FACULTY OF HUMAN SCIENCE

Master one History major

The Third English course (Second Semester) by Nasri Wahiba

The text :

Political communication has always been important in the Maghreb. It has helped leaders, political groups, and activists influence society, gain power, and resist foreign control. Over time, different methods of communication have been used, from oral traditions to digital media.

Before colonial rule, political messages were shared mostly through speech. Mosques, religious schools, and tribal gatherings were important places for communication. Poetry and storytelling also played a key role in spreading political ideas and keeping historical memory alive. Some rulers, like the Almoravids and Almohads, used religious messages to strengthen their power and encourage military expansion.

When European colonial powers took control in the 19th century, political communication changed. The colonial authorities introduced newspapers and radio to spread their ideas and maintain power. However, nationalist movements quickly adapted, creating secret newspapers and using oral networks to organize resistance. Leaders such as Messali Hadj in Algeria and Habib Bourguiba in Tunisia used speeches, newspapers, and pamphlets to fight colonial rule and unite the people.

After independence, governments in the Maghreb tried to control political communication. In Algeria, Morocco, and Tunisia, the press, radio, and television were often used for government propaganda. Leaders like Houari Boumédiène in Algeria and Hassan II in Morocco used state media to promote national unity and government projects. However, as opposition movements grew, governments had to change their communication strategies. For example, in Tunisia, Habib Bourguiba carefully prepared his speeches to maintain his image as the “father of the nation.” In Libya, Muammar Gaddafi used his Green Book to spread his political ideas.

The arrival of satellite television in the 1990s, and later the internet and social media, changed political communication in the Maghreb. Channels like Al Jazeera offered new perspectives, challenging government-controlled media. During the Arab Spring in 2010–2011, platforms like Facebook and Twitter played a key role in organizing protests, exposing government actions, and giving activists a voice.

After the Arab Spring, governments and political groups increasingly used digital tools to shape public opinion. Some used social media to connect with citizens, while others used it for surveillance and misinformation.

Political communication in the Maghreb has changed from oral traditions and religious messages to digital activism and government-controlled media. Understanding this history helps explain the current political situation, where communication remains a powerful tool for both governments and opposition groups.

QUESTIONS:

1. Provide a suitable title for the text
2. What is the general idea of the text?
3. Define these keywords terms: political communication, state media, oral communication, nationalist movements, propaganda, satellite television, public opinion, Digital activism.
4. How was political communication conducted in the Maghreb before colonial rule?
5. What impact did colonial rule have on political communication in the Maghreb?
6. How governments managed media after independence?
7. Why social media became important in the Arab Spring?
8. How do governments use digital tools today for political communication?
9. What are the different methods of political communication used in the Maghreb over time?
10. What impact did satellite television have on political communication in the Maghreb?
11. Why is understanding the history of political communication in the Maghreb important?
12. TRUE and FALSE
* Colonial powers introduced newspapers and radio to control political communication in the Maghreb.
* Nationalist movements in the Maghreb ignored modern media and relied only on oral communication.
* After independence, Maghrebi governments allowed complete freedom of the press.
* Habib Bourguiba and Muammar Gaddafi used political communication to shape their public image.
* After the Arab Spring, governments stopped using media for political purposes.
1. What is the main idea of each paragraph?