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EDS.

SOCIAL MOBILISATION IN MOROCCO

LESSONS LEARNED FOR A HISTORICALLY-INFORMED ACTIVISM

ibidem

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To Elies, Eloi, Laila, Nora, Poppy, Rai, and Uriel

To Maria Rosa de Madariaga, in memoriam

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OPENINGS:
THE CITY AND ITS ACTORS OF RESISTANCE

Natalia Ribas-Mateos, Fadma Ait Mous and Saskia Sassen

1. Opening Historically Informed Activism

> "There is no society without uprising"
> "Il ne peut pas y avoir des sociétés sans soulèvements",
> Michel Foucault.
> *(August 1979; published in Arabic. French version in Révue Rodéo, n. 2, 2013: 35–56).*

This book is a contribution to building a readership, to working towards elaborating a real tool that can be used as lessons in informed activism. Such lessons may be thought of as a way of expanding knowledge, of reaching an audience interested in understanding how local and global history is directly affecting our social actions.

To be more precise, activism, in the context of the book, is understood in a re-evaluation of practice and action (history), in a critical context where social structure is both a historical and sociological object. Thus, practical activism is understood as a way of timely historically informed interventions in complex contemporary struggles[1].

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1   These types of academic engaged biographies flourished during the 1960s and are directly propelled by Third-world activism. This can be seen, for example, in the biography of Fatéma Mernissi, in the biography of Saskia Sassen, and also in the biography of Bernabé Lopez. It has become very palpable in the case of Maria Rosa de Madariaga: "Because I said to myself: it just happens that right on Spain's doorstep, in the South, in the south of Spain, you have received a movement of liberation against colonialism. We have had our colonies and we also celebrate the war against the colonizer (…). It is perfectly clear how the movement evolved, which is not a movement against the *cabilas*, against the tribes; it became a movement against foreign occupation. There is an important dimension of national liberation, and later it would be a movement of socio-economic liberation. I toured the Rif by bus. (…) The most important thing was the working method, placing major importance on primary sources. I realized this for the Rif by studying the character of Abdelkrim. (…) Since then I have noticed that the majority of the movement against the Rif war meant dying for a cause that is not your own cause (…) When

Protesting, advocating and demanding all have a role as forms of solidarity and of social mobilising. Activism here compels the parameter of space and time[2] to establish a base on which to situate contemporary struggles; to establish the way in which they interplay with each other, in which struggles interconnect, how they interact as a process of interlacing community actions and the organisation of social movements. The "interlacing threads" (Ventura 2022), as shown in the case studies of the book; enable an expression of each spatial-temporal singularity.

This book investigates the ways in which historical knowledge supports current activism and advocacy in Morocco[3]. The chapters give presentations on how their work on the historical question and how their

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you analyse Spanish militarism in the Spanish protectorate in Morocco, you frequently develop the weight of a certain mentality (especially on the African military), and frequently highlight the image of that military Spain in the Rif, but were not all colonialisms hypermilitary? (…) The homeland (*patria*) concept of a colonised people is not the same as that of a European colonising people. The concept of the European nation is a concept that denotes superiority. On the other hand, for colonised countries, the concept of the 'watan' (nation) is a concept of getting rid of the countries that dominate, of imperial countries. (…) That gridded view was used by anthropologist David Montgomery Hart, in reference to the Spanish military. As you know, I had a great admiration, as he did for Emilio Blanco Izaga, who had conducted studies on the Rif. For Hart, it coincides with his segmentalist thesis of society. (…) Spain assumes the protectorate as a sublease from France, but Spain did not have the economic capacity (…) France had a strategic Liautey method, they called 'la tâche d'huile' (the oil stain), thus gaining the population little by little, in contrast to the methods used by the Spanish, who tried to buy the qaids. And that he used these kinds of slogans: Our enemy of today can be our friend of tomorrow" *(Interview with Maria Rosa de Madariaga, Ribas-Mateos 2021)

2   We could introduce the concept of 'multiversum' here. In the work of Ernst Bloch, 'multiversum' is associated with a critique of linear progress and Eurocentric evolutionism. The multiversum can also receive political and historical applications. It reflects the paradox of a unity that does not subsume the multiple, but consists of the difference, of the different temporalities (and histories, narratives) that recreate closed totalities (Ventura 2022).

3   Several historians have worked on urban revolts. Ira Marvin Lapidus undertook remarkable work on Muslim towns in the medieval period (Muslim Cities in the Later Middle Ages, Harvard University Press, 1967). More recently, in 2009, and edited by Christian Lange and Maribel Fierro, Public Violence in Islamic Societies: Power, Discipline, and the Construction of the Public Sphere, 7th–19th Centuries CE, Edinbugh, addresses this question both for Saadian Morocco (Fernando Rodríguez Mediano) and Alaouite Morocco, before and after the protectorate treaty (Manuela Marín).

selected case considers questions of authority and the challenges of historically-informed organising, and how that case has grappled with questions of the way history informs and empowers current activism. We reflectively think this way when debating the historical truth, when debating breaking the silence surrounding the use of iperita gas in the Rif, or when we consider the struggle of the families of political prisoners (Chafai 2021).

What is at stake in such historically informed activism and advocacy in contemporary Morocco? Critical interrogation is not simply revisiting these terms to theorise what place they might occupy in a contemporary debate, but rather to see if there is a new conceptualisation of the original terms and contradictions today. For example, in women's studies we can see how the first, second and third waves of feminism have given historically different forms to today's activism.

Research on social movements cannot be limited to situating their object in the immediate context; instead, the true subject of study is society as a historical problem. The compendium of efforts in the book contribute in different ways to describing the complex attempts to transcend this separation of approaches, presenting perspectives, methodologies and direct applications for the study of power relations and systems of social classification, paying special attention to the reconstruction of colonial situations and emergent social movements today. Logically, researchers in the book face the challenge of memory—often violent, even legitimised violence, and extreme violence—but also the challenge of understanding history and its intersection with spatial urban power[4]. For much of the 20th century, the field of 'historically informed activism' has defined its research through a series of contrasted geographical settings. Urban life had been mainly opposed to the rural and peri-urban areas, particularly in the Maghreb. Furthermore, research conducted in this book is not only biased by the urban representation, as we can see in the various chapters, but also because the North has been amply studied. On the positive side, this somehow replaces

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4   "We've waited a long time to have a good quality book in the puplic space, with a perspective of colonial studies, subaltern dynamism, transborder activism" (Ksikes 2021, during the launch of the first version of the book in Spanish).

a niche of study in the historiography of Morocco, which focused less on the case of the North of Morocco, the *Chamal.*

What problematisations does this book present? The first critical problem encountered in this work is the way of dealing with the past. If authors in this book have chosen to immerse themselves in this imbroglio, it is because they believe that it is possible to learn from thinking about the past as an ethnographic/historical/sociological problem, a strange other, and to reflect on the present time as a historical problem. Therefore, the starting point of this book is an epistemological problem that has yet to be resolved: the way in which human beings in their cultural diversity interpret time and divide it into 'past', 'present' and 'future' as one of the main concerns of how to think about the present moment, or as Coello and Mateo, would put it, in the ethnographic present (Coello and Mateo 2020), or in this case, the activist's presence in 20th century Morocco (Feliu 2022) and its continuity in neoliberal times (Camps 2022[5]).

Any critical reflection on historical activism must also address the fact that the epistemological problems analysed here are intertwined with widely known ethical factors and political biases: how does the present affect the way of reconstructing the past and what role does this view of the past and of history itself play? The creation of the past as an object is an absolutely relevant challenge; the construction of the nation, of an ethnicity, of a religious group, debates about genocides, conflicts from the past and memory are all examples of this challenge.

The second problem is methodological. The book describes the complex attempts to present perspectives, methodologies and direct applications in the study of power relations and systems of social classification, paying special attention to the reconstruction of colonial situations. This book presents dialectical methodologies for the study of human relations, showing the variants at play, trying to go beyond not so much the

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5   How does the private provision of security relate to an authoritarian regime? By considering security as a changing social practice, embedded in a historical approach in the case of Morocco and by taking an international socio-political approach to neoliberal times.

ambivalences as the dualisms (nature-culture, subject-structure, tradition-modernity[6]), but rather focusing on multi-faceted power relations.

The study of power is central to this work because we consider it one of the engines of history, beyond focuses that are materialist or symbolist, agential or structuralist. In all these perspectives, the dimension of power emerges, shaping unequal relationships in the sexual division of work, in the organisation of subsistence, in redistribution and, obviously, in the forms of social organisation. Power[7] also exists in the forms of symbolic significance found in the world, through legitimation and the social struggle to answer it and to define the world itself.

The third problem is identifying the key actor[8]. Another of the common themes that runs through this book is the consideration of the history of the excluded. Contributions to microhistory such as Carlo Ginzburg (1976, 1993) have made it possible to incorporate plebeian (or subaltern) sectors into the historical drama, including the case of women. The emphasis here was on popular culture that did not seek to analyse tradition,

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6   We could add many more: modernity movement/traditionalism-staticism (or even modernity presented in patchwork form within a plural temporality, as Tozy, 2021, mentions), immobilisation (political repression and stereotyped poverty)/processual vision, dominant knowledge versus peripheral knowledge (Arabic sources), double colonialism-single colonialism, siba/makhzen etc.

7   The structure of the regime in power has a direct impact on both the type of regime response (strategy) and its possibility of survival (control of resources and capacities), as well as the configuration and dynamics of the mobilization. Different regime models provoke different reactions that, in turn, affect the dynamics and chances of success of social mobilizations. Thus, these dynamics can become a comparative tool in helping us understand why revolts have different processes and results. It is not enough to focus on apparent processes of democratization; the analysis extends to the entire power regime, not just the political. In this sense, the extension of the analysis to cover all actors and resources involved in the power regime, complements and enriches the analyses of the political system. As a response, resistances are related to the processes of accumulation (economic, political, ideological etc.), by the elites and, ahead of these processes, to the population's objectives of improving their living conditions. Resistances mainly occur against these dominant processes of power accumulation.

8   We also have to be careful. It is not only city dwellers who are the main actors in the urban revolts. In 1907, in Casablanca, rural notables were involved. Failure to grasp a detailed insight into the psychology of the time will prevent the understanding of the failure of this revolt and the fact that a year later the consequences were no longer visible, at least not materially.

understood as the persistence of traditional ways of life, but rather the cultural practices and forms that had been actively marginalised by the dominant culture.

Saïd Bennis has recently published a text (in Arabic) addressing many of these issues which, in its preface, opens with: "tasâwulât h'awul mafhûm", "al-châr'a al-Îh'tijâjî", which deals with the concept of protest in Morocco. Among other issues, it questions the extent to which the space of protest can contain diversity and corporate pluralism, be a factor of reinforcement and internalisation of coexistence and social ties, or on the contrary, act as a factor in the dismantling of coexistence, in the deepening of distance and in the promotion of logics of confrontation on new bases. What can be done to convert the space of protest into one of identity renewal, of historical and linguistic affiliations?

How can the data and facts collected in the various forms of revolts be classified (populist, political, religious, secular, cultural, ideological, revolutionary, or are they a mix of these forms)? Will it depend on the type of actor, protester profile, or the nature of the demands raised? We will next consider two key examples of how some of the questions that arise in the book may be approached; firstly, in reference to the city as a key space of revolt, and secondly, in reference to the feminist struggle[9].

2. Cities as Places of Resistance

Several chapters intersect in their articulation of certain core theoretical arguments such as the key dimension of sociospatial relations under capitalism, or the intensification of flexible multiscalar epistemologies (Brenner 2019) within hierarchical arrangements of the socio-political struggle during the 20th century.

The vision of the urban was famously represented in Burges' classic concentric rings diagram from Chicago in 1921. From the urban worlds developed by the Chicago School to the elaboration of Global Cities, we

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9   In this respect, see the ways of transnational feminism as a question of contemporary change by the action of engaged networks (eg, Mujeres 24/FLDF-Oxfam Maroc), with Moroccan strawberry pickers in Huelva (Escrivá 2021).

can examine a number of questions regarding the role citizens play. We mainly refer to the citizenship characteristics defined by the Chicago School with regard to individualism and anonymity and leaving behind communitarianism. The city has long been a strategic site for the exploration of major subjects confronting society. In the first half of the 20th century, the study of cities lay at the heart of sociology—evident in the work of Simmel, Weber, Benjamin, Lefebvre and the Chicago School. These sociologists confronted massive processes: industrialisation, urbanisation, alienation, and a new cultural formation they called "urbanity". Studying the city meant studying the major social processes of an era.

However such observations were mainly made in North America. It is principally in the works of the so-called Manchester School, where British sociologists working in the mid-20th century in Africa (especially in Southern Africa), had observed the profound urban character or ethnic links, as Portes had also done in the case of the urban enclave in Miami back in the 1990s. In the case of Southern Africa, they invented the city not in opposition to traditional social relations but reformulating and interacting with them: they were embedded citizens inside the city. This view opposed the colonial vision of the 'African' as a mainly rural person (and fixed in a past without history, encapsulated as '*indigène*'). In this case, there were two main biases: that of the urban character of African societies, and the marginalisation of research from the Manchester School (see Mitchell 1956), in favour of that by the Chicago School.

Since the 1990s, the claim for rights in the world's cities has spread in its convergence of forms related to human rights claims, environmentalist claims, urban poor and social movements (living conditions and human settlements), local policies and international policies.

How do we see those aspects that are typically rendered invisible by modern narratives of development and urban competitiveness? In the early 1900s, the city was a lens for understanding larger processes—but half a century later, it had lost that role. It was Jane Jacobs[10] who taught us again

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10   She was known by her urban activism against the destruction of diversity and vitality of cities.

to view the city in a deeper, more complex way. She helped us re-emphasise dimensions that were usually excluded—or rather expelled—from general analyses of the urban economy. Indeed, we can imagine she would have affirmed without a shadow of a doubt that, no matter how electronic and global the city might one day become, it still has to be 'made'—and therein lies the importance of place.

The container of the city—embedded within a dynamically whole 'city dominant' approach—has lasted for a long time. In such a dominant approach, Global Cities are not only operative spaces for transnational firms, but also spaces for activism. The powerless in the cities gain from multi-sited digital platforms, and the feeling that they are part of a bigger community. In this sense, the new paradigm of the Global Cities has also relegated the role of cities in the South. These 'global cities' are placed inside a hierarchy of the main global cities (London, New York, Tokyo), while the internal global cities in the South have been relegated in the hierarchy of power and also in terms of the attention research has afforded them.

Cities do not seem to have any choice other than to become more competitive, more 'global', more modern, more developed; see, for example, the new urban projects in the cities of Casablanca, Rabat, and Tangier in neoliberal times. As a consequence, in addition to the global injustice in the cities of the South there are other types of injustice regarding the impact of the population of neglected neighbourhoods, so researchers from the urban South are often excluded from theoretical debates, and solutions have to be found in the new forms of activism. So in the future, we hope activism will be increasingly built up around a form of historically informed activism.

3. Women as Actors of Resistance

> "Of course, by focusing on the stories of key women of the national movement and the armed resistance, the book leaves out other stories, other points of view. We have not heard much from men, and nothing from the colonisers, the Moroccans who worked with them, or minority groups like Moroccan Jews or Algerians living in Morocco. We will not hear anything from rural women (women of the Rif, Middle Atlas or the Ait Baamrane of the South), the population that many Moroccans consider to be the real fighters of the resistance"
> Baker 1998:3).

Across Morocco, Tunisia and Algeria, the 20th century witnessed the emergence of individual women as political actors, as a category of political and social actors, and women (or "the woman question") as a theme for political action across North Africa. This history is intertwined with, and for a long time overshadowed by colonialism, nationalism, and postcolonial state-building processes. Prior to the 20th century, the women who have a place in historical records are almost exclusively those from elite families[11]. There are examples of the Amazigh warrior Queen Kahina leading the resistance in the 7th century or Sayyida al-Hurra of Tetouan.

By visualising the role of women, we can explore the emergence of individual women as political and social actors, as well as the stages of "the mobilisation of women as a group in the anti-colonial struggle, post-

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11   The books 'arguments point out the great structural transformations that have shaped the current power regimes. It takes a longue durée perspective, by understanding the emergence of capital and the state as central resources in the processes of power accumulation, and how these resources and the elites compete for control, and influence social mobilizations. the fate of social mobilizations, and even revolutions, is directly linked to the strength of the elites they face, what some authors have called 'the structure of opportunity' (see Tilly, 2006 and Kriesi, 2004), which is directly linked to the degree of concentration of power. Social mobilization is always embedded within a relationship of power, and as such is influenced by all actors involved in it. And, as in any social relationship, it is the actors with the greatest power that influence the most in their dynamics. These claim-making acts, collective or individual, have both practical and policy implications. Through direct action, people make themselves heard; they create realities on the ground that the authorities sooner or later have to come to terms with.

colonial state feminism and then a shift towards women speaking, writing and organizing themselves". Women's place in Moroccan history, especially during the Protectorate period, remains virtually invisible. The few writings devoted to it have concluded that there is very little recognition of women's role in the anti-colonial struggle through both nationalist history and memory.

When mentioned in the writings of male nationalists who have left traces, women are most often anonymous. In these accounts of nationalist memories, women are represented first as an object of prohibition (they were forbidden from visiting the Saints, for example). This is the Salafist reformist discourse. They are then considered as an object of reflection around the nation, in relation to the question of their own education, and education on which the nation's children depend for their own education. Woman, a term used here in the singular, appears as an object in a reformist petition signed by 400 people, and produced by the *fassies* notabilities, addressed to their municipal council in 1928. The document is preserved, translated and presented by Jacques Berque, the sociologist-colonial administrator. The reduction in women's places and rituals, their circulation in the outer space, the imposition of more *ḥudūd* (borders in the sense of Mernissi), give us an image of this religious reformism as it was practised at the time.

Gradually women moved from this category of thought, as well as from being an object of colonial and nationalist politics, to become a subject of their own individuality; that is to say, a politically conscious actor. Such dynamics started during the struggle against colonialism. Moroccan women participated in both the armed resistance (in cities and in the countryside) and in urban political resistance. Social class, educational background, activist trajectory, and the post-independence destiny of women in the urban political resistance differed from those of women in the armed resistance. In the latter case, women came from modest rural families newly established in the cities, while the women active in political resistance were from educated, urban, notable families.

Following independence, Moroccan women who had participated in the anti-colonial armed struggle returned to their previous roles and lives while those engaged in political parties and NGOs (from the end of the 1990s) continued their emancipation and activism. Post-independence structural dynamics in Morocco showed increased access for women to education, a visibility of pioneering female 'models' and principally the creation of structures to sustain female activism.

Women who had been socialised in the women's sections of political parties (PI, PDI or PCM), many of whom already had socioeconomic and educational capital, continued to be activists within these parties, focusing particularly on education and social actions. For working-class women, the Progressive Union of Moroccan Women was created in 1962 as part of the Moroccan Workers' Union (UMT), which was under state control. The socio-political situation from 1965 onwards, with a series of protests in Casablanca and other towns and cities, led to a clampdown on political freedom. It was in this context that Moroccan state feminism emerged through the creation of the National Union of the Women of Morocco (Union Nationale des Femmes du Maroc, al-Itihad al-Watani lil-Nsā' al-Maghrib, UNFM) in 1969.

From the late 1970s onwards, there was considerable political openness which allowed political parties of the opposition to resume their activities and particularly to call upon their female members to organise themselves in women's sections. From the mid-1980s, autonomous feminist associations which explicitly focused on women's rights and gender power relations would begin to emerge: examples include the Democratic Association of Women of Morocco (1985), The Feminist Action Union (1987), the Association for the Defence of Women's Rights (1992), the Democratic League of Women's Rights (1993), and Jossour, Forum for Moroccan Women (1995). This emergence was supported by activists' desire to make their own demands, speak in their own words, and organise themselves in ways different to those of the women's sections in political parties and trade unions. It should be noted that in such spaces, women's specific grievances were often ignored or taken as secondary.

From the late 1980s and early 1990s onwards, women activists made women's lives much more publicly visible by writing and speaking for themselves, as well as forming their own activist groups to articulate and claim their specific demands in an innovative way. Such visibility is due to many social transformations, among them women's growing access to primary, secondary, and higher education as well as the marketplace. The work of Fatima Mernissi and a group of scholars around her project was a turning point at that period. Many writings, including platforms such as magazines, were used to give voices to Moroccan women from different sides, including rural women and women in history.

In terms of political activism, the main focus of the first women's NGOS during the 1980s and 1990s was to reform the 1957 Personal Status Code (Moudawana), perceived as reducing women to a subordinate status. The process of such reform began with a movement led by l'Union de l'Action Féminine with the support of a number of allies, and showed the use of new repertoires of action such as the 1992 One Million Signatures petition.

The 1990s witnessed a great debate between two feminisms in Morocco condensed as modernist and Islamist in a polarised societal debate around the National Plan for the Integration of Woman to Development. Two major demonstrations were organised by both sides either to defend or resist the Plan. In the end, King Mohammed VI established a commission for reformation of the Family Code (see the chapter by Pérez and Amoretti).

We should also note the plurality of women's movements in Morocco. The emergence of an 'Islamic feminism' is noticeable via many dynamics including the emergence of structures and individual intellectuals as well as public policies. Women have been active in Al Adl wal-Ihsane since the 1980s, and the women's section of this NGO was officially created in 1998. Al-Adl women, as well as other Islamic intellectuals such as Asma Lamrabet, have engaged in *ijtihad* (the effort to reinterpret and recontextualise religious texts) to demonstrate that discrimination against women, both in the family and in wider society, is the result of men's actions, not

scripture. Since the 2000s, a state version of 'reformist feminism'—formulated with the aim of creating the image of a 'moderate Moroccan Islam' for local and international audiences—has also emerged. For instance, the State-sponsored *murshidat* (female religious guides) are sent around Morocco to explain a 'correct version' of Islam. The fact that these are women in positions of religious authority speaking to other women, without men as intermediaries, is a prominent rupture. The question remains whether the *murshidat* will promote a less conservative version of Islam than men do.

During the so-called Arab Spring, a new feminism emerged among younger generations who criticised previous women's activism as reductionist since it views Moroccan women as a homogenised group, neglecting disparities among women from rural and urban areas, as well as from different classes. To sum up, recent publications studying gender dynamics in Morocco show new categories of women activists. This can be seen in the case of the Soulaliyats, a women's movement claiming their rights over collective lands and fighting against land dispossession (see the chapter by Ramírez, and also Ait Mous and Berriane 2016).

4. What's Next?

The 22 essays in this volume illustrate some of the ideas discussed here. First, the historical process is marked by a distinctive kind of temporality exposed in different periods inside the book. This temporality is multi-levelled and subject to different rates of acceleration and deceleration (Koselleck 2002), and functions not only as a matrix within which historical events occur but also as an informed source in the determination of the present reality of activism today (see for example the figure of Abdelkrim). Consequently, historiography is here able to build a general discourse, an informed narrative in the discovery of both society and knowledge, as solid bases for an informed activism.

The book approaches new debates**.** Their main objective, as academic activists, is to highlight through this publication the need to learn from each other's struggles, practice, debates, reflections—as well as sharing and

documenting different experiences. How are social movements generated, how do they develop? How are they repressed? How do they die? What enables them to move beyond borders (Morocco or the Arab World)? What prevents them? What is their current shape, singularity, and when do they collapse? How do their original framed ideas, structures and social practices directly or indirectly affect their results in society? How can they best handle encounters with the authoritarian state and with the articulation with global capitalism? Bearing all these questions in mind, the book seeks answers, answers designed to provide a "longue durée perspective", answers researched and elaborated by academics who are also activists.

The book also approaches new perspectives on the understanding of global movements that are rooted in history but have become active in neoliberal times. The book contains both academic knowledge and solid grounding for activist-oriented political action. With this book we address a key issue in the contemporary transformation of world politics. It shows how the need to research and think matches academic knowledge, through theoretical and empirical exploration, with key action in social movements. It also goes beyond Mediterranean societies to connect social movement-activists and globalisation perspectives.

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Structure of the Book

The following chapters on social mobilization in Morocco highlight activist and engaged academic research in social movements as well as use multidisciplinary tools and methodologies (from anthropology, geography, history, and international relations). The privileged theoretical and methodological framework used conforms with a crossroads between public policy approaches, the sociology of power and the theory of social movements and the practicalities of such social movements, with close links to activism, especially since the Arab Spring.

Particularly, regarding the following dimensions: growing inequalities, unemployment, fiscal crisis, corruption, access to public health and social services, environmental crisis, food and water scarcity, social control, censorship and repression, violence (state violence, armed conflicts, etc.), political representation, participation, regimes' legitimacy crisis, identity politics, sectarisation, migration, borders and mobility.

The selection of the twenty-two cases of popular revolts collected offers a rich diversity of actors and casuistic with a varied geographical representation, including urban, rural and peripheral. Thus, the main enclaves present in the work are:

CASABLANCA (1907, 1965 and 2000), **FES** (1907 and 1990), the **EASTERN RIF** (1909, 1921, 1958, 1984 and 2004), **MEKNES** (1937 and 2011**), TANGIER** (1952, 2011 and 2015), **SALÉ** and its surroundings (1930 and 2008), **TAZA** (1915) and **IMIDER** (2011).

The different chapters of the book are distributed into four different parts and they stimulate different reflections on the idea of social mobilisations from a theoretical and empirical point of view, by questioning and problematizing the understanding and framing of social movements from a historical perspective in different periods that conform the four different parts book:

- **FIRST** PERIOD: **PRECOLONIAL** MOROCCO,
- **SECOND** PERIOD: **COLONIAL** MOROCCO,
- **THIRD** PERIOD: **NATIONAL** MOROCCO,
- **FOURTH** PERIOD: **NEOLIBERAL** MOROCCO.

Finally, the book adds a chronology, a map of places, and index of terms and an index of places to facilitate the reading.

CHAPTER 1.
A CENTURY OF SOCIAL MOBILISATION IN MOROCCO: BASES FOR A HISTORICALLY INFORMED ACTIVISM

Laura Feliu, Josep Lluís Mateo and Ferran Izquierdo

1. The background to social mobilisation: from protest to revolution

1.1. The scales of mobilisation[1]

The 2011 revolts in the Arab world marked the start of a period of reflection on social mobilisation and political change in the region. The idea for this book came in the wake of the post-Arab Spring period and intends to position and reassess events to gain a full understanding and also provide a framework for reflection on militant action. It is rooted in the conviction of the need to integrate historical dimensions to ensure a correct reading of the present.

The history of the 20th century is also one of resistance and transformation, achieved through social mobilisation. At some time in their history, in all societies, together with relations of competition between the principal elites—circular relations due to their permanent nature—we encounter relationships of power forged by the population when spurred to action to improve their living conditions. Our definition of wellbeing and living conditions is broad, encompassing both material and cultural factors, as well as those of identity, gender, rights, and liberties. The unequal and hierarchical structure of the system, not only forces the elites to compete but also generates a need for resistance and transformation among the popular classes. However, despite the possible existence of small groups in

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1   We would like to thank Natalia Ribas-Mateos to help us putting together this new introduction for the book in the English version.

the vanguard immersed in a permanent struggle, the mobilisation of the population is always circumstantial and limited in terms of time.

In hierarchical societies, individuals are rarely aware of their interests in improving their quality of life. A single mobilisation may combine the objectives of the elite—the differential accumulation of power—and those of the population at large—better living conditions. Analyses should distinguish between the two, as the underlying causes are different, the resulting dynamics vary and they lead to opposing social changes.[2]

The population does not always act neither react with the same intensity, and we can therefore identify varying degrees of action. Reactive actions frequently take the form of occasional protests and are characterised by a certain spontaneity. They are movements in response to specific events or demands stemming from intense pressure exerted on the population to the point that it becomes unbearable. In this sense, they differ from resistance and revolution provided they occur within the system, accepting the rules of play.

Attempts to transform the system, or certain policies that affect the principles of the power regime, acquire a greater dimension than in the two previous situations. Movements of resistance and revolution are only strong when the power regime controlling the system is fragile. Resistance is not only positioned outside the channels established by the regime, but also questions its very legitimacy.

Revolution goes even further, proposing a change of regime based on an alternative vision of social justice. The forms of resistance and its repression vary. Yet at the same time, because 20th century and modern-day resistances are associated with the progress of the State and capital, it could be claimed that all mobilisations possess a revolutionary element. Structures must not only be seen as the limits of the unchangeable, but also as an expression of just the opposite, namely "the irresistibility of change" (Halliday, 1999).

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2   On the theoretical perspective of the Sociology of Power, see (Izquierdo-Brichs and Etherington, 2017), (Izquierdo-Brichs and Lampridi-Kemou, 2013), (Feliu and Izquierdo, 2016).

In addition, reactions to protest and opposition may range from repression to negotiation, co-optation, or concession in order to boost legitimacy. In the case of resistance and revolutionary movements, the response is always repression, as they question the permanence of the elite and their control over the resources for the accumulation of power and therefore their very existence.

Consequently, one of the population's key resources, in order to achieve their interests, is mobilisation, in the form of protest, opposition, resistance, or revolution. However, it is neither the sole nor the most common resource. Sometimes, the population resorts to the use of competition among the political elite to achieve their goals, particularly when they require the support of social groups. In such cases, the population gains bargaining power and can demand improvements to their well-being. However, the population is always subject to the circumstantial needs of the elite, who used them as a competitive resource.

Morevoer, mobilisation emerges before the central power, and it is therefore important to identify its structure. In the case of Morocco, the centralisation of power by the monarchy, which constitutes the primary elite as it does not depend on others in order to accumulate power, is complemented by the continued influence exerted by the foreign elite (the national elite from other countries, transnational or global forces) on the Moroccan power system.

The Moroccan State lacks large economic resources, and therefore foreign aid is essential during the periods examined. This aid was guaranteed in the post-independence era by western powers, who considered Morocco as a bastion against Communism at the height of the Cold War (and in the 21st century in the struggle against terrorism), and the oil monarchies of the Gulf. As in the colonial era, and today with even more advantages.

On the one hand, the elite benefits from their alliances with foreign actors and play an increasingly active role in their accumulation circuits (Hassan II financed Chirac in his campaign to become mayor of Paris; Mohamed VI is one of the world's richest men, with business interests in the

Gulf and Africa). On the other hand, other elites must make do with their status as secondary actors, dependent on the circle formed by the monarch and his confidants, and with limited functional autonomy. This structure hinders the creation of alliances between these secondary actors, as they are always triangulated by the inevitable presence of the monarchy. Competition between these elites for the differential accumulation of power is the dominant trend.

In fact, social mobilisation examination also requires an approach that is close to micro-history. Neither capitalism nor the State adopt the same form in all societies, as their functions vary within the world-system. The processes of political control exerted by the elite over the population also vary, and therefore their particular nature in the case of Morocco and its territories must be defined within a geography that is differentiated from globalisation (Brenner 2004: 260). These local developments also require a structural explanation.

A further factor for consideration within these scales is the way that collective action and the population's everyday behaviour affect the specific structure of the nation-state, the particular local expression of capitalism, and the associated hegemonic cultural forms (Beinin, 2001: 20). These structures acquire different features and individual actions act upon them, creating their unique physiognomy.

1.2. Timeline and spaces

This collective work addresses 22 cases of social mobilisations that have taken to the streets, calling for change and development strategies, after which the protagonists, regardless of the success or failure of their demands, returned to their homes, their districts, and their *duars*—at least those that were able to—to take up their daily lives once again. Some of these mobilisations are interlinked, whilst others appear to stand completely alone or have generative effects on other mobilisations. Tarrow considers that "Protest becomes a protest cycle when it is diffused to several sectors of the population, is highly organized, and is widely used as the instrument to put forward demands" (Tarrow, 1989: 14–15).

 These cycles also have a counter-revolutionary response, and the fact that the State is a primary structure of power considerably bounds the counter-revolutionary map. Numerous examples are included in this work. De Madariaga studies the progress of the Riffian revolt that began in 1921 in the region of Alhoceima; Moreau refers to the fact that the "Tache de Taza" was a "focus for infection" that allowed dissent to spread southwards from the North in 1925. Cycles of varying nature would affect these northern territories in several periods, namely 1958–1959, 1984, 2000, and 2017 (*Hirak*).

In this respect, Clément (1992) notes that the 1955 protests in inland Morocco were the first to occur simultaneously in several cities (Casablanca, Khenifra, Mogador, Azemmour, Mazagan, Rabat, or Safi), in his opinion, thanks to the fairly sophisticated information systems. In 1965, the incidents in Casablanca coincided with those in Fes and Rabat. Similar phenomena occurred in the 1980s.

In 1981, mobilisations took place in Oujda, Berkane, Fes, Nador or Casablanca. Three years, later, during the crisis sparked by the public debt, structural adjustment plans, and the rising cost of living, protests broke out in Tunisia, spreading to Morocco in a further example of the regional cycle (Seddon, 1984). As the 1990 revolts affected Fes and Tangier overall. In 2011, the 20FM occurred against a backdrop of widespread protest that originated in Tunisia but would later extend to the entire MENA region, and would be later reproduced simultaneously in hundreds of locations around the country.

Whilst it is true that the geography of the Moroccan revolts covers the entire territory, some places appear more susceptible than others. Several locations stand out in particular, with Fes losing ground to other scenarios: Tangier, due to the nationalist movement; and Casablanca, the city which registered the most frequent uprisings and where the incidents were most serious. Population numbers are undoubtedly an underlying factor, but not the only one. Indeed, mobilisations are found to be most intense in small and medium-sized cities (from Beni Taydi in 2001 to Khouribga in 2011, etc.).

As for spatial categories, we are particularly interested in the urban-rural dichotomy. Studies on Nador in 1984 and Alhoceima in 2004 reveal the interrelation between the countryside and urban spaces/conurbations. The 2005 "marches of rage", when thousands of people marched from Tamassint to Ajdir, or even Alhoceima (chapter by Aarab) are examples of the pendular movement from the periphery to the centre and from the centre to the periphery in both the urban space and the provincial territory.

Furthermore, several revolts discussed in this work reveal that the interaction between the urban and rural population was far more extended than could be expected. This is attributable to several causes: Casablanca in 1907 and the attack by the surrounding tribes; Meknes in 1937, and the impact on the local population following the division of the river; or the fact that mobilisations and protests are not exclusive to urban cultures, as shown in the cases of Imider, analysed by Bogaert of the movement of the *Sulaliyat* in peri-urban areas, studied by Ramírez.

In other cases, demographic pressure and class inequalities characterise the urban spaces of the outlying slums of large cities such as Casablanca in 1952 or Meknes in 1956, which both experienced a large influx of migrants from the countryside.

Thus, the question of space has proved to be a determining factor in the dynamics of many of the revolts discussed in this work. The mobilisations occur within the public space, each with its own particular grammars and symbologies in defying the established order.

Let's give an example. Following the 1984 revolts in Tétouan, the government removed all traces of the colonial Plaza de España, replacing it with a large open square that was blocked off to traffic, essentially forming an extension of the royal palace in the centre of the medina. Yet in addition to the streets and religious buildings, the space is now dominated by imposing secular facilities such as factories, secondary schools, universities or peripheral areas, in a trend that emerged in the 1960s (students in Casablanca in 1965, in Nador in 1984, in Fes in 1990, etc.).

Finally, the lay militant spaces of the Arab Spring (the 20FM would meet in the headquarters of the AMDH or PADS, or in the squares that

became the agora) attempted to conquer and redefine the public space to illustrate the new order the movement demanded. The 20FM conducted a similar exercise in Tangier (Jiménez), with the renaming of the main Beni Makada square as Place de la Libération (emulating the Egyptian example of Tahrir). In Tétouan (Feliu), Place Mouley El Mehdi was renamed "Place du Changement-La Fontaine" and the Place du Cinema Avenida, "Place de la Justice".

1.3. The languages of social movements

The consequences of mobilisations can take years or even decades to fully emerge. The advantage of analysing historical events is that we know what happened afterwards and the effects they had.

Mobilisations that are not directly associated with political parties or trade unions are also an expression of political ideas, as they are inevitably linked to the power they oppose. They are often the product of a growing awareness of particular issues, that are not necessarily structured or even coherent, to the extent that they may include contradictory demands. Many of those taking part do not share ideologies in the classic sense, but rather conceptual frames in a practical sense of indignation and injustice, that is embedded in their being, as repositories of social differences.

Identity also plays an important role. The different identities are presented in varying ways, depending on their historical context. National identity, as a political driving force against colonialism in the 1930s; class identity, against the new labour conflicts; the Amazigh ethnical identity in response to the Arabisation of the independent nation-state from the 1980s onwards; gender identity in the mobilisations following the *Mudawwana* reform, which began in the 1990s; identities associated with the sense of belonging to a particular group, such as the mobilisations by the unemployed diploma holders, etc. The question is whether these identities crossed at given times and how they interacted in order to drive or limit a particular mobilisation.

In demonstrations and mobilisation, slogans are a means of defying the established power. The targets of their fury would shift from the

colonisers and foreigners to privileged families, the corrupt, the IMF, electricity companies, and even the king himself. In the 1965 revolt, those excluded from the new urban proletariat of Casablanca joined the protests by students facing a bleak future, and the slogans unleashed their discontent with the direction the newly independent regime was taking. It can be seen for example in the slogan: "Tomatoes, with salt, and Hassan to the slaughterhouse" (Monjib, 2011).

Memory also plays a crucial role. The memories of former revolts are also narratives that exclude certain actors and eulogise others. In this sense, references and genealogies must be sought. The 20FM in Tetouan evoked reminiscences of the 1984 uprising in the city. During the most recent revolts in the Rif, after the emergence of the Amazigh movement in the 1990s, the figure of Abdelkrim al-Khatabi recovered and reinterpreted, brandished as the standard-bearer in the majority of the protest demonstrations.

2. Periodisation

2.1. First period: Precolonial Morocco

The advance of the Moroccan State is evident throughout the 19th century (Laroui, 1980), implying the propagation of power in the hands of an elite sector through the expansion of the state structure from an initial nucleus. State intromission in the lives of the Moroccan people, in an overwhelmingly rural pre-colonial Moroccan, affects not only the economy and society, but also political life. The degree of State presence is unequal. The distinction between the *bled makhzen* and the *bled siba*, the territory under control or sultanate authority and dissident territory, has been used in scholarly literature as a means of explaining the situation in the territory, contrasting order, and backwardness (a form of surreptitiously highlighting colonialism's "contribution" to the imposition of order), and has therefore also been the object of harsh criticism [(Burke, 1972); (Ayache, 1983: 162)].

This advance took place in line with the development of mercantile capitalism and the market economy, in a process of autochthonous evolution with decisive foreign intervention. The interests of the elite classes clashed and intertwined with these two closely connected processes. The social transformation that accompanied all these processes also brought about a degree of change and replacement among the elite.

In consequence, the growing State presence generated resistances that have been widely documented in studies on pre-colonial Morocco [(Burke, 1976); (Laroui, 1980); (Sebti, 1991)]. Examples include resistance to the new taxes, considered both excessive or completely illegitimate (such as the 1873 protest by the tanners of Fes against market rights, known as *meks*), or to the recruitment of men, or the rural and tribal resistance to attempts to seize their lands (Broumas, 2017).

The programme of reforms and the transition to an increasingly capitalist economy facilitated European penetration at a time of rapid expansion, despite the economic crisis (the Great Depression between 1873 and 1896). The advance of the colonial system proved fundamental for the European national elite due to the differential accumulation of power, driven by economic regimes and increasingly frequent military expeditions. The foreign powers recruited protected local agents, Jews, and Muslims, farmers (*mojalatas*), and traders (*semsaras*), which facilitated colonial penetration but also heightened the potential for conflict (Kenbib, 1996).

There were explicit calls to rise up against the European presence in Morocco during the late 19th and early 20th centuries. The ambiguity of the actors' position within the context of the quest for power resources is revealed in episodes where the sultan attempted to dissuade sectors opposing the European presence from rising up in arms.

The power structure (the hierarchy between various actors) during this pre-colonial period fits in with the typology of elite groups and diversified resources. There was considerable diversity among the primary elites, with varying territorial establishments; each based their power on diverse, unequally distributed resources (political, capitalist, military, religious elites, etc.). However, the array of resources wielded by the sultan

(especially the state nucleus) positioned him at the forefront of the competition for power.

Around this core were numerous actors representing European penetration, which undoubtedly affected the state core of the *makhzen* (Burke, 1976), apart from the tribal and other configurations scattered throughout the territory. In turn, an urban bourgeoisie had also emerged that superimposed the traditional rural "notables".

2.2. Colonial Morocco

The political formula of the protectorate was finally imposed in Morocco in 1912 with the Treaty of Fes. The defeat of Germany in the First World War resulted in its exclusion, in contrast to the growing presence of the United States, which even limited the number of French interests, within a context of competing elites.

The colonial Empires took hold in pace with the industrial and commercial expansion of major corporations (the access to resources and territorial expansion). The colonised territories fulfilled a specific function in central-peripheral relations, namely that of providing land for farming, human capital (labourers, soldiers) and capital (for instance through debt) for the purpose of accumulation at the centre of the system.

The protectorate was seen as a solution for the Europeans (especially in the wake of the Great Depression of 1929–1939). The number of Europeans in Morocco rose from 30,000 in 1913 to 350,000 in 1952, approximately 70% of whom were French (Issawi, 2013: 79). In 1950, the Spanish population in the northern zone stood at 85,000, although the number is higher if we include the population in Ceuta and Melilla, which grew in line with colonial expansion. The creation of the figure of the *colon* proved crucial, as an "artificial" buyer thanks to the profits obtained from the appropriation of indigenous resources through the colonial system (expropriation and exploitation of land, control of raw materials and the market, positions of privilege within the administration, etc.).

In general, literature considers demographic growth to be one of the key factors behind revolt and revolution (Goldstone, 1991). The rate of

population growth reached its height between 1952 and 1960, rising by 3.3% (in 1960 the population stood at eleven and a half million). This was followed by a transitional phase, and later a sharp fall in the fertility rate.

In such an examination, the power structure during this phase was a modified continuation of the previous period (elites and diversified resources), characterised by the pre-eminence of colonial authorities and their control over the State, attributable to their military, economic and technological superiority. The sultan and his entourage occupied a secondary and essentially dependent position in most spheres, despite possessing certain resources (population, ideology-religion). The sultan's army and the khalifa's *mehallas* in the Spanish zone were no match for the sheer size and power of the European regiments.

One should not forget that Moroccan collaboration with the colonial authorities was the predominant trend during the early decades of the protectorate, from a stance of resigned acceptance of events. It was not until the second half of the 1940s that competition with the colonial authorities gained impetus, thanks to the mobilisation of the population and their alliance with the sultan.

Furthermore, the French and Spanish colonisation process contributed to developments in state structures and the emergence of a certain power structure (favouring certain structures to the detriment of others). The bureaucratic system spread thanks to economic instruments, political institutionalisation and military dominance, whilst economic penetration allied with autochthonous processes in the advance of capitalism.

As a matter of fact, the colonial system transformed the world of the secondary elites, in accordance with their varying scales. Furthermore, particularly as nationalist action and discourse progressed, regional and local powers were forced to show their hand. The old policy of shifting alliances was replaced by polarisation. In the Anti-Atlas region, France turned to some of the principal qaids—the most influential of whom was Thami El Glaui, the pasha of Marrakech who controlled vast territories in the south (Leveau, 1981)—as well as local authorities in other regions.