

Of space and time: On a *History of Morocco*

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TRANSLATION **Rodney Coward**

IN **ANNALES. HISTOIRE, SCIENCES SOCIALES 2016/4 71st year** , PAGES 923 TO 950

PUBLISHER **ÉDITIONS DE L'EHESS**

ISSN 2268-3763

ISBN 9782713225147

Uploaded: 03/22/2017

Article available online at

<https://shs.cairn.info/journal-Annales-2016-4-page-923?lang=en>



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The History of Morocco

Of Space and Time: On a *History of Morocco**

Daniel Nordman

The *Histoire du Maroc* edited by Mohamed Kably is a thoughtfully crafted work of considerable dimensions with, from a technical viewpoint, beautifully produced maps and illustrations.¹ The group of more than fifty authors, affiliated

This article was translated from the French by Rodney Coward and edited by Chloe Morgan and Stephen Sawyer.

* A review of Mohamed Kably, ed., *Histoire du Maroc. Réactualisation et synthèse* (Rabat: Édition de l'Institut royal pour la recherche sur l'histoire du Maroc, 2011). The volume was reprinted with a revised, modified text in 2012. I would like to thank Dominique Casajus, Jacques Revel, and Bernard Rosenberger for their perspicacious observations and suggestions. [Kably's volume has also been translated into English as *History of Morocco: A Work of Synthesis and Update* (Rabat: Édition de l'Institut royal pour la recherche sur l'histoire du Maroc, 2015). Significant extracts from this translation can be consulted on the website of the Royal Institute for Research in the History of Morocco: <http://www.irrhm.org/LangFr.aspx?r=141>. The references to the French text have been maintained in the English version of this article.—*Les Annales*].

1. Its publication was followed, two years later, by that of a second volume, presented as a complement to the first in the form of a chronology, but which in fact is much more: Mohamed Kably, ed., *Chronologie de l'histoire du Maroc. Des temps préhistoriques à la fin du XX^e siècle* (Rabat: Édition de l'Institut royal pour la recherche sur l'histoire du Maroc, 2013). In his short introduction to this work, Kably presents a reflection on the notion of “event,” and demonstrates the ad hoc, polysemic nature of this “basic material,” and its place in vaster time-spans. Abderrahmane El Moudden in turn offers insights on chronological criteria, the duality of the calendars in use (Hegiran and Christian), and the peculiarities of certain sources. This reasoned chronology, which is also a veritable index, furnishes its own commentary, complemented by various annexes. The choice of a chronology of this sort, which is unusual, confirms the vision of an overall project.

to various institutions, form a cohesive team which has embraced the process of “Moroccanization.” All but one, it should be noted, are Moroccan. With the exception of the first chapter, the list of contributors does not enable the reader to identify the role played by individual authors in the drafting of the book. Each chapter contains multiple contributions and, inevitably, in the course of the exposition, sudden shifts can be found in the choice of examples, in style and expression (ranging from the limpid and the elegant to, at times, the laborious), or again in terms of verbal tics and mannerisms. As a discipline, history has effectively been “Moroccanized”—to borrow a term used sparingly in the volume—to the point that this collective history could itself be cited in the closing passage of the *Histoire du Maroc* on current forms of knowledge and writing.

As it stands, the synthesis offered could well represent a landmark volume and be of interest to historians in a variety of fields.² From time to time, I will call upon other studies for the purposes of illustration, but it is impossible to enumerate all the topics broached in this collective work. This is a particular challenge to anyone seeking to review such a wealth of material, in which there are numerous tensions and synergies between older—sometimes republished—work and more recent published or unpublished studies. I will not venture into the twentieth century, reluctantly leaving to others, scholars or citizens, the appreciation of the frequently rich discussion of the Protectorate, the nationalist movement, post-independence Morocco, the so-called “Years of Lead,” political life, economic and social problems, and many other topics besides. It seemed to me that it might be useful simply to suggest other configurations, something between a catalogue and a set of propositions, grounded in thematic, transversal approaches. Over the course of this article, I will set out those that appear to me the most pressing. The first and most obvious difficulty, and one of the issues at stake in this massive tome, is present in many national histories, whether drafted by a single author or collaboratively. In this case, the number of coauthors means the work is not unlike an encyclopedia to which the various writers have provided contributions of unequal length in their respective fields of specialization. It was therefore necessary to combine the unity of a work of research with the remarkable diversity of the various inputs. Each individual contribution is doubtless comparative, containing elements of joint, if not avowedly collective, research—due to the very nature of the object or its treatment. But, while all collaboration is underlain by shared references and questions, it is nonetheless indispensable to set a guiding line acknowledged by all.

A priori, continuity remains uncertain unless it is firmly constructed. As Jacques Revel has pointed out, it is in temporal succession, rather than in the incessant communication and circulation between spatial units, that breaks or

2. This volume does not, however, render obsolete that of Jean Brignon, ed., *Histoire du Maroc* (Paris/Casablanca: Hatier/Librairie nationale, 1967), a scholarly, pioneering, inspired work prepared and drafted by a small Franco-Moroccan team, to which, along with other recent studies, Kably and his collaborators often refer.

transitions, intervals and gaps, and more or less long-term inflections can be observed.³ Yet although these are variable, they are not inaccessible. They can become the object of sustained reflection. Indeed, it was the fact that the authors in the team were addressing a potentially national history and duration, situated in the relatively “short” time-scale of a few centuries or two or three millennia, that led them to determine which threads to weave into the tapestry of the book. The question of periodization will be central to my purpose in this article, and it is this second point that I would like to underscore in various ways.

The discussion of time in no way excludes—far from it—consideration of momentous climatic, environmental, demographic, and technological transformations and their effects on the ground. Indeed, in its introductory tableau, a more profound perspective enters, more or less durably, into the history. The essential point is that the work avoids a ritualistic, overly static “the land and its people” type of presentation: the opening chapter—as I will show in the first section of this article—commits to much more. As a whole, what predominates is the succession of phases, not to say the very principle this represents, as a number of diverse and significant (though perhaps excessively classic) examples demonstrate. The periodization of the late antique Maghreb—from the third to the seventh century CE—was defined by late nineteenth-century French historians, and has long weighed heavily on thinking.⁴ But we should bear in mind a sentence written half a century ago by Abdallah Laroui: “We have cause neither to give precedence to the success of Islam, nor to be scandalized by it.”⁵ Other breaks that appear to be equally clearly defined can hardly be contested: an earlier history of Morocco recognized the date of 1492.⁶ The fourfold division of universal history (antiquity, Middle Ages, early modern, and modern) taught in French schools and universities was adopted in the Maghreb, and even used to label the historiography of earlier Tunisian authors (as early modern or modern). Lastly, we should recall the pedagogical model of the time-line punctuated by equidistant dates along which a cursor can be moved. When does early modern history become modern history? In 1970, the official instructions for Moroccan secondary education set the cut-off point at the United States’ Declaration of Independence of 1776, while the beginning of

3. Jacques Revel, “Échelles,” in *Dictionnaire de l'historien*, ed. Claude Gauvard and Jean-François Sirinelli (Paris: Presses universitaires de France, 2015), 191–93.

4. Houcine Jaïdi, “Tendances récentes dans la périodisation relative à l’histoire du Maghreb antique (III^e–VII^e siècle),” in *La périodisation dans l’écriture de l’histoire du Maghreb*, ed. Fatma Ben Slimane and Hichem Abdessamad (Tunis: Arabesque Éditions, 2010), 14–42. See also Mohamed Almoubaker, “La fin de l’Antiquité au Maghreb, ou le Maghreb à la croisée de deux chemins,” and Hichem Abdessamad, “La périodisation dans l’écriture de l’histoire du Maghreb. Le bricolage et la patience,” both in *ibid.*, respectively pp. 124–34 and 135–48; Abderrahmane El Moudden, Abdelhamid Hénia, and Abderrahim Benhadda, eds., *Écritures de l’histoire du Maghreb. Identité, mémoire et historiographie* (Rabat: Publications de la Faculté des lettres et des sciences humaines, 2007).

5. Abdallah Laroui, *L’histoire du Maghreb. Un essai de synthèse* (1970; repr. Paris: Maspero, 1975), 1:82.

6. Brignon, *Histoire du Maroc*.

the so-called modern period in Tunisia, too easily dated to 1881—a date introduced, without any real explanation, by French historians—has now been shifted to the middle of the nineteenth century to include Tunisian reformism.⁷ At certain key moments, Kably's *Histoire du Maroc*, developing along a unified temporal axis, confronts such questions, which will be the focus of the second part of this article.

Paying little heed to the irreversibility of time, I have chosen to break with continuity, which has been organized not only into periods, events, or dynasties, but also into phenomena—political, military, religious, and so forth. In this perspective, it is helpful to intertwine slow-moving geographical history—which is not stationary, but powerful and invisible to the naked eye—with the sporadic and decisive agitation of men and power. If the question is above all that of a state-centered history of Morocco, we must ask: Which Morocco, and since when? And while there is little doubt that the arrival of Islam was a major event, nor that the history of Morocco was significantly marked by the Idrissids in the eighth century, one may also speculate on Morocco before it became Morocco. This is a universal problem, common to all nations, which I will address in the third part of my article. As far as we know, the pre-Islamic period was less dense, less rich in this region than in Roman-African Tunisia. Does such an observation lead to a deepening of identity, or a recognition of origins? Is a figure such as Juba II (to cite but him) emblematic, or not?

From its political institutions to its cultural, religious, linguistic, and educational organizations, not to mention its press, schools, and universities, Morocco is defined as multiple and pluralistic. Traditionally, the historiography has swung between an assertion of the country's originality and uniqueness—in particular, it remained beyond the reach of the Ottomans—and a recognition of its different affiliations (Mediterranean, Atlantic, Saharan, religious). The history of the Ottoman empire, in its very formulation (the "Arab provinces" of the sixteenth to eighteenth centuries, the first stirrings of the "Eastern Question" following the Treaty of Küçük Kaynarca in 1774), or through its key dates (Bonaparte's expedition to Egypt in 1798, the capture of Algiers in 1830), has played a part in defining the general, international weft of history. But it was only from the mid-1980s that Ottoman specialists in Morocco looked toward the Middle-Eastern dimension in the broadest sense. The vast, invaluable compendium of sources for the history of Morocco *Les sources inédites de l'Histoire du Maroc*, published from 1905 by Geuthner, did not extend to Ottoman archival collections. Nor, moreover, did it include European sources other than French, Spanish, Portuguese, English, and Dutch archives, leaving aside, for instance, Italian or German collections.⁸ We can intuit, however, the

7. Mohamed Lazhar Gharbi, "L'historiographie tunisienne de la période moderne et contemporaine et le problème de la périodisation," in *Itinéraire d'un historien et d'une historiographie*, ed. Abdelhamid Hénia (Tunis: Centre de publication universitaire, 2008), 177–86.

8. Abderrahmane El Moudden, "Émergence d'un nouvel objet de recherche historique au Maroc: les études turco-iraniennes," in El Moudden et al., *Écritures de l'histoire du Maghreb*, 123–34.

role that exchange, modeling, observation, and the adaptation of customs may have played, in all sorts of ways, in the construction of the country's identity through its international relations with the Orient, with southern and northern Europe, and also with Far Eastern or Atlantic-seaboard countries. These questions, of paramount importance, will be addressed, if all too briefly, in the final section of this essay.

The Geographical Tableau

It was only fitting that Mohamed Naciri, a geographer conversant with every aspect of his field as well as history and the other social sciences, should be the author of the first chapter, "Natural Dynamics and their Influence on Territorial Structuring in Morocco."⁹ In the book, this type of survey is almost unique in terms of its breadth of vision, subject matter, and treatment of chronology. It is a prologue to the history, comparable in a way to Paul Vidal de La Blache's 1903 *Tableau de la géographie de la France*, which was read and understood as an independent treatise, but which was in fact the first volume of the *Histoire de France* edited by Ernest Lavisse.¹⁰ The reader will however note some obvious differences: Vidal de La Blache spoke of the "geographical personality" of France, and of a "geographical being," using now outdated anthropomorphic metaphors. The geographer divided France's territory into vast, homogeneous—as it were, orthonormal—regions. But his volume stands completely apart, and in no way introduces those that came after.

Naciri's contribution ties in much better with those that follow. Without eluding the role of the geological structure, the Vidalian geographer in him rejects all determinisms from the outset and, in this classic debate, underscores the effects of possibilism (the action of humans in history). His original tableau comes to life in fluid, transitory forms. Between constraints that are internal (the configuration of the territory) and external (a geopolitical position between two continents and two seas), the future territorial division is shown to obey multiple logics, both ethnic—with power grounded in tribal allegiances—and mystical—what he terms "maraboutic-Sharifian."¹¹ A territorial tapestry thus takes form, interweaving geographical, historical, ecological, religious, cultural, and state-related threads, in four complex and mutable main groupings: the Sahara, the Atlas mountains, the Atlantic, and the Mediterranean. These emerge less as constant spaces than as geopolitical and environmental potentialities, defined in terms of population mobility (that of mountain dwellers, for instance),¹² human adaptation to bio-geographical

9. Kably, *Histoire du Maroc*, chap. 1, "Le Maroc: de la dynamique naturelle à la construction territoriale," 5–33.

10. Ernest Lavisse, ed., *Histoire de France, depuis les origines jusqu'à la Révolution*, vol. 1, *Tableau de la géographie de la France*, ed. Paul Vidal de La Blache (Paris: Hachette, 1903).

11. Kably, *Histoire du Maroc*, 15.

12. *Ibid.*, 26.

characteristics, a multiplicity of competing poles, and “ways of life” or *genres de vie*, a term dear to earlier geographers. What matters is the strength of the fluctuations and the presence of sequences justifying the tableau. One is reminded of the so-called stationary time of Fernand Braudel—whose initial Mediterranean tableau was not static, whatever may have been written about it. It is true that the links established by Naciri are not always made fully explicit, but, by creating expectation and pointing the reader toward later comments, they find their place in the project of a general history. Thus, this chapter already situates the role of seventeenth-century Atlantic corsairing, the rare maps and charts produced within nineteenth-century Morocco, and the modalities of French encroachment into its eastern marches, resulting from the combination of internal and external pressures.¹³ The originality of this tableau lies in its explicit function as a dynamic introduction to the chapters that follow, offering a starting point that underlines the “historicity” of space.¹⁴

Of the possible frameworks—thematic, chronological, and spatial—it is the latter that Naciri has chosen to foreground. From there, the question is whether this determines what follows, or whether it combines with the others to make a cohesive whole, given that the spatial framework is not definitively fixed, and that so-called national history changes the configuration of a country through military operations, diplomatic exchanges, and, via migrations, through the presence of foreigners (especially the arrival of diverse populations). Constant transfers occur in both directions, from without to within and vice versa, in variable proportions and without attaining a definitive balance. The much-discussed factors of porosity, population movements, and the circulation of products and ideas redistribute relations between political and social actors. The political, military, and religious conjuncture can profoundly modify such relations, even over minimal time-spans. The preservation of the national framework thus implies continuous tension between space, which can be considered a given, and time, considered as being under construction. Is this not the central issue in this vast book, stretching as it does over the very *longue durée*? In other words, do the geographical and environmental milieu, or relations between Morocco, the Mediterranean, Europe, and the world, offer an analytical and narrative framework for history, at particular moments or permanently? The subsequent pages, which take into account climate change, the evolution of the flora and fauna, agricultural practices, social organization, and even rupestral art, are a sort of echo of this, relevant to the study of a country that is at once Mediterranean, Atlantic, and Saharan.¹⁵ As perfectly informed and eminently readable as they are, their content nonetheless remains inaccessible to the lay reader.

13. Ibid., 15–16 and 19. On these points, see also Leïla Maziane, *Salé et ses corsaires (1666–1727). Un port de course marocain au XVII^e siècle* (Mont-Saint-Aignan/Caen: Publications des universités de Rouen et du Havre/Presses universitaires de Caen, 2007), and Aurélia Dusserre, “Atlas, sextant et burnous. La reconnaissance du Maroc (1846–1937)” (PhD diss., Université de Provence, 2009).

14. Kably, *Histoire du Maroc*, 27.

15. Ibid., 35–75, chap. 2, “Le Maroc : des origines préhistoriques au VIII^e siècle av. J.-C.”

The Choice of a Guiding Principle: Themes or Periodizations?

On closing the “Kably,” the impressed reader is beset by a question: Where, ultimately, to situate the book’s underlying project? The *Histoire du Maroc* is not a history of settlement¹⁶; nor, despite the extent and quality of discussion in this direction, is it a social and economic history in the style of many historical works characteristic of the 1960s and the ensuing decades. It is not a history organized according to the dominant categories of the religious sphere or religious anthropology in the broadest sense, even if the authors pay due attention to the place of theological ideologies and debates, of *zawiya*s (religious schools), or of sanctity and eschatological fears. Nor, lastly, is the *Histoire du Maroc* a cultural history, although certain passages do address this domain, notably the remarkable discussion of recent evolutions in popular literature, the press, the arts, national heritage, and so on, ranging from editorial matters to linguistic issues (the Tamazight and Darija languages). What, then, is the general trend that emerges? One solution might have been to systematically combine thematic and chronological approaches, as in the *Histoire de France* published a quarter of a century ago.¹⁷ The volume entitled *L’espace français* adopted different chronologies tailored to the subject at hand: the formation of space, the human landscape, the space of capital, cultural resources, and land use. Without abandoning a chronological scheme, the volume entitled *L’État et les conflits* proceeded by thematic sequence: the revolts of the Old Regime, religious dissent, revolutionary conflicts, social and political conflict, peripheral minorities. In the *Histoire du Maroc*, to the contrary, the guiding line is chronological throughout, from chapter 2 to chapter 10, up to “Independent Morocco.”

A number of these themes are present in the volume, as illustrated by the conclusion of the presentation of medieval society and civilization.¹⁸ But if there is a guiding line or model, it is to be found elsewhere. This is a history written by historians concerned with the *makhzen* (state) in its totality and its furthest ramifications: it is envisaged as the origin and locus of central power—whether dominant or weakened—with reference to which particular developments are described and analyzed. But what precisely was the *makhzen* in the sixteenth or the nineteenth century? The fact that this object, though preponderant

16. Research in this domain is ongoing, for instance at the colloquium of the Al Idrissi association, entitled “Qu’en est-il de la tribu?” held at the National Library of the Kingdom of Morocco, May 15–17, 2014; see also Gwenola Graff et al., “Paysages gravés. Approche comparée de l’art rupestre au sud de la Méditerranée (Égypte/Maroc),” in *Une archéologie pour le développement*, ed. Jean-Christophe Galipaud and Dominique Guillaud (Marseille: Éd. La Discussion, 2014), 47–55.

17. André Burguière and Jacques Revel, eds., *Histoire de la France*, vol. 1, *L’espace français*, ed. Jacques Revel, and vol. 3, *L’État et les conflits*, ed. Jacques Julliard (Paris: Éd. du Seuil, 1989–1993).

18. Kably, *Histoire du Maroc*, chap. 3, “Le Maroc médiéval: société et civilisation,” 211–98, here pp. 290–92.

in the work, is never circumscribed or isolated conceptually, clearly shows that the book's authors consider it the principal agent at work in power struggles and in the combat against territorial fragmentation or ideological contestation. There are numerous examples of this omnipresence: under the Almoravids and the Almohads, or during the sultanates of Moulay Ismail (1672–1727) or Moulay Hassan (1873–1894), it is always the state that emerges—in different ways perhaps, but continuously. It is also visible in the place occupied by the Merinid sultans among the sovereigns who sponsored important artistic productions¹⁹; in the history of the emergent power and construction of the Alawite *makhzen*, including the examination of the processes of government and Moulay Ismail's urbanism; as well as in the history of the tribal crises at the time of Moulay Slimane (1792–1822) and the *makhzen* system—even as the author echoes the analyses of anglophone anthropologists.²⁰ Conversely, the welcome discussion of Saadian art and architecture (civil and military monuments, sanctuaries and religious foundations)²¹ is presented within an unusual framed layout that sets it somewhat apart—and this is not the only case. Does this disposition imply that it is more difficult to fit these elements, as opposed to power structures or economic life, into the historical narrative?

However, the notion of “turning point,” perceptible in the history of Moroccan Sufism,²² for instance, or, more broadly, the idea of a transition occurring over a century, may raise delicate questions concerning the moments and limits of a chronology, or the articulation of various time-spans. A coherent periodization, so simple and conventional in appearance, would be at once Moroccan, Mediterranean, and global.²³ But elsewhere, in the tangle of specific evolutions (land, man, faith, thought, etc.), periodization is multiple and contradictory, constructed by historians and always provisional.²⁴

For instance, the Moroccan authorial team, with certain reservations, has chosen to adhere to the classic notion of the Middle Ages, prompted—among other explanations—by a French educational tradition that was part and parcel of the practices of the Protectorate. Periodization as a theme is omnipresent in the reflection of historians, and questions linked to the periodization applicable to Morocco and Tunisia are central to the chronology of the *Histoire du Maroc*.²⁵ The authors of chapter 4 explain that they have retained the expression “the Middle Ages,” introduced and developed in European historiography, even though its signification and content have varied from scorn for this period to exaltation and

19. Ibid., 283.

20. Ibid., 479–82.

21. Ibid., 401–3.

22. Ibid., 347.

23. Kably, *Chronologie de l'histoire du Maroc*, 73–74.

24. See Jacques Le Goff, *Must We Divide History into Periods?* trans. Malcolm DeBevoise (New York: Columbia University Press, 2015).

25. See Ben Slimane and Abdessamad, *La périodisation dans l'écriture de l'histoire du Maghreb*.

comprehension.²⁶ The Moroccan fifteenth century is presented as “a transitory period between the ‘Middle Ages’ and the so-called ‘modern’ age.”²⁷ The author, though visibly surrounding himself with numerous verbal precautions, ultimately accepts this division, and in his text the term is non-problematic.²⁸ This “transitional” century begins with the Portuguese occupation of Sabta (Ceuta) in 818/1415, and ends in 916/1510, the date, since one is needed, of the foundation of the Saadian dynasty. The millennium of the Hegira was gradually approaching. The Iberian threat menaced both the Atlantic and the Mediterranean coastlines, the Ottomans had captured Constantinople, and the *Reconquista* was almost complete in a Spain that was also advancing into the New World: the picture is familiar enough. The fundamental characteristics of this medieval century are carefully analyzed, from the lasting effects of the Iberian conquest on the urban landscape (building materials imported from Portugal, the presence of foreign masons and architects) to the economic and demographic consequences: the desertification of coastal regions such as the Chaouia and the Doukkala; the capture of more than 5,000 people of both sexes and all ages during the seventy-eight-year occupation of Asilah; and the sale to the occupiers, especially during the great famine of 927/1521, of around 100,000 individuals, according to some estimates. These upheavals were accompanied by panic and fear, a heightened veneration of saints, and the development of mystic and messianic currents favorable to the reform of religious authority. Al-Jazuli, for instance, attempted to reunite the Sufi movements in southern Morocco, basing his strength and authority on a claimed resemblance to Moses and the anticipation of a propitious moment at which to declare himself the Mahdi.²⁹ It was this tense context that witnessed the rise to power of the Saadian Chorfa—an Arabian family who settled in the Dra’a valley in the fourteenth century—the first of whom, a scholarly, pious, and fervent advocate of holy war, offers the very image of a charismatic leader.³⁰

Further on in the volume, the so-called “long nineteenth century” is evoked.³¹ This recalls the classic debates in France, where the eighteenth century can be said to end, officially, in 1789, but where historians have pointed to an overlapping sequence that runs over several decades in the eighteenth century and part of the nineteenth. We are thus brought back to thematic signals with multiple meanings: the same date often has different significations. 1830 marked the end of the Ottoman empire in Algiers and was a decisive moment in Algerian history, but not in the history of colonization: the capture of Algiers was the culmination of a long series of naval interventions off the coast of the Maghreb, and it was only

26. Kably, *Histoire du Maroc*, chap. 4, “Évolution politique du Maroc médiéval,” 139–210, here p. 139.

27. *Ibid.*, chap. 6, “Le xv^e siècle : un siècle-tournant,” 299–383, here p. 299.

28. *Ibid.*, 365.

29. *Ibid.*, 356–58.

30. Bernard Rosenberger, *Le Maroc au xv^e siècle au seuil de la modernité* (n.p.: Fondation des trois cultures, 2008), 98–99.

31. Kably, *Histoire du Maroc*, chap. 8, “Le long XIX^e siècle : pénétration étrangère, réformes et crise (1204–1330/1790–1912),” 473–557.

after ten chaotic years that the conquest and occupation in Algeria entered *their* nineteenth century. As historians speculate about when the Moroccan nineteenth century began, they are aware of the upheavals caused by the events of 1830, following on from the French invasion of Egypt, and of their impact on Muslim countries as a whole. But they recognize that the evolution of Morocco is a case apart.³² The decade 1790–1800 is more appropriate as a starting point, not only because the initial date corresponds to the death of a sultan, but also and above all because it announces a so-called “irreversible” evolution which, from the Egyptian expedition on, saw Morocco influenced more by Europeans than by Moroccans themselves, who were obliged to give up their sovereignty. The end-point of 1330/1912 is self-evident, and marks the establishment of the Protectorate. The century, it could be said, appeared to be steered by a sort of fatalism.

The chapter opens with a veritable tableau—a sort of enclave, as it were—marked by excellent studies of pre-colonial Morocco. It is perhaps for this reason that the reader is left wondering why questions of “structure” (a “static” society, an “archaic” economy, a “traditional” education system) are addressed in these particular pages?³³ Why here—and not circa 1750, or 1880? The insertion of a static tableau within a context of contingency is not solely the result of the succession of authors. It raises a major theoretical question that is peculiar to the nineteenth century, and also perhaps to the *Histoire du Maroc* as a whole: How can more general temporalities be embedded in shorter time-scales, given that it is impossible to let them stand like geological outcrops? Does the book’s structure not express hesitations—in the relation between the long and the short *durées*—and editorial decisions?

The Choice of a Starting Point

Once the principle has been established, a delicate question arises—that of the starting point, of where to begin. This is both a chronological and a philosophical issue. Just as historians have speculated about France before Clovis, we too can speculate about Morocco before Islam. Two chapters of the *Histoire du Maroc* cover numerous centuries and subjects, relative to a country that is at once Mediterranean, Atlantic, and Saharan.³⁴ A first issue relates to the depth of the past, the expansion of knowledge and the reduction of approximations. As a comparison, we may take the *Histoire de France* edited by Jean Favier, publication of which began in 1984. The author entrusted with the volume covering the period “before the year 1000” shows how historians of the incipient “Hexagon”—a rather unfortunate choice of word—have drawn on the resources of biology, geology, physics and chemistry, dendrochronology, and archaeology. The “mists of time,” he writes,

32. *Ibid.*, 473.

33. *Ibid.*, 475 sq.

34. *Ibid.*, chap. 2, “Le Maroc: des origines préhistoriques au VIII^e siècle av. J.-C.,” and chap. 3, “Le Maroc et la Méditerranée avant l’Islam,” in particular p. 66.

putting the expression in quotation marks, are dissipated, and the gap between the history of the origins of humanity and the history of the inhabitants of Gaul and prehistoric France is bridged: “The differences of principle are attenuated, the differences in detail are brought into sharper focus: we see deeper into space today, but also deeper into the past.”³⁵ Building on a lengthy bibliography of recent publications in French and English, the *Histoire du Maroc* offers information on subjects as varied as tools and implements, forms of social organization, the earliest traces of sedentarization, and rupestral art, clues which can only be evaluated by specialists.

What, then, should we take as the starting point (in the broad sense)? Historians have long disputed this almost universal question. In his admirable *Spain: A Brief History*, Pierre Vilar notes that: “Before moving on to that most remarkable period of history which begins with the Islamic invasion, it has been necessary to measure beforehand what had sedimented out of civilizations prior to the Medieval Period.”³⁶ In the case of Spain, this refers to a brilliant prehistory, lasting Romanization, and active participation in the establishment of Christendom. Nearer to our subject and contemporary with Kably’s *Histoire du Maroc*, is that by Daniel Rivet. “Since when has it been legitimate to speak of an entity named Morocco?” he speculates.³⁷ Rivet is not unaware of the “risk” he is taking as he chooses, not the reign of Juba II (25 BCE–23/24 CE), a monarch who could be considered a scholarly, founding ancestor,³⁸ nor any other benchmark date, but the arrival of the Arabs and Islam in the eighth century,³⁹ in a passage that nevertheless evokes the place of Clovis in the collective imagination of the French. Michel Abitbol, the author of a different *Histoire du Maroc*, seems hesitant, only devoting some twenty pages to the pre-Islamic period, from the first inhabitants to the fall of Roman Africa—less a true chapter, despite its status, than a sort of introduction.⁴⁰ Kably unambiguously incorporates the very *longue durée* into the *Histoire du Maroc* by clearly and definitively integrating the two long phases to which he devotes the second and third chapters.

The Ancient History of Morocco, Yesterday and Today

In the late 1960s, a young French lecturer arrived in Morocco as part of his national service and found himself entrusted with teaching a course on Roman Africa at the University of Rabat. His classes were attended by a group of students

35. Jean Favier, ed. *Histoire de France*, vol. 1, *Les origines (avant l’an mil)*, ed. Karl Ferdinand Werner (Paris: Fayard, 1984), 50–55.

36. Pierre Vilar, *Spain: A Brief History*, 2nd ed., trans. Brian Tate (Oxford: Pergamon Press, 1977), 6.

37. Daniel Rivet, *Histoire du Maroc. De Moulay Idris à Mohammed VI* (Paris: Fayard, 2012), 11.

38. Augustus gave him a vast kingdom, comprising Western and Eastern Mauretania, from the Straits of Gibraltar to the Oued el-Kebir, north-west of Constantine.

39. Rivet, *Histoire du Maroc*. In a dense, energetic first chapter entitled “Penser le Maroc,” the author nevertheless sets out the key notions of “milieu,” “inhabitants,” “tribes and state,” “Islam,” and “sultan.”

40. Michel Abitbol, *Histoire du Maroc* (2009; repr., Paris: Perrin, 2014), 13–35.

who listened to one another's presentations on Juba II, the *limes*, the Baquates, African authors such as Apuleius or Saint Augustine, and cities such as Volubilis, Theveste, or Thamugadi. An abundant collection of works dating from the colonial period was available in the Rabat General Library, ranging from the diplomat and archaeologist Charles Joseph Tissot's research on the geography of Tingitan Mauretania,⁴¹ to volumes by René Cagnat, Stéphane Gsell, Jérôme Carcopino, and many others besides. Gabriel Camps was able to show that the achievements attributed to a sovereign such as Massinissa, who reigned for more than half of the second century BCE over the whole of Numidia and was credited with a host of qualities as an agronomist-king, administrator, and religious reformer, needed to be reevaluated as those of a dynasty, over a longer duration and across different chronological sequences.⁴² Many more recent, local, and technical studies seem less useful as a first approach. Some topics—the problematic of Romanization, the question of Christianization, or the place of African Latin literature—at times appear less attuned to offering critical perspectives than others, such as the history of Athenian democracy or knowledge of a world capable of illuminating the present-day Arabo-Islamic world.⁴³

Kably's *Histoire du Maroc* is the fruit of an extension—or calling into question—of this historiography which has traversed all sorts of writings by amateurs, soldiers, or scholars. Various factors have contributed to this reappraisal, from Marcel Bénabou's research on African resistance to Romanization,⁴⁴ to the studies undertaken in Moroccan, French, and Spanish universities, and the volumes in the series *Africa Romana*, whose congresses held in Sassari have provided material for thousands of pages over the last thirty years. In half a century considerable progress has been achieved: these decades have seen the emergence of many North African scholars,⁴⁵ working in collaboration with colleagues from Spain, Italy, France, the United Kingdom or elsewhere, and—especially in recent years—demonstrating through fieldwork that archeology is a locus of intense reflection on territoriality, with particular relevance for the contemporary history of Morocco.

Uncertainties and gaps in knowledge may well have imposed recourse to the *longue durée*. One chapter, under the broad, prudent title “Morocco and the Mediterranean World before Islam,” covers more than fifteen centuries, from the

41. Charles Joseph Tissot, *Recherches sur la géographie comparée de la Maurétanie Tingitane* (Paris: Imprimerie nationale, 1877).

42. Gabriel Camps, “Aux origines de la Berbérie. Massinissa ou les débuts de l'histoire,” special issue, *Libya. Bulletin du Service des antiquités. Archéologie - Épigraphie* 8, no. 1 (1960): 297–98.

43. See Mohamed Almoubaker, “La cité antique et nous : retour sur un enseignement,” in *Pratiquer les sciences sociales au Maghreb. Textes pour Driss Mansouri avec un choix de ses articles*, ed. Mohamed Almoubaker and François Pouillon (Casablanca: Fondation du roi Abdul-Aziz Al Saoud pour les études islamiques et les sciences humaines, 2014), 131–48.

44. Marcel Bénabou, *La résistance africaine à la romanisation* (Paris: Maspero, 1976).

45. At least ten (perhaps more) theses and dissertations presented in Paris, Fez, Rabat, Meknes, and Quebec can be cited in this connection.

twelfth century BCE in terms of textual evidence, or the seventh century BCE depending on the archaeological record. Such a range may seem surprising, but it is no more so than the long Western Middle Ages, within which historians distinguish heterogeneous periods of interwoven durations, some overlapping, others not, that preclude any generalizations. In a long presentation, extending from the Neolithic era to the Phoenicians, a Moorish kingdom and the Roman occupation, the retreat of the imperial administration, hypothetical Vandals and Byzantines, and up to a kingdom with Volubilis as its capital, the author devotes rigorous, well-structured and documented pages to constructing a continuity. However, certain passages are too short, particularly those on Jews (mentioned in certain chronicles and compilations of various dates) or Christians, though knowledge of either group is scant. For ultimately very little is known with certainty, whether about Volubilis, which continued to be inhabited by a Christian community until the arrival of the Arabs, or the admission of Jews within the walls of the first city of Fez. While the question of the relations between the Berbers and Judaism has provoked debate, the sources are almost totally mute, apart from legend, when it comes to a Jewish presence between the end of the Roman period and the Arab conquest.⁴⁶ In contrast, the chapter is convincing on subjects such as the economy and agriculture (vine-growing), relations between city and countryside, urban planning, architecture and the arts, and religious life, not to mention other useful brief observations on, for example, bilingualism (in addition to the Libyc and Punic languages, Latin is attested on coinage and amphorae). The conclusion draws together the knowledge gained and lessons learned, pointing to the persistence of tribal structures.⁴⁷

Juba II: From History to Memory

Juba II is a complex figure, often seen as an amiable jack-of-all-trades, who was more remarkable, according to Pliny the Elder, for his scholarly studies than for his reign,⁴⁸ and notable for his wide-ranging curiosity (embracing history, geography, natural history, art history, poetry, grammar, and philology), for the exploratory expeditions that he organized, and for his compilations of texts. His figure is sufficiently malleable to have given rise to a variety of portraits at different moments: a scholar whose works were the object of specialist study in France and Germany at a time when the two powers were competing for control of Morocco; an African prince brought up in Rome, who became a client king and a protégé of Augustus, the image favored during the French Protectorate; or the sovereign of the first Moroccan state in the eyes of writers seeking its origins. The portrait is alternately scathing and condescending, appreciative not to say enthusiastic, or again, more measured

46. Haïm Zafrani, *Deux mille ans de vie juive au Maroc. Histoire et culture, religion et magie* (1983; repr., Casablanca: Eddif, 2010), 11–13.

47. Kably, *Histoire du Maroc*, 132.

48. Pliny the Elder, *Natural History*, vol. 2, trans. Harris Rackham, Loeb Classical Library 352 (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1961), book 5, chaps. 1–6.

and credible.⁴⁹ Thus, borrowing the word “protectorate,” in common usage in the twentieth century, to refer to a less oppressive, more intelligent regime than “annexation,” Bénabou presents the African prince as a zealous servant of Rome and a figure in whom African, Roman, and Greek values came together.⁵⁰ Could we speak, then, of an age of Juba? Neither history nor legend has afforded him the posterity and status of the likes of Vercingetorix or Clovis.

The situation is no different in Kably’s *Histoire du Maroc*, which devotes several pages to Juba’s Greco-Latin culture, his inclination toward Hellenism, the influence of his wife Cleopatra Selene, daughter of queen Cleopatra VII of Egypt and Mark Antony, as well as the relation of dependence with Rome, economic rebirth, urban development, and the early stages of Romanization.⁵¹ The demonstration is detailed and conscientious, and avoids hyperbole or condescension. But the biography needs to be situated in a longer trajectory. Although Juba may have been an emblematic figure at a given moment—over a short lapse of time—he cannot be considered in isolation. The current literature has, in its own way, instituted a long sequence. Reversing the natural order of things, as it were, memory and legend endow Juba II and his time with substance. Which, then, should it be? “Good King Juba,” or merely “*under* Juba II”?

Since the nineteenth century, the elements used to consider this question, though sometimes innovative, have remained tenuous. In his caustic review of René de La Blanchère’s doctoral dissertation, Émile Masqueray reproached the author for supposing that the Oranian Tell and the mountainous regions of Morocco in the time of Juba might have resembled nineteenth-century Greater Kabylia, attributing La Blanchère’s error to a false historical continuity that completely overlooked the changes that had occurred.⁵² Various studies have warned against assimilating ancient tribes to their present-day namesakes, as if large-scale population movements had not taken place.⁵³ One final remark, concerning an apparent continuity: scholarly literature continues to use the names “Morocco” and “Algeria,” though these are merely a convenient way of retrospectively locating elements of a distant past. What can we conclude at this point about the link between history and memory? Two historical novels centered on Juba and his son, explicitly

49. Marie-René de La Blanchère, *De Rege Juba, regis Jubae filio* (Paris: Ernest Thorin, 1883); Marcel Bénabou, “Les trois fidélités du bon roi Juba,” *Le genre humain* 16/17 (1988): 201–14; Michèle Coltelloni-Trannoy, *Le royaume de Maurétanie sous Juba II et Ptolémée (25 av. J.-C.-40 ap. J.-C.)* (Paris: CNRS Éditions, 1997); Duane W. Roller, *The World of Juba II and Kleopatra Selene: Royal Scholarship on Rome’s African Frontier* (London: Routledge, 2003); Alicia García García, *Juba II y las Islas Canarias* (Santa Cruz de Tenerife: Idea, 2009).

50. Bénabou, “Les trois fidélités du bon roi Juba.”

51. Kably, *Histoire du Maroc*, 108–13.

52. Émile Masqueray, review of de La Blanchère, *De rege Juba*, in *Bulletin de correspondance africaine* 2 (1884): 470–79.

53. Halima Ferhat, *Sabta des origines au XIV^e siècle* (1993; repr., Rabat: Publications de la Faculté des lettres et des sciences humaines, Université Mohamed-V, 2014), 29–30.

prolonging their memory, have recently been published in close succession.⁵⁴ This spate of books with Juba as their hero speaks volumes on the impression that two millennia ago, there was a king and a culture, already plural.

Dark Ages and Obscure Spaces

One then enters what Émile-Félix Gautier called the “dark” ages, or more preferably “late antiquity,” a term recognized in France since Henri-Irénée Marrou, and variously defined.⁵⁵ Since the colonial era, one tendency, following a generally accepted thesis, has been to focus on the numerous and decisive migrations from east to west that supposedly took place between the fourth and the seventh century—migrations that may, according to the boldest partisans of this theory, have reached as far as Morocco, up to the Tangiers region, or even to Sijilmasa and the Sous. This is the tenacious myth of migrations originating in the east, covering little-known centuries in a sort of devastating landslide, a model grounded in interpretations of texts that lack critical editions but not ideological positions. It is a myth that has been debated in its own right.⁵⁶ Research seeking to pinpoint transitions has made it possible to compile an inventory of places and to identify toponyms using approaches drawn from historical geography. This has resulted in a breaking down of the isolation of late antiquity, based on texts by medieval Arab historians and geographers (when their narratives are not allusive). Despite divisions that have long been linked, among other factors, to disciplinary specialization, it has thus been possible to identify clues, forms of continuity suggested by the memory embodied in texts and places.⁵⁷ Though North Africa is also confronted with the question of transitions during and after the Roman era, and how they should be periodized, the responses it offers are distinct: in Tingitan Mauretania, for instance, Romanization may well have gone through three successive phases up to the beginning of the eighth century.⁵⁸ Overall, the vitality of late antiquity, whose limits were as

54. The first is a novelized biography that claims to have been written in Greek and in the first person, given to the author “by an old man from the South [of Morocco]”: Josiane Lahlou, *Moi, Juba roi de Maurétanie* (Algiers/Paris: Éditions de l’Île-de-France/Éd. Paris-Méditerranée, 1999). See also Josiane Lahlou and Jean-Pierre Koffel, *Ptolémée de Maurétanie. Le dernier pharaon* (Algiers: Dalimen, 2005), reprinted with a preface by Jean-François Clément entitled “De vénérables ancêtres” (Mohammedia: Senso Unico Éditions, 2006).

55. Émile-Félix Gautier, *Le passé de l’Afrique du Nord. Les siècles obscurs* (Paris: Payot, 1952); Henri-Irénée Marrou, *Décadence romaine ou Antiquité tardive ? III^e–VI^e siècle* (Paris: Éd. du Seuil, 1977); Peter Brown, *The World of Late Antiquity, AD 150–750* (New York: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, 1971).

56. Yves Modéran, “Mythe et histoire aux derniers temps de l’Afrique antique : à propos d’un texte d’Ibn Khaldûn,” *Revue historique* 618 (2001): 315–41; Modéran, *Les Maures et l’Afrique romaine (IV^e–VII^e siècle)* (Rome: École française de Rome, 2003), 131 sq.

57. Ahmed Siraj, *L’image de la Tingitane. L’historiographie arabe médiévale et l’Antiquité nord-africaine* (Rome: École française de Rome, 1995), 619.

58. Noé Villaverde Vega, *Tingitana en la antigüedad tardía (siglos III–VII). Autocontía y romanidad en el extremo occidente mediterráneo* (Madrid: Real academia de la historia, 2001), 599.

much spatial as chronological,⁵⁹ was less intense in the west of Romanized Africa than in the east.

Morocco as a Plurality

The idea that Morocco is anything but monolithic is steadfastly and convincingly defended by Kably and his coauthors, and the history of the country supports their thesis. As shown above, the first chapter, penned by Naciri, lays the foundations for this position.⁶⁰ We now need to examine the way the overall dynamic and its various expressions are organized with regard to a history and a nation in which the concepts of “plural identity” and “plural culture” have been appropriated by scholars, and where the term “plurality” has prospered.⁶¹

Forms and Aspects of Localness

Local history has primarily been addressed in monographs, but it can remain a gateway to the synthesis announced in the subtitle of the *Histoire du Maroc* by establishing different or simultaneous chronologies and flexible articulations between scales: a particular *zawiya* or region is a window onto the global level. A good monograph raises extremely general issues, as Pierre Bourdieu remarked.⁶² There thus exist observatories far from the capital, fringes that may be ephemeral, or geographically distant like Seville, “a sort of parallel capital of the [Almohad] empire.”⁶³ Antagonisms and conflicts have produced moments of dissidence, not to say revolts, which are not always apparent at the level of the whole country, but emerge in constant scalar modifications based on tribes or confederations of tribes, brotherhoods or minority affinities, or cities once occupied by foreigners and subsequently liberated or even independent. Historical and geographical regional studies define shared processes, spatial ways of being, which form a pattern, as if the fragmentary spaces could only become meaningful within a dominant—*makhzenian*—model.

Localness can be the very opposite of definitive secession, given the number and complexity of the links between the interior and the outside world created by war, peace, and trade in the direction of both the Mediterranean and the Ottoman empire. The chronology of events, in parallel with a precise analysis, shows how far the separatist, autonomist tendency in medieval Ceuta, which had attained the status of a city-state, combined with other scales to demonstrate not only the break-up of the Maghreb into rival provinces, but also the struggle for control of a

59. Bertrand Lançon, *L'Antiquité tardive* (Paris: Presses universitaires de France, 1997), 22.

60. See above, pp. 587–88.

61. Kably, *Histoire du Maroc*, 725.

62. See, for instance, Pierre Bourdieu, “Sur les rapports entre la sociologie et l’histoire en Allemagne et en France,” *Actes de la recherche en sciences sociales* 106/107 (1995): 108–22, here p. 119.

63. Kably, *Histoire du Maroc*, 276.

Mediterranean city (at a time when a pretender had set his sights on Sijilmasa, a key Saharan city at the edge of the empire). It also reveals the negotiations and confrontations that added Ceuta to a group of protagonists which included the masters of Seville, Fez, and Tunis. Ibn Khaldun, a relative of the 'Azafid dynasty who was close to the Ceutan oligarchy, used this case as the basis for a political theory: when a dynasty grows weak and withdraws from its distant provinces, powerful local families provide the city with its elders and chiefs.⁶⁴

There are other examples. Clans competed for power throughout the sixteenth century—as in early sixteenth-century Safi, where an ambitious local chief assassinated a rival, defied the Portuguese, and then went to stay in Portugal where the king appointed him “Caid of the Doukkala.” One could also point to urban revolts, the de facto independence of Tetouan in the early seventeenth century, and later that of Fez, or again to the emergence of a maraboutic principality in Tazerwalt. A multiplicity of local histories intertwine through these events, and acquire meaning in a conjuncture involving pressure from the Turks in Istanbul and Algiers, as well as the king of Portugal. Localities became de facto city-states governed by rebel families or administrators: Tetouan and Rabat in particular, which had seen an influx of Morisco immigrants, drew their livelihood from maritime corsairing and, in the seventeenth century, struggled to free themselves from the power of the sultans and the Dilaites—until the new dynasty of the Alawites put paid to these aspirations to independence and reunified the territory.⁶⁵ The fragmentation of the country, resulting from uncertain rules of succession and the influence of power networks, is visible in the episodes and conflicts that threatened its overall stability and allowed the local and regional levels, alternative geographical and political poles, to enjoy an existence free from the constraints of the *makhzen*. The history of this disunity is no less important than that of the country's unity, which it better enables us to grasp. Beneath these accidental features, then, certain constants emerged.

Solidarities and Diffusion

Throughout the book, more or less static zones of influence are often shown through figurative documents. But representing processes and phenomena of diffusion via maps is always a challenge—all the more so given that the *makhzen*'s relation to the territory was expressed in oral knowledge or by physical effort (the Sultan's constant displacements).⁶⁶ Religious history was marked by the struggle against the Christians in the coastal areas, by a policy of political domination—the *zawiya* of Dila was a strong regional power—and by control of the trans-Saharan routes by the brotherhoods. Such geographical underpinning explains the use of blocks of color to represent broad zones of influence in the clear, pedagogical map of the situation in the seventeenth century. Another map of *zawiyas* presents, for the nineteenth century, scattered series of asterisks indicating the dispersal of the brotherhoods

64. Ferhat, *Sabta*, chap. 5, “Sabta, l'impossible indépendance,” 171–217, here pp. 195–96.

65. Kably, *Histoire du Maroc*, 416–23.

66. *Ibid.*, 18–19.

across various sites.⁶⁷ However, what predominate in the book are static images with overlapping markings, linked to specific moments or policies, to the detriment of the slower historicity of religious phenomena: holy war, power relationships, economic interests, intertribal arbitration, doctrines and practices, expansion or decline. Colored shading and marks do not show the whole picture of this religious history, any more than discontinuous signs that freeze a snapshot of a situation. This is a real difficulty as it concerns around fifteen *zawiya*s, some cursorily cited, others discussed more extensively, especially in the case of the Dilaites. Priority is given to the relationship with the central power rather than to the adherence of the faithful, in a centripetal or centrifugal perspective. This goes to the heart of a question which could be underscored by the use of maps, that of the relations between a spatial tableau and an invisible dynamism.

Both monographs and syntheses have emphasized the part played by space in the foundation and diffusion of the brotherhoods. Discussing late nineteenth-century Morocco, Charles de Foucauld pointed to five major *zawiya*s (including those of Ouezzane and Boujad), but ignored possible relations with the rest of the Maghreb.⁶⁸ In the same period, Louis Rinn wrote that “the Tijaniyyah congregation is the only Muslim congregation whose origins, traditions, and material interests are located exclusively in Algeria. It alone, by virtue of its very statutes, is forbidden to have ties with religious orders in either the Orient or Morocco.”⁶⁹ In effect, as this was a question of geographical anchoring, the brotherhood might have been seen as pro-French. Diffusion, then, was under surveillance. But the reality may not have corresponded to static descriptions or vows taken, and brotherhoods such as that in Ouezzane or the Darqawiyya in Algeria saw their influence spreading.⁷⁰ The example of the Tijaniyyah brotherhood is a case in point. Out of the current of Sufism, there emerged a chain that spread from the *ksar* of Aïn Madhi, on the southern slopes of the Jebel Amour at the edge of the Sahara, not far from Laghouat—a zone of contact between people, ideas, and goods from the Maghreb, Africa, and the Orient. It was here that the founder of the brotherhood, Ahmed Tijani, was born in 1737 or 1738. He traveled widely in Morocco, southern Algeria, and Tunisia, as well as to Cairo and Mecca. He had thus stayed in Morocco on several occasions before settling there for good, and the Tijaniyyah likewise put down roots in this space already saturated with brotherhoods. A *zawiya* was built in the heart of the old city of Fez, near the Qarawiyyin mosque, where Tijani died in 1815. The tomb of this original, charismatic figure subsequently became a place of pilgrimage. At the same time, the strategies of the brotherhood became caught up in the turbulent political

67. *Ibid.*, respectively, 415 and 481.

68. Charles de Foucauld, *Reconnaissance au Maroc* (Paris: Société d'éditions géographiques, 1888).

69. Louis Rinn, *Marabouts et khouan. Étude sur l'islam en Algérie avec une carte indiquant la marche, la situation et l'importance des ordres religieux musulmans* (Algiers: A. Jourdan, 1884), 449–50.

70. Georges Drague, *Esquisse d'histoire religieuse du Maroc* (Paris: J. Peyronnet, 1952), 277, gives a list of nineteen brotherhoods, briefly describing their chronology and their spread. On the Taïbya outside of Morocco, see Rinn, *Marabouts et khouan*, 384.

context of the day: tense relations between the Tijaniyyah and the Turkish powers in Algeria, more relaxed relations between the Tunisian Tijanis and the Beys of Tunis, the siege of Aïn Madhi by Abd el-Kader in 1838, and potential competition between the Moroccan and the Algerian branches for the highly symbolic control of the tomb.⁷¹ Its implantation, in the form of inter-African connections and affinities, has never ceased to spread, extending to present-day Mauritania, Senegal, and the sub-Saharan countries. This wide-reaching network has evolved into a number of competing centers via its various branches and also, more recently, its major international axes. Morocco has been far from absent from this web.

A monograph may be dynamic and broaden the limits of its time-frame so that, as the number of meeting points swells, it can no longer be considered in isolation. Recognizing the dynamism of this type of diffusion, a bold officer doubted that the conquest of Morocco could be represented by blocks or stripes of color, and considered it necessary to take account of successive realities that are imperceptible at first glance, and to recognize traces, that is, moments and nexuses, totalities and gaps, along with sequences that remain invisible in purely static data.⁷² Religious forces also need to be included, in long networked pathways.

Memories and Traces

It would be important to reexamine systematically the history of the Jews in Morocco over its very *longue durée* and in relation to its memory. The focus of attention has long been the Arab, Berber, and Jewish components of the population, and the relations between them. Jews who had been expelled from Spain, or *megorashim*, settled in Morocco, bringing with them their knowledge and their customs: both Muslim and Jewish populations have retained the memory of Hispano-Arabic music, with Jewish musicians providing members of the court orchestras; a specific literature developed, in popular poetry and through Judeo-Muslim narratives; and Muslims and Jews joined together in pilgrimages. Purim celebrations were instituted, commemorating the Battle of the Three Kings in 1578, the bombardment of Tangiers in 1844, and the landings in 1942. Of course, the tensions cannot be overlooked, nor can this history be portrayed as consistently idyllic. But Haïm Zafrani, like other authors, has underscored the forms of convergence and symbiosis in a dual identity that remains at once faithful to universal Judaism and rooted in the local sociocultural environment.⁷³

71. Jillali El Adnani, *La Tijâniyya, 1781–1881. Les origines d'une confrérie religieuse au Maghreb* (Rabat: Marsam, 2007); Jean-Louis Triaud, "La Tidjaniya, une confrérie musulmane transnationale," *Politique étrangère* 4 (2010): 831–42.

72. R. C., "En regardant une carte," in Jacques Ladreit de Lacharrière, Maurice Bernard, and Henri Simon, *La Pacification du Maroc, 1907–1934* (Paris: Publications du comité de l'Afrique française, 1936), 74–82. On the notion of occupation, see Daniel Nordman, "Événement et occupation 1541, 1830, 1907," in "Journées d'études en hommage à Daniel Rivet. Rabat, 28–29 novembre 2011," special issue, *Les rencontres du centre Jacques Berque* 3 (2012): 37–47, <https://docplayer.fr/41743021-Journees-d-etudes-en-hommage-a-daniel-rivet-rabat-novembre-2011.html>.

73. Zafrani, *Deux mille ans de vie juive au Maroc*, passim.

According to frequent but unreliable accounts, such as that of the French slave Germain Moüette, black captives came from Sudan.⁷⁴ Convoys of slaves are said to have been driven to Morocco, following successive well-dated captures. This version is supported by occasional, approximate evidence. The expedition organized by Ahmed al-Mansour to Sudan (1590–1591) brought back gold⁷⁵—though not, as has often been written, in great quantities—and slaves to serve as the core of the future ‘Abid al-Bukhari army and as galley crews—but not for the sugar plantations along the Sous, where there was no labor shortage. The overwhelming majority of the ‘Abid al-Bukhari army was recruited by Moulay Ismail in Morocco itself, among the tribes of the Haouz, the Rif, the coastal plains, and the cities (Meknes, Fez, Tetouan).⁷⁶ A large part of it was affected to Mashra ar-Ramla, another to Meknes, and the rest distributed to the different casbahs established throughout the empire. Today, the formation of such an army is considered a tangible sign of the diversity of its contingents, making it a disparate and fluid entity that defies simple distinctions between categories. The criteria for establishing the latter are numerous, linked to policies, forms of prestige, customs, and, ultimately, to unstable ideological constructions: the “Blacks” and “Whites” of descriptions, physical appearance, and diversity of skin color, marked by various legal conditions and degrees of dependence (unambiguous slaves, recruits of doubtful status, free volunteers), an absence of any ancestral memory or territorial anchoring (that is, a certain vulnerability), exclusive obedience to the sultan (buttressed by an oath of loyalty), endogamous marriage, and economic functions.⁷⁷ The heterogeneity of the military forces is no more a specificity here than elsewhere, and it consistently replaced spatial frames of reference with flexible assignments. Jurisconsults in Fez

74. Germain Moüette, *Histoire des conquêtes de Mouley Archy, connu sous le nom de Roy de Tafilet; et de Mouley Ismaël, ou Seméin son frère ...* (Paris: E. Couterot, 1683), 306–8.

75. Kably, *Histoire du Maroc*, 406–7.

76. *Ibid.*, 432–34. See also Allan Richard Meyers, “The ‘Abid ‘I-Buhari: Slave Soldiers and Statecraft in Morocco, 1672–1790” (PhD. diss., Cornell University, 1974). For a nuanced and updated position, see Nabil Mouline, *Le califat imaginaire d’Ahmad al-Mansûr. Pouvoir et diplomatie au Maroc au XVI^e siècle* (Paris: Presses universitaires de France, 2009), 269–71 and 334. A synthesis can be found in Rosenberger, *Le Maroc au XVI^e siècle*, 176–78.

77. The bibliography, both historical and anthropological, is considerable. See Roger Botte, “‘Bouc noir’ contre ‘Bélier blanc.’ L’armée des ‘Abid al-Bukhari du sultan Mawlay Isma‘il (1672–1727)”; and Jocelyne Dakhliya, “Le fondu des couleurs? Expériences croisées de captivité dans le Maroc de l’armée noire,” in *Couleurs de l’esclavage sur les deux rives de la Méditerranée (Moyen Âge–XX^e siècle)*, ed. Roger Botte and Alessandro Stella (Paris: Karthala, 2012), respectively pp. 231–62 and 207–30. See also Fatima Harrak, “Mawlay Isma‘il’s *Jaysh al-‘Abid*: Reassessment of a Military Experience,” in *Slave Elites in the Middle East and Africa: A Comparative Study*, ed. Miura Toru and John Edward Philips (London: Kegan Paul, 2000), 177–96; Chouki El Hamel, “Register of the Slaves of Sultan Mawlay Isma‘il of Morocco at the Turn of the Eighteenth Century,” *Journal of African History* 51, no. 1 (2010): 89–98; El Hamel, *Black Morocco: A History of Slavery, Race, and Islam* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2013).

spoke out against the enslavement of free Muslims. These questions are clearly and concisely presented in the *Histoire du Maroc* as an episode in the show of military strength of a strong, well-armed state.

Throughout the immense, retrospectively reconstituted history of the peopling of Morocco, contradictory hypotheses and claims have been formulated, and we need to integrate these historiographical signposts, even if they do not necessarily speak the truth. As a marker, we may take a passage in which the geographer Élisée Reclus strove to define social groups—"white" Berbers and "black" Haratin—that could be included in a systematic history of orientalist traditions.⁷⁸ Moreover, posthumous clues, which could potentially be supported by other memorial references, have been identified. They may be seen as an expression of delayed effects and of lasting, sometimes imaginary, traces within the population.⁷⁹ There are all sorts of reports (including folk tales) of black domestic service, in both urban and rural areas. Ernest Gellner reports meeting a former slave while doing fieldwork in the mountains of central Morocco during the 1950s and early 1960s, a man whose grandfather still spoke an African language and had "probably" been brought across the Sahara. Black individuals in the Gharb were referred to as the "tribe of the *abid*,"⁸⁰ while the Gnaoua claim to originate from ancient Sudan. Black slaves and their origins are now part of a legend, born out of historiography and oral memory, which shatters conventional boundaries. With its diverse origins and filiations, its diffuse vectors of mobility, the population issued from sub-Saharan Africa remains an object of study for the historian, the ethnographer, and the anthropologist. The same is true of the Oriental component: like "a fat belly that feeds unceasingly on whatever is foreign to it," the territory of the Aït Ba'amran Berbers, south of Tiznit, welcomed from the earliest times, according to legend, the adversaries of Sidna Suleyman (King Solomon), sent into the Sous on camels, as well as figures from the Orient (such as Sidna Ali, the Prophet's son-in-law), and exiles originally belonging to Moroccan tribes. Once again, it is the relation between history and memory that is at play here: requisitions and displacements, and their supposed consequences, need to be interpreted in terms of both their starting point and their endpoint, or simply in their host region, but always over time. The group cannot avoid the entry of the outside world into the memory of the most immediate present, either through migrations or through fiction.⁸¹

78. Élisée Reclus, *Nouvelle géographie universelle. La terre et les hommes*, vol 11, *L'Afrique septentrionale*, part 2, *Tripolitaine, Tunisie, Algérie, Maroc, Sahara* (Paris: Hachette, 1886), 687–88.

79. Frédéric de La Chapelle, "Le Sultan Moulay Isma'il et les Berbères Sanhaja du Maroc central," *Archives marocaines* 28 (1931): 7–65, here p. 27. See Botte, "'Bouc noir' contre 'Bélier blanc,'" 262.

80. Ernest Gellner, preface to Mohammed Ennaji, *Soldats, domestiques et concubines. L'esclavage au Maroc au XIX^e siècle* (Paris: Balland, 1994), 9; *ibid.*, 204.

81. Romain Simenel, *L'origine est aux frontières. Les Aït Ba'amran, un exil en terre d'arganiers* (Paris: Éd. de la MSH, 2010), 41 and *passim*.

Enclaves and Access Routes

The traces and actors of the world are visible through the prism of the local, and the history of the Salé corsairs provides an example of the intricate overlap between geographical areas. Ship captains (*rais*), who in the sixteenth and early seventeenth century were mainly converts hailing from Algiers, other Mediterranean ports, or Europe, established themselves at the mouth of the Bouregreg, where, from the mid-seventeenth century, members of the same families distinguished themselves in long- or short-range campaigns that took them to the Canary Islands and the Azores, England, Iceland, and Newfoundland. These seafarers forged connections between maritime spaces; setting out from a dynamic base—at once an outpost and a relay—they contributed to the conquest of ocean routes.⁸² Contact with the outside world took place through gateways and enclaves. The occupation of coastal cities—Tangiers was recaptured from the English in 1684, Larache in 1689, and Asilah from the Spanish in 1690—had repercussions further inland. Close to the African continent, Gibraltar after 1704 is a case in point: with its conquest, England was integrated into the regional system. The stronghold took its supplies from Morocco, and soon a delegation obtained economic privileges including an extension of maritime trade and free movement for the English, who promised to supply weapons. Thus, relations with foreign powers drew Gibraltar into Moroccan history, in what proved a precursor to the nineteenth century.

In the eighteenth century, trade as well as English, Dutch, and Scandinavian diplomatic missions introduced Morocco to an exotic commodity: tea.⁸³ Chinese and Japanese porcelain wares, first brought by the Dutch, also made their appearance, and found their way to Tetouan or Fez. A complicated procedure for the payment of ransoms was initiated, involving monies deposited in Cadiz, voyages to Tangiers, Tetouan, and Ceuta, and presents for the go-betweens. The gifts offered to the sultan in Meknes consisted of a pair of mirrors, a silver-mounted hunting gun, brocades, a Gobelins tapestry, three chests of Chinese flatware and tea-services, and one of tea.⁸⁴ Foreign habits transformed the local culture. Thus, in the late nineteenth century, Pierre Loti, accompanying an official delegation to Fez, described the tea ceremony and the polite custom of taking three servings, noting that his two Moroccan servants drank it all night long.⁸⁵ Its consumption spread in successive waves.

82. Maziane, *Salé et ses corsaires*, 171–86 (maps).

83. Abdelahad Sebti, “Itinéraires du thé à la menthe,” in *Tea for Two. Les rituels du thé dans le monde* (Brussels: Crédit communal, 1999), 141 sq.

84. Ahmed Farouk, *Relation en forme de journal du voiage pour la redemption des captifs aux royaumes de Maroc et d’Alger pendant les années 1723, 1724 et 1725, par les Pères Jean de La Faye ...* (1726; repr., Paris: Bouchène, 2000), 72; Fabienne Tiran, “Trinitaires et Mercédaïres à Marseille et le rachat des captifs de Barbarie,” *Cahiers de la Méditerranée* 87 (2013): 173–86.

85. Pierre Loti, *Au Maroc* (Paris: Calmann-Lévy, 1890), 179 and 181–82.

The Exterior and the Interior

In conclusion, Kably describes Morocco as a “broker” (*porteur*). The word underscores the forms and effects of mobility, in time and through space, produced by exchanges of goods and ideas. Morocco’s exchanges with the outside world have been infinitely varied, and this contact is also visible within the country itself. Europeans, captives, preachers of redemption, come and go, observe and report back, with an ethnographical gaze. The topic of captives has become the object of renewed interest in recent years. That they were hardly enamored of Morocco is a fact. But they lived there, and they have left accounts of their experiences. Moïette’s narrative recounts eleven years of captivity in various cities in Morocco, particularly in Meknes, where Moulay Ismail had undertaken a vast program of works. He learned Arabic, made enquiries, described what he saw or heard, and his book contains a French-Arabic dictionary of almost nine hundred words and phrases.⁸⁶ His map of the states governed by the Sultan of Fez, which perhaps reveals strategic concerns, was the fruit of a veritable collaboration between the prisoner and a scholar from the city. Elsewhere, he describes Moulay Ismail, the powerful, scholarly, and pious Sultan, inviting a cleric to partake in a theological discussion, or listening to his counselors debate the advisability of projected peace negotiations with the English, whose protestant profession was said to be much closer to that of Muslims, since they did not worship images. In sum, knowledge circulated. Moïette’s work has been translated many times over, including into Arabic for a Moroccan edition published some twenty-five years ago.

Morocco itself is an object that touches on a great many themes. The Protectorate, the Rif War, and independence all testify to the presence of external links. Certain passages in Kably’s volume deserve to be highlighted, such as the convincing pages—also presented in a separate textbox—that conclude with the different collective memories, in Algeria and Morocco, of the relations between the sultan Moulay Abderrahmane and Abd el-Kader. Somewhat surprising, in contrast, is the limited coverage of international relations, which makes scant reference to the work of Djamel Guenane, Pierre Guillen, Jean-Claude Allain, and Jean-Marc Delaunay. The policies of conquest, decided upon in the European capitals, are important for an understanding of the early twentieth-century crises and the history of Morocco, a country that was more than a mere colonial and military objective. Through relations with Europe, even if they were the product of wariness and force, the world was extended.

The Other’s gaze has also found its way into the country in the form of nineteenth-century travelers’ accounts in French, English, Spanish, and German, or as a result of European military missions, and even through tourism. In the course of military and scientific expeditions, or within learned societies, a sort of globalization of knowledge developed around geology, flora, the arts, and other

86. Germain Moïette, *Relation de la captivité du Sr Moïette dans les royaumes de Fez et de Maroc* (Paris: J. Cochart, 1683).

disciplines. Explorers, whether affiliated or not to a university, traveled the length and breadth of the country. The *Histoire du Maroc* lists books by geographers, without giving a detailed account of their contributions. The names of scholars and intellectuals—Foucauld, Robert Montagne, Louis Massignon, Jean Dresch, Jacques Berque, and many others—are briefly cited. The political context may have determined their route, and the ideologies of the day may have inflected some of their studies. But the fact remains: they were eye-witnesses who described, and often understood, what they saw. They developed models and theories which, though dated, have not disappeared. Their lessons survive and have marked different disciplines, shaping and reshaping them. The internationalization of knowledge is the fruit of multiple experiences.

How, then, to write a history of Morocco? The *Histoire du Maroc* edited by Mohamed Kably demonstrates an undeniable unity by virtue of the erudition, based on recent research, that it displays in its overall conception. However, different approaches would also be possible, and are potentially interlinked. I will mention two here. First, it would be possible to make wide recourse to other considerations offered by closely related disciplines, in the fields of anthropology and linguistics. According to the dense yet accessible lessons of a book covering three millennia, from the emergence of the Libyc writing system to Berber militancy, the former was the result of Phoenician influence—the probability of its endogenous creation being very slight.⁸⁷ Such a question, one of a particularly thorny set of problems, has been approached in an undogmatic way with critical arguments that take into account hypotheses, probabilities, and relative certainties. From their beginnings, Maghrebian societies were open to external factors, and have never ceased to be so. A different choice would above all tend to establish the multiple temporalities—overlapping or not—which a very *longue-durée* history encourages us to seek and to find, transcending the boundaries of centuries, and thinking in terms of multiple chronologies. For time-scales are specific, depending on the discipline but also, and more importantly, on the object, whether it be landscapes, the state, trade and corsairing, religious life, or intellectual currents. It should be added that, as far as links and correspondences are concerned, I have principally mentioned a single direction: toward the point of arrival. A study of Morocco's slow outward expansion toward the world would prompt a complementary reflection on its opening toward the Mediterranean, Africa, and Europe.

It is always possible, therefore, to borrow from other disciplines, and the choice of periodization may give rise to hesitation. But my remarks are not sufficient to modify the general impression left by the *Histoire du Maroc*. Indeed my other question, concerning its overall tone, would ultimately consist in evaluating the place of this monumental history in the development of historiography today. The conferences and seminars cited in the volume have brought together specialists

87. Dominique Casajus, *L'alphabet touareg. Histoire d'un vieil alphabet africain* (Paris: CNRS Éditions, 2015), 82–86, 94, and 197.

on the Maghreb to discuss topics such as sources, the writing of history, periodization, and the legacies of so-called colonial history; they have demonstrated the imperative need for such reflection, not to say its axial importance. These colloquia, particularly the most recent, have clearly pointed to disparities, or rather what are mainly oscillations, between scales⁸⁸: one tending toward generalizations—“modern times” or “the contemporary period”—that are too simplistic not to be dubious, the other foregrounding statal, national, or protonational specificity and exceptionality—a characterization that some have considered, in reaction, to be excessive or even obsessive. This has been a recurrent dilemma, which at times may appear overly ritualistic and stifling of debate. These same presentations stress forms of continuity, particularly those grounded in the indispensable distinction between obsolete colonial-era knowledge (and its political uses), other no less dated but still valuable knowledge (not all of which constitutes a closed system that by definition precludes other approaches), and, a fortiori, the knowledge that fortunately has been gained since. Thus, among the most innovative historians there are those who nevertheless consider that older, “classic” studies remain “essential reading.” The detail—always important—of sites, poorly known periods, religious forces, economic innovations, or past conflicts still gives rise to discussion. But these debates are no longer linked (nor have they been for some time) to stubborn, exclusively ideological historical legacies, as massive and marked as the great doctrines of the past, each disqualifying a predecessor or competitor, as though the history of Morocco needed at all costs to be constantly rethought and rewritten, from start to finish.

More discreetly, between the lines, as it were, these debates resurface in the *Histoire du Maroc*. The ability of the majority of its authors to adapt to a great variety of subjects supposes that, despite occasional shortcomings in some of the discussion, the book was produced as an integral, unified piece of work with a clearly defined scope. This, in sum, is what I consider to be the book’s achievement: it is a work that is useful, often convincing, pedagogic, and accessible to different sorts of readers, because it is neither excessively skeptical, nor offensive, nor intransigent, nor polemic. Difficult to reduce to one or even several historical currents, it is a scholarly work, written with a balanced, reasonable mindset, in line with accepted rules and usages. It is underpinned by historical knowledge that is up-to-date, multiple, and without preconceived boundaries, and is equally attentive to studies which—after circumspect, critical examination—still deserve recognition. Ultimately, this *Histoire du Maroc* reveals itself to be at once experimental and pragmatic.⁸⁹

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88. El Moudden, “Émergence d’un nouvel objet de recherche,” 127.

89. I again refer readers to Abdessamad’s conclusions in “La périodisation dans l’écriture de l’histoire du Maghreb.”