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Lyautey l'Européen: metropolitan ambitions, imperial designs and French rule in Morocco (1912-25).

Abstract.

Much of the scholarship on Marshal Hubert Lyautey has portrayed his method of conquest and rule in Morocco as a conspicuous manifestation of his previous colonial experience, neglecting other equally revealing features of his administration, such as his assumptions, expressions of intent and responses to perceived European ambitions in the Western Mediterranean. Lyautey's lasting preconceptions about British and Spanish aspirations and capabilities, far from being marginal curiosities, became key tenets of policy and modus operandi in the French Protectorate. His over-simplified notions of imperial legitimacy, national traits and territorial priorities, although comparatively innocuous during the early years of French domination, would come to the fore during the Rif War (1921-1926). Such ~~apprehensions-perceptions~~ became increasingly difficult to reconcile with [the](#) international agreements of 1912, and could explain Lyautey's resistance and hesitation in the face of changing scenarios of the Rifian conflict and, eventually, his final fall from grace.

Lyautey l'Européen: metropolitan ambitions, imperial designs and French rule in Morocco (1912-25).

As a tribute to the 'admiration nostalgique' that Lyautey's term as Resident-~~General~~ still evokes, recent years have seen [the publication of](#) a number of books and articles on the French Protectorate ~~and~~ dealing with lesser-known aspects of Lyautey's

leadership and personality.¹ With such continuing interest and comprehensive research, it might be seem redundant to suggest that there are any facets of Lyautey's colonial tenure that need further examination, ~~as most of them have been thoroughly researched~~.² However, it is argued here, ~~however~~, that his period of residence may benefit from further discussion, in particular concerning the influence of Lyautey's background on his Moroccan policies. There seems to be a certain imbalance in the evaluation of Lyautey's formative years and their translation into colonial practice, notably as to his perception of imperial designs in the Western Mediterranean. The historical literature has traditionally contended that Lyautey's policies, managerial skills and administrative abilities were chiefly shaped by his previous overseas experience, the years in Indochina and Madagascar under Gallieni's influence and his time in office in Algeria, rather than by his knowledge and awareness of European ambitions in the Straits of Gibraltar. The following is a characteristic description of his developing ideas: 'ce fut au cours [des] années indochinoises, malgaches et algériennes que se forgea un destin et que se mirent misent en place les idées qui soutirèrent soutiement l'action ultérieure de Lyautey au Maroc'.³ This article claims that the image of the 'colonial Lyautey' (Lyautey l'Africain) has thus arguably displaced the 'European Lyautey' (Lyautey l'Européen) and, in doing so, has limited our understanding of controversial elements of his rule.⁴

In order to redress this perceived imbalance, this article focuses on Lyautey's observations on British and Spanish endeavours in the Western Mediterranean. It argues that the French Resident-General entertained clear notions of European priorities in Morocco and which, in some cases, led to the emergence of held his deep-rooted opinions, emerging from such understanding. ~~Such views were not occasional~~

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~~afterthoughts in an otherwise idiosyncratic style of command; rather, The way in which~~ Lyautey's policies ~~reflected~~ ~~responded to~~ such interpretations and ~~prejudices~~ ~~misgivings~~, ultimately defining relations between the colonial partners in the Protectorate. While Lyautey's African background is obviously an important factor, ~~an understanding of~~ his vision of ~~the~~ imperial appetites ~~of other European powers~~ may provide insights in understanding French protective strategies in Morocco and enabling us to re-contextualise Lyautey's final fall from grace.⁵

I

From his early military career, Lyautey expressed views that reflected a more general mind-set, ~~in which featuring~~ claims of the superiority of Western civilisation, the white man's duties to uplift 'semi-barbarian' peoples and the participation of what were perceived as backward races in the universal destiny of mankind ~~abounded~~.⁶ In this, Lyautey was probably no different to other officers who entered the military academy in Saint-Cyr, proceeded to the Military Staff School in Paris and spent the best part of their youth languishing in forgotten posts in provincial France. His royalist sympathies, aristocratic leanings and religious background were likely to have nourished typical Eurocentric ideas which would ~~become more defined~~ ~~acquire more defined contours~~ after a brief interlude in Algeria and a prolonged stay in colonial Indochina. It has been convincingly claimed that Lyautey shared *fin-de-siècle* concerns over France's 'decadence' and 'ruin', and became a convinced imperialist precisely to rescue her from such a fate.⁷ His initial considerations about the 'social role of the officer' in the metropolis—a likely nod to early military mentors he met in Paris and literary circles he frequented in Saint-Germain-en-Laye—were, therefore, reassigned by Lyautey to the context of the colonies, where France would recover her

own true self, as Lyautey had discovered his.⁸ Later assignments in Madagascar would lend new life to these aspirations, widely shared by other French colonialists. By the end of the nineteenth century, ~~general initial~~ admiration for British imperial endeavours —‘it is from her that we have to learn everything’, admitted a young Lyautey— had given way to the realisation that Britain was a main contender for supremacy in Africa.⁹ His experience in Madagascar ~~under Gallieni’s command p~~ provided Lyautey with further impetus to revive France’s imperial fortunes. There, ~~under Gallieni’s command, an inspired and a~~ distinct style of colonial rule, fit to match British contention for global dominance, evolved. Lyautey found ~~revelations~~ ~~inspiration~~ to equip France for the struggle with her ‘eternal and inexorable enemy’.¹⁰ As is frequently emphasized, Gallieni became for him a ‘most efficacious stimulator of energy’, ~~comparing~~ favourably ~~comparing~~ with Anglo-Saxon pioneers: ‘Madagascar versus South Africa. Gallieni versus Cecil Rhodes’, Lyautey exclaimed: ‘what a grand match.’¹¹

~~France’s~~ Colonial aspirations, also voiced in Paris by distinguished colonialist figures like Eugène Étienne or Charles Jonnart, would converge on North Africa, a preferred area of French expansion at the turn of the century, ~~in whose deserts~~ ~~Lyautey would serve after his malgache experience~~. By then already a public figure in the colonial milieu, ~~after his malgache experience~~, Lyautey was to find in ~~the deserts~~ ~~of~~ Algeria the testing ground for the ‘colonial role of the Army’ that he had envisaged in 1899. Soon after arriving at the disputed Algerian-Moroccan~~e~~ border, first as an overseer (1903) and later as High Commissioner (1908), Lyautey rapidly identified the Maghreb as the ~~best~~ sphere par excellence for ~~rejuvenating developing~~ France’s energy, ~~rejuvenation~~ and fecundity, declaring that North Africa would be for France

what the Far West was for America.¹² He was not alone in advocating a ‘colonial therapy’ for the motherland; this was also defended in Paris by influential social critics such as Eugène-Melchior de Vogué and colonial economists like Joseph Chailley-Bert, both acquaintances of Lyautey. Nor was he alone in trying to counter an emerging ‘colonial anti-militarism’ in metropolitan France in the 1890s.¹³ Lyautey was particularly perceptive, however, of the ambitions of other European powers in the North of Africa, an awareness which has received limited attention in the scholarship. Historians have often referred to the fact that ~~The influence of these representations in later years, however, has received limited scrutiny. The fact that~~ the Algerian-Moroccan border served as ‘fornaise’ and ‘final proving grounds’ for Lyautey where he established fruitful contacts with Algerian tribes, learnt to deal with French politicians and ministers —and ignored them when circumstances required— and gained the support ~~of has been already acknowledged by historians, who have also mentioned his instructive contacts with Algerian tribes and the support he received from the colonial lobby led by Eugène Étienne, which was~~ of such consequence in Lyautey’s future.¹⁴

~~Historians have already acknowledged the fact that the Algeria-Morocco border served as ‘fornaise’ and ‘final proving grounds’ for Lyautey, where he learnt to deal with politicians and ministers —and ignored them when circumstances required— and have also mentioned his instructive contacts with Algerian tribes and the support he received from the colonial lobby led by Eugène Étienne, of such consequence in Lyautey’s future.~~¹⁵

~~Likewise, It has also been argued that~~ the Moroccan crises of 1905 and 1911 ~~and deepened~~ Lyautey’s conviction that France would eventually enter Morocco ~~would be eventually entered~~ by force (‘neither Germany nor Europe would have

struggle with Britain, Morocco would become the Egypt of France.¹⁶ However, the influence of such later Further diplomatic pronouncements by Lyautey, however, space in scholars' accounts of his administration this period.¹⁷

To some extent, this is understandable because Morocco was neither a critical site of the inter-imperial contest in the decade between the 2nd Moroccan crisis (1911) and the Rif War (1921-1926), nor were Lyautey's views, as French Resident General in Morocco, uncommon. The view that It was hardly a controversial opinion that British interests lay largely in maintaining a favourable status quo in the Straits of Gibraltar, which would to ensure the protection of imperial trade routes, was hardly an a controversial opinion likely to create much controversy; neither was the view or that Spain's territorial acquisitions in Morocco reflected the country's secular decline and her irrelevance as colonial competitor. Germany's unhampered appetite for trade, despite setbacks suffered in the Algeiras Conference (1906), was also a commonly acknowledged factor on the Moroccan stage, as were the trade rights in the city of Tangier, pursued by other European powers.¹⁸ Most of these views enjoyed wide currency at the Quai d'Orsay and in other metropolitan political and military circles.¹⁹ However, in Lyautey's writings, such apparently customary considerations were coloured by distinctive viewpoints which rendered the national traits of European powers in a problematic light. Like many of his countrymen, Lyautey shared an instinctive dislike for Britain and Spain as Moroccan consorts, but in his case, unlike most of them, his these prejudices had a coherent, historical dimension to them, which would allow him to justify them more powerfully. In writings and pronouncements frequently overlooked by scholars, Lyautey took great pains to describe what he understood as the essential characteristics credentials of the British and Spanish

‘colonial spirit’ and to outline the reasons why their national disparities would prove problematic in the Moroccan context.²⁰

Two main conclusions can be drawn from Lyautey’s early writings on the matter: firstly, that Britain and Spain were irremediably handicapped by shortcomings in national sensitivity and responsiveness, which would prevent them from fully understanding the Protectorate; secondly, that France, on the other hand, was uniquely qualified to carry out a civilising mission in Morocco thanks to the ‘caractère d’universalité du génie français et à une expérience islamique toujours en éveil’.²¹

The logical conclusion of this was to argue for exclusive legitimacy for France to intervene in Morocco, an assertion likely to have damaging deleterious effects on the relationships among the colonial partners.

Some references may help to illustrate these thoughts. Comparing the situation of Britain in Egypt with that of France in Morocco, a frequent benchmark for him, Lyautey promptly concluded that both scenarios were very different: ‘La civilisation nous doit beaucoup, et depuis longtemps, dans la vallée du Nil’, he argued, ‘tandis que l’Empire Chérifien n’a jamais été qu’un terrain de négoce pour la Grande-Bretagne’.²² Britain’s colonial interests in Morocco were exclusively based on trade and economic considerations, traditional values which still governed the entire British Empire in an effective manner, but were hardly suitable or adequate for a proud nation such as Morocco. ‘Leur dédain pour les indigènes, leur confiance dans la Toute Puissance de la Grande Bretagne’, he confided to French Foreign minister Delcassé, ‘les rendent inaptes à manier au manière des forces morales de l’Islam’. The differences between Britain’s mercantilist designs and France’s sophisticated appreciation of ‘l’âme musulmane’, frequently examined by Lyautey, led him to

conclude that ‘nous disposons d’un personnel qui y apporte à la fois une vocation et une adaptation infiniment supérieure’.²³ Similar considerations applied to France’s other colonial neighbour. The inability of Spanish officials to adapt to a ‘civilising’ mission in North Africa corroborated this view. Two factors were of paramount importance. First, ‘la souci de la susceptibilité espagnole’, which prevented Spanish authorities from recognising obvious failings and adopting more suitable colonial strategies; and secondly, their contempt for the native population, which delayed the realisation that Morocco was a proud nation with an ancient history and long-lasting political institutions.²⁴ According to the French Resident, Spanish representatives appeared to interpret their presence in Morocco in the light of a perpetual and continuing struggle with a historical enemy, treating the native population with a haughtiness improper in a protecting nation.²⁵ Paralleling the British case, Thus, Lyautey thought that Spain’s colonisation would be ineffectual and difficult to accomplish; he thought their colonial methods were brutal and outdated.²⁶ It is interesting to notice that Lyautey’s views were again at variance with those of other observers, who interpreted the blatant flaws of the Spanish administration as a result of the country’s limited resources and outdated institutions, rather than the product of a supposedly inevitable historical confrontation with Islam or an expression of inherent spiritual failings. In this, as always, Lyautey remained original and highly opinionated.²⁷

To Lyautey, these characterisations of British and Spanish endeavours stood in marked contrast with his own vision. Lyautey’s chauvinism and arrogance, frequently noted by no strangers to his biographers, adopted on this occasion a comparative character.²⁸ To him, the French appeared to be particularly gifted for the task because of their North African experience, and also uniquely equipped to understand the

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‘Muslim soul’ and to inspire the confidence and appreciation of the Sultan’s subjects.

Their secret, according to Lyautey, lay in responding in accordance with a special sensitivity, an ability ‘qui ne corresponde à aucun état d’âme, ni à aucune disposition ou conception chez nos interlocuteurs’ (meaning Britain). ~~A)~~ Lyautey also regarded the French officials’ behaviour, keeping ‘la politique de tradition et de respect’ always firmly in mind, ~~C)~~ as the opposite of the intolerance and arrogance so often displayed by Spanish authorities. ~~B) keeping instead ‘la politique de tradition et de respect’ always firmly in mind.~~ Thanks to a sophisticated appreciation and intuition that made them superior to representatives of other European powers, Lyautey inferred, French officials were uniquely endowed to carry out their civilising mission in Morocco.²⁹

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As has been mentioned, Lyautey was not alone among his contemporaries in expressing distrust towards Britain or Spain. His originality lay in providing historical and long-reaching perspectives to justify his biased views, which gave them a rather durable and fixed unchangeable character. Such pre-conceptions not only reaffirmed the suitability of French rule in Morocco, but they seemed to identify it as the only possible option and inescapable way forward. Based on peaceful overtures following an ‘oil-stain’ pattern (‘tache d’huile’) centred on cautious political contacts among the tribes, the ‘Lyautey method’ might appear in this light both as a refined distillation of previous colonial experience and as the epitome of the French cultivated spirit compared to that of towards its other competitors. Thus, Lyautey’s tropical background may not have been the overriding factor that led him to present his policies towards the natives as essential for the Protectorate, as has been contended.³⁰ ~~He arguably attained~~ It is arguable that he arrived at such certainties also he saw as an obvious contrast between the French sensitivities and the limited

capabilities of other European powers. ‘Malgré des imperfections [des] nos méthodes de politique colonial’, —he famously stated— ‘nous savons attirer la sympathie de l’indigène’.³¹ In sum, Lyautey’s ‘method’ may be construed, in his view, both as a colonial treasure and as an imperial distinction for France, which may account for its resistance to change during the Rif War.³²

II

The initial stages of European ‘protective’ designs in Morocco were defined by parallel (and often rival) military advances in both areas, the embryonic development of colonial administrations and international trade competition in the city of Tangier.³³ The rapid military and economic successes in the French Protectorate, comprising the vast majority of the Sultanate, including the cities of Fez, Marrakech, Casablanca and Rabat and the richest plains of the country, soon contrasted with Spanish difficulties in a much harder territory, an arid stretch of land in the mountainous northeast of the country, including the enclaves of Ceuta and Melilla. Unsurprisingly, amicable declarations and friendly gestures between colonial partners were soon replaced by mutual distrust. The ‘conversion’ of Lyautey to the idea of a Protectorate —a prospect he fiercely rejected in previous years— may have played a part in the process.³⁴ The encounter with a more complex reality, far from the glimpses perceived in his previous temporary missions to Rabat (1907) or Casablanca (1908), together with Lyautey’s desire to defend the Protectorate (and his own role) against the vagaries of French parliamentary opinion, seem to feature at the root of this change. His growing contempt towards Britain and Spain and his eagerness to present himself as the legitimate bearer of the Sultan’s authority were also prominent.³⁵ After crushing the rebellion which welcomed him in Fez (1912) and securing areas under

French occupation—the Rabat-Fez corridor and positions in the Chaouia—the new Resident General was in a position to reveal the extent of this transformation in his thinking.

His ideas, however, went beyond his previous contemplation of indirect rule and previous criticisms of assimilationist policies in Algeria.³⁶ Instead, they reflected an increasingly elaborate frame of mind in which his prior notions of the lack of credentials of European powers to assume colonial rule were swiftly integrated. ~~As~~ ~~He~~ became an ardent defender of the country's new status and a firm supporter of its new Sultan, Moulay Youssef (1912-1927). In this role he soon concluded that, of all the interested parties taking part in the agreements of 1912, France was the only European power which could be regarded as truly legitimate, for only France had signed the Treaty of Fez (1912) with the Sultan of Morocco, whereas the other concomitant powers had merely accessed the provisions of the treaties secured by her. France's mission, accordingly, extended across the entire Sultanate, and territorial divisions introduced in previous agreements—what he always referred to as the 'zone of Spanish influence', and the international zone of Tangier—remained concessions for reasons of diplomatic convenience, under France's protection as representative of the Sultan.³⁷

The rather bold nature of these views was surely linked to the arduous situation Lyautey was facing in Morocco, initially marked by the Spanish authorities' lack of cooperation (for example in the Fez-Tangier railway project), their apparent disrespect towards the Sultan and their self-reliance and independence in the conduct of affairs, which showed a presumption of owning a territory equal in status to that of the French Protectorate.³⁸ Equally burdensome were British ambitions in Tangier, where European consuls did not even entertain the thought that Tangier could be considered

as a territory under French protection.³⁹ Rather than [being](#) deviations from international accords, Lyautey thought the views of other European powers arose from misinterpretations of the ‘spirit’ of the Protectorate. In Lyautey’s reports, the ‘obstinacy’ of British and other foreign representatives in Tangier was equated with the inability of Spanish officials to understand basic colonial principles, including Morocco’s political unity under the Sultan and France’s appointed role as -his protector. With such a distinctive perception of international legitimacy, Lyautey could not fail to be mortified by almost every step of colonial domination. British ‘intrigues’ in Tangier—the main reason why he did not trust British consular representatives—and the appointment of a Caliph in the [new](#) Spanish [new](#)-capital of Tetuan in May 1913 (a figure whom the Spanish authorities seemed to consider the sole representative of Moroccan sovereignty in their zone), were not taken lightly, but rendered in his reports as a betrayal of the Treaty of Fez.⁴⁰ Notwithstanding Lyautey’s dramatic propensities, it seems evident that ~~more than low key real~~ friction ensued from these misunderstandings: ‘tous nos rapports avec les Espagnols’, he would say years later referring to the previous episode, ‘sont faussées par la position qu’ils ont prise à l’égard du Sultan’.⁴¹ Despite his initial friendly ~~attitude-dispositions~~, particularly after an audience with the ‘charmant’ Spanish King Alphonse XIII in 1913, Lyautey was quickly disillusioned by colonial practice.⁴²

To be sure, Lyautey’s belief that other European powers had misinterpreted the 1912 agreements was neither groundless nor uncommon, and found echoes both [at the French Ministry of War and at the French Ministry of Foreign Affairs in Rue Saint Dominique and at the Quai d’Orsay](#). The unity of the country and the preservation of its sovereignty were endorsed in official correspondence as fundamental doctrines of the Protectorate, which appeared to be threatened by Britain and Spain’s [centrifugal](#)

~~centripetal~~ tendencies.⁴³ Rather than ~~negotiating rectifications enabling policy~~ colonial authorities, however, Lyautey's reaction arguably entrenched the exclusionary nature of French action in Morocco. On the other hand, this was a that was well-received by the Sultan, himself anxious about the extent of his authority. It has been ~~suggested~~ ~~posited~~ that Lyautey had already succumbed to a identification with the country (in a kind of 'le Maroc ~~est~~ c'est moi' scenario), would project his own shortcomings onto the state of international relations in Morocco.⁴⁴ Apart from strengthening the figure of Moulay Youseff as the best agent of the Protectorate, Lyautey's narrow views on legitimacy also offered a justification for his resentment towards Spain and his contempt for the British. They also ~~represented~~ ~~denoted~~, however, a perilous simplification of the complex international created in the Moroccan Protectorate. The French Resident General did not seem to give much thought to the correlation between Spain's presence in Morocco—established by the Franco-Spanish Treaty of November 1912—and wider international concerns in the Western Mediterranean, particularly the fact that other powers like Britain were interested in keeping the Spanish zone of influence as a buffer zone against complete French domination of Morocco or the fact that preserving the international status of Tangier (subjected to periodical renewal) was a priority for several European powers. In other words, Lyautey may have been overlooking the fact that, whilst it was undisputable that the Sultan remained sovereign everywhere, it was not the case that France was his sole protector. One historian has claimed, revealingly: 'Il manque clairement ~~à~~ Lyautey une dimension diplomatique, qu'il refuse obstinément de prendre en compte'.⁴⁵ It is from this perspective that Lyautey's support for later plans and proposals which plainly contravened the agreements of 1912 (for example, his whim about a possible

annexation of the Spanish zone or his recommendation that the city of Tangier was put under the direct control of French authorities, both supported by the Sultan) appears as a logical, if perhaps misguided, conclusion from his previous understandings, rather than occasional bursts of anti-Spanish feelings or Anglophobia.⁴⁶

The ominous damaging effect of the First World War on Franco-Spanish relations has been broadly acknowledged by historians. However, the extent to which Spain's attitude confirmed Lyautey in his resolution that France could act almost independently in Morocco has not been similarly stressed.⁴⁷ Admittedly, Lyautey found himself in a difficult predicament during those years. French authority had only been recently re-established in the northern part of the country, adding the cities of Marrakech (1912) and Taza (1914), and the reconstruction of the Mahjzen along French lines was still in the early stages. Urgent reinforcements required by the metropolis at the onset of the conflict did not leave the Resident General much option, and he was forced to perform a juggling act to maintain France's control over the territory whilst also sending troops to France. He managed to do so by precariously maintaining what he deemed an 'external shield' in the line of contact with southern Berber tribes in the Middle Atlas—the future line of military advances between Taza, Khenifra and Marrakech— while transferring troops from French dominated areas to the European front.⁴⁸ In such circumstances, the ineffectual attempts of Spanish authorities to bring German agents under control and their dubious determination to maintain the country's official neutrality could not fail to provoke an outraged reaction. The 8,000 square-miles area bordering the northern part of the French Protectorate became a veritable 'front ennemi', where Spain betrayed the principles of

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the Protectorate, the friendship of France and her own dignity during the war.⁴⁹ Apart from necessitating redeployment of French forces to the northern border, this ambiguous stance became irrefutable proof for Lyautey that Spain had lost any remains of legitimacy in Morocco. He even suggested demanding [that](#) the Spanish government take responsibility for the French blood spilt during the conflict.⁵⁰ Even allowing for Lyautey's flair for drama, it seems incontestable that the Great War became for him a sort of mental Rubicon preventing any future Franco-Spanish collaboration.⁵¹

Certainly, much of the responsibility for this state of affairs did lie with the Spanish authorities, chiefly because of their *modus operandi*, which simply replicated and seemed to vie with French occupation.⁵² The River Kert campaign (1913-1914), for instance, one of the first attempts to expand the hinterland between Ceuta and Melilla, had provoked suspicion in French quarters regarding border delimitations. The Spanish authorities' ambivalence during the Great War was also a major (and justified) bone of contention. It is difficult to believe, however, that Spanish attitudes were the result of a conscious, calculated policy, as Lyautey appeared to interpret them.⁵³ Spanish and British sources seem to confirm that the *Altos Comisarios* (High Commissioners) did make (unsuccessful) attempts to contain any partisan behaviour in the zone of influence.⁵⁴ Lyautey also assumed that, by emulating French military advances, the Spanish colonial authorities were determined to make military rivals of France in Morocco, when probably they were only anxious to mark the borders of their territory in order to protect its integrity.⁵⁵ In these and other circumstances, Lyautey possibly tended to react in a rather arrogant and hypersensitive manner when faced with the ineptitude of the Spanish administration. [This, in turn, this](#) did nothing damage the traditional pride of its representatives, thus cementing a mutually hostile

predisposition which would make any future Franco-Spanish collaboration problematic.⁵⁶ Unfortunately, the Great War years, during which Lyautey enjoyed almost absolute powers, ‘which surpassed those of contemporary monarchs’, may have nurtured his belief that he could act independently in Morocco.⁵⁷

Such views, which were prevalent among Lyautey’s collaborators and the Makhzen, fed the support that Lyautey enjoyed in metropolitan political and parliamentary circles—from heavy-weights like Millerand or Barthou, influential lobbyists such as Étienne or Jonnart and the *crème* of the Quai d’Orsay in the sympathies of Berthelot, Paléologue, Peretti or Beaumarchais.⁵⁸ The Protectorate emerged after the war as a showcase of the French Resident’s skill, abilities and perceptiveness, a manifestation of Lyautey’s own unique style of conquest and rule, the importance of which was difficult to ignore. His policy of ‘active defence’ had not only saved Morocco, but also assisted France in her time of need. His convictions—no matter how controversial—had contributed to shape the Protectorate and bring it under an effective administration, to the point where it became difficult even to understand it without referring to Lyautey himself.⁵⁹ Notwithstanding criticism in parliamentary circles and occasional arguments with government representatives, the views of this ‘great artisan of French colonial glory’, who received the baton of *Maréchal* in 1921, acquired a high reputation in the Quai d’Orsay, which possibly overshadowed some of the more problematic aspects and ~~most~~ inconvenient truths regarding his residency.⁶⁰ Moreover, it could be argued that some elements of the emerging colonial orthodoxy in the French Protectorate—particularly in relation to policies towards other European Powers—did not really correspond with the best interests of France in Morocco.

III

Whilst France had dominated a considerable part of her Protectorate by the end of the [Great](#) War (spanning now from the northern part of the territory to the Middle Atlas), Spanish advances remained limited to narrow strips of coastline around the enclaves of Ceuta and Melilla. Aiming at bridging the divide between [both these](#) *Comandancias* and expanding south the territory under Spanish control, the Spanish command initiated further military penetration into the Rif mountains in 1920. Instead of subjugating the Rifian tribes, however, these advances heralded the beginning of a conflict which would end up consuming the best energies of Spanish authorities in Morocco and, eventually, those of France too. The surrender of the position of Annual (21st July 1921), an outlying post in the eastern part of the Spanish zone where advances had been halted by the Rif tribes, and the ensuing disintegration of military command in a panic-stricken withdrawal towards the city of Melilla, resulted in the collapse of authority in the entire *Comandancia* (the city of Melilla itself was open to invasion for a number of weeks). Recovering the territory lost, and the more challenging prospect of subduing the Rifian tribes and their leader Abd el Krim in the process, would be the main priority of Spanish troops in the following years.⁶¹

Lyautey's initial assessment after the unexpected news [was relatively straightforward](#), if understandably disbelieving, for the magnitude of the disaster was only comparable to the Italian disaster in Adua, [was relatively straightforward](#).⁶² He depicted the defeat as yet another display of ineptitude of the Spanish military authorities (not as much of General Berenguer, Spanish *Alto Comisario*, as of his subordinates), who had been unable to co-ordinate military advances in the *Comandancia* of Melilla, overstretched themselves in their attempt to bring the rebellious tribes of the Rif into submission and finally succumbed to their fierce attacks. This unmitigated military rout provided Lyautey with yet more indisputable evidence of the ineptitude of the Spanish military

leaders (especially General Silvestre, whom he saw as ultimately responsible for the defeat). Lyautey also referred to Spain's attitude during the First World War as an earlier cause of the debacle, as he believed that German propaganda had stirred up aspirations for independence among the Rifian tribes, now turning against Spain.

Lyautey did not seem to attribute much credit to Abd el Krim, under whose leadership the Rifian harkas had successfully rebelled. His criticism was directed at what he saw to be the Spanish colonial failings, lack of organisation, inefficiency and corruption.⁶³

Ultimately, the disaster not only corroborated his derogatory views of the Spanish method of colonisation; it also proved 'what he [Lyautey] had known all along, that they [Spaniards] had no method to match his'.⁶⁴

Unfortunately for him, events in the Spanish zone required reinforcement of French garrisons posted on the northern border, although such a contingency did not delay Lyautey's plans for rounding up the 'Maroc utile' in the Middle Atlas (completed in 1922). Three problematic aspects in Lyautey's approach to the Rif rebellion, however, have been identified by historians. [These](#), relating to his underestimation of Abd el Krim's charisma and resourcefulness, his over-confidence in French political manoeuvring and his growing 'phobia' towards the Spanish authorities.⁶⁵ Plenty of evidence has indeed been gathered in support of these views. Lyautey's recommendation for a cautious approach in order to avoid French involvement was to be the blueprint for subsequent developments. French forces were to act with careful restraint and within the existing borders of the French Protectorate, since it was believed in Rabat that the situation only affected the Spanish zone. Any reaction to the Spanish misfortune was considered to be contrary to French interests, both in relation to [encouraging](#) possible unrest among the tribes and also in terms of severely prejudicing ~~effects for continuing~~ operations in other parts of Morocco largely

Military contacts with the Spanish authorities were rejected for a number of practical reasons, principally the lack of reliability of the Spanish colonial army, which would mean that, in any eventual cooperation, the French would end up bearing the brunt of the work.⁶⁷

That the Rif rebellion was entirely an anti-Spanish affair was a common assertion at that time.⁶⁸ The Rifian leader Abd el Krim himself used this claim to his advantage from the outset of the conflict, insisting that the Rif tribes had rebelled against the Spaniards and only against them. Whether this was true or just a ruse to protect the Rifian tribes from being attacked from two sides at once (especially before resistance in the Rif had become more coordinated) is still open to debate among historians.⁶⁹

Most observers, including French intelligence services, seemed convinced that neutrality and restraint would have no serious consequences for the French Protectorate and, on the contrary, would enhance the standing of its authorities² in the eyes of the native population.⁷⁰ ~~Due to~~As a result of this line of thought, the French northern border stayed open to the Rif tribes, who took advantage of the opportunity to buy supplies from the markets in the French zone and find refuge after failed expeditions against the Spanish. Thus French communication channels with the Rifian rebels remained open, contacts were carried out and information gathered.⁷¹

Although fundamentally based on tactical considerations and on [his](#) underlying loathing towards the colonial partners, Lyautey's 'sinieuse et claire obscure' manoeuvring during the Rif War also incorporated ambivalent attitudes, notably relating to the Sultan.⁷² Using the plea of the suffering tribes under Spanish advances to magnify Moulay Yousef's role (and that of France) —the Sultan protested against the treatment received by the Rifian tribes at the hands of the Spanish troops, and his concerns figured in public speeches— Lyautey also cultivated relations with Abd el

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Krim, a potential contender to the Sultan's authority in the Rif.⁷³ Other related issues may merit some attention too, ~~such as including~~ the ~~lasting persistent~~ misgivings about the international balance of power, ~~towards~~ which the *Maréchal* would ~~voice gravitate~~ repeatedly during the conflict. Lyautey's critically important refusal to cooperate with the Spanish authorities reflected a fairly logical conclusion to his long-term appraisal of Spain's inadequacy as a colonial power and the historical significance of her presence in Morocco.⁷⁴ In the midst of the conflict, such 'séculaire antagonismes' were boldly reiterated, representing Spanish colonisation as a continuation of the historical confrontation between the Cross and the Crescent, and the Moroccans unyielding hatred of the Spanish as its inevitable corollary:

Tout cela, c'est le passé —Lyautey warned— mais il est ici toujours présent aux jeux et au cour de tous, et avant tous du Sultan, du Maghzen, de tous les Musulmans [...]. Pour eux l'Espagne, c'est l'ennemi héréditaire. (...) Ils les vomissent.⁷⁵

Other reflections of a private nature seemed to infer that growing hardships for Spain in Morocco were to be welcomed by France: 'rien n'est plus heureux pour nous'

Lyautey concluded in a rather baffling statement, 'que l'Espagne s'y soit dérobée'.⁷⁶

Notwithstanding the difficulty in reconciling such statements with the provisions of the Treaty of 1912, Lyautey's proposals were nevertheless in line with the aspirations of the metropolis. His advice to remain prudent was well received by both Briand's (1921-22) and Poincaré's (1922-24) governments, even if it effectively meant dissociating France from Spanish tribulations in Morocco.⁷⁷ The esteem that Lyautey enjoyed in both cabinets no doubt helped to elicit a lasting support, which seemed logical, given the circumstances.⁷⁸ His tactics also seemed to pay dividends. As the Spanish armed forces became more and more entangled in a perpetual cycle of

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inconclusive victories and hasty retreats, the French zone remained unaffected, stable and pacified. However, Lyautey's stance was based on an ~~an overall~~-problematic overall assumption: that the events and situation in the Spanish zone would not have serious repercussions for the French Protectorate as long as the French stayed out of the conflict.⁷⁹ It would not be long before military vicissitudes challenged this conviction.

As historians have amply demonstrated, the perception of the Rif rebellion as an entirely anti-Spanish conflict was put to the test in November 1924, when the Spanish troops, under the orders of General Primo de Rivera, abandoned their advanced lines in the Rif and converged on the northern coastal areas in November 1924.⁸⁰ This retreat, evidently aimed at bringing a seemingly never-ending conflict to an end (as set out in de Rivera's coup d'État manifesto in September 1923), was a turning point in the conflict. It allowed the Rif tribes to regroup and to initiate unopposed advances both northwards, recovering part of the territory lost to Spaniards in previous campaigns, and southwards, reaching the outposts of the French zone in December 1924. These menacing developments—which placed Fez and Taza under threat—caused consternation in Rabat, and Lyautey reproached his Spanish counterparts in the strongest terms for not letting him know their intentions beforehand. He finally began to sense, perhaps, that events in the Spanish zone could have long-term consequences in the French zone.⁸¹

Lyautey's previously unfriendly attitudes rebounded against him. His bitter complaints about the lack of warning from the Spanish authorities were, nevertheless, reasonable, since the retreat was presented as a *fait accompli* and the French authorities were neither informed nor consulted before it took place. These uncooperative practices, however, were partly ~~related to~~ a consequence of the general disposition that Lyautey himself had shown in previous years, for example in

deliberately ignoring Primo de Rivera's attempts to improve Franco-Spanish relations shortly after his coup d'État.⁸² Thus, receiving similar treatment was not to be totally unexpected. Furthermore, Primo de Rivera had made it clear on several occasions that the withdrawal of Spanish troops to coastal positions was one of his priorities, so what Lyautey labelled as a complete surprise, other observers felt was a predictable development.⁸³ It could also be argued that Lyautey possibly exaggerated his shock at events in the Spanish zone in order to detach them from his own conduct predisposition towards the Spanish in previous years.⁸⁴ It is significant that French advances on the river Ouergha in May 1924 were disregarded in Lyautey's reports, even though these are now regarded ~~considered~~ by many scholars a decisive step in triggering Abd el Krim's rebellion against France, as the banks of the Ouergha were of crucial importance both for France's security in the Rif and for Abd el Krim's prestige and supplies, ~~were also disregarded in Lyautey's reports.~~⁸⁵

Lyautey was inevitably forced to review his position, and it has been generally accepted that he anticipated an attack against French outposts, and even gave an accurate estimate of when it was likely to take place.⁸⁶ While avoiding any comments that could call into question his previous predictions, for the failure of which responsibility was firmly laid at the feet of Primo de Rivera and his hasty retreat, Lyautey demanded urgent measures from the government, including requests for military reinforcements.⁸⁷ He also required his subordinates to step up political contacts among the tribal chiefs ~~tribes' chiefs~~, particularly those closest to the Rifian harkas and more likely to be influenced by their presence. In view of later events, it is worth noting that, despite admitting that the French Protectorate had never faced such an overwhelming threat, Lyautey was still confident that if these needs were met, he would be able to counteract the influence of the Rifian rebels and contain their attack,

when it came.⁸⁸ ~~Even though~~ Lyautey's proposals did not depart significantly from policies and he obstinately maintained a categorical opposition to cooperating with the Spanish forces. ~~The~~ The French government led by Édouard Heriot (15 June 1924-17 April 1925) duly approved them, merely reminding the Resident General of the need to keep costs down.⁸⁹

IV

In 1925, the confidence of the government in Lyautey began to wane.⁹⁰ The attack of the Rifian harkas against the French northern positions, predicted in November 1924, duly took place in April 1925, but the repercussions were far more serious than expected. Instead of holding the defensive line established in the northern perimeter of Fez and Taza, as the French troops were expected to do, an alternative and alarming scenario unfolded, where French posts were overrun, lives and material lost and the decimated French units forced to withdraw.⁹¹ With no further obstacles in their way, the Rifian harkas poured into the French Protectorate, shattering Lyautey's predictions and threatening both cities in the process. Lyautey's confidence that he could counteract the reaction of the Rifian tribes ~~was~~ proved to be misplaced, as he was forced to admit shortly after these events.⁹² In the midst of turbulent times in French domestic politics, Paul Painlevé's recently formed cabinet (17 April 1925) would soon discover that a militarily stabilized Morocco had been a rather misleading proposition on the part of the French Resident General.⁹³

Lyautey's further accounts of events in April 1925 revealed an unsurprising reluctance to admit flaws in his own strategy. The limited resistance of the French units and their eventual obliteration by Rifian fighters were put down to scant reinforcements and their late arrival, an argument also adduced by some scholars.⁹⁴

However, it is perhaps worth mentioning in this regard that Lyautey's reinforcements were to be sent in several stages, as agreed in December 1924, and some of them only upon his express request. Troops included in the later group were in Tunisia, and their deployment would have been a matter of weeks rather than days, as Lyautey probably took into account. The French Resident General only made an urgent request for those reinforcements in mid-April 1925, when the French front was already compromised. In other words, when it was probably too late.⁹⁵

Lyautey's alleged miscalculations have led to the conclusion that his crucial misconception was in underestimating the force of the Rifian harkas and Abd el Krim's capabilities and charisma.⁹⁶ Thousands of Rif tribesmen were able to traverse the northern perimeter of the French Protectorate in April 1925, in a double advance towards Fez in the south-west and towards Taza in the south-east. Lyautey's unshakeable (and possibly overrated) confidence in the ability of the French authorities to ensure the loyalty of the tribes has also been thoroughly examined in the literature, particularly in the case of Beni Zeroual, whose 20,000 tribesmen defected en masse to the Rifians.⁹⁷ Historians have equally argued that Lyautey's perception of the Rifian threat as negligible was distorted by his contempt for the Spanish colonial army — 'clé de voûte de l'approche rifaine du Maréchal', according to Rivet— and that this prevented him from fully understanding the dangers he faced in 1925.⁹⁸

Further clues to the understanding of this scenario may be found in the international overview of the conflict. As late as December 1924, and despite the escalation of hostilities, the French Resident General still appeared to understand the crisis as a by-product of the Spanish problem, relying on a rather sui generis and 'localised'

understanding of the tensions converging on the Protectorate.⁹⁹ His proposal to invade the Spanish zone, made unexpectedly in December 1924, on the grounds that Spain was incapable of exerting authority in her zone and France [thus](#) had the right to intervene outside her Protectorate, may be considered as an example of ~~th~~his limited interpretation of the balance of power created in the Straits of Gibraltar and its resulting constraints. The Resident General appeared to sustain the notion of a ‘totally French Morocco’ which could be implemented unilaterally, regardless of the diplomatic repercussions of which his government sternly reminded him.¹⁰⁰

Perhaps more decisively, it could also be argued that Lyautey underestimated the growing anxiety that the Rif War was causing in Paris and failed to perceive the sense of urgency required to resolve the conflict. Painlevé’s government, initially slow to react, unequivocally recommended a more active strategy after the Prime Minister visited the French Protectorate in June 1925.¹⁰¹ By then, reinforcements had been deployed in the Rif, the cities of Fez and Taza had been saved—thanks to the use of aviation—and the defensive line re-established, and the prime minister aimed at bringing the conflict to a swift conclusion by favouring cooperation with [the](#) Spanish authorities.¹⁰²

Of course, criticism in the French Parliament, vociferous anti-war press campaigns and anti-imperialist sentiment in French public opinion were major factors in the cabinet’s reaction, as well as critical views expressed in military circles regarding Lyautey’s tactics and other considerations about potential reverberations in the Muslim world. ~~Of these, t~~The Resident General seems to have been all too well aware ~~of all these factors~~.¹⁰³ By keeping faith in his method of careful advances based on political contacts among the tribes, ~~as~~ [which](#) he defended ~~on~~[in](#) his plan sent in early

the French Resident General was not only obstinately drawing on his previous Moroccan experience and refusing to adapt to a changing scenario, as has been claimed.¹⁰⁴ Nor was he simply disregarding metropolitan criticism (to which he was possibly accustomed) in a typically arrogant manner. He was ultimately defending his long-standing ~~belief regarding appreciations of~~ French imperial distinctiveness and uniqueness regarding other colonial powers, and the survival of 'contre-modèle français original' to which he had devoted his entire career.¹⁰⁵

Other considerations of an international nature also appeared to escape him. Abd el Krim's manoeuvring after his initial victories over the French in April 1925, for instance, was a major cause of concern both for Painlevé's government and for a restless Sultan. It did not take long for the Rifian leader to issue public declarations inviting European powers (including Germany) to send representatives to the Rif and establish commercial links to exploit the region's resources, to the dismay of the Quai d'Orsay, for whom avoiding the internationalisation of the conflict was paramount, and of Moulay Youssef, by then mindful of ~~the threat menace of~~ Abd el Krim's ~~menace~~.¹⁰⁶ The situation of the war victims (many of the Rifian women and children), by then widely reported in European newspapers, was another reason for disquietude: demands for international intervention multiplied, thanks to an increasingly aware European public opinion. French foreign minister Briand was aware, for example, that the International Committee of the Red Cross was actively seeking French and Spanish authorization to provide humanitarian assistance to the war victims, a prospect which he was determined to prevent.¹⁰⁷ Painlevé and the British Foreign Secretary, Austin Chamberlain, had also been compelled to make public statements categorically denying any involvement of the League of Nations in the Rif.¹⁰⁸ Adding to these misgivings, other European leaders, like Mussolini, were turning the situation

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in the Rif to their own advantage, [in Mussolini's case](#) in order to further Italian ambitions in Tangier, to the alarm of French Ambassadors abroad.¹⁰⁹ The Rif war, finally, presented the complete withdrawal of Spanish troops from the Protectorate as a not so distant possibility. Crucially, British [policy diplomacy](#) was adamant this should be avoided at all costs. Pressure on the French government intensified from late 1924 and conversations with the French Ambassador in London in early 1925 made abundantly clear that the British government would accept no changes in the Moroccan status quo and that a prompt solution to the conflict ought to be negotiated between France and Spain.¹¹⁰

Prolonging a colonial struggle in the vicinity of Europe and arousing strong feelings in European public opinion, the Rif War was also whetting other European powers' appetite and [the situation was](#) veering dangerously towards international intervention, a threat for those powers interested in keeping the status quo in the region. Such aspects of the situation in Morocco seemed to be largely ignored by Lyautey, who did not appear to understand how urgently they needed to be addressed.¹¹¹

Suggestions of cooperation with Spanish authorities fell on deaf ears. Lyautey went so far in his refusal to cooperate with the Spaniards that he even proposed alternative solutions (such as the possibility of creating an autonomous territory in the Rif under Abd el Krim's control) that contradicted hitherto solid principles that he himself had defended in previous years and also previous assurances given to the Sultan, as the French foreign minister Briand observed.¹¹² In short, Lyautey gave the impression of not fully grasping that bringing an end to the instability in the Rif as soon as possible was a priority for the French government and for other powers interested in the area, especially Britain.¹¹³

When he finally overcame his ingrained reservations and came to realise their ~~consequences~~ ~~implications~~, it may have been already too late. By sending Pétain to Morocco in July 1925, Painlevé made [it](#) clear that alternative strategies needed to be explored. The friendly contacts between Pétain and Primo de Rivera made the previous cold distance maintained by Lyautey even more questionable. Despite subsequent attempts to change his stance through an assortment of contradictory plans, ~~he~~ hastily devised and hurriedly proposed, which have been described as the result of a ‘courbe cyclothymique’, it can be argued that the French Resident General had already lost his government’s favour and that an acceptable course of action to make ~~of~~ his replacement a dignified affair quickly became the cabinet's priority.¹¹⁴ In this ‘contexte de disgrâce larvée’ Lyautey’s resignation and its purported motives—health problems, criticism in parliamentary circles in Paris, personality clashes with Painlevé, military rivalry with Pétain—have been duly and thoroughly examined by historians.¹¹⁵ His shortcomings in comprehending the complex international situation created in the Western Mediterranean, however, have not been equally highlighted as one of the main reasons leading to his departure in October 1925.

V

It has been argued that ‘Lyautey’s personal convictions provide the key for the understanding of his colonial philosophy’, a premise which has wide currency among historians of the French Protectorate.¹¹⁶ Too often, however, such [an](#) approach has been confined to evaluating Lyautey’s colonial background and its influence over French colonial policies, under the assumption that ‘he was determined to shape the Protectorate according to the colonial ideology he had acquired over two decades of overseas experience’.¹¹⁷ Other elements which also formed part of his *modus operandi*

have been left in the margins of literature, such as his appraisal of the international ambitions and capabilities of European powers involved in the Western Mediterranean (particularly Spain and Britain) and corresponding notions of French legitimacy. Lyautey's views stemmed from what may be considered rather stereotypical conceptions relating to national characteristics, historical traits, public spirit and cultural traits of both [these](#) countries, which portrayed them as irremediably marred by numerous failings and limitations, and a perhaps over-simplified and somewhat distorted idea of the conditions in which they were operating in Morocco. Far from being in the margins of history, such views acquire a significant bearing in the understanding of some of the contradictory practices put in place in the French Protectorate ~~after~~ ~~since~~ 1912. These assumptions, which became increasingly difficult to reconcile with international treaties, could play a part in explaining [his](#) later vacillations in accommodating [to](#) the changing scenario of the Rif War. Lyautey's initial refusal to alter French strategies at critical points during the conflict—particularly in relation to grand-scale military operations and cooperation with Spanish authorities—was not exclusively the result of an obstinate reliance on his Moroccan expertise, [n](#)or the fruit of a congenital phobia towards Spain. Rather, it can also be explained as a consequence of historical interpretations and idiosyncratic conceptions regarding other colonial powers, which both sanctioned the suitability of French colonial methods and, at the same time, perilously simplified the larger balance of forces in the Protectorate. Beyond the health reasons, ~~nourished antipathies, intimate-inherent~~ biases, personality clashes with other political and military figures and [his](#) ill-judged assessment of Abd el Krim's ~~stature charisma and abilities~~, it was these restrictive and categorical conceptions which led Lyautey to disregard the growing international anxiety created around the conflict, and which,

ultimately, caused his undoing. What were comparatively harmless preoccupations in the early stages of his career eventually proved incompatible with the international issues at play in the Western Mediterranean in the 1920s.

¹ R. Branche, 'Compte rendu', *Vingtième Siècle*, 70 (2001), 170. See P. Doury, 'Lyautey et la médecine', *Histoire des sciences médicales*, 35 (2001), 305-315; C. Gury, *Proust et Lyautey* (Paris, 2009); H. Radoine, 'French Territoriality and Urbanism: General Lyautey and Architect Prost in Morocco (1921-1925)' in *Colonial Architecture and Urbanism in Africa*, ed. F. Demissie (London, 2012), 11-32. Sparsely mentioned in the 1980s and 1990s, Lyautey's sexuality has received more attention lately: D. Porch, *The Conquest of Morocco 1900-1914* (London, 1986), 85-86; C. Gury, *Lyautey-Charlus* (Paris, 1998), 186-8; R. Aldrich, *Colonialism and Homosexuality* (London, 2003), 64-70; B. Singer and J. Langdon, *Cultured force. Makers and Defenders of the French Colonial Empire* (Madison, 2008), 200-201; E. Berenson, *Heroes of Empire: Five Charismatic Men and the Conquest of Africa* (Berkeley, 2011), 238-239.

² Recent authoritative works on Lyautey include: D. Rivet *Lyautey et l'institution du Protectorat Français au Maroc, 1912-1925*, 3 vols. (Paris, 1988); W. A. Hoisington, *Lyautey and the French Conquest of Morocco* (Basingstoke, 1995); P. Venier, *Lyautey avant Lyautey* (Paris, 1997); M. Gershovich, *French Military Rule in Morocco: colonialism and its consequences* (Oxon, 2000); P. Doury, *Lyautey: un saharien atypique* (Paris, 2002); A. Teyssier, *Lyautey: le ciel et les sabres sont grands* (Paris, 2004). Also P. Cenci and L. B. Koch, *Avec Lyautey: de Nancy à Rabat* (Paris, 2007) and M. P. M. Finch, *A Progressive Occupation?: The Gallieni-Lyautey Method and Colonial Pacification in Tonkin and Madagascar, 1885-1900* (Oxford, 2013). Rivet's latest contribution: 'Quelques propos sur la politique musulmane de Lyautey au Maroc (1912-1925)' in *Le choc colonial et l'islam*, ed. P.-J. Luizard (Paris, 2006), 255-270.

³ P. Venier, *Lyautey avant Lyautey*, *op. cit.*, 209.

⁴ Classical works by Benoist-Méchin, Bidwell, Gouraud, Le Tourneau, Pierre Lyautey, Harrison, Montagne or Maurois; show typical interest in colonial intricacies to the detriment of international politics. Similar features in Hoisington, *op. cit. Lyautey*; Gershovich, *op. cit. French Military*; and S. D. Segalla, *The Moroccan Soul. French Education, Colonial Ethnology and Muslim Resistance, 1912-1956*, (Lincoln, 2009). Brief references to Lyautey's Anglophobia and contempt for the Spanish may be found in Rivet, (*Lyautey*, iii, 269-73) and Porch, *op. cit. The Conquest*, xi.

⁵ Links between Lyautey's resignation and his long-standing imperial views have received little attention: Gershovich, 127-31; Hoisington, 195-201 and Rivet, iii, 265-70.

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⁶ P. Lyautey, *Lyautey l'Africain*, 2 vols (Paris, 1953-1957), ii, 2-35; Rivet, i., 158-163 and Teyssier, ~~op-~~
~~cit~~: *Lyautey: le ciel*, 176-202 and 238-247.

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⁷ Hoisington, *op.cit.*, 10; A. Le Révérend (ed.), *Un Lyautey Inconnu* (Paris, 1980), 229.

⁸ Venier, ~~op-cit.~~, 43-52; Rivet, iii, 37.

⁹ S. E. Howe, *Lyautey of Morocco: An Authorised Life*, (London, 1931), 74. Lyautey had first-hand experience of the British Empire after brief sojourns in Aden and Singapore.

¹⁰ S. E. Howe, ~~op-cit.~~, 71.

¹¹ Howe, ~~op-cit.~~, 139. Also Hoisington, 13.

¹² Howe, 189.

¹³ A. Le Reverend, *Lyautey l'ecrivain, 1854-1932*, (Paris, 1976), 271. Also Rivet, iii, 37 and Hoisington, 16

¹⁴ A. Le Reverend, *Lyautey*, (Paris, 1983), 295; A. Scham, *Lyautey in Morocco: Protectorate Administration, 1912-1925*, (Berkeley, 1970), 10. Rivet, i., 57 and 78-9.

~~¹⁵ A. Le Reverend, *Lyautey*, (Paris, 1983), 295; A. Scham, *Lyautey in Morocco: Protectorate Administration, 1912-1925*, (Berkeley, 1970), 10. Rivet, i., 57 and 78-9.~~

¹⁶ Hoisington, 24 and 33; P. Lyautey, ~~op-cit~~: *Lyautey l'Africain*, ii., 2-35.

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¹⁷ For example in Gershowich, 63-70; Hoisington, 21-39 or Rivet, i. 239-50.

¹⁸ P. Lyautey, ii., 137-152; A. Le Révérend, *Un Lyautey* ~~op-cit.~~, 247-54, and Singer and Langdon, *Cultured Force* ~~op-cit.~~, 198-202.

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¹⁹ Gershowich, 107-117; Hoisington, 95-110 and Rivet, iii., 167-70. Lyautey's interpretations occasionally clashed with the views of the French Foreign Minister, Delcassé.

²⁰ Such thoughts have been relatively ignored: Hoisington, 10-16 or P. Venier, 63-76, for instance.

²¹ ADMAE, M (1670), Lyautey to Delcassé, 16 June 1915.

²² ADMAE, M (238), Lyautey to Millerand, Minister of Foreign Affairs, 23 February 1920.

²³ ADMAE, M (1670), Lyautey to Delcassé, 16 June 1915.

²⁴ CADN, CD52A, Lyautey to Delcassé, 22 November 1914 and CADN, CD166, Lyautey to Delcassé, 22 September 1915.

²⁵ ADMAE, M (1659), Lyautey to Briand, Minister of Foreign Affairs, 22 December 1915.

²⁶ A[rchives] N[ationales] 475 AP, Fonds Lyautey (90), Lyautey to Poincaré, Prime Minister, 29 July 1912.

²⁷ Rivet, iii, 167.

²⁸ For Lyautey's chauvinistic tendencies: Gershovich, 126-130; Hoisington, 41-55 and Porch, *op. cit.*, 74-76.

²⁹ ADMAE, M (238), Lyautey to Millerand, Prime Minister, 23 February 1920.

³⁰ R. L. Bidwell, *Morocco under colonial rule: French administration of rural areas*, (London, 1973), 31; Gershovich, 63-74; Hoisington, 41-53; Rivet, i., 39-59.

³¹ Speech at the Institut Colonial in Paris, 10 February 1922. J.-L. Miège (ed.) *Paroles d'action*, (RabatParis, 1995), 404

³² Contradictions in Lyautey's method have been highlighted by Rivet, i., 43 and Hoisington, 53. For the influence of British indirect rule: G. Cholvy, 'Lyautey: itinéraire d'un colonisateur', *Bulletin de l'Académie des Sciences et Lettres de Montpellier*, 37 (2007), 167-78 and C.R. Pennell, *Morocco since 1830. A History*, (London, 2000), 159. Douglas Porch has suggested that Lyautey's 'method' was simply a façade he was willing to 'sell' in Paris in order to keep his privileged position in Morocco, (~~*op. cit.*~~ *The Conquest*, 278-82).

³³ Gershovich, 64-74.

³⁴ Rivet, i, 161-2.

³⁵ G. Catroux, *Lyautey le Marocain*, (Paris, 1952), 96-7; A. Le Révérend, *Lyautey l'écrivain*, 325. See also Hoisington, 44.

³⁶ Gershovich, 48; Singer and Langdon, 198-199; Rivet, i., 161-2; ii., 134.

³⁷ AN, 475 AP (90), Lyautey to Poincaré, 29 July 1912.

³⁸ Press releases from the Spanish Ministry of State left little doubt about this (*Ejército y Armada*, 24 Nov 1921, 3).

³⁹ S. Balfour, ~~*op. cit.*~~ *Deadly Embrace. Morocco and the Road to the Spanish Civil War*, (Oxford, 2002), 39. French control over Tangier was, in fact, a 'disastrous' prospect for British interests (PRO FO 371/3838, Memorandum from Mr Sperling, 3 September 1919).

⁴⁰ Other issues such as capitulations, economic legislation and fiscality were also highly contentious (Rivet iii. 126).

⁴¹ CADN, CD243, Lyautey to Spanish Military Attaché, Cuverville, 4 March 1924. Lyautey never set foot again in the Spanish Zone after this incident (Rivet, iii, 268).

⁴² Rivet, i., 152-3; Le Révérend, *Lyautey*, (Paris, 1983), 367.

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⁴³ Rivet, iii., 269-70.

⁴⁴ P. Doury, ~~op. cit.~~ *Lyautey: un saharien*, 261.

⁴⁵ H. de Charette, *Lyautey*, (Paris, 1997), 201.

⁴⁶ The Quai d'Orsay rejected the proposals on the grounds of international complications and recommended 'une compréhension plus mesurée de l'équilibre des forces imperiales' (Rivet, iii., 268). Lyautey's proposals in ADMAE, M, (68), Lyautey to Pichon, Minister of Foreign Affairs, 5 December 1918 and ADMAE, M (68), Lyautey to Pichon, 20 April 1919.

⁴⁷ For example in Rivet, iii., 161 and ff; Singer and Langdon, *op. cit.*, 204-08; Hoisington, 187-90.

⁴⁸ Gershovich, 107-111. It did not excluded occasional advances and retreats, as in Tafilalet in 1917.

⁴⁹ CADN, CM, CMC4, Lyautey to Painlevé, Minister of War, 24 July 1917 and CADN, CM, CMC6, Lyautey to Painlevé, 5 November 1918.

⁵⁰ ADMAE, M (186), Lyautey to Pichon, Minister for Foreign Affairs, 9 March 1918.

⁵¹ Gershovich, 126.

⁵² Balfour, ~~op. cit.~~ *Deadly Embrace*, 45.

⁵³ And some historians, for example, Le Rêvèrend, *Lyautey*, (Paris, 1983), 375.

⁵⁴ S[ervicio] H[istórico] M[ilitar], M[arruecos] (739/2/8), Commanding General of Melilla, Aizpuru, to High Commissioner Jordana, 9 August 1916. See also Pennell, *Morocco*, 174-182. Other historians have argued that the situation in the Spanish zone during the Great War as an unfortunate corollary to Spain's domestic polarisation and the government's inability to make their authority respected among Moroccan officials, most of whom supported the Germans (Balfour, 46-51; Gershovich, 103-106).

⁵⁵ Balfour, 37.

⁵⁶ G. Ayache, 'Les relations franco-espagnoles pendant la guerre du Rif' in *Españoles y franceses en la primera mitad del siglo XX*, (Madrid, 1996), 287-94.

⁵⁷ Gersovich, 108.

⁵⁸ See Gershovich, 107-117; Hoisington, 95-110 and Rivet, iii., 167-70.

⁵⁹ Rivet, iii. 173-5.

⁶⁰ Barthou's words (Singer and Langdon, 208).

⁶¹ General accounts of the Rif War in Balfour, ch. 3-5; C. R. Pennell, *A country with a government and a flag: the Rif War in Morocco, 1921-1926*, (Ann Arbor, 1986) and D. S. Woolman, *Rebels in the Rif: Abd El Krim and the Rif Rebellion* (Stanford, 1968).

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⁶² Spanish losses were estimated at 10,000 lives plus large amounts of artillery, weaponry and ammunition [S. Sueiro Seoane, 'Spanish Colonialism during Primo de Rivera's Dictatorship', in R. Rein (ed.), *Spain and the Mediterranean since 1898*, (London, 1999), 50].

⁶³ ADMAE, M (620), Lyautey to Briand, Minister of Foreign Affairs, 26 July 1921.

⁶⁴ Hoisington, 184. See also Gersovich, 126.

⁶⁵ Singer and Langdon, 181-217; Hoisington, 185-193; Gershovich, 127; Rivet iii. 273.

⁶⁶ M. Thomas, *The French Empire Between the Wars: Imperialism, Politics and Society*, (Manchester, 2005), 212-16.

⁶⁷ 'Nous ferions tous les frais de la combinaison', Lyautey wrote to Poincaré, AN, 475 AP (85), 4 March 1924.

⁶⁸ For example, the US Chargé d'Affaires in Morocco referred to 'the general incapacity of the Spanish to comprehend the psychology of the native population as the only explanation for the conflict' (N[atational] A[rchives] and R[ecords] A[dministration], Morocco, 1914-1936 (8, 881.00/975), Rand, report of 15 October 1924. See also M. Thomas, *Empires of Intelligence: Security Services and Colonial Disorder After 1914* (Berkeley, 2008), 150-55.

⁶⁹ A. Beroho, *Abd el Krim et les causes de la proclamation de la republique du Rif* (Tanger, 2008), 145-234; Singer and Landon, 212; Pennell, *A Country*, 182-5; Woolman, 173.

⁷⁰ Hoisington, 186.

⁷¹ Rivet, iii., 271-273. Lyautey's instructions in CADN, CD199, Lyautey to General Commander in Uxda, 3 March 1924.

⁷² Rivet, iii. 270.

⁷³ ADMAE, M. (589), 25 November 1921 .

⁷⁴ In that sense, it went beyond the 'mépris congenital' or the Machiavellian schemes that some historians have suggested (Rivet, iii, 269; Gershovich, 126).

⁷⁵ CADN, CD 243, Lyautey to Cuverville, 4 March 1924. See also M. Durosoy, *Avec Lyautey: homme de guerre, homme de paix*, (Paris, 1976), 120.

⁷⁶ ADMAE, M (197), Lyautey to Cuverville, 4 March 1924. It has been also argued that Lyautey saw in the Rif conflict an opportunity to embarrass Britain (Rivet, iii, 270-3).

⁷⁷ Rivet, iii, 269.

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⁷⁸ Poincaré's endorsement in ADMAE, M (197), 3 April 1924. Gershovich, 127-129; Hoisington, 188-191.

⁷⁹ A discussion on these assumptions in M. Thomas, 'Crisis management in colonial states: Intelligence and counter-insurgency in Morocco and Syria after the First World War', *Intelligence and National Security*, 21 (2006), 697-716.

⁸⁰ Woolman, 164; Sueiro, *op-cit*, *Spanish colonialism*, 53-4.

⁸¹ Lyautey's complaints in CADN, CD243, Lyautey to Herriot, 14 and 15 November 1924 and AN 475 AP (86), Lyautey to Herriot, 19 November 1924.

⁸² Rivet, iii., 269.

⁸³ The French ambassador in Madrid, Fontanay, repeatedly warned Poincaré's government about this possibility [ADMAE, M (197), 10 October 1923 and ADMAE, M(198), 26 June 1924].

⁸⁴ As suggested by Porch, 278-82 and Hoisington, 193-4.

⁸⁵ They had been presented at the time as 'police operations' (Singer and Langdon, 212). See also Gershovich, 127; Rivet iii, 275.

⁸⁶ Hoisington, 194; Gershovich, 129.

⁸⁷ AN, 475 AP (93), Lyautey to Briand, 18 May 1925.

⁸⁸ AN, 475 AP (86), Lyautey to Herriot, 23 January 1925. According to Rivet, Lyautey would receive reinforcements amounting to over 5,000 soldiers between January and May 1925 (Rivet, ii, 8-10).

⁸⁹ On Herriot's favourable disposition towards Lyautey, see H. de Charette, *Lyautey* (Paris, 1997), 336 and Rivet iii., 169. On Lyautey's irrepressible views against cooperation, see Rivet, iii, 269.

⁹⁰ Gershovich, 133-4; Rivet, iii., 61-2; Hoisington, 198.

⁹¹ Over 40 border posts were obliterated. French casualties (1,000 killed, 3,000 wounded and 1,000 missing) exceeded 20% of the forces deployed in the Rif (M. Thomas, *The French Empire*, 212)

⁹² Lyautey admitted that France could lose her entire Protectorate if Abd el Krim's rebellion was followed by a general uprising in the French zone [AN 475 AP (93), Lyautey to Painlevé, 29 April 1925]. See Rivet, *Le Maroc*, 61-62

⁹³ Rivet, ii, 65. On Painlevé's reaction see P. Piettre, 'La presse française et la politique extérieure de Cartel des gauches', *Transversalités*, 119 (2011), 139-155 and Gershovich, 117.

⁹⁴ Gershovich, 131; Singer and Langdon, 213.

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⁹⁵ Lyautey seemed to admit that much in later reports (Nantes, Cabinet Militaire, CMC 7, Lyautey to Painlevé, 12 May 1925)

⁹⁶ Gershovich, 127-131; Hoisington, 195-201; Porch, *op. cit.*, 296. See also J. M. Perry, *Arrogant Armies: great military disasters and the generals behind them*, (New York, 1996), 291. Some authors argue that Lyautey's collaborators were to blame: Singer and Langdon, 212. Shortcomings in intelligence services also in M. Thomas, *The French Empire*, 212-3.

⁹⁷ Gershovich, 117. Rivet, i, 156-7

⁹⁸ Rivet, iii, 2697; Gershovich, 126.

⁹⁹ H. de Charette, *op. cit. Lyautey*, 267.

¹⁰⁰ The proposal [ADMAE, M(199), Lyautey to Herriot, 19 December 1924] was swiftly rejected by Herriot [AN, 475 AP (102), Herriot to Lyautey, 20 December 1924]. See also Gershovich, 126.

¹⁰¹ Gershovich, 133

¹⁰² Hoisington, 199; Gershovich, 134.

¹⁰³ Hoisington, 198-9; Rivet, iii, 265; Gershovich, 134. See also, D.H. Slavin, 'The French Left and the Rif War, 1924-25: Racism and the limits of Internationalism', *Journal of Contemporary History*, 26 (1991), 25-32.

¹⁰⁴ Rivet, iii, 267

¹⁰⁵ J.-L. Miège, *op. cit. Paroles*, 25. In his last report to Painlevé before leaving Morocco, Lyautey declared that the methods pursued by Pétain differed 'totalement de ceux que, pendant toute ma carrière et particulièrement au Maroc j'ai toujours préconisés et appliqués' [M. Durosoy, *op. cit. Avec Lyautey*, 209].

¹⁰⁶ ADMAE, M (77), Briand to Peretti, French Ambassador in Spain, 9 July 1925. On Abd el Krim envoys, see M. R. de Madariaga, *España y el Rif. Crónica de una historia casi olvidada*, (Melilla, 1999), 473-86.

¹⁰⁷ Record of ICRC representatives meeting with Briand in International Committee of the Red Cross Archives, Section B CR, Riffains 138/104, Memo from G. Ador, undated [September 1925].

¹⁰⁸ Chamberlain on 19 of December 1924 (*Daily Mail*, 20 December 1924, 10) and Painlevé on 28 May 1925 (*Le Journal de Genève*, 29 May 1925, 8).

¹⁰⁹ ADMAE, M (77). Bernard, French Ambassador in Rome to Briand, 25 May 1925. See also

Suciroeane, *op. cit.*, 56. Briand himself made clear to Lyautey that 'écarter toute velléité italienne

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d'internationalisation' was one of the government's main priorities (Nantes, Cabinet Diplomatique, CD 243, Briand to Lyautey, 30 May 1925).

¹¹⁰ Herriot himself made several attempts to make Lyautey see the urgent need to resolve the situation in the Rif given the pressure his own government was under from its British counterparts [ADMAE, M (199), Herriot to Lyautey, 5 December 1924]. Contacts with French Ambassador in London intensified in early 1925 [ADMAE, M (199), French ambassador in London Fleuriau, to Briand, 6 January 1925]. See also D. Sasse, *Franzosen, Briten und Deutsche im Rifkrieg 1921-1926 Spekulanten und Sympathisanten, Deserteure und Hasardeure im Dienste Abdelkrims* (München, 2006), pp. 205 and ff.

¹¹¹ H. de Charette, *Lyautey*, p. 203 and 267.

¹¹² ADMAE, M (77), Briand to Lyautey, 7 July 1925.

¹¹³ This much had been suggested by the French Ambassador in Spain [ADMAE, M (77), Peretti to Briand, 17 May 1925]. Even the Spanish dictator Primo de Rivera anticipated that his refusal to cooperate with Spain would probably cost Lyautey his post [SHM, M (126/58/12), cabinet minutes, 12 August 1925].

¹¹⁴ Rivet, iii., 293-4.

¹¹⁵ Rivet, iii., 302. For example, Singer and Langdon, 213-214; Porch, 297; Teyssier, 389-390; Gershovich, 133.

¹¹⁶ M. Gershovich, "Collaboration and 'Pacification': French Conquest, Moroccan Combatants, and the Transformation of the Middle Atlas", *Comparative Studies of South Asia, Africa and the Middle East*, 24 (2004), 139.

¹¹⁷ Gershovich, *French Military*, 64.