

THE RESHAPING OF POSTCOLONIAL IBERIA: MOROCCAN AND AMAZIGH LITERATURES IN THE PENINSULA

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THIS essay develops key connections along lateral axes with other Moroccan literatures written in Castilian/Spanish, Catalan, and English through a transcolonial perspective. The unprecedented social and political developments that are taking place in Morocco today have also generated a renewed interest in the country's literary production. Instead of regarding the writings of Moroccan nationals as part of Maghrebi literature, critics are now becoming more sensitive to the unique features of this literature, against the backdrop of a colonial and postcolonial history that is markedly different from that of the two other countries of the reduced Maghreb: Algeria and Tunisia.¹ Literary fiction texts can serve as evidence in a similar fashion as empirically based political or social observations; processes represented within and implicit around fictional works, which can be discerned by a reader or interpreter, convey a reality or veracity about their geopolitical locations that is germane as[to], say, statistical data or sociological field work or political reports (Gupta, "Literary Studies" 873). As Daniela Merolla states,

[C]olonial and postcolonial 'poetics of transition,' a feature of English and French writings since the beginning of the nineteenth century, has progressively characterized Dutch, German, Italian, Finnish, Spanish, and other European literatures, thanks to new writers who have attracted public attention and criticism [. . .].

This artistic renewal has prompted discussion on matters pertaining to creation and language, cultural essentialism, social identity, and political choices. At the same time, international and national events have changed the social, political, and artistic atmosphere [. . .]. ("Poetics of Transition" 36).

Therefore, this article raises and discusses a new set of questions that are invoked in academic circles: in the last decade, how do Moroccan and Amazigh (Berber) authors (re)define their identities? How does this emergent literature configure the meaning of diaspora literature? How can we position new Afro-Iberian voices within the field of cultural production in the Peninsula? How does the language of expression shape and create new identities that bridge the gap between the writers and a Spanish State on the verge of dismemberment? Sandra Ponzanesi and Daniela Merolla pose similar questions: it is high time to ask if European literature supersede the national literatures, or when migrant literature will be an object of comparison without having to pass via the national canon (*Migrant Cartographies* 4). This article fleshes out the above questions through detailed textual analyses and contextualizes the cultural negotiations in the multifarious space of twenty-first century Spain. Born of recent economic crisis and autonomous communities pleads of independence, displaced agents are positioned at the interstices of different spaces, histories, and languages. As a result, Afro-Iberian voices echo the split subjectivities and fragmented consciousness that initiate new signs of identity, and innovative sites of collaboration and contestation, in the act of defining the idea of society itself. This article includes one male Moroccan author who writes in Castilian, one female Moroccan author who writes in English about Spain, and four Amazigh (Berber) authors who write in Catalan.²

MOHAMED LAHCHIRI: EPITOME OF THE BORDERLAND WRITER

Mohamed Lahchiri – first chief editor of *La mañana*, the first Moroccan newspaper written entirely in Castilian throughout the 1990s – wrote four short story books and a novel published as feuilleton in *L'Opinion: Pedacitos entrañables* (1994), *Cuentos ceutíes* (2004), *Una tumbita en Sidi Embarek* (2006), *Un cine en el Príncipe Alfonso y otros relatos* (2011), and *Una historia repelente* (2001).³ Lahchiri, who was born in Ceuta, narrates the transformations of territories and people of the former Protectorate into unequal and antagonistic spaces of post-independence modernity. Lahchiri belongs to a group of Moroccan writers that proliferated in the last fifteen years; a group of Moroccan authors who place Castilian-language Moroccan literature within the framework of a literature without borders.⁴ This writing is developing a series of questions about the use of the language of the “Other” (Castilian), the aesthetic practices of Western literature, and a deeply critical observation on the influence of the Western media in Morocco. Mohamed Lahchiri is very conscious of the ontological and epistemological differences between both cultures and can cross from one side to the other (from Occident to Orient), criticize both cultures, with no need to request a ‘visa’ from any ‘academic guard’, neither from the East or the West. Without apostatizing their Arab-African-Muslim culture, in many cases these Moroccan authors know better “[la] hermosa casa del vecino [Spain], más que la propia” (El Harti 40).

Lahchiri acknowledges that he began writing short stories in *La mañana* “para rellenar columnas” (“La casualidad” 28), but he also confesses that writing in Castilian

has helped him to approach “temas tabúes para nuestra escritura en árabe, como historias de primeras experiencias sexuales de adolescentes con prostitutas o mujeres adultas o de chicos arrastrando el temor – mejor dicho el terror – a ser sodomizados” (“La casualidad” 28). Lahchiri’s borderland narrative, an indefinite genre between autobiography and fiction, is situated in multiple loci of enunciation in order to confer aspects of modernity, (neo)colonization and the evolution of various stages of imperialism from the times of the Spanish Protectorate until now. What Lahchiri exemplifies is the representation of colonial and former colonies’ local hi(stories), of new forms of global colonialism in which the former “uncivilized moors” have adopted different masquerades, but have kept the same low esteem in their lives. Decolonialism is not produced from within former metropolis, thanks to the (unwanted) generosity of Europeans, or from the reaffirmation of autochthonous, pure and intrinsic values of neocolonized societies, but from the periphery, from the border, in order to foster a consciousness of different perspectives towards a compatibility of projects: socio-cultural emancipation and liberation.

The borderland locus is functional to explain the relationship with ‘the Other’ that is traversed by antagonisms of different kinds – frontier, class, gender, ethnic background, and language – and that is determined by diverse systems of exploitation and oppression. The latter are mirrored by the polysemy of otherness in the real world. Morocco is characterized for its plurality and the coexistence of cultural traditions and diverse ethnic groups: Arabic, Amazigh, Sephardic, and European. Such cultural hybridizations configure loci of enunciation in which a new rebellious, irreverent and subversive literature flourishes; what Michel Foucault would call “insurrection of subjugated knowledges” (81). Without apostatizing Morocco’s oral tradition, Lahchiri situates his culture within a transmodern project that yields strategies of growth and creativity in a renewed cultural manifestation that aims at decolonialization as well as novelty. As we can grasp in short stories such as “Moras pisoteadas,” his narrative consists on the offshoot of Moroccan intellectuals articulated around (neo)colonial empires that rejected (and, many times, attempted to erase) ancestral regional cultures. Daniela Merolla writes against “purist” literary critics what believe that ‘form and content’ are indivisible and that the artistic qualities of literary works go beyond a mere proposition of society and culture. She affirms that literary productions take place in the framework of expectations conjured up by cultural constraints and historical contexts (“Deceitful Origins” 105). In this sense, Lahchiri’s narrative breaks apart with fundamentalist observances of tradition in order to undertake a wider artistic personality, reasonable and levied at source, dialogical, and political and religiously independent (what is known as *turath*).

Lahchiri remembers that he was obliged by parents and grandparents to learn “la palabra de Dios (“El escritor de frontera” 165). At the same time, the characters portrayed in Lahchiri’s short stories lead to a comprehensive reading of a borderland author who despises colonialism and postcolonialist Moroccan elite after Independence:

[P]ensaron desde el primer momento que su futuro estaba en Marruecos y no en Ceuta ni en la España de Franco [. . .]

...

Medio siglo después, esto es un hervidero de rateros [. . .]

. . .
 Primero nos han pisoteado, como a las moras de la acera y después de haberse asegurado de que estábamos bien machacados, se pusieron a enseñarnos [. . .] a ser hijos de perra [. . .]. [E]n suma: aceptar todo, absolutamente todo por el dinero; volcándonos encima vómitos de desprecio doloroso y descorazonador de cristianillos valientes, a los que la vida ha hecho rodar hasta tierra de moros. (“Moras pisoteadas” 127-135)

According to al-Jabri, the contemporary Arab “reader” is restricted by his tradition and overwhelmed by his present. Muslim societies have not ceased to instill tradition in their youth, in the form of a certain vocabulary and certain concepts, as well as language and thought, depriving male and female Muslims of independence and freedom (al-Jabri 27). The young Muslim receives all this without the slightest critical reaction or critical mind: “To disjoin the subject from his tradition is therefore a necessary operation” (al Jabri 27). This operation represents the first step towards an objective attitude: “We must free ourselves of any understanding built upon biases derived from tradition or upon our present-day desiderata” (al Jabri 27). Along with al-Jabri’s line of thought, the Frenchified Moroccan writers who constituted the group *Souffles* in Paris have also shown the struggle between tradition and modernity, and the necessity to advocate for a “flexible and evolutionary Islam” (Wolf 35). “Literature,” as Abdelkébir Khatibi will argue, ‘is also a conflict of identities, signatures and forces’ (qtd. in Wolf 35). To be Arabized was to memorize lengthy passages from the Koran, and to be modernized was to be stuck forever in the existential angst and exotic landscapes of Albert Camus and Pierre Loti; “by repositioning themselves within the minor enclaves of a minor literature with major influences, they [the writers of *Souffles*] attempt to validate the multi-ethnic terrain of contemporary Moroccan society” (Wolf 35).

Subsequently, Lahchiri expresses in his texts the needs and customs of the social groups of oppressed Muslims. However, in order to carry out such a process, time and reflection (“critical thinking”) are necessary, as well as a return to the texts, symbols and myths of his own Muslim culture before mastering the texts of a modern-foreign-non-Muslim culture. Firstly, it is necessary to establish a “South-South” dialogue, and, then, switch to a “South-North” dialogue. In short, the process consists in promoting a “cultural revolution” (Dussel n/p), whose axis, most of the time, is in the educational level of the short stories. A process requires involving the youth in the representation of the peripheral culture oppressed by the imperial-foreign forces as well as the neo-colonial-autochthonous cultures. In this sense, North African-Muslim writers such as Lahchiri, who engage in cross-cultural issues of import and intercultural processes while writing either in their nations of birth or in Europe, complicate and challenge the traditional notion of nation-state as an object of affiliation. This critical realism combined with the use of the fantastic genre, irony, and a much more profuse use of intertextuality of texts from the Western and the non-Western canon (Greek mythology, English, French and Castilian translations of *Arabian Nights*, psychology, folklore, Koran and hadiths) will result in a

narrative that is set halfway from experimental narratives. The latter consists in the usage of a concise language, condensed signifiers, a dramatization of narrative texts, and a focus on the potentiality of exploring several linguistic environments. In short, “exploit and colonize the Castilian language” would be the motto of the cohort of Moroccan authors who write in Castilian.⁵

Lahchiri takes the reader to analyze a complex group of literary techniques that also responds the interstitial position of a borderland writer, leading to intertextual correspondences with texts and writers of Morocco and the rest of the Arabic world (particularly Egypt and Naguib Mahfouz) in order to represent the “discomfort in culture” and the vacuum in Moroccan narrative after its Independence. In this regard, Lahchiri takes after Abdallah Laroui’s *al-Gurba* (1971, *El extrañamiento* in Castilian), surpassing the proto-novel and nationalist stages of Moroccan literature (mainly known for its social realism) in order to embrace modern elements of fiction such as the disembodiment of the individual, the recovery of childhood, the enjoyment of literature for the sake of literature (evidently in “Recordar un cuento”). *al-Gurba* reveals the imposition of Muslim thinking, its sources and its evolutions. Laroui’s novel represents a disappointing meditation about Morocco’s independence, and the author proposes two forms of “escape”/exile: one of them is intellectual, and the other one psychological. Closely related to Laroui’s *al-Gurba*, Lahchiri’s narrative embodies the representation and interpretation of social injustice (“Moras pisoteadas”), the employment of irony to counteract racist stereotypes and the comparison between a past of belonging, of progress and the crumbling of Post-independence major projects (“El morito de Arcila”). It is also worth noting that not only Lahchiri’s short stories, but also Larbi El Harti’s “La alienada,” “Me llamo Rosa” and “Mi amiga Ghanu;” Ahmed El Gamoun’s “La Atlántida;” and Ahmed Ararou’s “Trabanxi,” “AMÉ . . . RICK,” and “La Resaca” present similar reactions to broken illusions due to geographical and economical displacements. In this sense, Lahchiri and the aforementioned authors follow Mohamed Abd al-Jabri’s line of thought, who thinks that the modern critical intellectuals are those who control the election of hegemonic modern instruments (European) and traditional Arabic-Islamic. The combination of approaches will be useful for the critical reconstruction of their own tradition as for the evaluation of neocolonized cultures (al-Jabri 226). At the same time, Lahchiri gives sufficient weight to the contradictions, in order to avoid candy-coating what continues being foreign and alienating to a certain culture. In short, Lahchiri’s short stories “interpellate” cultural Eurocentrism and, at the same time, encourage the necessity to continue questioning peripheral cultures in their double function of victims and perpetrators of oppression.

LAILA LALAMI: TAKING RISKS IN CONTEMPORARY MIGRATION LITERATURE

Laila Lalami is the author of three narratives, *Hope and Other Dangerous Pursuits* (2005), *Secret Son* (2009), and *The Moor’s Account* (2014). In *Hope and Other Dangerous Pursuits*, the author goes beyond exploring immigration to Spain in order to present the past, the present and the future of Hispano-Moroccan thorny

relations. The configuration of the narrative is polyhedral, subverting the rigid form of European narrative by introducing a flexible and pragmatic aesthetic sense, more akin to oral tradition, and North African feminism. Oral tradition becomes a tool for modernization, though North African non-intellectual women are not yet aware how much they are complying with the ideology of the world economic system. Aware of the latter and instead of a simple antagonism between men and women and between tradition and modernity, Lalami portrays the ambiguity of these women's performances that allow the presentation of their alternative social vision. Lalami's characters proffer a simultaneous deconstruction and reconstruction of dominant (European) ideology and hegemonic discourses. It is a way of keeping a "double insight, a sharpness of critical experience that is based on the tingling feeling of unbelonging, of [. . .] unhomeliness" (Ponzanesi and Merolla 5). Moreover, Lalami's narrative modes are linked to Arab feminism, which until a couple of decades ago had remained exclusive to a reduced set of Egyptian, Lebanese, Tunisian, and Algerian women. This situation produces a departure from the belief that all narrative practices must adhere to a certain set of ideological and formalistic (European) standards. The need arises to give meaning to a narrative practice not through its status as an epiphenomenon, but by considering how it may account for a process, revealing developments and actions related to the creative process or a literary interpretation. African (and particularly Arab) feminism continues to suffer a double struggle: internally against the old religious, social and economical order; and externally against European colonization. While challenging European domination, the reformists still admire modern European ideals. In other words, asserting a new national identity means necessarily drawing on the very model they are resisting: the Europeans (Al-Hassan Golley, "Is Feminism?" 529).

Hope and Other Dangerous Pursuits denounces the fates of a group of young Moroccans of both sexes who abandon a depressing reality manifested in a corrupt regime, unemployment, gender discrimination, and class warfare to sail across the Mediterranean. The characters narrate their stories of in-betweenness, of their engagement of domestic and diasporic concerns, and reflections on postcolonial Morocco. The book opens *in media res* and the reader is introduced to each of the four characters: Murad, a street hustler; Halima, a woman on the run from her husband; Aziz, an unemployed mechanic; and Faten, a religious fanatic. Each chapter focuses on the characters' lives before the trip, exploring the reasons of their choice, and then we the story jumps forward in time to see what happens to them after the trip and whether the rewards were worth the risk they took.

In Faten's story, "The Fanatic"/ "The Odalisque," and a short story "The Turning Tide," which is a narrative that proceeds *Hope and Other Dangerous Pursuits*, Lalami decries the misery of her female characters by disrupting the stereotypical image given to Moroccan women as illiterate, voiceless object that are defeatedly unrecognized by society and bereft of all spaces either inside society or within women themselves. Lalami's female characters declare themselves free of the shackles of patriarchy, tradition and home. If "home" is regarded as a space of confinement and obedience, a space that refutes outgoing, the female characters symbolically destabilize this pre-established notion by leaving "home," "the country,"

“the inside” and transcend geographic, historical, and cultural boundaries through the act of migration. Faten transcends cultural and religious boundaries articulating a hybrid identity that resists fixedness, stability, patriarchy, and thus expresses a new mobile, unstable and liberal subjectivity that responds to the calls of “modernity” in twenty-first century Morocco. At the same time, Faten represents a threat to the Moroccan Europeanized elite by contesting their Westernized lifestyles through her appearance and convictions (Mehta 140). The intercultural outlook enables her to question dominant culture-bound stereotypes of womanhood, regardless of their origin. Brinda Mehta affirms that Lalami’s short stories are, to date, the only narratives that focus more fully on the “women of the Straits” (116). Interestingly, Marlene de la Cruz-Guzmán reads the four stories of the novel through what is called *Mghribiyya* consciousness (137), a concept of *female cognizance* that must be articulated on its own and in opposition to *feminist consciousness* – a Western construction – (138).⁶ In other words, *Mghribiyya* constitutes a culture-centered solution to women’s oppression within Moroccan cultural groundings. The spirit of women’s empowerment is related to the artful reweaving of Jenara’s image (de la Cruz-Guzmán 137, Alami 152), a meta-story told by the character Murad in “The Storyteller.” The tale depicts the growth of Jenara as a woman against the cultural production of a “traditional Berber” rug. The rug is transgressive in its representation of an angry, unveiled woman with a knife in hand, who murders a demented Sultan who took her from her beloved fiancée and her family: “her emancipation is not dependent on a male, [. . .] but on her plan to end the injustice to which she has been subjected” (de la Cruz-Guzmán 137).

In “The Fanatic,” Faten is a young veiled Islamist student who endures a hard life with her mother in a shantytown in Rabat. Because of cheating in an exam and making a “derogatory comment about King Hassan within earshot of a snitch” (129), she is expelled from the university. Therefore, Faten is urged by her Imam to leave the country since the police is hounding her. In Morocco, Faten befriends a westernized, modern, well-off girl, Noura. Regardless of Noura’s family rejection to Faten, the latter is seen to have a great impact on Noura, who opts for putting on the hijab, reading Egyptian author and political activist Sayyud Qutb (*Milestones*), and watching Islamic oriented programs. The lower class Faten appears through the eyes of middle-upper class friend Noura’s parents, who are horror stricken when their daughter falls under Faten’s influence. The narrative meticulously draws attention to the movement of Islamic fundamentalism that saw its proliferation after the Islamic Revolution in Iran. Furthermore, Faten’s faith in a new religiosity complements the revolutionary praxis to decolonize Morocco from the “evils” of globalization, class injustice and gender prejudice (Mehta 140).

Later, Faten crosses the Strait of Gibraltar, gaining access to Spain after being raped by a member of the Guardia Civil. Due to the traumatic experience and being jobless in Spain, Faten turns into a professional prostitute. Through Faten, we are able to interrogate the Islamic ideological foundations and put into question religious fundamentalism. Faten seems to embrace her role as a fallen woman, however, Martín, one of her clients in Madrid, gives her a hint that he would “rescue her.” In the meantime, Faten wonders if Noura is still wearing the hijab in Morocco.

Noura, in Faten's eyes, possesses the "luxury of faith," as well as "the luxury of no faith" (138). Faten looks back at the period she had befriended Noura with the aim of "fighting back" against the morals and corrupt behavior represented by Noura's father. The veil can be a powerful political term to denote resistance on behalf of the women who choose to wear it (Al-Hassan Golley, "Is Feminism?" 522). Women's bodies are battlefield for the postcolonial cultural struggle between new capitalist forces – that pressures women to be more sexual and seductive – and old traditionalist ones – that forces them to be asexual, conservative and prudish –. (Al-Hassan Golley, "Is Feminism?" 527-528).

Now, in Madrid, Faten shares the street with immigrant women from Romania and Ukraine. Competing geographies of dispossession from the global South and the Eastern bloc vie for ascendancy in a globalized prostitution ring that provides invisible (working-class) service to the insatiable Spanish cravings for the exotic (Mehta 143). Fixated in a zone of dependency, stigmatized in the designation of underdevelopment, and ruled by a superior-metropolitan colonizer who is positioned as a categorically antithetical overlord, Faten becomes unfastened through her interactions with Martín. Regardless of his "good intentions," the reader can observe that Martín's desires require that Faten remains submissive and subservient reminding us of Edward Said's concept of the colonized subject as,

Fixed in zones of dependency and peripherally, stigmatized in the designation of underdeveloped, less-developed, developing states, ruled by a superior, developed, or metropolitan colonizer who was theoretically positioned as a categorically antithetical overlord (*Reflections on Exile* 295)

When Martín interrogates her about her past in Morocco, Faten becomes a sort of storyteller to fool Martín: "I didn't see much of my father. I spent all my days in the harem [. . .]. They initiated me in the art of pleasing men" (142). Once she realizes that Martín is "pleased with the game" (142), and claims that he has read "about the duties of the woman to the man and all that [in Morocco]" (142), Faten understands that Martín was not different than his own father, an anti-immigrant and Army lieutenant who had served under Franco. Akin to the above-mentioned de la Cruz-Guzmán's perspective, Fedwa Mālṭī Dūḡlās focuses on the female body through the image of Scheherazade, an analogous discourse about (a false) identity shaped by Western stereotypes that Faten gives to Martín:

There is an explosive relationship among sexuality, the body, and woman's voice in the Arabo-Islamic sphere [. . .]. Shahrazâd demonstrates to her literary cousins and descendants that an intimate relationship must be created between writing and the body. [She is] a sexual being, who manipulates discourse (and men) through her body. It is the latter that permits her to speak, as male violence is met with her sexuality, articulated through her body and words. At the same time, Shahrazâd uses narrative to redirect desire and, hence, sexuality. (5, 6, 11)⁷

By allowing the storyteller (false historian) to manipulate both literary and religious discourses, Suyoufie and Faqir emphasizes the fallacy of patriarchal hegemony in both discourses (Suyoufie 231, Faqir, *Pillars of Salt* 29).

Ahmed Idrissi Alami clearly points out the relationship between colonizer-colonized by bearing the memory of the Rif's success in defeating the Spanish army in the Battle of Annual in 1921, and in Spain's brutal revenge through the dispersal of mustard gas across the Rif (153). For Faten, it triggers memories about what she has been told of the Rif War and its heroic figure, Ibn Abdelkarim al-Khatlabbi:

Hearing the Generalissimo's name stirred in Faten memories about her maternal grandfather, a proud Rifi who'd lost his eyesight during the rebellion in the north. It was mustard gas, he'd told his children, and he'd spend the rest of his life begging for a gun to put an end to it all. (132)

Evidently, the past legacy of conflict and aggression continues to overshadow the present and shape the contours of Hispano-Moroccan future possibilities since, as Homi Bhabha says, the experience of colonial time events in postcolonial era "impels the past, projects it, gives its dead symbols the circulatory file of the sign of the present" (*Location* 254, Alami 154). Coupled with Bhabha, Alami, and Gloria Anzaldúa we can conclude that the prohibited and the forbidden are the inhabitants of the borderland: "In short, those who cross over, pass over, or go through the confines of the 'normal.' Do not enter, trespassers will be raped, maimed, strangled, gassed, shot. The only 'legitimate' inhabitants are those in power" (Anzaldúa 25).

Moreover, Martín finds in Faten a source of fantasy, a dish to be consumed, with skin "like black olives," and breasts "like mangoes" (131). Such a view perpetuates the stereotyped and limited position often accorded to Muslim women; "it projects the female as 'body,' a subject to male/female gaze. Yet, conceived, as a strategy of appropriation, it re-enacts a masculine pose in a traditional area reserved exclusively for males" (Suyoufie 227). Revolting against being framed within such position, Faten suggests that Martín pick Spanish girls like Isabel to fulfill his sexual desires. Martín replies, "Women in his country don't know how to treat men. Not the way you Arab girls do" (142). By saying the latter, Martín indicates that he does not see himself in a powerful position with Spanish women and hence resorts to the Eurocentric self/ other pattern where he could gain capital in relation with an Arab/ Muslim woman. Faten firmly refuses this position as the object of the hegemonic male gaze, and as a cultural artifact, which undermines her to a lower position as defeated othered female "illegally" resident in Spain. Faten frees herself from the oppression of a man for her own purposes, and she takes action against injustice as, according to Nawar Al-Hassan Golley, is the Moroccan and Islamic tradition of women's vociferous activism, "a more realistic and practical way not just of representing women but also changing their lives" ("Is Feminism Relevant?" 522, 527, also qtd. in de la Cruz-Guzmán 137). When Faten exits Martín's car, she reminds him defiantly, "I think you should find yourself someone else next time" (143).

Along the lines of Lalami's narrative, Assia Djebar criticizes the well-intentioned, ignorant stranger who is convinced beyond proof that the benighted Muslim woman must be "rescued" (12, 14, 60):

We saw at the beginning how the women of Islam [. . .] are speaking of their liberation [. . .] with what splendid and sometimes tragic leaps into

the future, from a thousand servitudes; from the oppression and from the heavy crust of the past. It is freeing itself – and the women at its heart as surely – with great strength because it is the strength of faith: faith in itself and faith in God (40).

It is only in finding Faten's own definition of self, as a culturally-centered self-assured Moroccan woman, that she is able to escape those identities superimposed by Noura's father and Martín.

The story ends with the narrator saying how Faten has progressed financially, and expressing how grateful she was for finding out the 'truth' (145): progress and possibilities were not given by anyone else, particularly men, and her future depends on obtaining and acquiring freedom of movement, body and mind. This end reminds us, again, of Chicana writer Gloria Anzaldúa's desire of building "a room of her own," taking satisfaction on living of her new hybrid culture built upon her own thoughts, her own hands and body, with her own "feminist architecture:"

She hid her feelings; she hid her truths; she concealed her fire; but she kept stocking her inner flame. She remained faceless and voiceless, but a light shone through her veil of silence [. . .]. Battered and bruised she waits, her bruises throwing her back upon herself and the rhythmic pulse of her feminine [. . .]. *Aquí en la soledad prospera su rebeldía. En la soledad Ella prospera* (22-23).

Faten's self-determination leads to a kind of reconciliation with her Moroccan past. Besides rejecting Martín, Faten decides to stay home on *Eid* (last day of Ramadan) rather than work, which suggests that she is changing her attitude toward Islamic principles. Furthermore, she settles a domestic problem with her roommate, Betoul, "one of those immigrants with the installment program – she sent regular checks in the mail to [her brothers and sisters]" (142). The women eat together, an indication of reconciliation with Faten's home culture, and, in consequence, enjoys her life, her profits, and her own identity. The two women recognize the irony of Betoul's position in relationship to her employer.

Therefore, for "The Odalisque," Spain turns into a space of identity negotiation, and a transitory moment in the life of the marginalized prostitute who suffers the pangs of homelessness and alienation. Faten's identity oscillates between Islamic fundamentalism and a fake European progressivism. Faten embraces the diasporic transnational position that contests all essentialist frames of reference she inherits. She rather embodies the perspective of the diasporic subject by enunciating compelling evidence that women are not always silenced subjects with no agency or voice. Therefore, together with Fadia Suyoufie, I can say that Laila Lalami indulges in a form of writing back to patriarchy with mounting self-confidence: "Arab women writers manipulate traditional material in their fiction and marks the personal, aesthetic, and political aspects of their contact with tradition" (216-217). The author reclaims the art of storytelling by recasting the role of women in a tradition that is mainly a "male" prerogative. Her appropriation of tradition is intended as a subversion of existing orders that limit women's freedom (Suyoufie 247). In Lala-

mi's texts (as well as in El Hachmi's, as I will discuss in the following section), we can observe an ironic position of the narrator towards people, customs and rigid life convictions in Spain as well as in Morocco, setting the narrator apart from any group identity. This kind of writing is characterized by subversion and reinvention of the language (Ponzanesi and Merolla 5, 6). In Lalami's portrayal of Faten, the author transgresses feelings of nostalgia for a remote past that haunt many diasporic subjectivities. More striking, in Lalami's text is the willingness to address barriers that female Moroccan literature still faces, such as raising with more openness and audacity gender issues and sexuality.

NEGOTIATING FEMALE AMAZIGH IDENTITY IN CATALONIA

In order to contextualize this part of the article, it's be necessary to address the specificity of patriarchal domination before and after 2004, the year that King Mohamed XI modified the Moroccan Family Code known as *Mouadawana*. Before 2004 the latter impeded women to be equal to men in front of the law, limiting rights to divorce, owning property and inheriting. Issued by Mohamed VI in 2004, *Mouadawana* acknowledged that two equal partners compound a family before the law, husband and wife. At any rate, after the Reform of 2004, Moha Ennaji, Rita El Khayat and Khadija Ryadi coincide that persons associated with the family carry out violence against women in most cases, and it is present in all social groups. As long as the present system of domination remains, and legal and social inequality continues, both men and the State will feel legitimized to pursue violence against women.

Arab women may have reached varying degrees of achievements in terms of their equality with men in different Arab nation states, owing to the modernist thinking of influential male intellectuals and/or the strength of Arab feminist struggle; their achievement may have contributed to force a counter civil law, but the Arab social structure remains invariably patriarchal (Ennaji, 209, El Khayat, *La mujer* 31, Ryadi n/p). This gender-based typecasting is nevertheless reinforced by a culture of silencing surrounding questions of domestic and sexual violence, whereby these abuses, according to Ennaji, "continue to be considered a private matter" and "do not represent a human rights violation or a crime that needs serious investigation and analysis" (209). Ennaji continues: "Violence against women continues to be surrounded by silence. As a consequence, violence against women is underestimated" (209, qtd in Mehta 127).⁸

In the last twelve years, Catalan presses have been publishing female Moroccan-Amazigh voices, who write in Catalan and who have lived in Catalonia since childhood.⁹ The significance of these narratives adds controversy to the ongoing political and language rivalry between Castilians and the different nationalisms of the Iberian Peninsula (particularly Catalan). Laila Karrouch published her autobiography in 2004, *De Nador a Vic* (published by Planeta/ Oxford UP in Castilian in 2005 under the title *Laila*) and *Petjades de Nador* (2013). During the same year (2004), the Catalan press Columna published Najat El Hachmi's autobiography, *Jo també sóc catalana*. Moreover, in 2008, El Hachmi was awarded the *Premi de les*

Lletres Catalanes Ramon Llull [Ramon Llull Prize of Catalan Letters] for her novel *L'últim patriarca* (Planeta, 2008; in Castilian, *El último patriarca*, 2008), a novel that could be defined as an “autobiographical fiction,” since, according to Suellen Diaconoff, “Moroccan women tend not to write autobiography as much as they write autobiographically, in the collective sense of women in body politic” (5). In 2011, El Hachmi published *La caçadora de cossos* (Planeta. In Spanish, *La cazadora de cuerpos*), and *La filla estrangera* (Planeta. In Spanish, *La hija extranjera*) in 2015. In 2013, Jamila Al Hassani published *La lluita de la dona bereber*. The only male Amazigh author who writes in Castilian and Catalan is Saïd El Kadaoui who published *Límites y fronteras* in 2008, *Cartes al meu fill. Un català de soca-rel, gairebé* in 2011, and *No* in 2016. These narratives of cultural and economic survival bind together several discourses. One can find the immigration experiences of Karrouch, El Hachmi, Al Hassani and El Kadaoui mixed with the founding texts on the exile experience of Muhammad Zafzaf, Abdellah Laroui, Rachid Nini, and the sociological narrative (in Castilian) of Pasqual Moreno Torregrossa and Mohamed El Gheryb, *Dormir al raso* (1994), and those of Sami Naïr and Juan Goytisolo, *El peaje de la vida* (2000) and *España y sus ejidos* (2003).

Karrouch and El Hachmi refer to their writing as a therapeutic process that assists the characters towards the closure of their life-learning cycles. In this respect, Morocco (The Rif) lies in the past and Catalonia in the future. Linguistically, both authors confirm that their “Catalanness” does not define itself through the antithesis of their “Moroccanness” or “Amazighness,” but rather, their identities multiply themselves according to their class status, the male or female version of their testimony, and their place in the generational and immigration lines.¹⁰ Thus, my goal is to analyze how the subaltern voices of immigrants may disrupt (or antagonize) the modern canon of the literatures of the Peninsula, as well as, following Anjali Prabhu’s reminder, how hybridity discourses are able “to dismantle power structures” (xiv). In the same vein, Marianne David and Javier Muñoz-Basols indicate that diaspora narrative generate “a multitude of sub-narratives, each one unstable and specific to place and moment, each a distinct and idiosyncratic language of pain and hardship with its own history and tradition, its own socioeconomic and political underpinnings” (xvi).

Given the implicit pedagogical and moral intention of the author to promote “tolerance” and “convivencia,” Karrouch’s autobiography tends to lessen the identity crisis she suffers upon arrival to Catalonia. However, it does bring forth the economic hardships that her family must overcome to live in Spain, and the “contradictory” role of Muslim women living in the West that “must” submit to the will of their husbands and fathers. In addition to overcoming the sporadic racist comments of her classmates when they call her “mora,” the author marks 1992 as the year the integration environment is disrupted by the massive flow of immigrants: “L’aprenentatge del català i el castellà i la integració en general es van fer més difícils, i la mescladissa de gent va començar a disminuir, i a la escola es formaven, sovint, grups d’estrangers i grups de catalans i castellans” (109).¹¹ As Karrouch’s text clearly exemplifies, the inherited – culture, history, language, tradition, as a sense of identity – is not destroyed, but taken apart, opened up to ques-

tioning, rewriting and re-routing and the newly inhabited zone becomes open, full of gaps (Akaloo 142).

Learning Catalan is the key to success in Al Hassani's novel character's "fight" to overcome prejudices and become a lawyer on behalf of oppressed women: "El fet de dominar la llengua li va obrir moltes portes [. . .] [E]star més preparada per ajudar-se i ajudar els seus fills [. . .] tot allò que era prohibit per les famílies tradicionals dels pobles berebers" (62, 79). At the same time, Al Hassani does not hesitate to blame Amazigh women to contribute to male "esclavisme" (86): women should not go to college, and must wear hijab and djellaba (61-62); "la lluita pels drets d'un mateix comença a casa" (84). El Hachmi combines the contradictory feelings arising from the contact between languages with a certain degree of alienation that will "regnar en la meua vida" (*Jo també* 47). Such an assertion suggests a parallel to the mental state of *nepantlismo* ("being or feeling in between") that Chicana writer Gloria Anzaldúa asserts in *Borderland/ La Frontera*, and that refers to the "transference" of cultural and spiritual values from one group to another (78); *nepantlismo* that, in the specific case of Muslim women "located between god and man," Abdelkébir Khatibi translates as "the *mise en abyme* of theological order" ("Maghreb plural" 80).¹² In *L'últim patriarca*, the narrator's (and main character's) intention is to "negotiate" her beliefs with god as well as the ritual practices of Islam, and, above all, mark her situation as a "retournée" in order to emphasize her condition of *mestiza*, crossbreed, of foreigner both in her North African/ Amazigh culture as well as in Europe. The main character of *La filla estrangera* [The Foreign Daughter] can't imagine describing making bread in a language other than her native Moroccan language, and her relationship to that language shifts according to her spiritual beliefs, concluding that the richness of her language suddenly diminished the moment she stopped believing in God.

Thus, it is not coincidental that Najat El Hachmi assumes a traumatic-anomalous-deviated discourse in writing *L'últim patriarca*. That is, with this novel El Hachmi accounts for the complex, controversial and contradictory literary and hybridizing processes of marginal and borderland literatures, aware that the colonial difference of the "borderland enunciating subject" (Mignolo, *Local Histories* 28) is not only uttered through a resisting and dissenting discourse, but is also materialized in the literary representation of the pain and anger of her "fractured" stories, of her memories, of her subjectivities. Overall, the novel highlights the *misovire* nature of the narrator, that is, of a woman who doesn't seem to find a man worthy of admiration, as well as the clear intention to apply what Abdelkébir Khatibi defines as "the double criticism of the paradigm-Other" ("Maghreb plural" 72); the narrator questions and "disengages" (73) the values imposed by the Muslim society (in our case Muslim-Amazigh), "so theological, so charismatic, so patriarchal" (72) and the hegemonic structure of Western societies, be it Catalan, Spanish, or European.

Jamila Al Hassani in *La lluita de la dona bereber* is as emphatic as El Hachmi towards religion, Amazigh rites and patriarchy when she claims that,

mai he sabut què és l'amor d'un pare i que és realment tenir un pare, suposo que si hagués estat un nen hauria tingut més sort [. . .]. No volia seguir el pas de la mare, que es va casar amb un desconegut, sense amor, sense respecte,

només per procrear i cuinar [. . .]. [S]empre he vist un dictador a casa i no un pare. D'ara endavant treballaré fort per oblidar la seva cara, aquella cara d'horror, d'odi, d'indiferència cap a nosaltres (11, 27, 109-110).

What we witness in Al Jassani's words is "courage of conviction," which implies, in Per Bauhn's opinion, the individual/ author's drive to social action by helping the most vulnerable in society (45), and courage is linked to heroism and danger to overcome the threat posed by dominant groups. The latter allows Al Jassani to step out of her comfort zone in order to be political engaged, a challenger of the status quo of "traditional institutions and societies [that] have consistently resisted what they perceive in different times and circumstances as modern" (Rocca, "Leïla Abouzeid" 131); being modern(ity) the oppositional term that comprehends misogyny and/or the traditional. We are speaking of a feminism Muslim women have created on their own, contrary to Western feminism. The starting point of Muslim women's consists on telling their own lives and surrogating for the rights they are claiming for themselves since 1980s (Rocca, "Leïla Abouzeid" 132, Badran 2, 56, 215);¹³ by denouncing the exploitative religious and patriarchal stereotypes, the author reassesses what needs to be improved in her life and society at large, departing from previous definitions, and reevaluating what women want to see within their own family, community and country (Rocca, "Leïla Abouzeid" 133, Mehta 7, Sa'dāwī 2).

As Fedwa Mālī Dūġlās points out "The Arab woman writer [. . .] achieves her literary voice [. . .] through her body. [Their] discourse is insolubly tied to sexuality of the body" (8, 10). Consequently, the written, plural and transgressing insubordination of El Hachmi becomes a fight, a negotiation of the difference, an encounter-(dis)encounter between the obsession of North African markers and "the anxiety of influence" of the European. Luois Renza observes that, "Against Harold Bloom's gender-restrictive oedipal theory of literary relations, influential forms of feminist criticism could posit a counterpatriarchal, noncombative, matriarchal tradition of women writers and/precursors" (198). Renza's opinion is complemented by Anna Rocca and Kenneth Reeds who consider that "[f]eelings of anxiety, fear, shame, pain and alienation, often surface when a woman decides to write an autobiographical account" ("Introduction" 2. See also Mehta 7). The coexistence with the Catalans/Spanish, the Muslim-Amazigh nature and the voluntary adoption of Catalan as an artistic expression, results in four perfectly defined cultures, with their sum acting as the foundation for a fifth: hybrid, interstitial and interpellating in equal amounts of the Amazigh culture as well as the Catalan.

In the writings of El Hachmi and Al Jassani there is evidence of a continuous conflict between exoticism and the universal scope of North African literature, reinforced in this case when dealing with female writers. For her part, Najat El Hachmi writes "Carta d'un immigrant" in 2004, a message to an anonymous immigrant whose ending I consider very appropriate for the development of the borderland concept: "Aprendràs a viure, finalment, a la frontera d'aquests dos móns, un lloc que pot ser divisió, però que també és encontre, punt de trobada. Un bon dia et creuràs *afortunat de gaudir d'aquesta frontera*, et descobriràs a tu mateix *més complet, més híbrid*, més immens que qualsevol altra persona" (n/p, emphasis added).

As Walter Mignolo points out, that language is not merely a neutral tool that represents the honest wish to tell the truth, but also – and here lies the literary fact in itself in the narratives of Lahchiri, Ararou, El Gamoun, El Harti, and, of course, El Hachm – is a tool for the construction of a history and the invention of realities (“Colonial and Postcolonial” 122); it is closer, I think, following Anjali Prahbu, to the creolization that possesses the potential to elucidate cultural creation, as well as the judgment of power relations (inequality, prestige and resources) that promote innovations, cultural and linguistic exchanges (Prahbu 4, 5). In the same vein, I concur with Anjali Prahbu in making a distinction between diasporic and creolization narratives, implying that while the first is premised on a past trauma that constitutes and links the members of a group towards a discourse of victimhood, the second can be seen to display an overweening pride in hybrid agency, forward-looking and concerned with interaction (13, 14). According to David and Muñoz-Basols, host nations and migrant writers would have to converse to “involve the exploration of legitimate demands and aspirations together with adaptive modes and strategies with the goal of community building” (xviii). Altogether, host countries would have to accommodate “to a changing world, balancing competing interests, and revising traditional concepts of nationhood to make them more capacious and tolerant of differences” (xviii). Najat El Hachmi combines both impulses, crucial to the forging of a discourse adequate to the multiple tactics required for a successful postcolonial praxis. This is why I consider that the literary project of Najat El Hachmi is definitely significant in the sense that it goes beyond the merely feminist view as a mere criteria of analysis of the social situation, to render what could be the origin of an Afro-Iberian identity, free of political considerations, as well as critically engaged in feelings of *unhomeliness* and exclusion.

Judging from what Mineke Schipper calls “the multinational Otherness industry” (115) of Editorial Planeta/ Oxford UP (including book cover’s designs and spending more than Euros 300,000 in “Orientalist advertisements” in *El País*), some people might argue that El Hachmi is a doubly-colonized subject (by gender and race). Definitely, Planeta is more interested in selling postcolonial women’s writing –and, at the same time, fulfilling the European’s desire for exoticism– than a gesture to give voice to those traditionally kept in the shadows. The fact that Spanish publishing houses care about publishing subaltern voices of immigration should be a good sign; however, we should investigate what exactly the authors are willing to “negotiate” for their books to appear in display windows of bookstores. Nasima Akaloo observes that there should be “close scrutiny” to the “powerful attempts by editors and publishing houses to control and manipulate ‘immigrant’ representations, as well as their desire to promote works which will attract the widest audience, thereby crippling, to some degree, alternative creations” (132). Anna Rocca asserts that autobiographies centered in confession are easy bestsellers of modern times in the Western world (“Leïla Abouzeid” 136): “Being an autobiography commissioned for a foreign [Western] audience, the author feels invested to correct some (western) stereotypes; among others, that Muslim women are traditional and oppressed” (Rocca, “Leïla Abouzeid” 138). It is also fair to say, as Suman Gupta suggests, that some scholarly attention (and intervention in my personal case with

several “selective” anthologies I edited) has been devoted to the industries that mediate the production, circulation and consumption of literature outside academic precincts, or more broadly into the buying and selling of books in the world. The impact of globalization on these industries has considerable knock-on effects on literature and literary studies, which have also received scholarly attention (Gupta, “Literary Studies” 870).

I shall end this section with a note from El Hachmi in regards to what kind of reader *Jo també sóc catalana* was aiming for: “A los que se llenan la boca con la inmigración y sólo han visto al inmigrante de lejos. Pero también a los que están preocupados por el tema de la identidad catalana” (Nuria Navarro, “Entrevista”). Regardless of the Orientalist marketing strategies of Planeta/ Oxford UP, *L’últim patriarca* shows a critical perspectives in relation to the double postcolonial oppression of women. The novel does not leave up the task of unmasking the differences in race, class, and gender in the immigration communities, and finally achieves the objective El Hachmi has previously delineated in her autobiography: “Desferme del meu propi enclaustrament, un enclaustrament fet de denominacions d’origen, de pors, d’esperances sovint estroncades, de dubtes continus, d’abismes de pioners que exploren nous mons” (*Jo també* 14).

CONCLUSION

To end this article, I would like to quote Equatorial Guinean writer César Mba Abogo: “[E]s preciso sembrar algo en este continente que arrastra tantos monólogos y diálogos inconclusos” (120). In this regard, the reader is not exactly sure which continent he is referring to. In my opinion, the message is aimed at both Europe and Africa, and it aims at a transmodern project of Afro-Europeanization, present in what I believe to be an inaugural work for Afrohispanic literatures in the twenty-first Century. In order to close the circle I proposed at the beginning of this essay, a question remains: Where is Iberian literature produced? As Rebecca L. Walkowitz infers, texts are written on the places where they are classified and given cultural and social purposes (919, 921). Iberian literature is not longer imagined to exist in a single literary system but in several, through various and uneven practices of world circulation. The multilingual circulation of immigrant fiction destabilizes nation-based conceptions of literary culture. As I have described above, Moroccan-Amazigh authors who write in the two major languages of the Peninsular rely on multiple literary traditions, trends, and techniques in order to fulfill two immediate needs: to speak about their fractured, hybridized condition, and to insert themselves in the Iberian literary market, a market that not always welcome North African writers. The case of Amazigh-Catalan writers is quite different due to linguistic and political circumstances, equating culture with community vis-à-vis literary inclusion as national inclusion, and about the ways to justify and to resist anti-Catalan sentiments from Hispanophone Iberia. In short, North African literature is written, printed and read in multiple places; and the authors mentioned in this essay force us, philologists/literary critics, to rehearse different strategies of theoretical analyses, to consider the relationship between the production and circu-

lation of non-canonical/marginal literature because –apart from being read within several literary systems– North African literature makes the Iberian system less unique, less nationalistic, less centered in the principles of Spain’s King Carlos I: “un Dios, una nación, una lengua.”

NOTES

¹ The “reduced” Maghreb is compounded mainly of the three countries mentioned in the text, while Libya and Mauritania are in the border between the Maghreb and the Mashrek. Culturally, the reduced Maghreb has very few connections with the Great Maghreb. For the purpose of this article, the Spanish presence in Libya and Mauritania is inexistent. Today, the Western Sahara belongs to Morocco. Therefore, I want to acknowledge that there is also a very prolific and active group of Saharawi authors who write in Castilian (poetry, narrative and theater). Because most (if not all) Saharawi literature in Castilian does not reflect hybridizing processes, I will not analyze it in this article. Adolfo Campoy-Cubillo wrote a book on the subject: *Memories of the Maghreb: Transnational Identities in Spanish Cultural Production*.

² Amazigh is the culture, and it is singular. Imazighen is the plural. Tamazight is the language.

³ During the 80’s the Moroccan newspaper *L’Opinion* had a weekly section called ‘La página en español’ [the Spanish page]. ‘La página en español’ resumed its publication in the early 90’s, when *La mañana* emerged as the main newspaper in Castilian. *La mañana* ceased its publication in 2006 after “copying” an article from Spain’s newspaper *ABC*, which linked current King Mohamed VI with homosexuality.

⁴ Within this group, we have Moroccan writers like Ahmed Ararou, Ahmed El Gamoun, Larbi El Harti, and Abderrahman El Fathi.

⁵ Mary Louise Pratt stresses that “autoethnography involves partial collaboration with and appropriation of the idioms of the conqueror [. . .] The idioms appropriated and transformed are those of travel and exploration writing, merged or infiltrated to varying degrees with indigenous modes” (6).

⁶ *Mghribiyya* can be also found in El Hachmi’s literary works, and specifically in *Jo també sóc catalana*, and Al Hassani’s *La lluita de la dona bereber*. Al Hassani concludes that Western women are also victims of male abuse: “la dona occidental no anava tapada però també perdia la seva identitat quan havia de patir maltractament físic y psicològic” (90).

⁷ This premise is questioned by Newar al-Hassan Golley who reminds us that, “[Female writers’] intention to present their material to westerners, however, makes their situation almost similar to that of European and American ethnographers who seek knowledge of what they usually see as (inferior) ‘other’ cultures” (*Reading* 91).

⁸ The Advocates for Human Rights and Global Rights make the following comments about what they call the “on-going and chronic violence” against women in Morocco: While it is difficult to determine the exact prevalence of domestic violence throughout Morocco, statistics that are available demonstrate that domestic violence is a widespread problem. A national study on the prevalence of violence against women found that 62.8% of women in Morocco of ages 18– 64 had been victims of some form of violence during the year preceding the study. The same study found that a victim’s husband committed 55% of these acts of violence, and the wife reported the violence in only 3% of such cases . . . There

is an overall acceptance of domestic violence and a distrust of the justice system that makes it unlikely that a victim will report domestic violence. (Mehta 129). As stated by Ennaji: “Illiteracy is very high among women in Morocco despite government and civil society efforts to reduce it. Only 36% of adult women know how to read and write, against 62% for men” (204). According to Orlando, illiteracy in Morocco is estimated at 50 percent (xiii).

⁹ Mohamed Toufali published in 2007 an anthology of Contemporary Rifi authors (*Escritores rifeños contemporáneos. Una antología de narraciones y relatos del Rif*. Some of the writers in the anthology, like himself, Karima Toufali, Karima Aomar, Driss Deiback, Rachid Raja and Mohamed Lemrini write in Castilian. Mohamed Toufali also claims that there is a Rifi literature in Castilian in the Eastern Yabha region: Alhucemas, Midar, Nador and Berkan (275).

¹⁰ *La filla estrangera* [The foreign daughter] is paradigmatic in this regard.

¹¹ I quote by (and translate from) the Catalan edition as I consider that the text is more faithful to the original intention of the author: narrate her autobiographical experience as an immigrant from Nador to Vic/Catalonia and not, as the edition in Spanish gathers, from Nador to an unidentified place in “Spain.”

¹² In 2002, Adelkader Benali, a Dutch writer of Moroccan/Amazigh origins, claimed that “A new literary stream has developed during the last five years. It is not Moroccan, it is not Dutch. Neither. It is something in between, which would be too easy. No, *it is an action*” (emphasis in the original. Qtd. in Merolla’s “Deceitful Origins” 108) Lucy Stone McNeece analyzes the rejection of Khatibi towards the rigidity of orthodox Islam while, at the same time, scorns prevailing models of capitalism (87).

¹³ Zakia Salime reads the intersections between feminist and Islamist women associations in Morocco in terms of reciprocal influence and independence rather than conflict and difference: “Feminist activists who stated their Islamic religious identity also expressed their fear of being labeled ‘feminist’ as long as the term was not freed from its Western legacy of secularism, colonialism, and gender wars” (140).

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