

Violence against women: the stark reality behind Morocco's human rights progress

Silvia Gagliardi

To cite this article: Silvia Gagliardi (2017): Violence against women: the stark reality behind Morocco's human rights progress, The Journal of North African Studies, DOI: [10.1080/13629387.2017.1363649](https://doi.org/10.1080/13629387.2017.1363649)

To link to this article: <http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/13629387.2017.1363649>



Published online: 14 Aug 2017.



[Submit your article to this journal](#)



Article views: 72



[View related articles](#)



[View Crossmark data](#)



Violence against women: the stark reality behind Morocco's human rights progress

Silvia Gagliardi 

Irish Centre for Human Rights, National University of Ireland, Galway, Republic of Ireland

ABSTRACT



While the dominant narrative suggests that Morocco is a champion of stability and moderation in the 'Arab world,' this article challenges that discourse and argues that the state's hagiographic narrative on women's rights and gender equality is problematic. This article also draws attention to the discontinuity between the legal focus on violence against women (VAW) by women's rights groups on one hand and the views and needs of non-elite Moroccan women on the other. This focus on reforms in the legal space has, concomitantly, left the existing power structures, which lay at the heart of inequality in Morocco, unchallenged. By illustrating these two arguments, the article also highlights a mutually fashioning, albeit asymmetrical, relationship between the government and women's rights groups, which perpetuates inadequacies in both of their approaches.

KEYWORDS Violence against women; women's rights; minorities' and indigenous peoples' rights; gender; Morocco; Arab spring

1. Introduction

Unlike other countries in the region, Morocco did not undergo a regime change during the so-called 'Arab Spring' of 2011. The monarchy managed to preserve the balance of power, largely through the passage of a new constitution in 2011 that represented progress in terms of human rights and democratic values. Importantly, however, it largely overlooked reforms in the area of women's rights.

While academics and experts hail Morocco as a champion of stability and moderation in the 'Arab world,' this article raises two key challenges to that narrative. First, it challenges the state's hagiographic narratives about its human rights progress. Second, the article draws attention to the discontinuity between women's rights groups' heavily focused activism on violence against women (VAW) and the needs and views of non-elite Moroccan women. By illustrating the two arguments, the article highlights a mutually

CONTACT Silvia Gagliardi  s.gagliardi1@nuigalway.ie  Irish Centre for Human Rights, 1 University Road, Galway, Republic of Ireland

© 2017 Informa UK Limited, trading as Taylor & Francis Group

fashioning, albeit asymmetrical, relationship between the state and women's rights groups, and the inadequacies in both of their approaches.

While progress on other Moroccan women's issues (including illiteracy, poverty and unemployment) has been slow, both the state and women's rights groups have been able to boast legal reforms on gender-related issues. Progress on legal reform has underpinned the state's narrative on human rights and has been at the heart of the women's rights movement, which has 'worked to *convince* [*emphasis my own*] the public that legal reform is an urgent need and to make women's rights a prominent topic of discussion in public conversations' (Young Evrard 2014, 3). This focus on reforms in the legal space has, concomitantly, left the existing power structures, which lay at the heart of inequality in Moroccan society, unchallenged.

The author's positionality vis-à-vis the ethnographic research conducted for this article is that of a women's rights/gender scholar with an expertise on Morocco as well as minority/indigenous peoples' rights. She has been professionally engaged in the country since 2012. Ethnographic work conducted throughout Morocco between September and October 2016 and in May 2017 challenges some of the key narratives to emerge when turning to the issue of gender and equality in Morocco. The author conducted semi-structured interviews with approximately 60 Moroccan women of mostly Amazigh descent in urban and rural areas across the country (including the regions of Rabat-Salé-Kénitra, Casablanca-Settat, Middle Atlas, Souss, Souss-Massa, Marrakech-Tensift-Al Haouz). Using a snowballing technique, the interviewees were identified with the help of local Amazigh women and took place in homes, community centres, cafes and NGO offices. Interviewees hailed from all walks of life, diverse socio-economic and educational backgrounds, and different regions of Morocco; their ages ranged from 18 to 80 years. With the assistance of local Amazigh female interpreters and the author's own linguistic knowledge, the interviews were conducted in different dialects of Amazigh (Tachelhit, Tamazight, Tarifit), Moroccan Arabic (Darija), French and English.

Section I addresses the state's hagiographic narrative on human rights and illustrates this through the analysis of specific legislation and policies. Section II then turns to women's rights groups' agendas, policy goals, and relationship with the monarchy. Section III examines the phenomenon of VAW and challenges the conventional explanations. Finally, the article concludes with key findings: it challenges the state's hegemonic discourse and women's rights groups' part in reinforcing this narrative. It further seeks to reveal non-elite women's voices on human rights and gender issues.¹

1.1. The monarchy's narrative

In order to quell political opposition in the wake of the 'Arab Spring', the monarchy cleverly appropriated international human rights discourses. This

proved to be strategically successful as it allowed the government to both internally and externally sell its progress in the area of gender equality reform whilst, at the same time, leaving untouched the structural inequalities embedded in power structures that are key to genuine reform.² In politicising gender issues to its advantage and for the maintenance of the status quo, the monarchy also exploited the absence of dialogue and co-operation among different women's groups (namely, secular versus religious) (Guessous 2011). As Salime (2007, 21) explained,

[The state's] manipulation of the liberal rhetoric of gender equality has decreased the spaces for independent organizing by feminist and Islamist women's groups alike. In addition to co-opting both movements, the state is now able to monitor the discourse and activism of these groups while acting as a neutral mediator.

State co-optation, of course, is not unique to Morocco. As Haussman and Sauer (2007) have argued through the Research Network on Gender, Politics and the State (RNGS) Model, states often co-opt women's movements by involving them in the policy process – all while policies fail to address policy goals (Žvan Elliott 2015). As this article highlights, gender has become a 'site of struggle' for various power brokers in Morocco where 'political change becomes dependent on the coincidence of interests between the king and the concerned social group, whereby the most important condition is the unquestioned power of the king to shape the policy environment' (Cavatorta and Dalmasso 2009, 495).

Very often, reforms that ostensibly responded to special groups' goals, such as the reforms of Morocco's constitution (including the officialisation of the Amazigh language), penal, family and labour codes have served the monarchy's interests rather than meeting special groups' policy goals. In each of these areas, the reforms have been contained in the legal space and have, largely, failed to achieve genuine reform.

1.2. Morocco's legal framework relevant to VAW

1.2.1. The constitution

In January and February 2011 street protests demanding socio-political reforms swept Morocco under the leadership of the diverse 20 February Movement (20FM). In response, King Mohammed VI introduced a new constitution, which was promulgated through public referendum in July 2011. In the constitution (2011, preamble), the country commits to 'prohibit and combat all discrimination whenever it encounters it, for reason of sex, or colour, of beliefs, of culture, of social or regional origin, of language, of handicap or whatever personal circumstance that may be.'

In addition to recognising the primacy of duly ratified international treaties over domestic laws, the constitution affirms the equality of men and women; the right to life; the right to the security of their person and of their kin; the right to physical and moral integrity as well as prohibition of cruel, inhuman, [or] degrading treatments or infringements of [their] dignity and the practice of torture (Constitution of Morocco 2011, arts. 19–22). However, such provisions only apply ‘in the context of compliance with the permanent characteristics of the kingdom’ (Constitution of Morocco 2011, art. 19). This amounts to a limitation clause that allows the state to interfere in individual rights. Moreover, the constitution does not include a definition of gender-based violence (GBV) or VAW. Although GBV is referenced in the *Preamble*, there is no specific prohibition thereof in its main text. Despite promises by the government, the promulgation of a specific law on VAW has not yet occurred.³

1.2.2. *The penal code*

While the Penal Code (1962, arts. 404, 414) contains general prohibitions on assault and considers violence against a family member as an aggravating factor for sentencing, there is no specific provision or law banning VAW. Although criminalised, the rape definition in the code is inadequate and discriminatory against women.⁴ Sexual relations outside of marriage remain illegal (Penal Code of Morocco 1962, art. 490). Whilst this provision might seem *prima facie* gender-neutral, it has harsher implications for a woman than for a man: while it is harder to prove the involvement of a specific male in pre- or extra-marital sex, pregnancy and birth giving generally are incontestable proof of sexual relations and can lead to criminal sanctions for a woman (Penal Code of Morocco 1962, art. 490). Sexual harassment is recognised as a crime only when it is committed by whoever abuses the authority entrusted upon him by his functions (Penal Code of Morocco 1962, art. 503.1). This provision applies to a public environment thereby reinforcing the ‘public/private dichotomy based on gender’ (Charlesworth, Chinkin, and Wright 1991, 626). As Hajjar (2004, 9) noted, ‘Criminalization [of domestic violence] undermines the ability of perpetrators to claim that what they do at home is private [...]’. The prospect of prohibiting and punishing domestic violence depends, foremost, on the state’s willingness and capacity to reform criminal and family laws.’

In 2013, Morocco repealed articles forbidding the ‘kidnapping, hijacking and displacement of a *married* [emphasis added] woman’ (Penal Code of Morocco 1962, arts. 494–496 repealed 2013). This repeal effectively ended the risk of court prosecution of domestic violence shelters. Despite this, mainly NGO-run shelters remain under-funded and under-staffed. The amendment of article 475 (Penal Code of Morocco 1962, art. 475.2, repealed 2014), which allowed a rapist to marry his underage victim and escape criminal prosecution, had a very limited impact in the absence of more

comprehensive accompanying measures. While representing a victory for local women's groups, this repeal has not sufficed to tackle violence against minor girls. As interviews conducted highlight, many families continue to marry off their underage daughters to their rapists, reportedly to preserve their honour, and to guarantee that they will be 'taken care of' both socially and economically (Sabbe et al. 2014, 140). Asked about sexual violence inflicted upon girls in her community, N.A., in her late teens, recalled her friend's experience.

My friend (...) was raped; she committed suicide by setting herself on fire. After she was raped, her parents abandoned her. She talked to the boy, and asked him to marry her and then get a divorce, because she would rather be called 'divorced' than 'raped'. He refused to do that, and she set herself on fire. (Interview with N.A., Agadir area, October 06, 2016).

1.2.3. *The family code*

A number of UN human rights mechanisms have reported that Morocco's Family Code still features discriminatory provisions against women.⁵ However, '[e]ven for the most controversial Islam-tolerated practices like polygamy, Islamist women found a gender-friendly response in the Shari'a [Islamic law] such as socio-economic and legal protection of the second wife' (Salime 2011, 56). Despite the reservations of secularists about interventions of Islamic discourses as a means of negotiating this space, for some women, this can be a powerful negotiating technique.⁶ This perspective was supported by a particularly insightful account on the effects of the Mou-dawana given by S.H., a single woman in her 40s in the Atlas region,

If it was not for this law, the man could have gotten married to three other women. But this law left other girls with no ability to be married as the second or third wife. (...) This is the difference between the new one and the old one [*meaning Family Law*]. Because it doesn't give rights to single women, it doesn't give them the ability to have their own families. (...) Women are always victims because even if the man doesn't get consent from the first wife, the man can go and sleep with other women, and the women either lose their virginities or get pregnant and they can't get an abortion, as abortion is illegal here. (Interview with S.H., Atlas area, September 28, 2016).

As regards marriage rights, the Family Code sets the legal age of marriage for girls and boys at 18 while there is no minimum age for marriages under 'special circumstances' (such as the supposed physical and mental aptness of the minor) (Family Code of Morocco 2004, arts. 19–20). The practice of child marriage of minor girls continues to be maintained with over 90% of petitions approved by the judiciary.⁷ Some interviewees suggested that judges approve petitions for underage marriages either for religious, cultural or financial reasons (which include judges accepting bribes).

One thing that is breaking my heart is that underage girls are getting married and that families are happy about that. Even though girls go to court and judges ask them if they understand what marriage means and their duties within it, whatever their answer is, they (*meaning their fathers*) give money to the judge and they just marry off their daughters. Some of them just get married and then they register the marriage afterwards. (B.L., Rabat area, September 23, 2016).

Many research participants consider the Moudawana's impact on child marriages and polygamy to be limited. As M.Z. explained,

The problem of polygamy will always be a problem, not only here, but all over Morocco, because, even if the woman doesn't give her consent to the man to marry another woman, he could go to another place, live for three months there, and get both residency and celibacy certificates, and he can marry another woman, without even anyone knowing about it. (...) In this region, there is mostly the problem of underage marriages. There is also the problem of polygamy, especially as there are no specialised courts that deal with these issues. (...) What they do with the women is that they just rule for the husband to give her the money or the alimony for the children to keep her quiet. (Interview with M.Z., Atlas area, September 29, 2016).

1.2.4. *The labour code*

Similarly to other relevant legislation, the Labour Code (2003) fails to adequately protect women's rights and its existing provisions are not properly enforced (Labour Code 2003, art. 40).⁸ Although sexual harassment is recognised as a serious misconduct in the Code, authorities rarely enforce this provision and a low number of victims sue their employers due to the difficulty of proving the offence and the feared repercussions in filing a lawsuit. As a result, the female workforce remains very low (26.1% of the active employed population) and has even decreased compared to a decade ago (HCP 2013, 62). In discussing sexual harassment of women going to and coming from the workplace, A.A., a woman in her 20s from the North of Morocco, explained,

So here in Morocco, (...) there are lot of multinationals and everybody starts [*working*] at 5 or 4 in the morning. As you know, Morocco isn't the safest place in the world, especially early in the morning, and people who are working in these multinationals live in far places, in places not so safe. So when they go at 4 or 5 in the morning to catch the bus, it is not very safe for women but it doesn't matter for men. I think the security or the safety of a place makes a lot of difference when we talk about equal rights or gender equality. (Interview with A.A., Atlas area, September 26, 2016).

While a bill against sexual harassment is reported to be under review, little information is available on its content and status.⁹

This short overview of national legislation related to women's rights suggests that, by failing to both amend discriminatory provisions against

women and to enforce relevant legislation in place, the Moroccan state's narrative about its human rights progress appears to be rhetoric used to thwart international criticism and domestic opposition. Additionally, as argued, even when there is legislation in place, it often does not meet the needs of non-elite women and remains 'ink on paper', as S.B. explained (interview with S.B., Rabat area, September 21, 2016). Instead of seeking legal remedies, F.A. explained her own approach in dealing first-hand with VAW,

I would try to convince him [*my husband*] not to abuse me, but I don't think I could go to the police station to report him. (...) It has already happened to me. He abused me once, but then we sat and we talked about it and I explained that he mustn't abuse me again or I am going to report him. Now, we are okay and he never abused me again. (Interview with F.A, Agadir area, 14 October 2016).

1.2.5. *International human rights obligations on VAW*

Morocco has committed to a number of international human rights instruments related to VAW. Despite 'professed progress' (Žvan Elliott 2014, abstract) in human rights and gender equality, these international legal obligations, directly or indirectly related to VAW have seldom been domestically internalised or implemented.¹⁰ Also, the country has limited the legal application of women's rights-related commitments through reservations and declarations.¹¹ By prioritising family harmony and complementarity between women and men, the country's declarations undermine both its international and national commitments to gender equality.¹²

When assessing compliance with international human rights law, a trend emerged revealing that it is the state's practice to present aspirational but unsubstantiated statements on its *women's* rights progress. For example, in its 2013 Report to the UN Commission on the Advancement of Women, Morocco presented as an imminent fact the promulgation of a law to combat VAW (Ministry of Solidarity 2013, 16). Similarly, in its 2014 interim report on the implementation of the 2012 Universal Periodic Review¹³ recommendations, Morocco announced that, 'A set of draft laws and regulations (...) are currently at the Parliament to be passed (...) or in the final stages of preparation' (DIDH 2014, 3–4). Among those, draft law 103/13 on combating violence against women was reported as 'at the final stage of preparation' (DIDH 2014, 4). However, the discussion over this bill, which was sent to the House of Councillors in August 2016, is still pending.¹⁴

Appropriation of the international human rights discourse coupled with its ratification of key human rights instruments have concealed the state's inaction on women's rights and gender equality issues. Presenting itself as a bastion of stability and moderation in the MENA region, Morocco has successfully neutralised national and international criticism and scrutiny on its

women's rights record among other 'sensitive' subjects. As Žvan Elliott (2014) suggested,

The story of Morocco's professed progress is a story of empowering its citizens, but one which does so on paper only. It is also a story which hides the salient details of poorly written reformed laws, obstructed access to justice, continuing widespread misogyny, material poverty and social marginalisation, and cohesive socio-economic programmes, which are rarely followed through.

1.2.6. The impact of national policies on VAW

While national policies, strategies and laws were, theoretically, steps in the right direction to address the issue of VAW and its causes and consequences, results of fieldwork suggest that these interventions have borne little to no impact on the daily lives of women. Notwithstanding the initial momentum in the late 1990s and the renewed pledges for action since the ascension of King Mohammed VI, Morocco's progress on VAW has stalled. This stalling is not coincidental and reinforces the central argument of this article – namely, the state's hagiography is a clever exercise of rhetorical self-aggrandisement.

From 1998 until 2007, strategies and plans flourished under socialist and independent governments. In 1998, Morocco launched a National Campaign to fight VAW, which led to the creation of a State Secretariat in charge of the Family, Children and Persons with Disabilities as well as of a Support Fund. In 2002, the country adopted a National Strategy for Combating VAW, regarded as good practice due to its pan-national consultative approach (State Secretary 2005, 19). In order to set this strategy in motion, the government adopted the Operational Plan (OP) for the fight against VAW in 2004. The OP led to the creation of psychological and legal assistance centres, a hotline for survivors, and a gender focal point (State Secretary 2005, 21). Pursuant to this, in 2006 the National Strategy for Equity and Gender Equality was adopted; it integrated gender in development and sought to 'unite and help' actions and gender initiatives (State Secretary 2006, 5). However, as Hajjar (2004, 31) argues,

Even if states commit themselves to the principle of women's rights (e.g. non-discriminatory clauses in national legislation, accession to international conventions), if they do not commit their resources to combat domestic violence [among other forms of VAW], they fail as states to assume their responsibility to protect their subjects from violence.

After the 2011 election, when the Party for Justice and Development (PJD) rose to power, the government announced the launch of a Plan for Equality 2012/2016 or *Ikram* (honouring). Among the eight areas included in the plan was one focused on the 'fight against all forms of discrimination against women' (Ministry of Solidarity 2013). Although the platform included

promulgating a law against VAW, the government did not respect its self-imposed 2013 deadline to do so. In addition, 'women's groups have criticized the inclusion of the word 'Ikram' [...] in the plan, as it implies notions of charity rather than a right to equality' (CARE 2013, 16). Also, the UN Working Group on the Issue of Discrimination against Women in Law and Practice (2012, 18, para 79) reported that, 'some civil society organizations (...) expressed concern that the Government was not doing enough and had shifted much of its responsibility to act with due diligence to address violence against women on to them (...)'.'

Even though this policy shift, which began in early 2000s, has often been attributed to the gradual rise to power of political Islam, including the emerging strength of the PJD, Young Evrard (2014, 114–115) noted that some activists argue:

The monarchy since independence can be described as a employing a double strategy regarding women's status and women's rights: extending symbolic support of women's rights while making few concrete changes at the political level. (...) Mudawwana reform was a symbolic gesture meant to placate civil society and external governments and funders while giving in to those powerful political figures [mostly *Islamists*] who expressed their opposition to the Plan of Action [*for the Integration of Women in Development*].'

This reading provides a more coherent interpretation of the monarchy's approach to gender equality, one that effectively adopts a clever but performative embrace of modernisation and human rights discourses while negotiating among different actors to keep its firm grip on power.

2. Women's rights groups in Morocco

Civil society actors are also implicated in the government's effort to shape the official narrative and conceal its limitations. Since the 1960s and 1970s, the monarchy institutionalised and supported women's rights groups; in particular, the former king, Hassan II, issued an 'appeal to women from leading families to form a women's movement that would address legal and other issues' (Young Evrard 2014, 20). While Hassan II offered a sort of 'paternal solicitude toward women and their issues' (p. 110), King Mohammed VI championed 'legal reform and women's status improvements [*so that they*] could continue to gain him international press and publicity as a reformist king' (Young Evrard 2014, 114). In the context of the 2011 Arab uprisings, one of the primary concerns of women's rights groups' in Morocco was consolidating the fragile gains obtained with the reformed 2004 Family Code and as such, they were reluctant to confront the monarchy's authority (Salime 2012, 107).

While the 2004 family code (*Moudawana* or *Mudawwana*)¹⁵ reform is often read as having successfully engaged both secular and Muslim feminists, the reform came, 'after two decades of intense feminist activism and at a

moment when [*the monarchy*] found it in *their* [*emphasis mine*] political interest to switch from a patriarchal to an egalitarian model of family law' (Badran 2011, 82). It was this political manoeuvring on the part of the palace, more than secular-Islamist alliances, that accounted for the change in the code. Tracing back the last major success for women's rights to the passing of the Moudawana, it is useful to recall the way this legislation came about to understand rights groups' prioritisation of VAW above other issues. In learning from past shortcomings,

[t]he show of force of the Islamists and traditionalists in March 2000 [*against the women's rights groups' supported National Action Plan for the Integration of Women in Development*] convinced the leading associations within the women's movement that to obtain the reform [*of the old Family Code*], they had to bypass the democratically elected institutions and address the king directly, as the only person able to *deliver* it [*emphasis mine*] (Cavatorta and Dalmasso 2009, 499).

In choosing to engage directly with the palace, these groups have been co-opted in a mutually strengthening, almost symbiotic, relationship. In the post-Moudawana era, a human rights-compliant law on VAW has seemingly been chosen as *the* policy goal for Morocco's women's rights movement as VAW has become the most discussed and dominant issue among women's rights groups (Lounasmaa 2013, 120, 154). In this context, the battle for legal reform on VAW and other issues as the centrepiece of women's rights groups' activism represents more of a monarchy-sponsored political choice rather than the result of grassroots consultations with non-elite women. This policy choice by women's rights groups is also evident when one examines a number of public platforms, official documents and NGO reports advocating for the urgent need for a human rights-compliant law on VAW.¹⁶ As it has been noted elsewhere,

[t]he traditional feminist approach to domestic violence has generally been to emphasize the common experiences of battered women in the interests of forging a strong feminist movement to end woman abuse. However, this approach has increasingly been questioned by scholars and activists who recognize the need to give voice to women marginalized by the largely White, middleclass feminist movement (...) (Sokoloff and Dupont 2005, 41).

While women all over the world, notwithstanding their socio-economic background, seem to underreport VAW, the peculiarity of the Moroccan case might lie in the choice women's rights groups have made in prioritising this issue to achieve gender equality. At least three reasons can be inferred from this decision. First, the palace has traditionally managed to co-opt women's rights groups and direct them to focus on certain issues (e.g. legal reforms) while in fact excluding them from an independent identification of their own policy goals (RNGS model, Haussman and Sauer 2007). Second, civil

society, including women's rights groups, are subject to vast political, administrative and financial pressure to comply with agendas and programmes set by the state on one side and international feminist groups on the other (Cavatorta and Dalmasso 2009). Third, a HR-compliant law on VAW may seem more attainable and urgent to Moroccan women's rights groups than other needs. The latter view is supported by the fact that, at least from a legislative point of view, Morocco has made strides to advance women's rights with the reforms of the Family Law, the constitution and, to some extent, the penal and the labour codes (Zoglin 2009; Hanafi 2011–2012).

3. VAW in Morocco and the wider women's rights context

In seeking to examine the intersectionality of ethnicity, class, language and gender in women's understanding and experience of women's rights and gender issues, this section offers an insight into the subaltern voices of Moroccan women.

3.1. *The phenomenon of VAW in Morocco*

Statistics provided by the High Planning Commission (HCP) indicate that between 2009 and 2010, approximately 6 million (62.8%) Moroccan women between the ages of 18 and 64 survived different types of violence, including domestic violence in 55% of cases (i.e. 3.7 million individuals). The most common form of violence in any setting was psychological, affecting 48% of women (4.6 million) (HCP 2011, 4). As explained by L.B., a woman in her 20s:

VAW is still a predominant issue in Morocco. When I say 'violence', it is not only the physical violence but also emotional and intellectual too. (...) For example, when you are in school, and just because you are a girl, you are treated differently in the class. That is the absolute violence. When I say for example, giving a book to a boy but not to a girl, that is also violence. (Interview with L.B., Agadir area, October 07, 2016)

Before delving into the personal accounts of women interviewed for this study, it is useful to draw a picture of the main explanations given in the literature as regards the occurrence and persistence of VAW in the Middle East and North Africa (MENA). In the region, VAW is accounted for by a variety of political, cultural and socio-economic factors. Among them, Sadiqi (2014, 185) noted, '[a] misinterpretation of Islam, conservative political discourse, and discriminatory Family Laws.' Yahyaoui Krivenko (2009, 127) argued that, '[l]ack of progress in women's rights attributed to a particular religion or culture often fails to identify totalitarianism and patriarchy as the core impediments to women's advancements.' Smail Salhi (2013, 39–40) enumerated other elements, including state co-optation of religious authorities, as well as women's rights movements, and a lack of political will to tackle

VAW. In Morocco, this combination of factors resulted in a, 'lack of public policies as well as lack of services for survivors of violence' (Smail Salhi 2013, 39).

The High Commissioner for Planning, Ahmed Lahlimi Alami, proffered that VAW in Morocco is predominantly an urban phenomenon, involving young people (perpetrators and survivors) and increasing with socio-economic insecurity. According to Lahlimi Alami, the HCP survey results suggested an identity crisis among youth (HCP 2011, 11–12), rather than a prevailing cultural propensity for VAW. Rame (2008, 5) highlighted the existence of a dynamic of resistance to change versus a process of liberalisation. Both Alami (HCP 2011) and Rame (2008) attributed the persistence of VAW to the societal divide between the country's liberal reformers and change-adverse traditionalists. Ennaji (2013, 134) states that legislative reforms would not bring about significant change in the well being of Moroccan women unless they generated a change of mentality. 'Morocco is a Muslim society where modernity and tradition compete – not to mention a country in transition towards democratization, integration into the global economy and urbanization.' (Ennaji 2013, 134).

In this context, the state's hagiographic narrative spells out the essential role of the monarch as the sole arbiter able to navigate between two diametrically opposed societal mind-sets and trajectories. Conventional accounts tend to focus on lack of progress on VAW, and women's rights generally, because of the lack of co-operation and dialogue among secular and religious groups. This article argues that this modernity/tradition divide is a construct and used particularly for the purposes of the monarchy's strategies and techniques. The research findings indicate that there is a two-fold and inter-related problem at the level of state's and women's rights groups. This includes various mutual relations between the two, which are conducive to a scenario where there is some new legislation, but lack of focus and understanding of the root causes as to why women do not have rights.

3.2. When the Subaltern Speaks

While relevant scholarly literature attributes the persistence of VAW to cultural mind-sets and traditionalist pushbacks, this article attempts to shift the focus from official and elite discourses to the lived experiences of women vis-à-vis VAW and other gender issues. VAW is one of the most recurring human rights violations affecting Moroccan women, and as demonstrated above, it is an issue at the forefront of the official struggle for women's rights in Morocco. However, while most interviewees condemned VAW, many accepted it as a 'fact of life' inherent to patriarchal society and the habitus (Bourdieu 2000) within their communities of origin. Also, non-elite women did not consider legislative reforms as a realistic means to bring solutions to their daily

struggles. As F.O. explained her view about gender equality and women's rights,

That's how things are supposed to be in Morocco. Women should stay at home and men should go out and work. Well, that's the way I live whether I like it or I don't like it, that's what it is. (...) We don't care about that [*the Constitution*], even if it's going to be talking about women's rights, we don't know what they are. (Interview with F.O., Ait Baha area, October 10, 2016)

When asked about the meaning of human rights, many interviewees responded similarly to N.A. in identifying the key issues at stake in their daily lives,

It is about simple rights, the right to go to school, the right to have access to health and even for parents don't have money to send their children to a private school, there should be opportunities to send them to public schools. (...) Especially here in this city, there are no human rights, especially for Amazigh people. (...) I have a lot of Amazigh family and I see how they suffer, they don't have access to health and they don't have access to school. As for the girls, they can't complete their education, because there are no schools where they are, and they cannot go to cities, so they just stay at home. (Interview with N.A., Atlas area, September 27, 2016).

Whilst women's rights groups prioritise legal reforms as the main strategy to promote women's rights and achieve gender equality, it is important to reiterate here that,

[f]or scholarship [*and advocacy*] on domestic violence to remain emancipatory, it must emphasize both individual and structural analyses of race, class, and gender inequality and marginalization in culturally diverse communities. In this way, the pursuit of both equality and safety is more possible in battered women's daily struggles for survival for themselves, their children, the men in their lives, and their communities (Sokoloff and Dupont 2005, 60).

Women's rights groups have, mainly, focused on legislative changes and awareness on VAW. What is noticeably absent from their agendas, however, is a grassroots understanding of the causes behind the persistence of VAW, including, women's fear of losing their children and basic means of living; self and collective shame and blame and stigmatisation by/within their communities; unequal access to justice and legal remedies; absence of suitable living alternatives and domestic shelters for VAW survivors and their children; and an overall impunity for perpetrators.

Another instance illustrating the gap between women's rights policy goals and lived experiences is the *Moudawana* reform. Aside from few mentions of general progress in the field of women's rights (especially in terms of divorce), most research participants were either unaware or unaffected by the legal or policy changes brought to women's rights in recent years. Widely hailed women's rights reforms, such as the *Moudawana*, have failed to bring any

tangible improvement to the lived experiences and conditions of women who participated in this research. Diverging from the mainstream narratives on women's rights progress, a number of interviewees offered an alternative interpretation of the women's rights situation on the ground. In this context, several research participants drew attention the issue of child custody. As noted by F.A., who was herself a survivor of VAW,

There are solutions [to VAW]. But if you seek divorce, he [*meant your husband*] is going to take the children away from you. (...) You can keep the custody of your children, but you will always be afraid that one day he [*meant your husband*] is going to come and kidnap them (...) Even if there is Moudawana and there are rights, women can never enjoy those rights.

(F.A., Agadir area, October 14, 2016).

In the same vein, L.B., a woman in her late teens, described the conundrum of a family member.

I know one family member who still gets abused. (...) Her husband hits her. When he over abuses her, she threatens him that she is going to call the police but then she thinks about her six children and stops herself from reporting him. (...) No one could intervene. (Interview with L.B., Agadir area, October 13, 2016).

Other interviewees, like F.A., highlighted the absence of practical living solutions for women survivors of violence,

They [*meaning women survivors of violence*] keep silent for the sake of their children because, when they go out of their husbands' house, nobody will take care of them; not even their fathers, or mothers, or brothers. (...). *We know that VAW is not normal but there is nothing we can do about it.* (...) Even if the Moudawana¹⁷ is there and there are rights, women can never enjoy those rights. (Interview with F.A., Agadir area, October 14, 2016).

For K.B., a woman in her 40s, the persistence of VAW is caused by an unequal access to judicial and legal remedies for women from disadvantaged socioeconomic backgrounds,

I am, myself, a victim of violence, before getting divorce. Now, again I am abused by my husband's children. (...) The police told me that it was not their business. It is the tribunal's business. (...) Yes, I went [*to the tribunal*] but, as I told you before, they didn't care [*because*] my husband had money and I was a poor woman. I don't have enough money and that is why they didn't care about me. (Interview with K.B., Ait Baha area, October 10, 2016).

Other interviewees shed light on issues of stigmatisation, blaming and shaming and victimisation for VAW survivors. H.O. fled her household with her infant child due to the physical and psychological abuse perpetrated against her by her husband. While H.O. was seemingly eager to obtain a divorce and alimony for her child, she was torn between seeking justice for

the wrongs committed by her husband and wanting to be accepted back in the marital home. As H.O. admitted during the interview,

If I get a divorce, I will stay here, [*meaning her family's home*] where there is no job, there is nothing and my life will be wasted. (...) I still wish that my husband would change his behaviour, and take me back, not abuse me, not rape me so that we can live happily again. *There are no other options.* (Interview with H.O., Ait Baha area, October 10, 2016).

Her mother, F.O., who arranged H.O.'s marriage with her (*meaning the mother's*) first cousin, blamed her daughter for the failure of the marriage and for her escaping her marital home. When F.O. initially explained her daughter's case, it seemed as if she sympathised with her daughter's plight by sheltering her and her infant daughter back in their own family's home. In F.O.'s own words,

When a husband is abusing his wife, she will feel ashamed to tell people about it so that they would know what's going on with them. So, *it is shameful for us when women are not patient enough.* But, in my girl's case, her man took her away, kept on abusing her, didn't give her food to eat, and locked her at home. So I had to go there myself and bring her back home, her and her little daughter [*meaning back to their own family's home*]. (Interview with F.O., Ait Baha area, October 10, 2016).

However, during H.O.'s interview, it became apparent that F.O. blamed her daughter for the breakup of her marriage and in fact hindered efforts by H.O. to seek legal remedies,

I am always blamed nowadays for coming back home and bringing my daughter. They told me, even my mother, that *I should have been more patient.* (Interview with H.O., Ait Baha area, October 10, 2016).

During H.O.'s interview, she also complained of suffering further abuses in her own family's home,

Sometimes I even argue with my brothers and they might abuse me. My daughter argues with my little sister and then they hit my daughter. When I get up to defend her, my mother starts abusing me as well. (Interview with H.O., Ait Baha area, October 10, 2016).

H.O.'s experience of violence in marriage can be regarded as a societal and family failure. Not only was she forced to marry her mother's first cousin by her grandmother and her mother, but when H.O. reported the abuses to the police, she was sent home and told that they would not intervene in what was going on between her and her husband and 'to just go back to her house and try to settle things up.' As well, in her current location in her family's home, H.O. and her infant daughter continue to be abused both physically and psychologically by her relatives.

What emerges clearly in these stories is that domestic violence is passed down across generations. Most importantly, H.O.'s narration contradicts the

official and civil society narratives of progress in the field of women's rights: i.e. that the focus on legally reforming the system is the issue at stake. There are, in fact, structural inequalities that lie at the heart of why women are unable to extract themselves from situations of domestic violence. Legal remedies, albeit important, are not sufficient to tackle the issue of VAW in the absence of logistical, financial and even social measures to address why survivors of VAW might stay entrapped in abusive relationships.

In acknowledging the lack of structures to shelter women survivors of violence, S.H. sadly concluded that, '[*Women survivors of violence*] remain in a violent situation, similarly to their mothers.' (Interview with S.H., Atlas area, September 28, 2016). Another interviewee, Z.T., also mentioned the concept of shame (see Nussbaum 2004) in association with women speaking up on violence perpetrated against them. In response to a question on domestic violence shelters, Z.T. responded that, 'some people do not talk about it to anyone. What happens in their houses stays in their houses. But, for those who are not *patient enough to take it*, they go out and talk about it.' (Interview with Z.T., Ait Baha area, October 10, 2016).

Another interviewee made an ethno-cultural-based distinction to account for persistence of VAW, again blaming the victim for the abuses she endures,

In Ouarzazate there are no cases of violence against women, for the *Amazigh women are patient* and do not want other people to know that they argue with their husbands. But, here in Agadir, *Arab women* argue with their husbands before everyone's eyes *without caring about what people might say about them*. (Interview with N.K., Agadir area, October 06, 2016).

When asked if she thought Arab women were to blame for their husbands' abuses against them, N.K. responded that, 'It depends. But, in the case of the woman upstairs, I think that she deserves what her husband does to her (...) because she never lets him rest peacefully in the house.' (Interview with N.K., Agadir area, October 06, 2016).

Another interviewee claimed how VAW disproportionately affects rural women as opposed to urban women, 'There is nobody to defend them [*meaning rural women*]. They are isolated in the places where they live. They don't have the ability to open up to the world.' (Interview with N.R., Agadir area, October 14, 2016).

As these testimonies serve to illustrate, not acknowledging or addressing the different explanations of VAW women may contribute to the failure by women's rights groups to bring about practical and inclusive solutions to VAW. It is only by including a variety of indigenous and subaltern voices – including from rural and underprivileged communities – in the human rights struggle that women's rights groups can hope to achieve a lasting change. As Reilly (2011, 60) concluded, 'Emancipatory possibilities of human rights-oriented transnational feminisms reside in dialogic, solidarity-building

feminist praxis tied to transnational processes of counter-hegemonic (re)interpretation and (re)claiming of human rights from previously excluded positions.'

4. Conclusion

The phenomenon of VAW in Morocco reveals, firstly, the limited human rights progress in contrast to the official triumphant narratives suggesting otherwise. Secondly, the article sought to demonstrate the gap between women's rights groups' policy goals on one hand and the lived experiences of women on the other. Women's rights groups seem to have been co-opted by the state in their attempt to redress VAW by focusing on the legal remedies while not tackling the reasons why women are subject to VAW and unable to extract themselves from it. The power structures and inequalities that contribute to, but are not solely confined to VAW, are not addressed adequately as to do so goes to the very heart of the patriarchal patronage systems to which the monarchy's hold on power is inextricably linked.

While mostly present in the domestic sphere, VAW is a pervasive and, yet often, matter-of-factly accepted human rights violation across society. As it emerged from the ethnographic research, women, especially from underprivileged and rural backgrounds, have resigned themselves to the status quo when it comes to VAW and do not believe in legal reforms (and punitive measures) as the best means to guarantee their rights in practice. Women's resignation can be ascribed not only to their lack of access to legal remedies, but also to the fear of losing their children and their means of survival in the absence of their husbands' socio-economic support. Further, they fear shaming and stigmatisation by their families and communities. Although the scale and acceptance of VAW is symptomatic of gender inequality, non-elite Moroccan women also highlight other issues, such as access to education, work and healthcare, in their lived experience requiring urgent attention.

In bringing the voices of women who have been on the periphery of sites of power close to the core, what is revealed is that without a 'vernacularisation' of women's rights and frameworks and, more importantly, a grassroots understanding for women's explanations for, and justifications of, VAW in their own communities, any reform in this area will continue to be perceived as undemocratic, exogenous or even as merely useless.

Acknowledgements

The author wishes to extend her gratitude to Ronan Macnamara at the University College Dublin for his time in proof-reading and providing useful suggestions to improve the very early drafts of this article; Dr Hugh McDonnell at the University of

Edinburgh for his timely and constructive feed-back on several drafts of this article; Dr Kathleen Cavanaugh at the Irish Centre for Human Rights of the National University of Ireland, Galway, whose feedback was crucial to bring the manuscript to its final shape; and last but not least, the two anonymous reviewers whose comments were instrumental to clarifying and refining the article's main arguments. Any errors or oversights are mine alone.

Notes

1. The rationale for prioritising women self-identifying as Amazigh or of Amazigh descent lies in the fact that the author's doctoral research revolves around human rights and gender equality issues for minority/indigenous women. Significantly, the Amazigh people – and especially women – feature among the most marginalised and under-represented communities in their access to economic, social and cultural rights. Amazigh peoples are the ethnically majoritarian, indigenous peoples of Morocco although estimates vary as to their exact number ranging between 40% and 70%. The Amazigh language is recognised as an official language of Morocco (Constitution of Morocco 2011, art. 5) while the Amazigh element is enumerated among the key features of Morocco's unity (Constitution of Morocco 2011, preamble).
2. On Morocco's usage of the human rights discourse for its own political purposes, see, *inter alia*: Charrad 2001, Cavatorta and Dalmaso 2009, Žvan Elliott 2015.
3. The draft law 103/03 on VAW has been sitting before Morocco's House of Councillors since August 2016. Furthermore, no date has yet been agreed upon to discuss the bill.
4. The rape definition in the Code is inadequate as it defines the crime according to: sex (of both survivor [female] and perpetrator [male]; type ('sexual relations'); the category ('attacks to good morals' rather than those to physical integrity) (Penal Code of Morocco 1962, art. 486). As well, there is no specific provision that criminalises marital rape, which is a form of VAW and a traditional harmful practice against women (UNGA 1993, art. 2; UNHRC 2012, 7). Another discriminatory provision is contained in art. 488, which provides for heavier penalties if the rape and indecent assault lead to the 'deflowering' of the (female) victim, who also has to demonstrate its physical effects upon her (Penal Code of Morocco 1962, art. 488). In the case of rape, authorities can pursue the survivor of this crime if the suspected rapist is acquitted (Human Rights Watch 2015).
5. These include provisions related to polygamy, divorce, guardianship of children and inheritance (Family Code 2004, arts. 40–46, 123–124, 236, 316–319).
6. These include Moroccan women's rights activists the author interviewed between 2012 and 2014.
7. In 2012 Moroccan judges granted over 36,000 requests to permit child marriages (that is 86% of all requests). See: HCP 2013, 22.
8. The Code also recognises the principle of non-discrimination between men and women in employment and wages (arts. 9, 346, 478).
9. See also: http://www.huffpostmaghreb.com/2015/07/07/ou-en-est-loi-harcelem-ent-sexuel-maroc_n_7741702.html (accessed 31 July 2017).
10. These include: equality between men and women in their enjoyment of rights; prohibition of discrimination based on sex; right to life; right to liberty and security of person; prohibition of torture; prohibition of slavery and servitude; right to

equality before the law; freedom of movement and to choose one's residence; right to health; right to marriage and to found a family.

11. After recently (2011) withdrawing reservations 'incompatible with the object and purpose of the present Convention,' (CEDAW 1979, art. 28.2), Morocco made specific declarations, which can be read as reservations. Regarding policy measures (CEDAW 1979, art. 2), Morocco expressed its willingness to apply this provision insofar as it does not conflict with Shari'a Law. Regarding equality before the law and movement of persons and choice of residence and domicile (CEDAW 1979, art. 15.4), Morocco declared that: 'It can only be bound by the provisions (...) to the extent that they are not incompatible with articles 34 and 36 of the Moroccan Code of Personal Status.'
12. The merits and contours of the secular versus religious (including Islamic and Islamist) feminism debate will not be discussed here.
13. The Universal Periodic Review is one of the UN Human Rights Mechanisms. For more, see: <http://www.ohchr.org/EN/HRBodies/UPR/Pages/BasicFacts.aspx> (accessed 01 August 2017).
14. See: <https://www.yabiladi.com/articles/details/49030/maroc-associations-veulent-amender-projet.html> (accessed 31 July 2017).
15. This family law or 'Moudawana' was approved with 'Dahir n° 1-04-22 du 12 hijra 1424 (03 Février 2004) portant promulgation de la Loi n° 70-03 portant code de la famille (Bulletin Officiel n° 5358 du 2 ramadan 1426 (06 Octobre 2005), p. 667).
16. These include: Moroccan NGOs' shadow reports to UN Treaty Bodies (most recently to the UN Human Rights Committee in 2016) and public campaigns and events led by prominent Moroccan NGOs that also operate as members of the Coalition 'Printemps de la Dignité'. See: <https://pdmaroc.wordpress.com/qui-sommes-nous/> (accessed 31 July 2017).
17. Family Code of Morocco (2004) accessible at: <http://www.consulatdumaroc.ca/forms/codefamillefr.pdf> (accessed 31 July 2017).

Disclosure statement

No potential conflict of interest was reported by the author.

Funding

This research was partially supported by the Irish Research Council Postgraduate Scholarship allocated to the author for the period of 2014–2018 [grant number RCS 1327].

ORCID

Silvia Gagliardi  <http://orcid.org/0000-0003-3802-5521>

References

- Badran, Margot. 2011. "From Islamic Feminism to a Muslim Holistic Feminism." *IDS Bulletin* 42 (1): 78–87. doi:10.1111/j.1759-5436.2011.00203.x.
- Bourdieu, Pierre. 2000. *Esquisse d'une Théorie de la Pratique* [Outline of a Theory of Practice]. Paris: Editions Du Seuil.

- CARE International Policy Report. 2013. "Arab Spring or Arab Autumn? Women's Political Participation in the Uprisings and Beyond: Implications for International Donor Policy."
- Cavatorta, Francesco, and Emanuela Dalmasso. 2009. "Liberal Outcomes Through Undemocratic Means: The Reform of the Code de Statut Personnel in Morocco." *The Journal of Modern African Studies* 47 (4): 487–506. doi:10.1017/S0022278X09990164.
- Charlesworth, Hilary, Christine Chinkin, and Shelley Wright. 1991. "Feminist Approaches to International Law." *The American Journal of International Law* 85 (4): 613–645. doi:10.2307/2203269.
- Charrad, Mounira. 2001. *States and Women's Rights: The Making of Postcolonial Tunisia, Algeria, and Morocco*. London: University of California Press.
- Dahir Pertaining to the Approbation of the Penal Code of Morocco. 1962. Accessed 31 July, 2017. http://www.wipo.int/wipolex/en/text.jsp?file_id=190447.
- Dahir Pertaining to the Promulgation of Law Related to the Labour Code of Morocco. 2003. Accessed 31 July, 2017. http://www.wipo.int/wipolex/en/text.jsp?file_id=190997.
- Dahir Pertaining to the Promulgation of the Constitution of Morocco. 2011. Accessed 31 July, 2017. http://www.wipo.int/wipolex/en/text.jsp?file_id=311565.
- Dahir Pertaining to the Promulgation of the Law Related to the Family Code of Morocco. 2004. Accessed 31 July, 2017. <http://www.consulatdumaroc.ca/forms/codefamillefr.pdf>.
- Ennaji, Moha. 2013. "Violence Against Underage Girl Domestic Workers in Morocco." In *Gender And Violence in Islamic Societies: Patriarchy, Islamism And Politics in the Middle East And North Africa*, edited by Zahia Smail Salhi, 130–150. London: I.B. Tauris.
- Guessous, Nadia. 2011. "Genealogies of Feminism: Leftist Feminist Subjectivity in the Wake of the Islamic Revival in Contemporary Morocco." PhD diss., Columbia University.
- Hajjar, Lisa. 2004. "Religion, State Power, and Domestic Violence in Muslim Societies: A Framework for Comparative Analysis." *Law and Social Enquiry* 29: 1–38. doi:10.1111/j.1747-4469.2004.tb00329.x.
- Hanafi, Leila. 2011–2012. "Moudawana and Women's Rights in Morocco: Balancing National and International Law." *ILSA Journal of International & Comparative Law* 18: 515–529.
- Haussman, Melissa, and Birgit Sauer. 2007. *Gendering the State in the Age of Globalization: Women's Movements and State Feminism in Postindustrial Democracies*. Plymouth: Rowman and Littlefield Publishers.
- HCP. 2013. "La Femme Marocaine en Chiffres: Tendances d'Evolution des Caractéristiques Démographiques et Socioprofessionnelles."
- HCP (Haut-Commissariat au Plan du Maroc). 2011. "Principaux Résultats de l'Enquête Nationale de la Prévalence de la Violence à l'égard des Femmes."
- HRW (Human Rights Watch). 2015. "World Report: Morocco/Western Sahara." Accessed 31 July, 2017. <http://www.hrw.org/world-report/2015/country-chapters/moroccowestern-sahara>.
- Inter-Ministerial Delegation for Human Rights (DIDH). 2014. Mid-term Report on the Progress Made in the Implementation of the Recommendations Issued at the Second Cycle of the Universal Periodic Review. Accessed 31 July, 2017. <http://lib.ohchr.org/HRBodies/UPR/Documents/session13/MA/MoroccoImplementation2ndCycle.pdf>.

- International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (Adopted 18 December 1979, entered into force 3 September 1981) 1249 UNTS 13 (CEDAW). Accessed 31 July, 2017. <http://www.un.org/womenwatch/daw/cedaw/>.
- Lounasmaa, Aura. 2013. "Women and Modernity: The Global and the Local in Moroccan Women's NGOs's Advocacy and Public Awareness Work." (PhD Diss.). National University of Ireland in Galway.
- Ministry of Solidarity Woman Family and Social Development of Morocco (Ministry of Solidarity). 2013. "Plan Gouvernemental pour l'Égalité (ICRAM)".
- Nussbaum, Martha. 2004. *Hiding from Humanity: Disgust, Shame, and the Law*. Princeton: Princeton University Press.
- Rame, Ali. 2008. *La Strategie Nationale de Lutte Contre la Violence a' L'Égard des Femmes au Maroc*. Querétaro: ICPC's Eighth Annual Colloquium.
- Reilly, Niamh. 2011. "Doing Transnational Feminism, Transforming Human Rights: The Emancipatory Possibilities Revisited." *Irish Journal of Sociology* 19 (2): 60–76. doi:10.7227/IJS.19.2.5.
- Sabbe, Alexia, Halima Oulami, Somia Hamzali, Najia Oulami, Fatima Zehra Le Hjiir, Mariam Abdallaoui, Marleen Temmerman, and Els Leye. 2014. "Women's Perspectives on Marriage and Rights in Morocco: Risk Factors for Forced and Early Marriage in the Marrakech Region." *Culture Health and Sexuality* 17 (2): 135–149.
- Sadiqi, Fatima. 2014. "Gender and Violence in Islamic Societies." *Gender & Development* 22 (1): 185–187. doi:10.1080/13552074.2014.889351.
- Salime, Zakia. 2007. "The War on Terrorism: Appropriation and Subversion by Moroccan Women." *Signs: Journal of Women in Culture & Society* 33 (1): 1–24.
- Salime, Zakia. 2011. *Between Feminism And Islam: Human Rights And Sharia Law In Morocco*. Vol. 36 of Social Movements, Protest, and Contention of Bert Klandermans. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press.
- Salime, Zakia. 2012. "A New Feminism? Gender Dynamics in Morocco's February 20th Movement." *Journal of International Women's Studies* 13 (5): 101–114.
- Smail Salhi, Zahia. 2013. *Gender and Violence in Islamic Societies: Patriarchy, Islamism and Politics in the Middle East and North Africa*. London: I.B. Tauris.
- Sokoloff, Natalie J., and Ida Dupont. 2005. "Domestic Violence at the Intersections of Race, Class, and Gender." *Violence Against Women* 11 (1): 38–64. doi:10.1177/1077801204271476.
- State Secretary in Charge of Family Childhood and Persons with Disabilities of Morocco. 2006. "Stratégie Nationale pour l'Équité et l'Égalité Entre les Sexes par l'Intégration de l'Approche Genre dans les Politiques et les Programmes de Développement."
- State Secretary in Charge of Family Childhood and Persons with Disabilities of Morocco (State Secretary). 2005. "Plan Opérationnel de la Stratégie Nationale de Lutte Contre la Violence à l'Égard des Femmes."
- UNGA (UN General Assembly). 1993. Resolution 48/104, "Declaration on the Elimination of Violence against Women", A/RES/48/104.
- UNHRC (UN Human Rights Council). 2012. "Report of the Working Group on the Issue of Discrimination against Women in Law and in Practice", A/HRC/20/28/Add.1.
- Yahyaoui Krivenko, Ekaterina. 2009. "Islamic View Women's Rights: An International Lawyer's Perspective." *Journal of Eastern Asia and International Law* 2 (1): 103–128.
- Young Evrard, Amy. 2014. *The Moroccan Women's Rights Movement*. Syracuse: Syracuse University Press.
- Zoglin, Katie. 2009. "Morocco's Family Code: Improving Equality for Women." *Human Rights Quarterly* 31: 964–984.

- Žvan Elliott, Katja. 2014. "Morocco and Its Women's Rights Struggle: A Failure to Live Up to Its Progressive Image." *Journal of Middle East Women's Studies* 10 (2): 1–30.
- Žvan Elliott, Katja. 2015. *Modernizing Patriarchy: The Politics of Women's Rights in Morocco*. Austin: University of Texas Press.