

The Maghrib in the New Century: Identity, Religion, and Politics

*Bruce Maddy-Weitzman and Daniel Zisenwine, eds.
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The Maghrib in the New Century: Identity, Religion, and Politics offers a timely addition to the literature on North Africa. Edited by Bruce Maddy-Weitzman and Daniel Zisenwine, this collection explores the socioeconomic and political challenges facing North Africa in the twenty-first century. The editors have divided the book into four sections broadly concerned with history and identity; the status of the ruling regimes in the face of processes such as globalization and Islamism; economic development; and the North African presence in France.

Benjamin Stora's introduction to the collection neatly sums up many of the issues this region faces, including the aftereffects of colonialism, the fallout from the Algerian civil war, identity movements and the questioned legitimacy of ruling regimes, emigration, terrorism, and battles over women's status. In the first section, Mickael Bensadoun analyzes Moroccan national identity under the nascent rule of Mohammed VI. This is followed by Robert Mortimer's examination of Algerian identity through literature. Maddy-Weitzman's essay provides an insightful discussion of how Berber/Amazigh activists have sought to construct Amazigh identity in both Algeria and Morocco by reinterpreting history.

The collection segues into a longer section focusing on the political challenges facing the region's dictatorial regimes, particularly in Algeria and Morocco. In the fallout from the Algerian civil war, analyses of the current situation in Algeria by Gideon Gera, Louisa Aït-Hamadouche, and Yahia Zoubir are particularly welcome. Zisenwine analyzes the first eight years of Mohammed VI's rule, while Michael Willis gives a thorough overview of that country's Islamist movements. Finally, in one of the few pieces to concentrate on Tunisia, Michele Penner Angrist offers a number of astute explanations for the strength of the Ben Ali regime.

The book's final section considers current economic conditions. Morocco and Tunisia's responses to economic reforms, such as structural adjustment programs and investment strategies, are usefully compared in an essay by Paul Rivlin. The very different situation of Algeria's rentier economy is the subject of an essay by Ahmed Aghrout and Michael Hodd, who argue that the slow pace of privatization efforts and the transition to

a market economy must accelerate in order to avoid further social and political instability. Finally, Paul Silverstein outlines how political events taking place in both Algeria and France are part of larger transnational processes linking not only the two nation-states but also North Africa and Europe as a whole. His article traces the various forms of Algerian immigrant politicization throughout the history of *les Beurs* in France, as well as the concomitant effect of this politicization on the political situation in Algeria.

These well-researched essays offer a very thorough analysis of how actors involved in nation-state politics, economic processes, and social movements jostle for position in determining North Africa's future. This collection is particularly strong on the issue of Amazigh history, identity, and politicization, especially in Maddy-Weitzman's and Silverstein's essays. Economic and political science perspectives are well represented here, although as an anthropologist I would have liked to see more essays examining everyday life, for example, how the average citizen experiences political or ethnic mobilization and the effects of structural adjustment programs. Also, although several contributors mention the women's movement and challenges to personal status codes across the region, no essays focus specifically on women and gender issues.

Taken as a whole, the articles fit together nicely, with thematic overlap and complementary arguments that draw a comprehensive portrait of the region's socioeconomic and political conditions. Though more work focusing on Tunisia would have been useful, the authors of these essays do an excellent job of discussing the many challenges North Africa faces in the twenty-first century. Particularly noteworthy is the fact that most of the contributors consider their subject matter in the broader context of globalization, by which I mean that nation-states are not viewed as entities separate from the wider processes in which they are enmeshed. For example, the effects of emigration and global communications technology on the construction of local identities (political, ethnic, religious, or otherwise) are discussed in a number of essays. The collection is, therefore, very much of-the-moment. It will be a useful text not only for researchers and policymakers working on this region but also for social science courses on North Africa.

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