

## C1. Portuguese Colonialism in Morocco, 15<sup>th</sup> – 18<sup>th</sup> Centuries

During the period of Portuguese imperialism, from the 15<sup>th</sup> to 18<sup>th</sup> centuries, Portugal established an empire that included territories in what is today Morocco. In particular, Portugal claimed part of the southwestern coast of the Mediterranean and stretches of Morocco's Atlantic coastline.

The city of Mazagan is one example. A port city on the Atlantic Coast of Africa, just south of Casablanca, Mazagan was a fortified city, surrounded by stone walls built by the Portuguese in the early 1500s. The Portuguese also built a citadel, other military fortifications, and an armory, which later became a cistern to store water. The Portuguese used the fortifications to defend against the attacks of local Amazigh (Berbers), pirates operating out of Salé, and later the Moroccan monarchy. In 1769, when local Moroccan forces drove the Portuguese out of their Moroccan holdings, the Portuguese were forced to leave Mazagan. But before they left, they mined the old town, destroying it and killing many Moroccans.

The destruction was so great, and the fear of additional mines so vivid that it was some time before a new city was built on the site. The new city was given the name 'El Jadida' (meaning 'the new city'), which is what it is called today.

**Assignment:** Imagine you are living in the 18th century. Write 2 diary entries, each at least one double-spaced page long. Choose names for your characters that are authentic. Also, include at least 5 facts or factual details drawn from the history/ geography of the area. (Be sure to look up additional information in addition to the information found in this reading.) Underline the pieces of information you include in each of your diary entries.

-- In one diary entry, you are a Portuguese trader. Until 1769, you lived in the city of Mazagan (Look up El Jadida, as the city is called today) on North Africa's northern Atlantic coast. Now you are living in Brazil because the Amazigh (Berbers) and Arabs of the region took control of the city. In your opinion, why were the wars with Morocco over the past century (See especially the Battle of Alcacer Quibir – "Battle of Three Kings" – in 1578.) bad for your home country, Portugal? Describe why you feel it was unjust that you were driven out of Mazagan. What important things do you think the Portuguese accomplished in North Africa (today's Morocco)? (Look up the history – and photos – of El Jadida and Asilah. See what UNESCO said about the former.)

--In another diary entry, you are an Amazigh who fought in 1769 to drive the Portuguese from Mazagan. Reflect on your experiences. Why do you feel that your people deserved to take over the area? What do you dislike about the Portuguese "contributions"? What do you think about Portuguese actions just before their troops withdrew from the city? What do you predict needs to be done to rebuild the city in the future?