Decolonizing the Moroccan Woman

Female Liberation and National Sovereignty in the Modern Maghrib

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ABSTRACT A public debate about the social status of women accompanied the emergence of mass politics in Morocco after World War II. The Arabic-language press argued that true sovereignty required the liberation of the kingdom's female citizens from the shackles of tradition. Taking inspiration from developments across the decolonizing world, nationalists promoted women's "rights and duties" to build a "new Morocco" beyond the constraints of French colonialism. State formation became dependent on a profound social transformation. Following independence in 1956, however, King Mohammed V gradually replaced the public conversation about female emancipation with a narrative that began and ended with the royal palace, thereby constructing a unique version of state feminism that persists today.

KEYWORDS decolonization, state formation, nationalism, North Africa

On April 11, 1947, a beautiful spring day with plenty of sunshine, Princess Aisha stepped before a large mixed-gender crowd in the city of Tangier to deliver her first major public speech. She appeared unveiled and in an elegant blue silk dress, thereby violating a number of gender norms. The sixteen-year-old princess began by praising her father ("Our Lord") for having established several schools for girls with the goal of liberating them "from erroneous superstitions and the shackles of ignorance."[1] Then she emphasized the importance of the Arabic language before speaking a few sentences in English and French. Becoming polyglot, she argued, would enable young Moroccan women to "disseminate their knowledge" while also "learning about the mentalities of other peoples." The kingdom's future could be redeemed only by letting its women "sip from the springs of knowledge."

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Princess Aisha's public appearance formed part of a royal offensive in Tangier seeking to position the monarchy at the forefront of the nationalist struggle. One day prior, Sultan Mohammed ben Youssef had given a historical speech about Morocco's role as an integral part of the Arab world. The event caused a sensation inside the country, greatly angered the French colonial authorities, and attracted international media coverage (Joffé 1985). Moreover, Crown Prince Hassan had spoken about national unity and the need for social reforms. These events and responses not only publicly challenged the colonizers but also represented attempts to retake the initiative from the nationalist movement. Advocating for the emancipation of Moroccan women might reassert royal hegemony over the anticolonial liberation struggle.

The "woman question" became a key topic of public debate during Morocco's decolonization. However, historians have given it little attention.[2] Already during the interwar years, Moroccans weighed the benefits of modern education for girls against its potentially corrupting influence on social norms (Terem 2021). Throughout the final decade of French rule, nationalists discussed the social status of women in the Arabic-language press as a way to situate themselves vis-à-vis the colonizers and imagine a postcolonial future. This debate emerged out of a longstanding concern with girls' education inspired by developments across the Arab world (Gaul 2022; Rahnama 2023). Initially focused on ways to strengthen the family and thereby the nation, it quickly led to much more radical ideas about female roles in public life. After independence in March 1956, newspapers promised middle-class women modern lives with Western clothing and ample career opportunities. The lower classes, in contrast, became targets of literacy and hygiene campaigns. Yet all were subjected to the discourse of "rights and duties" that defined the reciprocal relationship between the postcolonial citizen and the state. In return for educational opportunities and the right to vote, women had a duty to contribute to the building of a "new Morocco"— each according to her abilities and class status.

The discourse about modern womanhood can only be understood within the context of French colonial ideology. By the early twentieth century, France had abandoned the assimilation ideal of its so-called civilizing mission and shifted to a politics of "association" (Abi-Mershed 2010). Colonial officials considered the allegedly tyrannical control of Muslim men over their women a nearly insurmountable barrier to the progress of native society (Clancy-Smith 1998). The protectorate was meant to preserve the distinction between colonizer and colonized. The rudimentary education system in French Morocco thus sought to cultivate a small elite of potential collaborators while providing only vocational training for the masses (Segalla 2009). Exploiting linguistic heterogeneity offered another gateway for exerting control. Most Moroccans spoke either colloquial Arabic (darija) or one of several Berber languages such as Tamazight, Tarifit, and Tashelhit. Literary Arabic (Fusha) served as a lingua franca, though only a fraction of the population could

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actually read it and write in it. The sizable Jewish minority maintained a significant degree of communal autonomy while remaining integrated into the larger social fabric. The French colonizers exploited this cultural mosaic by trying to divide and conquer the different groups. The infamous Berber edict (*dahir*) of 1930 sought to subject regions inhabited primarily by Berbers to their own customary law, thereby removing them from the realm of the shariʿa as the unifying legal system for all Muslims (Hoffman 2010). Moroccan nationalists thus deemed it pivotal both to prove their own modernity by reforming gender relations and to create a unified Arabo-Islamic national identity.

This article studies how competing visions of women's advancement emerged in colonial Morocco (1912–56) before being subsumed by the royal family. I argue that the leaders of the nationalist movement viewed their country's decolonization as dependent on their ability to mold their female compatriots into active citizens. True sovereignty required cultural unity and gender equality through a radical transformation of social relations: the sanctity of the private realm had to give way to the requirements of public life. Yet this framing of the woman question as an explicitly national question also enabled King Mohammed V to remake this patriotic quest in his image. By having his eldest daughter become a public advocate for girls' education, he ensured that the "liberation" of his female subjects remained a royal prerogative. Through a skillful blend of public appearances, official statements, and symbolic gestures, the king created a chronology that began and ended with his family. This, in turn, provided additional legitimacy for the monarchy as the central pillar upholding the Moroccan nation. The palace-centric narrative of female liberation eventually supplanted a lively national debate over women's advancement that has been largely forgotten today.[3]

The evolution of the woman question in Morocco mirrored similar ones taking place around the world. Historians have studied how anticolonial nationalists viewed women as vessels of authenticity as well as symbols of "backwardness" in need of social reform (Chatterjee 1993: 116–57; Kandiyoti 1989). Modern education, they argued, would produce a "new woman" who could properly raise her children and thereby strengthen the nation (Baron 1995; Fleischmann 2003; Greenberg 2010). At the same time, the lower classes became the objects of intervention by upper-class women who had to ensure that their benighted sisters would also reap the benefits of scientific progress (El Shakry 1998). But the dynamics unleashed by the anticolonial struggles soon offered women a language to advocate for their own rights as full citizens (Jayawardena 1986). Their roles as managers of modern households enabled them to claim a larger role in public life—"having mothered the nation, they could now serve the state" (Najmabadi 1998: 115). Following the end of World War II, activists from across the globe discussed the relationship between women's rights and anti-imperialism (Armstrong 2016; Robinson 2016). Such transnational debates had taken place globally already during the

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interwar years but now led to more radical demands outside the realm of elite politics (Weber 2008). Constructing the nation around the idealized bourgeois family no longer seemed sufficient.[4] Women increasingly demanded their rights as equal citizens (Amin 2002: 216–45).

Already before the publication of Qasim Amin's "The Liberation of Women" in 1899, Arab intellectuals had been arguing that modernity had to include some form of women's advancement (Ahmed 1992: 144–68). In the mid-twentieth century Egypt's socialist regime under Gamal Abdel Nasser promoted state feminism: it "liberated" women from the social constraints of a conservative society and instead made them dependent on public services (Hatem 1992). This model of "revolutionary womanhood" allowed the nation's daughters to actively participate in the construction of a truly postcolonial society while also expanding the reach of the state (Bier 2011). Inspired by the dominant reformist discourse on female emancipation, young women in colonial Algeria challenged patriarchal authority by becoming Girl Scouts and athletes (Krais 2019). Their contributions during the Algerian Revolution (1954–62) merited tangible rewards—even if only in the short term (Lazreg 1994: 142–65). Tunisia, in particular, adopted state feminism as a quasi-official policy after independence to marginalize the country's conservative forces by removing its female citizens from the control of Islamic family law (Chater 1977; Marzouki 1993).[5] Regulating the female body and behavior became central to nation building across the region (Joseph 2000).

The public debate about the proper social status of women played an integral part in Moroccan state formation. To become worthy of leading the nation into a modern future, politicians, journalists, and members of the royal family presented themselves as most capable of harnessing the true potential of their female compatriots; leadership on the woman question offered a mantle of legitimacy vis-à-vis the colonizers, foreign observers, and the general public. The international context shaped local ideas: the image of radically emancipated women that emerged in the Moroccan press took direct inspiration from developments in Egypt and elsewhere, even if it bore little relation to the country's social reality. Although the monarch ultimately usurped it to strengthen his own position, the lively public debate about the role of women in society enables us to better understand the making of postcolonial Morocco.

The Modern Woman in the Nationalist Press

The end of World War II led to the emergence of mass politics in Morocco. Hizb al-Istiqlal (Independence Party) became the country's leading anticolonial organization following the publication of its independence manifesto in January 1944.[6] Several smaller political parties surfaced soon thereafter, including Hizb al-Shura wa-l-Istiqlal (Party of Democracy and Independence; PDI), which embraced political liberalism and even flirted with republicanism. Both parties remained under the control of the urban bourgeoisie. Given the absence of real ideological

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debates beyond a vague consensus about the need to replace the colonial order with a constitutional monarchy combining democratic ideals and Islamic values, discussing the status of women offered an opportunity to imagine Morocco's future.[7] Each party established women's branches that operated semi-independently and engaged in community organizing and welfare services (Baker 1998: 54–56). Simultaneously, party newspapers became forums for public debate.

The country's most important independent daily, *al-ʿAlam* (*The Banner*), had been giving some attention to the woman question since its initial publication by the Istiqlal in 1946. "There can be no awakening if the woman does not participate and no progress if the woman does not progress," concluded *al-ʿAlam* in an article that emphasized her twin roles as "man's companion" and "loving mother."[8] Shortly thereafter, it published a poem by the exiled nationalist leader Allal al-Fassi, who expressed his desire to liberate the Moroccan woman from "a life of ignorance and languor" so that she might "rescue her unfortunate people."[9] By August 1947 *al-ʿAlam* had inaugurated its "Woman's Page," which it dedicated to "our beloved Princess Aisha."[10] This weekly section covered a range of topics, including child-rearing methods, fashion news, beauty tips, and household management skills. The modern woman knew how to satisfy her husband ("always smile!") and take care of her children ("the future of the people").[11] A "sexual or procreative problem" called for a trained physician so as to safeguard domestic bliss.[12] The woman was the bedrock of the family and, by extension, the entire nation.

Al-ʿAlam also featured some articles written by women. For example, a student from Casablanca proclaimed her classmates' desire "to advance our noble people."[13] A female commentator warned readers about European dress at a time when the nationalist press, including *al-ʿAlam*, increasingly depicted unveiled women in short-sleeve outfits.[14] What to wear and where to wear it remained a contentious topic.[15] Another reader wondered how to share the benefits of the Woman's Page with illiterate women.[16] Everybody understood that these debates reached only a small, predominantly urban, and quite privileged substratum of Moroccan society. Yet, to achieve a true cultural revolution, the country needed to mobilize all of its sons and daughters. As Khadija ben Said from Fez reminded her sisters, Princess Aisha had repeatedly called on them to quickly transform their social milieu.[17] Bourgeois, Arabic-speaking, educated women had to become agents of change, not merely its beneficiaries.

By 1951 the Istiqlal had established itself as the country's foremost anticolonial organization, with up to one hundred thousand members. It had infiltrated French labor unions and thus reached the urban working class. The party adopted a centralized and hierarchical structure led by an executive committee increasingly insulated from the demands of its party membership (Rézette 1955: 298–306). And while it could mobilize tens of thousands to demonstrate against the colonial authorities, it lacked well-trained cadres capable of controlling the agitated masses (Hermassi 1975: 103). Absent any clearly developed party program, the Istiqlal

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brought together a heterogeneous alliance of interest groups united by a single goal: Morocco's independence. The woman question thus provided a great opportunity to present the party as the vanguard of anticolonial modernity uniquely positioned to challenge the French colonizers' claims of civilizational superiority.

The gender roles promoted by *al-ʿAlam* evolved considerably during the early 1950s. An article titled "The Best Thing for Our Women Is to Be Teachers rather than Servants!" criticized those opposed to women's increasing presence in public life. No longer just mothers, they should join the workforce and contribute to the nation's progress as educators or nurses.[18] As long as they based their lifestyle on Islamic principles, they would undoubtedly play pivotal roles in shaping the "new age."[19] The ideal of companionship quickly gave way to declaring "equality between the two sexes" a "social necessity."[20] A suitable example was Maryam Mazyan, a painter whose exhibitions had even caught the attention of the royal family. An interviewer praised her as "a role model for our young women."[21] The ideal, however, remained Princess Aisha, "the greatest proof for the future of the new Moroccan woman."[22] She embodied the virtues of patriotic femininity: educated yet pious, brave but modest, progressive without forsaking traditions. Through Princess Aisha's public appearances, Sultan Mohammed ben Youssef showed his approval of the transformation of gender norms.

Women from across the postcolonial world also offered examples worthy of emulation. South Asian women, for example, were said to "take on many big tasks and occupy important positions in the Indian government," even though female illiteracy remained at 95 percent on the subcontinent.[23] A picture of Pakistani medical students included a caption about their role in "freeing their country from the yoke of colonialism."[24] Especially prominent Egyptians such as the late feminist Huda Shaʿarawi increased "the pride of all Arab women."[25] Even Princess Aisha admitted to having been inspired by the struggle of Egyptian women.[26] National liberation could only be achieved as part of a transnational project—Morocco's women had to "enter into an alliance" with their sisters in Algeria, Tunisia, and elsewhere to achieve a "real awakening."[27] According to the participants of a women's conference in Baghdad in March 1952, all faced the same twin enemies of "colonialism" and "reactionism," which had to be overcome to secure the "human progress" of the Arab peoples.[28]

The opinions expressed by *al-Raʾy al-ʿAmm* (*Public Opinion*), published by the PDI, generally ran along similar lines. In the fall of 1949, however, the acerbic Mohammad al-Hababi wrote a series of radical articles denouncing Morocco's stunted social development.[29] According to him, the "civilized world" had already experienced the battle for equality between the sexes in the eighteenth century. To become a truly "progressive people," Morocco had to "imitate Western nations."[30] Other colonized countries like India and China had only obtained their freedoms after "solving the woman problem."[31] Al-Hababi also demanded women's "economic liberation" to ensure their material independence. He even compared the practice

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of arranged marriages to the live burials of infant girls during the pre-Islamic age.[32] He concluded that gender segregation caused "manifold psychological illnesses" that stood in the way of "renewing our nation."[33]

Such bold opinions shocked even the generally liberal readers of *al-Raʾy al-ʿAmm*, who responded with a flood of letters to the editor. A woman from Fez cautiously agreed with the points made by al-Hababi yet wondered how such radical plans could possibly be implemented in the foreseeable future.[34] A male reader residing in France opined that many European women were not educated either but agreed that economic liberation provided the key to social freedom.[35] In response to a question about the future of the veil, al-Hababi dismissed the entire topic as irrelevant because entering the workforce would automatically force the woman to wear "clothing suitable for her job."[36] A society's cultural norms apparently depended on prevailing material conditions. Finally, al-Hababi berated a reader from Salé who had compared Egypt to Europe—the country might seem progressive in comparison to Morocco, he commented, but "the distance between Egypt and real civilization is very long."[37] While certainly not representative of a broad trend of opinion, al-Hababi's daring proposals injected new ideas into the national debate.

Discussions about the status of Morocco's women had become an important aspect of the struggle for independence; what began as a debate about their roles as mothers and wives quickly gave way to proposals about their positions in public life. These dramatic changes can only be understood against the background of an enormous economic boom during the postwar years. The resulting rapid urbanization swelled the ranks of the working masses; by 1952 one in eight Moroccan women had entered the labor force (Ayache 1956: 308). Sky-high divorce rates among the urban lumpenproletariat had made single-parent households the new reality (Baker 1998: 163–64). Neotraditional ideals of a harmonious social order based on stable family units no longer seemed plausible, and the rise of new ideas about the proper place for women addressed this conundrum.

The seemingly lofty intellectual debates in the press actually had tangible results. In her autobiographical *Dreams of Trespass*, Fatima Mernissi (1994: 35) recalls how the nationalists in postwar Fez viewed female education as central to their project of building a "new Morocco." They looked down on those still practicing polygamy. One day her grandmother Yasmina predicted: "You will be a modern, educated lady. You will realize the nationalists' dream. You will learn foreign languages, have a passport, devour books, and speak like a religious authority" (65). She later attended a "free school" operated by prominent nationalists and went on to become a renowned sociologist. Mernissi's personal development had been made possible by her family's high social standing. Acquiring a modern education remained impossible for most of her compatriots. Nonetheless, her life demonstrated that the ideas discussed in the pages of the nationalist press did impact the country's social fabric. The end of the colonial era further accelerated this process.

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Postindependence Womanhood

Sultan Mohammed ben Youssef had become a national hero after the protectorate authorities forced him and his family into exile in August 1953 as punishment for his critique of the colonial order. The time spent abroad further strengthened his hold on the popular imagination, elevating him to a saintlike status embodying the popular will. The royal family returned to Morocco in November 1955, and France relinquished its protectorate four months later. The monarch, who shortly after independence had become King Mohammed V, now sought to secure the palace as central to the emerging political order (Miller 2012: 151–62). Because the French authorities handed over the reins of the state apparatus directly to him — including large parts of the bureaucracy as well as the security forces — he entered the post-independence power struggle from a position of strength. Moreover, the first government he appointed consisted not only of loyal associates and several Istiqlalis but also five ministers from the PDI (Monjib 1992: 28). His strategy of divide and rule weakened the Istiqlal, by far the country's largest political force, and helped turn the previously protorepublican PDI into an important ally of the royal palace.

Immediately on his return, the king publicly thanked his female subjects for their sacrifices during the anticolonial struggle. His newly appointed prime minister met with prominent women activists in December 1955 to listen to their concerns.[38] The royal princesses regularly inaugurated educational establishments for girls. That they usually led a retinue of government ministers, palace spokesmen, and even security officials underlined the importance the monarch assigned to these publicity efforts.[39] In an interview with *al-ʿAlam*, Aisha called for a revolution of social norms: "What is the purpose of a progressive and active young woman in an ossified and backward family?" she asked rhetorically.[40]

The former mouthpiece of the protectorate authorities, *al-Saʿada*, now disseminated the royal agenda to its readers. Pictures of the sovereign surrounded by unveiled young women portrayed him as the father of the women's awakening. The king himself "loved" that Princess Aisha had "gathered around herself the female youth of Morocco," thus preserving her status as a national icon.[41] As the newspaper informed its readers, an American scientist had proved that women were smarter and physically more robust than men.[42] Since female students averaged higher grades on their exams than their male counterparts, they could also earn their own livelihoods as "the director of a factory or theater."[43] Even the travel of a Moroccan dancer for a performance in France — news that would undoubtedly have scandalized most Moroccans — received cautious approval.[44] Although *al-Saʿada* predominantly covered issues pertaining to the private sphere, especially fashion and household management, it also addressed women's roles in public life.

Al-Raʾy al-ʿAmm offered a more radical vision for Morocco's women. A central point of reference was the situation in the People's Republic of China, where women worked as truck drivers and government ministers.[45] The Chinese state

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had secured equal pay for equal work and provided day-care centers and maternity leave programs.[46] Domestic developments also gave some hope. Now allied with the royal palace, the party newspaper consistently praised "the leadership of King Mohammed V," who had made women's liberation possible in the first place;[47] a prominent PDI member called on "our sisters, wives, mothers, and daughters" to "imitate Princess Aisha" in order to obtain the same "rights and duties as the man."[48] The newspaper also used the woman question to launch thinly veiled attacks on its political rival. For example, it sharply criticized the decision by the Istiqlal-led Ministry of Education to close a prominent girls' school in Marrakesh.[49] Moreover, it praised the teacher Qamr Barada, who had publicly demanded justice after two of her relatives had been kidnapped by unknown assailants.[50] Even though the article offered few details, it seems likely that the men had been PDI members victimized by the brutal intimidation campaign conducted by the Istiqlal against its opponents. Ms. Barada's cry for help channeled the anguish of all Moroccans opposed to the Istiqlal.

The most interesting aspect of *al-Raʾy al-ʿAmm* was the dialogue between the anonymous "Suʿad" and her readers. The pugnacious columnist denounced Moroccan marriage practices as "feudal" because their enormous costs had made spousal bliss an unobtainable goal for many.[51] Fathers choosing husbands for their daughters committed "a violation of human rights" that would ultimately lead to "a violent uprising."[52] Only a radical social transformation could allow Morocco to progress. Her readers remained somewhat skeptical, though. One of them called her opinions "premature" and urged her to "look backward before striving forward";[53] another opined that her advice might appeal to urban residents but remained completely irrelevant to "the poor village girl."[54] As these exchanges demonstrate, the radical vision outlined by the newspaper was not grounded in the lived reality of most Moroccans. Yet it enabled the editors of *al-Raʾy al-ʿAmm* to present their plans for the kingdom's future.

The Istiqlal struggled to assert itself on the political stage following independence as it suffered from both internal fissures and external pressure. Quarrels between Westernized intellectuals and Islamic conservatives, and growing resentment by the labor movement and the Left against the executive committee, weakened the party internally (Schaar 1969). Simultaneously, former anticolonial guerilla fighters and the Army of Liberation challenged the Istiqlal's leadership claim, arguing that they had made greater sacrifices for the kingdom's independence (Ashford 1961: 223). Most important, though, Mohammed V skillfully created patronage networks that made the kingdom's elites dependent on him for access to the resources controlled by the state apparatus (Waterbury 1970). Proximity to the royal palace became a necessity for economic success.

The Istiqlal also made the woman question central to its political agenda. During a party congress in December 1955, Morocco's most prominent female

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nationalist, Malika al-Fassi, reminded her audience that women had displayed "extraordinary heroism" throughout the struggle for independence.[55] Consequently, the party should fight for their civic rights, including the right to vote. Having only recently returned from several years of exile in Cairo, Abdelmajid Benjelloun passionately attacked his countrymen for having too long "imprisoned [their wives] in the kitchen" and demanded that the nation's daughters "smell the aroma of freedom."[56] The Moroccan woman should become an autonomous subject, not a mere "reproductive tool."[57]

An updated *al-ʿAlam* now regularly featured articles written by women. The couple Latifa and Mohammed Abd al-Raziq called for "civil laws with regard to marriage, divorce and inheritance," which, though based on the Quʾran, would secure women's roles as equal partners.[58] A reader identified as Fatima al-Zahra urged the Ministry of Education to ensure that all women could fully enjoy the benefits of the modern age.[59] And a group of young female Istiqlalis accused men unwilling to grant women equal rights of "egoism" and the "desire to control."[60] Such statements indicated a fundamental change in the way many educated Moroccans thought about gender roles. As one article pointed out, women were actually not inherently inferior to men; their "weakness" had rather been caused by "specific social circumstances."[61] Gender differences were social constructs rather than biological facts.

The postcolonial Moroccan woman should leave the house to excel in the fields of journalism, medicine, and law, as her sisters in the Middle East had already done.[62] Fatima al-Alami declared such professions compatible with her roles as mother and wife.[63] Sudanese nurses provided inspiration since they had rejected the hijab despite "great resistance by reactionaries and lower-class folks."[64] Especially the Egyptian revolution of July 1952 had "opened all spaces and doors for the young woman."[65] Female students traveled across the world to showcase the quality of Egyptian universities.[66] Moroccan women, too, should propagate the virtues of their country abroad so as to eradicate the "distorted image" created by the colonial powers, demanded a reader from Rabat.[67] Such arguments were considerably more radical than anything published during the colonial era.

The first Moroccan Muslim flight attendant, Aisha ben Qasim, appeared as exemplary for her generation.[68] So did Maryam al-Jabali, a musician who had graduated from a French conservatory in France, and Kenza, an actress in Hollywood.[69] The highest ideals of modern femininity were embodied by Tharya al-Shawi, Morocco's first woman pilot, whom an unknown assailant had murdered on the eve of independence. She had achieved a virtually unprecedented level of personal freedom and professional fulfillment in postwar Morocco and was later rumored to have been killed by a disappointed lover (Shoemake 2015). Yet in the eyes of the nationalist press, she simply represented the nation's potential and thus had to have been victim of French terrorists seeking to destroy Morocco's future.

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A "martyr of freedom," she embodied the aspirations of her compatriots.[70] The large crowd attending al-Shawi's funeral underlined her status as a national icon.

The postcolonial era also offered new opportunities for female self-fulfillment. The young woman should marry the "man of her dreams" on the basis of true love.[71] Instead of imitating unrealistic idols such as Marilyn Monroe, proclaimed one author, she should discover the beauty of her own skin and hair — the veil seemingly did not feature in this equation.[72] Even though *al-ʿAlam* regularly covered the newest fashions from Europe, this did not authorize the Moroccan woman to blindly imitate Western norms; her involvement in the anticolonial struggle meant that she could become a "modern advanced woman" all by herself.[73] She had earned the right to "participate in managing public affairs on equal footing with the man."[74] Women should become active citizens.

The Istiqlal positioned itself as the social force most capable of harnessing the abilities of Moroccan women and thus turning the promises of independence into reality. Central to the party's plans was the bourgeois nuclear family, a conjugal unit that allowed both spouses to develop their own potential. Whereas the monarch and his daughter had undoubtedly played pivotal roles in legitimizing the topic in the eyes of the general public, they ultimately remained representatives of the past. The path forward would be traversed by the nation's middle class, which had acquired the blessings of Western-style modernity while fighting for the country's liberation. That newspapers as diverse as *al-ʿAlam*, *al-Raʾy al-ʿAmm*, and *al-Saʿada* differed little on this issue underlines how dominant this specific narrative about modern womanhood had become.

The Lighthouse of Knowledge

The Istiqlal's failure to establish a large following in rural areas constituted its biggest weakness after independence. With 75 percent of the population living outside cities, a predominantly urban-based mass movement could not compete for power with the royal palace (Monjib 1992: 75). Influential notables adamantly rejected the newly arriving officials sent by the central government to serve as bureaucrats in their communities. Meanwhile, the king established alliances with tribal leaders, thereby turning "the Moroccan peasant" into a "defender of the throne" (Leveau 1985). The large-scale uprising led by local strongman Addi ou Bihi in 1957 and the establishment of the promonarchical Mouvement Populaire (al-Haraka al-Shaʿabiyya) in 1958 highlighted the growing antipathy toward the Istiqlal, especially in Berber-speaking regions. Reorganizing social relations in the countryside thus became of paramount importance for the party leadership, and mass education seemed the ideal means to achieve this objective.

A major barrier on the path of true national liberation remained widespread illiteracy, which affected about 85 percent of the entire population and virtually all rural women. The Moroccan League for Basic Education and Fighting Illiteracy sought to eradicate this blight by teaching standardized Arabic (Daoud 1997: 263).

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رئيس التحرير
محمد بن زيان
328 - 38
صندوق البريد 234

تكوين الفتيات المغربيات

آن وقت التطهير

لم يفهم عدي وبهي ومن حركة أن المغرب ملكا وشعبا، كافح للحصول على استقلاله ليكون الاستقلال وسيلة للإصلاح وقلب نظام الحماية الإقطاعي إلى نظام ديمقراطي يعيش في ظله كل مواطن عيشة حرة كريمة.

Figure 1. Cover page of *al-Manar*, February 1, 1957. The lead story is titled “Training Young Moroccan Women.”

Established by the Istiqlal in close cooperation with the Ministry of Education, the organization claimed to have “liberated” more than one hundred thousand illiterate Moroccans during Ramadan 1956 alone. Doing so had become of pivotal importance to “proceed in the caravan of advanced states in the age of speed.”[75] Public radio and preachers in local mosques spread the word about the campaign.[76] Minister of Education Mohammed al-Fassi praised these efforts to “snatch” the most unfortunate souls “from the darkness of ignorance.”[77] Even the Alliance Israélite began offering Arabic classes to elderly Jews, thus reinforcing the campaign’s national character.[78] Literacy in Arabic became a civic duty.

The league also began publishing *Manar al-Maghrib* (*Morocco’s Lighthouse*) in the summer of 1956, a weekly with the declared goal of teaching the illiterate masses while also covering current events and promoting patriotism (fig. 1). Printed in large letters with full vocalization (*tashkil*), a practice that facilitates reading comprehension and usually only appears in religious texts, the newspaper promised its readers “a modern life in the new Morocco.”[79] Each issue contained large photographs and cartoons to illustrate the topics under discussion. The first newspaper of its kind in the Arab world, it received much praise.[80] Rare copies soon circulated

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Figure 2. "A young woman helps her sister remove the shame of ignorance." *Manar al-Maghrib*, March 29, 1957.

abroad among those seeking to learn Arabic.[81] Even the delegates at a UNESCO conference in New Delhi expressed their admiration of its "beautiful layout" and "simple style."[82]

Manar al-Maghrib geared itself toward the impoverished masses, especially rural women. With men increasingly engaged in wage labor, they could no longer remain cloistered indoors but had to take care of family affairs, which required the ability to read and write.[83] The league aimed to remove all traces of the colonial order and create a truly sovereign Morocco, a project repeatedly referred to as the "greater jihad."[84] This could not be achieved by "waiting for relief from heaven" but through women fulfilling their "religious, national, and social duties" to "reform society."[85] Their progression both mirrored and contributed to the nation's progress, as several drawings in *Manar al-Maghrib* clarified: "the woman of yesterday" had confined her daughter to the house where she did things "of little importance to society"; the "woman of today" took her daughter to school every day; and the "woman of tomorrow" actively participated in the "development of society" by teaching her sisters in marginalized communities.[86] The advancement of the nation necessitated that educated women serve as "guides and helpers and take the hand of [their] sisters" living in misery.[87] By instilling a "shame of her ignorance" in the illiterate woman, they would motivate her to send her children to school while also studying at night (fig. 2).[88] This program mirrored similar ones recently conducted by UNESCO in other developing countries.[89] Especially the summer vacation offered unique opportunities for students to uplift their unfortunate compatriots.[90] Mutual

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aid committees operated by the Istiqlal in cities like Salé enabled the bourgeois woman to "do her duty by helping the poor."[91] In the words of Malika al-Fassi, "The future of the Moroccan woman is in the hands of the woman herself."[92]

Household management became a topic of great importance in the pages of *Manar al-Maghrib*. As in many other countries around the world, hygiene meant civilization. Organization and cleanliness were the secrets of a "smiling home."[93] Even more important, though, was the preservation of everyone's health.[94] In particular, the customary use of traditional midwifes in the countryside instead of modern medical facilities threatened the life of both mother and baby, argued the newspaper.[95] Those sick should refrain from breastfeeding and instead resort to nursing bottles.[96] Keeping children warm and well nourished became of national importance, since "bodily health is a prerequisite for mental health and the acquisition of knowledge."[97] Toothbrushing and carrot eating would enable them to blossom.[98] Such seemingly benign suggestions promoted state intervention in the most intimate aspects of family life, thus making the private realm accessible to its disciplinary powers.

The gender relations outlined in *Manar al-Maghrib* for the lower classes differed considerably from those offered by *al-ʿAlam* to its affluent clientele. A cartoon depicting a healthy daily routine for rural families included the caption "She prepares the breakfast; they [the children] go to school; he goes to work."[99] Education for poor women did not mean self-fulfillment but productive household units. Sure, widows and divorcees needed work opportunities to feed their offspring.[100] And those fortunate enough to receive more than a basic education might become nurses, educators, and even physicians.[101] But only after a deep economic crisis gripped the country in 1957 did *Manar al-Maghrib* acknowledge that many women had to gain additional income for their families (27.7 percent of Moroccan women had entered the workforce by 1960; Dialmy 2008: 137). As long as she did not "neglect the domestic duties," the poor Moroccan woman should work in order to avoid despair.[102]

Class status defined each woman's specific duties. Although similar in tone to the party press, *Manar al-Maghrib* offered very different advice to its readers. Clear guidelines on how to benefit from scientific knowledge enabled even the most socially marginalized individuals to embrace modernity through a step-by-step process. Straightforward instructions on how to be a good Muslim replaced nuanced theological debates. And while the freedoms proclaimed by the Istiqlal applied to all women, members of the urban bourgeoisie received advice on how to find self-fulfillment whereas the rural poor should focus on keeping their family members alive. Furthermore, the country's well-off — presumably readers of *al-ʿAlam* — had a duty to help their benighted sisters. Unlike the false promises of colonialism, however, this civilizing mission was based on "true sisterhood" that would unite, rather than divide, the Moroccan people (fig. 3).

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حقوق المرأة وواجباتها

أخذت المرأة المغربية — منذ سنوات عديدة — تشارك مشاركة فعالة في الحياة الاجتماعية . وبعد أن كانت لا تستطيع مفارقة بيتها إلا لضرورة أكيدة ، وبعد أن كانت البنت لا تعرف المدرسة وإنما تلازم المنزل لتتعلم الطبخ والخياطة والتطريز ويعدها أهلها من صغرها للزواج وتشرع هي بنفسها ورغم صغرها في تهيىء ما يحتاجه زواجها من معدات . لكن هذه الحالة بدأت تتغير منذ أن أخذ جلالة الملك يعلم بناته ويشجع الأميرة عائشة على مخاطبة الجماهير وإلقاء الخطب العديدة للنهوض بالمرأة المغربية وإعدادها للمستقبل .

موظفات في البريد وفي غيرها من الإدارات أو عاملات في مختلف المعامل . وهذا أمر يدل على أن المرأة أخذت تختلط بالحياة الواقعية من غير أن تنسى واجبها العائلي من تنظيف البيت وتربية الأبناء وغيرهما .

بمبادئ الإسلام الحقة . فإذا كانت للمرأة حقوق ، مسلم بها ، فإن لها كذلك واجبات عظمى . فلا يمكن لها أن تتمتع فعليا بما اعترف لها به من حقوق إلا إذا برهنت على أنها أهل للقيام بواجباتها العائلية والاجتماعية والسياسية ، على أكمل وأتم وجه . وإلا إذا قدمت الدليل القاطع على أنها لا تبالي بالدعايات والأكاذيب وأنها طاهرة العقل والقلب لا تؤمن بالخرافات ولا تعتز بالعوائد الضالة والمضرة . وأنها تعتمد في أداء واجباتها على العقل والحكمة والرزانة .

فلكي تصل المرأة المغربية إلى قمة

مغربية اليوم : أم تذهب بابنتها إلى المدرسة

ولكن كل هذا — لا يعد إلا مرحلة أولى ، إذ يمكن القول بأن عدد النساء المثقفات قليل جدا عندنا . كما أن عدد النساء اللاتي يقمن ببعض الأعمال الاجتماعية الكبرى أو السياسية قليل جدا كذلك . لهذا فإن أمورا كثيرة وعديدة لا تزال تنتظر منا الجهود والخدمات المتواصلة .

مغربية الأمس : كانت الأم تحبس بنتها بجانبها للقيام بأعمال قليلة الأهمية بالنسبة للمجتمع

مغربية الغد : امرأة تحاضر جماعات النساء وهي بهذا تساهم في تطوير المجتمع .

Figure 3. "The Rights and Duties of the Woman." Note how the clothing and posture of the woman depicted evolve as she moves from domestic chores to public service. *Manar al-Maghrib*, April 26, 1957.

The project to create a new Moroccan woman self-consciously took place amid dramatic transformations across the Arab world. The legendary Algerian resistance fighters Djamila Bouazza and Djamila Bouhired, for example, had demonstrated that they were "not made for being servant[s] in the houses of the French mistresses" by joining their male compatriots in the marquee.[103] In Tunisia, President Habib Bourguiba had created a legal framework that would "protect the family" by abolishing polygamy, raising the minimum age for marriage, and ending the male privilege of divorce through repudiation (*talaq*).[104] Having obtained her social and political rights, the Tunisian woman now actively participated in public life.[105] Commentators reassured readers: that did not mean flirting with strangers or refusing to obey one's husband. Rather, her liberation from the "mental chains" of tradition enabled the woman to finally fulfill her patriotic duties.[106] In that regard, she stood in the vanguard of women all over Africa who had escaped male "tyranny."[107] Women's liberation formed a central part of the continent's decolonization, and Morocco should not remain exempt from this wave of social progress.

The vision of mass education propagated by *Manar al-Maghrib* served the interests of the Istiqlal, which struggled to remain relevant after independence. Its enlightened members strove to bring modernity to disadvantaged communities to strengthen the nation. As the vanguard of progress, the party embodied the popular desire for modernity and true sovereignty. Moreover, the newspaper's advocacy for Arabization, a central goal for the Istiqlal's Islamic conservative wing, offered a unique opportunity to overcome Morocco's linguistic fragmentation, which the colonizers had exploited to divide and rule the multiethnic kingdom. The project

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would also weaken the influence of tribal leaders over their local communities by enabling the urban elites to communicate directly with the peasantry. The liberation of Moroccan women became a prerequisite for the ultimate triumph of the nationalist party.

Princess Aisha and the Royal Victory

Amid the Istiqlal's efforts to position itself as the champion of Moroccan women, the royal palace ensured its centrality to the national conversation. Mohammed V served as ceremonial chairman of the first campaign to eradicate illiteracy. More important, though, were the efforts of Princess Aisha. Her trips abroad allowed other nations to see "a cultivated Moroccan girl knowledgeable of the fundamentals of modern civilization" and thus brought pride to her people.[108] She served as the "direction of prayer" (*qibla*) toward which all women strove, remarked *Manar al-Maghrib*.[109]

The perfect opportunity to showcase the progress made by Moroccan women came with an international congress organized by the Union of Arab Women in Damascus in October 1957. The head of the Moroccan delegation was, of course, Princess Aisha, who took every opportunity to advertise the advances made by her country. All members dressed in traditional kaftans, but without veils, displaying Morocco's ability to embrace modernity without forsaking its roots. The princess engaged in numerous publicity efforts to inform an extremely curious Syrian public about the "great modern Moroccan awakening."[110] In an interview with the Egyptian daily *al-Ahram*, she praised Nasser and called for unconditional solidarity with the Algerian freedom struggle.[111] The Syrian army announced that it would name a maneuver after the princess.[112]

Aisha's speech before the congress proclaimed Mohammed V the great emancipator of his female subjects. After greeting the gathered representatives, she explained how the Moroccan woman had managed to overcome "ridiculous traditions" and "break the chains" that had "prevented her progress."[113] This process had begun with her father's ascension to the throne, according to the royal version of events. Despite firm resistance by "reactionaries" and "feudalists," he had insisted on sending his girls to school unveiled. The kingdom's elites soon thereafter "seized the torch from the hand of His Majesty" and established numerous schools for girls. Nowadays, she concluded, Moroccan women actively participated in public life "without depending on men in everything." By securing their "rights and duties" with the help of King Mohammed V, Morocco's women could now contribute to the creation of a truly postcolonial society.

This history lesson by Princess Aisha might not have been very accurate, but it highlighted the changes Morocco had undergone in recent years. The debate about the social position of women had quite rapidly evolved from "mothers and partners" to "rights and duties." Their roles had expanded beyond the private realm and into

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the public sphere. It also lionized the king, who had allegedly single-handedly brought his female subjects from darkness into light. Of course, members of the royal family had indeed made important contributions to shifting the public discourse. But this narrative reduced a vibrant national debate to the actions of the royal family.

This palace-centric version of events soon thereafter received an international seal of approval through a cover story in *Time* titled "The Emancipation of Moslem Women." The drawing on the front page showed a fully veiled woman, her eyes barely visible, lurking behind a wall decorated in the Moroccan style; in front of her and looking in the opposite direction stood Princess Aisha with a resolute facial expression, her hair uncovered and her eyes firmly focused on the future. The article highlighted her famous speech in Tangier as the ultimate example of "feminist leadership" that had allowed Moroccan women to "shake off an age-old bondage" as they "cast aside their veils and began talking briskly of emancipation" (*Time* 1957). It celebrated the liberation of women across the Muslim world in recent years, but the star of the story remained Aisha, who had become "a national heroine just by existing." Her willingness to defy gender norms by driving a car and even appearing on a private beach in a swimsuit had inspired her countrywomen to fight for their liberties, according to *Time*. With independence finally achieved, she joined the literacy programs offered by the young state to enlighten the ignorant masses. The article simply ignored the decade-long public debate about the role of women in Moroccan society. The modernization of gender relations in Morocco seemingly began and ended in the royal palace.

Conclusion

When the Moroccan state adopted the code of personal status (*mudawwana*) drafted by a royal committee in the fall of 1957, the national debate about the woman question came to an abrupt halt. Based on the shariʿa, husbands remained women's guardians and could repudiate them at will.[114] Male heirs received twice as much as female ones and polygamy remained legally permissible. The new family code provided a remarkable success for the king: by preserving patrilineal kinship structures, it ensured that rural tribes—the main supporters of the royal palace—would flourish in the nascent social order (Charrad 2001: 147–68). This move also enhanced the status of the religious scholars (ʿulama), who dominated the committee that drafted the *mudawwana* (al-Ahnaf 1994). Once the elites of precolonial Morocco on whose support every sultan had depended, they became increasingly marginalized as modern secular education superseded the value of religious learning. The codification of Islamic family law thus halted their descent into social irrelevance while tying their fortunes to that of the royal palace. Moreover, by superseding all customary law, especially in Berber regions, the *mudawwana* could serve as the basis for a unified national identity under the leadership of the king (Salime 2011: 3).

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The ideal of the nuclear bourgeois family unit as the central building block of the nation, as propagated by the Istiqlal for over a decade, had lost out. The nationalist press acknowledged the new legal code, which successfully combined "true Islamic teaching with modern laws."[115] But the political defeat resulted in a drastically declining interest in the woman question; women's sections in the press soon decreased in frequency and length. *Manar al-Maghrib* continued its literacy campaign for another two decades but featured few articles specifically dedicated to gender topics. Instead, a palace-centered narrative flourished as state feminism became a central component of Moroccan politics (M'Chichi 2010). And while radical ideas about female equality did not entirely disappear from public discourse, the new political order forcibly repressed them (Guessous 2009; Slyomovics 2005: 132–64).

Moroccan state feminism is not a stagnant phenomenon but continues to evolve under the pressure of local social movements and international advocacy groups (Tripp 2019: 143–90). In 2002 King Mohammed VI advocated for a quota reserving one-third of parliamentary seats for women; a considerably more egalitarian version of the *mudawwana* was passed by Parliament in 2004 at his behest; and in 2006 the Ministry of Religious Affairs began training female preachers as well as religious social workers, the *murshidat* (Wainscott 2017: 150–56). A plethora of feminist nongovernmental organizations — secular and Islamist, urban and rural — have been actively fighting for the social and economic rights of Moroccan women for more than two decades (Ennaji 2015; Sadiqi 2008). Yet none of this changes the central role of the monarchy in using the status of women to strengthen its own position (Eddouada, Pepicelli, and Bouyssou 2010). Moreover, although the female illiteracy rate had dropped to "only" 35 percent by 2018, this number remains significantly higher in rural areas (World Bank n.d.). Seven decades after the first public debates about female empowerment as a pathway to national salvation, even the goal of universal basic education has not yet been achieved.

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Notes

1. “Zaʿimat al-nahda al-amira mawlatuna ʿA’isha tukhatib nisaʾ al-Maghrib,” *al-ʿAlam*, April 12, 1947, 2.
2. For an introduction to Moroccan debates about the woman question, see Borrmans 1977, Rachik 2003, and Wyrtzen 2015: 219–47.
3. Since the 1980s Moroccan feminists have been reintegrating women as historical actors into the nationalist narrative (Kozma 2003).
4. Beth Baron (2005), Lisa Pollard (2005), and Mona Russell (2010) have discussed how European middle-class ideals shaped debates in the Middle East during the early twentieth century.
5. For a study of the Tunisian state’s attempts to regulate gender norms postindependence, see Kallander 2018.
6. The anticolonial struggle also led to the rise of popular forms of Moroccan patriotism beyond party politics. See Silver 2020.
7. For an introduction to the prevalent political ideologies in colonial Morocco, see El Mansour 1996.
8. “Khitab bahithat al-hadira,” *al-ʿAlam*, November 20, 1946, 3.
9. “Al-Marʾa al-maghribiyya,” *al-ʿAlam*, January 9, 1947, 2.
10. “Safhat al-marʾa” (editorial), *al-ʿAlam*, October 14, 1947, 3.
11. “Ibtasimi da’iman,” *al-ʿAlam*, September 11, 1947, 7; “Himayat al-tifl (1),” *al-ʿAlam*, September 19, 1947, 3.
12. “Nasa’ih li-l-sayyidat,” *al-ʿAlam*, September 19, 1947, 3.
13. “Ila al-fatah al-maghribiyya,” *al-ʿAlam*, June 18, 1948, 3.
14. “Al-Marʾa al-sharqiyya tatahaddath ilayki ya sayyidati: al-marʾa al-mutahaddira,” *al-ʿAlam*, August 25, 1950, 2.
15. For the role of dress codes in nationalist debates in Algeria, see Rahnama 2020.
16. “Wa al-marʾa al-ummiyya?,” *al-ʿAlam*, August 29, 1947, 3.
17. “Ila al-islah ayyatuha al-sayyidat,” *al-ʿAlam*, February 1, 1948, 3.
18. “Khayr li-nisaʾina an yakun muhadhdhibat min an yakun khadimat!,” *al-ʿAlam*, October 27, 1950, 2.
19. “Kalimat bi-munasabatiha,” *al-ʿAlam*, July 28, 1950, 2.
20. “Huquq al-marʾa fi al-tarikh,” *al-ʿAlam*, May 9, 1951, 2.
21. “Hadith maʿa al-anisa Maryam Mazyan awwal rassama maghribiyya,” *al-ʿAlam*, December 3, 1951, 3.
22. “Fi al-ʿahd al-muhammadi,” *al-ʿAlam*, September 11, 1947, 7.
23. “Al-marʾa al-hindiyya tusharik al-rajul fi jamiʿ al aʿmal,” *al-ʿAlam*, July 14, 1950, 2.
24. “Al-Marʾa al-Bakistaniyya allati sahamat fi tahrir biladiha min nir al-istiʿmar,” *al-ʿAlam*, December 23, 1950, 3.
25. “Huda Hanim Shaʿarawi,” *al-ʿAlam*, January 16, 1948, 3. See also “Taktashif maʿdan al-nikl fi Misr,” *al-ʿAlam*, September 30, 1950, 3.
26. “Al-Amira ʿA’isha, zaʿimat al-nahda al-nisaʾiyya fi Marrakush,” *al-ʿAlam*, May 21, 1948, 3.
27. “Al-Nahda al-nisaʾiyya fi al-Maghrib al-ʿarabi,” *al-ʿAlam*, January 16, 1948, 3.
28. “Taharrur al-marʾa juzʾ la yatajazzaʾ min taharrur al-watan,” *al-ʿAlam*, May 14, 1952, 2.
29. “Mushkilat al-marʾa: al-rajʿiyya wa-l-taqaddumiyya harakat al-intaj al-fikri,” *al-Raʾy al-ʿAmm*, September 2, 1949, 1.
30. “Tahrir al-marʾa,” *al-Raʾy al-ʿAmm*, September 9, 1949, 1.
31. “Tahrir al-marʾa (5),” *al-Raʾy al-ʿAmm*, October 12, 1949, 1.
32. “Tahrir al-marʾa (4),” *al-Raʾy al-ʿAmm*, September 30, 1949, 1.

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33. “Tahrir al-marʾa (6),” *al-Raʾy al-ʿAmm*, October 22, 1949, 1.
34. “Hawla tahrir al-marʾa,” *al-Raʾy al-ʿAmm*, November 12, 1949, 2.
35. “Hawla tahrir al-marʾa,” *al-Raʾy al-ʿAmm*, November 12, 1949, 2.
36. “Hawla tahrir al-marʾa,” *al-Raʾy al-ʿAmm*, November 16, 1949, 1.
37. “Hawla tahrir al-marʾa,” *al-Raʾy al-ʿAmm*, November 16, 1949, 1.
38. “Istisharat al-sayyid al-Bakay qasd tashkil hukuma,” *al-ʿAlam*, December 4, 1955, 1.
39. “Tadshin madrasat al-fatah wa maʿhad al-faqir bi-l-Baydaʾ bi-mahdir al-amiratayn,” *al-ʿAlam*, January 27, 1956, 1.
40. “Sumuw al-amira ʿAʾisha tatahaddath ila al-ʿAlam,” *al-ʿAlam*, October 27, 1956, 4.
41. “Al-Marʾa al-muslima al-jazaʾiriyya tutalib bi-haqq al-tatawwur,” *al-Saʿada*, February 27, 1956, 3.
42. “Dhakaʾ al-marʾa wa dhakaʾ al-rajul,” *al-Saʿada*, February 27, 1956, 3.
43. “Al-Marʾa . . . min ʿarsh al-dalal ila al-aʿmal,” *al-Saʿada*, July 4, 1956, 2.
44. “Naʿima al-Sharqi taʿud ila Baris,” *al-Saʿada*, April 5, 1956, 1.
45. “Al-Marʾa . . . fi al-Sin al-shaʿbi,” *al-Raʾy al-ʿAmm*, June 6, 1956, 4.
46. “Huquq al-marʾa fi al-Sin al-shaʿbi,” *al-Raʾy al-ʿAmm*, January 31, 1957, 3.
47. “Nahdat al-marʾa al-maghribiyya,” *al-Raʾy al-ʿAmm*, May 7, 1957, 4.
48. “ʿAla al-marʾa al-maghribiyya an taqtadi bi-l-amira Lalla ʿAʾisha,” *al-Raʾy al-ʿAmm*, March 18, 1957, 3.
49. “Al-madrasa allati anshaʾha al-shaʿb,” *al-Raʾy al-ʿAmm*, October 13, 1956, 5.
50. “Hadhihi al-sayyida murashshaha li-l-ikhtitaf,” *al-Raʾy al-ʿAmm*, November 3, 1956, 1.
51. “Kalimat al-ʿadu: al-zawaj ʿindana,” *al-Ray al-ʿAmm*, November 27, 1956, 4.
52. “Kalimat al-ʿadu,” *al-Ray al-ʿAmm*, December 11, 1956, 3.
53. “Ila Suʿad,” *al-Raʾy al-ʿAmm*, March 28, 1957, 2.
54. “Ila Suʿad,” *al-Raʾy al-ʿAmm*, February 7, 1957, 3.
55. “Nashat al-marʾa al-istiqlaliyya fi al-midan al-thaqafi wa-l-ijtimaʿi wa-l-watani,” *al-ʿAlam*, December 5, 1955, 5.
56. “Tahrir al-marʾa,” *al-ʿAlam*, January 7, 1956, 2.
57. “Al-marʾa awla bi-l-tʿalim,” *al-ʿAlam*, April 14, 1956, 2.
58. “Al-Marʾa al-maghribiyya fi al-ʿahd al-jadid,” *al-ʿAlam*, December 8, 1955, 2.
59. “Barid al-safha,” *al-ʿAlam*, September 27, 1957, 3.
60. “Hadhihi jamʿiyyat al-inbʿath,” *al-ʿAlam*, November 22, 1957, 7.
61. “Hal balaghat al-marʾa al-maghribiyya al-makana al-laʾiqa biha wa limadha?,” *al-ʿAlam*, February 25, 1957, 6.
62. “Nuridu li-l-marʾa al-maghribiyya nahda mithaliyya,” *al-ʿAlam*, February 25, 1957, 6.
63. “Dawr al-marʾa al-maghribiyya fi al-mujtamaʿ al-hadir,” *al-ʿAlam*, December 26, 1956, 2.
64. “Al-marʾa al-sudaniyya wa nahdatuha,” *al-ʿAlam*, February 11, 1957, 6.
65. “Al-nahda al-nisaʾiyya fi Misr,” *al-ʿAlam*, August 1, 1956, 2.
66. “Mahammuki al-awwaliyya k-umma ya sayyidati,” *al-ʿAlam*, January 27, 1957, 3.
67. “Dawr al-marʾa al-maghribiyya fi al-mujtamaʿ wa-l-watan,” *al-ʿAlam*, October 4, 1957, 3.
68. “Fatah muslima tashtaghil mudifa bi-sharikat al-tayaran,” *al-ʿAlam*, July 4, 1957, 1.
69. “Al-nahda al-niswiyya al-maghribiyya,” *al-ʿAlam*, September 20, 1957, 3.
70. “Imraʾa min al-Maghrib,” *al-ʿAlam*, August 31, 1956, 2.
71. “Saʾtazawwajuhu ma damat saʿadati maʿhu,” *al-ʿAlam*, June 5, 1957, 7.
72. “Al-marʾa al-mahira,” *al-ʿAlam*, November 7, 1956, 3.
73. “Hadith li-l-marʾa,” *al-ʿAlam*, February 25, 1957, 2.
74. “Baʿd madhahir hayat al-marʾa al-maghribiyya,” *al-ʿAlam*, September 27, 1957, 3.
75. “Limadha qarrarna murajaʿat durus al-hamla al-ula?,” *Manar al-Maghrib*, November 4, 1956, 4.

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76. “Khitab raʾis al-ʿusba,” *Manar al-Maghrib*, March 15, 1957, 5.
77. “Min khitab wazir al-tarbiya al-wataniyya,” *Manar al-Maghrib*, March 15, 1957, 4.
78. “Ihtimam al-ittihad al-israʾili bi-taʿlim al-lugha al-ʿarabiyya,” *Manar al-Maghrib*, December 2, 1956, 8.
79. “Ma hiya hadhihi al-jarida,” *Manar al-Maghrib*, July 22, 1956, 1.
80. “Al-Duktur al-Dahan yunawwihu bi-Manar al-Maghrib,” *Manar al-Maghrib*, October 21, 1956, 7.
81. “Manar al-Maghrib fi ʿamiha al-thalith,” *Manar al-Maghrib*, July 18, 1958, 2.
82. “Manar al-Maghrib fi munazzamat al-Yunisku,” *Manar al-Maghrib*, December 23, 1956, 1.
83. “Al-Marʾa bayna al-ams wa-l-yawm,” *Manar al-Maghrib*, July 22, 1956, 6.
84. “Al-Jihad al-akbar,” *Manar al-Maghrib*, August 5, 1956, 1.
85. “Al-Marʾa al-saliha tabni mujtamaʿan salihan,” *Manar al-Maghrib*, April 12, 1957, 3.
86. “Huquq al-marʾa wa wajibatuha,” *Manar al-Maghrib*, April 26, 1957, 3.
87. “Al-Marʾa al-maghribiyya fi midan al-ʿamal,” *Manar al-Maghrib*, December 9, 1956, 3.
88. “Al-marʾa tadfaʿ al-jahl ʿan nafsiha,” *Manar al-Maghrib*, March 29, 1957, 3.
89. “Takwin al-fatayat al-maghribiyyat,” *Manar al-Maghrib*, February 1, 1957, 1.
90. “Kayfa yanbaghi an taqdi al-fatah ʿutlataha?,” *Manar al-Maghrib*, July 4, 1958, 3.
91. “Nashat al-marʾa fi midan al-isʿaf,” *Manar al-Maghrib*, December 30, 1956, 3.
92. “Dawr al-marʾa al-maghribiyya fi al-ʿahd al-jadid,” *Manar al-Maghrib*, July 19, 1957, 6.
93. “Al-Manzil al-mubtasim,” *Manar al-Maghrib*, September 16, 1956, 3.
94. The Iranian state had already promoted female physical education, hygiene, and health during the 1930s (Koyagi 2009).
95. “Al-Muwallida al-qabila,” *Manar al-Maghrib*, September 16, 1956, 3.
96. “Al-ridaʿa al-sinaʿiyya,” *Manar al-Maghrib*, September 16, 1956, 3.
97. “Hadha yahumm man lahum atfal,” *Manar al-Maghrib*, October 14, 1956, 6.
98. “Al-ʿinaya bu-numuw jism al-tifl,” *Manar al-Maghrib*, February 14, 1958, 6.
99. “Kayfa taqdi yawmaha,” *Manar al-Maghrib*, January 13, 1957, 4.
100. “Al-Marʾa al-maghribiyya fi midan al-ʿamal,” *Manar al-Maghrib*, March 22, 1957, 3.
101. “Wajibat al-fatah nahwa al-Maghrib al-jadid,” *Manar al-Maghrib*, July 12, 1957, 3.
102. “Yanbaghi an la tashtaghil al-bint bi-l-wazif wa tansa wajibat al-bayt,” *Manar al-Maghrib*, January 2, 1959, 3.
103. “Dawr al-marʾa al-jazaʾiriyya fi al-kifah,” *Manar al-Maghrib*, August 9, 1957, 3.
104. “Taʿaddud al-zawjat fi Tunis,” *Manar al-Maghrib*, August 19, 1956, 5.
105. “Al-Marʾa fi Tunis,” *Manar al-Maghrib*, August 19, 1956, 3.
106. “Dhikra tahrir al-marʾa fi Tunis,” *Manar al-Maghrib*, January 16, 1959, 3.
107. “Al-marʾa al-ifriqiyya al-yawm,” *Manar al-Maghrib*, January 23, 1959, 3.
108. “Al-amira ʿAʾisha tuʿarrif bi-l-marʾa al-maghribiyya,” *Manar al-Maghrib*, January 23, 1959, 3.
109. “ʿAla al-marʾa an takhudh ahsan ma fi al-qadim wa atyab ma fi al-jadid,” *Manar al-Maghrib*, July 19, 1957, 7.
110. “Sumuw al-amira ʿAʾisha fi Dimashq,” *al-ʿAlam*, October 29, 1957, 6.
111. “Najah thawrat al-Jazaʾir rahn b-istimrar al-ʿawn al-ʿarabi,” *al-Ray al-ʿAmm*, September 22, 1957, 1.
112. “Nashat al-amira lalla ʿAʾisha fi al-Sharq al-ʿArabi,” *al-Ray al-ʿAmm*, September 15, 1957, 1.
113. “Kalimat sahibat al-sumuw al-malaki lalla ʿAʾisha fi al-muʾtamar al-rabiʿ li-ittihad nisaʾ al-ʿarab,” *al-Raʾy al-ʿAmm*, September 11, 1957, 2.
114. Unlike premodern Islamic law, however, it limited the discretion of judges and imposed uniform rules regardless of religion or ethnic background, thus cementing in place the authority of the centralized state and offering a clear epistemological break from premodern shariʿa practices (Tucker 2008).

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115. “Huquq al-zawj wa-l-zawja,” *Manar al-Maghrib*, January 24, 1958, 3. See also “Hadith al-marʾa: qanun al-ahwal al-shakhsiyya,” *al-ʿAlam*, January 10, 1958, 3.

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