FACULTY OF HUMAN SCIENCE

Master one History major

The first English course (Second Semester) by Nasri Wahiba

The text:

The history of media in the Maghreb—which includes countries like Morocco, Algeria, Tunisia, Libya, and Mauritania—shows how the region’s communication methods have changed over time, influenced by local cultures, colonialism, and modern technology.

Before colonialism, people in the Maghreb relied on oral traditions like storytelling, poetry, and spoken histories to share knowledge and culture. When Islam spread to the region in the 7th century, written Arabic became important for religious and scholarly communication.

During the 19th and 20th centuries, European colonial powers, especially France and Italy, introduced newspapers and radio. These were mostly used to serve colonial interests and spread information to European settlers, often ignoring local voices. However, radio also became a tool for resistance. For example, during Algeria’s fight for independence (1954–1962), the Voice of Free Algeria (\*La Voix de l'Algérie Libre et Combattante\*) used radio to unite people against colonial rule.

After gaining independence in the mid-20th century, Maghreb countries set up state-controlled media to promote national identity and government policies. Newspapers like Algeria’s \*El Moudjahid\* and Tunisia’s \*La Presse\* became well-known, but independent media faced restrictions. People often turned to foreign radio stations, like the BBC, for alternative news.

In the late 20th and early 21st centuries, technology changed the media landscape. Satellite TV and the internet allowed people to access news and entertainment from around the world, breaking the state’s control over information. Channels like Al Jazeera and regional broadcasters such as Morocco’s 2M and Tunisia’s Nessma TV became popular. During the Arab Spring uprisings in 2010–2011, social media platforms like Facebook and Twitter played a key role in organizing protests and sharing information. In Tunisia, social media helped bring down President Zine El Abidine Ben Ali, leading to more media freedom.

Today, the media in the Maghreb faces both opportunities and challenges. Tunisia has made progress in allowing more independent media, but in countries like Algeria and Morocco, journalists still face pressure from the government. In Libya, ongoing conflict has left the media divided. Despite these challenges, media remains a powerful tool for sharing ideas, challenging authority, and shaping the future of the region.

Questions:

1. What is the general idea of the text?
2. Define these keywords: oral traditions, Colonial media, social media, arab spring, press freedom, digital platforms.
3. What were the main forms of communication in the Maghreb before colonialism?
4. How did colonialism change the media landscape in the Maghreb
5. What role did radio play during Algeria’s fight for independence?
6. How did media change after Maghreb countries gained independence
7. What impact did satellite TV and the internet have on the Maghreb’s media?
8. Why social media became so powerful during the Arab Spring?
9. How traditional media like newspapers have adapted to the rise of digital platforms.
10. How media in the Maghreb reflects the region’s cultural diversity?
11. TRUE or FALSE
* Colonial powers introduced newspapers and radio to promote local cultures in the Maghreb.
* After independence, Maghreb countries established state-controlled media to promote national identity.\*
* In Libya, the media landscape is unified and well-regulated despite ongoing conflict.
* The Arab Spring uprisings led to increased media freedom across the entire Maghreb region.
1. Summarize the text.