Subjects in the French Army, 1914-1918* (Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 2008), 181-82; Bekraoui, *Les Marocains dans le Grande Guerre*, 131; Charles-Robert Ageron, *Les Algériens Musulmans et la France (1871-1919)*, 2 vols (Paris: Presses Universitaires de France, 1968), II, 1185. The quote regarding food, weather, etc. is found in Miller, *A History of Modern Morocco*, 103; Rivet, *Lyautey et l'institution du Protectorat.*, II, 21.

38. An example of the nationalist approach to Morocco's modern history would be Allal al-Fasi, *Muḥādarāt fī al-Maghrib al-'Arabī mundhu al-Ḥarb al-'Alamiyya al-'Ula* (Cairo: Jami'at al-Duwal al-'Arabiyya, Ma'ahad al-Dirāsāt al-'Arabiyya al-'uliyā, 1955), 1-31; and Idem, *The Independence Movements in Arab North Africa*. Trans. Hazem Zaki Nuseibeh (New York: Octagon Books, 1970).

to promise a return to a degree of order and peace within a framework that seemed to preserve the essentials of the system in place when the European invasion commenced, and provide a basis for adjusting to and benefiting from opportunities which the early Protectorate, the Protectorate of Resident General Lyautey, seemed to offer to those willing to work with it. Hence, looking more closely at the circumstances lived by Moroccans in the years just before and during the Great War seems a possible way to shed some light on the question of how it was possible for so many Moroccans to see benefit—or at least less harm than was anticipated—in working with the Protectorate government, and in substantial numbers to make the supreme sacrifice on the battlefields of France.

One of these circumstances was, of course, the clear evidence of the superiority of French military technology, training, and organization. As has been discussed above, French artillery and rapid-fire weapons repeatedly destroyed resistance forces, devastated their villages, camps, and fortresses, and inflicted heavy casualties. In desperation, many resisters turned to the promises of holy men that their *baraka* (divine blessing) would make their followers impervious to the killing power of the modern weapons fielded by their enemies, only to have their zealous ranks mowed down by volleys of shrapnel and withering machine gun fire. Modern firepower gave the state and overwhelming advantage in the colonial situation, making decisions to pursue combat in the face of such devastating odds, more and more difficult, even for the bravest of resistance fighters.

Despite Lyautey's complaints regarding the significant drawdown of French regular forces, the Resident General, using his extensive political connections in Paris assured the replacement of his best troops with equal numbers French Territorial troops and obtained authorizations to maintain Moroccan auxiliary forces (*goumiers*, *mukhaznis*, *partisans*) at pre-war levels. The size of the Protectorate's occupation corps in Morocco therefore remained relatively constant between 1914 and 1918. This permitted him to ignore the Ministry of War's orders to withdraw to the coast and to continue instead his offensive against the resistance throughout this same period, with frequent enough success to add considerably to the territory under the Protectorate's control by war's end.³⁹

39. On force levels during the period 1913 to 1919: Gershovich, *French Military*, 80.

Another factor that framed Moroccans' choices regarding the Protectorate, was popular concern—at least for the great majority of Moroccans at the time—for the person and authority of the 'Alawi sultan, a descendant of the prophet of Islam and a member of the religiously ennobled family that had ruled Morocco since the XVIIth century. By March, 1912, sultan Mawlāy 'Abd al-Ḥafīz, who had seized power from his brother, Mawlāy 'Abd al-'Azīz in 1908, on the promise to an enraged and fearful population that he would pursue a policy of *jihād* against foreign intervention, especially the efforts by France to bring Morocco into its empire, was forced to sign the Treaty of Fez (30 March) which in fact placed Morocco under French tutelage. As has been noted, several units (*tabors*) of the royal army stationed in Fez subsequently mutinied on April 17, killing their French instructors and touching off days of rioting in Fez in conjunction with a general uprising of the tribes in central, eastern, and northern parts of the country. Mawlāy 'Abd al-Ḥafīz was forced to abdicate on August 9, 1912 and left Morocco for France aboard a French warship on August 12. On the 15th of July Ahmed al-Hiba ibn Mā' al-'Aynayn proclaimed himself “Sultan of the *jihād*” (*Imām al-Mujāhidīn*) at Tiznit and began his march toward Marrakesh, accompanied by ever increasing numbers of partisans from the Sahara, the Souss, and the High Atlas regions. By the time he reached Marrakesh, his force was approximately 10.000 strong. He entered the city on August 18, and was “immediately proclaimed sultan by the 'ulamā of the city.”⁴⁰ Contrary to what was assumed in Paris, it was clear to people on the ground in Morocco (like Lyautey) that his movement represented something more than the traditional *Siba* (dissidence). He proposed a miraculous solution to the nation's crisis. Large and diverse sectors of Moroccan society were sufficiently alarmed at the brutality of the French efforts to re-impose “order” in the Fez area and a deepening sense of uncertainty about the fate of the 'Alawi sultanate, its government, and the future of Muslim Morocco generally, for a moment, to take him seriously as a credible leader. Even men of property and proponents of peaceful reform of the state began to consider this radical option. Letters published in the Tangier based newspaper, *'Al-Ḥaqq* (anti-French, Pan-Islamist, published by two Egyptians under the “protection of the Spanish Legation in Tangier and distributed through the Spanish Consular Post) suggest the extent of the desperation and “end of the world” feeling that gripped the Moroccan population at that time, putting people at a loss for what to do, for what course

40. Edmund Burke, III, *Prelude to Protectorate in Morocco: Precolonial Protest and Resistance, 1860-1912* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1976), 199-207.

to choose. “We no longer know in the name of whom to pray; there is no longer a sultan,” stated the outcries published in *’Al-Ḥaqq*.⁴¹

In the midst of this crisis, on 13 August, 1912, the successor to Mawlāy ‘Abd al-Ḥafīz, his brother, Mawlāy Yūsūf bin al-Ḥassan was proclaimed sultan at Rabat, the new capital of Morocco under the Protectorate. The proclamation was made “amid popular indifference and a certain coolness on the part of the *’ulamā* and notables.” Nonetheless, many of the latter offered their *bay’a* (pledge of allegiance) to the new sultan on August 19, in a tense, somewhat sullen, but calm atmosphere. Parts of the country, like the Tafilalt, withheld their *bay’a* until after the demise of al-Hiba’s sultanate north of the High Atlas Mountains seemed certain.⁴²

The Protectorate and the Sultanate

Deeply shaken by the events that had unfolded since March, 1912, Lyautey realized when entering Morocco after the signing of the Treaty of Fez, that he could very well be entering a political void, where no sector of Moroccan society might offer support for the Protectorate; where, contrary to his earlier impressions, the uprising against it was truly nationwide, if not exactly nationalist, in scope. His very conception of what a Protectorate should be: a system of French tutelage and control that operated through the government of a sovereign state (as opposed to a more direct form of colonial rule, such as the one France had imposed on Algeria) would be unworkable if the Moroccan state and its ruling house collapsed. His first priority therefore was not to bring modern civilization to Morocco, but to restore basic elements of its traditional system. That, first of all, meant he had to restore the sultan, his army, and *makhzen* to a credible level of sovereignty and authority in order for his notion of a protectorate to work at all.

Aside from the conceptual contractions built into this paradigm for “indirect colonial rule,” he faced constituencies, both in Morocco and in France that were at least skeptical concerning the feasibility and possibility of implementing such a plan.⁴³ Despite the odds, Lyautey, with his customary energy and flair, leavened by a real fear that inaction, or resort to just military action, would lead to an “Algerian” solution for Morocco, launched an ambitious program to revive and restore a traditional Morocco that he

41. Regarding *Al-Ḥaqq*, see: Christiane Sourieu-Hoebrechts, *La Presse Maghrébine: Libye-Tunisie-Maroc-Algérie* (Paris: Éditions du Centre National de la Recherche Scientifique, 1975), 40 and Burke, III, *Prelude to Protectorate in Morocco*.

p. 205; The quotation from *Al-Ḥaqq* is reproduced in Rivet, *Lyautey et l’institution du Protectorat* I, 138.

42. Rivet, *Lyautey et l’institution du Protectorat* I, 170-1, and fn. No. 123.

43. *Ibid.*, I, 171-2.

imagined had been in existence on the eve of the Protectorate. While sharifian and French troops subdued rebellion in the central parts of the country, and drove remaining resistance forces further and further to the periphery, he pushed through the proclamation of Mawlāy Yūsūf as the new sultan and undertook a rigorous program to educate him in the affairs of government and the country, about which the new sultan knew very little and in which at first he seemed to take little interest. Chosen no doubt because he “posed no threat to the Protectorate (unlike his brother, Mawlāy ‘Abd al-Ḥafīz), he was, at first perhaps a little too “malleable” to be seen as anything but Lyautey’s puppet; a “*sultan beni oui oui*” as many called him, sequestered in the palace away from public view and from the decision-making processes which might demonstrate his seriousness and competence as a ruler of the country.⁴⁴ However, under the solicitous tutelage of Lyautey and the new grand vizier, Muhammad Guebbas, Mawlāy Yūsūf soon exceeded his tutors’ expectations in terms of his knowledge of government affairs and his growing interest in taking a more active, public role in the affairs of the country.⁴⁵ Lyautey was eager to associate the sultan with activities that could undermine the popular notion –at first commonly put about in the markets of the country– that Mawlāy Yūsūf was the “Sultan of the French.” Above all he had to restore at least the “appearance of the sultan’s power and his religious integrity, in a way in which he would symbolize –beyond the foreign presence– the durability of Moroccan identity.” In short, it was a plan to use the sultan without compromising him: “to conserve the position of sultan as *sharīf*, crowned monarch and untouchable Muslim.”⁴⁶

To these ends Lyautey insisted that all military operations against the resistance, including those of the Great Qaid’s in the south against al-Hiba and other groups, be carried out in the name of the sultan and with his representatives formally in command. Mawlāy Yūsūf responded enthusiastically to this policy and by 1913 was eager to undertake extensive travel within the submitted regions of the country. At every opportunity, Lyautey associated the sultan with the inauguration public works projects: the opening of new roads, factories, and railroads. He also participated in the openings of the very popular trade and craft fairs that Lyautey organized during the war period, and received intensive media coverage as he visited the various displays surrounded by other fairgoers. Religious feasts were carefully choreographed to highlight the sultan and tradition and at the same

44. Ibid.

45. Charles-André Julien, *Le Maroc Face aux Impérialismes, 1415-1956* (Paris: Éditions Jeune Afrique., 1978), 108-9.

46. Rivet, *Lyautey et l’institution du Protectorat I*, 173.

to associate him with popular celebrations which always drew large crowds of people.⁴⁷

The Sultan and His Troops

With the outbreak of the Great War and mobilization of Moroccan people and resources for the defense of France, Mawlāy Yūsūf immediately fell in with the Protectorate's requests for assistance from Morocco. A number of his letters and proclamations to Moroccan troops have survived. In these documents the sultan is no doubt putting his name to texts which were placed before him by Protectorate officials. However, it is also clear that he was able to use this opportunity to continue the process of his rehabilitation as a credible Moroccan sultan –something which Lyautey no doubt highly approved of, even though it was an opportunity that could (and did) lead to problematic outcomes for the French. The letters emphasized that the troops being addressed were the sultan's Moroccan troops; that they were being sent to Europe to aid a friendly and benevolent France and its Allies in the struggle against Germany. While the sultan acknowledged the role that French officers, "and other representatives of French authority" had played in training his troops, his letters put more emphasis on explaining their achievements and capabilities as due to the qualities of the soldiers themselves. The letters and proclamations are lavish with praise for their accomplishments and emphasize how these attest to their own military qualities, their "warrior virtues" which they have inherited from a long and prestigious proud ancestry. The sultan encouraged his troops to give their best in order to provide an example for the soldiers of many races fighting beside them and in order to leave a glorious memory with their families for generations to come. The sultan assured his troops that they would achieve victory alongside Muslim troops from many parts of the Muslim world. Indirectly the royal correspondence suggests that their adversaries –which by late 1914, included the Muslim Ottoman Turks– were tyrannical and misguided. None of these documents mention Holy War.⁴⁸ The Ottoman proclamation of *jihād*, issued in early November, 1914, is not mentioned and seemed not at all to resonate in Morocco at court or in the country generally, even though small Pan-Islamic groups existed in several Moroccan cities, and German and Turkish propaganda was widely circulated

47. Ibid., I, 174-5.

48. Example of the royal letters to Moroccan troops can be found in: Mohammed Nehlil, *Lettres Cherifiennes* (texts) (Paris: Librairie Orientale & Americaine, 1943), Letter No. CXXVIII (27 Ramadan, 1332/19 August, 1914); another royal proclamation made to Moroccan troops on the Western Front can be found in Bekraoui, *Les Marocains dans la Grande Guerre.*, text and translation of proclamation dated 5 Moharram, 1333/23 November, 1914, 349-51.

in Morocco during the war.⁴⁹ Rather, the rationale advanced for service in war in these documents was strikingly non-religious, focusing as they do on actions expected of royal troops, the glorification of the fighting men, their families and ancestors, and on the duty to assist France and its Allies, for very material reason that they have been friendly benefactors of Morocco. *Jihād*, of course was the rhetoric of the Moroccan resistance, the opposite choice of collaborating with the Protectorate. Hence, the performance of the Moroccan troops on the battlefields of Europe and their close identification with the sultan throughout the war, not only pleased Lyautey and the French, but constituted early steps toward giving both army and sultan greater credibility in the eyes of many Moroccans, something concrete to build on in the decades following the war. It was also important for future political developments that Moroccan troops fought in France as Moroccan troops, as loyal subjects of the Sultan, Mawlāy Yūsūf, under their own flag (1915), as allies of France: a status insisted on by Lyautey who resisted French government efforts to integrate the TAM/RMTM into the regular French army.⁵⁰

Islam in the Great War

Another framing circumstance of this period was the marked solicitude of the Protectorate for Islam in Morocco. At Lyautey's insistence Islamic sites and rituals were respected and often renovated. The *'ulama*, sufi brotherhoods, and popular *marabouts* ("friends of God" of local and regional significance) were given patronage, signaling to the population that their religion was not in danger, as a great many people feared, in a Morocco associated with the French. Lyautey went out of his way to show respect and concern for the traditional readings and practices of Islam and to affirm his intention to keep them in place. One aspect of his treatment of Mawlāy Yūsūf was his intention to reestablish the sultan's religious authority and prestige in the Islamic context. Many among the religious leadership especially appreciated this attention to Islam as they knew and practiced it, after their brief, and somewhat infatuated encounter with al-Hiba, whose politics of *jihād* seemed attractive in the tumultuous circumstances of 1910-1912, but whose understanding and

49. Mustafa Aksakal, " 'Holy War Made in Germany'? : Ottoman Origins of the 1914 Jihad," *War in History* 18 (2) (2011): 184-99; Edmund Burke, III, "Moroccan Resistance, Pan-Islam and German War Strategy 1914-1918," in *Francia: Forschungen zur Westeuropaischen Geschichte* (Munich: Artemis Verlag) Band 3 (1975): 434-64; al-Fasi, *The Independence Movements in Arab North Africa*, 106-9.

50. Gershovich, *French Military*, 175. Maurice Durosoy, in his article on the "Soldats Marocains," published in *Renseignements Coloniaux* (July, 1932): 286-90 quotes a Moroccan soldier serving in France as saying proudly that "we are Moroccans, but we fight like French (sic.), 199 and fn 14.

practice of Islam turned out to be very problematical once he came in contact with religious leaders and scholars north of the Atlas Mountains.⁵¹

Religious leaders at all levels were mobilized in support of the war effort. The Shurfa of Ouezzan and their Tayyibiyya brotherhood, ‘Abd al-Qādir bin Muḥammad al-Sharqāwī, leader of the influential Sharqawiyya *zāwiya* in Budjad, the ‘ulamā of Marrakesh, prominent scholars in Fez, like Aḥmad bin al-Mouazz and ‘Abd al-Ḥayy al-Kettānī as well as others, issued statements of support for France and the Moroccan efforts to assist her in the war against Germany. The Tijāniyya, Nāsiriyya and other brotherhoods encourage their followers in North Africa and West Africa to join the war effort as soldiers and workers. ‘Ulamā were especially mobilized to refute the validity of the Ottoman call for *jihād* against France and her allies. All of them were harshly critical of Ottoman claims to the caliphate and, hence, the legitimacy of its call for holy war. Many wrote strong criticism of the Ottoman sultanate’s claim to be a legitimate Islamic government and criticized its harsh treatment of Muslims within its dominions. None of the *fatwas* and letters that have survived call for holy war on Morocco’s part. The solicitation and publication of these documents was undoubtedly choreographed by Protectorate authorities. Nonetheless, they represent a wide range of religious sanction for cooperation with the French war effort. They clearly were addressed to Muslims who had concerns about serving France and about participating in combat against other Muslims and provided them with a rationale for deciding in favor of support for the French.⁵²

The French and the sultanate were also solicitous about providing for the ritual requirements of Islam for the soldiers of the Moroccan army in Europe. Throughout the war, demands from the troops and the pressure of Ottoman propaganda critical of the treatment of Muslims fighting for the Allied side, as well as the interventions of General Lyautey moved French military and civilian officials to initiate measures to address concerns about such issues as proper Muslim burial practices, dietary requirements, prayer spaces, assignment of *imams* to the troops at the front, the observance of Islamic feast days and the accommodation of fasting during the month of Ramadan.

51. As-Sūsī, *Autour d’une Table d’hôte*, 154-65.

52. Some of these documents were collected and published in the Arabic original with French translations in “Les Musulmans Français et la Guerre,” *Revue du Monde Musulman* (Paris: Ernest Leroux, Editeur, for La Mission Scientifique du Maroc), Vol. XXIX (December, 1914). For the mobilization of brotherhoods like the Tijaniyya who had a large following in North and West Africa in support of the Allied Powers’ war effort, see: Muḥammad al-Rādī Gannūn al-Ḥassani al-Idrissi, *Rasā’il al-‘Alāma al-Qāḍi al-Ḥājj Aḥmad Skīrij al-Ansāri al-Khazraji*. 2 vols., (Rabat: Imprimerie Royale, 1997), Vol. 1, 16-7.

Despite their ambivalent, and often biased attitude toward Islam and Muslims, the French did make some serious efforts to meet the particular needs of their Muslim soldiers, which was often a matter not easily accomplished in the chaotic conditions of combat in the trenches. Moroccan troops responded positively to the efforts to meet their religious requirements. They were not, it seems, at all persuaded by German and Turkish propaganda directed to them as Muslims and against France. The Moroccan force, which was, at least in principle, an all volunteer force had a very low desertion rate compared to other North African and French units. Their French officers –often to their expressed surprise,– found them more stoic and less complaining than other North African soldiers. They were famous for their zeal and skill in combat against the Germans and their allies, and well-known for their willingness to take high casualties.⁵³

Lyautey's solicitude for Islam from the outset of the Protectorate made sound political sense for both French and Moroccan actors in this intense encounter. It clearly allayed fears regarding the demise of the religion and preserved a substantial portion of the religious elite –starting with the sultan– in place, making them de facto collaborators with the new regime, which seemed a rational choice for all concerned. However, as time passed, and especially in the years after the Great War, Lyautey's policy regarding Islam tended to have an “embalming” effect. The Islam he intended to respect was an Islam frozen in place, unique to Morocco, cut off from trends of change within the Islamic world. “Religion came to be regarded merely as a tool for political quietism. The (Protectorate, perhaps even the *Makhzen*) authorities wanted it to be the opium of the people and it is difficult to regard drug-peddlers with respect. They aimed at keeping the country in the most obscurantist form of Islam under subservient leaders. Thus, when the crisis came, their allies were not, as Lyautey had always hope they would be, the best and most progressive elements in the country, but the worst and the most reactionary.”⁵⁴

The Great War and the Moroccan Economy

The Protectorate also undertook many initiatives in the economic sphere that in the early years seemed accessible to all Moroccan, and promised economic benefits to many. The Great War, on the one hand, brought economic hardship, on the other it brought new prosperity for those who were in a position to provision the *metropole* with commodities or manpower. Lyautey during the war accelerated efforts to mobilize the Moroccan economy for

53. Richard S. Fogarty, *Race and War in France: Colonial Subjects in the French Army, 1914-1918* (Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 2008), 182-95.

54. Bidwell, *Morocco under Colonial Rule*, 152.

French needs and to create the impression that the Protectorate was and would be a font of material benefits for the whole country. Trade fairs promoting agriculture, trade, and industry were organized and received popular reception. Large sums were spent from the Protectorate budget for construction of railroads, roads, and the improvement and creation of ports. Incentives were offered Moroccan farmers to bring new lands under cultivation, increasing land under agricultural production from 1.583.000 hectares ((1 hectare =2.47 acres) in 1915 to 2.245.000 hectares in 1918. 98% of this land was farmed in these years by Moroccan fellahin. The *colon* community during this period accounted for only 2%. *Colons* who were farmers were exempt from military service as long as they continued to work the land.⁵⁵ Livestock production was also promoted and the number of animals (cattle, sheep, and goats) nearly doubled during the war years.⁵⁶ Moroccan agricultural exports boomed, increasing from 31.000.000-Ff in 1914 to 114.000.000 Ff in 1918.⁵⁷ In 1914, Morocco was largely a subsistence economy. 80% of the population (of 5.400.000) was made up of peasant farmers and stock raisers. All still used traditional agricultural techniques and technology. Agriculture then was rain fed, except for a small number of areas where irrigation was possible from wells, *kheṭṭara* systems, or gravity flow diversion from rivers and streams. Fortunately, the weather during the war years was favorable: 1916 and 1918 saw good harvests; 1914, 1915, and 1917 were average years. Cereal production (wheat and barley) therefore could be increased by approximately 25%-30% during the war years.⁵⁸

However, much of the potential advantage to Moroccan producers was offset by the increase and generalization of taxes: the *tertib*, a tax levied as a percentage of all agricultural production, as well as taxes on tea, sugar, and a variety of documents related to official transactions. In August, 1914, the Protectorate fixed prices, authorized a government monopoly on the purchase of “strategic agricultural products, and passed a law authorizing requisitioning by military supply officers. Moroccan grain reserves were quickly bought up for export to France, eliminating cereal reserves critical for the sustenance of the population in the event of poor harvests. In general, in the course of the war years, foodstuffs and other commodities were increasingly in short supply, or not available. Prices increased accordingly. Bread became more expensive in Morocco than in war-torn France. A black market in essential

55. Bekraoui, *Les Marocains dans la Grande Guerre*, 171-2.

56. *Ibid.* 173.

57. Pennell, *Morocco Since 1830*, 178.

58. Bekraoui, *Les Marocains dans la Grande Guerre*, 169-171.

goods flourished. Farmers produced more, but had to sell at fixed prices for the French market and had to pay whatever gains they realized toward increasing tax obligations and production costs. Hence, while elite merchants and sectors of the emergent bourgeoisie did well or made fortunes, the majority of the population suffered increasingly as the war dragged on.⁵⁹

Economic conditions are often given as the principal reasons for Moroccans “volunteering” for military service. Sources do not permit us at this stage to know very much about their individual motivations for enlistment, during the 1912-1918 period, but external evidence suggests the “coercive” conditions, to use Driss Maghraoui’s term, be they economic, political, or social— and one might add, environmental, given the frequency of poor harvests— did play a primary role in individuals’ decisions to enlist in the TAM and the Goumiers. Many joined up for other more personal and professional reasons, but the economic incentive of annual reenlistment bonuses (@ 50 Ff (1912-1915) and then 60Ff (1915), daily pay, a clothing allowance, and rations, even though meager (i.e. derisory) by French standards, seemed the most common reason for entering service in the new army or auxiliary forces. In some instances, enlistment bonuses went directly to soldiers’ families, which no doubt constituted another incentive for enlistment, given the extremely marginal economic conditions they typically endured, and the fact that these conditions were often exacerbated by destruction resulting from resistance to conquest. Recruits came from all over Morocco, even from territories not yet under *Makhzen*/Protectorate control, where extreme social and economic dislocation and hardship were the common fate of thousands of Moroccans during the period 1912-1914, and no doubt played a determining role in the decisions of many to enter government service.⁶⁰ For these men, as for railroad workers, and Moroccans who were recruited to work in France during the war, their decision to enlist was seen as a rational choice. It was not a choice about national identity. They were Moroccans and proud of the fact. Serving in the military forces of the sultan, or in other roles at his behest still meant a measure of social and professional prestige. It was not conceived of as an act of resistance or collaboration. It certainly was not seen as an expression of loyalty to France, although some Frenchmen grudgingly thought so, and

59. Bekraoui, *Les Marocains dans la Grande Guerre, 173-191*; Charles F. Stewart, *The Economy of Morocco, 1912-1956* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard Middle Eastern Monograph Series, Harvard University Press, 1967), 57.

60. Rivet, *Lyautey et l’institution du Protectorat*, I, 23-25; Driss Maghraoui, “The Moroccan Colonial Soldiers: Between Selective Memory and Collective Memory,” in *Beyond Colonialism and Nationalism in the Maghreb: History, Culture, and Politics*. Ali Abdullatif Ahmida, ed. (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2000/2009), 49-70.

much was made in post-war writing about the Moroccan army of the loyalty shown by Moroccan soldiers for their French officers.⁶¹

Resistance a Problematic Option centers of resistance

Finally, a critical framing reality for decision making among Moroccans during the early years of the Protectorate was the fact that while the resistance movements active throughout this period all proposed ridding the country of foreign occupation and, therefore, promised an opportunity to fulfill the religious obligation to engage in *jihād*, none of them had by 1914, or during the war, proven themselves even close to achieving this goal. The resistance managed to win several significant battles against French forces at El-Herri in the Middle Atlas, near Khenifra, (13 November, 1914) and in the Tafilalt (6 August, 1918), but these were isolated triumphs, not followed up on, and hence, unsuccessful in turning back *makhzen*/French advances in both the northern and southern parts of the country. The resistance in the countryside would continue to harass the Protectorate throughout the 1914-1918 period and well beyond until 1934, when the rural resistance was officially declared over.⁶² For a short time in 1912, rural and urban resistance seemed to coalesce into a movement of “national” scope, which Lyautey and many in the Protectorate regime truly feared would confine French presence to the coastal cities. Lyautey expressed this fear in a letter to Emmanuel Rousseau, the French Minister of War, Millerand’s *chef de cabinet* (Rabat, 24 October, 1912); “I feel Morocco is slipping away under my feet: the generalization of the national movement has taken on all of a sudden a violence and cohesion, and a rapidity which makes us very fearful. I must envisage the eventuality where everything is going to come apart and where we would be thrown back onto the coast.”⁶³ However, vigorous intervention by *makhzen* and French troops under Generals Moinier and Gouraud, scattered this movement and thereafter, while armed resistance continued, it never again –despite some German efforts to the contrary– was able to pose a unified challenge to the Protectorate.⁶⁴ The several centers of

61. Rivet, *Lyautey et l’institution du Protectorat*, II, 25-35; Maghraoui, “Moroccan Colonial Soldiers,” 66-8.

62. There is considerable literature extant on the Franco/*Makhzen* conquest of the French zone of the Protectorate. Useful surveys of these campaigns can be found in William Hoisington, *Lyautey and the French Conquest of Morocco*, and Douglas Porch, *The Conquest of Morocco* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1993); For conquest in the Spanish Zone, see C.R. Pennell, *Morocco since 1830: A History* (London: Hurst & Company, 2000), 154-241.

63. Quoted in Rivet, *Lyautey et l’institution du Protectorat*, I, 125.

64. For German efforts to undermine French control in Morocco and disrupt the flow of material assistance from the Protectorate to France during the Great War see, Edmund Burke, III, “Moroccan Resistance, Pan-Islam and German War Strategy, 1914-1918,” in *Francia: Forschungen zur Westeuropaischen Geschichte*, Band 3 (1975): 434-64 and Albert Bartels, *Fighting the French in Morocco*. Trans. H.J. Stenning (London: Alston Rivers, Ltd., 1932).

resistance' inability to cooperate and communicate with each other and their chronic and woeful lack of weapons and other materiel were compounded by the various movements' differences regarding political goals beyond ridding the country of the French and Spanish invaders. Each of the movement leaders: Aḥmad al-Hiba (Southwest), 'Abd al-Malik bin 'Abd al-Qādir (North and East) and M'barak bin Ḥussain al-Touzounini (Tafilalt) saw themselves as future sultans, and each of them had substantially differing conceptions of what political and religious life would be like under their rule.⁶⁵ Hence, from the point of view of doctrine, practice, and expectations these movements embodied a direct challenge not just to French occupation, but to the reigning sultanate, the *makhzen*, and the prevailing political, social, and religious order in the rest of the country as well. As a consequence they were dismissed, or outright rejected by significant segments of Moroccan society, even without French encouragement, and gradually lapsed into several regional movements which were pushed back in turn to the point of their extinction.⁶⁶ Resistance therefore did not represent, even prior to the world war's outbreak, a clear or un-problematical choice for many Moroccans, contrary to many resistance narratives which would come to prevail in Moroccan historiography later. None of the resistance movements offered the peace and stability that Lyautey's Protectorate demonstrated possible, nor promised the preservation of the social and political order extant prior to the arrival of foreign forces, which a great many Moroccans were deeply concerned about and which Lyautey explicitly encouraged and acted to do. Other choices regarding resistance were active during this period. The constitutionalist movement that came into existence at the time of the revolt of Mawlāy 'Abd al-Ḥafīz (1908) and militated around the *Lisān al-Maghrib* group was still active in Tangiers and Fez. There were also Pan-Islamist groups, with links to Ottoman and German intelligence and propaganda operations and Salafists who looked to the Arab east for support and inspiration in their efforts to reform Islamic practice and thought in Morocco. Although the existence and activities of these groups would resonate strongly with nationalist and resistance discourses later, they were of little consequence during the first decade of the Protectorate or during the war years.⁶⁷

65. For Touzounini: 'Abdallah Hammoudi, "Aspects de la mobilisation à al campagne, vue a travers la biographie d'un Mahdi mort en 1919," in *Islam et Politique au Maghreb*, édité par Ernest Gellner, Jean-Claude Vatin, and Abdellah Hammoudi (Paris: Éditions du CNRS, 1981), 47-55; for Ahmad al-Hiba: Ibrahim Karidiya, *Thawrat al-Hibah bin Mā' al-'Aynayn* (Casablanca: Sharikat al-Tibā'a wa al-Nashr, n.d (1988); "El Hiba Fils de Ma El Ainin," *Renseignements Coloniaux*, supplement No. 3 to *L'Afrique Française*, March, 1917 and *Ibid.*, No. 4, April, 1917; for 'Abd al-Malik bin 'Abd al-Qādir: Albert Bartels, *Fighting the French*.

66. Rivet, *Lyautey et l'institution du Protectorat*, I, 142; Gershovich, *French Military Rule*, 104-19.

67. al-Fāsi, *Independence Movements*, 82-91 and 106-11; Burke, III, "Moroccan Resistance, Pan-Islam and German War Strategy, 1914-1918, 451-61.

Conclusion

We know precious little about what Moroccans who served the king in support of France actually thought of their experience. We know even less about those at home left to grieve the loss of so many and to carry on in increasingly onerous circumstances without them. But in France as in Morocco they more strongly than ever identified themselves as Moroccan. By design and by accident, Lyautey's brilliantly choreographed installation and consolidation of the Protectorate over and over stressed this identity for soldiers, sultan, and government alike. Praise for their contribution to the war effort was fulsome and sustained throughout the war years and immediately thereafter. Participation in the Great War facilitated his endeavors considerably as French racism, cultural biases, and fear worked to keep these "colonial" soldiers separate and to themselves, while their courage, steadfastness, and skill in battle singled them out as worthy, even trustworthy, allies from a country being colonized by France, but not French.

At home, Lyautey's obsession with the implementation of a collaborative colonial regime created a range of apparently rational choices for Moroccans at all levels of society to accept some degree of association with his project. For a brief period, perhaps a decade, the circumstances which framed such decision making were such that rational choices that included working with the Protectorate seemed viable and not encumbered by concerns for bringing harm to country, regime, or religion. The promise of economic opportunity, solicitude for Islam, respect for the sultan, fragmentation of the traditional forms of resistance into a congeries of competing and confusing personal and tribal causes, and the overwhelming evidence of the colonial power's technological superiority, Lyautey's own charm and skills as a politician and showman all combined to create a growing constituency of Moroccans persuaded or compelled to cast their lot with Lyautey's dream. Their time and their choices were much more complex and much more practically and rationally focused than later resistance and nationalist discourses would admit or consider, as they sought to establish the origins of their respective narratives. It was a moment in Moroccan history usually overlooked, but extremely important to appreciate if fuller understanding of the rise of nationalism and the national liberation struggle is to be achieved. It was a brief interlude, a turning point, a time when all sides might have decided to make collaboration in a positive sense work. If there was an opportunity there it was missed. Neither the French nor Morocco would embrace Lyautey's fantasy, even though they both could not bring themselves to fully condemn

his legacy. The years after the Great War, therefore, proved to be the starting point for an increasingly contentious relationship.

Jacques Berque shows in his masterful work on the interwar years (1919-39) how differently both the French and North African soldiers, and their publics, saw their relationship after the war. “The war,” he says, “had seemed to them like a kind of divine judgment. The sons of these two military nations returned home with rival feelings; The French with the sense that this land contained their manifest destiny; the Arabs that they had earned rights, for had they not, in this war been part of France, fought her foes bravely and loyally? Now, the heroes returned to find a land already shaken by formidable currents of world opinion. Disappointment quickly followed. The readjustment between the pre-war and the post-war world looked like being difficult (sic.). Nobody realized yet –presumably through being unused to such things– that a victor earns only a single right: the right to remake himself, to become something different. His former self is doomed, and must be replaced, with all his feelings, attitudes, his whole moral code. But among the victors, self-confident through preponderance, very few had enough courage or enough prudence. Those who came home full of hope, particularly the Muslim soldiers who had seen terrible things, soon realized that everything was beginning again as it had before. With an ironic contrast between war and peace, everything was reverting to the accepted colonial way of life. In the three countries of the Maghrib things resumed their course. And this continuance was as intolerable to self-interest as to justice.”⁶⁸ In Morocco both the Spanish and French Protectorates failed to perceive the need for fundamental changes. Soon they faced the most formidable resistance movement of the period, that of Muḥammad ibn ‘Abd al-Karim al-Khaṭṭabi, and his movement to establish what was called a “Republic of the Rif.”

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ملخص: تأملات في المقاومة ومحاولة التكييف في المغرب خلال الحرب العظمى، 1914-1918

في شهر غشت من سنة 1914، واصلت بعض عناصر المجتمع المغربي انخراطها في إعلان الجهاد على القوات الفرنسية الرامية إلى فرض الحماية كأمر واقع على مجموع التراب المغربي منذ سنة 1912. ومع ذلك، فإن نظام السلطنة المغربي الذي ظل مستقلاً من الناحية القانونية ولم يدخل رسمياً كطرف في النزاع القائم عند اندلاع الحرب العظمى، ما لبث أن استجاب على الفور للدعوة الفرنسية إلى حمل السلاح. وقد أبلت القوات المغربية البلاء الحسن وأبانت عن شجاعة ملحوظة، حيث قاتلت باستماتة على طول الجبهة الغربية حتى نهاية الحرب في عام 1918. وتطرح مسألة فهم استعداد المغاربة للموت من أجل فرنسا، في وقت كانت فيه حكومتها وأجهزتها الاستعمارية بصدد فرض حمايتها على البلاد المغربية سيلاً من الأسئلة الهامة المتعلقة بالتعاون والمقاومة.

الكلمات المفتاحية: الحماية الفرنسية، القوات المغربية، المقاومة، التكييف، التعاون، الحرب العالمية الأولى، الجهاد، فرنسا، ألمانيا.

Résumé: Réflexions sur la résistance et l'accommodation au Maroc pendant la Grande Guerre, 1914-1918

En août 1914, une partie de la société marocaine se trouve engagée dans une guerre sainte contre la France qui voulait imposer son Protectorat au Maroc (1912). Légalement, le Maroc n'était pas officiellement un belligérant et n'avait pas déclaré sa participation à la Grande Guerre. Néanmoins, le gouvernement chérifien répondit sans réserve à l'appel aux

armes français. Les soldats Marocains luttèrent courageusement jusqu'à la fin des combats en 1918. Pour comprendre leur bonne volonté à mourir pour la France alors que la France combattait simultanément les Marocains chez-eux, il faut repenser la signification et les conséquences morales, sociales et politiques des actes de collaboration et de résistance.

Mots clés: Protectorat français, troupes marocaines, résistance, accommodation, collaboration, Première Guerre mondiale, *jihād*, France, Allemagne.

Abstract: Reflections on Resistance and Accommodation in Morocco During the Great War, 1914-1918

In August, 1914, large areas of Morocco were fiercely resisting the imposition of a French Protectorate (1912) over the country. Yet the Moroccan sultanate, technically and legally still an independent regime and not officially a belligerent in the Great War, responded immediately to the French call to arms.

Moroccan troops showed remarkable steadfastness and courage, fighting along the Western Front to the war's end in 1918. Comprehending their willingness to die for France, even while France was in the process of imposing its Protectorate over their country poses a number of important questions regarding collaboration and resistance.

Keywords: French Protectorate, Moroccan troops, Resistance, Accommodation, collaboration, First World War, *Jihād*, France, Germany.

Resumen: Reflexiones sobre la resistencia y el alojamiento en Marruecos durante la Gran Guerra, 1914-1918

En agosto de 1914, grandes áreas de Marruecos resistieron ferozmente la imposición de un protectorado francés (1912) sobre el país. Sin embargo, el sultanato marroquí, técnica y legalmente todavía un régimen independiente y no oficialmente beligerante en la Gran Guerra, respondió inmediatamente al llamado a las armas francés.

Las tropas marroquíes demostraron una firmeza y valor notables, luchando a lo largo del frente occidental hasta el final de la guerra en 1918. Comprendiendo su voluntad de morir por Francia, incluso mientras Francia estaba en proceso de imponer su protectorado sobre su país, plantea una serie de preguntas importantes sobre la colaboración y resistencia.

Palabras clave: Protectorado francés, tropas marroquíes, resistencia, alojamiento, colaboración, Primera Guerra Mundial, *yihād*, Francia, Alemania.