

# The Recovery of the Muslims' Past and the Others

*Islamic Perspective of History*

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the Others  
Islamic Perspective of History

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## CHAPTER 2

### The colonial crimes against humanity and massacres of Muslims in the French-Italian-occupied Maghreb, 1832-1962 CE

BY

ATAULLAH BOGDAN KOPANSKI

*"Toutes les populations qui n'acceptent pas nos conditions doivent être rasées. Tout doit être pris, saccagé, sans distinction d'âge ni de sexe: l'herbe ne doit plus pousser où l'armée française a mis le pied. Qui veut la fin veut les moyens, quoiqu'en disent nos philanthropes. Tous les bons militaires que j'ai l'honneur de commander sont prévenus par moi-même que s'il leur arrive de m'amener un Arabe vivant, ils recevront une volée de coups de plat de sabre. [...] Voilà, mon brave ami, comment il faut faire la guerre aux Arabes : tuer tous les hommes jusqu'à l'âge de quinze ans, prendre toutes les femmes et les enfants, en charger les bâtiments, les envoyer aux îles Marquises ou ailleurs. En un mot, anéantir tout ce qui ne rampera pas à nos pieds comme des chiens."*

*Lieutenant-colonel de Montagnac, Lettres d'un soldat, Plon, Paris, 1885,*

#### **Synopsis:**

The French as well as Italian occupation of Muslim North Africa was the most virulent form of all European colonial onslaughts in history of the Mediterranean realm. Its ruthless policy of *ferro ignique vastare* resembled the ancient Roman tactics and strategy of Scipio Africanus during the Third Punic War. The systematic destruction of mosques, *waqf* properties and madrasas can be compared only with the fanaticism of the medieval Christian crusaders in Spain and Sicily. The French cultural revolution in the Maghreb was dwarfed only by the vandalism of the Communist commissars, Turkish Kemalists, Tunisian socialists and Pahlavi shahs.

With the problem of political or religious bias against the Muslims set aside, the historian of the anti-colonial Muslim resistance next confronts the issue of the veracity of historiography. Much of what was and is written about the anti-colonial Jihad has been based overwhelmingly on European non-