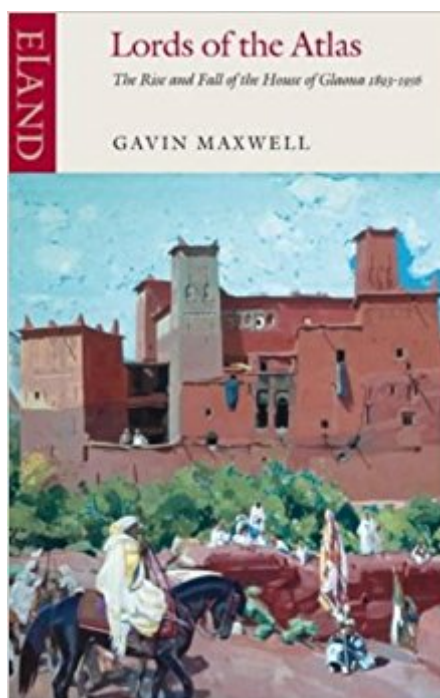


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Lords Of The Atlas: The Rise And Fall Of The House Of Glaoua 1893-1956



Synopsis

Set in the medieval city of Marrakesh and the majestic kasbahs of the High Atlas mountains, 'Lords of the Atlas' tells the extraordinary story of the Madani and T'hami el Glaoui, warlord brothers who carved out a feudal fiefdom in southern Morocco in the early twentieth century. Quislings of the French colonial administration, they combined the aggression of gangland mobsters with the opulence of hereditary Indian princes, and ruled with a mixture of flamboyance and terror. On returning from the coronation of Queen Elizabeth II in 1953, T'hami ordered the severed heads of his enemies to be mounted on his gates. Yet in 1956, when the French left Morocco, the Glaoua regime toppled like a pack of cards.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

"Contains many superb color photographs that enhance Maxwell's lively narrative." --"Library Journal"

Lords of the Atlas is a classic story of Morocco and the rise and spectacular fall of the House of Glaoua. Madini and T'hami El Glaoui, sons of a Moroccan Caid by an Ethiopian concubine, rose meteorically to power in the almost medieval state of Morocco at the end of the nineteenth Century. This is the epic story of the more than fifty years in which they governed the country in barbaric, ostentatious splendor, until their spectacular downfall in 1956. Out of the intriguing and dramatic lives of Madair and T'hami, Gavin Maxwell has fashioned an epic story set against the superb background of Marrakesh and the pinnacled castles of the High Atlas, still magnificent as crumbling

ruins. A dramatic history of intrigue, action, and exotic places, and illustrated with over one hundred color illustrations and photographs, *Lords of the Atlas* is a stunning look at the rise and fall of one of the twentieth century's most fascinating rulers. (8 X 9 3/4, 276 pages, color photos, b&w photos, map, illustrations)

Brilliantly crafted with a wealth of information, Gavin Maxwell obviously did his homework and it shows. It was a delight to read although occasionally I found myself mystified by the thought that such barbaric and frankly extreme behaviour as described could have happened in such a beautiful and friendly country as the Morocco I know. But then again, that's what makes the book so interesting. The corrupting influence of wealth and power is a twice-told tale all too familiar. A "must read" for anyone with a genuine interest in history as well as the subtle and sometimes bewildering nuance of culture, customs and tradition. If the author was hoping to engender some sympathy for Tāhāmi he failed with me. I thought that he was a despicable individual although no doubt blessed with that thin veneer of personal charm so typical of the type.

As a part time resident of Morocco who can often be found "lost" in the crumbling ruins of kasbahs, it was easy to find myself "back in time" whilst reading this book. The "fiefdom" of the Glaoua dynasty is immensely interesting, interwoven with the complexities of history and political intrigues, alongside the vagaries and viciousness played out at every level, from the ruling families and would be "sultans", to the colonial powers. And, as is always the case in history, or in any event for that matter, nothing is what it seems. A reasonably easy read, though keeping track of names and dates can be a little tricky.

Fascinating reading if you are sincerely interested in Morocco or have spent time there: it has a history that is farcical, fantastic and gruesome by turns, but here it is told with such humor, wit and detail (much of it is taken from 1st person sources) that this is a very good read indeed.

I had high hopes for this book, but I was disappointed in how often Maxwell puts in pages and pages of quotes from other sources. Not that they weren't interesting, but I had hoped for more of his own writing.

Interesting but not my favorite genre. Still trying to get past the mid-point after 2 months.

Fascinating read on Moroccan History

Enjoyed the first person perspective of some of the historical events and personalities. The current photographs of Morocco are beautiful. The older photographs of some of the notables are interesting.

I had the good fortune of having the illustrator as a tour guide in Marrakesh. The book and its illustrations capture this part of the world wonderfully

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