

# A History of Modern Morocco

Susan Gilson Miller



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## A History of Modern Morocco

Morocco is notable for its stable and durable monarchy, its close ties with the West, its vibrant cultural life, and its centrality to regional politics. This book, by distinguished historian Susan Gilson Miller, offers a richly documented survey of modern Moroccan history. The author's original and astute interpretations of the events, ideas, and personalities that inform contemporary political life are testimony to her scholarship and long association with the country. Arguing that pragmatism rather than ideology has shaped the monarchy's response to crisis, the book begins with the French invasion of Algeria in 1830 and Morocco's abortive efforts at reform, the duel with colonial powers and the loss of independence in 1912, the burdens and benefits of France's forty-four-year dominion, and the stunning success of the nationalist movement leading to independence in 1956. In the postindependence era, the book traces the monarchy's gradual monopolization of power and the resulting political paralysis, ending with the last years of Hassan II's reign, when Moroccan society experienced a sudden and radical opening. A postscript brings events up to 2012, covering topics such as Morocco's "war on terror," the détente between the monarchy and the Islamists, and the impact of the Arab Spring. This concise, readable book will inform and enthrall students coming to the history of North Africa for the first time, as well as those in other disciplines searching for the background to present-day events in the region.

**Susan Gilson Miller** is Professor of History at the University of California, Davis. Her research interests focus on Islamic urbanism, travel and migration, minorities in the Muslim world, and the historiography of colonialism and nationalism, with a special emphasis on North Africa. Her most recent publications are *The Architecture and Memory of the Minority Quarter of the Muslim Mediterranean City* (2010) and *Berbers and Others: Beyond Tribe and Nation in the Maghrib* (2010).



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**CAMBRIDGE**  
UNIVERSITY PRESS

CAMBRIDGE UNIVERSITY PRESS  
Cambridge, New York, Melbourne, Madrid, Cape Town,  
Singapore, São Paulo, Delhi, Mexico City

Cambridge University Press  
32 Avenue of the Americas, New York, NY 10013-2473, USA

[www.cambridge.org](http://www.cambridge.org)

Information on this title: [www.cambridge.org/9780521008990](http://www.cambridge.org/9780521008990)

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First published 2013

Printed in the United States of America

*A catalog record for this publication is available from the British Library.*

*Library of Congress Cataloging in Publication Data*

Miller, Susan Gilson.

A history of modern Morocco / Susan Gilson Miller.

p. cm.

Includes bibliographical references and index.

ISBN 978-0-521-81070-8 (hardback) – ISBN 978-0-521-00899-0 (paperback)

1. Morocco – History. I. Title.

DT324.M545 2012

964-dc23 2012014471

ISBN 978-0-521-81070-8 Hardback

ISBN 978-0-521-00899-0 Paperback

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## Acknowledgments

Friends, colleagues, and family have helped me over the years and made the writing of this book possible.

Moroccan scholars provided me with the informal education necessary to study the history of their country. I especially want to thank Jamaa Baïda, Khalid Ben Srhir, Mohamed Kenbib, Abdelahad Sebti, Mohamed El Mansour, Ahmad Taoufik, Mohamed Kably, Maâti Monjib, Mohamed Dahbi, Mohamed Hatimi, Nadia Erzini, Simon Lévy, Mina Elmghari, Mokhtar Ghambou, Halima Ferhat, Rahma Bourqia, Mohamed Mezzine, Abdelfattah Kilito, and Fatima Sadiqi for generously sharing their deep knowledge of Moroccan state and society with me. My first Moroccan mentor was the impeccable Si Muhammad al-Manuni, who introduced me to the intricacies of modern Moroccan historiography. Special thanks to Said Mouline and Mia Balafrej, who offered me superb hospitality during my many visits to Rabat, and to Sonia Azagury and Rachel Muyal, my sentinels in Tangier.

I am grateful to the Moroccan American Commission for Educational and Cultural Exchange, Jim Miller, Director, which provided funding support via successive Fulbright grants, as well as to former MACECE Director Ed Thomas. In Tangier, Elena Prentice and Thor and Elizabeth Kuniholm, former directors of the Tangier American Legation Museum, provided a friendly and welcome base.

A host of North African specialists have been advisers and collaborators over the years: Wilfred Rollman, Julia Clancy-Smith, William Granara, Jonathan Katz, Michael Willis, Susan Slyomovics, Kenneth Brown, Norman Stillman, Katherine Hoffman, James McDougall, Thomas Park, Harvey Goldberg, John Entelis, Mark Tessler, Dale Eickelman, André

Levy, Susan Ossman, Joelle Bahloul, Daniel Schroeter, Gregory White, Lucette Valensi, Yolande Cohen, Bruce Maddy-Weitzman, and Michel Abitbol have at one time or another come to my aid. My thanks to one and all.

Former students, now colleagues, shared their work with me, enriching my own. Their friendship is especially treasured: Sahar Bazzaz, Jonathan Smolin, Emily Benichou-Gottreich, Ilham Khuri-Makdisi, Lisa Bernasek, Amira Bennison, Hannah Louise Clark, Amy Young, Tom de Georges, Jessica Marglin, Eric Calderwood, Aziza Chaouni, Etty Terem, Moshe Gershovich, Stacy Holden, Abby Krasner Babale, and Lamia Zaki are at the center of a new generation of Maghribi scholars who are changing the state of the field. David Stenner and Lily Balloffet, history graduate students at UC Davis, have more recently lent a hand.

My warmest appreciation to Gérard Lévy of Paris, who generously gave me unpublished photos from his personal archives, and to the Center for Middle Eastern Studies at Harvard University, my platform for pursuing Moroccan studies for nearly twenty years. My heartfelt thanks to a series of supportive CMES directors who made a place for Maghribi studies at Harvard: William Graham, Cemal Kafadar, and Steven Caton among them. In a special category of her own is Susan Kahn, Associate Director of CMES.

My new colleagues in the History Department at UC Davis have been a source of unstintingly warm encouragement. I am also grateful to the interlibrary loan section of Shields Library, UC Davis, always receptive to my requests, and to the faceless and nameless heroes of the Widener Library Scan and Deliver service. My thanks, too, to Marigold Acland of Cambridge University Press, a woman of infinite patience, and Joy Mizan and Sarika Narula, who have ushered me through the final stages of the editorial process.

Finally, thanks to my family, which has put up with my historical passions over the years with patience and good humor: Daphne, Ross, Arlen, Emet, Sam, and Max, and most of all, to David, to whom this book is dedicated.

## Note on Transliteration and Translation

The transliteration of Moroccan personal and place names poses difficult problems. French spelling is predominant throughout the Maghrib, but unfortunately, it does not always render well into English. Generally speaking, I have used the French spelling for place names, making use of the glossary of toponyms found in J-F. Troin, ed., *Maroc: Régions, pays, territoires* (Paris: Maisonneuve & Larose, 2002). Exceptions to this rule are place names that are commonly found in English: Marrakesh, Tetuan, Tangier, Fez.

Personal names call for a different approach. When the name has a common French spelling and the individual may be otherwise difficult to identify, I use the French spelling (Laroui, for example, instead of al-‘Arawi). When a name gains greater clarity by using the *International Journal of Middle Eastern Studies* (IJMES) method of transliteration from Arabic, that method is applied: ‘Abd al-Qadir instead of Abdel Kader, Muhammad instead of Mohamed. Admittedly, this is often a matter of personal choice.

Arabic terms are transliterated using the IJMES method, with the modification that I have dropped all diacritical marks except for the ‘*ayn* (‘) and the *hamza* (’), indicating the latter letter only when it is in the middle of the word. (Hence *Qur’an* but not *shurafa’*.) In some cases, I write the plural of an Arabic word by adding an “s” to the singular, such as *fatwas*. Finally, Arabic words that now appear in the *Oxford English Dictionary* – for example, *ulama* – are spelled accordingly.

All translations from Arabic and French to English are my own, unless otherwise indicated.



## Chronology

1830, July 5	French landing in Algiers
1844, August 14	Moroccan defeat at the Battle of Isly
1859–1860	Tetuan War against the Spanish
1863, December 11	British Jewish philanthropist Sir Moses Montefiore arrives in Tangier
1873	Sultan Hassan I enthroned
1880, May 19–July 3	Conference of Madrid affirms the legal right of protection
1894	Sultan ‘Abd al-‘Aziz enthroned
1900, May 13	Death of the regent Ba Ahmad
1904, April 8	French-British agreement giving France a free hand in Morocco
1905, March 31	Emperor Wilhelm II lands at Tangier
1906, January 7–April 6	Algeciras Conference places conditions on Moroccan independence
1907, August 7–12	Bombardment of Casablanca by the French
1907, August 16	Sultan ‘Abd al-Hafiz proclaimed in Marrakesh
1908, January 4	<i>Bay‘a</i> of Sultan ‘Abd al-Hafiz at Fez
1909, May 4	Death of Shaykh Muhammad b. al-Kabir al-Kattani
1911, November 4	Franco-German treaty; Germany concedes Morocco to France
1912, March 30	Treaty of Fez, French Protectorate begins
1912, April 27	Lyautey is named Résident Général of the Protectorate
1912, August 13	Proclamation of Sultan Yusuf

- 1912, November 27 French-Spanish treaty institutes Spanish control in the north
- 1914, November 13 Middle Atlas Berbers defeat French at Battle of el-Herri
- 1921–1925 Rif War and declaration of the “Ripublik” of the Rif
- 1925, September 24 Lyautey is replaced by T. Steeg and departs Morocco
- 1927, November 18 Sultan Muhammad V is enthroned
- 1930, May 16 Berber Dahir
- 1933, 18 November First Throne Day celebrated
- 1934, December 1 Reform Plan of the CAM (Moroccan Action Committee)
- 1937, September Meknes riots lead to pro-nationalist demonstrations
- 1942, November 8 Allied landings in North Africa
- 1943, January 22 Anfa Conference, Roosevelt–Muhammad V meeting
- 1943, December 10 Creation of the Istiqlal Party
- 1944, January 11 Manifesto of Independence
- 1945, November 14 Creation of PCM (Moroccan Communist Party)
- 1946, June 20 ‘Allal al-Fasi returns to Morocco from Gabon to head Istiqlal
- 1946, September 11 Istiqlal founds party newspaper *al-‘Alam*
- 1947, April 9 Sultan Muhammad V’s speech at Tangier
- 1952, December 5–8 Anti-French riots in Casablanca
- 1953, August 20 Sultan Muhammad V deposed and exiled to Madagascar
- 1954, November 1 Start of Algerian war of independence
- 1955, March 20 Creation of UMT (Moroccan Workers’ Union)
- 1955, August 22 Conference of Aix-les-Bains
- 1955, November 16 Sultan Muhammad V returns to Morocco
- 1956, March 2 French-Moroccan declaration of independence
- 1956, May 14 Foundation of the FAR (Royal Moroccan Armed Forces)
- 1956, October 8 Tangier is reintegrated into Morocco

- 1956, December 26 First congress of the UNEM (Moroccan Students' Union)
- 1957, January 21 Revolt of Addi Ou Bihi in the Tafilalt
- 1957, July 9 Crown Prince Hassan declared heir to the throne
- 1957, August Muhammad V takes the title of King
- 1957, December 21 Creation of University Muhammad V in Rabat
- 1958, May 12 Istiqlal government headed by Ahmed Balafrej
- 1958, May–November Rif Rebellion repressed by FAR under Crown Prince Hassan
- 1958, October Morocco joins the Arab League
- 1958, December 24 Government of Abdallah Ibrahim
- 1959, September 6 Istiqlal splinters; left-wing forms UNFP
- 1960, February 14 Arrests of UNFP militants accused of plotting against the Crown Prince
- 1960, February 29 Earthquake in Agadir
- 1960, May 27 King Muhammad V takes over the government
- 1960, May 29 First municipal elections
- 1961, February 26 Death of Muhammad V
- 1961, March 3 Hassan II becomes King
- 1962, July 5 Algerian independence declared
- 1962, December 7 First Moroccan Constitution adopted
- 1963, January 2 The Istiqlal leaves the government and joins the opposition
- 1963, February 6 Death of 'Abd al-Karim al-Khattabi in Cairo
- 1963, May 13 First legislative elections
- 1963, June–July Arrests of UNFP; Ben Barka flees Morocco
- 1963, August 21 Birth of Sidi Muhammad, future King Muhammad VI
- 1963, October 15 "War of the Sands" with Algeria
- 1963, November 9 Mehdi Ben Barka is condemned to death in absentia
- 1964, March 14 Trial and death sentence for leaders of UNFP, later commuted
- 1965, March 22 Casablanca uprising of students and workers
- 1965, March 29 Hassan II amnesties political prisoners
- 1965, June 7 Constitution of 1962 suspended, state of emergency declared

- 1965, October 29 Ben Barka kidnapped in Paris
- 1967, June 5 Morocco sends troops to aid Arab side in Six-Day War with Israel
- 1967, June 5–11 Anti-American demonstrations; attacks on Jews in Meknes
- 1969 Agreement of association with the EEC
- 1970, July 31 Second Constitution ends the state of emergency
- 1970, August Ila al-Amam splits from Communist Party (PCM)
- 1971, July 10 Attempted coup at Skhirat palace is subdued by Oufkir
- 1971, July 13 Ten ranking army officers are executed by firing squad
- 1972, February 12 Trial of soldiers implicated in the Skhirat coup opens in Kénitra
- 1972, March 1 Third Constitution is promulgated
- 1972, August 16 Second failed coup, death of Oufkir
- 1972, November 6 Execution of 11 detainees accused of planning the August coup
- 1973, January 24 Arabization of the Faculty of Letters, Rabat
- 1973, March 3 King announces the program of “Moroccanization”
- 1973, May 10 Founding of the Polisario
- 1973, October Arab-Israeli war; price of oil and phosphates soars
- 1974, May 13 Death of ‘Allal al-Fasi
- 1974, June Shaykh Yassine’s letter to Hassan II, “Islam or the Deluge”
- 1974, November 6 The Green March begins
- 1975, December 18 USFP leader Omar Benjelloun is assassinated
- 1976, January 27 War with Algeria in the Sahara
- 1976, May 20 SARD is declared (Sahrawi Arab Democratic Republic)
- 1977, May Trial of members of Ila al-Amam
- 1977, November 26 CDT created (Democratic Confederation of Workers)
- 1979, January Tan-Tan is seized by the Polisario
- 1979, March Driss Basri becomes Minister of the Interior

- 1979, June 24 AMDH (Moroccan Association of Human Rights) is created
- 1980, July Amnesty of members of USFP jailed since 1973–1974
- 1981, June 6 Casablanca bread riots
- 1981, September Foundation of Shaykh Yassine’s al-‘Adl wa-l-Ihsan
- 1984, August Treaty of Oujda, Moroccan-Libyan Union
- 1984, November 13 Morocco quits the OAU after SARD is admitted
- 1985, August 19 Visit of Pope John Paul II to Casablanca
- 1986, July 22 King Hassan II and Israeli PM Shimon Peres meet in Ifrane
- 1988, May 6 Diplomatic relations with Algeria are resumed
- 1988, December 10 OMDH (Moroccan Organization of Human Rights) is created
- 1988–1993 Construction of the Hassan II mosque in Casablanca (\$600 m.)
- 1989, February 17 Creation of the UMA (Maghreb Arab Union)
- 1990, May 8 CCDH formed (Consultative Committee of Human Rights)
- 1990, August 2 Persian Gulf War begins
- 1990, September *Notre ami le roi* is published in Paris
- 1991, February 3 Massive pro-Islamist demonstrations in Rabat
- 1991, August 5 The Charter of Agadir is signed by six Amazigh associations
- 1991, September 6 Cease-fire in the Saharan war
- 1991, September 13 Abraham Serfaty is freed and exiled from Morocco
- 1991, October 23 Liberation of the survivors of Tazmamart prison
- 1992, August 21 New Constitution is presented for referendum
- 1993, February 6 Arrest of Police Commissioner Tabit
- 1993, September 15 Israeli PM Yitzhak Rabin visits Rabat
- 1994, August Closing of the border with Algeria after Marrakesh bombing
- 1995, December 24 “Cleanup” campaign of Minister of the Interior Basri

- 1996, September 13 Constitutional revision calling for a bi-cameral legislature
- 1998, March 14 Government of “Alternance” under A. Youssoufi
- 1999, July 23 Death of Hassan II
- 1999, July 30 Muhammad VI is enthroned
- 1999, September 30 Abraham Serfaty returns from exile
- 1999, November 9 Minister of the Interior Basri is fired
- 2000, March 1 The Berber Manifesto
- 2001, October 17 Dahir of Ajdir creating the IRCAM
- 2002, March 21 Marriage of Muhammad VI and Salma Bennani
- 2002, September 27 Parliamentary elections, PJD emerges as main opposition party
- 2003, May 8 Birth of heir-apparent, Prince Hassan
- 2003, May 16 Casablanca bombings followed by mass arrests
- 2003, May 31 Banning of satirical *Doumane*, editor Ali Mrabet jailed
- 2003, December ERC formed, headed by human rights lawyer Driss Benzekri
- 2004, January New Family Code (*Mudawwana*) is enacted into law
- 2004, February 24 Earthquake in El Hoceima (seven hundred killed, fifteen thousand homeless)
- 2004, June 15 Free trade agreement with the United States signed
- 2004, December 15 Public testimony of victims of “years of lead” by ERC begins
- 2006, January 6 King announces termination of the work of the ERC
- 2006, December 16 Closing of the magazine *Nichane* for attacking “Islamic values”
- 2007, March Suicide attacks on targets in Casablanca
- 2007, June Morocco and Polisario hold talks at UN but fail to reach agreement
- 2007, September 7 Parliamentary elections, only 37 percent of eligible voters take part; Abbas El Fassi (Istiqlal) named Prime Minister

- 2009, July 30 Celebration of tenth anniversary of Muhammad VI on the throne
- 2010, August Tension with Spain over border incidents near Melilla
- 2011, February 20 Mass rallies for political reform and a new constitution
- 2011, April 28 Bomb blast in a Marrakesh café kills fifteen, including ten foreigners
- 2011, July 1 New constitution approved in a referendum, winning 98 percent of the vote
- 2011, November 25 PJD wins a plurality in parliamentary elections, Abdelilah Benkirane is named Prime Minister



## Who Is Who?

- Ababou, M'hamed (d. 1971)** Head of military academy at Ahermoumou, leader of cadets in abortive Skhirat coup
- 'Abd al-Aziz, Sultan (d. 1943)** Reigned 1894–1908, deposed by his brother 'Abd al-Hafiz
- 'Abd al-Hafiz (d. 1937)** Reigned 1908–1912; signed Treaty of Protectorate with France, 1912
- 'Abd al-Qadir al-Jaza'iri (d. 1883)** Hero of resistance to French in Algeria, 1832–1847
- 'Abd al-Rahman, Sultan** Reigned 1822–1859; modernizer and reformer
- Aherdane, Mahjoubi** Berber military chief, leader of 1957 Rif uprising; founder of the *Mouvement populaire* (MP)
- Arslan, Shakib (d. 1946)** Druze pan-Islamist, visited Morocco in 1930, inspired young nationalists
- Azoulay, André** Counselor to Hassan II and Muhammad VI on financial, political, and Jewish affairs
- Azziman, Omar** Legal expert, human rights advocate, Minister of Justice 1997–2002
- Balafrej, Ahmed (d. 1990)** French-educated leader of Istiqlal, Secretary-General of the party (1944), Prime Minister (1958); served in other top posts before retiring from public life (1977)
- Basri, Driss (d. 2007)** Minister of the Interior 1979–1999, dreaded symbol of the “Years of Lead,” removed by Muhammad VI
- Bekkai, M'barek (d. 1961)** Head of the first government of independent Morocco, appointed December 1955
- Belarbi, Aïcha** Sociologist, diplomat, author, women's rights activist

- Ben ‘Arafa, Mawlay Muhammad (d. 1976)** Puppet ruler imposed by French, 1953–1955
- Ben Barka, Mehdi (d. 1965)** A founder of UNFP, condemned to death in absentia, “disappeared” in Paris.
- Benaïssa, Mohamed** Journalist, politico, Ambassador to United States (1993–1999); Minister of Foreign Affairs (1999–2007)
- Benjelloun, Omar** Trade unionist, head of USFP, assassinated 1975
- Benkirane, Abdelilah** Head of PJD, appointed Prime Minister in November 2011
- Benlyazid, Farida** Filmmaker, director of *A Door to the Sky* (1989)
- Bennani, Salma** Wife of Muhammad VI (2002), known as Princess Lalla Salma; mother of Prince Hassan (b. 2003), heir to the throne
- Berrada, Hamid** Student leader, journalist, condemned to death in absentia 1963
- Bouabid, Aderrahim (d. 1992)** Economist, founder and leader of USFP
- Bu Himara (El Rogui)** Rebel chief and royal pretender in the Taza region, 1902–1909
- Chraïbi, Driss (d. 2007)** Author, voice of postcolonial generation
- Daure-Serfaty, Christine** French human rights activist, reported on secret prisons during the “Years of Lead”
- Dawud, Muhammad (d. 1984)** Historian, nationalist, author of multi-volume *A History of Tetuan*
- Dlimi, Ahmed (d. 1983)** Security head, Hassan II’s right-hand man after death of Oufkir; died in auto crash
- al-Fasi, ‘Allal (d. 1974)** Founder, chief architect of the Istiqlal party, coauthored Plan of Reforms, favored a constitutional monarchy
- al-Fasi, Malika (d. 2007)** An author of the 1944 Manifesto of Independence; nationalist; symbol of early political activism for feminist movement
- el-Fassi, Abbas** President of UGEM (1961); human rights activist; head of Istiqlal (1998); Prime Minister 2007–2011
- Ghallab, Abdelkrim** Leading author, novelist, political commentator, editor of Istiqlal newspaper *al-‘Alam*
- al-Glawi, Thami (d. 1956)** Pasha of Marrakesh, allied with French in colonial period, opposed Muhammad V and then relented, famous for his venality
- Guedira, Ahmed Reda (d. 1995)** Lawyer, adviser to Hassan II, held many government posts; organized pro-royalist FDIC as alternative to Istiqlal (1963)

- al-Hajwi, Muhammad (d. 1956)** Religious scholar, reformer, propagandist for Protectorate
- Hassan I, Sultan** Reformer and consolidator; reigned 1873–1894
- Hassan II, King (d. 1999)** As Crown Prince, chief of FAR; after enthronement in 1961, wielded near-absolute power
- al-Hiba, Ahmad (d. 1919)** Son and successor of Ma al-‘Aynayn, led unsuccessful 1912 revolt against French occupation
- Hicham b. Abdallah el-Alaoui, Prince** Pro-democracy intellectual, cousin of King Muhammad VI, lives in the United States
- El-Himma, Fouad Ali** Technocrat, close adviser to Muhammad VI, founder of PAM (2008)
- Ibn Musa, (Ba) Ahmad (d. 1900)** Grand Vizir and Regent for young Sultan ‘Abd al-‘Aziz
- Ibrahim, Abdallah (d. 2005)** Head of opposition government 1958–1960, a founder of the UNFP
- Jamâi, Abubakr** Economist, political activist, editor of *Le Journal* (now defunct)
- Jettou, Driss** Technocrat, Minister of Interior (2001); Prime Minister 2002–2007
- al-Kattani, ‘Abd al-Hayy (d. 1962)** Scholar, bibliophile, ally of al-Glawi, favored deposition of Muhammad V, disgraced and died in France
- al-Kattani, Muhammad b. ‘Abd al-Kabir (d. 1909)** Sufi shaykh and political rival of Sultan ‘Abd al-Hafiz, accused of treason and flogged to death
- al-Kattani, Muhammad b. al-Ja‘far (d. 1927)** Sufi shaykh, author of *Salwat al-Anfas*, history of the notables of Fez
- al-Khattabi, ‘Abd al-Karim (d. 1963)** Berber chief, journalist, head of Rifian Republic 1922–1926; hero of anti-colonial resistance
- Laâbi, Abdellatif** Poet, founder of *Souffles*, political prisoner in the 1970s
- Laanigri, Hamidou** Security chief abruptly removed from power in 2006
- Laroui, Abdallah** Public intellectual and nationalist historian
- Lyautey, Louis Hubert Gonzalve (d. 1934)** French aristocrat, first Résident Général of the Protectorate (1912–1925), preserver of the makhzan, and architect of Moroccan modernity
- Lyazidi, Mohamed Ahmed (d. 1990)** Chief propagandist of the pre-independence Istiqlal
- Ma al-‘Aynayn (d. 1910)** Saharan religious scholar, leader of resistance to French occupation before 1912
- al-Madghari, Muhammad (d. 1892)** Chief of Darqawa brotherhood, called for jihad against French in the 1880s

- el-Malki, Habib** Economist, minister, member of USFP
- al-Manabhi, al-Mahdi (d. 1937)** Minister of War under ‘Abd al-‘Aziz, exiled to Tangier after 1912
- el-Mandjra, Mahdi** U.S.-trained economist, diplomat, human rights advocate
- Medbouh, Gen. Mohamed (d. 1971)** Chief of Royal Household, killed after failed Skhirat coup
- Mouti’, ‘Abd al-Karim** Founder of Islamic radical group al-Shabiba al-Islamiyya in 1969; in 1975, accused of killing labor leader Omar Benjelloun
- Muhammad V, Sultan and King** Reigned 1956–1961; revered as liberator of Morocco from colonial rule
- Muhammad VI, King** Current ruling monarch, son and successor to Hassan II, enthroned July 1999
- al-Muqri, Muhammad (d. 1957)** Makhzan official
- al-Nasiri, al-Makki (d. 1994)** Member of CAM, journalist for nationalist press
- Noguès, Charles (d. 1971)** Résident Général of the French Protectorate in Morocco, 1936–1943; implementer of Vichy-inspired race laws during World War II
- al-Ouezzani, Mohammed Hassan (d. 1978)** Founder of PDI, rival of ‘Allal al-Fasi
- Oufkir, Mohamed (d. 1972)** General, Minister of Interior, died in mysterious circumstances after 1972 failed coup
- Rachid b. Hassan, Prince** brother of King Muhammad VI and second-in-line in succession to the throne
- al-Raysuni (Raisuli), Ahmed (d. 1925)** Local chieftain and sharif of the Jebala region; mounted campaign of kidnapping Europeans, 1903–1904, that received world attention
- Sbihi, Abdellatif (d. 1965)** Leader of “Young Moroccans”; organized resistance to the Berber dahir, 1930
- Serfaty, Abraham (d. 2010)** Mining engineer, founder of Ila al-Amam, jailed during the “Years of Lead”; released in 1991 and exiled; returned home in 2000
- Taoufik, Ahmed** Historian, novelist, Minister of Islamic Affairs (2002–), architect of a reformed religious establishment
- Torres, Abdelkhalek (d. 1970)** Nationalist leader in the Spanish zone
- Yassine, Abdessalam** Royal admonisher, founder in 1987 of al-‘Adl wal-Ihsan pro-Islamist Party

- Yata, 'Ali (d. 1997)** A founder of the PCM (Communist Party) in 1943 and later its head; in 1974, founded the socialist PPS
- Youssoufi, Abderrahmane** Founding member of the UNFP; Prime Minister of the government of "Alternance," 1998–2002
- Yusuf, Mawlay, Sultan (d. 1927)** Reigned 1912–1927; father of Muhammad V



MAP 1 Morocco and Its Major Cities

## Introduction

The present work retells the story of state-societal relations in Morocco over the long expanse of nearly two hundred years, beginning with the French conquest of Algeria in 1830 and ending with the death of King Hassan II in 1999. This history is arranged chronologically and falls into three large tranches: the period 1830–1912, before the coming of the French Protectorate; the period of the Protectorate between 1912 and 1956, when Morocco was a dependency of France; and the post-1956 years, when Morocco became an independent state under a monarchy. Writing across this broad swath of time has necessitated painful choices about what to include and what to leave out. While the desire to be comprehensive is a worthy one, it is in reality a losing cause: the pertinent fact, the delicious quotation, the choice observation, the nutty conclusion, all selected at the discretion of the author, may not always satisfy the reader. The expert will undoubtedly find many inexcusable absences in this book. The sweeping optic has opened the way for integrating the results from many different areas of social science research that might otherwise not have found a shared home.

This narrative presents a “writing against” earlier histories of modern Morocco, whether they are in French, English or Arabic. It is inspired by recent and profound changes within the field of Moroccan historiography, in turn influenced by the political opening of the 1990s that motivated Moroccan intellectuals to “liberate” their own history from the strictures of an earlier period. Furthermore, the exposure of the crimes of the “years of lead” via testimony given to the Instance Équité et Réconciliation (the ERC, or Commission of Equity and Reconciliation) in the first years of the twenty-first century has not only seized the public mind, but also forced

people to confront a past they might have preferred to forget. Suddenly the historical profession in Morocco has become a vortex of ideas about what constitutes “authentic” history, and who is responsible for writing it. The personal histories and memories of ordinary people that welled up in the context of the ERC are valuable historical sources of the first order, filling in yawning gaps in the official record. But they are also controversial, and have set in motion a heated debate within Moroccan society about how and to what extent memory (in the absence of more conventional sources of documentation) ought to be mobilized for producing history. As a further consequence of the revelations of the “years of lead,” the need to write contemporary history, or *l’histoire du temps présent*, has been foregrounded as a major concern of Moroccan historians who have finally acknowledged that the recent past – and especially the period since 1956 – is practically a blank slate. Moreover, when considering the existing corpus, it becomes clear that earlier historical production – both native and foreign – is badly in need of revision, augmentation, and reinterpretation.

What are some of the problems that have bedeviled the writing of recent Moroccan history? What are the presuppositions that have informed it? What are the blockages that inhibit the production of a viable contemporary history? Silences that are politically motivated, myths about the sanctity of the nationalist cause, the inviolability of the monarchy, the state monopoly over representations of authenticity, the violence of state-societal relations, the occultation of sources, fears of retribution, all have played a role in shaping the contours of contemporary historical discourse. The identification of those blockages and the effort to overcome them is the endeavor that inspired this book. An overriding difficulty stems from the fact that the long middle period of the present account, the Protectorate years, have been a source of contention, included within the grand narrative of Moroccan history only on the condition that they be recognized as a time of deviation, a kind of historical “mistake.” This point of view is primarily a product of the immediate postindependence years when the fervor to write a “national” history cut loose from the weight of colonialist thinking was a driving force, but it has inexplicably endured beyond its time. Various intellectual positions have converged around the idea that the Protectorate was an aberration not especially worthy of study; in fact, for many years, it was shunned by Moroccan researchers (with one or two exceptions) as a contaminated subject to be placed in isolation. The enormous impact of the Protectorate years organizationally, administratively, culturally, and politically on the postcolonial state has been minimized, or even denied. Moreover, the deep connecting currents between the

precolonial and the colonial periods have also been obscured, which is ironic, given the fact that many of the outstanding Moroccan political personalities of the interwar period were born and schooled in the nineteenth century and their intellectual formation was decidedly of that era. As a consequence, the continuities that tie one stage of modern historical development to the next have not come together, making for a fragmented and disjunctive history rather than a cohesive, nuanced, and contextualized one. This blockage is not only a methodological error but also a conceptual one, preventing us from seeing modern Moroccan history as an unfolding, variegated, often discontinuous and textured canvas, yet all of one piece. Our critique does not constitute an argument in favor of teleology, for the errors of that approach are amply clear; rather, it is a plea for recognizing the ill effects of a discourse of total rupture, the reasons why it came about, and why it should be overcome.

A second blockage we have encountered relates to the practice of imagining the monarchy as the main symbol and arbiter of Moroccan “authenticity.” In this scenario, the Protectorate period is seen as a wasteland from which the Moroccan people emerged unscathed because of the mantle of protection thrown over them through their mystical identification with a spiritualized monarchy. This position asserts that despite its immense intrusion into every aspect of Moroccan life, colonization had little effect on Moroccans, who came out of the experience with their “pure and essential” qualities intact. The danger here is manifold. First of all, when Moroccan history is subsumed under monarchical history, other institutions in society are deprived of their agency; tribal loyalties, religious loyalties, bonds to work, to neighborhood, to other social organizations, become subsumed under the monarchical principle, where they are submerged and eventually forgotten. Moreover, the hybridity that was a by-product of the colonial experience is lost. Many of the examples we give in this account of the interpenetration of two worlds that colonialism brought about – in social customs, laws, politics, in intellectual life – are invalidated by adopting such a narrow perspective. Also filtered out are the luxuriant varieties produced by the colonial experience – social deviants, border-crossers, and experimenters of all types who enliven historical studies. Alternatively, denying the importance of the exportation of Moroccan influences abroad that were unmediated by the royal center – through expositions, world fairs, architecture, migration, and other forms of diasporic activity – is the other side of this constricting narrative. Seeing Moroccan history solely through the prism of monarchical history is a distorting practice that begs to be superseded.

A third blockage concerns the nationalist movement and the tight grip the political parties have held on recent Moroccan historiography. There are many reasons for this: the hegemony of the nationalist parties over the daily press, the myth of an all-encompassing national “unity,” the concept of nationalists as “heroes of the revolution.” Nationalist leaders, especially those on the left, have been enveloped in a cloud of hagiography that is difficult to penetrate, and the closer one gets to the relationship between Muhammad V and the nationalists, the thicker is the wrap. Myths surrounding the history of the nationalist movement are deeply embedded in the popular imagination: for example, the misleading idea that Fez dominated the nationalist movement in the 1930s and 1940s dies hard, as does the contention that the nationalists made no headway in rural areas, or that its leadership was of a single mind. Studying the regional basis of nationalist organizations, the role of women in the resistance, the relations between nationalists and communists, between nationalism and Berber ethnicity, and other pertinent topics would help us understand the incessant infighting, personality clashes and violence engendered by the nationalists among themselves and later, in the late 1950s, between the liberation armies and the state’s forces of order. These topics are only now emerging from the halo of mythologizing that surrounds the nationalist movement allowing them to be explored in greater depth.

The question of violence that is a subtheme of the nationalist endeavor must also be examined more carefully. The tendency toward violence in the Moroccan state is not necessarily explained by the struggles that accompanied its birth; rather, violence in itself calls for explanation, particularly in light of the connection between the war of liberation, the growth of a security apparatus in the independent state, and the eventual emergence of all-powerful police and intelligence services in Hassan II’s makhzan. The history of institutions of violence, like any other history, is best understood through an analysis of the events that surrounded their formation, and by placing less emphasis on ideologies of domination, or on suspected character flaws in the Moroccan “personality,” or on culturally learned behaviors, and more emphasis on the specific circumstances, fears, and assumptions of decision makers as they went about the business of state-building.

Furthermore, I have tried to bring an international dimension to this story and to situate it within the setting of regional and global events, in the belief that we cannot understand the context in which everyday decisions are made without a sense of the surrounding political landscape. This history is not informed by theories of globalization or by Marxist dialectics, but it