

Maghrib (130054)

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## Maghrib since 1830

The **1830s** marked a change in the history of the **Maghrib**. Under the increasing influence of Europe, the region moved towards the establishment of modern nation states, but at a variable pace. By the early nineteenth century, Morocco and Tunisia already had well established identities. The three other modern states, Algeria, Libya, and Mauritania, were all creations of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. This distinction between these two categories of countries can be seen in various ways throughout those two centuries.

### 1. THE NINETEENTH CENTURY: REFORMS AND FOREIGN CONTROL

Two Maghrib countries were conquered by outside forces in the 1830s. The French invasion of Algeria in 1830 led to the first permanent European colonisation of an Arab country, and the Ottoman occupation of Tripolitania and Cyrenaica in 1835 restored an older Ottoman dominance over an area that had, for more than a century, been more or less independent. The contexts of the two campaigns

were thus different, but there were similarities between them: the invaders were foreign to the region, and their invasions led to resistance from local groups and tribes that feared for their accustomed autonomy.

In both cases, the former rulers, the deys of Algiers and the Qaramānlīs of Tripoli, faded away quickly. In Algeria, resistance to foreign rule was focused (in the western half of the country) on a charismatic leader, 'Abd al-Qādir (d. 1883), who aimed to establish a reformed political structure inspired by the Egyptian and Ottoman models. His state was, however, based largely on a traditional tribal model. In Tripolitania, opposition to the new Ottoman rulers came from peripheral tribes such as that of Ghūma b. Khalīfa (d. 1858) and the Awlād Sulaymān. Modernity also meant, in both countries, a greater emphasis on establishing frontiers and controlling peripheral areas. In both Algeria and Tripolitania, the new rulers established themselves first in the larger towns on the coast and then began, the 1840s and 1850s, to expand their control southwards, into the desert, the French taking oases such as Warjilān

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