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Hegemonic Rivalry in the Maghreb: Algeria and Morocco in the Western Sahara Conflict

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Hegemonic rivalry in the Maghreb:
Algeria and Morocco in the Western Sahara conflict

by

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Abstract

Western Sahara has been in a state of political crisis since Spain granted the territory to Morocco and Mauritania in 1975. While Morocco has attempted to incorporate the region within its borders, the Polisario Front (Frente Popular de Liberación de Saguía el Hamra y Río de Oro) has challenged Morocco's claims and proclaimed they are the voice of the indigenous Sahrawi people. Algeria, home to a majority of the Sahrawi refugees, continues to support the Polisario and their goal of independence from Morocco.

Yet, does Algeria have an ulterior motive for their actions beyond support for a displaced people? This thesis examines how Algeria has utilized the Western Sahara conflict to undermine Morocco's plans for incorporating the territory. Applying hegemonic stability and rivalry theory to the conflict, Algeria's methods of challenging Moroccan claims are analyzed to see how its actions have weakened the objectives of Morocco towards Western Sahara as well as the perception of Morocco within the Maghreb region and internationally. The thesis suggests that as Algeria continues its support for the Polisario, it may have successfully challenged Morocco's attempt to incorporate the territory within its borders.



Figure 1: Map of Western Sahara, with Berms marked. The Polisario Front (governing party of the Sahrawi Arab Democratic Republic) control areas east of the berms and temporary capital located outside Tindouf, Algeria. Morocco controls areas west of the berms.
<http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/File:Westernsaharamap.png>

Chapter 1: Conceptualizing Algeria in the Western Sahara conflict

Why is there a continued conflict in Western Sahara? After nearly forty years of conflict and cease-fires, negotiations and UN involvement, Morocco is no closer to achieving a successful end-game in which they control the territory. The Polisario Front (Frente Popular de Liberación de Saguía el Hamra y Río de Oro), a rebel group against Spain, Mauritania and Morocco in the 1970s which struggled for independence and now is recognized as the governing body for the Sahrawi Arab Democratic Republic (SADR) continues to demand for independence and recognition against Morocco's wishes. To this day the conflict is at a standstill with both sides continuing to advocate different actions that would settle the conflict – for Morocco, official recognition of its claims on the territory and merging it fully within the state, for the Polisario, recognition of independence and properly establishing the SADR in El Aaiún.

This thesis is based on the following hypothesis: Algeria's support for the Polisario is a strategy by Algeria to become the sole regional hegemon in the Maghreb. **Regional hegemon** is the dominant state within a region, based on the concepts created by

Kindelberger and Russett in the formation of hegemonic stability. In terms of **region**, it is defined as a cluster of states within geographically bound areas. In this case, Algeria and Morocco are bound together due to proximity and location within the Maghreb (Arabic for West). The **Maghreb** region consists of Morocco, Algeria, Libya, Tunisia, Mauritania and the Western Sahara territory (Figure 2).



Figure 2: Map of the Maghreb (www.hartford-hwp.com/archives/32/017.html)

The states in the region share a geographic zone linked around the Atlas Mountains and the coastal plains of the Mediterranean Sea.

Historically the Maghreb has been classified as the northwest of Africa and originally was only Morocco, Algeria, Tunisia and western Libya.

Mauritania was grouped with the region in 1989 after the founding of the Arab Maghreb Union (Africa Research Bulletin, 2012). The region shares common history due to conquest by the Ottomans as well as France and Italy.

The argument is that Algeria continues to be involved in the Western Sahara conflict from a power politics position against their rival Morocco, and that its political goals for the North West African region are supported by maintaining support for the Polisario Front against Morocco. While both Morocco and Algeria seek to be the dominant force in the region and over the future of Western Sahara, not as much scholarly work has been done on how Algeria has undermined Morocco, especially in regards to Western Sahara. This makes examining Algeria's role in the conflict more relevant to the discussion and adds a new dimension to understanding the relationship between the Moroccan government and the Polisario. Singling out Algeria's role in the conflict allows its position to be analyzed against Moroccan interests in Western Sahara to see how regional views on the conflict have shifted. It allows for further discussion on how Algeria could be viewed as a viable hegemon in the region due to its ability to prevent Morocco from achieving its political goals in regards to Western Sahara.

Why single out Algeria and Morocco for consideration for dominance in the region? Considering the relative size of the region and spending power the states have militarily (Table 1), only Libya would be able to challenge Morocco and Algeria for supremacy in the region. Tunisia spends far too little in military spending and is currently in the process of moving towards a more democratic, yet possibly more fundamentalist state in the wake of the Arab Spring (Zelin, 2011) and Mauritania continues to struggle economically and politically since independence.

Table 1: General statistics on the states in the Maghreb region¹

	Morocco	Algeria	Mauritania	Tunisia	Libya
Population	32,309,239 (2011)	35,406,303 (2011)	3,359,185 (2011)	10,732,900 (2011)	6,733,620 (2012)
Area (sq.km)	446,550	2,381,741	1,030,700	163,610	1,759,54
GDP (US Dollar)	163 billion (2011 est.)	264.1 billion (2011)	7.242 billion (2011 est.)	101.7 billion (2011 est.)	92.62 billion (2010 est.) N/A (2011)
Military Budget	5% of GDP (2003 est.)	3.3% of GDP (2006)	5.5% of GDP (2006)	1.4% of GDP (2006)	3.9% of GDP (2005 est.)

¹ Information on all states gathered from the CIA Factbook, accessed July 2012

However, with the marginalization of Libya during the end of the twentieth century and the fall of Col. Mummar Gadaffi in 2011, Libya has become less secure and viable as an alternative to Morocco and Algeria in the region. Further, the thesis is focused around the problems in achieving a solution in Western Sahara, which Tunisia, Mauritania and Libya have been removed from for some time – although Libya had supported the Polisario under Gadhafi (Zunes and Mundy, 2010) and Mauritania has recognized the Polisario as the official representative of the Sahrawi (Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, 2008). Morocco and Algeria, while having faced their own protests during the Arab Spring (Amos, 2012 and Nossiter, 2012), have been able for the most part avoid major challenges to the government's authority and have emerged stronger with the instability in Libya.

With the Algerian government supporting the Polisario and defending the demands of the Sahrawi for an independent state, questions should arise in regards to its own interest in the conflict. What role does Algeria play in the conflict? How has Algeria been able to influence the international community's perception on Morocco's interest in Western Sahara? Can they gain an advantage over Morocco without directly participating in the negotiations towards a settlement? By supporting the Polisario and the Sahrawi people, is Algeria pursuing

its own agenda which could frustrate efforts towards a settlement?

These questions are the focus of this thesis

The operating theory for the work surmises that a state will support opposition groups in a neighboring state if it will enable the state to become a regional hegemon. Theoretically, the idea of the regional hegemon is built off the work of John Mearsheimer. In his work *The Tragedy of Great Power Politics* he argues the notion of “offensive” hegemony (4-5) in which states and great powers alike seek out opportunities to undermine rivals. As states desire as much power as possible and try to maximize relative gains in power (23), it continues to drive competition between states. The idea is further developed by authors like Michael McGinnis, who argued the idea of regional rivalry within the framework of Cold War politics and competition (1990). While Mearsheimer’s work deals with “great powers” like the United States and the Soviet Union, his concepts on hegemony and the role of regional power politics allows for greater application and perspectives within the confines of this work. Mearsheimer’s work also explains the concept of the regional hegemon, which sees states trying to exert dominance over others on a regional level.

On a global scale, the United States has been considered the main hegemon in economic, military and political spheres. The regional

aspect to hegemony suggests that dominance by one state can be exerted on a smaller scale within the international community. By having states compete against each other for dominance and leadership on a smaller scale, rivalries between states can develop as they seek new ways to gain prominence on the local level and position themselves as the hegemon within its region. Utilizing the work done by others on rivalries between states only adds to the development of Mearsheimer's work and understanding of how power and influence work on the micro levels of state-state politics.

The objective of this thesis is to develop a better understanding of how hegemonic stability can be applied to the regional or subregional level, in particular within the context of regional rivals Algeria and Morocco. Since regional rivalry is still being developed theoretically, the games the Great Powers played in the past can be applied in some ways to the actions taken by smaller actors seeking to promote its interests and goals amongst its neighbors. The focus of this analysis will be on the behavior of Algeria towards its rival Morocco, and whether the failures of achieving a final agreement on the Western Sahara conflict is a result of Algeria's rivalry with Morocco for regional hegemony. In other words, is Algeria's objective to undermine Morocco's goal of incorporation of Western Sahara into greater Morocco, or is Algeria's support of the Polisario Front and the

Sahrawi Arab Democratic Republic (SADR) a strategy towards becoming the hegemonic power in the region.

With Morocco and Algeria considered rival hegemons in the Maghreb (Cordesman, Burke and Nerguizian, 2010), studying Algeria's role as a possible deterrent towards peace in Western Sahara allows for a better understanding of how states can interfere with intrastate politics and create the conditions that allow for relative gains. Such gains, Mearsheimer argues, allow for greater security of the state. He sees the system as one within a realist framework, without the right agency to protect states from each other they must become more ambitious and seek out power against its rivals. For a state to achieve hegemony within a region, it must capitalize on beneficial situations that better position itself against others (21). Building on the work of McGinnis, this capitalization will allow the state to have an advantage over regional issues and better itself in the long term.

To understand Algeria's position in the conflict, the thesis will take a case study approach towards both Morocco and Algeria in regards to Western Sahara. It will examine Morocco's interest in the area and how Algeria has challenged those interests. The model will look at analytical, rather than quantitative, evidence in order to understand the relationship between the rivals as well as explain how Algeria has utilized its relationship with the Polisario to undermine

Moroccan interest in Western Sahara. The analysis is based on the argument that Algeria has regional hegemonic ambitions, and is utilizing the Polisario to challenge Morocco for hegemonic supremacy in the Maghreb.

The following chapters will examine the issue of hegemonic stability, rivalry and how Algeria has made attempts to challenge their rival for dominance of the Maghreb region. Chapter 2 will further discuss the concepts of hegemony and rivalry. Examining how rivalries play out will help to understand Algerian and Moroccan concerns and points of conflict. Chapter 3 will explain the Western Sahara conflict as well as Morocco's objectives for incorporation of the territory into "greater Morocco." The chapter will also examine the relationship between Morocco and Algeria in order to better understand its goals and objectives in the conflict. Chapter 4 will examine Algeria's strategy in the conflict, looking at whether its actions towards Morocco have undermined Morocco's goals with Western Sahara and its ability to become a regional hegemon. Furthermore the section will determine if Algeria has benefitted from weakening Morocco's position on issues surrounding Western Sahara and thereby achieved regional hegemon status within the Maghreb.

Chapter 2: The regionalization of hegemony

Literature on hegemony has from the beginning sought to understand how states are able to exert control on others in the international system. Those within the field have worked to understand how one entity can dominate the political or economic discussion any number of states. The idea of hegemony is built off the work of Krasner and Russett, which dwell on the diminished influence of the United States in the world after the Vietnam War. Linking economic factors with political ambition and control, Kindelberger, Krasner and Slidell sought to better understand how states gain, maintain and lose power. The developments in this period helped to explain the dominance of the US (and the United Kingdom before World War II) and how it was losing its ability to lead the world.

Stephen Krasner sought to understand the economic arrangement of state power politics. He argued the need to understand power politics as well as trade under the auspices of opportunity costs in terms of trade (1976, 320). Utilizing this idea, he suggests the need for small states to become more open in order to grow economically. Such openness would allow smaller states to compete better as well as become more integrated with larger states

that have the perceived advantages within the trade system. This dependence would lead to states to align over time with those who present the best opportunity to benefit far longer – which would require states to align with the major powers in the world (the US and the Soviet Union).

Krasner also point out that in a hegemonic system smaller states would take advantage of being within the system since they would grow economically although its own political power is limited (Krasner, 322). Smaller states become an intricate part of the greater hegemonic system since they have much to gain economically while not threatening the political system as a whole or exerting leadership (Kindleberger, 1981, 249). This is important in understanding how hegemonic stability theory can be applied to rivalry theory, because the lack of opposition against international hegemons like the US, the Soviet Union or Great Britain (before World War II) would allow the smaller states to position themselves against each other on the lower level of the political system. This repositioning within hegemony allows each state to show why they would be more important than its rivals and allow for more recent competition between the states.

Understanding Krasner and Kindleberger's early works help to bridge the gap between the emergence of the field in the 1960s and 1970s and how authors like Mearsheimer understood the context in

the 1990s. As the United States has become the singular power in the post-Cold War era, discussion shifted towards understanding how a state or states could maintain hegemonic control. Bruce Russett, for example, has sought to understand hegemony through alternative methods like cultural diffusion rather than in the traditional means of trade and economic superiority. He suggested (1985) that the success of the hegemon was through the allocation of private goods, and that the shift is based on the whole global system being modified by the US to maintain American interest and dominance (Russett, 208). Even he, however, saw the emergence of peace issues in the Third World and regime stability as a threat to American dominance. The work of Krasner and Russett, who early on surmised the role of western powers as a means of creating hegemonic poles, helps to create the concepts that John Mearsheimer would question and reexamine.

Mearsheimer's concepts of great powers became better understood in his work *The Tragedy of Great Power Politics*, which sought to explain what power actually is and how states seek to survive. Based on this need for states to survive in an anarchical world, he suggests there is a level of fear and power maximization needed for a state to maintain its own presence in the world, suggesting a balancing requiring allies or resources to maintain leverage. While his work was based on European power politics, he

also attempted to explain the rise of China in the 21st century, suggesting that the US never acted as a true hegemon on the world stage but as a balancing force to the Soviets during the Cold War and against both Russia and China during the current decade. His work, based on the roles of European powers, does create a basis for understanding smaller hegemonic battles – especially his interest in the ideas of balance and unbalance multipolar. His sole focus on European hegemony and views on the US as a balancer and not a hegemon further allows his research and concepts to be extrapolated to smaller regional blocs like the Maghreb (Mearsheimer).

In terms of regional hegemony, Mearsheimer's work in the field has led to others examining the same issues. This has also increased interest in understanding regional rivalries. While hegemonic stability looks at the economic value of a state's power and the regional rival looks originally at the military aspect of state power, both deal with how states interact and perceive each other. Indeed, hegemonic stability theory itself holds a need for a rival to emerge against the perceived hegemon for the system to stay in balance – or for multiple parties to compete should a power vacuum occur due to the collapse of the previous dominant party. As rivalry studies have developed, they have taken from the hegemonic field the concepts of regime interest and security, transferring these concepts to the study of

smaller powers (McGinnis, 1990). By positioning towards security measures, the field is able to originally examine the relationships between small and large states. Over time, the work has been able to move away from the Cold War focus to try and examine relationships between smaller states. In turn, they offer a means to better explain and speculate on actions taken on the micro political level and any future ramifications.

Regional rivalry is considered more of a study of securitization of states, due in large part to the states used to study the concept. McGinnis' earlier work focused on India and Pakistan, Iran and Iraq, Greece and Turkey, the Republic of Korea and the People's Democratic Republic of Korea as well as Ethiopia and Somalia (111). He tried to frame the issue or rivalries between states along the lines of the Cold War – its own militarization was in many ways due to each state's alliances with the US and the Soviet Union. In his work he examined issues of security and armament of states in response to its neighbors. In these cases, he saw its development through the scope of the end of the Cold War, which leads to some questions of relevance.

Yet the pairings established by McGinnis give some idea of how regional rivalries develop and stay constant. From China and Japan's historical conflict over Korea to their recent contest over oil access . While many states have begun to swing in favor of Chinese economic

interest in the region and within the developing world, Japan's diplomatic experience makes states still willing to side with it, even if it's kept quiet. As Japan has sought to strengthen their connections with Southeast Asia, they have moved into markets that had been under Chinese influence and both states have utilized soft power to influence states towards supporting their position (Sohn, 2010). Further, Japan has sought to use their own financial resources to undermine Chinese interested in the developing world, keeping an economic as well as security rivalry alive (Dreyer, 2006). India and Pakistan, meanwhile, have been rivals since before independence and division of British India in 1948 and their own rivalry continues to this day. While it is possible to suggest that India is by far the dominant force on the Indian subcontinent and could be the hegemon, issues surrounding Kashmir have led to several armed conflicts and a continuation of aggressive rhetoric between Dehli and Islamabad (Haidar, 2008/2009).

While harder to connect when dealing with Greece and Turkey, especially as work done by Georgiou, Kapopoulos and Lazaretou (1996) suggested empirically there was no armed rivalry between the states even while military expenditure went up, the suggestion of rivals tends to be applicable with the other cases as each state showed a willingness to align with a superpower based more on arms buildup

rather than something far greater like economics. In each state's case it helped to set the tone for how the state can respond to actions taken by its own rivals over the next twenty years. McGinnis' work on the subject also highlights the evolving nature of hegemonic stability and its focus on the Great Powers when addressing the behaviors of smaller actors within its own neighborhood. Like others (Rousseau and Garcia-Retamero, 2007) who saw asymmetrical relations between neighbors leading towards threat fears, McGinnis sees the realist nature of rivalry within a zero-sum game. Like in hegemonic stability, rivalry theory sees the world through competition that leads in time to power being condensed in a small amount of states.

The development of the regional rivalry concept has helped to clarify how relationships between neighbors and rivals grow. It is suggested by some that the idea of a rivalry must be defined as competition within the zero-sum game framework (Goertz and Diehl, 1992, 153). By taking a more realist approach on the subject, rivalries could focus less on the economic definitions found in hegemonic stability and better shape how rival hegemons can occur. When the idea of the zero-sum game is combined with "contested issues" (Bennet, 1996) which can lead to a disagreement "over the resolution of some issue(s) between them for an extended period of time (Bennet, 160)," the rival states involved in a struggle for influence and

control over a region have created its own sense of purpose that fuel the conflict between them.

The ideas of Goertz, Bennet and others have helped to spell out the ideas of regional rivalry and frame the various perspectives that help explain why states view its neighbors as rivals. Further, its concepts help to define the very nature of the conflicts the states have created amongst themselves or have had fostered onto them – be they based on spatial or positional conflicts as defined by Thompson in his work on principal rivalry (1995) or the simple issue of disagreements over conflict as defined by Bennet. The idea that rivalry can happen on a regional level may not be new, but the interest outside the confines of the Cold War is. Indeed, looking at the literature over the past twenty years shows signs of a redefining of the regional rivalry concept along lines of national security as well as economic issues that shape and define work on hegemonic stability.

While this work is not looking at the economics of rivalry between states, the idea that economics, security and government can build a rivalry feeds into the ideas of stability that Krasner and others would argue in the 1960s. By bridging the economic necessity of hegemons with the natural rivalries that develop between states in certain regions, this suggests the actions taken by states in order to prevent one from gaining hegemonic control over the region are

normal actions taken in order to maintain a certain balance between the states. If one agrees with the zero-sum approach taken by Goertz and Diehl and others who apply rational choice towards the conflict between rivals, it would also build the idea of hegemonic stability towards a localized understanding.

A different view of rivalry comes on the issues of the threat states pose towards each other. While there is a possible issue of identity involved in creating security issues through perceived threats (Rousseau and Garcia-Retamero, 2015), states who feel a weakness in military power sense the problems that develop into rivalry. Like McGinnis, the race to arm fuels the desires of those involved in a rivalry to emerge as the better armed and the better prepared for possible conflict. However, the threat can instead build into a power position that allows for states to dictate policy and actions to its neighbors (Dahl, 1957). If this is truly the case, then the actors involved in a rivalry would aspire to be viewed as the hegemon within its own relationship – and such a view would shape its own interests on the regional level.

There has been even an attempt to understand a multi-level hegemony, which would see the regional and global hegemon fighting each other for access to new markets and an attempt to work between states (Deyermond, 2009). This different approach to rivalry studies

embraces the economic nature of hegemonic stability while seeing the willingness of states at different levels of global interaction secure themselves against each other. While work on Central Asia sees the complex links between the US as a global hegemon, Russia as the regional hegemon and Uzbekistan and China as emerging regional (and in China's case, global) hegemons it also highlights how dominance can still occur at various levels of interaction from the economic and security levels. Comparatively, the ideas presented in this discussion can be applied to the actions taken by Morocco and Algeria against each other while dealing with actions taken by the US, France, Spain and international organizations all within the context of Western Sahara. In other words, the ideas of Kindelberger and Krasner when understanding economic supremacy and hegemony have led over time to the security issues that scholars like McGinnis and Bennet examine. In terms of the thesis, Algeria's support of the Polisario could be taken as part of its rivalry with Morocco, and its goal of hegemony in the region a development of its relationship with its rival.

Chapter 3: Framing the narrative: Morocco, Algeria and Western Sahara

This chapter is focused on explaining the complicated relationship between Morocco, Algeria and Western Sahara. The first part examines Western Sahara itself – its people, its history, its resources and geography. This creates a better sense of what the territory is and has to offer those who seek to control it. The second section deals with the War for Spanish (Western) Sahara and Morocco's attempts to incorporate the rechristened Western Sahara as the southern provinces of Morocco. This section also examines the development of the Polisario Front, the establishment of the SADR and the rise of Algeria as the major sponsor of the front.

The final section examines the rivalry between Algeria and Morocco – rooted in border disputes that help to develop each side's interest in Western Sahara. Each section shows the historical nature of the conflict between the two rivals and how Western Sahara has become an issue between Algeria and Morocco. This conflict suggests how Morocco can challenge Algeria in the region for supremacy as well as how Algeria has sought to keep Morocco from gaining dominance over its neighbors.

Western Sahara: A Primer

Western Sahara is a strip of land along the Atlantic coast of Africa. The territory sits on 266,000 sq. km of land, which borders Morocco, Algeria and Mauritania. The territory has a total coastline of 1,110 km and a total population of 522,928 (CIA, 2012). Many of the Sahrawi (Western Saharan) people do not live within the territory but rather in the camps outside of Tindouf, Algeria. When one looks at a map of Western Sahara, it becomes clear why many would assume it already was a part of Morocco. A majority of the population of Western Sahara descends from the Berber tribes of the region (Hodges, 1984), and are traditionally nomadic. The Berbers had been dependent on their nomadic traditions throughout the centuries for its state's economy as well as basic survival (Hodges, 75). Since Spanish control ended in the 1970s, Morocco has moved a number of Moroccans into the state for both work and, as believed by the Polisario, as a means to shift the population towards Moroccan sympathies (Zunes and Mundy, 2010).

The territory, while arid, is known for having one of the largest phosphate reserves in the world. The mineral, a necessity for fertilizers and farming, is considered a major resource for the region, and has already led to USD 1 billion a year in sales to Morocco (Simanowitz, 2009). The rise in phosphates extraction comes in line with growth in iron, uranium and zirconium – all that help to build the case for a

major supplier of minerals on the world stage. Morocco and international companies have also sought to find oil and gas reserves along the coastline of Western Sahara (Simanowitz, 301), which would only add to the economic growth of the territory but currently are shifted to Morocco. There is also a belief the coastal areas of Western Sahara may present future oil revenues, with both the Moroccan and the SADR governments working in the early part of the millennium to secure contracts for future oil exploration once the Western Sahara question has been settled (Western Sahara Campaign, 2003).

In addition to minerals, Western Sahara is noted for its fishing waters. Morocco has profited from growth in the fisheries, thanks to deals worked out with the European Union in which Moroccan waterways are not defined. The failure of the EU and Morocco to establish a demarcation line for Western Sahara waters allows fishing to occur off the coast, which violates UN Resolution 1514(XV) (302). With the European Union increasing trade with Morocco without excluding the Western Saharan territory (which other states like the US have), it places Morocco in a position where they are profiting off sales that should not be allowed in the marketplace. Morocco has responded that the sale of resources is helping to fuel development in the territory (Borrell and Grushkin, 2010).

The conflict in the Spanish Sahara and the rise of the Polisario

Western Sahara has had a long history of conflict that has shaped its history as well as relations between itself and its neighbors. The territory was first claimed by Spain at the 1884 Berlin Conference (Spector, 2009). At the time the population was mostly nomadic and Spain failed to make much of the territory over the years. In 1961 Spain moved the Spanish Sahara's status to non-self-governing territory under the auspices of the UN Charter (Spector). The UN, dealing with conflict between Spain and Morocco, would further push Spain towards allowing the Sahrawi a vote for independence in 1965, 1967, 1968, 1972 and 1973 (Marks, 1976). While facing several nationalist uprisings (Marks, 8) Spain would eventually withdraw from Spanish Sahara in 1975. The Polisario Front would arise during this period, rising up against Spain in 1973 as a means to assert the Sahrawi desire for independence (Ben-Meir, 2010).

While Spain was in the middle of war and planning its eventual withdraw from the territory, other states would take interest. Morocco and Mauritania sought to claim the territory through historical links that the International Court of Justice rejected in October 1975 (Spector). Undaunted, Morocco invaded the territory later that month and Spain, facing the possibility of war and an ailing Generalissimo Franco, agreed to terms to divide the Spanish Sahara between

Morocco and Mauritania. The Polisario shifted its attention to the new owners of the land, launching attacks on Moroccan and Mauritanian lands and eventually winning a peace treaty with Mauritania in 1979. Morocco would eventually regain Polisario-controlled lands in the 1980s. To prevent further attacks, the Moroccan government proceeded to build high sand walls known as berms (similar to its war strategy with Algeria in 1963) as defensive points. The berms would expand over time to create diverging zones between the Polisario and the government. These would create the perceived "Free Zone" of the Polisario and the SADR at present. The Polisario would declare an independent government in exile from Algeria in 1975 that would be recognized by 75 governments and gain a seat in the Organization of African States in 1982. Morocco would leave the OAU at that time in protest and remains the only African state not a part of the successor organization, the African Union.

The two sides would broker a peace accord in 1989 that called for an eventual vote on independence, autonomy or some other form of governance monitored by the UN. However, debate over the voting lists between the Polisario and Morocco in 1994 and 2000 have stymied any possible solution by a vote, and the Polisario has been critical of Moroccan attempts to remove an independence vote from the list. In the last decade there has been an emerging movement

within Moroccan-controlled Western Sahara against Morocco, calling themselves the *Intifada* with uprisings in 2005 and 2010, and the Polisario has suggested this would become the new form of protest against Morocco instead of armed conflict (Zunes and Mundy, 2010).

In 2003 former US Secretary of State James Baker, serving as a special UN Envoy on Western Sahara, made an attempt to bring both sides to an agreement on a settlement, which would dismantle the SADR and establish a Western Sahara Authority, which would govern for five years within Morocco. Upon those five years, the population would vote for integration, autonomy or independence. Even with the allowance of Moroccan settlers in the region – illegal under the auspices of the Geneva Convention (Simanowitz) the Polisario and Algeria agreed to the terms, while Morocco rejected them outright. Morocco propose a new referendum that would allow for autonomy only in 2007, which the Polisario rejected and submitted its own proposal for a referendum. The UN Security Council requested both sides to mediate towards a solution (Simanowitz, 303) which failed to see results.

As of 2012 the UN Mission to Western Sahara exists, working inside both the Moroccan and Polisario-controlled areas of the territory. With the mandate expected to be extended this year, there had been talks held in March to push for some sort of governance

settlement – with Algeria and Mauritania observing the talks (Arieff, 2012). Those talks ended with a commitment towards further talks later in the year between the Polisario and Morocco, with both sides continuing to push their own agenda for a future settlement. However, due to the recent protests in Western Sahara (both before and during the Arab Spring movement of 2011) the Polisario has pushed for human rights to be brought back onto the agenda as a means to challenge Moroccan authority and to safeguard the local Sahrawi population from possible abuse (Simanowitz, 2012).

Table 2: Timeline of the Western Sahara Conflict²

1884	Spain granted control over what would become Spanish Sahara
1958	Spain merges the Saguia el-Hamra and Río de Oro territories into Spanish Sahara
1970	The Zemla Intifada occurs against the Spanish government in the territory, Spain puts down the organization
1973	The Polisario Front forms in Mauritania
1975	Spain begins a negotiation of a handover of Spanish Sahara to Morocco and Mauritania
Oct. 16, 1975	The ICJ ruled that Spain should not have controlled Spanish Sahara and that Morocco and Mauritania had historical links, but that should not hinder the right to self-determination.
Nov. 6, 1975	The Green March occurs, sending Moroccan troops into Spanish Sahara
Nov. 14, 1975	The Madrid Accord is signed by Spain, Morocco and Mauritania ceding control of the Spanish Sahara. The UN fails to recognize the Accord
1975-1991	The Western Sahara War
Feb. 27, 1976	The Sahrawi Arab Democratic Republic is proclaimed by the Polisario Front
Aug. 5, 1979	Mauritania and the Polisario sign a peace accord, ending Mauritania's involvement in the conflict
Aug. 1979	Morocco annexes all of Western Sahara, taking claim to the Mauritanian portion of the territory ceded by Spain in 1975.
1980s	Morocco builds berms to protect the Souther Provinces from attack by the Polisario
1984	The SADR wins a seat at the OAU/AU. Morocco leaves the organization.

² Information gathered for this timeline comes from Zunes, S. and J. Mundy. (2010) *Western Sahara: War, Nationalism, and Conflict (Ir)resolution*. Syracuse University Press, http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Western_Sahara_conflict and http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Western_Sahara_War

Table 2 continued

Sept. 6, 1991	A cease-fire is declared by Morocco and the Polisario. The UN pushes for a referendum to determine the final status of Western Sahara
1991	Settlement Plan (Resolution 658) endorsed by the UN, proposing referendum on independence, autonomy or incorporation of Western Sahara. Vote never occurs
1997	Houston Agreement orchestrated by the UN to hold a vote in 1998. Morocco and the Polisario disagree on how census is to occur and who counts as Sahrawi. Vote never occurs
2001	Baker Plan I proposed, which would only allow Western Sahara autonomy. Algeria and Polisario reject the plan
2003	Baker Plan II proposed, creating a Western Sahara Authority which would govern for five years before an autonomy vote would occur. Algeria and the Polisario agreed eventually to the plan and the UN endorsed the plan, but Morocco rejected it due to the possibility of independence.
May 2005	First Independence Intifada breaks out in Moroccan-held territories
Oct. 9, 2010	Gdeim Izik set up as a protest camp in Western Sahara, taken down in November
Feb. 2011	Fresh round of protests in Western Sahara, inspired by both Gdeim Izik and the Arab Spring protest movement
2010 – present	Current UN Envoy Christopher Ross has held nine rounds of talks to bridge differences between Morocco and the Polisario over any future settlement. Algeria and Mauritania attend as observers. So far, nothing has happened to change Moroccan or Polisario positions

Algeria and Morocco: Seeds of Rivalry

While the focus of the work is on the Western Sahara issue and how Algeria is trying to utilize the territory to undermine Morocco, it is important to understand both the history of the Western Sahara conflict as well as the conflict between Algeria and Morocco. Algeria and Morocco had both been under the rule of France – Algeria as a Regency as early as 1837 (Heggoy, 1970) and Morocco as a protectorate in 1912 (Protectorate Treaty, 1912). France had signed an agreement with the Moroccan government not to militarize certain areas under Moroccan control but while both states were under French rule both states saw official borders created in 1938 that would move the Draa Valley – which includes the Tindouf region used by the Polisario as its base today – into Algerian territory.

Morocco would contest this claim upon independence, arguing that the Draa region had been under Moroccan rule before European powers interfered with borders. However the Algerians argued that the territory belonged to them under French law as well as agreements made in 1904 and 1912 with Spain (Heggoy, 20). Small-scale conflict between the states would occur in 1962 and 1963, as Morocco would move troops into the disputed areas and then withdraw them while Moroccan press would use the issue to encourage greater nationalism amongst the population (Farsoun and Paul, 1976). The two states

would finally engage in war in October 1963 over the disputed area which would see Morocco fail to take over the region. The Sand War would begin the process of positioning the two states as rivals in the region, as talks over Tindouf and the southwest boundaries of Algeria would push well into the 1970. In 1972 the Organization of African Union would draw the final lines that would result in the Moroccan and Algerian border – lines Algeria would ratify and that Morocco would allow to stand, even as they failed to ratify (Zartman, 1987).

Some like William Thompson (2001) have argued that the rivalry between Algeria and Morocco “ended” in 1984 (p.577) due to a failure of continued military action. However, as Algeria and Morocco continue to arm and maintain its current policies in regards to Western Sahara as well as each other, this analysis could be questioned. Recently, Algeria and Morocco engaged in its own arms race due to counterterrorism and the rise of al-Qaeda in the Maghreb (AQIM), although Algeria has been more directly affected by Islamist threats (Carney, 2009). Algeria’s links to Russia due to oil supply have helped the state to increase its arms buildup that prompted Morocco to request and increase in arsenal from the US, the Netherlands and eventually France (Carney), although both sides have made clear the arming is needed due to the threat AQIM poses to its security.

Neither state has sought to provoke the other into armed conflict recently. Yet the rise in arms buildup and the continued rivalry between Algeria and Morocco has led some like Carney to suggest both states are attempting to become more strategically significant to the West – especially the United States. As its own rivalry from the past moves into the 21st century it becomes more apparent that they maintain a steep desire for influence and control. With the borders between the states still closed and both states having pulled allies and neutral parties towards its side on the Western Sahara issue from the Arab League, the African Union and the United Nations (Vaquer, 2007), each continues to pursue a strategy of counterbalancing each other and giving a greater appearance of leadership and authority within the Maghreb.

While both states have failed to take up arms against each other, Algeria's support of the Polisario allows them a proxy to use in terms of political and military conflict. Using the Polisario has allowed Algeria to insert itself within the discussion for a future settlement of the conflict while absolving themselves of responsibility. Considering the territorial rivalry between Morocco and Algeria has existed since independence (Rasler and Thompson, 49) and that both states continue to seek out new advantages against each other due to the US' War on Terror, it should be expected that the rivalry would

continue to exist even during periods of friendlier relations.

Considering both states view each other skeptically and at times as a threat to regional stability due to their own hegemonic ambitions, friendlier relations may be linked to future agreements over Western Sahara. In the case of these states, Western Sahara has been central to exploiting its developing rivalry.

Chapter 4: Algeria's Opposition to Moroccan Interests in the Western Sahara

This chapter examines perceived goals and objectives of the Moroccan government in regards to Western Sahara and examines how Algeria has attempted to undermine Morocco's ability to succeed. The analysis is based on Algeria's hegemonic ambitions and its strategy to counter influence by Morocco. The chapter is based on the argument that in order to achieve regional hegemony in North West Africa, Algeria has attempted to oppose Morocco's objectives in regards to Western Sahara. By working against Morocco's interests on the conflict, Algeria would then be able to offer its voice on a regional and international level and strengthen its leadership position in the Maghreb. This would then allow Algeria to foster the perception that it is the subregional hegemon in the region.

The section begins with a presentation of possible goals of the Moroccan government in regards to Western Sahara – what the state hopes to achieve once incorporation has been accomplished (either through direct incorporation or through an autonomy process). These goals are created based on research on Moroccan interest in Western Sahara. Each possible reason for Morocco's actions towards an

ultimate incorporation of the territory will be examined by looking at current and previous public records and information. An examination of the current policy practices of Morocco and others can show how states have responded to Morocco's attempts to exert control over Western Sahara and shift world opinion in its favor. Further, should states show resistance towards Morocco it would suggest that Algeria is trying to influence the resolution of the conflict. Algeria's role or influence on each issue will be examined as well, especially in terms of how Algeria has been able to successfully challenge Morocco. It will also examine if the problems with Moroccan authority over Western Sahara are outside the realm of Algerian influence and whether Algeria benefits from negative international perceptions of Morocco's interests in the region.

For the hypothesis of this thesis to be confirmed, there should be an indication of Algerian negative influence on how Morocco's claims on Western Sahara are viewed internationally. However, if the findings suggest Morocco has been successful in changing regional and international views on Western Sahara or the Polisario, then it would be considered as weakening Algeria's position. However, if Algeria has been able to maintain previous attitudes on Western Sahara or been successful in limiting Moroccan claims on the territory – either through direct action or covert support of others – then it would be viewed as

strengthening Algeria's position. Where the Western Sahara issue is concerned, both states involved in the matter have been persistent in trying to undermine the other. By examining the cases through known policy position and published information will allow for a better understanding of each state's ability to promote its agenda as well as Algeria's ability to emerge as the regional hegemon at the behest of Morocco in its attempts to gain victory in the conflict.

In other words, the overall attempt of this research is to determine Algeria's capacity to exert regional –and to some extent international leadership on Western Sahara matters. Should it succeed in shaping the debate, Algeria would be viewed as a viable regional hegemon.

Morocco's endgame? Positioning for regional supremacy

Morocco's desire to incorporate Western Sahara creates many possible opportunities to enhance its position internationally and within the region. In doing so they would be able to not only challenge Algeria for regional supremacy, but surpass their rival to be viewed as a possible hegemon for the Maghreb. To do this, Morocco would need to achieve certain goals against both Algeria and the Polisario to weaken their status in the region. To create such goals, this thesis has reviewed works from major scholars in the field of Western Sahara – specifically Stephen Zunes and Yahia Zoubir, as well as others like Ben-Meir and Maghraoui - to examine what Morocco wants. This research helps to formulate possible goals of the Moroccan government that would be attained once Western Saharan incorporation had occurred. By creating these goals, Algeria's means of challenging Morocco over the territory can be better understood.

One such opportunity over the territory would allow Morocco to not only increase its boundaries but also consolidate international views on the issue in its favor. A final treaty between the government and the Polisario would allow the state to have its boundaries internationally recognized and allow Morocco to shift its interests elsewhere internally, especially if the result led to the Sahrawi population supporting autonomy or integration into the state. This

would also allow the international community to recognize Moroccan claims on the area and create a greater level of stability in regional politics, weakening Algeria's position within the region and undermining the ability of the Polisario to exert influence within Western Sahara. As a result, such actions would allow Morocco the ability to project leadership and stability within the region and create a sense of hegemonic superiority over its neighbors.

Secondly, a settlement on the Western Sahara matter would force states and organizations to end its support for the Polisario. As it stands the continued recognition of the Polisario through recognition of the SADR damages Morocco's ability to exert control over the territory. Further, it increases the international standing of the opposition and prevents Morocco from achieving any of its long-terms plans in the region. As long as other states continue to recognize either the SADR as the independent government for the Sahrawi or the Polisario as the official representatives of the people, Morocco is limited in exerting control over the full territory and must counter its rivals in the region for influence and position. By achieving incorporation of Western Sahara into Morocco, the Polisario would become marginalized within Morocco and would lose support in the international community.

The third point regarding Morocco's desire to incorporate Western Sahara deals with resource allocation. Once the territory is

legally incorporated, Morocco would have greater access to maritime and land-based resources that would make its position in North West Africa much stronger. As noted by Sören Lind and Toby Shelly (Summary Report, 2010), questions over the control of phosphates, oil and fisheries within Western Sahara persist and have become central to Morocco's policy in the region. By having full legal access to the resources, rather than the current use of the resources that has run into conflict with activist groups, international companies as well as the European Union, Morocco would be able to better develop the Western Sahara as well as better profit off the resources found in the region. This would greatly increase its ability to lead in the Maghreb and better position the state compared to Algeria.

Finally, all these issues relate to making Morocco a more viable regional hegemon. Once the question on Western Sahara has been settled, Morocco would be able to build on greater support from its Western allies – the United States and France – and better position itself in a post-Gadhafi Maghreb region to be the central power base. As a greater Morocco would increase its mineral and fisheries wealth, the state would be viewed more viable economically within the region and decrease the influence Algeria currently has in regional politics. Ousting the Polisario from control over the Sahrawi would further increase Morocco's leadership capacity in the region.

These four possible objectives of Morocco are central to this analysis because in each case Algeria and the Polisario have sought to challenge Morocco's desire to be viewed as the regional hegemon. Each suggested goal for Morocco allows it a means to not only solve its own problems with Western Sahara, but better position itself internationally and within the Maghreb as a major force. Further, by resolving the Western Sahara situation, Morocco would be in a better position to push for greater regional integration through the Arab Maghreb Union (World Bank, 2010). The following sections examine each possible goal from both the Moroccan and Algerian example to see how Algeria has or has not challenged and undermined the Moroccan government.

Recognition of Moroccan claims towards Western Sahara

In terms of recognition, Algeria has been able to use its connections with the Polisario on a continental level. However, since capturing Western Sahara Morocco has struggled to have its claims on the territory recognized outside Africa, let alone within its home region. Part of the problem comes with the decision released by the International Court of Justice, which in 1975 determined that while there were some traditional links between the Sahrawi and old Moroccan sultans before Spanish and French rule, those connections (typically allegiances of loyalty) were not enough to legitimize Morocco's claims on the territory (Maghraoui, 2003, 115). Rather than accepting the results and wait for the Spanish referendum over the territory, Morocco sent civilians and troops into Spanish Sahara to begin its takeover of the region. The march on Spanish Sahara would force Spain towards handing over Spanish Sahara to Morocco and Mauritania in Madrid later that year (Maghraoui).

Since then Morocco has been engaged in a conflict not only with the Polisario over control over the territory, but with the Polisario and Algeria over recognition of what they feel is rightfully its. Due to its ground invasion after the ICJ ruling, Morocco has been seen as the aggressor in the state (Maghraoui, 116) due to the repression of the Sahrawi as well as its opposition to the right of the Sahrawi to self-

determination as dictated by the UN and the ICJ. Some have raised the point (Maghraoui, 124) that separation of Western Sahara from Morocco would damage its sovereignty – a position taken by the United States to this very day (Arieff).

In Morocco's favor is the unwillingness of many in the international community to push for a solution. Morocco has been a willing ally of the US and from a geopolitical scope plays an important balancing role in North Africa for Washington (Zunes and Mundy, 72). Further, it is the position of the US that allowing a Sahrawi vote on independence could destabilize the Moroccan monarchy, which would threaten a major ally in North Africa (Zoubir, 2009) that has become more important during the War on Terror.

In addition to the US, Morocco receives more aid from France in maintaining the current situation. France has been a champion for Morocco within the Security Council and is in many ways a counterbalance to the objectives of its former colony Algeria. Accordingly, it is advocating a solution to the conflict that would better support the regime in Rabat – one in which Western Sahara would be under Morocco's sovereignty while allowing autonomy for the Sahrawi. The French government was also instrumental in successfully altering the discussion over Sahrawi independence and was able to wedge

themselves within the proposed Baker Plan in 2001 (Zunes and Mundy, 78).

This position allows Morocco protection from the UN when it comes to Western Sahara, and France was willing to endorse Morocco's proposal for autonomy for Western Sahara with no possibility of self-determination (Zoubir 2009, 985). However, the position has been limited as France, the US and Spain did push for Morocco to provide a "credible" solution with the failure of the second Baker Plan in 2003 (Zoubir, 2007). Further, in 2009 US Secretary of State Hilary Clinton said the following in regards to Morocco's plan for Sahrawi autonomy:

"Well, this is a plan, as you know, that originated in the Clinton Administration. It was reaffirmed in the Bush Administration and it remains the policy of the United States in the Obama Administration. Now, we are supporting the United Nations process because we think that if there can be a peaceful resolution to the difficulties that exist with your neighbors, both to the east and to the south and the west that is in everyone's interest. But because of our long relationship, we are very aware of how challenging the circumstances are. And I don't want anyone in the region or elsewhere to have any doubt about our policy, which remains the same. (Zoubir, 2010)"

As long as the US remains committed to the autonomy plan suggested by Morocco, Morocco gains enough international clout to weaken pressure by Algeria and others to compromise with the Polisario and the Sahrawi nationals. With the US maintaining a neutral stance officially on the territory (Al-Manar Slimi, 2009) even after its

willingness to support the Baker plan in 2003, Morocco is further able to utilize their major allies' disinterest in allowing for an independent Sahrawi homeland to continue to propose its own plans over control over the territory.

In 2011, Morocco reiterated its interest in negotiating a proper settlement over Western Sahara while further arguing its position over the conflict and the Polisario. For instance, Moroccan Foreign Minister Taïb Fassi Fihri said the following:

“Morocco reiterates its full readiness to pursue and intensify the negotiation process to find a consensual political solution to the artificial regional dispute over the Moroccan Sahara, on the basis of the autonomy initiative that the Security Council has considered, through six successive resolutions, as serious and credible (UN, 2011)”

Morocco continues to push its goal for incorporating Western Sahara into Morocco thanks in part of support from allies in France and the US, but also due to the UN considering autonomy as a viable option instead of full independence.

Algeria, on the other hand, has sought to utilize the invasion and Morocco's attempts to control the territory to its advantage. While Morocco views international resistance to recognizing its claim as based on Algerian manipulation (Maghraoui, 124), there are some within Algeria that fear that should Western Sahara be recognized as the “Southern Provinces” of Morocco that it would not only throw off the balance of power in the region, but whet appetites in Rabat to

pursue claims towards Tindouf and southwest Algeria (Zoubir 2007). Considering Algeria's own fear of conflict, it has sought to challenge Morocco's claims to the territory and back the Polisario and the SADR as the legitimate power over the area. This comes from its historical support for self-determination of people and Algeria's own history of conflict with France. Jacob Mundy says as much when examining Algeria's role in the conflict:

"...self-determination is an important aspect of the normative framework through which Algerian nationalism constitutes itself and through which the Algerian government has tended to articulate its foreign policy. The ideal of self-determination indisputably played a key discursive role in Algeria's struggle for independence and so there is a sense in which Algerian leaders seen in Polisario clear parallels with their struggle for independence. Support for Western Saharan resistance is thus not only consistent with Algeria's national values, but also its history." (Mundy, 2010, 3-4)"

Algeria has been most vocal on the international stage in its support for the Sahrawi cause and helped the state gain entry to the Organization for African Unity and the successor African Union – which Morocco withdrew from in 1984 and remains the only nonmember on the continent. Algeria has also seen other states recognize the SADR or the Polisario as the official voice of the Sahrawi and support the idea of Sahrawi self-determination (Benabdallah, 2009). As states show support for the position made by the UN in the 1970s – that Western Sahara should be governed by the Sahrawi - Algeria has not directly created this development but has been able to benefit from

state's sympathies for the Sahrawi as a means of limiting Morocco's perceived aggression.

In the end, Algeria's greatest argument against Morocco's claims on Western Sahara is that no state besides Morocco – not even its strongest supporter France – recognizes it (Zoubir 2007, 167). When Morocco made its 2007 autonomy proposal, Algeria and the Polisario were able to reject it outright as it failed to include an option for independence, and positioned Morocco as the aggressor state yet again. It is this conflicting development between them that Algeria has been able to use against Moroccan interests. Algeria, while not forcing the matter beyond supporting the Sahrawi cause, will continue to benefit from Morocco's inability to have its claims recognized. In this way, Algeria can be viewed as a stronger force in the region.

Ending recognition of the Polisario abroad

Morocco has, since the takeover of Western Sahara, sought to challenge the Polisario's base abroad. While it is somewhat focused on having the territory recognized as part of a greater Morocco, lessening the Polisario's support abroad would allow Morocco a better advantage in negotiating any possible solution with the group. Because of Algeria's continued support for the Polisario, Morocco has been "bogged down" (Arieff, 6) and less capable to assert dominance and leadership in the region, thereby weakening its capacity as a possible regional hegemon in the long term.

To Morocco's credit, as the war and stalemate has dragged on, the numbers have begun to fall on its side. With Morocco fostering the perception of the Polisario as a front for Algerian aggression, as well as pushing its own agenda for autonomy within Morocco, it has been able to persuade states to withdraw recognition for the SADR. Morocco has been aided by France, which has been accused of paying off states to withdraw its support for the Polisario and the SADR (Zoubir 2007).

Unlike its interest in keeping Morocco from incorporating Western Sahara, Algeria has a greater need to develop and maintain the Polisario presence. Algeria has a legitimate concern about a future solution between the Polisario and Morocco, since the SADR are based within Algerian borders. As such, it has become more and more

apparent to Algeria to advocate for more recognition of the Polisario as the official government for Western Sahara. With the number of nations that recognize either the Polisario as the voice of the Sahrawi or the SADR as the official representative of Western Sahara (see Appendix 1) shifting over time, Algeria has been able to count on other states to show at least sympathy with the cause of the Sahrawi and with the Polisario – leverage they can utilize against Moroccan interest.

Algeria's other success in preventing the marginalization of the Polisario is its strict refusal to participate in negotiations. While many may question Algeria's actual interest in the conflict, they have stayed out of all negotiations regardless of pressure. While some, like Mohammed Benouna (the Moroccan UN representative) have argued that Algeria should be forced to negotiate since "Polisario cannot negotiate without the blessing of Algeria (International Crisis Group, 2007)," Algeria has always maintained the position that it is only concerned for the Sahrawi and that the Polisario speak for the people. Mohammed Tefiani, the director of Algerian relations with the rest of Africa, said that Algeria "reject[s] any approach that attempts to force an Algeria-Moroccan dialogue on Western Sahara (ibid)."

While it would be impossible to show that Algeria has directly weakened Morocco's ability to remove the Polisario from the global stage, on this point Algeria shows its ability to undermine its rival.

Rather than speak as a concerned party under the auspices of "self-determination," Algeria is able to press its own views without directly involving itself in the negotiations. Should Algeria be forced to negotiate with Morocco, the Polisario's relevance would become rather nonexistent and the views of the Sahrawi would be diminished. Whether the Moroccan government agrees with it or not, the Polisario is considered the voice of the Sahrawi people, and as long as Algeria stays, or at least acts, above the fray, the Polisario will be able to maintain supporters and recognition. Even with the money flowing to buy off states for support, Algeria's willingness to play by the UN's rules allows it to continue to undermine Morocco's objective and keeps the Polisario as a threat to the future integration of Western Sahara into Morocco.

Access towards maritime and interior resources

Morocco's interest in incorporating Western Sahara does go beyond the idea of "greater Morocco." With Western Sahara's possible sites of natural resource development, the territory becomes far more valuable beyond nationalist desires. Morocco has made it a point that its work in the territory is part of greater development for the region, and will only help to take the Sahrawi population forward. While there may be a legitimate question over how much control Morocco would allow an autonomous Sahrawi region within its border in terms of negotiations for resource extraction, the fact that Morocco has already begun to profit from the territory means Morocco is in a position to legitimize its control over the area.

Indeed, with the state trying to profit on the sale of fish contracts and phosphates, Morocco would be wise to integrate the Western Sahara within its legal boundaries. As it stands, states continue to struggle with dealing with products sold from Western Sahara, as noted by the Stockholm Environmental Institute in 2010 (Summary Report). The group, in a conference dealing specifically with the sale of phosphates and its effects on food supply and management and how it affects Western Sahara, argued it would be wise to boycott the sale of such products from the region since they were taken

illegally – tying the debate back to full legal recognition of Morocco’s stewardship of the territory as part of its “Southern Provinces.”

Another part of this debate stems from conflict with the Polisario over the control of waterways. The Polisario had sought in 1987 an agreement with the European Union to promote fisheries along the coast line – an agreement the EU declined. However, the EU would reach the same agreement with the Moroccan government in 2006, one that the Polisario called “a massive enterprise of plundering and amassing of natural wealth...and a flagrant violation of international law (Benabdallah, 423).” and others criticized

Yet in terms of undermining Morocco’s ability to profit from such resources, Algeria has sorely failed to push any agenda. As it stands, much of the push-back on Morocco’s investment come from the Sahrawi activists abroad, the Polisario as well as other activist groups that question the sale of goods from the territory. Algeria itself, having been focused on the political endgame, has expressed no views on matters over resources outside the confines of Sahrawi control over them. With Algeria marginalized as long as Morocco is able to sell phosphates and work out fishing deals with other states that enter Saharan waters, it stands to have little to no footing in undermining its rival.

Yes, Morocco continues to profit from its dealings abroad in terms of major resources. Yet as long as the borders remain unsettled, Morocco will continue to feel pressure from outside organizations and companies that will not purchase goods or create contracts that profit from Western Sahara goods. While this may weaken Morocco in the eyes of investors and activists, Algeria has not been able to profit from the conflict in a leadership role outside calling for a political solution to the boundaries of Morocco and the self-determination of the Sahrawi. As it stands, Algeria has failed to directly undermine Morocco in this point. While Algeria has no direct influence on other states concerning the extraction of resources, they will benefit over time should states begin to resist the opportunity to trade with Morocco goods coming from the territory. But its success is incidental and not based on its own involvement on the issue, lessening its image as a regional leader on this issue.

Strengthening Morocco's position in the Maghreb and abroad

With Algeria and Morocco as regional rivals for dominance, each seeks a means to position itself as a regional leader. Both states had been competing for influence against Libya, but with the recent change in government in Tripoli there is a greater chance to exert leadership in the region in order to diminish Libya's standing and become the stronger force in the Maghreb. With Tunisia in transition and Mauritania considered a weaker state comparatively, it allows the two to engage in direct challenges against each other in the region and abroad.

Algeria has sought out means to challenge Morocco politically and economically for leadership in the region for some time. While Morocco has been able to benefit from Sahrawi resources due to the failure of a final framework that would address the state, Algeria has been able to promote itself as a "champion of colonial peoples and alienates Morocco from regional leadership (Carney, 2009)." As Africa itself tends to regionalize itself within clusters, the failure of the Maghreb to unite has been linked to Algeria and Morocco's battles over Western Sahara, and Algeria has been rather successful in promoting its own agenda against its neighbors within the African continent.

One aspect is the role of the US and France and how its position towards Morocco has influenced the lack of a successful peace plan. In

2003 James Baker presented to the UN a draft resolution for a possible peace deal. While including clauses for a vote that would offer the option of integration or autonomy within the state to the Sahrawi, Morocco rejected the deal because "independence" was included as part of the agreement, which they argued was incompatible with the territorial integrity of Morocco and could lead to instability in the region (Zunes and Mundy). Thanks in part to the War on Terror, both Morocco and Algeria have become major players to the United States in North Africa (Solá-Martin, 2009). Since Morocco has become more important to the US, it creates a new level of rivalry between the two sides in their attempt to position each as the more desirable state in the region.

In 2009, as a response to the 2007 initiative taken by Morocco, Secretary of State Clinton continued to promote American support for the Moroccan plan. More support came in 2010 by members of the US Senate, who called the proposal for autonomy under Moroccan control "the 'sole realistic solution'" (Ben-Meir, 65). Algeria, while maintaining pressure on the African Union and to some extent in the UN, continues to see its views brushed aside by the West, especially the United States. Actions taken by Algeria and South Africa in 2011 to prevent Morocco's election to the Security Council highlight this further (Bennis, 2011), as they were unable to convince fellow members of

the UN that there would be a risk of the Western Sahara conflict ending on less than favorable terms for the Sahrawi. Both states, major supporters for the Polisario and Sahrawi independence, failed to reduce the votes needed for Morocco to earn a seat in the council. In this framework, actions taken by Algeria in support of the Polisario tend to be overridden by the West. However, with others questioning the usefulness of Algeria in negotiations over a future peace plan, it could lead to a strain between the West and Algeria if it is viewed as an obstacle to peace.

The result of such actions taken has led Algeria to both strengthen and weaken itself and Morocco on the global stage. As both struggle to be viewed as the major player in Maghreb affairs and to champion its positions abroad, Algeria has been forced to work behind the scenes to weaken its neighbor. While such actions have proven successful in Africa and help to strengthen its position there, Morocco's greater international appeal and support weakens Algeria's best attempts to weaken its rival. On this point, it appears that Algeria is only marginally successful in undermining Moroccan hegemonic objectives. However, the longer the Western Sahara conflict plays out and the longer the Algerians support the Polisario with no major resolution benefiting them, the more likely Algeria will become a

weakened force in the region and be forced to accept Morocco's positions on the territory.

Chapter 5: Summary and Conclusions

Algeria and Morocco have fought against each other for well over a century, from French colonial rule to the Sand War of 1963. Both states have sought to expand their borders and influence within the Maghreb region, utilizing calls for greater national unity as a means to rally support for their cause. In the case of Western Sahara, Morocco's historical demands to the land led to conflict between the Moroccan Army and both Spain and the Sahrawi people. The Sahrawi, seeking independence from Spain, fought against Morocco under the support of the Polisario Front since 1975. Algeria, having allowed refugees from Western Sahara into the Tindouf region in the southwest corner of Algeria, has played a major supporter of Polisario actions since Morocco's march into the territory, and continues to provide political support to this day. Morocco has been able to reclaim most of the territory in Western Sahara from Polisario rebels and create a small zone that the Polisario is able to work from in the state.

The historical conflicts between Algeria and Morocco help create political problems for both states in regards to Western Sahara and the future of the Maghreb. Both see the possibility of being the major power amongst its neighbors in the Maghreb and even beyond. As long

as the Western Sahara conflict persists, tension between the two states will lead to questions over who has more power and influence in the region. In the case of Algeria, every attempt to weaken Morocco's claims and control over Western Sahara makes their ability to exert power over their neighbors much easier.

Utilizing a dual approach that incorporates the ideas of the regional hegemon with the security issues coming from rivalry studies, this thesis has attempted to examine whether there could be a causal link between supporting minor opposition groups and how such support can benefit a state's hegemonic superiority over its neighbors. While the case presented works only in terms of understanding Algeria and Morocco, such a notion could prove useful towards understanding rivalries between states. However, in this case Algeria's continued support for the Polisario Front and its backing of the Sahrawi Arab Democratic Republic has only given it minor advantages in its rivalry with Morocco.

Algeria's successes in frustrating Morocco's case for incorporating Western Sahara tend to be based on the role of the Polisario. First, Algeria's continued international support for the Polisario helps to maintain some international interest in the group and the interests of the Sahrawi for independence. Algeria has been very successful in getting the SADR a seat on international organizations

and maintaining pressure of Morocco from other states in regards to the treatment of the people. Secondly, Algeria's refusal to talk to Morocco on Western Sahara frustrates future peace plans and undermines Morocco's ability to negotiate an agreement for incorporating the territory. As long as Algeria observes talks and does not participate, they maintain the perception that they are not involved in the process and that they are only there for the Sahrawi people and their long term goal of independence.

Finally, Algeria has used the Polisario as a means to weaken Morocco's presence internationally. While Morocco won their seat to the Security Council, the issue of Sahrawi independence or incorporation were used by Algeria and South Africa to build a case against Morocco winning the seat. Further, Morocco's ability to sell resources found in Western Sahara has been harmed as groups put pressure on governments to not accept goods from Morocco. While Morocco has been able to negotiate deals on oil and phosphates, Polisario supporters have put states in the position to reexamine deals and not agree to certain plans. This would allow Algeria the ability to replace Morocco in energy trading and strengthen Algeria's place in the region.

As long as the Moroccan government is able to impose its own rules on the Polisario, Algeria will be forced to work from a defense

position to maintain its relevance and prevent Algiers from being directly involved in any settlement. As long as Algeria continues to back the Polisario, Morocco will not be able to impose an agenda that could be viewed by some as aggressive due to its noninterest in self-determination for the SADR. Economics and international politics, however, have not been as kind in forcing Morocco's hand as much as Algeria would hope it would. Instead, the challenges facing Morocco over Western Sahara tend to fall outside the interests of Algeria and do little in the long run to suddenly challenge the status quo between the states.

The thesis opens up future studies on how Algeria itself moves forward towards achieving greater dominance in the Maghreb as well as raises interesting questions for future study. Algeria's own stability would come into question should Morocco successfully incorporate Western Sahara, as those in government fear that the failure of Morocco to accept the OAU's findings in 1972 over the Draa Valley would lead to future conflict. The role of Algeria in handling refugees also sets itself for study, as the state could be faced with a greater Sahrawi population if Morocco forces a resolution of their own. Morocco's ambitions within the Maghreb have been studied for some time but with the Mediterranean Union's relationship between the EU and Northern Africa, Morocco would be interested in aligning itself

more with Europe and creating a power position within their home region. Other directions future research on the conflict could examine how ethnicity and culture between the Berber Sahrawi and the more Arab Moroccan population could be a catalyst for conflict over the future of the territory.

With Morocco ascending to the Security Council for a two year stay, there is now a greater chance for Morocco to press for an advantage and gain leverage and dominance over its rivals. For the time being, however, Algeria has shown through its linkage with the Polisario that it is able to achieve minor advantages and gains that weaken its rival. Until the Western Sahara matter is properly settled, Algeria will still be viewed as an obstacle towards peace due to its rivalry with Morocco, but Algeria will continue to see itself as a defender of the rights of self-determination for all, and use this belief as a means to further undermine Morocco both in the Mahgreb and on the global stage.

Appendix A

Recognition of Moroccan and Polisario/SADR claims on Western Sahara

Recognition of the SADR (ordered by Date of Recognition)

(Note: asterisk denotes full diplomatic relations and the exchange of ambassadors)

*Algeria (March 6, 1976)
*Angola (March 11, 1976)
Mozambique (March 13, 1976)
Korea, Democratic People's Republic (March 16, 1976)
Rwanda (April 1, 1976)
*Panama (June 23, 1978)
Tanzania (November 9, 1978)
Ethiopia (February 24, 1979)
Vietnam (March 2, 1979)
Laos (May 7, 1979)
Ghana (August 24, 1979)
Guyana (September 1, 1979)
Jamaica (September 4, 1979)
Nicaragua (September 9, 1979)
Uganda (September 6, 1979)
*Mexico (September 8, 1979)
Lesotho (October 9, 1979)
Cuba (January 20, 1980)
Iran (February 27, 1980)
Sierra Leone (March 27, 1980)
Syria (April 15, 1980)
Libya (April 15, 1980)
Botswana (May 14, 1980)
Zimbabwe (July 3, 1980)
Mali (July 4, 1980)
Chad (July 4, 1980)
*Vanuatu (November 27, 1980)
AFRICAN UNION (February 22, 1982)
*Mauritius (July 1, 1982)
*Venezuela (August 3, 1982)
Suriname (August 11, 1982)

Bolivia (December 14, 1982)
Ecuador (November 14, 1983)
Mauritania (February 27, 1984)
Nigeria (November 11, 1984)
Trinidad and Tobago (November 1, 1986)
Belize (November 18, 1988)
Barbados February 27, 1988)
*El Salvador (July 31, 1989)
Honduras (November 11, 1989)
Namibia (June 11, 1990)
Malawi (November 16, 1994)
*Paraguay (February 9, 2000)
Saint Vincent and the Grenadines (February 14, 2002)
*Timor-Leste (May 20, 2002)
*South Africa (September 15, 2004)
Uruguay (December 26, 2006)
Haiti (November 22, 2006)
*South Sudan (July 9, 2011)

Suspended/Cancelled Recognition of the SADR (ordered Dates of Recognition)

Madagascar (February 28, 1976, Frozen July 4 2005)
Burundi (March 1, 1976, Cancelled relations May 5, 2006)
- Reestablished June 16, 2008, Cancelled October 25, 2010
Benin (March 11, 1976, Cancelled relations March 21, 1997)
Guinea-Bissau (March 15, 1976, Withdrew recognition March 1997)
- Reestablished relations May 26, 2009, withdrew March 20, 2010
Togo (March 17, 1976, Cancelled relations June 18, 1997)
Seychelles (October 25, 1977, Cancelled relations March 17, 2008)
Congo, Republic of (June 3, 1978, Cancelled relations September 13, 1996)
São Tomé and Príncipe (June 22, 1978, Cancelled relations October 23, 1996)
Equatorial Guinea (November 3, 1978, Withdrew recognition May 1980)
Cambodia (April 10, 1979, Withdrew recognition August 14, 2006)
Afghanistan (May 26, 1979, Withdrew recognition July 11, 2002)
Cape Verde (July 4 1979, Frozen July 27, 2007)
Grenada (August 20, 1979, Cancelled relations August 16, 2010)
Dominica (September 1, 1979, Withdrew recognition July 22, 2010)
Sait Lucia (September 1, 1979, Cancelled relations August 16, 2010)
Zambia (October 12, 1979, Cancelled relations March 29, 2011)
Swaziland (April 28, 1980, Suspended August 4, 1997)
Costa Rica (October 30, 1980, Frozen April 22, 2000)

Kiribati (August 12, 1981, Cancelled relations September 15, 2000)
Nauru (August 12, 1981, Cancelled relations September 15, 2000)
Papua New Guinea (August 12, 1981, Cancelled relations April 2, 2011)
Solomon Islands (August 12, 1981, Cancelled relations January 1989)
Tuvalu (August 12, 1981, Cancelled relations September 15, 2000)
Burkina Faso (March 4, 1984, Cancelled relations June 5, 1996)
Peru (August 16, 1984, Frozen September 9, 1996)
Colombia (February 27, 1985, Frozen December 2000)
Liberia (July 31, 1985, Cancelled relations September 5, 1997)
India (October 1, 1985, Cancelled relations June 26, 2000)
Guatemala (April 10, 1986, Withdrew recognition April 1998)
Dominican Republic (June 24, 1986, Frozen May 23, 2002)
Saint Kitts and Nevis (February 25, 1987, Cancelled relations August 16, 2010)
Antigua and Barbuda (February 27, 1987, Cancelled relations August 16, 2010)
Albania (December 29, 1987, Cancelled relations November 11, 2004)
Kenya (June 25, 2005, Frozen July 20, 2006)

Recognition of Sahrawi claims on Western Sahara

AFRICAN UNION

Algeria
Angola
Argentina
Australia
Austria
Belgium
Belize
Bolivia
Botswana
Brazil
Burma
Burundi
Chad
China, People's Democratic Republic of
Chile
Congo, Republic of
Costa Rica
Cuba
Cyprus
Czech Republic
Denmark

Dominica
Dominican Republic
Ecuador
Egypt
El Salvador
Ethiopia
EUROPEAN UNION
Fiji
Finland
Germany
Ghana
Greece
Guatemala
Guinea-Bissau
Haiti
Iran
Ireland
Italy
Jamaica
Jordan
Korea, Republic of
Lesotho
Libya
Malawi
Malaysia
Mali
Mauritius
Mexico
Mozambique
Namibia
New Zealand
Nicaragua
Nigeria
Norway
Panama
Paraguay
Peru
Portugal
Russia
Rwanda
São Tomé and Príncipe
Sierra Leone
Slovakia
Slovenia

South Africa
South Sudan
Spain
Suriname
Sweden
Switzerland
Tanzania
Uganda
UNITED NATIONS
United Kingdom
Uruguay
Venezuela
Vietnam
Zimbabwe

States that recognize Moroccan sovereignty over Western Sahara
Morocco

States that recognize Moroccan claims on Western Sahara

ARAB LEAGUE
Azerbaijan
Bahrain
Benin
Belarus
Bulgaria
Burkina Faso
Cameroon
Cape Verde
Central African Republic
China, People's Democratic Republic of
Chile
Cambodia
Colombia
Comoros
Congo, Democratic Republic of
Djibouti
Dominican Republic
Equatorial Guinea
France
Gabon
Gambia
Guinea
Hungary
Indonesia

Kuwait
Macedonia, Former Yugoslav Republic of
Madagascar
Maldives
Nauru
Netherlands
Niger
Liberia
ORGANIZATION OF ISLAMIC COOPERATION
Peru
Poland
Romania
Russia
Saudi Arabia
Senegal
Serbia
Seychelles
Sudan
Swaziland
Turkey
Yemen

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