

Hassan II and Sorcery

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Note: The late king Hassan II is the father of the current Moroccan king Mohammed VI

There is an aspect of the personality of the late Hassan II that has been difficult for Westerners to understand, which is related to his clinging to some beliefs related to sorcery.

The daily life of the late King Hassan II, together with those close to him, those around him, his entourage, and his harem, was not devoid of practices and behavior marked by sorcery. Away from the image of the king holding power with an iron fist and the modern king imbued with Western culture in general, and Francophone in particular, some features of Hassan II appear to be of a person who is sometimes interested in what is related to magic, sorcery and some superstitious beliefs. History has told us that power has always used myth, sorcery, and magic in parallel with the use of force, political cunning, and planning to perpetuate its hold on power.

Although the late Hassan II was rational and "charismatic" in his dealings with the West and his dealings with the issues of the times and the economy, in more than one act, and at separate periods, he showed that he was not limited to recognizing the authority of reason only, but rather it was proven more than once that he resorted to the authority of sorcery and witchcraft, especially regarding matters that the mind, cunning and planning are unable to discern.

There are many accounts preserved by the collective memory that were reported by more than one of those who lived inside the palace or were close to the king and were aware of what was going on behind the walls of the court.

Many Westerners, especially the French, were perplexed in classifying the personality of the late King Hassan II with a dual personality to the point of schizophrenia, as it seemed to them that he was superior to any Moroccan in the embodiment of modernity, as no one in Morocco appeared more modern than him; he spoke sophisticated French that many of the French

themselves did not speak; he absorbed the culture and knowledge of his time, but at the same time he sometimes seemed more conservative than the most conservative, and clinging to traditions and customs steeped in antiquity, which the rational mind does not accept, such as belief in a number of superstitions and resorting to sorcery and magic.

More than one party confirmed the interest of the late King Hassan II in the mysterious worlds of magic and sorcery and his search and exploration for mystics, fortune tellers, astrologers and sorcerers, some of whom were striving to offer their services and skills to the court, men of power and the most senior officials.

The Alawite kings do not cross the Massa river

One of the strange beliefs that the late King Hassan II was keen to respect is not to cross the Massa river, as it prevailed that crossing it might cause some harm to the king or a member of the royal family.

According to this belief, if an Alawite king crossed this river at any time of the year, this act would trigger the mechanism of evils that could harm the king, his family, or his close surroundings, during the remainder of the year in which the king violated this custom.

It is well known that the late King Hassan II was never known to have crossed the Massa river, and during his visits to southern Morocco, when the royal procession arrived at the Massa river bridge located on the road linking Ait Melloul and Tiznit, the king would leave his convoy to ride a helicopter heading towards the sea and far away from the mouth of the river and then return to the land on the other side of the Massa river, in order to avoid crossing it, whether the king was coming from the north in the direction of the south or vice versa.

Tabaroud

At the beginning of the reign of the late King Hassan II, it was believed that his body was protected by a miraculous power that would prevent him from harm, even by using weapons, whether it be fire arms or white arms, by what is described as "*tabaroud*".

"Tabaroud" is magic consisting of talismans and a special mixture, and its recipe is confidential. Very few mystics know its secret and they inherit the knowledge among themselves in order not to circulate it. Its preparation is subject to a set of rituals, the components, amounts and method of preparation of which are known only to some special mystics and magicians.

It has been rumored in some private circles that the "Tabaroud mixture" was prepared on a night of the month of Ramadan and at a specific moment that only those who are well-versed in the "science of Domyati" and the "arts" of black magic know. It has been said that whoever benefits from this recipe will not be harmed by any white or fire weapon (sword, dagger, machete, bullets, launcher...).

According to scholars of black magic, the effectiveness of the "tabaroud" is not only related to the aforementioned mixture, its description, conditions, rituals, and the timing of its preparation, but also requires talismans and amulets that are prepared by the black magic experts, carried by the recipient of the mixture and the one anointed with it. While some others saw that the "Tabaroud" was just a rumor that was spread among the subjects to perpetuate the sanctity of the Sultan and present him as the caliph of God, who enjoys his care, protection and preservation, and therefore there is no need to think about trying to harm him or prejudice his person, because he is immune in spirit by God and in body by "Tabaroud".

Until the coups of 1971 (in Skhirat) and 1972 (the attack on the royal airplane), the simple citizen saw the king as a superhuman figure, but this image changed due to the leaked events and catastrophes. The Skhirat Palace on July 10, 1971 was its scene, as some of those present admitted that they saw the late King Hassan II raising his hands under threat as a machine gun was aimed at him by a simple soldier who later recognized him and enabled him to escape from those who were looking for him to liquidate him.

At that time, many simple Moroccans understood what had not occurred to them before, and learned that royal palaces could be stormed and the king threatened, and that the latter was not immune to the dangers facing every human being, whether he was a king or just a simple citizen.

"Blessing" and the jinn in the service of Hassan II

One of the beliefs that circulated among Moroccans in the fifties, sixties and seventies is that the late King Hassan II had a special kind of "blessing" that protected him from all harm, and this belief was confirmed after his escape from the Skhirat coup attempt and the attack on the royal plane.

This belief was linked to another belief popularized in some popular circles, that some jinn were in the service of the late King Hassan II, and it was rumored at that time that he (the king) was able to control them thanks to the success of the mystics and magicians from the region of Souss who were well versed in black magic and harnessing the jinn and thanks to some Jewish magicians as well.

More than one informed source has confirmed that some mystics used to visit the palace during the reign of the late King Hassan II, and they are the same mystics who were visited by some of the elite, including officials, ministers, and senior officials, and a few of those mystics were close to the royal court and had a special favor.

The green march and sorcery

Before launching the Green March in November 1975, the late King Hassan II requested that the mystic, Haj Muhammad al-Habib, be brought to the royal palace from his residence in Zawiya (“monastery”) Sidi al-Zouin on the outskirts of Marrakech, but the mystic did not acquiesce to the royal desire and refused to comply with the royal order on the grounds that he would lose his blessing if he left Zawiya, so he asked that the king come to him if he wanted to benefit from his blessing, insisting that he should visit him without spectacle or protocol.

Unusually, the king accepted and made his departure without protocol. According to more than one source, the late Hassan II was alone with the mystic and no one attended their meeting. The king went out of the meeting holding a rosary, which was said to bear the blessing of the mystic, and it is the same rosary that Hassan II continued to hold until his death.

This wasn’t the only time that the late King Hassan II visited Haj al-Habib at Zawiya Sidi Al-Zouin as he visited him again before meeting Algerian President Chadli Ben Jedid in the presence of the King of Saudi Arabia, Fahd Ibn Abdel Aziz, in the year 1983 at the Moroccan-Algerian border at the height of the Sahara war before the army was able to build the separation wall. Everyone was surprised by the late king's travel to Marrakech before he went to Oujda to meet the Algerian president, in order to be alone with the mystic Haj Muhammad al-Habib, in one of the halls of the Zawiya of Sidi al-Zouin, and no news of this meeting was leaked.

Coincidence of religious holidays on Friday

The royal palace during the reign of the late King Hassan II remained pessimistic about the coincidence of any religious holiday (especially Eid al-Fitr) with Friday, as it was believed that whenever Eid al-Fitr and Eid al-Adha coincide with Friday, that is considered a sign that the court or the royal family will suffer something bad, such as the death of one of its members or some other harm.

In this regard, some rumors and stories have spawned, including that the observers of the crescent sometimes took this belief into account and were careful not to fall into its trap, and thus they strive hard to avoid being assigned to see the crescent when it is expected to coincide with Friday. And it happened in one year that there were rumors regarding a possible manipulation in acknowledging the sighting of the Eid al-Fitr crescent.

Haunted places

During the reign of Hassan II, stories and legends arose regarding some places and buildings, especially palaces, mosques and shrines. It was said that some palaces are inhabited by the jinn and some corners and halls inside some royal palaces require daily cleaning with rose water and perfumed with musk, otherwise their furniture will be scattered by a hidden power, as it was said

that there are places that no one can enter except the king, and if someone else enters them, he will be harmed because their guards are not human.

Sorcery, myth and power

Historians almost unanimously agree that sorcery, myth and rumor are considered tools in the struggle for power. They can also create or consolidate the charismatic side of the person holding the reins of power, becoming thus a means of strengthening influence or authority or of destroying and distorting it.

And based on the relationship of the late King Hassan II with some mystics and his use of some practices related to metaphysical thought and sorcery, stories and rumors have spawned and many of these stories contributed to strengthening the prestige of the king.

The late King Hassan II was known for his fondness for the book “The Prince” by Machiavelli, which gives advice centered on empowering the ruler with methods that give him influence over his subjects. In this regard, the historian Mustafa Bouaziz acknowledges that it was proven, in the pre-modern stages, that rumor and tales woven based on sorcery were tools of managing public affairs.