

# THE DEEPEST BORDER

THE STRAIT OF GIBRALTAR

AND THE MAKING

OF THE MODERN

HISPANO-AFRICAN

BORDERLAND

SASHA D. PACK

M O R O C C O

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*The Strait of Gibraltar and the Making of  
the Modern Hispano-African Borderland*

**Sasha D. Pack**

Stanford University Press

Stanford, California

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Printed in the United States of America on acid-free, archival-quality paper

Library of Congress Cataloging-in-Publication Data

Names: Pack, Sasha D., author.

Title: The deepest border : the Strait of Gibraltar and the making of the modern Hispano-African borderland / Sasha D. Pack.

Description: Stanford, California : Stanford University Press, 2019. | Includes bibliographical references and index.

Identifiers: LCCN 2018035354 (print) | LCCN 2018037749 (e-book) | ISBN 9781503607538 (e-book) | ISBN 9781503606678 (cloth : alk. paper)

Subjects: LCSH: Geopolitics—Gibraltar, Strait of, Region—History. | Exclaves—Western Mediterranean—History. | Borderlands—Spain—History. | Borderlands—Morocco—History. | Gibraltar—Boundaries—History. | Spain—Boundaries—History. | Morocco—Boundaries—History.

Classification: LCC DP302.G41 (e-book) | LCC DP302.G41 P33 2018 (print) | DDC 946.8/07—dc23

LC record available at <https://lcn.loc.gov/2018035354>

Typeset by Newgen in 11/13.5 Adobe Garamond

Cover design: George Kirkpatrick

Cover illustration: Chart of the Western Sheet of the Mediterranean Sea, Subchaser Archives.

*For George R. Pack (1946–2013), in memoriam*

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## Acknowledgments

**THIS BOOK HAS** been possible thanks to the help of many archivists, librarians, historians, anonymous readers, teachers, editors, friends, and family. The project has enjoyed the support of grants from the Humanities Institute, the Baldy Center for Law and Social Policy, and the Department of History of the University at Buffalo, and from the Fulbright Scholar Program. In its early stages, the project benefited from valuable suggestions of two scholars whose leadership in the field of modern Spanish historical studies is now greatly missed, the late Carolyn P. Boyd and the late Christopher Schmidt-Nowara. It has also received valuable intellectual and logistical support from Ana Moreno Garrido, Irene González González, Scott B. Eastman, Carolina Rodríguez López, Jared R. Vega, Patrick Hanley, Sandie Holguín, Adrian Shubert, Carolina García Sanz, Julio Ponce Alberca, Andrew Ginger, Jessica Marglin, Florentino Rodao, Nigel Townson, Vicente Moga Romero, Tanya Shilina-Conte, Carlos Sanz Díaz, Roberto Villa García, Ángel Viñas, Stanley G. Payne, John Eipper and WAISworld, Victoria Ruiz and the Comisión Fulbright España, Carlos Larrinaga, Rafael Vallejo, and Antonio Cazorla-Sánchez, who unwittingly provided the book's title. Leopoldo Ceballos, Patricia Hertel, Chris Grocott, and Ali Al Tuma generously shared elements of their research. At various stages, the work benefited from the thoughtful comments of Philip J. Stern, Peter J. Grieco, Eric Storm, Geoffrey Jensen, José María Faraldo and the Seminario Otros Mundos, and two unusually patient and perceptive anonymous reviewers. I am grateful to my colleagues in the Department of History at the University at Buffalo for maintaining

a vibrant and collegial academic environment. Margo Irvin, Nora Spiegel, and the Stanford University Press also have been a pleasure to work with. I give special thanks to my mother, Yda; my father, George, to whose memory this book is dedicated; and my many other family members whose surprising level of interest in this project has been most appreciated. Finally, I thank my wife, Emilie, for her unflagging devotion and support.

## Abbreviations

AGA	Archivo General de la Administración (Alcalá de Henares)
AGMM	Archivo General Militar de Madrid (Madrid)
AHF	Archivo Histórico del Ferrocarril (Madrid)
AHINI	Archivo Histórico del Instituto Nacional de Industria (Madrid)
AHN	Archivo Histórico Nacional (Madrid)
AHS	Arizona Historical Society (Tuscon, AZ)
AIMS-SDO	Archivo Intermedio Militar del Sur—Segunda División Orgánica (Seville)
AMAE	Archivo del Ministerio de Asuntos Exteriores (Madrid)*
BNE	Biblioteca Nacional de España (Madrid)
CGE	Centro Geográfico del Ejército (Madrid)
DAI	Delegación de Asuntos Indígenas
FNFF	Fundación Nacional Francisco Franco (Madrid)
GGA	Gibraltar General Archive (Gibraltar)
HCP	House of Commons Papers
JMM	Junta Municipal de Melilla (Municipal Council of Melilla)
RLP	Rom Landau Papers, Syracuse University Special Collections (Syracuse, NY)

xiv Abbreviations

RAHFC	Real Academia de la Historia, Fondo Fernando Castiella (Madrid)
RAHFBCB	Real Academia de la Historia, Fondo Conde de Benomar (Madrid)
SHD	Service Historique de la Défense (Château de Vincennes, Paris)
TNA	The National Archives (Kew, London)

\*Regrettably, the AMAE (Spanish Foreign Ministry Archive) closed in 2014. Many of the documents have been transferred to the AGA for re-cataloging. The references to this archive given in the notes may therefore be obsolete.

## Note on Translations and Spelling

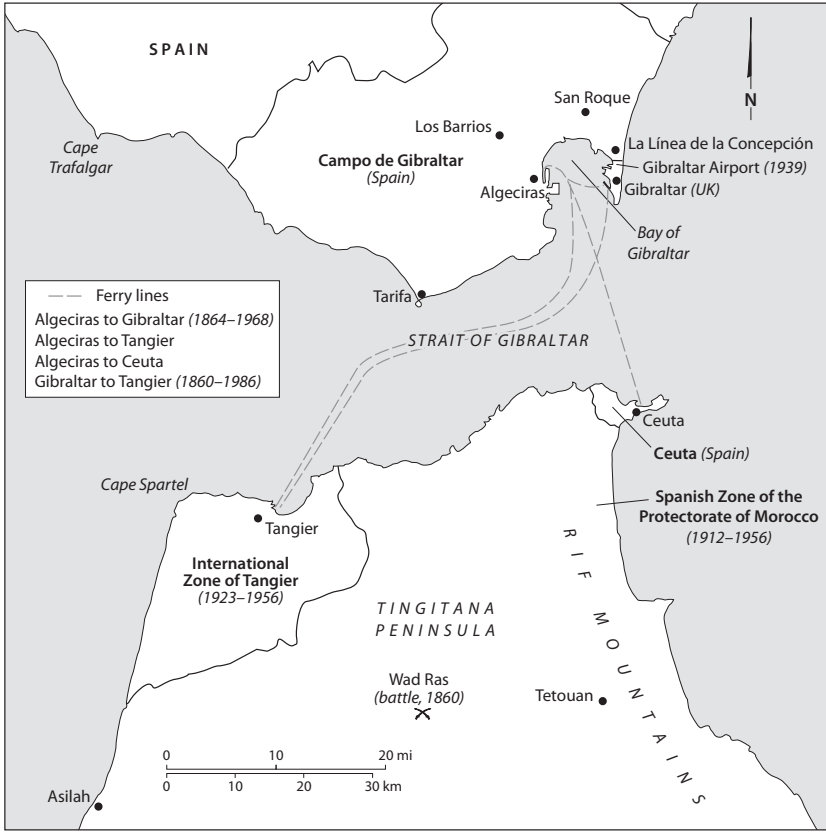
**UNLESS OTHERWISE INDICATED**, all translations of non-English sources are the author's. For Arabic names and geographical terms, the guidelines of the International Journal of Middle East Studies have generally been followed where possible. Exceptions are made for names of commonly recognized Moroccan figures such as Abd el-Krim. European and American scholarship has rendered the names of Riffian tribes deriving from Amazigh languages in various ways. Here, preference is given to the accepted English orthographies that most closely resemble those that interested readers will find in French and Spanish primary and secondary sources; hence, *Beni Ouariaghel* is adopted instead of *Aith Waryaghar*.



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MAP 1. The Western Mediterranean



MAP 2. The Strait of Gibraltar



MAP 3. The Western Mediterranean Channel

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## **The Deepest Border**

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## Introduction

**THE STRAIT OF GIBRALTAR** defines one of the modern world's paradigmatic borders. This forty-mile-long, ten-mile-wide waterway at the far western corner of the Mediterranean Sea demarcates a series of commonplace historical binaries: it separates Spain from Morocco, Christendom from Dar al-Islam, imperial Europe from colonial Africa, the great ocean from the inland sea. In addition to a north-south border, this peculiar geopolitical space is also an east-west passage. It forms a junction in a major maritime thoroughfare, one that became global in 1869 with the opening of the Suez Canal at the opposite end of the Mediterranean. The Strait of Gibraltar not only facilitates passage between far-flung points like Mumbai and London but also connects its own northern and southern shores, both to one another and to the wider material and political worlds. The many peoples and polities gathered in this bicontinental space have shared in a common history, marked by their position at the extreme limits of two great landmasses and at the heart of a prized maritime corridor.

This book grants the ethnically and politically pluralistic space at the western corner of the Mediterranean a discrete historical identity, adapting it to a single coherent narrative divided into distinct periods. It is the history of a regional order, that is, of a shifting balance of forces that provided some framework for orderly coexistence but also implied the ever-present threat of violence and occasionally erupted in war.<sup>1</sup> Those who were especially engaged in the ongoing process of ordering the trans-Gibraltar region may be divided into three categories: (1) local political authorities,



civic figures, and agents of multiple empires—Britain, France, Spain, Morocco, and Germany—stationed on or near the shores of the Strait and the narrow western Mediterranean channel, roughly to the Cartagena-Oran axis, and running some distance into the Spanish and Moroccan interiors; (2) the numerous clans, tribes, brigands, migrants, mariners, and trade networks ranging across these lands and waters; and (3) governments in distant imperial capitals engaged in strategic positioning on and around the Strait.

Although individual elements of this order emerged at different historical moments, the overall matrix examined in this book took shape in the middle decades of the nineteenth century. As European navies learned to neutralize piracy, new patterns of circulation and settlement became possible in the western Mediterranean. A combination of migration, imperial positioning, and environmental pressures drew greater attention to its shores. As multiple states and empires began to operate there with greater intensity, the long arm of centralized administration began to meddle more directly in older political, legal, and commercial systems, creating opportunity for some and provoking resistance from others.

This constricted space of multiple borders and diverse imperial claims experienced considerable violence, originating from within and without, over the long narrative arc of this book. It therefore provides an interesting context in which to analyze endemic civil conflict and its fluid relationship to international war.<sup>2</sup> Low-level violence prospered on both shores of the Strait throughout the nineteenth century. State forces entered the fray alongside populist gangsters, brigands, and revolutionaries, who themselves sometimes acted in collusion with other rival states, beginning a cycle of patronage that culminated with the brutal Rif War (1921–1926). The violence of colonial Morocco soon boomeranged across the Strait when the Spanish colonial army rebelled against its government to provoke the Spanish Civil War (1936–1939).<sup>3</sup> Yet despite its evident potential as a geopolitical flashpoint, the Ibero-Moroccan zone remained a marginal theater in the two world wars.

The three postwar decades brought deep structural change and an entirely new conjuncture of regional order and mobility. The European colonial empires withdrew, and “Atlantic Eurafica”—the western fringes of southern Europe and North Africa—fell under American hegemony. The Jewish Moroccan descendants of Sefarad (the Hebrew term for Roman Hispania) departed, and the dominant vectors of migration

turned northward. Although the borderland built over the previous century fragmented, it left behind the legacy of a relatively stable and resilient international order in the western Mediterranean. Despite a few lingering problems, the new Ibero-Maghribian space appeared to reach a new, mostly peaceful stasis. It resisted joining Samuel P. Huntington's well-known list of contemporary Islam's "bloody borders," although revelations of trans-Gibraltar jihadi networks in the early twenty-first century indicate that the postcolonial world of nation-states has not eradicated mobile brigandage but merely altered the context in which it operates.<sup>4</sup> In any case, the breadth and generality of global models can risk obscuring the depth and historical specificity of conflict, its origins, and its management. As an alternative, this book examines the dynamics that facilitated and shaped these processes, seeking a *longue durée* perspective on the collective (not always collegial) sovereign exercise of governing so crucial and complex a region.

### A Border and a Preponderance of Borders

The fundamental challenge to writing the history of the trans-Gibraltar region, and the Mediterranean world in general, is to reconcile narratives of imperial and religious conflict with the countervailing image of a zone characterized by unbridled mobility, migration, and exchange.<sup>5</sup> A key naval choke point and putative frontier of civilizations, the Strait has played a correspondingly key role in international histories as a focus of geopolitical tension. In the age of European seaborne empire, the British naval base at Gibraltar formed a "lion in the path" of continental powers seeking to unite their Mediterranean and Atlantic fleets, and later helped guarantee communication with India.<sup>6</sup> Spanish nationalists came to regard the Strait as a thin line of defense against a range of African and Asian despots aiming to "encircle Europe from the south," and many of their counterparts across the Arab world harbored nostalgia for a bygone age when Islamic civilization blossomed astride this key nexus.<sup>7</sup> Yet historians of both Iberia and the western Maghrib have also depicted the territories adjacent to the Strait as "a separate world" of fragmented political authority, steeped in piracy and brigandage, a magnet for human diversity remote from the sinews of imperial power.<sup>8</sup> None of these narratives is complete without the others; the goal here is to mingle them and examine the ways they have mutually conditioned one another.

One measure of creeping imperial interest is the proliferation of many types of polities and boundaries in the region over the modern period. Four coastal exclaves dotted the littoral, serving as access points for global exchange and imperial power. On the north shore of the Strait stood British Gibraltar (1713–present), a two-and-a-half-square mile promontory rising to a rocky peak 1,400 feet over the southern Spanish coastline between Cádiz and Málaga. On the African side, the “international city” of Tangier (1923–1956) and the Spanish possession of Ceuta (1668–present) lay on the southwestern and southeastern corners of the Strait. Another key Spanish holding in North Africa was Melilla (1497–present), some two hundred miles to the east. Somewhat beyond Melilla began the French settler colony of Algeria (1830–1962), also a major factor in regional affairs. This arrangement of imperial positions was framed by southern Spain and northern Morocco, the neglected peripheries of two kingdoms whose power centers lay distant from the Strait. Spanish Andalusia—successor to al-Andalus, the southern Iberian foothold of successive Islamic dynasties—was conquered by Christian armies from the thirteenth through fifteenth centuries and, apart from the Atlantic-bound Guadalquivir Valley, became a stagnant region of large estates and landless peasants. Morocco, a sprawling composite governed from the Atlantic plain, faded into a patchwork of clans and tribes that enjoyed considerable autonomy in the country’s mountainous north and east. When the sultanate fell under the colonial protection of France (1912–1956), a peculiar caveat designated Spain to control the northern sliver, further complicating the region with yet another border.

The region’s many borders, including seaports, became key sites of negotiation in the regional dialectic of territoriality and mobility. For this reason, borders serve as a crucial starting point to gain appreciation for the region’s complex political geography. Although they do not all serve an identical purpose, borders tend to draw from a common repertoire of practices and relationships related to regulating limits—territorial, but also jurisdictional, ethno-religious, or otherwise. They defined who could operate where. They could be tools of statecraft and tools for private individuals trying to escape the reach of state power. They mediated relations between the networked world of the coastal exclaves and the remote Andalusian and Moroccan interiors.

The most straightforward function of a border is to mark a territorial claim—drawing lines on the map, determining who belongs within

them and under what circumstances they may be crossed. Assets like natural resources or sheltered harbors sometimes entered in these calculations, but the region's border politics centered more frequently on the regulation of movement in and out of a territory. Border officials played a key role here. Even when a boundary's legal terms were established by international treaty, local authorities exercised considerable discretion, granting favored syndicates or tribes license to traffic goods and currency (and sometimes people and armaments) obtained from overseas in exchange for payment, political favor, or a combination of both. This kind of activity occurred in significant proportion at every border in the trans-Gibraltar region.

Borders themselves projected power onto neighboring realms. They created safe havens, giving cover to a range of political or commercial activities that were illegal on the other side—illustrating how, as the anthropologist James Scott observed, “an external frontier conditioned, bounded, and in many respects constituted was what possible at the center.”<sup>9</sup> For example, in both southern Andalusia and northern Morocco, banditry thrived on its ability to operate in multiple jurisdictions, sometimes obtaining legal protection from authorities in the coastal exclaves. Local political bosses and tribal leaders often collaborated more closely with neighboring polities like Gibraltar or Melilla than with their nominal leaders in Madrid or the sultan's court.<sup>10</sup> The power to designate extraterritorial legal protection across borders became a central component of interimperial politics, creating what Lauren Benton and Lisa Ford have called a “legal force field” of influence radiating across multiple jurisdictions.<sup>11</sup> Laws governing migration and trade could thus become difficult to enforce without risking international conflict.

The many sovereign entities coloring the regional map must therefore be understood as aspirational claims rather than literal monopolies on political power. As scholars have come to adopt a critical approach to territoriality, they have examined how multiple political and legal regimes frequently operated within the same borders—a phenomenon that became particularly intense in such a constricted and contested space as the trans-Gibraltar.<sup>12</sup> Sovereignty itself was not the monopoly of the state, but it must be regarded as a divisible aggregate of political and administrative powers that can be distributed among multiple authorities in a single bounded space: thus, Tangier could remain the spiritual and juridical patrimony of the Moroccan sultan even while its budgets and municipal code were administered by a committee of European consuls, each answerable

to the hierarchy of his own national government. Or, to provide another example, a private French company possessed the authority to concede the tobacco monopoly over Spanish Morocco to a Spanish robber baron, Juan March, who registered his operations in Gibraltar and Algeria to avoid scrutiny by his own government.

These types of convoluted arrangements gave rise to a special kind of borderland politics. Throughout this book, readers will become acquainted with networks and individuals who made it their specialty to exploit geopolitical frictions in order to carve out their own independent spheres of power. Operating in territorial or juridical spaces to which sovereignty was ambiguously assigned, they learned to mediate—even control—the terms of local relations and exchange that historians have increasingly placed at the center of the borderland dynamic.<sup>13</sup> Some established direct political relationships with officials from multiple governments, often serving as proxies in interimperial struggles, advancing in the slipstream of imperial power while avoiding falling under its control. A few amassed considerable power in this way, rewarding their entourage and shifting their allegiances as would any deft practitioner of statecraft. These groups and individuals must, like states and empires, be considered crucial actors in the regional order. As such, they form a key substantive link between borderland society and the geopolitics of the Strait. The historiography of colonial frontiers has generated several archetypes for local figures whose activities factored in geopolitics, from the man on the spot who precipitated colonial expansion to the go-between who facilitated contact between alien peoples.<sup>14</sup> The concern here, however, is rather different. The central process described in this book is not so much the expansion of a colonial frontier but the development of a multilateral regional order in the Hispano-African borderland over a long historical period. As often as not, the main role of the “slipstream potentates” and other powerful local networks in this narrative was to draw rival powers into cooperation in order to defeat them.

The matter of borders and their transgression also extended, if in a more metaphorical sense, to the region’s ethno-religious communities as they came into increasing contact with one another. For the past half millennium, the Strait of Gibraltar has formed a basic line of demarcation between the Euro-Christian and Afro-Muslim worlds. Its violation has often sent scholars into the totalizing analytical frameworks of imperialism, colonialism, and the “Orientalist” paradigm. Yet a recent flowering

of Hispanist scholarship has cautioned against reducing the Strait to a horizon for a common European project of colonial expansion. Although the narrative of the Christian Reconquest remained important in popular and intellectual discourse on Spain's southern borderland, scholars have also identified the emergence of a contrary myth depicting deep affinities between the lands and peoples of southern Andalusia and northern Morocco.<sup>15</sup> As interest in racial origins challenged the primacy of the religious frontier in some circles, a number of fin-de-siècle nationalists began to theorize the Hispanic essence of Sephardic Jews and of the descendants of Muslim al-Andalus. Spanish philologists developed the concept of Hispano-Muslim civilization, vestiges of which endured in long-term exile south of the Strait.<sup>16</sup> Some of Morocco's noblest families descended from al-Andalus. Men bearing Hispanic names like Vargas and Torres became ministers to the sultan, and today many Moroccan elites claim Andalusian ancestry.<sup>17</sup>

One potential basis for this bond was the role shared by Spain and North Africa as exotic Others of European culture. Andalusians in particular were often rendered as cousins of the "Moors"—an ancient term that in this context encompassed the various Arab and Amazigh (Berber) peoples of the Maghrib. Much as Moroccan Islam figured for some Spaniards as a degenerate version of medieval Andalusian splendor, many Moroccans denigrated modern Andalusians as dregs that remained after the Muslim departure.<sup>18</sup> By 1900, some 180,000 Spaniards lived in North Africa, mainly French Algeria, drawn mostly from the ranks of impoverished day laborers of Andalusia. Unlike most French and British colonials, they did not remain in comfortable enclaves but shared with the "Moors" their neighborhoods, work sites, and often a common antipathy toward Jews as well. They adopted a lingua franca combining Arabic, Berber, and Romance languages, and their French bosses sometimes had difficulty distinguishing them from Maghribian workers.<sup>19</sup> Some converted and took Muslim spouses.

Once established in the colonial protectorate of Morocco after 1912, Spanish authorities labored to forestall the tendency toward "hybridization" that is often associated with borderlands. Instead, they recognized the value of respecting inviolable social, legal, and sexual boundaries among Christians, Muslims, and Jews, "in the interest," as the medievalist David Nirenberg aptly phrased it, "of freeing space for other forms

of interaction.”<sup>20</sup> These other forms included normal exchanges like trade and neighborliness but also came to encompass deeper sentiments, such as mutual respect and even a sense of common mission. Considered heretical in an earlier age, such feelings were tentatively explored by certain Spanish Romantics and stirred by the brief Hispano-Moroccan War of 1859–1860.<sup>21</sup> The discourse of solidarity between Catholic Spain and Muslim Morocco was especially prevalent in Spanish military circles. Francisco Franco, the Spanish Civil War leader and dictator from 1939 to 1975, sought to harness the energy of this putative alliance of God-fearing peoples in order to expel liberalism, atheism, and Anglo-French imperialism from the trans-Gibraltar sphere altogether. Rather than draw from the rhetorical repertoire of Christian crusade or French-style civilizing mission, the Spanish attitude toward Morocco developed on a trajectory similar in some respects to Imperial Germany vis-à-vis the Ottoman Empire: good will “spurred on by a sense of shared threat of Entente encirclement.”<sup>22</sup>

The regional perspective therefore also adds an interpretive dimension to the study of Spanish foreign relations and their role in forging the contemporary western Mediterranean order. Modern Spain’s engagement in European affairs has taken place almost entirely on its southern borderland—putatively colonial space. Spain may be unique in this respect among large European nations, for which imperial struggles usually involved a significant continental component. Even when two world wars engulfed Europe, Spain was tied in only by a fine thread running through Gibraltar and Morocco (excepting its limited participation in the German war against the Soviet Union in 1941–1943).<sup>23</sup> After some three centuries of Atlanticism, the Mediterranean regained its primacy in Spanish foreign affairs progressively but tentatively over course of the nineteenth century. Fernando VII’s passive reaction to the French invasion of Algeria in 1830 and an allegedly rudderless imperial strategy in Morocco would draw fierce criticism from twentieth-century Spanish nationalists. But avoiding encirclement from the south was a subtle task to perform without becoming mired, as one diplomat wrote in 1882, in colonial “adventures, when we are not yet prepared.”<sup>24</sup> In the latter decades of the nineteenth century, British and French imperial geometries appeared to be on a collision course in the western Mediterranean, and in 1905, Spain’s prime minister predicted that “an Anglo-French struggle inevitably would finally be fought out on Spanish soil.”<sup>25</sup> Another respected voice of the era, the polymath Joaquín Costa, warned that without cultivating a strong ally in Morocco, Spain

risked becoming “another Poland, dismembered, cut to pieces to satisfy the voracious appetites of two or three powers.”<sup>26</sup>

In short, where other European powers construed a colonial space, the Spanish increasingly saw their “vital space,” to apply a term current in European geopolitical discourse of the day.<sup>27</sup> Saddled with the fear of becoming a colonial subject—not entirely unfounded, as it turns out—the Spanish government ordered a disastrous attempt to occupy northern Morocco after World War I. Similar anxieties influenced the radical prescriptions of the insurgent regime of General Francisco Franco in the late 1930s, which sought to align its geopolitical revisionism in the Strait and northwest Africa with the broader Axis struggle against the British and French empires.<sup>28</sup> Although this project failed by 1942, the Franco regime remained heavily invested in the continuity of the Moroccan Alawite dynasty, remaining alongside the United States as a resolute counterweight to successive French, Soviet, and pan-Arabist attempts to subvert it. As a result, Morocco became one of few modern states to reemerge with its precolonial ruling dynasty intact.

With the passing of the colonial age, it may seem that most of the actors on the trans-Gibraltar stage have departed, leaving only a civilizational binary—an echo of the popular *moros y cristianos* battle reenactments staged in Mediterranean Spain (and much of the Hispanic world) for centuries.<sup>29</sup> It is important to recall, however, that the relationship between Spain and Morocco—as states and as communities of people—was not a novelty of the postcolonial era but had gradually been reconstituted over two centuries, especially from the mid-nineteenth century on. After a long period of hostility or at best limited engagement, the two empires became parties to a common regional order. No longer could a “Moors and Christians” paradigm exist independent of the system of states and sovereignty that sought to govern their relations. With this in mind, our method instead takes a cue from a rather different spectacle of local popular culture: in the mid-twentieth century, in the Spanish border town of La Línea, lying within the shadow of British Gibraltar, with the North African coast visible on the horizon, children played a version of hide-and-seek known as *contrabandistas y carabineros* (smugglers and sentries).<sup>30</sup> This game reenacts the struggle between mobile networks and territorial law, between an intensively bordered space and the international system of sovereignty attempting to dominate it. By considering the accretion of such struggles over the long century from the mid-nineteenth to the



mid-twentieth century, we can aspire to understand the present regional conjuncture and identify lessons valuable for understanding new regional challenges.

### Early Modern Inheritances, circa 1500–1850

The Strait of Gibraltar first acquired its identity as a border at the end of the fifteenth century, when Catholic Spain emerged as a major power and Morocco a haven for its first enemies. For the earlier Mediterranean empires of Carthage, Rome, Byzantium, and successive Caliphates, the western periphery had usually included territories on both shores.<sup>31</sup> Although east-west passage through the Pillars of Hercules marked the junction of the known and unknown seas, the short south-north crossing was routine and unremarkable. The climate and natural landscape on opposite shores were more similar to each other than to other parts of Spain or Morocco. Features characteristic of a border began to accrue in the high medieval period. The Christian monarchs of Castile and Aragon gradually shifted away from a fractious system of alliances involving Muslim states throughout the Mediterranean world, instead adopting a stance of crusade. Increasingly they united under the banner of common Hispano-Visigoth heritage to confront neighboring Islamic domains. It was during this period of fierce religious wars that northern Morocco's coastal mountain range acquired the name Rif, from the Moroccan Arabic word for "parapet," signaling the rhetorical invention of a new defensive front.<sup>32</sup>

The newly united Spanish Crown's conquest of Muslim Iberia's last remaining stronghold at Granada in 1492 marks a culmination only in retrospect. Many Christian contemporaries hoped to continue southward into Mauritania Tingitana, recalling the ancient name of the African dependencies of Roman Hispania. In a bull of 1495, Pope Alexander VI proclaimed the Spanish rulers "Monarchs of Africa."<sup>33</sup> Iberian Christians captured the African coastal promontories of Ceuta (1415), Tangier (1471), Melilla (1497), Oran (1509), and as far east as Tripoli (1510), but these outposts remained oriented toward the sea, not bridgeheads for interaction with an inhospitable interior. Efforts to continue inland proved a costly distraction from new oceangoing missions in the Atlantic and the competition for influence in Rome. Rather than pursue a bicontinental Euro-African kingdom, the Catholic Monarchs instead focused their energies on Italy and America.

The far western Mediterranean thus became a “forgotten frontier,” as the historian Andrew Hess memorably termed it—no longer the focus of active expansion, but a new fulcrum for the great ethno-religious sorting of the long sixteenth century.<sup>34</sup> Spain cultivated a national identity closely tied to Catholic imperialism, cleansed of Judaism and engaged in global struggle with Islam. The Spanish Crown expelled Jews who refused to convert to Christianity in 1492 and presented Hispano-Muslims with a similar choice over subsequent decades. Moriscos, the converted descendants of Muslims who retained elements of Arab culture, never escaped the reputation of internal enemies and were expelled after 1609. As the landing point for much of this exile, Morocco in turn became a bulwark against Habsburg-Spanish expansionism. Amid political fragmentation following the final collapse of al-Andalus, a legal consensus emerged that collaborating with Christians was an act of apostasy and treason when carried out on African soil.<sup>35</sup> Such collaboration had once been an unavoidable fact of life for Muslims in medieval Iberia, but this new doctrine in effect posited a new religio-political line of demarcation in the Strait that had not hitherto existed. By 1666, the Alawite dynasty claimed the mantle of Sharifian lineage descended directly from the Prophet Muhammad, but the Arab-Berber nobility of the Atlantic coast exerted little authority over the tribes and charismatic religious mystics that populated the Moroccan north and east. The Alawite sultans could aspire to spiritual leadership over these crucial realms only by remaining hostile toward Christian Spain.

Although the ethno-religious cleansing of the sixteenth-century might resemble a characteristic component of modern state building, one consequence, paradoxically, may have been to exacerbate a set of conditions unfavorable to it. The frequently violent persecutions turned the trans-Gibraltar region into a kind of “shatter zone” in which the dynamics of circulation and conflict functioned mainly outside state authority. As persecuted people abandoned their homelands en masse, many fled across the Strait. Those who reached Moroccan shores frequently became ready recruits for the piracy and privateering of Barbary that disrupted cross-channel exchange, left coastal settlements of Andalusia vulnerable to raids, and suffused Spanish Renaissance society with a mix of fascination and horror. The refugees fueled social and political dynamism in their adoptive country but also division. Shut out from tribal lands of the Mediterranean coast, Jewish and Morisco exiles settled in cities like Tétouan and Fez, sparking a wave of urbanization that challenged an older

social order.<sup>36</sup> Others remained in Spain, attempting to blend quietly into urban life or to head for the hills. Some Moriscos took to the Alpujarras range of Granada and organized armed resistance, inciting suspicions that they might be fifth columnists in support of Ottoman-Barbary coastal assaults. Bounty hunters combed forests in search of rebel Moriscos to sell at the Málaga slave market.<sup>37</sup>

While the Atlantic empire invigorated Seville and Cádiz, southern and western portions of Andalusia stagnated and fell into endemic civil conflict. The lands on both sides of the Strait were increasingly marked by vast depopulated stretches interspersed with a few dynamic port cities and way stations. In this atmosphere, brigandage provided an appealing means for ambitious youths to escape poverty, build private militias, and even amass political power. The Moroccan government (known as the *Makhzan*) administered its far-flung provinces as a “patrimonial bureaucracy,” in which local elites purchased government positions, often with funds raised through brigandage.<sup>38</sup> In Andalusia, bandits were frequently emboldened by the protection of powerful seigniorial masters or, in a desperate situation, by access to safe havens across the waters.<sup>39</sup> Efforts by the Spanish royal administration to neutralize the free reign of bandits by repopulating vacated lands with pious sedentary landholders met with little success.<sup>40</sup>

With the Atlantic turn of Spain and Portugal and the chronic Barbary raiding, more distant maritime powers asserted a presence. British and French naval activism in the western Mediterranean reached new heights during the late seventeenth century. Both powers gained trading concessions from North African potentates in exchange for access to European weaponry.<sup>41</sup> Britain assumed possession of Tangier from Portugal in 1661, only to abandon the recalcitrant town to the sultan in 1684—a key milestone in the consolidation of the fledgling Alawite state. Soon after, the War of Spanish Succession presented Britain with an opportunity to capture an equivalent position on the opposite shore of the western Mediterranean choke point—Gibraltar—where its forces landed in 1704. Over the course of the eighteenth century, European navies gradually eroded the dominance of the Barbary corsairs. British Gibraltar and Moroccan Tangier became increasingly cosmopolitan hubs on opposite shores of the Strait. Gibraltar, though now an Anglo-Protestant fortress, attracted Catholic and Jewish migrants from throughout the Mediterranean and housed resident Muslim consuls of the Moroccan sultanate.<sup>42</sup> Tangier, long a safe harbor

for European fugitives, became the sultanate's diplomatic capital by the late eighteenth century. At arm's length from the empire's traditional capitals of Fez and Marrakesh, the northern outpost became a crucial contact point between European officials and their Muslim interlocutors, who were usually forbidden from living under Christian jurisdiction. Europeans also attempted to exert more direct influence over the Makhzan. King Carlos III of Spain sent Jorge Juan on an extraordinary diplomatic mission to the court of Sultan Muhammad III in 1767, the same year French warships bombarded Morocco's Atlantic coast. Both initiatives yielded trade concessions from the Alawite sultan. While the Spanish pursued further diplomatic ties with the sultan and the beys of Ottoman Algeria, France continued on its imperialist course, making its decisive entrée into the region with the invasion of Algeria in 1830. Together, these developments not only raised the stakes of imperial competition in the western Mediterranean channel but also opened intensive new patterns of migration and circulation around the region, which would soon be further enhanced by the rise of steam locomotion over land and water. The modern trans-Gibraltar order that is the subject of this book was born of this conjuncture.

## Sources and Organization

Despite the cartographic saliency of the Strait of Gibraltar, borders and borderlands are not natural features but historical processes, driven by the ongoing negotiation among multiple polities or groups occupying or vying to occupy a particular space. The record of this negotiation does not reside in any single archival collection or type of source material; it must be assembled from a broad range. French and Spanish diplomatic and military archives contain reports of government and military officials on matters related to border management, smuggling, and imperial jockeying throughout the region. In the urban milieu, Melilla and Tangier played particularly significant roles in the construction of the trans-Gibraltar, and their municipal archives (including those of the Tangier International Zone, today housed at Alcalá de Henares) have been consulted extensively. Because of the sizable secondary literature, primary documents from Gibraltar have been consulted on a more limited basis, although records of legal and political disputes arising from the British colony's jurisdictional ambiguities help more precisely identify what was at stake in how its border functioned. A number of memoirs and travel narratives are valuable for

reconstructing borderland society, as are works by contemporary and historical ethnographers on the social dynamic of colonial Tétouan and other Moroccan towns. Biographies of key figures of the period have also been of great value. This book thus aims for a broad synthesis of new historical research and recent secondary literature on individual polities within the trans-Gibraltar space. Bringing these strands together reveals themes and patterns often imperceptible to national and mono-imperial histories. Through this process a borderland history acquires its substance.

Part I of this book, “From Shatter Zone to Borderland, 1850–1900,” examines the formation of the modern regional order during the second half of the nineteenth century. Although our starting point of 1850 corresponds to no particular milestone in the national histories of Spain and Morocco, or in the imperial trajectories of France and Britain in the Mediterranean, the vantage point of the regional order draws attention to a number of common patterns and new pressures. Advances in steam-powered transport facilitated migration and commerce on a greater scale, and accelerated the disastrous spread of cholera, the epidemic par excellence of nineteenth-century global exchange. It was, moreover, during the third quarter of the nineteenth century that “territorial boundaries along which states claimed sovereignty became more sharply defined in both law and practice,” as James Sheehan has put it.<sup>43</sup> Articulation of more precise borders was a sovereign response to escalating challenges posed by the transnational phenomena of epidemic disease, trade, and banditry. This process forms the subject of Chapter 1, which analyzes the transformation of the vaguely defined neutral ground between British Gibraltar and the adjacent Spanish lines into a modern regulated border.

The invention of the Gibraltar-Spain border was just the first manifestation of a dawning era in which states and empires would assert a more active and thoroughgoing presence in the Strait. Competition for influence in the densely trafficked trans-Gibraltar zone was heightened by new geopolitical imaginings of the broader Mediterranean, either as thoroughfare or lake.<sup>44</sup> The French Empire of Napoleon III launched a series of initiatives in Italy, the Levant, the Maghrib, and Suez, auguring a clash with Britain for control of the Mediterranean corridor. British and French imperial tensions resembled an existential threat both to the Moroccan dynasty and to the troubled Spanish empire, which signaled its alarm with a small but pivotal invasion of Morocco in 1859 that historians have sometimes unjustly dismissed as a trumped-up war driven by domestic

concerns. Chapter 2 employs correspondence of Spanish military and consular officers in Melilla and Tangier to reexamine the Hispano-Moroccan War of 1859–1860 as a response to the growing British and French influence in the region. Significant territorial acquisition was never an option, but Spanish officials converted a limited victory into a mechanism for pulling Moroccan tribes and merchants into the orbit of Melilla. The proliferation of these types of “imperial borders” forms the subject of Chapter 3, which considers how vectors of imperial influence emanated from the emerging nodes of regional power at Tangier, Gibraltar, Melilla, and Oran onto their Moroccan and Andalusian “hinterlands”—this last concept itself being a neologism of the era.<sup>45</sup> The new imperial dynamism turned both shores of the trans-Gibraltar region into magnets for travelers and permanent settlers. Drawing from an array of European travel narratives, memoirs, and periodicals, Chapter 4 describes the formation of a new bicontinental, multiethnic conurbation centered on the Strait. The result was a notable degree of colonial conviviality, but one that also invited brigandage and rebellion on its fringes.

The particular challenges arising from borderland governance are crucial for understanding the region’s major conflicts of the era. Part 2, “Between Borderland and Empire, 1900–1939,” invites readers to set aside familiar narratives of colonialism and resistance but instead consider how the intensive patchwork of administrative and legal boundaries defined the region’s experience during the first decades of the twentieth century. To reduce the risk of conflict, European diplomats agreed on a new system of borders and spheres of influence. By 1912, they devised an elaborate protectorate system designating France to be the protector of the sultan and the entirety of his realm, but to satisfy British demands, they also left Morocco’s northern coast to be administered by a Spanish-appointed “caliph.” This resolved one set of imperial tensions but also created a new set of ambiguities. The arrangement opened new avenues for enterprising brigands, gangsters, rebels, and agents-provocateurs to exert political power disproportionate to their means. Chapter 5 profiles the exploits of three particularly successful “slipstream potentates”—Bu Hmara, Raisuni, and Juan March, all of whom became key regional figures. Chapter 6 turns to World War I. The trans-Gibraltar remained in the Entente sphere throughout that conflict, but with the anomaly that neutral Spain oversaw the northern coast of Morocco and the abundance of maritime smuggling networks, autonomous brigandage, and safe havens operating there.

French and Spanish military intelligence reports indicate the extent to which German agents exploited this legal and political gray zone to infiltrate the pro-Entente sultanate. Although this amounted to only a minor tactical advantage for Germany during the war, it sowed bitter and violent resentments between the Spanish and French colonial armies in Morocco.

This regional context adds a significant interpretative dimension to the region's years of violence between World War I and World War II. Inflamed by the pro-German activities of some Spanish colonial officers during World War I, the French government launched a campaign to expel Spain from Morocco entirely. Sensing danger, Madrid ordered hasty military action in its zone of the Moroccan protectorate, a provocation that enabled the enterprising nobleman Abd el-Krim el-Khattabi to build a resistance movement and wage a violent campaign for an independent Rifian state in 1921. Drawing on unpublished French and Spanish military sources, Chapter 7 reconsiders standard interpretations of the Rif rebellion as a protonationalist anticolonial movement, instead emphasizing how the conflict arose from a form of political entrepreneurship typical of the borderland slipstream. Only in 1926, during a fleeting moment of cooperation, did Spanish and French forces suppress the Rif revolt. The way was thus opened for Spanish colonial administration and settlement in northern Morocco. Chapter 8 examines how, as the physical border between Spain and Morocco disintegrated, Spanish colonial administrators sought to mediate relations between the two peoples in an effort to present a common project of liberation from the yoke of French colonialism. Meanwhile, in the nearby exclaves of Tangier and Gibraltar, working-class Spanish border settlements emerged within colonial societies. Chapter 9 considers this juxtaposition of a conservative colonial elite to a Spanish community tied to the republican left and to the economic and revolutionary undergrounds. As the Spanish Civil War broke out, colonial elites favored the side of Franco's military rebellion against the Republic of 1931, even as the future dictator pledged to conquer them.

Part 3 begins with the Spanish Civil War and the early phase of World War II (1939–1942). The existing order proved remarkably resilient despite efforts by Franco's Spain and the Axis to topple it, as argued in Chapter 10, but events nevertheless set in motion a long transition during the postwar decades. As the Mediterranean lost relevance in the emerging postwar geopolitics, the Strait's meaning changed. The Rock of Gibraltar did not lose its sublime majesty, but the American naval presence at nearby Rota (near

Cádiz) after 1953 rendered it strategically obsolescent while the dynamics of a north-south, Euro-African, postcolonial relationship gained relevance. In the context of this changing conjuncture in the trans-Gibraltar, Chapter 11 offers new perspectives on the regional context in which two varieties of authoritarian nationalism developed, first in Spain and later in Morocco. The postwar era of decolonization also resulted in the isolation of Gibraltar from its Spanish neighbor, the departure of Europeans and Jews from Morocco, and the start of a new era of northward migration. Chapter 12 chronicles this new ethno-religious sorting, concluding with some reflections on the crucial lessons and legacies of the region's modern history.



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## **Part One**

### **From Shatter Zone to Borderland, 1850–1900**

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# 1

## Inventing a Border

### British Gibraltar and the Spanish Campo

**THE STORY OF** the trans-Gibraltar region's transformation from a peripheral "shatter zone" into a dynamic focus of sovereign energies begins in the bay waters and the thousand-yard isthmus separating the British exclave from Spain. Used by both Gibraltarians and Andalusians, but permanently occupied by neither, this vaguely defined neutral zone turned into a precise, albeit formally unrecognized, border between two sovereign spaces during the mid-nineteenth century. Seeking to tame "mobile" forces such as contraband trade networks, migration, and contagious disease, local officials on both sides devoted new attention to the space lying between the British town and its nearest Spanish neighbors. This no-man's-land soon became the focus of active land management, jurisdictional demarcation, and biopolitical measures to regulate access to the colony and its commercial and legal privileges. In the absence of a bilateral agreement between Madrid and London on the placement of a border, these developments created a common framework for cross-border relations between local officials at British Gibraltar and Spain's adjacent Campo de Gibraltar district. They also resulted in the loss of territory that would weigh heavily on Spain's national memory and alert its authorities to the perils of British dominance on their southern borderland.

Whereas scholars and lawyers have tended to examine these developments in terms of the ongoing territorial dispute between Spain and Britain, this chapter understands them as a sovereign response to a series of changes in the broader regional conjuncture of politics and mobility.<sup>1</sup> Both Spain and Britain were early comers to the liberal age, but Britain's

confident free-trade empire contrasted sharply with Spain's convulsive praetorian liberalism and its episodic revolutions. As Gibraltar became a major node of Mediterranean commerce in the early nineteenth century, the principle that merchants and transporters should operate unencumbered directly challenged Spain's shaky governing coalition, unable fully to shed mercantilist and protectionist strictures. By the 1840s, as communication and exchange across the bay and isthmus reached new levels, the long-standing legal assumption that British Gibraltar was strictly a naval garrison oriented toward the sea became untenable. Local authorities on both sides began to call for clearer guidance on problems like customs enforcement, extradition, and disease control. Rather than a territorial dispute between two powers, the making of the Gibraltar-Spain border arose from an interrelated set of conflicts characteristic of the mid-nineteenth century world: free trade against mercantilism, centralization against local autonomy, and an "environmentalist" approach to urban hygiene against the older method of controlling contagion through quarantine.

### The Problem of Utrecht

For the first century of its existence, British Gibraltar operated largely free from legal constraints. The Treaty of Utrecht, which formalized Britain's occupation of the fortress Rock in 1713, was a dead letter nearly from the start. The treaty awarded Britain "the full and intire [*sic*] propriety of the Town and Castle of Gibraltar . . . to be held and enjoyed absolutely with all manner of rights for ever"—but "without any territorial jurisdiction." The phrase "territorial jurisdiction" was fraught with ambiguity. By one interpretation, the Spanish Crown retained such prerogatives as appointing diocesan hierarchs and refusing rights of residency (to Jews and Muslims) in Gibraltar as anywhere else in the realm. Yet for the British, the "propriety" implied not only ownership of the fortress but also the right to defend land and sea within a radius of one cannon shot and to administer it as they pleased. A related provision was Utrecht's ban on overland contact between the British garrison and the neighboring Spanish districts—creating an irresistible temptation to smuggling. Clandestine cross-border trade in goods like tobacco and textiles undermined Spanish royal monopolies and fiscal regulations but provided a gravy train of spoils for the ill-paid petty officials and day laborers of the adjacent Campo de Gibraltar.<sup>2</sup>

In any case, interpreting the terms of Utrecht remained a strictly academic exercise. Deeming British activities illegitimate, the Spanish laid siege to the Rock in 1727 and 1779–1783 but failed to recover it. Instead, the improbable survivor built considerable influence over its neighbors on both shores of the Strait. Gibraltar's Anglo-Protestant masters quickly assimilated to the cosmopolitan mode of Mediterranean trade and politics. To gain access to provisions from Morocco, they offered residency to Jewish and Muslim traders.<sup>3</sup> The Rock also took in Catholic merchants from places like Genoa and Sardinia, and became a key node in the political-financial networks that channeled considerable trade with Spain, Morocco, and Algeria. The British garrison was a chief source of weapons and food for Andalusian guerrilla units resisting Napoleon. It became the main entry point for liberalism and Freemasonry into Spain and a refuge for Spanish liberal revolutionaries.<sup>4</sup> Evangelical missionaries employed the Rock as a base of operations, hiring mercenary Andalusian bandits to smuggle and distribute their pamphlets.<sup>5</sup> It also became a vital channel for outside material and financial support flowing to many North African politicians and militias, including Algerian anti-French resistance leader Abd el-Kader in the 1840s.<sup>6</sup>

As Spain was visited with successive waves of trauma throughout the nineteenth century, British Gibraltar flourished and grew. In 1826, the British claimed a portion of the neutral isthmus, an act that had less to do with usurping land than with ensuring ownership of deeper waters of the open bay, which was better suited to a modern naval and merchant fleet than the craggy shores directly adjacent to the Rock. Gibraltar's population grew from around three thousand in 1800 to thirteen thousand by 1825 and sixteen thousand by 1850, straining the settlement's meager water supply and acreage. Accounting for the bulk of the growth were migrants from Genoa, Malta, and nearby districts of Spain, adding a major Catholic, largely Spanish-speaking presence to the small eighteenth-century population of chiefly English and Sephardic Jewish origin.<sup>7</sup> Familial and (largely illicit) commercial links with Spain across the bay and isthmus pulled Gibraltar landward while demographic pressures augured a more systematic approach to land use.

Having been a pleasant retreat in earlier times, the neutral ground of the isthmus was by 1840 no place for weak constitutions. Littered with rotting seaweed and other detritus, the shoreline was speckled with pools of seawater that seeped downward to render the groundwater undrinkable.

Generally warm relations with local Spanish authorities had enabled the town of Gibraltar to use the near portion of this narrow strip for various purposes, including two slaughterhouses. The slaughterhouses possessed only an incomplete mechanism of discharging waste, so that animal blood and carcasses languished in the sand. Other sections of the isthmus became vegetable gardens—irrigated with untreated urban sewage—the colony’s main source of fresh produce.<sup>8</sup> A town cemetery was also situated there, accounting for the neutral zone’s only permanent residents. As a result of overcrowding and a high water table, the dead could not be buried at a depth greater than five feet, occasionally leading to macabre discoveries during periods of flooding.

The Spanish end of the isthmus was a poorly maintained no-man’s-land. Residential dwellings were formally prohibited, although a scattering of shanties housed a few dozen. In 1827, an American traveler described the Spanish line as a dilapidated guardhouse swarmed with beggars, vagabonds, half-naked women, and ill-fed troops who would grant passage for a dollar’s bribe.<sup>9</sup> The Campo de Gibraltar consisted of a wooded plain, with coastal beaches rounding the five-mile-wide Gibraltar Bay, all under an arc of rugged mountains a few miles to the interior. Spaniards settled these areas only after being expelled from Gibraltar in 1704, reestablishing the abandoned medieval settlements of San Roque, immediately to the north, and Algeciras, directly across Gibraltar Bay. A road linking these settlements to Gibraltar received a daily traffic flow of hundreds of individuals, who were required to carry border permits from local authorities on both sides. At any given time, between 7 percent and 10 percent of Gibraltar’s population were nonresidents who remained in the colony on average for a few weeks, according to data from 1842.<sup>10</sup> Entering the British town were Andalusian laborers and domestics, along with small peddlers and their mules loaded with potable water and produce. Gibraltarians, some of Spanish ancestry, traversed the isthmus in the opposite direction, entering Spain for family visits, hunts, sexual liaisons, and other leisure pursuits. Hidden among these traffic flows were occasional fugitives, smugglers, dissidents, deserters from nearby Spanish naval bases, and convict laborers of the British Empire attempting to escape to Spain. In 1838, local Spanish and British colonial authorities reached agreement on the extradition of such people but omitted to define precisely where a runaway would be considered to have entered the other jurisdiction.<sup>11</sup>

Gibraltar's economy, once dominated by military expenditures, grew with the port's expanding role as a free-trade haven lodged between two states (Spain and Morocco) that were heavily reliant on mercantile protectionism and royal monopolies. One French observer called the British Rock "a grand warehouse that England constantly stocks with cast-off goods" to be brought to Spain for the profit of smugglers and their political protectors.<sup>12</sup> Trade with Spain was essential to the livelihood of Gibraltarian shopkeepers and importers, who resold their merchandise to any Andalusian willing to smuggle it. Spain's liberal governments were reluctant to legalize such trade. Although abstract principles of liberalism would have favored it, the precarious liberal coalition was hostage to the protectionist demands of Catalonia's powerful manufacturers. As a result, smugglers dealt in textiles, foodstuffs, tobacco, and a range of other goods. Even some Spanish-made goods passed into Andalusia via Gibraltar, where they were stamped "Made in England" to raise their value.<sup>13</sup> Only in 1869 did major tariff reform remove incentives to smuggle commodities other than tobacco, which remained subject to a royal monopoly. Smugglers came in all sizes. Spaniards who entered the town to work or peddle frequently returned home in the evening with tobacco, fabrics, and other goods concealed under oversized clothing. Higher-volume operations were carried out by sea in large boats, sometimes with crews of upward of twenty men and ten cannon. Individuals of many nationalities registered such vessels in Gibraltar, from where they delivered contraband goods to nearby drop points on the Spanish coast.<sup>14</sup>

These individuals plainly operated outside Spanish law, which provided no mechanism to import goods from Gibraltar. In the absence of legal recognition, an unofficial system of regulation and patronage functioned. Gibraltar authorities licensed about 150 Spaniards to conduct business in the colony. The prerogative to identify candidates for this privilege belonged by custom to the Spanish consul, who exacted a fee from contrabandists in exchange for granting this designation.<sup>15</sup> This system served to regulate a cross-border trading network that supported tens of thousands in a variety of occupations, from merchants to harbor pilots to the landless day laborers who clandestinely ran merchandise to distributors in the interior.<sup>16</sup> The availability of willing foot soldiers owed largely to the latifundist land-tenure structure, Andalusia's most persistent sociohistorical feature, which caused considerable social misery. The life of these *haramperos*, as



smugglers were known, was hardly glamorous or lucrative. For a wage similar to that of a field hand, about three pesetas per day, they hid during daylight hours to evade capture by government agents, then awoke at dusk to lead their dogs (who carried their merchandise) on overnight treks through dense mountain forests.<sup>17</sup> For those who were captured, intervention from a complicit mayor or magistrate was typically sufficient to gain release, but runners who could not escape punishment sometimes received indemnification from an organized insurance cooperative.<sup>18</sup>

In so poor a region as the Campo de Gibraltar, local authorities' tolerance of the contraband trade might be thought of as a kind of "moral economy," although such an understanding obscures the fabric of bribery and patronage necessary to sustain it. According to a study produced by the Spanish Treasury in 1887, the governors of the Campo during this period regarded bribes "as a perquisite to improve their situation, build personal wealth, and find adventure and good stories."<sup>19</sup> It may not even have been clear to the typical tobacco runner whether his activities were outside the law. For a day laborer caught at the checkpoint with a pinch of tobacco, it might have been difficult to distinguish a tax from a bribe, which was often disguised as a "license" purchased directly from a customs officer. Once on the trail, *haramperos* found their pursuers could be horsemen in the service of the private tobacco monopoly, while their protectors were local judges, political bosses, and sometimes even priests.

The thriving presence of a forbidden commercial colony at Gibraltar ensured a role for smuggling networks and other forms of banditry in the politics of southern Andalusia. Flamboyant rogues who "dressed like nobles" while siphoning riches from royal coffers and the well-to-do, the most successful bandits were popular heroes in the Campo de Gibraltar, where their vocation was said to rank "among the liberal arts."<sup>20</sup> They lived in symbiosis with political bosses, who frequently protected outlaws who could help them hold power. A few mayors of mountain villages to the north of Gibraltar had risen to prominence as highwaymen and smugglers. Moreover, the linkage among banditry, revolutionary republicanism, and the frustration of the region's chronically distressed peasantry was fairly direct. Throughout Spain's tumultuous nineteenth century, liberal revolutionaries routinely allied with bandit networks, which delivered popular support and armed militias. In some cases, brigands facilitated rebels' escape to Gibraltar when an uprising turned sour, but they also led an independent and unpredictable constituency. As liberal politicians repeatedly

learned, efforts to demobilize revolutionary fervor and consolidate a new regime were hindered by populist bandits looking to settle local scores and push for ever-greater independence from Madrid. A national police force, the Civil Guard, was created in 1844 in large part to deal with the nexus of brigandage and social revolution. But agents of the central state struggled to cut through the thicket of local patronage, as mayors used their authority to provide legal cover to the networks that supported their wealth and generated considerable economic activity and employment in their districts. Wanted men also fled to Gibraltar, Tangier, and Oran, where they found safe havens.<sup>21</sup>

### Creeping Sovereignty and the Push for a Formal Border Protocol

By 1841, Spain's liberal government was sufficiently motivated to recognize and regulate exchange with Gibraltar. It was in this year that a broad Anglo-Spanish trade agreement was scuttled by Britain's refusal to crack down on Gibraltarian merchants who dealt with known Spanish smugglers. On that occasion, Britain's foreign minister, Lord Palmerston, observed, "Although every Government has a right to make what fiscals laws it pleases . . . no Government has a right to ask or to expect the Government of another country to help in the execution of such laws."<sup>22</sup> Following Palmerston's rebuke, Spain's moderate-liberal government took baby steps toward relatively freer trade over the following decade, performing a delicate political balancing act to reconcile pro-protectionist Catalan manufacturers with Andalusian merchants and Treasury officials seeking more commercial engagement.<sup>23</sup> A fiscal reform of 1849 reduced tariffs, though without coming close to eliminating them, and provided for more effective collection mechanisms. Trade was authorized in hundreds of previously banned goods, although the most lucrative, tobacco, remained closed.<sup>24</sup> In a belated acknowledgment that commerce and traffic with Gibraltar carried on, the Spanish built a customhouse at the north end of the isthmus. But the new facility was little more than a "filthy shed" (*zaquizami*) where smugglers preferred to bribe poorly paid guards rather than submit to the new tariff regime.<sup>25</sup>

The Spanish government's gradual liberalizations were accompanied by a more centralized approach to customs enforcement. Because local customs authorities were often deeply compromised beneficiaries of the

Gibraltar contraband trade, Madrid equipped the Ministry of the Treasury with a carabineer force and armed vessels to operate in Gibraltar Bay. The placement of national agents in the bay signaled Madrid's new resolve to patrol borders, but encountered a series of practical limitations. Gunboats were only as effective as the harbor pilots who guided them through the challenging waters of the bay. Drawn from the ranks of local talent, the pilots were often tied in to the smuggling economy and guided the ships away from places where they knew a tobacco drop would be taking place.<sup>26</sup>

Violent clashes in the bay between armed smuggling vessels and Spanish gunboats were generally avoided by advance bribery, but the risk was ever present. Palmerston ensured that Gibraltar's merchant fleet was "provided with means of defence."<sup>27</sup> The new Spanish commitment to patrolling the bay and neutral zone for smugglers thus raised the prospect of an international incident. How might a Spanish gunboat confront an armed contraband vessel flying the Union Jack? How might a British sentry react should his station on the Gibraltar isthmus become the scene of a gunfight between a Spanish carabineer and a suspected smuggler?

The escalating danger was recognized by Gibraltar's new governor, Sir Robert Gardiner, in 1848. Gardiner aspired to define the border once and for all, and along with that to tackle the related problem of smuggling. The governor appreciated that revising the Treaty of Utrecht had become a matter "far too delicate for diplomacy to deal with," but he hoped a local agreement would be sufficient to establish "an understood provisional appropriation of jurisdiction."<sup>28</sup> He believed that the prevailing uncertainty regarding the neutral zone was itself a corrupting influence, fostering a free-for-all atmosphere in which British guards generally preferred accepting a petty bribe to arresting the pitiful Andalusian runners who resorted to that occupation.<sup>29</sup> Moreover, Gardiner feared that without a firm boundary, the new Spanish program to combat smuggling might draw British sentries into violent clashes. It was widely known that revolutionary republican bands in San Roque, Ronda, and Algeciras, all of which were tied into the contraband networks, were purchasing supplies from Gibraltar, probably including arms and gunpowder.<sup>30</sup>

A decorated artillery general, Gardiner regarded Gibraltar as fundamentally a fortress rather than the commercial colony it had also gradually become over the course of several decades—a stance that would earn him the reputation as "one of the worst governors Gibraltar has ever had."<sup>31</sup> Gardiner urged Gibraltarians to share compassion for their politically

troubled neighbor: “We, of Gibraltar, above all other people in the world, brothers . . . of Spain, are, by every tie of honor and probity, bound to act with and support her . . . to bear with [Spain’s] weakness, while aiming at her political and commercial regeneration.”<sup>32</sup> Gardiner abhorred his colony’s role in enabling Spanish criminality. Instead of playing the benevolent neighbor, the British colony had fallen into the hands of commercial interests “who live by the moral corruption and smuggling of the poor and indigent,” and who “assert even a right to compel Spain to buy their cottons and tobacco.”<sup>33</sup> Gardiner applauded the steps that Spain was taking toward free trade, partial and precarious though they were, and entreated his subjects to look past the inconveniences that the new customhouse posed: “You will have to pay (and at a lower rate) to the customs-house officer the duties on licit traffic, which you have heretofore paid in fees [that is, bribes] for smuggling.” The time had come to accept “that the vicious and empty bubble of smuggling has burst.”<sup>34</sup>

The governor’s appeal to patience and moral rectitude failed to quell the growing hostility of the larger part of Gibraltar’s civilian population. A series of impolitic maneuvers made it worse. He restricted the import of wine and spirits, goods that brought much temporary relief to imperial soldiers assigned to the foul garrison. He ordered his police to remove signs announcing public meetings, which he correctly deduced were being organized to plot his demise. He also took aim at the colony’s financial houses by attempting to make the Spanish peseta into Gibraltar’s official currency, claiming to “know of no other means of effectually wresting the command of money which the Jews and money traders at present hold in Gibraltar.”<sup>35</sup>

Most important, the colonial governor committed the cardinal sin of aiding Spanish customs patrols at the expense of Gibraltarian merchants. In 1852, acting without support from London, Gardiner warned the operators of Gibraltarian fishing vessels (often a cover for smuggling) that they could not count on British protection if caught without a license in Spanish waters.<sup>36</sup> He pursued similar policies on land. The French consul reported that Gardiner instructed his sentries to tolerate Spanish police chasing smugglers and fugitives onto the isthmus, “a practice previously considered a grave affront.”<sup>37</sup> An episode that particularly fueled the merchants’ ire occurred when Gibraltar’s police arrested a Spanish tobacco smuggler in the neutral zone and turned him over to the Spanish military command. Gardiner’s enthusiasm for cooperating with Spanish authorities

on contraband prompted one Gibraltar native (of Spanish ancestry) acidly to note the British governor's "efficient administration . . . of the revenue laws of Spain."<sup>38</sup>

Gardiner was keenly aware that his new policies could easily provoke an unpleasant incident. He reported several close calls in 1853 that might easily have resulted in the shooting of a British soldier: "I cannot be answerable for what might have followed such a contingency—probably retaliatory fire of the English sentry on the Spanish Piquet," he warned Britain's ambassador to Madrid. "A convention of extradition and a definition of jurisdiction to be enforced by the adjoining commands are objects I have for upwards of 4 years urged as of imperative and immediate necessity, and yet these deplorable scenes continue to occur."<sup>39</sup>

By inviting Spanish incursions in neutral or disputed areas, Gardiner's policies thus added a new urgency to the problem of demarcating jurisdiction. The Spanish minister of state, the Marqués de Miraflores, launched a negotiation on the matter in 1851. Miraflores indicated that Spain could tolerate British presence in the neutral zone as long as Spanish law remained in force all the way down the isthmus to the old fortress line. The waters adjacent the neutral zone, moreover, should be genuinely neutral, enabling Spanish vessels to engage the tactic of running smugglers aground in the shallow waters. The British position was somewhat different: they proposed that individuals in neutral zone should be subject to the laws of their home country and insisted that the maritime boundary bisect the bay north to south, even if this preserved the anomaly of British water touching Spanish beaches. These disagreements were starting points for negotiation, and Gardiner hoped that his good-faith cooperation with Spanish customs enforcement would ease a path to compromise.<sup>40</sup> The real breakthrough was an acknowledgment by both sides of the need for a border at all.

## Epidemic and Revolution

The resolve of the Spanish and British governments to establish a clear jurisdictional boundary was to be met with resistance from a coalition of Gibraltarian merchants and Andalusian contrabandists—who shared close commercial and sometimes familial ties. We would ordinarily expect state officials to gain the upper hand when cooperating bilaterally, but in this case a number of factors favored the cause of the cross-border networks: the rising influence of Gibraltar's merchant community in

the British government as the result of ongoing trade negotiations with Morocco; a new cholera epidemic reaching the western Mediterranean as a result of the Crimean War; and a wave of revolutionary cantonalism in Andalusia, possibly associated with the epidemic.

The cholera outbreak of 1853–1855 did not spare any part of the Iberian Peninsula, but the poverty-stricken south suffered the worst ravages. In Gibraltar alone, some two thousand residents, one eighth of the population, required medical relief, though the number of deaths is unknown.<sup>41</sup> Within hours of exposure, the disease could send a healthy person into a state of acute dehydration, severe pallor, and seizures and altered consciousness, a terrifying experience for any patient or eyewitness. In addition to the human toll, commerce between Gibraltar and Andalusia suffered. In October 1853, port authorities in Cádiz and Málaga imposed fifteen-day quarantine requirements on all ships coming from Gibraltar, with Algeciras threatening the same if the British port continued to accept Atlantic and Mediterranean vessels that had not undergone quarantine. Yet the sanitary value of this type of cordoning was uncertain. The interruption of trade led to shortages and hunger that far outweighed any benefits to public health. Even before John Snow famously traced a cholera outbreak in London to a single fountain in 1854, the “environmentalist” approach emphasizing better urban water treatment and airflow was gaining currency: as Britain’s ambassador in Madrid admonished, the Spanish “system for preventing contagion is founded on a belief that is fast exploding.”<sup>42</sup> In fact, Spanish law had banned sanitary cordons on land borders with Portugal and France since 1834—but this rule did not apply to Gibraltar because no land border was recognized!<sup>43</sup>

Even as medical opinion changed, political factors still favored the use of quarantine. The Spanish Interior Ministry, with which this power was vested, regarded quarantine as an opportunity to apply pressure on the British to renounce jurisdictional claims on bay waters. For Gardiner, rejecting Spanish quarantine rules—and thus cutting off all communication across the bay and isthmus—presented a chance to escalate his war on smuggling. This was the path fatefully chosen. With a sanitary cordon imposed on 24 October 1853, social and economic intercourse between Gibraltar and the Campo came to a standstill. Shortages of meat and produce in the British town soon followed. According to William Baly, a London physician sent by the British colonial secretary to study the epidemic, the cordon was costing shopkeepers roughly half of their

customer base. Gardiner did take steps to avert the worst possible crisis, arranging with Spanish officials a small drop point at an isolated rock in the middle of Gibraltar Bay where Spanish vessels could leave supplies. But this obscure measure did not earn Gardiner forgiveness. Baly found that almost all inhabitants of the colony deplored the cordon and believed that submitting to Spanish quarantine rules was a price worth paying to keep open access to neighboring markets. By contrast, only “a very few persons” supported Gardiner’s “mercantilist” decision to keep Gibraltar connected with the metropole at the expense of local cross-bay commerce that only the Spanish government deemed illegal.<sup>44</sup>

By rejecting Spanish quarantine rules, Gardiner stirred the ire of the colony’s merchant guild, known as the Gibraltar Exchange Committee. The committee’s chair, William Carver, possessed influence in London he did not hesitate to wield. His merchant guild had forged close ties with the politically powerful Manchester textile associations.<sup>45</sup> It was, moreover, enjoying favor for its role in negotiating an Anglo-Moroccan free trade deal, to be finalized in 1856.<sup>46</sup> In December 1853, Carver was received by the Duke of Newcastle, secretary of state for war and the colonies, and John Bright, a Radical deputy from Manchester. After considering Carver’s grievances and Gardiner’s response, Newcastle ordered the Gibraltar governor to accept Spanish quarantine rules and reopen the colony to overland traffic, which he did on 8 February 1854. Although Newcastle did not question Gardiner’s prerogative to cooperate with Spanish authorities in detaining tobacco runners, he observed that the British government could not interdict legal transactions merely on the grounds that goods would likely be resold to smugglers: “Any question of moral duty” was “more for [the merchants’] consideration than mine.”<sup>47</sup> Gardiner’s wings were clipped. His tenure in Gibraltar would end eighteen months later, and with it any hope of establishing a stable bilateral convention on cross-border movement.

But the drama was not yet over. The Gibraltar merchants’ revolt against their colonial governor was followed a few months later by a rebellion of Andalusian smuggling syndicates against the Spanish liberal state and its increasingly aggressive border policies. In July 1854, a military uprising staged near Madrid provoked a revolution that swept the Progressives into power under Baldomero Espartero. The Algeciras garrison supported the Progressives, and in the confusion of the moment found an ally in the local revolutionary junta movement. The revolutionaries, resentful of all

manner of administrative centralization, mobilized on the issue of open communication with Gibraltar. “Public Health Committees” (*juntas de sanidad*), as local insurrectionist groups were sometimes known, included many contrabandists and gangsters in their ranks, and also represented the grievances of the region’s impoverished day laborers.<sup>48</sup> The local *juntas* were the beneficiaries of the Espartero government’s push toward decentralization—including in the realm of quarantine, which would subsequently be given over entirely to local port authorities in an 1855 law.<sup>49</sup> Still, the republican movement throughout Andalusia blurred the distinction between local autonomy and outright separatism, and the incessant circulation of rumors rendered all law a subjective and murky concept.<sup>50</sup> As the French consul at Cádiz reported, “In each city, in each district, there are *juntas* that name the leaders that they fire the next day, and some of them, like Algeciras, declare their independence from all central power.”<sup>51</sup>

The Public Health Committee of Algeciras soon decreed the border out of existence altogether. Even some Spanish government officials joined the cantonalist mobilization. The Spanish army, desperate to rein in the revolutionary situation, turned its sights on rooting out republican activity in the surrounding sierra, leaving the border station in the hands of the *juntas*. Customs agents and carabinieri abandoned their positions, leaving the Spanish line unmonitored for three days and resulting in a massive transfer of merchandise into Spain. The French consul on the scene predicted, “If this continues, the warehouses of Gibraltar will be left empty.”<sup>52</sup>

### From Neutral Zone to Sovereign Border

Amid popular rebellion, continuing epidemic, and an orgy of smuggling, British colonial officials abandoned hopes for constructive dialogue with the Spanish. Instead, they took measures to gird Gibraltar for future episodes of contagion and revolution. Just as the Campo rebellion was beginning, William Baly, the medical envoy from London, delivered his recommendations on improving sanitary conditions in the British town. Baly’s report emphasized environmental factors, chiefly the poor sewage and foul stagnant water along the town’s north line and the adjacent waters. Although he understood that miasmatic airs “cannot originate epidemic disease,” Baly was convinced, like a growing number of his colleagues, that “a foul state of atmosphere . . . determines more than any other circumstances the rapidity and extent of [its] ravages.”<sup>53</sup> Baly proposed



reclaiming the isthmus that hitherto formed the neutral zone between the British town and the Spanish Campo. He recommended the creation on the isthmus, “sufficiently distant from the town,” of a permanent lazaretto to quarantine ships and a “hospital” to receive those succumbing to pestilence. These installations would facilitate Gibraltar’s compliance with Spain’s obsolescent quarantine system without undue disruption to naval and commercial transport.<sup>54</sup>

Implementation of Baly’s prescriptions began in 1855. Gardiner asked the Algeciras governor for permission to erect sick houses in the neutral zone, away from the town, until the contagion subsided. But Gardiner’s emphasis on their temporary nature appears rather disingenuous in light of Baly’s recommendation that a permanent lazaretto be established. British sentries were advanced into the neutral zone to guard the new sanitary installations, and it quickly became clear that the British colony intended to annex the isthmus. After the sick houses were dismantled, the sentry boxes remained. Moreover, the stockpiling of cement and other construction materials, readily visible from Spanish lines, indicated British intentions to establish more permanent installations on the hitherto neutral ground. Looking back on this in 1887, a Spanish Treasury official wondered why his government failed to “demand a more formal guarantee than simply the word of the Governor of Gibraltar when he asked us, in the name of charity, for the terrain to build a lazaretto.”<sup>55</sup>

Official Spanish reaction to these developments, however indignant in later periods, was initially quite accommodating. The Madrid government first took note of a possible British usurpation of the isthmus on 29 May 1855, when it ordered the commanding general of the Campo de Gibraltar to investigate. The general reported that the new British installations resembled a parapet that could “serve as a shelter [*abrigo*] for [Gibraltar’s] defenses,” but he concluded, “The construction in question in my opinion cannot be considered a fortification.”<sup>56</sup> As long as it posed no direct military threat, the British advance onto this narrow strip of mostly worthless land was not, from the perspective of Madrid, a pressing concern. The embattled Progressive regime was still struggling to rein in revolutionary, quasi-secessionist movements throughout Andalusia.

Meanwhile, British policy toward cross-border trade reverted to the aggressively promerchant liberalism of the 1840s. James Fergusson, who replaced Gardiner as Gibraltar’s governor in August 1855, quickly reversed his predecessor’s policy not to protect British vessels from Spanish patrols

in the bay. Fergusson alerted his Spanish interlocutors in the Campo that any ship driven aground onto the isthmus for any reason “will be protected by British authorities”—a further assertion of British sovereignty over the erstwhile neutral zone. In a sharp change of tone from the conciliatory Gardiner, Fergusson admonished José Martínez, the military governor of Algeciras, to direct his officers “not to interfere in any way with [British vessels’] proceedings.”<sup>57</sup> Martínez interpreted Fergusson’s reversal of Gardiner’s policy as a sign not only that the new governor intended to support contraband runners but also that the British were engaging a policy of active expansionism of Gibraltar on land and sea. On receiving Fergusson’s menacing note, Martínez wrote to Espartero’s former minister of war, Leopoldo O’Donnell: “If it weren’t for scrupulous vigilance on our part, there would be a thousand transgressions on theirs and over the course of time they will take control of what today we call the Neutral Ground and expand further their jurisdiction over our land and coast, which is doubtless their aspiration.”<sup>58</sup>

Facing the prospect of British aggression, the Spanish government displayed a new willingness to establish some mutually agreed boundary between British and Spanish sovereign space. In October 1858, the Spanish minister of state Saturnino Calderón issued the clearest sign to that date that Spain was prepared to recognize Gibraltar as a colony rather than merely the fortress concession described in the Treaty of Utrecht: The “honest and friendly relations between peoples,” wrote Calderón, depended on the “perfectly defined terminus forming the dividing line between one state and the other.”<sup>59</sup> Although high-level talks did not materialize, events on the ground soon induced a lasting agreement among local officials. During a Christmas Day storm in 1859, high winds forced a British vessel aground onto the disputed terrain. Spanish customs patrols converged on them, seizing a haul of contraband goods. Gibraltar’s governor, William Codrington (Fergusson’s successor), protested the seizure to the military governor of Algeciras, who averred that as a military official he had no authority over the agents of the Spanish Treasury who carried out the seizures. Within weeks, however, the two officials came to a practical understanding that ships or their effects washing ashore on neutral ground would be subject to the jurisdiction of the country whose front line was nearer.<sup>60</sup> In effect, the local authorities at least agreed on the existence of a jurisdictional boundary equidistant from the two front lines and bisecting what remained of the neutral zone.

This new *modus vivendi* would crystallize over the following decades, despite the lack of any formal recognition by the Spanish government of the existence of this new border. In 1860 and 1863, Madrid registered diplomatic protests over the Britain's occupation of the isthmus. The Spanish government had known about the permanent constructions since 1855 but chose to protest them only in response to British military activities in the neutral area: first, the deployment of British troops on the isthmus in 1860 as a means to defend Tangier from a possible Spanish invasion during the Hispano-Moroccan war of 1859–1860; second, the British practice of sending “armed boats . . . to escort the smugglers, preventing us from suppressing the contraband trade that is so injurious to our national income, threatens honest industry and commerce, and above all poses an imminent danger of conflict and collisions that can perturb the good relations and sincere friendship” between Spain and Britain.<sup>61</sup> The troops departed in 1861 and naval tensions in Gibraltar Bay soon deescalated, but the British colony asserted its new claim in other ways. The establishment of the Sanitary Commission in 1865 empowered a civilian council to assume a regulatory role on the isthmus over matters such as burial and water supply. Gibraltarians thus assumed stewardship over the freshwater springs and gardens, and improved the general cleanliness of the terrain by removing decades of unsanitary accumulations from the sea and slaughterhouse.<sup>62</sup>

The mood on the Spanish side toward Gibraltar's territorial consolidation was one of pragmatic resignation. In April 1868, a lieutenant colonel prepared an internal report that would in some respects anticipate Spain's limited ambitions with respect to Gibraltar for most of the next century. It argued that the district command should accept the border as a done deed and take initiatives to prevent any further enhancement of Gibraltar's power. This meant developing a plan to install artillery in the hills overlooking Gibraltar at a moment's notice. The memo also recommended building permanent settlements as far as possible down the isthmus, replacing the shantytowns that dotted the shoreline with civilian housing and barracks, to be known simply as *La Línea* (“the line”), designed to “raise national prestige and show the English that the [Spanish] government is paying close attention to this piece of territory.” Finally, the lieutenant colonel emphasized the need to select incorruptible customs and border personnel “so that they are perfectly instructed of the necessity to . . . enforce the most exquisite repressive vigilance against contraband.”<sup>63</sup>

A few months later, Spain experienced yet another liberal revolution, which would solidify the new paradigm that would govern cross-border relations for the following century. Spain's Glorious Revolution began in nearby Cádiz on 18 September, where a military uprising spurred an outflow of Andalusian political refugees into Gibraltar. Within two weeks, 199 entered the British enclave, including the highest-ranking officers at Cádiz and Algeciras and a number of Jesuit priests. Though not expelled immediately from the British colony, the refugees were ordered to seek asylum elsewhere in reasonable time. With his superiors on the run, the commanding general of La Línea, José Ramón Osorio, joined the rebellion and took control of the Algeciras district. Seeking popular favor, Osorio freed prisoners, mainly republican partisans jailed for crimes associated with smuggling and banditry. As confusion turned to chaos, revolutionary Public Health Committees resurfaced throughout the Campo to promote republicanism and even declare independence from Madrid. Acting on his own, Osorio declared a three-day customs holiday on trade with Gibraltar. But national forces soon arrived to suppress the juntas, spurring a second outflow of refugees to Gibraltar and elsewhere. On this occasion, the Gibraltar police magistrate recalled that, although there was still no formal Anglo-Spanish extradition treaty, he worked closely with the Spanish consul and paid "most scrupulous and delicate attention" to the "feelings and wishes of the Spanish government as regarded refugees and criminals."<sup>64</sup> Gibraltar's cooperation in policing the border freed Spanish forces to hunt revolutionary dissidents in the Sierra.<sup>65</sup>

By April 1870, a general amnesty allowed republican dissidents to return to Spain. This would provide the occasion for the revolutionary Spanish government to incorporate a new municipality of La Línea, wiping out most of what remained of the old neutral zone. Little more than a collection of improvised shacks housing scarcely more than one hundred residents as late as 1868, La Línea quickly became home to thousands of smugglers, deserters, criminals, and dissidents set free by the revolutionary government. Although the revolutionary regime enacted major tariff liberalization in 1869, the royal tobacco monopoly remained. Customhouse officials in La Línea were said to live well above their pay grade, an indicator that tobacco smuggling would continue to be a mainstay of the local economy for some time to come.<sup>66</sup> Spain's prime minister General Juan Prim hoped to consolidate his tumultuous revolution by recovering Gibraltar. Prim approached the British ambassador in April 1870 about

the possibility of returning Gibraltar to Spain, possibly in exchange for Ceuta, but despite some sympathy among British liberals, his proposal was roundly laughed out of Parliament.<sup>67</sup>

Although tobacco smuggling would continue for decades to come, British Gibraltar's new willingness to cooperate with Spanish authorities in capturing political dissidents formed a promising basis for maintaining good cross-border relations. Over the objections of the Gibraltar Exchange Committee, the colonial government established a stricter border protocol in 1873, making residency rights virtually impossible to obtain and requiring (with few exceptions) nonresidents to abandon the colony on hearing the nightly cannon shot at dusk.<sup>68</sup> Known as the Aliens Order-in-Council, the new law also granted the British magistrate the power to remove "any alien [he] may not judge proper to admit."<sup>69</sup> Gibraltar police were notably cooperative in the efforts of the Spanish antibanditry crusader Julián Zugasti, who served as governor of the Andalusian province of Córdoba from 1870 to 1873, to root out revolutionary cells. They participated in a cross-border telegraph network of informants stretching from Andalusia and Gibraltar to the Ceuta prison and French Oran.<sup>70</sup>

Gibraltar authorities continued to help their cross-border counterparts to apprehend dissidents, even when London disapproved. In 1882, the captured Cuban independence fighter José Maceo escaped from Ceuta prison with his wife, child, and two comrades. They made their way to Tangier, whence they took a ferry to Gibraltar in hopes of gaining asylum and passage to the United States. By the time Maceo and his companions reached the Rock, however, Spanish officials in Gibraltar, Tangier, and Cádiz were already working with the Gibraltar police to intercept the "tall mustachioed mulatto" and to treat him as a "fugitive criminal." Claiming this authority under the Aliens Order-in-Council, the colonial magistrate arrested the men as soon as they reached the Gibraltar pier. Maceo begged the Gibraltar police for help, pleading that to return him to Spanish custody would be "sending him to the slaughterhouse," but to no avail.<sup>71</sup> The military command of Campo was notified, and when the Cubans were pushed out of Gibraltar lines, Spanish police were already waiting to arrest them.

The handover of Maceo provoked controversy in Britain, where the government maintained that Gibraltar's local practices contravened Anglo-Spanish extradition protocol, and where public opinion doubted the

Spanish penal system's commitment to humane practices. Hoping to mollify outrage among humanitarian opinion, the Foreign Office persuaded the Spanish to transfer Maceo from Ceuta to Pamplona, considered a more humane prison, and to treat them all as prisoners of war rather than common criminals.<sup>72</sup> Although the magistrate who handled the Maceo case was ultimately removed following a government investigation, Gibraltarian authorities insisted on the need for an exceptional extradition regime. The colony's attorney general noted that the "peculiar circumstances" of the town, "a small territory scooped out . . . from the midst of the Spanish continent," rendered the standard protocol unworkable. As a major imperial transport and trade hub, Gibraltar availed criminals the means to "escape to some other country pending the lengthened proceeding required under the Extradition Treaty."<sup>73</sup>

The special prerogatives that Gibraltar asserted in the Maceo case would be reaffirmed in 1908, when a sergeant in the Gibraltar secret police became suspicious of a man disembarking from the Tangier ferry for his "look." The sergeant followed the man, who visited the butcher shop of a known local anarchist in Gibraltar, then proceeded to queue for the Algeciras ferry. The sergeant informed the Spanish consul, who telegraphed authorities in the Algeciras, where the man was apprehended as he stepped onto the quay. The suspect, calling himself José García Amador, matched the description of José García Ortega, a known anarchist of Tangier. After some interrogation, he admitted that his plan was to travel to Seville, where he claimed his wife was giving birth. As it happened, García Amador's journey to Seville coincided with a visit to the city by the king, Alfonso XIII, who had once already been the target of an anarchist assassination plot in 1906. Recounting this intrigue to his minister of state, the military governor of the Campo commented that the Gibraltarian policeman deserved credit for preventing a possible regicide.<sup>74</sup>

The relationship between Gibraltar and the Campo thus improved considerably once a border was clearly articulated. Although no Spanish government ever explicitly recognized Gibraltar's usurpation of neutral ground as legitimate, the border's *de facto* reality was increasingly accepted. Whereas older Spanish legislation pertaining to land borders typically mentioned only Portugal and France, an 1885 order banning the introduction of cloth rags into Spain included a reference to "the limiting line of Gibraltar."<sup>75</sup> Acrimony over the smuggling problem continued,

but the Spanish strategy centered on attaining binational police cooperation rather than revisiting the question of a jurisdictional border on the isthmus. In 1888, when the Gibraltar police began punishing loiterers on the isthmus, the Spanish Ministry of State chose to applaud rather than contest Gibraltar's standing to do so in the first place.<sup>76</sup> In 1891, the Spanish tobacco monopoly financed the construction of a three-foot-high metal fence intended to funnel foot traffic bound for La Línea through the official checkpoint.<sup>77</sup> Throughout the 1890s, Anglo-Spanish discussions at the ministerial level again raised no grievance over British authority on the isthmus and Spanish military cartographers appear to have abandoned the pretense of its neutrality.<sup>78</sup> Later, as part of negotiations on the colonization of Morocco, the Cartagena Treaty of 1907 confirmed a mutual commitment on the part of France, Spain, and Great Britain to respect the current sovereign borders in the western Mediterranean. The following year, the British erected their own steel fence. The fence largely followed the border of 1854, although the eastern end of its perimeter was extended tens of yards northward, adding just enough territory on the hitherto unused eastern side of the isthmus to extend a runway for airborne craft—a significant consideration by 1908.<sup>79</sup>

The historical significance of Gibraltar's territorial consolidation in this period has little to do with the formal acquisition of one thousand muddy yards. More important was the establishment of a clear, mutually agreed boundary between two distinct polities. With this, Gibraltar enhanced its ability to regulate entry and expulsion and to combat contagious disease while also creating a common bilateral space for labor and consumption (as discussed in Chapter 3), and even policing in some cases. The new border also consolidated Gibraltar's claim to deeper bay waters, ensuring the colony's dominant commercial and naval position. Although this stung Spanish national pride and put the overland neighbor on alert against future expansion, Gibraltar's maneuvers in the 1850s had more to do with consolidating a position of broader regional influence. Steam power, heavy industry, and modern artillery were changing the geopolitical character of the Mediterranean. France, Britain's chief competitor, would follow its conquest of Algeria with interventions in Italy, the Levant, Suez, and eastern Morocco by the end of the decade. The ratcheting up of imperial influence on its southern border would lie at the origin of Spain's 1859 invasion of Morocco, to which the next chapter turns.

## 2

### Crisis in the Western Channel, 1855–1864

**PRIME MINISTER LEOPOLDO O'DONNELL'S** declaration of war on Morocco in October 1859 launched what the Spanish would come to know as the War of Africa—a title that captures the rhetorical ostentation surrounding the invasion even as it vastly overstates the operational scale. The campaign in fact was limited to the immediate trans-Gibraltar zone. It was a response not so much to Isabella the Catholic's exhortation of 1504 to push the Christian conquest southward, as many at the time believed, but rather to a troubling confluence of British and French imperial positioning and volatile tribal politics directly on Spain's southern borderland. As tensions escalated around Spain's North African exclaves of Ceuta and Melilla in the late 1850s, O'Donnell threatened to hold Sultan Abd al-Rahman responsible for the actions carried out by subject tribes against Spanish interests. But the aging, ailing sultan appeased one attempt after the other. At the encouragement of John Drummond Hay, the British consul in Tangier who opposed Spanish expansion across the Strait, Abd al-Rahman offered restitution for raids on Spanish vessels off the Rif coast and arranged the release of the Spanish hostages captured by tribesmen near Ceuta.<sup>1</sup> Only after Abd al-Rahman at last succumbed to his illness in August 1859 would O'Donnell get his *casus belli*. The deceased monarch's untested son, Muhammad IV, could not afford to respond so meekly to O'Donnell's provocations. In August, the new sultan refused to punish his own subjects over a skirmish with Spanish workers on a new fortification project in Ceuta. O'Donnell had found his pretext to mobilize an invasion.



Reports from the front gripped Spain for months, stirring patriotism in the fractious nation “as though there were one single heart for so many chests,” as the novelist Benito Pérez Galdos later wrote.<sup>2</sup> In December, an expeditionary force of forty-five thousand men made the crossing from Algeciras to Ceuta, proceeding south into the rolling terrain of the Tingitana Peninsula and capturing Tétouan by February. The townspeople and tribes of Morocco’s northernmost districts endured a season of terror, scattering to the hills and coasts to escape a superior army and the cholera epidemic raging within its ranks. Morocco’s leading historian of the day lamented his people’s utter lack of solidarity: “Let the people of Tétouan fight for their Tétouan,” he recalled them crying, “as if [they] did not believe that it was incumbent upon [them] to help the Muslims to victory.”<sup>3</sup>

Spain’s decisive victory came in March 1860 in the valley of Wad-Ras, midway along the Tétouan-Tangier road, where the sultan’s brother, Mulai Abbas, sued for peace. As the news reached Spain, cheering mobs poured into the streets of Barcelona and Madrid. A force of eight thousand Spanish troops occupied the largely abandoned city of Tétouan, where fireworks displays and even a celebratory bullfight punctuated the festivities.<sup>4</sup> The peace terms allowed the Spanish to occupy Tétouan until the sultan satisfied an indemnity of four hundred million reales—double the amount held in the sultan’s reserves—though cholera forced them to depart in haste by 1862. Spain also gained a new commercial, administrative, and religious presence at several Moroccan ports.

The Hispano-Moroccan War of 1859–1860 resembles both a borderland conflict and a bid for imperial conquest. Although the war’s immediate causes issued from border tensions, its historians have generally emphasized the narrative of imperialism. From the Spanish perspective, the war fit within the wider ambitions of O’Donnell’s precarious Liberal Union government in Madrid. O’Donnell’s first government had collapsed after just three months in 1856 under the weight of infighting. Determined to cement a political comeback in 1858, O’Donnell cast about for foreign policy triumphs. Buoyed by the example of Napoleon III of France, he forged a strategy to restore Spain’s national unity and global influence that would lead to a series of fleeting colonial adventures from Equatorial Guinea to Chile and Southeast Asia between 1858 and 1866. In addition to restoring Spain’s global position, a more energetic imperial policy promised to reward multiple domestic constituencies: It would open markets for the industrial bourgeoisie, secure Atlantic slaving and other trading routes,

reward O'Donnell loyalists stationed overseas, and give the Catholic Church a new evangelical mission.<sup>5</sup> But among the Liberal Union's various campaigns, only the Morocco war appealed to a powerful romantic nationalism rooted in Spain's frontier identity.<sup>6</sup> In 1851, a twenty-three-year-old Antonio Cánovas (who would later become Spain's leading statesman) had mused, "Our natural frontier lies in the Atlas Mountains, and not in the narrow canal that connects the Mediterranean to the Atlantic"—envisioning Spain as a kind of bicontinental mirror image of Ottoman Turkey.<sup>7</sup> The potential to reunite Spaniards around the myth of "Reconquest" was concisely expressed in a letter from an exiled veteran of the anti-Bourbon Carlist movement. Writing to the Spanish ambassador in Paris, the ex-militiaman pled for permission to join "the ranks of the army that will be designated to fight the Muslims" on behalf of "Isabella, our beloved [Bourbon] Queen."<sup>8</sup>

Yet despite momentary outpourings of Spanish patriotism, most evaluations of the war's significance in both Spanish and Moroccan national histories have centered on decadence. For Spain, the peace treaty amounted to a "pyrrhic victory" that could not hope to match the euphoric release that accompanied news of the sultan's capitulation.<sup>9</sup> Before the war even began, the British government made clear its resolve to prevent Spain from acquiring new territory in Morocco, including the prizes of Tangier and Tétouan. And yet British patronage appears hardly to have buttressed Morocco's independence. From the Moroccan perspective, the war launched the "prelude" to the colonial protectorate established in 1912. Even more so than the French bombardment of Isly in 1844 or the British free trade agreement of 1856, the Spanish war undermined the cohesiveness of Moroccan governance. As a result of the war, the sultan's administration (Makhzan) became increasingly vulnerable to European extraterritorial prerogatives, which pressured it to enact institutional reforms that only provoked popular resentment.<sup>10</sup>

This chapter shifts emphasis away from both national accounts, locating the war's crucial origins and enduring legacies in the changing political geography of the trans-Gibraltar borderland. Although it could be made to fit a grand imperial strategy, O'Donnell's decision may also be seen as an urgent response to a growing concern that maritime conflicts over piracy and trade were becoming part of an Anglo-French geopolitical challenge being played out directly on Spain's southern flank. Unlike the Liberal Union's other midcentury military adventures, the Moroccan war

issued from direct competition with both French and British initiatives. Closer examination of the origins and consequences indicates that those two European empires—not so much the sultan’s government or even anti-Spanish tribes near Ceuta and Melilla—were Spain’s chief adversaries. The invasion of Morocco was less a bid for a seat at the colonial banquet than an attempt to cultivate new vassals to help resist Anglo-French pressures.

Key to assessing both the causes and the consequences is the matter of extraterritorial protections, that is, the sovereign claim over itinerant individuals operating outside normal jurisdictional borders. The practice of harboring protégés became increasingly prevalent in the region during the mid-nineteenth century, proving an effective mechanism for mastering trade routes and gaining mobile allies outside the normal frame of international relations. Spanish officials became alarmed by the growing number of Riffians operating under British and French protection along the Alboran coast between Tangier and the Algerian line, and particularly around the vulnerable outpost of Melilla. Although the Hispano-Moroccan war was fought in the Tingitana Peninsula over a *casus belli* pertaining to Ceuta, here we follow the cue of C. R. Pennell, the historian of Morocco who has located the war’s origins two hundred miles to the east, in range of Melilla and the Moroccan-Algerian frontier.<sup>11</sup>

### Mastering the Alboran Sea

The westernmost of the Mediterranean’s many narrow channels, the Alboran Sea lies directly to the east of the Strait of Gibraltar. It provides the maritime link between Andalusia’s impoverished southeast, the rugged Rif coast (once called Barbary), and the Oran and Nemours districts of northwestern Algeria. The Alboran became a new theater of competition after 1830, as France began its conquest of Algeria. To thwart the French effort, officials in Gibraltar and Melilla, and of the Beni Snassen tribes of the eastern Rif, sold arms and provided havens to anti-French resistance forces led by Abd el-Kader. The role of Melilla in this effort was particularly striking. By supporting Algerian resisters, the commanders of the Spanish garrison were directly contradicting the policies of their king, who hewed to a pro-French neutrality. The government of Fernando VII in Madrid viewed the French campaign favorably, hoping that the participation of Spanish colonial militias in the effort might translate into political influence or even territorial gains for Spain.<sup>12</sup> Moreover, it regarded a French settlement colony in Algeria as a potential safety valve for emigration, a place where

Andalusian laborers could remain tied to their homeland rather than casting off forever to the disloyal American republics.

The perspective of Melilla diverged sharply from that of Madrid. From Spain's nearest frontier garrison, a French position in Algeria resembled more threat than opportunity. In 1848, with French success increasingly certain, the Melilla command convinced its superiors to send troops to the Chafarinas Islands, a tiny Alboran archipelago near the Algerian line, to better monitor local shipping routes and to keep the islands out of French hands.<sup>13</sup> Even if it posed no immediate military threat, French Algeria soon drew southeastern Spain and northern Morocco into its orbit and exerted dominant influence on traffic and migration in the Alboran Sea. A French firm controlled the only regular Oran-Tangier service, established in 1845. Despite efforts by the Spanish Ministry of the Economy to develop a network of Spanish rail and steamship services into "the most direct link from the European continent to the African continent," a weekly steamer originating at Marseille controlled virtually all traffic in goods and passengers bound for Oran from southeastern Spanish ports.<sup>14</sup> In the course of two decades after 1830, some fifty thousand Spaniards, mainly young men from southern and eastern provinces, abandoned their homelands to become laborers and soldiers in service of the French colonial project. Arriving in private vessels that dumped them on unmonitored coastlines near Oran, most possessed no documentation at all. French law required some type of passport, but colonial officials, guided chiefly by the imperative to populate their colony with Europeans, had little incentive to enforce it. The more patriotic among the migrants, including many Carlist dissidents, joined special regiments of the French Foreign Legion that flew Spanish flags, but the majority gained legal status by paying taxes and serving with French forces.<sup>15</sup>

As peninsular Spain lost many thousands of able-bodied, military-aged subjects to colonial Algeria, the Melilla garrison looked for ways to gain its own influence over regional traffic and transient bodies. Foul and remote, Melilla in the mid-nineteenth century was little more than a series of fortifications built on a small promontory on the Alboran Sea, in the shadow of foothills quickly ascending to 2,600 feet. Unlike Gibraltar or even the modest Spanish settlement of Ceuta, Melilla possessed virtually no civilian population and lived in greater isolation—two days' journey by steamship to the two nearest Spanish cities, Ceuta and Málaga, the source of its provisions—surrounded by the pastoral mountain tribes of the eastern Rif. These tribes generally disapproved of the Spanish presence,

preserving long collective memories of ethno-religious antagonism, but some accommodated Spanish presence and sought advantage from it. As the region's largest sheltered harbor, the garrison formed the only significant transport hub on the long, rugged coast between Ceuta and Oran. Although overland contact between Melilla and Morocco was formally illegal, Spanish and Makhzan law counted for little, and the garrison had long been the terminus of Riffian trading caravans. Spanish officers purchased Riffian products such as beef and leeches, in part to supply the garrison, but also to export around the Mediterranean, thus undermining the sultan's prerogative to restrict access to export markets to his favored merchants.<sup>16</sup> The opportunity to profit from the garrison's position as an informal entrepôt for trade with Tangier, Oran, and Mediterranean Europe, was possibly the only attractive aspect of a Spanish officer's assignment to Melilla.

Opportunities for trade helped warm the Spanish garrison to some tribes but left others incensed. As a permanent feature of the regional order of the eastern Rif since the late fifteenth century, Melilla was enmeshed in a web of intertribal rivalry. Among those especially hostile were Riffians with maritime vocations. With few economic alternatives in their rugged tribal lands, some continued the time-tested practice of raiding commercial vessels in the Alboran Sea, even after losing state sponsorship for their activities by the 1830s. Possessing the forest resources to build their own craft, some sought to establish clandestine ports to compete with the Melilla trade and to shelter pirates dedicated to scuttling European vessels, leading to periodic episodes of seaborne violence along the Moroccan Mediterranean coast. Placed inside coastal caves and other hidden points, these harbors not only violated Makhzan prerogative to license foreign trade but also threatened Melilla's informal monopoly on coastal smuggling.

At the epicenter of this struggle was Manuel Buceta, a Spanish army officer who served as military governor of Melilla in 1854–1856 and 1858–1860. A veteran of the liberal regime's military campaigns of the 1830s and 1840s, Buceta's support for the 1854 revolution earned him the post at Melilla—less a reward for a career of distinguished service than an opportunity to nurture ambition. Like many of his predecessors (and some of his earlier counterparts in Gibraltar), Buceta took an entrepreneurial approach to the job. Even though Melilla was a dependency of the Granada provincial command, Buceta assumed a good deal of autonomy, dealing with

his Riffian neighbors on a distinct plane, outside the bilateral relationship between the Catholic monarch and the sharifian sultan. Motivated by a combination of strategic positioning and personal profit that is difficult to disentangle, Buceta's goal was to exploit the Alboran piracy crisis to strengthen Spain's control over its southern border. As with Gibraltar vis-à-vis southern Andalusia, the mechanism for achieving this was to establish relationships with subjects from neighboring lands, sometimes protecting those whose trading activities violated the sovereign laws of their home country.

On the periphery of the Moroccan empire, the Rif coast was increasingly at the center of a contested borderland lodged between other emerging imperial spheres. Considerable mutual mistrust among the three European powers engaged in competition for local protégés raised the risk of violence. The Spanish consul general in Tangier, Pedro Orfila, registered his suspicions in a classified communiqué to Buceta in January 1855: "There is reason to suspect that a certain European nation, doubtless motivated by mercantile and political interests in the Rif, is attempting to win over the good will of the horde of pirates that operate on this coast." Without citing France by name, Orfila proceeded to charge that Sharif Muhammad al-Ladri, leader of the Beni Said tribe, was a "protector of the pirates and a friend of said Power," which he charged was pressuring for the release of one of al-Ladri's vessels impounded by the Spanish fleet. Allowing France to succeed, Orfila concluded, "would gain the alluded-to nation much prestige in [Morocco], the protection over which it has always coveted . . . and would be attained if we should lose our due consideration."<sup>17</sup>

Clashes between European and Moroccan vessels in the Alboran Sea thus were part not only of a "north-south" struggle but also of an interimperial struggle. Riffian mariners who were considered pirates by one power could be given protection by another. French-Spanish rivalry over access to the eastern Rif coast was particularly tense. Although coastal trade between Tétouan and the Rif had always been a perfectly legal internal activity, Buceta objected that some merchant ships from Tétouan were selling armaments to tribes hostile to Melilla. The 1855 seizure of a vessel belonging to Jacob Sarfaty, a Moroccan French protégé and member of a prominent Jewish family based in Gibraltar, drew protest from the French mission in Tangier. The Spanish eventually returned Sarfaty's property but insisted on their right to capture any ship caught trading with tribes they considered hostile and to seize all military supplies found on board.<sup>18</sup>

In an atmosphere of frequent clashes between Spanish and Riffian mariners throughout 1855, Buceta encouraged Spanish privateers to pursue vessels carrying crewmen from enemy tribes, even into French Algerian waters if necessary. In one case, a private Spanish ship captain docked at the Algerian port of Nemours (Ghazaouet) on the pretext of a consular mail delivery, but his real purpose was to lie in wait for a Riffian vessel accused of harassing Spanish fishermen. The Riffians arrived as expected, conducted some business, and then set out on their return to Morocco. The Spanish vessel quickly set out in pursuit, engaging them somewhere near the Algeria-Morocco line. The parties differed on who fired first (the Riffians claiming not to have been armed at all), but the clash ended with twenty-nine Riffian crewmen leaping into the water and desperately swimming for shore, while the Spanish crew seized the vessel and pocketed the four thousand pesetas found aboard. Four bodies washed up on the Algerian coast and fifteen went missing, but ten managed to reach French authorities to tell their harrowing tale. The French command at Nemours protested to the Spanish consul in Oran that this ill-fated Riffian ship had been engaged in legitimate trade and possessed a French license to navigate Algerian waters. Buceta, pressed by his superiors to justify his orders, retorted that the French authorization was irrelevant because the clash occurred just over the line in Moroccan waters, where the Spanish were asserting a blanket right to patrol.<sup>19</sup>

Sultan Abd al-Rahman had little choice but to accept the legitimacy of Melilla's low-level seaborne war, for his uncle Slimane (r. 1792–1822) had renounced any responsibility for Riffian piracy in a 1799 treaty with Spain. Meanwhile, French authorities were granting safe conducts to Riffian mariners navigating Algerian waters, directly contravening the Makhzan's prohibition on its subjects trading freely with foreigners. Abd al-Rahman's government struggled to retain control over domestic coastal trade between the Rif and ports like Tétouan and Tangier. It was reduced to issuing safe conducts for "its loyal subjects" just to sail within Moroccan coastal waters.<sup>20</sup> The notion that the sultan would need to authorize his own subjects to trade with Riffian tribes signaled that the north coast was slipping from his grasp.

In late 1855, under pressure from the European powers, Abd al-Rahman attempted to subdue his tribal subjects on the Alboran coast. Not wishing to allow a conflict in the remote Rif to derail emerging possibilities for expanding Atlantic trade with Europe, Abd al-Rahman made



what would be a perilous bargain for any Moroccan ruler—carrying out a brutal raid, or *razzia*, against his own subjects to mollify foreign powers. In November, he sent some eight thousand Makhzan troops marching into the Rif, where they burned boats and villages, confiscated livestock, and took hostages. This followed a long-standing Makhzan practice of sending occasional castigation missions of exemplary brutality as a substitute for permanent occupation, but this *razzia* proved insufficient—even counter-productive—in the new circumstances.<sup>21</sup>

Soon after, Buceta made a bid to control navigation and trade on the Rif coast, assuming the prerogative to issue navigation licenses known as passports (not to be confused with the international travel document standardized after World War I). He declared that all Moroccan sailors and crewmen, including those aboard Spanish vessels, who operated between Tétouan and the Algerian line must carry such a document, which was obtainable either at Melilla or one of the Spanish island positions in the Alboran Sea (Peñón de Vélez de la Gomera, Peñón de Alhucemas, or the Chafarinas). Tribes willing to cooperate with Buceta gained competitive advantage over those who did not, helping to cement Melilla's regional hegemony. For example, for a tribute of twenty reales per vessel per month, fishermen of the Marura tribe gained license to operate off the Rif coast, but the privilege was subject to suspension if fellow Marura committed hostile acts against Spaniards. In October 1856, Buceta concluded a deal to give blanket authorization to vessels of the Beni Bu Gafar, a tribe known for its hostility to the French.<sup>22</sup> Buceta's passport system considerably enhanced the profile of his small border garrison.

Relations with certain tribes were further solidified when Buceta came to the assistance of Riffians seeking seasonal employment in new French agricultural settlements of western Algeria. Makhzan law prohibited Moroccan subjects from working abroad, but the fecund French colony was as attractive to many underemployed Riffian peasants as it was to the surplus labor supply of Andalusia. Sensing opportunity, leaders of some tribes asked Buceta to provide safe-conduct papers to tribesmen seeking entry to Algeria. Thus, the nominally Moroccan inhabitants of the Rif could obtain nominally Spanish passports, gaining them entry at French Algerian ports. Moreover, for a price of two hundred pesetas, Buceta would grant sailors from friendly tribes a license to transport Riffian workers to Algerian ports. According to reports of the Spanish consul in Oran, such boats were routinely packed to their limits with migrants.<sup>23</sup> In the eastern



Rif, it was Melilla, not the Makhzan, that determined who traded and traveled, a practice that paid material and political dividends to the garrison.

What did other regional officials think of the audacious garrison commander's practice of issuing improvised passports? Buceta's direct superior, the commander of the Captaincy of Granada, registered approval, but only as long as exceptional circumstances endured. He insisted that "in more normal times, when frontier Moors respect the Spanish flag and live in harmony with [Ceuta and Melilla]," free navigation must be restored.<sup>24</sup> It is also noteworthy that the pasha of the Rif, the sultan's chief representative there, gave his endorsement to Buceta's passport system. The pasha even brokered an arrangement between Melilla and the neighboring Beni Sicar tribe in 1856, conveying to Buceta his confidence that the tribe "would not break their word, and for your part you will do the same, to mutual benefit."<sup>25</sup> What of the French port authorities in Oran who had to judge the validity of these documents? The Paris government instructed Algiers to reject Moroccan subjects bearing passports issued at Melilla, yet the ports of Oran and Nemours continued to accept them until war broke out in 1859. Labor was in high demand and Riffians were considered excellent workers, and as a rule the French authorities preferred to receive Riffian workers at seaports under Spanish protection rather than via interior routes controlled by the Beni Snassen, a cross-border tribal federation hostile to French colonials.<sup>26</sup> The strongest rebuke of Buceta's initiative came from the Spanish diplomatic service, which leveled accusations that the sale of passports was enriching Buceta while undermining the broader bilateral relationship. In response, Buceta maintained that these passports were vital to Spanish national interest. Denying any motive of personal profit, he insisted his goal was to "reinforce Spanish influence in the north of Morocco," something that required "the concession of such passports and protection to the interested parties."<sup>27</sup>

Buceta made a strong case that Melilla's survival as a Spanish possession depended on its ability to deal directly with Riffian tribes. In 1856, he told Orfila (Spain's highest ranking diplomat in Morocco) that bilateral Hispano-Moroccan relations remained predicated on the legal fiction that land borders were closed and there was no exchange between the Spanish presidios and the Moroccan tribes—a striking parallel with Gibraltar vis-à-vis southern Andalusia. Within that constraint, no agreement between Madrid and the sultan could realistically guarantee Melilla's safety. To

survive, Melilla had to forge good relations with some Riffian tribes in order to defend itself from the hostility of others. Any attempt to restore free coastal shipping and abolish Buceta's licensing system would therefore undermine Melilla's chief instrument of leverage, jeopardizing the garrison's security for the benefit British and French protégés in Atlantic Morocco and Algeria.<sup>28</sup> Evidence in support of Buceta's thesis seemed to accumulate in the spring and summer of 1858, when sea patrols near Melilla and Spain's minor Alboran possessions apprehended several Riffian and Jewish mariners carrying rifles, bullets, and gunpowder believed to be destined for enemy tribes.<sup>29</sup>

### O'Donnell's War

When O'Donnell returned to power in June 1858, Buceta gained a powerful ally in Madrid. The Spanish government became increasingly aggressive in demanding indemnities for acts committed by Riffians against Spaniards on land and sea. The prime minister further insisted that the ailing sultan grant Spain consideration equal to that gained by France after the bombardment of Isly (1844) and by Britain after concluding a free trade agreement with Morocco in 1856. From January 1859, a new policy requiring all Spanish navy ships navigating the Strait to call at Tangier signaled bellicose intentions.<sup>30</sup>

Could the Spanish have strengthened their position in Morocco through peaceful means? Juan Blanco del Valle, Orfila's successor as Spanish consul in Tangier, believed they could. Blanco del Valle, who was engaged in ongoing negotiations with the Makhzan, believed that Buceta's passport system was serving the interests of no one but Buceta himself. Blanco del Valle was optimistic he could reach a general trade deal with the Makhzan that would include guarantees from the Makhzan to punish Riffian hostility and to permit expanded security zones around Ceuta and Melilla—but only if Buceta and his subordinates ceased their rogue persecutions of unlicensed Riffian vessels. In a frustrated missive to O'Donnell in June 1859, Blanco del Valle charged, "If it were possible to doubt the patriotism and loyalty of these military commanders . . . , it could be believed that [Buceta's] conduct is a manifestation of just that." Buceta, however, continued to press his case, arguing that Blanco del Valle was too credulous of the Makhzan's claim to control its subjects the eastern mountains. He suggested instead that the naïve diplomat tell the Moroccan government "to make its authority respected" among the tribes.<sup>31</sup>

As an alternative to the escalating conflict around Melilla, Blanco del Valle sought a British-style free-trade agreement with the sultan. The principal merit of such an approach was that it avoided a war that in any case was unlikely to yield significant territorial spoils. The British secretary of state Lord Russell made clear that long-term Spanish military presence in Tangier or the adjacent Moroccan coastline was “inconsistent with the safety of Gibraltar” and would not be tolerated by his government.<sup>32</sup> With permanent occupation off the table, the notion was dubious that expanding free trade would do much to strengthen Spanish influence in the region. Madrid tended to regard free trade less as an instrument of peace than one of British imperial influence. Recent experience with Gibraltar provided the first cautionary tale. The Spanish were also inclined to regard free trade as a pretext for British encroachment on what they regarded as their own jurisdictional claims in Alboran waters. In December 1858, the British ambassador in Madrid protested the “unjustifiable and impolitic” capture by Spanish coast guard of a Riffian ship, the *Maimón*, at Peñón de Vélez de la Gomera.<sup>33</sup> Although the Spanish minister of state acknowledged the ship was captured in error—the *Maimón* was indeed carrying a Buceta passport—he did not see what business it was of the British ambassador to register protest. Instead, he urged the Makhzan to reject “the sort of protectorate that Great Britain presumes to arrogate over it, by having its diplomats officially intervene in disputes that Spain might have with the sultan’s government.”<sup>34</sup>

The mechanics of British “free-trade imperialism” were thrown into yet sharper relief in an incident of July 1859 involving Spanish crewmen on a trading vessel registered in Gibraltar. Attempting to smuggle sheepskins out of Tétouan, two of them were apprehended after exchanging gunfire with a Makhzan customs agent. Eying a Union Jack on their boat, the Moroccan agent turned the two Spaniards over to British consular authorities, who offered the men the choice of being tried in either Spanish or British consular courts. They chose the latter. This choice did not get the two men out of prison sentences but would permit them to claim British subjecthood in the future, and thus, according to a Spanish trade official, “to more easily defraud the interests of our Treasury.” Following a vigorous Spanish protest, the long-serving British consul in Tangier, John Drummond Hay, agreed to restore the men’s status as Spanish subjects, but the Spanish by then had Drummond Hay marked as a British official “who always goes in search of problems with us.”<sup>35</sup>

Spain's relations with France were similarly hampered by tensions over transport routes in the Alboran and the eastern Rif, but there was nevertheless some potential for collaboration. With rumors of Abd al-Rahman's failing health and a looming succession crisis in Morocco, many Spanish nationalists hoped that the moment was at hand for a joint Hispano-French expedition to extend "Latin power" deep into the Maghrib interior.<sup>36</sup> It was well known that Napoleon III envisioned a radical transformation of the Mediterranean into a new *Mare Nostrum* of the Latin races, a project that began with his support for the effort to build a canal to the Red Sea at Suez and his patronage of Italian unification early in 1859. The French empire, moreover, faced border problems in parallel with those of Ceuta and Melilla, as Algerian resisters found succor among the Beni Snassen federation in northeastern Morocco. Amid a relative security void following the transfer of French infantry units to assist Piedmont's war on Austria, they brought arms and anti-French propaganda across the border and carried out acts of sabotage against French positions inside Algeria.<sup>37</sup> The bases were present for the armies of O'Donnell and Napoleon III to coordinate a thrust into the Rif.

But in the end there would be no such alliance. A mission to Madrid in summer 1859 by Aimable Jean-Jacques Pélissier, the Duke of Malakoff, hero of the recent French victory at Sebastopol in the Crimea, failed to produce an understanding.<sup>38</sup> The choice to send Malakoff might have prefigured the outcome. The prestigious French marshal did not share his emperor's fervor for sponsoring the ambitions of Latin neighbors, whom he considered potential rivals rather than racial cousins: he had opposed Italian unification and would prove to be no friend of Spain's during his subsequent governorship of Algeria.<sup>39</sup> Instead, the French fell in line with Britain's policy to keep Spanish ambitions in check, and later sent troops and thirty-two warships to Gibraltar to help monitor the invasion. Napoleon III nevertheless took the opportunity, while vacationing in Bayonne in September 1859, to share with visiting Spanish army officers the French plan to punish the Beni Snassen.<sup>40</sup>

Although there was no coordinated Hispano-French invasion, the new sultan, Muhammad IV, would face simultaneous attacks from the two powers within two months of assuming the throne. On 21 October 1859, General Martimprey led fifteen thousand French colonial troops from Algeria across the border into eastern Morocco. The following day, in Madrid, O'Donnell obtained unanimous approval in the Spanish

parliament to declare war on Morocco. The Spanish operation would turn out to be the more ambitious and consequential of the two, but Martimprey's campaign merits a moment's attention. French Algerian forces skirmished with Beni Snassen rebels for three weeks while Martimprey negotiated directly with the rebels' chief rival, Hajj Mimoun, to gain permission to erect three permanent French redoubts inside Moroccan territory. But cholera soon decimated these garrisons, which disappeared without a trace until a small monument to Martimprey's men was erected in 1908. In any case, by dealing with the French, Hajj Mimoun elevated himself to a kind of *de facto* plenipotentiary status, and the beleaguered Muhammad IV was left little choice but to give his blessing to this *fait accompli*. The sultan granted Hajj Mimoun his own tax collectors and customs agents, reducing the Makhzan's representation in the Oujda border district to a single *qadi* (magistrate).<sup>41</sup>

Martimprey's "castigation" operation in Oujda was complete by the time the first wave of Spanish troops crossed the Straits in late November. O'Donnell's army of traditionalists and liberals, of Basque, Catalan, and Castilian regulars and volunteers, landed in Ceuta with three thousand mules and seventy-eight pieces of field artillery. They also brought supply loads awash with the same cholera that had been circulating in the Mediterranean for a decade. Carried by forward scouts and negotiators, cholera advanced ahead of marching Spanish columns. Thousands of townspeople fled to the hills—fearing Spanish troops, to be sure, but also in terror of the epidemic unleashed by the invasion. Cholera spread with sustained intensity from the beginning of the Spanish campaign, following the vectors of Spanish troop movements, fleeing townspeople, and prisoners of war. The disease accounted for two-thirds of the more than seven thousand Spanish deaths, and the toll among Moroccans was probably far greater.<sup>42</sup> The French physician Dr. Castex, one of few European civilians on the scene throughout the Spanish campaign, reported that the terror of disease contributed to an atmosphere of misery and exhaustion well out of proportion to the scale of the war.<sup>43</sup>

The effects of contagion and terror were powerfully felt in Tangier, notwithstanding the British guarantee to protect the city from a Spanish attack. According to Dr. Castex, a mood of "incessant apprehension about a bombardment" prevailed in the city for the duration of the Spanish campaign.<sup>44</sup> Commerce came to a standstill and European consular authorities took refuge across the Strait, mainly in Gibraltar and Cádiz, to return

only after the Makhzan's capitulation in April 1860. The resulting shortages only exacerbated the effects of contagion as the poor relied on fruits and vegetables grown near contaminated canals. Those with access to the black market could obtain grain as well as personal armaments from Gibraltar.<sup>45</sup> Some 2,500 Moroccan Jews took temporary refuge in Gibraltar, and perhaps 1,500 more reached adjacent districts of Andalusia. About one hundred settled permanently in Ceuta and southern Andalusia, but most returned home, malnourished, their savings depleted, and their possessions looted.<sup>46</sup> The crisis cemented ties between Gibraltar and Tangier, and occasioned the first regular ferry service between them, the Bland Line, which operated continuously until the late twentieth century. Within five years, seventeen additional shipping lines would operate between the two cities.<sup>47</sup>

The war produced a dramatic centrifugal effect on Morocco's reputed religious pluralism. Although they faced a kind of apartheid system of varying severity, Morocco's Jewish minority were full subjects of the sultan. For centuries they had rubbed elbows with Muslims in Moroccan cities and market towns, and the two groups shared a common nostalgia for Al-Andalus. The war and epidemic of 1859–1860 shook this precarious conviviality. As Muslims of Tétouan with rural family or clan connections fled to the countryside, many Jews escaped to coastal cities and others to Iberia. Those Jews who could not afford passage to another city remained in the Mellah, or Jewish quarter, rather than risk venturing outside city walls.<sup>48</sup> As the city evacuated, members of nearby tribes joined Muslim city dwellers in sacking the Mellah, terrorizing Jewish houses, looting property, and killing several dozen.<sup>49</sup> On reaching the Mellah of Tétouan, Spanish soldiers encountered heavily vandalized buildings and terrified residents hiding in cellars.

For the first time since the expulsion of Jews from Spanish Oran in 1669, a Jewish population came under Spanish rule. To Tétouan's Sephardic community of six thousand—who named their cemetery for the old Spanish kingdom of Castile—the Spanish presented themselves as liberators. Soon the city's atmosphere was lifted with parades and fireworks, and Jewish merchants procured European goods in Gibraltar to sell to the new occupiers.<sup>50</sup> In what might be seen as a precursor to the religious freedom clause of Spain's 1869 constitution, the occupation authorities established a mixed Jewish-Muslim city council in Tétouan. Spanish liberals regarded this as harmonious intercommunal collaboration, but for the

Muslim majority it added to the humiliation.<sup>51</sup> Yet this philo-Sephardism on the part of the Spanish would soon be diminished by contradictory displays of anti-Semitism, opening a new chapter in the enduring and complex relationship between Spain and the Jews. Pedro Antonio de Alarcón's quasi-official war reporting was filled with familiar negative stereotypes of Jews while making the commonplace exception for attractive Jewesses. Amid the triumphalism, the Spanish occupiers achieved the Christian conversion of several Jewish adults and the baptisms of fatherless Jewish children.<sup>52</sup>

### Francisco Merry y Colom and Mulai Abbas

Hostilities ended in March 1860. As Spanish columns turned toward Tangier, an expeditionary force led by the sultan's brother Mulai Abbas met them at Wad-Ras. This encounter proved decisive. Spanish force was overwhelming, and Mulai Abbas quickly sought peace. The Moroccan prince recognized that victory was unlikely, and holding out would only raise the unwanted prospect of British and French intervention. Mulai Abbas preferred to reach a quick settlement with Spain, a potential patron of his ambitions within the sultan's court. In a battlefield meeting with O'Donnell, Mulai Abbas agreed to entertain Spain's substantial demands, the full extent of which would be worked out over the following three years: payment of a massive indemnity; ceding to Spain of the Atlantic territory of Ifni; the possibility of indefinite Spanish occupation of Tétouan; the right to establish Catholic parishes in certain Moroccan cities; expanding the limits of Ceuta and Melilla; and the granting of plenipotentiary status to the Spanish consul in Tangier, affording him the ability to negotiate directly with the sultan, a privilege already enjoyed by his French and British counterparts. In recognition of this last point, Muhammad IV permitted all European consuls in Tangier to adopt the title of minister.<sup>53</sup>

After the initial peace of Wad-Ras in April, Hispano-Moroccan relations assumed new importance for both countries, embodied by a brief but bold collaboration between Mulai Abbas and his new Spanish interlocutor, Francisco Merry y Colom. A thirty-one-year-old career diplomat, Merry y Colom came from a prominent Anglo-Spanish family of Seville, being selected for diplomatic service at eighteen years old for his mastery of languages. Like his fellow Andalusian Antonio Cánovas, Merry y Colom represented a younger generation of Spanish elites who considered

the southern borderland, rather than American lost causes, to be Spain's vital strategic focus.<sup>54</sup> When Muhammad IV requested the recall of Blanco del Valle as part of the initial peace, Merry y Colom was reassigned from Washington to Tangier.

Merry y Colom's chief goals in Tangier were to assert Spanish influence in Morocco and to keep other European powers off of Spain's southern border. Whether this meant projecting imperial power or cultivating an independent pro-Spanish sultanate formed an ambiguity never fully resolved, and Merry y Colom did not necessarily regard these aims as contradictory. Merry y Colom emphasized the risk of becoming encircled by mighty empires: "There is no lack of large-scale political and commercial interests that could compromise the independence of [Morocco] and create for us a new French or English border with Andalusia," he wrote to his minister of state in 1864. Keeping a check on the "impertinences and tendencies" of his British and French counterparts required close collaboration with the sultan. He assured his superior that his relationship to Muhammad IV was as one "between friends, with total frankness of language," and that "our influence here permits us total independence of action and our interests are assured."<sup>55</sup>

Merry y Colom's reports may have been self-serving, but they also indicate his chief preoccupations and aims during his tenure as minister in Tangier. His guiding principle was that Spain ought to enjoy entitlements in Morocco equivalent to those of France and Great Britain. The French ambassador had entered the sultan's presence without doffing his hat, and so neither would Merry y Colom.<sup>56</sup> The British delegate to Tangier had negotiated directly with the sultan, and so Merry y Colom sought this privilege as well, insisting that the sultan should receive him as a sovereign representative of the Spanish queen. A professional diplomat of the European tradition, he found archaic and humiliating the requirement that those seeking audience with the sultan must first send a gift, the exquisiteness of which would determine the sultan's availability. French and British emissaries hitherto had deferred to this custom, anxious not to be perceived as invaders, even as they peeled apart Moroccan sovereignty with tactics like retaining protégés and negotiating treaties directly with local potentates. On his mission to Marrakech in 1863, Merry y Colom would refuse to offer a gift, a stand that did not jeopardize his chance to meet the sultan.<sup>57</sup>

In one sense, these demands advanced Merry y Colom's goal of bringing Spain to a parity of status with France and Great Britain, a level



of influence that could one day translate into a colonial stake—and this is in fact how things would turn out by 1912. However, Merry y Colom's goal in Tangier was not simply to reserve a place for Spain in some emerging Anglo-French imperial system. He also strove to build a pro-Spanish camp within Moroccan politics prepared to resist both heavy-handed British free trade and creeping French penetration. His main Moroccan partner, Mulai Abbas, was brother of Muhammad IV and by implication a contender for the throne in the event of a succession crisis. The two developed a close relationship that bolstered one another's political ambitions. For Mulai Abbas, who acquired a certain celebrity among Spaniards and visited Valencia in 1861, Spanish patronage was a valuable asset in court politics. His brother appointed him pasha of Melilla in 1863, a role that involved expelling Riffians from Spain's newly annexed lands around the presidio and regulating cross-border exchange through a ruthless system of tribute and repression (see Chapter 3). Merry y Colom interpreted this move as "in itself . . . a demonstration of the sultan's good will," and Mulai Abbas assured Merry y Colom that he was "guided by the ancient and intimate friendship that unites us."<sup>58</sup> As the sultan's chief representative on the remote Rif coast, Mulai Abbas had the opportunity to amass considerable independent wealth and a sizable private militia, a project the Spanish were pleased to support. But as Merry y Colom emphasized the importance of working "to augment the prestige and the authority" of the Hispanophile pasha, Muhammad IV grew suspicious of his brother's close relations with the Spanish, deploying spies to monitor him and his partisans throughout the realm.<sup>59</sup> The sultan was wise to take note of Mulai Abbas's ambition. Three years later, on rumors that Muhammad IV may be ill, Merry y Colom promised his friend the support of the Ceuta garrison in the event of a succession struggle, although this never came to pass.<sup>60</sup>

The collaboration between Merry y Colom and Mulai Abbas was the clearest sign of the new Hispano-Moroccan relationship and of the new regional dynamic emerging from the hostilities of 1859–1860. Though disappointing for some romantic nationalists, the lack of territorial conquests (which would have been costly to hold) is beside the point. By mounting an invasion of Morocco against the wishes of Britain and France, O'Donnell had been defending the Rif coast—a space he considered within the Spanish sphere—from the creeping imperial arrogations of Algeria and the Gibraltar-Tangier nexus. The Spanish victory compelled

the Makhzan to grant Melilla the monopoly on coastal shipping between Tétouan and the Algerian line and to accept the legitimacy of Buceta's passport system. The result was not to eliminate all antagonism between the Spaniards and the tribes, but rather to create a bilateral framework for managing hostility and to curtail the ability of other powers to grant protection to mariners unfriendly toward Melilla. The Makhzan suffered devastating political consequences, to be sure, but these likely would have been suffered sooner or later under the weight of some combination of European powers. Spain's intermediate position may even have prevented Britain and France from directly clashing in Morocco as they would in Sudan in 1898. The Makhzan further agreed to help create border facilities to legitimize overland exchange with Melilla and Ceuta, thus setting in motion their transformation from naval garrisons oriented toward the sea into towns claiming informal dominion over neighboring "hinterlands." Like the British consolidation of the Gibraltar isthmus, the Hispano-Moroccan war was more than a minor imperial episode; it was a step in the creation of a borderland.

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# 3

## Imperial Borders

**THE CONSTELLATION OF** imperial positions stretching from Tangier and Gibraltar to Melilla and Oran defined the geography of regional power with sharpening clarity over the latter half of the nineteenth century. This chapter embarks on a tour of these four privileged havens, examining various ways they asserted and subverted political authority in several directions across the region. The three exclaves managed to project considerable power over their borders, even without pursuing territorial expansion beyond the requirements of sanitary urban development. Oran, capital of the western district of the French settlement colony of Algeria, was different in this respect but must be included here because, like the exclaves, its influence radiated into eastern Morocco and across the Alboran Sea to Spain.

Juxtaposing the experiences of these four centers generates a variegated portrait of a new regional order emerging from the events explored in Chapters 1 and 2. The effects of Anglo-Franco-Spanish competition have been examined extensively by historians of Morocco, who have identified processes of “protocolonial” destabilization and the “disarticulation” of Makhzan institutions: armaments were introduced into tribal areas, fiscal policies were dictated by outsiders, and growing numbers of Muslim and Jewish protégés of the European powers were emboldened to behave with impunity. In their zeal to keep rival powers away from Gibraltar, the British propped up Morocco’s independence by encouraging military reforms and infrastructural modernizations that wound up only increasing the sultan’s debt and his subjects’ alienation.<sup>1</sup> Yet while the fate of the

sultanate was an important long-term concern, this was tied to the more immediate consideration of the growing friction between four imperial spheres in the western Mediterranean corridor.

Rather than tell a story of Europe pushing its way southward into Africa, this chapter posits the crystallization of a new locus of power centered on the maritime corridor. Power accumulated in these outposts precisely because of their remoteness from the older centers of political and economic power in west-central Morocco and northern Spain and, simultaneously, their links to the wider world via the Mediterranean corridor. Taken together, this multinodal fringe came to form the center of an emergent borderland—four points where relations between neighboring peoples were ordered and mediated. Imperial friction was significant but increasingly balanced by cooperation among the representatives of four sovereign powers to manage the intensively bordered political geography. The system might have survived indefinitely if not for a wider imperial crisis in 1898. The chapter therefore ends with a discussion of how tensions in Gibraltar Bay during that year returned the Great Powers to their imperious habit of achieving compromise by assigning territorial spheres in Africa.

### Tangier: Node of Liberal Empire

The port lying at the Strait's southwestern corner exemplifies the region's shift from a bifurcated periphery to a cluster of power. Tangier traced its origins to an ancient Carthaginian settlement and began the nineteenth century as a minor Moroccan town of six thousand inhabitants, distant from the Makhzan administration centered in Fez and Marrakech. Its growth over the next century owed to its deep-water port and its status as a reserve for Christian merchants and official representatives of European governments.

Although kept at a frustrating distance from the sultan's court, the Europeans of Tangier did enjoy access to the network of consuls dotting the Mediterranean rim. This would prove a valuable resource for exercising power, especially in the age of cholera. The hajj pilgrimage to Mecca formed the major conduit of the disease into the western Mediterranean, and during the devastating pandemic years of the 1820s, the sultan had been forced to take the unpopular step of banning his subjects from undertaking it.<sup>2</sup> The European consuls of Tangier, who maintained communication

with port authorities in major hajj nodes such as Alexandria, Tripoli, and Tunis, along with Christian lazarettos like Malta and Mahon, possessed knowledge that could reduce the spread of contagion on pilgrimage and commercial vessels. As a result, Tangier soon became the primary point of departure for Moroccan Muslims undertaking the hajj pilgrimage to Mecca while also surpassing Tétouan in commercial traffic. In 1840, Abd al-Rahman asked the European officials to form the permanent Hygiene Commission, vested with the power to restrict sea and land access to the city and enforce quarantine rules. The Hygiene Commission's effectiveness at combating plague catapulted Tangier to unequaled prestige among Morocco's eight international ports, all of which submitted to its authority to impose quarantine by 1846.<sup>3</sup>

Despite the benefits to trade and public health, foreign control of sanitation policy proved a political liability for the sultan. A severe cholera epidemic of 1865 would reveal to a scandalized Moroccan populace the extent to which their sovereign had ceded power to Christians. The experience of the *Samaunt*, a Turkish vessel carrying returning hajjis from Alexandria, provided a ghastly illustration. During the ship's excruciating fifty-day voyage from the east, some 1,000 of the original 1,800 passengers succumbed to cholera. Despite ten days of quarantine at Mahon, pestilence continued to rage, and the desperate ship was turned away at Gibraltar before docking at Tangier on 2 September. After a brief inspection, the Hygiene Commission ordered the ship to leave immediately, but the desperate captain flatly refused. The pasha of Tangier, Muhammad Vargas, was called in to mediate. Vargas was unwilling to deploy force to compel his countrymen to leave, prompting the Spanish and French delegates on the commission to resign in protest. As the traumatized passengers waited aboard, it fell ultimately to Sultan Muhammad IV to decide whether to overrule the commission and risk jeopardizing the sanitary credentials of his premier port. Amid popular outrage, he ordered the *Samaunt* out of port under threat of cannon. The ship would spend another four weeks aimlessly adrift, burying the dead at sea, before at last gaining admission at the Gibraltar lazaretto.<sup>4</sup> The incident revealed the risks of placing such a critical function of municipal governance under a foreign authority unaccountable to the sultan. As a Persian diplomat observed in 1866: "The very idea that Muslim sovereigns have made agreements with the European powers to regulate the pilgrims' voyage would be enough to change the relations of these sovereigns with their subjects. . . . [T]his proposition

would raise storms of hatred in the Muslim world.”<sup>5</sup> Recognizing the political risks, Muhammad later withdrew the Hygiene Commission’s authority to declare quarantine and established the first Moroccan lazaretto off Mogador (Essaouira).

Tangier’s character as a center of European diplomacy and trade made the town into a crucial center of regional politics. Following the Spanish victory of 1860, the town became the main theater of Anglo-Spanish competition for influence in Moroccan politics and institutions. The peace of Wad-Ras stipulated payment of a massive indemnity to Spain, but precisely how the Makhzan would generate the revenue to cover the debt remained to be worked out. The Makhzan paid somewhat under half of the agreed sum immediately, but the problem of paying off the balance would lead to a contest between the British and Spanish consulates in Tangier for patronage of an increasingly dependent Makhzan. Both turned to the customs tax, or *maks*, an unpopular form of taxation denounced by Muslim jurists as foreign to Islam and widely perceived as a form of legalized extortion benefiting the sultan’s favorites. The resident British minister John Drummond Hay orchestrated a complicated scheme of loan guarantees from his government to cover some of the remainder the indemnity, to be repaid using revenue collected by a reformed version of the sultan’s notoriously corrupt customs service.<sup>6</sup> Meanwhile, his Spanish counterpart, Francisco Merry y Colom, was working with Mulai Abbas, Spain’s ally in the sultan’s court, on a separate mechanism to collect revenue. Rather than rely on the sultan’s customs service, Merry y Colom and Mulai Abbas agreed in October 1861 on a plan by which Spanish agents would intervene directly in the collection of duties at the eight Moroccan ports, sending half the proceeds to Spain until the debt was fully paid.

This arrangement placed Merry y Colom’s legation at the center of a major political question with significant ethno-religious, international, and imperial dimensions. For all their venality, Moroccan customs agents had long been guardians of a kind of “moral economy” that exempted small merchants from the fees and bribes exacted from bigger fish. The smaller merchants, mainly Muslim, were seen as warranting special consideration because they brought European goods to smaller interior markets, an enterprise that could not be profitable without some fiscal relief. Another consideration was the legal problem of deriving state revenue from trade with Christians. Some ulema jurists could tolerate the *maks* provided it was being levied to support jihad. Whether or not paying a humiliating

war indemnity could be framed as a component of jihad, the pragmatic course was to minimize such discussions by taxing non-Muslim traders as heavily as possible. In the past, large Jewish merchants of Mogador and the other Atlantic ports paid customs duties in exchange for monopoly licenses on various goods. This arrangement had been upended, however, by the Anglo-Moroccan commercial treaty of 1856, which ended these monopolies and gave incentives for Moroccan-Jewish merchants to seek protégé status from European powers. In addition to gaining them greater legal protections, this status in some cases enabled traders to avoid customs duties altogether.<sup>7</sup>

While Muhammad IV was compromised to the British treaty, his brother Mulai Abbas played the populist. The sharifian prince contrived an agreement with Merry y Colom in March 1862 formalizing the traditional exemption of small merchants from the *maks*, a caveat that ensured that larger traders would bear the brunt of the unpopular indemnity. Precisely who stood to gain and lose varied from port to port. In Mogador, English traders and their protégés benefited most from the existing favoritism, while unprotected Jewish traders welcomed the Spanish intervention so that “they would not be abused in the manner that the Moorish authorities currently practice.”<sup>8</sup> In Tangier, by contrast, there prevailed a widespread belief that Jewish traders were avoiding their obligations. Merry y Colom’s confidant, the Spanish Arabist Felipe Rizzo, reported that “commerce and wealth in this city are controlled almost entirely by the Jews,” who had “bought off the employees of the customs house.” Rizzo added that the first days of the Spanish intervention in April 1862 “produced a panic . . . among the Jewish merchants, [while] the Moors expressed great happiness on seeing that since the Spanish collector . . . was placed beside the Tangier customs administrator, the law was equal for all and the poor merchant was equal to the rich one.”<sup>9</sup> Spanish officials would subsequently accuse the British consul of Tangier of providing cover for Jewish protégés to smuggle goods to Gibraltar without paying the new export duties.<sup>10</sup>

Whether or not the allegations were true, Merry y Colom sensed a tactical opportunity in the confluence of popular anti-British and anti-Jewish attitudes—one that might have been reinforced by deeply held ideological conviction. The Spanish minister’s younger brother, Manuel, a budding neo-Catholic intellectual, would later author a four-volume history of Spain noted for its defense of the Catholic Monarchs’ expulsion of Jews. Francisco, with his new assignment in Tangier, would quickly find



himself confronted with a legacy of that momentous edict of 1492: a Jewish community in Tangier that formed a main pivot point in the region's rapidly changing political dynamic. As European presence intensified in the nineteenth century, Jews had come increasingly to be understood by many Muslim compatriots as fifth columnists for European interlopers. The most fortunate Jewish inhabitants of several Moroccan coastal cities received protections from British and French (and sometime Spanish) traders and diplomats, and British influence in Tangier depended to a large extent on relations with Jews, some of whom maintained important commercial ties with Gibraltar.<sup>11</sup> Moreover, an emerging principle of Victorian-era liberal internationalism held that "the peculiar position of the Jews places them under the protection of the civilized world."<sup>12</sup> Reinforcing this notion was the Alliance Israélite Universelle, a Paris-based educational organization that aimed to educate Jews of Arab and Ottoman lands in the French mode and, in the words of one observer, "divest Judaism of its oriental taint."<sup>13</sup> In 1862, Tétouan became the site of the Alliance's first Jewish school.

As many Moroccans perceived a British and French bid to become patrons of the Jews, Merry y Colom attempted to stir Judeophobic populism among the country's Muslims. Though fraught with consequences for Spain's international standing, this tactic would surface sporadically down to the 1950s but was pioneered by Merry y Colom in late 1863. When a Spanish customs agent at the Atlantic port of Safi turned up dead under suspicious circumstances in August 1863, a rumor circulated that his fourteen-year-old Jewish servant, Jacob Ben Yehuda, had poisoned him.<sup>14</sup> Before any police inquest could be conducted, Merry y Colom ordered the boy arrested along with several other alleged conspirators to the assassination plot. (The Spanish report claimed both Jews and Muslims were involved, whereas the American and British versions indicate all the accused conspirators were Jewish subjects of the sultan.) Ben Yehuda and one other, a British protégé named Lalouche, were tortured into confession in front of a crowd of townspeople at Safi. After consulting a group of Muslim jurists, Muhammad IV ordered the immediate hanging of Ben Yehuda in Safi and beheading of Lalouche in Tangier, doubling the audience and maximizing the visual effect. The others gained a reprieve thanks to local British consular intervention, then a request for clemency by the town's Jewish leadership.<sup>15</sup>

With the Ben Yehuda affair, the problem of relations among Moroccan Jews and Muslims became tied into the burgeoning Anglo-Spanish tension

in the Strait. An uneasy period in Jewish-Muslim relations in Tangier and other Moroccan cities followed the incident, and an enduring personal antagonism between Merry y Colom and John Drummond Hay was also launched. The Spanish consular minister was more convinced than ever that his British counterpart was “inciting the Hebrews against the Spanish.” He accused Drummond Hay of encouraging and emboldening Jews to provoke fights with Muslims, such as when an Arab stable boy in the Spanish consular service was pelted with mud, insulted, and ultimately beaten by a crowd of Jewish youth. According to the Spanish account, the pasha of Tangier sentenced the Jewish boys to a severe beating at the scene of the crime, although Drummond Hay protested that the proper legal procedure was not followed and, moreover, that the beating should not have been carried out in the middle of the street in front of a British house. Merry y Colom retorted that he had once watched from his own balcony as British guards stabbed to death a “drunken moor” who had insulted them while staggering past their post—and then hung the cadaver by the toes in front of the casbah as a warning to others.<sup>16</sup> On another occasion, the British consular minister mocked Felipe Rizzo in front of a crowd of Muslims and Jews, the Spanish consular secretary having failed to offer his extended hand to the higher-ranking Drummond Hay as diplomatic protocol required.<sup>17</sup>

Merry y Colom considered Drummond Hay a chronic liar willing to engage in unfair play in order to discredit the Spanish. In a letter to his prime minister, the Marqués de Miraflores, he called the Englishman “a miserable man capable of whatever calumny against his rivals.”<sup>18</sup> Drummond Hay even hosted a gathering of the Tangier Council of Jews at his home in which, as Merry y Colom alleged, a number of uncharitable opinions about the Spanish were aired. In a note to the British foreign secretary Lord Russell, the Spanish government charged that the Jews of Tangier, “encouraged by the attitude of the British Minister, are daring to demonstrate their antipathy toward the Spanish.”<sup>19</sup> What clearer indicator of this animosity than an altercation at the Tangier fish market between Merry y Colom’s personal cook and a Jewish British protégé over a cod?<sup>20</sup>

If all this had remained confined to Tangier, demographics might have ensured Spain a public relations victory. Drummond Hay, however, contrived to internationalize the affair. In December 1863, the *Gibraltar Chronicle* published declarations by Drummond Hay to the effect that Spain was persecuting the Jews of Morocco.<sup>21</sup> Other foreign delegations sent

reports home as well. The French consul Ordega was sympathetic to Merry y Colom, whom he considered a potential check on Drummond Hay's power, although he chose to avoid becoming involved in a Muslim-Jewish controversy. The American consul reported the news to Washington with considerable outrage. The federal government, desperate for British support in its struggle to quash the rebellion of the southern states, supported Drummond Hay, and also promised the Board of Delegates of American Israelites in New York to "use all proper influence for the purpose of checking" the cruel acts committed against Moroccan Jews.<sup>22</sup> Miraflores, in a vote of confidence to his man in Tangier, agreed that Drummond Hay's "game is clear as the sun at midday," although the Spanish leader was loath to allow his country to gain further fame as persecutor of the Jews or a practitioner of savage justice.<sup>23</sup>

A truce was eventually brokered by one of the prominent Jewish figures of the age, Sir Moses Montefiore of London. Montefiore's organization, the Committee of English Jews, addressed a letter to Queen Isabel II, via the Spanish embassy in London. In skillful diplomatic idiom, the committee "heartily appreciated the humanity shown to our unfortunate brothers" who took refuge in Algeciras in 1859, "and continued to feel grateful to Her Catholic Majesty for the protection offered."<sup>24</sup> Montefiore then traveled to Madrid, where Isabel II herself received him. He obtained from Miraflores a note ordering the release of the remaining prisoners in Safi and instructing all Spanish officials in Morocco to ignore and combat "the gross calumnies which have been written against Spain, in the belief that the Spanish consuls in Morocco have undertaken a crusade against the Israelites established in this empire." Although the Spanish government did not explicitly acknowledge Merry y Colom's targeting of Jews, the circular did admonish, "The best mode of replying successfully to such calumnies is by increasing your solicitude for this race, which is so sadly circumstanced in this country."<sup>25</sup> The Moroccan monarch issued a decree soon thereafter echoing this sentiment, reminding his subjects that the Jews of his realm "should be on an equal basis with any other person, so that not even the slightest injustice may be done to them nor any unmerited treatment accorded them."<sup>26</sup>

The Ben Yehuda affair began as part of a project to establish Spain as a champion of Moroccan Muslims, but the end result was to establish Tangier as a center of imperial philo-Semitic humanitarianism. Muslim-Jewish antagonism rose to the surface in several more episodes throughout

Morocco over the following decades, prompting the British consulate of Tangier to consider extending categorical British protection over all Morocco's Jews. In 1864, Drummond Hay ordered British port agents throughout Morocco "to instruct the Sultan officials . . . that hatred and mistreatment of Jews or anyone else will not be tolerated," and the British government "will have no choice but to give protected status to all" who suffer injustice.<sup>27</sup> Although no blanket protection ever was issued, humanitarian motives provided imperial agents an inroad into Moroccan affairs. The Makhzan expressed frustration over the "arrogance and recklessness" with which it believed Jews had begun to operate as a result of the solicitousness of the Europeans. It is possible that the impact may have been overstated, as Jews continued to turn chiefly to Makhzan courts to litigate disputes.<sup>28</sup> In any case, the Anglo-Jewish Association of London lobbied in the 1880s to end these protections, which they regarded as counterproductive to the humanitarian cause because they bred antagonism and resentment.

Spanish officials in Tangier, though they mainly respected their government's official position, sometimes voiced suspicions over the extent of Anglo-Jewish collusion, especially in Tangier. Although Moroccan Jews, even when under European protection, were required to conform to the traditional all-black dress code from top hat to pointy babouche slippers, a Spanish diplomat opined in 1882 that those in Tangier went about the high streets at all hours with European dress and "unbelievable insolence."<sup>29</sup> In 1889, the Spanish minister registered unease at the goals of the local Masonic lodge, which had been founded in 1867 by a group of Jewish British protégés who he believed sought to turn Tangier into a British mandate.<sup>30</sup> Contrary to the British, Spanish policy under Merry y Colom and subsequent ministers was to sever protections granted to hundreds of Jews during the 1859–1860 war who did not remain active in their service, returning them to the sultan's jurisdiction.<sup>31</sup>

### Melilla and the Pax Melillana

Another consequence of the Spanish victory over Morocco in 1860 was to extend the territories of Ceuta and Melilla beyond their old fortification walls. Especially dramatic was the transformation of Melilla, which grew from a fifteen-acre promontory with virtually no permanent civilian inhabitants into an expanse of nearly five square miles, its extension

delimited by the radius of a twenty-four-pound cannon shot from the coastal fortress (some 9,400 feet). Much of the new territory encompassed the flood plain of the river Oro—uncultivable, unavailable for building, and a breeding ground for waterborne disease—while the foothills to the north and west included existing Riffian tribal settlements. The Spanish had given these terrains peculiar names like Dry Attack and River Attack, good indicators of the hostility they received from the interior. The attacks most often took the form of rock throwing, but sporadically involved armed assault. According to one local story, patient tribes methodically attempted to divert the river stone by stone in an attempt to flood the garrison.<sup>32</sup>

The Treaty of Wad-Ras ended the Hispano-Moroccan war on terms largely favorable to the aggressor, but one area on which both sides agreed was the need for stricter controls on contact and exchange between the sultan's subjects and the two Spanish exclaves. Prince Mulai Abbas, in his amicable surrender on the sultan's behalf, asserted that only "peaceful Moors" should be permitted to enter the fortress towns, and they should remain there only during daylight hours. The Makhzan also agreed to designate Melilla as the only authorized port for trade with the Riffian interior.<sup>33</sup> In return, Francisco Merry y Colom conceded to the Makhzan the sole authority to regulate overland movement in and out of Melilla and Ceuta. The sultan was to designate a pasha to guard the town gate and collect export duties from Moroccan merchants seeking to sell goods in the Spanish exclave. Under no circumstances were Spaniards to leave Melilla by land.<sup>34</sup> Even under this new arrangement, the Moroccan government would not be held responsible for future hostile acts carried out by Riffian mariners against Spanish vessels.

Things would not turn out quite so simple in practice, but signs pointed toward a new, mutually beneficial *modus vivendi*. In 1862, the officer who succeeded Manuel Buceta as governor of the Melilla garrison informed his commander in chief that "the Moors remain tranquil and [there have been] no new occurrences" of hostile behavior. The following year, the next governor corroborated this optimism, observing, "The Moors continue to display satisfactory conduct and do not oppose that the garrison has shifted its boundaries."<sup>35</sup> Spanish soldiers were frequently seen mingling at the garrison beach with riflemen of the neighboring Beni Sicar tribe, "fraternizing with the Moors as though with their own countrymen."<sup>36</sup> Melilla's military elite also began considering ways to exert deeper,

lasting influence, envisioning the establishment of Hispano-Arabic schools for Moroccan boys, although there would be no meaningful action on this front for decades.<sup>37</sup>

Riffians residing within Melilla's new limits—along with others who came from farther away—learned to reap considerable benefits from agreeing to submit to Spanish dominion. Among these was access to Spanish passports issued in Melilla, the controversial system pioneered by Buceta in the 1850s to extort loyalty from Riffian tribes. Though still of dubious legal status, these passports helped many Riffians to circumvent the sultan's prohibition on labor migration to French Algeria. Melilla soon became the hub of a modest seasonal cycle of Riffian labor migration numbering some seven thousand workers. On their return from Algeria, migrant laborers docked at the Spanish town, pockets full, and took advantage of the European market before heading to their homes and families.<sup>38</sup> Riffians could also peddle goods to the garrison community at regular weekly markets. Although Sunday markets were eliminated within three miles of the presidio—another assertion of the new predominance of Christian law—two Monday markets were authorized within the exclave limits to replace them.<sup>39</sup>

This convivial state of affairs continued through summer 1863, until Muhammad IV was made fully aware of the situation and acted to intervene. When Francisco Merry y Colom traveled to Marrakech in May to conclude a final peace settlement, the Spanish plenipotentiary became suspicious that the Moroccan sultan had not received a full accounting of his army's surrender three years earlier. The sultan averred that "his intermediaries did not understand in many cases the importance of certain questions; others twisted the protocol wishing to resolve them on their own, and, lastly, in some cases they even went so far as to hide things."<sup>40</sup> Muhammad had acquiesced to a range of Spanish demands, such as the placement of permanent Spanish consuls at several Moroccan ports, the establishment of a Catholic church at Mazagan (El Jadida), the modest extension of territorial limits of Ceuta and Melilla, and access to Moroccan beef on terms similar to those accorded to Gibraltar. But there was a red line the sultan would not cross: he flatly refused to permit his subjects to reside or to maintain houses in the expanded domains of Ceuta and Melilla. If necessary, he would dispatch his army to the northern coast to forcibly remove them, compensating them for their loss of livelihood.

The Spanish initially "were in no hurry" for the sultan to carry out his wish to remove his subjects from their exclaves. As Merry y Colom argued,

“It is Spain’s chief interest that relations between the Riffians and Melilla continue for a long time, in order that these relations develop trade and our influence is extended throughout these districts.”<sup>41</sup> Without its overland neighbors, Melilla remained an isolated outpost, its communication with peninsular Spain limited to a single mail steamer every fifteen days.<sup>42</sup> Soon, however, Merry y Colom would become aware of a different risk. This risk did not derive from ethno-religious hostility, but rather from the prospect of an invidious third-party interloper, Britain. Amid the crippling disruption in cotton supplies caused by the American Civil War, British investors were already seeking to acquire land and workers for cotton cultivation in districts near Tangier. The Makhzan resisted this because Moroccans in British employ would, by the terms of the Anglo-Moroccan Treaty of 1856, become protégés subject to British law, in effect turning these plantations into patches of virtual British sovereignty. Envisioning the possibility of a similar British encroachment into the Spanish exclaves, Merry y Colom insisted that Moroccan subjects had no legitimate standing to sell property to British speculators or anyone else, citing the patrimonial tradition by which “the sultan is owner of life and land, and the Arabs are considered nothing more than usufructuaries.”<sup>43</sup> As the prospect of Moroccan subjects becoming proxies for British or French influence in the Spanish presidios came into focus, the Spanish thus came around to the sultan’s segregationist position. The expulsion of Moroccans from Ceuta and Melilla and the disbanding of the Riffian rifleman corps finally took place in November 1863. The Melilla expedition, led by Mulai Abbas, evicted the residents, cordoned the boundary, and destroyed the only mosque within the new Spanish limits, eliminating any remaining pretext to cross the new border.<sup>44</sup> Three years later, the Ministry of War barred non-Spaniards from purchasing property in Melilla or the surrounding land, noting, “This is the practice at Gibraltar, and prudence counsels Spain to follow this example at Melilla.”<sup>45</sup>

Following his 1863 expedition, Mulai Abbas remained on the Melilla front, where he would assume the role of mediating all cross-border movement as the new pasha of the Rif. The pasha behaved with considerable autonomy and flexibility toward Muhammad’s ban on communication between Melilla and the Rif. According to the Spanish Orientalist geographer Rafael Pezzi, Mulai Abbas extracted gifts from merchants on both sides of the border as a precondition for cross-border trade, giving greater consideration to the more generous donor. With the proceeds, he assembled a

substantial private militia. This arrangement was advantageous for Melilla because Mulai Abbas's militia helped suppress enemies of the Spanish garrison. Over time, however, the pasha's heavy hand discouraged commercial exchange between Melilla and the Riffians.<sup>46</sup>

To rein in the power of the pasha of the Rif, the sultan turned to the Spanish for help establishing a regular border. In October 1866, the Spanish minister of war agreed to create a Moroccan customs station housed inside Melilla's limits, far from the shoreline, thus stripping the pasha of his autonomy and his ability to maintain a militia.<sup>47</sup> The new Moroccan customhouse opened in 1867 with considerably more success than the first effort of 1863—both in terms of facilitating the collection of customs duties and promoting better relations between Melilla and the Riffian tribes. The Spanish exclave, now drawing a new trickle of construction workers and other settlers from the peninsula, purchased Riffian goods in rising quantities, and its harbor became a link to the other Mediterranean markets. The cattle trade in particular played a key role in smoothing relations, as Melilla relied on Riffian pastoralists for its beef supply. Not only did this policy create opportunities for peaceful trade with Riffian tribes, but the revenue it generated was used to finance the periodic indemnities demanded by the Spanish government as restitution for occasional incidents of violence.<sup>48</sup> Losing out were local Jewish merchants, whose former dominance of this trade was being suppressed by Spanish-Moroccan diplomacy. Responding to a protest from local Jews, the Spanish governor of Melilla bluntly explained in 1875 that “without country or loyalty, [the Jews] only aspire to multiply their profits, being the cause of conflicts that they do not have to resolve and that can promote wars that are only useful and convenient for themselves.”<sup>49</sup>

The other key initiative to bring the new Melilla border under control was a grand land reclamation project. This would expand the network of fortification walls, divert the river Oro away from the town, and create an embankment to put an end to chronic flooding. Some neighboring tribes objected, regarding the work as an abrogation of the long-standing neutral zone and a pretext for the Spanish to enhance their fortifications and expand their settlement. A fresh wave of border attacks by Riffian guerillas impeded progress, but after repeated Spanish protests, the Makhzan took action against its Riffian subjects, mobilizing a force of three thousand men to suppress them. In 1872, the works were completed and the river assumed its new course. The swamps that once encircled the old garrison



had become a memory. Impressed by the lower incidence of disease and the end of the town's foul smell, the French geographer Honoré Duveyrier observed, "Thanks to this intelligent labor, the presidio's climate has improved."<sup>50</sup>

Replacing the riparian miasma was a new terrain suited to urban settlement. Recruitment of civilian settlers began in earnest, and the six thousand mostly Andalusian civilians who had settled there by 1896 enjoyed paved streets, a sewage system, and park space, while a theater and casino now served the local military elite. Soldiers and officers, along with a few port workers and traders, animated the quays during the day. Melilla had likely become Spain's most ethnically diverse community. Several hundred Jews established residence in the growing town, identifiable by their curly locks and Moroccan habits of dress. Representing the vanguard of a movement to "repatriate" descendants of Sephardim expelled at the end of the fifteenth century, they were walking symbols of Spaniards' contradictory relationship with Moroccan Jewry.<sup>51</sup> A Muslim trader took up permanent residence in 1887 and by 1896 he had been joined by nearly one hundred of his coreligionists. Melilla even became home to a small handful of Hindu migrants connected to British seaborne trading.<sup>52</sup> Suburbs emerged just beyond Melilla's fortified walls, where residents exploited their position on the semipermeable boundary (see Figure 3.1). The first, El Mantelete, a charming Jewish neighborhood with ordered streets and happy one-story houses, was a commercial center. Further out, the shabbier El Polígono was the clearinghouse for contraband armaments procured with the help of complicit port and customs officials.<sup>53</sup>

Similarly to Gibraltar, cross-border trade overtook military expenditure as the primary driver of Melilla's growth during this period—much of it considered contraband by Moroccan law. Spanish and Riffian vessels cooperated to avoid tariffs on all kinds of goods, from eggs to hides. The town's sole agricultural firm, chartered by the Spanish government in 1884 to create a buffer zone, generated far more profit from contraband than from cultivation.<sup>54</sup> Bereft of independent power, the pasha of the Rif relied on the Melilla command to patrol coastal waters for such activity, but conflicts of interest abounded, as much of the settled population of Melilla, its suburbs, and the minor Alboran islands dealt in this trade. Most important, Melilla officials facilitated the smuggling of British Remington rifles and ammunition from Gibraltar and Tangier into the Rif. Melilla's officers also profited from the sale of protections to Jewish and Muslims



**FIGURE 3.1.** A photograph of the market at Mantelete, an extramural suburb of Melilla, 1892.

*Source:* Reprinted courtesy of Archivo General de Melilla.

arms dealers, enabling those groups to move freely between the exclave and the interior without fear of harassment by Makhzan police. Over the course of three decades the Riffian tribes became well armed with modern European weaponry.

The flood of armaments in turn emboldened some Riffians to stage assaults on heavily fortified Melilla. In October 1893, a tribal militia outfitted with Remingtons and Winchesters—along with English-style tunics and plenty of tobacco and kef—provoked border skirmishes. When a mosque on the Melilla periphery was damaged, the conflict escalated and took on an aura of jihad. By the end of October, well-armed militiamen had Melilla’s land perimeter surrounded, inducing a tense stalemate and a major headache for the Makhzan. Leading a charge to dislodge the Riffians from their entrenchments, Melilla’s governor Juan García Margallo was killed, possibly by a Remington whose acquisition he had once facilitated. Having built good bilateral relations with Spain over the decades since the Treaty of Wad-Ras, the Makhzan was little disposed to support tribal militiamen, especially in light of a report from the sultan’s envoy, Muhammad Torres, indicating most residents of Melilla’s new Moroccan suburbs “have arrived happily . . . [and] are enjoying great tranquility.”<sup>55</sup> Likewise, the Spanish government did not seek direct conflict with the sultan, in contrast to 1859, but chose to limit its hostilities to the Melilla front. Soon,

the European powers gave Spain a green light to commit a large force and use warships to bombard Riffian positions. After punishing the rebels for killing Margallo, the Spanish sought nothing from Sultan Hassan I other than an indemnity and reaffirmation of the thirty-four-year-old terms of Wad-Ras.<sup>56</sup>

The brief War of Margallo broke the arrangement reached in the 1860s by Merry y Colom and Mulai Abbas to preserve peace and promote intercommunal trade around Melilla, but only momentarily. By extending the exclave's jurisdictional and commercial influence into the Alboran Sea and the Rif, the Pax Melillana had underwritten a period of relative prosperity for Melilla and its neighbors. The Margallo episode was not so much a failure of that system, but rather it was the fruit of the excesses of Melilla's officialdom, which had been overzealous in selling protection to arms smugglers. After the brief war, all parties were quick to return to the status quo ante. Spain's liberal Sagasta government did not attempt to turn the skirmishes into pretext for territorial or other gains. Melilla was not yet the tempting bridgehead to the Riffian interior that it would become a decade later, when the discovery of iron deposits and a new wave of French aggressiveness changed the picture. The British position to limit direct European intrusions into Moroccan territory remained more attractive than the prospect of becoming a junior partner to France in a conquest of Morocco that, as the future diplomat Théophile Delcassé had written in 1887, was a project for the "intimate combination of the Latin races."<sup>57</sup>

The development of Melilla and its relations with the Riffians after 1860 should therefore not be judged as a failed first attempt at the kind of territorial colonization that followed in the twentieth century. Although there was no single Spanish consensus toward Morocco during the late nineteenth century, policy was guided more by borderland politics than by colonial expansionism. Melilla's expanded role after 1860 had forestalled a clash in the western Mediterranean between expanding imperial "force fields" emanating from French Algeria and Britain's Gibraltar-Tangier corridor. Spain actively contributed to efforts to keep the "Morocco question" a matter for international diplomacy, its role underscored by the choice of Madrid and Algeciras to host major international conferences on preserving the sultan's independence in 1880 and 1906. In 1884, the celebrated polymath Joaquín Costa, a luminary of Spain's "regenerationist" movement, told an audience of 1,500 in Madrid that Morocco "should never become a European colony," but instead "a virile nation, independent and

cultured, a natural ally of Spain, united with us by ties of neighborliness and of history.” With this, Costa launched the Africanismo movement that would gather momentum over the next several decades. Costa’s vision echoed those of several Spanish diplomats and politicians of his day, guided by the belief that a strong, friendly Morocco was integral to Spain’s own national survival, while imperial conflict on the southern border could sow fatal divisions.<sup>58</sup> Were the fractious and revolutionary lands of Spanish Andalusia as vulnerable as Morocco to imperial irradiation? The cases of Oran and Gibraltar permit us to examine this question.

### Oran and the Algerian Magnet

The region’s largest magnet for migrants before 1914, Algeria posed a direct challenge to the restrictive emigration laws of both Spain and Morocco. Although Hispano-Moroccan cooperation in policing the Rif after 1860 discouraged further French intrusions there, the attraction of French Algeria continued to undermine the Moroccan sultan’s ban on labor migration. Spanish laborers also flouted their country’s exit visa requirements, and were welcomed on Algerian coasts by French officials and employers in need of manpower. The population of Spanish subjects in the French colony reached a peak of 160,000 in 1900, although many more who acquired French nationality were excluded from this figure. In the western district of Oran, Spaniards outnumbered the French by three to two. For the fugitives and dissidents hidden among this clandestine flow, Algeria was a haven. During the 1860s, upwards of one-third of the entire Spanish community in Oran consisted of army deserters, tax evaders, fugitives, and political dissidents. Algeria was now not only the destination of an older outflow of Carlist refugees; it increasingly attracted competing factions of liberal military officers, professionals, along with a few dissident reformist clergy and leftist revolutionaries.<sup>59</sup>

The Spanish government struggled to gain French help to close this escape valve. In 1862, after five years of negotiation, the government of Napoleon III agreed to deport Spanish migrants who failed to register with their consul, bar Spanish settlers from serving in the French colonial army, and turn over Spanish men caught evading debts or military service. But implementation was another matter. Spanish consular agents complained that Algeria’s governor-general—the same Duke of Malakoff who had counseled against supporting Spain in the 1859 war—“had not

strictly adjusted himself to the spirit of the . . . pact,” but instead had ordered colonial prefectures “not to observe” the requirement that Spanish migrants register with their local consulate. One perceived mocking irony in Malakoff’s warning that Spaniards must register “under penalty of being deprived of the immunities” guaranteed by their government.<sup>60</sup> Without assistance from French authorities, Spanish consuls faced a nearly impossible task. Spanish laborers did not tend to settle under consular noses but marched to the rhythm of boom-and-bust cycles in crops such as cotton and esparto grass, in addition to epidemics and frontier violence.<sup>61</sup> In an atmosphere of frequent native resistance and frontier warfare, the legions of undocumented Mediterraneans provided France with a military asset. While some two hundred Spaniards per year were deported for flagrant criminality, most enlisted in colonial militias, a dangerous but potentially rewarding fast track to French citizenship.<sup>62</sup>

Malakoff’s death in 1864 did not bring about any sudden change in French attitudes. Of particular note was the role of Algeria in giving succor to political dissidents of the short-lived First Spanish Republic of 1873. As the Republic suppressed cantonalist revolts in Andalusia, the embattled president Nicolás Salmerón declared revolutionaries who took to the seas to be pirates. The German navy responded to Salmerón’s plea, intercepting two renegade frigates in the Alboran Sea.<sup>63</sup> But thousands of others found refuge in Oran (some two thousand from Cartagena alone). As Spain’s revolutionary interlude gave way to the Restoration monarchy of 1875, another wave of defeated Carlist refugees streamed in. Well positioned for maintaining contact with the Andalusian coast, Oran became a gathering point for followers of the revolutionary republican leader Manuel Ruiz Zorrilla.<sup>64</sup>

By the late 1870s, the Spanish government made some progress in getting the French to recognize claims on its subjects, but the gains would prove ephemeral. In 1878, the Spanish consul praised the “indefatigable vigilance” with which Oran’s municipal police pursued deserters from the Cuban wars, a practice that continued down to the final loss of that colony in 1898.<sup>65</sup> The French government also recognized the Spanish subjecthood of one hundred undocumented settlers killed by tribal insurgents near Saida in 1881, agreeing to indemnify their families.<sup>66</sup> The more pronounced trend for undocumented Spaniards, however, was toward amnesty and French naturalization, carried out with particular intensity between 1889 and 1893. In a feeble nod to the Franco-Spanish Convention of 1862, children born

to Spaniards could on their eighteenth birthday petition to retain Spanish citizenship, but foreigners' increasingly limited access to schools, hospitals, and other services served to discourage this. A new group called the League of French Workers of the Department of Oran fulminated against the continuous waves of Spanish and Riffian migrant labor and lobbied to gain privileges for French citizens. The league barred non-French from joining, but its ranks soon swelled with naturalized workers of Spanish origin. These new Frenchmen became among the most avid adherents of a new nationalism, drifting to the anti-Semitic and antiliberal parties and jealously guarding their privileged employment status.<sup>67</sup>

Coerced naturalization helped the French Republic to limit foreign influence and consolidate sovereignty over Algeria. Stories of ill treatment of compatriots in places like Algeria and Tunisia in this era would mobilize many Italian nationalists around Enrico Corradini's concept of the "proletarian nation," but Spain produced only muted indignation.<sup>68</sup> In 1904, the Africanista politician Miguel Villanueva spoke out in parliament against anti-Spanish discrimination in Algeria, but the issue gained little traction. Some Spaniards in the Oran district harbored a mild irredentism based on the notion that they were the region's true colonizers, but rumors that the Spanish government was actively pursuing a claim on Algeria's western district are not corroborated in the documentary record.<sup>69</sup> In their classic fascist foreign policy treatise of 1941, José María Areilza and Fernando Castiella inveighed against the "total silence" of official Spain on the issue: "Indecisive in its foreign policy, pusillanimous, liberal," the Restoration regime had permitted "the French to vaingloriously claim that the French element had statistically eclipsed the Spanish—at last!"<sup>70</sup>

### Spain and Gibraltar: Between Irredentism and Dependency

The major focus of Spanish irredentism was not Oran, but Gibraltar. The belief that the Rock's recovery would consummate the nationalist project united a range of politicians across the spectrum. Emilio Castelar, president of Spain's short-lived Republic of 1873, declared that Great Britain "cannot be our ally as long as it possesses Gibraltar."<sup>71</sup> On the right, neo-Catholic activists regarded Gibraltar as a malignant tumor of Protestantism and Jewry. In his famous disquisition on heterodoxy in Spanish history, Marcelino Menéndez Pelayo reserved a special place for Gibraltar, "the

first Iberian land in which heresy freely prevailed, offering easy refuge to all dissidents of the Peninsula in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, and a strategic center for all Anglo-Protestant propaganda operations.<sup>72</sup>

Yet beyond its emotive power, to what extent did Gibraltar truly limit Spain's sovereignty by the late nineteenth century? Older arguments that the British colony incubated banditry, heterodoxy, and revolution in Andalusia lost relevance once a *modus vivendi* was reached on cross-border relations. As discussed in Chapter 1, better mechanisms for tracking fugitives and effective cooperation between Spanish and Gibraltarian police ended the colony's career as a safe haven for political plotters (at least until the 1930s), and Spain's tariff reform of 1869 undercut contraband trade in most goods (the major remaining exception being tobacco). Some argued that Gibraltar's defense posed too great a burden on whoever controlled it, especially in an age of fast warships armed with submarine torpedoes capable of laying waste to coastal positions from four miles out at sea. According to one British naval officer, Spain was better off leaving Gibraltar in Britain's strong and benevolent hands than attempting to hold "the apple of discord" on its own "and infallibly originate an era of war."<sup>73</sup> In 1873, a Spanish engineer criticized the idea of swapping Ceuta for Gibraltar—a bargain fruitlessly pursued by various Spanish governments since 1720—believing that building a modern communications, transport, and cultural bridgehead into Africa promised far greater returns than recovering the tiny Iberian promontory of declining value.<sup>74</sup>

Although a few British polemicists concurred on "the uselessness of Gibraltar," successive British governments doubled down.<sup>75</sup> They did not pursue further territorial expansion, which reached virtually its full extent by 1860, but found other means to extend the colony's radius of influence. In 1880, artillery batteries appeared atop the Rock capable of delivering 9.2-inch caliber shells at a range of about seven miles. By 1888, a London firm won the concession to build a railway link from the hub at Bobadilla (near Málaga) to the port of Algeciras, terminus of the regular Gibraltar ferry service, apparently in a gesture of goodwill by the Spanish government as Gibraltar took measures against cross-bay smuggling.<sup>76</sup> But even a heavily fortified Gibraltar was of limited value without other supports. In 1881, the French navy had gained a presence at the Mediterranean choke point of Bizerte (Tunisia), which meant that peace with France remained a necessary condition to preserve the Mediterranean thoroughfare to India. The British naval officer Fred Warren argued that the extension of railway



track to Algeciras—even if British owned—would “inevitably alter the conditions under which [Gibraltar] has been hitherto held,” enabling the rapid mobilization of Spain or another power to the Campo de Gibraltar. “To seize both sides of the Bay, which would require at least 20,000 men to hold, might be imperative” for adequate defense.<sup>77</sup> In 1895, the government of Lord Salisbury committed major investments to expand the port of Gibraltar. The immense labor of digging tunnels and building the new harbor was to be carried out by Spanish labor drawn from the ranks of the underemployed peasantry of the Campo de Gibraltar.

As a result, Gibraltar and the Campo became mutually dependent as never before. Although it was not the original motive, the decision of 1870 to incorporate the border town of La Línea and open the isthmus to settlement opened an economic lifeline to the impoverished Spanish district. In social, economic, and ethno-cultural terms, the town soon became a working-class suburb of Gibraltar. As Gibraltar authorities abandoned the use of imperial convict labor in favor of the more reliable workers of the Campo, the population of La Línea grew to eleven thousand by 1882 and thirty-two thousand by 1900, surpassing the population of the British town. A parade of laborers crossed the Gibraltar gate each morning to toil in the coaling station and dockyards, as builders and peddlers, domestics and cooks. The British town owed much of its urban dynamism to the thousands of Linenses who not only worked but also animated street life, and spent a portion of their wages not only on tobacco but also on soaps, canned goods, candles, fans, and other products to keep or resell. The Spanish consul estimated four thousand to five thousand daily in 1892: this “is undoubtedly a positive development, as it alleviates in some way the misery of the Spanish side, but we can also be assured that almost all of these same people, on returning, carry at least a pound of tobacco each.”<sup>78</sup> Whereas earlier smuggling operations were controlled by a few favorites of the Spanish consulate in Gibraltar, the contraband trade was now democratized, open to all Spanish employees in Gibraltar willing to carry a lump of tobacco under their topcoats on their evening return home.<sup>79</sup> In some years, Gibraltar’s wholesalers moved more tobacco than all Germany.<sup>80</sup>

Discussions between the Spanish and British governments on how to combat this trade went on for decades but faced multiple obstacles. The British government refused to discourage it by imposing a tax on tobacco entering Gibraltar, as most stocks were supplied from within Britain’s imperial free-trade zone. Moreover, the tobacco trade employed two-thirds



of the colony's laboring civilian population, including cutters, cigarette rollers, box makers, and transporters.<sup>81</sup> The Spanish government faced pressure from the tobacco monopoly (held after 1887 by the *Compañía Arrendataria de Tabacos*, or CAT) to seal the border, but this too was unrealistic. In addition to the bonanza for labor, local Spanish industries such as cork and fishing relied on Gibraltar for their equipment and customers, and some three hundred small growers supplied the British town with fresh produce. The CAT financed Gibraltar's first border fence, a three-foot-high metal barrier intended to funnel cross-border foot traffic through the official checkpoint, but the decision to let commuters pass continued to rest with sympathetic officials.<sup>82</sup> The widest circulating daily of Gibraltar and the Campo, the Spanish-language *El Calpense*, adopted an editorial line that consistently defended the clandestine tobacco trade; its owner, R. A. Parval, was a longtime employee of the Spanish consulate of Gibraltar.<sup>83</sup>

If public opinion in the Campo favored the open relationship with Gibraltar, hand-wringing continued among Spanish national elites. A report issued by the Spanish Interior Ministry in 1887 lamented that smuggling prevented the youth of the Campo from learning "the habit of honest work" and "the civic virtue of patriotism."<sup>84</sup> The Spanish intellectual Joaquin Costa would bemoan the weak national identity among inhabitants of the Gibraltar borderland: "We must demand more schools and more teachers, especially in the Campo de Gibraltar, in order to stop the British threat, which from the Rock intends surreptitiously to substitute Pelayo with John Bull and Isabel the Catholic with Queen Victoria."<sup>85</sup> Long a hotbed of various forms of revolutionary republicanism, the Campo had begun to nurture an anarchist movement, which many townspeople hoped would pressure the government "to open up this illicit [tobacco] traffic for a certain period of time."<sup>86</sup> A royal decree of October 1894 strengthened the power of customs officials to persecute smugglers. Going beyond "fiscal interests," the law's preamble observed "the spectacle offered by the Customs House of La Línea at all hours of the day is very sad" and evoked the need "to create the most rudimentary conditions of morality and decorum for the town."<sup>87</sup>

This type of language only heightened the antagonism between Madrid and the Campo. The municipality of La Línea registered a formal protest on behalf of its "noble people," who were "hurt and offended at being considered a community of doubtful morality and decorum." It was

“precisely this habit of honest and dignified labor,” the mayor wrote, that left the townspeople “distant from the pernicious currents of anarchism and their spirit uninfluenced by any destructive doctrine.”<sup>88</sup> But central authorities remained unconvinced. A few weeks later, a newly appointed chief customs administrator, Felipe López, ordered systematic searches of everyone entering Spain from Gibraltar, imposing an unprecedented excise tax on any tobacco they found. A revolt followed in short order. On a November evening in 1894, tensions boiled over and a crowd of seven hundred angry commuters began pelting López with rocks while chanting, “Thief! Thief!”<sup>89</sup> In the name of serving his nation, López had ventured into a hostile world within his own borders.

López found no haven inside British lines, either. On the morning of 27 December, he entered Gibraltar to deliver to the Spanish consul there his first report on the new tariff regime. Walking down High Street in the broad light of day, he was assaulted by two men, receiving whips to his face and body. López fled to the police station, where he reported the incident. He then was confronted by a “crowd of men and boys” shouting, “Kill him,” along with a barrage of insults.<sup>90</sup> Within a day, the Gibraltar police apprehended a father and son by the name of Montegrifo, British subjects who until recently had resided in La Línea, but relocated to Gibraltar following the late crackdown on smuggling. The Spanish consul reported that “the large majority of the public in La Línea” stood in support of the Montegrifo men.<sup>91</sup> Authorities in Madrid hoped to seize the incident to signal their new resolve to “deal a blow to the very deeply rooted and unpunished resistance in the Campo.” The Spanish undersecretary of state wired the Gibraltar governor Robert Biddulph directly, “making him understand that, a Spaniard having been assaulted, it was imperative . . . that justice be carried out.”<sup>92</sup> But attaining a conviction from a Gibraltar jury would prove impossible, as the several eyewitnesses refused to corroborate the original account.<sup>93</sup>

The López affair was another demonstration that even with the problem of the jurisdictional boundary settled, Gibraltar’s magnetic field continued to scramble Spanish sovereign prerogatives like border control. It also limited the Spanish government’s ability to command the full loyalty of the growing number of subjects residing within the British colony’s orbit. Moreover, the British naval presence at Gibraltar restrained Spanish action in Tangier and along the northern Moroccan coast, where French competition raised the prospect of encirclement. The British colony formed

a concentration of military, political, and economic power—greater than those of Melilla, Oran, and Tangier—that wielded regional influence unstopably and irrespectively of territorial boundaries.

### The Trans-Gibraltar and the Making of the Entente Cordiale

An opportunity to transform this unstable cluster of magnetic fields into a firmer system of bounded spheres of influence arrived in 1898—the year Spain lost the remnants of its trans-Oceanic empire in a war with the United States, and the year that an Anglo-French war nearly broke out over a dispute near Fashoda in Sudan. These twin crises led to a period of intense diplomacy among several European powers, producing by 1902 a compromise between Britain, France, and Spain, to delineate the three powers' respective spheres of influence in the region, opening the way for the wider Anglo-French Entente Cordiale by 1904. The weakest of the empires present, Morocco, would suffer the greatest indignity. In exchange for guarantees of Gibraltar's security, the British abandoned their sponsorship of Morocco's independence. As a consequence, the Spanish and French could negotiate the terms of a future colonial partition of Morocco into two zones, as long as they agreed to respect the British demands that the north coast be given to Spain, the relatively weaker power, and that Tangier retain its broadly international character.

The journey from war to Entente began in May 1898, when, with war with the United States still raging overseas, the Spanish government precipitated a crisis over Gibraltar. Claiming the need defend its southern coast from some secret Anglo-American “racial” alliance, the Spanish army mounted large (nine-inch) artillery batteries in the Sierra Carbonara, the arc of hills looking downward on Gibraltar. Although the cannon were aimed at the bay waters, the British ambassador quickly protested that a simple alteration to these installations could threaten the British town itself. With France's diplomats taking a leading role in brokering a Spanish-American peace, and its armies advancing on British claims in the Upper Nile basin, the British prime minister Lord Salisbury was left wondering if the Latin nations were conspiring a secret alliance of their own. The Spanish gambit rendered Gibraltar so vulnerable as to be “practically of no use to us in case of war,” he noted, insisting that his government should risk “whatever consequences may follow our putting a stop to this activity.”<sup>94</sup>

As with much international diplomacy in this era, the matrix of contingencies resembled a game theorist's fantasy. Was some Anglo-American dynamo preparing to claim the Canary Islands or even southern Andalusia? Was a secret Franco-Russo-Spanish alliance set to stage an attack on Gibraltar from the Maghrib? Or, as some at the Quai d'Orsay feared, was Spain working out terms with Britain to thwart French ambitions in Morocco?<sup>95</sup> Nobody at the time could have known for certain, but it turns out that Britain and America were not conspiring and that the Spanish were determined to avoid any alliance that could lead them into another war. In a confidential policy statement, the minister of state averred that "Spain's current circumstances do not permit any offensive or defensive alliance with any of the Great Powers."<sup>96</sup>

Sensing Spain's vulnerability, the Salisbury government was prepared to offer shelter. Ambassador Henry Drummond-Wolff presented Spain with an offer of "perpetual friendship" in order "to draw together the ties between their two countries and to secure the peace of the Mediterranean." But this was not to be a friendship between equals. Spain was asked, in effect, to accept the traditional British claim on everything within radius of a cannon shot from atop the Rock of Gibraltar—only updated to account for the seven-mile range of modern artillery. The British offered a guarantee—though without resorting to the term *protectorate*—to "prevent the landing of any hostile forces" and "undertake the defense on behalf of Spain" of Gibraltar Bay and its perimeter, the Canary Islands, and the Balearic Islands. Under such terms, over a half million Spaniards would have lived under the umbrella of British defenses. Further, though still nominally Spanish citizens, they would be subject to enlistment in the British army in time of war.<sup>97</sup>

In view of chronic laments that the people of the Campo were unpatriotic and that local political structures were beholden to bandits and revolutionary separatists, the British proposal seemed only to promise further erosion of Spain's sovereignty over its Mediterranean periphery. Conscious of the insult he was delivering to the injured Spanish, Drummond-Wolff dryly added that the "proposal represents no particular indignity to Spain." Similar conventions governed the Suez Canal and Bosphorus-Dardanelles passage, he noted.<sup>98</sup> From the perspective of maritime traffic, the Balearic-Gibraltar-Canaries axis surely bore similarities to the other two meridional narrows, but it is unlikely the Spanish found reassurance in being compared with Egypt or the Ottoman Empire.

Despite recent humiliation at the hands of the United States, the Spanish hand did hold some cards, namely the possibility of a secret protocol with France.<sup>99</sup> The collision of British and French imperial geographies in Sudan nearly precipitated war in October 1898, and although France ultimately stood down, its general staff proceeded with a plan to recruit Spain into a military alliance against Britain. French and Spanish interests could find common ground in Minorca, the Balearic island that had been a British possession during the eighteenth century and could threaten French-Algerian communications if recaptured. The French command informed its Spanish counterpart of its belief that Britain had struck a deal with the Carlist pretender to the Spanish throne, financing him in exchange for the promise of a coaling station at Minorca in the event his movement should succeed. By presenting this evidence of Albion's perfidy, the French hoped to coax Spain into an agreement, aiding the recovery of Gibraltar in exchange for "total latitude in terms of [French] territorial extension" in Morocco.<sup>100</sup>

The French were offering Spain the chance to pursue Gibraltar at the cost of abandoning the Maghrib—tempting, perhaps, but in the wake of disasters in Cuba and the Philippines the Sagasta government was in no mood to risk another war. Instead, the Spanish minister of state, Francisco Silvela, persuaded his British interlocutors to withdraw their commitment to Morocco's independence in exchange for Spanish acceptance of British hegemony over the Rock and Strait of Gibraltar. By March 1899, the Spanish removed their artillery installations in the Sierra, and the two governments agreed to shore up regional security via diplomacy on the Morocco question.<sup>101</sup>

If the Spanish government had successfully prevented a major affront to its sovereignty, it had transferred this fate onto Morocco. A convoluted round of secret negotiations followed over the course of 1900 and 1901, drawing Germany, Russia, and Italy into a web of talks concerning the fate of Morocco and the Strait in the event of an Anglo-French conflict. But the British progressively abandoned their stalwart commitment to Moroccan independence. A mission to London sent by Sultan Abdelaziz was rebuffed in 1901, signaling the seismic shift underway in the geopolitics of the Strait.<sup>102</sup> By the end of 1901, secret Hispano-French talks pursued the principle that Spain should exert influence over a sliver of northern Morocco, consolidating its dominance over the Rif coast and, crucially, creating a "buffer zone" between the British Strait and the French

Maghrib.<sup>103</sup> After more than a century of British patronage, the fiercely independent Alawite state was blithely bargained away to relieve Anglo-French friction, while Spain held on to its precarious position as a relevant player in imperial geopolitics. When the Entente Cordiale was concluded in 1904, France received a British blessing to extend its North African empire to the Atlantic while Great Britain retained undisputed mastery of the Strait.

This arrangement ultimately failed to resolve borderland frictions, a story that will be taken in up in Part 2. It did, however, mark a milestone in the protracted effort by a concert of remote capitals—Paris, London, Madrid, and, begrudgingly, the sultan's court centered in Marrakech—to bring order to the exercise of power in the constricted space of the trans-Gibraltar. This progressive organization of multiple regimes of sovereignty into territorial spheres formed a key process in the rise of a modern borderland centered on the Strait of Gibraltar. The process was not limited to political arrangements; the region's coastal settlements drew waves of visitors and migrants from near and far, turning it from rural backwater to a vibrant and diverse conurbation. The final chapter of Part I turns to the many different communities and classes of people who now mingled as never before.

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# 4

## Tourists and Settlers

**FROM NEAR AND FAR**, the arrival of tourists and settlers signaled that the trans-Gibraltar frontier, once remote and famously inhospitable to outsiders, was becoming a cosmopolitan contact zone. In the span of a few decades in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, short- and long-term migration became the dominant feature of the trans-Gibraltar's urban history and social landscape. This phenomenon indeed touched much of the Mediterranean during this period. The poor, mosquito-ridden coast of southern France became the Côte d'Azur, Europe's exemplary winter resort, refurbished with imported tropical flora and grand promenades. Several coastal stations on the Adriatic and the Maghrib pursued a similar model, developing modern amenities and entertainment to attract northern Europeans seeking escape from damp and polluted winter air. By the first decade of the twentieth century, a combination of shipping lines, hotel firms, and municipal societies were promoting tourism in several cities around the western Mediterranean.<sup>1</sup> Hajj pilgrims also generated a certain transport and hospitality industry across the Mediterranean and the Indian Ocean, and, more locally, too, waves of traffic to regional holy sites in the Maghrib fueled an itinerant service economy.

In Morocco, Europeans' ability to leave coastal enclaves without armed escort, often as sightseers, formed a constitutive element of the colonization process. "The protecting arm of France has made it safe for foreigners to travel anywhere in the civil and military districts without weapons, except in the Grand and Middle Atlas," observed the American historian Hugo C. M. Wendel in 1930.<sup>2</sup> By the 1920s, transport firms,



notably the French *Compagnie Générale Transatlantique* and Gibraltar's Bland Line, operated tour companies and hotels, arranging school trips and other forms of tourism in hopes of encouraging future settlers.<sup>3</sup> Whereas the opportunity "to penetrate far into the interior of North Africa" was until recently "only available to travellers of experience, with unlimited time and money at their disposal, who were willing to brave all manner of hardships and to trust native assistance," a 1920s-era travel brochure now compared such a journey to "a tour through the English counties," where "family parties may travel without the slightest trouble or embarrassment."<sup>4</sup>

The advertiser indulged in a measure of hyperbole, to be sure, but tourism and travel nonetheless played a significant part in shaping the region's identity and aspirations. The Strait's principal ports became landing points for ever-growing numbers of passengers. In addition to the frequent turnover of diplomatic and military personnel, Tangier and Gibraltar drew a permanent current of merchants and imperial seamen and no small number of pleasure travelers, advised by Baedeker, Murray's, and other guidebooks to begin their journeys to Spain from there.<sup>5</sup> Compilers of later (posthumous) editions of Richard Ford's iconic guide to Spain encouraged travelers in Andalusia to visit Tangier and its environs (while the Spanish possessions of Ceuta and Melilla were virtually absent).<sup>6</sup> Baedeker similarly included information on the excursion to Tangier. An emerging subgenre of guides and travel diaries combined southern Spain with northern Morocco.<sup>7</sup>

### New Currents of Circulation

The arrival and circulation of people seeking vibrant and sanitary places was becoming a central feature of the Strait of Gibraltar's social history in this period. Yet little of this can be discerned from the official record. The bulletin of the Spanish Chamber of Commerce in Tangier declared in 1897 that tourists, who numbered a few hundred per year and usually did not stay overnight, "do not alter the reality of the town."<sup>8</sup> This narrow and misleading statement was based on figures comprising only those arriving on private pleasure boats—a criterion that would have excluded most travel writers, to say nothing of the merchants and other wayfarers for whom a business trip to Africa still also contained an element of touristic appeal. The same year, a Puerto Rican mercantile newspaper

published a series of dispatches from a “traveler, ‘*turista*,’ and narrator of very interesting tales and pleasing and intense descriptions” of Andalusia and Morocco, a feature that may have proven useful to Spanish merchants being pushed out of the Caribbean.<sup>9</sup> Indeed, growing ranks of individuals sought to gain entrée into business circles through involvement in leisure society, to pass a mild winter in a salubrious environment, to stop for a day en route to another destination—or, most of all, to settle in a place where the proliferation of all such activities promised economic opportunity.

European tourists formed a category of extraterritorial subject not altogether distinguishable from other travelers and permanent settlers. It may be idle to insist on categorical distinctions between tourist, traveler, and settler. In the aggregate, transient, temporary, or permanent migrants formed a stable community of protected subjects, raising the stature of the foreign consuls who oversaw them and providing increasingly significant revenue sources for transport firms and urban services. For example, European consuls in Tangier registered as “residents” all who intended to remain in the city for at least two months, a group that included some two thousand British tourists who came each year to enjoy the mild winter.<sup>10</sup> An Anglican chaplain joined this winter colony for the 1881–1882 season, opening St. Andrew’s Church in 1894, which helped forge a sense of collective permanence from a composite of temporary settlers.<sup>11</sup> Similar colonies existed on the Strait’s northern shore. British officers stationed at Gibraltar possessed summer residences in San Roque, a town seven miles north over the Spanish line that Ford described as “snug and English looking.”<sup>12</sup> Gibraltarians of the merchant class owned villas around the Campo de Gibraltar, escaping the summertime swelter of the crowded British colony to settlements around Gibraltar Bay such as the coastal resort of Campamento and the hillside settlement of Los Barrios.<sup>13</sup> A day’s passage by steamship eastward along the Andalusian coast, Málaga was home to a minor winter colony for convalescents from several European countries, who came from as far as Britain and as nearby as the cold and damp Sierra de Granada to soothe their respiratory problems. One or two resident British physicians resided in Málaga throughout the second half of the nineteenth century—a quotient comparable to Algiers and Naples, though nothing like the seven to be found in Florence or the thirty-nine working on the French Riviera.<sup>14</sup>

In Tangier, tourists blended with other travelers, particularly merchants and migrant laborers—Christian, Jewish, and Muslim—who

circulated constantly between Gibraltar, Tangier, Ceuta, Algeciras, and Cádiz, in search of customers, finance, work, pleasure, and family. Multiple passenger ferries arrived at Tangier's port each day. Passengers on a typical steamer arriving from Gibraltar or Algeciras were "almost entirely" Spanish, "coming from towns of the Campo de Gibraltar," but they also included the occasional German investor in search of new opportunity and the officer from the Gibraltar garrison taking advantage of a few days' leave to enjoy Tangier's famous shooting.<sup>15</sup> Tangier was also the port of entry for returning hajjis, who spent the night beside the tomb of a revered seventeenth-century warrior-saint before at last changing out of their pilgrim's garb.<sup>16</sup> Moroccans occasionally boarded the ferry for Gibraltar and nearby points in Andalusia, typically for the purpose of building commercial networks or purchasing goods unavailable in Morocco. The Riffian nobleman Muhammad Abd el-Krim (father of the future rebel leader) brought his family on a visit to Málaga in 1906. Other Moroccans pursued the vocation of tour guide, making their way to Gibraltar port to solicit passengers in need of a guide across the Strait. A few became tourists themselves, visiting, for example, the Alhambra, jewel of Hispano-Arab patrimony.<sup>17</sup>

In both Gibraltar and Tangier, frequent rotation of military and diplomatic personnel and their families, along with the continuous flow of wayfarers of all kinds, gave rise to a service economy built on facilitating travel and accommodating newcomers. Officers and consuls rotated through, but the need for cooks and gardeners for their residences was steady, as was the need for stable keepers and mounted guides—all of which provided occupational opportunities for Moroccan and Spanish migrants alike. A "smart and clean" interpreter-guide with knowledge of Arabic, Spanish, and some French, commanded a respectable wage of three and a half duros per week.<sup>18</sup> The business of escorting larger tour groups on excursions from Tangier into the countryside sustained the livelihoods of some thirty to forty young men, a mix of Muslim, Spanish, and Jewish residents of the city.<sup>19</sup> In addition to language, hunting skills were a necessary credential, for it could not be assumed that food would be readily available in rural villages. In the districts surrounding Tangier, the sight of tourist caravans was so commonplace by 1880 that members of an official British mission mistook an encampment of Moroccan soldiers for Gibraltarian tourists traveling under the escort of "one of the numerous caterers to the untiring energy of English travellers."<sup>20</sup>

Europeans mostly reached the Strait by steamship, gravitating to the hubs of Tangier, Málaga, and Gibraltar, whence some worked their way inland. Four days' journey by rail from London was faster than the five- to seven-day steamship passage, but most travelers remained dissuaded by long connection times and the noisy, shaking wagons of Spanish trains. The challenges of overland travel south of Madrid were illustrated by fate of the *Sud-Express*, a rail route from Paris to Casablanca via Madrid, Algeciras, Gibraltar, and Tangier. The idea behind the *Sud-Express* was to coordinate timetables and ticket sales among the existing smaller rail lines and ferry service comprising the route, reducing travel time from eighty to sixty hours. The line began weekly service in September 1897, transporting just 580 passengers between Algeciras and Madrid in its forty-three-week run before being cancelled.<sup>21</sup>

By contrast, hundreds of thousands of seamen, naval personnel, and transatlantic passengers called at Gibraltar each year, many of whom disembarked to visit the town and its environs.<sup>22</sup> Although Gibraltar did not begin collecting data on tourists before the 1920s, a cottage industry devoted to serving them was in place much earlier. Travelers could expect a chaotic welcome from eager freelancers. As early as 1870, the Andalusian journalist Augusto Jerez Perchet remarked, "We had barely arrived at the dock when we were assaulted by a cloud of bellboys and innkeepers, speaking different languages until they find the one the traveler possesses."<sup>23</sup> Although overnight stays in Gibraltar were severely restricted, a ten-day tourist pass could be obtained with the help of a hired escort, typically a Spanish or Gibraltar boy. These grooms also guided visitors into the Spanish Campo on horseback or mule back. Others hired diligence carriages or hopped steamers to Algeciras, Tangier, and other coastal points.

The tightening Gibraltar-Tangier nexus opened a unique set of possibilities for travel. In less than three hours, one could pass between Europe and Africa on any of three English steamers at the modest price of two pesetas for a first-class fare in 1900. Anglo-Gibraltarian dominance of this route frustrated the animators of Spanish commerce in Tangier, who lamented their government's piecemeal approach to fomenting Spanish influence in the increasingly Euro-African city. The Spanish *Compañía Transatlántica* operated service from Algeciras to Tangier, but an eleven-peseta port tax per passenger rendered it uncompetitive—especially when passage across the bay to Gibraltar to catch a British line was convenient and inexpensive. The purpose of this tax was to fund a subsidy supporting

Transatlántica's Cádiz-Tangier line, an unprofitable cargo and mail service that could not otherwise prosper under the reigning environment of protectionism in Spain and with the free port of Gibraltar so near. As a result of this desultory policy, the Spanish ferry service from Algeciras could not compete with Gibraltar's Bland Line, despite a majority of the clientele being Spanish and despite its port's direct access to a rail link after 1893. The port of Gibraltar dispatched about three times the number of passengers as Algeciras, and about half the total number of Europeans to touch the shores of Tangier—a figure that rose from 6,901 in 1887 to a peak of 17,403 in 1891 (declining thereafter as direct steamship services to other Moroccan ports increased).<sup>24</sup>

### Taming a Touristic Frontier

Crossing the Strait itself could generate much anxiety for the uninitiated. According to the account of the French geographer-diplomat Maximilien de la Martinière, “The decks of the small steamers . . . are generally crowded with that motley throng only to be met in the neighborhood of Eastern countries. Greasy Jews in hideous costumes, renegade Arabs . . . such are the elements of the first picture which meets our gaze, and which does not leave us a favorable impression.” There were likely many Spaniards aboard as well. Like countless other newcomers, Martinière may have been incapable of distinguishing these Maghribian archetypes from the Andalusians who made the passage for motives of commerce and labor: they would have differed little in appearance—in some cases even dress—and tended to communicate in a *lingua franca* that flowed effortlessly among Spanish, Arabic, and Riffian. In any case, the Frenchman's supercilious gaze was soon disrupted by the mayhem of arrival. The ferry dropped anchor well short of the main dock. A fleet of small boats approached filled with Moroccan “descendants of ancient pirates,” grasping the rope ladders to “climb up, agile as monkeys, and invade the deck.”<sup>25</sup> Other diarists also evoked the sensation of a Barbary raid. The Austrian baron and seasoned travel writer Ernst von Hesse-Wartegg was taken aback at the docks by the appearance of twenty or thirty “coffee colored raiders” competing to pull travelers and their luggage onto their boats, a ruckus which drove “screaming female passengers” to hide.<sup>26</sup> As it turned out, these putative pirates were nothing more threatening than freelance luggage porters and guides in search of clientele. Unlike the Martinière and Hesse-Wartegg, the

Puerto Rican Ramón Martínez García was not so unsettled by the “spectacle of a multitude of dinghies piloted by Moors rowing and screaming in their strange language”: he recognized that a certain portion of these men were also of Spanish origin, and could effect his disembarkation “free of molestation or concerns.”<sup>27</sup> Similarly, the Lady Howard-Vyse, an English winter tourist, found the “mass of shouting, screaming, and gesticulating Arabs” to be less a threat than a “wonderful scene” that confirmed her passage into a different world.<sup>28</sup>

In general, however, perception that danger lurked around every corner added to the adventure. In the environs of Gibraltar, the ubiquitous presence of the Spanish Civil Guard may have put some foreign travelers at ease, but it also heightened the bandits’ mystique, especially as guard stations became less frequent in the higher elevations of the interior.<sup>29</sup> Traveling the forests north of Gibraltar on horseback, the Spanish writer Vicente Blasco Ibáñez observed that the “state of war is permanent,” as smugglers snaked along hidden mountain trails at night to evade the mounted tobacco patrols (for whom the well-dressed author was nervous to be mistaken).<sup>30</sup> With the advent of rail in 1893, two civil guardsmen were assigned to each train, causing one guidebook author to observe that “the presence of these functionaries . . . gives a flavor of romantic adventure to the most commonplace railway trip.”<sup>31</sup> In major accounts like Hesse-Wartegg’s *Andalusien* and Ford’s *Handbook*, bandits and smugglers were central characters. In Ronda, a sixty-mile journey into the sierra from Gibraltar, Hesse-Wartegg found an ammunition shop unusually large for a town of twenty-five thousand inhabitants. Ford, who by 1845 considered the modern bandit to be merely a “brutish, unpleasant” imitation of the gallant rogue featured in Goya’s paintings, reported that an Englishman had no reason to fear them.<sup>32</sup> By the end of the nineteenth century, spotting a bandit was more exciting than dangerous: tourists in Spain rarely met major misfortune. One dramatic incident of May 1870 illustrated how exceptional such misfortune was. Two Gibraltar men, British subjects of Spanish ancestry, were on a horseback excursion a mile beyond the Spanish line, when bandits snared them and whisked them into the woods near Ronda. They remained hostage for three weeks before the British government agreed to the hefty ransom of £26,000, a sum the Spanish government later reimbursed.<sup>33</sup>

On the Moroccan shore, the prevailing (if simplistic) dichotomy between loyal and untamed lands defined the prudent European traveler’s

sensibility through the end of the nineteenth century. Although European travelers of the late nineteenth century usually did not need to fear for their safety as long as they remained in districts loyal to the sultan, their governments frequently pressured the Makhzan to apply “exemplary” (often arbitrary) castigation whenever any protected subject was harmed. A passport was not required to enter Morocco, but Sultan Hassan I (1873–1894) decreed a requirement that Christians traveling his realm hire a *maghasni*, or militiaman, for escort. More than a bodyguard, the *maghasni* was, in effect, an “insurance policy”: the Makhzan would not entertain grievances for theft or loss of property on the part of travelers who neglected to hire one but was indulgent with those who did.<sup>34</sup> The *maghasni* became part of the cost of doing business, although some complained it was a useless requirement because travel south from Tangier along the Atlantic corridor was perfectly safe. As in the sierras of Andalusia, rumors of danger could be much exaggerated, as a traveling American couple learned when an “altogether too pessimistic” passenger on the Algeciras-Tangier ferry regaled them with “several blood-curdling tales of robbery and murder.”<sup>35</sup> Commonsense measures such as pitching one’s tent near a village rather than on an obscure mountainside were usually sufficient to ensure safety.<sup>36</sup> Because of the need for an entourage and provisions, travel in Morocco before 1900 was not so much unsafe as it was expensive and complicated, comparing unfavorably in this regard to Persia, China, and Syria, in the estimation of the well-traveled *Times* of London correspondent Walter B. Harris.<sup>37</sup> In the face of such challenges, James Edward Budgett-Meakin, a British newspaper publisher in Tangier, still managed to complete the 340-mile road to Marrakech on bicycle in 1897, an impressive and widely observed spectacle of imperial modernity.<sup>38</sup>

If most Europeans remained in the sultan’s “submitted” lands of the Atlantic seaboard, exceptions were to be found chiefly among Spaniards. Over the centuries, thousands of Spaniards had vanished into the tribal lands of northern Morocco to unknown fortunes, and by the late nineteenth century an adventuresome (or desperate, or fugitive) Spanish seaman could find work aboard a Riffian vessel engaged in contraband trade with Gibraltar, Melilla, and Málaga. Among the more settled Spaniards of the southern borderland, travel into the Rif stirred the mix of danger and routine that had long defined life there. In 1894, one unusually daring Malagueño peddler of brassware traversed tribal lands “not frequented by Christians,” accompanied only by his son and a private Moroccan

servant.<sup>39</sup> In 1904, after a Spanish fisherman from the Peñón de Alhucemas went missing, a Spanish colonel and Moroccan sergeant jointly led a search expedition. For a group of women inhabitants of the Spanish-occupied islet, this military escort presented an occasion to visit the Riffian mainland, and even to “attend a Moorish wedding . . . and stroll about.”<sup>40</sup>

The problem of lodging added to the difficulty of travel away from coastal and insular enclaves. Most guidebooks urged those traveling in rural Andalusia to stay at establishments staffed by British or French employees. For a typical traveler from northwestern Europe, most Spanish-owned hotels away from large cities were plagued with discomforts and inconveniences—primitive lavatories, no passenger lift or English-speaking staff. The strange custom of tipping, perfunctory and standardized in most of Western Europe, drew employees to “gather like vultures.”<sup>41</sup> Ford urged travelers to carry their own provisions to avoid inn fare better suited to the “iron frames and oil-and-garlic digestions of the smugglers and robbers” said to dominate the region.<sup>42</sup> In the remote sierra village of Gaucín, the Andalusian travel diarist Jerez Perchet was surprised to encounter a theater performance and an establishment called the Hotel Inglés—markers, surely, that he had stumbled into “the middle of civilization.” Alas, the straw mattress—“a parody of a soft and springy bed”—indicated that the hotel might not have lived up to its name.<sup>43</sup> The larger and more touristic Ronda, known then, as now, for its breathtaking vistas, did not possess a hotel at all until 1906. When Hesse-Wartegg visited the mountaintop town in 1893, he slept in a “windy, cold room with a bare stone floor” at the local inn.<sup>44</sup> On the Moroccan shore, roadside accommodation was even more rudimentary. Experienced Europeans advised pitching a tent even when an inn was available. Ford warned the *funduq* along the Tangier-Tétouan road “swarm[s] with vermin, and the court is filled with animals.” According to a Spanish military mission, the ten-room structure “lacks utensils and supplies,” and “serves only for the lodging of the moors themselves,” who typically slept eight to ten per room.<sup>45</sup>

The cosmopolitan and the rustic collided with great force in Tangier. Morocco’s diplomatic capital was now also becoming a *sui generis* enclave that attracted rural migrants from both Andalusia and northern Morocco. The European population probably did not exceed one-fifth of the city’s total population at any time before 1912, and of these, the vast majority were Andalusians of modest means.<sup>46</sup> By 1892, the Spanish contingent was easily the largest among Tangier’s various European communities, reaching



some five thousand among a total population of perhaps thirty thousand, eclipsing the next-largest European community, British Gibraltarians, by a factor of ten. Among the Spaniards, only 150 were registered as merchants, industrialists, or property owners, and many of the rest were veterans of radical politics.<sup>47</sup> During Spain's revolutionary turmoil of 1868–1874, Tangier became a landing point for more than two thousand Andalusian republican insurrectionists and a center of the anarchist underground. Not always known for bourgeois respectability, these migrants soon earned a reputation among Tangier's middle-class Europeans as “dregs of the criminal population . . . many of them half drunk, all of them most objectionable.”<sup>48</sup> In 1876, the Spanish minister in Tangier, José Diosdado, dismissed the myth of Tangier as “a kind of promised land for the poor and persecuted,” lamenting that the “generally peaceful” community of “honorable artisans, workers assured of employment, and established fisherman” had “totally changed,” in such a way as to undermine Spanish “prestige and . . . security in the country.” The newcomers, he continued, were “lazy and roguish types” who “believe that among the Moors and the Jews everything is permissible and that the representatives of their nation will always support them.”<sup>49</sup> These rebels and fugitives became smugglers, bar owners, gambling house operators, and brothel keepers. They occupied and cultivated extramural terrains without authorization, and frequently allowed their pigs to roam freely in city streets, causing great offense to Jewish and Muslim residents.<sup>50</sup> Others reached Tangier after escaping from Ceuta prison. Many drifted in and out of petty crime and charity houses like the Franciscan mission established by Padre Lerchundi in 1881. (Lerchundi's patron, the shipping magnate Claudio López Bru, directed the *Compañía Transatlántica*, which was heavily staked on Spanish success in Tangier.<sup>51</sup>)

Yet this one-sided portrait overlooks Spaniards' contributions to the city's burgeoning service industry, closely tied to its identity as a travel hub. As the principal fishermen and as hunters of wild boar and partridge, they supplied hotels with fresh meat to serve their guests; their practice of raising pork, though frowned upon, catered to another demand of the European colonist consumer. In addition, it was a Spaniard who established a service to ferry travelers and their animals across the treacherous delta of the river Oued Suani, thus opening a road to the east from Tangier toward Ceuta and Tétouan. Although much Spanish small entrepreneurship took the form of cafés and cabarets that might serve as fronts for illicit gambling and prostitution rings, or even anarchist meetinghouses, others worked as

artisans, masons, gardeners, cooks, and domestics.<sup>52</sup> Spanish liquor and tobacco stalls were increasingly prevalent in the suqs, or open-air markets. Most unskilled laborers were men working in the transport and building trades. In contrast to the agricultural and relatively more familial migration to Algeria, they moved back and forth between Tangier and the Campo de Gibraltar as the precarious urban labor market required. In most years, the balance of Spanish departures from the city nearly equaled the number of new arrivals, suggesting that the steady net growth in the Spanish population masked the unstable and impermanent nature of many Spaniards' stays in the city.<sup>53</sup> A new wave of building in Tangier created additional opportunity for Spanish masons, especially since the local pasha periodically banned the use of Moroccan labor in foreign construction projects.<sup>54</sup> The largest Spanish firm in Tangier, the Sociedad Hispano-Marroquí, employed two hundred Spaniards in brick making and construction in 1890.<sup>55</sup>

Though a small minority of the newcomers, the thousand or so European merchants and diplomats in Tangier exercised a disproportionate influence on the city's expansion. During a devastating cycle of drought, famine, and epidemic, experienced throughout Atlantic Morocco from 1878 to 1883, they facilitated major charity relief efforts, making Tangier a magnet for rural Moroccans. Desperate migrants streamed toward the city, erecting shanties of reed and mud on the outskirts, hand-milling wild arum roots to produce minimal quantities of bitter ersatz bread.<sup>56</sup> Rural Jews, arriving in hopes of charity from prosperous coreligionists, slept in doorways and turned to mendicancy.<sup>57</sup> As many as one-fourth of the new arrivals perished, but most of those who survived remained in the city.<sup>58</sup> The new migrants found a city that, under de facto European rule, offered considerable opportunity for employment and petty entrepreneurship.<sup>59</sup>

As for the Europeans, they were undeterred by the environmental catastrophes. On the contrary, the influx of disaster refugees spurred further opportunity. Following the five-year crisis, Tangier became easily Morocco's fastest-growing city, doubling in size to thirty-six thousand inhabitants from 1884 to 1895, and it was the only one to gain European population. Some five hundred Gibraltarians bearing British nationality resettled in Tangier during the 1880s. A few high-profile marriages cemented the connections between the Jewish communities of the two cities, but most Gibraltarian migrants—Jewish and Catholic alike—were working-class Spanish speakers who acquired the derisive nickname “scorpions.” Divided almost equally between men and women, these nominally

British subjects formed a more settled community than did the administrative and merchant cadres that typified many other British colonial settlements.<sup>60</sup> Europeans owned the lion's share of industry in Tangier, and almost of all of it served the needs of urban expansion. In addition to the Spanish construction firms, French factories produced bricks, cement, lumber, carbonated water, flour, and matches. German distilleries provided low-grade alcoholic spirits to the new working-class of Spanish and Jewish migrants (while the hotels imported their spirits from Europe). The Spanish *Transatlántica* shipping line, despite a brush with bankruptcy in 1892 due to its unprofitable cargo service, retained two agents in Tangier and financed the city's electrical grid, providing employment for Spanish engineers and Moroccan laborers.<sup>61</sup>

Tangier's picturesque cityscape was increasingly European in its aspect, particularly in certain suburban developments. The French travel writer Pierre Loti observed that the sultan "had all but abandoned the city to foreign visitors, gazing on it with ever more distance as a city of the infidel."<sup>62</sup> The Madrid Convention of 1880, in which the sultan conceded foreigners the right to own property, opened the way to considerable European investment. An era of land speculation and hasty construction was thus launched. Tangier's first hotel, the Continental, opened the same year, with several more appearing over the next decades, under French, British, and Spanish ownership.<sup>63</sup> Multiethnic, middle-class neighborhoods sprouted outside the old walls featuring continuous art nouveau facades designed and built mainly by Spanish architects and construction firms.<sup>64</sup> Of particular note was the Marshan district, a spacious, green suburb where the wealthiest Europeans and Moroccans built villas in the modern Italian style—an indication of a city increasingly organized along class rather than ethno-religions lines.<sup>65</sup> Tangier's European-style modernization undoubtedly marked an improvement on the old city in terms of sanitation and physical comfort, although a traveler would have been excused for finding it retrograde: interiors flooded in periods of heavy rain, and most of the city's pavement remained inadequate for wheeled traffic.

Despite such hiccups, Tangier was becoming increasingly hospitable to outsiders. Signage and streetlamps were installed to help visitors navigate its labyrinthine streets.<sup>66</sup> Eight miles to the west of Tangier, the Cape Spartel lighthouse, accessible by a modern road maintained by the maritime powers, made for a pleasant day excursion where visitors could see the putative tomb of Hercules and enjoy marvelous vistas, refreshments, and

beer.<sup>67</sup> The city also now boasted new hotels that might disappoint a traveler in search of Orientalist adventure. In his 1883 travelogue, the Spanish diplomat Wenceslao Villa-Urrutia noted how Tangier had Europeanized and cautioned against forming an impression of Morocco based only on a visit to the diplomatic capital.<sup>68</sup> “You cannot escape Europe,” lamented a “thoroughly disappointed” Hesse-Wartegg upon reaching the Hotel de France, with its Parisian beds and lobby appointed with European newspapers and a piano.<sup>69</sup>

At the same time, the old central district encompassing the Muslim and Jewish cemeteries continued to present European travelers with novel spectacles and local color. Tangier’s older artisanal and commercial middle class of mixed Arab-Mauritanian origin was being overwhelmed by an influx of rural Riffians. As they adapted to the Arabic language and cosmopolitan air of the city, Riffians came to predominate as shopkeepers and artisans in the commercial quarter.<sup>70</sup> Unlike other Moroccan cities, Tangier no longer contained a Jewish ghetto, but the city’s twenty-two synagogues were mostly clustered together. Five mosques and several Marabout shrines attracted a steady flow of Muslim pilgrims, whose offerings generated revenue for the confraternities that maintained them. Itinerant Muslim merchants who came to Tangier to work the *suq* also paid visits to Marabout shrines, an indication that Moroccans, too, combined commerce with tourism.<sup>71</sup> Returning Hajjis slept beside the shrine to Sidi Muhammad al-Hajj ben Abdallah, grandson of a seventeenth-century martyr who led a popular insurrection against a sultan accused of collaborating with Spain against the Ottoman Empire. The growing crowds of Europeans in Tangier posed a challenge to the sanctity of such shrines, which nonbelievers were forbidden from entering. Until the keepers of the Muhammad al-Hajj tomb built a wall around the perimeter, the shrine and its venerator were increasingly the objects of European gawkers.<sup>72</sup> To “watch a bit of Africa” during the day before “returning back to Europe in the evening” was possible without leaving Tangier, observed Hesse-Wartegg: “The usual effeminate tourists like it.”<sup>73</sup>

The author of several exotic travel diaries, Hesse-Wartegg did not hide his contempt for strolling and gazing about the fashionable quays. He preferred adventures into the bandit-infested cork forests of the sierra, accompanied only by his donkey and his pistol, or the disreputable outskirts of Málaga after dark among thieves bedecked in “pagan amulets.” But the Austrian baron may have reached Málaga and Tangier too late to

live out his “Andalusian-Moorish dream.” The former turned out to be a city of modern streets where “rude French and even ruder Englishmen” abounded, and where some innkeepers did not even speak Spanish.<sup>74</sup> His invocation of effeminacy to signal the distinction between traveler and tourist had been a commonplace of Victorian culture, though perhaps one passing from fashion. By the late nineteenth century Europeans in the Mediterranean tended to use the terms interchangeably, with no apparent difference in connotation.<sup>75</sup> Assignment of the two terms did not particularly follow lines of gender or denote a level of daring. Travel to the region continued to offer all migrants a share of excitement, but it ultimately resembled more closely a form of domesticated rather than virile adventurism.

Women from distant imperial metropolises increasingly occupied public space in ways unfamiliar to people of local ancestry. Strolling the streets of Gibraltar, the Andalusian Jerez Perchet commented on the prevalence of women who smoked cigars and “go out unaccompanied, in accordance with English style,” with such “seriousness in their faces that even the most bold Andalusian man would not dare flirt.”<sup>76</sup> Excursions out of Gibraltar were as routine for English women as they were for their husbands and for Spanish peddlers and laborers. The seven-mile bridle path from Gibraltar to San Roque was regarded as safe and unchallenging, a route English ladies handled without guides. The picturesque climb to Ronda presented a greater equestrian challenge, and women, according to Richard Ford, “are received as heroines on their return” from those laborious trails.<sup>77</sup> In line with the recommendations of major travel guides, many women who reached Gibraltar made the journey to see Tangier. Blasco Ibáñez, who carried a pistol for protection, was surprised to observe two unchaperoned señoritas on the Bland Line ferry from Gibraltar.<sup>78</sup> Even more brazen, an American girl on the ferry was heard declaring to her mother that she would “marry a Moor.”<sup>79</sup>

The ability of British women to circulate freely was a point of pride and, at least for the British correspondent Walter B. Harris, a sign of beneficent British influence. In his nostalgic 1921 memoir, *Morocco That Was*, Harris recalls the safety of the forty-two-mile Tangier-Tétouan road, along which “lady tourists often rode . . . accompanied only by a native guide.”<sup>80</sup> Certain English women appear to have acquired a reputation for compassion, in spite or because of their eccentricity. Emily Keene, the English wife of the powerful nobleman Sharif Wazzan, gained fame in Tangier

as “protectress of the poor” for administering thousands of smallpox vaccines in the 1870s (a project that thirty years later would provoke a mob in Marrakech to beat a male French physician to death). When their husbands and sons fell afoul with European authorities, Moroccan women sought out Lady Drummond Hay to plead for clemency.<sup>81</sup> The wife of the longtime British consul minister “made a great sensation [in Tangier], as she goes around dressed like a man, [wearing] a short, round tweed jacket and waistcoat, breeches and stockings,” recalled Lady Howard-Vyse, who described her compatriot as “a strange figure at which the Arabs [*sic*] are still more scandalized than the Europeans, as they think women should never even show their faces, except in their own homes.”<sup>82</sup>

This cultural divide often seemed unbridgeable, even within the circles of elite local society. Hesse-Wartegg recounts the story of a Muslim grandee’s wife who attended a ladies’ night in which European legation wives “would get drunk and naked.” Scandalized, she refused a second invitation, although in other cases Muslim men and women politely endured the champagne and low-cut dresses found at society balls. When moving in European circles, the wives of Muslim officials became accustomed to changing between Mahgribian and European dress multiple times in the course of a day.<sup>83</sup> Muslim women of ordinary rank navigated Tangier’s urban spaces under the full coverage of a haik, a white cotton garment that wrapped around the entire body and head, often but not always with a separate kerchief of cotton or lace meant to cover the face below the eyes. Humble Spanish women of Tangier and other Moroccan cities wore mantillas, the traditional Andalusian head shawls, affording a level of modesty less disruptive to local norms than the European women of legation society. Moroccan Jewish women adopted a liberality closer to their European counterparts, keeping their heads uncovered and decorated with jewelry until marriage, which was signaled by the addition of a colorful silk kerchief over the hair.<sup>84</sup> On pleasant afternoons, Muslim women could be seen emerging onto rooftops, faces bared, chatting with their neighbors. The effect was a two-tiered city, men occupying the city’s filthy cramped streets below the “dazzling white rooftop world of women.” Only Christian women could access both. Hesse-Wartegg’s wife, the American operatic soprano Minnie Hauk, along with a party of European legation wives, received a rare invitation inside the pasha’s palace living quarters. The women were surprised by its decrepit condition but impressed by the collection of European consumer goods to be found in the chamber of the

Moroccan nobleman's wife—a woven Belgian carpet, fine cabinets, mirrors, and clocks of European manufacture.<sup>85</sup>

### Mediterranean Destinies

Across the region, the goal of systematically exploiting the burgeoning “industry of foreigners” animated coalitions of investors, civic leaders, and ordinary residents, despite a preponderance of challenges. The agreeable climate and myriad charms of southern Andalusia and northern Morocco were largely neutralized by poor sanitation and facilities. For the stretch of coast from Gibraltar Bay to Málaga, British capital investment resembled a panacea. The Algeciras Gibraltar Railway Company, the British-owned rail service linking the bay with the main Madrid-Málaga line after 1893, precipitated hopes that Gibraltar might yet “become in reality what its geographical position seems to demand—the great gateway for English travelers to Spain.”<sup>86</sup> In addition to any economic benefits to Gibraltar, the project could provide a considerable boost to Málaga's undercapitalized touristic ambitions. Lying seventy miles to the northeast of Gibraltar by nearly impassable road or twice-weekly steamer, the regional capital of Málaga faced the long-term decline of its local metallurgical and textile industries, plus a major vineyard blight in the province.<sup>87</sup> As a tourist resort, Málaga in fact possessed a modest pedigree, but, like Tangier, Gibraltar, and several mid-sized Spanish cities, further urban growth—touristic or otherwise—required addressing the insalubrious conditions that invited periodic bouts of epidemic. After about 1860, the city's major investments centered on port expansion and the demolition of cramped, flood-prone districts in favor of wide boulevards. By 1891, a new breezy maritime promenade was lined with new hotels financed by local elites, notably the Marqués de Larios, scion of a grand sugar and rum fortune.<sup>88</sup> The wave of civic improvement also included the launch in 1887 of an annual fair, where Gibraltar residents and passing British sailors were said to form a “significant presence.”<sup>89</sup> The 1896 edition of a major British guide to Mediterranean resorts still judged the Andalusian port too densely populated, noisy, and filthy, and soon the “Propagandistic Society for Climate and Beautification of Málaga,” led by board of local Spanish and British notables, began a civic campaign to promote sanitary practices.<sup>90</sup> But although a slowly modernizing infrastructure gradually expanded Málaga's foreign tourist colony, the resort would become a major international tourist capital only after 1960.



Potentially a major investor, the Algeciras Gibraltar Railway Company declined to contribute the spark of capital many in Málaga had hoped for. The British firm instead aimed to exploit the new connection with the Madrid-Málaga line to bring more passengers to the Strait. The company staked its success on its key position in the Sud Express, the regional network of rail lines linking Paris with Casablanca. When the Sud Express failed after less than a year in 1897, the Algeciras Gibraltar Railway immediately launched a campaign to revive it. Executives wrote to their counterparts in other firms of the Sud Express network urging them to reconsider, and the firm extended the rail all the way to the Algeciras dock where Africa-bound ferries would board. The railway also invested £25,000 to improve the main landing pier at the port of Tangier, an outlay amounting to 6 percent of its total capital.<sup>91</sup> Although this project never lived up to expectations, the railway did bring places within closer range of Gibraltar “within the ken of the ordinary tourist,” and it built the Hotel Reina Victoria of Ronda, which opened in 1906.<sup>92</sup> The railway gave a sense of taming the sierra, famous for its bandits and rugged topography, although even railways were known to offer bandits safe passage in exchange for “protection.”<sup>93</sup> Even at its primitive stage of development, the new rail partially ameliorated the discomforts of travel in Andalusia. After three days ascending and traversing the Serranía de Ronda on horseback, Jerez Perchet was relieved to recover the train at Gobantes, noisy and shaky though it was. The Andalusian diarist saved little regret for the romance of mounted travel: “All those who miss the tranquil voyages of bygone times ought to take an excursion on horseback to the Spanish interior, and it is likely they will reconsider their concerns.”<sup>94</sup> Even so self-styled an adventurer as Hesse-Wartegg was much impressed by the engineering feats the line entailed, cutting through such a vertical landscape with immense tunnels and bridges; the Austrian baron judged it the most romantic and spectacular journey in all Spain, recounting how passengers roved en masse from one window to the other to gain the best views.<sup>95</sup>

Directly across the bay from Gibraltar, Algeciras became a target of British hotel investment. In the 1890s, the Algeciras Gibraltar Railway financed the construction of the grand Hotel Reina Cristina, a grand specimen of colonial Victorian architecture set idiosyncratically in the heart of the whitewashed Andalusian town. Along the pleasant maritime façade, a number of British-owned hotels served Gibraltarian weekenders and other wayfarers whose movement was facilitated by a ferry service that made the



quarter-hour journey across the bay six or seven times daily.<sup>96</sup> While anti-smuggling measures were making customs procedures more rigorous, the authorities of the Campo de Gibraltar were increasingly accommodating of British subjects coming to Spain for “walks, rides, and diversions.” Such tourists received special permits in order “to avoid the crowds of people . . . at the Customs House gates and the . . . waste of time to which we must subject those entering Spain from Gibraltar.”<sup>97</sup>

Of anywhere in the region, the sense of Mediterranean destiny was perhaps strongest in Tangier: filth, contagion, and religious conflict would be replaced with mild airs, sunlight, and exchange, all under the beneficent tutelage of modern European civilization. Tangier’s burgeoning optimism in the final two decades of the nineteenth century issued from the belief that it was becoming a safe, sanitary place equidistant from four imperial powers, with an endless capacity to extract concessions from a Makhzan eager to keep the infidels at arm’s length. The 1890 edition of the popular *Murray’s* tourist handbook predicted a new wave of construction “as Tangier becomes more popular as a winter station.”<sup>98</sup> Budgett-Meakin’s *Times of Morocco* actively promoted Tangier’s potential, reminding readers of the city’s three hundred days of sunshine annually and citing an 1894 declaration in the *British Medical Journal* that Tangier was North Africa’s premier health resort. The embodiment of civic consciousness was the Hygiene Commission. Although this council of European consular officials had first been established in 1831, its original function of imposing quarantine at the port was largely obsolete, as new ideas of public health had come to favor urban improvement over lazarettos. A group of European residents attempted to revive the organization around this new emphasis in 1870, but the Hygiene and Streets Commission, as it had come to be called, did not receive the sultan’s blessing and languished for lack of revenue. After adopting a funding system of voluntary subscriptions, the commission gained more solid footing by 1890. Subscribers were drawn from the ranks of expatriates and lifelong Tangerines, across ethnic, religious, and class lines, numbering nine hundred by 1910. The commission worked to improve street lighting, paving, and drainage, and to establish building codes.<sup>99</sup>

Like Málaga, Tangier’s potential to become a major winter resort would remain only partially realized. Eustace Reynolds-Ball’s authoritative *Mediterranean Winter Resorts* repeatedly dismissed foul, chaotic Tangier’s potential as a health station.<sup>100</sup> But in spite of—or perhaps because of—the

overwhelming stench from the tanneries and retrograde cooking oil of the city's cramped old quarter, and the odors wafting upward from a new fish cannery located near the port, the beach beckoned.<sup>101</sup> Cosmopolitan space par excellence of the twentieth century, Tangier's beach became a fashionable spot for members of European society to be seen not only bathing but also riding horses and socializing. On pleasant days, the beach could be thick with well-dressed crowds, men and women representing all the city's ethnic communities. Some were seated in canvas-backed chairs, attended by tuxedoed waiters, while others installed their fully clothed selves directly on the sand (see Figure 4.1). Spontaneous equestrian parades delighted visitors, and by 1889 a section of the beach provided bathing cabins and two open-air cafés. In 1901 Budgett-Meakin reported that bathing "is much in vogue among Europeans and Jews, both sexes together." Meanwhile, outlying shores would serve as dumping grounds for some time to come.<sup>102</sup>

Ethnic divisions were readily transcended in leisure settings, and leisure there increasingly was. Emily Keene's recollection that "there was not much distraction in Tangier society" in the early 1870s would have seemed scarcely believable by 1900.<sup>103</sup> The city's main entertainments were European in origin, though increasingly attractive to the majority population of native-born Muslims and Jews. Visitors of certain standing could



**FIGURE 4.1.** Bathing station at Tangier Beach, ca. 1934.  
*Source:* Photograph by M. Benitah y Blanco. Laredo 1935, p. 559.

expect invitations to dances and concerts put on by European legations. The women of Tangier high society gracefully endured the hardships of life on a remote outpost, arriving at balls and recitals with their dresses and coiffures intact, despite having ridden in on bareback donkeys—even a saddle was a rare luxury in Tangier, not to speak of a wheeled carriage.<sup>104</sup> Sporting events provided occasion to bring diverse ethnic communities together. The British Country Club, founded in 1898, brought tennis, golf, and cricket to the well-heeled society of legation officers, wealthy merchants, Moroccan nobles, and aristocratic long-term tourists. The local soccer team included a number of Moroccans on its roster and attracted spectators of all kinds.<sup>105</sup> Gibraltar, too, inaugurated a prestigious yacht club in the harbor and further consolidated its usurpation of the North Front terrains with the installation of a racetrack, cricket pitch, and rifle range.<sup>106</sup> English gardens lain with imported flora impressed Blasco Ibáñez as social centers where a variety of races and religions could live happily together.<sup>107</sup> When the town's constricted spaces became too small, Gibraltarians rode horses into the Spanish Campo to enjoy beaches and trails, and to hunt boar and deer in the dense cork forests an hour's ride to the north.<sup>108</sup>

A special place in the elite social network was reserved for the hunt. A favorite activity of Tangier's legation society was pig sticking, a peculiar fast-paced hunt carried out in the wooded sand hills south of the urban core. Pig sticking required a horse that was fast, strong, and nimble, and it was practiced by Christian diplomats and pork-abstaining Moroccans alike. Mounted sportsmen enlisted the aid of seminomadic locals encamped near the hunting ground, who were called on to frighten the wild boar out of the brambles and into the open. From there, the hunter galloped across ravines and ditches, over fences and fallen trees, contriving to pierce the beast with his spear.<sup>109</sup> But this exhilarating pursuit was threatened by a new cycle of urban and touristic expansion. The gentleman hunter had to compete with Spaniards who made a living supplying the growing hotel industry with fresh game. As the boar population became depleted, John Drummond Hay prevailed on Sultan Hassan I to grant a special hunting reserve off limits to all but members of diplomatic legations and their guests, and arranged to stock the reserve with wild boar transferred from the Andalusian forests adjacent Gibraltar.<sup>110</sup> The European authorities also worked with the pasha to enforce an annual moratorium on the hunting of hare and partridge between February and August to stanch depletion of the forests as Tangier grew.<sup>111</sup>

North of the Strait, the elite hunting club was the Royal Calpe Hunt. This institution dated from the Napoleonic Wars but expanded in the late nineteenth century as a new merchant class composed of Mediterranean Catholic and Jewish stock joined the older Anglo-Protestant elite in pursuit of fox in the Campo de Gibraltar. The hunt long enjoyed the sanction of Spanish authorities but frequently raised ire among local farmers endured the general pandemonium and occasional crop damage caused by the hunters. By 1889, the Anglophone club began to take conciliatory measures, staging horse races and other popular festivities around San Roque for the entertainment of local residents. Remaining tensions were eased with the involvement of the Larios family, patrons of much urban development and charity as far afield as Málaga, which provided land for the hunt. The Gibraltar-born Pablo Larios, Marqués de Marzales by virtue of marriage into Andalusian nobility, served as master of the hounds from 1891 until the hunt's demise during the Spanish Civil War.<sup>112</sup>

Alongside these pursuits of elite society were a variety of more popular entertainments. La Línea, Gibraltar's burgeoning Spanish suburb, was particularly notable in this regard. Having grown from a collection of huts in 1870 into a town of thirty thousand by century's end, La Línea's inhabitants included not only Spanish labor migrants but also Gibraltar's working-class inhabitants fleeing the cramped and costly housing conditions of the British enclave. A short walk over the line from Gibraltar sat the six-thousand-seat bullring of La Línea, the capacity of which exceeded the town's population when it opened in 1883.<sup>113</sup> La Línea moreover was dense with taverns and brothels, especially as British imperial regulation of prostitution became increasingly strict.<sup>114</sup> Of La Línea, Blasco Ibáñez recalled, "English soldiers . . . go there, attracted by the wine and the fine girls [*buenas mozas*]" in this suburb, where "easy money leads to constant revelry."<sup>115</sup> Across the Strait, Tangier was polite by comparison. European-style cafes, music halls, and casinos opened, catering to high society, the popular classes, and the tourists, often all together.<sup>116</sup> The elegant French Kursaal opened in 1912, a gambling house that quickly became a central social institution that hosted events ranging from the Zionist Ball to Madrid's Castillo Orchestra.<sup>117</sup> The Spanish legation opened the Cervantes Theater in 1913. Other Spanish entertainments such as zarzuela and flamenco could be found in the popular quarters, as could displays of dubious "oriental" dance, performed in cellars for credulous tourists, sometimes by Jewish and Spanish women.<sup>118</sup>

Before concluding this survey of new migrations and urban development in the trans-Gibraltar, it is worth taking a brief detour to Melilla. A full day by steamer from both Málaga and the conurbation of the Strait, and inaccessible to Europeans by land, Melilla lay well off the beaten tourist path. The Spanish exclave was nevertheless notable for its splendid urbanism in the early twentieth century, when it became the unrivaled seat of Hispano-Muslim modernism. Spurred by major investment in mining, the burgeoning town fanned radially from the baroque-era garrison, the older shanties surrounding it becoming overlain with new wealth. Opportunities in mining and transport lured in a mercantile bourgeoisie, which included major peninsular patrons such as the López Bru and Güell families and the Count of Romanones. Melilla's military society also grew substantially during the first decade of the new century as the Great Powers reached agreement on Morocco's colonial partition. With these solid economic foundations, Melilla attracted migrants by the tens of thousands. Peninsular Spaniards came to work as engineers and workers in construction, port trades, and military support services. The city expanded from ten thousand inhabitants in 1900 to fifty thousand by 1920, the central district of Haussmannian boulevards and grand promenades fading into cramped suburbs extending vertically into the foothills of the Rif. Some eight thousand Riffians found refuge in the city during the turbulent first decade of the twentieth century, many later returning across the Moroccan line to establish the new mining suburb of Nador.<sup>119</sup>

The protagonist of Melilla's urban development was the Sociedad Hispano-Africana, a venture of the Barcelona arts patron Joan Antoni Güell. The Güell family also held a major stake in the largest Spanish mining concern operating in the Rif, along with interests in colonial agriculture and hotels. Güell's favorite architect, Antoni Gaudí, did not go to Melilla but helped to train the city's most influential architect, Enrique Nieto. In 1906, after completing three years of work with Gaudí under the tutelage of Lluís Domènech i Montaner, another Catalan modernist, Nieto left Barcelona for Melilla, where he would go on to design dozens of buildings between 1909 and 1945. With the floral lines and classical motifs typical of the Barcelona school, Nieto mingled neo-Mudejar arches and Nasrid mosaics, a style that inspired many other architects and freelance builders.<sup>120</sup> He created the synagogue (1924) and the central mosque (1945), along with centers of local elite society such as the Military Casino and the Chamber of Commerce, although his design for a neo-Mudejar bullring was never realized. Beaches appeared in the 1920s, but an isolated location

and cycle of wars prevented Melilla from becoming a significant destination for bathers, tourists, or the infirm. Private capital proved unwilling to sustain an unprofitable hotel industry, which would rely on municipal and state investment after 1941.<sup>121</sup>

### Borderland Sociability and Its Limits

This chapter has shown how currents of circulation and migration in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries stimulated expansion throughout the far western Mediterranean, in terms of demography, urban spaces, and sociability. But to what extent did this process exert a qualitative influence in the broader history of the Strait? A big part of the answer has to do with the dominant role Anglo-French imperial culture and institutions in the trans-Gibraltar, even though formal colonial claims were limited to two-and-a-half square miles of British Gibraltar. A striking indicator was language, which became a marker of class identity. Use of English and French languages denoted status, while the popular lingua franca was Spanish. Speaking the language of Cervantes gave Moroccans access to European society and formed a common bond among the working classes of greater Gibraltar, but outside a democratic framework could not be politically meaningful. Like its language, Spain's currency was a common denominator, convenient for the seamless movement of payments between Spain, Gibraltar, and Morocco. The Spanish peseta gained recognition as a legal coin for commercial transactions, but this, too, was largely a symbolic gain: the peseta's adherence to a common gold standard until World War I meant that its extended reach would not improve its convertibility rate. To some, the prevalence of Spanish language and currency in Tangier and Gibraltar resembled evidence in support of a nascent irredentism.<sup>122</sup> The Malagueño poet Narciso Díaz de Escovar posited a continuity between older anxieties of the Anglo-Protestant menace emanating from Gibraltar and newly emerging fears that Spain may succumb to colonial subjugation, comparing the Algeciras Gibraltar Railway Company to the "nineteenth-century miners [who] prospected for gold in this land, in order to extract it for countries . . . disagreeable to Spain."<sup>123</sup>

Anxieties over excessive colonial influence divided Morocco even more deeply. The young sultan Abdelaziz (r. 1894–1908) was widely regarded as overly Europhilic, seduced by bicycles, fireworks, and other imported gadgetry while ignoring responsibility to his own people and faith.<sup>124</sup> To judge from the patterns of urban expansion and social integration taking

place in Tangier, Abdelaziz was not alone in his embrace of European influence. Yet in rural districts, including those directly adjacent to Tangier, simmering conflicts pitted clans favorable to Abdelaziz against militias built on xenophobic populism. By the first decade of the twentieth century, popular rebellions raged in multiple corners of the sultan's empire as pretenders arose questioning his legitimacy.<sup>125</sup> Many inhabitants of the highlands adjacent to Tangier refused to enter the city, fearing indelible contamination, and some refused to mingle or to permit their children to mingle with Muslims who frequented the city. If circumstances required going to Tangier, they might refuse to wash with soap fabricated there or insist on performing their prayers in the middle of the highway (which, like a river, was considered flowing and therefore pure).<sup>126</sup>

The era of relative peace between Tangier and its environs came to a close with the century, as brigandage came down from the mountains and approached the city gates. In 1896, the sultan informed the consular community in Tangier that he could no longer guarantee the safety of travelers to the interior, a preemptive response to rumblings of unrest in his realm.<sup>127</sup> The most feared of Morocco's brigand-rebel-populists was Ahmed ben Muhammad er-Raisuni, with whom readers will become more fully acquainted in the next chapter. Raisuni soon discovered that kidnapping tourists brought far higher ransoms than Moroccans or itinerant Spanish workers, who received minimal consideration from their governments.<sup>128</sup> On his visit to Tangier, Blasco Ibáñez would not dare venture outside city walls, explaining the danger with strained empathy: "For us, [Raisuni] is a bandit; for the warlike and patriotic little moors, he is a Moroccan hero who does not accept the invasion of Europeans; and he takes advantage of them, putting a price on their heads, while awaiting the moment to rise up against a renegade sultan who breaks bread with the foreigners, and rides around in bicycles and on automobiles, while his prisons fill with pure and proud Muslims who protest the slow intrusion of the Christians in this land of death and cruelty, the last refuge of Muslim fatalism."<sup>129</sup>

European tourists' and settlers' most direct contribution to the process of colonial consolidation was thus to empower those charged with protecting them in Tangier. Calls for firmer European control of the city became louder and the Powers exerted pressure on the sultan to capture Raisuni.<sup>130</sup> At the next major convention on Morocco, the Algeiras Conference of 1906, European grip on Tangier was tightened. Signatories approved the creation of an expanded municipal police force under Spanish and French



oversight. And to restrict the flow of tax revenue to Moroccan officials, all levies on municipal property were now to go to the International Sanitary Council (formerly the Hygiene Commission).<sup>131</sup>

The Algeciras Conference was itself a display of European imperial influence not only in Tangier but on the Strait's Spanish shore as well. As Gibraltar's informal satellite, the Andalusian town of Algeciras would enjoy a brief moment in the sun in 1906. Kaiser Wilhelm II, with a provocative visit to Tangier the previous year in protest of the new Anglo-French Entente, set in motion an international crisis. What later became known as the First Morocco Crisis would be averted a year later in the opulent halls of the Hotel Reina Cristina. The conference took place on Spanish soil, but the British Empire was the real host. The choice of site was a coup for British diplomacy, and perhaps also for the hotel's proprietor, Alexander Henderson, who was also a member of Parliament and the main shareholder of the Algeciras Gibraltar Railway. The kaiser, aiming to establish Germany as the sultan's new patron, had wished to hold the conference at Tangier. France favored Geneva, while the Spanish government wished for the opportunity to showcase the splendid San Sebastián.<sup>132</sup>

The compromise choice, Algeciras offered a British imperial venue superimposed on an Andalusian backwater. During the three months of the conference, the narrow streets of Algeciras came alive after hours as diplomatic entourages and legions of journalists descended on the modest town of twenty-two thousand. Terrace cafés became lively with the sounds of many languages as the hundreds of conference participants and observers imbibed the mild winter evenings out of doors under newly electrified streetlights.<sup>133</sup> The municipality hastily repaired a decrepit bridge over the river Miel so that the arriving guests could more comfortably reach the town center from the rail station. The conference spurred an effort to renew the Sud Express, the rail network that had folded in 1898, on hopes that "the interest in Algeciras that is being raised by the diplomatic conference . . . will not be fleeting."<sup>134</sup> Under the new name Maroc Express, it did attain better results, particularly during the peak tourist months between October and April.<sup>135</sup> Spain was at last a key link in the journey from northwestern Europe to the Maghrib.

Tourists and settlers, and the travel infrastructure that supported them, transformed the shores of the Strait from a strategic outpost into a diverse urban agglomeration protected by a tenuously shared European hegemony. But free circulation soon clashed with another imperative; for



if the three European powers were to cooperate in ordering the borderland, they insisted on articulating clear boundaries of their respective territorial spheres. In 1907, they reached a protocol at Cartagena to confirm the permanence of the borders at Gibraltar, Ceuta, and Melilla. The British immediately began building the *verja*, or border fence, at the northernmost extent of their occupation of the Gibraltar isthmus. The exact placement of the new fence extended Gibraltar's claim by approximately three hundred yards on the little-used eastern end of the isthmus, allowing, in the dawning era of aviation, for a runway.<sup>136</sup> Although Spanish officials resented “accepting their done deeds . . . even if the usurpation is small,” the minister of state counseled against “attribut[ing] excessive significance” to the British move, noting even that the high steel fence “would bring us the advantage of making smuggling more difficult.” As the Gibraltar–La Línea border hardened, the special permits given to well-connected Gibraltarian tourists were canceled “to demonstrate . . . that we are not indifferent to [British] conduct, and to make a protest” against the *verja*.<sup>137</sup> Early in 1908, the Spanish Ministry of War issued a new requirement that rail routes designated as “secondary” or “strategic” be controlled by Spanish firms and regulated more strictly. The coastal rail from Cádiz to Cartagena, via the Campo de Gibraltar, Málaga, and Almería, figured among the strategic routes, spelling the end of British ownership of railway services in and out of Algeciras. Soon after, in 1913, the Malagueño-owned Compañía de Ferrocarriles Andaluces took control of all existing rail lines in the region.<sup>138</sup>

The south of Spain escaped the fate of northern Morocco in the first decade of the twentieth century. While the Spanish government proved to possess the diplomatic and administrative machinery to curtail further British incursion, Sultan Abdelaziz was caught helpless as the cycle of colonial contact, exchange, and resistance played out on the peripheries of his realm. Rebellions against the sultan's rule came with ever-greater power and frequency, furnishing the pretext for French and Spanish forces to realize their governments' plans to occupy the sultanate in 1911 and establish a formal protectorate the following year. The half-century-long process of constructing a demographically and political pluralistic space under a European sovereign order was thus consummated. But the order remained fragmented and precarious, dependent on territorial spheres too easily contested and transgressed. Our attention now turns from the emergence of the modern borderland to the pursuit of an international order that might sustainably govern it.

## **Part Two**

### **Between Borderland and Empire, 1900–1939**

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# 5

## Slipstream Potentates

**MOROCCO FORMALLY BECAME** a Hispano-French protectorate in 1912, bifurcating the trans-Gibraltar into an imperial north and a colonial south for the next forty-four years. But the region never ceased to be a borderland; indeed, it became more intensively bordered than ever. Although historians of this period have tended to interpret both political violence in northern Morocco and the subsequent civil-military tensions in Spain through the lens of colonialism, the chapters in Part 2 of this book highlight ways the region's borderland character conditioned major patterns and conflicts during the first four decades of the twentieth century. Of course, colonialism cannot disappear from the analysis altogether, but its workings must be adapted to the dense political geography of the western Mediterranean channel.

One crucial result of the formal colonizing process in Morocco was to add yet another set of borders and overlapping sovereign arrangements. In 1906, the Act of Algeciras tightened French and Spanish control over major functions of the Moroccan state such as port policing and tax collection but also confirmed the sultan's full sovereignty over all Morocco. At Cartagena in 1907, the governments of Spain, France, and Britain agreed to recognize the current boundaries of Ceuta, Melilla, and Gibraltar. In March 1912, the Treaty of Fez submitted the sultanate to a French protectorate. A Hispano-French treaty followed in November, designating a Spanish "zone of influence" in the north of Morocco, and Tangier was left in a special status to be worked out later—all while affirming, somewhat

paradoxically, the sultanate's unitary political economy and foreign policy under French suzerainty and, after a German protest, the continued right of all foreigners to travel and engage in commerce throughout its territory.

This convoluted arrangement resulted from compromises that the powers considered preferable to war but also brought about an array of unintended consequences. One was to enhance the prospects for ambitious nonsovereign actors to amass considerable autonomous power. By entering political relationships with officials of multiple governments, tapping regional contraband networks, and moving around, some of them managed to ride the slipstream of one or more sovereign authorities while avoiding falling under the full jurisdiction of any one of them. This chapter profiles three of them—Bu Hmara, Ahmed ben Muhammad er-Raisuni, and Juan March—who thrived in the new imperial configuration and came to play a constitutive role in the regional order.

Political entrepreneurship already was deeply rooted in both southern Andalusia and northern Morocco, leavened by endemic brigandage and by the protections and safe havens available at places like Gibraltar and Melilla. In Andalusia, many revolutionaries and caciques (local bosses) owed their fortunes and power to banditry and smuggling networks stretching into Gibraltar and North Africa.<sup>1</sup> On the Moroccan shore, collaboration with Europeans had become a promising method for advancing political ambitions. In the 1870s, the saintly nobleman Sharif Abd es-Salam al-Wazzan built a prominent career straddling this borderline. Wazzan commanded such devotion that some followers in his district climbed over thick crowds and suffered broken bones just to touch his carriage, yet privately Wazzan yearned to be European. He divorced three Muslim women to take an English wife and suffered brief imprisonment by Sultan Hassan I for “European tendencies being looked upon as dangerous to the welfare of the Empire.”<sup>2</sup> He gained consular protection from John Drummond Hay for his help in rooting out other ambitious chieftains. Later, in 1884, Wazzan staged a short-lived rebellion that briefly earned him and his followers protection cards from the French, until British objections pressured the French to abandon him.<sup>3</sup> Wazzan exploited his liminal position on cultural and jurisdictional boundaries, but ultimately he could not overcome the collective will of multiple sovereign powers. His rise and demise set the pattern for twentieth-century rebels, who had many more borders at their disposal.

## Bu Hmara: Prodigal Rogue

The ability to exploit borders and interimperial tensions could be a more powerful asset even than noble birth. In 1902, a minor bureaucrat from Meknes used this skill to found a new polity in the eastern Rif, the area where projections of French power from Algeria were colliding with the ambitions of Spanish Melilla. This enterprising leader, who came to be called Bu Hmara, held out until 1909, by which time too many rival forces had aligned against him. As a young Makhzan clerk, Bu Hmara learned to forge the imperial seal, then traveled to Tunisia to learn the art of pyrotechnic illusionism. As he worked his way back westward through Algeria, he put both these skills to use in claiming to be Mulai Muhammad, the disloyal older brother of Sultan Abdelaziz living under house arrest in Fez. Though of common birth, Bu Hmara impressed unsophisticated villagers with his knowledge of the Koran and his noble affect, punctuated with an eye defect to match rumored descriptions of the sultan's brother. Wanted by both the Makhzan and the French colonial authorities, he was arrested in Algeria in 1901, but a sympathetic Muslim policeman hid the pretender and facilitated his passage across the border to Taza, in northeastern Morocco.<sup>4</sup> Capitalizing on discontent in Taza over the sultan's aggressive taxation and collaboration with infidels, Bu Hmara united several tribes under his charismatic leadership to stage a revolt in 1902. Soon he proclaimed himself to be Morocco's legitimate sultan. He adopted a parasol, symbol of sharifian authority, and attempted to send an ambassador to Constantinople.<sup>5</sup> His credulous followers revered the putative Mulai Muhammad as their ruler, but the Spanish, even when they supported him, christened him *El Rogu * (the pretender). To avoid confusion, we employ the most descriptively neutral of his many identities, Bu Hmara, "he of the she-ass," on which he had come riding in.<sup>6</sup>

Bu Hmara quickly proved his aptitude for both holy populism and extraordinary cruelty—binding his prisoners' necks with iron rings and occasionally setting them ablaze with kerosene—but what most distinguished him from other rebels was effectiveness exploiting European interimperial tensions. Rather than remain in Taza, he established headquarters at Selouane, some sixteen miles to the south of Melilla in the heart of a district that prospectors believed contained "one of the largest and richest iron mines in the world."<sup>7</sup> There, Bu Hmara set about building his own territorial enclave, albeit with poorly defined frontiers and a system

of tax collection more closely resembling a series of raiding expeditions. Spanish officials quickly flattered Bu Hmara's ambitions. They recognized his right to levy tariffs on trade with Melilla, a turnabout from their long-standing policy to designate this prerogative exclusively to representatives of the sultan. Even more surprisingly, the sultan's delegate in Melilla, Muhammad Abd el-Krim al-Khattabi, a Spanish protégé (and father of the future rebel leader), supported and accompanied Spanish trading missions to Selouane.<sup>8</sup>

Duties on trade with Spanish Melilla (and later French Algeria as well) became the rogue polity's principal source of revenue, with which Bu Hmara was able not only to feed his standing army numbering 400–1,500 men but also to clothe them with elegant European uniforms, complete with gold braid. He obtained rifles of similar quality to those possessed by the Makhzan army, mostly single-shot European makes obsolescent in Europe, through the vibrant contraband trade from Melilla and Gibraltar.<sup>9</sup> In a quaint similarity to Sharif Wazzan, Bu Hmara made European music a notable feature of his enterprise. Whereas Wazzan taught himself to play the violin in upright fashion, as a miniature cello, Bu Hmara created a musical "academy" where, in addition to traditional Andalusí *nubah*, musicians played military marches with cornets, trombones, and drums, acquired from Europe through a Jewish merchant. Copious kef smoking and a court jester, known throughout Selouane for his farcical swagger and oversized turban, added to the idiosyncratic court atmosphere.<sup>10</sup>

The Spanish effort to transform the rogue into a vassal came at a pivotal moment in international and colonial politics. Enthusiasm for the Morocco project was reaching levels not seen since the war of 1859–1860. A broad new optimism took hold in Spain that the expanse of rugged, infertile, rebellious territory across the southern waters might hold the solutions to multiple problems. The prospect of a colony in Morocco brought renewed hope for Madrid's military-administrative apparatus and for Basque and Catalan financial oligarchs, badly shaken by the loss of Cuba but also flush with repatriated capital, as well as for shipping firms and for landless peasants who could now dream of owning their own plot.<sup>11</sup> Spanish colonial appetites were whetted further when the French review *Le Correspondant* reported in 1903 that Spain was to control much of the country's fertile Atlantic heartland and the eastern oasis around Taza, linchpin of the overland route from Oran to the Atlantic.<sup>12</sup> But popular

disenchantment set in just as quickly. Anglo-French compromises over the next decade reduced the notional Spanish zone to an unviable rump of mostly tribal domains.

Although broad national support for so-called *marroquismo* proved fleeting, a narrow cadre of politicians, financiers, and military officers remained focused on the Rif, the heartland of Bu Hmara's movement. If the Spanish government could exert effective dominion there, it could gain status within the Entente framework as "an ideal trustee" of the mines, "under whose administration neutrality could be expected."<sup>13</sup> Moreover, the Melilla officer corps, as masters of the primary commercial port of the eastern Rif, stood to benefit substantially from trade with the interior. They controlled the lucrative supply of contraband tobacco and armaments, and also opaquely ran the town's Excise Council (Junta de Arbitrios), which had been established in the 1890s and vested with the power to collect a commission on all port activity. Port and shipping interests on the Iberian Peninsula also backed the project, another sign that trade and transport across the Alboran Sea, as much as interior settlement, was a prime economic motive.<sup>14</sup> An arrangement with Bu Hmara to open his domain to Spanish trade and mining might advance various commercial, military, and diplomatic objectives without directly confronting tribes long hostile to Christian penetration into the Rif.

But Bu Hmara did not intend to become a vehicle to further Spanish colonial aims. Seeking to avoid dependency on his Spanish patrons, he turned to French financiers in Algeria. In exchange for granting rights to prospect for iron, he procured loans and expertise to expand his territorial holdings and to build a new port on the Nador Lagoon (known to the Spanish as Mar Chica) to compete directly with Melilla. The French remained discrete about their dealings with Bu Hmara, which contradicted their official position, defended at Algeciras in 1906, to preserve the sultan's full sovereignty over all Morocco.<sup>15</sup> Even in the face of international commitments to keep Morocco whole, Bu Hmara had little intention to dial back his claims. In 1906, at the height of his ambition, he envisioned dredging a deeper channel to give larger vessels access to the Nador Lagoon from the wider Mediterranean. He also conceived building a network of roads and railways. But the pretender's appetite exceeded his ability to pay his creditors and the spigots soon ran dry. The French colonial army, in occupying Oujda the following year, signaled it no longer needed a local interlocutor in eastern Morocco.



In late 1907, the increasingly desperate Bu Hmara pivoted back toward Spain. Claiming much of the eastern Rif as his personal patrimony, he courted two mining firms—the Spanish *Compañía Española de las Minas del Rif* and the Hispano-French *Compañía del Norte Africano*. He offered to sell them concessions to develop mining operations in his domains and extend rail links from Melilla, promising to guarantee security and to suppress any attempts at sabotage by subject tribes. For many of Bu Hmara's followers, this invitation to European incursion marked a betrayal, leading to a rapid loss of support and eventually his capture and execution.<sup>16</sup>

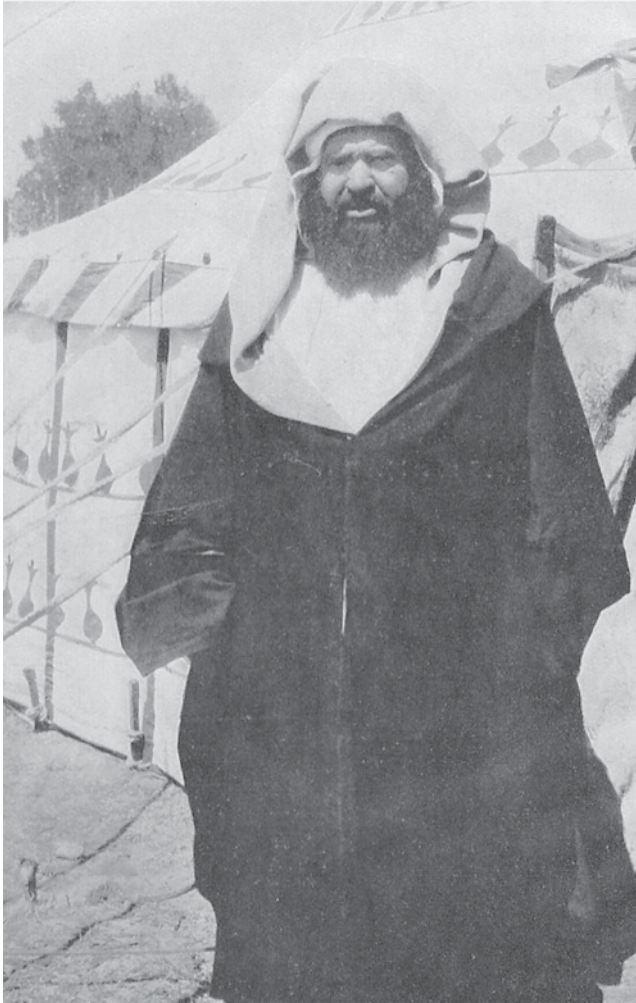
Bu Hmara's fall thus indicated that Spanish participation in a sustainable Anglo-French Entente could not rest on tenuous agreements with local potentates but required significant military commitment. But whereas the Spanish army and government regarded their stake in Morocco as the linchpin of their international position in the twentieth century, public opinion tilted toward abandonment as the costs in blood and treasure became clear. After a series of disastrous ambushes in 1909, the government sought reinforcements, resulting in draft riots in Barcelona that drew violent police repression and caused the suspension of most military operations in the Rif for a decade.

### Raisuni: Indispensable Brigand

A more sophisticated and successful course through the imperial slipstream was plotted by Ahmed Ben Muhammad el-Raisuni (referred to by his European contemporaries as Raissouli). Though briefly an ally of Bu Hmara, Raisuni's career followed a reverse trajectory.<sup>17</sup> Unlike Bu Hmara, Raisuni's claim to nobility was no fabrication. The young sharif from Tétouan nonetheless passed on the chance to study law and religion that was his birthright. He preferred to pursue power in rawer and crueler forms, becoming one of the most feared brigands along the Tangier-Tétouan road by 1890, before reaching the age of twenty. Beyond highway robbery, he demonstrated the capacity to wreak major havoc. One of his early successes involved disrupting the supply of charcoal manufactured in the Atlantic woodlands to Bedouins in the eastern desert.<sup>18</sup> After being captured and chained to the wall of a wretched prison in Mogador for some four years, he gained release on a deal arranged by another ambitious nobleman, Muhammad at-Torres. Once free, Raisuni returned to brigandage, and, blessed with saintly lineage and a healthy dose of *baraka*, assembled a loyal retinue.<sup>19</sup>

Historians have placed Raisuni among a populous category of Moroccan politicians who were in equal measure bandit, saint, populist, and feudal lord.<sup>20</sup> Fair though these descriptions may be, they do not account for the uniqueness of Raisuni's accomplishments. While the typical Moroccan brigand's brief life ended at the blade of the executioner or a rival, Raisuni maneuvered to become an indispensable component of regional order throughout the first two decades of the twentieth century. He bore several qualities favorable to success in his chosen vocation: acumen, ruthlessness, and a charisma doubly derived from his lineage and his immense frame, "broad as he was tall . . . of solid flesh and muscle," topped with a "round, massive face . . . surrounded by a thicket of beard" (see Figure 5.1).<sup>21</sup> His demeanor tended naturally toward the tyrannical and merciless, but he was mindful of the restraints imposed by Moroccan and even international law, sometimes using them to his advantage. A Spanish army report's description of Raisuni as "a strange mix of the just and the arbitrary" cuts to the core of his enigma.<sup>22</sup>

Raisuni possessed the political sophistication to exploit the unstable boundaries of territory and jurisdiction that dominated northwestern Morocco. Like Bu Hmara, Raisuni's operations benefited from their borderland position. Until the Spanish army forced him eastward later in his career, Raisuni ranged the Tingitana Peninsula, roughly within the parallelogram formed by Ceuta and Tétouan on the Mediterranean side, and Tangier and Asilah on the Atlantic. He was comfortable with Europeans; unlike many of his countrymen he did not consider it dishonorable to keep liquor on hand to provide to European guests.<sup>23</sup> Establishing a headquarters at the mountain village of Zinat, Raisuni soon discovered European travelers could be lucrative prey. He snared the *Times* of London correspondent Walter B. Harris in 1903. By capturing this wealthy and influential luminary of Tangier society, Raisuni struck gold, gaining as ransom the release of imprisoned cronies while also striking up an enduring friendship with his hostage. A year later, Raisuni followed up the Harris affair with another coup de main, kidnapping the wealthy Greek American playboy Ion Perdicaris along with his stepson and several servants. Students of American presidential history may recall Theodore Roosevelt's 1904 campaign promise, "Perdicaris alive or Raisuni dead"—a sign of the political potency of extraterritorial protections (although it was later revealed that Perdicaris was not in fact a citizen of the United States). With American warships headed for Tangier, Sultan Abdelaziz had little choice but to grant Raisuni's demands. The sultan conceded a significant ransom and, more



**FIGURE 5.1.** Raisuni in 1924.  
*Source:* Forbes 1924.

important, appointed Raisuni to be caid (chief administrator) of Tangier and the Tingitana. It was likely the first occasion when American electoral politics spurred the career of an African brigand.

Already in command of a sizable militia, Raisuni now held political office in Morocco's most prosperous city. As caid, his principal role was to guarantee peace and order, which he took as license to intimidate and collect tribute profusely. The caid was not, however, the Makhzan's direct representative in Tangier. These were the naib, Muhammad at-Torres—the

man who had earlier secured Raisuni's release from prison—and, in legal matters, the qadi. As naib, Torres did possess a small personal security entourage, but many of his men belonged to tribes under Raisuni's command or otherwise preferred to join the latter's cause. Pro-Raisuni sentiment among Moroccan Tangerines prevailed due to a combination of genuine admiration and the lack of safe alternative within a security regime built on gruesome public punishments and arbitrary requisitions. The awesome caid himself recalled that he "brought peace and security to the country" with a formula of "a little blood in the marketplace [and] a few heads stuck on a wall."<sup>24</sup> These heads belonged mainly to members of the rival Anjera tribe. The European population was left impressed and queasy, and most everyone agreed that Raisuni had been chiefly responsible for the reign of troubles he took credit for ending.

If not for the European population, Raisuni might have been able to usurp all governing authority from the naib and run Tangier as an autocrat. But it was the settlers' presence that made Tangier such a prize. The European-run Sanitary Commission extended the infrastructure of irrigation and sewage, and formerly common grazing lands became the suburban garden plots of European settlers. The legal framework for this process had been set down at the Madrid conference of 1880, when Sultan Hassan I had granted blanket approval for property sales to foreigners in and around his major ports. In this way, the qadi had the authority to sell terrains and issue property titles to European buyers without seeking case-by-case approval from the Makhzan. In an atmosphere of rapid urbanization, however, Raisuni considered this function too lucrative to leave in the qadi's hands and claimed for himself exclusive authority to sell the sultan's patrimony to Europeans. Colonists might have been forgiven for missing this nuance of Moroccan law, especially considering that those who acquired title from anyone but Raisuni risked a ransacking. This was the fate of one British subject who returned home on a June afternoon in 1906 to find his garden destroyed and house looted.<sup>25</sup>

The Makhzan sensed pressure to reassert the primacy of its laws over Raisuni's arbitrary acts. If the naib and qadi could not administer effectively, the Europeans would inevitably move to do so themselves. In April 1906, the Algeciras Conference confirmed the sultanate's unitary independence for the time being, but also provided for a joint French-Spanish-Moroccan police force aimed precisely at urban banditry in Tangier. Moreover, taking note of Raisuni's practice of intimidating colonists into purchasing counterfeit property titles from his men, the Act of Algeciras

allowed local consuls to legitimize the status of properties held “without regular title.”<sup>26</sup> In a letter dispatched from Fez on 26 June, a secretary of Sultan Abdelaziz upbraided the naib and the qadi for allowing Raisuni to grant “foreigners the authorization to acquire these properties with your support” and demanded to know “the reasons that pushed you to support [Raisuni] even knowing that he should have nothing to do with questions concerning property rights.” In his reply, the qadi cited “a difficult situation,” a nebulous excuse that earned pardon only after a reprimand.<sup>27</sup>

Abdelaziz did not attempt to capture or punish Raisuni. Instead, his government engaged in a kind of *trasformismo*, attempting to turn the unruly provincial boss into a loyal servant of Moroccan law through a combination of bribery and flattery.<sup>28</sup> Whereas its correspondence with the loyal but hapless qadi was stern, the Makhzan struck a far more conciliatory tone with Raisuni. The sultan’s secretary assured the saintly chief, “as one of our most devoted servants . . . we cannot believe that you deliberately accorded these [property] rights.” Surely, he continued, the noble caid understood that selling communal lands to the benefit of European settlers “would be disapproved of by God and his Prophet.”<sup>29</sup> But accusing Raisuni of collaboration with the infidel rang hollow, especially on the heels of the Algeciras Conference. Raisuni’s saintly credentials and his success in intimidating the European settlers stood in sharp contrast to decades of what was commonly perceived as Makhzan appeasement of European colonial ambitions.

Though probably not favorable to European incursion in his homeland, Raisuni was neither the puritanical jihadist that many of his supporters undoubtedly saw in him. His formula was to identify and exploit opportunities arising from the new juridical and territorial boundaries the European colony had produced. Raisuni had no intention directly to challenge the Europeans, whose land purchases had become a major revenue source for his clan. The only episode of bodily violence directed against a European in Tangier during Raisuni’s tenure as caid was in fact perpetrated by his rivals in the Anjera tribe. Calculating that incidents of direct violence against Europeans would undermine Raisuni’s position, members of the Anjera murdered a French railway employee named Charbonnier in May 1906. Paris responded immediately, presenting the Makhzan with a list of demands: capital punishment for those responsible, a sizable indemnity to the surviving family, the concession of land to erect a memorial to Charbonnier, and a public apology by a representative of the sultan.<sup>30</sup>

Abdelaziz rejected the notion that his government should “implicitly recognize . . . responsibility” for the tragedy, observing that when a German subject was recently killed near Fez the kaiser had been content with an ordinary plot in the foreign cemetery.<sup>31</sup> As the Makhzan wrung its hands over how to deal with the irate French, Raisuni became appeaser in chief. He promptly recruited a poor man to suffer the exemplary execution, promising a lifetime pension for the man’s family in return.<sup>32</sup> As French and Spanish warships appeared on the horizon, Raisuni also prevailed on the Makhzan to submit to the other French demands and even provided police to guard Charbonnier’s memorial.

Rather than European settlers, Tangier’s ordinary Moroccan subjects were far more vulnerable targets for the petty extortion and robbery that sustained the livelihoods of Raisuni’s militiamen. Desperate, some joined with the Anjera or pleaded with European authorities in Tangier, Ceuta, and even Algeria, for protection or citizenship.<sup>33</sup> The line separating the protected from the vulnerable therefore was often but not always a question of religion or national origin. The Raisuni clan unwittingly crossed that line in June 1906, when militiamen kidnapped two Arabs and confiscated the sheep and butter of a third, only to learn that the trio had recently traveled to Algeria and purchased French protection cards.<sup>34</sup> These episodes added color to an emerging picture of Raisuni’s Tangier as unsafe for European subjects, a problem the consular corps of Tangier increasingly pressured the Makhzan to resolve.

The sultan spared no expense in raising a special mounted cavalry, trained by three French specialists in his service, to “demonstrate our firm intention to protect [Tangier and the Tingitana] and the security of its inhabitants.”<sup>35</sup> The Makhzan immediately ordered his accountants in Tangier to borrow fifty thousand Spanish reales—“no matter the terms of the loan”—to pay the 1,200 men being commissioned.<sup>36</sup> The minister of war, Sidi Muhammad al-Gebbas, was called in from the Algerian frontier to lead Makhzan forces into Tangier. Even as it prepared to assail Raisuni’s stronghold, the Makhzan continued to flatter him, holding out hope that the charismatic chieftain could be transformed into a powerful ally and loyal member of the sultan’s court. In a letter to Raisuni dated 21 November 1906, the Makhzan drew a contrast between the noble chieftain and many of his followers, “people of low class, incapable of distinguishing between what is useful and what is harmful . . . professional agitators whose sole preoccupation is to stir trouble and cause trouble for Muslims.”<sup>37</sup> The

sultan proceeded to instruct Raisuni to camp with Gebbas and submit to his command. But Raisuni remained defiant, threatening to sack Tangier if Gebbas did not suspend his march immediately. The embattled caid never made good on this threat, but as he sat in Tangier awaiting his fate, he sent some forty of his men southward along the Atlantic coast to prepare the way for their leader's retreat. Raisuni stood his ground for a day against eight hundred Makhzan infantry, allied tribal cavalry, and a parade of mules hauling European-made artillery. After the arrival of French-trained Algerian reinforcements, Gebbas was able to march into the city, capture him, and, before a crowd gathered at the Grand Mosque, ceremoniously read the sultan's decree stripping him of his position as caid of Tangier and the Tingitana.<sup>38</sup>

Insightful and patient, Raisuni surely sensed that the level of cooperation the powers displayed in 1906 was unlikely to continue indefinitely. He withdrew to the mountains but did not rest. In July 1907, he captured the sultan's longtime artillery specialist Harry MacLean, who was leading an expedition to apprehend him. The "Scottish caid," an eccentric figure of Tangier society who had first come to Morocco in 1877 to flee a love affair gone sour in Gibraltar, was a valuable prize. The terms of his release netted Raisuni a ransom of £20,000 and status as a British protégé.<sup>39</sup> Now immune to the sultan's law, Raisuni set about building a luxurious palace at Asilah. From his new headquarters, he lent men and resources to the coup of 1908 that toppled Abdelaziz in favor of the sultan's older brother, Abdelhafid. As the deposed sultan and his retinue sought refuge in Tangier and Melilla, the incoming monarch rewarded Raisuni with formal recognition as pasha of Asilah on the condition that he renounce British protection, which he did. But rather than recede into obscurity, Raisuni assumed nearly full autonomy in his dealings with the Europeans. He maintained his own intelligence service in Tangier and a direct liaison with Madrid in the person of the Spanish consul in Larache, Juan Zugasti.

The imposition of the Hispano-French protectorate in 1912 only enhanced the imperial slipstream. The final phase of that process began in April 1911, when sultan Abdelhafid faced insurrection at his palace gates in Fez. The resulting threats to European interests gave the French colonial army pretext to march on the sultan's capital. This was quickly followed up by a parallel Spanish landing at Larache, carried out with logistical support from Raisuni in nearby Asilah, to assert claim to the northern zone.<sup>40</sup> The last remaining patron of Moroccan independence, Kaiser Wilhelm



II of Germany, responded by ordering a gunship to the Atlantic port of Agadir. This launched a second Morocco crisis, the resolution of which four months later through a land deal in equatorial Africa belongs to the history of the origins of World War I. For our purposes, it should suffice to note Berlin's resolve in maintaining a toehold on Morocco's northern shores. In the end, Wilhelm II accepted French hegemony in Morocco, but with the caveat that Germany should retain its right to harbor protégés there. And the Germans made no secret of their intention to do so. At a legation ball in Madrid during the height of the crisis, the German ambassador Max von Ratibor stood within earshot of French dignitaries as he remarked to a Spanish acquaintance, "If you should write to your friend [Raisuni], do tell him I remain his friend and that he can count on us."<sup>41</sup>

With the crisis concluded, France had the green light to proceed with the establishment of a protectorate over Morocco. In March 1912, with French troops surrounding his palace, Abdelhafid was forced to sign the Treaty of Fez, which effectively conceded his entire domain to French occupation. This was followed shortly by Abdelhafid's abdication in favor of the third Alawite brother, Yusef, who submitted to reign under French suzerainty. In an effort to eliminate the pluralism that long bedeviled effective governance in Morocco, a newly established French residency in Rabat assumed direct control over a reformed Makhzan administration. The residency established a single regime applicable equally to foreigners, protégés, and Moroccans, and claimed the exclusive right to introduce all legal, administrative, military, economic, and education reforms.<sup>42</sup>

But as older forms of legal-administrative pluralism were dismantled, a new patchwork of jurisdiction and sovereignty was forming. As prescribed by the Entente protocol of 1904, the northernmost section of Morocco was given over to Spanish influence—a sliver bounded by the Mediterranean coastline, the Atlantic coast from Tangier southward just beyond Larache, and the Moulouya and Ouergha river valleys, representing about 5 percent of the sultan's realm. The Spanish Zone was established through a subsidiary agreement with France concluded in November 1912. This established a "caliphate" to administer the northern zone. The caliph was to be a Moroccan appointed by the sultan from a list of candidates provided by Spain. The Spanish High Commission, established at Tétouan, was to be the caliph's sole foreign liaison, though, rather confusingly, the Spanish could access the sultan (the caliph's superior) only via the French resident general at Rabat.<sup>43</sup> The phrase "Spanish protectorate,"



casually bandied about by some Spanish imperialists, was thus misleading: the indivisibility of the Moroccan state rested under the formal sovereignty of the French-sponsored sultan in Rabat. According to the letter of the November treaty, the Spanish possessed the ability to influence how their caliph administered the northern zone but not to claim for it any independent capacity in exterior relations. The Spanish Zone, along with the still notional “international zone” of Tangier, were both French concessions to diplomatic requirements, but they seemed to contradict a third such requirement—the imperative to preserve Morocco’s territorial integrity.

When the protectorate regime went into effect in 1912, Raisuni’s position as pasha of Asilah presented a constitutional anomaly. His position as a high-ranking delegate of the French-backed sultan—but within the Spanish administrative zone—interfered with the Spanish prerogative to administer this territory. To resolve this, Raisuni signaled his willingness to assume the post of caliph of the entire Spanish Zone. As he later told his English biographer Rosita Forbes, he considered the Spanish “strong enough to help the Arabs but not strong enough to oppress them.”<sup>44</sup> Raisuni briefly gained the trust of the Spanish Lieutenant Colonel Manuel Fernández Silvestre, the commanding officer in the Larache district. Silvestre initially supported choosing Raisuni for caliph but soon came to understand the chieftain’s friendly gestures as temporary expedients for his own ambitions. Silvestre, who harbored an earnest commitment to the Africanista civilizing mission, reserved no place for Raisuni’s brutal inhumanity. Silvestre thus became Raisuni’s chief antagonist among the Spanish and, in an ironic twist, a leading voice for disengaging from the fraught game of tribal politics that had characterized Spanish operations in northern Morocco at least since the 1850s and the days of Manuel Buceta. For Silvestre, proper colonialism required the heavy-handed military subjugation of the entire Spanish Zone.<sup>45</sup>

Raisuni’s successes became emblematic of the Spanish failure to pacify its colonial sphere of northern Morocco, forming a stark and unflattering contrast with French successes in the rest of the country. Walter B. Harris, the British journalist who had briefly been Raisuni’s hostage in 1903, commented in 1921 that whereas formerly rebellious parts of the French Zone could by then “be travelled in perfect security—often by train or motor,” the once peaceable northern zone had under the Spanish become “as difficult of access to-day as the wildest regions of Central Africa.” According to Harris, Raisuni commanded everything outside the

walls of Tangier, Tétouan, and Ceuta; Europeans wishing to travel overland outside the three cities required a safe-conduct pass from him. Harris attributed the “total absence of security [and] constant aggression” in the northern zone to the Spanish protectorate administration’s failure to grasp the “natives and their ways.”<sup>46</sup> To explain the alleged Spanish shortcomings, other contemporary observers and historians have cited factors such as diplomatic failure, anthropological ineptitude, and military incompetence.<sup>47</sup>

These critiques have their place, as do others, but the Spanish Zone’s peculiar borderland quality may render any comparison with French fortunes unjust. Whereas the mountain tribes of the French Zone faced the simple choice either to submit or resist French forces on two fronts, those in the Spanish Zone could choose from a menu of powerful sponsors present in Tangier—including France, Britain, Germany, and the Makhzan itself. Raisuni was particularly skillful in establishing for himself a quasi-autonomous position in this landscape, preventing the Spanish from attaining anything close to a monopoly on political power in the zone entrusted to them by the Entente system. One solution was to appoint Raisuni as caliph of the Spanish Zone, but few in the army or government trusted the chieftain to behave as a loyal collaborator. The Spanish instead opted for the more conservative choice, Mulai el Mehdi ben Ismael ben Muhammad, a cousin of the sitting sultan. Raisuni remained at large in Asilah, an official of the Makhzan—and thus protected by the French.

Why did the French residency not come to Spain’s aid by pressuring Sultan Yusef to relieve Raisuni of his status as pasha of Asilah? Although Raisuni would not likely have left willingly, reclassifying him as a common bandit would have opened a legal path for a Spanish assault on his compound. By protecting Raisuni, the French were thwarting the effective occupation and administration of the Spanish Zone of the protectorate. As Agustín de Luque, Spain’s minister of war, argued, any action against Raisuni would be “eminently political in character, and . . . could bring consequences that we would prefer not to confront for now.”<sup>48</sup> The French resident general in Rabat, General Hubert Lyautey, may have chosen not to pursue Raisuni based on the belief that continued disorder in the Spanish Zone would work to French benefit. Although their intentions cannot definitively be established, there is considerable evidence that French officials privately hoped the “difficult and disagreeable” Spanish would fail in their mission to effectively control the northern zone.<sup>49</sup>

On 30 November 1912, the ink on the Hispano-French treaty barely dry, Silvestre defied Luque's order of restraint and took it upon himself to attack Raisuni's compound at Asilah. As Raisuni's forces scattered, Silvestre's men freed the pasha's prisoners and imprisoned his family. Luque publicly denounced Silvestre's insubordinate act, but understood that a strike against the brigand was necessary for Spain to achieve mastery over its portion of the protectorate, and refused Silvestre's offer of resignation. Raisuni also escaped without punishment. To arrest or kill a man who was, after all, an official of the French-backed sultan—and easily the most popular figure in northern Morocco—would hardly have been prudent. Rather than take Raisuni out, the Spanish command followed Silvestre's strike with an olive branch, offering him compensation for the destruction of his Asilah palace. Raisuni accepted the indemnity but refused to submit to the Spanish-appointed caliph and repaired again to the hills.

The outbreak of World War I brought Raisuni into relations with the German and Ottoman empires, which proved excellent sources of armaments and political capital. The kaiser's reputation as a friend of Islam, solidified in October 1914 with the Ottoman entry on the side of the Central Powers, permitted Raisuni to gain the advantages of a European patron without compromising his anticolonial populist appeal. Raisuni declared to the inhabitants of the Tingitana that the time had come to liberate Islam from the French, announcing in 1915 that the German army had marched into Paris, something he certainly knew to be false thanks to his sophisticated intelligence network in Tangier.<sup>50</sup> The story of Raisuni's exploits during the war belongs to Chapter 6; for the moment, it suffices to take note of his deft avoidance of committing loyalty to any single power. Despite his public embrace of pro-Turk, pro-German politics, Raisuni's plan was never to pin his chance for success to German coattails. He stopped short of accepting formal protection from Germany. He certainly did not carry out the German bidding, which would have had him march his men south to take on the French directly.<sup>51</sup> Though not averse to the prospect of a German triumph, he was probably too influenced by good relations with British and Americans in Tangier to stake his position on it. When a German emissary explained to him in early 1918 that "the German victory was now assured," the sharif was said to have replied, "I shall believe that the Germans have won the war when my English friends acknowledge that they have lost it."<sup>52</sup>

In one sense, it is possible to conclude that Raisuni emerged from the war stronger than ever—well supplied by the Germans with rifles and, according to Moroccan informants, poison gas grenades as well.<sup>53</sup> But his greatest strategic asset, the diluted nature of sovereign power in northern Morocco, depreciated considerably following Germany's defeat. The French foreign minister spoke of a "friendly spirit" between Spain, France, and their respective Moroccan vassals, that would quickly "liberate . . . the Spanish Zone of Morocco from all constraints imposed by Germany on the entire Sharifian Empire."<sup>54</sup> Although this cooperation would prove narrow and short-lived, all four parties coincided for the first time in their desire to pursue Raisuni. In July 1919, the way was opened when men under Raisuni's command ambushed a Spanish detachment near Ceuta, using Spanish rifles (some even donning Spanish uniforms) to kill hundreds of colonial Spanish troops.<sup>55</sup> In response, the caliph, with French approval, declared Raisuni an outlaw. Spanish forces gradually pushed into the Tingitana interior, eventually surrounding Raisuni at his nearby stronghold at Tazrout by May 1922. With few options remaining to him, Raisuni attempted to gain protection from the French residency, which responded lukewarmly, agreeing only to safeguard his property. Pushed eastward into the Rif, Raisuni was finally captured at Tazrout in early 1925, not by a European army, but by Abd el-Krim—another German quasi protégé from the Great War, who was leading a rebellion in the Rif. Bereft of options and weary from years of adventurism, Raisuni died a prisoner in April 1925.<sup>56</sup>

### Juan March: Mediterranean Robber Baron

If Raisuni earned a place in popular memory as the "last of the Barbary pirates," he might have found a kindred spirit in the Spanish merchant Juan March. The first biography of March was published under the title *The Last Pirate of the Mediterranean*—and its entire stock purchased almost immediately by March himself, not wishing to see this unflattering portrayal disseminated.<sup>57</sup> What could the distinguished Majorcan entrepreneur, politician, financier, and philanthropist possibly have shared in common with the notorious brigand of the Tingitana? March came from a minor commercial family of unclear origins, nothing comparable to Raisuni's ancient noble lineage. March continued in commerce,

abandoning his family's livestock business for tobacco, whereas Raisuni peddled in ransom and extortion. Raisuni ended up defeated and imprisoned, while March retired with unsurpassed wealth and a reputation for generosity. Yet these differences may be accidents of fate. For both men, ruthlessness and unscrupulousness in business translated readily to politics. Each was alternately courted and persecuted by his sovereign, and each managed to engineer a prison break. They both excelled at the art of populist politics, a skill that helped them to enhance their power at the expense of central sovereign authority. Their greatest allies were borders themselves, which permitted them to drift between competing jurisdictions, gain protections—and even provide protections to their immense clans—as the pursuit of wealth and power dictated.

Like Raisuni, March's enterprise issued from existing practices in the western Mediterranean region during this period. His ambition and aptitude may have been exceptional, but his methods were not. By the time March began trafficking in tobacco in 1905, generations of smugglers had exposed the hapless enforcement of the state tobacco monopoly (held by the *Compañía Arrendataria de Tabacos*, or CAT, since 1887). At the age of twenty-four, March purchased a tobacco factory in Algiers from an exiled Spanish Carlist, hiring the son as manager.<sup>58</sup> March's transporters copied the techniques of their predecessors, registering his ships in Gibraltar and Oran, where acquiring tobacco for export was perfectly legal, and transferring buoyant wooden boxes of merchandise from one vessel to another on open water by moonlight. This kind of operation thrived when the region's various maritime patrol agencies and port authorities did not coordinate their efforts or enforce a single set of laws. The Act of Algeciras of 1906 threatened the enterprise, however, by creating a tobacco monopoly for Morocco under the aegis of several European signatories. The CAT was the first to hold this monopoly, and for a brief period thereafter, French and Spanish patrols cooperated to enforce it, capturing thirty of March's vessels in a single raid in 1907.<sup>59</sup>

Undeterred, March prepared for battle. To do so, he adopted gangster methods, using bribes and threats to recruit Spanish Civil Guard and CAT sentries to his service. He moved his operations from Algiers to Gibraltar and joined forces with established smugglers. In time, March built a far-flung intelligence network that encompassed much of the Strait and Alboran Sea. One biographer estimates that March's mercantile enterprise had as many as forty thousand people on his payroll, ranging from customs agents to maritime spies. Not yet possessing a formal claim to

political power like Raisuni or many an Andalusian cacique, March could not harbor protégés *sensu strictu*, but he did protect those who worked on his behalf, underwriting generous unemployment insurance for government agents who risked their careers by collaborating with him.<sup>60</sup> Ship captains and dockworkers tended not to ask questions, but those possessing any knowledge were more fearful of March than of the police. On one occasion in 1909, an informer was given “sand shoes,” buried to the neck on a Majorcan beach at low tide and left gradually to drown as the tide rose.<sup>61</sup> March was also implicated in the murder of a business associate’s son, a charge that was never proved.

Recognizing the futility of competing with so ruthlessly efficient an enterprise as March’s, the CAT withdrew. A French firm assumed the monopoly in 1910, which in turn sold directly to March the subsidiary right to control the tobacco trade in what would become the Spanish Zone of northern Morocco in 1912. By doing so, the French were giving up not a major market but only a poor and thinly populated corridor already known as a smuggler’s haven. But March, well versed in the functioning of regional trade, envisioned possibilities invisible to Parisian managers. March had his sights set on another key tobacco market, the rapidly growing military populations of Ceuta and Melilla, which as sovereign Spanish territories remained subject to the older CAT monopoly on the Spanish market. Now possessing legal cover of a concession in the Spanish Zone, March established a tobacco warehouse at Cabo de Agua, on Morocco’s north coast near Melilla. His presence there gained him entry into the smuggling networks operating between Morocco and the two Spanish exclaves. From his experience in peninsular Spain, he knew the CAT stocks at Ceuta and Melilla could not compete with higher-quality, lower-cost tobacco smuggled from Gibraltar or Algeria. Access to these two markets enabled March to cement his relations with Moroccan (especially Riffian) trading networks and with the Spanish colonial officer corps, greatly enhancing his influence in the years to follow.<sup>62</sup>

Contemporary investigators and historians have speculated that, in addition to supplying the tobacco for the entirety of the Spanish colonial army, March funneled contraband arms to Riffian tribes. Suspicions that March was supplying arms to Bu Hmara were likely true but never substantiated. If he did sell arms to Riffians, the decision to do so was almost certainly commercial rather than political, although the line separating these two categories was admittedly blurred. According to one biographer,

March would have netted a 300 percent profit from the direct sale of an average European rifle at Cabo de Agua, while arms suppliers with more deeply political motives historically tended to provide credit.<sup>63</sup> Similar accusations would follow March after the Rif rebellion of 1921—a subject to be taken up in Chapter 7—with one noteworthy constant: March survived one inquest after another, but his accusers rarely did.

March's eagerness to engage both sides of a conflict for private gain signaled his loyalty to no one but himself. Like Raisuni, he tended to regard political alliances as though they were commercial transactions, unencumbered by ideas, principles, or even long-term strategic considerations. With the outbreak of World War I, March found himself awash in new opportunities. He used his large fleet to provide some eighty thousand Germans passage home from Spain via Italy, and during 1915–1916 supplied fuel to German U-boats operating in the western Mediterranean.<sup>64</sup> At least one biographer has indicated that March also assisted the German effort to supply armaments to Raisuni during World War I, a charge first leveled by the Spanish socialist politician Indalecio Prieto directly following the war.<sup>65</sup> March exerted his dominance in regional shipping not only with his own fleet but also through his ability to offer the most lucrative contracts—in tobacco, of course, but now also petroleum and other supplies to sell to the Germans. He orchestrated the merger of several shipping firms operating between the Spanish Levant, Balearics, Canaries, and the Maghrib, to form what would become the region's dominant transporter of passengers and goods, the *Compañía Transmediterránea*. French intelligence suspected the new Spanish shipping conglomerate of participating in a broader German conspiracy centered in Palma de Majorca, providing cover to German-led efforts to move contraband goods and arms into Morocco.<sup>66</sup>

Although the French were never able to implicate March directly for the duration of the war, their skepticism over his intentions contrasted sharply with British enthusiasm. The British wanted intelligence on German U-boat activity in and around the Strait of Gibraltar, which March gladly provided, but were little concerned with Spain or Morocco per se. March used his extensive private intelligence network to provide the British with information on German U-boat movements. One of *Transmediterránea's* largest stakeholders, José Juan Dominé, was known to be a British agent.<sup>67</sup> March asked for nothing in return, but British goodwill was a critical asset in sustaining contraband operations in the Bay of

Gibraltar and the Strait. On at least one occasion, the Royal Navy scuttled a CAT assault on one of March's tobacco rigs. But the relative success of German submarine warfare in the Mediterranean suggests Britain may have gotten the short end of the deal.<sup>68</sup>

March's exploits opened a dilemma for Spain's dynastic elite. His smuggling empire generated great wealth for the national shipping sector but fueled domestic corruption and deprived the government of considerable revenue. In 1916, the prominent conservative politician Manuel Allendesalazar spearheaded an inquiry into March's contraband tobacco operations, claiming they cost the national treasury twenty-five million to thirty million pesetas annually. The Count of Romanones stood up on the Cortes floor to laud Allendesalazar's efforts. But the Anglophile prime minister may not have fully appreciated the extent of cooperation between British naval intelligence and the Spanish Mediterranean shipping industry. March invited Romanones to Majorca, where he was dined and fêted. Soon Romanones not only dropped his support for Allendesalazar's investigation but also even became a major shareholder in Transmediterránea.<sup>69</sup> Such were Juan March's powers of persuasion.

Forces never aligned to bring down March as they had for Bu Hmara and Raisuni, but all three were remarkable figures by any estimation. This chapter has analyzed how their enterprises thrived in an atmosphere of diluted or ambiguous sovereign power, allowing them to amass considerable regional power and influence. These conditions continued to figure significantly in the regional order. The next chapter turns to World War I, which laid bare the contradictory set of international legal and political requirements prevailing on Spain and Morocco.



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# 6

## Illusory Neutrality, 1914–1918

**AGAINST SOVEREIGN WISHES** and popular sentiment, the Strait of Gibraltar drew both Spain and Morocco into the European conflict of 1914. The far western Mediterranean formed the linchpin of the Entente: a major Anglo-French friction point resolved by creating a Spanish Zone in northern Morocco to separate the French Maghrib from the British maritime corridor. Germany, whose government had once stated that it had no ambitions in the region, now sent agents to Spain and Morocco to seek the friendship of those who might help it to destabilize the Entente order. Like their French and British counterparts, the Germans engaged with Spaniards and Moroccans in commercial, political, and military endeavors, leaving a significant stamp on the region's fortunes, if not so much the war's outcome.<sup>1</sup> The postwar settlement of 1919 scarcely affected the western Mediterranean, confirming for many Spanish nationalists that their government's "fatal neutrality"—as one pro-Entente polemicist put it—had ruined a golden opportunity to redeem their long-standing claims on Gibraltar and Tangier.<sup>2</sup> In the absence of major battles or territorial adjustments in the Strait, historians of Spain and Morocco have instead located the war's consequences chiefly in the national political culture. The war caused socioeconomic upheavals and ideological clashes that radicalized politics in neutral Spain and Spanish Morocco, much as they had in belligerent countries like Russia and Italy—forming a crucible for postwar revolutionary movements like anarchosyndicalism in Barcelona and Abd el-Krim's Islamic republicanism in the Rif.<sup>3</sup>

This chapter turns the focus back to the experience of the war itself, emphasizing its direct impact on the political conjuncture of the

trans-Gibraltar space. Specifically, it examines German efforts to exploit ambiguities in borderland governance to undermine both Spanish and Moroccan commitments to the Entente. By establishing covert arrangements with a range of officials and private individuals in both countries, the German presence pried apart an order based on the contradictory principles of international access and Entente hegemony. For the Spanish government, which controlled most of the region's coastal territories, German activities presented a particular dilemma: meeting the obligations of wartime neutrality appeared to require abrogating the treaties at the heart of the Entente. As the designated administrator of Morocco's north coast, how could the Spanish honor their commitment to keep Morocco open to foreign merchants (including Germans), per the Algeciras Act of 1906, while simultaneously respecting the pro-French sultan's unitary foreign policy over the entire realm?

Efforts to reconcile these conflicting obligations in a manner favorable to the Entente masked rising mistrust, particularly between Spanish and French protectorate officials. The Spanish government's generally pro-Entente neutrality made a modest contribution to the defeat of the Central Powers, mainly by guaranteeing the reliable provisioning of Gibraltar and delivering raw materials to feed Entente war industries. But it also contrasted sharply with the prevailing pro-German attitude among Spanish colonial officers in Morocco.<sup>4</sup> Many, if not most, of them suspected that the French were angling to expel the Spanish from Morocco altogether, and therefore welcomed the prospect of German assistance. The Spanish government's main tool for keeping its colonial officers' Germanophilia in check was its power to appoint the high commissioner of the Spanish Zone, whose headquarters were established in Tétouan when the Spanish occupied that city in 1913. But the North African garrisons of Ceuta and Melilla, though nominally part of the peninsular chain of command, possessed a reputation for flouting government directives and behaving like "independent cantons," as one Spanish minister of state put it.<sup>5</sup> Official neutrality for the duration of the war thus belied Spain's Janus-faced conduct on its southern borderlands.

At the outbreak of war, the Spanish prime minister Eduardo Dato offered a simple but pregnant declaration: "The Moroccan problem," he insisted, "is above all a national matter, and its development shall not in any way influence the foreign policy of Spain."<sup>6</sup> But the line separating the domestic from the foreign—rarely as clear as politicians wish to believe—was but a faint blur in the Moroccan protectorate. If Spanish neutrality in

the European war was straightforward from the peninsular perspective, it was less clear precisely how this would work south of the Strait. How could a pro-Entente state (Morocco) be partially administered by a neutral military authority, the Spanish High Commission in Tétouan? To comply with the requirements of neutrality, Tétouan continued to permit Germans to reside and practice their trades in the Spanish Zone, arguing that to expel them would violate the terms set down in Algeciras and reconfirmed after the Agadir crisis of 1911. Spanish Morocco and peninsular Spain were attractive landing points for Germans fleeing from throughout colonial Africa and beyond. Thousands set up shop on the littorals of the western Mediterranean channel, and many worked with locals to evade British controls on shipping in the Strait or stir anti-Entente activity.

On both shores, Spanish military and civilian officials and private individuals ignored their government's order to exercise "the strictest neutrality" and instead took advantage of German presence to advance a range of goals. In these circumstances, the Spanish prohibition of any "hostile act that could be considered contrary to the most perfect neutrality" proved, for lack of both resources and will, impossible to enforce.<sup>7</sup> Juan March, who used his vast smuggling fleet to sell petroleum and intelligence to German and British vessels operating the western Mediterranean, was only the most egregious example. Others conspired to help Germany overcome Britain's conditional blockade of the Strait by hiding petroleum, wolfram, and other war contraband inside fruit stocks, or by facilitating German contact with anti-French tribal militias in Morocco.<sup>8</sup> Thousands of agents operated in the service of all three powers on Spain's Mediterranean coasts. While British authorities in Gibraltar, who long enjoyed good relations with neighboring districts of Andalusia, stepped confidently into this web of intrigue, the French regarded Spanish neutrality with considerable suspicion. French military intelligence was sensitive to any signs of German-Spanish cooperation, providing the historian a rich source of information on espionage and covert warfare, even if it was prone to exaggeration at least some of the time. These developments probably did little to shape the wider conflict but must be regarded as crucial prelude to the antagonisms and savage violence to visit Morocco and Spain in the decades to follow.

### Germany in the Western Mediterranean

The German search for influence in what was becoming an Anglo-French lake predated the war by decades. The project of Kaiser Wilhelm II

to rehabilitate the Ottoman Empire is well known, but Imperial Germany also looked toward Spain, another bygone power shaken by colonial wars and chronic civil conflict, and, also like the Ottomans, perched uneasily amid an Anglo-French imperial sphere. As early as 1881, German chancellor Otto von Bismarck sent the propagandist Adolf von Konring to Madrid to promote a common sense of Hispano-German mission in Africa, and during the Berlin Conference of 1884–1885, he floated the idea of a Riffian state under Spanish suzerainty.<sup>9</sup> German military concerns attempted to purchase terrains in the Chafarinas in 1885 and the Canaries in 1907, two Spanish archipelagoes near Moroccan coastlines, leading to scandal in Spain.<sup>10</sup> In March 1904, Wilhelm II met Alfonso XIII at Vigo, where he told the young Spanish king that he possessed no territorial ambitions in Morocco. This policy was underscored by multiple declarations to the Spanish press by the German ambassador in Madrid to the effect that his government desired “to elevate the status of Spain to first place in Morocco.”<sup>11</sup>

Even when Wilhelm II made his theatrical stand in favor of Moroccan independence at Tangier in March 1905, a message of Hispano-German solidarity lay just below the surface. The Anglo-French Entente of 1904 rested on Spanish participation, but the German foreign ministry believed that Spain could be peeled away from the agreement. On landing in Tangier, the kaiser received a warm welcome from the city’s Spanish community, as depicted in Figure 6.1. They adorned his parade route with flowers, and “from each garland bedecked with German and Spanish flags hung the sign, ‘*Viva el Emperador Alemán*.’”<sup>12</sup> The kaiser invited Alfonso XIII to travel to Berlin on 1 September—the eve of Sedan Day. But the Spanish king rebuffed the invitation, electing instead to meet a British delegation at Gibraltar. From there, he sailed for London to further his courtship of Victoria Eugenia of Battenberg, a niece of King Edward VII of Great Britain, which resulted in a marriage that appeared to consummate Spain’s position in the Entente system.<sup>13</sup> The German pursuit of Spanish friendship resumed in 1911, when a second Moroccan crisis again elevated tensions with the Entente. In Madrid, the French military attaché reported that his German counterpart was telling “every Spaniard he has the occasion to meet” that “Germany would support Spanish ambitions” in Morocco, and that “action must be taken without delay” to prevent the sultanate from falling into French hands.<sup>14</sup> At the peak of the crisis, Gabriel Maura, a Spanish parliamentary deputy and son of a distinguished conservative leader, felt obligated to declare to the *Deutsche Revue* of Stuttgart, “Spain and Germany have no solidarity of interests.”<sup>15</sup>



**FIGURE 6.1.** Spanish postcard commemorating visit of Kaiser Wilhelm II (mounted on white horse) to Tangier, 31 March 1905. Standing ahead of Wilhelm, identified by his white beard, is Harry MacLean, the “Scottish Caid,” artillery instructor to the sultan’s army.

*Source:* Author’s collection.

After World War I began, Germany aggressively pursued Spanish support. The German ambassador to Madrid, Max von Ratibor, expressed openly and frequently his government’s willingness to deliver Gibraltar and Tangier (along with a free hand in Portugal) should Spain collaborate in a German victory.<sup>16</sup> Spain’s Germanophile press, led by Torcuato Luca de

Tena's *ABC*, presented the two exclaves as exhibits A and B in the case for declaring independence from the Entente sphere—and given the long histories of antagonism, it was not difficult to find readers who were either Anglophobic or Francophobic, if not both.<sup>17</sup> In 1915, Spain's senior conservative statesman, Antonio Maura (anticipating Gabriele D'Annunzio's famous 1919 call to arms over the Entente's refusal to deliver Italy its irredentist prizes) urged his countrymen to “keep alive the claim [on Tangier] and make public protest if this Spanish right is mutilated and swept aside.”<sup>18</sup> But overall the Spanish government proved too firm to be tempted by Ratibor's overtures and, unlike Italy, would not enter the war for the sake of gaining an irredentist claim. The Count of Romanones, the paragon of Restoration liberalism, believed, perhaps quixotically, that Spain's pro-Entente neutrality would pave the way to a favorable revision of the Morocco settlement. In the end, however, France would bar any such discussion. The only initiative coming from within the Entente to reward Spanish goodwill came in April 1917, when the British government established a commission to study a Gibraltar-Ceuta swap, an idea that once again went nowhere.<sup>19</sup>

German efforts in the western Mediterranean were not limited to failed attempts at flattering Spanish irredentism. Far more consequential was Germany's unofficial presence at Spanish Mediterranean ports from Algeciras to Melilla to Barcelona. The presence of some twenty German nationals in Málaga on the war's outbreak already caught British and French notice, and the relatively small cadre of Germans residing in Spain at the start of the war would quickly be overwhelmed by a mass arrival of German technicians and industrialists evacuating from Portugal, South America, and French territories of North and West Africa. Although many found passage home, Entente sources estimated that eighty thousand in all spent the war in Spain and Spanish Morocco, where they engaged in combinations of commerce, industry, diplomacy, and espionage. That figure, which would quadruple the number of Germans in Spain at the height of World War II, may be inflated, but the impact of German entrepreneurship in these places during the Great War was nonetheless unmistakable. By 1915, Málaga alone counted nineteen German-owned export firms, along with a watchmaker, two chemical companies, and an electrical firm. The region's prosperity during the war years was due in some measure to this introduction of German expertise. Hispano-German firms exported fabrics, shoes, and other light manufactured goods to both zones of Morocco via Tangier and Larache.<sup>20</sup>

Industrial collaboration frequently included a political component. A French intelligence officer later claimed that by the last phase of the war, German “activity was evident in all major matters; they try to monopolize all Spanish industry and commerce; they are not embarrassed to openly declare, ‘Spain will become the best German colony.’”<sup>21</sup> The French resident general in Rabat, Hubert Lyautey, reduced the German merchant’s overseas wartime activities to a concise stereotype: “Espionage,” he observed, “is instinctive among the Germans.”<sup>22</sup> Patriotism undoubtedly led many of them to serve the wartime cause. Like Britain and France, Germany developed a network of agents in ports and commercial centers across Mediterranean Spain, where information was sold and contraband was cleared in transactions that plausibly resembled the legitimate activity of a neutral country. Some Germans engaged in sending war contraband from Spain across the Alboran Sea and into Morocco, where they hoped it would reach anti-French tribes. They also acted as liaisons to recruit informants among the Spanish and Moroccan populations. The Spanish suburbs of Gibraltar formed a particularly intensive site of such activity. Several lookout points along Gibraltar Bay afforded views of British naval operations and became “filled with German agents” as early as October 1914, in Lyautey’s estimation.<sup>23</sup> Although Algeciras and the Campo de Gibraltar in general tended toward Anglophilia—especially in light of the wartime employment boom—there was always sufficient discontentment to be found and placed in service of the German cause. The German consular agent subsidized two local newspapers in Algeciras. In early 1916 the British consul in Seville discovered an ongoing German effort to foment radicalism among Spanish miners in the region employed by British mining firm Río Tinto. Although connections existed between German agents and strike leaders and other revolutionary activists (including the noted anarchosindicalist Ángel Pestaña), it is not likely that German support was decisive in the strike wave that began in 1917.<sup>24</sup>

The most ambitious of the German attempts to attain influence in the region was carried out by the Mannesmann brothers, mining prospectors who began looking to exploit the iron deposits and fluid politics of the Rif in the years before World War I. The brothers Max and Reinhard were chiefly entrepreneurs, but their endeavor coincided with Reich imperial policy, and they gained the support of German diplomatic officers in places like Málaga, Tangier, and Melilla.<sup>25</sup> In 1910, the government of Spanish prime minister José Canalejas denied a Mannesmann petition to



charter a mining company that would have included rights to subdue local populations by force of arms. Undeterred, the brothers pressed forward on their own. Working from an office in Melilla, they established direct tribal liaisons in the Tingitana and Rif, offering lavish payments and German protection cards in exchange for access to unused beachheads and mineral deposits. In 1910, the Oran press reported that Germans had purchased sixteen mining concessions directly from some of the same tribes that had sabotaged Spanish development the previous year. A German misfit dressed as a Moroccan tribesman was detected traversing the eastern Rif, giving away German flags, pistols, and bullets, and spreading rumors that the Makhzan army was preparing to expel the French and Spanish.<sup>26</sup> Although the Riffians gave little credit to this particular German adventurer, within two years the Melilla command would discover that Riffian agents were distributing small German flags in the Spanish Zone at Al Hoceima, along with messages of Muslim-German friendship.<sup>27</sup> Officials of the Reich embraced the anti-French implications of such activity: the German military attaché in Madrid reportedly declared in 1913 that, even after the failed gambit at Agadir in 1911, “Morocco continues to be where we can most cripple France.”<sup>28</sup> But the Reich would not yet find a collaborator in the Spanish government, which publicly rejected the Mannesmann plan late in 1913.<sup>29</sup>

Any remaining illusion that the mines formed an exclusively mercantile operation disappeared in August 1914. The Mannesmann brothers promptly signed on to the German war effort. They committed themselves to stirring anti-French militancy in Morocco, and their agents became German imperial protégés.<sup>30</sup> Max and Reinhard themselves abandoned Melilla for the relative safety of Marbella, a small seaside resort west of Málaga, from where they could remain engaged in Morocco while maintaining a direct line to their Spanish liaison residing at Madrid’s Palace Hotel.<sup>31</sup> Engineers in their employ continued with risky but potentially lucrative prospecting forays into the Riffian interior. According to the American mining engineer Courtney DeKalb, these agents “on more than one occasion were murdered,” and their mining contracts “offered quietly for sale in the commercial centers.”<sup>32</sup> Even so, Mannesmann claimed three thousand square miles of subsoil rights in the Rif by 1918. Iron ore was shipped in Spanish vessels from Melilla, a neutral port not subject to the Entente blockade. Throughout the war years, pro-German Spanish officers at Melilla netted substantial commissions by facilitating such activity.<sup>33</sup>

German activities in the Rif were not limited to mine prospecting, but also aimed to advance other political and military objectives. First

among these was to foment discord in the French Zone and the sultanate's Atlantic heartland. Spanish Morocco provided a haven for both German expatriates and anti-French Moroccan resisters.<sup>34</sup> The two groups appeared to find common cause, as Mannesmann agents tapped into interior tribal transport networks and supplied anti-French tribes with light machine guns of the most sophisticated type yet available to Moroccans. The Germans moreover hoped to exploit their alliance with Ottoman Turkey to build prestige as friend of Islam and enemy of the colonial powers. Positive impressions were reinforced by posters on display wherever a German agent was present: the kaiser "makes no war against Islam," read the Arabic-language signs, "and orders France to free Muslim prisoners of war and hand them over to the sultan of Constantinople as Caliph of the Muslim world." Other posters asserted that the recruitment of Moroccan men of military age to fight for France in Europe was a way to "get rid of them" before they could join the independence struggle.<sup>35</sup>

Among the enthusiastic Germanophiles of the Rif was the prominent Abd el-Krim family, Spanish protégés and collaborators with the Melilla garrison since 1902. In 1914, at the age of thirty-two, the elder son became qadi of Melilla, a position that brought him into a close working relationship with the Spanish military administration, while his younger brother was awarded a subvention from the Spanish government to study civil engineering. Soon after the outbreak of the Great War, the Abd el-Krim family came to believe that, among the European powers operating in Morocco, Germany's interests were most closely aligned with those of the Riffian people. Not only was Germany unique among the Great Powers for having no Muslim colonial subjects, it was also the greatest supporter of the Ottoman Empire. Support for the sole Islamic belligerent and its major ally was not unusual in tribal circles, but pro-Spanish Moroccan informants reported that Abd el-Krim (father) was making subversive calls for the Ottoman sultan to replace the pro-French Yusef as sovereign of the Rif, and that Abd el-Krim (son) was seeking to attain political supremacy in Melilla.<sup>36</sup> Such activities laid bare the risks the Spanish colonial officers were taking by allowing the Germans in, but for the moment the temptation to expel France from Morocco overwhelmed other considerations.

### Germano-Hispano-Moroccan Intrigues

Germany's image as a counterweight to French hegemony appealed not only to Moroccan resisters but to many Spaniards as well. German

support of Moroccan rebellions against French domination aligned with a tradition of Spanish Africanismo—dating from the time of Francisco Merry y Colom and Joaquín Costa—that envisioned a revived and friendly sultanate as a partner in keeping French expansionism at bay. A rift was thus opened between a government in Madrid eager to flatter the liberal powers and a colonial administration deeply mistrustful of French intentions. On summer holiday in San Sebastián as the war broke out, Alfonso XIII assured the French ambassador Léon Geoffroy of his nation’s commitment to the “intimate understanding that exists between the two countries.”<sup>37</sup> Yet from Rabat, Lyautey soon grew suspicious of Spanish neutrality. It was not that the top French commander in Morocco doubted the Spanish king’s sincerity. He believed Alfonso XIII and his government were “desirous . . . to observe toward us an attitude of benevolent neutrality in the present conflict.” But Lyautey nevertheless feared that Madrid’s good will might be insufficient to quell the “Germanophile and Francophobe demonstrations” observed throughout the Spanish Zone among Moroccans and the Spanish officer corps alike.<sup>38</sup> “The correctness of the king and his government are undeniable,” he cabled to Paris in December 1914, but the fact remained that “German-Islamic action is reaching acute levels in the south of Spain and in Melilla.”<sup>39</sup>

Lyautey well understood that German activity in the western Mediterranean had little to do with recruiting Madrid into the Central Powers. German attention was focused on gaining advantage in the peripheral areas, especially the north-south maritime corridor of the Alboran Sea that linked Europe to French positions in North Africa. After German legations were expelled from Naples and Palermo, Barcelona became the new distribution point for pro-German propaganda bound for North Africa from Alexandria to Ifni.<sup>40</sup> German consuls recruited informants from the ranks of Madrid and Barcelona police inspectors, and Spain’s Mediterranean ports were particularly useful to the Germans for running supplies to Riffian collaborators. The shipping firm *Transatlántica*, based in Barcelona, was considered “Germanophile” by French intelligence for allegedly aiding German exporters to channel armaments from Cádiz, Málaga, Barcelona, and Almería, into Morocco via Melilla and Ceuta.<sup>41</sup> Another shipping firm implicated in arms running was the *Correo África*, a small postal contractor acquired by the pro-Juan March *Transmediterránea* empire in 1916.<sup>42</sup>

Although German activities could remain hidden in the urban fabric of the Iberian Peninsula, they were far more conspicuous on the opposite

shore. Melilla became the capital of Spanish Germanophilia, a sentiment felt among careerist officers and the civilian population alike.<sup>43</sup> The French representative there, General Paul-Prosper Henrys, drew a portrait of a Melilla—and indeed of most of Spanish Morocco outside the officialdom of Tétouan—in which Spanish officers remained in the majority pro-German, many actively so. Clemente Cerdeira, a Spanish Arabist and longtime consular official, confessed to a French colleague in 1921 that “the majority of Spanish officials” in Morocco had based their activities “on the premise of [France’s] defeat.”<sup>44</sup> In Melilla, local police, army officers, and even a family of Moroccan-Jewish shopkeepers served as liaisons between the Germans and Riffian tribesmen.<sup>45</sup> The Spanish exclave provided refuge for men like Albrecht Bartels, a German merchant in French Morocco who on the outbreak of war became an anti-French militia leader. In his self-serving memoir, Bartels recounts how he evaded the Civil Guard in Melilla in 1915 by variously disguising himself as an Arab and as a Jew, despite French pressure to arrest him. Such a stunt could not likely have been carried off without help from Spanish officials, who on other occasions had fêted him and fed his entourage.<sup>46</sup>

Melilla also became a key deposit point for German armaments destined for anti-French militias. With the complicity of a Spanish lieutenant colonel, contraband munitions reached the port of Melilla well camouflaged among the high volume of sacks of cement arriving each day from Málaga for a major port expansion. Rather more clumsily, cannon were disguised as pianos. Although tens of thousands of Germans left Spain in 1914, a more clandestine current flowed in the other direction. Most arrived via Portugal and Tangier, although at least four individuals arrived on a ship from Genoa, hiding inside more pianos!<sup>47</sup> A German mining engineer variously called Farle and Lang, along with two Hispano-German jewelers, used Melilla as a bridgehead to establish pro-German networks among the tribes of the eastern Rif, all financed from a Málaga bank account under the pretext of mine prospecting.<sup>48</sup> Support from Spanish officials was crucial to the German operations, which required not only offloading the disguised arms shipments at the port of Melilla but also transferring them across tribal lands of the interior. Henrys also believed Spanish officers were helping the Germans to access the river Moulouya, which carved a valley between the Rif and Middle Atlas ranges that formed the only clear passage from the Mediterranean to the Atlantic and the French stronghold. French interrogation of a German prisoner revealed

that fifteen German officers and thirty German soldiers were freely roaming between Melilla and the Moulouya valley by April 1915, probably accompanied by Ottoman counterparts.<sup>49</sup>

No major operation in northern Morocco could ignore Raisuni. The brigand reached the height of his powers during World War I, his clan accessing a steady supply of armaments from Hispano-German networks in Ceuta and Tangier (mostly captured French materiel). By mid-1915, Raisuni's increasingly public identification with the German-Ottoman cause made it more urgent for the Spanish to come to terms with him, but also more difficult without further upsetting the French.<sup>50</sup> High Commissioner José Marina was prepared to grant Raisuni institutional legitimacy within the protectorate framework by appointing him caliph of the Spanish Zone, but only on the condition that he travel to Madrid and express his allegiance directly before the Spanish king. The offer was attractive, but for Raisuni to do so would have meant breaking faith with all he had lived for. As his Spanish escort approached Tangier harbor, the warlord lost his nerve—a missed opportunity he later lamented might have prevented the Rif War of 1921–1926.<sup>51</sup> Instead, Raisuni continued his open defiance of Spanish incursions. In December 1915, he expelled two Spanish officers from their stations in Ksar el-Kebir for espionage; two months later, when two Spanish protégés were murdered nearby, Raisuni refused to pay an indemnity or move to apprehend the perpetrators.<sup>52</sup>

But in a world where acts of hostility were often the opening round of a negotiation, the Spanish colonial army was not ready to abandon its courtship of Raisuni. As reward for fruitful collaboration, many in its ranks expected that a triumphant “Germany should give Spain the entire Protectorate of Morocco and Raissouli should be proclaimed sultan.”<sup>53</sup> The Spanish agreed to drop their support for the Anjera (Raisuni's longtime rivals) and place Raisuni on the army's payroll. In exchange, Raisuni offered the hope—illusory though it would prove—of claiming Tangier for the Spanish. Spanish general José Villalba worked with Raisuni to engineer a joint occupation of Tangier. In February 1916, they amassed some thirty-four thousand troops at a distance of twelve miles from the city. Among Raisuni's entourage were a number of Turks and Germans. But the offensive was countermanded from Madrid at the eleventh hour, possibly on account of a British protest. As a wave of disappointment overtook the mobilized encampments, the Spanish proposed redirecting these forces to wrest control of the Tangier-Tétouan road from local militias. But Raisuni would not consent, arguing that to be seen collaborating with the Spanish

against Muslim tribes would undermine his popular legitimacy. To disillusioned junior officers, this proved that “General Raisuni” was using Spanish assistance for his own profit, “waiting to become powerful enough to turn his arms against those who put them in his hands.”<sup>54</sup>

Germany’s other favorite Moroccan proxy was Abd el-Malek el-Meheddin. Grandson of the legendary nineteenth-century Algerian resister Abd el-Kader, Abd el-Malek by his noble birth possessed a key credential for the role of warlord-politician on the Moroccan periphery. Having risen through the Franco-Moroccan administrative service, Abd el-Malek attained the post of chief of the Tangier police. On the outbreak of war in 1914, it thus fell to him to expel enemy subjects from the city, including the German minister. But Abd el-Malek may himself already have been a German agent by this time. He admitted having secretly telephoned the German legation to warn of the imminent expulsion with sufficient lead time to incinerate classified documents.<sup>55</sup> Abd el-Malek then quickly abandoned Tangier for the Rif and declared jihad against the French. German support, with the connivance of Spanish authorities, financed the recruitment of about 1,800 men from tribal districts around Melilla.<sup>56</sup>

Spanish officials also helped the Germans to cultivate alternatives to the sitting pro-French sultan Yusef. Yusef’s two brothers, Abdelaziz and Abdelhafid, who had sat on the throne in succession before Lyautey installed the more pliant Yusef in 1912, both abandoned Morocco for Spain in 1914, where French intelligence believed they maintained comfortable exile with stipends from Germany. Suspicious of Abdelaziz’s potential German ties, the French foreign ministry had summoned him to Bordeaux for questioning in September 1914. The sultan emeritus, claiming he was prone to seasickness, insisted on traveling overland under Spanish escort arranged by the Spanish consul of Tangier. He attended the French interview, but instead of returning to his palace in Tangier, he took up residence in Algeciras, across the Strait and out of French clutches.<sup>57</sup> Abdelhafid, who hitherto also received his pension from France, relocated from Tangier to Barcelona, a major center of German operations. According to local police, Abdelhafid exchanged correspondence with Abd el-Malek, and when the French government withdrew his pension, the German and Turkish governments quickly replenished it. But France retained considerable influence in Madrid, and Abdelhafid’s fortunes could not last. The French ambassador prevailed on Romanones to make sure the ex-sultan was kept incommunicado, so Abdelhafid was soon confined to a house arrest in the isolated mountain town of El Escorial.<sup>58</sup>

## Salvaging the Trans-Gibraltar Entente

As evidence of Hispano-German collaboration accumulated, Lyautey grew impatient with the Spanish government's double game. Already by October 1914, the French general urged his government to "firmly demand an effective neutrality" and hold Spain "responsible for the chronic presence of anti-French insurgents at our border . . . [and] the continuation of contraband traffic in arms and munitions, practiced nearly in the open, by the northern and southern Spanish zones, by the Canaries, and the Spanish ports." Lyautey argued that even as a neutral power, Spain's obligation to the protectorate system of Morocco required the expulsion of German consuls and the use of martial law to root out German-sponsored activity.<sup>59</sup> Lyautey acknowledged that only with Spanish approval could he order the sultan to expel the German and Austrian consuls in the Spanish Zone, but he believed his government should apply pressure on Spain to do so.<sup>60</sup>

Lyautey's seriousness gradually began to register in Madrid. In July 1915, Dato recalled the openly Germanophile José Marina from his post as high commissioner in Tétouan, replacing him with Melilla's military governor, Francisco Gómez Jordana.<sup>61</sup> Jordana quickly moved to place the Abd el-Krim family under stricter surveillance. No longer was it enough to abstain from proclaiming loyalty to the Ottoman Empire—the Abd el-Krims would be held to account for "any act contrary to the strictest neutrality Spain has adopted with respect to the current European conflict."<sup>62</sup> To cast a sharper light on the issue, Jordana arranged the withdrawal of the younger son's engineering scholarship. When the older son confessed to a Spanish interrogator his yearning for the "independence of an unoccupied Rif" and support for "the uprising of all Islam against the Allies," Jordana had little choice but to arrange his detention.<sup>63</sup> As the Germanophile commanding general of Melilla, Luis Aizpuru, confided to Jordana, giving succor to a pro-German family could "push us into an awkward situation with France, which already does not consider this family deserving of the protections Spain offers it."<sup>64</sup>

Jordana made other efforts, some significant, to enforce a neutrality more acceptable to the French. By August, he agreed to suspend interzonal mail service—contravening the principle that open communication across the sultan's realm remain unimpeded—to keep pro-German propaganda out of the French Zone.<sup>65</sup> He also applied pressure on Melilla to tone down



the Germanophilia of its local press and to curtail the free circulation of the many German subjects between the Spanish city and the neighboring tribal domains.<sup>66</sup> Several key Germans were later expelled from Melilla. The leading German operative in 1915–1916, Albrecht Bartels, received an Iron Cross from the Reich but ended the war in a prison on the windswept Castilian plateau at Alcalá de Henares. Jordana's motives for complying with French demands had less to do with ideological preference to the Entente than a fear that France might intervene directly. In October 1915, he recommended to his government that Spain demonstrate its commitment to patrolling for contraband and “always have a boat crossing the coast so that the French do not send their own [vessels] on the pretext that our vigilance is lacking.”<sup>67</sup>

But Jordana's task was made difficult by the sheer prevalence of pro-German sentiment among Africanista officers and civilian inhabitants across the Spanish Zone and in the coastal exclaves. While the Spanish high commissioner enhanced the window dressing of Spanish neutrality, he was unable to impose political discipline on much of the colonial officer corps. Several garrisons flouted the dictates of the royal administration, and now of the High Commission in Tétouan as well. Jordana was also unable to prevail on the Makhzan's direct representative in Melilla, Bashir Ban Sennah, to reconsider his open support for the German cause in the Rif.<sup>68</sup> Economic considerations added to the political difficulties. The French protectorate administration imposed restrictions on grain imports from the Spanish Zone, a move that severely compromised the port industry at Larache. Manuel Fernández Silvestre, the Spanish resident general there, noted that German and Austrian owners of the city's port and railway concessions were inciting popular protests against the French measure.<sup>69</sup>

Although he possessed extensive knowledge of Hispano-German collaboration, Lyautey might have overestimated the effect it would have on the Moroccan populace. The French general wished for Madrid to make some show “so that the indigenous at least realize there is no Hispano-German solidarity,” but he failed to consider that collaboration with Spain might actually have diminished German prestige in the eyes of many Moroccans.<sup>70</sup> For example, reliance on Spanish support hindered the logistical operations of the German-protégé warlord Abd el-Malek, whose supply lines from Melilla were frequently looted by Riffian tribesmen. Winning over certain tribes—those that were predominantly anti-Spanish rather than anti-French—would be difficult for Abd el-Malek as long as



he remained linked to Melilla, a factor that would continue hinder the effectiveness of his campaigns. Abd el-Malek also faced the impossibly subtle task of maintaining German support while placating fears among some Riffian constituencies that Germany's real motive was to replace France and Spain as the colonial power. As a result, mutual mistrust prevailed between Abd el-Malek and Bartels, Germany's chief operative in the Rif, who was continually frustrated by Abd el-Malek's refusal to engage an all-out assault on French lines. Spanish officers, who provided a safe house to Abd el-Malek in Tétouan at points during the conflict, attempted mediation between the two personalities to no avail.<sup>71</sup>

One prominent Riffian figure who did come to Abd el-Malek's aid was the younger Abd el-Krim. In mid-1916, the Spanish High Commission concluded that after a year of imprisonment, the influential young rebel was of greater value as a free man. But a return to Spain's good graces resembled betrayal to many among the increasingly well-armed tribes of the interior, and his family compound was ransacked by some of them in 1917. At that point, Abd el-Krim distanced himself from the Spanish. From the small port of Ajdir, he facilitated the shipment of significant armaments to Abd el-Malek.<sup>72</sup> But Abd el-Malek limited himself to cross-border operations into the extreme eastern reaches of the French Zone throughout 1917 and 1918, mainly ambushes of transport lines, and he would pose only a limited nuisance to the French occupying forces and pro-French tribes.

The Spanish, unable to reap much benefit from German and Ottoman prestige, made a half-hearted return to the French tent. In February 1917, the respective High Commissions of Spain and France reached an extradition treaty between the two zones, creating a mechanism for mutual cooperation in capturing enemies who slipped across the border. But the extradition treaty amounted to little because the predominance of Germanophile sentiment within the Army of Africa thwarted meaningful action. When Abd el-Malek's militia dissolved following the German defeat, its rank-and-file fighters were allowed to disappear into Riffian society, while its leaders, including Abd el-Malek himself, obtained refuge in Melilla.<sup>73</sup> It was not until 1919 that the Spanish turned over approximately sixty of Abd el-Malek's men to the French.<sup>74</sup> Spanish Morocco thus entered the postwar era with two dangerous liabilities: an increasingly armed and motivated anticolonial militia movement and a neighbor and nominal protectorate partner, the French resident general Hubert Lyautey, brimming with antagonism and mistrust.

# 7

## War on the Colonial Borderland, 1919–1926

**IN THE ANNALS** of modern Moroccan political insurgencies, the one led by Abd el-Krim in the 1920s counts among the most successful, having nearly achieved secession and the creation of an independent Riffian state. The Riffians would have seceded from the French-controlled Sultanate of Morocco, but it was the Spanish colonial army, charged with administering the northern zone of the protectorate, that bore the burden of suppressing them. Although Spain was vastly superior by most every operational measure, the defeat of Abd el-Krim required five years of struggle, the imposition of a military dictatorship in Madrid, collaboration with rival French forces, and secret cooperation with France and Germany in the procurement and deployment of chemical weapons. In the meantime, Riffian forces killed and captured more Spaniards than in all previous violent engagements between Moroccans and Europeans combined since the advent of the Alawite state. Their assault on the Spanish outpost of Anual in July 1921 shocked the world and precipitated a political crisis in Spain that ended constitutional monarchy for a half century. When the Riffians attacked, panicked Spanish troops scattered in every direction. “Impelled by terror,” they “looked only to save their skin, abandoning livestock, materiel, armaments” in their flight to safety in Melilla or across French lines.<sup>1</sup> An official total of some eight thousand Spanish soldiers perished (the actual figure was likely higher). From their bodies, some of which were left mutilated in the fashion long typical of warfare in this region, Riffian soldiers lifted enough weaponry to sustain an extended conflict. Anual revealed the weakness of Spain’s colonial occupation, but historical

interpretation of the Rif crisis should not be limited to a bilateral conflict of colonialism and resistance. Abd el-Krim's movement must also be considered in the context of a broad and ongoing multilateral crisis of borderland governance that World War I had only inflamed.

It was no accident that such a rebellion should have prospered at the friction point of multiple empires. We have seen how a series of Great Power compromises had created a sovereign patchwork in the western Mediterranean channel. In this arrangement, the Spanish colonial army was tasked with holding a mountainous portion of north Morocco nestled between the sea and the much larger French imperial sphere. At the nexus of coastal exclaves and inland caravan networks, the Spanish Zone spanned a region especially favorable to political entrepreneurship. A mix of charisma, deft interjurisdictional maneuvering, and *baraka* had catapulted the careers of Bu Hmara, Raisuni, Juan March, and many smaller Spanish and Moroccan figures who managed to exploit the region's peculiarities to their advantage.

What distinguished Abd el-Krim from the earlier slipstream potentates? Contemporaries and most historians have downplayed the similarities, interpreting the Riffian leader as an eminently modern figure who emerged in the revolutionary aftermath of World War I. Abd el-Krim's leading biographer recalls that for Spanish scholars engaged in the antiauthoritarian struggles of the late Franco period, "there was no doubt that Abd el-Krim's movement was a clear precursor to the anti-colonial movements to emerge after World War II."<sup>2</sup> The first generation of Moroccan nationalist intellectuals claimed the legacy of Abd el-Krim for their canon, although the Riffian rebel was never fully clear about whether his ultimate goal was to lead Morocco to independence or simply to secede from the subjugated Alawite sultanate. Postcolonial nationalists pointed out that the Rif movement's chief antagonists were Europeans, who had turned the Alawite dynasty into a puppet regime. In the words of a leading Moroccan nationalist, Abd el-Krim's resistance to the Europeans formed the "greatest manifestation" of the Maghrib's "deep-rooted national consciousness, . . . based upon the right of self-defense."<sup>3</sup> Unlike the subjugated Sultan Yusef, Abd el-Krim brought Morocco into the vanguard of the movement to apply Woodrow Wilson's principle of self-determination beyond Central Europe. He earned the support, for example, of a Catalan nationalist movement hitherto unwilling to sympathize with what a prior generation had considered "uncivilized peoples."<sup>4</sup> In the centers of Islamic culture of

the eastern Mediterranean, Abd el-Krim's project was glorified as a new Al-Andalus. His place in the Salafiyya pantheon of puritanical Islam was secure even after his defeat, which was blamed on the heterodox Sufi confraternities that filled the ranks of his army.<sup>5</sup>

Abd el-Krim is remembered not only as a freedom fighter but also as a modernizer. Rather than taking part in some eternal cycle of Riffian rebelliousness, he set about building "a country with a government and a flag."<sup>6</sup> Not content to follow the model of the Alawite state, based on a precarious system of pacts with tribal leaders, he hoped the language of Islamic struggle against a colonial Christian power would evaporate tribal identities and inculcate a sense of common Riffian belonging.<sup>7</sup> Groomed as a political leader rather than a warlord, Abd el-Krim endeavored to set up a system of uniform taxation and conscription, an administrative apparatus with centralized record keeping, sharia courts, a single currency, and internationally recognized territorial boundaries. Where the Makhzan had sometimes been suspicious of the technological tools of European-style state building, Abd el-Krim told a *Chicago Daily News* reporter of his vision for roads, rail, and telephones, even predicting that "in a few years" his minor Mediterranean port of Ajdir "will be comparable" to Rome and New York.<sup>8</sup> Unlike his contemporary Mustafa Kemal Atatürk, another of pioneer of republicanism in the Islamic world, Abd el-Krim did not seek a secular state but conformed to a type of Islamic modernism that privileged a single, institutional theology, embodied by Sharia law and Salafist teaching. Yet ideas current in Cairo and Beirut notwithstanding, Abd el-Krim also rejected the *andalusista* thesis of eternal struggle against Spain, claiming to aspire only to a small republic with normal relations with its neighbors.<sup>9</sup> If given the chance, Riffian expansionism likely would have moved to the south and west rather than jumping across the Strait to recover the Iberian jewels of early Islam.

Yet it is possible to overstate the novelty of Abd el-Krim's contribution. His rebellion can be placed within a larger pattern with structural roots in the mid-nineteenth century. First, like other slipstream potentates we have examined, he emerged in a political space created by polyvalent imperial rivalry. Having worked on behalf of Germany under Spanish protection during World War I, his post-1918 operations exploited to the fullest the ongoing jealousies between France and Spain and among military and civilian officials within the Spanish government. Furthermore, he relied on the region's contraband networks, particularly arms and foodstuffs from

the ports of Tangier and Gibraltar, and overland from French Morocco and Algeria. Last, while Abd el-Krim himself may have envisioned the Rif as a modern nation-state, his supporters' motivations tended to be quite different. Some formed part of a cycle of holy resistance dating from the French invasion of Algeria in 1830, and many others simply feared the brutal consequences of not signing on to the movement.<sup>10</sup>

### The Postwar Moment and the Protectorate of Morocco

Abd el-Krim's war has dominated the history and memory of Spanish Morocco in the post–World War I period, so it is worth noting that from 1918 to the middle of 1921 it was Hispano-French antagonism that appeared to pose the greatest threat to the precarious protectorate system. Although it could be traced at least to the mid-nineteenth century, the mutual mistrust between the two powers over the Morocco question reached new heights by the end of World War I. The Spanish never lost sight of France's long-term objective to gain control of all Morocco and challenge Britain directly in the Strait. They mistrusted French intentions to make good on promised support, such as a 1911 agreement to collaborate in a Tangier-Fez railway, which would improve access to interior colonial outposts in both French and Spanish Zones. The project was delayed by poor safety reports and other bureaucratic impediments the Spanish suspected were orchestrated by French officers in Rabat, who could not tolerate the possibility of Spanish or even German forces strengthening their interior positions.<sup>11</sup> For their part, French authorities feared that the Spanish High Commission in Tétouan would ally with proindependence Moroccan militias, and possibly some remnants of the German army, to free the northern "caliphate" from their gravitational pull.

There were signs to validate French suspicions. The clearest of these was the name change of Spain's official colonial bulletin. The publication known since 1913 as the *Official Bulletin of the Zone of Spanish Influence in Morocco* was replaced in December 1918 with the more assertive *Official Bulletin of the Spanish Protectorate Zone in Morocco*—a semantic change the French foreign minister Stephen Pichon regarded as "contrary to the [Hispano-French] treaty" of 1912.<sup>12</sup> While it is true that the Spanish government officially hailed the Entente victory for "liberat[ing]" its zone from German "shackles," such language scarcely reflected sentiments among

Spaniards in Morocco.<sup>13</sup> During the war, intrepid German prospectors had generated considerable revenue for Melilla's coffers in the form of port fees and for the Tétouan authority in the form of concession dues.<sup>14</sup> In Tangier, too, the French minister reported that the bulk of the city's Spanish population was Francophobe and "regrets our victory," with the exception of a small class of property owners who welcomed anything that preserved the status quo. Tangier's largest European demographic, Spanish workers, "received with displeasure" the news of the Ottoman defeat, and some joined with Muslims in minor anti-French protests.<sup>15</sup>

Adding to French anxiety about the extent of Hispano-Moroccan Germanophilia was the impression that military cooperation continued after the armistice. Following a visit to the Spain's High War College (*Escuela Superior de Guerra*), the French lieutenant colonel P. Cuverville reported, "A huge majority of Spanish officers still express a boundless admiration for the German army." The German press, he added, "never lets the opportunity slip to flatter Spanish self-esteem [and] warmly praises Spanish operations in Morocco."<sup>16</sup> Alfonso XIII continued to court German support after the Reich's defeat. Impressed by Germany's deployment of poison gas against pro-French tribes in Morocco during the war, the Spanish monarch authorized his military attaché in Berlin to reach out to German chemical firms. A filling station for chemical grenades was installed in Melilla by 1921. French officials in Rabat concurred with their foreign ministry's opinion that Hispano-German collaboration had not ended in 1918. Hubert Lyautey, the resident general, admitted that the Spanish had eventually effected a general expulsion of Germans from northern Morocco, but considered this to be too little too late. Moreover, although the Spanish agreed to turn over sixty to seventy members of Abd el-Malek's anti-French militia, the former German protégé himself received refuge and a pension in Melilla. In a June 1919 letter to Pichon, Lyautey deplored the "large supply of funds, arms, munitions, materiel of all kinds," made available to anti-French causes in northern Morocco, with "the Spanish authorities being either accomplices, favorable, or at best indifferent." Cuverville reported that a former Mannesmann agent who had taken up residence in Barcelona after the war was still orchestrating clandestine shipments of armaments and propaganda to anti-French Moroccan militias. Taking all of this into account, Lyautey expressed his desire to "hold Spain accountable for French blood and treasure spilled in vain because she did not know how to respect neutrality."<sup>17</sup>

The Spanish government's pro-Entente position had acted as a brake on the colonial army's Germanophilia during the war, but this did not carry over into peacetime. The prime minister, the Count of Romanones, shared the conviction of many colonial officers that Spanish Morocco was of little use as a subsidiary administrative zone within an essentially French colony. During the Paris peace conference of 1919, Romanones hoped to raise Spain's profile in Morocco and sought unsuccessfully to gain a seat at the negotiating table. Even though Spain had been neutral in the war, he argued, it had a major stake in the Act of Algeciras and in reaching agreement on an international statute for Tangier.<sup>18</sup> Although denied access to peace conference, Romanones did travel to Paris to meet with Pichon in March 1919, on which occasion he expressed his position that "Spain's rights in Morocco are equal to [France's]." But Pichon could entertain no such thought, for it raised the specter of a quasi-autonomous northern caliphate aligned with Spain and Germany.<sup>19</sup> The new German Republic, faced with the loss of domestic iron sources in Alsace-Lorraine and Silesia, might find common cause with Spanish officials who regarded it as a potential ally in the campaign to elevate Spain's status in the broader protectorate system.

The Act of Algeciras, with its mandate of open internationalism, gave cover to Spanish efforts to invite Germans or anyone else into Morocco. Pichon recognized the contradiction between the Act of Algeciras and a protectorate framework designed to give primacy to French considerations across all Moroccan territory, and resolved to remove "anything international" from the protectorate system. The only way "to expel Germany from Morocco, where she introduced herself only to cause us nuisances," he reasoned, "is to make . . . the Act of Algeciras disappear."<sup>20</sup> The postwar moment, which found Germany and Spain absent from the grand negotiation of the new peace, presented the opportune moment to do so.

Pichon outlined a plan to force Spain to acquiesce. First, France would build on the original Entente agreement of 1904, working out a bilateral deal with London to renounce all remaining rights on the Nile in exchange for supremacy in Tangier. The French would then engage the Tangier question with the other wartime allies, then with the neutral powers, coming to Spain last. The foreign minister reveled in the treachery of his plan: "We will thus be alone before our neighbors, and it will be a beautiful sight to behold as they see that they are only ones to ask us to support maintaining the Act of Algeciras." The final element of Pichon's diplomatic

assault on Spanish Morocco involved political meddling in Madrid, where operatives should “discreetly encourage those already numerous Spaniards who regard Spanish Morocco as a burden for Spain and a bargaining chip, and to augment their numbers.”<sup>21</sup> Pichon did not indicate precisely what would be done to encourage this belief.

As Pichon engaged his plan, Romanones felt the heat and moved aggressively to demonstrate his government’s effective control of its protectorate zone. He needed quick victories in Morocco, and the colonial army scored several by the end of 1919. The first step was to give the new high commissioner, General Dámaso Berenguer, the green light to challenge Raisuni. Despite the withdrawal of German support, the noble warlord had not relinquished control the Tingitana interior, leaving a hapless Spanish colony effectively imprisoned in the coastal positions of Larache, Ceuta, and Tétouan. Several tribes contributed men to Berenguer’s cause, and Raisuni’s militias were pushed southward with a combination of force and bribery. The Spanish gambit into the interior initially netted diplomatic dividends. By April 1920 France conceded that the Spanish Zone “remain[ed] outside the provisions of the [Versailles] peace treaty.” Basking in this victory, Romanones publicly renounced the “use [of] Morocco and Tangier as objects of exchange. . . . They possess imponderable values for Spain; they have no price.” With the Spanish colonial army at last making progress in the Tingitana, irredentist murmurs over Tangier became louder. Addressing the Royal Geographical Society, the Spanish ambassador to London noted with only some exaggeration that Spanish was the international city’s lingua franca among all classes, the peseta was the principal coin, and that “thought and feeling, life and sentiment there, are Spanish.” The left-liberal *Heraldo de Madrid* proposed a unilateral occupation of Tangier on 15 June 1920.<sup>22</sup> But as in 1860, capturing Tangier was a Spanish pipe dream that neither Britain nor France would indulge. Disinclined to charity, the two powers would leave Spain with a far less glamorous—and more challenging—role in regional governance: to keep the famously indomitable realms of northern Morocco from subverting the trans-Gibraltar order.

### Abd el-Krim’s Republic of the Rif

Spain’s advances into the Moroccan interior during 1919 and 1920 owed largely to a lack of impetus for organized resistance without Raisuni or



another eminent figure. Having coerced the weary brigand to remain neutral, Spanish forces freely entered the pro-Raisuni district of Chefchaouen by October 1920. In the Rif sector, too, 1920 was a year of military success for the Spanish. Under the command of Manuel Fernández Silvestre, Spanish forces extended their lines outward from Melilla. They marked their occupation with small blockhouses built of sandbags and corrugated roofs but did not stray far from the valleys where railway lines ran.<sup>23</sup> They distributed sacks of wheat and peseta notes to win over tribal villages beleaguered by a season of drought.<sup>24</sup> No resistance movement could prosper in such conditions. As Raisuni bided his time, northern Morocco's second most prestigious politician, Abd el-Krim, was not yet prepared to sever ties with the Spanish.

The scion of the powerful Riffian family may have acquired an ideology during the Great War, but his relationship with Spain was tactical. As Raisuni and others demonstrated, shifting patrons was nothing unusual in this region, and indeed it was useful tool available to individuals and weak polities operating in a plurisovereign environment. For an ambitious political leader in so densely bordered a region, ambivalence was a crucial instrument of power. As the Spanish began casting a wider net of patronage among rival clans, Abd el-Krim rediscovered his anticolonial passion. The family definitively renounced Spanish protection in February 1920 and claimed to join an anti-Spanish militia. But the labor of federating Riffian militias into an anti-colonial movement would not begin for another year.<sup>25</sup> In the mean time, Abd el-Krim kept his Spanish interlocutors close. He held out hope of a deal with Spanish investors on mining rights in the Rif, much as his father had negotiated for Bu Hmara two decades earlier. No political movement of any kind would have been possible without reliable finance, and the Rif's iron deposits formed a logical starting point. Although most known deposits were already in Spanish hands, Abd el-Krim allowed Spanish prospectors into the sprawling domains of his Beni Ouariaghel tribe, including the deep-pocketed industrialist Horacio Echevarrieta in early 1921. The Riffian leader continued to reap concession fees on some smaller mines until 1924, when the Spanish government, by that time a military dictatorship, moved to nullify them.

Another possible revenue source for Abd el-Krim was the lucrative trans-Alboran smuggling network, although the available evidence is inconclusive on his participation. One informant told the Spanish High Commission that Abd el-Krim maintained relations with the liberal

politician Santiago Alba. The same Alba was a known associate of Juan March, having served as the tobacco kingpin's chief political protector, though the details of this relationship were lost when March burned his correspondence with Alba following the military coup of September 1923. The Ministry of Economy estimated that March, using his monopoly in the Spanish Zone as cover, was netting two hundred thousand pesetas per week smuggling tobacco into Ceuta and Melilla—enough to purchase mining rights for the entire Rif in somewhat less than one year.<sup>26</sup> A former business associate alleged that March had funneled arms to anti-Spanish groups the Rif as recently as 1920. In the aftermath of the Anual disaster, a more treasonous act could not have been dreamed up, so it remains possible that the allegation was fabricated to support a larger case against March. An inquiry carried out by the Barcelona police brought to light more allegations but little hard evidence. The High Commission dismissed the charges against March, either because it did not find them credible or because it preferred to avoid antagonizing a major partner: March's contraband tobacco provided supplementary income for the complicit officers who controlled its distribution throughout northern Morocco.<sup>27</sup>

In any case, the idea of supporting a single charismatic figure like Abd el-Krim to guarantee well-ordered commercial relationships in the entirety of the Spanish Zone held appeal for Juan March along with a range of other investors and politicians. Even General Silvestre kept an open mind. But the scenario of Abd el-Krim becoming a kind of "frontier client" of the Spanish was unlikely for two related reasons. First, the Rif was not a frontier but a kind of sovereign void where multiple imperial geographies converged. If Spanish colonial forces could not directly and effectively occupy it, others would move in. Second, Abd el-Krim was hardly reliable as a proxy in this effort, for, like Bu Hmara and Raisuni before him, his charisma was directly proportionate to his ability to stave off visible signs of European penetration. For these reasons, the highest levels of Spanish government opposed accommodating Abd el-Krim's ambitions, a position they impressed on Silvestre when he visited Madrid in mid-1920. The *Compañía Española Minas de Rif*, in which prominent politicians, officers, and the royal family owned a stake, tracked closely with Spanish foreign policy; it refused to recognize Abd el-Krim's standing to grant mining concessions.<sup>28</sup>

Accommodation between Abd el-Krim and the Spanish colonial army thus being out of the question, the two became locked in competition for

clients among the various tribes and clans of northern Morocco. Spanish occupation provided employment to Moroccans willing to serve in protectorate security forces but also provoked a patchy resistance of independent groups throughout the Rif over the course of 1920—opportune for a charismatic leader to forge a coherent movement from these dispersed peasant militias. By early 1921, Abd el-Krim launched such an effort. The prestigious qadi sent delegates from village to village to recruit men and solicit donations. They chose mosques rather than markets to make their pitch, leveraging the unifying force of Islam as a way to overcome the possibility that perennially feuding tribes may turn on one another. Following prayer, Abd el-Krim's envoy would stand and deliver a condemnation of Spain's exploitation of the wealth of the Rif—a powerful message, though somewhat disingenuous considering that mining rights formed an issue that by itself probably could have been worked out without violence.<sup>29</sup>

By May, the High Commission began to grasp the seriousness of Abd el-Krim's movement. Silvestre informed Berenguer that the former Spanish protégé had become the undisputed leader of a unified resistance, and was gaining sufficient prestige to peel away Moroccans who had desperately joined the Spanish police and military service in the time of famine.<sup>30</sup> On 1 June, an attack on the Spanish position at Mt. Abarrán, near Anual, left 179 troops dead (mostly Moroccans in Spanish service). Madrid ordered an investigation, which concluded with Silvestre and Berenguer assuring their government that key tribes remained loyal to Spain and underestimating the urgent need for reinforcements. Another attack on the Anual perimeter began on 17 July. As the poorly supplied outpost struggled to hold out, Silvestre led two cavalry charges to come to the rescue. But Abd el-Krim's army thwarted both attempts, severing the main road with machine guns confiscated at Mt. Abarrán. After four days, Silvestre ordered a general retreat, which quickly degenerated into a panicked flight as thousands of Spaniards and pro-Spanish Moroccans were massacred, and Silvestre appears to have committed suicide. From the carnage, the Riffian army lifted a mother lode of twenty thousand rifles, four hundred machine guns, heavy artillery pieces, and canned food stocks. It was only the arrival of reinforcements from the western sector that saved Melilla itself from being overrun.<sup>31</sup>

The Anual debacle blew apart the cracked façade of protectorate governance and raised the prospects for Abd el-Krim to gain international patronage. The bloody episode rekindled Hispano-French antagonism to

the great benefit of the Rif movement. Avoiding the much larger issue of French imperialism that underlay the entire conflict, Riffian propaganda identified Spain as the “traditional enemy,” evoking memories of al-Andalus in a kind of mirror image of the romantic crusading evoked during O’Donnell’s war of 1859–1860. On the same day as the Anual attack, a group called the Muslim Assembly of the Rif selected the largest Mosque in Tangier to make a declaration of jihad against Spain. One curious element of this declaration was the exaltation of Sultan Yusef—the Riffians’ spiritual sovereign to be sure, but one whose submission to French rule scarcely fit with a liberation campaign.<sup>32</sup> But evoking Yusef’s name signaled to Rabat that the Riffians meant no quarrel with the French. French Resident General Hubert Lyautey, still bitter over what he regarded as Spanish betrayal during World War I, might have viewed the Spanish rout at Anual as just deserts. On 9 August, reacting to Abd el-Krim’s run of success, Lyautey dryly declared, “I do not see what effective support we could provide” to our Spanish “brothers in arms.” He even regarded a Hispano-Riffian conflict as good for French prospects: “Our best chance to avoid [general war] is for the Moroccans not to join forces with the Spanish.”<sup>33</sup>

On the Spanish side, suspicions deepened that France was actively supporting the Riffian movement. French perfidy was an article of faith among Spanish officials in Morocco. As one colonel told a superior in Madrid: “The French, guided by their imperialism, seek to take over all of Morocco,” and will throw up “every type of obstacle in order to achieve their goal of expelling us” from the northern zone. He added that the Muslim camps on the outskirts of Melilla were crawling with adherents of Abd el-Krim’s “modernist ideas,” along with French spies, and “especially French Jews, always our enemies despite the preferential treatment we have offered them.”<sup>34</sup> More surprisingly, the Spanish Socialist deputy Indalecio Prieto accused France of arming Abd el-Krim directly, a suspicion shared by the Spanish army as late as October 1923.<sup>35</sup> Lyautey reacted with indignant denials, but French *attendisme* clearly favored the Riffian effort. Lyautey’s unbending position that Morocco remained a single economic and political entity played to Abd el-Krim’s hand. It gave French interzonal border patrols the excuse not to interfere with the northward flow of arms, foodstuffs, and recruits to support the Riffian army.

Abd el-Krim actively courted French patronage. In May 1922, he requested a formal audience for two of his emissaries with the French commander at Fez. Lyautey struck a cautious posture, instructing the Fez

command to “not accord official status to the visitors, but at the same time not leave them with the impression they are misguided.”<sup>36</sup> The Riffian envoys met with two local colonial administrators. When asked to recognize the Republic of the Rif officially and to respect the rights of its cross-border trading caravans, the minor French officials lacked the authority to grant these requests. Abd el-Krim came himself some weeks later to ask the French command to withdraw its border installations from the right bank to the left bank of the Ouergha River, rendering the key waterway to the Atlantic a *res nullius* in accordance with Islamic law. This the French would not allow, as it resembled a first step toward Riffian expansionism into the French Zone and the fertile, well populated Ouergha valley. By agreeing to such a move, the French effectively would have relinquished their power to control navigation of the region’s major river, with the likely result of pulling transriparian tribes into Abd el-Krim’s orbit.<sup>37</sup>

Although hemmed in on his southern flank, Abd el-Krim continued to exploit borders to the north and west. In the relatively more open city of Tangier, his supporters could spread news and propaganda to large Moroccan audiences, forming an information node that Spanish police were powerless to suppress. The city also became an open armaments market where pessimistic Moroccans in the Spanish service could sell their weapons. In December 1923, the creation of the International Zone of Tangier further diluted sovereign power. Administered by a council of European diplomats each answerable to his own foreign ministry, Tangier formed a weakly governed haven for rebels, dissidents, and fugitives. The city “was the theater of intrigues and revolutionary activity during the most acute and critical period of the Riffian revolt,” recalled the Spanish ambassador in Paris after the war, a haven for “active collaborators, agents intimately tied to Abd el-Krim el-Khattabi himself.”<sup>38</sup> At Gibraltar, Abd el-Krim maintained a full-time agent, Dadi ben Mesaud, who procured equipment like telephones and armaments (although it turned out he also sold information on Riffian movements to the Spanish consul in Gibraltar). Spanish coastal patrols were insufficient to blockade Riffian shores as long as officials at nearby French and British ports remained indifferent. Moroccan vessels regularly transported poultry and meat to Gibraltar, but as the Spanish consul there reported, British port officials did not monitor the contents of cargo loaded on for the return voyage. One vessel managed to deposit sixteen thousand rifles near Al Hoceima in a single run.<sup>39</sup> Spanish intelligence files present

catalogs of allegations of arms smuggling and detail multiple episodes of suspicious ships escaping naval patrols. The Spanish high command believed most of the arms arrived by sea via Tangier, the Atlantic ports of French Morocco, or minor ports of eastern Algeria, reaching the Rif via the normal interior caravan routes of the Maghrib with little regard for territorial borders.<sup>40</sup> Yet perhaps two-thirds of the Riffian army—which numbered on the order of one hundred thousand at its peak—was unarmed. Soldiers were responsible for procuring their own weapons from fallen comrades or contraband vendors. Surplus could be sold to Abd el-Krim's fledgling government in Ajdir, but a good deal of stockpiling likely took place.<sup>41</sup>

To maintain unity in such a fractious and heavily armed society, Abd el-Krim preferred to reward loyalty with honors and treasure rather than to punish dissent. Odious brutality was practiced, including cruel and unusual executions outside normal codes of Riffian warfare, but the experience of Bu Hmara revealed that terrifying torture methods were not effective in inculcating long-term loyalty. Abd el-Krim's approach involved turning tribal chiefs into caids, thus integrating popular leaders into a central administrative structure on equal terms with their counterparts from other tribes. Cultivating this nascent bureaucracy could be costly, especially when Abd el-Krim insisted that his republic's regional delegates all travel to Ajdir each month for a meeting to build *esprit de corps*.<sup>42</sup>

Although Abd el-Krim achieved a measure of security in his domains, finding reliable sources of finance continued to pose a problem. In Gibraltar, Dadi ben Mesaud forged a relationship with Alfred Gardiner, owner of a small British shipping firm who agreed to invest in the fledgling Riffian government in exchange for lucrative contracts in the event of victory. Abd el-Krim negotiated a £1 million loan from Gardiner, though the payment never materialized. Gardiner later backed a paper currency for the putative republic, but ultimately the Riffian leader was unwilling to become dependent on a British speculator, and the Spanish peseta remained the official currency.<sup>43</sup> Revenue from mining proved equally elusive. The Spanish colonial army moved quickly to recover the mining districts around Melilla lost after Anual, and European mining firms were running again by November 1921.<sup>44</sup> In 1923, Echevarrieta, the Spanish industrialist who earlier had sought mining concessions from Abd el-Krim, negotiated payment of a ransom of 4.7 million pesetas for 230 Spanish captives taken in the aftermath of Anual.<sup>45</sup> This windfall dwarfed the revenue that the

Riffian leader could generate through taxation and fines of tribes—which probably hovered around a hundred thousand pesetas per year.<sup>46</sup>

### Civil-Military Tension

Much as it exacerbated Hispano-French antagonism, the Anual fiasco also reopened the rift between the Spanish government and its military. Facing pressure from France to prove its commitment to the protectorate system in 1919, Madrid had ordered the colonial army to penetrate the north Moroccan interior and occupy its famously inhospitable domains. In July 1921, the Anual disaster seemed to be proof that the colonial army was a flimsy bulwark of Spain's international position. Yet for the colonial army, the defeat confirmed Madrid's unwillingness to commit to the resources necessary to support the operations it was being asked to carry out.<sup>47</sup> Silvestre had hoped to overcome this dilemma by conquering the northern zone gradually and methodically, but after Anual the choice became one of escalation or abandonment. To win in the Rif, the colonial army needed to neutralize Abd el-Krim's tribe, the Beni Ouariaghel, a task that required staging a large and risky amphibious assault on the coastal stronghold of Al Hoceima. Alternatively, the Spanish could give up on vengeance and seek terms with Abd el-Krim.

Although recognizing Riffian independence was out of the question, most dynastic politicians drew from Anual the lesson that Spain should keep out of the interior and concentrate its resources on maintaining the coastal garrisons—essentially a continuation of the Spanish Crown's secular policy toward the southern borderland. The war-weary Cortes refused to authorize a major amphibious landing aimed at crushing Abd el-Krim outright. In the conservative cabinet of Antonio Maura, only the war minister Juan de la Cierva tilted toward escalation. Like most of his generals in Morocco, Cierva believed Spain could not hold even Ceuta and Melilla without thoroughly defeating the Riffian insurgents. This line of argument contained elements of both strategic pragmatism and the politics of prestige. The leaders of the Spanish colonial army regarded Abd el-Krim as a quasi-nationalist Riffian revolutionary disinclined to any sort of compromise. Proposals to pay ransom to recover Spanish prisoners of war and to offer the Riffians some kind of "administrative independence" to them resembled a futile approach, as past experience made clear. In addition to bringing shame on the Spanish army, such an approach would



be an invitation to the French garrisons in Atlantic Morocco to begin their march northward to the Mediterranean.

A parallel argument favoring escalation in the Rif had to do with Bolshevism, the regicidal menace that gave pause to a Spanish dynastic elite already dealing with a turbulent postwar wave of labor unrest. The most vocal supporters of the “Republic of the Rif” were tied to the international left. Abd el-Krim’s liaison to the League of Nations was John Arnall, a British resident of Tangier who had been active in leftist politics but also sought mining contracts with the Riffians. The League of Nations ignored Arnall’s attempts to gain recognition for the “united suqs of the Rif” in 1921 and 1922. But Arnall’s pro-Riffian interventions, along with the supportive declarations from the French Communist daily *L’Humanité* and the outspoken Communist deputy Jacques Doriot, all fueled Alfonso XIII’s conviction that the war in the Rif was a front in the battle against international communism, a continuation of the revolutionary crisis that visited Europe after World War I. The leading Spanish officers, including Francisco Franco, shared this assessment.<sup>48</sup>

On the other side, the most vocal opponent of escalation was Maura’s minister of economy, Francesc Cambó. On record as an opponent of military adventurism across the Strait, Cambó had argued that Spain had better uses for “that bargaining chip called Morocco.” In the months following the Anual debacle, he locked horns with Cierva over strategy, threatening to resign if the Maura government attempted the amphibious landing at Al Hoceima.<sup>49</sup> After the Maura government fell in March 1922, Cambó became even more vigorous in his opposition. In October 1922, he published a series of editorials in the popular Catalanist daily *La Veu de Catalunya* advocating the establishment of what he termed a “civil protectorate” and presented several arguments against direct military confrontation with the Riffian army. He drew parallels with experiments in self-government emerging in postwar Europe, reasoning that to leave the administration of the Spanish Zone to Abd el-Krim was no different from conceding the management of Catalonia’s roads and telephones to the new Catalan Commonwealth (Mancomunitat). It would be illogical to expect that “Spain should have the temperament to exercise a protectorate action on a people of different race and religion.”<sup>50</sup> In answer to those obsessed with redeeming national honor, Cambó invoked the honor of magnanimity, as when England, “amidst a wave of assassinations of their soldiers by the Sinn-Feiners, settled with their leaders and gave Ireland



quasi-independence.”<sup>51</sup> Like the earlier generation of Africanistas, Cambó believed Spanish interests were best served by maintaining coastal possessions bordering an independent Moroccan empire. Comparison with the French enterprise was unrealistic: “For France, Morocco is a colony, while for Spain it is a coastline,” he argued, noting it was “much more economical for Spain in men and money for Abd el-Krim to protect these lands than for the Spanish army to occupy and protect them.”<sup>52</sup>

For Cambó, Spain’s true *bête noire* in Morocco was not Abd el-Krim but Juan March, whose tobacco enterprise he regarded as the real beneficiary of the military escalation. The contraband trade reached new heights with the intensification of the Moroccan campaign in 1920, which brought thousands of new army personnel and civilian workers to Ceuta and Melilla. Although March’s tobacco monopoly did not include the two Hispano-African exclaves, his ownership of the protectorate concession provided cover for the more lucrative enterprise of smuggling his product into these and other Spanish cities. The maritime tobacco trade supported a wide clandestine network of intelligence, patronage, and technical expertise across the Alboran Sea. Riffian mariners brought to bear their local knowledge, maneuvering small craft into coastal caves and crevasses at the sight of CAT patrols. Ship captains of diverse European nationalities reached Andalusian and North African ports, where they plausibly claimed no knowledge of anything being loaded into their cargo hulls during overnight anchorages in the middle of the Alboran Sea. Spanish suppliers visited tobacco producers in the Canary Islands and Algeria posing as intermediaries for the CAT, then delivered the merchandise to March’s agents. Spanish coast guard crews on March’s payroll supplied information on patrol movements, while army officers in Melilla and Ceuta supplemented their salaries selling cigarettes obtained at the ports to soldiers and civilians.<sup>53</sup>

Throughout 1921 and 1922, Cambó’s ministry worked with the CAT to bring down this system. They offered suppliers financial incentives to limit their sales to company vessels or to large ships incapable of hiding out in coastal caves. The CAT also took advantage of auctions in postwar Royal Navy surplus to improve its fleet with several torpedo speedboats capable of catching the small contraband runners.<sup>54</sup> They offered rewards for anonymous tips and began paying commissions directly to guard crews for apprehending smugglers. Finally, and most troublingly for March, the CAT dramatically lowered its prices on cigarettes sold in Ceuta and

Melilla, a violation of the Act of Algeciras and the protectorate treaty mandating price parity between the CAT and La Régie (the French Moroccan tobacco monopoly).<sup>55</sup>

Feeling genuine pressure, March searched for leverage in the increasingly delicate Franco-Spanish relationship. Having diversified into shipping, publishing, and finance, March was able to weather the CAT price war for a time, but he did not wish to lose his lucrative toehold in Morocco. March turned to Paris, pressing the argument that Cambó was acting on behalf of the Spanish tobacco monopoly with no regard for how his actions could threaten the sustainability of the protectorate system. In letters to the French directors of La Régie and the French ambassador in Madrid, he reasoned that CAT discounts would initiate a price war that would impoverish the Moroccan treasury, so largely dependent on tobacco concession dues. March charged that the brazen Cambó was ignoring price parities mandated by the treaties of 1906 and 1912, which had been designed precisely to prevent this. He presented a vivid scenario of Spanish soldiers driving right past customhouses in armored trucks filled with cheap tobacco to sell to their comrades stationed in the interior, whose patriotism would compel them to purchase from the Spanish source. The director of La Régie relayed the message to Lyautey that the Spanish government was planning to violate international treaty law in order to settle a political score with Juan March, whose concession dues fed the sultan's treasury handsomely. Lyautey reacted by calling such a situation "intolerable."<sup>56</sup>

Soon, rumors circulated suggesting ulterior motives behind Cambó's advocacy on behalf of Abd el-Krim and his persecution of March. An informant of Lyautey's, Manuel Ríus, claimed Abd el-Krim had promised major mining concessions, along with a sizable tobacco plantation, to a circle of Spanish and French investors including Cambó. Ríus, a Catalanist politician who had recently served as mayor of Barcelona, reported that the French director of the Algerian tobacco monopoly—another competitor of the Juan March empire—had recently traveled to the city to meet with Cambó. From there, the two men sent an emissary to Al Hoceima to meet with the Riffian leader on their behalf.<sup>57</sup> Cambó's effort, like attempts by Horacio Echevarrieta and others to secure mining concessions from Abd el-Krim, gives a sense of what mercantilist "peaceful penetration" would have looked like in the 1920s, if such a thing had been possible amid such a contentious geopolitical conjuncture.

## The Iron Surgeon and the Lion

General Miguel Primo de Rivera's bloodless coup d'état in Madrid on 13 September 1923 brought down a parliamentary government that had become frozen in indecision over basic principles of Spain's Morocco policy and had lost the confidence of the colonial army. He took power with the thinly veiled support of a king who had favored a hard line against Abd el-Krim's movement, but the general had until recently been a vocal and often impolitic critic of the Moroccan enterprise. In 1917, while stationed in Cádiz, Primo de Rivera had sounded a tone similar to Cambó: "Neither Morocco nor any other part of Africa is really Spain, and the blood so copiously spilt in Africa will never produce any more useful or noble benefit than to have given us a bargaining chip for recovering Gibraltar," which itself was mainly "a question of honor . . . more annoying than dangerous."<sup>58</sup> And yet as head of the government, Primo de Rivera could not avoid becoming embroiled in the most violent interior conquest the Rif had yet seen.

Promising a "quick, sensible, and dignified solution" to the Morocco problem, the new dictator advanced a policy of semiabandonment. Under this plan, the Spanish would withdraw to lines around Ceuta, Melilla, and Tétouan, and table any kind of amphibious expedition or decisive attack. Abd el-Krim would be named emir of an entity to be known as the Autonomous Region of the Rif, and his army reorganized under Spanish auspices. Primo de Rivera's plan amounted to recognition that no attempt to occupy the Rif interior could succeed without French help. The Riffian army was sustained on supplies and financing from the outside. Spanish blockades of the Riffian coast were already imperfect, and interdicting overland supply lines from Tangier and the French Zone was probably impossible. Attempting to blockade Morocco's Atlantic ports was out of the question, being tantamount to declaring war on Morocco and France. Spain's struggles came at a felicitous moment for the Quai d'Orsay, as events in the Rif sucked away any Spanish leverage in the ongoing negotiations on the Tangier statute throughout 1923. Until the French position changed, Primo de Rivera regarded confrontation with Abd el-Krim as an exercise in futility. Failing some kind of accommodation, the Spanish dictator was prepared to unleash an aerial assault of conventional and poison-gas bombs (an eventuality that would come to pass by mid-1924 but fail to bring victory).<sup>59</sup>

Abd el-Krim rejected Primo de Rivera's terms for semiabandonment, insisting on the complete expulsion of Spanish forces from the Maghrib, including Ceuta and Melilla. The Riffian leader knew the expenditure of blood and treasure in Morocco was unpopular among Spaniards and sensed that Lyautey would savor watching from a distance as Spain retreated. Moreover, the political logic of Riffian intertribal unity led inexorably to the conquest of Ceuta and Melilla. Abd el-Krim appealed to Islam as the transcendent force to overcome internecine conflict, and the two exclaves of Spanish sovereignty marred the spiritual purity of the sultan's realm. But a viable Rif Republic could not be forged only in the north and west. It also required expansion southward into the fertile Ouergha River valley, a vital source of grain within the French Zone. To feed their war effort, the Riffians had hitherto purchased grain via Gibraltar and from across French lines without difficulty, but this convenient arrangement would not last. By late 1923, the Spanish high commissioner reported that British patrols "pursued contraband in the Rif rigorously."<sup>60</sup> The French government, after two and a half years of callous neglect, also changed its posture once the Tangier negotiations concluded in December 1923. Riffian expansion southward into the French Zone caused alarm as Ouergha valley tribes straddling the interzonal border began adhering to Abd el-Krim's movement.

The period of French passivity was thus coming to a close. In February 1924, Lyautey warned his government of the dangerous possibility that an independent state could take root directly on the French Zone border, "modernized and supported by the most warlike tribes, with a morale exalted by success against the Spaniards."<sup>61</sup> In May, as a noisy debate in the French parliament included calls by the communists for French troops to fraternize with rebel tribesmen, the outgoing conservative prime minister Raymond Poincaré quietly authorized Lyautey to occupy the Ouergha valley. Within two months, the French colonial army created a line of blockhouses and other fortified positions—turning the hitherto notional interzonal border into a material reality for the first time. This was a chiefly defensive measure, doing nothing at first to curtail the northward flow of grain, armaments, or recruits. Yet the French initiative had the effect, apparently unanticipated by Lyautey's intelligence service, of alienating more border tribes and pushing them into Abd el-Krim's camp. By December, the French and Spanish militaries began secretly cooperating to interrupt the Riffian supply lines from the south. Lyautey was disregarding

the principle of free interzonal commerce, signaling that he had come to regard Abd el-Krim as a threat not only to Spanish ambitions but also to the entire protectorate system. Coordination between the protectorate powers tilted the balance against the Rif rebellion. The border closure quickly disrupted Riffian grain supplies, stirring discontent among Abd el-Krim's collaborators. The shortages prompted a change in Abd el-Krim's strategy by early summer 1925, pulling back from a planned assault on Melilla to confront French forces in the Ouergha valley. This in turn only further strained manpower available for the summer harvest while at the same time inviting a much larger and more resolute French military commitment by mid-1925.<sup>62</sup>

French rapprochement was critical, but Primo de Rivera did not limit himself to this treacherous alliance. His regime also began to relax the pressure on Juan March. As the leading transporter in the region and a friend of the Africanista officer corps, March was in a position to be useful to the military effort in the Rif. He possessed the tobacco that had become critical to morale, providing nicotine for soldiers and significant income supplements to officers who enjoyed access to the contraband supply. He controlled a large transport fleet, and, more elusively, an extensive network of small coastal sailors, porters, and merchants of diverse ethnic and tribal affiliations in the Rif, through which he could gather information and introduce misinformation. Sensing the possibility of profitable terms with the government, the usually high-handed Majorcan boss looked for ways to ingratiate himself with Primo de Rivera. Late in 1923, in the midst of international negotiations over the future of Tangier, March complied with the dictator's request to purchase land in suburban Tangier to strengthen the Spanish claim to that city. March also provided a loan to prop up the failing daily *Correspondencia Militar*, a key organ of military politics, and funded the construction of a new Catholic church in Tétouan. Finally, he gave the dictator cigarettes to hand out to troops during a Christmas visit to Tétouan.<sup>63</sup> Meetings between the two men became frequent by mid-1925, and although there are no transcripts, there can be little doubt that Primo de Rivera's strategic thinking was shaped by his conversations with the man whose smuggling network dominated Mediterranean Morocco. The fleet and expertise of the *Compañía Trasmediterránea*, over which March held considerable influence, would be a crucial partner in an amphibious landing at Al Hoceima. It cannot have been a coincidence that within two years, Primo de Rivera's government had granted March the

tobacco monopoly for Ceuta and Melilla, in addition to the Spanish Zone, and, as discussed in Chapter 9, an informal monopoly on tobacco smuggling into the Iberian Peninsula from Gibraltar.<sup>64</sup>

Hispano-French cooperation against Abd el-Krim's rebellion was cemented during the second half of July 1925. The partnership was consecrated by a visit to the French Zone by the French Marshal Philippe Pétain, long a rival of Lyautey's. Pétain announced a "new phase," one that necessarily required earnest cooperation with Spain. The two governments committed to rigorous contraband patrols in coastal waters, over land routes, and in Tangier, and to end the practice of sheltering individuals wanted by the other power. Moreover, they agreed to offer a single peace proposal to Abd el-Krim, by which the Riffian leader would gain quasi-autonomous rule over a large territorial expanse straddling both zones in exchange for recognizing the protectorate system, or face a joint Hispano-French offensive.<sup>65</sup> The two armies did not for a moment abandon their mutual suspicion, each quietly continuing to pursue separate peace with Abd el-Krim at the expense of the other, and in the end Abd el-Krim would surrender himself only to the French in 1926. Committed cooperation between Spain and France was nevertheless achieved, if only temporarily, once Pétain replaced Lyautey as France's supreme commander in Morocco on 26 August 1925. The way was thus cleared for Primo de Rivera and Pétain to coordinate the long discussed Al Hoceima landing, where fifteen thousand Spanish soldiers would disembark on the strategic Riffian stronghold on 8 September.<sup>66</sup> Despite long-held reluctance to stage an amphibious assault, as H hour approached Primo de Rivera betrayed the sincerity of his commitment to working with France: with heavy wind and fog threatening to delay the operation, the Spanish dictator was heard to mutter, "I promised Marshal Pétain I would disembark, and I will disembark, whatever the cost."<sup>67</sup>

Like those of Raisuni, Abd el-Krim's ambitions were not sustainable in an atmosphere in which sovereigns set their rivalries aside and aligned their goals. Once the European powers committed a half million troops against the Riffians (some two-thirds of them under French command), Abd el-Krim's republic stood little chance, even as he held out for an additional nine months before surrendering himself to French forces. France never withdrew from its trans-Ouergha positions, creating a minor border dispute between the two zones that was never fully resolved. Combined Moroccan and European deaths from combat and disease approached

forty thousand, although it is impossible to reach an exact figure, especially if one includes long-term illnesses from exposure to chemical weapons.<sup>68</sup> It is possible all the same to exaggerate the role of memory and its power to construct eternal enmity. As we will see in Chapter II, the Rif's next rebellion, three decades later, would target the sultan's government and even evoke nostalgia for Spanish dominion.

The Rif War laid bare the basic geopolitical dilemma Spain faced on its southern borderland. Was it possible to fulfill Spain's share of the responsibility in managing a stable imperial order without establishing a bona fide colony, occupied, settled, and exploited? Primo de Rivera's initial doctrine of semiabandonment reflected his minimalist attitude toward the problem, an attempt to reconcile Spain's international commitment with the utter lack of enthusiasm for it among his countrymen. This calculation possessed a certain logic: for some time, Spain's principal interest in the Rif had been as a staging ground to patrol maritime corridors. But as the age of colonial territoriality reached its apotheosis, Spain's charge was to impose direct administrative control within the borders of its zone. Disguised as the privilege of a European power, this mission was the burden of a nation clinging to independence.

# 8

## A New *Convivencia*

**THE DEFEAT OF** the Rif rebellion made possible for the first time the large-scale settlement by Spaniards in several interior towns under the sultan's dominion. A colonial push ensued, but the commercial and agricultural dynamism envisioned by an earlier generation of Africanistas scarcely materialized. Spanish Morocco nevertheless formed a crucial strategic asset, provided it could be held effectively. Keeping the peace was only a minimum condition. Protectorate officials also pursued strategies to promote constructive coexistence between Spanish settlers and the myriad Moroccan tribes and townspeople. The myth of *convivencia*—or peaceful coexistence—among the religious communities of medieval Al Andalus was thus reprised as an instrument in the struggle to consolidate a bicontinental Spanish sphere and gain stature in the region.

Outside of Tangier, few Spaniards had attempted to settle as Christians among the Moroccans before 1927. Tens of thousands flocked to Melilla during the mining boom of the 1910s, often abandoning precarious situations in Tangier or Oran, but they rarely ventured into the sultan's realms. Spanish settlement in the protectorate zone hitherto remained limited to some forty small coastal plots outside Melilla and small communities in Larache and Tétouan by 1919. In the 1920s, the Rif War produced a bonanza in the Spanish exclaves, drawing some eleven thousand more to Melilla and seventeen thousand to Ceuta (raising the latter's population by 50 percent), and bringing the two cities' populations in line with Tangier and the Gibraltar–La Línea binational conurbation. Migrants were predominantly unskilled and often illiterate Andalusian



men, a gender imbalance mitigated in the war's final stages by the arrival of family members and of single women in search of opportunity. But some Spanish civilians followed the progress of military advances into the protectorate interior, so that Spanish villages sometimes sprouted from colonial army outposts.<sup>1</sup> In the decade following Abd el-Krim's surrender, some forty thousand Spaniards established themselves in the protectorate, as northern Morocco became a catch basin for Spanish day laborers and petty merchants chasing opportunities arising from the military and administrative venture. By 1936, Spaniards formed significant minorities in Tétouan and Larache, and to a smaller extent in the interior towns of Ksar el-Kebir and Chefchaouen, and outnumbered Moroccans two to one in the supposedly Moorish Melilla suburb of Nador.<sup>2</sup>

As a result of the changing demography, the Spanish colonial administration found itself in the unfamiliar position of overseeing the relations among three recognized religious communities with long histories of both coexistence and antagonism. Its method for doing so drew from a varied repertoire of colonial discourses and practices that sometimes produced confusing paradoxes: expressions of Hispano-Moroccan "brotherhood" coexisted with unsubtle paternalism; efforts to cultivate Jewish clients could be accompanied by anti-Semitic rhetoric; support for Alawite dynastic continuity over all Morocco was peppered with hints of a future partition. The common denominator was a self-conscious differentiation of Spanish practice from the French colonial project that dominated most of northwestern Africa. In contrast to the French approach of classifying Moroccans by ethnic origin and recruiting some into a secular republican colonial elite, the Spanish presented themselves as Catholic believers prepared to respect—even pursue—the ideal of a pure and unitary Islamic essence. This involved creating a network of Islamic schools to overcome "heterodox" practices in some tribal traditions while also cementing social boundaries between Catholic settlers and Muslim Moroccans to suppress the prospect of an "impure" or "hybrid" borderland society.

The Hispano-Moroccan relationship itself was becoming a component of the region's political geography, forming a frequent subject of contemporary commentary and of historical and anthropological assessment.<sup>3</sup> Many analysts of Spanish policy in the protectorate have dismissed the rhetoric of "Hispano-Moroccan brotherhood" as a ruse to disguise a bid for colonial domination typical of the era or, at best, a noble ideal to guide Spaniards' conscience through brutal circumstances.<sup>4</sup> The occupiers

indeed behaved as typical colonizers in many respects. They determined the priorities and secured the finance for infrastructural developments, imposed a system of territorial administration, and frequently carried an ingrained sense of superiority over their subjects. Spanish policy toward Moroccan Jews mirrored French and British colonial practice, aimed at cultivating Hispano-Jewish identity and eroding the sultan's role as their protector. Moreover, military rhetoric expressed brotherhood with the French just as frequently as with the Moroccans. In the Spanish colonial press, notably Francisco Franco's *Revista de Tropas Coloniales*, references to Franco-Spanish cooperation were de rigueur. The Africanista luminary Tomás García Figueras alluded on multiple occasions to the "broad spirit of cordiality" between the Spanish and French armies, citing French assistance in maintaining supply lines to Spanish forces operating near the interzonal border.<sup>5</sup> The Spanish high commissioner's visit to Rabat occasioned a celebration of "Franco-Spanish friendship," marking the highest manifestation of "affection and fraternity" between the two powers, "Army to Army, Zone to Zone, Nation to Nation."<sup>6</sup> Frequently repeated by both parties was the axiom that solidarity between the two protectorate powers was indispensable to the protectorate's survival. The French general staff called for preserving "the Franco-Spanish collaboration fortunately realized in 1925–26" against Abd el-Krim.<sup>7</sup> The Tangier-Fez rail, controlled by France but traversing sixty miles of the Spanish Zone, was at last cleared to open 1927, after years of rancor, signaling a new confidence in the prospect of a common transport grid.<sup>8</sup> Official Spanish actions appeared at last to placate earlier French concerns about courting German activity in their zone. By the end of 1927, the Primo de Rivera regime prohibited non-Spanish companies from operating in the Spanish Zone, a big step toward closing the open-door policy stipulated in the Algeciras Act of 1906.<sup>9</sup>

But understanding Spanish Morocco policy as a variant of European imperialism also requires accounting for sharp resentment within Spanish political and military culture toward the Anglo-French Entente and the League of Nations system that issued from it. "Morocco is not for Spain a business enterprise," protested the Africanista officer Cándido Pardo González in 1930: "Morocco is a vital problem that the international politics of Europe have imposed on us, especially those of France."<sup>10</sup> Spanish officials in Morocco sought to inculcate a sense of shared resistance against European imperialism. Although Franco's *Revista* issued requisite platitudes, its editorial position was far from deferential to the official pro-French

thesis. In a 1926 editorial, Franco criticized the Spanish army for relying on the “French pattern” of static trench warfare designed for capturing territory, when conditions in Morocco called for lighter, more mobile forces capable of cooperating with tribal populations.<sup>11</sup> Another motif was to contrast Hispano-Moroccan civilizational affinity with French civilizing conceits. Rodolfo Gil Benumeya, a frequent contributor who wrote under the pseudonym Amor Benomar, attributed the earlier failings of Spanish cultural action in Morocco to the “excessively European way in which we have oriented ourselves.” Himself the descendant of a Morisco warlord, Gil Benumeya posited that Spain’s “race and history place it on the side of the inferior peoples,” adding that “if the mainly European League of Nations is to become truly universal, Spain is where yellow, red, black, and brown should come on equal footing.”<sup>12</sup> Although few were so ecumenical as Gil Benumeya, several Africanista figures saw opportunity to transform Riffian rebelliousness into a common cause, contending that only Spain’s rising international profile could deliver Morocco to freedom from France (although the details of such an arrangement were left to be worked out). The most brazen critic of the French model was the military jurist Antonio Martín de la Escalera, whose writings drew attention to hypocrisies in French colonial discourse. He argued that the French claimed to be the Moroccans’ “benevolent and solicitous tutor” while at once insisting on the latter’s “perpetual incapacity” to reach an equal level.<sup>13</sup> In 1935, a French reviewer criticized Escalera for espousing Moroccan nationalism, an accusation the Spaniard accepted and embraced.<sup>14</sup>

### A Different Kind of Colony

The Spanish colonial administration relied mainly on indirect governance over what had become commonly referred to as the “caliphate”—the administrative zone of northern Morocco headed by the Spanish-appointed caliph of Tétouan. The administrative structure built by Abd el-Krim in the 1920s proved effective and resilient, and most of the caids he had appointed retained their powers under the Spanish. They continued to collect the *tertib* land tax and handle the regular administration of justice. Counterintuitive though it may seem, the Riffian caids found much common ground with the Spaniards. Unconnected to the sultan’s imperial hierarchy, they had risen as part of a rebellion against the collaborationist Makhzan, and then were preserved by Spanish colonial authorities who

themselves often resented their junior status in the protectorate system. When the dictatorship that defeated Abd el-Krim was replaced by the Spanish Republic of 1931, some caids even expressed concern that the new government in Madrid might become friendlier toward France, or possibly even abandon Morocco to the French altogether.<sup>15</sup> Despite such concerns, the Republic made no major changes to the handling of protectorate governance. Although it has sometimes been charged that the new republican regime “civilianized” the protectorate, the first civilian high commissioners had in fact served in 1923 under the Restoration monarchy, and though generals usually occupied the top positions during the Rif War, Alfonso XIII stated that in the future the military “must be subordinate” to civilian leadership.<sup>16</sup>

Following the Rif War, the main mechanism for colonial administration, the Delegation of Indigenous Affairs (Delegación de Asuntos Indígenas, or DAI), expanded and improved, with greater efforts being made to recruit experienced administrators and train them in Moroccan language and culture. As a rule, DAI representatives, known as *interventores*, were drawn from military ranks. On the principle that heavy-handed oppression might risk another rebellion, they were instructed not to challenge the authority of the caids in most matters. DAI administrators were further told to avoid drawing attention to controversial differences in culture and to practice a “discreet Catholicism,” which was believed to make a more favorable impression on Moroccans than atheism. They were also told to respect local sanitation customs, avoiding introducing European hygiene and medical practices without the local caid’s approval.<sup>17</sup> The main tasks of the *interventor* were to gather information about his district and work with Moroccan officials on developing sound practices in areas in which Spaniards and Moroccans worked together. They received special instructions to avoid the “woman question” at all costs, although codes on female roles could depend on location and circumstance. For example, some Riffian women found employment as stone gatherers, working alongside Spanish women on roadbeds being laid by the Spanish administration. In Nador and Al Hoceima (renamed Villa Sanjurjo for the Spanish general who conquered it), Moroccan men competing for the same jobs began to criticize the Spanish for their liberal use of Muslim women in the construction sector. The DAI discussed whether to end the practice, ultimately leaving it to individual district *interventores* to decide whether to limit women’s labor to domestic work and light industries like meat salting.<sup>18</sup>

The Spanish approach to governance was not entirely deferential, however, especially in matters of security. General Francisco Franco, whose role as the publisher of the colonial army's main mouthpiece was gaining him increasing political influence, laid out a swords-into-plowshares agenda. Franco argued that north Morocco was plagued by a "fictitious commerce and welfare" based on armaments, specifically rifles, which formed a basic "attribute of virility," the acquisition of which was every Riffian man's "lifelong dream."<sup>19</sup> An armaments buyback program following Abd el-Krim's defeat recovered 66,269 rifles.<sup>20</sup> The protectorate also took part in the cement-and-roads era of the Primo de Rivera dictatorship, bringing to Morocco the infrastructure needed to mobilize the forces of centralized order. The protectorate administration received a loan of eighty million pesetas to finance several infrastructural projects, equaling 1 percent to 2 percent of the sum invested in Spain.<sup>21</sup> Although the caliphate incurred the debt, priorities were determined in Madrid. Receiving primary consideration were roads and rail, crucial assets for putting down future rebellions. It was further hoped that better long-distance transport would give growers reliable access to the coast and stimulate peasant capitalism. Roads also afforded more effective surveillance of trading caravans, whose role in transmitting contraband items and information made them targets of particular suspicion. The DAI created a unified internal passport system that permitted Moroccans to travel freely, something that the convoluted system of tribal relations had long hindered. This enabled the protectorate administration to generate basic data on long-distance traffic patterns and to compile a preliminary registry of subjects.<sup>22</sup>

Projects that lacked direct military application, such as water treatment and irrigation, received less attention. Without state encouragement, private colonial entrepreneurs scarcely ventured beyond coastal areas. A few large agricultural firms established operations along the Al Hoceima coast. Although figures are spotty, Spanish growers in Morocco numbered no more than three hundred as late as 1943. Less than ten percent of the agricultural land of Spanish Morocco was irrigated, and most of this was owned by the sultan. By comparison, the French Zone, some twenty times larger, claimed some one thousand times the amount of productive land by 1930.<sup>23</sup> Nevertheless, the extension of roads and rail to interior hubs, where they intersected with caravan routes, appears to have helped small Moroccan growers connect to wider markets.<sup>24</sup> Before the 1940s, major industrial investment remained the exception to the rule. Juan March invested

2.2 million pesetas in tobacco processing in Tangier, and paid 1.7 million pesetas directly to the caliphate to maintain his tobacco monopoly there, accounting for about 3 percent of its budget in 1930. With the dearth of economic productivity, about two-thirds of the caliphate budget was a direct subsidy from the Spanish treasury.<sup>25</sup> As Martín de la Escalera frankly stated in *Revista de Tropas Coloniales*, “If we regarded Morocco as nothing more than a commercial colony . . . we would be wise to favor abandonment.”<sup>26</sup>

Colonial technocrats focused on extending the circulation and transport infrastructure of peninsular Spain southward. As on the Iberian Peninsula, the new paved economy generated considerable hope among small entrepreneurs for tourism in the protectorate. Planners and developers envisioned bringing to northern Morocco the central trope of twentieth-century Spanish touristic modernization: “Turning our Moroccan zone into a country . . . no different from any European country, savoring the picturesque and the exotic without the slightest compromise of the advantages and guarantees enjoyed in a country fully incorporated into Western Civilization.”<sup>27</sup> The Spanish tourism bureau in Paris encouraged rail passengers and motorists en route to Casablanca to consider a stop in the Spanish Zone to hike, camp, or ski. Proposals to finance a hotel network were studied but scarcely realized until after Morocco regained independence.<sup>28</sup>

Much of this enthusiasm was founded on the belief that sooner or later Spain would build a tunnel under the Strait to connect Ceuta with the Iberian Peninsula. According to *Revista de Tropas Coloniales*, Ceuta was poised to become an entry point for a new generation of European motorists attracted by “intensive advertising and comfortable hotels.” The Spanish Zone of the protectorate had many “splendid” landscapes, but “little economic value until the people who come to contemplate them are able to pay with their pockets for the pleasures of their eyes. . . . [T]he climate can be as mild and healthy as you like, but man must help it along.”<sup>29</sup> Annual fairs in Ceuta and Melilla attracted a few thousand, typically relatives of Andalusian migrants. Tourism was sometimes cited to justify public works projects in both cities, such as hygiene improvement in the market and slaughterhouse, along with street lighting and new schools, befitting a city that “present[s] itself to visitors as a model of urbanization.”<sup>30</sup> The Spanish Republic made appeals for the trans-Gibraltar tunnel project in the name of commerce and peace, but lacked the diplomatic leverage to overcome geopolitical misgivings chiefly on the part of Britain and Italy.<sup>31</sup>

Spanish settlement in the caliphate was, not surprisingly, markedly urban. The vast majority came to the zone's seven largest cities, where they comprised some two-fifths of the population by 1936. In tribal domains, where some 88 percent of the zone's Moroccan Muslims lived, census takers counted only 4,228 Europeans (less than 1 percent)—and apart from a few hundred tenant farmers, most of these were probably Moroccan Jews, who, tellingly, were counted as Europeans.<sup>32</sup> Small lower-middle-class communities of Spaniards appeared in a few cities of the Spanish Zone, attracted by modest commercial opportunities brought by state and private investment. More numerous among the Spaniards were poor day laborers, who had been lured from Andalusia to Ceuta and Melilla during the boom years of the Rif War. They found work alongside Moroccans, mainly in road construction or in the menial service of officers or colonial administrators.<sup>33</sup> This settlement pattern differed sharply from the agricultural patterns of colonial Algeria and from the French Zone of Morocco, where around 15 percent of the European population lived outside cities and towns in 1926.<sup>34</sup> The Spanish population of Morocco remained below that of the Oran district of Algeria, but as the latter stagnated and declined as a result of assimilationist measures and diminishing opportunities, Morocco seemed dynamic by comparison.

The Spanish colony also differed in terms of the race and class segregation typical of most European colonization of the era. As Josep Lluís Mateo Dieste indicates in his monumental historical ethnography of Spanish Morocco, the basic social division was not so much between Spaniards and Moroccans as between military elites and ordinary townspeople. While some lower-middle-class Spanish settlers could afford to live in new housing blocs near the colonial barracks, poorer Spaniards tended to live among the locals, similarly to their compatriots in the international colony of Tangier. Their offspring became perfectly bilingual and sometimes were labeled “half-Christian-half-Muslim” by their Moroccan neighbors. Meanwhile, officers of high rank sometimes lived out the “Orientalist dream,” graduating from barracks to luxurious villas in the Arab style, cavorting with one another at horse competitions and social clubs with the support of Moroccan and Spanish servants.<sup>35</sup> Moroccan soldiers in the Spanish service also lived separately from their civilian coreligionists, boarding at Spanish barracks. By 1935, some 2,717 were garrisoned at Ceuta, the largest concentration of Muslims in modern Spain to that point.<sup>36</sup>



As the physical boundary between Spain and Morocco seemed to be fading, the need became more urgent to establish boundaries of coexistence between ordinary Spaniards and Moroccans. Although full residential integration was limited to certain districts of a few cities and it is impossible to know whether truly hybrid communities would eventually have emerged, authorities from both sides labored to prevent excessive blurring of ethnic lines. Incidence of mixed marriages, a standard sociological indicator, was low: of the one million inhabitants of the Spanish zone in 1950, the DAI tallied 615 mixed marriages, most of these having come about when conscripted Moroccan men met peninsular Spanish women during their civil war service. There were many more informal relationships, but the institutional bar was high: a Catholic man needed to renounce his faith to marry a Muslim woman; marriage between a Muslim man and a Catholic woman did not require conversion but risked leaving children without confessional belonging.<sup>37</sup> The extent to which other forms of private intimacy were shared across religions communities is more difficult to get at. Interconfessional wet-nursing, for example, had been subject to prohibition in the past on this religious borderland, suggesting that it may have been practiced, albeit controversially.<sup>38</sup>

Active prevention of social mixing between Spaniards and Moroccans was meant to signal respect for the colonized society and to allay fears that crusading or missionary motives lay behind the Spanish project. Not only marriage but all intimate encounters were discouraged. Postal censors scanned love letters and provided border agents with information to repel Moroccan men seeking to enter Spain for an amorous encounter, while caliphate authorities operated special prisons for women engaged in commercial or recreational sex with Christians.<sup>39</sup> Despite occasional stories of Moroccan men offering their daughters to Spanish officers as bargaining chips, Spanish soldiers mainly directed their attention to the growing ranks of Spanish women who settled across the Strait.<sup>40</sup> Later, when Franco's army recruited Moroccan soldiers to fight in the Spanish Civil War, Moroccan women were also imported to Spain to attend to troops' sexual appetites in specially established Islamic zones, which also provided mosques, halal meat, and cemeteries.<sup>41</sup>

Spanish protectorate authorities also worked to preserve boundaries between Spaniards and Moroccan Muslims in associational life, particularly labor unions. Spanish labor organizations operating in Morocco were ordered not to promote the integration of Muslims to their ranks, although no



such prohibition applied to Moroccan Jews. A 1929 law empowered protectorate authorities to vet European settlers for leftist tendencies and to bar entry to those suspected of seeking to organize Moroccan workers.<sup>42</sup> The advent of the Spanish Republic of 1931 brought a brief wave of optimism among some labor activists that the protectorate could become a laboratory for their movement's internationalist vision. These hopes were quickly dashed, however, as the new regime's leaders signaled early on they were unwilling to put their grand political designs for Spain at risk for the sake of reform in the protectorate. Popular euphoria quickly subsided on 14 April, the very day the Republic was declared in Madrid, when caliphate guards fired into the crowd at a street demonstration in Tétouan, killing two and wounding twelve.<sup>43</sup> The Spanish administration also disappointed Moroccan leaders hoping to see legislation requiring wage parity between Moroccan laborers, who earned about three pesetas per day, and Spaniards, who commanded five.<sup>44</sup> The democratic regime's internationalist gloss nevertheless seems to have penetrated colloquial language: casual mixing of Spanish and Moroccan employees among administrative service staff was sometimes celebrated as a *república*, until the term lost favor after the military rebellion of July 1936.<sup>45</sup>

The most sensitive social boundary was confession, which conjured memory of the religious frontier wars of the medieval and early modern periods. Spanish colonial administrators cultivated deliberate respect for Islam in hopes of drawing a sharp contrast with their French counterparts. The secular French administration sought to identify elements of Moroccan society well suited to collaborate in a republican empire, favoring pre-Arab peoples who they believed had not irretrievably imbibed Islamo-Arabic or sharia civilization. Although the first general residency under Lyautey had attempted to learn from the mistakes of the Algeria project, the French administration in Morocco later replicated the “Kabyle myth” of earlier campaigns, championing Berbers—a nebulous ethno-linguistic catchall for pre-Arab people of the western Maghrib—as eternal resisters of Arabization and worthy protégés. The “Berber *dahir*” of 1930 marked the apotheosis of this divide-and-conquer strategy. The decree established the supremacy of pre-Islamic tribal law over Makhzan justice in designated rural zones, but its main effect was to sow resentment that proved counterproductive to French authority and nourished modern Moroccan nationalism.<sup>46</sup>

By contrast, the Spanish preferred to deemphasize ethno-linguistic distinctions theorized by French anthropologists and favor the older

Mediterranean practice of segmenting populations along confessional lines. Spanish Africanismo did not discount race, but that concept tended to unite rather than differentiate the Iberian and Maghribian peoples. Scholars and journalists generated essays on the legacies of Sephardic and Arab influence in modern Spanish civilization, in everything from clothing to language to government, and Spanish intellectuals accepted the belief well into the twentieth century that prehistoric Iberian and Berber peoples shared common origins.<sup>47</sup> If what divided this common stock was religion, the Spanish found ways to support a standard orthodox Islam, as they had done for Catholicism, while avoiding provoking conflict with Muslims in rural areas whose spiritual practices were inflected with other traditions. One method was to provide boys with an Islamic education that was simultaneously compatible with modern life, Spanish occupation, and even a spirit of Moroccan patriotism. Spanish was the main language of instruction in these Hispano-Arab schools, which opened in population centers throughout Morocco. Such schools also included religion courses taught in classical and Moroccan Arabic. A similar formula was followed in the Hispano-Jewish schools. With the latter, the Spanish aimed to ensure that at least some portion of Jewish population in northern Morocco chose a Spanish education for their children rather than sending them to one of the many British and French schools for Jews established during the previous decades.<sup>48</sup> Luciano López Ferrer, who served as the Spanish consul in Tétouan at the start of this enterprise in 1913, stressed, “We must ensure that [Jews] study us and be made to see that, as the other countries have evolved on an open-minded and tolerant liberal trajectory with the profoundest respect for law, we have not been left behind.”<sup>49</sup>

Official philo-Sephardism was one area in which Spanish colonialism most closely mirrored Anglo-French models, emphasizing the Europeanization of Moroccan Jews against an “oriental” backdrop. With established foreign institutions like Freemasonry and the Alliance Israélite Universelle attracting Jewish members in Tangier and cities of the Spanish Zone, the Spanish labored to catch up. In the 1920s, a growing network of Hispano-Hebraic Associations on the Iberian Peninsula also extended to Tangier, Tétouan, Larache, Ksar el-Kebir, Asilah, Ceuta, and Melilla. The prominent Tangier Jew Mesod Benitah, a Spanish protégé, organized an exhibition of the work of Josep Tapiró Baró, a Catalan painter who followed the Orientalist master Mariano Fortuny to Morocco in 1859 and became especially known for his depictions of Moroccan women.<sup>50</sup> Senator

Ángel Pulido, a moderate republican of the Regenerationist era, launched a campaign to grant Spanish citizenship to the entire Sephardic Diaspora. In 1924, Primo de Rivera would invite “former protégés and their descendants” to solicit Spanish citizenship for a period of six years, a window that would open somewhat wider under Article 23 of the Republican Constitution of 1931.

While reaching out to Sephardim became a liberal cause in Spain, and attracted the sympathy of Alfonso XIII, some who took interest in Moroccan affairs believed pro-Jewish policies to be futile and ill advised. The Spanish High Commission in Tétouan opposed these types of measures precisely because they resembled British and French policies too closely. Encroaching on the sultan’s traditional role as protector of the Jews of his realm was seen to undermine the Spanish claim to offer an alternative to heavy-handed French colonialism. A direct invitation to Sephardic Jews to become Spanish, in the form of revoking the Edict of Expulsion of 1492, would, moreover, only provoke competition with France for patronage of the Jews.<sup>51</sup> During the early part of the Spanish Civil War, Franco’s army would abandon decades of official philo-Sephardism. As seen in a later chapter, Spanish colonial officials in wartime would have little difficulty trading the pro-Jewish attitudes of their predecessors for the anti-Semitism pervasive among many peasant colons. By doing so they would demonstrate their affinity with the emerging Moroccan nationalism on the basis of common Franco-Judeo-phobia.<sup>52</sup>

### From Protectorate Zone to Caliphate

Another notable development was the effort to paint the Spanish Zone as legitimate, free, and independent from the French-controlled Makhzan structure headquartered in Rabat. One key aspect was the evolving role of the Spanish-appointed caliph. The original Hispano-French treaty of 1912 vested the position of caliph with limited power outside the narrow functions of a regional administrator. Its holder possessed no sovereign claim and no ability to deal directly with any head of state, including his own, the sultan in Rabat. After two years of vacancy during the high point of the Rif War, the Spanish appointed Mulai Hassan ben el-Mehdi to be the zone’s second (and last) caliph in 1925. As though part of a new dynasty in the making, el-Mehdi was his predecessor’s son, and also a cousin of the ruling Alawite family. The Spanish surrounded their sharifian client

in Tétouan him with the trappings of royalty. He was granted an armed retinue (under Spanish command), and, like the sultan vis-à-vis the French residency in Rabat, his maintenance as symbolic leader lent legitimacy to the colonial power. Spanish authorities referred to their caliph as *su alteza* (his highness), an uncommon honorific for a mere regional administrator, but always reserved the nobler *su majestad* (his majesty) for the sultan.

Yet this detail was easily obscured by another, more visible discourse suggesting the “sovereignization” of the caliph. Franco argued in 1928 that the northern tribes’ willingness to submit to disarmament and direct taxation formed “the firmest proof of the sovereignty of the caliph and his government.” Even though many tribes had “never recognized Makhzan authority”—that is, the sultan’s power to tax them and regulate their dealings with outsiders—they were now proving their submission to the caliph by offering regular tribute.<sup>53</sup> Covering el-Mehdi’s trip to Chefchaouen in 1929, *Revista de Tropas Coloniales* again converted him into “the sovereign,” further noting that the visit was staged “with all the solemnity and ritual traditionally carried out by Moroccan sovereigns.”<sup>54</sup> Three years later, el-Mehdi traveled to Ceuta, Seville, and Madrid, where he received royal treatment, reviewing parades of militiamen and regular troops, traveling aboard a Spanish destroyer, and lodging at the Ritz Hotel, a modern palace for foreign dignitaries.<sup>55</sup> He was received in Madrid by Niceto Alcalá Zamora, president of the Republic, who referred in his remarks to the caliph’s royal lineage (see Figure 8.1).<sup>56</sup> This discourse would intensify during the Civil War, as will be seen in Chapter 10, in an effort to cultivate him as the standard-bearer of an incipient anti-French Islamic nationalism.<sup>57</sup>

Colonial administrators hoped Moroccans would perceive a contrast between French heavy-handedness and Spanish restraint. The caliph was useful in this effort, as the Spanish made a spectacle of his role in checking colonial power. In 1927, for example, the Ministry of State vested the caliph with the power to arbitrate the usage of underground springs lying within the Spanish Zone—traditionally an exclusive prerogative of the sultan. When Melilla requested a water concession, the caliph ruled that the Spanish municipality could receive only what remained after local Moroccan irrigation needs were first met.<sup>58</sup> Another clear signal of restraint was church territoriality. The Melilla diocese claimed no spiritual jurisdiction beyond the territorial limits established after 1860. As a result, Catholic burials were impossible outside city walls. Once the old



**FIGURE 8.1.** The Caliph of Spanish Morocco visits Madrid, 1932. Front row, from left: Manuel Azaña (prime minister of Spain), Hassan ben el-Mehdi (caliph of Spanish Morocco), Niceto Alcalá Zamora (president of Spain), Emilio Mola (Spanish army general).

*Source:* *África: Revista de Tropas Coloniales* (June 1932), p. 113, Biblioteca Nacional de España. Reproduced by permission.

intramural cemetery reached capacity, burial plots were for a time placed under private patios or in wall niches until additional space could be obtained.<sup>59</sup>

An interesting consequence of the caliphate's rising profile was the threat it posed to Ceuta and Melilla, hitherto the centers of Spanish

influence in the Maghrib. Although part of the peninsular command structure, the two frontier garrisons had long assumed the prerogative to deal directly with neighboring tribes, merchants, and potentates of the Tingitana and Rif. We have seen how they managed to scuttle Madrid's efforts to negotiate with the sultan in 1859 and to facilitate German contacts with Moroccan militias during World War I. Now it appeared that, by building up the caliphate, the Primo de Rivera dictatorship was developing a tool to neutralize the two exclaves' outsized influence in the protectorate that lay just over their borders. A royal decree of 1927 eliminated the General Commands of Ceuta and Melilla, placing the garrisons under the direct authority of the High Commission in Tétouan. In this way, they became part of a single command structure in Morocco, hampering their ability to pursue policies at odds with Madrid.

Ceuta and Melilla had long prospered from their role as chief mediators of the Hispano-Moroccan relationship. The extent to which the towns depended on this role was revealed as the Spanish government ended a number of exceptional privileges "adapted to the special modalities of a city neighboring our protectorate in Morocco."<sup>60</sup> The Primo de Rivera regime abolished the town's unelected Excise Councils (*Juntas de Arbitrios*), removing a reliable source of independent wealth for the local military elite. Established in the 1890s and composed entirely of army officers, the councils collected a commission on all port activity, including the lucrative ore exports. A reform of 1927 replaced these with Municipal Councils (*Juntas Municipales*) with military leadership and some civilian representation. The new bodies were dispossessed of the ability to levy direct taxes, although for the time being were allowed to keep a portion of port revenues. The Republic of 1931 took things further, removing military representation from the Municipal Councils altogether.

The young democratic regime also eliminated another exceptional privilege long enjoyed by the two exclaves: the ability to deny residency to migrants from peninsular Spain for any reason. Between 1927 and 1930, the enclaves deported 4,443 unemployed and indigent Spaniards back to their home provinces, mainly Málaga and Almería, and reserved the right to prevent new arrivals from disembarking without labor contracts in hand.<sup>61</sup> Such measures were no longer possible after 1931. Yet a continuing influx of economic refugees from the Iberian Peninsula further strained social welfare services in Ceuta and Melilla, just as Madrid was imposing what Melilla's Municipal Council called "a rigid and incomprehensible fiscal

system, inopportune in these depressed times” that left it almost entirely dependent on allocations from the central government. The Municipal Council of Melilla claimed in 1935 that thirty thousand of its residents received public welfare—“more than half the city . . . !”—and that it spent more on charity medical care than did the much larger city of Valencia.<sup>62</sup> Most households living on assistance were headed by women, as unemployed men tried their luck in the Moroccan interior and left their families to become public charges. Shantytowns grew up around the urban cores of both cities—accounting for perhaps half of Ceuta’s housing stock by 1940—and became bastions for diseases like typhoid and diphtheria that thrived in foul conditions.<sup>63</sup> In Melilla, it was only the charity of the wealthy ex-German protégé warlord Abd el-Malek that made possible the construction of some inexpensive housing in the suburb of El Polígono.<sup>64</sup> Cockfighting rings and other forms of clandestine gambling formed the main economic pillar in some neighborhoods. For a short time after 1931, Ceuta’s desperate municipal authority authorized a lottery to support poor relief and also endeavored to tax the sex trade. This type of experimentation ended in 1934, when the new high commissioner, the center-right Catholic Manuel Rico Avello, launched a crusade against revolutionary labor activism in Ceuta and the vice rings he believed were behind it.<sup>65</sup>

With all these developments, the exclaves’ formerly collaborative relationship with the protectorate was turning into rivalry for Madrid’s attention. A state of anxiety prevailed in both Ceuta and Melilla that their remaining competitive advantages in port infrastructure and proximity were precarious and fleeting. Unlike the ports within the protectorate—such as Casablanca and Mogador in the French Zone, and Al Hoceima (Villa Sanjurjo) and Larache in the Spanish Zone—the exclaves lay across a sovereign border where the caliphate could erect a major tariff barrier at any moment. Melilla’s status as the main port serving eastern Morocco was under threat, as the French were financing a railway connecting this region to the western Algerian port of Nemours (Ghazaouet). Even the Spanish government could sometimes resemble an adversary. It failed to deliver the much anticipated trans-Gibraltar tunnel to Ceuta. At one point Madrid nearly authorized internal tolls on trade caravans to Melilla, but the Municipal Council successfully mobilized to prevent it. In a smaller humiliation, the High Commission refused to provide subventions for a local expo staged by Melilla’s tourist bureau but chose instead to sponsor a similar event in Tétouan.<sup>66</sup>



As Spanish Morocco coalesced into a multiconfessional borderland society, Ceuta and Melilla lost many of the benefits previously derived from their frontline position on the Spanish-Moroccan border. The cities' military elites, defanged of much of their political and economic autonomy, could no longer enjoy both colonial prerogatives and sovereign guarantees. The military and political components of exclave governance were disaggregated. The first was subordinated to the colonial authority of Tétouan, and the second was pulled into a national democratic experiment, where, in the words of a municipal document of Melilla, it was the worker's "very just and reasonable [aspiration] to improve his lot under a Republic."<sup>67</sup> While the Spanish colonial army built a caliphate unencumbered of the requirements of elections and civil liberties, republicanism permeated not just Ceuta and Melilla, but indeed all four coastal exclaves at the heart of the trans-Gibraltar borderland. The more imperial centers of Tangier and Gibraltar, too, became centers of Spanish political activism, including revolutionary socialism and anarchism. The next chapter explores the urban dynamic in these strategic colonial outposts as they confronted a new wave of crises.



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# 9

## The Blighted Republic

**SPAIN WAS A** republic for approximately ten years, in 1873–1874 and 1931–1939, including the civil war that engulfed it after 1936. As a movement, modern Spanish republicanism had begun to simmer in the mid-nineteenth century. Some of its most radical forms prospered, as seen in earlier chapters, in the trans-Gibraltar, where entangled strands of political dissent and organized crime extended across the Strait and outside Spanish jurisdiction. This chapter turns attention to Tangier and Gibraltar in the interwar period—two strongholds of borderland republicanism that were also key positions in the Anglo-French imperial system.

Both colonies faced new challenges after World War I. Gibraltar and its Spanish suburbs languished as British military spending dried up, pushing thousands to Ceuta and Melilla in search of new opportunities arising from the Rif War. As for Tangier, which had thrived for decades on the competitive advantages gained from its diluted authority, the municipality was forced to weather an era of autarky and state interventionism without a single dedicated imperial patron. Proposals to raise revenue by ending the prohibition on gambling in the International Zone provoked a particular clash between Tangier's colonial interests and Spaniards who had come there to work underground numbers rackets. Both Tangier and the Campo de Gibraltar became centers of agitation among working-class Spaniards, particularly after the coincident arrivals of the Great Depression and Spanish Republic of 1931. The fragile new regime faced the sometimes contradictory challenge of promoting Spain's imperial interests while living up to its promise to tackle social problems, which were especially acute

in the border districts. From the perspective of the colonial societies on both shores of the Strait, progressive democracy was on display in a least favorable light.

### The Interwar Slump in Gibraltar and the Campo

Since the middle of the previous century, the Spanish towns of the Campo de Gibraltar district had staked their identity on open cross-border communication with the British colony. They enjoyed—even depended on—a number of formal and informal privileges and exceptions unavailable to the rest of the country. Residents of the Campo freely enjoyed the right to enter and work in the British town, whereas an exit visa was demanded of other Spaniards.<sup>1</sup> This privilege accounted for the steady growth of La Línea since its founding in 1870. Gibraltar was the source of wages and inexpensive goods that together formed the backbone of the local economy on the Spanish side. Demand for labor in Gibraltar reached its peak during World War I, when twelve thousand Spanish workers entered daily. The postwar recession was deeply felt in the Campo as coaling and port activity dropped off, and by 1932 daily crossings had fallen to seven thousand, one third being women informally employed as domestic or restaurant workers.<sup>2</sup> Significant lost wages were compounded by the loss of revenue from commuters' petty tobacco smuggling. Meanwhile, Gibraltar's resident working-class population gained access to the British trade union structure in 1919. The British Transport and General Workers Union, open only to British subjects, pushed for laws to protect its members from cross-border competition and guarantee them the most qualified and stable jobs. The population of La Línea had spiked during the war, but it fell precipitously from over sixty-three thousand in 1920 to some thirty-five thousand a decade later.<sup>3</sup> Painting a bleak portrait, the Campo's parliamentary deputy Rafael Torres Beleña observed that until dependence on Gibraltar could be overcome, the worker's only alternative was migration, which Torres Beleña claimed fed mainly the French interests in Algeria and Morocco (omitting to mention the ongoing war boom in Ceuta and Melilla).

To stanch the bleeding, local leaders explored the possibility of designating La Línea a duty-free zone. In this way, smugglers could become legitimate merchants, ending what Torres Beleña called the "regrettable stigma" of smuggling and bandit networks. Such a policy also promised

to enhance the purchasing power of those higher on the social ladder. The middle classes of the Campo frequently traveled to Gibraltar to purchase all manner of goods—bicycles, shoes, tools, and sugar—so why not permit those with privileged access to Gibraltar to import openly and on a larger scale?<sup>4</sup> The antismuggling inspector who had been sent from Madrid supported the idea, and the Campo's military governor made a similar plea, claiming a free port was the "only option . . . to offer something, within the law and regulations, to make it possible to live." Yet governments of Restoration Spain rejected the "free port" proposal along with other mechanisms that would have legitimized the flow of contraband across the Gibraltar border into La Línea. In 1922, Finance Minister José Bergamín rejected the idea not only on fiscal grounds, but also for geopolitical reasons. To withdraw a pretext to patrol the Bay of Gibraltar and the Gibraltar isthmus "would be to extend the Gibraltar garrison's radius of action over the entire area considered to be within the free economic zone."<sup>5</sup>

Even the unofficial right informally enjoyed by Campo residents to import tobacco freely seemed to be under threat. After 1923, Spanish dictator Primo de Rivera fortified the La Línea customhouse and created the position of "Royal Delegate for the Suppression of Contraband and Smuggling," to which he appointed a former district military governor. Although it has been seen as part of an economic war on Gibraltar, Primo de Rivera's move also signaled a burgeoning partnership with Juan March. After benefiting from March's logistical support during the Rif War, the dictatorship suspended the previous government's efforts to persecute the pirate tycoon. It chose instead to accept March's commercial empire, grant him the full tobacco monopoly, and seek better relations for their mutual benefit. By curtailing overland tobacco smuggling at La Línea, the Primo de Rivera regime was taking precise aim at Juan March's chief competitors, the petty foot smugglers, while March's large cross-bay operations were left alone.

None of this sat well with the people of La Línea. A riot at the La Línea customhouse on 6 March 1928 left two dead at the hands of Civil Guard detachments. In the wake of the tragedy, the government relaxed its enforcement. New legislation soon followed that enshrined the right of Campo residents employed in Gibraltar to carry small quantities of goods with them across the border on their commute home. But the political damage was done. Juan March, the gangster-populist of Majorca, had become, along with Primo de Rivera, an enemy of the common people, at

least at La Línea, the center of republicanism in the Campo. On the advent of the Republic in 1931, the hardline La Línea customs director was among the first to flee to Gibraltar.<sup>6</sup>

The Republic of 1931 quickly demonstrated support for the petty contrabandists. In the first instance, the new democratic regime withdrew March's tobacco monopoly, which the prior government had granted in a backroom deal without a public notice or approval of the Council of State. Furthermore, the republican government arrested and imprisoned March in June 1932 on corruption charges (he would escape to Gibraltar in 1933). Anti-March sentiment dovetailed with the Republic's promises of democratic justice. La Línea was as "enthusiastically republican" in the 1930s as it had been in 1873. By summer 1936, the town was home to twelve Masonic lodges, but only five militants of the fascist Falange party.<sup>7</sup> Local politics were largely driven by the status of town residents' *de facto* smuggling privileges. As a government official visiting the Campo from Madrid would later observe, the typical inhabitant "gives even greater importance to the distant memories . . . of free entry across the border and the coasts, of great amounts of contraband goods; this is the wish of the majority of these individuals, and only the government that should permit it would be their ideal government."<sup>8</sup>

### Tangier, Colonial Orphan

Much like the Campo de Gibraltar, Tangier hitherto formed a magnet for regional migration, drawn in by an economic dynamism issuing from imperial privilege. The city's lack of exclusive imperial sponsorship had been its greatest asset. Its peculiar juridical status had left it lightly regulated and taxed, attracting capital from multiple European countries that facilitated decades of exponential population growth. A modest 12.5 percent port duty was the main source of revenue. This formula worked well in earlier days, when nearby harbors posed little competition and the inflow of building materials was seemingly endless. Protectorate powers did not rely on customhouses to govern movement in and out of the International Zone. Instead, the International Statute of 1923 had devised a system to distribute revenues based on receipts, lest customs guards or other gate keepers around Tangier's perimeter fall into patterns of corruption characteristic of other nearby borders.<sup>9</sup> But Tangier's privileged position was also a precarious one. As mercantilist imperatives pulled Spanish and French

political and economic resources to their respective protectorate zones, Tangier would be orphaned.

To the Primo de Rivera regime, a free and open international colony on a strategic borderland was most unwelcome. The city had been “the theater of intrigues and revolutionary activity during the most acute and critical period of the Rif revolt,” the Spanish ambassador in Paris wrote in 1927, calling it a haven for “active collaborators, agents intimately tied to Abd el-Krim . . . himself.”<sup>10</sup> Following the Rif War, Primo de Rivera made a play to absorb Tangier. The dictator told the Madrid daily *ABC* that Spain had “met the tough challenge of maintaining neutrality during the Great War, and sacrificed nearly 40,000 lives and more than 5 billion pesetas.” He did “not think it is too much to ask of the [other] nations to agree to the inclusion of Tangier in the Spanish protectorate.” Days later he explicitly tied the Tangier question to Spain’s continued loyalty to the League of Nations, declaring in *La Nación* that “if [Spain] is to be trusted with a protectorate, it should be without mutilation, and if she is to be considered useful in the League of Nations she should figure among the ranks of the Great Powers.”<sup>11</sup> But sympathy was in short supply in interwar Europe. Primo de Rivera’s escalating rhetoric was ignored by the French and British until the dictator staged a boycott of a League of Nations assembly on 1 September 1926. The Great Powers were unmoved by this dramatic gesture, but a compromise enabled Primo de Rivera’s face-saving return to the international body. As it became clear that Spain would not annex Tangier, the Primo de Rivera regime pushed to harden the city’s border with the Spanish Zone. In 1928, the French-dominated municipal administration and the Spanish High Commission in Tétouan agreed to erect a joint Franco-Spanish customhouse at all points of entry into the city.

In the new environment, Tangier’s diluted sovereignty, once an advantage, was increasingly a liability, as commerce faced competition from other ports that enjoyed committed imperial sponsorship. Casablanca, a minor harbor in 1900, surpassed Tangier as the country’s most important port by 1930, its traffic volume having grown sixteen-fold in two decades compared to Tangier’s modest trebling. According to one report in 1933, flowers and produce from Meknes that once had been exported via Tangier were diverted to Casablanca because of its low port fees, even though the longer travel time compromised their freshness. More generally, the city’s International Chamber of Commerce complained: “Tangier, with no hinterland, without industry or local agriculture, must capture enough goods

from the neighboring Zones to justify its port and its railway,” but “the preferential regime accorded to ports in the French zone makes it impossible for Tangier to capture the tonnage that it has the right to expect.”<sup>12</sup> Municipal leaders supported converting the city into a free economic zone in the mold of Gibraltar, Ceuta, and Casablanca, but such a measure would have little effect without Spanish and French cooperation to eliminate interior border customs.<sup>13</sup>

The city that had benefited from decades of attention from European investors and diplomats was in a state of stagnation by 1930. Construction, a major source of employment that was especially dependent on international capital markets, came to an abrupt halt after the Wall Street crash of 1929. In 1930, Tangier’s most active and influential merchants’ organization, the International Chamber of Commerce, inveighed against the “catastrophic” impact of French and Spanish policy, calling for “an active collective reaction by the Tangerines themselves, who have played the role of martyr enough.”<sup>14</sup> In March 1931, a group of twenty-seven European and five Moroccan merchants created the International Committee for the Defense of the Economic Interests of Tangier, claiming to represent “the legitimate grievances of a population reduced to misery.”<sup>15</sup> The group’s main complaint echoed those of Ceuta and Melilla under the Spanish Republic—the inability to control in-migration. Border and port agents levied tariffs on incoming merchandise but did not restrict passenger traffic in and out of the city. Tangier law restricted residency to those with a passport and either a work contract or proof of independent means, but police did not systematically require individuals to produce documentary proof. Moreover, it was generally believed within the European community that the Spanish consul was furnishing bogus work contracts to all comers as part of a deliberate policy to populate the International Zone with Spaniards and thereby enhance his country’s influence. To quell this impression, the Spanish Ministry of State implemented a toothless and ineffective measure in 1931 to stop migration to Tangier at the point of departure, issuing instructions to port authorities in Cádiz and Málaga to require a valid employment contract of anyone departing for Tangier.<sup>16</sup>

As at so many other Mediterranean spots facing economic decline, Tangier’s leaders found hope in the prospect of tourism. Tourism had been one of modern Tangier’s foundational industries at the end of the previous century. If the promise of its seaside resorts remained unfulfilled, casino gambling had been a major revenue source—until the

International Statute of 1923 banned games of chance. This was done out of respect for the laws of Morocco and of the statute's European signatories, but gambling casinos in Tangier had dated back to European settlement in the nineteenth century and had once constituted the city's "cash cow," in the words of one editorial.<sup>17</sup> Because Islamic law proscribed gambling, its prevalence in Tangier was testament to the city's colonial character. Before 1923, gambling revenues kept many hotels profitable and provided supplementary income for merchants of all European nationalities. Moreover, they supported the Spanish and French Red Cross, the local tourism office, the local dispensary, educational initiatives, and other benevolent institutions. With the 1923 ban, gambling ceased to play a formal role, but it did not disappear. The major hotels and social halls suspended all games of chance, but the numbers vendors, mainly Spaniards, were undeterred, and slot machines could be found by those who went searching.<sup>18</sup>

A more programmatic approach to tourism development emerged in the 1930s. Whereas up to 1929 the extent of the Control Committee's action in this area was to approve funds to install privacy cabins on the beach, amid the crisis, tourism and particularly gambling began to resemble a magic bullet.<sup>19</sup> In May 1930, an unidentified man in attendance at a public meeting of the International Chamber of Commerce took the floor to urge Tangier's merchant community to consider the possibilities of tourism. In its report to the Control Committee, the chamber found it worthwhile to dedicate a full manuscript page to the comments of this man, who, "in a brilliant a tableau . . . brought us across Europe, from the French Atlantic to the Côte d'Azur and the Italian Riviera. He took us to visit the rich coasts of the Spanish Atlantic, the great beaches of Belgium, the rich spa towns like Baden. . . . The speaker showed us that Tangier, for its geographic position, could easily attract an important current of tourists and holidaymakers. Our mild climate allows in both winter and summer an influx of travelers, winterers, and summer holidaymakers."<sup>20</sup> Yet Tangier's beachfront hardly inspired comparison with Saint-Tropez. Only in 1936 were municipal sewage discharges diverted to the unused Atlantic shore "to avoid prejudicial effects to the touristic value of the beach."<sup>21</sup> The chamber's report proceeded to call for "industrializing our Zone with this in mind," presenting a plan to urbanize areas the near the eastern beach, add a casino and possibly also a golf course and spa. To finance all of this, the report argued, required "opening gambling halls in the hotels, the sole



means for them to prosper and to raise the necessary resources” for such an ambitious project.<sup>22</sup>

The prevailing consensus held that legalized gambling was the necessary foundation for any ambitious plan to develop Tangier’s tourism economy. As early as 1929, the Control Committee received two petitions advocating the restoration of gambling. One was signed by 253 local business leaders, while the other bore the signatures—including many illiterate *X* marks—of 138 Moroccans, among them hotel bellboys, tour guides, bazaar merchants, and donkey carters.<sup>23</sup> Representing colonial business interests, Tangier’s Legislative Assembly forcefully supported lifting the ban, keeping a prohibition only on houses dedicated exclusively to gambling. The French administrator of the International Zone raised the question of legalized gambling on several occasions throughout the 1930s. A unanimous vote in the Control Committee was required to change the statute, and several delegates warmed to the idea.<sup>24</sup>

But the measure consistently fell one vote short, as Spanish consuls exercised their veto throughout the 1930s. Their opposition was premised on standard objections, such as the adverse social effects that could accompany a legal gambling industry. When reassured that gambling halls were meant for tourists and that locals would not be permitted inside, the Spaniards replied that Tangier was nonetheless too close to Spanish metropolitan and colonial territory to permit a gambling station. Casino gambling had been outlawed in peninsular Spain during the Primo de Rivera dictatorship; moreover, the Republic weathered a high-level political scandal involving illegal numbers rackets in 1934–1935 and was meanwhile waging an antivice crusade in Ceuta. As an alternative, one Spanish consul, Cristobal del Castaño, suggested building a bullring, an initiative that he argued had raised considerable revenue in Ceuta. Predictably, this proposal was a nonstarter for other members of the committee, who proceeded with circular discussions of the relative morality of gambling, bullfighting, and hunting. Not only would a bullring require modifying the International Statute’s animal cruelty law; in the words of the French delegate, the quintessentially Spanish spectacle would be “out of place in the international milieu of Tangier.” Never mind that the Spanish formed by far the city’s largest foreign community: no effort to Hispanicize the city’s social life was likely to gain traction.<sup>25</sup>

Given the enthusiasm in Tangier’s Control Committee and private sector in favor of gambling as a solution to Tangier’s economic troubles, it

is striking that nothing apparently could be done to persuade the Spanish to withdraw their veto. The defiance with which three successive representatives of the Spanish Republic clung to their antigambling stance is all the more remarkable after 1935, when the Spanish currency began to deteriorate. When the peseta's value in international currency exchanges entered free fall in the spring of 1936, Tangier's public treasury resolved to liquidate its once large reserves of the Spanish coin. The city's outsized legion of private moneychangers scoffed at the republican government's officially decreed exchange rate of sixteen pesetas to the pound sterling. Smugglers ignored new measures to restrict capital flight and brought trunks filled with Spanish banknotes from across the Strait to get what they could.<sup>26</sup>

The Spanish Civil War, which began with a failed military rebellion on 17–18 July 1936, proved catastrophic for the republican peseta and for Tangier's port and tourist receipts alike. Tourist visits to Tangier dropped precipitously in 1937 as a result of the war, and the Bland Line ferry from Gibraltar was suspended after nearly being hit by an Italian bomber in the service of the rebellion. Port activity dropped by some 42 percent between 1936 and 1938, yet city leaders continued to dream of building a horse track (to compete with Gibraltar) and a municipal stadium.<sup>27</sup> Meanwhile, by the end of 1936, nonmetallic Spanish peseta notes were worth zero in Tangier, alarming the Control Committee enough to suspend the peseta's free convertibility on 19 December. With this emergency abrogation of one of international Tangier's most sacrosanct constitutional principles, the council hoped to salvage what it could from liquidating the remaining pesetas held by the city treasury. The Spanish consul, José Prieto del Río, conveyed his government's commitment to buying back all of Tangier's pesetas at a fair rate, adding that he was "convinced that the Spanish government will honor its word."<sup>28</sup> But Prieto del Río was isolated. The Italian consul, whose government was now actively supporting Franco's rebellion, raised the idea that currency issued by the Republic would never recover its value. The British and French representatives remained largely quiet in the debate, and in the end the International Zone's government showed no confidence in the republican peseta. Yet with his embattled government rapidly losing credibility in Tangier, Prieto del Río still would not consider withdrawing his veto on gambling in exchange for some rescue deal.

The best explanation for the Spanish intransigence on the gambling question is almost totally invisible to the historical record but key to understanding the city's and the region's fate. When pressed by other delegates

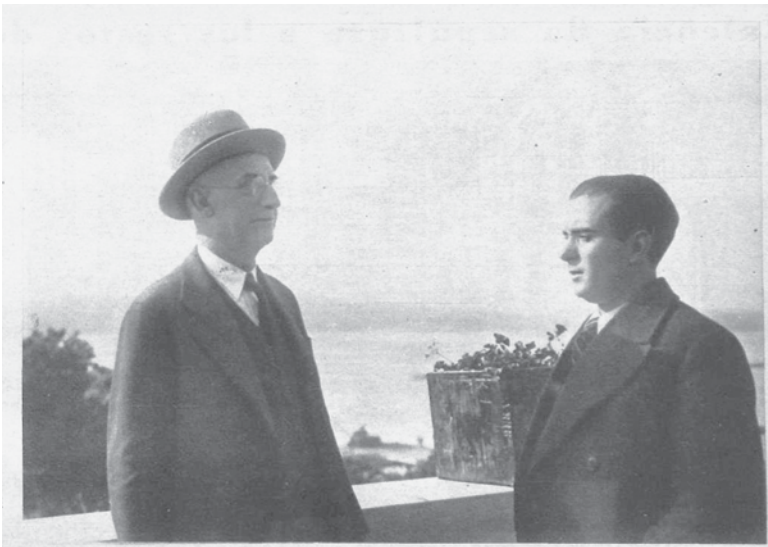
in a 1938 hearing, Prieto del Río restated the customary arguments against legal gambling, but enigmatically added: “[I have] interests to protect and [I do] not have confidence in certain employees of the police force or the Tangier tribunal.”<sup>29</sup> The Spaniard did not elaborate on precisely what he meant, but the insinuation of organized crime is unmistakable. Prieto del Río may even have feared for his life. He never appeared without the escort of two armed bodyguards, communist gangsters from Madrid. Their real assignment, it appears, was not to protect Prieto del Río but to prevent him from defecting to Franco’s side, as his predecessor José Rojas had done.<sup>30</sup> Spaniards dominated Tangier’s underground numbers racket, which had long been tied to the revolutionary anarchist underground, and, whether Prieto del Río was personally connected or merely feared reprisal, his comment suggests he faced pressure to defend this informal monopoly.

### The Spanish Civil War in Tangier and Gibraltar

By the time the military rebellion was launched in Melilla on 17 July 1936, a considerable reserve of annoyance and contempt toward the Spanish Republic had accumulated among elites in both Tangier and Gibraltar. The roguish activities of Spanish revolutionary militias in Tangier and Andalusia served to deepen these attitudes once the Spanish Civil War began. In both exclaves, leaders harbored ill will toward pro-Republic forces and instead elected to appease an insurgent army that increasingly had them surrounded. In effect, the two colonies favored the side more likely to threaten their very own existence—a winning gamble, as fate would have it.

Sympathy for Spanish republicanism had rarely been present among the elite of Gibraltar, who recalled the nineteenth-century incarnation of this ideology and its associations with banditry and revolution. Even before the establishment of the Republic of 1931, Gibraltar authorities censored republican publications “out of respect” for the laws of the Primo de Rivera regime—a principle that had rarely applied where mercantile or migration laws were concerned.<sup>31</sup> The *Gibraltar Chronicle*, the colony’s English-language paper of record, toed the line in favor of Spain’s antirepublican right, signaling goodwill, if not a full-fledged alliance between traditional local elites on both sides of that contentious border. The Republic’s decision in 1932 to ban foreigners from acquiring property in the Campo de Gibraltar only fueled antagonism among Gibraltar’s

propertied classes. The republican consul in Gibraltar actively monitored fifteen Spanish households suspected of involvement in anti-government conspiracies, a figure that dropped to nine after a new Labor government in Britain threatened to expel any resident Spaniard involved in political activities.<sup>32</sup> Despite some efforts by the British government to encourage neighborliness toward the Republic, Gibraltar served as refuge for the latter's enemies, much as it had for liberal conspirators in the nineteenth century. José Larios, a scion of the prominent Campo family, was imprisoned in 1931 for removing tricolor republican flags from the streets of Algeciras but soon alighted to Gibraltar. In November 1933, Juan March staged a *de luxe* escape from a Madrid prison, whisked in a Rolls Royce to the Hotel Rock of Gibraltar, where he proceeded to hold court with politicians and journalists (see Figure 9.1).<sup>33</sup> Charles Harington, who served as Gibraltar's governor from 1933 to 1938, maintained cordial relations with General José Sanjurjo, author of an abortive 1932 coup against the Republic. Harington received Sanjurjo on the Rock in 1934 and 1935. The British colonial governor also joined hunting parties with Franco and Luis Martín-Pinillos,



**FIGURE 9.1.** After escaping from a Madrid prison in November 1933, Juan March (*left*) turns up at the Hotel Rock in Gibraltar, where he is photographed speaking with a reporter. Spain is visible in the background across Gibraltar Bay.

*Source:* Photograph by A. Freyone. *Crónica*, 12 November 1933.

the military governor of the Campo de Gibraltar. Whether this was the intention, such contacts cleared the way for relatively good relations between Gibraltar and Franco's insurgency, with significant wartime consequences.<sup>34</sup>

By late spring of 1936, street politics reached a boil throughout Spain, including both shores of the Strait. In the Campo de Gibraltar, members of middle-class or Catholic families did not always count on police to protect them. They were warned to be home before nightfall, as anarchist militants far outnumbered the ranks of Falangist youth brigades. A few such families found temporary refuge in the British colony.<sup>35</sup> In Tangier, a range of labor organizations sponsored daily protests throughout May and June, and although they remained peaceful, calls for "bombs and shelling in order to obtain what is rightfully ours" were routine.<sup>36</sup> The city's business-oriented Legislative Assembly requested an urgent crackdown, and the Control Committee obliged, disbanding four labor organizations. At the time, the Spanish consul José Rojas called the measures alarmist and counterproductive (though Rojas himself would soon take refuge among the antirepublican conspirators in Tétouan).

News of the military uprising of 17–18 July was received in this context—not a new departure but an event that accelerated a process already underway. The Campo garrisons at Algeciras and San Roque immediately sided with the rebellion, a sign of the Spanish army's progress in colonizing the south since the days of chronic revolutionary cantonalism in the nineteenth century. Only heavily republican La Línea held out for some ten days with the help of revolutionary militias from Málaga, including one led by the anarchist Danino, a Gibraltarian of Maltese origin whose sister was wedded to a proinsurgent officer of the San Roque garrison.<sup>37</sup>

The Republic managed to retain its tenuous grip on the Spanish representation in Tangier, establishing Prieto del Río as consul after Rojas fled. The violence to visit that city over the following two years would resemble the targeted political assassinations of the prewar period rather than mass wartime repressions of Spanish Morocco and Andalusia. As in other expatriate communities, the Spanish of Tangier split in two, the working-class majority remaining loyal to the Republic while the smaller middle classes and the Franciscan establishment favored the uprising.<sup>38</sup> Representing republican officialdom in the city were Prieto del Río and Clemente Cerdeira, the consulate's veteran Arabist. Both men clung to the ideal of a moderate republic that enjoyed little bandwidth among the revolutionary

organizations active in Tangier. The European municipal leadership generally regarded the Spanish Republic with dismay, a view confirmed in the days following the rebellion by the arrival of Spanish naval vessels in a state of mutiny seeking supplies at both Tangier and Gibraltar harbors. Prieto del Río attempted in vain to convince the skeptical Control Committee to authorize stationing ten thousand mutineer sailors around the perimeter of Tangier to defend the city against a hostile entry of pro-Franco troops from the adjacent Spanish Zone of Morocco.<sup>39</sup> Instead, authorities at both ports quickly expelled the mutineers, citing the mandate of strict neutrality, but they were surely also influenced by Franco's threats of aerial bombardment.<sup>40</sup>

Formally neutral, the two colonial enclaves became magnets for refugees and no small amount of intrigue on both sides. When gunshots signaling the rebellion shattered a pleasant July afternoon at the annual La Línea town fair, thousands of Gibraltarians made haste back to British lines, and thousands more Spaniards thronged the Gibraltar town gate as refugees. Others swam into the bay's disputed waters hoping to be picked up by British vessels. In his palace, Governor Harington hosted the Castilla del Pino family, a "martyr" family of San Roque that lost relatives at the hands of leftist militias in the early days of the rebellion. Members of the prominent Ybarra family moved from Seville into Gibraltar's Bristol Hotel.<sup>41</sup> Within ten days of the uprising, the rebel general Queipo de Llano announced it was safe for landowning families hiding out in Gibraltar to return to La Línea; by September most were back in their homes. For partisans of the Republic in the Campo, flight to Gibraltar offered an alternative to fighting on, a factor that likely contributed to shortening the war there. Republican refugees populated a makeshift camp on the isthmus until September, after which they either made their way to republican ports or quietly found low-wage employment in the British town.<sup>42</sup>

After several weeks' drama, Gibraltar and the Campo gradually settled into a kind of new normalcy. With the blessings of the Francoist and British navies, the regular Bland Line ferry between Gibraltar and Algeciras ran throughout the war. Gibraltarian investment retained its important role in the Campo, and some seven thousand workers resumed their daily commutes across the land border. The crossing was open to virtually anyone except those on a registry of republican militants issued by the Francoist authorities in 1937.<sup>43</sup> Other prewar cross-border traditions were suspended, including the La Línea fair and the Calpe Hunt, the

latter definitively. A casual observer might not have noticed the discreet but brutal repression being carried out. The main instigator was Servando Casas, a right-wing physician who had fled to Gibraltar shortly before the rebellion, returning in late July to find his La Línea clinic ransacked. The garrison command quickly appointed Servando Casas mayor and Falange chief of La Línea, positions from which he personally ordered two thousand executions over the next eight months—equal to some 6 percent of the city's population, an exorbitant proportion even by the standards of the Spanish Civil War. Some of La Línea's leftist partisans managed to change their fortunes, however, simply by trading in their red and black for Falangist blue.<sup>44</sup>

As the military rebellion coalesced under the supreme command of General Francisco Franco, Gibraltar became a launching point for many a republican partisan's flight and temporary home for many more. Some four thousand, possibly more, passed through, with upward of a thousand inhabiting the overcrowded British town at any given time throughout much of 1937. Their political activities in Gibraltar were mainly limited to peaceful gatherings, occasional violent outbursts being swiftly set upon by police.<sup>45</sup> As late as January 1938, a handful of Spanish soldiers and police deserted to the British colony each day, quickly making their way to republican-held Barcelona via Marseille.<sup>46</sup>

The liberal commercial ethos that had in the nineteenth century led Gibraltar to favor weak central governance over the Campo could not prevail when fear of Bolshevism subsumed all else, and Gibraltar's discreet support for the military rebellion was manifest in supply shipments, in the special support it gave to refugees from republican violence, and in a range of social and business contacts. Despite legal restrictions on trade, sales to rebel authorities in the Campo increased dramatically during the war.<sup>47</sup> Gibraltar's sympathetic colonial governor permitted the establishment of a makeshift "Nationalist consulate" early in 1938. When Franco's forces achieved victory in April 1939, the new consulate requested the repatriation of republican refugees, preferring them to face trial in Spain rather than forming an organized opposition in the British colony. Although concerned with the sanitation risks of keeping so many people in crowded, squalid conditions, British authorities were reluctant on humanitarian grounds to turn over the remaining refugees. This ethical consideration was complemented by the practical one that these men and women were willing to perform much of the tunnel digging and other unpleasant tasks



for minimal compensation. The consul negotiated the repatriation of some seven hundred refugees “who had the least to fear from [Francoist] tribunals.”<sup>48</sup> As late as 1940, some 1,200 remained trapped in Gibraltar and some 350 were still in the colony in 1946.<sup>49</sup>

Whereas Gibraltar formed a peaceful haven, Tangier was tied into the republican war effort from the start. Tangier’s European leaders, fearing a flood of republican refugees in the summer of 1936, were relieved to see the opposite—an exodus of activists, including hundreds of unemployed men. Municipal sources estimated that, of the ten thousand Spaniards residing in Tangier in 1936, 500–600 departed for Málaga to fight for the Republic, and an additional 160 emigrated away from Spain. Only seven leftists were deported, probably fewer than the number of Falangists Prieto del Río managed to expel. The international Control Committee prevented the Spanish consul from ejecting sixty pro-Franco sympathizers on the grounds that such an act would invite further street violence.<sup>50</sup>

A neutral enclave with diluted political authority, Tangier was a particular magnet for political conflict associated with the Spanish Civil War. By late summer 1937, Tangier had begun to resemble a number of peninsular Spanish cities in early 1936—a cauldron of political violence featuring a cycle of targeted assassinations and reprisals. Anarchists and Communists thrived in the International City, attaining decisive influence over the Spanish consulate and tarring the reputation of many of their compatriots who, according to the Dutch consul, mainly desired “only work and bread.”<sup>51</sup> In the guise of a local benevolent society, a five-hundred-man anarchist militia prepared to resist a fascist revolt in the city. They also scuttled attempts by a number of Jewish refugees from central Europe to gain passage to French Casablanca, apparently in hopes of extorting the Jews’ touted gold to fund their cause.<sup>52</sup> One Spanish anarchist gangster adopted the handle “Raissouli” in homage to the late brigand of the Tingitana, while a Muslim fellow traveler—reportedly a nephew of Abd el-Krim—went by the Spanish sobriquet “Pajarito.” Such symbolic displays of hybridization belied what a French colonial army source considered a “naïve project” to foment rebellion in the protectorate, that was “totally ignorant of Morocco and of the Muslim mentality.”<sup>53</sup>

Blue-shirted Falangists multiplied in Tangier as well, incorporating local Muslims into their ranks. They armed themselves with pistols and batons and engaged vigilante patrols of working-class neighborhoods. Under pressure to suppress political violence from left and right, police



were hard-pressed to keep up. The Control Committee was deluged with complaints from both sides claiming that it was favoring the other. Prieto del Río took particular umbrage at the use of the term *red* in official municipal documents to refer to partisans of the Republic.<sup>54</sup> On Christmas Eve in 1936 a contingent of Italian sailors assailed the offices of the antifascist Spanish daily *Democracia*, a vigilante act that somehow resulted in the expulsion of the newspaper's publisher for inciting violence but immunity for the sailors themselves, who received protection from the Italian consul.<sup>55</sup>

Tangier's neutrality frequently tilted toward the rebels' favor. This was in large part because the European councilmen regarded leftist militias as the greater threat to municipal order. The International Zone's French administrator, Joseph Le Fur, himself sensed this pattern but appeared helpless to change it. Le Fur believed that the municipal police force's aggressive and sometimes arbitrary arrests of leftist revolutionaries gave credence to the common belief that the police were an arm of fascist insurgency. The force also routinely provided security detail at pro-Franco meetings, such as a celebration of Franco's capture of Málaga held at the home of prominent army surgeon Manuel Amieva. Bedecked with the Spanish national flag, Amieva's balcony drew gunshots from below, prompting Le Fur to call for police to act "in the interest of everyone and with the greatest impartiality."<sup>56</sup> The police did pursue Falangists, and detained ten in a sweep in late July 1937, but it could be difficult to distinguish between reprisal and provocation. For example, when Ricardo Ruiz Orsatti, a deputy of Le Fur's and a moderate Spanish republican, survived an assassination attempt, both leftists and Falangists might have had motive to target him.<sup>57</sup>

Falangist militias were far more useful as propagandists and recruiters of Muslim Moroccans than as vigilante gunmen. Prieto del Río surely recognized this when he proposed a deal directly to the rebel high commissioner in Tétouan, General Juan Beigbeder, not to expel the detained Falangists if they ceased their uniformed parades and recruitment drives. Beigbeder, although he did not respond to Prieto del Río's offer, did urge Falangists to exercise restraint, lest the mission of winning over Tangier's Muslim population be undermined by frivolous muggings and shootings. Falangist propaganda, filled with anti-Semitic and anti-French messages, was distasteful to much of the European elite, which generally took pride in the city's intercommunal harmony. One example, distributed in Arabic, claimed that "Jews who are opposed to God and fight only for their own

interests . . . and Russia . . . and France, which is run by the Jews and the Freemasons . . . are the representatives of Red Spain.”<sup>58</sup> Prieto del Río thus scored a rare victory in the Control Committee when he pushed through, over the objections of the Italian and Portuguese delegations, a law prohibiting the recruitment or transit of international volunteers to either of the warring Spanish armies. By 1938, the major violators of this truce were not Spanish republicans or Falangists but the Italian Fascist press, which continued to call for volunteers to fight in Spain.<sup>59</sup>

By the late summer of 1938, the French-controlled municipal administration reached wit’s end in keeping public order. In September, it broke up a republican plot to provoke rebellion against Franco’s army among Moroccans of the Spanish Zone, resulting in the arrests of twenty-four Spanish taxi drivers and fifteen Moroccan coconspirators, and the flight of Prieto del Río to South America. Yet the administration could do no right by the fascist coalition either, which searched for any means to depose French municipal authorities. When French sailors docked in Tangier in early September, they were pelted with rocks and shouts of “Viva Franco!” by a gang of Spaniards and Moroccan Muslims. In another case, Italian agents encouraged a Muslim woman arrested for smuggling kef to file a complaint for wrongful detention against the French chief inspector. Although the case went nowhere, the French government concluded the case “proves that the Italians seek, by all possible means, to bring harm to the French, especially the officials of the International Zone.”<sup>60</sup> The main result of all this was to destroy the credibility of a civil municipal administration under international stewardship. By the end of 1938, Tangier had reverted to its former status as an object of imperial positioning.

When the Spanish war at last ended in April 1939, the Control Committee quickly moved to prohibit newcomers from immigrating to Tangier. Access was limited to those who could afford a five-thousand-franc collateral, and only for a maximum of six months. The measure aimed to stem the influx into the city of refugees from Europe’s burgeoning “New Order”—chiefly Spanish republicans and Jews from central Europe.<sup>61</sup> For republicans, the standard exodus routes took them across the Strait to Tangier, then on to French Morocco, France, or Algeria. Some managed to blend into settler communities of Spanish Morocco. After the French Republic fell in 1940, some refugees found passage to the Americas, while others endured concentration camps or found their way into the Resistance.

Jewish refugees faced a greater challenge. Roughly thirty thousand had reached Tangier and Casablanca from Poland by 5 September 1939.<sup>62</sup> Having been stripped of their citizenship, a good portion of these stateless people sat in Tangier prison awaiting the opportunity to depart for South and North America. Local Jews with networks in Casablanca and other ports came to the assistance of some of the refugees, though on the whole sympathy for their Ashkenazi coreligionists was limited. A Spanish DAI agent reported that some of the newcomers were heard insulting Sephardic rites during the Jewish High Holidays of 1939, calling them “barbaric, boorish, backward, crude, gross, etcetera.”<sup>63</sup> In May 1940 the local Rabbinical Council endorsed a proposal by Manuel Amieva, then president of the Control Committee, to restrict the entry of additional refugees from central Europe, “in view of the social and political danger that could result,” and imposing jail terms and fines on clandestine traffickers. By the time the law took effect in December, many of the refugees had already moved on to Casablanca, where they were permitted to remain, despite the Vichy regime’s new Jewish laws, provided they did not enter Muslim districts and agreed to accept responsibility for any unrest. In 1941, some 840 Jewish refugees from central Europe remained in Tangier.<sup>64</sup> As a rule, those who kept to themselves could remain, while those seen to contribute to social tension were pressured by the local Jewish community to depart for Palestine.<sup>65</sup> These outsiders had not formed part of Tangier’s social fabric before their desperate arrival in 1939. But their sudden departure anticipated the destiny of their Sephardic coreligionists less than two decades later, part of a broad and dramatic transformation of the trans-Gibraltar during the mid-twentieth century, a process the remainder of the book will analyze.

## **Part Three**

### **Toward a New Paradigm, 1936–1970**

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# 10

## The New (Old) Order, 1936–1942

**THE FAILED MILITARY COUP** of 18 July 1936 and the ensuing civil war that engulfed Spain triggered a revolutionary moment in the trans-Gibraltar borderland. Over the following six years or so of war and hardship, the region would experience tumultuous change. An organized Moroccan nationalist movement would blossom and a new Judeophobia would flourish. Germany and Italy would gain a significant presence where they previously had almost none. The two fascist regimes entered the fold to aid the Spanish army rebels in toppling the republican government and soon established positions on both shores of the western Mediterranean from which to challenge France and Britain. Francisco Franco, a veteran of the Moroccan campaigns of the 1920s, emerged in 1939 as Spain's uncontested dictator, bent on leveraging the looming global conflict to forge a new Spanish empire in northwestern Africa. Yet just a few years later, the outcome of World War II appeared to bring about the restoration, *mutatis mutandis*, of the preexisting order. The Moroccan protectorate structure of 1912 emerged intact, the International Statute for Tangier was modified only slightly to reflect new rights accorded to the Soviet Union, and the cross-border dynamic at Gibraltar remained vibrant as ever. This cycle of war, revolution, and restoration in the region raises the fundamental question: what precisely was it that turned out to be revolutionary, and what exactly was restored? Decades would pass before the answer would be fully determined, a process that occupies Part 3 of this book.

## Radical Imperial Revisionism

It would be inadequate to look only to Morocco to find the causes of the Spanish Civil War, causes that fit a common pattern of revolutionary-counterrevolutionary civil conflict of the era. But examining the role of the southern borderland nevertheless helps to illuminate how Spain's internal conflict fit within a wider dynamic of imperial struggle during an era of world history in which internal and international conflict were inextricably tangled. The rebel *nacionales* were led mainly by officers of the Spanish colonial army in Morocco steeped in resentment over the republican government's close relations with France—their bitter protectorate rival—and a general sense that peninsular politicians cared little for their sacrifices.<sup>1</sup> The rebels would not likely have had the confidence to stage an insurrection without a number of sources of support rooted in the trans-Gibraltar: the financial empire of Juan March; the Anglo-Protestant elite of Gibraltar; a Fascist Italy bent on expanding its influence in the western Mediterranean; and the tribes of the Tingitana and Rif, whose loyalty to the Spanish colonial army since the defeat of Abd el-Krim defied expectations, contributing some eighty thousand men to fight for Franco in Spain.<sup>2</sup>

Key aspects of the Franco regime's victory, consolidation, and longevity were secured on the southern borderland. The *nacionales'* swift attainment of air superiority in the Strait neutralized the republican navy's ability to interrupt rebel supply lines from Morocco while also guaranteeing that the liberal powers positioned at Gibraltar and Tangier would do nothing to aid republican defenses. The Republic imposed a naval blockade, but soon Germany and Italy furnished the planes to carry out an aerial convoy across the Strait (a first in military history), while pummeling republican blockade vessels from the air. Once the republican navy was neutralized in the Strait, the rebels soon enjoyed the use of naval vessels, tourist ferries, and ships borrowed from the Transmediterránea firm's commercial fleet to transport supplies and men onto the Iberian Peninsula.<sup>3</sup> Meanwhile, Gibraltar and Tangier became assets to Franco's cause as important conduits for goods and hard currency. Morocco became a major source of conscripts, and the Africanismo of the colonial army provided an ideological repertoire to accommodate the inexorable rise of Arab (and particularly Moroccan) nationalism within the Francoist tent.

The prospect of a coming era of fascist hegemony lent urgency to the rebel leader's aspiration to gain control of both shores of the Strait, or

perhaps even all of northwest Africa. Franco secured the support of both the Italian Duce and German Führer within weeks of the rebellion, and well into World War II, the Spanish Caudillo remained enthusiastic about the Third Reich and its European New Order, which for a time provided an approximate political template for his own regime. It is important to consider, however, that global conflict of this era represented not only, or even chiefly, a clash of mass-political ideologies. World War II was also a clash of empires, the logic of classic geopolitics forming an ideological underpinning common to all the belligerents to some extent. Generations of Spanish Africanistas shared in this geopolitical outlook, regarding northern Morocco as the vital sphere of influence on which national survival hinged.

Political turmoil in republican Spain loomed large in the precarious Spanish colony. Even if the notion of the Republic becoming a Soviet satellite in southwestern Europe was fanciful, possibility of revolution was certainly real enough in Spain throughout the 1930s. Its potential spread from the Iberian Peninsula into the protectorate could have furnished France with an irresistible pretext to invade Spanish Morocco and thus achieve a long held goal to dominate the north coast and challenge British hegemony in the Strait. Moreover, the centrifugal tendencies long associated with Spanish revolutions raised the concern that outside powers could establish quasi-colonial influence over renegade provinces. These fears helped motivate Franco's rhetoric in the first two years following his victory as he promoted the idea that recovering Gibraltar and advancing in Africa were essential to achieving national unity.<sup>4</sup>

Franco and his supporters assumed that France and Britain were their natural predators, while the fascist powers' interests aligned with anyone poised to oppose the two great liberal empires. The insurgents' belief that Britain and France stood in the way of Spanish aggrandizement in purely territorial terms was not unjustified, but it also left them blind to Italian and German agendas. In one key respect, the new Spanish Right resembled Morocco's last independent sultans in their attitude toward Germany: it saw a distant empire whose presence in the western Mediterranean could neutralize British and French power but whose real expansionist goals were directed elsewhere. The Germans had long done their part to encourage this attitude in their dealings with both Spain and Morocco, presenting themselves in turn as champions of Spanish ambitions and Moroccan independence. For Spaniards who regarded Morocco



as the bulwark against French encirclement and the linchpin of Spanish security, it seemed a logical step to turn to the Third Reich. They envisaged a new German order supplanting an Anglo-French system bent on devouring Morocco and Spain in two bites.

This uninformed prognosis would prove also to be erroneous, a fact that became increasingly visible to some Spanish officials over the course of 1940. It was Hitler and Mussolini, not the western Allies, who were quickest to reach for the carving knife, ready to draw up a new order in the strategic choke point based on raw geopolitical considerations. The tripartite Axis alliance was possible at all only because Germany, Italy, and Japan were able to work out separate, complementary spheres of domination. But Franco's vision of a bicontinental Spanish empire at the Mediterranean gates of the Atlantic could never materialize as another *guerra paralela* against Anglo-French hegemony—too many other powers aspired to a position in the same constricted space. Nor was it certain that a victorious Hitler, encountering a delicate situation in the western Mediterranean and needing to balance multiple vassals and confront American hostility, would ever have seen fit to grant Gibraltar, Tangier, or any significant part of northwest Africa, to Franco. For all the enthusiasm within the Franco regime for the emerging Axis, the dictator's most inviolable sine qua non was Spanish territorial integrity—not to become a colonial football on the Euro-African Atlantic, another Morocco, or to permit new foreign enclaves to replace old ones.<sup>5</sup> As a Spanish lieutenant colonel assured a French contact in May 1940, "We will defend our country against *all* who attempt to violate" Spain's sovereignty.<sup>6</sup> Britain and France would thus contrive to flatter Franco's ambitions in hopes of demonstrating a greater respect than the Axis powers for Spain's precarious holdings. With the German Blitzkrieg advancing on Paris, one Maghrib specialist at the French High Command concluded, "Our front is in Madrid."<sup>7</sup>

The Hispano-Moroccan space was becoming the target of a new set of imperial ambitions even before the Spanish Civil War began. German political geographers had begun to examine the Mediterranean in terms of an inland Euro-African lake—the inverse of a global thoroughfare but one with equally profound implications for Spanish foreign relations. A particularly outlandish expression of this idea was the German architect Herman Sörgel's vision to create "Atlantropa" by constructing a great hydroelectric dam across the Strait of Gibraltar.<sup>8</sup> And although Nazi imperialism wound up turning to Eurasia rather than "Eurafrika," shoring up

defenses in southwestern Europe and northwest Africa remained a crucial task. During the early stages of the Spanish conflict, Italian and German presence there grew precipitously, concentrated around key naval choke points. From the perspective of Mussolini's Italy, political interest in reversing the putative communist advance coincided with the geopolitical appeal of the Balearic Islands. Access to this archipelago, situated at the maritime nexus of Barcelona, Valencia, Algeria, and Sardinia, could bring Italy a key position on the fringes of the western Mediterranean channel. By the end of 1936, Italy was building the makings of permanent naval and air bases in the Balearic Islands of Formentera and Majorca (Alcudía), preempting a possible British claim there and gaining the ability to disrupt communications between France and its Algerian colony. As Mussolini boasted in September 1937 to Joachim von Ribbentrop, Hitler's ambassador to London at the time, the Italian navy was gaining the ability to ensure "not one negro will be able cross from Africa to France by the Mediterranean route," thereby depriving France of a vast reserve of colonial troops.<sup>9</sup> Adopting a familiar colonialist tactic, Rome relied on individual political entrepreneurship to establish a sustainable and friendly presence in Majorca with an eye to influencing civil affairs. This mission fell to an "extravagant Fascist" known as "Count Rossi." The would-be viceroy meddled in the island politics of Majorca to encourage the growth of a pro-Italian Falange party independent from Franco's command structure, and attempted to help Italian shipping firms overtake Juan March's dominant position, encountering little success with either project.<sup>10</sup>

German intervention on Franco's behalf resulted in the sudden and significant establishment of Nazi presence on both shores of the Strait. By late summer 1936, colonies of German officers and technical advisers appeared in Ceuta, Melilla, and throughout Spanish Morocco. The Luftwaffe developed an aerial link from Tétouan to Seville that played an important logistical role early in the Spanish Civil War.<sup>11</sup> The Third Reich contributed the heavy artillery placed along much of Morocco's Mediterranean coastline, including major installations within range of Gibraltar, catching the eye of the British.<sup>12</sup> With this, Franco's army flouted Spain's commitment to the protectorate system set down in 1912, which expressly barred any fortification of the northern coast of Morocco. The German intelligence service also set up radio intercept stations at Algeciras and ten other coastal and insular points on both shores from Cape Trafalgar to Melilla. By early 1937, the beach hotels of the Campo de Gibraltar had become a major Axis

surveillance post. Officers and agents lodged at the Reina Cristina, a rebuilt version of the splendid British hotel where the Conference of Algeciras had taken place in 1906.<sup>13</sup> Hotel bathrooms became makeshift darkrooms to develop film of British naval movements. On Sundays, German spies descended to the Campo's beaches, Aryan giants immodestly clad in "tiny swimsuits" that prudish Civil Guards had little choice but to tolerate.<sup>14</sup>

Franco's association with Germany formed the crucial leaven for wartime Africanismo. Germany enjoyed much prestige among Morocco's various anticolonial factions for its earlier struggles against France, and now the Reich's purported benevolence toward colonized peoples became an important propaganda theme. In December 1936, the Spanish cinema of Tétouan screened *Kreuzer Emden* (1932), which told the tale of the German raiding vessel that disrupted British imperial shipping in Southeast Asia during World War I. Although in Germany the film had disappointed box-office expectations some years earlier, it was advertised in Tétouan as Europe's blockbuster of the season.<sup>15</sup> Addressing a delegation of Moroccan nationalists in Salamanca in September 1937, Franco cited "the spiritual adhesion of Italy and Germany, which have the same affection [as Spain] for the Muslim race, and which also wish to help us forge the grandeur of the Moroccan people so that it can be the guide for the other Muslim peoples." For his part, the pasha of Tétouan presented the Caudillo with a cityscape of the caliphate capital rendered by the Andalusian painter Mariano Bertuchi, inscribed with the dedication, "For your love of Islam . . . ; *Viva Franco! ¡Arriba España!*"<sup>16</sup>

It may be idle to assess the extent to which Moroccans adhered to the cult of Franco. Personalistic claims to authority were a familiar feature of local politics, and Franco's hard-won reputation as heroic leader of Muslim troops was far more compelling than the alternative image of a benevolent Spanish imperialist. Much like El Cid Campeador—the eleventh-century warlord of the Ebro frontier who commanded Christian and Muslim troops—Franco represented different ideals to different publics. While maintaining an image among Spanish nationalists as a Catholic crusader, he appeared to his Muslim audience as a transcendent hero who declared war against a repressive Spanish government. Rumors circulated that the purportedly childless "al-Hajj Franco" adopted a Muslim orphan as his daughter.<sup>17</sup>

While it may be that no influential Moroccan would have accepted permanent rule by a Spaniard, Franco was sufficiently credible to command

genuine support in the moment. French observers were taken aback by the loyalty of the northern caids to Franco after 1936—despite the shortages of basic goods and the mandatory troop levies their people endured, and despite what might have resembled a golden opportunity to exploit turmoil on the peninsula to beat back the colonizers. Acute economic crisis left ordinary conscripts with few alternatives—a familiar Riffian dilemma—but it is nonetheless remarkable that no significant resistance emerged, especially given the numerous channels available to fund such a movement. Analysts in Rabat predicted such uprisings multiple times throughout the latter months of 1936, before one finally admitted in August 1937 that the Spanish Zone “contrary to all predictions, is in fact as calm today as on the first day” of the Civil War. The population remained “loyal to the indigenous leaders and their [Spanish] administrators.” Tétouan projected a combination of “force and mystique” that “drives the masses on an enterprise in which the interests of Moroccan nationalism seem to be confused with those of Spanish nationalism.”<sup>18</sup>

A likely additional factor was repression. Within days of the military uprising, rebel authorities preemptively decapitated the opposition, executing 560 Spanish republicans in Ceuta and Melilla (mainly from the ranks of the notably radical taxi driver and telegraph worker syndicates) and up to 1,500 suspicious individuals in the protectorate, including Muslims and Jews, and imprisoned a total of five thousand more.<sup>19</sup>

### Toward a Partitioning of Morocco?

The uprising of July 1936 ended any remaining pretense of a unified Hispano-French Protectorate of Morocco, at least until 1942, by which time the regional conjuncture had changed considerably. As a sign of this, both French and Spanish colonial authorities sought to curtail all intercourse with the opposite zone. Rabat and Tétouan shared a common fear that young Moroccan men would avoid service in Franco’s army by fleeing to the French Zone. In October 1937, the DAI office in Tétouan complained of the concentration of Muslims that could be found milling about near the French consulate in European dress, arguing these individuals should be forced to choose between enlistment and expulsion.<sup>20</sup> Moreover, closing the interzonal border furthered the rebel army’s mercantilist aims. It prevented the diversion of precious wartime provisions like Moroccan beef, poultry, beans, wheat, potatoes, eggs, and wine to Gibraltar or France,

where they might fetch higher prices. It was also hoped that the autarkic border would help bolster the “national peseta,” the Franco regime’s fledgling new currency.<sup>21</sup>

Another reason to curtail interzonal movement was to prevent exposure to ideas and propaganda aimed against the rival protector. French protectorate authorities were particularly troubled by cross-border recruitment efforts. About one-tenth of Franco’s Moroccan forces came from the French Zone. Drawn from the ranks of pro-Franco tribes, cross-border recruiters took their rhetorical cues from the caliph of the Spanish Zone and the influential pro-Spanish caid Suleiman al-Khattabi (Abd el-Krim’s cousin), pitching the Francoist cause as a struggle for independence from French rule and for the integrity of Islam. Such statements by northern Moroccan politicians directly contradicted Sultan Muhammad ben Yusef’s unequivocal prohibition on his subjects taking sides in the Spanish conflict. The sultan’s injunction, along with the French commitment to non-intervention in the Spanish war, left it unambiguous that service in Franco’s army by any Moroccan subject in either zone was illegal, though nothing short of invasion of the Spanish-controlled north could have ended it. The new French resident general, Charles Noguès, arrived in Rabat in September 1936 with a mandate to enforce the prohibition in the French Zone but soon discovered that no attempt to seal the interzonal border could fully keep recruiters out.<sup>22</sup>

Spanish administrators in Morocco likewise were uneasy about the influence of French republicanism. Fearful that hajji pilgrims from the Spanish Zone might seek passage to the Levant aboard French vessels, Franco’s Burgos government sponsored its own pilgrimages to Mecca. These carried approximately two thousand faithful over the span of 1937–1939 and continued sporadically into the 1950s. The 1938 hajj was the most elaborate, carried off parallel to the elaborate nationalist Catholic pilgrimage to Santiago de Compostela the same year.<sup>23</sup> Hajjis aboard the *Marqués de Comillas* set out from Tangier, where Muslim municipal employees for the first time were granted leave to carry out the holy pilgrimage. After completing their rites at Mecca, they called at Fascist Rome on the return voyage.<sup>24</sup> As for regional pilgrimages, the DAI promoted Muslim religious festivals in the Spanish Zone to discourage confraternities from visiting shrines in the French Zone, where they might share not only spiritual fellowship but also information and contraband goods with their counterparts on the other side.<sup>25</sup> In September 1938, Noguès took a lesson from

the Spanish and made his own show of respect for Islamic tradition. The French resident general attended a religious festival near the interzonal border, being “very favorably impressed by the reception” he was given by the some twenty thousand Moroccans in attendance.<sup>26</sup>

Rather than being seen to collaborate with the French imperial project, the Francoist coalition emphasized fellowship with the cause of Moroccan independence. The Falangist propagandist Ernesto Giménez Caballero told a gathering of Moroccan nationalists in Tétouan: “And you, Muslims, with the help of Spain, a people of your blood . . . because we are Iberians like you, because we come from Africa, from this holy Africa which we love and which we have in our blood, you will make your Empire of Islam.”<sup>27</sup> The Moroccan nationalist leader Abdelkhalek Torres, scion of noble Andalusí lineage, soon became a favorite protégé of the Spanish colonial army, which offered him considerable logistical and political support. Having earlier become a Freemason to gain favor with the Spanish Republic, Torres had founded a “shirt movement” in the fascist style, choosing green, color of Islam.<sup>28</sup> Although his el-Fitqan (“youth”) party failed to gain traction, Torres managed to secure the patronage of the Spanish High Commission. When he addressed a demonstration in Ksar el-Kebir in October 1937, Spanish authorities granted special approval for all shops and businesses to close for three hours for the event, a practice ordinarily regarded as an illegal “general strike.”<sup>29</sup> Torres obliged his Spanish sponsors by “glorify[ing] the liberationist actions undertaken in Morocco by the ‘new Spain,’ and express[ing] his faith in a future Islam delivered from all European control.”<sup>30</sup>

As the Spanish Civil War dragged on, however, the risks of supporting such an overtly proindependence Moroccan politician grew. By late 1937, Torres withdrew his support for Spanish conscription of Moroccan men. This practice had been prohibited by the sultan in February and was generating ever more stories of suffering, illness, and death. Torres led protests against Spanish conscription policies before fleeing to the French Zone for a time. In response, the Spanish stirred rivalry within the Moroccan nationalist movement, and soon the star of another politician, Muhammad el-Mekki Nasiri, was ascendant. In July 1938, he appeared beside Franco’s influential brother-in-law Ramón Serrano Suñer before a crowd in Tangier. The pro-Franco weekly *Domingo* published a long essay by el-Mekki Nasiri on 3 July 1938, in which the Moroccan politician lauded Franco’s belief that “Spain can never be great and free until

Morocco and North Africa are free and independent,” while reducing the enemy Second Republic to a puppet of “French imperialism . . . considering the caliphate zone to be an annex of the (French) African empire, maintained at the cost of Spanish sacrifice.” As evidence, el-Mekki Nasiri offered the example of Hispano-Arabic schools. Unlike their French counterparts, these schools were not “centers of assimilation,” he claimed, but initiatives to raise Moroccan learning to the standards of Egyptian Islamic culture and foment “greater cultural union between Egypt and Morocco.”<sup>31</sup> The Spanish-appointed caliph, Mulai Hassan ben el-Mehdi, came across to some Moroccans as another promoter of pan-Arab bonds. According to an unconfirmed rumor circulating in Tangier and the Spanish Zone in 1937, el-Mehdi had sent a letter of support to Amin al-Husseini, Grand Mufti of Jerusalem, amid the ongoing Arab Revolt in Palestine, a popular act of solidarity the pro-French Sultan Muhammad ben Yusef would not consider.<sup>32</sup> By this time, the Arabic press as far afield as Egypt, Palestine, and Syria was praising Franco, contrasting the purportedly serene Spanish Zone with the deplorable state of the French Zone, although enthusiasm began to fade by late 1938 as Arab journalists became skeptical of Italian and German intentions in the Arab world.<sup>33</sup>

Another key element of Franco’s prestige was his appeal to anti-Semitic sentiment in the Spanish Zone. Despite few traces of ideological Judeophobia in its recent past—indeed a marked philo-Sephardism in certain cases—the Spanish colonial army rediscovered in 1936 the tactical anti-Semitism deployed by Merry y Colom in 1863 (see Chapter 3). Anti-Semitic populism served multiple purposes. Most immediately, it emboldened petty Falangist officials to shake down Jews for protection money, which helped fund pro-Franco activities. Although relatively few Jews were murdered in the initial purges directly following the uprising—six in Melilla and five in Ceuta, all of whom were targeted as members of the Socialist party—their threshold for demonstrating loyalty was higher and sometimes involved a financial commitment. Prominent Jews of the region maintained generally good relations with some high-ranking Spanish officers, but these associations alone did not protect them. Franco quipped that High Commissioner Juan Beigbeder’s favorable attitude toward Jews was due to the “fact he must owe them money.”<sup>34</sup> The rebel government also received donations from prominent Jewish financiers in Gibraltar, in part as a means to protect their investments in peninsular Spain from confiscation, but also to gain state provisioning contracts,



which a few Jewish banking houses received after 1939 as reward for their support.<sup>35</sup>

Shared contempt for Jews also served to reinforce bonds between rural Moroccan Muslims and working-class Spanish migrants, whose impressions were chiefly based on the unsympathetic portrayals rendered by their rural parish priests.<sup>36</sup> Displays of popular anti-Semitism among Spaniards in northern Morocco dated back decades. A correspondent of the *Alliance Israélite Universelle* in 1868 described an Easter ritual in Tétouan whereby Spaniards entered the Jewish quarter carrying dolls dressed in Jewish garb, which they shot at with rifles, set ablaze, and dragged through the mud—a ritual that was followed up with a shower of rocks thrown by local Muslims acting in fellowship. On another occasion, in 1893, a violent anti-Jewish mob of Spanish residents was dispersed only when the Spanish consul appeared wielding a pistol.<sup>37</sup> By the time of the Spanish Civil War, the mouthpiece of conservative *Africanismo*, Tomás García Figueras, sensed a dangerous game, deploring the “the constant humiliations and scorn . . . with which the majority of the Spanish colony continually treats the Jews,” and fearing it would awaken the Moors’ “instinctive hatred.”<sup>38</sup>

Although much research has since shown the extent to which Moroccan Muslims and Jews were capable of coexisting as long as the former were politically dominant, the 1930s were a time of rising tensions and periodic street skirmishes. The Spanish Republic had tended to court the Jews of the protectorate, who were somewhat overrepresented on mixed municipal councils. The Republic’s chief education reformer Fernando de los Ríos made a special show of visiting Jewish centers on his visit to the protectorate. In 1933 a Hispano-Jewish school in Ksar el-Kebir staged a theater performance that struck some as offensive to Islam, inciting acts of protests and intimidation that spread to Tétouan and other cities. Although both Jews and Muslims collaborated with the Spanish occupation, Eloy Martín Corrales has observed that Moroccan nationalists tended increasingly to regard Jews as foreign elements.<sup>39</sup> Anti-Semitic rhetoric dovetailed with the growing Nazi presence in cities of the Spanish Zone and became a key marker to distinguish the Franco movement from all that was republican, secular, and French. It also became a tool to rally Moroccan Muslims to Franco’s side in the peninsular conflict. After failed meetings with both Spanish and French leftist governments in late 1936, two major Moroccan nationalist politicians, al-Wazzani and Abd Jelil, returned to Fez convinced that the fascist bloc had far more to offer Arabs than the two republics,



which they believed to be under Jewish influence.<sup>40</sup> Torres, the leading Moroccan nationalist of the northern zone, went as far as to pursue legal action against a Jew of Tétouan who had publically criticized his party.<sup>41</sup> Spanish colonial authorities seized on the Palestine conflict to distinguish Franco's cause from those of the allegedly pro-Jewish French and British, encouraging the Moroccan nationalist press of the Spanish Zone to cover it extensively.<sup>42</sup>

The most effective case against the Jews summoned age-old tropes of usury and money changing. Jews of Tangier had long ago found a niche in finance. A few were prominent traders and investors, and many more operated the countless banks of the Grand Suq, most of which amounted to little more than open-air stalls where money could be borrowed or changed on the international currency market.<sup>43</sup> After 1936, new autarkic measures in the Spanish Zone created another, riskier financial opportunity: smuggling hard currency from Tangier into the Spanish Zone.<sup>44</sup> The High Commission counted on Jews in Tangier and Gibraltar to provide the foreign currency necessary to procure critical supplies. At the same time, Spanish authorities did not wish for francs and sterling to circulate freely among the Spanish and Moroccan populace, who were expected to hold their savings in the precarious Francoist peseta. But as the Civil War dragged on and shortages became more acute, currency traffickers began lending inhabitants of the Spanish Zone foreign currencies against inflationary pesetas. Although currency runners came in all types, the Jewish operations caught Spanish authorities' attention. They believed that the Tangier Sephardic community was the largest and best organized, even creating a risk pool to cover the fines incurred by rank-and-file smugglers caught by authorities.<sup>45</sup> At least some of these clandestine currency runners were Jewish refugees from Central Europe who had managed to escape to Tangier. In one curious case of March 1938, three Jews (one Moroccan and two central Europeans) were found smuggling foreign currencies directly to Spanish colonial authorities. Puzzled, the DAI officer wondered if the "Israelite community [had] approved of the activities of these [Jews] who favor Franco, despite being the ones to suffer most from fascist persecution."<sup>46</sup>

The dominant player in this game was Mesod Bendrao, a prosperous Sephardic merchant, industrialist, arms dealer, and smuggler of Tangier. Connected by marriage to Gibraltar's prominent Sarfaty family, Bendrao was a founding member of the Tangier Masonic Lodge and had been

featured in the conservative Madrid weekly *Blanco y Negro* as “the good Spaniard” in 1935.<sup>47</sup> Holding major business operations in Tangier and the French Zone, he became an important source of hard currency to the Spanish rebels, a relationship he solidified by joining the Falange. Bendrao hoped his collaboration with the insurgent army would help protect his extensive portfolio of interests in Andalusia, which included canneries, livestock, leather goods, and fishing vessels. It was, moreover, to the rebel authorities in Tétouan that Bendrao owed his import-export monopoly in Spanish Ifni. As late as July 1938, the House of Bendrao advertised the sale of supplies, armaments, and food stocks in the Francoist weekly *Domingo*.<sup>48</sup> But Bendrao had enemies within the Jewish community, and after Franco’s victory they furnished Spanish authorities with information that would lead to his downfall. A rival, Isaac Benitah, accused Bendrao of extensive dealings with the Spanish republican consul in Tangier, Prieto del Río, throughout the Civil War. According to Benitah, Bendrao turned over 1.5 million pesetas to Prieto del Río, smuggled supplies to the republican side, and offered to retain twenty thousand Moroccan mercenaries at his expense to fight with the Republic. Benitah and others in the Tangier Jewish community may have harbored jealousy toward Bendrao, or perhaps they resented his dealings with an authority that had shown considerable hostility toward Jews. In any case, the Falangist chief of security in Tangier determined that Bendrao had managed “to remain on the fence during the Civil War,” despite his expressions of loyalty to Franco. In 1943, Bendrao would be arrested and executed in Tangier on the charge of Freemasonry.<sup>49</sup>

Despite their reliance on Jewish assistance, protectorate authorities began persecuting Jewish lenders by spring 1937. A French source offered this analysis: “In deciding to repress [contraband lending] with brutality,” the rebel authorities were gaining popular favor by being seen as “coming to the aid of small artisans and peasants who routinely fall victim to usurers” while also creating “a new pretext to impose heavy fines, rightly or wrongly, on the Israelite population.”<sup>50</sup> Jewish landlords were also required to reduce their rents by 35 percent. Moroccan conscripts were promised that “on their return to Morocco, they would be allowed to carry out a Saint-Bartholomew’s on the Jews.”<sup>51</sup> No such horrible spectacle came to pass, though Jews of the Spanish Zone did endure several episodes of violent intimidation carried out by Spanish Falangists and returning Moroccan veterans during the first half of 1937. During that period, local garrisons imposed collective “fines” on Jewish communities—nine

hundred thousand French francs in Ceuta and five hundred thousand pesetas in Tétouan. Jewelry and other small valuables could be sent out of the Spanish Zone via the British mail, which remained free from the rebels' clutches. The wave of persecution was sufficient to provoke many to seek refuge in the relatively safe International Zone of Tangier. Some Jews managed to purchase entry visas for Tangier from Spanish authorities for large sums. A Spanish republican representative in Tangier explained that victims "did not dare speak up because they have major interests in the region and hope to save a portion of their property by conforming to the orders of the [Spanish] authorities."<sup>52</sup>

### French and British Responses

The two liberal powers could not ignore the Spanish rebels' successes in mobilizing Moroccan nationalism or the troubling German buildup on both shores of the Strait. Discussion revived within the French Supreme War Council about invading Spanish Morocco from the south. Such a move would have clashed with long-standing British policy to keep France away from Morocco's north coast, but the establishment of a German satellite there arguably posed a more urgent threat. Further complicating the diplomatic calculus was the Non-Intervention Agreement among the Great Powers with respect to the Spanish Civil War, although the French could have justified an invasion of rebel positions in Spanish Morocco as a matter of defending the integrity of the sultanate. By May 1937, General Alphonse Joseph Georges urged haste in reaching an agreement with Britain on the terms of such an invasion so that it could be "launched with surprise and conducted swiftly" should the need arise.<sup>53</sup>

There was some controversy within the French army over what conditions must be met to warrant an advance on the Spanish Zone. Noguès, the resident general in Rabat, was an early and dedicated partisan of invading. From 1937, he argued that through actions like violating the sultan's prohibition on recruiting Moroccan soldiers and inviting German military assistance, the Spanish colonial army had spurned its obligation to the protectorate treaties of 1912. His superior, General Maurice Gamelin, concurred that this was sufficient pretext to justify "an offensive . . . to conquer Spanish Morocco, with the aim of competing for mastery of the Strait of Gibraltar."<sup>54</sup> Although Spanish Morocco was full of German advisers and technical specialists, Berlin was quite careful to limit its armed presence to a

volunteer unit at Melilla. In this way, the Germans could justify their claim to keep no forces in Spanish Morocco, which referred to the protectorate zone and not the sovereign Spanish exclave. Feeling French pressure, the Third Reich even reduced its civilian presence in Spanish Morocco by mid-1937. The Spanish High Commission nevertheless remained on edge about the prospect of armed French intervention into 1938.<sup>55</sup> Had a European war broken out over the Sudetenland crisis of September 1938, the temptation for France to seize Spanish Morocco and Tangier would have been difficult to resist. Such an action would have undercut Franco's methodical march to victory in Spain but would not likely have saved France from defeat on the continent. In this scenario, British Gibraltar would have become surrounded by ongoing turmoil on the Iberian Peninsula and faced a pro-Axis France directly on the Strait. Had a wider war engulfed the Strait before the Spanish Civil War was concluded, the pivotal early phases of World War II might have looked considerably different.

Late in 1938, Britain ramped up efforts to discourage the French from acting against Spanish Morocco. As ever, the prime directive of British policy in the region was to protect Gibraltar, key to maintaining vital imperial shipping routes. The British clung to their long-standing policy to prevent France, Germany, or any other Great Power from gaining a military position directly on the Strait. Even though it was well known that the Third Reich was active in Spanish Morocco, the Germans remained for the time being in an advisory role to the Franco government. Rather than help to defeat Franco, the British government hoped to turn him. In November 1938, the Foreign Office urged its French counterpart on the need "to redouble our efforts to ensure the western powers a certain influence in the [Francoist] camp."<sup>56</sup> Throughout the Spanish Civil War, the British government was unperturbed by hostile actions taken by the rebels against British interests. Despite the rebels' confiscation of the British-owned Río Tinto mines in Andalusia, Britain sold them metal, manufactured goods, and fuel in quantities similar to peacetime trade with all of Spain.<sup>57</sup>

Some of the most crucial British aid to Franco's cause is almost invisible to the archival record. The Royal Navy base at Gibraltar worked with the rebel government to gain control over the smuggling networks running between the British colony and Spain. From its earliest days, the Franco regime adopted maximalist measures against this contraband. Gonzalo Queipo de Llano, the top rebel general in Andalusia, ordered the execution of anyone caught entering with black-market goods or British pounds

not acquired directly from the Francoist foreign currency exchange at the official rate (although there was room for clemency, and a more common punishment was to strip offenders of their precious Gibraltar work permits).<sup>58</sup> By September 1937, Franco's representative in Gibraltar trumpeted that "following the gradual steps we have taken with the customhouse, this week we may declare that contraband [*harampeo*] has been eliminated." The success was such, he added, that the owner of the main Algeciras-Gibraltar ferry could no longer survive without a subsidy, having lost all his clientele who had been engaged in this activity. The new rebel regime declared it had put an end to "the deeply rooted custom of tolerating a little contraband" at La Línea and Algeciras.<sup>59</sup>

Yet it defies belief that smuggling was wiped out, as though by the purifying force of Falangist will. In fact, what the rebel authorities had achieved was not to eliminate the contraband trade, but rather to wrest control of it and channel it to their political ends. It was an open secret that Francoist officials were well fed despite acute shortages. The Campo de Gibraltar was an especially unproductive district where food distribution was hampered by lack of fuel. As for rail transport, "the well-known slowness . . . of Andalusian rail," compounded by "the military necessities of this region and of Morocco," made it "impossible to obtain a wagon" for food transport, according to a Francoist agent in the Campo.<sup>60</sup> Yet despite these impediments, high officials were seen leaving La Línea "with their automobiles piled high with food."<sup>61</sup>

To this strategically crucial but desperate corner of Andalusia, Gibraltar provided the lifeline. The British colony required massive labor to build its defenses (against a possible Spanish assault), and ten thousand Spanish workers crossed into the British town each day—about as many as Spain ever would send to the Nazi Arbeiterkorps.<sup>62</sup> They worked the docks, cleaned the streets, kept the houses, and even prepared the ground for anti-aircraft installations and an expanded airstrip on the Gibraltar isthmus. One effect of the relatively free cross-border circulation at Gibraltar was to strengthen the "national peseta." While the Republic's currency had lost most of its value in the spring of 1936, the rebel treasury had begun amassing foreign currency reserves to back its new currency. By March 1937 Queipo de Llano's border guards were requiring all Spaniards to surrender any foreign currency (and precious metals) they were holding at the rate of forty-two pesetas per pound sterling, but they granted workers of the Campo de Gibraltar a preferential rate of fifty pesetas. This generated

some three thousand pounds per week flowing to Francoist coffers—a modest but reliable source of hard foreign currency.<sup>63</sup>

Of even greater consequence was Gibraltar's role in the politics of food distribution. Spanish employees of Gibraltar long had served as conduits for tobacco, but amid shortage, they added a number of basic supplies like rice, potatoes, and sugar to their repertoire. In a nod to regional custom, Queipo de Llano's army permitted the importation of these goods in small quantities, threatening to deal harshly with those who attempted to exceed modest official quotas. As discussed in previous chapters, cross-border smuggling networks had long dominated local politics in the Campo de Gibraltar. The incoming supplies not only helped mitigate basic shortages; they also facilitated the precipitous rise of the pro-Franco Falange party in a district that had been heavily leftist and pro-republican for decades. As in earlier times, large-scale smuggling of tobacco—and now of food as well—was the preserve of organized gangs with the networks and wherewithal to pay bribes and avoid capture. As Queipo de Llano's army deputized Falangists to serve as border guards and customs sentries, joining the pro-Franco party became an attractive option. Accreditation with the Falange thus provided access to contraband networks, and republican militiamen became Falangists overnight. Blue-shirt militias also engaged in cross-border exercises with the blessing of the Gibraltar authorities, even though this raised the possibility of German agents entering the British colony. One notorious example was a certain Emilio Griffith, who had turned from a La Línea police officer tied to the republican Left into a Falangist liaison of Queipo de Llano's. Griffith ran goods and currency from Gibraltar with impunity but also maintained ties to republican exiles there—for which he was eventually denounced and arrested, dying soon after in a Seville prison.<sup>64</sup>

Gibraltar authorities provided more than passive support. In addition to permitting food to flow into Spain, the British assisted the Falange in maintaining a grip on these stocks. Reversing a century of policy, the Gibraltar naval command agreed to patrol the bay for unaffiliated smugglers who might deliver not only black-market foodstuffs but also arms or even republican militiamen, onto hidden coastal drop-off points. At the same time, they allowed arms shipments they knew to be bound for pro-Franco forces to pass through.<sup>65</sup> Although a crucial partner of the Franco cause in patrolling Gibraltar Bay during the Spanish Civil War, the British would later indulge in their own treachery during World War II, smuggling

hundreds of republican dissidents into Spain to spy for Britain. They penetrated Andalusia aboard a ship piloted by José Heredia, a fifty-year-old tobacco smuggler forced to flee to Gibraltar in 1936. The British Special Operations Executive arranged for Heredia's clearance through Gibraltar Bay and around to a point near Estepona, where he repeatedly deposited 150-pound bales of tobacco, along with a few spies each time, under the watch of complicit Spanish coast guards.<sup>66</sup>

Active British support for the Franco movement after 1936 created an awkward situation for France. At the turn of the century, a desperate Spain had made the Anglo-French Entente possible, providing the crucial territorial buffer between imperial spheres in the western Mediterranean. Now, an insurgent Spain threatened to unmake the geopolitical foundations of future Anglo-French cooperation. In early 1939, with Franco's peninsular victory in sight, Noguès registered his belief that, if invading the Spanish Zone was off the table, accommodation with its new Francoist masters was crucial: "It is important that relations between the authorities of the two zones recover the peaceful and friendly character they have always had so that the official resumption of these relations can be shown before the eyes of the local population"—in effect, repeating the protectorate catechism of Hispano-French cooperation.<sup>67</sup>

But the incoming Spanish regime made clear its contempt for the protectorate framework that kept Spanish foreign policy tethered to France. When Philippe Pétain arrived to represent France at the Franco regime's temporary capital of Burgos in March 1939, the town greeted the Lion of Verdun with deserted streets and shuttered windows.<sup>68</sup> Instead of promoting solidarity, Spanish colonial authorities permitted the anti-French Radio Falange to transmit vitriolic Arabic-language broadcasts into the French Zone. They staged military parades and propagandistic appeals to Italo-German friendship, despite the promise by the Spanish ambassador in Paris, José Félix Lequerica, that all foreign agents (i.e., the Germans and Italians) would depart from the protectorate and all Muslim units would be demobilized. In March 1939, French police in Nemours (Ghazaouet, western Algeria) detected the movement of hundreds of uniformed Italian, Spanish, and "indigenous" sailors in nearby waters, hinting at the possibility that an effort may be afoot to foment rebellion in the Oran district. Such a strategy would be advocated in 1940 by the Spanish high commissioner Carlos Asensio Cabanillas but never brought to fruition.<sup>69</sup>

Thus provoked, French hostility toward the nascent Franco regime was powerful and well founded, but finding a plausible outlet to express

this was another matter. At a secret meeting convened at Bayonne on 1 May 1939, a group of top French generals, including Pétain, concluded that if war with Germany was imminent, there was no sense in starting it over Morocco, which only guaranteed the belligerency of battle-hardened Spanish and Moroccan forces.<sup>70</sup> The government of Édouard Daladier agreed and instead focused on keeping Franco from seizing Tangier. Spain's representative in the international city assured his French and British counterparts that his country had no intention to annex Tangier or otherwise meddle with its international status, but the French consul reported that "unreasoned pessimism" persisted in the city.<sup>71</sup> In April, the spectacle of French warships in the harbors of both Tangier and Gibraltar left "a deep impression" and produced a "very salutary" effect among Spaniards contemplating an assault on one or both points.<sup>72</sup> By August 1939, Daladier was urging a preemptive Anglo-French occupation of Tangier, even allowing for the possibility that Spanish and Italian troops also be included to demonstrate commitment to neutrality. But Britain's War Office would not hear of any move that might startle the hitherto neutral Franco into Hitler's arms.<sup>73</sup>

By the time war broke out in Poland, efforts on both sides to flatter Franco's ambitions in the Strait were intensifying.<sup>74</sup> With German support, the Franco regime was well into the process of surrounding British Gibraltar with massive fortifications and cannon comprising seventy-five miles of lines, six miles deep, and thirty-six thousand men.<sup>75</sup> On 12 September 1939, the Spanish lieutenant colonel charged with fortifying the southern coast eagerly proposed "achieving the certain neutralization and partial destruction" of the heavily fortified British colony by raining artillery down from the sierra.<sup>76</sup> But Spanish leadership preferred caution. Franco remained neutral for nine months as hostilities remained confined to east-central Europe. As evidence mounted that Italy was plotting to invade Tangier, discussions continued with the Allies throughout the first half of 1940 on an arrangement that would strengthen Spanish influence in the International Zone. As a volley of missives on the subject among high-ranking officials extended into the late spring, the fall of France in June 1940 changed the context entirely.<sup>77</sup>

### The Failure of Eurafrika

With the surrender of France, the way appeared at last to be open for a great territorial revision in the Strait. The powerful senior partner



in the Moroccan protectorate was reduced to a German vassal led by a hastily assembled a government in Vichy. Seizing on the confusion, some four thousand Moroccan troops under the Spanish command of Colonel Germán Gil Yuste marched on Tangier on 14 June 1940, occupying the city and taking a step toward fulfilling a long-standing imperial dream. Days earlier, on 12 June, Franco had changed Spain's status from neutral to nonbelligerent. This ambiguous classification seemed to signal a "pre-belligerent" stage, similar to the Italian progression.<sup>78</sup> This may well have been the plan, but with so many German and Italian uniforms on Spanish and protectorate soil it was in any case impossible to sustain the fiction that Spain met the criteria for neutrality, as it had attempted to do during the World War I with disastrous consequences. With the French Empire intact and encircling Spain, the Franco regime was far less vulnerable as an aligned power than as an insincere neutral.

But declaring alignment with Hitler's New Order was only a preliminary step in the thorny process of achieving any territorial revision. Franco, along with the vast majority of Spaniards, would have savored the opportunity to expel the British from Gibraltar. One indication of his regime's eagerness was a proposal by the Southern Command in June 1940 to sever the undersea telegraph cable serving Gibraltar, a reckless idea that Franco was wise to ignore.<sup>79</sup> Franco had no delusions of capturing the Rock without German support, and in the summer of 1940, Hitler was disinclined to rush into such an operation against the august symbol of British seaborne might. The Führer held out hope the besieged home island could be coaxed into an alliance if its empire was left intact. What the Führer most wished to avoid was a British landing on Morocco's Atlantic coast, which could animate anti-Vichy factions in French Morocco and possibly nudge Franco back toward neutrality. Skeptical that the French protectorate administration of Noguès possessed the will to repel a British landing, Hitler sought to consolidate a German position in the Atlantic. In view of the resolute defiance of Winston Churchill's new government and a possible clash with America in the future, Hitler considered an Atlantic base at North African latitudes to be a defensive precondition for carrying out the epic drive into Russia that was increasingly on his mind. In a September meeting between Ribbentrop and Serrano Suñer, the German foreign minister floated the suggestion that Spain cede one of the Canary Islands to Germany in exchange for help in Gibraltar. The Spanish minister testily replied that a strong bicontinental Spain would provide the New

Order sufficient bulwark in the Ibero-African Atlantic, and the matter was dropped.<sup>80</sup> This icy meeting between the two fascist ministers set the tone for the meeting between Franco and Hitler at Hendaye on 23 October, in which the Spaniard lectured the bemused Führer ad nauseam on Spain's historical destiny in northwest Africa and insisted that its rightful imperial sphere at a minimum included all of Morocco and the Oran district of western Algeria. Franco's comportment caused Hitler such irritation that he vowed never to meet with the Spaniard again, yet considerably more negotiations would be needed to bring the two sides together. Franco's price for permitting German troops to stage an assault on Gibraltar from Spanish soil was not only too high; his demands directly conflicted with territorial adjustments in northwest Africa that Hitler was reserving for France and Italy to gain purchase on their loyalty.

Britain succeeded in preserving Gibraltar through a combination of skilled diplomacy and luck—but with only a minimum of military reinforcements that otherwise would have drained resources from the home defenses. The idea that Franco might order an attack on the British possession was received with concern rather than enthusiasm in the Campo de Gibraltar. Thousands of Spanish workers continued to enter the colony daily throughout the war, even during periods when the resident population evacuated, prompting the Spanish consul in Gibraltar to request that any bombing raid be planned with this in mind.<sup>81</sup> Gibraltarians did experience occasional and fleeting moments of terror but never the extended siege that Spanish irredentists had been awaiting since 1783. French planes carried out a largely symbolic raid on Gibraltar as reprisal for the British attack of the Algerian naval base of Mers-el-Kbir of June 1940. On the heels of Germany's invasion of the Soviet Union, Spanish batteries once briefly fired on Gibraltar, an action that drew protest from Britain's ambassador in Madrid, Samuel Hoare, and would not be repeated. Italian planes strafed the colony in December 1941, producing collateral damage of Spanish property in La Línea for which requests for compensation went unanswered.<sup>82</sup>

The strategic and political risks of attacking Gibraltar were high for Franco's fledgling regime. A joint Hispano-German operation would put the Canary Islands at risk of a British counterattack and would spell the end of Anglo-American oil and grain shipments to Spain. Spain's wartime ambassador to London, the Duke of Alba, later claimed that Churchill promised Franco the handover of Gibraltar after the war. It is possible

that in 1940 some British official suggested such a deal to Spanish interlocutors, though at the time Franco was too certain of a German victory and Churchill too eager to project confidence to take such chatter seriously.<sup>83</sup> For Spain, committing to the Axis was the only path to recovering Gibraltar, and although the Hendaye meeting reached only vague conclusions, the Spanish and German militaries set about planning a major operation. Without a clear guarantee on future annexations in the Maghrib, Franco insisted that ground operations to execute such a plan be exclusively Spanish. He desired German support in the form of submarines to neutralize a British naval response, but a German assessment concluded that the Spanish army was pitifully unprepared to assail the heavily fortified Rock. By the end of 1940, Franco balked, both at the prospect of large numbers of German troops on Spanish soil and at the inevitable consequence of a catastrophic British economic and military response. To reinforce this reluctance, the British embassy secretly worked with Juan March and a New York bank to funnel cash payments to Anglophiles on Franco's staff.<sup>84</sup> By the end of 1940, Hitler was blaming Franco's ambivalence over Gibraltar for frustrating his plans to shore up Eurafrika at the Atlantic.<sup>85</sup>

For neither the first time nor the last, the fate of Gibraltar conditioned the fate of Morocco. In the 1850s, O'Donnell had turned to Morocco after first taking aim at Gibraltar, and nearly a century later Franco was to follow a similar course. Sensing the Spanish regime felt pressure to attain a foreign triumph, Churchill signaled to Franco that he would countenance a Spanish southward advance into French Morocco—but only if Spain first pivoted back to genuine neutrality.<sup>86</sup> Yet it is difficult to fathom how the Spanish army could have succeeded in French Morocco without siphoning copiously from the expanding reserves of German prestige among the Moroccan populace. Spain's good graces with Moroccan nationalist politicians, caids, and other charismatic potentates had largely derived from its ties to Germany during the Spanish Civil War. A similar phenomenon was observed during the Spanish occupation of Tangier, where a French business leader observed a "cult of Germany" among the Moroccan Muslim population. According to a DAI report, the common sentiment held that Germany "did not carry any blood debt with the Muslims, nor had it ever tried to invade a Muslim country, having always defended and helped Islam."<sup>87</sup>

The Spanish occupation of Tangier lasted for the balance of the war, and the city's experience reflected the confused and fluid governing

order in the Strait throughout this period—even as prospects diminished for major combat touching the region. The Franco regime inherited and sustained the Spanish tendency to pursue contradictory policies on the southern border simultaneously. The occupation began in summer 1940 with affirmations of neutrality and commitments to preserving the International Statute governing the city. Manuel Amieva, leader of the city's Spanish community, declared that the Spanish action "had no goal . . . other than to assure [Tangier's] neutrality and that all foreign interests are scrupulously protected."<sup>88</sup> In London, the Duke of Alba maintained that the occupation was a prophylactic against a hostile Italian invasion. Yet as the sweltering Tangier summer turned to autumn, the Spanish began an overhaul of municipal politics. On 3 November, Colonel Yuste, head of the occupation authority, announced the suspension of Tangier's two municipal councils—the Control Committee and Legislative Assembly. The Spanish firm Telefónica promptly gained its long-sought monopoly on the city's wire communications. The occupiers soon replaced Tangier's international police with an entirely Spanish force, and on 23 November Franco announced the absorption of Tangier into the Spanish Zone of the protectorate. On the morning of 13 December, the international corps of civil servants arrived at work to find Spanish functionaries had taken over their desks.<sup>89</sup> Spain's violation of the "gentleman's agreement" to preserve Tangier's international status drew stern protest from the British ambassador in Madrid, Samuel Hoare. Hoare chided the Spanish for giving in to pressure from Germany, "who, seeing the favorable trajectory of Anglo-Spanish friendship, saw in the Tangier situation a propitious occasion to chill it."<sup>90</sup>

The expeditious confidence with which Spain annexed the international exclave is usually attributed to Franco's conviction that his regime was part of a German-led New Order destined to triumph.<sup>91</sup> Additional steps taken over the following few months appeared to bear this out. Yuste expelled Sultan Muhammad ben Yusef's representative in Tangier, considering him a French puppet, and replaced him with a pasha answerable to the pro-Spanish caliph in Tétouan. The grand quarters of his former palace were rededicated as city's first German consulate. On 17 March 1941, top Spanish and Italian officials attended the ceremonial handover. While German arrivals were fêted, Spanish police treated the French community with contempt, even though much, if not most, of the city's French community favored the Axis. French installations such as the meteorological

and telegraph stations were shut down, and those found speaking the language of Molière in the street faced harassment.<sup>92</sup> No longer concerned about offending the French, the official Spanish press abandoned the rhetorical gymnastics of treating the caliph as a head of state without actually misstating his precise legal status as subsidiary to the sultan. The caliph was presented as unambiguously sovereign, and the sultan left unmentioned, as though on a path to illegitimacy. Days after the establishment of the German consulate, the caliph traveled from Tétouan to celebrate Tangier's "reintegration into Morocco." The Tangier daily *España* described screaming crowds, women ululating wildly, and "the deepest stirrings in the Moroccan soul" in "the presence of the Sovereign."<sup>93</sup>

In view of these events, Hoare's readiness to blame Franco's transgressions on German pressure seems naïve, and the continued flow of dollars and sterling through Tangier appears only to have appeased a hostile dictator. The Spaniards' only meaningful concession to Tangier's international status was to tolerate the free currency market, which preserved the precarious Allied toehold in the city. After being suspended in 1936, the peseta's free convertibility was reinstated on 1 November 1940, just as the city's other international institutions were being shut down. This measure was necessary to keep Franco's project in Tangier financially viable, and even turned the city into a destination of massive capital flight from Europe.<sup>94</sup> As though further proof were needed of the Franco regime's lack of commitment to Allied rights in Tangier, Spanish authorities refused to investigate both the sabotage of the Gibraltar ferry in Tangier harbor in February 1942, which resulted in eleven deaths, and numerous acts of vandalism against British property in the city over subsequent days.<sup>95</sup> Many rank-and-file Spanish officials, including police informants and personnel from the national airline Iberia, remained pro-Axis, and continued with some success to persecute pro-Allied elements into 1943.<sup>96</sup>

Although it is true that many Spaniards in Tangier required no coaxing, Hoare's assessment that German pressure was accelerating the Franco regime's time frame for annexing Tangier was more perceptive than it at first appears. From the outset of their occupation, Spanish authorities in Tangier began to grow suspicious of German intentions. Hitler regarded Franco's Spain less as an ally than as a vassal, and showed no reluctance to alienate Spanish friendship for the sake of establishing a position in Atlantic Morocco. Well before the tense Serrano Suñer-Ribbentrop and Franco-Hitler meetings of autumn 1940, the Germans signaled they were

not staking their access to the Atlantic on Spanish cooperation. For example, German officials took advantage of their access to Spanish Morocco to court Moroccan nationalists directly at Spanish expense. On 10 June 1940, Abdelkhalek Torres received ten German consular officials in his Tétouan garden with the goal of finding out if Hitler would cede all of Morocco to Spain. No, came the unequivocal answer, Spain would not be permitted to advance southward, but the Führer was prepared to grant Morocco full independence—a reply that greatly pleased Torres, who voiced discontent with the Spanish and preferred his movement to associate with “a country that is better organized and has more economic resources.”<sup>97</sup> In July, the DAI learned that German operatives in Ksar el-Kebir (near the French Zone border) offered two Moroccan militia leaders substantial resources to carry out an invasion of the French Zone on their own.<sup>98</sup> On 5 August 1940, the caliph—presumed to be loyal to the Spanish—invited a group of Luftwaffe personnel to Tétouan’s Hotel Nacional, where the DAI believed the Germans would “attempt to come to terms with [the caliph] on the conditions for granting Morocco independence.”<sup>99</sup> And throughout the summer 1940, DAI agents reported several rumors, presumably instigated by German agents: one promised that a German protectorate would eliminate the land tax (*tertib*) imposed by the “ungrateful” Spanish, while another told of Germany’s intention to liberate the Riffian hero Abd el-Krim from his remote exile and make him sultan of all Morocco.<sup>100</sup> The German consular secretary in Tangier, Otto Wiedeman, sustained good relations with both Torres and Alal al-Fasi, another icon of the Moroccan independence movement, and distributed Arabic-language pamphlets critical of Spain. In conversation with a Spanish informant, Wiedeman chided, “Spain still has not dictated a single law against Jews who reside in [its] Zone, even though it is known they labor on behalf of their nation, which is England, and of their principles, which are those of Freemasonry.”<sup>101</sup>

These activities were aimed at pressuring Franco to accept a permanent German presence on Spanish territory or risk losing Morocco altogether. In this light, the extravagant displays of Germanophilia at Spanish Tangier over the course of 1940 and 1941 thus seem intended to reassure the Germans of their privileged place in the city under Spanish rule. But even though spectacles of pro-Axis alignment in the city may have been designed to appease the side Franco presumed would be the eventual victor, occupation authorities preferred to keep German influence in check. Their standard assumption had once been that the Axis was the force of

revisionism in the Strait, yet it was turning out that the two most visible markers of Spanish rule in Tangier—the dominant status of the peseta and the Iberia air service to Europe—were made possible, respectively, by British pounds sterling and American oil.

The British and their protégés thus began to gain an upper hand in Tangier despite the large Italian and German presence. They retained the ability to enter and leave Tangier freely, while a safe-conduct card was required of subjects of the Axis powers.<sup>102</sup> From this position, the British gained Moroccan protégés. Rival Moroccan nationalists, who in the late 1930s had vied for Franco's patronage in their struggle against what they regarded as French republican imperialism, became involved in the Anglo-German conflict. Spanish postal censors intercepted a package of propaganda materials sent from Berlin to the Tétouan offices of *Unidad Marroquí*, the bilingual Spanish-Arabic newspaper run by the Moroccan nationalist el-Mekki Nasiri.<sup>103</sup> But the influential el-Mekki Nasiri, it turned out, was already working in the service of the British, as the Spanish would learn only the following year.<sup>104</sup> In August 1940, *Unidad Marroquí* published a scathing critique of the Germans, “who believe themselves to be superior . . . to the rest of humanity” and “aspire to dominate all other peoples.”<sup>105</sup> This rhetoric bore close resemblance to other propaganda texts prepared and distributed by Britain's chief operative in Tangier, Rom Landau, with whom el-Mekki Nasiri likely associated. Landau, a Polish Jewish émigré to London and scholar of Moroccan and Arabic culture, circulated several anti-German propaganda tracts in Tangier in 1941 and 1942. Landau's texts ranged from the ideological—quoting anti-Islamic statements uttered by Nazi leaders and citing passages from the Quran to support British ideas of democracy—to the menacing, spreading rumors of typhus outbreaks in France and Germany to dissuade Moroccans from being recruited into Third Reich labor corps.<sup>106</sup> German agents responded, distributing small medallions so that pro-German Moroccans could identify one another. The obverse was inscribed with the Arabic phrase “There is no force or power greater than God,” and on the reverse “Liberate me, o God, from my humiliator and tyrant, from the oppressor of my independence and my liberty: England.”<sup>107</sup>

The Spanish occupiers also struggled to balance their many social and commercial contacts in Tangier's Jewish community with the optics of Nazi-inspired anti-Semitism considered useful to win over the Muslim populace. In a 1941 report on popular opinion, the DAI office in Tangier



described the prevailing sentiment: “They say that before, only the Jews were in charge in the city and they did whatever they wanted, but now, thanks to the Spanish, the rule of the Jews is over.”<sup>108</sup> But in September 1941, during the Spanish occupation of Tangier, Francoist officers were spotted attending the wedding of the prominent Jewish merchant Mesod Bendrao’s nephew—the sort of invitation typically paid back with a favor. Shortly thereafter, the chief Spanish administrator in Tangier ordered Spanish officials in Morocco to abstain from all “dealings with Jews, especially those of doubtful conduct.” In justifying the new directive, the administrator cited the widespread criticism among Tangier’s Muslims of the Spanish authorities’ “dealings and friendship with the Jews.” Rumor had it that “low-level Spanish officials who find themselves in [Tangier] have many friendships with Jews in the city, who spend a good deal of money on them with the goal of attracting them to the English cause, while also finding out what they think.” The years 1941 and 1942 marked the high point of the belief that Tangier’s Jews—including the thousands who had arrived from east-central Europe—formed a British fifth column and were being recruited to develop anti-Spanish radio propaganda in Egypt and America. Yet the Spanish administrator acknowledged that “popular ignorance may be the cause” of the rumors circulating among Tangier’s Muslim masses, and mainly feared that “a great disillusionment about the new principles of our Regime” might accrue “among the humble people.” No authority had the power to prevent Franco regime officials from associating with Jews, and the Tangier administration hoped only the Spanish agents did so discreetly and obtained authorization before attending a Jewish social gathering.<sup>109</sup>

By the end of 1941, signs were accumulating that German and Spanish strategic aims were not as closely aligned as the ideological champions of Hitler’s New Order dreamed. Luis Orgaz, an Africanista veteran, replaced Asensio in May 1941. A conservative monarchist deeply scornful of the Franco regime’s fascist revolutionary streak—and a major recipient of the British bribery scheme—Orgaz sounded alarm over German intentions. By the time Orgaz took the helm in Tétouan, Spanish intelligence services had amassed overwhelming data to indicate that, even as the Axis powers recognized Spanish dominion over Tangier and northern Morocco, German and Italian operatives were making promises of independence to Moroccan nationalists in exchange for conceding Atlantic bases.<sup>110</sup> Appointed as part of an effort by Franco to balance the pro-Nazi zealotry



of Serrano Suñer and others, Orgaz's primary concern was to safeguard the Spanish Zone in Morocco, and he warned his countrymen to be wary of German intentions. He alerted censors in Madrid that the dangerously pro-German editorial positions in the Spanish press directly contradicted Spanish interests. The colonial army monthly *África: Revista de Tropas Coloniales*, for example, did "scant service to our African policy" when it praised an essay by the German SS officer Heinz Barth arguing that Germany was the ideal mentor to an independent Morocco.<sup>111</sup> Similarly, the Tangier Falangist daily *Presente* mentioned the "colonial rights" of Germany in Morocco, which censors allowed despite "knowing how injurious the word 'colonial' is" and that "its use should be suppressed at every occasion."<sup>112</sup>

Orgaz displayed considerable independence in his command over the Spanish Zone. Samuel Hoare, the British ambassador to Madrid, saw in Orgaz a kind of latter-day viceroy—an intense patriot who trusted the intentions of neither the Axis nor the Allies, loathed the Falange, and was briefly involved in a conspiracy to remove Franco. In February 1942, Orgaz began to reverse the momentum of nearly six years of policy in Spanish Morocco to secede from the French-controlled sultanate. To mark the occasion of a new irrigation project on the river Moulouya, which formed part of the interzonal border in the eastern sector, Orgaz made a series of joint appearances with his French counterpart, Charles Noguès. According to el-Mekki Nasiri's *Unidad Marroquí*, the two protectorate leaders "spoke on various questions related to the Kingdom of Morocco"—itself a new label for the erstwhile sultanate—giving an interview that "took place in an atmosphere replete with the spirit of understanding and effort for the cause of a unified Morocco."<sup>113</sup> Although this event cannot be said to have marked a total reversal of Spanish foreign policy, it already heralded a pivot back to neutrality by early 1942. Among Spanish officials close to events on the southern borderland, skepticism toward German intentions began to mount well before the Anglo-American landing in Morocco of November 1942 or the overall turning of the tide against the Third Reich.

# 11

## A Changing Matrix, 1942–1963

**THE ANGLO-AMERICAN LANDINGS** on Atlantic Morocco and Mediterranean Algeria on 8 November 1942, known as Operation Torch, laid bare the futility of the German-led collective defense of the western flank of “Eurafrika.” Even with nominal members of Hitler’s New Order in control of southwestern Europe and Atlantic Africa, the western Mediterranean proved a soft underbelly, especially as Hitler increasingly transferred his resources and attention to war in the East. In the amphibious Allied assault, British Gibraltar became a vital operational linchpin, perhaps for the final time, serving as command headquarters and as a forward air base. On the Atlantic shores of Morocco, French forces loyal to the Vichy government held out just three days against the Americans.

The German effort to seal the Mediterranean had come to nothing, but the idea lived on that the western Euro-African space was crucial for the collective defense of Europe. As the Mediterranean theater opened, Franklin D. Roosevelt eyed the chance to cultivate a new ally in northwest Africa. Meeting with Winston Churchill and Sultan Muhammad ben Yusef in Casablanca in January 1943, the American president told the Moroccan sovereign he could expect a postwar scene to “sharply differ” from the prewar situation, “especially as they related to the colonial question.” Roosevelt’s comment animated the spirits of Muhammad and his fourteen-year-old son, Hassan, who was also present, and helped to purchase the royals’ tolerance of three major American military bases established on their Atlantic coast.<sup>1</sup> The Americans remained more circumspect

toward Franco's Spain, a friend of the enemy and an enemy of democracy. It would take another decade for the Spanish regime to gain a spot in the emerging Euro-African order, chiefly by demonstrating dogged commitment to fighting communism.

This chapter explores the regional consequences of the transition to a new era of American hegemony. As elsewhere, the cast of sovereign and mobile actors was changing rapidly on the trans-Gibraltar stage during this period. Added to the contrabandists of Gibraltar and Tangier were thousands of Spanish anti-Franco partisans based in Algeria and Tangier, along with emboldened Moroccan nationalists and, by the mid-1950s, a revived Riffian regionalist movement under the exiled Abd el-Krim and his clan. In addition to the United States, other outside forces like the Soviet Union and the Arab nationalist regime of Egyptian president Gamal Abdel Nasser entered the scene, while French and British influence diminished. The regional context of the trans-Gibraltar thus conditioned the political trajectories of both Franco's Spain as it gradually opened, and Alawite Morocco as it transitioned from colonial protectorate to semiauthoritarian monarchy. The Franco regime was more active than previous Spanish governments on its southern border, which for the dictatorship presented lifeline and menace. The two regimes carried on a cautious and sometimes acrimonious relationship during the decolonization era, a period of violence and political uncertainty one historian has called the "years of misunderstanding."<sup>2</sup> But by 1963, out of many possible outcomes, these two confident clients of American power together became protagonists of a new regional order underwritten by American dollars and might. To appreciate this process, it is helpful first to consider its antecedents, the period when both shores of the Strait were in Spanish hands.

### The Trans-Gibraltar in Age of Autarky, 1942–1951

By the end of 1942, the Strait of Gibraltar was no longer a factor in World War II, but it was crucial for the Franco regime. As the mirage of a Hispano-German alliance faded, the regime found itself isolated. Shunned by the western Allies, it engaged a plan of autarky with the aim of achieving industrial and military self-sufficiency in the face of a hostile world. But this project paradoxically relied on goods, materials, and finance from the open markets of Gibraltar and Tangier. These two exclaves provided

a lifeline for autarky; in the process, they enhanced the regime's sense of security and nudged it toward economic liberalization.

In this context, the Franco regime was prudent to shelve its irredentism over Gibraltar. Although a major campaign would later be waged to recover the British colony, such a policy made no sense amid the austerity and famine of the 1940s. Gibraltar was a source of basic food supplies—canned vegetables, condensed milk, rice, coffee, and sugar—brought into Spain mainly by a workforce on its evening cross-border commute home to La Línea. Some ten thousand Spanish workers each carried in an average of about two pounds of contraband foodstuffs per day, amassing quantities valued at a total of perhaps 260 million pesetas in 1950 (equal at that time to US\$6 million on the Tangier currency market).<sup>3</sup> Local fishermen were moreover able to obtain netting illegally from suppliers in Gibraltar, and harbor patrols tolerated even larger contraband shipments across Gibraltar Bay of scrap metal and gasoline, “which enabled vehicles to circulate throughout much of the southern part of the peninsula.”<sup>4</sup> The opportunity to access this trade was so appealing that Spanish workers applied for work authorizations in the British colony “with real insistence,” even though they lost much of their wage earnings at the border to the highly unfavorable official exchange rate.<sup>5</sup> Customs officials insisted that workers turn over three-fourths of the pounds sterling they earned in wages—another crucial revenue stream for the state treasury—but they generally turned a blind eye to petty contraband.

At odds with the broadly negative tenor of Anglo-Spanish relations throughout the 1940s, the regular and cordial communication between Gibraltar and the Campo provided benefits that the Spanish regime did not fail to recognize. As a token of thanks, Spanish authorities granted residents of the British colony blanket authorization to use the so-called Playa de los Ingleses, a beach lying some eighteen miles to the north at La Chullera. The Spanish military governor even ordered two cabanas built for the enjoyment of Gibraltar's governor and base admiral.<sup>6</sup> Obtaining an entry permit to Spain was pro forma for Gibraltarians, who supported a modest tourist industry in the Campo de Gibraltar and western Málaga province, including a sizable sex trade in La Línea that rankled Spanish authorities.<sup>7</sup> An earlier subject of dispute, the presence of Spanish republican refugees in the British town, was resolved by 1946, as the two governments agreed to expel those deemed active revolutionaries to the Americas and repatriate others to Spain on the promise of immunity.<sup>8</sup> Gibraltar generally

cooperated in preventing the Franco regime's enemies from gathering in the British exclave. In 1948, the Spanish consul could report that the British base admiral "was being most useful" in persecuting unidentified smugglers who might be engaged in human traffic of republican partisans across Gibraltar Bay.<sup>9</sup>

Tangier provided the Franco regime another vital link to the outside world. The Spanish had occupied the city in June 1940 with the intention of dismantling its international structure, but they quickly realized that the exclave was of greater value as an open currency market than as another burden on the regime's fraught autarkist experiment.<sup>10</sup> Spanish authorities maintained Tangier's liberal economic regime down to the end of their occupation in October 1945, and Spaniards continued to seek opportunity there long after. Although the Moroccan franc remained the official currency, pegged to the eponymous French coin, the Spanish occupiers paid contracts and issued credit in pesetas. This strengthened the city's principal holders of pesetas, Spanish banks, and bolstered the peseta's convertibility with badly needed dollars and pounds sterling, with which fuel and other provisions could be acquired.

Spanish prestige in Tangier during the war years provided an unlikely foil to the city's beleaguered French institutions. The franc's value with respect to the new peseta fell by about 65 percent in the first two years of the Spanish occupation, tumbling further after Italo-German forces took French Tunisia in November 1942. Spanish authorities might have savored a bit of *schadenfreude* over French misfortune, but they quickly found themselves presiding over an inflationary shock that threatened devastating social consequences in Tangier. As holders of pesetas dominated commerce and credit, they noted growing "discontent . . . among day laborers and those of modest means who earn their wages in francs."<sup>11</sup> Stabilizing a currency in free fall proved difficult in an environment where underground currency traders prospered. Those with access to pounds sterling and dollars sold their francs to smugglers, who employed "poorly dressed" Moroccans to run the currency out of Tangier on foot on "barely passable roads . . . never on highways or in any vehicles."<sup>12</sup> Throughout 1942, Spanish and French authorities together searched for ways to stabilize the franc. Besides intervening against underground traders, they secretly coordinated to transfer "quite a lot of gold in boxes and ingots" from France into Tangier's municipal coffers.<sup>13</sup>

Stories of shortages and starvation in Spain during the 1940s are legion, but the peseta's success in Tangier seemed to provide a glimmer

of hope. The widespread use of the Spanish coin in Tangier and Spanish Morocco boosted its value, affording private Spanish firms the purchasing power to acquire what they needed from the international marketplace there. Even as late as 1944, with the Allied victory increasingly certain, the Spanish high commissioner Luis Orgaz remained sanguine about Tangier's future role in bolstering Spanish finances. He noted that all rationed supplies in the city were valued in pesetas, as was most credit and many manufactured goods—all of which reinforced the currency's value. "The solid position of the peseta in the Tangier market, and its wide and secure radius of action," Orgaz concluded in a cable to Madrid, "make us hopeful for its bright future."<sup>14</sup> Going forward, sure-footed Spanish industry would provide, in the words of a foreign ministry official, "the guarantee for commercial relations in Tangier . . . so that the peseta can continue to maintain the favorable position it now enjoys."<sup>15</sup>

This optimism was short-circuited, however, when the Allies forced Spain to relinquish Tangier in October 1945. The International City's future would be decided by the victorious powers, though, in a small but significant exception to Franco's diplomatic isolation, the Allies offered Spain a seat at the table. Franco's foreign ministry used this opportunity to plead that their five-year occupation had been handled responsibly given the circumstances, and indeed had saved the city from a much worse fate had the door been left open for Fascist Italy to invade. Financial markets had prospered, they argued, and the city's inclusive international flavor had been preserved. Spanish authorities had, moreover, mainly abandoned their anti-Semitic posturing by 1942, even criticizing occasional acts of vandalism against Jewish property committed by "irresponsible people."<sup>16</sup> By pressing these arguments, Spanish negotiators avoided total expulsion from the city. Spain would retain its representation on the municipal Control Committee and police force. And—though this was not made explicit—the Allies would look the other way as Spain quietly removed the eight artillery installations it had mounted along Morocco's north coast in 1940 with German support, sparing the regime additional punishment for violating its commitment dating from 1912 not to do so.<sup>17</sup> The Allies also consented to keeping the peseta as one of two official currencies in the International Zone (along with the Moroccan franc), mandating use of the Spanish coin for the payment of port fees and tobacco purchases.<sup>18</sup>

Despite the hard-won fight to preserve some of the peseta's privileges in Tangier, the reversion to an international statute accorded poorly with the Franco regime's ongoing policy of illiberal autarky. Without

Spanish control over municipal contracts and credit, the free peseta stood little chance of maintaining its favorable exchange rate. From 1943 to 1949, the Spanish currency lost two-thirds of its value with respect to the dollar.<sup>19</sup> After 1945, the notion that a favorable international market could nourish a protectionist peninsular economy was quickly turned on end: instead, many private firms in Spain began taking advantage of Tangier to circumvent the strictures of autarky. They did this by exploiting a provision allowing Spanish producers to buy dollars and pounds directly from the national treasury at the official rate to purchase raw materials unavailable in Spain. The law restricted a firm's access to foreign currencies, however, to an amount less than or equal to the value of its exports—a figure that was routinely doubled or tripled on declaration forms. Complicit in this overreporting, Spanish customs agents also looked past the suitcases full of pound and dollar notes being smuggled in and out of Spain for the purpose of obtaining pesetas in Tangier at market rates, yielding a significant margin. One notorious currency smuggler recalled that every serious import-export operation in Spain was using these techniques to take the greatest possible advantage of the Tangier markets. (The regime's fiscal authorities later attempted to recruit him for his expertise.)<sup>20</sup> In 1950, one Catalan textile firm netted \$500,000 in a single coup, triggering a panic on the Tangier markets that sent the free peseta tumbling some 20 percent in short order.<sup>21</sup> Other operations were less sophisticated but had a similar effect, simply by purchasing pesetas in Tangier and hiring ship captains to deposit them at designated points on the Spanish shore.<sup>22</sup>

As it presented opportunities for Spanish business, Tangier simultaneously eroded the foundations of Francoist autarky. The city now specialized as never before in the lucrative business of currency speculation, which became increasingly important as Spanish émigrés and foreign tourists learned to channel dollar remittances through Tangier.<sup>23</sup> Rather than nourish Francoist autarky, as it had during World War II, the Tangier currency market was increasingly a force for liberalization. In 1951, the Spanish commerce ministry attempted to combat the influence of Tangier by establishing a complicated mechanism to mimic fluctuations in currency markets through a state-run exchange in Madrid. This system hobbled along, but a number of shocks, including the sudden mass withdrawal of the peseta from independent Morocco in 1958, forced the Franco regime to carry out a more comprehensive monetary reform in 1959.

## Spain's Southern Menace

Anxiety over vulnerability on the southern borderland forms a major thread of modern Spanish history. It is helpful to keep this continuity in mind as we decipher the changing regional order across the Moroccan transition to independence. Imperial glory in Morocco may have formed part of the Generalissimo's personal identity, but considerations of colonial nostalgia and financial return ultimately played little role in his regime's Morocco policy. Spanish Morocco diverged sharply in this regard from the attitude of Spain's authoritarian neighbor, Salazar of Portugal, and of its "coprotector" France, with respect to their African empires. Rather than staking its identity on the preservation of formal empire, the Franco regime remained consistent with a century of Spanish policy to maintain sufficient influence in North Africa so as to remain relevant in international affairs and to monitor threats on the southern border. For much of the modern period, the main such threat was French expansionism, but the onset of the Cold War took things back to the future: As the influential Falangist Ernesto Giménez Caballero put it, the international communist movement comprised followers of "a latter-day Almanzor," the tenth-century Andalusí warlord reincarnated as Joseph Stalin.<sup>24</sup>

The presence of tens of thousands of Spanish political exiles in Algeria, Tangier, southern France, and French Morocco caused particular concern. After the civil war, Spanish republicans received asylum in France on the condition they remained out of French political affairs. French authorities did little, however, to impede the exiles' continuing struggle against Franco—the opposite of the British posture in Gibraltar. After the German expulsion from France, Spanish communists moved easily between southern France and Oran on the Marseille shipping line *Transméditerranée*, which Spanish intelligence services believed was "under considerable Communist influence."<sup>25</sup> Long a destination for Spanish political dissidents, Oran became home to some fourteen thousand Spaniards claiming leftist political affiliations, more than one-fourth of the city's overall Spanish community. It was from Algeria that the Spanish communist leader Santiago Carrillo directed a major guerrilla offensive at the Val d'Aran in the Pyrenees in autumn 1944. In conjunction, Alboran Sea smugglers delivered forty additional partisans at Andalusian beaches near Almuñecar, along with radio transmitters, machine guns, and other small arms—materiel superior to most anything available to guerrillas



inside Spain, but of limited value without a reliable supply line to replenish ammunition.<sup>26</sup> Moreover, during the course of 1945, French solidarity with the Spanish exiles diminished and shifted toward the Anglo-American position in favor of restoring the Spanish Bourbon monarchy.<sup>27</sup>

Franco's security forces proved they could handle large-scale assaults like the Val d'Aran offensive but became obsessed with the steady trickle of small-scale *guerrillerismo* originating across the Strait. The Algeciras Civil Guard reported receiving "constant and repeated threats of possible discharges of men and armaments on this littoral mainly due to the proximity of Gibraltar and Tangier, and particularly French Morocco." The opportunity to run a little contraband out of Tangier appealed to modest fishermen and English yacht captains alike—indeed, the "immense majority" of them, according to the Spanish naval attaché in Tangier in 1947. To avoid scrutiny by port agents, goods and passengers were transferred at sea under the moonlight. Naval officers fretted over the ever-present prospect of anti-Franco forces in the Maghrib establishing communication with bandits operating in the sierras of Andalusia. Spanish naval intelligence received a report of radio transmitters being deposited on isolated beaches near Cádiz, and Francoist postal censors identified links between dissident networks in Tangier and fugitives believed to be hiding out in the mountain forests. Among the forty-four such individuals the Civil Guard was tracking—wanted for crimes such as kidnapping, extortion, smuggling, robbery, and murder—twenty-four were considered active "reds" or to move in leftist circles.<sup>28</sup> With the anti-Franco resistance in the Maghrib unable dependably to deliver supplies to drop points on the Iberian coast, partisans inside Spain turned to local bandits, an undisciplined and politically unreliable caste that had sunk multiple revolutions in the previous century.<sup>29</sup> The Civil Guard and other internal security forces methodically neutralized these groups, sending dozens of squads of six to eight men to hunt them down in the forested hills.

The revised Tangier statute of 1945 added to the Franco regime's unease by granting the Soviet Union access to the international city. The Soviets gained the right to establish a consulate there, although they never would do so. Already in 1944, Spanish operatives in Tangier had reported "an atmosphere of optimism" among anti-Franco groups, who were systematically conflated with Stalinists in Francoist discourse. Republican partisans were emboldened to make "provocations and verbal demonstrations in the bars and cafés of the city . . . openly in the presence of

people . . . attached to the Falange . . . and the current . . . Regime of Spain.”<sup>30</sup> Were these merely outbursts of political emotion, or were Soviet agents operating in their midst? Were the Soviet naval vessels that sometimes called at Tangier offering political shelter and logistical support to Spanish exiles? To Moroccan nationalists? Such questions ate at Spanish officials, who, despite retaining a leadership role in the municipal police force, were barred from searching incoming vessels without probable cause and permission from the appropriate consulate.<sup>31</sup> The colonial army even developed a contingency plan to abandon Tangier and blockade the city in the event of a Soviet coup. A dress rehearsal for such an action was tried in 1948, when Spanish agents closed cross-border communication from Tangier to Spanish Morocco under the pretext of stricter sanitation procedures. Outcry in the international press—including talk of implementing an airlift—forced the Spanish High Commission to rescind the new regulations.<sup>32</sup>

### Did the Franco Regime Support Moroccan Independence?

In the last years of the colonial era, Spain at last began to muster something close to an effective colonial occupation. It maintained some seventy thousand troops there, about half the wartime peak, but still extraordinary for a territory of just over eight thousand square miles. Spanish capital fueled a minor industrial boom, creating demand for Spanish and Moroccan manpower. The Spanish settler population in the northern zone rose from sixty-two thousand in 1940 to a peak of ninety thousand when the protectorate ended in 1956.<sup>33</sup> Yet few in the Spanish regime were so naïve as to regard these developments as progress toward the realization of a bicontinental empire. For most, the overriding goal to join the Western alliance required reconciling strategic goals in North Africa with the changing regional order.

The question of the Franco regime’s commitment to Moroccan nationalism revisits a long-standing ambivalence within Spanish Africanismo: pursue formal colonization, or cultivate a strong independent ally against external threats in the Strait. In the new conjuncture, the principal threat was communism—an umbrella term that included Spanish and French militants operating in the Maghrib, Soviet agents, and certain elements of the Maghribian independence movements. Some credence was given to

the idea that nationalist ideology could serve as an effective prophylactic against communism. When the Egyptian monarchy fell in 1952, Franco grew concerned that the ascendant Nasser regime was tilting Marxist, but ultimately became convinced that any alliance between Arab nationalism and Soviet communism could only be tactical and temporary. Spanish agents in Tétouan were given discretion to work with Moroccan nationalists who displayed anti-French rather than anti-Spanish views. However, Franco's inner circle believed Morocco was too fragile to resist communist treachery without the protectorate's firm hand and firmly opposed any talk of independence.<sup>34</sup> Although the Communist Party of Morocco itself was small, the nationalist party Istiqlal was becoming a mass movement with strong trade-union elements. Istiqlal's aim was the kind of constitutional parliamentary system that revolutionaries could readily hijack—a formula that surely reminded Francoist leaders of the turbulent experiment in their own country that they had quashed two decades earlier. "In twenty-five years [Morocco] will be prepared" for independence, opined Franco in January 1956—scarcely two months before the sultan was to achieve exactly that. Even on Franco's glacial time frame, he believed large Spanish bases would be necessary "to always guarantee Moroccan independence and that Communism never dominates the Strait."<sup>35</sup>

Having emerged in the cities of the French Zone after about 1930, Moroccan nationalism began as an ideology of bourgeois urbanites, often European protégés, who envisioned Moroccans as a single people sharing a common history and political destiny.<sup>36</sup> The movement derived strength from its ability to accord popular legitimacy to institutions otherwise complicit in colonial rule. Sultan Muhammad ben Yusef, whose father had submitted to France in 1912, found in the new nationalist independence movement an avenue for his family's redemption. In April 1947, he delivered a speech in Tangier praising the nationalists and their goal of ending the protectorate.<sup>37</sup> The Spanish government embraced the "Maghrib awakening" for similar reasons. Its patronage of Moroccan nationalism, hollow though it may have been, furnished effective propaganda in the Arab world, where the diplomatically isolated regime was turning for allies. In 1945, Franco's foreign ministry permitted its caliph in Tétouan to send a proindependence delegation to the Arab League, the sort of move the French would not consider.<sup>38</sup> The Spanish High Commission continued to permit Abdelkhalek Torres and other nationalist politicians to operate, though suspicion always followed them. Violent demonstrations in

Tétouan on 8 February 1948 resulted in their expulsion to Tangier. Torres was permitted to return in 1952 in conjunction with a high-profile tour of the Arab world by Franco's foreign minister.<sup>39</sup>

Acts of sympathy toward Moroccan nationalism rarely surpassed symbolic displays or instruments to further other aims—namely to demonstrate Spain's usefulness to the emerging Western alliance. To overcome the "Axis stigma," attention to Jews was the greater expedient. With the West watching, the Franco regime ceased to exploit Jewish-Muslim divisions as a means to burnish pro-Arab credentials as it had openly done in 1936–1942. It is nonetheless probable that individual Spanish officials discreetly continued to engage in such activity. Rumors circulated in late 1947 that protectorate administrators were authorizing Moroccans to travel to Palestine to join the struggle against Zionism, although this was not official policy.<sup>40</sup> Franco had first pursued a relationship with the new state of Israel in 1948 in hopes of building a moral case for his inclusion in the postwar international order, but he was rebuffed by the Jewish state's advancing of a moral agenda of its own. Only with the Israel route cut off did the Franco regime intensify its Arab turn. In his New Year address of 1952, Franco expressed his "sympathy and support for the Arab world." Later that year his foreign minister embarked on a tour of the Arab world to deliver platitudes about historic Hispano-Arab ties.<sup>41</sup> Perhaps the greatest individual symbol of Hispano-Moroccan ties was Muhammad ben Mizzian, a Riffian officer who served in the Spanish colonial army in the Rif War and Spanish Civil War, and whom Franco had entrusted with the command of Ceuta in 1939. But Franco refused to consider Mizzian for the post of high commissioner, an act that would have upset the hierarchy of the protectorate system and put the French on edge. When Mizzian ascended to the rank of lieutenant general in 1953, Franco appointed him captain general of the Spanish region of Galicia—an unprecedented honor for a colonial soldier, but also one that sent him as far as possible from the Moroccan stage.<sup>42</sup>

In the meantime, Moroccan nationalism continued to gain momentum with or without Spanish patronage, thanks in part to the peculiar haven of Tangier. With its relatively liberal speech laws and international access, Tangier became the "capital of political agitation in Morocco," according to the city's French police chief. Nationalist leaders there enjoyed access to international press and met with outside delegations. Although large assemblies had been unlawful in Tangier since the tumultuous lead-up to the Spanish Civil War, the European municipal administration chose

to tolerate a large peaceful gathering that greeted a delegation of Arab journalists and politicians from Cairo in March 1951. The ban was again invoked the following year, however, as nationalist demonstrations turned violent, resulting in eight deaths and eighty-six arrests.<sup>43</sup> From Tangier, Moroccan nationalist leaders were able to travel to Cairo, where they were received by the Arab League. They also met with Abd el-Krim, the veteran Riffian resistance leader who had absconded to the Egyptian capital from French custody in 1947.<sup>44</sup> Abd el-Krim's close friendship with Abdelkhalek Torres, the prestigious nationalist politician of Tétouan, was especially significant because the Riffian leader's blessing was crucial for bringing his people into the Moroccan nationalist fold.<sup>45</sup> New stirrings of rebellion in the Rif raised the possibility of an alternate scenario. In September 1951, one group was found to have created hidden stashes of armaments under large rocks on the shoreline near Nador. A Riffian delegation traveled to Tétouan, threatening, "If the nationalist party does not wish to act, the Riffians will declare holy war and procure the necessary weapons without difficulty."<sup>46</sup> But such threats amounted to nothing without the support of Abd el-Krim, who on this occasion stood with the Moroccan nationalists.

If one constant can be found in Spanish policy toward Morocco after 1942, it is its support for the continuity of the Alawite dynastic line. Franco remained committed to the most traditional of Moroccan institutions despite the sultan's open advocacy of independence, and despite Istiqlal's bombastic accusation that Spain's "totalitarian regime" was trying to "detach the north of Morocco and Ifni from the rest of the country."<sup>47</sup> In August 1953, the Spanish regime opposed a French-engineered coup in Rabat that replaced the independence-minded Muhammad ben Yusef with his uncle Muhammad ben Arafa, a French loyalist. It is unsurprising that the Spanish government did not support the French maneuver. On the brink of concluding a long-term military pact with the United States, Franco was not about to jeopardize a major foreign policy breakthrough by supporting a petty coup against a pro-American monarch. But the regime's legitimacy went deeper. Spain's opposition to Ben Arafa also aligned with its long-standing policy (with a parenthesis between about 1938 and 1942) to respect the sultanate's central institutions. On at least one occasion, a high-ranking Spanish army official referred to Ben Arafa as the "quisling sultan" in internal correspondence.<sup>48</sup> In Tétouan, Spanish police supervised rallies demanding the return of Muhammad ben Yusef. Spanish protectorate officials ensured that imams invoked Ben Yusef's cause and

referred to Ben Arafa only as “the usurper” in their Friday sermons—quite a remarkable development in view of the exiled sultan’s stated opposition to colonial rule.<sup>49</sup>

At the same time, the Franco regime declined opportunities to gain greater influence over the northern zone at the expense of Moroccan unity. Late in 1953, as the Ben Arafa controversy unfolded, the Spanish embassy in Cairo was approached by none other than Abd el-Krim, still operating from exile in the Egyptian capital. Working through secret channels involving his son in Munich and a private liaison in Barcelona, the legendary Riffian leader proposed a treaty of “peace and friendship” with Spain—including a promise to respect Spanish sovereignty in Ceuta and Melilla. In exchange, Spain was asked to provide “moral support” for an uprising by a cross-border confederation of Moroccan and Algerian tribes against the pro-French pretender, “closing its eyes and facilitating the landing of agitators and arms on the coasts” of Spanish Morocco. But the Spanish mission considered Abd el-Krim “a surviving mummy of an extinct past,” and refused to pass along his request to Franco.<sup>50</sup> A similar initiative was brought forth by the Spanish high commissioner at the time, Rafael García Valiño. In January 1954, five months into Ben Arafa’s usurpation, the veteran Africanista officer invited hundreds of northern tribal leaders and caids to Tétouan to plan a secession from the French-backed sultanate in exchange for their unconditional loyalty to the Spanish High Commission. García Valiño enthusiastically delivered the proposal to Franco, presenting the Tétouan declaration as a golden opportunity to ensure the continuity of Spanish influence in the region and ensure the friendship of the Arab world. But Franco refused to consider such a partition without broad international support.<sup>51</sup>

While Madrid considered its policy in the wider terms of diplomatic relations with France and the United States, Tétouan continued to seek influence in a Maghrib increasingly likely to be set free from colonial rule. In an effort to cultivate an alternative to Istiqlal in the northern zone, García Valiño appointed Abdelkhalek Torres to the newly created post of “minister of social affairs” of Spanish Morocco.<sup>52</sup> Spanish officials also provided assistance to leaders of the anticolonial movement in neighboring Algeria, including that country’s future president Ahmed ben Bella. The true extent of collaboration from Madrid is unclear, but evidence points to the complicity of Spanish military officials in Tétouan and Melilla. The Spanish High Commission gave refuge to 150 Algerian nationalists in 1955,

providing them housing and pensions and facilitating their secure travel in and out of Spanish Morocco. Algerian nationalists established connections with their Moroccan counterparts, establishing camps for training insurgent militias near Melilla. French patrols caught at least three arms smugglers from Spanish Morocco trying to reach Algeria, leading the French army to conclude that Spain was protecting Algerians involved in maintaining maritime supply lines into the embattled French colony from Nador and other northern Moroccan ports.<sup>53</sup> The Spanish ambassador in Paris admitted as much, replying, “It would seem as though you believe the duty to patrol the frontier between our two zones in order to avoid the passage of men or arms falls exclusively on us.”<sup>54</sup>

### **“The Spirit of Barajas”: Forging Authoritarian Nationalist Solidarity Across the Strait, 1956–1963**

The struggle for influence in the Maghrib only intensified after Morocco gained independence. American pressure on France in mid-1955 to discuss an end to the protectorate yielded quick results. Muhammad ben Yusef made a triumphant return from exile in Madagascar in November, and by March 1956, France had agreed on a timeline to withdraw. In April, the Spanish outlined a five-year phased military withdrawal and recognized the sultan’s authority to govern the movement of people and goods in and out of the northern zone. The more complicated task of determining the status of the Spanish peseta, which circulated in the billions in northern Morocco, was postponed indefinitely.<sup>55</sup>

Whether the sultan could govern northern Morocco and the Rif to any greater effect in 1956 than his predecessors ever had been able to do previously was far from guaranteed. Muhammad ben Yusef’s best hope to win Riffian loyalty over to the Moroccan national cause was to gain the support of Abd el-Krim, who from his exile in Cairo continued to enjoy exalted status among his people. The Alawite dynast invited Abd el-Krim to return to his homeland with amnesty, but the Riffian leader declined, protesting that the Moroccan government was persecuting Riffian notables, including members of his own Beni Ouariaghel tribe. The sponsor of Abd el-Krim’s asylum, Egyptian president Gamal Abdel Nasser, deviously tried to forge a compromise. His official press published a false report that “perfect agreement that exists between the king of Morocco, [Istiqlal leader]

Alal al-Fasi, and the Emir Abd el-Krim,” and then censored Abd el-Krim’s denials. Offended by Nasser’s treachery, Abd el-Krim responded by breaking with Rabat altogether. With the support of 250 Riffian notables, he offered the Algerian independence army (Front de Libération Nationale, or FLN) access to his arms smuggling network. In exchange, the FLN was to subsidize a Riffian army of one thousand men to stage an uprising against the sultan and Istiqlal.<sup>56</sup> Northeast Morocco became a cross-border refuge for Algerian anticolonial forces, just as in the 1850s. Seizing the chance to needle the French, Franco flattered the FLN, lauding the “goal of consolidating [the] independence” of “the peoples of North Africa.”<sup>57</sup>

The Riffians’ persistent ties to tribal kin in Algeria did not square with the centralizing nationalism issuing from Rabat, Morocco’s new national capital inherited from the departed French Residency. After assuming charge of the Rabat government in late 1956, Istiqlal quickly sent new local and provincial administrators to the Rif, drawn entirely from the ranks of French-speaking adherents from the south. Among them was a black governor from Casablanca, seen as an especially stinging provocation.<sup>58</sup> In schools, French replaced Spanish as the language of instruction. Riffian political parties were excluded from the government on the grounds they were too sympathetic toward the Spanish. Even Abdelkhalek Torres, the leading nationalist of the former Spanish Zone, criticized Rabat’s Jacobin zeal before making haste for Cairo. Others who vocally rejected Istiqlal were forced to take refuge in Ceuta and Melilla.<sup>59</sup> The livelihoods of many Riffians were threatened when Rabat sought to curtail the relative freedom of movement and trade in and out of the Spanish exclaves. With no bilateral agreement yet reached on the future of the Spanish currency in Morocco, the Rabat government ordered the peseta’s immediate withdrawal. Inhabitants of the northern zone who had savings in the Spanish coin suffered considerably, and in desperation sold millions of pesetas to smugglers at cut rates.<sup>60</sup>

The nationalist passions unleashed by the decolonization process were fast escaping the Makhzan’s grasp. In contrast to their counterparts in Spain and France (after 1958), Moroccan nationalists could not turn to the reassuring presence of a prestigious military figure as head of state. Having become a symbol of backwardness and colonial collaborationism, the figure of the sultan had nearly depleted its reserve of traditional charisma. Sixteen months after attaining independence, Muhammad ben Yusef took the modernizing step of converting his title from Sultan to



King Muhammad V, an indication of his concern that the independence process may be leaving him behind.<sup>61</sup>

The Alawite dynasty's fortunes continued to deteriorate in 1957 under pressure from both Istiqlal and Nasser. Each was pursuing a different political project—Istiqlal for a grand Morocco, and Nasser for an Arab state extending across the Middle East and Maghrib. In both, Muhammad's role was thought expendable. The Moroccan monarchy would hitch its wagon to Istiqlal while making clear it wanted little to do with Nasser. To drive this point home, Prince Hassan, on a visit to Cairo to mark the fifth anniversary of Nasser's coup, yawned during an Egyptian military parade and opined on Egyptian soldiers' cowardice in the face of the Israelis. In retaliation, the spurned Egyptian leader marshaled his aging protégé Abd el-Krim, in whom he saw a convenient figurehead for a pro-Egypt rebellion in the Rif. To supplement aid to the Riffians already flowing from the FLN, Nasser sent Egyptian military attachés from Madrid, Rabat, and elsewhere to train and advise the antimonarchist, anti-Istiqlal Riffian militias. At this point, Abd el-Krim's son, Idris Muhammad el-Khattabi, again reached out to his Spanish interlocutors. Idris reiterated his clan's commitment to respecting Spanish claims on Ceuta and Melilla in exchange for support in creating a secessionist state extending as far east as Oran. But Franco chose not to come to the aid of his army's old nemesis.<sup>62</sup>

For the Riffians and their Egyptian patrons, this augured a clash, if not with the Alawite royal forces, then with the mobilized Moroccan nationalists of Istiqlal. As Istiqlal emerged as independent Morocco's largest party, its leader, Alal al-Fasi, pitched the slogan "Greater Morocco," rallying to irredentism to unite the party's conservative-monarchist and leftist factions. After gaining Muhammad's support in October 1956, Istiqlal made a bid to become the dominant state party, raising popular militias outside the royal command structure. Over the course of 1957, Morocco became consumed by a radicalizing nationalism spearheaded by both Istiqlal and an unaffiliated confederation of militias, by then collectively known as the National Liberation Army, that had emerged from the Nasser-FLN collaboration in the erstwhile Spanish Zone. These diverse groups supported Muhammad V but also presented an alternative to his Royal Armed Forces, much of whose leadership was still tarred with the charge of collaboration with the Europeans. In return, the Moroccan king permitted them to retain a command structure independent from the royal forces.<sup>63</sup> In 1957, the militias turned their attention to the Atlantic Sahara, where

they sought to recover the Spanish colonies of Ifni and Río de Oro and a portion of French Mauritania. They engaged French and Spanish forces, and although Muhammad V may in any case have been powerless to stop it, the king preferred to see nationalist energies trained toward these districts of West Africa, which, unlike Ceuta and Melilla, the Americans considered to be colonial rather than sovereign holdings.<sup>64</sup>

The Spanish regime shared Muhammad V's preference to keep the Ifni War contained in the Western Sahara, distant from the trans-Gibraltar. It certainly would not respond to the Abd el-Krim clan's pleas for help, which would only draw the conflict with Morocco closer to the border. Above all, Franco was loath to introduce further chaos in Muhammad V's realm, an eventuality that he believed only opened the door to communism. Over the course of 1957, French officers shared intelligence with the Spanish army hinting at Soviet influence among Algerian exiles and their Riffian hosts in Nador. The fear that the Soviet Union could exploit political turmoil was ever present, but most adherents of international communist movement in Morocco were in fact not Moroccans but Spanish exiles. Although Arab nationalist movements tended to consider communism antithetical to Islam, Spanish observers sensed a process of competitive radicalization, as Istiqlal sought to broaden its ranks by appealing to Marxist sympathies in the trade-union movement. The Spanish General Staff also took seriously the possibility that the Soviets were supporting the campaigns in the Western Sahara, using Spanish republican exiles as liaisons.<sup>65</sup> Whether or not this was the case, the Spanish army preferred to confront the National Liberation Army without actually engaging in direct hostility against Muhammad V, whose royal forces remained in the rear. In early 1958, a joint Hispano-French force smashed Moroccan nationalist positions from the air and then drove them out. When royal forces did step in, the Spanish handed them a small victory, turning the Tarfaya district over to their former protégé, Mizzian, now a general in Muhammad's army.<sup>66</sup>

As the Ifni dispute was placed on ice, Muhammad V faced an intensifying conflict in the more sensitive region of the Rif. The monarch was mindful of the fierce independent streak of these mountain tribes, who had resisted Arabization since the eighth century. Sensitive to this, he placed Mizzian, a native son of the region, to command his royal forces in the Rif. The scion of a prominent political family and a success story in Franco's army, Mizzian was as popular among the Riffians as he was detested by many Moroccan nationalists, who regarded him as a "Hispanized"

collaborator.<sup>67</sup> As the king's representative in the Rif, Mizzian found himself in the middle of a bitter conflict between the revolutionary nationalism of Istiqlal and the Riffian tribes, who enjoyed the support of Abd el-Krim, the FLN, and Nasser's Egypt. The Jacobin conceits of Moroccan nationalism were the antithesis of Riffian tribal identity. Its social bases were predominantly Arab and urban, expanding throughout the former French Zone through the industrial trade unionism of the party's rising left wing. Northern Morocco was a world apart, largely rural and accustomed to indirect administration. Since 1927, an alliance between Spanish colonial administrators and tribal officials had maintained stability throughout three decades of gradual economic change. Cries of "¡Viva el Generalísimo Franco!" heard on the streets of Tétouan appeared to signal a special relationship, but flattery did nothing to alter Franco's indifference. It only gave credence to Istiqlal's claims that the protesters were Spanish shills hostile to the Moroccan people's organic unity.

As the Spanish army continued its withdrawal from the Rif and Tingitana interiors, Riffian leaders, including members of Abd el-Krim's family, pleaded for Franco's support. They explained their predicament in terms the Francoists were sure to understand, comparing it to the troubles of 1936 that "obligated Spain to rise up in arms against the excesses of an . . . anarchic state, which violated the nation's liberties and the citizens' rights."<sup>68</sup> And having loyally supported Franco in 1936, the Riffians appealed for reciprocity. Franco's chief adviser in Tétouan, Enrique Arqués, lobbied the Caudillo on the importance of maintaining influence on its southern borderland to keep pace with the United States, Soviet Union, Egypt, and France, advocating measures such as food aid to the Riffians. High-ranking Spanish diplomats privately criticized Istiqlal for its heavy-handed assimilation program and warned of the need to account for the region's peculiarities.<sup>69</sup>

But Franco resisted any temptation to reprise his El Cid act, the simultaneously Catholic and Muslim warrior-liberator on display in Spanish Morocco in the late 1930s. The Spanish army continued its phased withdrawal from northern Morocco and dissolved its indigenous units, leaving the Rif precariously in the hands of Mizzian. The royalist general attempted to mediate with the Riffians via Sheikh Amazian, a prominent figure of the Beni Ouariaghel, to no avail. Instead, the Sheikh urged Mizzian to defect to the Riffian movement, but the general was unwilling to abandon his monarch. At his headquarters at Al Hoceima, on the north

coast, Mizzian gave refuge to Makhzan administrators as they were chased out of the Rif interior.<sup>70</sup>

The emerging protagonist of the Riffian movement was the caid of the Beni Ouariaghel—Abd el-Krim’s cousin, Suleiman al-Khattabi, who had remained loyal to the Spanish during the Anwal disaster of 1921 and reestablished contact with them after the Ben Arafa coup of 1953. A full-scale revolt began on 25 October 1958 with attacks on three regional Istiqlal headquarters, and the creation of the Rif Liberation Army under Beni Ouariaghel leadership. The army of some twenty-five thousand Riffian militiamen gathered in Nador, and by December it had surrounded Al Hoceima, home of Mizzian and the temporary barracks of the Spanish colonial army’s residual forces. Controlling access to the busy port city, Riffian guards permitted only Spaniards to enter and leave. The Riffians reiterated their promise to “maintain good harmony” with the Spanish, noting it was not the northern tribes but the central government in Rabat that had demanded the Spanish withdrawal.<sup>71</sup>

Despite Riffians’ unceasing displays of goodwill toward Spain, Franco showed his legendary sangfroid. He shared with his Moroccan counterpart an overriding priority to prevent the African kingdom’s political breakdown. The Moroccan king ordered his son Hassan to lead a counterinsurgency of twenty thousand men against the Rif Liberation Army. The Spanish granted Hassan’s forces access to their air base at Nador, whence they staged a *razzia* on the Riffians, reportedly deploying napalm and killing eight thousand, including women and children, in a modern replay of the Makhzan expedition of 1855. By February 1959, the rebellion was crushed. Muhammad V treated Riffian prisoners with magnanimity, freeing them and authorizing them to speak critically of Istiqlal so long as they remained loyal to the monarchy. On the other hand, rather than openly acknowledge the causes of Riffian discontent, the king blamed the disastrous episode on outsiders, chiefly Franco and Nasser.<sup>72</sup>

At a moment when some Arab nationalisms were abandoning hereditary monarchies in favor of *marxisant* “non-alignment,” the Western powers, including Spain, grew increasingly nervous that another Nasserite or Ba’athist coup might visit the Maghrib. The Francoist narrative of the Spanish Republic of 1931 provided the template: a descent into anarchy followed by the rise of a disciplined Bolshevik party to exploit the chaos. This formula found ready application in the Maghrib. Spanish officials in Morocco were particularly mindful of Istiqlal’s young trade union liaison

Mehdi ben Barka, who advocated a pivot away from the Western alliance and a larger role for labor unions in government. Ben Barka precipitated a schism in 1959, forming the National Union of Popular Forces, which led Muhammad V's government in 1959–1960. In neighboring Algeria, the FLN was already causing revolutionary disruptions, sinking the French Fourth Republic in the process by 1958. France's prestigious new leader, Charles de Gaulle, believed he could negotiate peace with the FLN, extricate his nation from the quagmire, and lead Europe into an era of decolonization. Influenced by official memory, many in the Franco regime regarded De Gaulle's plan as naïve and dangerous. They shared this view with a faction of the French army and thousands of *pieds-noirs* descendants of nineteenth-century European settlers, many of them bearing Spanish surnames. After meeting with associates of the right-wing French general Raoul Salan in 1959, a Spanish diplomat explained that De Gaulle was "playing the role played by Gil Robles"—referring to the conservative Spanish politician of the Second Republic—"when he was taken aback by his own triumph and lacked the courage to take charge, associating instead with the turbulent leftist elements that brought us to disaster."<sup>73</sup> According to the Francoist narrative, only an alliance of military and traditionalist forces could bring redemption to French Algeria. Salan and his colleague Pierre Lagailarde established themselves in Madrid in 1960 under the sponsorship of Ramón Serrano Suñer, Franco's brother-in-law and former foreign minister. Although José María Areilza, Spanish ambassador to Paris, assured De Gaulle's government that these dissident officers would not be permitted to return France, Salan did reach Algiers in 1961, where his failed coup attempt marked the start of a year-long terror campaign against decolonization.<sup>74</sup>

Prospects for counterrevolution in Morocco looked rather different from the Algerian situation. The Alawite dynasty clung to power in the face of a nationalist backlash against the family's decades of complicity with Europeans. As Franco was advised by his General Staff in November 1959, "The royal palace is for many Moroccans a marionette, still in French hands, and the crown prince is a political curse." Not only the nationalists and the tribes, even officers in the Royal Army were plotting Muhammad V's overthrow, though none ever was realized.<sup>75</sup> Instead, Muhammad V appropriated popular nationalism while taking an authoritarian turn. He took direct control of his government in 1960, in effect becoming prime minister in addition to king. Following Muhammad V's unexpected death

the following year, his successor, Hassan II assumed a similar role. Aiming to placate irredentist passions through the pursuit of Greater Morocco, the late monarch had first brought grievances over Ceuta and Melilla before the United Nations in December 1960, requesting that the Spanish cities be added to that organization's list of non-self-governing territories. In June 1962, Hassan II unilaterally extended Morocco's claim on territorial waters from six to twelve miles, an abrogation of a 1957 treaty on the matter that would challenge Spanish fishing rights.<sup>76</sup> These acts were aimed less at recovering the historically Spanish cities than at gaining leverage on other territorial disputes. In a series of meetings throughout 1962, Hassan II's foreign minister, Ahmed Balafrej, convinced Franco's ambassador to Rabat, Manuel Aznar, that Spain ought to abandon its colonies of Ifni and the Western Sahara, arguing that to hand the Moroccan monarchy such a victory would fend off pressure from revolutionary nationalists. Hassan argued that without this gesture by the Spanish, his realm may soon succumb to the anarchy and communism already consuming Algeria. Franco and his advisers remained unimpressed, overruling Aznar and refusing to budge on Ifni and the Western Sahara in 1962. Hassan II continued to invoke the Red menace, noting in a 1969 meeting with Franco that "Russia has accentuated its military presence in the Mediterranean," and predicting Soviet presence "on my territorial flank . . . if not today, then within a decade."<sup>77</sup> When the consequences Hassan II threatened did not come to pass, the Spanish dictator's decision not to appease what he considered Morocco's "imperialist ambitions" appeared vindicated.<sup>78</sup>

As Morocco's chief bulwark against what Nasser was calling "Arab socialism," the Alawite monarchy emerged more powerful than it had been in a century. With a hastily called referendum in 1962, Hassan II gained overwhelming popular approval for a new constitution concentrating power in his hands. The text of constitution was drafted from inside his palace, being released to the public just two weeks before the vote. A vigorous campaign on state radio and television influenced the outcome, as did a boycott by the opposition leftist parties, which would suffer much persecution over the following decade.<sup>79</sup> The constitution of 1962 also institutionalized a key Western institution, the crown price, creating a predictable line of succession in a dynasty that, like many in the Arab world, had frequently made brothers into untrustworthy rivals. Abd el-Krim issued a harsh critique from Cairo shortly before his death. The aging Riffian chief called the idea of a crown price "absolutely incompatible with the

norms of Islam,” which he claimed required input from imams and representatives of the common interest. Abd el-Krim also criticized the new constitution’s provision granting the head of state the power unilaterally to conclude international treaties and declare war. Indeed, a central problem of Moroccan history was the tension between popular attitudes toward outsiders and the sultan’s need to adopt pragmatic foreign policy. “The provisions of this constitution,” concluded Abd el-Krim, “do not accord at all with the lived experience of the Moroccan people over the centuries.”<sup>80</sup>

To reconcile this new constitutional semiauthoritarianism with the prevailing mood of nationalist revolution, Hassan II returned to the policy of Greater Morocco. But rather than pursue the Spanish exclaves on the north coast, he turned his attention to a more realistic battle over the long undefined boundary in the western desert with the fellow postcolonial Muslim states of Algeria and Mauritania. Hassan II precipitated a conflict that led to the Sand War of 1963–1964. With tensions rising with Algeria in summer 1963, Hassan II sought reconciliation with Spain despite Franco’s earlier rebuff. Returning from a meeting in Paris on 6 July 1963, the king stopped at Madrid’s Barajas airport, where Franco received him. It was there that Hassan II offered his Spanish counterpart a deal: Morocco would not pursue its claims on Ceuta and Melilla until such time as Spain had succeeded in recovering Gibraltar.<sup>81</sup> Although neither of the men knew it, this promise would definitively underwrite the Strait’s territorial status quo.

# 12

## The End of a Modern Borderland

**THE TRANS-GIBRALTAR BORDERLAND** that was made in the middle decades of the nineteenth century was unmade a century later. The maritime passage at its center gained a new hegemon when the United States established a naval presence at Rota (near Cádiz) after 1953. With this, the precarious geopolitical balance in the western Mediterranean was obliterated—and with it the old logic driving European competition there. The imperial nodes of Tangier and Gibraltar lost their regional influence: the independent Kingdom of Morocco dissolved the privileged international colony of Tangier; as for Gibraltar, the Spanish nationalist regime waged a campaign that transformed the colony's land border from an instrument of power into a quarantining wall.

The pluralism and circulation that characterized the modern trans-Gibraltar could not survive the decolonization era. The Franco regime, mindful of Gibraltar's strategic obsolescence in the new Atlantic order, engaged an extended campaign to recover the British colony between 1954 and 1982. Gibraltar weathered the siege, but its symbiotic "hinterland" relationship with the Campo was destroyed in the process. The British territory would find a new "deterritorialized" niche in the global archipelago of offshore trade and finance. Across the Strait, Morocco's traditional accommodation of minority legal communities could not withstand the rise of post-colonial nationalism. The millennial presence of Jews in Morocco all but vanished in scarcely a decade. The colonial society of merchants, administrators, soldiers, and Spanish settlers began a gradual departure from



Tangier and other Moroccan cities at the end of the 1950s. As Morocco lurched toward a nationalist ideal of homogeneity, Spain gained a significant measure of ethno-religious pluralism for the first time in its modern history. One clear sign of the new relationship was the inversion of the “imperial borders” of Ceuta and Melilla into “absorptive borders” in the 1960s. Moroccan migrants arrived in those cities by the thousands, turning the colonial migration paradigm upside down and engendering the kinds of new dynamism and new challenges that would engulf much of Europe over the coming decades.

### A Second Great Sorting?

Postcolonial nationalism fueled a mild ethnic cleansing of Morocco—although the scale was minor compared with the Iberian expulsions of the seventeenth century, and Morocco was spared the sustained period of violence that accompanied a similar process in Algeria. Nevertheless, ethno-religious coexistence became increasingly fraught. At the vanguard of this trend were Morocco’s Jews, for whom episodic persecution had been a way of life for some time. Almost all, some 250,000 in 1948, resided in the French Zone, where they had been the targets of anti-Semitic laws of the Vichy regime, while 14,000 lived in the north under Spanish administration.<sup>1</sup> Sultan Muhammad ben Yusef’s signature act of resistance during the war was to affirm his commitment to protect Jewish subjects, echoing his great grandfather’s declaration of 1864 (see Chapter 3). This had been a courageously moral gesture but also an absolutist one: Muhammad was asserting the sultan’s traditional role as protector of a minority community, not declaring Jews’ civic equality. While Istiqlal and the nationalist elite claimed to embrace Morocco’s Jewish heritage, and included some Jews in their ranks, these displays proved difficult to reconcile with decades of anticolonial nationalist mobilization and its frequent flirtations with anti-Semitism. Both Muhammad and the Istiqlal party blamed European colonizers and Zionists for dividing the Moroccan people along confessional lines. Moroccan Jews faced pressure to disavow Israel, and most indeed kept their distance from the Zionist movement. But the accumulated history of legal and physical segregation and colonial protections augured against the integration of Moroccan Jews into some emergent national community, and the difficulties were only compounded by the transnational bifurcating effect of Zionism and Arab nationalism.<sup>2</sup>

The advent of the state of Israel brought a fresh wave of anti-Jewish propaganda. In spring 1948, Spanish monitors observed this in Friday prayer sermons at various locations in northern Morocco. Jews were depicted as enemies of Islam, and Muslims hoping to reach heaven were urged to avoid all contact with them. A rumor circulated near Chefchaouen to the effect that the American president behind the creation of Israel was related to the Truchmans of Ksar el-Kebir. In Fez, an interfaith Passover custom in which Muslims brought small gifts to Jewish homes (an act traditionally reciprocated on Muslim feasts) was disrupted by protests.<sup>3</sup> In early June, violence in the French Zone claimed the lives of forty-three Moroccan Jews and a French official.<sup>4</sup> Over the next two years, the Jewish population of the Spanish Zone, never very large, nearly halved to 7,872.<sup>5</sup> The mood became particularly tense as the protectorate ended in March-April 1956. The French chief of security in Tangier observed: "Due to the current tensions between Israel and the Arab countries, an atmosphere of hostility on the part of the Moroccans against the Israelites has been observed for some time. There exists a certain fear among the latter, who are doing everything possible to expedite their wealth out of Morocco . . . as they do not take the assurances given by Rabat on this subject to be a sufficient guarantee."<sup>6</sup>

In light of the recent horrors in Europe, Morocco's Jews faced a nervous situation after 1956: not only were they targets of hostility, their ability to leave the country was also uncertain. The newly independent kingdom, seeking to establish bona fides to join the Arab League, suspended all relations and communications with Israel down to mail service. Moroccan Jews seeking exit visas were suspect, and as part of a campaign to thwart Israel's demographic growth, Moroccan postal officials burned Zionist pamphlets containing instructions on how to emigrate. Within weeks of the protectorate's end, police in Tangier reported an influx of Jews seeking visas to countries in the Western Hemisphere. Although it had no formal relations with Israel, Spain joined France and the United States in coordinating an evacuation operation. With the knowledge of only Franco's innermost circle, the Israeli secret service agency Mossad established a base at a secluded shoreline on Gibraltar Bay between La Línea and Algeciras. From there, agents contrived to smuggle some twenty-five thousand Moroccan Jews into Ceuta and Melilla, whence to Israel. Under American pressure, Moroccan authorities granted thousands of Jews temporary work authorizations "for Canada," often code for Israel. By 1961,

some 120,000 Jews had left Morocco one way or another, and of those who remained, nearly all would abandon their native country over the next three decades. Most went to Israel, France, and the Americas, although Franco's Spain would become the adopted home of nine thousand Jews by 1970.<sup>7</sup>

Europeans abandoned Morocco with similar urgency. Some half a million Europeans lived in Morocco as the protectorate ended. Of these, 138,000 were Spaniards, who formed a densely settled extraterritorial community in the cities and towns of northern Morocco. Many of their children had never known Spain, and some were political dissidents who had found a kind of semiexile in Spanish Morocco. Much like their French counterparts in Algeria, Spanish colonists vigorously opposed ending the protectorate, although no radical resistance emerged equivalent to the Organisation Armée Secrète (OAS) of Algeria. As the Spanish army withdrew in stages, most of the Spanish population retreated with it. Many gathered in Tangier hoping to acquire passage to the Americas, wishing to avoid returning to authoritarian Spain.<sup>8</sup> Others took advantage of subventions offered by the Spanish government to repatriate. For some, nostalgia for settler life in Spanish Morocco has been perpetuated in veterans' associations, while others have erased the experience of Morocco entirely from their family histories.<sup>9</sup> By 1970, some forty-three thousand Spaniards remained in Morocco, mainly Tangier and Casablanca, cities where they had found social and economic niches, and in many cases did not wish to return to a homeland changed by civil war.<sup>10</sup>

In Tangier, morale declined precipitously among the proud Spanish community as pillars of belonging disappeared. The end of direct air service to Madrid and the suspension of the Spanish postal and telegraph services in 1958 "made a real impression," reported the Spanish consul, who added, "The masses of Spaniards in Tangier . . . have only now become convinced of something they had never before believed or understood: that they find themselves in a foreign land."<sup>11</sup> Europeans and Americans lost their extraterritorial immunity to Moroccan law, a change that drove out a number of open gays among Tangier's fabled colony of artists and writers. By 1960, Tangier's international administration was gone, and its exceptional economic status with it. The Pariente Bank, Tangier's oldest, established by a Gibraltar Jewish family in 1844, closed its doors the same year. Capital fled and real estate values plummeted as Tangier lost its fiscal advantages under the new regime.<sup>12</sup> Spanish institutions like the

Grand Cervantes Theater, an art deco gem opened in 1913, languished and decayed. Tangier underwent sudden economic and demographic shock, although some things never changed. In 1963, the British Orientalist Rom Landau received a postcard from an exasperated former student, who wrote of Tangier, “There are too many tourists and people trying to sell you everything under the sun.”<sup>13</sup>

### Gibraltar Cast Adrift

Like Tangier, Gibraltar emerged dramatically changed by the decolonization era. Spanish nationalists had long believed that Gibraltarian identity was founded on a shallow “patriotism of privilege,” easily debased if advantages to residency in the colony could be eliminated. To this end, the Franco regime engaged a sustained effort throughout the 1950s and 1960s to cut Gibraltar out from regional trade and migration networks. But the Spanish tactic was premised on an outdated set of assumptions. As early as 1954, the Spanish consul in Gibraltar conveyed surprise on hearing, for the first time, “from the mouth of a Gibraltarian: ‘Gibraltar is every day more closely tied to the mother country, feeling more and more English and less and less colonial.’”<sup>14</sup> The collective experience of air assaults and evacuations in 1940–1941 may have set in motion the gradual process of forging a Gibraltarian identity in close fellowship with Britain. In any case, Anglicization gained momentum after the war, as the British pound replaced the struggling peseta as the Gibraltar’s main street currency, while the Spanish-language daily *El Calpense* lost its position as the town’s widest circulating daily by the 1960s.<sup>15</sup> Concerned over data indicating that only half the population spoke English, the colonial government engaged an active campaign to Anglicize public education. In addition to English language and school curriculum, postwar Gibraltar adopted British-style social insurance, sports, and popular and material culture. Restrictions on residency, first enacted in 1870, tightened further. An ordinance of 1955 guaranteed permanent residency only to British subjects born in Gibraltar or whose male ancestors had been born there, though some modification of this *jus sanguinis* statute was necessary to accommodate accession to the European Economic Community after 1973.<sup>16</sup>

This more active approach to fostering Anglo-Gibraltarian identity signaled a coming conflict with Spain. The large majority of the Spanish political class and general populace—including the anti-Franco exile

community—harbored a deep sense of victimhood and injustice over Gibraltar, well suited to the emerging language of the decolonization era. As the Franco regime emerged from isolation in the early 1950s, it gained the confidence to challenge British control of the Rock openly, if gingerly at first. As early as 1950, Franco suggested a regimen of shared sovereignty, though without great insistence. In 1952, Franco's brother Nicolás, Spain's ambassador to London, told *El Calpense* he felt “no rush” to address the Gibraltar dispute—a polite reminder, perhaps, that the issue would not soon be forgotten.<sup>17</sup> When the coronation of Elizabeth II in June 1953 occasioned a five-day celebration in Gibraltar, local dignitaries from the Spanish side did not attend. According to the Spanish consul Ángel de la Mora, the absence was sufficient to provoke “unease in public opinion” in the British town.<sup>18</sup> The regime's abandonment of decorum was completed two months later when the Falangist daily *Arriba* published an interview with Franco. In the interview, the Caudillo reiterated long-standing irredentist claims while also advancing the newer argument that Gibraltar's military value was obsolete and that “only the great British egotism and its attachment to the old imperial mentality” were impeding progress on the issue.<sup>19</sup> One week later, the *Gibraltar Chronicle* published an apparent rebuttal under the title “Proud to be British.”<sup>20</sup>

The politics—and even quasi-Marxist language—of colonial exploitation was slowly mobilized. In 1952, municipal leaders in La Línea launched a campaign to improve conditions for Spanish workers in Gibraltar. Mora, the Spanish consul, wrote a private letter to Gibraltar's mayor on behalf of a Spanish employee of the Gibraltar electric utility who lost his job as the result of a workplace injury. The letter presented an impassioned plea for “justice,” a term invoked repeatedly.<sup>21</sup> Residents of La Línea formed four-fifths of Gibraltar's wage earners but lacked the collective representation available to Gibraltar's small native-born workforce. A few months later, the mayor of La Línea persuaded the Franco regime's official trade union to establish the Sindicato de Obreros Españoles en Gibraltar (Trade Union of Spanish Workers in Gibraltar), dedicated to supporting the grievances of Spanish workers and offer insurance schemes based on what they called the “Spanish social model.” The day the union was established, 19 May 1952, six thousand men and two thousand women signed on, representing two-thirds of Spanish day laborers in Gibraltar and over half of the total Gibraltar workforce. Their main enticement to enroll was that Sindicato membership entitled workers to streamlined border processing and a more

favorable exchange rate on wages earned in British pounds. Yet their ambitions did not end there. Within a year, the union was staging strikes, the intensity of which occasionally surprised even the Spanish authorities. Whitehall instructed Gibraltar's authorities that the Spanish union had no legal standing on British territory and that all labor questions should be handled through diplomatic channels.<sup>22</sup> Nevertheless, the *Sindicato* vastly improved the position of Spanish workers with Gibraltar's employers, who agreed to threefold wage hikes and new occupational safety requirements over the next decade.<sup>23</sup>

The curious episode of the *Sindicato* spawned a new cause for Spain's National Movement, the amalgamation of the *Falange* and other nationalist groupings that had by then lost most of the influence it enjoyed during the early stages of the Franco regime. Throughout the first half of 1954, Falangist student demonstrators chanted slogans not only against the British monarch, but also against the Franco regime's allegedly supine acceptance of her upcoming visit. British property across Spain was damaged. In collusion with a Falangist cell, members of the Spanish trade union stole dynamite cartridges from a Gibraltar tunnel site, prompting concerns of a terrorist attack during the upcoming visit by the new queen in May 1954.<sup>24</sup> Police on both sides of the border cooperated to prevent violence during the event, but the Franco regime protested in other ways. It withdrew its diplomatic representation from Gibraltar and reinstated visa requirements for anyone—Spanish, Gibraltarian, British or otherwise—wishing to cross the border in either direction. The military governor of the Campo de Gibraltar, José Cuesta Monereo, commissioned a wall on the near side of the neutral zone that would permit the Spanish to regain the upper hand in controlling overland traffic in and out of the British colony.

The Spanish tactic of restricting movement in and out of Gibraltar targeted one key group of growing economic and political importance: British holiday makers. The sun-soaked Andalusian coastline stretching east from the British colony to Málaga and beyond—known as the *Costa del Sol*—was attracting considerable foreign investment. Until 1958, Gibraltar possessed the region's only runway suitable for long-range aircraft. Constructed for military purposes in 1939 by Spanish laborers, the Gibraltar airstrip was in use principally by British charter tour services, making it the main transit hub for some one hundred thousand British tourists per year to visit Andalusia—a figure poised to grow exponentially. This bonanza for Gibraltar's hotel and transport industries was threatened,

however, by the enlargement of the airstrip at Málaga. Joseph Gaggero, a major stakeholder in Gibraltar tourism and the son of a prominent local financier, lobbied the government in London to restrict direct flights by British aviators to Málaga. Gaggero argued that collaborating with tourism development on the Costa del Sol would hamper Gibraltar's own initiatives to develop hotels and casinos, all "for the sake of gaining a limited benefit for the British traveling public."<sup>25</sup> But a coalition of British tour operators and diplomats favoring an opening to Málaga won the day. Spurred by a goodwill gesture on the part of Franco to rescind visa requirements for British nationals, the British Civil Aviation Board authorized charter departures to Málaga.<sup>26</sup>

The aviation board's decision aligned with the British ambassador's claim that "now was the time to give less importance to what twenty-some thousand Gibraltarians wish for."<sup>27</sup> This posture also extended to contraband trade originating at Gibraltar. In October 1960, the Royal Navy declined to protect a smuggling vessel fired upon by Spanish coast guards in Gibraltar Bay.<sup>28</sup> But this conciliatory position did not contain any hint the Rock might be returned to Spain. To the extent that it would submit Gibraltar to the decolonization process, the British would oversee the evolution of Gibraltar's municipal council into a self-determining autonomous government.<sup>29</sup> This measure did not satisfy the Franco regime, but the Spaniards were reluctant for their own reasons to press the language of decolonization too far. Although the regime would successfully lobby the UN Special Committee on Decolonization to support the Spanish claim on Gibraltar, it was wary of conceding too much legitimacy to a body that was equally likely to support Moroccan claims on Ceuta, Melilla, and Spain's other remaining African possessions. Addressing the Special Committee, a Spanish diplomat called Gibraltar "a cancer on the Spanish economy"—a quotation that appeared two days later in the Moroccan nationalist daily *Nation Africaine* as proof of Spanish hypocrisy.<sup>30</sup>

By the end of 1964, the Franco regime returned to the most usable weapon at its disposal—the border. The La Línea customhouse refused to recognize the new British passports emblazoned with the Gibraltar seal, a sign of the town's increasing autonomy that Spain refused to accept. Although some sympathizers of Gibraltar called for a boycott of tourist travel to Spain, Whitehall would not encourage any sort of "campaign of dissuasion," which could harm British tour vendors, further escalate tensions, and in any case probably prove ineffective.<sup>31</sup> But an all-out assault

on Gibraltar's status as a regional economic driver posed risks for Spain as well, punishing cross-border communities long dependent on the British town. The workers of La Línea continued to value their connections to the Gibraltar labor market. A Bilbao chemical refinery promised long-term contracts and doubled wages to workers willing to relocate, but the offer attracted very few volunteers—even after local authorities assured them they would not lose their Gibraltar working papers.<sup>32</sup> In 1964, a speaker at a meeting of the Campo de Gibraltar Chamber of Commerce stated, “the decision to return Gibraltar to Spain would lead to the loss of 8,000 jobs,” an unpatriotic comment that earned those who published it a stern warning from government censors.<sup>33</sup> A more influential voice, the economist Juan Velarde Fuertes, depicted the Campo de Gibraltar as a backward, time-forgotten landscape that would starve without the British presence. He argued in 1970 that major state development aid would be required to wean the Campo from its dependency on Gibraltar.<sup>34</sup>

The Franco regime continued to seek methods, short of a blockade, to sever Gibraltar from all communication across the Strait. To avoid disturbing Spanish day laborers, who mainly crossed on foot, this began with a dramatic slowdown for automobile traffic at the La Línea customs station. Using the Rock as a transit hub now posed great inconvenience for the steady summer flow of motorists moving between Europe (especially France) and Morocco. Cars disembarking at Gibraltar were subjected to thirty-minute inspections, resulting in newsworthy queues. Gibraltar police could do little more than offer tea to delayed passengers, who in many cases had to stay overnight because the border station closed at dusk.<sup>35</sup> In January 1965, 873 cars crossed the La Línea border, approximately one-tenth the monthly total of one year earlier.<sup>36</sup> Gibraltar remained a tourist curiosity, but commercial tour operators stopped bringing Costa del Sol groups on day excursions there by 1967.<sup>37</sup> By the end of 1968, the Spanish government canceled ferry service between Algeciras and Gibraltar after 104 years of nearly continuous service. The Spanish public followed this news with hope and amazement—except for the tourist board, which regarded the piling on of inconveniences and delays as a “blow to our credibility as a hospitable nation.”<sup>38</sup>

In its effort to isolate Gibraltar, Madrid sought to enlist the Moroccans. In 1965, Franco's state holding company invested in a Moroccan venture to start a modern “roll-on, roll-off” car ferry service across the Strait. Although the region's most modern and most economical automobile ferry



had long been operated by a Gibraltar firm, the inconveniences of the border discouraged motorists from using it: the number of autos carried on the Tangier-Gibraltar ferry fell by more than 90 percent from 1964 to 1968. The new Hispano-Moroccan venture was poised to capture these motorists and divert them away from Gibraltar and directly onto a planned highway linking them to France and points north. The Spanish provided half the capital and, to sweeten the deal further, granted the Moroccan firm privileged access to other Spanish ports. Direct Spanish participation would empower the Franco regime to veto multiple attempts to restore direct maritime communication between Tangier and Gibraltar.<sup>39</sup> The Moroccan liner was christened the *Ibn Battuta* and began service in 1966. By 1968 the Hispano-Moroccan firm moved eighty thousand cars across the Strait while Gibraltar's once mighty *Mons Calpe* line moved fewer than five thousand.<sup>40</sup> The Spanish hoped this was the first step in a deeper collaboration. Text was drafted for an additional accord that would guarantee the two countries' mutual commitment to control of all passenger and freight transit across the Strait.<sup>41</sup> But the Moroccans greeted the second offer coolly. They did not wish to damage their relations with Britain or sign away an opportunity to replace Andalusia as Gibraltar's main supplier of meat, produce, and labor in the event of a Spanish overland blockade. The British town was already becoming an employer to Moroccans, mainly from the area around Tangier. Gibraltar's six resident Muslims in 1961 multiplied to 1,989 by the end of the decade, housed in new apartment blocks where Moroccan women and children could be seen in the town along with male laborers.<sup>42</sup> The Franco regime thus learned the limits of the anticolonial solidarity upon which the ideal of Hispano-Moroccan brotherhood long had been predicated.

Spanish tactics, effective at cutting the colony out of regional transport networks, did little to break Anglo-Gibraltarian resolve. In 1967, the British government consulted the Gibraltar citizenry on the question of handing over the Rock to Spain with a guarantee that its autonomous municipal government and free port status would be preserved. The results left no doubt as to the meaning of "self-determination": with a turnout of 95 percent, 12,138 voted to remain in the British sphere while 44 favored reverting to Spain.<sup>43</sup> Franco, meanwhile, became frustrated with tactical gains on issues like visa rules and ferry authorizations. As he told a confidant, "Spain desires sovereignty over the Rock, and anything other than that is a compromise that delays the realization of the national ideal."<sup>44</sup> The

dispute reached its climax in 1969. On 2 April the UN General Assembly called for an end to the colonial situation by October. Within two months, Great Britain unveiled a new constitutional arrangement converting what was by then called the City of Gibraltar into a British Overseas Territory and requiring any move to return it to Spain to be ratified by popular referendum. During the lead-up to the October deadline, one correspondent reported a palpable fear among Gibraltarians of a Spanish attack.<sup>45</sup> But in the end Spain's most brazen act would be to cut Gibraltar's overland telephone lines while it continued fruitlessly to pursue some kind of negotiated capitulation. The Spanish naval minister Pedro Nieto Antúnez succinctly captured his government's attitude: "What we have gained is already too much to permit us to stop now, to say nothing of retreating."<sup>46</sup> On 1 October 1969, Spain closed its land border altogether. The five thousand Spaniards still employed in Gibraltar were told they could no longer cross the frontier, and many of their compatriots—including a group of republican veterans exiled in Venezuela—sent donations to cover lost wages. Gibraltar fell into a subdued defiance, as streets lost much of their vitality and newspapers, missing their Spanish linotype operators, went unpublished. A few British flags appeared hanging from houses and one vendor sold postcards to commemorate the historic day.<sup>47</sup>

The Gibraltar recovery campaign had produced much heat but little light. When the blockade ended in 1982, Gibraltar remained in foreign hands, and in many ways was more foreign than ever, the old port-hinterland relationship between the colony and the Campo having given way to a new offshore economy. As the Royal Navy presence decreased, transshipping and offshore banking became the pillars, with Internet gambling operations and other forms of electronic commerce finding advantages there by the early twenty-first century.<sup>48</sup> An expanded industrial and passenger port at Algeciras served the Campo region. A cross-border relationship that had thrived for over a century, through shocks of revolution and war, came to an end.

### Absorptive Borders

As Gibraltar drifted away from the hinterland relationship cultivated over the preceding century, Ceuta and Melilla followed an opposite trajectory. The North African exclaves became vanguards of contemporary Spain's ethno-religious diversification. The arrival of a few hundred

Sephardic Jews and Hindus in the late nineteenth century had given a foretaste of what was to come. In 1937, Moroccan veterans of Franco's campaigns were granted *comunidad* status in Ceuta and Melilla, loosely equivalent to the Ottoman *dhimmi*, by which they gained an institutional framework for Islamic law, worship, cemeteries, baths, and education.<sup>49</sup> In the decade following Moroccan independence, Spain's North African cities took in thousands of Muslim residents—some thirteen thousand in Melilla and twenty-five thousand in Ceuta by 1970, one-third of the latter city's population. Some of these were soldiers in Spanish service and their families, while others came seeking economic opportunity. In 1962, Hassan II reissued the old sultanate's prohibition on Moroccan subjects residing in the Spanish cities, but this was hardly a deterrent. Thousands—on the order of one-tenth of each city's population—simply remained in the cities, outside both Moroccan and Spain law, without being naturalized for years or decades.<sup>50</sup>

As with Gibraltar, decolonization was the direct cause of Ceuta and Melilla's transformation. Once Tangier lost the economic privileges of an international city in 1960, new opportunities arose for Ceuta and Melilla. Already by the end of 1955, the Spanish Cortes approved the conversion of the two cities into "free commerce zones." The exclaves in some respects came to resemble new Gibaltars: sources of irredentist pique but also vital economic and social assets to their immediate neighbors. In 1964, just at the moment the Gibraltar-Spain border began to close, Ceuta and Melilla announced new openings. They granted visa-exempt daytime entry and work authorization to Moroccans residing in the respective neighboring districts of Tétouan and Nador—a regimen similar to those that Gibraltar had implemented for residents of the Campo de Gibraltar in 1873. Perhaps thirty thousand Moroccans have used these privileges every day for decades. These residents also enjoyed exemptions on customs duties, fueling a new and largely tolerated contraband economy that has served as an economic driver and informal pension system for widows willing to carry in goods brought from to them from afar.<sup>51</sup> Nador became a new La Línea. Founded in 1908 as a fledgling mining town nine miles to the south of Melilla, Nador grew from 30,000 inhabitants in 1960 to 140,000 by century's end.<sup>52</sup>

Spain's entry in the European Community in 1986 underscored the unusual position of Ceuta and Melilla. By granting special visa exemptions to residents of adjacent districts outside the European free-movement

(Schengen) zone, the exclaves became exceptions to the embedded principle of late twentieth-century European integration holding that as internal borders wither, external borders should become harder and more uniform. The thousands of Moroccans living in Ceuta and Melilla extralegally presented a separate issue. In preparation to integrate into Europe, the Spanish parliament mandated their expulsion in 1985, though after vigorous protests the Spanish government agreed to naturalize them *en masse*.<sup>53</sup> Ceuta and Melilla both remain militarized to a degree far out of proportion with their size, a historical legacy that has adapted to an ongoing struggle to contain illegal cross-border traffic in drugs, arms, and people. Street names ensure public memory of colonial officers and Falangists of the protectorate period. At the Playa de los Cárabos, Melilla's municipal beach named for the old Spanish word for Riffian corsair vessels, crowds drawn from at least three religious groups enjoy lazy afternoons on the sands as Spanish soldiers carry out training exercises along the maritime promenade.

### Legacies and Lessons

The vectors of power and circulation that defined the region since the mid-nineteenth century were unrecognizable by the latter decades of the twentieth. As Europeans departed from the Maghrib, and as Gibraltar severed from the regional network, the main currents of traffic were now generated by Africans. The Strait—and the Tangier-Algeciras automobile ferry that traverses it—became a major funnel for mass migration from all over the Maghrib to points throughout Western Europe. Spain also found itself in uncharted terrain, becoming substantially multiconfessional for the first time since the final Morisco expulsion of 1609.

Unlike in earlier times, religious minorities could not expect special legal regimes under royal protection. The nation-states of modern Europe, including Spain, have been largely averse to designating special categories of citizenship mediated by third parties such as religious institutions or outside powers. This tradition leaves little room to revive the old Ottoman practices of granting community status to certain religious minorities or recognizing extraterritorial protections. The *comunidad* status that Franco's government granted to Muslims in Ceuta and Melilla formed only a limited and temporary exception. Before the twentieth century, history provides few precedents for an Islamic diaspora living under non-Muslim rule. Even in medieval Iberia, the status of Muslims who remained in peace

as the Christians advanced was controversial among Islamic jurists.<sup>54</sup> In the postindependence era, the Moroccan sovereign returned to this convention, but his nominal prohibition on Moroccans' residency in Europe was furnished with significant loopholes allowing those residing abroad to return regularly and remit their wages to family back home.<sup>55</sup>

The inversion of the migratory flow, though it may follow economic logic, has given rise to one of Europe's greatest political challenges of the early twenty-first century. The dramatic uptick in labor and family migration of North African peoples to Europe has prompted multitudes of Internet pundits to invoke comparison to 711, the year marking the start of the Umayyad Caliphate's conquest of Iberia, either to extol or to warn of an imminent Islamic recovery of al-Andalus. Of course, unlike the Umayyads, modern migrants are neither mounted nor armed, and they willingly submit to a non-Muslim polity. But like other large migrations, they form a dense fabric into which contraband and revolutionary networks may be woven. They also may consign a portion of subsequent generations to suffer alienation from both their cultural homeland and their country of birth.

The open communication that Muslims in Europe now enjoy with the centers of the Islamic world also may invite historical analogy with the Morisco rebellion of 1568–1571. Staged from a mountain stronghold in Andalusia, this revolt against Christian rule coincided with a geopolitical clash between the Habsburg and Ottoman empires, prompting fears that the Muslim rebels of southern Spain were embedded agents of Islamic expansionism. But here, too, the comparison requires significant qualification, for these clashing "civilizations" were less restrained by other systems of order. The notion that national interest existed independently of religious considerations had few champions in Baroque Spain, while shari'ian rulers of northwest Africa seen collaborating with the Spanish deeply compromised their popular legitimacy. The possibility for Spanish and Moroccan governments to participate in a common cause was simply not available in the sixteenth century as it was at the end of the millennium. The nationalist regimes of twentieth-century Spain and Morocco, once liberated from the pressures of the modern imperial system, did not retreat anew behind a hostile civilizational frontier. Instead, for the first sustained period in their mutually constituted history, the two states functioned under a common international order.

The new borderland paradigm therefore must look not only to precedents in bygone eras, but also take account of more recent accretions. Competition among seaborne European empires for permanent bases in the western Mediterranean led to a revival of the trans-Gibraltar as a unified geopolitical space for the first time since the fifteenth century. From roughly 1850, the ongoing process of ordering the intensively diverse region raised ever more possibilities for both conflict and peaceful interaction. Imperial struggles spawned violence on both shores, especially during the era of the World Wars, but the order proved resilient. The withdrawal of European empires led to a reconfiguring of interethnic relations and political power in the region, but, stabilized by American presence, the Hispano-Moroccan space did not shatter. As a multilateral community of interests, it remained relevant into the new millennium as the imperial friction point shifted southward. The “deep border” of the western Sahel—where a new configuration of American, French, Chinese, and other imperial influence combined with transient jihadism and the environmental pressures of desertification and intensive farming—would come to form a common area of concern for the states of the western Mediterranean. In a relationship in some respects comparable to the United States vis-à-vis Mexico or the European Union vis-à-vis Turkey for much of this period, the stronger power’s preoccupations became a bargaining chip in the hands of the weaker one. North African states held the keys to the floodgates of trans-Mediterranean migration into Europe, as Moroccan negotiators frequently have reminded the Spanish. They also possessed the territory to harbor dissident actors, such as the Canary Islander and Basque separatist militias who found safe haven in Algeria in the 1980s.<sup>56</sup>

Over the long historical arc of the modern trans-Gibraltar borderland, an emerging sense of common regional interest has attenuated the stubborn power of ethno-religious identity and imperial tension. Chief among the shared concerns has been the struggle to control mobile threats to the sovereign order without undermining the circulation and exchange that has allowed that order to prosper. Cooperation and alignment of sovereign interests is a precondition for any regional community of states to manage mobility effectively. This forms the greatest lesson of the borderland born in the nineteenth century. Adapting it to a changing conjuncture of order and mobility poses the greatest continuing challenge.

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## Notes

### Introduction

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10. Francisco Garrido, *Bandidos, bandoleros, y contrabandistas en la Serranía de Ronda* (Málaga: Diputación de Málaga, 2001), 117–18; and Henk Driessen, *On the Spanish-Moroccan Frontier* (Oxford, UK: Berg, 1992).

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17. See the essays in José Antonio González Alcántud and Sandra Rojo, eds., *Andalusies: Antropología e historia cultural de una élite magrebí* (Madrid: Abada, 2015); and Calderwood, *Colonial al-Andalus*, 286–98.

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## Chapter 1

1. On the shortcomings of the bilateral territorial dispute, see Sasha D. Pack, “The Making of the Gibraltar-Spain Border: Cholera, Contraband, and Spatial Reordering, 1850–1873,” *Mediterranean Historical Review* 29, no. 1 (2014): 72–73.
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13. Juan Maestre Alfonso, *Hombre, tierra y dependencia en el Campo de Gibraltar* (Madrid: Editorial Ciencia Nueva, 1968), 24.

14. Sánchez Mantero, *Estudios sobre Gibraltar*, 64.

15. Solly Flood, “Permit System,” 66–68. An oblique charge of corruption among Spanish consular employees in Gibraltar was also leveled by the Spanish director general of customs in a letter to Minister of State Segismundo Moret, 8 October 1894, AMAE Tr. 453.

16. Sánchez Mantero, *Estudios sobre Gibraltar*, 60.

17. Vicente Blasco Ibáñez, *Crónicas de viaje* (1902; repr., Valencia: Ediciones Prometeo, 1967), 32.

18. “Apuntes confidenciales: El contrabando en el Campo de Gibraltar” (unpublished manuscript, Spanish Ministry of Treasury, 1887), 6, AMAE Tr. 453.

19. “Apuntes confidenciales,” 17.

20. “Apuntes confidenciales,” 5; Sánchez Mantero, *Estudios sobre Gibraltar*, 62.

21. Guy Thomson, *The Birth of Modern Politics in Spain: Democracy, Association, and Revolution, 1854–75* (Basingstoke, UK: Palgrave, 2010), 6–7; Garrido, *Bandidos*, 21, 117–18; Sánchez Mantero, *Estudios sobre Gibraltar*, 20; Charles J. Esdaile, *Fighting Napoleon:*

*Guerrillas, Bandits, and Adventurers in Spain, 1808–1814* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2004), 124–25; E. Inman Fox, “Estudio preliminar,” introduction to Julián Zugasti, *El bandolerismo* (Madrid: Alianza, 1982); Richard Stites, *The Four Horsemen: Riding to Liberty in Post-Napoleonic Europe* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2014), 28–120.

22. Quoted in William G. F. Jackson, *The Rock of the Gibraltarians: A History of Gibraltar* (Rutherford, NJ: Fairleigh Dickinson University Press), 236.

23. Enrique Montañés Primicia, *Grupos de presión y reformas arancelarias en el régimen liberal, 1820–1870* (Cádiz: Universidad de Cádiz, 2009), 138–49.

24. Ballesta Gómez, *La verja*, 174.

25. “Apuntes confidenciales,” 32.

26. “Apuntes confidenciales,” 6, 25–7.

27. Quoted in Jackson, *Rock of the Gibraltarians*, 236.

28. Gardiner to Lord Howden, British Minister Plenipotentiary in Madrid, 11 October 1851, AMAE Tr. 448, Exp. 2.

29. Grocott and Stockey, *Gibraltar*, 40.

30. This was reported by the French consul at Gibraltar, cited in Miège, *Le Maroc et l'Europe*, 2:269. Although there is no detail on the nature of these supplies, Gibraltar's merchants had sold armaments to Andalusia guerrillas during the Peninsular War and to the Algerian resistance to France in the 1840s.

31. Jackson, *Rock of the Gibraltarians*, 238.

32. “Governor Sir R. Gardner's Report on Gibraltar, 18 June 1853,” and “To the Merchants, Traders, and Inhabitants of the Garrison and Territory of Gibraltar,” 8 August 1853, in “Copy of the memorial presented to the Duke of Newcastle by a deputation from the merchants of Gibraltar; and copies or extracts of correspondence relating thereto, and of dispatches dated 21 March 1853, and 15 October 1853. Extracts of a dispatch of the Governor of Gibraltar, dated 18 June 1853,” HCP, Accounts and Papers, 1854 (130), 21, 89.

33. Gardiner to Duke of Newcastle, British Secretary of State for the Colonies, 3 November 1853, in “Copy of the memorial presented to the Duke of Newcastle,” 52.

34. “To the Merchants, Traders, and Inhabitants of the Garrison and Territory of Gibraltar,” in “Copy of the memorial presented to the Duke of Newcastle,” 22.

35. “Governor Sir R. Gardner's Report on Gibraltar, 18 June 1853,” 90.

36. Gardiner to E. de Calonge, Governor of Algeciras, 9 March 1852, AIMS-SDO, Caja 23, Número 9.

37. Quoted in Alfredo Ortega, “Comercio y contrabando en Gibraltar a mediados del siglo XIX: Informes de Joseph Antoine Limperani, cónsul de Francia,” *Almoraima* 16 (October 1996): 56.

38. “The humble Memorial of Carlos Esterico, a Native of Gibraltar,” in “Copy of the memorial presented to the Duke of Newcastle,” 49.

39. Gardiner to Howden, 8 September 1853, AMAE H-2484.

40. Gardiner explained as much in a letter to the Spanish consul in Gibraltar, Antonio Estéfani de Castro, 6 June 1853, AMAE Tr. 448, Exp. 2.

41. Joan Serrallonga, “Epidemias y historia social: Apuntes sobre el cólera en España, 1833–1865,” *Historia Social* 24 (1996): 7–21; Sawchuck, *Deadly Visitations*, 151.

42. Duke of Newcastle to Gardiner, 15 January 1854, in "Copy of the memorial presented to the Duke of Newcastle," 66.
43. Spanish government circular of 23 January 1849, quoted in Gardiner to John Francia, 24 October 1853, in "Copy of the memorial presented to the Duke of Newcastle," 28.
44. "Copy of the report made by Dr. Baly to the Secretary of State for the Colonies, upon the subject of quarantine at Gibraltar, under the date of the 6<sup>th</sup> day of May 1854," HCP, 1854–55 (161), 3–6, 11.
45. Jackson, *Rock of the Gibraltarians*, 241.
46. Miège, *Le Maroc et l'Europe*, 2:269, 280–286.
47. Newcastle to Gardiner, 15 January 1854, in "Copy of the memorial presented to the Duke of Newcastle," 61.
48. Juan Bautista Vilar, *La España del exilio: Las emigraciones políticas españolas en los siglos XIX y XX* (Madrid: Síntesis, 2006), 269; Thomson, *Birth of Modern Politics*, 15–41.
49. Josep Lluís Barona Vilar, *Salud, enfermedad y muerte: La sociedad valenciana entre 1833 y 1939* (Valencia: Institució Alfons el Magnànim, 2002), 291.
50. For example, rumors that the excise tax was repealed provoked a riot against carabinieri in Loja (Granada) in 1854 (see Thomson, *Birth of Modern Politics*, 26).
51. Quoted in Miège, *Le Maroc et l'Europe*, 2:270.
52. Ortega, "Comercio y contrabando," 55–56.
53. "Report of Dr. Baly on the Sanitary State of Gibraltar," 20 July 1854, HCP, 1854–1855 (274).
54. "Copy of the report made by Dr. Baly to the Secretary of State for the Colonies," 9–10; Gavin Milroy, *Quarantine as It Is, and as It Ought to Be* (London: Savill and Edwards, 1859), 10–12.
55. "Apuntes confidenciales," 44.
56. Report of Commanding General of Campo de Gibraltar, 29 June 1855, AMAE H-2484.
57. Fergusson to Martínez, 10 January 1856, AIMS-SDO, Caja 23, Número 13.
58. Martínez to O'Donnell, 13 January 1856, AIMS-SDO, Caja 23, Número 13.
59. Calderón to Spanish Ambassador in London, 10 October 1858; Malmesbury to Calderón, 15 March 1859, AHN 8548.
60. Codrington to Serrano Bedoya, 29 December 1859; Serrano Bedoya to Codrington, 2 January 1860, AIMS-SDO, Caja 23, Números 16–17.
61. Spanish Ministry of State, Political Bureau, "Proyecto de Nota sobre la reclamación relación al Campo neutral de Gibraltar," 14 March 1863, AHN 8548.
62. Sutherland, *Report on the Sanitary Condition of Gibraltar*, 31–33, 94–97; Constantine, *Community and Identity*, 196–207.
63. "Consecuencias que de presente y de futuro había de producir a España la solución presentada por el Teniente Coronel Quiroga y Camino más adecuado que en la cuestión de los límites conviene seguir," Algeciras, 12 April 1868, AIMS-SDO, Caja 23, Número 20.
64. Lord Napier of Magdala, Governor of Gibraltar, to Earl of Kimberley, 25 November 1882, in "Correspondence respecting the expulsion of certain Cuban refugees from Gibraltar," HCP, 1882 (C. 3452), 71–72; J. B. Vilar, *España del exilio*, 269.

65. "Apuntes confidenciales," 35.
66. "Apuntes confidenciales," 33.
67. Chester W. Clark, "Marshal Prim and the Question of the Cession of Gibraltar to Spain in 1870," *Hispanic-American Historical Review* 19, no. 3 (August 1939): 318–23.
68. Constantine, *Community and Identity*, 119–22.
69. Gibraltar Aliens Order-in-Council of 1873, Article 4, quoted in HCB, 1882 (C. 3452), 4.
70. Julián Zugasti, *El bandolerismo* (Madrid: Imprenta T. Fortanet, 1876), 148–49.
71. Testimony of Julius Vinales, Gibraltar Police Sargent, reported in Lord Napier of Magdala, Governor General of Gibraltar, to Foreign Office, 22 November 1882, in "Correspondence respecting the expulsion of certain Cuban refugees from Gibraltar," 37.
72. House of Commons Hansard, Commons Sitings of 12 and 30 March 1883, 3rd Ser., Vol. 277, and 11 May 1883, 3rd Ser., Vol. 279.
73. "Correspondence respecting the expulsion of certain Cuban refugees from Gibraltar," 68–69.
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75. *Gaceta de Madrid* 155 (4 June 1885).
76. Informe de la Sección Comercial del Ministerio de Estado, 15 April 1895, AMAE Tr. 453.
77. *Diario de La Línea*, 3 April 1891, cited in Ballesta Gómez, *La verja*, 206.
78. See several documents at AMAE H-2489 and Tr. 453.
79. Rosario de la Torre del Río, "Recogimiento, crisis del 98 y nueva orientación internacional (1875–1914)," in *La política exterior de España (1800–2003)*, ed. Juan Carlos Pereira (Barcelona: Ariel, 2003), 430–31.

## Chapter 2

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2. These are the words of Benito Pérez Galdos's elderly sage, Joaquín Ansúrez, in the 1905 novella, *Aita Tettauen* (Madrid: Librería y Casa Editorial Hernando, 1954), 30.
3. Quoted in Eric Calderwood, "The Beginning (or End) of Moroccan History: Historiography, Translation, and Modernity in Ahmad b. Khalid al-Nasiri and Clemente Cerdeira," *International Journal of Middle East Studies* 44 (2012): 404.
4. Mohammed Kenbib, "Les juifs de Tétouan entre la chronique et l'histoire," *Hespéris Tamuda* 24 (1986): 281.
5. See Juan Antonio Inarejos Muñoz, *Intervenciones coloniales y nacionalismo español: La política exterior de la Unión Liberal y sus vínculos con la Francia de Napoleón III (1856–1858)* (Madrid: Silex, 2010); Francesc A. Martínez Gallego, *Conservar progresando: La Unión Liberal (1856–1868)* (Valencia: Centro Francisco Tomás y Valiente, 2001), 117–64; Stephen Jacobson, "Imperial Ambitions in an Era of Decline: Micromilitarism and



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6. For thorough analysis of this phenomenon, see Alda Blanco, *Cultura y conciencia imperial en la España del siglo XIX* (Valencia: Publicacions de la Universitat de València, 2012), 27–47.

7. Antonio Cánovas del Castillo, *Apuntes para la historia de Marruecos* (1860; repr., Málaga: Algazara, 1991), 273. See also Azucena Pedraz, “El pensamiento africanista hasta 1883: Cánovas, Donoso y Costa,” *Anales de la Fundación Joaquín Costa* 11 (1994): 31–48; and Francisco Javier Martínez Antonio, *La otra guerra de África: Cólera y conflicto nacional en la olvidada expedición militar de Francia a Marruecos en 1859* (Ceuta: Archivo General de Ceuta, 2010).

8. Felipe Baque to Spanish Embassy of France, 30 October 1859, AMAE H-1510.

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10. Edmund Burke III, *Prelude to Protectorate in Morocco: Precolonial Protest and Resistance, 1860–1912* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1976), esp. 19–30; Mohammed Kenbib, “Structures traditionnelles et protections étrangères au Maroc au XIX<sup>ème</sup> siècle,” *Hespéris Tamuda* 22 (1984): 79–101; C. R. Pennell, *Morocco since 1830* (New York: New York University Press, 2000), 66–67.

11. C. R. Pennell, “The Geography of Piracy: Northern Morocco in the Mid-Nineteenth Century,” *Journal of Historical Geography* 20, no. 3 (1994): 272–82.

12. Jean-Louis Miège, *Le Maroc et l’Europe (1830–1894)* (Paris: Presses Universitaires de France, 1961), 2:202.

13. Jacinto López Tirado, *Islas Chafarinas: Un paseo por su historia* (Melilla: Asociación de Estudios Hispano-Africanos, 2002), 28–29.

14. Juan Bautista Vilar, *Los españoles en la Argelia francesa* (Murcia: CSIC, 1989), 45–52, 55, 77; Miège, *Le Maroc et l’Europe*, 2:209–10.

15. Spanish consul of Algiers to Secretary of State, 26 June 1862, AMAE Tr. 63, Exp. 1.

16. C. R. Pennell, “The Discovery of Morocco’s Northern Coast,” *British Journal of Middle Eastern Studies* 20, no. 2 (1993): 227.

17. Orfila to Buceta, 2 January 1855, AGMM R-149, Leg. 2, Carp. 22.

18. French consul of Tangier to Spanish Captain-General of Granada, 7 September 1855; Spanish Captain-General of Granada to Spanish Minister of War, 26 November 1855, AGMM R-149, Leg. 2, Carp. 22.

19. French General Command of Oran to Spanish consul of Oran, 2 August 1855; Buceta to Spanish vice-consul of Oran, 12 September 1855; Spanish Undersecretary of War to Captain-General of Granada, 28 September 1855, AGMM R-149, Leg. 2, Carp. 22.

20. Spanish Undersecretary of War to Captain General of Granada, 28 September 1855, AGMM R-149, Leg. 2, Carp. 22.

21. Pennell, “Geography of Piracy,” 279–80.



22. Captain General of Granada to Buceta, 10 February 1856 and 7 November 1856, AGMM R-149, Leg. 2, Carp. 23.
23. Spanish consul of Oran to Minister of State, 27 September 1859, AHN Estado 8357, reproduced in Juan Bautista Vilar, "Los orígenes de la inmigración laboral marroquí en la Argelia francesa: Los rifeños en Oranie (1855–1863)," *Cuadernos de Historia Moderna y Contemporánea* 6 (1985): 130–32.
24. Captain-General of Granada to Buceta, 21 November 1856, AGMM R-149, Leg. 2, Carp. 23.
25. Pasha of the Rif to Buceta, n.d., 1856, AGMM R-149, Leg. 2, Carp. 23. The text represents a "free interpretation" by the translator, to whom the letter was read aloud.
26. J. B. Vilar, "Los orígenes de la inmigración laboral marroquí," 122–24.
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31. Blanco del Valle to O'Donnell, 14 May 1859; Buceta to O'Donnell, 17 June 1859, AGMM R-149, Leg. 2, Carp. 26; Pennell, "Discovery of Morocco's Northern Coast," 230–31.
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33. Andrew Buchanan to Saturnino Calderón Collantes, Spanish Minister of State, 11 December 1858, AHN 8550.
34. Saturnino Calderón Collantes to Spanish Ambassador in Paris, 12 December 1858, AHN 8550.
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36. Martínez Antonio, *La otra guerra de África*, 83–89.
37. Kamel Kateb, "La gestion administrative de l'émigration algérienne vers les pays musulmans au lendemain de la conquête de l'Algérie (1830–1914)," *Population* 52, no. 2 (March–April 1997): 405–7; Julia A. Clancy-Smith, *Rebel and Saint: Muslim Notables, Populist Protest, Colonial Encounters (Algeria and Tunisia, 1800–1904)* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1994), 161–62; Louis Voinot, *Sur les traces glorieuses des pacifications du Maroc* (Paris: Charles-Lavauzelle & Cie., 1939).
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39. Général Derrécagaix, *Le Maréchal Pélissier, Duc de Malakoff* (Paris: Librairie Militaire R. Chapelot et Cie., 1911), 570.
40. Alengry, "Les relations franco-espagnoles," 127; Martínez Antonio, *La otra guerra de África*, 96.
41. Saïd Sayagh, *La France et les frontières maroco-algériennes (1873–1902)* (Paris: CNRS, 1986), 7–8, 100.

42. Joan Serrallonga, "La Guerra de África y el cólera (1859–60)," *Hispania: Revista Española de Historia* 58, no. 1 (1998): 254–55.
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58. Merry y Colom to Marqués de Miraflores, 19 November 1863, RAHFBC, 9/7428.
59. Merry y Colom to Marqués de Miraflores, 25 September 1863, RAHFBC, 9/7428.
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### Chapter 3

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4. José Diosdado to Spanish Ministry of State, 3 September 1865, AGA 15: 13.1/81–77; John Sutherland, *Report on the Sanitary Condition of Gibraltar with Reference to the Cholera Epidemic of 1865* (London: Eyre and Spottiswood, 1867), 29–30.

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6. A detailed account of this operation is given in Khalid Ben-Srhir, *Britain and Morocco during the Embassy of John Drummond Hay, 1845–1886*, trans. Malcolm Williams and Gavin Waterson (London: RoutledgeCurzon, 2005), 101–7.

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13. The Catholic novelist Joris-Karl Huysmans, paraphrased in Ruth Harris, *Dreyfus: Politics, Emotion, and the Scandal of the Century* (New York: Picador, 2010), 67.

14. Slightly differing accounts of this episode are given in “Nota del Subsecretario de Estado,” 17 November 1863, AHN Estado 8548; Sarah Leibovici, *Chronique des juifs de Tétouan (1860–1896)* (Paris: Maisonneuve 7 Larose, 1984), 55–61; and US Department of State, *Papers Relating to Foreign Affairs, Accompanying the Annual Message of the President to the Second Session of the Thirty-Eighth Congress* (Washington: US Government Printing Office, 1864), 4:414–27.

15. Marqués de Miraflores, Spanish Minister of State, to Juan Tomás Comyn, Spanish Ambassador in London, 3 November 1863, AHN Estado 8548. For a full account of the

legal case, see Jessica M. Marglin, *Across Legal Lines: Jews and Muslims in Modern Morocco* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2016), 127–32.

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17. Merry y Colom to Miraflores, 5 December 1863, AHN Estado 8548.
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19. “Memorandum que fué leído al Conde Russell,” AHN Estado 8548.
20. Merry y Colom to Miraflores, 10 December 1863, AHN Estado 8548.
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27. Quoted in Ben-Srhir, *Britain and Morocco*, 162.
28. The words of the contemporary historian Ahmad b. Khalid al-Nasiri, quoted in Ben-Srhir, *Britain and Morocco*, 163. On litigation patterns, see Marglin, *Across Legal Lines*, 125.
29. Wenceslao Ramírez de Villa-Urrutia, *Una embajada á Marruecos en 1882* (Madrid: Impresores de la Real Casa, 1883), 47; Kenbib, *Les protégés*, 34–35.
30. Miège, *Le Maroc et l’Europe*, 2:579–580.
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33. Communiqué from Government of Melilla, n.d. (October 1874?), AGMM R-155, Leg. 8, Carp. 4.
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## Chapter 4

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103. Keene, *My Life Story*, 13.
104. Howard-Vyse, *Winter in Tangier*, 140.
105. Betegón, *La Conferencia de Algeciras*, 296; Vaidon, *Tangier*, 122; Ceballos, *Historia de Tànger*, 250.
106. *Handbook for Travellers*, 397; Grocott, “Moneyed Class of Gibraltar,” 8.
107. Blasco Ibáñez, *Crónicas*, 47.
108. Jerez Perchet, *Impresiones de viaje*, 84.
109. Martinière, *Morocco*, 42–43.
110. *Handbook for Travellers*, 425; Harris, *African Sultan*, 26.
111. Budgett-Meakin, *Land of the Moors*, 84.
112. Jennifer Ballantine Perera, “Pablo Larios y el Royal Calpe Hunt como ejemplo de relaciones transfronterizas entre Gibraltar y España durante el siglo XIX y principios del XX,” *Historia Contemporánea* 41 (2010): 345–72.
113. Lutgardo López Zaragoza, *Guía de Gibraltar y su Campo* (Cádiz: J. Benítez, 1899), 113. A British map indicates an earlier bullring at the same site in 1859.

114. Philip Howell, "Sexuality, Sovereignty and Space: Law, Government and the Geography of Prostitution in Colonial Gibraltar," *Social History* 29, no. 4 (2004): 452–64.
115. Blasco Ibáñez, *Crónicas*, 46–47.
116. Miller, "Making Tangier Modern," 139.
117. *Le Petit Marocain*, 19 June 1925.
118. Martinière, *Morocco*, 15–16. The author only refers to "Jewesses," but it is likely that women from Spain, routinely taken for Moroccans, also took part in these shows.
119. Antonio Bravo Nieto, *La construcción de una ciudad europea en el contexto norteafricano* (Melilla: Ciudad Autónoma de Melilla, 1996), 57–58, 126; Vicente Moga Romero, *Las minas del Rif y Melilla, 1916: Las vetas de una mirada centenaria* (Melilla: Biblioteca de Melilla, 2009), 25; María del Carmen Burgos Goye, *Las migraciones en las ciudades de Ceuta y Melilla* (Granada: Comares, 2012), 13.
120. Antonio Bravo Nieto and Marcelo Bendahán, *Guía del modernismo en Melilla* (Amsterdam: Maestro Books, 2008); Francisco Saro Gandarillas, *Estudios melillenses* (Melilla: Ciudad Autónoma de Melilla, 1996), 122–126; Bravo Nieto, *La construcción de una ciudad europea*, 32, 293–94.
121. Carmelo Abellán García y Polo, *Memoria de la actuación del Excmo: Ayuntamiento de Melilla, durante los años 1942 al 1948* (Melilla: Ayuntamiento, 1949).
122. For example, Alfonso Merry del Val, "The Spanish Zones of Morocco," *Geographical Journal* 55, no. 5 (May 1920): 330.
123. Quoted in Arcos Cubero and García Sánchez, "Los orígenes del turismo malagueño," 43.
124. Pennell, *Morocco Since 1830*, 121–24.
125. Miller, *History*, 58–69.
126. Michaux Bellaire, "Quelques tribus," 93–94, 97.
127. Workman and Workman, *Sketches Awheel*, 129.
128. Harris, *Morocco That Was*, 246.
129. Blasco Ibáñez, *Crónicas*, 92.
130. For a more detailed account of the Raisuni episode, see Chapter 5.
131. Graham H. Stuart, *The International City of Tangier*, 2nd ed. (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 1955), 58.
132. José María Areilza and Fernando Castiella, *Reivindicaciones de España* (Madrid: Instituto de Estudios Políticos, 1941), 404.
133. Betegón, *La Conferencia de Algeciras*, 12–16.
134. Director General de la Compañía de Ferrocarriles Bobadilla-Algeciras to Dirección de la Compañía MZA, 24 January 1906, AHF D/652/1.
135. Dirección de la Compañía MZA to Director General de la Compañía de Ferrocarriles Bobadilla-Algeciras, 25 March 1907, AHF D/652/1.
136. Isidro Sepúlveda Muñoz, *Gibraltar: La razón y la fuerza* (Madrid: Alianza, 2004), 218–20.
137. Correspondence between Julio Domingo Bazán, Military Governor of the Campo de Gibraltar, to Manuel Allendesalazar, Spanish Minister of State, 3 March, 13 March, and 27 April 1909, AIMS-SDO, Caja 24, Número 2.

138. “Ley de Ferrocarriles secundarios y estratégicos de 26 de marzo de 1908,” esp. Articles 32–38. Although dated 1908, the full text of the law anomalously is given in the 1905 edition of *Disposiciones sobre obras públicas, ferrocarriles, y tranvías* (Oviedo: Imprenta de Flóres, Gusano y Cía., 1905), 297–304; also see Francisco Comín Comín, Pablo Martín Aceña, Miguel Muñoz Rubio, and Javier Vidal Olivares, *150 años de historia de los ferrocarriles españoles*, 2 vols. (Madrid: Anaya, 1998), 1:165.

## Chapter 5

1. The classic exposé of this phenomenon is Rafael García Casero, *Caciques y ladrones* (1908; repr., Madrid: Turner, 1979).

2. Emily Keene, *My Life Story* (London: Edward Arnold, 1911), 13–14, 60–61.

3. Frederick V. Parsons, *The Origins of the Morocco Question, 1880–1900* (London: Duckworth, 1976), 115–27, 222.

4. Ross E. Dunn, “The Bu Himara Rebellion in Northeast Morocco: Phase I,” *Middle Eastern Studies* 17, no. 1 (January 1981): 37; Gabriel Delbrel, *El pretendiente y sus “harkas” en el nordeste marroquí: Hechos relativos a la dominación del Roguï (1902–1908)* (Tangier: self-published, 1909), 5.

5. Douglas Porch, *The Conquest of Morocco* (New York: Knopf, 1983), 101; Ross E. Dunn, “Bu Himara’s European Connexion: The Commercial Relations of a Moroccan Warlord,” *Journal of African History* 21, no. 2 (1980): 252.

6. Delbrel, *El pretendiente y sus “harkas,”* 2.

7. Courtenay DeKalb, “The Mines of El Rif” (unpublished manuscript, [1924?]), AHS Series 3, Box 7, f. 71.

8. Jacobo Butler, “Yo negocié con el Roguï” (unpublished manuscript, [1957?]), 13–14, BNE MSS/22975.

9. Porch, *Conquest*, 96; Dunn, “Bu Himara’s European Connexion,” 237–39.

10. Keene, *My Life Story*, 13; Butler, “Yo negocié,” 84–85, 151–53.

11. Víctor Morales Lezcano, *El colonialismo hispano-francés en Marruecos (1898–1927)*, 2nd ed. (Granada: Diputación Provincial de Granada, 2002), esp. 40–58, 112.

12. Jean-Marc Delaunay, *Méfiance cordiale: Les relations franco-espagnoles de la fin du XIX<sup>e</sup> siècle à la Première Guerre Mondiale* (Paris: L’Harmattan, 2010), 2:191.

13. Courtenay DeKalb, “The Shadow of the Mogreb” (unpublished manuscript, 1924), 16, AHS Series 3, Box 6, f. 58. See also Pablo Díaz Morlán, *Empresarios, militares y políticos: La Compañía Española de Minas de Rif (1907–1967)* (Madrid: Marcial Pons, 2015), 78–79.

14. Morales Lezcano, *Colonialismo hispano-francés*, 40–59.

15. Rom Landau, *Moroccan Drama, 1900–1955* (London: Robert Hale, 1956), 57; Dunn, “Bu Himara’s European Connexion,” 248–49.

16. Butler, “Yo negocié,” 208–20. For a detailed account of negotiations between Bu Hmara and the mining firms, see Díaz Morlán, *Empresarios, militares y políticos*, 33–44.

17. The pretender of Selouane even used his counterfeit Makhzan seal to appoint Raisuni governor of the Jebala district of northwest Morocco. See Walter B. Harris, *Morocco That Was* (Boston: Small, Maynard, and Co., 1921), 212.

18. Jacques Ladreit de Lacharrière, *Le rêve d'Abd el Kerim: Équisse d'histoire marocaine* (Paris: J. Payronnet et Cie., 1925), 48.
19. The major biography of Raisuni is Rosita Forbes, *El Raisuni: Sultan of the Mountains* (London: Thornton Butterworth, 1924). It is based on direct interviews near the end of his life. A lengthy interpretation of Raisuni by an author who knew him well is found in Harris, *Morocco That Was*, 179–264. Another useful biographical source is I. S. Allouche, “Documents relatifs à Raisuni,” *Hespéris* 38 (1951): esp. 327–29.
20. See, for example, Porch, *Conquest*, 106–10.
21. Forbes, *El Raisuni*, 34.
22. Quoted in Carlos Seco Serrano, *La España de Alfonso XIII* (Madrid: Espasa Calpe, 2002), 322.
23. Josep Lluís Mateo Dieste, *La “hermandad” hispano-marroquí: Política y religión bajo el Protectorado español en Marruecos (1912–1956)* (Barcelona: Bellaterra, 2003), 127.
24. Quoted in Forbes, *El Raisuni*, 78.
25. Unknown representative of sultan in Fez to Muhammad At-Torres, Qadi of Tangier, 9 June 1906, reproduced in Allouche, “Documents,” 329.
26. Article 63, General Act of the Algeciras Conference relating to the Affairs of Morocco (Great Britain, Austria-Hungary, Belgium, France, Germany, Italy, Morocco, Netherlands, Portugal, Russia, Spain, Sweden, United States), signed at Algeciras, 7 April 1906.
27. Makhzan to At-Torres, 26 June 1906, and to Qadi of Tangier, 17 August 1906, reproduced in Allouche, “Documents,” 332, 334–35.
28. This term originated in the Kingdom of Italy during the 1880s in reference to the liberal government’s attempts to use generous budget allocations as a tool to convince radical strongmen of the south to accept the legitimacy of national institutions.
29. Makhzan to Raisuni, 25 June 1906, reproduced in Allouche, “Documents,” 330–31.
30. Makhzan to Qadi, 17 August 1906, reproduced in Allouche, “Documents,” 334–35.
31. Makhzan to Torres, 16 July 1906, reproduced in Allouche, “Documents,” 336–37.
32. Forbes, *El Raisuni*, 41.
33. Sebastian Balfour, *Deadly Embrace: Moroccan and the Road to the Spanish Civil War* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2002), 34.
34. Makhzan to Qadi, 26 June 1906, reproduced in Allouche, “Documents,” 333–34.
35. Makhzan to At-Torres, 18 July 1906, reproduced in Allouche, “Documents,” 339.
36. Makhzan to Treasury of Tanger, 2 November 1906, reproduced in Allouche, “Documents,” 342.
37. Makhzan to Raisuni, 21 November 1906, reproduced in Allouche, “Documents,” 351.
38. Allouche, “Documents,” 351.
39. Susan Gilson Miller, *A History of Modern Morocco* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2012), 60.
40. Morales Lezcano, *Colonialismo hispano-francés*, 101.
41. French military attaché in Madrid to French Ministry of War, 26 July 1911, SHD 7-N-1200.



42. “Traité conclu entre la France et le Maroc le 30 mars 1912, pour l’organisation du Protectorat français dans l’Empire chérifien,” *Bulletin officiel: Empire chérifien—Protectorat de la République française au Maroc* 1 (1 November 1912), 1.
43. “Convenio entre España y Francia fijando su situación respectiva en Marruecos,” 27 November 1912, AMAE Tr. 566.
44. Forbes, *El Raisuni*, 16.
45. Balfour, *Deadly Embrace*, 34–37.
46. Harris, *Morocco That Was*, 257–59.
47. On this discussion, see David S. Woolman, *Rebels in the Rif: Abd el Krim and the Rif Rebellion* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 1968), 55–57; Ramiro de Maeztu, “The International Policy of Spain,” *Foreign Affairs* 1, no. 2 (15 December 1922), 136–43.
48. Agustín de Luque, Spanish Minister of War, to Silvestre, quoted in Carlos Hernández Herrera and Tomás García Figueras, *Acción de España en Marruecos, 1492–1927* (Madrid: Imprenta Municipal, 1929), 1:183.
49. The words of Léon Geoffroy, the French ambassador to Madrid, quoted in Vincent Courcelle-Labrousse and Nicolas Marmié, *La guerre du Rif (Maroc 1921–1926)* (Paris: Éditions Points, 2008), 19.
50. “Rapport du Commissaire Résident Général, Commandant en Chef, sur l’action allemande au Maroc,” 4 July 1919, SHD 7-N-2126.
51. Seco Serrano, *La España de Alfonso XIII*, 322n35; Harris, *Morocco That Was*, 247–48; Walter B. Harris, *France, Spain, and the Rif* (London: Edward Arnold & Co., 1927), 100.
52. Boissonas, French Minister Plenipotentiary in Tangier, to Briand, 11 April 1918, SHD 7-N-2124.
53. French Chargé d’Affaires in Madrid to Briand, SHD 7-N-2125.
54. French Foreign Ministry to Spanish Embassy in Paris, 7 July 1919, SHD 7-N-2126.
55. This episode is described in Harris, *Morocco That Was*, 258.
56. Woolman, *Rebels in the Rif*, 70, 105–6, 163–65.
57. Manuel Domínguez Benavides, *El último pirata del Mediterráneo* (Barcelona: Tipografía Cosmos, 1934). In John Milius’s 1975 feature film *The Wind and the Lion*, a fictionalized Raisuni declares himself the “last of the Barbary pirates,” a label also applied by Barbara Tuchman, “Perdicaris Alive or Raisuni Dead,” *American Heritage* 10, no. 5 (August 1959), 18–21, 98–101.
58. Pere Ferrer Guasp, *Juan March: Los inicios de un imperio financiero (1920–1924)* (Palma de Majorca: Edicions Cort, 2001), 209.
59. Mercedes Cabrera, *Juan March (1880–1962)* (Madrid: Marcial Pons, 2011), 53–54.
60. Arturo Dixon, *Señor monopolio: La asombrosa vida de Juan March* (Barcelona: Planeta, 1986), 48–52; Cabrera, *Juan March*, 81.
61. Chief of Police of Barcelona to Spanish Director General of Security, 12 December 1923, AHN PRESID\_GOB\_PRIMO\_DE\_RIVERA, 254-1, Exp. 241.
62. Ferrer Guasp, *Juan March*, 222–24.
63. Cabrera, *Juan March*, 57–58; Ferrer Guasp, *Juan March*, 274.
64. Dixon, *Señor monopolio*, 26–27.



65. Ferrer Guasp, *Juan March*, 268.
66. Cabrera, *Juan March*, 83–85; Geoffrey T. Garratt, *Gibraltar and the Mediterranean* (London: Jonathan Cape, 1939), 190–91.
67. Carolina García Sanz, *La Primera Guerra Mundial en el Estrecho de Gibraltar: Economía, política y relaciones internacionales* (Madrid: CSIC, 2012), 238–40.
68. Carolina García Sanz, “Gibraltar y su campo: Un estudio regional de las relaciones internacionales de España durante la Primera Guerra Mundial,” *Hispania* 226 (2007): 583–84.
69. Dixon, *Juan March*, 42–43.

## Chapter 6

1. For a thorough study from this perspective, see Fernando García Sanz, *España en la Gran Guerra: Espías, diplomáticos y traficantes* (Barcelona: Galaxia Gutenberg, 2014).
2. See Francisco J. Romero Salvadó, “‘Fatal Neutrality’: Pragmatism or Capitulation? Spain’s Foreign Policy During the Great War,” *European History Quarterly* 33, no. 3 (2003): 291–315.
3. See Maximiliano Fuentes Codera, *España en la Primera Guerra Mundial* (Madrid: Akal, 2014); and Francisco J. Romero Salvadó, *Spain 1914–1918: Between War and Revolution* (London: Routledge, 1999). On the role of World War I in the ideological development of Abd el-Krim’s movement, see C. R. Pennell, *A Country with a Government and a Flag: The Rif War in Morocco, 1921–1926* (Boulder, CO: Middle East and North African Studies Press, 1986).
4. Carolina García Sanz, *La Primera Guerra Mundial en el Estrecho de Gibraltar: Economía, política y relaciones internacionales* (Madrid: CSIC, 2012), 290.
5. Salvador Bermúdez in 1920, quoted in José Luis Villanova, *El Protectorado de España en Marruecos: Organización política y territorial* (Barcelona: Edicions Bellaterra, 2004), 156.
6. Quoted in Carlos Seco Serrano, *La España de Alfonso XIII* (Madrid: Espasa Calpe, 2002), 340.
7. *Gaceta de Madrid* 219 (7 August 1914).
8. C. García Sanz, *La Primera Guerra Mundial*, 96.
9. Courtenay DeKalb, “The Shadow of the Mogreb” (unpublished manuscript, 1924), 9; Jean-Marc Delaunay, *Méfiance cordiale: Les relations franco-espagnoles de la fin du XIX<sup>e</sup> siècle à la Première Guerre Mondiale* (Paris: L’Harmattan, 2010), 2:168.
10. María José Vilar, “España, Alemania y las Islas Chafarinas en vísperas del replantamiento de la cuestión marroquí (1885–1902),” *Studia historia: Historia contemporánea* 24 (2006): 207–29. On the Canary episode, see Fernando Ory and Nicolás González Lemus, *Canarias y el Imperio alemán* (Puerto de la Cruz [Tenerife, Spain]: Ayuntamiento, 2002).
11. DeKalb, “Shadow of the Mogreb,” 14; Frederick V. Parsons, *The Origins of the Morocco Question, 1880–1900* (London: Duckworth, 1976), 521.
12. Albrecht Bartels, *Fighting the French in Morocco*, trans. H. J. Stenning (London: Alston Rivers, 1932), 40.
13. DeKalb, “Shadow of the Mogreb”; Seco Serrano, *La España de Alfonso XIII*, 67, 88.

14. French military attaché in Madrid to French Ministry of War, 26 July 1911, SHD 7-N-1200.
15. Gabriel Maura, "It Is Spanish Policy to Support England and France in the Crisis," *Deutsche Revue* 36 (August 1911), 139–43.
16. F. García Sanz, *España en la Gran Guerra*, 38.
17. C. García Sanz, *La Primera Guerra Mundial*, 156–57.
18. Antonio Maura, "Discurso en el Teatro Real de Madrid, 1915," quoted in *África a través del pensamiento español: De Isabel la Católica a Franco*, ed. Ángel Flores Morales (Madrid: Instituto de Estudios Africanos, 1949), 191.
19. C. García Sanz, *La Primera Guerra Mundial*, 355–64; Ángel Ballesteros, *Los contenidos de la política exterior de España* (Ceuta: Instituto de Estudios Ceutíes, 2005), 47–48.
20. "Rapport du Commissaire Résident Général, Commandant-en-Chef, sur l'Action allemande au Maroc," 4 July 1919, SHD 7-N-2126. Also see F. García Sanz, *España en la Gran Guerra*, 95; C. García Sanz, *La Primera Guerra Mundial*, 78, 95.
21. Rapport de Melilla, No. 104 A, "Au sujet des intérêts allemands dans la Zone espagnole du Maroc," [1919?], SHD 7-N-2126.
22. Rapport du Commissaire Résident Général, Commandant en Chef, sur l'action allemande au Maroc," 4 July 1919, 10, SHD 7-N-2126.
23. Lyautey to Minister of Foreign Affairs, 16 October 1914, SHD 7-N-2122.
24. C. García Sanz, *La Primera Guerra Mundial*, 186–88, 194, 244; "Rapport du Commissaire Résident Général, Commandant en Chef, sur l'action allemande au Maroc," 4 July 1919, 14, SHD 7-N-2126.
25. The Mannesmann brothers, Max and Reinhard, should not be confused with Mannesmann Brothers AG (founded 1931), also a mining firm, or with Dr. Otto Mannesmann, another German agent recruited to incite rebellion in North Africa.
26. Spanish Minister of War to Captain-General of Melilla, 1 March 1910; Captain-General of Melilla to Spanish Minister of War, 24 and 25 October 1910, AGMM R-797, Leg. 21, Carp. 21.
27. Rapport de Melilla, No. 104 A, SHD 7-N-2126.
28. Quoted in Jacques Ladreit de Lacharrière, *Le rêve d'Abd-el-Krim, esquisse d'histoire marocaine, nombreuses illustrations dans le texte* (Paris: J. Peyronnet, 1925), 84–85.
29. Seco Serrano, *La España de Alfonso XIII*, 332.
30. Rapport de Melilla, No. 104 A, SHD 7-N-2126; Sean McMeekin, *The Berlin-Baghdad Express: The Ottoman Empire and Germany's Bid for World Power* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2010), 89–90.
31. Note of 12 December 1917, SHD 7-N-2124.
32. DeKalb, "Shadow of the Mogreb," 17, AHS Series 3, Box 6, f. 58.
33. Courtenay DeKalb, "The Mines of El Rif" (unpublished manuscript, [1924?]), 12, AHS Series 3, Box 7, f. 71.
34. Henrys, "Situation politique du Maroc à la date du 29 décembre 1915," SHD 7-N-2124.
35. French vice-consul of Larache to Lyautey, 7 October 1914, SHD 7-N-2122.

36. Vincent Courcelle-Labrousse and Nicolas Marmié, *La guerre du Rif (Maroc 1921–1926)* (Paris: Éditions Points, 2008), 29–30; María Rosa de Madariaga, *Abd el-Krim el Jatabi: La lucha por la independencia* (Madrid: Alianza, 2009), 128.
37. Geoffray to Minister of Foreign Affairs, 17 August 1914, SHD 7-N-2122.
38. Lyautey to Minister of Foreign Affairs, 28 September 1914, SHD 7-N-2122.
39. Lyautey to Minister of Foreign Affairs, 14 October 1914 and 23 December 1914, SHD 7-N-2122.
40. Rapport du Commissaire Résident Général, Commandant en Chef, sur l'action allemande au Maroc," 4 July 1919, SHD 7-N-2126.
41. Lyautey to Minister of Foreign Affairs, 28 September 1913, SHD 7-N-2122. In 1918, a Transatlántica ship would be detained in Gibraltar after the British Admiralty, acting on intelligence reports, discovered two German passengers of military age aboard.
42. "Rapport du Commissaire Résident Général, Commandant en Chef, sur l'action allemande au Maroc," 4 July 1919, SHD 7-N-2126.
43. Madariaga, *Abd el-Krim el Jatabi*, 125.
44. Michaux-Bellaire, of French delegation in Tangier, 12 December 1921, SHD 7-N-2126.
45. "Rapport du Commissaire Résident Général, Commandant en Chef, sur l'action allemande au Maroc," 4 July 1919, SHD 7-N-2126.
46. Bartels, *Fighting the French*, 89, 245.
47. "Suite du rapport sur Regensratz," 15 April 1915, SHD 7-N-2122.
48. Madariaga, *Abd el-Krim el Jatabi*, 121–22.
49. Henrys, "Situation politique au Maroc à la date du 29 décembre 1915," SHD 7-N-2124.
50. "Rapport du Commissaire Résident Général, Commandant en Chef, sur l'action allemande au Maroc," 4 July 1919, SHD 7-N-2126.
51. Rosita Forbes, *El Raisuni: Sultan of the Mountains* (London: Thornton Butterworth, 1924), 190.
52. Saint-Aulaire, Deputy Resident General of France in Rabat, to Aristide Briand, French Foreign Minister, 27 February 1916, SHD 7-N-2124.
53. Michaux-Bellaire, of French delegation in Tangier, 12 December 1921, SHD 7-N-2126.
54. Lyautey to Briand, 6 April 1916; Colonel Valentin to Lyautey, 7 March 1916, SHD 7-N-2124.
55. Walter B. Harris, *France, Spain, and the Rif* (London: Edward Arnold, 1927), 60–61.
56. Madariaga, *Abd el-Krim el Jatabi*, 125.
57. Lyautey to Delcassé, 14 October 1914, SHD 7-N-2122.
58. French Director of Foreign and Commercial Affairs, Africa Section, to Paul Painlevé, French Minister of War, 4 April 1917, SHD 7-N-2124.
59. Lyautey to Delcassé, 14 October 1914, SHD 7-N-2122.
60. Lyautey to Delcassé, 28 September 1914, SHD 7-N-2122.
61. C. García Sanz, *La Primera Guerra Mundial*, 367–68. Jordana should not be confused with his son, Francisco Gómez-Jordana Sousa, who would also serve as Spain's high commissioner in Tétouan and later as foreign minister.

62. Luis Aizpuru, Commanding General of Melilla to Jordana, 17 September 1915, AHMM, R-738, Leg. 2, Carp. 2.
63. Quoted in Madariaga, *Abd el-Krim el Jatabi*, 134.
64. Aizpuru to Jordana, 17 Sept 1915, AHMM, R-738, Leg. 2, Carp. 2.
65. Count of Saint-Aulaire, official in French Foreign Ministry, to Adolphe Messimy, French Minister of War, 30 July 1915, SHD 5-N-61.
66. "Situation politique au Maroc à la date du 29 décembre 1915," and Lyautey to Briand, 24 February 1916, SHD 7-N-2124.
67. Jordana to Salvador Bermúdez de Castro, Marqués de Lerma, Spanish Minister of State, 9 October 1915, AGA 15: 13.1/81-12.
68. Lyautey to Briand, 24 February 1916, SHD 7-N-2124.
69. French Residency in Rabat to French Foreign Ministry, 7 July 1915. SHD 5-N-61.
70. Lyautey to Delcassé, 23 December 1914, SHD 7-N-2122.
71. Bartels, *Fighting the French*, 123, 160.
72. According to the British journalist Walter Harris, Abd el-Malek received six hundred Mauser rifles and much ammunition at Ajdir on 28 June 1916 (cited in Ladreit de Lacharrière, p. 100).
73. "Rapport du Commissaire Résident Général, Commandant en Chef, sur l'action allemande au Maroc," 4 July 1919, SHD 7-N-2126; Madariaga, *Abd el-Krim el Jatabi*, 125-26.
74. AGA 15: 13.1/81-1781; Madariaga, *Abd el-Krim el Jatabi*, 182.

## Chapter 7

1. Cándido Pardo González, *Al servicio de la verdad: Las Juntas de Defensas Militares, el Protectorado de Marruecos y Alhucemas, la Dictadura del segundo Marqués de Estella: Aportaciones para un estudio crítico de la Dictadura del General Primo de Rivera* (Madrid: Rehya, 1930), 1:105.
2. María Rosa de Madariaga, *Abd el-Krim el Jatabi: La lucha por la independencia* (Madrid: Alianza, 2009), 20.
3. 'Alal al-Fasi, *The Independence Movements in Arab North Africa*, trans. Hazem Zaki Nuseibeh (New York: Octagon Books, 1970), 95.
4. Enric Prat de la Riba, quoted in Eloy Martín Corrales, "El nacionalismo catalán y la expansión colonial española en Marruecos: De la Guerra de África a la entrada en vigor del Protectorado (1860-1912)," in *Marruecos y el colonialismo español: De la Guerra de África a la "penetración pacífica,"* ed. Eloy Martín Corrales (Barcelona: Edicions Bellaterra, 2002), 191, 204.
5. Abderrahmane El-Moudden, "Résistance anticoloniale et emergence d'une structure politique étatique moderne: Bin 'Abd al-Karim et Mustafa Kemal," in *Réforme de l'État et réformismes au Maghreb (XIXe-XXe siècles)*, ed. Odile Moreau (Paris: L'Harmattan, 2009), 150-55.
6. C. R. Pennell, *A Country with a Government and a Flag: The Rif War in Morocco, 1921-1926* (Boulder, CO: Middle East and North African Studies Press, 1986).
7. María Rosa de Madariaga, *España y el Rif: Crónica de una historia casi olvidada*, 3rd ed. (Melilla: Biblioteca de Melilla, 2008), 572-73.

8. Quoted in Vincent Courcelle-Labrousse and Nicolas Marmié, *La guerre du Rif (Maroc 1921–1926)* (Paris: Éditions Points, 2008), 132.
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## Chapter 8

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## Chapter 9

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## Chapter 10

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## Chapter 11

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“Sasha D. Pack’s highly original study of this critical Mediterranean chokepoint represents a masterpiece in the field of border studies. Integrating local and regional scales of analyses with grand imperial and global narratives of modernity, *The Deepest Border* advances novel theoretical arguments.”

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In the mid-nineteenth century, as European navies learned to neutralize piracy, new patterns of circulation and settlement became possible in the western Mediterranean. *The Deepest Border* tells the story of how a borderland society formed around the Strait of Gibraltar, bringing historical perspective to one of the contemporary world’s critical border zones.

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Cover design: George Kirkpatrick  
Cover illustration: Chart of the Western Sheet of the  
Mediterranean Sea, Subchaser Archives.