

XIII

MOSLEM NORTH AFRICA

1049–1394

Toward the end of the fourteenth Christian or eighth Islamic century, abū-Zaid ‘Abd-ar-Raḥmān ibn-Muḥammad, of the Banū-Khaldūn, snatched a few months from a remarkably full life to write a “Book of Examples,” *Kitāb al-‘ibar*. The latest date in the portion concerning his native North Africa falls in A.H. 796, or A.D. 1394,

The principal source, Ibn-Khaldūn’s *Kitāb al-‘ibar*, has been published in full (7 vols.) at Būlāq, A.H. 1284 (A.D. 1867/8, reprinted 1971); the North African portions (vols. 6–7), ed. MacGuckin de Slane as *Histoire des Berbères* (2 vols., Algiers, 1847–1851), were translated by de Slane, also as *Histoire des Berbères* (4 vols., Algiers, 1852–1856; reprinted almost unaltered as “edited by Paul Casanova,” Paris, 1925–1956, and again 1968–1969). For additional information, consult Carl Brockelmann, *Geschichte der arabischen Literatur* (2nd ed., 2 vols., Leyden, 1943–1949, with 3 supplemental vols. [cited as sI, sII, sIII], Leyden, 1937–1942), II, 314, 679; sII, 342.

The most important other chroniclers, in roughly chronological order, are the following; for each author the best edition and translation of his complete work or the relevant portion thereof will be cited, with reference to Brockelmann for further information:

Al-Bakrī (abū-‘Uбайд ‘Abd-Allāh ibn-‘Abd-al-‘Azīz), *Kitāb al-masālik wa-l-mamālik*; North African portion ed. de Slane as *Description de l’Afrique septentrionale* (2nd ed., Algiers, 1910) and trans. de Slane (2nd ed., Algiers, 1913); both were reprinted together (Paris, 1965): Brockelmann, I, 627; sI, 875; sIII, 1242.

Al-Idrīsī (abū-‘Abd-Allāh Muḥammad ibn-Muḥammad), *Nuzhat al-mushtāq fī ikhtirāq al-āfāq*; North African and Spanish portions ed. and trans. by Reinhart Dozy and Michael Jan de Goeje as *Description de l’Afrique et de l’Espagne* (Leyden, 1866): Brockelmann, I, 628; sI, 876; sIII, 1242.

Anonymous, *Kitāb al-istibṣār fī ‘ajā’ib al-amṣār*; North African portion ed. Alfred von Kremer as “Description de l’Afrique . . .,” *Sitzungsberichte der Kaiserlich-Königlichen Akademie der Wissenschaften (Wien), Philosophisch-historische Classe*, VIII (1852), 389–428, and trans. Edmond Fagnan as “L’Afrique septentrionale au XII^e siècle . . .,” *Recueil des notices et mémoires de la Société archéologique de Constantine*, XXXIII (1899): Brockelmann, sI, 879.

As-Sam’ānī (‘Abd-al-Karīm ibn-Muḥammad), *Kitāb al-ansāb fī ma’rifat al-aṣḥāb*; selection ed. and trans. Évariste Lévi-Provençal as “La Généalogie des Almohades et l’organisation du parti” in his *Documents inédits d’histoire almohade* (Paris, 1928), pp. 25–74: Brockelmann, I, 401; sI, 564.

‘Abd-al-Wāḥid al-Marrākushī (abū-Muḥammad . . . ibn-‘Alī), *Kitāb al-mu’jib fī talkhīs akhbār al-Maghrib*: ed. Dozy as *The History of the Almohades* (2nd ed., Leyden, 1881; repr.

which will serve admirably as a terminus for the crusading period there, especially since the final crusade in this area occurred in 1390. If this choice serves to stress the importance of Ibn-Khaldūn among the multitude of medieval North African historians, nothing could be more appropriate. Any chronicle of this place and period must be in

1968); trans. Fagnan as *Histoire des Almohades* (Algiers, 1893; from *Revue africaine*): Brockelmann, I, 392; sI, 555.

Ibn-al-Athīr (abū-l-Ḥasan 'Alī ibn-Muḥammad), *Kitāb al-kāmil fī-t-ta'rikh*; ed. Carl Johann Tornberg as *Chronicon* . . . (14 vols., Leyden, 1851–1876; repr. Beirut, 1965–); North African and Spanish portions trans. Fagnan as *Annales du Maghreb et de l'Espagne* (Algiers, 1901; from *Revue africaine*): Brockelmann, I, 422; sI, 587, 969.

Ibn-'Idhārī (al-Marrākushī), *Kitāb al-bayān al-mughrib fī akhbār mulūk al-Andalus wa-l-Maghrib*; portion ed. Dozy as *Histoire de l'Afrique et de l'Espagne* (2 vols., Leyden, 1848–1851) and trans. Fagnan (2 vols., Algiers, 1901–1904); balance ed. Lévi-Provençal as *Histoire de l'Espagne musulmane au XI^{ème} siècle* (Paris, 1930); rev. ed. by G. S. Colin and Lévi-Provençal (2nd ed., 2 vols., Leyden, 1948–1951, with 3rd vol. ed. A. Huici Miranda, Tetuan, 1960), all trans. Huici Miranda (2 vols., Tetuan, 1953–1954; 3rd vol., Valencia, 1963): Brockelmann, I, 411; sI, 577.

Al-Baidhaq (Abū-Bakr ibn-'Alī), *Ta'rikh al-Muwahhidiin*; ed. and trans. Lévi-Provençal as "L'Histoire des Almohades," in his *Documents inédits d'histoire almohade* (Paris, 1928), pp. 75–224; Brockelmann, sI, 554, 967.

Ibn-abī-Zar' (abū-l-Ḥasan 'Alī ibn-'Abd-Allāh), *Kitāb al-anīs al-muṭrib bi-rauḍ al-qirtās fī akhbār mulūk al-Maghrib wa-ta'rikh madīnat Fās*; ed. and trans. Tornberg as *Annales regum Mauritaniae* (Uppsala, 1843–1845); trans. Auguste Beaumier as *Roudh el-Kartas: Histoire des souverains du Maghreb . . . et annales de la ville de Fès* (Paris, 1860): Brockelmann, II, 312; sII, 339.

Ibn-Faḍl-Allāh al-'Umarī (abū-l-'Abbās Aḥmad ibn-Yahyā), *Masālik al-abṣār fī mamālik al-amṣār*; Moroccan portion ed. M. Gaudet-Demombynes as "Quelques passages relatifs au Maroc," *Mémorial Henri Basset*, I (Paris, 1928), 269–280; North African portion trans. *idem* as *L'Afrique moins l'Égypte* (Paris, 1927): Brockelmann, II, 177; sII, 175; sIII, 1261.

Ibn-al-Khaṭīb (Lisān-ad-Dīn abū-'Abd-Allāh Muḥammad ibn-'Abd-Allāh), *Ta'rikh al-Maghrib al-'Arabī* (Casablanca, 1964) and several other works in scattered editions and translations: Brockelmann, II, 337, 679; sII, 397; sIII, 1279.

Yahyā ibn-Khaldūn (abū-Zakariyā' Yahyā ibn-Muḥammad), *Bughyat ar-rūwād fī dhikr al-mulūk min Banī 'Abd al-Wād*; ed. and trans. Alfred Bel as *Histoire des Beni 'Abd el-Wād* (2 vols., Algiers, 1904–1913): Brockelmann, II, 312; sII, 340.

Later Arabic historians of significance include Ibn-Qunfudh al-Qusanṭīnī (abū-l-'Abbās Aḥmad ibn-al-Ḥasan), *Al-Fārisiyah fī mabādī ad-daulah al-Ḥafṣīyah*; selections ed. and trans. Auguste Cherbonneau under various titles in *Journal asiatique*, 4:XII (1848), 239–252; 4:XIII (1849), 187–205; 4:XVII (1851), 52–77; 4:XX (1852), 211–238: Brockelmann, II, 313; sII, 341.

Ibn-al-Aḥmar (abū-l-Walīd Ismā'īl ibn-Yūsuf), *An-nafḥah an-nisrīniyah wa-l-lamḥah al-Marīniyah*; Moroccan portion ed. and trans. Ghaoutsi Bouali and Georges Marçais as "Histoire des Benī Merīn, rois de Fās," *Bulletin de correspondance africaine*, LV (1917), 1–107; Algerian portion ed. Lévi-Provençal as "Deux nouveaux manuscrits . . .," *Journal asiatique*, CCIII (1923), 231–255, and trans. Dozy as "Histoire des Benou-Ziyan de Tlemcen," *Journal asiatique*, 4:III (1844), 382–416: Brockelmann, II, 313; sII, 340.

Az-Zarkashī (abū-'Abd-Allāh Muḥammad ibn-Ibrāhīm), *Ta'rikh ad-daulatān al-Muwahhidiyah wa-l-Ḥafṣīyah* (Tunis, A.H. 1289 [A.D. 1872/3]); trans. Fagnan as *Chronique des Almohades et des Hafṣides* (Constantine, 1895): Brockelmann, II, 606; sII, 677.

Ibn-abī-Dīnār (abū-'Abd-Allāh Muḥammad ibn-abī-l-Qāsim), *Al-mu'nis fī akhbār Ifriqiyyah*

essentials a reworking of his narrative, amplified and occasionally corrected from other medieval Arabic sources. Direct historical evidence is limited to a few letters and official documents, supplemented by numismatic and epigraphic data of considerable value.

In the study of medieval history by modern scholars, North Africa has been a neglected stepchild between Egypt and Spain.¹ In the

wa-Tūnis (Tunis, A.H. 1286 [A.D. 1869/70] and 1350 [1931/2], repr. 1967); trans. Edmond Pellissier and Gaston Rémusat as *Histoire de l'Afrique* (Paris, 1845): Brockelmann, II, 607; sII, 682.

The best collections of letters and official documents are still Louis de Mas Latrie, *Traité de paix et de commerce et documents divers concernant les relations de l'Afrique septentrionale au moyen âge* (Paris, 1866; repr. New York, 1964); Lévi-Provençal, "Un Recueil de lettres officielles almohades," *Hespéris*, XXVIII (1941), 1–80; Mariano Gaspar y Remiro, *Correspondencia diplomática entre Granada y Fez, siglo XIV* (Granada, 1916, from *Revista del Centro de estudios históricos de Granada y su reino*); Lévi-Provençal, "Lettres d'Ibn Tumart et de 'Abd al-Mu'min," in his *Documents inédits d'histoire almohade* (Paris, 1928), pp. 1–24; and Silvestre de Sacy, "Pièces diplomatiques tirées des archives de la république de Gènes," *Notices et extraits*, XI-1 (1827), 1–96. Important individual items are Godefroy-Demombynes, "Une Lettre de Saladin au calife almohade," *Mélanges René Basset*, II (Paris, 1925), 279–304; Eugène Tisserant and Gaston Wiet, "Une Lettre de l'Almohade Murtad'ā au pape Innocent IV," *Hespéris*, VI (1926), 27–53; de Sacy, "Mémoire sur le traité fait entre le roi de Tunis et Philippe-le-Hardi, en 1270 . . .," and "Mémoire sur une correspondance de l'empereur de Maroc Yakoub, fils d'Abd-alhakk, avec Philippe-le-Hardi . . .," *Mémoires de l'Académie des inscriptions et belles-lettres*, IX (1831), 488–506; and Julián Ribera, "Tratado de paz . . . entre Fernando I . . . rey de Nápoles y Abuámer Otmán rey de Tunes [1477]," *Centenario Michele Amari*, II (Palermo, 1910), 373–386.

The numismatic literature on Moslem North Africa is extensive; a complete bibliography and corpus of coins will be found in H. W. Hazard, *The Numismatic History of Late Medieval North Africa* (New York, 1952), with "Additions and Supplementary Notes" in the American Numismatic Society's *Museum Notes*, XII (New York, 1966), 195–221. For coins struck in medieval North Africa by Christian invaders, see H. H. Abdulwahab, "Deux dinars normands de Mahdia [1151, 1157]," *Revue tunisienne*, n.s., I (1930), 215–218, and G. Hannezo, "Monnaies d'or frappées à Tunis en 1270 par Charles I^{er} d'Anjou," *Revue tunisienne*, XXVII (1920), 44–45, as well as earlier articles noted there.

For epigraphy, consult especially Combe, Sauvaget, and Wiet, *Répertoire chronologique d'épigraphie arabe* (Cairo, 1931–); Gabriel Colin, *Corpus des inscriptions arabes et turques de l'Algérie: Département d'Alger* (Paris, 1901); Gustave Mercier, *Corpus . . . Département de Constantine* (Paris, 1902); Octave Houdas and René Basset, "Épigraphie tunisienne," *Bulletin de correspondance africaine*, I (1882), 161–200; Gustave Mercier, "Inscriptions arabes de Bougie," *Bulletin de la Société d'archéologie de Constantine*, 1901, pp. 167–169; C. Brosselard, "Mémoire épigraphique et historique sur les tombeaux des émirs Beni-Zeiyân," *Journal asiatique*, 7:VII (1876), 5–197; Alfred Bel, "Inscriptions arabes de Fès," *Journal asiatique*, 11:IX (1917), 303–329; 11:X (1917), 81–170, 215–267; 11:XII (1918), 189–276, 337–399; 11:XIII (1919), 5–96; 11:XIV (1919), 467–479; and Henri Basset and Lévi-Provençal, "Chella, une nécropole mérinide," *Hespéris*, II (1922), 1–92, 255–316, 385–425.

1. Comparatively, of course, for much valuable work has been done, first by French scholars, and more recently by Spaniards and North Africans as well. The best general histories of medieval North Africa are Ernest Mercier's *Histoire de l'Afrique septentrionale* (3 vols., Paris, 1888–1891) and Charles A. Julien's *Histoire de l'Afrique du nord* (2nd ed., 2 vols., Paris, 1951–1952; rev. ed. 1966–), trans. John Petrie (New York, 1970).

English language, for example, there is no complete scholarly history of North Africa between the Arab conquest of the seventh century and the Turkish conquest of the sixteenth, nor a single translation of more than a few pages of any of the Arabic historians named in the bibliographical note.

This neglect does not signify any presumptive unimportance of North Africa, either relative or absolute. The southern coast of the Mediterranean played, during the crusading period, a larger role in human history than at any time after the fall of Carthage, larger than at any subsequent time until the brief struggle in 1942–1943 between the Allied and Axis military forces. Morocco, for instance, supplied two Berber waves which successively within a century's span swept over Spain, postponing and endangering the Christian reconquest.² Tunisia, where the Fāṭimids of Egypt had originated, provided the most logical and powerful claimant to the caliphate when the Fāṭimids, and their 'Abbāsid rivals, collapsed within the period of the crusades. Finally, it was with North Africa that Sicily maintained the continuous commercial and sporadic military contacts which made the island realm a center for transmission of Islamic culture to western Europe second only to Andalusia, and far more important than Constantinople, Frankish Greece, Cyprus, or the crusader principalities on the eastern shore of the Mediterranean.

For our purposes, as for those of all medieval Moslems, "North Africa" extends from about 25 degrees east longitude, the western boundary of Egypt then and now, westward between the desert and the Mediterranean in a gradually widening strip which reaches its greatest breadth near the Atlantic Ocean. This area has always been geographically and historically a single unit, clearly demarcated from Egypt to the east and from the Sahara and Sudan to the south; during these three and a half centuries continuous contacts were maintained with both, but on a smaller scale and with less effect than those with Spain and Sicily. This two-thousand-mile sweep includes part or all of the modern regions of Cyrenaica, Tripolitania, Tunisia, Algeria, and Morocco; from 1160 to 1230 under the Muwahhids and briefly about 1347 and in 1357 under the Marīnids they were, except Cyrenaica, subject to the rule of a single monarch, a historical phenomenon which had not occurred since Roman times and has not since been repeated.

If the closing date adopted, 1394, is partly historiographical and

2. See above, chapter XII.

partly historical in import, the reasons for opening with 1049 are wholly historical, for within a decade the political, economic, and religious circumstances of both Tunisia and Morocco were to be profoundly altered. In 1049 Tunisia was visibly prosperous and peaceful, adjectives which would be inapplicable for over a century thereafter.³ Agriculture was flourishing, with wheat along the north coast, olives along the east coast around Sfax and Susa, dates on the palms of the Jerid, gardens and fruit orchards everywhere, even cotton and sugar cane. Salt was obtained from the great deposits west of Kairawan, fish from the Mediterranean and the inlet of Bizerte; camels, horses, and sheep abounded in the less fertile desert and highland zones. Manufactures included cloth of cotton and of wool, some of it extremely rich or delicate, excellent pottery and glass, and competent metalwork. A thriving commerce was conducted overland with Fāṭimid Egypt, with the Sudan, with Algeria and Morocco; it was rivaled by sea-borne trade with Fāṭimid Sicily and with Andalusia, and with such Christian ports as Genoa and Pisa. Cities prospered, from semi-independent Gabes in the south, with its fair-sized Christian remnant, to the holy city of Kairawan in the center, full of scholars and orthodox theologians, past the ornate palaces in its suburb Ṣabrah, where excises and other highly productive imposts were collected and added to the royal treasury, to Mahdia, the strongly fortified port, and Tunis in the north.

The predominantly Berber population participated contentedly in this prosperity, considering their lives and property secure under a strong and competent government which was itself composed of serious-minded Ṣanhājah Berbers who shared the Sunnite tendencies of the large majority of their subjects. The small Christian, Jewish, Khārijite (heretical), and Arab minorities had no bitter grievances which might have threatened the dominant Berbers.

The temporal power was firmly in the hands of the Zīrid dynasty, which had no internecine rivalries to contend with, and whose nominal allegiance to the Shī'ite Fāṭimid caliph at Cairo, Ma'add al-Mustansir, rested lightly on them. Relations with the Ḥammādids of eastern Algeria had been placed on a peaceful basis by the treaty of 1042/3, and raids by Zanātah Berber tribesmen had been firmly repulsed in 1029 and 1035/6. The current ruler, fourth Zīrid to govern Tunisia in a direct line of descent, was al-Mu'izz ibn-Bādīs, a

3. Material on Tunisia and eastern Algeria has been carefully compared with the descriptive analysis in George Marçais's excellent *La Berbérie musulmane et l'Orient au moyen âge* (Paris, 1946).

strong, shrewd, popular man of Sunniite leanings and confident temperament. He had ruled ably since 1016, and the mob killing of some Shī'ite soldiers soon after his accession to power had not precipitated any open break with Cairo.

His father's cousin, al-Qā'id ibn-Ḥammād, maintained a similar regime in eastern Algeria, with his capital at the fortified mountain town called Qal'at Banī-Ḥammād. His reign, commencing in 1028, had been marked by skillful diplomacy, including the buying off of Zanātah raiders in 1038/9 and the negotiating of the treaty with al-Mu'izz to terminate a two-year siege. His realm, which his father Ḥammād ibn-Bulukkin had detached from the Zīrid holdings in 1014 and in which the Fāṭimid suzerainty and the Shī'ite theology had been simultaneously renounced, was in most respects a less brilliant counterpart of Tunisia. Eastern Algeria in 1049 was prosperous, its capital was a fine city, its culture and scholarship and manufactures and commerce were adequate, its Berber citizens were content, yet in none of these did it succeed in rivaling its eastern neighbor.

By comparison with Tunisia and eastern Algeria under their Ṣanhājah Berber rulers, Morocco and western Algeria were turbulent and disorganized in 1049, but the contenders for power were all local chieftains. The situation during the tenth century, when the Spanish Umayyads, the Tunisian Fāṭimids, and the Moroccan Idrīsids had intrigued for Berber support, had been resolved by the Fāṭimids' move eastward and the extinction of both the other contending dynasties. Even the successors of the Umayyads, the Ḥammūdids of Malaga and Ceuta, held only the one toehold in Africa, and were too occupied with intradynastic warfare to think of expanding their holdings. Relieved of external pressure, the Berbers followed their ancient pattern of pastoral nomadism, small-scale cultivation of grains, and urban commerce. Petty warfare between tribes and struggles for tribal leadership occupied their attentions as in pre-Islamic days, and the whole region formed a cultural backwater and, to change the metaphor, a power vacuum susceptible to conquest from within or without. Like Morocco in the west, Tripolitania and Cyrenaica in the east were in fact held by local chieftains, some of whom governed the few towns, like Tripoli, while others led nomads who combined a pastoral life with sporadic raiding.

The first breach in this peaceful picture resulted from al-Mu'izz's Sunniite proclivities. He had gradually, for nearly a decade, abated his recognition of Fāṭimid suzerainty by denying the Shī'ite caliph in various implicit ways, becoming increasingly bolder as his defiant gestures went unpunished. Finally, relying on the leagues of desert

between Egypt and Tunisia, al-Mu'izz in 1049 removed the name of Ma'add from the coinage and the Friday invocation, thus formally renouncing allegiance to the Shī'ite.⁴ He went further, placing a Sunnite legend on his coins and mentioning in public prayer the 'Abbāsīd caliph, al-Qā'im, who responded with a diploma of investiture. Needless to say, this was a mere formal approbation, as no effective power was wielded in North Africa by any 'Abbāsīd after Hārūn ar-Rashīd.

Resenting this insurrection on both personal and religious grounds, Ma'add at Cairo, counseled by his vizir al-Yazūrī, hit upon one of the most overwhelmingly effective revenges on record. It happened that in the fringes of the desert east of the Nile there were large groups of nomad Arabs who were disturbing the Fāṭimid's subjects by raids and similar incivilities. By the simple device—ingenious but unoriginal—of bestowing upon their leaders the titular governorship of all North Africa, he persuaded them to attack al-Mu'izz on his behalf.

This swarm of locusts, consisting of the great tribes Banū-Hilāl and Banū-Sulaim with their hangers-on, descended on Tripolitania and Tunisia during 1052, occupied Tripoli, defeated the Zīrid army in battle, besieged al-Mu'izz in Kairawan, and ravaged the countryside. Since this last phrase occurs frequently in history, further comment is necessary in this instance: North Africa, and particularly Tunisia, had been one of the most fertile areas of the known world, the granary of the Roman empire; the Arabs, scorning all cultivators of the soil, systematically devastated the whole province so that famine became endemic and agriculture has even today, over nine hundred years later, not been restored to its ancient level.

Al-Mu'izz tried every possible method of preserving his kingdom; he fought battles, he married his daughters to the least hostile chieftains, he bribed and threatened, he urged the Arabs to attack Algeria, which they cheerfully did, but nothing succeeded. He was forced to slip out of his capital to take refuge in the strongly fortified port of Mahdia, while the Arabs looted Kairawan with unusual thoroughness. The historians do not mention it, but al-Mu'izz and his son Tamīm, who succeeded him in 1062, apparently went to the extreme of attempting to propitiate the Fāṭimid Ma'add, as the Sunnite coins give way between 1057/8 and 1065 to Shī'ite

4. Although the Arab historians differ on this date, it is firmly established by numismatic evidence (Hazard, *Numismatic History*, pp. 52-56, 90-94). It is noteworthy that the Ḥammādids, who had renounced Shī'ism and Fāṭimid allegiance in 1014, resumed them following the Zīrid rupture and derived some momentary benefit from their opportunism (*ibid.*, pp. 56-57, 94-96).

gold struck at Mahdia in the name of Ma'add. However, if there was such an attempt, it failed, and it is very unlikely that Ma'add could have recalled the voracious horde he had sent against Tunisia.⁵

The other cities of Tunisia reached separate agreements with the invaders, after the first murderous pillaging, and set up tiny sovereignties under Arab or Berber nobles or adventurers. It is not too far-fetched to compare their status in 1049 to that of provincial towns of the Roman empire at its height, and in 1059 to that of the same towns after the barbarian invasions, so shattered was the entire political and economic structure.

The Ḥammādids of eastern Algeria were slightly less hard hit. It is true they were defeated in battle by the Arabs, and their countryside was stripped, but the assault was weaker and less persistent, and a *modus vivendi* was soon reached by which the Berbers held the towns and paid tribute to the invaders. In partial recompense, Algeria inherited some of the commerce and culture which fled ravaged Tunisia. Scholars, artisans, and merchants moved to Qal'at Bani-Ḥammād and, when Arab impositions made that inland stronghold untenable, they accompanied the Ḥammādids to the new capital at Bugia in 1069, and again, definitively, in 1104. Yet the net effect of the Arab incursion on eastern Algeria was to decrease its prosperity in agriculture and commerce and to eliminate personal security for ruler and citizen alike.

This relatively unsatisfactory pattern became stabilized for the whole region between Egypt and Algiers, with land commerce totally prevented by roving marauders, with agriculture drastically curtailed, and with civilization isolated in fortified towns paying tribute to the nomads. Among the permanent effects of the Arab invasion must also be included the increase in the proportion of pastoral nomads to sedentary cultivators, the displacement of Berber nomads—chiefly Zanātah—by the newcomers, the diffusion of the Arabic language in rural areas, the movement of whatever culture survived northward to the ports or mountain towns such as Constantine, and the seaward orientation of Berber commercial activity and military prowess.⁶

Morocco meanwhile was undergoing a sharply contrasting series of events. An ascetic religious reformer, 'Abd-Allāh ibn-Yāsīn, of the Kazūlī tribe, had appeared in the desert fringes and secured support

5. The invaders, ironically enough, were admired by later generations as the epitome of Arab chivalry, and inspired a popular ballad-cycle, *Sirat abī Zaid wa-Banī Hilāl* (for editions see Brockelmann, II, 74; sII, 64).

6. For further details consult Marçais, *op. cit.*, and *Les Arabes en Berbérie du XI^e au XIV^e siècle* (Constantine, 1913).

among the Lamtūnah Berbers. Since religious movements in Islam usually develop political and military aspects, he appointed a Lamtūnī named Yaḥyā ibn-ʿUmar to command his well-disciplined and fanatically determined forces. Yaḥyā was succeeded in 1056 by his brother Abū-Bakr, generally considered the first Murābiṭ ("outpost," corrupted through Spanish to Almoravid) ruler. With Sijilmasa as a base conquests were made rapidly in all directions. The veil-wearing precursors of the modern Tuareg (*Tawāriq*) mustered a rapid striking force which defeated local rivals piecemeal, and then recruited among their victims with the ancient and irresistible Moroccan dual appeal to religious fanaticism and the desire for loot. In 1061 Abū-Bakr turned his attack southward, leaving his cousin Yūsuf ibn-Tāshfin as his lieutenant in northern Morocco. Although most Arabic historians considered Yūsuf absolutely independent thereafter, his name did not replace that of Abū-Bakr on Murābiṭ coins until after the latter died in 1087 while fighting Negro tribes far to the south. In the intervening quarter-century Abū-Bakr had consolidated Murābiṭ power in southern Morocco, destroyed the remnants of the great Negro empire of Ghana, and spread his version of Islam over several degrees of latitude and longitude; nor had Yūsuf been idle, as he had conquered western Algeria and all northern Morocco, including Ceuta (then under Saqaut the Barghawāṭī), and had responded to Andalusian pleas for aid with the resounding victory of Zallaca in October of 1086,⁷ after which he had returned to Africa.

It is frequently asserted, possibly correctly, that it was after this triumph over the Spanish Christians that Yūsuf, nominally deferring to the ʿAbbāsid caliph as his spiritual superior, assumed the title *amīr al-muslimīn*, but his coins never go beyond the simple *amīr*, which he used after Abū-Bakr's death in 1087. For nearly twenty years more Yūsuf reigned as sole sovereign of the Murābiṭs, almost attaining the age of one hundred lunar years, with apparently undiminished vigor, for within this period fell his conquest of half the Iberian peninsula from his former Moslem allies and his Christian foes alike. At his death in 1106 his pious son ʿAlī inherited an extensive, firmly controlled, prosperous empire including half Spain, half Algeria, and all Morocco.

ʿAlī's thirty-seven-year reign was uniquely fortunate for its time and place in having no history. Nothing happened, beyond a few border skirmishes, to mar his generation's enjoyment and easy-going exploitation of their warrior fathers' conquests—nothing, that is, beyond a typically Berber theological-military revolt among the hill

7. See above, p. 401.

tribes of the High Atlas, instigated by one Muḥammad Ibn-Tūmart, of the Harghī tribe, who proclaimed himself the Maḥdī, or divinely guided leader, about 1121 and died seven (or nine) years later after rallying considerable support to his Muwaḥḥid ("unitarian," corrupted through Spanish to Almohad) anti-anthropomorphic dogmas and anti-Murābiṭ politics.

Ibn-Tūmart's successor, who was proclaimed in 1130, was a faithful disciple, 'Abd-al-Mu'min ibn-'Alī, of the Kūmī tribe, who by missionary zeal and military force converted the neighboring Berbers, cracked the imposing Murābiṭ façade, and eliminated 'Alī's young and incompetent successors Tāshfin, Ibrāhīm, and Ishāq. The conquest of Marrakesh in 1147 was followed by Muwaḥḥid acquisition of the whole Murābiṭ empire on both sides of the Strait of Gibraltar. The powerful military machine included many former Murābiṭ troops as well as Maṣmūdah Berber mountain nomads in great numbers.

Even before completing operations in Spain, 'Abd-al-Mu'min turned his forces eastward against eastern Algeria, still shared by Ḥammādids in the towns and, in the rural areas, Arabs who dominated the local Berbers. Neither group could resist the Muwaḥḥid onslaught of 1152. The ninth Ḥammādīd, Yaḥyā ibn-al-'Azīz, hastily surrendered Bugia, Algiers, Constantine, and his other meager holdings, while the Arabs were defeated and either scattered, deported to Morocco, or enrolled in the Muwaḥḥid forces in Spain.

Among those who acclaimed 'Abd-al-Mu'min in eastern Algeria was al-Ḥasan ibn-'Alī, eighth and last Zīrid ruler in Tunisia. Like his father and grandfather before him, he had exercised authority over little more than the port of Mahdia. The Zīrids had adjusted their policies as well as possible to their restricted status for nearly a century, developing a sea-borne trade to replace the vanished African commerce. Their position opposite Sicily had led them to intervene several times in unsuccessful efforts to prevent the Christian reconquest: in 1026 while sailing against the Byzantines a Zīrid fleet had been shipwrecked off Pantelleria; the same fate frustrated the expedition of 1052 against the Normans; a final thrust in 1068 landed but withdrew without accomplishing much. In 1075 a truce was negotiated between Tamīm of Mahdia and Roger I of Sicily, and peaceful trade flourished for many years between their realms.

Tamīm had meanwhile actively encouraged piracy against other Christian territories, and the inevitable reprisal occurred in 1087. Genoa and Pisa combined forces, with the papal blessing, and took Mahdia, pillaging it and levying heavy tribute before retiring. This

brief foray, eight years before Urban's promulgation of the idea at Clermont, was the first crusading effort by Christians in North Africa, but its success failed to halt the organized and highly profitable Zīrid piracy, which was seconded by Ḥammādid corsairs based on Bugia. A second Italian assault, in 1104, was unsuccessful.

The real threat was to come from Norman Sicily, in retaliation for the 1122 sacking of Nicotera in Calabria by Moroccans transported on Zīrid ships. An attack on Mahdia in 1123 failed, as did a Ḥammādid combined land and sea operation in 1135. The Normans took the island of Jerba in 1135; in 1143 they took Sfax after unsuccessfully attacking Tripoli. Consecutive years witnessed punitive raids on other pirate lairs, culminating in the pillage of Tripoli in 1146. Finally, in 1148, Mahdia itself was stormed, and al-Ḥasan fled to the Arabs and then to his Ḥammādid relative and rival, who imprisoned him. He persuaded 'Abd-al-Mu'min that the honor of Islam, of which the Muwaḥḥid claimed to be *amīr al-mu'minīn* ("commander of the faithful"), required that the accursed "infidel" be expelled from his North African footholds. 'Abd-al-Mu'min delayed action for several years in order to consolidate his administration, appointing his many sons governors of the far-flung cities and provinces of Andalusia and Morocco, as well as the newly-won Numidia, always with experienced Muwaḥḥid counselors to assist them. In 1159 the army moved eastward, and within two years conquered all Tunisia and Tripolitania. The local chieftains were besieged if they hesitated to accept the inevitable incorporation into the Muwaḥḥid domain. The Christians too underwent siege, but were finally, in return for concessions and promises of friendship, permitted to sail to Sicily in January 1160. Their brief tenure of the African coast, marked by tolerance and an attempt by Roger II of Sicily to restore prosperity, was not only the lone extended occupation of North African soil by European Christians between 1049 and 1394 but the sole such occupation between 700 and 1400.⁸

By the time of 'Abd-al-Mu'min's death in 1163, his realm reached from Barca in Cyrenaica to the Atlantic, including all North Africa and half Spain. This was no loosely held aggregation of regions paying nominal allegiance to a titular overlord, but a cohesive, pacified, centrally controlled empire which professed adherence to the doctrines of Ibn-Tūmart and demonstrated its loyal submission to 'Abd-al-Mu'min and his sons by paying regular tribute to his representatives, who in turn forwarded the immense sums to Marra-

8. On the Normans in North Africa to 1160 see volume II of this work, pp. 30-31.

kesh. The size of this tribute reflected the return of prosperity to the eastern provinces, as well as the unified development of Morocco and Andalusia. The Tunisian Arabs, like those of Algeria, were broken as military threats to the central government by being dispersed or deported to Morocco, while their warriors were inducted into the Muwaḥḥid forces, often being sent to Spain for frontier defense. Agriculture was revived, land-borne commerce was encouraged and protected, cities were rebuilt and fortified. The new Muwaḥḥid empire represented the apogee of Berber power, exercised under the aegis of a purely Berber version of Islam, militant and virile, strict and intolerant, in which Jews and Christians were forcibly converted, and in which for the first time women were severely secluded.

Under 'Abd-al-Mu'min's son and successor Yūsuf, North Africa experienced twenty-one years of unbroken prosperity. From 1163 to 1184 there were no serious invasions, few important revolts or rivalries, no catastrophic interruptions of any kind. Commercial relations were inaugurated with Genoa and Pisa, and a fortunate generation began to repair the previous century's ravages, while those whose tastes were warlike subdued several minor disturbances and added Almeria and Murcia to Yūsuf's Iberian holdings. In 1184 he was killed while besieging Santarem, and his mantle fell on his son Ya'qūb.

While Ya'qūb's accession was dutifully accepted throughout his father's realm, it was considered as an opportunity by adventurers from an unexpected quarter. Majorca, or Mallorca, largest of the Balearic islands, was ruled by descendants of the last Murābiṭ governor in Spain. He and his heirs were known, after a female ancestor, as the Banū-Ghāniyah, and they were firmly established in their island stronghold. In the November following Ya'qūb's enthronement the current Ibn-Ghāniyah, 'Alī ibn-Ishāq, left Majorca to his brother Ṭalḥah and sailed with several relations and kindred spirits to Bugia, which was taken by surprise, as were two relatives of the caliph, later ransomed. Leaving his brother Yaḥyā to govern Bugia, 'Alī took Algiers and Miliana, attacked Qal'at Banī-Ḥammād, and besieged Constantine. Pursuit and retaliation were prompt and vigorous. Miliana expelled its new ruler, Algiers and Bugia were retaken by the Muwaḥḥid fleet, the siege of Constantine was raised. Ibn-Ghāniyah, moving rapidly, assaulted Tozeur, took Gafsa, and joined with an Armenian former slave of Saladin named Karakush, leading a band of Ghuzz Turkomans, to take Tripoli. Ya'qūb in person defeated the combined rebels in battle, retook Gafsa, and left Tunisia well garrisoned. Nevertheless, the Banū-Ghāniyah and their disreput-

able Arab allies continued smash-and-grab raids, disrupting agriculture and commerce from Tripolitania to Algeria.

In 1190 Saladin of Egypt sent 'Abd-ar-Raḥmān of the Banū-Munqidh to Ya'qūb to ask for naval aid to intercept the supply ships of the crusaders at Acre. Ibn-Khaldūn says the Aiyūbid forwarded a rich present to the Muwaḥḥid, who regretted his inability to aid but later reconsidered and sent 180 ships, which prevented the Christians from landing in Syria. Al-Maqqarī, writing about 1630, says that Ya'qūb was so offended by Saladin's failure to accord him the caliphal title *amīr al-mu'minīn* that he declined to grant help. Gaudetroy-Demombynes concludes that aid was withheld for three reasons: because Ya'qūb needed his ships for Spanish waters, because he did not wish to anger the French, and because he was irritated by Saladin's connections with the Banū-Ghāniyah. The truth is probably that a small flotilla was sent as a gesture, but that it played no significant role in the Syrian fighting. Two letters embodying this request and dated 1189 and 1190 appear to be apocryphal.⁹

Ya'qūb had other problems, of which the most urgent was the Christian counter-attack in Spain culminating in the taking of Silves. In 1195 he crossed to Andalusia and at Alarcos defeated the Spanish Christians decisively. This led him to adopt the sobriquet al-Manṣūr (the victorious, by the help of Allāh), by which he is known to Arab historians. He then returned to Africa, where he died in 1199.

His son Muḥammad, an-Nāṣir, was faced with the same problems, the increasing Christian pressure in Spain and the insolent brigandage of the Banū-Ghāniyah in Tunisia. They took Mahdia in 1202 and Tunis in 1203, at which time they held all Tunisia and pronounced the Friday prayer in the name of the 'Abbāsid caliph. The only fixed policies attributable to the Banū-Ghāniyah are extortion and devastation, at both of which they excelled. An all-out effort by an-Nāṣir, his fleet, and his highly effective general abū-Muḥammad ibn-abī-Ḥafṣ finally trapped and exterminated the raiders, restoring to the Muwaḥḥids their considerably damaged eastern provinces. An-Nāṣir then turned his attention to Spain, but was decisively beaten by the Christians in 1212 at Las Navas de Tolosa, the real turning point in the struggle for the peninsula.¹⁰

After an-Nāṣir's death in 1213 his son Yūsuf II, al-Mustanṣir, reigned rather tranquilly for eleven years, but after he was killed by a cow in 1224, the Muwaḥḥid strength was dissipated in internal

9. For these letters, and the exchange between Saladin and Ya'qūb, see Gaudetroy-Demombynes's article in *Mélanges René Basset*, II, 279–304.

10. On the reconquest of Spain and Portugal see chapter XII, above.

rivalries. Between 1224 and 1236 there were six major claimants to the Muwaḥḥid caliphate, and, while they scrambled for power and executed one another, the empire fell apart. Andalusia was detached by Ibn-Hūd and Ibn-Naṣr, who established dynasties at Murcia (in 1228) and Granada (in 1232). Thenceforth, except for a brief reversion about 1237, Muwaḥḥid power did not extend into Spain. Likewise the governor of Tunisia, Yaḥyâ, son of the general and governor abū-Muḥammad ibn-abī-Ḥafṣ, in 1230 seized the occasion to disown the contending factions in Morocco and set up an independent state, ostensibly predicated on a return to the original Muwaḥḥid doctrines promulgated by the Mahdī. As the first Ḥafṣid monarch Yaḥyâ made good his revolt, but his neighbor on the west was less fortunate. Western Algeria was under the governorship of Yaghmurāsan ibn-Ziyān, of the Zanātah Berber Banū-ʿAbd-al-Wād. He set himself up as an independent sovereign at Tlemsen in 1236, but lost his capital to the Ḥafṣid emir in 1242/3 and had to accept a subservient status, the first but not the last Ziyānid to do so. Even within Morocco the Muwaḥḥid dominance was severely challenged. Ceuta in the far north broke away in 1232, while in the vicinity of Fez the Zanātah Berber Banū-Marīn were becoming menacingly aggressive.

The survivor of the Muwaḥḥid free-for-all, ʿAbd-al-Wāḥid ibn-Idrīs, ar-Rashīd, strove to rebuild his shattered heritage, but the difficulties proved insuperable. Seville and Granada in Spain, Ceuta (which had been taken in 1235 by a Genoese fleet and ransomed for 400,000 dinars) and Sijilmasa in Morocco recognized his suzerainty for brief periods, but only Fez and Marrakesh remained in his possession at his death in 1242. His brother ʿAlī, as-Saʿīd, spent six hectic years in subduing the Marīnids, and was killed attacking the Ziyānids in Tlemsen in 1248. A distant cousin, ʿUmar ibn-Ishāq, al-Murtaḍâ, took up the losing battle and for eighteen years fought Ziyānids, Marīnids, and local rivals. He was executed by another distant cousin, Idrīs II ibn-Muḥammad, known as Abū-Dabbūs, who won the throne with Marīnid aid, refused to share the spoils, and was killed by the fifth Marīnid, Yaʿqūb ibn-ʿAbd-al-Ḥaqq, in 1269. With him ended the only dynasty to rule North Africa as a whole for any extensive period of time, and the last to exert any great influence in Spain.

Thus at the very moment when Louis IX of France was planning his crusade against North Africa, the last vestige of a power which might have coördinated African opposition to him was eliminated. For the balance of the crusading period, and until the Turkish

conquest in the sixteenth century, Morocco under the Marīnids and their successors the Waṭṭāsids, western Algeria under the Ziyānids, and Tunisia and eastern Algeria—with Tripolitania and occasionally Cyrenaica as unwieldy appendages—under the Ḥafṣids would go their mutually hostile ways.

In Morocco the Marīnids had gradually taken over all the Muwaḥḥid holdings, but without the strong religious motivation which had made their predecessors so formidable a foe in their early years. Ya'qūb spent the years before 1270 in acquiring firm control of northern and central Morocco, and was finally secure enough at home to contemplate foreign adventures.

Yaghmurāsan the Ziyānid was still alive and active at Tlemsen in western Algeria. He had snatched Sijilmasa from the debris of the Muwaḥḥid realm, and had tentatively attacked the Marīnid Ya'qūb, had been repulsed, and had negotiated a truce. When he had once thrown off his fealty to the Ḥafṣids, he paid little further attention to his eastern neighbor, and neither he nor Ya'qūb participated at all in repelling the crusade. In fact, a private and bloody quarrel was to occupy their full attention throughout its brief course.

In Tunisia Yaḥyâ I the Ḥafṣid had constructed a firm and secure state, had expanded it to include Bugia and Constantine, and later Algiers, had been acknowledged suzerain by Ibn-Mardanīsh at Valencia when that skillful intriguer was in unusually desperate straits, had taken Tlemsen and made Yaghmurāsan his vassal, and had been fleetingly proclaimed in such widely separated cities as Seville, Denia, Jerez, and Almeria in Spain, and Ceuta, Tangier, Sijilmasa, and Meknes in Morocco. These distant proclamations, like the Naṣrid, Marīnid, and Ziyānid acknowledgments of fealty, were merely transitory but flattering testimonials to his renown; his merit lay in his administrative achievements within his own greatly enlarged and firmly held borders. The state he bequeathed in 1249 to his son Muḥammad I was by far the most stable and prosperous of the three successor states.

Relations with Christian powers had also become regular and fruitful.¹¹ Yaḥyâ had inherited commercial accords with Pisa, Genoa, Venice, and Sicily, and he renewed them all as definite treaties; Marseilles, Narbonne, Montpellier, and Barcelona began to compete for the rich Tunisian trade, all of which was carried in Christian vessels. During his reign the primacy of Pisa gave way to a Sicilian preponderance which approached monopoly. Excellent relations

11. The best modern discussion is Robert Brunschvig's *La Berbérie orientale sous les Ḥafṣides* . . . (2 vols., Paris, 1940-1947), I, 27-37.

were established with Aragon, whose king, James I, went so far as to have his Genoese agent Nicholas Cigala request—unsuccessfully—from pope Innocent IV an assurance that French king Louis IX's 1248 crusade to Egypt would not attack Tunisia, a strange foreshadowing of the events of 1270.

Yahyâ refused to adopt any title beyond the simple *amîr*, and at first Muḥammad imitated his father's modesty, but early in 1253¹² he was proclaimed *amîr al-mu'minîn* and assumed the epithet al-Mustanşir. After the extinction of the 'Abbāsid caliphate by the Mongols in 1258, he was the foremost ruler of Islam, and his claim to caliphal dignity was recognized as valid by the authorities at Mecca in 1259. By 1270 he had expelled two local rivals, had been acknowledged as suzerain by Naşrids, Ziyānids, and Marīnids, and had made a notable record for orderly administration and development of Tunisia. He had recently returned from an armed patrol of his remoter territories, during which he had punished fractious nomads and restored order. He was on excellent diplomatic and commercial terms with the Italian cities and Aragon, and his relations with France and Sicily were far from hostile. This is the state which was represented to aspiring crusaders as an easy and rich conquest; this is the ruler who was depicted to pious Christians as a timid potential convert.

Louis IX, his motivations for crusading in general and for crusading to Tunis in 1270 in particular, his finances, his military dispositions, and the consequences of his death have been carefully analyzed in a previous volume.¹³ The Moslems' reaction to this onslaught is of equal interest; their accounts differ in several important points from the familiar European narratives.

Charles of Anjou is known to have had several strong motives for deflecting the crusade to Tunis—reluctance to leave turbulent Sicily for any long period or at any great distance; the desire to punish al-Mustanşir for furnishing troops to the Hohenstaufens Manfred and Conradin, and for sheltering Frederick of Castile, who had commanded these troops in Sicily; the need to collect sums previously paid by the Ḥafşids for navigational and commercial privileges, often miscalled "tribute"; and his friendship with Baybars of Egypt, the logical target. He is, consequently, usually blamed¹⁴ for manufac-

12. This date, wrongly given by Ibn-Khaldūn as October 1249, one month after Muḥammad's accession, is established by az-Zarkashī and confirmed by the quantity of coins on which he is termed merely *amîr* (Hazard, *Numismatic History*, pp. 74, 162–163). Al-'Umarī is of course even more incorrect in ascribing these events to the period after the "victory" over the crusaders in 1270.

13. See volume II of this work, chapter XIV.

14. An important group of modern historians tend to absolve Charles on the grounds that his real interest was the attacking of the Byzantine empire after peacefully negotiating with

turing more respectable and speciously attractive reasons for duping his saintly brother Louis—that al-Mustanşir was an ally of the Egyptian Mamlūk rulers, that he could cut the supply line and retreat of a crusade to Egypt, that he encouraged piracy, and that he and his realm could easily be converted to Christianity.¹⁵ Yet Charles is scarcely mentioned by the Moslem historians.

These authors, in their innocence of the intricacies of European political and dynastic affairs, blame Louis alone for the disastrous decision, and do not credit him with pious or even sensible motives. One anecdote, reported by Ibn-abī-Dīnār, ascribes the invasion to Louis's resentment at a slurring reference to him by al-Mustanşir as "the one who was captured by such as they," indicating his Turkish bodyguard and recalling the fiasco at Damietta.

The better-informed Ibn-Khaldūn gives a circumstantial account in which European traders, unsatisfied creditors of a Tunisian merchant who had been executed several years earlier, complained to Louis and assured him that Tunis, weakened by a recent famine, could easily be captured. Although Berber rulers did often attack one another on equally flimsy pretexts, our knowledge of Louis's character and of the magnitude of his enterprise leads inevitably to the conclusion that in this instance the Moslem chroniclers were ill-informed. Nevertheless, Ibn-Khaldūn had extraordinarily accurate information on the methods by which crusaders were recruited and financial support was provided and on the identity of their leaders, but he erred in ascribing this data to Ibn-al-Athīr, who had died in 1234.

A more serious contradiction concerns the diplomatic preliminaries to the assault. Ibn-Khaldūn's account conflicts with the European version, according to which the decision to attack Tunisia, in spite of its previous satisfactory commercial and diplomatic relations with France, was not publicly announced until the fleet rendezvous at Cagliari in July of 1270. The Arabic historian, on the other hand, asserts that Louis's plans were known throughout North Africa as far as Egypt, whose envoy recited taunting verses recalling the French king's previous captivity and ransoming. Al-Mustanşir sent an embassy to ascertain Louis's intentions and to propose "conditions of

Tunisia for the resumption of payments; see Brunschvig, *Berbérie orientale*, I, 58. Apparently, however, Charles wanted no crusade at all, but when confronted with Louis's determination he could not decently avoid participation; he therefore decided that his interests would be better served, or less damaged, by diverting the crusade from his potential Egyptian ally to his recalcitrant Tunisian "debtor," but arranged to delay military operations in favor of extended negotiations, from which he emerged the sole beneficiary.

15. Brunschvig (*Berbérie orientale*, I, 57) suggests that the incomprehensible delusion obsessing Louis was caused by over-optimistic Franciscan and Dominican missionaries.

peace sufficiently advantageous to quell his warlike ardor." Ibn-Khaldūn adds, not as fact but as hearsay, that the ambassadors took 80,000 pieces of gold to buy Louis off, but that the latter accepted the gold and then announced that the expedition would nevertheless be aimed at Tunisia, because al-Mustanşir had frequently broken the treaty between them. The envoys, being dismissed, returned to Africa and informed the caliph of the situation, leading him to strengthen the measures of defense he had commenced on first learning of Louis's preparations.

This narrative contains four essential features: Tunisian knowledge of the destination of the crusade, the Ḥafṣid peace feelers, Louis's public declaration of his plans, and the episode of the gold. It is clear that the Moslems were well aware that extensive preparations were being made by Louis for a crusade; even in the absence of definite knowledge of its destination al-Mustanşir would have been criminally remiss if he had neglected the obvious precautions for defending his realm which he certainly took, and which will be discussed in more detail below. The peace mission sent by al-Mustanşir to France fits the circumstances very plausibly,¹⁶ and may well have taken a small but royal gift; Louis's answers would not have been reassuring and the envoys on their return would probably have advised their caliph to look to his defenses. On the third point, however, the Moslems are clearly in error. It can be stated categorically that Louis did not announce publicly his intention of attacking Tunisia and his pretexts for so doing. At most, he might have alleged, in his reply to the envoys, instances of Ḥafṣid treaty-breaching, but the final decision was not generally known until July of 1270, so much is certain. The incident of the 80,000 dinars is assigned by Mercier,¹⁷ with apparent plausibility, to the period immediately following the appearance of the fleet off Carthage, a last desperate attempt to purchase immunity. His assertion that Louis's nature was too chivalrous to permit him to retain the gold and deny the peace plea may be doubted in view of that saintly monarch's infinite capacity for rationalization and self-deception in a pious cause, as well as of the contemporary concept that no Christian need observe any code of ethics in dealing with the "infidel." But the utter silence of the French sources on this matter suggests that the only gold actually paid was the authenticated reparations collected by Charles of Anjou.

In general, Ibn-Khaldūn was poorly informed on the motivations of

16. Geoffrey of Beaulieu indicates that a Ḥafṣid embassy visited Paris in October 1269, but does not specify its mission (*RHGF*, XX [Paris, 1840], 20–23).

17. *Histoire de l'Afrique septentrionale*, II, 198–199.

the crusade but well informed on Louis's preparations. He was wrong in asserting that the Tunisians knew they were the destined target, right in that they had strong and well-founded suspicions. He was probably correct in his account of the embassy, except in his report of Louis's response. And he may have narrated accurately his hearsay on the gold but ascribed it to the wrong occasion. In addition, he is our best source on al-Mustanşir's plans and preparations for repelling the crusaders.

The first steps were the strengthening of city walls and especially the repairing of breaches facing seaward, the accumulating of reserve stocks of grain and other necessities, and the prohibiting of free access by Christian merchants to the inland portions of his realm. Further precautions, taken when his suspicions were confirmed by the return empty-handed of his embassy, concerned the recruitment of defenders. He requested contingents from western Algeria and Morocco, which were too involved in fighting each other to accede to his demands, and from Egypt, whose Mamlūk sultan Baybars ordered the garrison of Cyrenaica to proceed immediately to his assistance. He enlisted a splendid volunteer corps from among the refugee Spanish Moslems within his borders. Contingents were requisitioned from all his provinces, and swarms of Arabs joined him for the interval before the autumnal date-ripening. The garrisons and citizens of the coastal cities were armed and alerted, and his own court and household troops were made the mobile nucleus of his forces.

When the hostile fleet appeared off Carthage, al-Mustanşir's councillors were divided over the best strategy. One group wanted to prevent a landing; others argued that it was desirable for the French to commit their troops to an attack on such a strongly fortified position rather than to sail away and seek a softer spot elsewhere. The caliph, to his later regret, adopted this latter course and the landing was effected without strong opposition on July 18, 1270.

There is no reason to repeat here in detail the actual events of the crusade—the skirmishes and inaction pending the arrival of Charles of Anjou, the dysentery that decimated the French, the death of Louis on August 25, the belated arrival of Charles, the further skirmishes, the treaty signed November 1, the coming on November 10 of Edward, prince of Wales, with the English and Scottish contingents, the evacuation on November 18, and the storm which sank several ships, allegedly including the one bearing the gold paid to Charles by al-Mustanşir. The Moslem accounts do not differ significantly from the European except to exaggerate the number of crusaders (40,000 knights, 100,000 archers, and a million foot-soldiers according to

Ibn-abī-Zarʿ, reduced by Ibn-Khaldūn to 6,000 knights and 30,000 men, whereas Strayer estimates the true total as about 10,000) and to display uncertainty on the cause of Louis's death (Ibn-Khaldūn hesitates between fever and an arrow-wound but dismisses the tale, accepted by al-Maqrīzī, that it was caused by his avarice in grasping a jeweled sword-hilt which had been coated with poison).

The results of the crusade, so disastrous in the eyes of European chroniclers, appeared as a victory to the Moslems. Al-Mustaṣṣir announced to his subjects and his fellow sovereigns that he had succeeded in repelling a sacrilegious invasion of Moslem soil and had concluded an advantageous treaty; he successfully invited them to contribute to the indemnity, which he said was ten mule-loads of silver, though the treaty specifies 210,000 ounces of gold. To prevent a recurrence of the incident he ordered the walls of Carthage razed, and North Africa's first true crusade passed into history with far less effect on the victims than on the aggressors.

The death of Muḥammad al-Mustaṣṣir in 1277 led to dynastic complications which became involved with Aragonese politics and finally produced another crusade. Muḥammad's son Yaḥyā II was acclaimed caliph with the epithet al-Wāthiq (he who trusts in Allāh); he continued on good terms with the Italian cities, with Angevin Sicily, and with James I of Majorca, antagonizing Peter III of Aragon,¹⁸ brother and rival of James and enemy of Charles of Anjou. Peter conspired with Ibrāhīm, a son of Yaḥyā I who was in exile in Spain, and in 1279 gave him military and naval support in overthrowing his ineffectual nephew. Ibrāhīm forebore to assume caliphal dignities, contenting himself with his father's title *al-amīr*. Peter, who had hoped to add a quasi-vassal Tunisia to the ring of allies he was erecting around Sicily, was disappointed by Ibrāhīm's independence and lack of subservience, and cast about for another potential sultan who would be more amenable to control. He found such a one in the governor of Constantine, Abū-Bakr ibn-Mūsā, of the Kūmī tribe, usually called Ibn-al-Wazīr, and agreed to support this man's ambition to overthrow the Ḥafṣid by landing troops at Collo in April of 1282.

Peter then announced a crusade against the Saracens and made

18. Peter's complex African ties are summarized by Brunschvig, *Berbérie orientale*, I, 74-83, relying chiefly on Christian sources, as the Arab historians neglect the overseas ramifications of Ḥafṣid family dissensions. See also C. E. Dufourcq, "La Couronne d'Aragon et les Hafsides . . .," *Analecta sacra tarraconensis*, XXV (1952), 51-113, and *idem*, *L'Espagne catalane et le Maghrib . . . de . . . (1212) à . . . (1331)* (Paris, 1966), as well as E. Solal, "... L'Expédition de Pierre III d'Aragon à Collo (1282)," *Revue africaine*, CI (1957), 247-271.

ostentatious preparations, but his plans were upset by the premature massacre of the French in Sicily on March 30. He arrived at Collo on June 28 only to find that Ibn-al-Wazīr's revolt, starting on schedule, had already been suppressed by Ibrāhīm's energetic son 'Abd-al-'Azīz, governor of Bugia. He nevertheless stayed there several weeks, engaged in desultory fighting and looting, until he was ready, late in August, to accede to the request of the Sicilian insurgents to lead them against the hated Angevins. He then departed, with the "crusaders" he had presumably planned all along to use in Sicily, to eject Charles and establish a Catalan hegemony in the central Mediterranean, leaving North Africa almost undisturbed by his brief sojourn.¹⁹

The next territory invaded by Christians was the island of Jerba, seized in 1284 as a fief by Roger de Lluria, Peter's Italian admiral.²⁰ It later passed to some dissident Catalans from the Grand Company's Greek holdings and as an alternately Christian and Moslem outlaw state would remain a pirate haunt and a source of unrest in the central Mediterranean until the Turkish conquest.

Meanwhile the North African mainland had resumed its tripartite Berber existence untroubled by further crusading incursions. Marīnid strength in Morocco increased steadily, enabling the sultans to impose their will on western Algeria and on Andalusia. For seven decades, from 1270 to 1340, the Berber Marīnids were involved in Spanish Moslem affairs, holding various fortified towns, meddling in the Naṣrid succession, sending unruly nobles as "volunteers of the faith" to hold the frontier against Christian attempts at reconquest, and occasionally crossing to participate in person in the "holy war" (*jihād*) by looting small towns or ravaging Spanish fields and orchards. Despite the encomiums offered by Moslem chroniclers these Marīnid sultans accomplished little in Spain, and their definitive expulsion in 1340 following 'Alī ibn-'Uthmān's catastrophic defeat at Tarifa merely deflected their ambitions eastward, but it was decisive in assuring the Spanish that no third Berber wave would overrun the reconquered territories and again delay and endanger the final Christian triumph.

The steady interchange of persons and ideas between Andalusia and Morocco which had started under the Murābiṭs and continued

19. Ibn-Khaldūn correctly links the Aragonese arrival to Ibn-al-Wazīr's revolt, but implies that Peter did not land and states that the crusade had no effect.

20. On this early Roger de Lluria (Loria, in southern Italy) see volume II of this work, p. 264. On the Catalan Grand Company see chapter VI, above.

without serious interruption for two and a half centuries, from 1090 to 1340, and which was to persist for two and a half more as a one-way flow southward until the final expulsion of the Moriscos in 1609, served to strengthen and broaden Moroccan culture immeasurably by exposing it to the influence of the advanced civilization developed by Moslems and Jews in Spain.

The rivalry between the Zanātah dynasties of western Algeria and Morocco was too heavily weighted in favor of the Marīnids. They besieged the Ziyānid capital, Tlemsen, at every opportunity, even building a rival city, Maṣṣūrah, adjacent to it so that the sieges might be conducted in comfort. Between 1271 and 1337 these efforts numbered eleven, one of which lasted eight years and was on the point of success when the Marīnid sultan, Yūsuf ibn-Ya'qūb, was assassinated, and the last of which did succeed, resulting in the temporary suppression of Ziyānid rule. The victor, 'Alī, after his setback in Spain in 1340, moved eastward against Ḥafṣid Tunisia and took the capital, but his dream of reestablishing a North African empire comparable to the Muwaḥḥids' was shattered by the nomad Arabs, who overwhelmed his Berber army near Kairawan in 1348 and sent him fleeing back to Morocco, where his son Fāris had assumed control. A brief Ziyānid revival was stopped by Fāris in 1352, but the second attempt, in 1359, proved permanent, though the new Ziyānid ruler, Mūsā II ibn-Yūsuf, repeatedly lost his capital to Marīnid armies, regaining it on their departure.

The result of this one-sided struggle was that Morocco and western Algeria came to differ sharply by 1394. Morocco had grown strong and prosperous, despite constant intradynastic struggles for the throne in which each contender intrigued and bid for Berber and Arab support. Before 1358 these contests were adequately controlled by a series of strong sultans—Ya'qūb, Yūsuf, 'Uthmān, 'Alī, and Fāris—but after 1358 the accumulated wealth and power were dissipated by a free-for-all from which no single victor emerged to rebuild the nation. In the last thirty-six years of the crusading period fifteen sultans or major contenders emerged, and their fruitless warfare so weakened the country that its ports were doomed to fall easy victims in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries to Spanish and Portuguese attacks, first merely raids, like that at Tetuan in 1399, then actual conquests, commencing with Ceuta in 1415.

Western Algeria was a perpetual battleground. Aside from the Marīnid invasions there were incessant battles between Arab and Berber tribes and a running contest between Ziyānids and Ḥafṣids for the possession of Algiers. In general the Ziyānids ruled only the

capital city of Tlemsen, exercising occasional control over the hinterland by alliances with one group of nomads against another, or by bribery. Tlemsen became a commercial center whose prosperity attracted Christian and Moslem merchants and was reflected in architectural and cultural eminence, but political and personal security was never attained. The rural economy became predominantly pastoral, and the only cities to rival Tlemsen were the ports of Algiers, Tenes, and Oran. Nominal Ḥafṣid suzerainty was disowned by 'Uthmān ibn-Yaghmurāsan before 1300, and he and his successors constantly invited attack by intervening in Ḥafṣid and Marīnid rebellions and by invading eastern Algeria. After the interregal years of 1337-1348 and 1352-1359 Mūsā II spent his thirty-year reign in eluding the attacks of Marīnid invaders and their Ziyānid puppets, as well as of his son 'Abd-ar-Raḥmān II, who succeeded him in 1389 after two years of open rebellion. The new ruler had to repay Marīnid favors by acknowledging the suzerainty of the reigning sultan, Aḥmad ibn-Ibrāhīm, and the crusading period closed with a murderous scramble for the succession among his brothers, six of whom were to rule briefly—as were two sons and a nephew—between 1393 and 1431, when a seventh brother, Aḥmād, would succeed in establishing himself for a thirty-one-year period.

Thus despite their differences the two Zanātah dynasties were stricken by the same fatal malady, intradynastic contentions for power in which each candidate sought nomad and urban support by unrelenting intrigue in which neighboring rulers meddled opportunistically. In each case the result was to atomize the realm into confederations whose ephemeral ties were based on momentary self-interest or personal pique, thus rendering the ports helpless against impending Christian assaults and preventing the interior from being developed in an orderly manner. From this century of strife stemmed the great weakness which would become manifest after 1400; from being a vital and prosperous competitor in the commercial and military affairs of the Mediterranean this region then commenced its long decline, accelerated during Turkish and Sharīfian rule, to its recent subordinate position.

These observations on Morocco and western Algeria apply almost unaltered to eastern Algeria, Tunisia, and Tripolitania, theoretically a single Ḥafṣid realm, but subject to countless palace revolutions, provincial secessions, and nomad uprisings, all serving to weaken the state and diminish its prosperity, as well as to render it incapable of resisting eventual Christian and Turkish onslaughts. The 120-year intermission between the Tunisian crusades of 1270 and 1390 is

historically divisible into four rather unequal portions.²¹ The fratricidal warfare which had started after al-Mustanşir's death in 1277 continued until 1318, with such added complications as the two-year reign of the audacious impostor, Aḥmad ibn-Marzūq, who impersonated the murdered son of al-Wāthiq. The characteristics of this period include the fragmentation of the Ḥafşid realm into emirates—ruled from Tunis, Bugia, Constantine, and Tripoli—and tribal domains in the smaller cities and the interior, the concession to the Arab nomads of ever-increasing privileges and immunities, and the gradual subordination of Moslems to Christians in Mediterranean power politics, marked by favorable treaties for Italians and Catalans and regular payments to Aragon from Tunisian customs receipts.

This dismal situation was improved by Abū-Bakr II ibn-Yaḥyâ, emir of Bugia, who in 1318 conquered Tunis; he spent fourteen years suppressing revolts, repelling invasions, and restoring order, and then ruled fourteen years longer over a Ḥafşid state which had been strengthened internally and externally, though he could not avoid recognizing the preponderant military power of his Marīnid son-in-law 'Alī. The next quarter-century, from Abū-Bakr's death in 1346 to 1370, was compounded of the same fragmentation and internecine warfare as the first, with the added menace of Marīnid invasions, culminating in the short-lived conquests of Tunisia by 'Alī in 1347 and by his son Fāris in 1357; Tripoli was sacked by the Genoese in 1355. The last twenty years, during which the Ḥafşid territory was united under Aḥmad II ibn-Muḥammad, who in 1370 succeeded in eliminating his opponents and reorganizing the realm, were comparable to Abū-Bakr's reign but were more prosperous and more independent because of the Marīnid collapse.

Throughout the whole period commercial and diplomatic relations were maintained with the Italian cities—Genoa and Venice, and Pisa until its eclipse in 1325—as well as with Marseilles, and with Aragon-Catalonia and its associated powers in Majorca and Sicily. These relations, described in numerous letters and treaties in Italian and Catalan archives, involved consulates, mutual indemnity for corsairs' activities, safety and freedom of worship for Christian merchants resident in North Africa, ransoming of prisoners, payment of "tribute" during periods of weakness, and occasional naval aid against the Ziyānids. During Aḥmad's reign, however, a great increase in governmentally-approved piracy led to sharp protests and threats from Europe's maritime powers.

21. Brunschvig, *Berbérie orientale*, I, 83–198, gives a thoughtful, detailed account of Ḥafşid political history between the crusades, an account on which I have not hesitated to draw.

The political situation within North Africa in 1390 can be summarized thus: Ḥafṣid Tunisia, Tripolitania, and Numidia were stable and well governed under Aḥmad; western Algeria under the Ziyānid 'Abd-ar-Raḥmān II was experiencing a brilliant but turbulent reaction after Mūsā's long and adventurous reign; Morocco under Aḥmad the Marīnid was enjoying a short interlude of relative calm between fratricidal combats. Dealings with Moslem powers were amicable; Naṣrid Granada, Mamlūk Egypt (which controlled Cyrenaica), and the Sudan were important commercially but not politically. The deterioration in Tunisian relations with France and Italy was offset by an improvement in those with Aragon following the death in 1387 of Peter IV, who had dreamt of conquering Tunisia, as had his predecessors in 1282 and 1314.

The 1390 crusade was conceived by Catalonia's rival for maritime leadership, Genoa, as a secular enterprise to suppress the pirates based on Mahdia.²² In 1388 the same city had sent a fleet to retake the notorious island of Jerba from its Moslem proprietors, for the same eminently practical reason. There was little essential difference in the "Barbary corsairs" under the twelfth-century Zirids, the fourteenth-century Ḥafṣids, and the eighteenth-century beys and deys, or in the suppressive measures adopted respectively by Normans of Sicily, by Genoese, and by European and American mercantile powers. In order to secure French support the Genoese late in 1389 sent envoys to king Charles VI with instructions to depict the proposed expedition as his sacred duty, to which he should contribute a commander and an army while Genoa would supply galleys and six thousand archers, as well as all necessary provisions.

Charles VI assented without enthusiasm, permitting up to fifteen thousand of his knights and squires to participate at their own expense. His maternal uncle Louis II, duke of Bourbon, volunteered to command and was so designated. The crusading host included, besides the numerous French, contingents from England, Burgundy, Hainault, and Flanders, and a few Catalans to keep a sharp eye on Genoese schemes. The combined host met at a tiny island off the east coast of Tunisia and confirmed the selection of Mahdia as the object of attack. This had been the Genoese destination throughout,

22. The standard modern accounts, drawn almost entirely from European sources, are Léon Mirot, "Une Expédition française en Tunisie au XIV^e siècle: Le siège de Mahdia (1390)," *Revue des études historiques*, XCVII (1931), 357-406, and Aziz S. Atiya, *The Crusade in the Later Middle Ages* (London, 1938), pp. 398-454, despite such minor errors as dating the Genoese embassy in November 1390 and twice calling Aḥmad "Abū-Bakr." See also chapter I, above.

and presumably they convinced the genuine crusaders and the duke of Bourbon by recalling its repeated capture by Christians in 1087 and 1148.

A landing was made, apparently unopposed, late in July 1390, on the isthmus which connects Mahdia with the mainland, and a complete sea and land blockade was instituted, effectively isolating Mahdia—called Auffricque (Africa) by the medieval Christians—for the duration of the crusade. The tactical position of the crusaders was excellent, as their flanks were covered by their fleet, their front was on the alert against sallies from the beleaguered town and repulsed the only such effort with ease, and their rear was protected by palisades against the Saracen cavalry. Provisions were ample, and were brought daily from the galleys offshore. The composition of their forces was good, with a relatively small force of trained fighting-men, mostly knights and archers, and apparently without horses. Discipline and morale were high; this crusade was unique in that it paid its own way in Europe and thus did not alienate the populace. The strategic position was less admirable, for the crusaders' siege equipment for taking so strongly fortified a city proved hopelessly inadequate, and so they had to rely on blockade, against which ample supplies of food and water had been laid up in Mahdia.

The Moslems' situation was also not unfavorable. Mahdia, besides being well fortified and well provisioned, was well garrisoned. Large contingents of cavalry were available to harass the crusaders, although Arabic histories do not confirm Christian assertions that the rulers of Tlemsen and Bugia brought sixty thousand cavalry to reinforce the Tunisians commanded by Aḥmad's brother and sons. Other Christian estimates of the enemy as comprising about forty thousand Tunisians are probably still much too high. Avoiding battle, they skirmished constantly, wearing down the invaders, who also suffered from the inevitable onslaughts of sickness, heat, and shortage of fresh water.

A determined assault on Mahdia having been repelled, both Tunisians and Genoese were willing to negotiate, and a tentative agreement is said to have been reached by which a ten-year truce would be proclaimed and substantial payments would be made by Aḥmad to the doge and commune of Genoa.²³ Although Louis had asserted that the purpose of the crusade was to conquer rather than to extort

23. Or to Louis and the commune of Genoa, as the chronicler's statement "*au duc et commune de Gênes*" is susceptible of either interpretation, and in fact Mirot adopts the former and Atiya the latter, while the Arabic sources mention no such payment, and none seems ever to have been made.

gold, he and his nobles ratified these terms and raised the siege after having maintained it about two months. On the return journey the crusaders were persuaded to further Genoese interests in Sardinia by replacing the Catalan garrisons of Cagliari and Ogliastro with Genoese; in Terracina, which was captured and "entrusted to the Genoese;" and in Piombino, where a long-standing dispute was settled. The crusaders then returned home triumphant, having accomplished much for Genoa but nothing which might be construed as a legitimate crusading purpose.

The effects on Europe of this expedition were minor. Genoa's treaty with Tunisia was soon matched, except for the payments, which were never collected, by similar treaties with Pisa, Venice, and Sicily. The enthusiasm of the returning nobles helped recruit the major crusade directed at Nicopolis in 1396, which in turn by its catastrophic defeat helped to discredit the anachronistic crusading idea still further.²⁴ In historical perspective it was the last of a series of attacks directed at Tunisia by pious crusaders in the misguided belief that success would weaken the Moslem position in the Egypt-Palestine-Syria region; it was midway in a long series of practical expeditions to suppress piracy. Future Christian attacks were to be of a different type, Spanish and Portuguese efforts to make permanent secular conquests. The effect on North Africa was insignificant. Mahdia was scarcely damaged and quickly repaired; the military power of the Ḥafṣids was not perceptibly diminished; any gold paid was not enough to affect the economy adversely; piracy was not suppressed.

During the final four years between 1390 and the end of Ibn-Khaldūn's narrative all three Berber rulers were replaced. Aḥmad the Ḥafṣid died in 1394 and was succeeded by his son 'Abd-al-'Azīz, who had distinguished himself against the crusaders and whose forty-year reign would further enhance Ḥafṣid power and prosperity. The dynasty was not to be definitively overthrown until 1574. The Ziyānid 'Abd-ar-Raḥmān II died in 1393, and his death precipitated a long period of struggles from which the dynasty was to recover slowly, surviving until 1556. The similar warfare in Morocco following the death of Aḥmad the Marīnid in 1393 was to prove fatal to that dynasty, once the strongest of the Muwaḥḥids' inheritors. In 1465 they were to give way to the Waṭṭāsids, who had actually exercised power since 1420, only one generation after the end of the crusading period, and the Waṭṭāsids themselves would predecease the neighboring dynasties, their final overthrow coming in 1554.

24. See chapter I, above.

The astonishing ability of these Berber dynasties, so weak and so lacking in family loyalty or theological endorsement, to retain the thrones of their turbulent nations for two or three centuries has a fourfold explanation. No external aggressor sufficiently powerful to subdue them had arisen, for France, Spain, and the Ottoman empire were all engaged in consolidating their realms and eliminating neighboring enemies, and Egypt had served as a shield against the Mongols who twice overran most of the central Islamic world. No new religious movement had swept over the Berbers and united them in opposition to the existing governments, as had the Fāṭimid, Murābiṭ, and Muwaḥḥid dogmas, and indeed North African Moslems had become less susceptible to religious motivations simultaneously with their European Christian foes. No adequate intellectual or emotional challenge had developed to shake the universal popular acceptance of the dynastic concept, so that every rebellious tribe or clique sought, and easily found, a dissident member of the ruling house to serve as their figurehead, to be crowned or cast aside as fortune and policy dictated; in the sixteenth century the Spaniards and Turks would likewise find subservient Ḥafṣid and Ziyānid puppet princes to lend a spurious aura of legitimacy to the rival invading factions.

To these three negative reasons must be added one more positive: within each dynasty there occasionally appeared capable rulers who would succeed in eliminating rivals, subduing nomad revolts, repelling invasions, and creating stable and prosperous regimes. A series of such men among the Marinids ruled from 1258 to 1358; a similar series of Ḥafṣid sultans held power from 1370 to 1488; the Ziyānids produced several capable individuals like Yaghmurāsan rather than a consecutive series of strong reigns, but were relatively strongest late in the fifteenth century.

The outstanding characteristic of the political history of late medieval North Africa can thus be identified as the extraordinary importance of the ruler's personal ability. The political tensions between Arabs and Berbers, urban merchants and pastoral nomads, indigenous nobles and refugees from Andalusia, theologians and courtiers, could be resolved by a skillful and determined sultan, but would severely penalize incompetence or indecision. The resources of each state were sufficient to repel invasions and maintain the integrity of the realm only if properly exploited by a single intelligence; if misused or dissipated by internal rivalries they proved inadequate. This emphasis on individual capability contrasts sharply with the Byzantine and Ottoman empires and with Mamlūk Egypt, whose institutions and

administration were effective in minimizing the harm a weak ruler or a contest for the throne could do the state.

During the entire 345-year period Morocco can be seen to have reached its maximum power on three occasions, under the Murābiṭs about 1100, the Muwaḥḥids about 1180, and the Marīnids about 1350, and to have started immediately thereafter on its rapid and permanent decline. Tunisia after its initial devastation had experienced several alternations of prosperity and instability, as well as occasional ephemeral invasions, but finished at its strongest. Algeria, divided and disputed, had never rivaled its neighbors, as it was destined to do in modern times. North Africa as a whole, however, was by 1394 far less powerful in relation to either Europe or the Moslem Near East than it had been in 1049, because of its failure to share in their progress.