

# Morocco under Colonial Rule

French Administration of  
Tribal Areas 1912–1956

Robin Bidwell



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Tribal Areas 1912-1956**

**Robin Bidwell**

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*In memory of  
E.R. "Johnnie" Johnson, O.B.E., former  
Deputy British Agent in both Eastern  
and Western Aden Protectorates, who  
first taught me the interest of working  
with tribes, and of our comrades, the  
"up-country" members of the Aden  
Political Service*

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Naturally, no one except myself is responsible for errors or omissions.

Middle East Centre  
Cambridge  
August 1970

R. B.



# Notes on Style and Transcription

I confess to two deliberate anachronisms for the sake of style and simplicity. Hubert Lyautey became a Marshal of France early in 1921, but I have sometimes referred to him by that rank in discussing earlier events. Secondly, the Service des Renseignements officially became the Service des Affaires Indigènes in 1926 although it was often called by this name before that date. I have throughout used the more familiar name – and often the abbreviation “A.I.” – except in direct quotations.

Finally a note upon transcription. To attempt to make Moroccan names, Arabic or Berber, conform to any standard system would have involved extensive research and the result would have been to have produced names difficult to recognize in the general context of European historical writing. I have therefore adopted the following rules of thumb:

- (1) Personal names are given as the person concerned transcribes them. If he is illiterate, the name is taken from French official documents.
- (2) Place names are taken from French official maps.
- (3) Tribal names are taken from the map drawn by Bernard G. Hoffman for his *The Structure of Traditional Moroccan Rural Society* (The Hague, Mouton, 1967), which is included in this book by kind permission of the publishers. His map is the clearest that I have seen for showing the location of the tribes, and, although I do not always agree with his transcriptions, I have adopted them so that text and map should correspond.
- (4) I have transcribed standard Arabic words like shaykh and sharif in the French way as cheikh and cherif so as to avoid differences between the quotations, which are mostly in French, and the rest of the text.

In all four cases I have sometimes modified spelling in quotations in the interests of overall consistency.

I have added a glossary of the Arabic and Berber words most frequently used in this book (see Appendix I). Where such a word occurs in the glossary I have not put it in italics in the text.

Abbreviations used in references cited in the Notes, which appear at the end of each chapter, are explained in the Sources and Citations section on p. 329.

# Foreword

The modern historian concerned with North Africa suffers both from a lack of information and from an excess of it. Much material is still bound by the fifty-year rule which applies in France to official records, and there are certain matters such as the Glaoui plot against the Sultan upon which the most frank of informants prefer to remain silent. On the other hand, almost every single chapter could have been made into an entire book by the piling up of more facts culled from official sources. I hope that some day somebody else will do this and give us detailed studies of each aspect of French policy in tribal areas. What I have attempted to do is to study the aims and methods of the French administration and to illustrate them with a selection of local examples. In an attempt to disarm criticism. I should like to quote the doyenne of colonial historians, Dame Margery Perham:<sup>1</sup> “No part of history is more difficult to record intelligibly than administration. This is especially true of good administration, for while the bad is generally advertized by the protests of the administered . . . the good is likely to produce the happiness that has no history.” On the whole, I consider that the French rule of tribal areas was a piece of good administration.

This is in no sense a history of Morocco under the French. The most important matters of the time – the rise of Nationalism in the cities, industrial progress and development, the activities of the colons, etc., are mentioned only in so far as they impinge upon tribal life. It is impossible to understand events which affected Morocco as a whole without a detailed study of the internal French politics of the 1950s, but this book does not attempt to treat Morocco as a whole but as a collection of local units: it is the history of “the man in the souq” rather than that of a nation.

There are two important words that I should like to try to define in this Foreword. The first of these is “tribe” and it is a word that I approach with apprehension, well knowing that whatever I say will be condemned by some social anthropologist. For Waterbury<sup>2</sup> “a tribe is above all a mechanism by which a number of segments collectively exploit a sector of strategic resources”, while for Evans-Pritchard<sup>3</sup> “a tribe is the largest community which considers that disputes between its members should be settled by arbitration”.

However, as far as Morocco is concerned, I do not think that one can improve on the definition given by Lacouture: "L'ensemble de gens qui disent, sans trop y croire, qu'ils descendent du même ancêtre qui ont part au même système de répartition d'eau, et appellent les mêmes choses et les mêmes gens par les mêmes vocables".<sup>4</sup> Fifty years earlier Doutté had said much the same: "C'est à tort qu'on se représente les divisions des tribus sous la forme d'un arbre généalogique. Les divisions des groupes actuels des populations constituent généralement non des rameaux issus d'une même souche, mais des greffes supportées sur un pied primitif qu'il est devenu parfois impossible de discerner".<sup>5</sup> A Moroccan tribe is a group of people who have come together for various historical, social and other reasons, and who are united because they believe themselves united.

As it is not possible to give an exact definition of a tribe, it is equally impossible to estimate the precise number of them. Gellner says that "Moroccan tribes are 'segmentary' in the sense that tribal sections, sub-sections and so forth have roughly the same kind of social reality as, does the tribe itself. Consequently, it is largely arbitrary as to whether one counts a given tribe as one tribe, or whether one counts it as three tribes (because it has three primary segments) or as N tribes, because it has N sub-segments at the next level and so on".<sup>6</sup> The figure most often given is that there are something over 600 tribes in Morocco which gives an average of 10-15,000 souls in each.

The second important word is 'Protectorate' of which Revilliod says, "le mot de 'protectorat' n'est qu'une étiquette dont la commodité est de se prêter aux combinaisons les plus variées, souvent même les plus opposées".<sup>7</sup> Lyautey, whose views on the question will be expanded in Chapter II, defined it as "pas la domination d'un peuple vaincu par un conquérant, mais la libre association de deux nations; l'une la nôtre, vous apportant une organisation administrative supérieure, les ressources de la civilisation la plus avancée, les moyens matériels de tirer un meilleur parti des ressources de ce bel empire, la force nous garantissant désormais contre les interventions étrangères et contre l'anarchie; l'autre, la vôtre, maintenant son intégrité à l'abri de cette protection tutélaire, gardant son statut, ses institutions, le libre exercice de sa religion, développant dans la paix et dans l'ordre ses richesses et sa prospérité".<sup>8</sup>

In fact, a Protectorate, rather than outright annexation, was all to which France could aspire as a result of the international bargaining through which Great Britain, Italy and Germany were paid to leave her a free hand in Morocco. Making a virtue of necessity Gaillard, the first Secretary General, said that it was "tout à fait conforme à nos traditions libérales".<sup>9</sup> He went on, "le système du

protectorat offre le très grand avantage de maintenir, tout en les réformant progressivement, le gouvernement et l'organisme administratif du pays protégé. Cet avantage prend une importance toute particulière dans un état théocratique comme le Maroc . . . Avec une annexion, tous les liens qui reliaient soit les tribus soit les communautés citadines avec le gouvernement central sont rompus." Thus Morocco remained a Protectorate, ruled in the name of a theoretically still sovereign Sultan. In fact, the handles of power were so adroitly created by the French that for long periods they were able to manipulate them with as little interference as in an ordinary colony.

## NOTES

1. Perham, p. 138.
2. Waterbury, John, *The Commander of the Faithful* (London, Weidenfeld & Nicolson, 1970) p. 64.
3. Quoted by Gellner, Ernest, *Saints of the Atlas* (London, Weidenfeld & Nicolson, 1969) p. 133.
4. Lacouture, p. 225.
5. "Figuig", *La Géographie*, VII (1903), p. 186.
6. In a personal communication to the writer.
7. Revilliod, M., *L'organisation intérieure des pays du Protectorat* (Paris, Rousseau, 1913), p. 2.
8. Quoted by Taillis, J. du, *Le Nouveau Maroc* (Paris, Challamel, 1923), pp. 228-229.
9. Gaillard, Henri, "L'Histoire et l'organisation du Protectorat", *Conférences franco-marocaines* (Paris, Plon, 1916), Vol. I, pp. 89-90.

# I

## Introduction

Evans-Pritchard has outlined the normal sequence of the events that occur when a European Power sets out to dominate an area in Africa or Asia.<sup>1</sup> Firstly, the colony is conquered by superior arms and the leaders of the native population killed or suppressed. Secondly, that part of the country which is most suitable for European occupation is taken over and settled by immigrant Europeans and the natives are driven to the less attractive parts. Thirdly, the powers of the State are kept in European hands and Europeans are given higher status and economic opportunities. Fourthly, native customs and laws are preserved where they do not conflict with European interests, but where they do, they are "transformed" or "adapted". Fifthly, the ruling power sets out to raise the standards of the native population with educational, agricultural and other benefits. Sixthly, "the patterns of social relations within the native community tend slowly to take the form of European patterns as political, economic and finally even kinship and family institutions begin to conform to a European type; while in such important cultural features as language, religion, and personal laws the two peoples remain apart". Seventhly, a class of *évolués* emerges as a bridge between the rulers and the mass of the native population. We shall now discuss how these "rules" apply to Morocco.

Firstly, owing to the genius of Lyautey, the conquest of the country, although violent, did not lead to the killing of the native leaders but to their incorporation in a reorganized structure of government. The pacification (the writer keeps this word which was often used by the French as a synonym for a full-scale war) is examined in the early part of this book. This is followed by an account of the reorganization of the government as it affected tribal areas and of the use that the Marshal and his successors made of the local leaders. He was utterly determined that the conquest by Europeans should not be marked as it had been in North America and South Africa by the wholesale extermination of the native population or its

deliberate enfeeblement and debauchery by alcohol. He ensured that French entry into an area should start to confer benefits from the very moment that the shooting stopped. His former chief, Jonnart, Governor General of Algeria, had urged<sup>2</sup> that the people should not see the French only as merchants or policemen. Lyautey would have agreed whole-heartedly and at the time he left he could declare: "Pour les petites gens et surtout pour les sédentaires, il est certain qu'ils sont plus heureux qu' autrefois. Non parce qu'on leur a apporté des chemins de fer, des automobiles, des routes mais parce qu'ils sont moins opprimés, moins à la merci des pillards. Naturellement les tribus guerrières ont des regrets."<sup>3</sup> He had laid the basis upon which a happy and successful association could have continued: he had created what Berque has called "un système colonial de bonne conscience".<sup>4</sup>

Lyautey had done his best to prevent the second of Evans-Pritchards' developments – the large-scale arrival of colons – from taking place. His policy was, however, reversed by his successors and more official immigrants arrived during the three years of Steeg's rule than in the thirteen years of the Marshal. This upset the balance that Lyautey had laboured to create, for the second generation of colons felt themselves to be Africans with as much right to be in the country as the Arabs or the Berbers. At the same time, as a French-educated Muslim writer has said, "l'habitude de 'montrer à travailler à l'indigène' a détourné le colonisateur du véritable travail et l'a dépouillé du sens de sa civilisation. La pratique de l'injustice lui a désappris la justice et ses fondements. . . . Le colonisateur se décivilise lentement, il s'abrutit et se dégrade. . . . Son racisme 'anti-indigène' a exacerbé son individualisme sur le plan national et son chauvinisme sur le plan mondial. C'est ainsi que, peu à peu, une administration coloniale cesse d'être une institution impersonnelle, un organisme d'Etat et devient graduellement une compagnie d'individus, un 'gang'".<sup>5</sup> We shall see that this is exactly what happened in Morocco.

The Marshal made every effort to show that he was not in a conquered country and to maintain the fiction that the French had been invited there to help. The lower-class colons would have none of this – they were a master race. Julien has said: "Le Français se considère d'une autre essence que l'indigène, même quand il ne l'avoue pas".<sup>6</sup> Books by colons abound in such phrases as: "L'arabe est un moulin dont l'europpéen est le vent. Que le vent cesse, le moulin stoppe",<sup>7</sup> and this attitude spread to the highest level. Urbain Blanc, the Délégué of the Resident General is quoted as saying, "vous seriez indépendants quand vous saurez construire une locomotive qui marche".<sup>8</sup> For every writer who felt like the Socialist Deslinières ("Aimons-le sincèrement comme un frère attardé qui nous rejoindra

un jour",<sup>9</sup> there were many more who thought "élever les autochtones: c'est abaisser les français"<sup>10</sup> or "tout comme ils auraient voulu que jamais un enfant marocain ne franchisse le seuil d'une école, ils pensent que la misère constante du fellah est la source intarissable de la prospérité du colon".<sup>11</sup>

The French, who pride themselves upon their clear-sightedness, never seem to have realized that the contemptuous attitude of some of their number and the paternalistic condescension of others might be wounding and offensive to the Moroccan people. Indeed, few but A.I. officers and farmers seem to have known any Moroccans other than their sweepers: few troubled to learn any Arabic. Yet French writers were certain that the Moroccans loved them and their literature abounds in self-congratulation. Ladreit de Lacharrière wrote: "La France ne colonise pas comme d'autres pour exploiter mais pour civiliser"<sup>12</sup> while Colonel Azan claimed: "La France a le droit de demander le concours des indigènes de toutes races et de toutes couleurs car, à la différence de la plupart des nations, elle les traite avec un bienveillance et une générosité sans bornes"<sup>13</sup> In March 1935 *L'Afrique Française* said rather ingenuously: "La France a été très généreuse vis-à-vis du Maroc. Elle a défendu ce pays contre les convoitises étrangères".

As France was so generous and benevolent, when things went obviously wrong, it could only be the result of foreign intrigue. As early as 1925 the Chef de Région of Fez sent a secret letter to his superiors accusing the British consulate in Fez of financing Wahhabi agents against those tariqas which supported the French. *L'Afrique Française* around this time becomes richly comic in discussing the sinister elements that were manipulating Abdel Kerim against France. Apart from Englishmen like Gordon Canning (obviously an agent of the Intelligence Service), this galaxy of conspirators included a Transylvanian sailor who had worked for Bela Kun, a Hamburg Jew masquerading as a Latvian Colonel, Messrs Mollah Hassanoff and Nacher Mahmedoff (sent by the Berlin pan-Islamic Committee but really secret agents of the Comintern) and Signor Cantalupo, an Italian journalist. The escape of Abdel Kerim in 1947 provoked a frenzy of excitement among French writers who found convincing reasons for blaming it, according to taste, upon the British, Russians, Americans, Spaniards, Yemenis, Egyptians and international oil interests. Ingenious left wingers even accused the French Secret Service.

This mania for seeing France and French interests as the victims of conspiracy reached the highest level. The Resident General Boyer de Latour himself wrote: "Les Anglais, malgré de cruels mécomptes, n'ont pas encore complètement cessé la lutte séculaire



et traditionnelle contre l'Empire Française: certains personnages du Colonial Office se croient encore au temps de Fachoda",<sup>14</sup> while "La Bible d'une main, la bouteille de coca-cola de l'autre, les Américains croient faire le bonheur du monde et il leur arrive de plonger les pays où ils interviennent dans l'anarchie et le désordre". A senior official<sup>15</sup> apparently did not find it ridiculous to write at the height of the Cold War that the Istiqlal Party was jointly controlled by the U.S.A. and the U.S.S.R. A colon writer<sup>16</sup> ascribed the return of Sidi Mohammed ben Youssef and the end of the Protectorate to the machinations of the American mistress of the French Prime Minister.

The second of Evans-Pritchard's points has taken us into an air of unreality that persists in the third – the maintenance of the powers of the State in European hands. Even before the Protectorate, Brunel had recommended "Ceux-là seuls ont droit à la liberté entière qui savent et veulent s'en servir dans l'intérêt de la France".<sup>17</sup> Lyautey would have said the same about the colons: if they wished to play at politics the place to do so was in France. Steeg, the parliamentarian whose dominating characteristics seems to have been a love of his own voice, created an elective assembly. With that the mischief was done and all the bitterness of French party politics was given a platform in Morocco. If a subsequent Resident General did not consult this assembly he was denounced as a tyrant: if he did seek its views, its members asked the impossible at the expense of the unrepresented Moroccans and complained to friends in Paris if he did not grant its demands. The members saw any concession to the Moroccans as "une atteinte à leurs privilèges qu'ils confondent volontiers avec leurs droits".<sup>18</sup>

The Assembly of colons was dominated by the richest merchants and farmers among them to the extent that the system under which Morocco was ruled can best be described as an oligarchy. A group came into being consisting of the leading colons, allied to the most important of the permanent officials of the administration and with the Glaoui as its native member. Dresch wrote in 1946 "that the Sultan, an absolute sovereign had ceded his absolutism to the Resident General",<sup>19</sup> but this soon ceased to be true. The liberal experiments of Labonne made both colons and officials fear that their vital interests might be harmed and they formed an even tighter group pledged to resist any change. "Désormais, la Résidence ne sera plus obéie que dans la mesure où elle agira en accord avec ces dirigeantes occultes."<sup>20</sup> Grandval shows in his book how impossible he found it to impose his will upon his officials or upon his police officers who stood by while the Resident General was being physically assaulted by enraged colons. The Resident General had lost control

of the machine and Robert Schumann, Minister of Foreign Affairs, said "aucune réforme importante visant les relations entre la France et le Maroc ne sera possible sans un retour aux notions exactes de responsabilité et subordination hiérarchiques".<sup>21</sup>

Lyautey had established a degree of independence in internal matters that his successors were able to maintain, subject only to the possibility of their own dismissal. Schumann, although the Cabinet Minister responsible for Morocco, was unable to secure the execution of his orders in that country. If the Resident General refused to obey all that the Minister could do was to create a Cabinet crisis and perhaps bring down the Government. Schumann proved unable to dismiss Philippe Boniface – a friend of the Glaoui and of the principal colons – from the vital post of Chef de Région of Casablanca: the Resident General, under pressure from the oligarchy, said that there was no one to replace him. Too often the principal post in Morocco became a pawn in the squalid politics of the Third and Fourth Republics: in February 1934, for example, Daladier offered it to Jean Chiappe, Préfet de Police of Paris whom he suspected of Fascist tendencies and wished to remove from the city. Control from Paris was rendered yet more difficult by the almost incredible ignorance that existed in French political circles. Two examples will show this: speaking in the Senate in December 1935 Jules Hayaux, Rapporteur de la Commission des Finances, informed his colleagues: "Le mouton est l'animal sacré de l'Afrique du Nord. Chaque année les musulmans lui rendent un solennel hommage qu'on appelle la fête du mouton." Fourteen years later, the Prime Minister Ramadier was quoted as saying that the authority of the Sultan came from the fact that he was the only living descendant of the Prophet Muhammad.<sup>22</sup>

It is therefore clear that the machinery of government in Morocco towards the end of the Protectorate was controlled neither by the Government in Paris nor by the Resident General in Rabat. Léon Marchal, the former Délégué who had played such a leading part in the creation of the SMPs and was in 1955 Directeur de l'Afrique Levant at the Quai d'Orsay wrote in that year: "Le régime contractuel du protectorat se transformera en un régime d'occupation par la force."<sup>23</sup> This had indeed already happened. Those Regions like Fez which were under a military commander had been in a state of siege since 2 August 1914, while the civil area had been in the same state since September 1939. Travel within Morocco was restricted and it was extremely difficult to obtain permission to travel abroad. Under Circulaire 19/spp of 14 August 1928 no theatrical performance in Arabic was permitted without the express authorization of the Resident General. Newspapers published abroad, even in Algiers or

Tunis, were usually banned and the censorship of the local press was rigid and unimaginative. While, however, these measures of a police state were enforced, it was still impossible with modern communications to prevent people in the outside world from knowing what was happening within Morocco. The old days when Gallieni could depose a Queen and shoot a brace of Ministers unnoticed had passed for ever, and attacks in the French Parliament could sap the morale of officials and conscripts in Morocco.

Evans-Pritchard's fourth point – that native customs and laws were left alone unless they harmed European interests but were transformed if they did – is a summary in a single sentence of much of the detail of this book. It is an exaggeration to say as Frisch does: "Si Abraham tombait aujourd'hui du ciel dans une tribu quelconque, il reconnaîtrait, toujours vivantes, les habitudes, les moeurs et les idées de son temps. . . . Nous avançons, ils n'avancent ni reculent",<sup>24</sup> but there can be little doubt that there was a greater change in social behaviour under the forty years of the Protectorate than in the previous millennium. This is mainly due to the application of Evans-Pritchard's fifth point – that the ruling power sets out to improve the standard of life of the native population by economic and other advances. Even in 1914 de Caix warned that economic benefits alone were not enough to win the support of the people.<sup>25</sup> This advice went unheeded under the successors of Lyautey and although much was done for the Moroccan people, little was done by them. They received many benefits in schools and hospitals about which their opinion was never asked. At the same time they saw how very much more was done for the colons. Morocco was in fact almost a socialist state with the Government constantly interfering in every detail of the peoples' lives.

The sixth point that Evans-Pritchard makes – that some social relationships take on a European pattern while cultural features do not – is the theme of the final two chapters. It has always been a cardinal belief of Frenchmen that there is only one valid culture in the world, that it is their duty to lead all men towards it and that where adaptation is necessary it is for the non-French to give way. Olivier, a Governor General of Madagascar, said that "une bonne politique indigène est celle qui, sans rien bouscouler, permet l'évolution saine et normale des sociétés indigènes vers une forme de civilisation aussi rapprochée que possible de la civilisation occidentale".<sup>26</sup> General Noguès congratulated himself that the two peoples were coming closer together under his rule – in other words that the Moroccans were being changed: "Les milieux marocains s'impregnèrent chaque jour davantage de nos idées, de nos exigences sociales et intellectuelles et s'inspirent de plus en plus de nos

techniques. . . . Le déséquilibre qui en résulte pour la société marocaine nous impose l'impérieux devoir de veiller sans relâche à la sauvegarde politique, économique et sociale de nos protégés. . . . Il ne s'agit pas pour la France de vouloir en quelque sort synchroniser brusquement deux civilisations qui ne battent pas au même rythme. Sa mission consiste au contraire à procéder par étapes à agir avec méthode et prudence et à continuer, dans l'ordre et la paix, et sans renoncer à aucune de ses prérogatives essentielles la grande oeuvre franco-marocaine que nous commande le souvenir du Maréchal."<sup>27</sup> It is perhaps this belief that "la mission civilisatrice" which early writers so often mentioned, consisted of leading peoples towards an exclusively French culture that caused Dubly to remark that in the whole history of colonization only three figures loom as great as Lyautey – Dupleix, La Bourdonnais and Suffren.<sup>28</sup>

Evans-Pritchard's seventh stage is that a class of évolués emerges as a result of education and stands in an intermediate position between the rulers and the mass of the native population. The greatest test of any colonial power lies in its relationship with this group. Lyautey realized this in 1926: "Dans dix ans tous les problèmes qui se posent actuellement au Maroc seront remplacés par celui de l'incorporation complète des intellectuels marocains dans la vie publique, par l'organisation d'un Maroc indépendant d'autant plus attaché à la France qu'il sera plus libre",<sup>29</sup> but his successors did not. A few colons like Nahon urged "Tendons-leur la main fraternelle, efforçons-nous de les comprendre, au moins de ne pas les humilier",<sup>30</sup> but the majority saw in them only dangerous competitors for jobs.

Berriau had realized that the young people must be given a say in the administration of the country: "Il faut donner aux indigènes les moyens d'exprimer par des organes officiels leurs besoins et leurs désirs, de les faire collaborer à nos travaux et de contribuer eux-mêmes à l'amélioration de leurs conditions matérielles."<sup>31</sup> A nationalist movement was bound to form and even before there was any sign of it Augustin Bernard urged: "Il ne faut pas opposer aux mouvements nationalistes un simple *non possumus*: il faut les diriger, les guider, sinon ils se développeraient sans nous et contre nous."<sup>32</sup> The French did not attempt to do this but poured scorn upon constructive proposals like that of the Plan de Réformes of 1934. Then, falling into the most common mistake of all colonial powers, they arrested the first moderate nationalist leaders and cleared the way for a second more extreme generation to seize control of the movement.

To all demands for increased participation the oligarchy made the Government return a complete negative. General Juin himself

wrote: "Pouvait-on confier à des mains inexpertes et à des cerveaux insuffisamment préparés les mécanismes d'une administration moderne nécessitée par l'essor du Maroc nouveau? Non, certes et les Marocains eux-mêmes l'ont reconnu."<sup>33</sup> Even a liberal like Maître Buttin wrote in 1953 that independence was probably fifty years ahead.

Hypocritically this refusal to advance was justified in the name of Lyautey. The Marshal fought all his life against rigidity of any sort – "le caporalisme voilà l'ennemi: la lutte éternelle de la lettre contre l'esprit"<sup>34</sup> – but now his tradition was invoked to defend it. The methods that he had used thirty years before, the abuses that he had had to tolerate in difficult circumstances were declared inviolable while even Moroccans realized that he had been "un esprit d'élite révolutionnaire".<sup>35</sup> The Sultan himself argued: "vous avez pris en tutelle en 1912 un enfant en bas âge. Il portait un vêtement correspondant à sa taille. L'enfant a grandi: il porte toujours ce même vêtement."<sup>36</sup>

This blank refusal had two results. The Nationalists, unable to achieve anything by argument, turned to force. Once this has happened the colonial power is almost always bound to lose in the long run. Public opinion at home in the twentieth century will no longer tolerate the holding down of a subject people by force for an indefinite period. Casualties to young soldiers abroad lead to urgent questioning of the reasons why they were there. The writer while in South Arabia was told that it would not matter if he himself as a Political Officer were killed, for his death could be covered up, but the loss of a British soldier would lead to a Parliamentary question. Opposition in Parliament and attacks in the metropolitan press lead to a collapse of morale at home which spreads to officers in the field who start to feel that their task is hopeless. Meanwhile the cycle of terrorism and reprisals constantly decreases the number of local people prepared actively to support the regime. In this crucible a national spirit solidifies. In Morocco this was particularly helped by the weakening of tribal links as Montagne recognized: "La tribu meurt lentement, cependant que l'Etat moderne se constitue."<sup>37</sup> Ironically it had been the French themselves who had brought the concept of the national state based on territorial limits into the country to replace the old theocracy based on a universal religion. Their own propaganda in two wars had been a powerful spur to nationalist sentiment.

The second result of the refusal to share power was that the Nationalists felt that they needed outside help and that their obvious allies were the newly independent Arab countries. As early as 1916 *L'Afrique Française* reported that the intelligentsia were following the revolt in the Hejaz with keen interest, and Le Tourneau, writing

in the same journal in 1935, noted that the young were turning to the East for inspiration rather than to Paris. News of the liberation of Lebanon and Syria was carried everywhere by the 100,000 wireless sets that were now owned by Moroccans. A colon might sneer that "les Maghrebins sont des Pygmalions qui adorent une statue de l'Orient qu'ils ont eux mêmes sculptée: si belle et sans défauts",<sup>38</sup> but Princess Lalla Aïcha in her speech at Tangier could refer to "L'Égypte, cette seconde patrie pour tous les Arabes, cette Égypte chérie, peut prétendre à l'éminente dignité de diriger tous les peuples arabes et de se charger de les conduire vers leur plus glorieux et grand avenir".

Lyautey had realized that the Protectorate could only endure if it were supported by the privileged class and if there were no outside interference. He created a coalition of interests – the Sultan wished to extend the area under Makhzen control, the merchants of the cities wanted opportunities to trade and the colons sought to implant themselves. He was adroit enough to prevent major conflict between the groups by supporting all of them. His successors supported only one and gradually a gulf opened between Europeans and Moroccans.

France, says Berque, failed "à orienter les transformations déclenchées par elle-même",<sup>39</sup> and the writer would suggest that this was because she never really understood the Moroccan people. All colonial powers have claimed that they alone have the secret of understanding backward races – the British, the French, the Italians and the Spaniards have all claimed that they alone had this gift – but there is no standard native to understand any more than there is a standard European. It is often difficult enough to imagine what is happening in the head of someone who shares the same background and upbringing: to claim to know the thoughts of a person of a different race and religion is an arrogant absurdity. This lack of comprehension became a factor of vital political importance as the new class of educated Moroccans emerges. Instead of their being the bridge, as Evans-Pritchard says in his final point, they were the force that brought down the French protectorate. Halstead has shown how many of the leaders of the revolt were the very people that the Government should have enlisted on its own side.<sup>40</sup>

It is against this general background that we shall consider the effects of French rule upon "the man in the souq". Twentieth century opinion is that the State can no longer stand aside and leave everything to private initiative, so something has to be done in the fields of education, health and the improvement of living standards. This was in keeping with much of imperialist thought even before the principles were generally accepted in the home countries. Cromer believed that the purpose of domination was "the conferment of

moral and material blessings upon others". Lyautey and the officers inspired by him felt much the same and it is their efforts to do this and the results that they achieved which make up the second half of this book. The general pattern – the subject by subject study – if inspired by that bible of progressive imperialism, Lugard's *Dual Mandate in British Tropical Africa*.

Lugard had three principles by which he ruled Nigeria.<sup>41</sup> The first of these was generous recognition of native capabilities and institutions; the second was the integration of the latter into the new system of government; the third was the retention of wide discretionary powers by European officials in the interest of reform. These would have been acceptable to Lyautey although his successors would have been dubious of the first one. Lugard and the Marshal would have agreed upon very many points, and matters of resemblance and contrast between them are often noticed in this work. These two men were to be yardsticks by which their successors were judged and usually found wanting: of the two the writer prefers Lyautey as the warmer and more human.

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## II

### Lyautey and "La Politique Indigène"

In appointing General Lyautey to be the first Resident General in Morocco, Raymond Poincaré chose more than a man, he chose a definite and well-known policy. Lyautey's views on colonial matters were already on record. He had served with Gallieni in Tonkin and Madagascar and was known to be a disciple of his methods. In 1899 Gallieni had published his *Trois colonnes au Tonkin* which had defined his views in such phrases as "C'est l'action combinée de la politique et de la force qui doit avoir pour résultat la pacification du pays et l'organisation primitive à lui donner tout d'abord. L'action politique et action de force sont les deux principaux agents de la première période d'une occupation ou d'une conquête. Si leur combinaison réussit, une deuxième période s'ouvre aussitôt: la période d'organisation, qui a recours à une troisième facteur, l'action économique. Au fur et à mesure que la pacification s'affirme, le pays se cultive, les marchés se rouvrent, le commerce reprend. Le rôle du soldat passe au second plan, celui de l'administrateur commence."<sup>1</sup> Lyautey himself had published his article "Du rôle colonial de l'Armée" in 1900 and his letters from overseas, though as yet unpublished, had circulated widely in Paris. He had shown while commanding at Ain Sefra and in Oran the methods of pacification that he might be expected to use in Morocco. His settlement of the Beni Snassen at the end of 1907 had proved a model operation: he had converted, almost without cost, a tribe which for sixty years had been a thorn in the side of Algeria into a loyal ally. He consciously drew inspiration from the achievements of the Greeks and Romans: on the very day of his appointment, he quoted Montesquieu to Poincaré: "Alexandre résista à tous ceux qui auraient voulu qu'il traitât les Grecs en maîtres et les Perses en esclaves. Il ne laissa pas seulement aux peuples qu'il avait vaincus leurs mœurs, il leur laissa encore leurs lois civiles et souvent même les rois et les gouverneurs qu'il avait trouvés. Il fut Alexandre le Grand, parce qu'il voulut tout conquérir pour tout conserver." The General

was firmly conscious that his appointment implied support for these methods. He wrote: "Ce pays-ci ne doit pas se traiter par la force seule. La méthode rationnelle, la seule, la bonne, celle d'ailleurs pour laquelle on m'y a envoyé, moi et non un autre, c'est le jeu continu et combiné de la politique et de la force."<sup>2</sup>

Lyautey was to remain faithful to his principles throughout his career. He had a horror of rigidity of method and a great sense of flexibility, but he never wavered in his application of the principles that he had imbibed from Gallieni. He kept his essential belief that war in the colonies was not the brutal, senseless thing it was shown to be in Europe. Opening an exhibition in Rabat in 1917, he said: "La grandeur et la beauté de la guerre coloniale, c'est que, au lendemain même du combat, elle est créatrice de vie."<sup>3</sup>

### *Pacification*

The military details of Lyautey's campaigns are beyond the scope of this book, but the principles on which they were based were those on which the whole future settlement of tribal Morocco was to depend. He regarded as essential the simultaneous use of force and the holding out of future benefits. Lyautey aimed not to destroy the unsubmitted tribes but to attract them to live in peace. His instructions to General Henrys make this very clear: "Bref, châtier si cela est indispensable, mais sur tout aboutir à une paix effective, à un régime normal et stable, et faire des pays Beni Mtir et même Beni Mguild une couverture au lieu d'une menace."<sup>4</sup> His first preoccupation was to create this "couverture" for the occupied regions which were merely to consist of "Maroc utile". This he defined as "toutes les régions qui présentent: (a) un intérêt économique réel (agricole, hydraulique, forestier, minier etc.), (b) un intérêt militaire et indispensable pour garantir la sécurité et le développement des précédentes."<sup>5</sup> The General resisted all attempts to move into the mountains until he was ready, until the occupied area was thoroughly secure. He resisted, too, any attempt to mark in definite boundaries upon official maps: this meant that he was able both to advance unnoticed by the authorities at home if he wished to do so or withdraw without loss of prestige. Whenever, possible Lyautey hoped to conquer without fighting. He never tired of repeating his famous formula "Il faut manifester la force pour en éviter l'emploi". His instructions to his commanders were explicit, "L'action politique précédant et préparant toujours l'action militaire qui n'entre en jeu, *ultima ratio*, que lorsque tous les autres moyens ont échoué. . . . L'action politique se présente sous des aspects infiniment variés et procède de principes différents suivant l'organisation politique,

sociale et religieuse des populations sur lesquelles elle a à s'exercer."<sup>6</sup> This was the work of the Officiers des Affaires Indigènes who sought out potential collaborators in the unsubmitted tribes and entered into relations with anyone who could help a peaceful advance. To each group he told what it would most like to hear. These included religious leaders, personal rivals of hostile cheikhs and the few prosperous tribesmen who preferred security to their traditional anarchy. The General insisted that advances must never be so sudden as to startle the tribes into resistance, and his orders on this were categoric: "Ne jamais engager ni laisser engager une opération militaire sauf le cas d'aggression immédiate ou de force majeure sans qu'elle ait été au préalable préparée politiquement."<sup>7</sup> Lt. Col. Doury, whose involvement in the Tafilalet in 1918 without sufficient political preparation led to a reverse for French arms, received a stinging rebuke and was removed from command.

Lyautey was anxious to conquer without humiliating the tribes that he was deprived of their traditional liberty. There was often a contradiction between the global promises made to the Sultan and the individual promises made to the tribes. Sometimes a tribe was made ready to submit by purely political means but was unwilling to lose face by doing so. This led to one of the most characteristic features of the pacification of Morocco – the *baroud d'honneur* – an arranged battle took place and the honour of the tribe was satisfied. As an aid to the peaceful penetration of an area, Lyautey often opened a market on the edges of unsubmitted country with the aim of attracting tribesmen by low prices for what they needed and the army paid artificially high prices for what the tribesmen had to sell. Bugeaud had said long before, "C'est le commerce seul qui pourra nous attacher les populations arabes. Chaque arabe qui s'enrichira deviendra notre partisan. C'est un ennemi de moins et un allié de plus." If these methods did not work recourse was had to a blockade of the mountains. Most of the Berber tribes were transhumants – they moved their flocks down from the mountains in the autumn and took them up again in the spring. The French would occupy the lowland pastures and during the winter the sheep would die in the snows of the Atlas. This reduced the tribes to acute misery but sometimes led to surrender without bloodshed.

When the use of force was unavoidable, Lyautey aimed not at a frontal advance but at a converging movement of several columns which would isolate the unsubmitted tribesmen and make them feel that resistance was helpless. Lyautey was anxious that the conquest should leave as few scars as possible. He wrote to de Mun: "On ne conquiert pas de la même façon lorsqu'on pense surtout au marché qu'on devra ouvrir le lendemain sur le terrain conquis."<sup>8</sup> He insisted

that the tribesmen resisting the French advance were not criminals and should not be treated as such: they had every right to defend their liberty and their homes. The terms of submission were usually extremely easy and little more than a nominal fine was imposed. Often, as we shall see, the newly-submitted tribesmen were fighting in the French ranks the following day with arms supplied by their conquerors. Only in the case of dissidents, tribesmen who had submitted but had rebelled or *insoumis* who raided into pacified territory, were sanctions at all severe. "Généralement", wrote Commandant Colombat, commanding the Cercle des Beni Mguild, "tout dissident ou insoumis, pris les armes à la main sur notre territoire est fusillé." Tribesmen who came back from dissidence had to expect a heavy fine.

### *Postes*

There were three possible means of pacifying the country and Lyautey had to make his choice. The first method was that adopted by the Spaniards in the Riff, and to some extent by the Italians in Libya, and consisted of building large forts and leaving the dissidents alone. This method had long ago been rejected by Bugeaud who compared it to the wish of an admiral to dominate the Mediterranean by anchoring his ships around the coasts. The second possibility was that adopted by Bugeaud himself and consisted of having mobile columns constantly in motion burning the crops of the dissidents and giving them no chance to settle. The third, which Lyautey chose, was to combine these two systems. According to another of his formulae, "on ne se garde que par le mouvement", but *postes* were necessary to show that the occupation was permanent. They had also another important role to play which he had defined in Ain Sefra as early as 1903:<sup>9</sup> they were to be a "centre d'attraction et non un pôle de répulsion". They had a very positive role to play in the whole settlement of the country. He told his officers: "Je veux que mes postes donnent aux indigènes l'impression, non du provisoire mais du définitif. Ma grande préoccupation est de choisir pour eux des emplacements tels que, à la paix, la vie commerciale puisse se développer autour d'eux. Les garnisons, par leurs besoins variés, appelleront les mercantis d'abord, puis les colons. . . . Mes postes doivent être le noyau de futurs cantons de colonisation. C'est pour assurer aux colons, après la clientèle militaire, une nombreuse clientèle indigène, que j'ai établi mes postes dans le voisinage des grands marchés marocains. Ces marchés se trouvent naturellement au carrefour des grandes voies de pénétration, aux points stratégiques du commerce. Loin de chercher à dissoudre ces

marchés, je m'efforcerai de les développer. . . . La considération économique s'accorde avec la considération militaire. Tant que je tiendrai le marché au bout de mes canons, je commanderai le pays, car je puis, à ma volonté, faire l'abondance ou la famine".<sup>10</sup> Then, he went on, "les médecins passeront à l'avant-garde. Dans chaque poste, je créerai une infirmerie indigène. . . . Petit à petit, les bienfaits de la civilisation calmeront les appétits d'indépendance. Insensiblement les soldats diminueront et seront remplacés au fur et à mesure par des colons." Two more famous Lyautey phrases were attached to this policy: French influence should spread out from the *postes* like a "tâche d'huile" or like shrapnel bursting out from a single centre.

### *Indirect rule*

Lyautey realized that indirect rule was an essential ingredient of a Protectorate, for without it the regime would be a "voile jeté pudiquement sur l'annexion".<sup>11</sup> Lyautey had no doubt that "le Protectorat est la négation de l'administration directe. L'administration doit toujours y apparaître comme assurée par les autorités indigènes sous l'autorité suprême du sultan sous notre simple contrôle".<sup>12</sup> He insisted that the Moroccan officials should have real power and not act merely as a façade for French officials. This was, he admitted, extremely difficult for officials who had been raised in the Napoleonic tradition of centralization – "nous Français avons l'administration directe dans le peau". Within six weeks of his arrival, he was ordering that all officers of A.I. "doivent surtout se pénétrer de l'esprit même du Protectorat en abstenant avec soin de faire de l'administration directe, en limitant leur intervention à un contact large, éclairé et discret, bien que très actif des caïds auxquels doivent être laissées tout l'initiative et la responsabilité".<sup>13</sup> He was determined that his officers should never give the impression that they were ruling a conquered country, and that they must act through the Moroccan officials. In May 1914, Lieut. Boucly, who had executed three women in El Boroudj for poisoning a *tirailleur*, was removed from the country in disgrace. In practice as the work of the government increased, direct administration became more and more inevitable, for many of the local chiefs were illiterate and none were trained, but Lyautey would never admit this. In his report of November, 1920, he would not admit that anything had changed: "La conception du Protectorat est celle d'un pays gardant ses institutions, se gouvernant et s'administrant lui-même avec ses organes propres, sous le simple contrôle d'une puissance européenne. . . . Ce qui domine et caractérise cette conception c'est la formule: Contrôle opposée à la formule: Administration directe."<sup>14</sup>

Indirect rule meant rule through the local aristocracy, headed of course by the Sultan. Lyautey's relations with Moulay Youssef form the subject of another chapter, but it is worth noting that this was no new concept in North Africa. The Romans had ruled through Juba II and the Portuguese had left affairs of the tribes in the hands of Yahya ben Tafouft. Bugeaud had realized that the best way to prevent the nobles from becoming centres of disaffection was to make use of their services, while Lyautey himself had followed the same policy with the great chiefs of the Sud Oranais. The General elevated this practice to a principle of government: addressing the chiefs who had assembled to pay homage to the Sultan on the occasion of the Aid-el-Kebir in 1916. he said: "Le Makhzen fortuné, les Chefs héréditaires et les Pachas forment autour de lui comme une couronne élatante de bijoux précieux, et vous savez tous avec quel soin je m'attacherai toujours à ce que les rangs et les hiérarchies soient conservés et respectés, à ce que les gens et les choses restent à leurs places anciennes, à ce que ceux qui sont les chefs naturels commandent, et à ce que les autres obéissent".<sup>15</sup> No message could have been less of a call for social revolution or more gratifying to his hearers. In this he differed from his master Gallieni, whose sympathies were with the working classes who wanted security so that they could earn their bread, rather than with aristocrats who might have taste and leisure for adventure. It is, however, of interest to see how little difference in policy there was between the two marshals despite their great divergence in character and political ideals.

He was extremely indignant to find on his arrival in Fez that the cheurfa had been treated on the same basis as everyone else: "on a été ici par trop caporal". Lyautey maintained a personal contact with the upper classes of Moorish society, entertaining them, visiting them in their homes, obtaining honours for them. He made it very obvious that he enjoyed their company. "Je me sens absolument inadaptable à la société égalitaire et collectiviste" he had written,<sup>16</sup> and towards the end of his life he was still advocating aristocracy – in the Greek sense of the rule of the best people as a solution to France's own difficulties. In the absence of a full-scale biography of the Marshal we can only speculate upon his further political ideas for France. Perhaps he hoped that the evident success of the reformed monarchy in Rabat might lead to a restoration of the Bourbons in Paris. Perhaps, too, he hoped originally to come home from Morocco to save his country as Bonaparte had come home from Egypt to take command: hopes that were dashed by his disastrous experiences in 1917 as Minister of War.

*The preservation of the identity of Morocco*

Lugard laid great stress upon the assumption of British suzerainty over Nigeria: suzerainty, he said, "involves the ultimate title to all land, the right to appoint Emirs and all officers of state, the right of legislation and taxation". Lyautey was able to obtain all of this while stressing that Morocco was an independent country – a useful bulwark against day-to-day interference by the French Parliament.

Nationalist leaders like Belafrej have stated that Lyautey aimed at "la destruction de la personnalité marocaine".<sup>18</sup> This, I shall suggest, is the exact opposite of the truth. Lyautey was determined that Morocco should never be absorbed into an entity called French North Africa. When Messimy, the War Minister, said in April 1914, "Faisons l'Afrique française une", Lyautey violently repudiated the idea. He refused to sacrifice the interests of the Protectorate to those of Algeria, although the latter was part of metropolitan France. He proved, indeed, a more awkward neighbour than the marauding tribesmen had been. In January 1924 the *Chambre de Commerce* of Oran protested about "une petite guerre entre l'Algérie et le Maroc" and complained that the Marshal with his genius for publicity was winning it. Although he was unable to intervene in the Tafilalet himself, he was adamant that French troops from Ain Sefra should not do so. When he had himself commanded on the Moroccan–Algerian border he had been foremost in planning encroachments: now no one resisted them more fiercely.

He insisted on Moroccan sovereignty over all its territory, even the parts that it did not control such as Tanger and the Spanish Zone. He tried to secure Moroccan representation at the Peace Conference of Versailles and its entry into the League of Nations – a move that was blocked by Britain, which feared that Egypt would demand the same. He ordered that the cherifian anthem should be played on important occasions and that the Moroccan flag should fly over public buildings: he would have been outraged to have learned in 1953 that Moroccans were being imprisoned for waving their national banner. These were only the outward signs of his defence of the country's interest. More importantly, he urged the people to take a pride in their past, their achievements and their personality. The preservation of historic buildings attracted his most intense personal concern: he encouraged research into Moroccan history and created the Bibliothèque Générale and the Institut des Hautes Etudes Marocaines to help research. For the Exhibitions at Casablanca and Rabat samples were collected of the finest local workmanship in carpets and textiles, of woods and minerals and even

animals with the object of giving visitors an impression of the country as a whole, and the diversity of its products.

The Marshal stressed the difference between Morocco and Algeria: "Alors que nous nous sommes trouvés en Algérie en face d'une véritable poussière . . . au Maroc, au contraire nous nous sommes trouvés en face d'un empire historique et indépendant, jaloux à l'extrême de son indépendance, rebelle à toute servitude qui, jusqu'à ces dernières années, faisait encore figure d'Etat constitué, avec son hiérarchie de fonctionnaires, sa représentation à l'étranger . . . il existe encore au Maroc nombre de personnages qui, jusqu'il y a six ans, furent ambassadeurs du Maroc indépendant à Pétersbourg, à Londres . . . hommes d'une culture générale, qui ont traité d'égal à égal avec les hommes d'Etat européens . . . rien de similaire n'existe en Algérie ou Tunisie".<sup>19</sup> He tried to impress on the French Government that the Moroccans were not a clay that they could mould as they wished, but a proud, spirited and intelligent people with minds and wills of their own. It was not his duty to transform them socially into a standard modern form, classless and indistinguishable from their neighbours.

For Lyautey every facet of Moroccan life from the Sultan to the most ignorant marabout in the Bled Siba had its proper place in the scheme of things. His Director of Education, Georges Hardy, says that for the Marshal the traditional institutions of Morocco represented a sacred trust which he had not only to conserve but to reform.<sup>20</sup> Hardy goes on: "c'est le peuple marocain tout entier, avec la diversité de ses tendances, qu'il confirme dans ses traditions et dont il équilibre les forces en vue de la santé générale du pays".

As part of his respect for the character of Morocco, Lyautey firmly opposed any attempt to spread the Christian religion. This was a point on which the Muslims were particularly sensitive as it was always assumed that any conqueror would endeavour to impose his faith upon the conquered. A distinguished official, Marty, whose enthusiasm, outrunning his discretion, led him to distribute books on the Life of Jesus in Arabic, was swiftly removed from Fez. Protestant missionaries had to be regarded with particular suspicion as it was always believed that they worked for the British Secret Service. Lyautey paid ceremonial visits to the Sultan on religious occasions and attended the Festival of the Tolba in 1915, when prayers were offered for French victory. The Marshal established an absolute rule that no Christian might enter a mosque and he himself refused an invitation to enter the mosque of Moulai Idris when the cheurfa wished him to give thanks for his recovery from illness. Annually, however, he had the souqs decorated and went in procession to the outside of the mosque and put 25 golden louis



into the *robia*. Necessary action with regard to the reform of the Habous system and religious education were always taken through Muslim leaders. The Moroccan pilgrims showed their appreciation of his attitude towards their faith by bringing back from Mecca a piece of the Kiswah which they presented to him – an honour reserved for Muslim rulers.

Lyautey attempted, too, to preserve the unique character of Morocco by cutting it off from the rest of the Arab world. He is quoted as saying: “Ma plus vive préoccupation fut de le garder ainsi, passionnément provincial, ayant conservé un fort mauvais souvenir des invasions arabes.”<sup>21</sup> The Marshal was worried that Algerians and Tunisians employed as officials would bring revolutionary ideas into the country and hoped to train enough Moroccans to make them unnecessary. Nearly all Arabic newspapers, including those published in Algeria and Tunisia, Tanger and Tetouan, were banned from circulation in the Protectorate. He relied on the religious autonomy of the country as a further means of keeping it divided from the rest of the Muslim world. Finally, the Marshal realized that it was essential to provide a good Muslim education for students in order to avoid demands to study at Beirut or Cairo.

### *Use of French officers*

Lyautey usually started from the principle that anything done in Algeria was wrong. He had already criticized the famous Bureaux Arabes for “maintenant deux autorités parallèles, créant donc au lieu de l’unité d’action, un dualisme avec ses inconvénients”,<sup>22</sup> and preferred the Cercle system that Gallieni had established in Indo-China and Madagascar. The essential difference was that the local military commander was responsible both for warlike operations and for political control:<sup>23</sup> all power and responsibility was vested in a single individual. The organization that he established is discussed in Chapter IX, and here it is unnecessary to say more than that in practice there were great advantages in the concentration of all power in the hands of single army officers: a warlike people respected soldiers as a class in the way that the Chinese respected the literati, and the system was less accountable to parliamentary budgetary control. Each officer was to have a very large measure of initiative – “l’initiative c’est une désobéissance qui réussit”, said the Marshal,<sup>24</sup> who also said: “L’initiative, de toutes les vertus actives, c’est celle que j’apprécie le plus”.<sup>25</sup> Within, however, this wide margin of initiative and independence an officer must feel himself part of “L’Equipe” and any departure from the basic principles laid down by the Marshal met with instant retribution.

The Marshal would have enjoyed the saying of Lugard that "It may be said that as Faith, Hope and Charity are to the Christian creed, so are Decentralisation, Co-operation and Continuity to African administration – and the greatest of these is Continuity".<sup>26</sup> The latter was a point frequently stressed by Lyautey, who never believed in changing officers around without very good reason. He delighted to tell the story of two neighbouring islands in the South Seas, of which one belonged to the French Empire and one to the British. In fifteen years the French island had fifteen brilliant Governors, while the British had one rather stupid one. At the end of the period the British island had made much more progress than the French.

It was not easy at first to establish whose will was to prevail in Morocco. Officers who had arrived with established reputations and who had been there before Lyautey were not easy to control. A school of thought gathered around the celebrated Colonel Mangin which tried to reverse Lyautey's principle of methodical political preparation and believed in the same heroic aggression that Mangin was to show in the trenches of France. Publicists supported this school against Lyautey even after Mangin's impetuosity had led to a severe check at the hands of the Ait Ouirrah at Ksiba. Catroux commends Lyautey for his patience with a difficult, and indeed disloyal subordinate, but says that he was compelled to sacrifice Mangin to one of his basic principles: team spirit.<sup>27</sup>

Mangin's spirit, however, survived in other officers and led to the worst defeat suffered by the French in Morocco. In November 1914 Colonel Laverdure led a surprise attack on the Zaians which led to the annihilation of his column. In a morning the French had 33 officers and 613 soldiers killed and the whole position might have crumbled but for the energetic action of General Henrys. Lyautey commented bitterly that Laverdure "a été représentatif de l'école qui depuis deux ans fait néfaste au Maroc, contre laquelle j'ai eu à lutter sans relâche, qu'aucun leçon ne corrige parce qu'elle est infatuée de son infallibilité et convaincue de l'infériorité pitoyable de tous ceux qui ne la suivent pas aveuglement. Cette école a à sa tête quelques personnalités militaires spécialement de l'Infanterie Coloniale généralement formées au Soudan, grisées par le succès, par l'appui de certains milieux politiques et coloniaux, par le prestige qui s'attache toujours en France aux casse-cous." He ascribed this attitude to officers who wished to further their own careers by achieving "faits d'armes", and never succeeded completely in bringing them all under control. In October 1918 he removed Lt. Col. Mercier from command of the Cercle du Gharb for allowing his troops to be involved in an unnecessary clash, and in 1920 Lt. Col. Aubertin

was regarded as unsuitable for command in Morocco because he was too anxious for battle.

Lyautey led his "équipe" as a great conductor controls his orchestra. Full rein was given to individual talent provided that his officers conformed to the general pattern. His close collaborator, de Tarde, says that "l'Ecole de Lyautey est une Ecole de Chefs, ou plutôt l'Ecole de beaucoup d'Ecoles de Chefs,"<sup>28</sup> for the men trained by the Marshal formed their own "équipes" and passed on his message. The great figures of A.I. like de Lamothe, Parlange and Chardon, took the same pains as the Marshal to indoctrinate their subordinates.

Lyautey was himself the finest propagandist of his ideas. Constantly on the move, he visited his officers again and again, starting always with the question: "What have you achieved since my last visit?" He was accessible to all the officers of A.I. who were expected to visit him when in Rabat and who had the right to write to him directly, avoiding official channels. In 1921, for example, we find him rebuking the General Commanding at Meknes for trying to prevent Colonel Freydenberg of Qasbah Tadla from writing to him directly. Not only the officers of A.I. but doctors, teachers and colons had opportunities to put forward their views. Lyautey demanded that all the officers under his command should maintain constant contact with the people under their orders and himself set the finest example in this regard. To maintain this contact a knowledge of the local language was essential; as he said: "Tout administrateur qui ne connaît pas à fond la langue des indigènes n'a pas la vocation coloniale."<sup>29</sup> He took steps to ensure this by the foundation of the Institut des Hautes Etudes Marocaines. Again he set the example and himself learned to write Arabic.

### *The War*

The war brought new opportunities and new dangers to Morocco. Lyautey's first concern was to send all available troops home to fight in France without abandoning anything that he had conquered. He disregarded orders to evacuate all his forces to the coast and to abandon the forward areas; instead he moved all his troops from the coast as a screen for the pacified country. With diminished forces he continued to nibble away at the unconquered area – not merely for the sake of morale but because it diminished the number of enemies. Again he found a formula: "Qui n'avance pas recule. Qui n'impose pas sa volonté subit celle de l'adversaire. Un ralentissement de notre activité militaire devait être immédiatement exploité par nos enne-

mis, ne pas s'en tenir à une attitude passive, mais bien à une 'défensive-active'."

He deliberately created an atmosphere of confidence – "la politique du sourire" – and showed how little worried he was by obtaining vast sums of money for public works: a policy summed up in yet another famous formula: "Tout nouveau chantier vaut un bataillon." In the circumstances of war the French Government lost all control of his activities and Maurois comments that for a time no monarch in the world exercised a power as absolute as did Lyautey.<sup>30</sup> Great increases were made in cultivated areas, huge quantities of grain were shipped to France, and unprecedented prosperity came to Morocco. Lyautey organized Fairs, which he regarded as "une opération de guerre", and took the opportunity to introduce French goods in the place of German ones. The Fair at Fez became famous for its roundabouts, and dissidents were known to have submitted so as to have an opportunity to ride on its wooden horses. To show that France was winning the war Lyautey had German prisoners sent to Morocco and set to work on the roads where they could be seen by all. As a further gesture of confidence he used more of these prisoners to excavate the Roman city of Volubilis. Lyautey summed up his wartime policy thus: "Sauvegarder le Maroc dans la lutte actuelle et l'armer par avance pour la grande lutte économique qui suivra la guerre."<sup>31</sup>

The success of Lyautey's wartime policy was recognized in French political circles. A leading Député, Maurice Long remarked that Morocco, far from being a source of weakness in critical days, was an element of strength.<sup>32</sup> It had, indeed, equalled the most faithful of France's old colonies in the support that it gave.

Lyautey worked tirelessly to provide Moroccan troops for France. He hoped that blood shed in common would increase the sense of unity between the Protecting power and her ward. By October 1915 he was saying that the accounts that were coming back from the *Tirailleurs* of enormous losses were causing alarm among the tribes and he was having to have recourse to "recrutement à haute pression", although he found it easier to provide the much-needed labourers for the factories of France.

Another great advantage that Morocco gained from the war was the arrival of Territorial Battalions to replace those troops who had gone to the trenches. The tribesmen, in a country where survival to old age usually depended on dexterity as a warrior, had an exaggerated respect for those often stout and elderly figures, believing that they must be *baroudeurs* of exceptional skill. Lyautey hastened to make use of their civilian aptitudes. In July 1917 Loth, the Directeur de l'Enseignement, reported that fifty-eight of them were teaching

in schools and that in Casablanca seventeen classes were entirely run by them. Use was made of other abilities, too – a corporal with a mathematics degree found himself in a high post in the Direction des Finances while another Territorial founded a plant nursery in Azrou. We even find Commandant Colombat of the Cercle des Bani Mguild reporting favourably on a Territorial whose management of local *Maisons de Tolérance* was giving general satisfaction in the regretted absence of Madame Carmen.

### *Lyautey and the colons*

The Marshal was concerned to protect the tribes as far as possible from European influences that he did not immediately control. He restricted the entry of colons into the Berber areas and whole districts like the Souss were closed to them. He saw in the colons the germ of electors and the forerunners of all those features of party strife so repugnant to his aristocratic nature. We shall study Lyautey's land policy in another chapter but, in brief, he wished to ensure that there were no European proletariat to compete for employment with the local population. He was unable to avoid this in urban areas like Casablanca but managed to prevent it in tribal country where his efforts were whole-heartedly seconded by the officers of A.I. In the records of the Cercle of the Beni Mguild there are numerous letters from officers like Capitaine Bertschi and Capitaine Grosmangin to would-be European settlers telling them not to come. Where European development was necessary or inevitable, the Marshal tried to assign the land to large companies because this meant more capital was available and fewer European personnel required. In this we may see an interesting contrast to the attitude of Lugard, who opposed the activities of large companies to the extent that Perham has said that he was "very much of a Socialist".<sup>33</sup> Lyautey did however reserve the extraction of phosphates, obviously the greatest single source of wealth in the country, for exclusive exploitation by the State.

During the war the Marshal ordered colons to remain on their farms rather than to join the army, as their continued presence showed that the French were determined to stay and their example was useful in increasing production. Lyautey had constantly to defend himself against accusations that he discouraged the settlement of Frenchmen in a country conquered by their blood and their treasure. He encountered the most venomous hostility of the colon press directed by settlers who considered that all Morocco was theirs to exploit. Lyautey defended himself: "On m'a accusé souvent bien à tort, de ne pas favoriser la colonisation au Maroc; j'ai fait tout