OMAN,
IBADISM
AND
MODERNITY

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Family in the Maghrib:
The Case of Mzabi Society in the *Nahḍa* Period

Anna Maria Di Tolla

orth Africa, and in the Arab world in general, the
ly is the basic unit of social organization and so-
onomic activities. It is typically characterized by a
archal form, as in many other areas of the world, and
ystem is based on local communities whose ties have
founded in kinship.[1]

the late 19th and early 20th century a wave of national-
nd a rebirth of Islamic intellectual reflection infested
rab world and, indirectly, the whole Maghrib region.
period of political thinking, cultural reinvigoration,
ocietal change is known in Arabic as the *nahḍa*, or
ssance, because many in the Arab world looked to a
nodel of civil society based on the European princi-
f access to political participation, to education, and
economic activities, and a number of women began
for the right to take part in the political process. In
Maghrib family and kinship functioned as the basis
which social formations were able to remain autono-
from the French colonial regime.

the North African countries, more than 95 percent
population are Sunnī Muslim, although there are
variations in belief and practice. Culturally, the re-
s distinguished by its significant Berber popula-
and this heritage exerts a strong influence on lo-
guistic traditions and political organization. The
ity of Berber communities are Sunnī Muslim, but
are Ibāḍī minorities in Jabal Nafūsa and Zuwāra in
Jerba Island in Tunisia and Mzab in Algeria.

hin the Maghrib, I choose to focus on the Mzab
thern Algeria in order to understand the changes
ily life and organisation, and other transforma-
concerning the everyday life of Mzabi women dur-
e period of *nahḍa*, as well as changes in the pro-
n and transmission of culture in the Mzab. The
of the region, El Ateuf (العطف), was the first Mzabi
founded in 1014 AD, Bou Noura (بونورة) in 1046,
aïa (غرداية) in 1048, Beni Isguen (بني يزقن) in 1347,
(مليكة) in 1350, and two other cities founded more
y, Guerrara (القرارة) in 1631 and Berriane (بريان) in
epresent today one of North Africa's most ancient

examples of traditional social organization. These locali-
ties have maintained their own unified system of tradi-
tions and social and religious organizations for centuries.
They represent a small Berber island in the Sahara; they
practise a fierce and exclusive form of Islamic puritanism
and they have kept their cultural and political institu-
tions intact.

The Mzab valley was annexed to France in 1882. The
colonial government tried to destroy the local cultural
values and ways of life. Some 20th-century Ibāḍī scholars
of the Maghrib, such as Sulaymān al-Bārūnī of Libya
(1870–1940) and Abū Isḥāq Ibrāhīm Aṭfiyyash of Algeria
(1886–1965), spent most of their lives in exile because of
their anti-colonialist activism.[2]

Concerning Mzabi women, their private life is often
considered to be a symbol of cultural identity, a refuge of
traditional values.[3] Indeed, more than as women's 'refug-
es' these traditional aspects should be valued as grounds
for the struggle against French colonialism in connection
with everyday lived experience. As Berber's studies have
shown, struggles take place not only at the level of or-
ganized political movements, but also through a variety
of forms and practices in Berber women's everyday life.[4]

The purpose of this study is to examine and under-
stand the participation of Mzabi women in social pro-
cesses, especially the changes in women's education. This
paper starts with an outline survey of the social structure
and kinship specifics of North Africa, followed by a brief
overview of some aspects of how Mzabis fought the co-
lonial regime without assimilating and without delegiti-
mizing traditional social structures.

Traditional Social Structure and Kinship
and the Colonial Society in North Africa

In the countries of the Maghrib, the traditional social
structure was characterized by social segmentation; the
ties binding local communities have historically been
grounded in kinship. The importance of kin-based soli-

darities in the region already has been analyzed by Ibn Khaldūn. In his work,[5] although written in the 14th century AD, he provides insights that are still useful for the understanding of the Maghribian society in the 19th and the 20th centuries. He was concerned with what held a collectivity together, gave it strength and power, and prevented its segmentation. Ibn Khaldūn stated that *'aṣabiyya*, that is 'solidarity' or *esprit de clan* is the cohesive force of the group. He understood *'aṣabiyya* as originating among blood relations and extended family units, namely, the clan or tribe.[6]

In the 1960s Germaine Tillion has analyzed the character of Maghribian kin groupings through her metaphor of the 'republics of cousins'. Many of these groupings survived until the period of national independence. Tillion illustrates how the 'republics of cousins' are a construction based on the social seclusion of women, crimes of honor, and the obsessive concern of men (husbands, fathers, brothers) with their women's 'honor'.[7] Marriage is a central institution which creates a political, social and economic alliance between families. According to Mounira M. Charrad, the pattern governing marriage ties and the control of women were necessary for the maintenance of community cohesion.[8]

The French and Their Attempts to Educate North African Women

The French occupation of Algeria—considered to be a part of France—preceded that of the two protectorates, Tunisia (1882) and Morocco (1912). The occupation was a crucial factor in shaping the experiences of women in the three regions making up French North Africa in different ways.

The French made everywhere the same distinction between Arab and Berber women, with the latter seen as being more independent than Arab women. French troops in Algeria, for example, considered the fact that Kabyle women in Algeria joined in the battles by ululating and inciting their combatants to victory as a specific Berber quality differentiating them from Arab women.[9]

Colonialism was also an invasion of rural space. There were several attempts by the French to educate North African women, trying to access women's private life and instill their values. The French hoped that women would then pass these values on to their children, thus breaking down the barriers of cultural resistance.[10] The response of North African women to French control varied immensely from country to country. During the early decades of colonization, North African women were overloaded with a double burden of domination, both colonial and gender-based. Algerian women felt the colonial burden more intensely than those of Tunisia and Morocco, due to the length and intensity of the French occupation.[11]

What surely is significant is that the French principle that all land was alienable (negotiable) had an impact on family structure and size. Agricultural land owned by North Africans was confiscated, often arbitrarily, for profitable land speculation in expanding the French zone of occupation. The imposition of the French legal system and heavy taxation caused material and moral deprivation which dramatically affected women in Algeria. North African women in rural communities remained illiterate until the Second World War.[12] Schools for girls were established in North Africa in the period following the Ferry Law (1880s). The focus of these schools was on French-style home management or skill acquisition in cooking, laundering, needlework, hygiene and other arts and crafts.[13]

The *Nahḍa* and the Family

Contacts with the colonizers were largely a shock for the native populations. Among other effects, Maghribi intellectuals (educated in Europe or the Middle East) demanded the renovation of Islamic thought and the reform of society. By the 1920s, many Ibāḍī scholars and political activists[14] had joined anticolonial movements and were contributing to religious reform extending from the Mediterranean to the Indian Ocean.

In the *nahḍa* period, marriage was seen as a central institution that defined social and family relationships and established social limits. Thus, marriage was perceived as the most important 'building block of society'.[15] In other words, the pillar of modern society was represented by marriage and the family. This attitude was also influenced by the cultural and political changes taking place in the Ottoman Empire at times such as the rise of patriotism or national duty. These played a role in emphasizing the importance of the family, and of women in particular.

The family and education became the focus of debates over people's 'private life' and "a new cultural and social life emerged during this period in Arab-Islamic countries".[16] These debates on 'private life' strengthened the notion of the nuclear family and reinterpreted marital relationships.[17]

Several thinkers in the Maghrib, influenced by the reformist ideology which had gained influence across the Middle East, started calling for the education of girls. The schooling of girls since largely was seen favourably as

an important political axis in the program of the nationalist movement, and was presented as the formation of future wives and mothers for their country. But a change had recently begun to take place. On the one hand, access to knowledge led to changes in women's way of life, which in a few years saw their existence transformed. The years of struggle for independence enabled the women of the bourgeoisie to have access not only to schooling, but also to political and public life, and to community life. On the other hand, these changes denoted, as a matter of fact, a questioning of the roles traditionally assigned to women (those of mothers and wives), which had historically confined them in a domestic space considered as private.

The fear of the influence of the West reinforced the place of the nuclear family as the main foundation of local society also among the Mzabi community.[18] Many Ibāḍī scholars and political activists have written about its importance, though from different perspectives.

Ibāḍī Mzabi Society during the Colonial Period

The Mzabis are an Amazigh (Berber) sedentary group settled in a geographically distinct region at the northern edge of the Sahara in Algeria. They descended from the 9th-century Ibāḍī followers of the Rustamid dynasty who had chosen Tāhart its capital. They settled in the pentapolis of the Mzab, of which Ghardāya was the capital. They distinguished themselves from their neighbours in terms of their economic activities: their urban life was based on date-palm gardens and trade in textiles and foodstuffs. The groups of merchants were numerous and economically integrated in the cities they traded with, but they left their families in the Mzab. An important factor for the stability of such an arrangement lay in the fact that women were not allowed to leave the Mzab valley or marry outsiders.

Ibāḍī society for centuries maintained its own system of physical and moral isolation, of traditions and social and religious organization. After the Ibāḍīs had settled in the Mzab valley, their policy of autarchy and austerity did not encourage other flows of people toward the region. This period is referred to as the secret phase *(kitmān)*. During the 14th century, a progressive opening occurred in the life of Ibāḍī towns due to the development of trade. This brought about the arrival of new non-Ibāḍī groups. The few immigrants who arrived during this time consisted of small groups practicing the Ibāḍī doctrine, and some local nomad populations, who were absorbed into the existing towns.[19]

In the absence of an Imāmate government, at least from the 15th century onwards, the towns of the Mzab valley were ruled by two corporative institutions; the *ḥalqa* (circle) of the *ʿazzāba* (learned men) and the *jamʿiyyat al-ʿawāmm* (council of laymen or *shaykhs*).[20]

The slow process of growth in the Mzab valley involved the controlled extension of the *quṣūr* and the establishment of new towns. The layout of towns in the valley was the product of a family-based community which was reflected in social structure through a series of interconnected spaces with various functions: the *quṣūr* for urban life, cemeteries for the dead, palm groves for agriculture.

In 1878 Émile Masqueray visited the Mzab and had the opportunity to copy an important Mzabi book, then published by him in French translation as *Chronique d'Abou Zakaria*.[21] Some years later he was given insight into the *qawānīn* or written laws of the Mzab. These laws, although not codified, were written down and registered, while in other Berber Algerian communities, like in the Aurès, they were preserved by oral tradition.[22]

In 1882 France annexed the Mzab and made Ghardāya the military headquarters of a territory extending from Jelfa (الجلفة) in the north to El Golea (الجولية) in the south.[23] In Algeria, since 1830, the French authorities adopted a policy of control concerning the private life of their subjects and the practice of Islam. These changes prepared the ground for the Mzabis to look for ways to oppose and resist the French and to participate in anti-colonial and pan-Islamist movements.[24]

The Mzab valley was an exceptional case concerning the resistance to the French invaders. The distinctiveness of the region was recognized by the French, who at first tried to restrict the independence of the Mzabis. However, Mzabi opposition took different forms at different times, from 'classical' resistance to invading rule from outside, to a resistance articulated by religious leaders. Often resistance to colonial encroachment focused on specific religious issues.[25] The Mzab region became a centre for moral opposition in 1914. It supported the Sanūsī uprising in the Cyrenaica (Libya) against the Italians, an event they regarded as part of a return of the Ottomans.[26] Anyway, French rule remained always indirect in the region. The Mzabis' main sources of resentment was constituted by French plans for introducing conscription, a plan which was extended to the whole of Algeria in 1912. Mzabi arguments against conscription were based on a reading of the terms agreed to in different decrees (1853, 1882, and in the 1871 Crémieux decree) which did not include the Ibāḍī Mzab. The conscription debate ended with a French concession in 1924, which gave the region a separate status.[27] As a result, and despite the violent resistance everywhere in Algeria and elsewhere (such as the Sanūsī uprising), Mzabi resistance took a more limited form.

The Mzab and Ibāḍī *Iṣlāḥ*

Between the 1920s and the 1960s, Mzabi Ibāḍī *'ulamā'* appropriated the slogan of reform (*iṣlāḥ*) to give meaning to the deep changes that had been taking place in the region since the 1880s and its passage under French sovereignty. Through this slogan of reform, those who called themselves 'reformists' took on the religious magisterium and transformed it. They redefined the Ibāḍī 'orthodoxy' and redrew the outlines of their community.

Using the example of the Algerian Muslim reformist movement, *Iṣlāḥ* (or 'Renaissance' (*nahḍa*) in Egypt), Mzabi Ibāḍī reformism took root through the struggle of a great scholar, Muḥammad b. Yūsuf Aṭfiyyash (1820–1914). Born in Beni Isguen, he initiated the early reflections and approach of the reformist movement. Aṭfiyyash aimed at fighting harmful innovations (*bidaʿ*), ignorance, and sectarian fanaticism, advocating instead harmony, Islamic unity and religious knowledge.[28] As soon as he began to speak of the struggle against religious innovations, with the clear ambition of discussing certain ritual aspects, the *'azzābas* of the 'learned city' attacked him virulently, forcing him to take refuge in the 'luminous city' (Bou Noura).[29]

An important figure in the Mzabi reform movement, and later in the Algerian nationalist movement, was Ibrāhīm b. ʿUmar Bayyūḍ (1899–1981), a *shaykh* from the town of Guerrara who became the leader of Ibāḍī reformists after World War I. Besides lamenting the weakness of faith among the Muslim youth,[30] Bayyūḍ argued against the various provisions of the colonial authority and its military representatives on the territory of Ghardāya. This earned him much malignancy from the side of the French, but on the other hand, legitimated him in the eyes of the clerks of the *ḥalqa* of Guerrara. The latter admitted him as a member of their circle, and in 1923 entrusted to him the precious task of preacher in the mosque. The reform project found its first base and space there.[31]

It was on the grounds of the reorganisation of education, in the sense of its modernization, and the struggle against the inertia of the clerks of the *ḥalqa* that the nascent reformist movement based its approach. But very quickly the scope of the reform extended to aspects related to the economic and social life of the Ibāḍīs through the demand for access to the 'benefits of technical progress'.

In 1925, the first reformist institute for higher education opened in Guerrara, the *Maʿhad al-ḥayāt*, headed by Ibrāhīm b. ʿUmar Bayyūḍ, and aimed at offering an opportunity to train beyond the rudimentary curricula of community schools. Its main objective was to set up a reformist elite by recruiting it in all the cities of the Mzab.[32]

The main objectives of the Mzabi reform movement were: rejecting the isolation of the Ibāḍī community; educating children and reducing the number of illiterates; reforming Arabic-language community education by modernizing its methods and opening its programs to secular disciplines (mathematics, natural sciences, literature); improving the economic and social conditions of the Mzabis by adopting technical progress; teaching girls within the reformed network and in Arabic; instituting the possibility for local scholars, by virtue of their competence, to take up positions in the public service; ensuring the preservation of the community from the contagion of foreign vices; retaining its ancestral structures.[33]

At the educational level this reformism, by removing the obstacle of prohibitions traditionally waged by conservatives, generated a new current of schooling. However, the clerics of the *ḥalqa* were able to halt the schooling of girls.[34]

Mzabi Family, Women and Education

Ibāḍīs have also preserved the predominant role of women in traditional Berber society. The important part played by women in religion, so unusual among Muslim peoples, is relevant for the life of women and the interaction between Islam and woman-centred ritual practice, and has contributed to the vitality of Berber culture. It is particularly apparent in the very existence of Mzabi culture. In 1925, when Anne-Marie Goichon came to live in the Mzab and gained the confidence of some women, she was able to study family life,[35] including details concerning the life of women[36]. Her work, *La vie féminine au Mzab*, is considered an important source in writing the history of Algerian women,[37] who are otherwise rarely mentioned in historical sources about the country. Her text is dedicated to the minute description of women's clothing, tools, work, food, ornaments, rituals and words, but it must be read mainly as an account of how a group of women who construct and manipulate this context to serve their own interests above all, are thus able to safeguard and preserve their identity and culture. The strength of Mzabi women lay in their being able to increasingly take refuge in tradition, and in their daily lives as a form of resistance to the colonization that tried to invade private life and the rural space.

Women—as William Marçais writes in his preface to Goichon's book—are the 'armature of Mzabi society'.[38] They are, therefore, in a very special sense the guardians not only of the family but of the whole city. The Mzabi young woman, in the period of her adolescence, is initiated into studies of both a dogmatic and moral

nature. This constitutes a discipline which is peculiar to the Ibāḍīs, and there is no similar institution in any other Islamic country.

In order to control the women when the men were absent, the local (male) authorities set up and supported a parallel authority among the women.[39] They were called ʿazzābāt, the plural of ʿazzāba which indicates the male city-fathers. When one of them died, the group nominated a new member on the basis of her dignity and religious knowledge.[40]

All the Mzabi women's lives are framed within a 'religious sisterhood'. A special authority is vested in this 'order' of women who wash and lay out the bodies of the dead. The superior matron presides each year over a reunion of the members; she is well versed in the Qurʾān and the works of the great shuyūkh of the sect, and gives guidance to all in matters of religious law the disobedience of which is punishable by a particular form of excommunication (tabriʾa).[41]

The women who fill this office, which is not paid but highly respectable, are chosen by the clerks from among the most virtuous, capable, and intelligent matrons of the town. They are feared and respected, because they have access to every house, they must be consulted on all occasions, and they have the disciplinary power of excommunication delegated to them by the ḥalqa.[42] Their principal function is to teach. The dogma that all Muslims are equal includes women, who must therefore be taught to understand the Qurʾān and their prayers. They have also to be taught something of the laws and the history of their city and the Ibāḍīs. Women do not go to the mosque, so the laveuses lead their prayers and occasionally preach to them.[43] There are also men who render the same pious service to the bodies of men.[44] The maintenance of the religious and moral doctrine was at the basis of Mzabi society and any relaxation of doctrine, it was said, would lead to the disintegration of the community.[45]

In the economic life of the group a woman's role does not extend beyond the limits of the family, but she is nonetheless able to give expression to her artistic inclinations: while her husband provides for the daily needs of his dependents, she draws upon the objects and landscapes which surround her, such as her jewelry, her garden, and so on, for the designs of the draperies that adorn her home.[46] This is a playful occupation approved of by the society of the Mzab, and which also includes the chanting with which she accompanies her tedious and hard work.[47] A Mzabi woman may not marry a stranger, but men are allowed to marry women of other races and creeds, including Christians and Jews (except in Beni Isguen, the 'holy city', where marriage with a non-Mzabi woman entails banishment).[48] An Ibāḍī woman retains her father's surname, but in all other respects she passes into the family of her husband. In the husband's absence, it is the mother who supervises the household, lives in the house if possible, and exercises authority.

The Mzabi Family: Permanence and Changes

The Mzabi family is charged with the transmission of and socialization to Ibāḍism and its values. Changes are not new to the Mzabi community, as it has been torn between the questions of tradition and modernity for more than a century. Debates among Mzabis have seen the notions of conformist and conservatism on the one hand, set against those of innovation and evolution on the other.

These two movements, one conservative and the other reformist are both centred on Mzabi society with regard to issues of refusal or acceptance of various aspects of modernity. The Ibāḍīs have been able to develop and maintain a stronghold in their installation in Mzab. They can count on a social and economic system guaranteeing their own security and independence, a system governed by religious authority ensuring respect of the Ibāḍī doctrine and stability for the community. This organization continues to exist even today, in spite of the effects of colonization in the 19th century, the religious reform at the beginning of the 20th century, and the independence of the Algerian state in 1962.

It is in this context that one can situate the transformations of the Mzabi family in the nahḍa period. As Brahim Cherifi points out in his book *Le M'zab, Études d'anthropologie historique et culturelle*,[49] the Mzabi family is undergoing significant changes in its structure. Today, the extended family is no longer a single homogeneous place of socialization, but has become a composite assembly. Family is certainly a place for the transmission of Ibāḍī values, but it is not the only one. Indeed, the learning of these Ibāḍī values has taken place comprehensively within community schools, setting up a Mzabi education system parallel to the education system of state with the aim of ensuring the learning of such values. This has taken place parallelly to state curricula for boys, but not for the majority of girls. While boys attend two schools in swapped schedules, girls attend only the community school.

On the other hand, the family represents a means of transmission of essential Ibāḍī values in the Mzab, linked to religious practice.

The system of community schooling for Mzabi girls, and the ways in which its problems indicate the dynamics of a kind of Mzabi identity backup process, are related to issues of continuity and change wherein Mzabis try to

find a balance between endogenous and exogenous view-points. Concerning the education of girls, we can find important information in a 12-page typed document written by Omar Rasn'ama. The document focuses on the history of the education of boys and girls at the Institute *al-Iṣlāḥ* in Ghardāya, and was written in May 1982.[50]

The idea of establishing community education exclusively for girls gained traction in the late 1940s. The reform movement has had the merit of being the first to reflect on the need to educate girls as well as boys. Initially however, the reform movement created the Institute *al-Iṣlāḥ* in Ghardāya in 1932, which was aimed at boys alone. It was only the new management, installed in 1948, that defended the draft guidelines for girls.

The first attempt to spread schooling among girls, which took place in 1950, was unsuccessful. At the end of the same year, the project was entrusted to a four-person team for revision. This team instructed the teacher Omar Rasn'ama to set up the first class for girls. Having repurposed part of his house a classroom, he taught sixty girls whose age varied from seven to twelve. The program contained the teaching of Arabic language and literature, the Qur'ān, and the study of religion. Knitting and sewing were introduced to the program after 1951. This was a program which prepared the girls for the specific future as housewives. Beyond the ideal of education for all, the reformers soon realized that drawing the support of women could be of great advantage to them. Mzabi girls were thus prepared to become good mothers and good soldiers for the cause of independence. Girls' education was not, at any stage, conceived of aiming at rethinking the role and place of women in the society.

Yet resistance to this project was widespread among a part of the population that considered it a destabilizing factor for their society. It was felt that girls should not be sent to school like boys. Thus, a virulent campaign was conducted against the project and its promoters, highlighting the risks that the community would incur if this teaching did not stop. Some of the more radical opponents of the project even threw stones at the house where the courses took place. These deliberate acts were perceived as incredibly violent because they violated the sanctity of the space of the house. Omar accused the colonial authorities of complicity because they did not suppress this kind of aggression and instead had deliberately laid down obstacles to derail the project (though the author does not explain what these obstacles were). It is possible that the colonial authorities saw in it a rival project to that of the White Sisters who previously had not succeeded in bringing even a single Mzabi girl into their school. It is difficult to say whether this indeed may have been the case, even though we know that the colonial administration supported the implementation of the missionary White Sisters and White Fathers with their dispensaries, girls' schools, and embroidery workshops. Finally, Omar Rasn'ama says in his document that despite this hostility, the project grew and moved to new premises to meet the growing number of applications for the enrollment of girls.

Conclusions

Mzabi women were a key resource in resisting French colonial rule. They participated in the preservation and conservation of a lifestyle of pertaining to a specific kind of a social organization in a way which went beyond integrating aspects of modernity or not, or enrolling girls in schools or not. Their aim was to preserve the Ibāḍī community, to ensure that the younger generations did not turn away.

Faced with changing times, the Mzab and its traditional institutions played as indispensable a role as ever in the *nahḍa* period. Nevertheless, the stakes are not the same today, and in order to maintain the link with tradition these institutions are relayed by social and cultural associations. Community education of Mzabi girls is at the heart of this dialectic of continuity and change, since the purpose is on one side the preservation of the Ibāḍī doctrine, and on the other hand, it is itself an aspect of continuous change.

The interest in analyzing these dynamics lies across three levels: the first is related to the status and role given to women within the family in the same community; the second relates to how girls' education was initially conceived of and envisaged by the Ibāḍī society; the third is exploring related developments since independence which have accelerated over the past decade in community schools.

The period of the *nahḍa* (1914–1945) saw further major political and socioeconomic changes which impacted on family and women. The French manipulated family law in Algeria to tighten the colonial rule over the Algerian population. The contributions of the Ibāḍī communities to independence from colonial rule are of immense significance. They also offered a unifying principle for contesting colonial power. The establishment or extension of French domination entailed a rearrangement of the nexus of social solidarities.

The family in North Africa became a basic unit of the social structure in traditional societies. Mzabi women reacted to the changes in their situation by retrenching within the family, which became a bulwark against colonialism. They created an oral tradition of anti-colonialism that was passed from one generation to the next.

During the past century, Mzabi women may have furnished the basis for a shared sense of identity and political community in the present century.

While the colonial order had evolved a formidable arsenal of methods for containing un-submissive Mzabi men, it had few, if any, which were successful in invading women's everyday life. Indeed, it can be argued that the contradictions of the French regime offered opportunities, under certain conditions, for Mzabi women to offer nonviolent resistance.

Notes

1 "[...] Ideally, the patriarchal society would dictate to women patterns of behaviour and thinking inspired by a value system based upon honour" (Offenhauer 2005: 1).

2 Hoffman 2012: 4.

3 Mai Ghossoub writes: "What better symbol of cultural identity than the privacy of women, refuge *par excellence* of traditional values that the old colonialism could not reach and the new capitalism must not touch? The rigidity of the status of women in the family in the Arab world has been an innermost asylum of Arabo-Muslim identity" (id. 1987: 4, cited in Cooke 2001: 111–112).

4 Sadiqi 2003.

5 Ibn Khaldūn 1997, I: 255; Charrad 2001: 17–27.

6 Ibn Khaldūn 1997, I: 256–258.

7 These aspects are common to the countries of the Mediterranean as well as the Muslim Arabic ones (Tillion 1966: 69).

8 Charrad 2001: 26–27.

9 Tillion 1966: 69.

10 In 1900 the French feminist Hubertine Auclert wrote about the condition of Algerian women (Lorcin 2003: 70).

11 Ibid.

12 With the exception of the élites and some urbanites (Lorcin 2003: 70). The Algerian women were active participants in the Algerian revolution mostly contributing through also various traditional women's roles. It is interesting to mention here Fanon's analysis of the role of the woman's body within the revolution of Algeria. Traditionally, veiling was an act to discipline the woman's body and also to protect it. As Fanon shows in his essay 'Algeria Unveiled', the Algerian women fought for freedom and the veil has represented a strategy against the French army (Fanon 1965: 35–67). Willy Jansen studied how women in the Mzab indeed have been shrouded in a hostile mythology that masked their true identity (Jansen 1989: 296).

13 Lorcin 2003: 70.

14 Abū Isḥāq Ibrāhīm Aṭfiyyash, Ibrāhīm Abū l-Yaqẓān, Ibrāhīm b. ʿUmar Bayyūḍ, and others played a key role in shaping Ibāḍī intellectual life in the Mzab during the first half of the 20th century. Their experience outside of the Mzab and their affiliation with intellectuals and politicians in cities such as Algiers, Tunis and Cairo were important for the development of the *Iṣlāḥ* movement (Ghazal 2015: 47–63).

15 Zachs 2012: 291.

16 According to Fruma Zachs the use of the term 'private life' in relation to the *nahḍa* "makes it possible to explore views on the conjugal family's internal space such as relationships between parents and children or the relationships between men and women in marriage, or what is termed *sociabilité*" (Ibid.: 286).

17 Thus 'private life' during the *nahḍa* also had a public face, in which women and men were involved in negotiating their social order (Ibid.).

18 Ibid.: 300.

19 Alport 1954: 35–38.

20 Bierschenk 1988: 116.

21 [Warjlānī 1878]: IX.

22 Masqueray 1886: 50; Cepeda 1995: 238.

23 Alport 1954: 40–45.

24 Ghazal 2015: 47–63.

25 For example, in 1903/4 in Ghardāya one tried to prevent the construction of two mosques, or in 1914 there was resistance to a great threat, when the Pères Blancs planned to set up a school at Beni Isguen, the 'holy city' (Marks 1993: 62–63).

26 Marks 1993: 63.

27 Ibid.: 65–66; Pappé 2005: 69–70.

28 Hoffman 2012: 3.
29 Salhi 2006: 10.
30 Hoffman 2012: 6.
31 Salhi 2006: 12.
32 Cherifi 2015: 381.
33 Salhi 2006: 12.
34 In the late 1950s, when, for example, Kabylia began sending its
    daughters to school, the Mzab sent only 20 Ibāḍī girls out for a total
    of 882 pupils (Salhi 2006: 13).
35 Goichon 1925.
36 Women are depicted as 'staunch defenders' of the Ibāḍī practices,
    especially the women who taught other women the Ibāḍī doctrine,
    the Qurʾān and prayers (Jansen 1998: 296).
37 Ibid.: 297.
38 Goichon 1925: VIII.
39 Goichon 1925: 219–238, Alport 1973: 141–151.
40 Daddi Addoun 1977: 36.
41 [Warjlānī 1878]: 74; Di Tolla 2015: 120; Muʿammar 2015: III.
42 Goichon 1925: 219–220.
43 Once a year, the laveuses from the five cities of the Mzab met to ex-
    change information, learnt from one another's experiences, revised
    old regulations, and defined any modern transgressions or deviations
    from proper behavior (Alport 1973: 41).
44 In both cases, the washers of the dead are older widowed or divorced
    women with a reputation of purity and devoutness (Jansen 1998:
    297).
45 To this day the rules regulating women's life were strict and detailed
    in the Mzab. For instance, the decisions taken by the ʿazzāba in 1979
    specified exactly the interior of the nuptial room, the composite
    parts of the marriage gifts and the pieces of meat and plates of cous-
    cous of the meals offered at different occasions during the wedding
    (Jansen 1998: 298; Chikh 1981: 182–186).
46 Di Tolla 2015: 120.
47 Ibid.
48 Alport 1973: 42; Morand 1910: 442.
49 Cherifi 2015.
50 Ibid.: 444.

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