



The Impact of the Green March on Modern Moroccan Society

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ABSTRACT

Abstract. This research aims to examine (a) the historical context of the Moroccan Green March and (b) the impact of this profound social, political, economic, military, and religious event on modern day Moroccan society and culture. On the 6th of November 1975, approximately 350,000 Moroccans, entirely unarmed, descended upon the small town of Tarfaya, some 900km away from the Moroccan capital, Rabat. They awaited a signal directly from HM King Hassan II, to enter what is known to be Western Sahara, or ‘Moroccan Sahara’. When that signal came, the masses, brandishing only bare necessities, holding aloft Moroccan flags and the holy Quran, entered Spanish-held Western Sahara. The Spanish troops were ordered not to fire upon the Moroccan civilians, who sought to ‘take back’ what was considered to be territory integral to the history, culture and owners of the Moroccan people and the Kingdom of Morocco. Whilst those who took part did seek (and receive) permission from the Moroccan Monarch, the impetus for this action came from within society, not from the Monarch of government. The Green March has a substantial effect on Moroccan society to this day, and songs are sung about it (such as ‘Sawt El Hassan’) and postage stamps are issued to commemorate the momentous event.

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1. Introduction:

Between 1884 and 1975, Spain had occupied the territory now know as ‘Western Sahara’ and ‘Moroccan Sahara’. Morocco took control of the region from the 6th of November 1975, and the last Spanish soldier left the territory on the 26th of February 1976. This brought an end to the policy of Spanish decolonisation, and the Spanish Empire. The Moroccan reclamation of Western Sahara, by 350,000 volunteers is celebrated as the “Green March” in Morocco.

On the evening of the 16th of October 1975, owing to an advisory opinion of the International Court of Justice, sitting at The Hague, affirming Moroccan link to the territory, and accepting that historical Moroccan monarchs had appointed judges and raised taxes in Western Sahara, as well as visited the territory in the capacity as the reigning monarch (and been received as such), King Hassan II addressed the wider Moroccan public on the issue of the territory. There had long been social and political angst in relation to the territory, and the Moroccan people felt aggrieved that territory that had historically been Moroccan had been alienated from its people.

After the solemn sounding of the national anthem, His Majesty King Hassan II directly reached into the home and business of every Moroccan via the air waves and television. Due to the enormous pressure from Moroccan

civil society, His Majesty bowed to opublic pressure and suggested that he would support a large volunteer group of 350,000 Moroccan civilians march into Western Sahara to affirm Moroccan sovereignty- not simply the sovereignty of the reigning monarch of Morocco, but the sovereignty of the Moroccan people as a whole (Weiner, 1979). His Majesty started off his public discourse by praising Allah [god], the prophet Mohamed and bringing the Islamic faith of the Moroccan people into the equation. He then addressed the issue of the Moroccaness of Western Sahara, and accepted that his people had an unwavering commitment to the entirety of Moroccan territory, including and especially Western Sahara.

Then, spontaneously, civil society took it upon themselves to organise and reclaim Western Sahara, an integral Moroccan territory. This narrative has been affirmed by the Moroccan people time and again. It is manifestly the case that this was not a war, but the Moroccan civilian population themselves claiming what they believe to be rightfully their collective birth right. More recently, on the 45th anniversary of the Green March (in 2020), this narrative was reiterated and laboured by the reigning Moroccan monarch, HM King Mohammed VI. He stated that “Moroccans responded spontaneously and with a keen sense of sincere patriotism...” and that the “peaceful march, which enabled our country to recover its southern

provinces” [Western Sahara]. His Majesty further stated “Dear Citizens, my commitment to reaffirming the Moroccanness of the Sahara is as steadfast as my endeavours to make the Sahara an engine of development at the regional and continental levels” (King Mohammed VI, 2020). The social, economic, political and religious nature of his speech are profound, and are telling of how relevant the Green March and status of Western Sahara is to the Moroccan people.

After the spontaneous collectivisation, the volunteers rallied together and travelled from various parts of Morocco to Tarfaya, a settlement close to the border that existed between Morocco and the territory colonised by Spain. They then passed the artificially fabricated border, chanting religious slogans, holding the Quran aloft, and raising the Moroccan flag and images of King Hassan II (Davis, 2020). This forced Spanish troops to flee from the unarmed civilian population, for fear of a terrible bloodbath and the impending condemnation for clinging on to a colonised land in the modern era. Moreover, King Hassan II had also reached out politically to the Spanish occupiers to do his utmost to ensure the safety of the civilians marching (Hodges, 1984).

The Green March was evidently a monumental success for the Kingdom of Morocco, King Hassan II, and the Moroccan people in general. Not only did it lead to the reclamation of Western Sahara for the Moroccan people, it served several key social functions. At the time, Morocco was suffering from social problems and political uncertainty. The Green March showed Hassan II as a strong monarch who was acting for the Moroccan people and was not a merciless dictator as some of his detractors had labelled him. It also united Moroccan society behind an admirable goal and gave a sense of purpose to the country in general.

As time has passed, the profound implications of the Green March have become amplified. Every year, the reigning Monarch celebrates the “Green March Remembrance Day” on the 6th of November with the people, and often makes a speech to the nation (Bazza, 2018). In this regard, upon the state visit of His Majesty King Felipe VI of Spain to Morocco on the 13th of February 2019, the religious/nationalistic song “Sawt El Hassan” which is solely about Allah and Western Sahara was played whilst the King of Morocco and King of Spain shook hands with dignitaries from both parties.

In 2004, a Moroccan study highlighted that despite strong public opinion on the matter of Western Sahara, it was politically stagnant and little progress had been made. It stated that the issue “of Western Sahara, is still unresolved and is beginning to create a major problem in terms of Morocco's foreign policy” (Zoubir & Benabdallah-Gambier, 2004). Recent developments show that substantial progress has been made in the intervening period, and that a recent flurry of activity shows that the issue of Western Sahara, an exceedingly minor issue on the

world stage, is of crucial importance to both the Kingdom of Morocco and the Moroccan people.

At present, the overwhelming majority of individuals living in the area known as Western Sahara identify themselves as Moroccan and are Moroccan citizens. On the 10th of December 2020, the USA recognised full Moroccan sovereignty of the entire territory. This has been heralded by substantial efforts by the Kingdom of Morocco to obtain the affirmation and recognition from the international community to recognise Western Sahara as an integral part of Morocco.

It must be mentioned that in recent times, Jordan has opened a consulate in Western Sahara, showing that it too recognises Moroccan sovereignty over the territory, and that even during the COVID-19 pandemic, it was of utmost importance in the bilateral relationship. It has been stated that “Jordan is an influential partner of Morocco in securing a paradigm shift in favour of the international community recognising Moroccan sovereignty over Western Sahara” and is accordingly genuinely embracing this role. Recently, the USA, Swaziland, the UAE, Zambia and numerous other countries have recently inaugurated consulates in Laayoune and Dakhla in Western Sahara (Allison, 2021). A paradigm shift is evidently taking place. It is apparent that the Green March took place on the ground starting in November 1975. However, under the leadership of His Majesty King Mohammed VI, a renewed political Green March has been taking place since the year 2020. The same goals, ideology and beliefs that carried the original Green March have been inculcated in the youth of modern Morocco and are as relevant today as they ever have been, perhaps even to a greater degree.

Very few articles exist in respect of this issue, which appears to be neglected by the academic community. This research will have a beneficial impact for several reasons, including the fact that it can inform governments, NGOs, the wider public and other groups about the reality of the implications of the Green March on modern Moroccan society, as well as the sentiments of the Moroccan people. Additionally, it will contribute to the body of literature available on this topic, which is extremely important for Morocco, the MENA region, and also (to a lesser extent) the global realm of politics and socioeconomics. Moreover, the voices of the Moroccan people deserve to be amplified and granted the credence required, as opposed to being marginalised and western (or orientalist) perceptions being forced into the academic void that exists in this area. It would be beneficial to have been able to cite from a wider array of academic resources, but incredibly few exist in this regard, especially when compared to other issues such as tourism within Morocco, or conflicts such as the first and second Gulf Wars.

2. Methods:

This research seeks to ascertain two research questions that the author wishes to enquire into. These are



to examine (a) the historical context of the Moroccan Green March [which has been broached within the introduction and throughout this article] and (b) the impact of the Green March on modern day Moroccan society and culture. This is of importance owing to the central nature of this event in relation to modern Moroccan culture, the view of the author that there is a modern-day political Green March taking place, and the fact that a greater understanding of the issues being brought before the world stage in relation to the Western Sahara question can be obtained by understanding both the historical context and the impact thereof on modern day Moroccan society and culture. The ultimate goal is to give the genuine and authentic voices of Moroccan people an opportunity to be ventilated on a public platform. This has the ability to inform the wider public, contribute to the body of literature available, and can potentially be of use to various governments, NGOs and other bodies.

Accordingly, it was necessary for this research article to draw heavily upon existing scholarly and news sources to provide a historical background to the issue. By examining empirical research, one can gain an insight into the history of the situation, from which one may then view through a uniquely Moroccan lens. This research envisioned giving the international community a unique perspective of how the situation is viewed on the ground, as opposed to through the lens of the mainstream media, which can often be seriously biased or given a precarious tilt so as to promote the perspective of a third party such as a government or the ownership. Accordingly, a benchmark can be provided so that the authentic position of the Moroccan people, as well as that of the Moroccan government, can be understood, so that it can be taken into account when attempting to address challenging situations that may arise locally or internationally.

Furthermore, the main aim and objective of this research is to highlight the impact that the Green March has on contemporary Moroccan society- socially, economically, politically, religiously, and culturally. It is clear that the Green March has had a profound implication in all of these realms both internally, and on an international footing (in diplomatic circles, in cultural exchanges and even reverberating within the world of music and popular culture). Thusly, this research adopted a mixed-methods approach, with the qualitative approach being substantially dominant, so that the authentic and unfettered views of Moroccan citizens can be presented.

The quantitative element was primarily a short questionnaire, asking for biographical data (name, gender, age, place of birth, place of residence), as well as five simple questions on a Likert scale regarding their perspectives on the Green March, how much they believe they know about it, how important they feel it is to Moroccan society, and how important they feel that it is to them and their lives, if the Green March was more relevant in their lives now compared to as it was ten years ago, and

if they feel that the issues relating to Western Sahara are as relevant today as it was ten years ago. This questionnaire was supplied electronically to 45 Moroccan citizens, who consensually and freely agreed to take part. 38 of them actually completed it and returned it to the researcher. It is believed that a response rate of approximately 84% is generally very good, notwithstanding the small sample size.

There are several benefits of using surveys. The foremost consideration was the ease and swiftness of use, as well as financial considerations. When used on an electronic platform, ranging from email to Facebook or even WhatsApp, the costs can be negligible. Given that no funding was received for this research, this was certainly not an inconsequential consideration. Additionally, in this regard, questionnaires are convenient, cheap and there is no direct observational bias, as they can be completed in the privacy of one's own home, in a coffee shop, or even on the bus whilst one travels to or from work. Furthermore, they are standardised, all participants receive exactly the same stimulus (questionnaire). Therefore, the subjective element that may be at play when asking face to face questions is removed.

Conversely, they are far from flawless. They are inflexible and not well-suited to potentially controversial topics, as a pre-set response such as a Likert scale is inflexible, overly rigid, and does not allow for an expansive answer or a justification. If a blank box to fill-in is given, this also has problems in that it is difficult, time-consuming and problematic to quantify and analyse. Accordingly, they may be simply inappropriate to use, or to place substantial emphasis on (Sincero, 2012). Thusly, a mixed-methods approach has been used for this research. The author feels as if this struck a suitable balance between the rigid, inflexible, and standardised nature of questionnaires, and the data-rich information that can be obtained from qualitative modes of enquiry. Mathematical and statistical calculations can only provide a rudimentary footing upon which this research may be based.

The qualitative element was felt to be the most important part of the study, for the reasons given above. It was felt that a qualitative analysis of the impact of the Green March on modern Moroccan society was the *sine qua non* of the study. Whilst using a questionnaire was beneficial and could go some way in achieving the aim of the research, such as on a Likert scale, it could not portray the emotions of respondents sufficiently well. The intent of the research was to identify the impact of the Green March on contemporary Moroccan society. It is difficult to accurately and justifiably pre-empt how participants will respond, therefore, a qualitative narrative inquiry was most appropriate (Kyngäs, 2020). The qualitative approach that the researcher uses is appropriate as it elicits the fundamental feelings, considerations, values, beliefs, and perceptions of the sample participants regarding how they feel that the Green March has impacted modern Moroccan



society, which this research seeks to examine (Neuman & Robson, 2020). Therefore, 25 participants engaged in a qualitative narrative enquiry in the form of an unstructured online interview/discussion, to ascertain how participants felt that the Green March had affected modern Moroccan society. This provides an “insider view” and allows for the presentation of real-life stories, events, experiences, and feelings (Wang & Geale, 2015).

3. Results

3.1. Quantitative results

The results of the quantitative element were not overly surprising. It is well-noted that the Green March has had a profound impact on the foundations of Moroccan society and appears to play a key role in fermenting nationalistic fervour and evidently is a bedrock of Moroccan patriotism.

The questionnaire was supplied electronically to 45 Moroccan citizens, who consensually and freely agreed to take part. 38 of them completed it and returned it to the researcher. The sample population consisted of 16 males and 22 females. A response rate of approximately 84% is generally very good, notwithstanding the small sample size. The results of the questionnaire (with biographical data not included) are as follows:

Figure 2 shows a substantial number of sample participants either “strongly agree” or “agree” that the Green March is of importance to Moroccan society. Compared to the low score for those who stated that they tended to “disagree” or “strongly disagree”, it is apparent that there is a substantial majority that agree with the idea that the Green March is important to Moroccan society.

Further to this, it is helpful to isolate and further present the responses to the question that the Green March is more relevant today than it was 10 years ago:

The Green March is more relevant today than it was 10 years ago

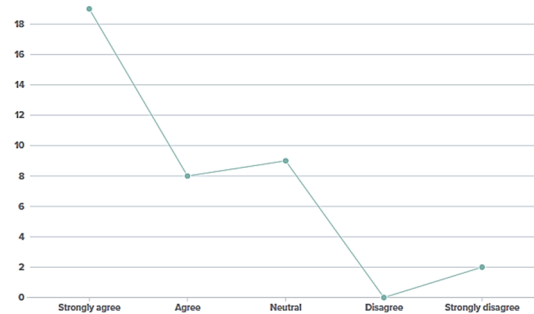


Figure 3. Number of responses to the question “The Green March is more relevant today than it was 10 years ago.”

| | Strongly agree | Agree | Neutral | Disagree | Strongly disagree | TOTAL |
|--|----------------|-------|---------|----------|-------------------|-------|
| I know a lot about the Green March | 19 | 10 | 6 | 3 | 0 | 38 |
| The Green March is important to Moroccan society | 17 | 12 | 4 | 3 | 2 | 38 |
| The Green March is important and relevant to me | 14 | 12 | 8 | 2 | 2 | 38 |
| The Green March is more relevant today than it was 10 years ago | 19 | 8 | 9 | 0 | 2 | 38 |
| Western Sahara is more important to Moroccans today than it was 10 years ago | 20 | 9 | 1 | 5 | 3 | 38 |

Figure 1. Questionnaire

The author believes that the following data ought to be individually highlighted, so as to demonstrate how the participants felt that the Green March is important to Moroccan society:

The Green March is important to Moroccan society

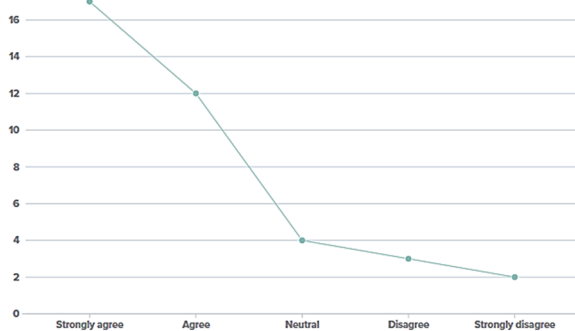


Figure 2. Number of responses to the statement “The Green March is important to Moroccan society.”

Accordingly, it is manifest that there is the belief that the majority believe that the Green March is even more relevant and important in modern-day Morocco than it was 10 years ago, albeit with a not insignificant minority indicating that they were neutral in response to this statement. There were very few responses indicating a dissenting opinion.

3.2. Qualitative results

As mentioned above, the qualitative element (in the form of a qualitative narrative inquiry) was felt to be the most important part of the study. The quantitative results are entirely useful and bring a strong and useful grounding/framework upon this this research and rely, however, the qualitative data obtained is evidently the most important part of the study.

This study examined 25 participants, who engaged in a qualitative narrative enquiry by way of an unstructured online interview/discussion, to ascertain how they felt that the Green March had affected modern Moroccan society.



One of the most profound and common comments was in relation to the religious-nationalistic song “Sawt Al Hassan”. Every participant mentioned it and said that they knew the words to this song. The most commonly used word in the song is “Allah” and the modal phrase being “Allahu Akbar” [Allah is the greatest], which is sung repetitively, along with lyrics relating to the Moroccan nature of Western/Moroccan Sahara. The researcher was informed that this song is sung by schoolchildren, along with the national anthem of Morocco. Also, it is commonly played by military bands and on TV on days of national importance and significance. It must also be mentioned that this song has many millions of views on YouTube, including one video of six million, 5.4 million and even one sponsored by Coca Cola, in collaboration with the state-owned TC channel 2M, which has approximately 3.3 million views (Coke Studio Marco, 2017). This shows that the religious-based nationalism which fuels the narrative that Moroccans understand in relation to Western Sahara is deeply rooted and ingrained within Morocco society.

Another important issue raised was that several participants had seen or used the Barid Al Maghrib/Poste Maroc (Moroccan post office) Western Sahara stamps. These are issued by the Moroccan post office at regular intervals, to commemorate specific anniversaries and the inauguration of social, political, economic, infrastructural projects. A 2020 stamp shows the map of Morocco, with the national flag superimposed, showing the entirety of Morocco (Western/Moroccan Sahara included), and a 2019 version celebrates the recovery of the territory for the Moroccan people. However, in 2010, an extremely unusual stamp was issued by the Moroccan post office, using ground-breaking technology in that the stamp incorporated authentic sand from Western Sahara into the stamp itself. This was the first time that a middle east or African national had availed this technique. The Moroccan post office commented that “the green march: event of the century, march of peace, is indeed the conscience of an entire people, refusing domination and alienation, who mobilized and rose up in order to recover part of their territory” (Poste Maroc, 2010). This sums up the prevailing mood understood through the narrative inquiry. The pride of the recovery of the territory was succinctly expressed in that one participant earnestly provided the author with four of the 2020 stamps, amounting to approximately \$4USD.

The overwhelming majority expressed that they felt that Western Sahara was an integral part of the Kingdom of Morocco, and great emphasis was placed on labelling the fact that although the King reigns, the territory is the inalienable right of all Moroccan citizens, and that this issue transcends transitory politics. Most participants also felt the urge to express their pride in that they Green March and recovery of the Western Sahara and reincorporation into Morocco was not a diktat from above, but a spontaneous unification of the country to achieve what they see to be an admirable and noteworthy goal.

Conversely, an extremely small minority felt that at the present moment, in 2021, during the COVID-19 pandemic, other issues were more pressing, such as fixing the economy, resolving unemployment, vaccinating the public and fix other day-to-day problems like dealing with the teacher’s union in a fair and equitable manner. Whilst others did feel that these issues ought to be dealt with on a priority basis, there was no contradiction in pressing for great recognition of Western Sahara as a Moroccan territory and also dealing with the COVID-19 pandemic and other day-to-day and party-political issues. In fact, one of the key goals of the national government is to ensure the territorial sovereignty and integrity of the country, and that this too is a pressing and worthy cause.

In essence, most participants expressed that they understood the issue very well, owing to the fact that it was frequently discussed in the media and on TV, as well as having been frequently covered in the compulsory and tertiary education system. It is therefore an extremely important topic to Moroccan society at large, as well as to the individuals that make up the society. Due to a recent and prominent flurry of political activity, such as the USA, Jordan and other countries agreeing with the Moroccan position, it is manifest that an international political Green March is taking place (Allison, 2021). Moroccans feel as though each and every one of them is a standard bearer of the renewed Green March. Thusly, it is even more important now than it was several years ago. This does not detract from the fact that it was also hugely important in previous years.

4. Discussion

From this study, it is apparent that there is a hegemonic attitude within Morocco in respect of Western Sahara. Moroccans believe that it is as Moroccan as Marrakech, Casablanca, or Rabat. There is little scope for disagreement and the paradigm within Morocco is clear.

Due to the fact various countries have recently acknowledge that Western Sahara is an integral Moroccan territory has had a profound impact on Moroccan society in general. It is understood that Morocco has catered not only for the other provinces, but also for food security, employment, housing, social security, education and the other needs of the population of Western Sahara. Not only is it a highly regarded region of Morocco, but it is also a beloved region, and is treasured by the Moroccan people in general. Taxes are raised from the region, judges appointed by the King of Morocco sit in courts in Western Sahara, and Moroccan laws prevail. In fact, the Court of Appeal for the territory sit in Laayoune, in a majestic palace of justice, with the Moroccan flag flying above the building, and the Royal Arms of the Moroccan monarch and also the official portrait of His Majesty behind the judge in each courtroom and chamber (Moroccan Ministry of Justice and Liberty, 2020). Moreover, there are numerous Consulates in Western Sahara, accredited to the Kingdom of Morocco.



Therefore, the diplomatic clout of the region cannot be underestimated.

From the narrative inquiry, it was apparent that there was a strong sentiment that the participants felt that the Western Sahara was a Moroccan territory. This appeared to be the unequivocal belief of those who participated, and also the prevailing opinion held by the Moroccan people. This may be due to a number of complex factors, including the education system, an emphasis on drawing the map of Morocco with the “correct” borders, propaganda and information on TV, historical links to the entirety of the kingdom and the land of Morocco, and the strongly held belief that the land of Western Sahara is equally as Moroccan as Marrakech, Casablanca or Rabat.

Moroccan schoolchildren are taught about the territorial integrity of Morocco, and the sovereignty of the Moroccan people and monarch over the entire landmass. Accordingly, during the formative years of children, they are taught that the region is an integral part of the country. Moreover, patriotic songs are taught to children. Therefore, there is little scope for dissenting opinion. However, the status of Western Sahara as a Moroccan territory is considered to be an issue of substantial personal and national pride.

Additionally, the Moroccan state has engaged in substantial statecraft in Western Sahara. Whilst some respondents felt that the region had benefitted disproportionately from government assistance, respondents would have liked for the same (high) level of support to be received by all people, not just those in Moroccan Western Sahara. Moreover, development and infrastructure projects are rapidly taking place in Western Sahara. A prime example of this includes the highly esteemed flagship project, the Dakhla Port, which was celebrated on the Moroccan postage stamps (Morocco World News, 2021). Another such project is the Tiznit-Dakhla Highway (Hatim, 2021), the Laayoune Bridge (Mulyungi, 2021), construction to increase the electricity production and distribution within Western Sahara (Bourchouk, 2021), as well as a regional football centre for the Royal Moroccan Football Association (Morocco World News, 2021). All of these are branches, emanating from the planting of the seed of the Green March. Keeping in line with the emphasis of Moroccan sovereignty, and ensuring the rights of all are safeguarded, new courts have been created in Western Sahara such as the Court of First Instance of Dakhla, the renovation of the Laayoune Court of Appeal and Court of First Instance of Laayoune, and the creation of the Judicial Archival Centre (Hatim, 2020). Thusly, it is manifest that there are substantial and wide-reaching effects even in the modern day.

The impact of the Green March ranges across the spectrum, from education, transport, trade (especially in relation to natural resources such as phosphate), diplomacy and even in terms of the military and policing. This is widely understood by Moroccan people, as is the terrorist

nature of the tiny number of Saharawi separatists, that certainly do not represent the overwhelming majority of those who live in the region. There is a small terrorist outfit (Polisario Front), but their activities have been largely constrained in recent years, much to the contentment of the participants and wider public both within Morocco and internationally (Taibi, 2021). Therefore, the situation is now far from this being a “forgotten conflict”, as characterised by Peter Pham in 2010 (Peter Pham, 2010).

The seeds of the Green March appear to have grown into a key issue within the MENA region, and a global hot topic, which has had profound ramifications such as Morocco recalling its Ambassador to Berlin (Reuters, 2021). However, Peter Pham is certainly correct in his assertion that the people of Western Sahara are “virtually indistinguishable” from other Moroccan citizens, and that perhaps regional autonomy can be helpful not just for the regions in Western Sahara, but other Moroccan regions such as Marrakech-Safi and Oriental. It is clear that the input of all Moroccan citizens is important, especially in relation to issues of tremendous gravity, such as the status of Western Sahara and the effects of the Green March.

5. Conclusion

The research conducted in the form of qualitative and quantitative analysis obtained from the sample group, along with relying on other sources, indicate that the Green March still has a substantial impact on Moroccan society. It is evident that the impact of the Green March ranges far more widely than a nationalist cause, supported by the overwhelming majority of the population. It appears as if this is a uniting factor for Moroccan society, and transcends age, occupation, ethnic group, background and social status.

The impact of the Green March has had wide-reaching and substantial reverberations, ranging from education, transport, trade (especially in relation to natural resources such as phosphate) (Hamann, 2021), diplomacy (Kozlowski, 2021) and even in terms of the military, policing and the judiciary. The renewed Green March has even been praised by the European Union for its beneficial implications of Western Sahara and Morocco in general (Parliament of the European Union, 2020).

In respect of statecraft, the Kingdom of Morocco has performed admirably. As per the US Department of State, “The Kingdom of Morocco claims the territory of Western Sahara and administers the territory that it controls”. This shows that the Green March has led to concrete steps, on the ground action, and the development of the region. It is further stated that “Moroccan law and practice apply [in Western Sahara]. The Moroccan constitution and Moroccan law generally provide for freedom of expression, including for the press...”. The US Department of State also cites that the region sends parliamentarians to the Moroccan Parliament, and that “parties and local observers considered the elections free, fair, and

transparent. International observers considered the elections credible, noting voters were able to choose freely, and deemed the process relatively free of irregularities.” This is a stellar endorsement of how Morocco has administered region (US Department of State, 2019).

From the Green March- a large group of unarmed civilians, marching into territory colonised and held by the Spanish military, to a functioning democracy, with a generally free and fair judiciary, credible democratic credentials and swift development, it must be concluded that the Green March has profound implication on modern day Moroccan society, both within Western Sahara and outside the territory. It also has a profound regional implication, and also has implications on a global scale. The historical context is certainly important, but the renewed, modern day Green March demonstrates the magnitude of the event even upon Moroccan society in the present day. Accordingly, the impact of the Green March on Moroccan society is significant in every respect, and certainly cannot be understated.

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