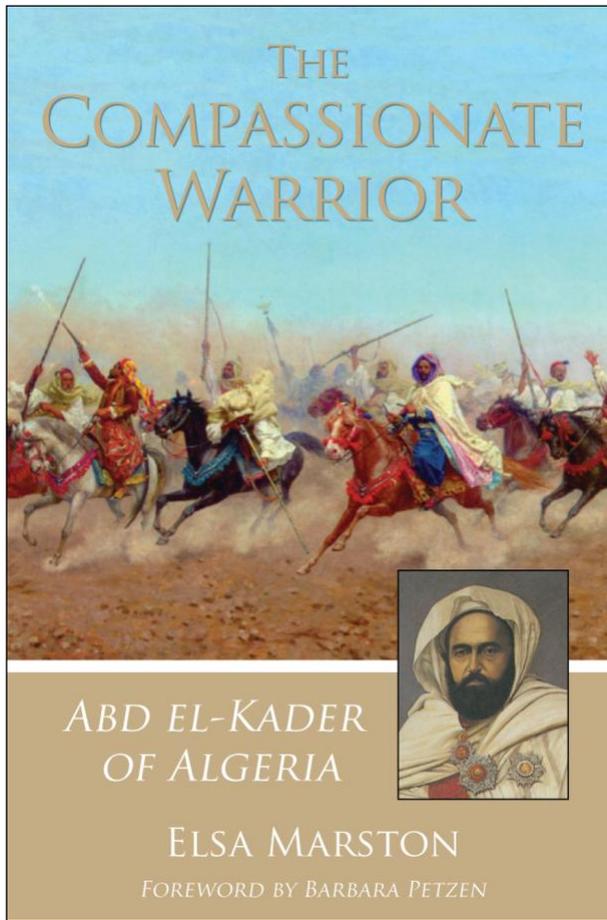


The Compassionate Warrior: Abd el-Kader of Algeria

By Elsa Marston

Foreword by Barbara Petzen



This fascinating biography of the heroic Arab who led the resistance to the French conquest of Algeria, endured betrayal and imprisonment, and in 1860, in Syria, saved thousands of innocent people from mob violence brings a vital message for our times. This is the fascinating biography of Emir

Abd el-Kader (1807-1883), the heroic Arab who led the resistance to the French conquest of Algeria. He was a brilliant military strategist, superb horseman, and renowned Muslim leader. Known for kindness towards his enemies, he became an international celebrity in his own time. Today he is recognized as a pioneer in interfaith dialogue.

Discover how, in 1860 in Syria, he saved thousands of innocent Christians from mob violence, earning praise from leaders as diverse as Abraham Lincoln, Pope Pius IX, and Napoleon III.

This Book Features:

- ❖ 8 pages of color and black-and-white illustrations from the life of Abd el-Kader
- ❖ A map of Algeria
- ❖ A Foreword by Middle East Education specialist Barbara Petzen
- ❖ An extensive Timeline of the life of Abd el-Kader, a Glossary of foreign terms, and an Index.

Publication Details

- ❖ ISBN: 978-1-937786-10-6
- ❖ Pub Date: June, 2013
- ❖ Price: \$16.95
- ❖ Trim Size: 6x9
- ❖ Page Count: 184 paperback
- ❖ Age Group: Teens and Adults

Co-Winner of the Middle West Book Award for best "Youth Nonfiction"

Praise for *The Compassionate Warrior*

“This book introduces us to a true Muslim hero, a man who combined the best qualities of a freedom fighter and a peacemaker. Often called the George Washington of Algeria, the Emir Abd el-Kader led his people in a long fight to resist the French conquest and colonization of their country. Although he did not achieve liberty for Algeria, Abd el-Kader stands in the company of other great modern-day heroes who championed the rights of their people—Mahatma Gandhi, Nelson Mandela, Martin Luther King, and many others. . . . Elsa Marston’s excellent biography presents [Abd el-Kader’s] legacy as a model for young Muslims today searching for a way to be both true to their religious heritage and open to the best of the modern world, and for non-Muslims who are not exposed to enough Muslim voices of reason and compassion.”

—**Barbara Petzen**, Director, Middle East Connections

“Abd el-Kader’s story of chivalry, compassion, and moral courage is more relevant than ever in today’s shrinking world. Elsa Marston is to be congratulated for being the first to write a lively young adult biography of this warrior scholar and humanitarian, who today’s youth and leaders could beneficially emulate.”

—**John Kiser**, author of *Commander of the Faithful: The Life and Times of Emir Abd el-Kader*

“This clear and accessible biography will provide young readers with a valuable portrait of the Emir Abd el-Kader, who was so admired in 19th-century America. It is an admirable contribution to the understanding of the encounters between Muslims and Christians in the age of colonialism.”

—**Carl W. Ernst**, University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, author of *How to Read the Qur’an: A New Guide, with Select Translations* and editor of *Islamophobia in America*

“At a time when negative stereotypes dominate the public perception of Islam and Muslims, our young people are sorely in need of positive role models who embody the highest ideals of what it means to live a life of dignity and purpose. Marston has filled that void with this gripping narrative of the life of Emir Abd el-Kader, a towering figure who inspires us all to a greater sense of humanity and justice no matter what religion we may practice.”

—**Robert F. Shedinger**, Luther College, author of *Was Jesus a Muslim?*

“In her engaging biography, the author shows well how Emir Abd el-Kader, head of a religious order and a fighter against colonial intrusions, preached tolerance and coexistence among communities, as was evident of his defense of the downtrodden during the exceptional Damascus riots of 1860. It is good of the author to bring to light the tolerance of a brave and compassionate hero who was needed then and is needed now as a model of leadership.”

—**Leila Fawaz**, Tufts University, author of *An Occasion for War: Mount Lebanon and Damascus in 1860*

“Award-winning author Elsa Marston’s books about the Middle East are often categorized as ‘juvenile fiction and non-fiction.’ However, *The Compassionate Warrior*, like most of her work, is a piece of solid scholarship, engagingly narrated, that will also have great appeal for adults. The Emir Abd el-Kader is an inspirational figure from Algerian history who deserves to be better known, and this exceptional book is a welcome contribution to that cause.”

—**Laurence Michalak**, University of California, Berkeley

“The special merit of Elsa Marston’s very beautiful book is that the virtues and human qualities of Abd el-Kader play a central role in her story. In bringing this story to American youth, the author is offering them the chance to discover not only the values of mercy and peace within Islam, but also the life of a person who completely embodied those values. *The Compassionate Warrior* is not only a beautiful narrative that is based on solid documentation, but it is above all a useful book for our children who are going to inherit a world which is in urgent need of mercy and peace.”

—**Ahmed Bouyerdene**, author of *Emir Abd el-Kader: Hero and Saint of Islam*

Praise for *The Compassionate Warrior*

“Obviously smitten with her subject, Marston presents his life as a great romantic adventure, and writes in a flowery, flowing style that harkens back to a bygone era in literature. Featuring lavish illustrations with photos and portraits, Marston’s lively twelve-chapter biography is enhanced with notes, a glossary, and a timeline of el-Kader’s life. While simple and aimed at a middle school audience, the prose is lively, colorful and at times quite exciting. It befits the subject, a dashing nineteenth-century hero who rode about the desert, robes flowing in the wind, and sword flashing in the sun.”

—**ForeWord Reviews**, Mark McLaughlin

“Abd el-Kader—a man of principle, Muslim spiritual leader, diplomat, Arab luminary—led a rich and engaged life, despite decades of exile. This Algerian hero’s story provides a fascinating window into the history of the nineteenth century, reflecting social and religious values and the tumultuous political times, and helping us make connections between France’s brutal colonial policies, the Algerians’ valiant resistance, and one leader’s dignified and powerful struggle for justice. Marston’s is an important contribution to youth literature, and will doubtless be a truly lasting one.”

—**Zeina Azzam**, Georgetown University, Director of Educational Outreach, Center for Contemporary Arab Studies

“*The Compassionate Warrior* provides us with a rich opportunity to learn about the life and teachings of a prominent Muslim spiritual teacher who resisted French colonialism. Not being content with returning violence for violence, Emir Abd el-Kader also protected Syrian Christians at a later point in his life. . . . This volume is highly recommended for all who seek to learn about spiritual ways of responding to the traumas of the contemporary world.”

—**Omid Safi**, University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, author of *Memories of Muhammad: Why the Prophet Matters*

“In Elsa Marston’s story of Emir Abd el-Kader we learn about the character of a man who was regularly faced with difficult decisions. In his journey, we see that being a warrior does not always mean going to war, but can also involve simply fighting for what is right. We witness the heroism that lies in human nature, even during the horror of battle, and the compassion that makes heroism possible. There is no avoiding the strong sense of justice that permeates all of his actions, and that that commitment to justice is deeply informed by his faith and spirituality. The remarkable nature of his story only highlights the importance of being true to one’s convictions. His story is both awe-inspiring and inspirational.”

—**Hussein Rashid**, Hofstra University, associate editor of *Religion Dispatches* magazine

“Elsa Marston’s biography illuminates the extraordinary story of Emir Abd el-Kader. This 19th century hero was tireless in his efforts to protect innocent lives and the honor of Islam. His example is an inspiration for us all.”

—**Jacqueline Jules**, librarian and teacher, author of *Sarah Laughs* and *Benjamin and the Silver Goblet*

“It is not very often that we readers and teachers come across a book that reveals so much history and biography in such an engaging and compelling way. Although the life of the great Algerian freedom fighter of the nineteenth century is the central focus of the book, the story also features French and North African colonial history, Christian-Muslim relations, and European politics. This book is an excellent vehicle for young people to explore a fast-moving story of heroic resistance to power, of nobility in times of war, of famous people and trying times, while all along learning—and probably enjoying—history, ethics, cross-cultural relations, and the inner workings of Muslim societies.”

—**Roger Gaetani**, editor of *Introduction to Sufism: The Inner Path of Islam* and *A Spirit of Tolerance: The Inspiring Life of Tierno Bokar*, former teacher and developer of educational materials

Praise for *The Compassionate Warrior*

“Elsa’s book, though written for the middle grade and young adult market, is a thorough and scholarly biography. It’s an important work—one that begs to be read widely. There are 2.6 million Muslims in the U.S.—they need to see themselves in our literature, to find heroes like themselves. And el-Kader is a fabulous hero—a revolutionary warrior in the mold of George Washington, an intellectual champion of liberty like Thomas Paine, and a Gandhiesque defender of human rights.

Non-Muslims, too, need to read this book. The bedrock upon which compassion is built is understanding, and after reading Elsa’s book, I have a much better understanding of el-Kader, Algeria, and Islam in general. *The Compassionate Warrior* is a worthy addition to your library, classroom, or bookshelf.”

— **Mike Mullin**, author of *Ashfall*

Praise for Emir Abd el-Kader

“Today the Christian world unites to honor in the dethroned Prince of Islam [Abd el-Kader], the most unselfish of knightly warriors, risking limb and life to rescue his ancient foes, his conquerors and the conquerors of his race and his religion, from outrage and from death.”

—**The New York Times**, October 20, 1860, reporting on the Emir’s rescue of 10,000 Christians in Damascus

“The most redoubtable adversary that France encountered on African soil, the man who for sixteen years of heroic battles fought for his faith and for the independence of his country, Abd el-Kader is, unquestionably, the most important personage that has arisen in the last century among the Muslim populations.”

—**Le Figaro**, French national newspaper

“Such is the history of the man for whom our town is named. A scholar, a philosopher, a lover of liberty; a champion of his religion, a born leader of men, a great soldier, a capable administrator, a persuasive orator, a chivalrous opponent; the selection was well made, and with those pioneers of seventy years ago, we do honor the Shaykh.”

—**Elkader High School**, Elkader, Iowa, class of 1915

“Abd el-Kader disquieted Paris and challenged all the might of France in the reign of Louis Phillipe. The history of the French conquest of Algeria is in substance the record of the conflict which Abd el-Kader waged almost single-handed against the foremost military nation of Europe.”

—*The London Times*

“Emir Abd el-Kader was one of the most remarkable figures in recent Islamic history, combining perfection in both the active and the contemplative life, an achievement that remains of great significance today for Muslims and non-Muslims alike.”

—**Seyyed Hossein Nasr**, The George Washington University, author of *The Heart of Islam*

“...the unsung hero of Algerian nationalism, Emir Abd el-Kader was a compassionate warrior and negotiator with the French, as well as a defender of religious minorities in the Ottoman Empire.”

—**Imam Feisal Abdul Rauf**, author of *What's Right with Islam* and *Moving the Mountain*

“Abd el-Kader acted towards me with a greatness that I would not have encountered in the most civilized countries of Europe.”

—**de Marandol**, French prisoner-of-war in Algeria

“[The Emir Abd el-Kader] continues to be regarded in our times as the Muslim hero par excellence—a hero in whom the most noble chivalry was combined with the metaphysical insights of a true sage, and the spiritual graces of a realized saint.”

—**Reza Shah-Kazemi**, Institute of Ismaili Studies, author of *My Mercy Encompasses All* and *The Other in the Light of the One*

“Abd el-Kader’s most renowned deed was the rescue, at great risk to his own life, of over 10,000 Christians who were under all-out onslaught from an army of Druze in Damascus in 1860, an act which attracted the warm acclaim of such figures as Abraham Lincoln, Pope Pius IX, and Napoleon III.”

—**William Stoddart**, author of *What Does Islam Mean in Today's World?*

“Abd el-Kader, who fought for nearly two decades against occupation and oppression, refused the oppression of others, and believed that despite all our differences, we were brothers and sisters in humanity. His many battles, as a resistance fighter, as a prisoner, as an intellectual, and as a believer, embodied this simple and yet revolutionary idea. His message, in a world with more interaction than ever before, is not only still relevant, but key for us to preserve our ability to coexist and to work together for a better future. I think he is more needed today than in the 19th century.”

—**Majed Bamy**, descendant of Abd el-Kader, diplomat, and social activist

About the Author of *The Compassionate Warrior*



ELSA MARSTON is an award-winning author of over a dozen books of fiction and non-fiction for children and young adults. She grew up in Boston where her father was a professor of English at Northeastern University. From a young age, she was fascinated with the stories of ancient Egypt and the Middle East. She attended Harvard, the American University of Beirut, and Indiana University.

Elsa is an accomplished children's and teen author. A lot of her writing is about the Middle East and Arab-Americans. That's because her late husband, Iliya Harik, was from Lebanon; family connections and his work as a political scientist (at Indiana University) took them to the Middle East many times. Elsa's next children's book, *The Olive Tree*, (illustrations by Claire Ewart) is scheduled for publication in 2014. It is a story of friendship set in a small Lebanese village. She lives in Bloomington, IN.

About the Author of the Foreword

BARBARA PETZEN is Director, Middle East Connections, and sits on the board of directors of the Abd el-Kader Education Project. She previously served as outreach coordinator at the Harvard Center for Middle Eastern Studies. She has designed and taught courses on Middle Eastern history, Islam, and women's studies at Dalhousie University and St. Mary's University in Nova Scotia, Canada. She earned degrees from Columbia College and Oxford University, which she attended as a Rhodes Scholar. Her academic interests include the history and present concerns of women in the Middle East and the Islamic world, the role of Islam in Middle Eastern and other societies, relations and perceptions between the Islamic world and the West, and the necessity for globalizing K-12 education in the United States.



Portrait of Abd el-Kader in Istanbul,
by Stanislaw Chlebowski,