

# Arab Spring and Democracy

Symposium, Multidiscipline Research Center, Sapporo Gakuin University

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At SGU Hall, Sapporo Gakuin University

## Introduction: 'Arab Spring' and Conundrums

**Shoji Matsumoto** 55

Professor, Sapporo Gakuin University

## Part I Politics, Law and Economics

Morocco in the New Geopolitical Environment

**El Mostafa Rezrazi** 59

Visiting Professor, Sapporo Gakuin University

International Human Rights and Entitlements of Third States

**Shoji Matsumoto** 74

Professor, Sapporo Gakuin University

Les effets du printemps arabe au Maroc:

Rôle de la société civile et particulièrement du mouvement féminin

**Aziz Chaker** 88

Professeur, Université Sidi Mohammed Ibn Abdellah

## Part II History, Relations with Japan

Inside View of the Arab Spring:

Report on 2011 Parliamentary Election in Morocco

**Kei Nakagawa** 95

Professor, Haboromo University of International Studies

Morocco after the 'Arab Spring':

The Reform Process

**Samir Arrour** 109

Ambassador of the Kingdom of Morocco in Japan

# Introduction: 'Arab Spring' and Conundrums

Shoji Matsumoto

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In January 2013, two months after the symposium, of 'Arab Spring and Democracy,' sponsored by the Multidiscipline Research Center of Sapporo Gakuin University on November 11, 2012, ten Japanese were killed in a hostage-taking incident by terrorists in Algeria. Professor Rezrazi, a visiting professor of Sapporo Gakuin University, has revealed that the weapons used in Libya's internal armed struggle were taken by 'Al-Qaida in the Islamic Maghreb' (AQIM) reportedly engaged in the hostage-taking. AQIM is an Al-Qaida terrorist group organized in Algeria and included in the UN 'Consolidated List' of terrorist groups. The aforementioned terrorist activity is related to the Arab Spring.

The Arab Spring has been in a way bloody, but in another way hopeful. Both Professor Rezrazi and His Excellency Arrour, Ambassador of the Kingdom of Morocco in Japan, submit that there are three stages in the Arab Spring, which consistently aspire for liberalization and democratization.

Liberalization and democratization in the 'Arab Spring,' however, are perplexed with conundrums. At first, can human rights which are in discord with the Islamic law be democratically demoli-

shed? Professor Aziz, University Sidi Mohammed Ibn Abdellah, Fez, apprehends that the protection of human rights of women may regress under the new Islamist administration established by the election held under 2011 new Moroccan Constitution, albeit the constitution pushed ahead with liberalization and democratization. Second, can a State legitimize by law the terrorist activities and discrimination? Professor Rezrazi points out that AQIM contrives to establish the terrorist State of 'Islam Emirates' in Sahel (Algeria, Mauritania, Mali and Niger).

An answer to the question whether or not a State may deny human rights by law, if democratic procedures are followed, is expected in the law of international human rights. They consist of absolute, universal and relative human rights. Then absolute human rights consist only of the rights to life or person and non-discrimination. The obligation to respect the absolute rights can not be derogated by any history, culture, tradition, religion, system and ism or even in the state of emergency such as extraordinary natural phenomenon and internal armed struggles. The rule is hard and fast. Consequently, any State cannot legitimize State terrorism and discrimination even by democratically enacted law. Any conception incompatible with absolute human rights is not accepted in the international society. Isn't there, then, any problem in absolute human rights as such?

Since human rights have been intrinsically conceived 'freedom from s State,' the obligation to respect absolute human rights also has been conceived negative obligation to refrain from interfering

in the activities of citizens. As a result, genocide could not be eradicated. Recently, however, States are expected to assume the positive 'responsibility to protect (R2P)' in order not to degenerate human rights violations into genocide. In that sense, 'limited government' is not befit. What is, then, R2P? Taking the problem of gender discrimination raised by professor Aziz for instance, a State is obliged not only negatively to refrain from discriminating on the basis of gender, but positively to further women's rights in terms of discharging the State's R2P. Now, furthermore, a third State is also entitled to invoke the international responsibility of another State for the violation of human rights against that another State's residents. One of the reasons why Morocco has quitted of bloody 'Arab Spring' may be attributed to its implementation of the positive obligations.

Morocco's quitting of such bloody affairs as occurred in Tunisia, Egypt, Libya and Syria, according to Professor Nakagawa, Hagaromo International University, is caused by the positive promotion of liberalization and democratization that was implemented under the initiative of the king long before the 'Arab Spring' in Morocco. And she adds a particular cause that elections were fairly implemented, based on her experience of monitoring as a member of an international election monitoring group in Morocco. Ambassador Arrour gave his approval to professor Nakagawa's analysis. That may be cited as an example illustrating the relevance of the R2P. Nevertheless, terrorists acts were not thereby eradicated.

Contemporary terrorism is spawned under globalization. So, it will be hard to eradicate terrorism by a single State. The absence of cooperation between Morocco and Algeria owing to the Western Sahara conflict becomes a barrier not only to economic development, professor Rezrazi submits, but to the eradication of terrorism in the area of Sahel and the North Africa. Ambassador Arrour identifies the absence of will to solve the Western Sahara conflict on the part of the Polisario as the cause of its continuance. The Polisario is based in the Tindouf camps, located in the southern west of Algeria. Thus, the Polisario is under the control of Algeria. Furthermore, it has been noted in the General Assembly of the United Nations that some members of the Polisario are colluding with the AQIM. In this vein, the hostage-taking in Algeria seems not to be completely unconnected with the Western Sahara conflict.

We have got a fresh reminder that ostensibly unrelated matters are related deep inside in the era of globalization.

This booklet is edited on the basis of the symposium entitled 'the Arab Spring and Democracy,' held at Sapporo Gakuin University, Ebetsu, Hokkaido, Japan, on November 11, 2012, under the auspices of the Multidiscipline Research Center of Sapporo Gakuin University.

The symposium is chaired by professor Kentaro Sato, Hokkaido University. We would like to extend our hearty gratitude to him.

# Morocco in the New Geopolitical Environment

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## 1. Introduction

Recent analyses of the Middle East and North Africa indicate that the countries in the region are entering a “third phase” of the Arab Spring. The first phase was characterized by the massive mobilization of the “street,” and the second phase by elections and emergent political organizations. This third phase will require governments to overcome the social and economic challenges that continue to plague the region. While the Moroccan case does not conform to this tidy account of political disarticulation (despite having elections last November, there were never calls for outright revolution), Morocco will also be entering this “third phase,” facing the same social and economic challenges related to international economic crisis, and to some inherited issues such as jobless of higher educated community.

However, most of assessments that have been presented on the Moroccan case show that Morocco had the prestige to launch several structural reforms almost ten year prior to what is today called Arab Spring.

Latest reforms introduced in Morocco in 2011, focused on the

decentralization of power from the king, an independent judicial body, the election of a new Parliament and the new Head of Government, have earned the kingdom the designation of a “happy outlier,” having avoided the unrest of neighboring countries. The king has expressed definitely his real will for reform, and intention to offer an alternative path to deeper democracy without inviting outright revolution.

Given the economic indicators, perhaps the positive analyses and conclusions of progress refer to an increased liberalization or deeper democracy in the kingdom. However the regional environment does not help fully on this direction, since economic crisis is affecting neighboring economic partner such as Spain, and regional political and security environment remains vulnerable mainly in the area of Maghreb (North Africa) and the Sahel.

## **2. The Political Cost**

Vulnerable Regimes: How the coming of islamists to power (e. g. by elections) is taking a negative manifestation in the Western and local media spots.

**Libya:** More than a year after the revolution, Khaddafi is dead and elections have been held but Libya remains an unstable place. To make matters worse, it remains a place that is awash in weapons left over from the former regime. This situation is resulted from: the lack of global reconstruction of State organs; insufficiency of human resources and capacity building within

political Intelligentsia; and the failure of post-Khaddafi regime to recollect small and medium arms used previously against Khaddafi. Smuggling weapons from Libya for the benefit of al-Qaeda is a serious threat for the entire region, especially Sub-Saharan Africa and the Arab Maghreb. This is an outcome of the lack of security in Libya, which is a golden opportunity for al-Qaeda members and arms traffickers to smuggle weapons and strengthen their positions in the region.

**Tunisia:** A sharp conflict between liberals and Islamists, vulnerable borders, lack of a clear political road-map for the new State.

**Mauritania:** vulnerability of the structure of the State, and more need for civil control over the state.

**Algeria:** Three factors explain why no change and no reforms have been introduced or forced to modify Algerian ruling structures:

- 1) The first is its oil and gas resources, which gave the regime enough room to appease the public's dissatisfaction. Public spending in Algeria has increased by more than 50% in the last two years. The government allocated more money for food subsidies and awarded pay increases to civil servants. It also offered young entrepreneurs interest-free loans to establish their businesses, granted tax exemptions, and reserved a quota of local public contracts for them.
- 2) The second is that the specter of the 1990s civil war, which led to between 100,000 and 150,000 deaths, is still very fresh in people's minds and actively used by official medias to focus on the mass the syndrome of fear from changes. Such fears

of violence and insecurity have kept many Algerians from seeking radical changes, despite their economic and social grievances. This sentiment seems to have been strengthened by the messy transition prevailing in Arab Spring countries in its neighborhood—Tunisia, Egypt, and Libya—but also by the situation in Syria.

- 3) The control of military elites over State's main instances, makes the political decision making very complicated, and provide to the ruling party since the 1960s another empowerment to survive despite the artificial political plurality promoted in the late 5 years.

### **3. The Economic Const**

Taking the example of North Africa area, the failure of the Maghreb countries — Algeria, Libya, Mauritania, Morocco and Tunisia — to increase their economic co-operation has become such a persistent phenomenon that it has a name, the “non-Maghreb.” Estimates of its cost to the region range between one and two percentage points of annual economic growth. The Arab Union says the integration stalemate costs each country 2% of its annual growth, while the African Economic Commission, reckons that if a Maghreb Union existed the five countries would each gain 5% of GDP.

The World Bank has estimated that deeper integration, including the liberalizing of services and reforming investment rules

would have increased the per capita real GDP between 2005 and 2015 by an additional 34% for Algeria, 27% for Morocco and 24% for Tunisia. But if these countries maintain the growth rates they recorded over the past five years, it will take them more than 20 years to reach the per capita income currently enjoyed by less wealthy OECD countries like Mexico and Turkey.

These estimates differ according to whether or not they take into account such variables as trade in services and foreign direct investment (FDI). But the problem is neither accuracy of these estimates nor the methods used. What counts, given the symbolism of comparing the cost of the “non-Maghreb” with the benefits of the European Union, is the political message: the need to lift all trade barriers. In a region that aspires to greater integration, it has to be stressed more strongly than ever that a dynamic single market will create investment opportunities for companies throughout the region. The integration of the Maghreb has become a vital economic necessity, especially at a time when regional blocks are facing intense competition. Without this integration, economies of the region could sustain big losses and would have trouble meeting challenges already on the agenda (tariff dismantling, eastward expansion of the EU, global liberalization of the textile sector, and vulnerability to shocks from extreme demand). Integration will undoubtedly be the driving force behind consistent economic growth and solid trade among countries of the region, thereby enabling them to secure a firm foothold in the global economy.

## **4. The security cost**

### **a. Deterioration of Sahel: Security Environment**

The Sahel has all the factors of instability: vulnerable countries, internal conflicts for power, the increase of armaments, fast population growth, general climate of insecurity fed by arm trafficking activities, drugs and illegal immigration, terrorist operations and also signs indicating the project of Al-Qaeda to establish an Islamic Emirate throughout the arc of the Sahel.

The Organization of Al-Qaeda in the Islamic Maghreb is a source of concern for safety in the area not only for the countries of the African Sahel, but also a direct threat to entities in these countries, including the weakened triangle, which are, Mauritania, Niger and Mali.

Military raids brought recently against members of Al-Qaida, kidnapping of Europeans by Al-Qaeda and their implications at security, military and ideological levels during the past five years all indicate their dream project of creating an Islamic Emirate in the region. This danger is associated with the success of terrorists who established a small Emirate in northern Mali.

It seems that Al-Qaeda seeks to achieve its objective by sowing unrest to justify foreign interventions which could be used later in instigating the setback of Arabs and Africans against these interventions.

There are four armed movements in northern Mali. The MNLA (National Movement for the Liberation of Azawad), which

is the cause of the rebellion on January 17th, includes some Tuareg tribes. Northern Mali does not host only Tuareg populations. The MNLA was initially allied with Islamist movements that have expelled them from major cities in June.

For the three other Islamist movements, the oldest is Al-Qaida in the Islamic Maghreb (AQIM), present in the area for more than a decade under the appellation GSPC (Salafist Group for Preaching and Combat), mainly composed from Algerians.

Ansar Eddine (Supporters of religion) is a Tuareg Islamist formation with some members of Arab tribes of northern Mali. The movement is led by the charismatic Iyad Ag Ghali, a key figure in the crisis. This movement is present in two regional capitals of northern Mali, Timbuktu and Kidal.

Finally, MUJAO (Movement for the Unity and Jihad in West Africa) is composed mainly at management level of Arab Malians, Mauritians and Sahrawis. But it is also composed of Songoy and even some West African migrants trapped in the desert by the conflict from Nigerian, Benin and Ivory Coast.

The challenge that seemed, earlier, limited within the borders of Mauritania, Algeria and Mali, through groups that infiltrate the borders to perform missions here and there and vanish in the desert has rapidly evolved to become a potential threat to the existence of the State, as the creation of a new “Islamic Emirate of Azawad” could become a structure model and a strategic depth to AQIM metaphorically identified as the new Sahelistan.

Since January 17th, 2012 and the attack on Menaka, things are

slowly beginning to emerge about the real reasons for the conflict in the region. Although the word MNLA is used repeatedly in several speeches, we are truly facing a religious war, orchestrated by AQIM recently joined by several members of Boko Haram. Who, a few months ago, were trained in camps erected by AQIM in the Tegahghar.

First, a brief history of events, fifteen years back, the GSPC (Salafist Group for Preaching and Combat) decided to set up small units to control southern Algeria and Morocco, Western Sahara, North and eastern Mauritania, northern Mali, the Niger, southern Libya, northern Chad, Kordofan (Sudan) and a part of Somalia.

All these areas, for those who know, are poorly controlled by their respective states. This is why the Islamists want to make an Emirate led by them. Therefore, it is concluded that the current conflict in northern Mali is and will continue later elsewhere.

Mapping relationships between these four movements is not easy to make and extremely changing. They are 5 000 to 6 000 men if we add the four groups which include a thousand seasoned and well armed fighters. But can we know exactly the total? The MNLA is said to be ready to ally with the central government and with partners from Mali to force out the Islamists.

Today, we think MUJAO and AQIM are very close. The MUJAO recently asked for the release of members of AQIM in Algeria. It is difficult to establish the relationship between Ansar Eddine and others even if they fought alongside against the Malian army.

Without strong central power, the decisions are difficult to make. This is one of the difficulties of solving this crisis. The Malian army has also suffered a humiliating reverse in March. But it must be at the forefront of the recovery. In the short term, this may appear to be a factor that will slow inability for several months. But in the medium and long term, it will be a positive factor even if the Malian army is supported by others. Politically, the signal is stronger. With a threatening and credible Malian army, it would also be easier to negotiate with the movements of the North. We must reverse the balance of power.

At the international level, there is now a convergence analysis of the gravity of the situation. It must also determine how to solve the crisis and the timetable. Algeria is not very favorable for settlement by force while negotiations have not been exhausted. It is a way of saying “We must be in, hear our opinion.” It should also be emphasized that intervention would be much less “productive” if Algeria does not secure its borders. Algeria is a key element for resolving the crisis.

Diplomatic work is underway after Hillary Clinton’s visit to Algiers. François Hollande went there in early December. Algeria needs to be reassured. She was afraid, as in Libya, the consequences of a badly designed intervention if not well anticipated. That we find ourselves in an Afghan like situation with fighters weakened but mobile and difficult to counteract. It is crucial that Algeria would agree to block its borders.

Mauritania and Niger are also very worried. They fear that

fighters back flow to their territories. In addition, the Niger fears skids on the Malian army Tuareg populations, which could motivate some Nigerians Tuareg elements to fight or could even result in the resurgence of a Tuareg rebellion in Niger. A large number of political-security issues arise.

Mauritania, Mali, Niger and Algeria are not the only countries to suffer of this situation because Morocco also looking for a solution to the Sahara Conflict and today faces the challenge of some veteran members of Polisario taking action in terrorist operations with Al-Qaeda. This is a new anvery serious situation, as it may affect Morocco's role in the fight against terrorism and compromise security efforts of coordination with Mauritania, Polisario therefore enjoys the protection of Algeria's territory of Tindouf.

Indeed, this hypothesis was developed in media reports way back ago without being able to prove it. But over the years, more and more reports from all capitals of the region, the United States and Europe, indicate that recruitment continues to intensify in Tindouf camps in favor of Al-Qaeda. And this imposes the need to Algeria to crack the situation of bilateral disputes with Morocco and regional interests that is the unconditional cooperation with the countries of the region.

With the impulsive situation in Libya, and the vulnerability of these borders, terrorist attacks are then supposed to succeed in a way that indicates that the circle of threat extended to the north-east, towards the North African countries.

Two variables govern this warning:

- The first variable is the fact that terrorism in the region is no longer merely ideological repository, but overtakes for increased activity in trafficking networks and organized crime gangs supporting the rebellions of African Arab tribes and Tuaregs plagued in Mali and northern Niger.
- The second variable is simply the extension of the gray zone that disobeys the control of any country, which foreshadows the fulfillment of the dream of Al-Qaeda, namely the creation of an Islamic Emirate in the region.

It became clear today that one of the objectives of AQIM is to attract foreign forces, particularly Western nationals, to desert zones in order to turn against them Arabs and Africans, knowing that organization had called on several occasions to face a so-called western crusade plot against the protectors of Islam in the Arab Maghreb.

The Sahel and Maghreb are responsible for protecting their own safety, and all countries in the region must agree around the same table. However, the emphasis on security should not hide the relationship between violence and hunger on one hand, and terrorism and development, on the other hand.

This role leads the Maghreb countries to overcome differences and animosities between them and which are also of a bygone era, as lived in the case of conflict between Algeria and Morocco over Western Sahara.

All efforts made by the countries of the region, including

Algeria, and success in the fight against homegrown terrorism could not eradicate the terrorist threat but have pushed it to withdraw further south, which helped to secure a large part of Algerian territories. However, the gray zone is becoming widespread and contains many groups affiliated to AQIM.

#### **b. Tensions between the two Sudans**

The Inter-Sudanese conflict of 2011-2012 is an ongoing armed conflict since May 21st, 2011 between Sudan and South Sudan to the control of Abyei, an oil-rich region. It follows the referendum on the independence of South Sudan, which was held from January 9th to 15th, which provided an outcome for the division of the country on July 9th, 2011.

Sharing the border is only important in what the boundary represents. It marks the limits of the crossing cattle, oil fields. There are disputed territories cases such as the Abyei district case but it is on the table, known and should be discussed. There is also the currency issue. Southerners have their own currency; they made the South Sudan Pound. Northerners were furious because they thought that the money earned from the south will be in the same central bank. There are also disputes over the sharing of oil royalties.

#### **c. Dogmatic Obstructions over the Issue of Western Sahara**

After the daring Initiative undertaken by Morocco, and submitted to the United Nations on April 11th, 2007, which consists of

proposing a larger autonomy to the Sahara provinces, Morocco has shown the depth of his philosophy of flexibility and moderation in foreign policy, particularly within a current regional environment characterized by fragility of political structures in a number of neighboring countries, and growing insecurity risks in the Sahel region.

From the other side, Polisario backed by Algeria has not shown intention of state-of-mind to negotiate. It is still attached to one conventional slogan of “independence”, despite the fact that the Sahrawi concerned population lived in both Tindouf, and in the Sahara provinces administrated by Morocco since the Madrid Accord, and the Green March.

Theoretically, what all parties should admit is that there are two diplomatic behaviors in Western Sahara issue. Moderate craft diplomacy- to which Morocco belongs- a behavior characterized by the peaceful character of diplomacy. It is a theory that sees diplomacy as an opposite to dogmatic judgment, violence and use of force. And spiky diplomacy -adopted by Polisario and Algeria- which failed to draw clear-cut line between dogmatic beliefs and the requirements of diplomatic work based on negotiation, persuasion, compromise, and potentiality.

If we admit that Rabat has fulfilled its obligations when it has proposed in 2007 a credible autonomy proposal qualified by main actors in the international community as a serious and credible.

However, the status quo works in favor of the Polisario leadership at the expense of those Sahrawi families forced to live in

inhuman conditions in Tindouf.

**d. Other related Non-Conventional Issues (Traffic Arms, drugs, and illegal migration)**

Before the start of the war in Libya, the majority of unlawfully groups carrying weapons in the Sahel region came from Somalia, Sudan and Egypt by Chad to the East or West Africa.

After the end of the wars in Liberia, Sierra Leone and Côte d'Ivoire, non-state actors in the Sahel region were supplied with arms and ammunition from war veteran fighters. As of 2011, it is Libya which has become the main source of weapons in circulation in the region. Weapons are now passing Erg Merzoug the border between Libya and Niger. Passing by Algeria would be more difficult, given the importance means that it deploys to intercept convoys of weapons (Amari, 2012).

Thus, the crisis in Libya has exacerbated an already critical situation in terms of security in the Maghreb and Sahel. Indeed, according to the UN report S/2012/42, published January 18th, 2012, the armed conflict in Libya has allowed violent groups in the Sahara, such as Boko Haram and AQIM, access to large caches weapons. Arms raised by the UN report are grenade launchers, machine guns with anti-aircraft sight, automatic rifles, ammunition, grenades, explosives and light artillery mounted anti-aircraft vehicle (The report UN, 2012).

In October 2011, the Chairman of the Military Committee which brings together the Chiefs of Staff of the countries of the

Atlantic Alliance (NATO) said that the mark of at least 10,000 anti-aircraft missiles have been lost in post-conflict Libya.

The problem is not new and has never been isolated. He was and continues to be associated with other activities such as a traffic drugs, illegal immigration gestation, and even the use of children for operations violence.

札幌学院大学総合研究所 BOOKLET No. 5

## アラブの春と民主主義

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# Arab Spring and Democracy

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Kei Nakagawa  
Samir Arrour

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## 札幌学院大学総合研究所について

札幌学院大学の前身である札幌文科専門学院の創設は一九四六年、爾来、「学の自由」「独創的研鑽」「個性の尊重」を大学の理念として、研究と教育にあたってきました。本研究所は、これまでの札幌学院大学の研究活動の蓄積を継承し、学内の研究活動のいっそうの活性化、研究成果の積極的な発信と地域社会への貢献を目的に、二〇〇八年四月に設立されました。本学は五学部九学科からなる文系総合大学で、百二十名を超える研究者が所属しています。その専門領域も、経営学、経済学、法学、社会学などの社会科学を中心に、心理学や言語・文化研究など人間の生活に関する多様な領域を網羅しています。本研究所はこうした強みを生かして、学際的な研究活動を展開していきたいと考えています。

札幌学院大学総合研究所長・人文学部教授 白 杵 勲

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