

Why Parties in Morocco: Political Party Formation and Development Under Monarchy

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Dedication

To the martyrs of the Syrian Revolution.

To the victims of the Syrian Genocide.

To Arab and non-Arab publics struggling to assert their political agency.

To Palestine: the people, the place, the idea.

Acknowledgements

A PhD dissertation is often the accumulation of five or more years (six years, in this case) of intellectual development, throughout which the author is interacting with stimulating people and material. Though the author's knowledge of the material is scrutinized at different stages, there are hardly any occasions where he must reckon with the people – his intellectual debtors. In what follows, I may fail to remember and acknowledge all the people who have influenced my thought and contributed to the completion of this dissertation. To them, I apologize, and quote an Arabic *muwashah* (sung poem in the Classical): “If ever I misbehave in your love, know that infallibility does not exist, save for a prophet.” A prophet I certainly am not.

I came of age at a time when war and political instability was a constant in the Middle East. Politics was thus one of my earliest hobbies. As I grew older, I developed a keen interest in studying Arabic political agency. I was, and still am, convinced that we—Middle Eastern peoples—were largely responsible for our own political outcomes, that we are not docile recipients of foreign bombs, aid, and dictates. I was thus interested in examining the history and trajectory of political agency in the Middle East and North Africa. At its infancy, this project sought to compare my home country of Jordan with Morocco. Through time, it developed to focus solely on Morocco. That being said, like Alexis De Tocqueville writing about Democracy in America, my home country was constantly weighing on me – serving as my comparative benchmark.

The project found a home at the George Washington University's political science department. It was there that I had the privilege and fortune to bounce my ideas, thoughts and written work around a generous, collegial, and outstanding group of faculty and

graduate students. I am forever indebted to my cohort mates, specifically Christie Arendt, Trey Herr, Drew Herrick, Daniel Jacobs, Clinton Jenkins, Michael Joseph, Barnett Koven, Elizabeth (EB) Pertner, Kevin Petit, Mara Pillinger, and Jack Sine. They were not only instrumental in helping me survive the first few years of graduate school, but in helping me enjoy it too. I also appreciated the company and camaraderie of Sultan Alamer, Dina Bishara, Lillian Frost, Lisel Hintz, Audrey Mercurio, Daniel Nerenberg, Dorothy (Dot) Smith Ohl, Fabiana Perrera, Allison Quatrini, Steven Schaaf, Annelle Sheline, Chana Solomon-Schwartz, Alanna Torres-Van Antwerp, Scott Weiner, Madeleine Wells Goldburt, and many others. From the faculty, I'd like to thank Robert Adcock, Brandon Bartels, Bruce Dickson, Alex Downes, Henry Farrell, Martha Finnemore, Danny Hayes, Harvey Feigenbaum, Eric Lawrence, Kimberly Morgan, Harris Mylonas, Stephen Kaplan, Emmanuel Teitelbaum, Paul Wahlbeck, and Adam Ziegfeld.

My dissertation committee has been a graduate student's best wish come true. Since the day I met him in Amman when he was signing his co-authored book, Nathan Brown has been a model of humility, consideration, responsiveness and support. I am heavily indebted, both personally and intellectually, to his stewardship and guidance. Henry Hale has been as excited about this project as I have, throughout its various stages (arguably more so, at times). His commentary was always thorough and incisive. Sarah Binder brought a razor-sharp analytical precision and clarity to the committee and proofread early drafts of the proposal word by word. Nathan, Henry, and Sarah were as caring and judicious in advising as I could have hoped. I thank them dearly. I'd also like to thank William Lawrence and Anouar Boukhars for agreeing to serve on my dissertation committee. William Lawrence helped set me up in Rabat, and for that I thank him.

In Morocco, I was based in the École De Gouvernance et D'Économie (EGE) in Rabat, where EGE faculty, staff, and visiting researchers were attentive, friendly, and welcoming. They were invaluable in helping me navigate the lay of the land in Morocco. Of them, I would like to thank Fadma Ait Mous, Ahmed Bendella, Najib Bounahai, Omar Bendjelloun, Olivier Deau, Manuel Goehers, Marleen Henny, Zakaria Kadiri, Loubna Lhachimi, Racha Lotfi, Badiha Nahhas, Ilyas Saliba, and Christoph Schwarz. My field research in Morocco benefited considerably from the help of Hassan Aourid, Mehdi Ben Khouja, Mounir Jouri, Mohammed Masbah, Maati Monjib, Abdulhayy Moudden, and Mohammed Sassi. All of these people, and many more, combined to make my research and living experience in Morocco unforgettably rich and enriching. My research in Morocco was funded by the George Washington University (GWU) political science department, the Institute for Middle Eastern Studies (IMES) at GWU, the American Political Science Association (APSA) Middle East and North Africa (MENA) alumni fund, and the Zeit-Stiftung Ebelin und Gerd Bucerius Foundation's Trajectories of Change program.

My family has supplied all the necessary love, food, entertainment and support to help me see this project through. My sisters, Rania and Tala, have always provided care, wit, humor and sass to balance and complete my life. My parents, Maher and Sawsan, have exhibited all the confidence in my ability to achieve the highest of academic and non-academic achievements. My father honed my social and life skills that have enabled me to learn from politicians, professors, students and street vendors alike. Having a surgical and encyclopedic knowledge that I have always struggled to keep up with, my mother never stopped challenging my intellect. It is from her that I got my belief in science and expertise, and my aspiration for accuracy and precision. I owe all my achievements, academic or

otherwise, to her. Finally, my partner Neveser Koker nurtured my scholarship through its highs and lows, lent me her acumen and superior intellect, and with boundless, unconditional love, brought out the best scholar in me – after she had already brought out the best musician, traveler, devotee, and companion. I could not have started this project, let alone finished it, without her.

I started this project in 2012, when a tremendous hope engulfed the Middle East and North Africa after a massive wave of regional protest brought down some (and shook most) regional dictators. Six years later, that hope has almost vanished, as dictatorships reestablished themselves in transitional countries, and others descended into bloodshed and strife. Of all of these uprisings, the tragic fate of the Syrian Revolution has affected me the most. It is that revolution that has shaken my ideological and political proclivities, my faith in humanity, and wounded my conscience at its core. I’ve watched Bashar al-Assad wage a genocidal war against the people of Syria – killing, displacing, and ethnically cleansing half of its population. I’ve also watched international powers enable him either by direct assistance or inaction. I’ve seen conspiracy theories and Islamophobic narratives take root to explain the Revolution’s trajectory through a complete normalization of the ‘War on Terror’ discourse. Being the son of a Palestinian family that itself was ethnically cleansed from its homeland in 1948, this was deeply unsettling and personal for me. The Syrian Revolution has reminded me that the struggle for political agency in the Middle East and North Africa has a long and decorated history, that—regardless of the resources marshalled against it— simply cannot be reduced to dictator whims, or foreign power politics. It is not tidy, it is not pretty, and it is often bloody, but it is our struggle. For that reason, I dedicate this dissertation—itsself a study of organized political agency in Morocco—to the martyrs

of the Syrian Revolution, the victims of the Syrian Genocide, and Arab and non-Arab publics struggling to assert their political agency. Who knew that chanting “How sweet is freedom!” would scare them so much?

I also dedicate this dissertation to Palestine, the idea and place to which we—the Palestinian people—have a right to return.

Abstract of Dissertation

Why Parties in Morocco: Political Party Formation and Development Under Monarchy

Why do political parties form in authoritarian settings where they cannot contest executive power? In this dissertation, I construct a theory of political party formation and development in such settings. I argue that political parties in such regimes form to contest political discourse and practice, and develop in ways that are intricately related to these formation processes.

In order to test my theory, I employ a comparative-historical analysis to explain the formation and development of four major political parties in Morocco and one social movement organization that did not form a political party – the Istiqlal Party, the Socialist Union of Popular Forces (USFP), the Popular Movement (MP), the Party of Justice and Development (PJD), and the Justice and Spirituality Movement (JSM). The methodology consists of: 1) in-depth interviews with party cadres and leadership, state officials, and independent observers, 2) participant-observation of different party activities, 3) and content and discourse analysis of media and archival documents.

Theoretically, the dissertation draws attention to the ideational and symbolic incentives for political party formation and development. It also sheds light on the aspirations and abilities of parties that know they have a minimal chance of winning electoral office to shape or influence the debate. Empirically, the dissertation examines the history and trajectory of party formation for an Arab World where Islamist parties are dominant, and few institutional political actors are slated for future roles. Understanding the party-development history and trajectory of Moroccan parties yields valuable insights for social research on the Arab World.

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Chapter 1: Why Parties in Morocco?

Introduction

Why do political parties form in authoritarian settings where they cannot contest executive power? The literature on political party formation has spanned many historical periods, geographical areas, ideological developments and regime types. Thus far, the literature has mostly concentrated on “competitive party systems” (Mainwaring 2014), hegemonic party systems and party-state systems. Party systems that don’t fit under any of these umbrellas have received much less scholarly attention. Moreover, individual political party formation and development in what I call non-partisan authoritarian regimes—authoritarian settings where authoritarian incumbents are non-partisan and formal executive power is out of the reach of political parties—has only recently received sustained scholarly attention (e.g. Lawrence 2013; Lust-Okar 2005; Spiegel 2015; Storm 2013; Wegner 2011).¹ To my knowledge, there are no studies that systematically examine the formation and development of more than two political parties in such regimes.

This regime category perhaps deserves further explication. Non-partisan authoritarian regimes are a subset of authoritarian regimes in which there is no single or dominant party, and executive power is the exclusive domain of unelected non-partisan politicians.² These regimes are non-partisan because political parties operate legally, but cannot constitutionally contest the highest executive office. They are authoritarian because they accurately fit Linz’s (1970) description: they have limited pluralism, they lack an elaborate ideology or mobilization, they have distinctive mentalities, and their political

¹ The dearth in treatment of such parties is reviewed in the introduction of Storm (2013, 1-13).

² Examples of such regimes are contemporary Jordan, Morocco, Kuwait, Iran, and Thailand, but many other historical cases would fit these criteria (Argentina during 1976-1983, or Chile during 1973-1988).

leaders exercise power within formally ill-defined but predictable limits. In such regimes, there is an unelected executive authority that manages the political process. This authority can be a monarchy, a theocracy, or a military junta – but most importantly, cannot be partisan.³ Such regimes are not outwardly hostile towards political party formation, but they are also not particularly conducive to party formation, as holding official legislative or executive office is possible without partisan affiliation.⁴ As such, they do not fit any of the categories of Mainwaring’s typology (Mainwaring 2014).

Levels of freedom vary within these regimes, but three important features set them apart: top executives are unelected,⁵ they cannot constitutionally be party affiliates, and yet political parties operate legally, if not freely. As such, designating them as “non-partisan” is not merely furnishing the authoritarian category with an adjective or a qualifier, as studies of comparative politics have been prone to do with democracies and dictatorships (Collier and Levitsky 1997). Rather, identifying them as “non-partisan” is specifying a set of institutional arrangements that, at best, do not incentivize the formation of political parties. In such regimes, political parties may run for parliamentary elections, but legislative control does not have the typical benefits associated with winning legislative elections. These, after all, are authoritarian legislatures, heavily hampered by legal and constitutional hurdles that privilege the executive branch. Thus, control of such legislatures is neither a necessary nor a sufficient condition for political party formation. As such,

³ According to this definition, any authoritarian regime in which the top executive is affiliated with a political party (E.g. republican Egypt under Mubarak, republican Tunis under Ben Ali, Peronist Argentina) is excluded from the category of non-partisan authoritarian regime.

⁴ The label “non-partisan” should not suggest that these authoritarian regimes are egalitarian when it comes to political parties. They are not, and they have clear preferences on whom to include and exclude (often coercively) from the political process.

⁵ Whether or not the top executives in these systems are formally heads of state or heads of government is irrelevant. Holders of executive power in such systems, both formally and informally, do not reach their positions in a free and fair electoral process.

political party formation in such regimes draws theoretical attention to a novel aspect of political party formation and competition – the competition not only for formal political office, but also over informal public space, for social and discursive presence and influence.

In this proposed dissertation, I seek to construct a theory of political party formation and development in such settings. I argue that political parties in such regimes form to broadly contest political discourse and practice. I define political discourse as the semiotic and cultural arena where language is the primary tool of contesting, justifying and developing political practices.⁶ I consider political practice to be not only the formal participation in political institutions, such as participating in elections, introducing legislation, and formulating policy – but also, social and popular mobilization outside of formal political institutions for political aims. I further argue that in such regimes, a party's social presence and influence is best measured qualitatively through gauging personal descriptions, media and archival analysis, and discourse analysis. Such qualitative measures are better indicators of a party's prominence in a society's political and discursive arena. Influence in such regimes should neither be measured quantitatively nor through studying a party's presence in authoritarian legislatures. Given the historically ineffectual nature of authoritarian parliaments and distortion of elections, presence in authoritarian parliaments would be insufficient for measuring a party's social presence – and must be supplemented by qualitative analysis.

I will unravel the puzzle of party formation in non-partisan authoritarian regimes

⁶ I thus join an emerging current in political science that Schmidt (2010) calls “Discursive Institutionalism,” which includes all scholars who “use ideas and discourse to explain political change and continuity in institutional context” (Schmidt 2010, 2).

by studying the formation and development of four Moroccan political parties⁷ and one social movement organization that has not (yet) formed into a political party: the Istiqlal (Independence) party, the Socialist Union of Popular Forces (USFP),⁸ the Popular Movement (MP), the Party of Justice and Development (PJD), and the Justice and Spirituality Movement (JSM). The distinction between the four political parties here and the social movement is a substantive one: while all five organizations have organizations that are built and framed around a political ideology, only the four parties enjoy the benefits (and bear the costs) of formal political participation (which I will elaborate on below).

Contrary to the disciplinary convention, I argue that political parties form largely as a result of identity-based rather than distributional conflicts within society. Political parties in Morocco have formed to advance certain ideologies – normative articulations of membership in Moroccan society. These ideologies have emerged out of existing regional, national and supra-national identity cleavages. As such, they are products of historical circumstances and existing social struggles. They have historically facilitated the formation of political parties, framed the organizational development of these parties, and impacted each party's position vis-à-vis the authoritarian incumbent. Hence the way that Moroccan parties have developed is intricately linked to the timing, sequence, and historical context of their formation process. The party formation process itself is a product of ideological contestation.

The significance of my study may not stand out to all readers. Indeed, some readers may argue that in Morocco, a Monarchy that has historically been described as “executive,”

⁷ Currently, there are 32 political parties in Morocco.

⁸ This party originated with the National Union of Popular Forces, created in 1959. The UNFP suffered a major splinter creating the USFP in 1975.

“administrative” or even “absolute,” political parties may be paper organizations that have no relevance to politics. Here, one must differentiate between two types of parties that have historically formed in Morocco: the first type is that which has explicitly been formed by the King’s coterie of advisers and officials, termed *Al-Makhzan* in Morocco, in order to contest specific elections, administer governments, and limit the influence of what I call independent political parties. These parties have been referred to locally as ‘administrative parties’ or ‘loyalist parties.’ The second type is that which has formed organically, building social bases and party organizations around a political ideology, not solely to contest elections or hold public office. Locally known as ‘national parties,’ I call these parties independent political parties. For theoretical and empirical reasons, I focus my study on these independent parties.

I make the explicit decision not to study administrative parties due to the artificial nature of their existence. Most subjects interviewed for this dissertation used the term “electoral machines” to refer to these parties, rather than political parties. Most subjects also identified political thought or ideology as a key feature in political parties that “administrative parties” lack. In independent parties, activists devote considerable attention, time, and effort in a type of activism whose fruits may not be immediately apparent. They do so while exposing themselves to real, immitigable risk, which sets them apart from “administrative parties.” At the same time, these are occasionally large organizations, and ones that have considerable sway over oppositional politics in the country. Thus, my study focuses on the motivations of political party activism when administrative incentives are almost absent.

I also focus on independent parties in order to fill the gap in the political science

literature on associational life in the authoritarian Middle East and North Africa (MENA), which I argue privileges top-down accounts of monarchic/authoritarian manipulation of associational life at the expense of bottom-up agentic accounts of political associations. In most regional political science research, social and political agents are always reactive recipients of political initiatives, rarely ever the proactive initiators of such initiatives. While the Moroccan monarchy has formed a myriad of parties in order to control the partisan landscape, this nevertheless begs the question of why it has done so, and why parties outside its domain exist in the first place. Thus, and for the most part, the parties I study in this dissertation have been outside the domain of the Moroccan monarchy. The Monarchy has had to invest in significant resources to manage, limit, and control these parties. They are thus as much producers of the Moroccan regime as they are its products.

Morocco is an ideal case from which to build a theory for political party formation in non-partisan authoritarian settings. It is a monarchy in which no political party can reach the top executive office (that of the king), yet where there are numerous political parties. Morocco's contentious national struggle with Spanish and French colonialism produced ideas and leaders to which all four political parties under consideration trace their lineages. It has a sizeable ethno-linguistic minority, which has mobilized politically along these ethnic lines and influenced the politics of party formation.⁹ Morocco has historically been considered what Steven Levitsky and Lucan Way (2010) call a full authoritarian regime, in which the opposition could not legally contest executive power. Still, Morocco has one of the more developed political party landscapes in the Arabic-speaking world. Hence, Morocco is a case where parties formed in a setting where electoral and institutional

⁹ Though it is almost impossible to ascertain, Morocco's Amazigh population is estimated to be around 33 percent of the country's 33 million citizens.

incentives were almost entirely absent. Moreover, it is a case with significant variation in political party formation, development, institutionalization and function. Thus, a theory explaining party formation and development in Morocco promises to contribute much to the political parties literature.

Given that political parties in Morocco cannot contest formal executive power, the implications of my study may not be immediately apparent. I argue that political parties – especially in contexts where they cannot contest formal executive power – contest power more broadly and in important symbolic and discursive ways.¹⁰ They compete with authoritarian incumbents *and* each other over legitimacy, political discourse, and policy formulation. They influence the policy agenda without necessarily being present in government institutions. This is true in all regime types, where many political parties form regardless of their prospects for governing. Hence, studying political parties in non-partisan authoritarian regimes can help unpack party formation more broadly. If my argument about the motivations of political party formation is true, that leads to a new path for theorizing and understanding political party activism. After all, if parties form in political systems where they cannot hope to occupy the highest executive office – and where there are alternative avenues for patronage distribution – then that points towards an understated function and motivation of political parties: ideological contestation, or the desire to “shape the debate.”¹¹ Hence, examining political party formation and development in a non-partisan authoritarian regime serves as a research strategy to study the drivers of political party formation while holding constant other motivations that exist in other types of

¹⁰ On symbolic power, see Bourdieu (1991).

¹¹ Indeed, recent research in American politics has argued for the centrality of ideology and party social identity / loyalty, rather than individual voter preference, in determining political outcomes. See Achen and Bartels (2016).

political systems, authoritarian and democratic alike.

Additionally, the theoretical implications of this argument point to understudied patterns in authoritarian politics, and thus would help provide a more nuanced understanding of authoritarianism. Thus far, the most salient argument for party formation in authoritarian regimes is that they serve as “institutional vehicles for collective action” to fortify authoritarian incumbents (Slater 2010, 50). While this may be an accurate account for hegemonic party or party-state authoritarian regimes, it is less so for non-partisan authoritarian regimes – where individual parties can not only fortify/legitimate authoritarian incumbents, but also challenge them, restrict them, and contest the legality (and even the legitimacy) of their rule. A nuanced account of political party formation and development in such regimes would contribute to the scholarly discussion on whether parties are merely “upgrading authoritarianism” (Heydemann 2007) or serve as vehicles for contesting discursive, symbolic and institutional power.

Empirically, this exercise situates the rise of Islamist politics in its historical and regional context, and elucidates the prospects of political party development in the Arabic-speaking World after the “Arab Spring.” Political parties did not play a key role in the Arab uprisings of 2011 – the massive wave of protests that brought down some and shook most Arab regimes. This exercise helps uncover whether parties are part of the political structures that continue to be strained and challenged, or whether they themselves are challengers that might help shape the development of Arab regimes. This study contributes an understanding of the history and trajectory of party-formation in an Arabic-speaking World where Islamist parties and movements are primed for future dominance and few other institutional actors have similar prospects.

This chapter proceeds as follows: I first review the most influential definitions of political parties and party systems, arguing for a broader interpretation of the most salient definition of a political party. I then review and critique the literature on political party formation as pertains to non-partisan authoritarian regime. I move on to introduce my theory of political party formation and development, and the hypotheses that derive from the theory (which I will test individually in subsequent chapters). Next, I describe my empirical strategy and methodology, and elaborate on my case selection. I conclude with the theoretical and empirical implications of studying the formation and development of Moroccan political parties, and a brief chapter outline.

Political Parties and Party Systems

Many influential definitions of political parties trace back to Schumpeter, who defined a party as “a group whose members propose to act in concert in the competitive struggle for power” (Schumpeter 2008, 283). The emphasis on mechanics of contestation has led most definitions of political parties to presuppose elections as the predominant means of contestation (e.g. Sartori 1976). Thus the literature has argued that whether driven by ambitious politicians (Aldrich 1995), vote-maximizers (Downs 1957), amorphous office-seekers (Schlesinger 1985) or “policy-demanders” (Cohen et al. 2008), political parties form to reach office through contesting and winning elections. Simply put, parties are thus functions of competitive electoral contestation. As Bawn et al. argue, “parties, and the politicians who lead them are about one overwhelmingly important thing; gaining office,” (Bawn et al. 2012, 579).

I argue that this interpretation of the Schumpeterian definition of political parties is too narrow, and that presupposing elections as the predominant means of power

contestation biases our understanding of political party formation and activism. Such an interpretation cannot provide the necessary theoretical leverage for understanding political parties in non-partisan authoritarian regimes. Given that the institutional space in non-partisan authoritarian regimes is largely restricted to the manipulations of only a few unelected leaders, electoral incentives for political party formation and development are neither necessary nor sufficient. To explain party formation and development in non-partisan authoritarian regimes, a broader interpretation of Schumpeter's conception of "the competitive struggle for power" is required, one that includes competition over institutional *and* symbolic/ideational political power. Such competition manifests both formally (via contesting political institutions) and informally (via contesting legitimacy, discourse and symbols) and its main arenas are not only policy-making, but also language and the public sphere. This broad interpretation would be more suitable for understanding political party development in non-partisan authoritarian regimes, where parties are involved in a collective struggle for power, but not exclusively by contesting elections.¹² Thus, I supplement the Schumpeterian definition by considering a political party a group whose members propose to act in concert in the competitive struggle for power *in whatever means at their disposal* (I elaborate on this in the below section on key definitions).

Political parties compete for both formal/institutional and informal/symbolic power. They play both the institutional competitive game (over whatever political office is available to them) and the symbolic competitive game (over symbols, language and discourse). Thus, an organization that only engages in informal competition over symbols and discourse cannot be considered a political party. A political party explicitly accepts the

¹² Storm (2013) points out that Schumpeter's definition neglects to highlight the importance of elections. While she views this as a shortcoming of the definition, I view it as a theoretical advantage.

political system and agrees to participate in it despite its limitations on party activity. Hence, it agrees to use the regime's limited political institutions as vehicles for its activism. It thus institutionalizes political practice in a way that a social movement organization does not. Additionally, while possibly contesting the legitimacy of regime practices, a political party legitimates a non-partisan authoritarian regime by sharing the costs and benefits of the political system. In other words, only a political party incurs/enjoys the costs and benefits of formal participation in the political system that (as opposed to a social movement organization). The benefits of formal participation can include policy-making, legislating, participation in government, patronage and so on.¹³ The costs include being implicated in the various shortcomings and dysfunctionalities that plague such regimes, such as poor human rights records, selective application of the law, corruption, and so on. Though I argue that formal participation does not provide incentives that are significant enough to be exclusively driving party formation, they cannot be neglected or denied. Similarly, one cannot deny that parties in such regimes are parts of the system (and I would argue are integral to understanding the regime in its entirety).

In non-partisan authoritarian regimes, political parties compete for power against both authoritarian incumbents *and* one another. This dynamic is similar to the one described by Scott Mainwaring, who argues that political parties in authoritarian regimes play a “dual game”: one targeting the electorate and the other targeting the regime (Mainwaring 2003). “Rather than trying to maximize votes or seats, ... [parties] might consider pulling out of unfair elections to delegitimize the authoritarian regime,” he writes (Mainwaring 2003, 9). In authoritarian regimes, Mainwaring argues that the game played

¹³ On the benefits of participating in authoritarian political systems for political parties, see Brown (2012, 24-26).

between parties and the regime takes precedence over the electoral game. I argue that in non-partisan authoritarian regimes, the electoral game is one of many games parties “play” between themselves and the regime, themselves and society (or the electorate), and between each other to contest the discourse and practice of politics. Hence, in addition to the electoral arena, it is necessary to examine the non-electoral arena to fully grasp incentives for political party formation and development, and to analyze party behavior in non-partisan authoritarian regimes.

In this regard, it is helpful to recall another distinction made between parties and party systems. Sartori defines a party system as “a pluralistic system of ‘parts’ that forcibly ‘express’ the opinions of the governed” (1976, 29). Mainwaring and Scully define a party system as “patterned interactions in the competition among parties” (1995, 4). Some studies explore party system weakness (Hale 2005) or party system transformation (Greene 2009). A thriving strand of the literature on political party systems examines these systems in terms of party system institutionalization (Hicken and Kuhonta 2014; Mainwaring and Torcal 2005; Randall and Svåsand 2002; Riedl 2014) – what Hicken and Kuhonta describe as “the stability of patterned interactions among parties” (2014, 3). This study will examine the Moroccan party system (the patterned interaction in party competition) only as a byproduct of studying the formation, development and institutionalization of individual Moroccan parties. Samuel Huntington has defined institutionalization as “the process by which organizations and procedures acquire value and stability” (1968, 12), and Randall and Svåsand (2002) have shown that it is possible for parties themselves to institutionalize irrespective of their systems. Due to the number of ‘administrative parties’ mentioned above, the Moroccan party system in its entirety is not a primary object of study. That being

said, the formation and development of individual Moroccan parties cannot be understood without taking into consideration the competitive party landscape. In other words, explaining individual political party formation and development necessitates an explication of the timing, sequence, and historical context of party formation processes. In that sense, systemic inferences can certainly emerge out of this dissertation, but are only of secondary consideration to the primary goal of the dissertation – explaining individual political party formation and development.

Political Party Formation Literature

Existing accounts of political party formation and development can broadly be classified as regime-based explanations according to the democracy/dictatorship dichotomy. For democracies, two main schools of thought dominate the literature on political party formation. Both of these schools attribute political party formation to material incentives. The first of these schools is based on rational choice institutionalism (Aldrich 1995; Cox 1997; Duverger 1986). For these studies, the units of analysis are individuals (frequently politicians), and occasionally groups of “policy demanders” (Cohen et al. 2008). The primacy of winning elections is central to rational choice institutionalist theories. Hence in non-partisan authoritarian regimes, where electoral contestation for executive (or even legislative) positions is severely skewed, these theories are not very helpful in explaining political party formation and development.¹⁴

Notable in this strand of the literature is Hanson’s (2010) research on political party formation in new democracies. Hanson argues that ideology is necessary (though

¹⁴ The concept of the party as an organized policy demander is of little help because, as I shall argue, political parties form absent of sufficient institutional incentives to shape policy. Moreover, they are seldom content with achieving isolated policy wins, and almost always have broad, ambitious goals with regards to membership in (and direction of) society.

insufficient) for political party formation in “uncertain” democracies. He defines ideology as “clear, consistent definitions of the criteria for membership in a desired polity” (2010, 77). Ideology, Hanson argues, artificially elongates time horizons, thereby inducing instrumentally rational individuals to overcome the collective action dilemmas of forming a political party, and maintain long-term cooperation. Hanson is careful not to extend the scope of his argument beyond uncertain democracies, but his theoretical propositions have promise for non-partisan authoritarian regimes – as I shall outline below.

The second school of thought posits that political parties form organically out of historic and sociological material conflicts between different segments of a national society. Lipset and Rokkan (1990) argue that the cleavages identified as most salient within a national society in Europe were products of two processes, nationalism and industrialization, and the sequential interactions between them. In cleavage-based theories, the unit of analysis is the social group (ethno-linguistic, religious, class). This theory has impressive explanatory power for European cases, and may be useful for explaining party formation in non-European settings. For the theory to travel, two considerations must be brought to bear: most non-European settings did not witness an “industrial revolution,” and almost all were products of colonial struggle. While colonial struggle may substitute for national revolutions to institutionalize regional and ethnic cleavages, economic cleavages cannot simply be captured with industrial or factor-based cleavages. As such, cleavage-based explanations would only provide a partial explanation for party formation in non-partisan authoritarian regimes.

In authoritarian regimes, research has found that political parties form for different reasons and perform different functions than they do in democracies. Whether serving as

vehicles for mass-based (Huntington 1970) or elite-based collective action (Brownlee 2007; Magaloni 2006; Slater 2010), the literature has argued that political parties institutionalize authoritarian regimes. They do so through legitimizing the political system and serving as channels and forums for recruiting political leaders, patronage distribution, aggregating interests, and policy deliberation. Authoritarian incumbents may also create opposition parties in authoritarian regimes to feign contestation, control the political space and create a veneer of legitimacy (Wilson 2005). A salient critique against these theoretical propositions is that they merely consider the formation of parties in hegemonic party or party-state systems. Hence, these theoretic propositions travel with great difficulty to non-partisan authoritarian regimes, where authoritarian incumbents do not need to create parties—oppositionist or loyalist—to legitimate their rule. That said, these theories draw attention to an important function of parties in authoritarian (and I would argue all) regimes: regime legitimation. They also point to the role of authoritarian incumbents in shaping party outcomes – which I shall also discuss below.

To summarize, the political party formation and development literature has provided convincing explanations for competitive party systems (democracies), hegemonic party systems and party-state systems (authoritarian regimes) – the three categories that comprise Mainwaring’s (2014) aforementioned typology. However, these explanations do not travel well to non-partisan authoritarian settings. The proposed dissertation seeks to address the puzzle of party formation in such regimes, a question that remains unexplored in the theoretical literature.

Definition of Key Terms

Before proceeding with the proposed theoretical mechanism, it is important to

tackle some definitions that will help clarify the terminology used in the below theoretical discussion. In the above section on political parties and party systems, I supplemented the Schumpeterian definition of political parties by broadening the concept of “competitive struggle for power.” Here, I further specify and operationalize my definition of a political party. I define a political party as *a group of political activists, united around a particular ideology, who wish to contest the public political space in whatever means at their disposal*. The public political space includes the formal political arena of legislatures, cabinets, local governments, and so on but more importantly includes the symbolic and discursive political arena and public space – of media, language, history and the public debate. According to this definition, the group of political activists must wish to contest both the formal and discursive political arena to qualify as a political party. The group must also have both an ideology and the capacity for formal political activism.

I define ideology as *an articulation of membership in a desired political community that structures, informs, and restricts the menu of possible political action*, providing this action with symbolism and meaning. Ideology is thus a conceptual toolkit that political party activists use to build their organizations, mobilize constituents, attract members, and frame activism in a political system where the benefits of such activism are not immediately apparent. Lastly, I define the capacity for formal political activism as *the desire and ability to contest, if not necessarily to win, formal public office*.

It is important to distinguish between contesting and winning public office. In a system such as Morocco’s, the benefits of winning public office may be questionable given that real authority does not lie in elected bodies, and electoral laws skew public representation in formal political institutions. However, contesting public office allows

political activists to campaign and broadcast their ideas around public governance, to communicate to the Moroccan public that these parties would be responsible bearers of legislative, municipal, and ministerial power. It sets up these parties for assuming such powers in a future time horizon, when they will ostensibly have the opportunity to govern unchecked by the authoritarian incumbent (most actors know that, currently, this is not attainable). It also signals their willingness to be a part of the political system, and enjoy the costs and benefits of participation. It allows them to contest formal political institutions both from within those same institutions and from outside of them – through symbolic and discursive contestation.

An Ideational Theory of Political Party Outcomes

I argue that political parties in non-partisan authoritarian regimes form as a result of identity-based conflicts within society, to contest political discourse and practice. Political parties in Morocco have formed neither to immediately gain executive / legislative office, nor to determine resource allocation among different classes, nor to legitimate an authoritarian incumbent, but to advocate and implement certain “ideologies” shaping the identity of Moroccan society.¹⁵ In adopting the previously mentioned definition of ideology, I build on Hanson’s definition of ideology as “any clear and consistent definition of the criteria for membership in a desired political order” (2010, 46-47). Such a definition for membership criteria in a desired polity, certainly has a prescriptive (normative) element. Where I differ from Hanson is in the operationalization of the concept: whereas Hanson uses the individual as his unit of analysis, I follow social movement theorists and

¹⁵ Abdelal et al.’s (2009) definition of a collective identity is particularly useful here: “a social category that varies along two dimensions – content and contestation. Content describes the meaning of a collective identity ... Contestation refers to the degree of agreement within a group over the content of the shared identity” (19).

use the political party/social movement itself as the unit of analysis (Tarrow 2011).¹⁶ Using the party/movement itself as the unit of analysis privileges repertoires of contention, social networks and cultural frames as the primary factors for overcoming the costs of collective action, rather than Hanson's sole emphasis on artificially elongated time horizons. Thus, on the supply side, ideologies are not only advanced, shaped, and influenced by individual ideologues, but by social groups as a collective. Moreover, on the demand side, individuals do not carry out individual rational cost-benefit analyses to determine whether or not they join a political party. Rather, individual decisions on party membership and activism are influenced and shaped by collective advocacy, contestation and development of ideology.

These ideologies reflect distinct normative visions for Moroccan society: what it should—or should aspire to—be. They are not merely a particular set of policy prescriptions, yet nor are they comprehensive societal programs. Rather, they are definitions of groups boundaries, the rigidity/ looseness of which varies, that bind and inform political behavior, serve as reference points for political mobilization, and fashion partisan activists with a menu of possible political actions (and render certain courses of actions impossible). Because ideologies are identity construction and contestation projects, they are relational (the boundaries of which depend on one another) and draw upon existing regional, ethnic and linguistic identity cleavages within Morocco and its broader regional context. In other words, some of the identity-based conflicts that determine party formation in Morocco are waged both inside and outside the Moroccan nation-state. Examples of

¹⁶ Here, it is worth quoting at length Tarrow's explanation for how social movements solve the collective action problem: "Movements are produced when political opportunities broaden, when they demonstrate the existence of allies and when they reveal the vulnerability of opponents. By mounting collective actions, organizers become focal points that transform external opportunities, conventions and resources into movements. Repertoires of contention, social networks and cultural frames lower the costs of bringing people together in collective action, creating a broader and more widely diffused dynamic of movement" (2011, 23).

such competing ideologies are nationalist, socialist, Arabist, Amazigh, and Islamist. Each of these ideologies has different implications for the character, membership and trajectory of Moroccan society. These ideologies are fluid, transformable, and not necessarily mutually exclusive, but nonetheless have discernable boundaries. In their ideologies, parties address specific social bases and social segments, but these social bases do not determine party ideology.

Party formation, the primary dependent variable of this dissertation, hinges on the interaction between ideology and the capacity of the party/movement to enter the formal political arena – to effectively contest political discourse and practice. What distinguishes a political party from a social movement organization or any other collective political actor is the capacity to contest formal as well as informal politics. As such, I argue that ideology is a *necessary* but *insufficient* condition for political party formation. A political group must evaluate the costs and benefits of formal participation in the political system and decide whether or not it wishes to enter the formal political system. While the benefits of formal political participation may include representation in formal political institutions and access to political resources, the costs of formal political participation may include implication in the political system's dysfunctions. Party formation timing depends on a political group's evaluation that the benefits of formal political participation outweigh the costs of doing so. When a political group is able to effectively contest the discourse and practice of formal and informal politics by advocating an ideology, it forms a political party.

Once formed, political parties invest heavily in various forms of discursive, symbolic and organizational capital in different stages of their life cycle that “lock them in” in a path dependent manner (Pierson 2000), and restrict their behavior and menu of

available options. Thus, a subset of dependent variables in the study under the singular label of party development (ideological development, organizational development, independence / relationship with the Monarchy) are products of individual party formation processes. Hence, an ideology's coherence and rigidity, the organizational structure and capacity of the party, and the historical interaction with the Monarchy are byproducts of *why* and *when* parties formed – the timing, sequence, and historical context of party formation. Together, they indicate *how* each party formed and developed. Though parties have developed in relatively isomorphic fashion along these three variables, I argue that variation in party development can be explained by the timing, sequence and historical context of party formation. I further argue that parties that formed at a later historical stage by and large avoided the development pitfalls of their predecessors.

The three development variables basically correspond to McAdam, McCarthy and Zald's (1996) identified factors for the emergence and development of social movements: framing (ideology), mobilizing structures (organization), and political opportunity structure (relationship with the Monarchy).¹⁷ Yet, rather than treat these three variables as *independent* variables impacting political partisan activity, I consider them to be *dependent* variables, dependent on a party's historical formation trajectory, and code them as the singular variable of party development.¹⁸ Party development is an accurate label because it captures both positive development (e.g. ideological innovation, organizational enhancement) and negative development (e.g. ideological stasis, organizational decline).

¹⁷ McAdam, McCarthy and Zald (1996) define these three as such: framing refers to processes that afford a shared meaning for the grievances and optimism of participants. Mobilizing structures refers to the forms of formal and informal organization available to participants. Lastly, political opportunity structure refers to the institutionalized national political system.

¹⁸ Brown (2012) has also studied party ideology and organization as effects, rather than causes.

Hence, what has become of these parties and organizations today is a function of their earlier development. Later formers have learned the lessons of early formers in how to frame, organize, and manage their activism. The causal chain of development thus emphasizes the importance of timing, sequence and historical context in the primary dependent variable, political party formation. In privileging timing, sequence and historical context, I emphasize the importance of diffusion and learning on the party/organization level, and further correct for a bias in the literature on MENA politics – which has explained political outcomes largely from the prism of “authoritarian learning” (Heydemann and Leenders 2011).¹⁹ Hence, in addition to explaining *why* and *when* parties have formed, I also explain *how* they formed and developed.

Alternative explanations for political party formation and development in Morocco have hitherto focused on one of the three dependent variables discussed above in analyzing political party outcomes: that of the relationship with the Monarchy. Specifically, these explanations have treated political party outcomes in Morocco as byproducts of authoritarian incumbent choices, either as mild disturbances to an otherwise stable authoritarian order or subsumed to the whims of the (authoritarian) King. Though Moroccan political parties have generated an impressive amount of recent research (Lawrence 2013; Storm 2013; Wegner 2011), this literature has either focused on a single political party and its relationship with authoritarian incumbents (Lawrence 2013; Wegner 2011) or explained system-wide political party development as the product of authoritarian incumbent strategic choice (Lust-Okar 2005; Storm 2013). These works have typically privileged formal institutional explanations for system-wide political party development,

¹⁹ For an example of scholarship that has privileged organizational learning to explain partisan outcomes in a MENA context, see Wickham (2004).

often at the expense of agentic accounts of party behavior. I call this a ‘top-down’ approach to explain systemic political party outcomes, with heavy emphasis on an authoritarian incumbent’s strategic choice of cooptation or coercion (Gandhi and Przeworski 2007).

I argue that this literature—while greatly improving our understanding of authoritarian regimes and authoritarian incumbent thinking and choices—must be supplemented by more thorough and detailed explanations of the formation and development of parties under these regimes that privilege the agency of partisan political actors. Given the flawed nature of formal authoritarian political institutions (parliaments, cabinets, local governments, courts) and how authoritarian incumbents manipulate them to their advantage, these would at best offer an incomplete picture for studying social and political forces. In other words, if one accepts that electoral laws in authoritarian regimes skew representation, and that parliaments and municipalities are not optimal sites—and certainly not the only sites—for challenging authoritarian incumbents, one should examine other forums of political activity to understand political party activism.²⁰

Hence, I argue that a ‘bottom-up’ approach, of examining the relationship between political parties and their societies / social environments (in which the authoritarian incumbent is only one of many actors), is better suited for studying political party formation and development. By placing the focus on the parties themselves, I argue that systemic party development outcomes are best explained by parties’ strategic engagement with

²⁰ Jordan’s experience with legal reform to stiffen penalties of ‘honor killings’ perpetrators shows that political parties occupy a prominent position in the policy discourse, that they can impact policy without a sizeable presence in the legislature, and that incumbents cannot legislate and formulate policy unencumbered by parties. In 2003, Jordan’s king proposed legislation to modify part of the penal code in order to have stiffer sentences for perpetrators of ‘honor killings.’ The lower house of the parliament (house of deputies) rejected the law after it had passed by the upper house (the senate), and the King himself had invested substantial political capital in the process. Despite only having 15 seats in the 120 member parliament, The Islamic Action Front (IAF)—the political arm of the Muslim Brotherhood—claimed a symbolic political victory.

society, rather than authoritarian manipulation. As such, political party formation and development outcomes are products of a dynamic social struggle, which though not isolated (or insulated) from authoritarian manipulation, are much more complex than being reduced to outcomes of strategic authoritarian choice – which top-down explanations seem to suggest. In this type of account, political parties are not only produced by the regime: they produce and reproduce it, as well. This approach may offer an entirely different interpretation and analysis of political party outcomes. What top-down explanations might consider a political party strength, such as proximity to an authoritarian incumbent and control of patronage/resources, bottom-up explanations might consider a liability (subordination/cooptation, dependence, and loss of legitimacy). Moreover, a bottom-up approach will better-explain variation in political party adaptation and response to different forms of regime machinations, the terms under which each party participates in local politics, and how political parties may act as agents of political stasis and change.²¹

Political Party Formation and Development Hypotheses / Expected Findings

The previous theoretical discussion produces the following hypotheses that I will test in the dissertation. At first, it is helpful to separate the hypotheses into those that concern party formation and those that concern party development. The first hypothesis, concerning party formation and deriving from the central theoretical argument, is that political parties have historically formed in order to contest political discourse and practice. That is, they have not only sought to contest formal political office, but also to advocate their ideology in the public sphere and contest political discourse. They have formed

²¹ Viewing outcomes in this reflexive lens, this dissertation will heed Howard and Walters's (2014) call for "[focusing] on how political repression and participation are debated and enacted locally" and "allowing local political discourse and practices to drive how scholars conceptualize and study political change" (395, 401).

because a party organization enabled them to do both more effectively than alternative organizational setups. For this hypothesis to be confirmed, I would expect ideas and ideology to be equally if not more important in driving party formation than material incentives. That would form the basis of my ideational (rather than material) theory for political party formation. I would also expect that party formation occurred when a group realized the desire and capacity to contest both discourse and practice through formal political participation. This first hypothesis thus relates to both *why* and *when* political parties formed.

H1: Ideology / Desire for Formal Activism →→→ Political Party Formation

I identify three alternative hypotheses to H1 that must also be tested. The first of these is that political parties have formed for material institutional incentives – to run in and win parliamentary and local elections, form cabinets, or following constitutional amendments. This alternative hypothesis emanates from the rational choice institutionalist literature on party formation (Aldrich 1995; Cox 1997; Duverger 1986). For this alternative hypothesis to be confirmed, I would expect party formation to be dependent on major electoral/institutional milestones.

H1A1: Formal political institutions →→→ Political Party Formation

The second alternative hypothesis is that parties have formed for what I call legitimization incentives – to legitimate an authoritarian incumbent by feigning meaningful political contestation of authoritarian political institutions. This is slightly similar to the first alternative hypothesis, with the main difference being that rather than form independently to contest institutions, political parties here form at the behest of authoritarian incumbents themselves to legitimate the political system. This alternative

hypothesis emanates from the literature on authoritarian strategic choice (Brownlee 2007; Gandhi and Przeworski 2007; Lust-Okar 2005; Wilson 2005). For this hypothesis to be confirmed, I would expect party formation to be dependent on major legitimacy crises for authoritarian incumbents.

H1A2: Authoritarian Legitimation →→→ Political Party Formation

The third alternative hypothesis is that political parties have formed for what I call structural incentives – to reflect a class structure and/or contest resource allocation between different classes. This alternative hypothesis emanates from the literature on party formation in authoritarian regimes (Huntington 1970; Slater 2010). For this hypothesis to be confirmed, I would expect party formation to depend on major economic transformations.

H1A3: Economic Class Structure →→→ Political Party Formation

The remaining hypotheses concern political party development, or *how* parties formed and developed. Each of the following three hypotheses concerns one of the three dependent variables described above coded under the singular variable of party development. The second hypothesis is that parties which formed at a later historical stage (what I will henceforth call late formers), having observed the costs of ideological rigidity, have developed loose ideologies to leave themselves broader room for maneuvering within the political system, and hence a broader menu of political action. The intuition here is that late formers have had the benefit of hindsight, and observed how a rigid ideology limits the menu of political action for their predecessors. As such, they decided to develop ideologies that were less restrictive, less rigid, and more amenable to broad interpretation so as to leave themselves maneuvering room. I code this variable “ideological rigidity,”

and hypothesize that late formers have looser and less rigid ideologies. For this hypothesis to be confirmed, I would expect that the later a party forms, the more likely it will have a flexible ideology.

H2: Date of formation →→→ Ideological rigidity

I identify one major alternative hypothesis to H2 that must also be tested. This alternative hypothesis is that inclusion into the political system has led to ideological moderation from otherwise more ideologically rigid political currents. This is popularly known in the political science literature as the “inclusion-moderation hypothesis” and was most extensively articulated and analyzed in a Middle East context by Schwedler (2006). That is, rather than date of formation, level of inclusion/integration in the political system has been the most important determinant of ideological development. For this hypothesis to be confirmed, I would expect that the more integrated the party in the Moroccan political system, the more likely it will have a flexible ideology.

H2A: Level of “inclusion” →→→ Ideological rigidity

The third hypothesis relates to the organizational development of each party. Each party has had to develop representative bodies, parallel organizations, decision-making hierarchies and leadership structures that best allow it to “form the masses” in its own ideology. I hypothesize that late formers, having observed the effects of organizational structure and various social extensions on party efficacy, developed more effective and disciplined organizational structures. Again, the intuition here is that with the benefit of hindsight, late formers observed the adverse impacts of leadership stagnation and erratic decision-making, and the positive impact of developing parallel organizational bodies to deepen social extensions, and internal procedures that produce good governance. As such

they sought to build bodies and procedures that insure smooth leadership selection, institutionalized and regular leadership turnover, deliberate decision-making and rapid mobilization. They have also formed various social extensions targeting specific social segments (youth, women, labor, professionals, and so on) in order to more effectively advocate their ideology. I code this variable “Organizational Effectiveness,” and hypothesize that late formers have more effective and disciplined organizations. For this hypothesis to be confirmed, I would expect that the later a party forms, the more likely its organization will be effective and disciplined.

H3: Date of formation →→→ Organizational Effectiveness

I identify one major alternative hypothesis to H3. This alternative hypothesis is that the quality or type of party (religious, nationalist, socialist, etc.) has impacted organizational development, specifically that Islamist political parties tend to be more organizationally effective. The main interlocutors I thus engage with here are Mecham and Hwang (2014), who argue that “the parties with the strongest organization, with the most grassroots outreach, and with the clearest political narrative (though often still murky) are the Islamists” (5). Relatedly, Brown (2012) has argued that oppositional Islamist parties have had to invest in various non-political organizational forms in order to survive. That is, rather than date of formation, quality or type of party (and whether or not said party is loyal or oppositional) has been the most important determinant of organizational robustness. This is not necessarily a hypothesis that is a complete “alternative” or mutually exclusive with the one I advance. Nevertheless, the emphasis in the literature has been on the type of parties (Islamist) rather than on their date of formation. For this hypothesis to be confirmed, I would expect that the type of party determines how effective and

disciplined its organization will be.

H3A: Type of party →→→ Organizational Effectiveness

Finally, the fourth hypothesis pertains to the relationship with the Moroccan monarchy. The earliest of political parties in Morocco, Istiqlal, have had to develop a functional relationship with the Moroccan Monarchy. As such, the balance between working with the Monarchy and maintaining a party's independent decision from Monarchic interference is a struggle that all Moroccan parties have wrestled with. Thus, I hypothesize that later formers have developed more pragmatic and independent approaches towards alliances with / opposition to the Monarchy. Having observed the costs and benefits of close proximity and/or radical opposition to the Monarchy, late formers have struck a delicate balance in terms of distance from the Monarchy. As such, they developed nuanced and pragmatic approaches towards the Monarchy that have preserved their independence, and better used the Monarchy to battle their political opponents. I code this variable "Independence," and hypothesize that late formers have a higher degree of independence. For this hypothesis to be confirmed, I would expect that the later a party forms, the more independent it will be from the Monarchy.

H4: Date of formation →→→ Independence

I identify one major alternative hypothesis to H4. Similarly to H3A, this alternative hypothesis is that the type of party (religious, nationalist, socialist, etc.) has impacted political independence, specifically that Islamist political parties tend to be more pragmatic and independent, and less susceptible to Monarchic manipulation. Similarly to H3A, this is not necessarily a complete "alternative" or mutually exclusive with the hypotheses I advance. However, the emphasis in the secondary literature has been on the type of party

rather than its date of formation. As such, type of party has been the most important determinant of political independence. For this hypothesis to be confirmed, I would expect that the type of party determines how independent it will be from the Monarchy.

H4A: Type of party →→→ Independence

Empirical Strategy and Case Selection

I employ a comparative-historical analysis to explain the formation and development of four major political parties in Morocco and one social movement organization that did not (yet) form a political party – the Istiqlal Party, the Socialist Union of Popular Forces (USFP), the Popular Movement (MP), the Party of Justice and Development (PJD), and the Justice and Spirituality Movement (JSM). The unit of analysis in the study is the political party/organization, as I wish to highlight the agency of collective non-state actors in authoritarian regime settings. The time period covered by the study is pre-independence Morocco (1930) until the present (2018). The historical scope must be this broad because these parties or organizations formed in different time periods across this period. In order to examine the variation in party formation and influence necessary to make the theoretical argument, the time period under study must be this broad.²²

There are two dependent variables in the dissertation: political party formation, and political party development. The first dependent variable, party formation, is explained by highlighting the date and social context at the time of formation, as well as the historical incentives for party formation. The second dependent variable, party development, is defined as a party's historical development along three axes – ideology, organization and

²² The empirical strategy entails selecting on the dependent variable of party formation, where all four parties in the study constitute successful cases of party formation. Here, party formation does not vary, but party influence varies. For more on the suitability of selecting on the dependent variable (with variation), see King, Keohane, and Verba (1994, Chapter 4).

relationship with the monarchy. This variable depends on the politics of a party's formation, or *how* it formed and developed. Party development is a *consequence* of the contestation for power previously alluded to in the section on political party definitions. Party development is examined along the previously mentioned three variables: ideological development, organizational development, and evolving relationship with the Monarchy.

There are three independent variables in the study: ideological resonance, capacity for formal political contestation, and party formation process (timing, sequence, and context of party formation). The first two explain the primary dependent variable, political party formation. Primary among these is ideological resonance. By using the term resonance, I situate first whether the party's ideology is a product of regional, national, or supra-national identity cleavages, and second the resonance of the ideology given the existing social cleavages. A regional ideology is one that emanated out of regional identity cleavages in Morocco. An example would be the urban/rural regional cleavage. A national ideology is one that emanated out of national identity cleavages in Morocco. An example would be the Arab/Amazigh or nationalist/socialist cleavage within Moroccan society. A supra-national ideology is one that transcends the Moroccan border. An example would be a pan-Arabist/pan-Amazigh/pan-Islamist cleavage. Like ideology, identity cleavages are fluid, transformable, and not necessarily mutually exclusive, but nonetheless have discernable boundaries. The second independent variable is the capacity for formal political contestation. The capacity for formal political contestation indicates a political grouping's desire and ability to move beyond contesting political discourse and sloganeering based on ideological priors to formal political activity. Lastly, the party formation process refers to the timing, sequence and historical context of party formation,

and is the primary independent variable used to explain the second subset of dependent variables pertaining to party development.²³

The methodology consists of a combination of qualitative tools. I carried out 63 in-depth elite interviews with party cadres and leadership, partisan and non-partisan state officials, and independent observers. I supplemented these interviews with participant-observation of different party activities, as well as content analysis (and discourse analysis) of media archival documents (Moroccan national archive documents, newspaper clippings, US state department central files, intelligence reports). This combination of qualitative methodologies is suitable for understanding the formation and development of political parties because, as described below, the political parties being studied formed in different causal pathways. Moreover, interviewing party cadres and leaders and observing party functions is necessary to understand how these parties address constituents and publics, and how they attempt to build their bases.²⁴ Interviews were conducted in Arabic with all layers of the party membership hierarchy (leaders, mid-level organizers, women, youth), as well as former (and possibly current) state officials and independent observers between September 2015 and October 2016.

I conducted most of the archival research for this study in Washington DC between the Spring of 2014 and the Spring of 2015 when I was completing my coursework and writing my dissertation proposal at the George Washington University. Analyzing and interpreting this data required a more in-depth knowledge of Moroccan history, which I

²³ I will address the JSM's development along the same criteria used for political parties that formed, even though JSM did not (yet) form a political party.

²⁴ As Adams (2009) notes, ethnography is "an important research technique for anyone studying issues of identity because it gives [the researcher] access to the self-understandings of the group in a variety of contexts, allowing [her] to experience the reflexivity of group identity as well as what the identity means in practical terms" (318).

acquired from interviews, informal discussions, Arabic language reading on Moroccan history, and consulting the memoirs and writings of historic leadership figures in Moroccan political parties. I was unable to consult French administrative archives and/or read extensively in the French secondary literature on Morocco due to time considerations. In the ensuing empirical analysis, I may refer to much less works than I've actually consulted. I've been selective not only with which works to cite, but which works to trust, and which interview data to include. At times, and for particular parties, I include much more extensive interview citations than for others. I do this especially for late-forming parties, due to the scarcity of primary source materials on them. I've deemed certain partisan accounts in the interview data credible and fair, and thus included them, and deemed others incredible, exaggerative, and/or hyperbolic and thus excluded them. In doing that, I've also relied on the knowledge of Moroccan history and politics I've acquired in carrying out this research and adjudicated the data accordingly. My empirical analysis, particularly in testing hypotheses 2-5, relies heavily on interview data and writings of partisan leaders and activists. This is a deliberate attempt on my part to highlight the agency, motivations, cultural frames, and language of the partisan actors themselves, and privilege that set of considerations over others. As such, I do not merely acknowledge that my empirical analysis may be biased, but that such a bias is deliberate, and by design.

Within Morocco, I study Istiqlal, the USFP, the MP, the PJD and the JSM for a number of reasons. The four parties under consideration are widely considered to be among the most prominent in a country with 32 political parties. They were selected because they provide the necessary variation in all three independent variables to suitably test my ideational theory of political party formation. Istiqlal is often thought of as the first

indigenous (non-French) political party in Morocco. Founded in 1944, its indigenous roots led to its compelling ideological position: right of center, socially conservative, representing Arab urban middle-class preferences and often soliciting US support for its causes (whether independence from the French, democratic reform, or anti-communist goals). It is widely considered to be the most important political party in the country during early independence, leading some to claim it rivaled the Monarchy. Its relationship with the Monarchy vacillated between an alliance, a balancing act and open hostility – throughout which Istiqlal remained “loyal.”

The MP is a party established in 1957 (with monarchic assistance) to rival Istiqlal’s broad influence and present “Royalist” politicians to challenge Istiqlal’s discourse and assume public office. Established by an Amazigh politician with close ties to the palace—Mahjoubi Aherdane—the MP would appeal to Morocco’s Berber population and exploit the ethno-linguistic fissure in Moroccan society. The MP calls itself a “Royalist” party, though it joined Liberal International (a UK-based international federation of liberal parties) in 2003. Of the four parties selected, the MP was the closest to the monarchy – the quintessential *Makhzan* party.²⁵

The USFP is a socialist party originating in the leftist offshoot of Istiqlal in 1959. It was initially called the National Union of Popular Forces (UNFP), and was founded by Istiqlali leaders who were more suspicious of the Monarchy than their peers. UNFP would become Morocco’s most significant leftist political party, leading many foreign patrons of Morocco to be suspicious of its foreign policy objectives. Its deteriorating relationship with the Monarchy would lead to the exile and disappearance of one of its founders – Mehdi

²⁵ As previously mentioned, parties in Morocco were typically categorized as either loyalist parties, belonging to the *makhzan* (Arabic for political center) or independent, opposition parties.

Ben Barka.²⁶ In 1975, a broad faction of the UNFP split from it and formed the Socialist Union of Progressive Forces (USPF). Of the four parties chosen, USFP perhaps had the most contentious relationship with the monarchy.

The PJD is the product of the institutionalization of Morocco's Islamist social movement. Initially a conservative student movement arguably encouraged by the Monarchy, Morocco's Islamist movement drew in many ideologically heterogeneous groups—some amiable to the Monarchy, some hostile—and eventually institutionalized and joined the political process after several rounds of regime persecution and harassment. Reconciling itself to an agenda of “reform not revolution,” the PJD was born in 1998 out of an alliance between the Movement for Unity and Reform (a social movement organization) and the Constitutional Democratic Popular Movement (MPDC) party – an MP offshoot. It is currently believed to be the strongest and most influential Moroccan political party.

Lastly, the JSM is a social movement organization (SMO) that is radically opposed to the Moroccan Monarchy and the Moroccan political system as it is currently construed. It was officially established in 1987 by Abdessalam Yassine, a “Berber peasant” religious cleric who was formerly an employee of the Moroccan Ministry of Education. Yassine's social activity led to frequent and lengthy imprisonment, harassment and persecution for him and his followers. The JSM advocates an Islamic system of government to reconcile alternation of power and popular legitimacy with the Muslim character of the Moroccan nation. Its vehement opposition to the Moroccan system of government is a nonviolent one.

²⁶ Ben Barka is believed to have been abducted by French Police and handed over to Moroccan security officials, who tortured and killed him. The operation included CIA as well as French and Israeli intelligence involvement.

For the purposes of the study, the JSM is the proverbial dog that did not bark – the null value for political party formation (although it established a political division in 1998). It is necessary to study why the JSM refuses to form a political party whether it be for ideological, organizational or existential reasons, and the degree to which it influences political discourse and practice in Morocco. The JSM cannot be considered a political party because it does not even aspire to hold formal political office. The other four parties do.

These five cases neatly capture the possible variation on all three independent variables, as well as variation on the primary dependent variable necessary to test my theory of political party formation. They also adequately represent the political party/organizational spectrum of Morocco. One of these parties was an off-shoot of an existing party (USFP), one formed out of the institutionalization of a social movement (PJD), one formed organically as a leader of the national anti-colonial movement (Istiqlal), one formed with explicit monarchic involvement (MP), and one did not form (JSM). Studying these parties/organizations will provide the leverage not only for making generalizable inferences about the Moroccan party system more broadly,²⁷ but also about party formation and influence in other non-partisan authoritarian regimes, and parties in authoritarian regimes or democracies that know they have a minimal chance of governing.²⁸

Implications

²⁷ These are arguably the most “substantively important cases” of political party formation in Morocco that any theory would need to explain. For more on substantively important cases, see Goertz and Mahoney (2012, 185-85).

²⁸ All four parties being studied are positive cases of political party formation. There are methodological justifications for selecting on the dependent variable (with no variation) in this regard. First, the causal model of party formation must be tested on positive cases, and cannot be tested on negative cases. Moreover, the hypotheses I test seek to explain necessary conditions for political party formation and development. For more on the suitability of selecting on the dependent variable with no variation, see Goertz and Mahoney (2012, 177-191).

Theoretically, the dissertation will contribute to the literature on political party formation by drawing attention to the importance of ideology for political party formation. It will thus help create a much more resilient and generalizable theoretical framework for political party formation in non-partisan authoritarian regimes, which can include military juntas, monarchies, theocracies, and other regimes where the executive does not belong to an authoritarian political party. It can also shed theoretical light on the formation of parties in other regime types or party systems, that know they have a minimal chance of governing, but nevertheless wish to shape the debate (such as the Green Party and the Tea Party in the US).

Empirically, this study can help understand the prospects of political party development in a tumultuous Arab World. Political parties were not instrumental in bringing down the regimes that collapsed in the wake of the Arab revolutions of 2011. While regimes such as Morocco, Jordan and others in the Gulf have thus far survived, it would serve us well to understand whether parties merely provide window-dressing for authoritarian incumbents or contest power in the available discursive or symbolic as well as institutional channels (or have done so in the past). If parties are part of the authoritarian infrastructure being challenged, we should try to understand how they are so. If they are not part of this infrastructure, and are in fact challenging it, we should try to understand how they do so.

Hence, understanding the history and trajectory of party-formation for an Arab World where there appear to be few institutional political actors slated for future roles would yield valuable insights. Currently, only Islamist political parties seem capable of replacing long-serving dictators, and are thus primed for dominating the Arabic-speaking

political landscape. Understanding the party-development possibilities for their various contenders would enhance knowledge of Arabic-speaking societies and their polities.

Chapter outline and plan of the dissertation

The rest of this dissertation is organized as follows: in Chapter 2, I test my first hypothesis—that parties in Morocco have formed to contest political discourse and practice—by examining the formation history of the four parties and one organization included in the study. This will test my main theoretical argument about ideational reasons for political party formation – and ideology being the primary driver of political party formation. In this chapter, I will tackle both formation and non-formation (the JSM). In Chapter 3, I test the second hypothesis by examining the individual party/organization ideology—its sources, prescriptions, and resonance in Moroccan society, and how that has developed. In Chapter 4, I test the third hypothesis concerning party organizational development. In Chapter 5, I test the fourth hypothesis by examining the relationship between individual parties/organizations and the Monarchy, and how that relationship has evolved. Thus the chapters are organized such that each chapter tests a specific hypothesis and its alternatives. In Chapter 6, I conclude with theoretical and empirical implications of the argument, as well as systemic observations on political party competition in Morocco.

Chapter 2: “For God, Country, and King:” Party Formation in Morocco

Introduction

In this chapter, I test my first hypothesis, that parties formed in Morocco to contest the discourse and practice of politics, and provide an answer to my first research question: Why do political parties form in authoritarian settings where they cannot contest executive power? I answer these questions by examining the formation processes of the Istiqlal party, the Popular Movement (MP), the Union of Socialist Popular Forces (USFP), the Party of Justice and Development (PJD), and the Justice and Spirituality Movement (JSM) – or Jama‘at Al-‘Adl Wal Ihsan.

I argue that the historical evidence from Morocco largely confirms the first hypothesis: Political parties in Morocco form to contest political discourse and practice. They have historically formed when they formulated an ideology that resonated broadly within their social environment, and they wished to contest politics both from within formal political institutions and outside of them. Contesting political practice has often included formal institutional contestation (i.e running for electoral office) when the latter has been possible. It has not always been so, due to the heavy manipulation and distortion of political institutions by the authoritarian regime. Thus, when material incentives of gaining office in institutions have been present, they were long-term propositions. As a result, discursive contestation (through ideology) has historically been a bigger driver of political party formation than formal institutional contestation.

I further argue that to best understand and explain the formation of these political parties, one must examine the linguistic and discursive public space, and determine where these parties situated themselves in this public space. It is through examining discourse and

language that the researcher best determines activist motivations for party formation and party activism in Morocco, and—I would argue—in other non-partisan authoritarian regimes.

Importantly, I argue that the historical evidence also largely rules out the alternative hypotheses outlined in Chapter 1: that parties formed to represent a class structure, that they formed to run for political office, and that they formed to legitimate authoritarian incumbents. Morocco’s class structure, I argue, was not reflected in the party landscape that ensued in either pre- or post-independence. Important electoral/institutional milestones did not produce any of the parties studied in this dissertation. Finally, most of the political parties studied in this dissertation did not form to legitimate the authoritarian political order, but rather to challenge, steer and affect this order.

I weigh these alternative explanations against my own argument by situating the moment of formation in its socio-historical context, by adjudicating the interview data I obtained in doing my research, and by studying party behavior in important historical (electoral and non-electoral) milestones in Morocco’s history. These milestones are not solely those of elections, regime legitimacy crises or “class conflict.” They are moments when the definition of what it meant to be a Moroccan citizen was debated, contested, and momentarily resolved. Morocco’s party formation history, I contend, is a history of intense and sustained ideological contestation.

Here, it is important to discuss my definition of a political party, in order to dispel any tautological concerns. In Chapter 1, I defined a political party as “a group of political activists, united around a particular ideology, who wish to contest the public political space

in whatever means at their disposal.”²⁹ This definition is not drastically different from the Schumpeterian one of “a group whose members propose to act in concert in the competitive struggle for power” (Schumpeter 2008, 283). My definition merely entails broadening the mechanics of “the competitive struggle for power” to examine means of contestation other than elections. These can include (but are not restricted to) the establishment of civil society groups, trade union activism, media activism, and (in extremely polarized cases) paramilitary activism. In any political party landscape, a hierarchy of means of contestation must, and inevitably does, exist. Indeed, according to my definition, the primary means of contestation need not be ideology or discourse. Yet in Morocco, as I argue below, this has been the case: ideological contestation rather than formal institutional contestation (elections) has been a more important driver of political party formation.

Istiqlal: leaders of the Moroccan National Movement

The roots of modern partisanship in Morocco date to the advent of French and Spanish colonialism in the early twentieth century – and local resistance to this colonialism. Ever since France signed the Treaty of Fez with the Alaouite Dynasty of Morocco in 1912—which designated Morocco as a French protectorate—it faced local resistance to its influence. Theoretically, Morocco remained an independent country, headed by a Sultan (Yusef ben Hassan). Practically, the Moroccan Sultan did not have full jurisdiction over his designated territory, with the French and Spanish splitting control of the country’s territory and economic resources and acting like full-fledged colonialists. The earliest forms of resistance to the Treaty of Fez were armed insurrections carried out by the Zayanes tribes against the French (1914-1921), as well as the Rif and Jebala tribes against

²⁹ Though ideology is a necessary condition for constituting a political party, the operationalization of ideology may vary: In some political party landscapes, it can play a much bigger role than in others.

Spanish control (1919-1921). The Rif people had declared an independent ‘Rif Republic’ in 1921, only to see their secessionist ambitions thwarted by the Spanish and the French in 1926.³⁰

When military resistance failed, Moroccans directed their energies to civil and political forms of resistance to French and Spanish influence. The earliest organized political structure that emerged during this period was the National Association (الرابطة الوطنية) in 1930, which was triggered by, and came as a direct response to, the Berber Dahir of May 16th 1930. The Dahir was legislation that sought to facilitate French administration of Berber land by governing Berber areas under different laws than Arab ones. The local population saw it as a divisive tool, intent on separating Morocco’s Arabs from its Berbers and fomenting future discord between them. Local protests broke out in different Moroccan cities to object to the Dahir, leading to the imprisonment of some of the most fervent and outspoken protestors.³¹ The frames of Moroccan national unity were critical to mobilize the protestors. “I don’t know exactly when I became a nationalist,” said Abdelkrim Ghallab, long-time Istiqlal party leader. “My earliest memories are of attending prayers and chanting against the Berber Dahir. That’s when I found out that there were Arabs and Berbers in Morocco,” he added (Ghallab 2016).³²

The National Association represented an important organizational development for political mobilization in Morocco. Three major factors differentiated it from its precursor

³⁰ A translated text of the declaration was found in a confidential report number A-35 prepared by the US Embassy in Rabat under the title of “Politics in Morocco: The Rebellious Rif” dated March 14th 1973. Box 2486: Folder POL 12. Record Group 59: General Records of the Department of State, 1763-2002. National Archive: College Park, Maryland. The Rif would prove to be an obstinate area for the Moroccan government after independence.

³¹ Writing in 1948, Allal al-Fassi (2003) noted that he, Abdelaziz Bin Idris, and Mohammed Hassan Ouezzani were arrested in Fez at the beginning of June 1930 in protests against the Berber Dahir. Abdellatif Subaihi and Abdellatif Utabi were also arrested in Salé and Rabat, respectively (165).

³² Personal interview, April 14th 2016, Ghallab residence – Rabat, Morocco.

resistance movements: first was the peaceful method of operation, as opposed to the military and violent resistance. Second was the broad geographical, pan-regional representation of Moroccans from across the French colonial administration's landscape (north and south), as opposed to the uni-regional composition of most military resistance campaigns. Lastly, whereas military resistance movements were concentrated in the rural provinces, the National Association comprised of urban educated middle-class figures from different Moroccan cities, and as such was an urban movement. According to M'hamed Boucetta, Istiqlal's secretary general from 1974-1998, three cities played a crucial role in the formulation of Morocco's National Movement: Fez, Rabat, and Salé (Boucetta 2016).³³

These three differentiating factors would greatly influence (if not determine) the type of activism that the Moroccan National Movement—and the parties that emanated from it—would adopt. The methods adopted by the National Association, as well as the leadership figures it produced, would have a lasting impact on political activism in Morocco. One of the first things the National Association would do is to institute a French-language magazine entitled *Maghreb* in 1932, to challenge French discourse on current events in North Africa and appeal to French public opinion.³⁴ It was clear to the National Association leaders of the time that this was one of the most suitable avenues for resisting French influence, given that other avenues (legal, military, economic) were blocked. The editor of *Maghreb* would be Ahmed Balafrej – a Sorbonne-educated, upper middle-class young man from Rabat, who would become a notable leadership figure in the Moroccan

³³ Personal interview, April 7th 2016, Boucetta residence – Rabat, Morocco.

³⁴ Al-Fassi (2003) writes that “the first thing the ‘nationalists’ thought they should do is to enlighten public opinion in France and the exterior on the one hand, and to caution the [Moroccan] public and prepare it to bear the burden of resistance on another” (165).

independence struggle and Istiqlal's first secretary-general.

While the National Association leadership included many modernist figures such as Balafrej, it included traditional figures as well. A notable example of the latter was Allal al-Fassi. Al-Fassi belonged to a traditional urban family from Fez, and was educated in Qarawiyyeen University where he graduated in 1932. Whereas Balafrej supplied the nationalists with organizational capability and international exposure, al-Fassi provided the intellectual foundations for the urban national resistance movement, grounding it in what Clement Henry Moore calls a mixture of liberal constitutionalism and Islamic reformism (1970, 75). Al-Fassi's charisma surfaced at an early age, and he managed to appeal to both Moroccan traditionalists and modernizers within the nationalist movement. His fiery speeches electrified urban crowds, and his activism increasingly concerned French authorities at the time.³⁵ The combination of modern and traditional leadership would enable the Moroccan Nationalists to appeal to a broad segment of Moroccan society later on.

The National Association was the first of many organizations with which the Moroccan Nationalists experimented to better frame and form their activism. In 1934, the Nationalists formed their second attempt at an organized political entity, the National Action Committee (NAC) (كتلة العمل الوطني) – known by its French acronym CAM.³⁶ A pronouncedly elite and urban organization, the NAC was the first party-like structure in the Moroccan polity at the time. Its main purpose was bounding the French authorities to

³⁵ In their correspondences, US officials in Morocco made frequent mention of how al-Fassi was much more amenable, pragmatic and friendly in personal meetings with them than his fiery speeches gave off.

³⁶ Interestingly, the French translation was the "Moroccan Action Committee" (Comité d'Action Marocaine) rather than the correct translation of كتلة العمل الوطني, which would have been "The National Action Committee" – most likely a deliberate attempt by the French authorities at the time to conceal the nationalist inclination of the movement.

the articles of the Treaty of Fez, which had stipulated indirect rule by the French authorities and a degree of Moroccan autonomy. The NAC employed methods such as petitions, newspaper editorials and personal appeals to French officials –appealing to public sentiment and administrative beneficence simultaneously. Its most important initiative was a document entitled “The Moroccan People’s Demands.” That document was delivered by different NAC delegations to the nascent Moroccan monarch Mohammed Ben Youssef in his Casablanca palace, to the French authorities in Rabat, and to the French Foreign Ministry in Paris in November of 1934 (Fassi 2003, 190; Qadiri 1997, 59). The publicity of the demands indicated that the NAC was challenging the existent political order in the public political space.

“The Moroccan People’s Demands” were a significant development for Moroccan Nationalists. Scholars have debated to what extent these demands were a) nationalist and b) independent (the degree of French involvement in them). Allal al-Fassi (2003) describes in detail the fifteen chapter headings of the “Moroccan People’s Demands,” some of which included Moroccan nationality, Islamic endowments (*’awqaf*), Arabic as an official language, the Moroccan flag, and official holidays and ceremonies. Adria Lawrence (2013) has argued that these demands cannot be considered nationalist, because the NAC did not demand a separate political entity for themselves from the French. But it is unclear why they had to demand a separate entity to qualify as nationalist. The NAC was, after all, articulating a distinct criterion for political membership and making claims on behalf of a separate Moroccan nation, a nation that was (to borrow a much-cited definition) “an imagined political community – imagined as both limited and sovereign,” (Anderson, 2006, 6). The demands (by a group calling itself a National Action Committee) for a

Moroccan nationality and civil status, Arabic as an official language and a Moroccan flag and official holidays were clear attempts at articulating a distinct identity and political community, unmistakably non-French (perhaps even anti-French), that can certainly be characterized as nationalist.³⁷ In submitting the demands, not only was the NAC articulating an ideology (according to the definition I adopt in chapter 1), but a nationalist ideology.

Additionally, Moroccan Nationalists did not merely make a set of public demands from their colonizer. Besides making demands in the realm of nationality and civil status, language, and an official flag and holidays, the Moroccan nationalists resorted to another nationalist tactic to emphasize their claims: they “invented a tradition” (Hobsbawm 1983). In 1933, the nationalists—in a bid to prove their loyalty to Mohammed Ben Youssef and “expose the French”—instituted a celebration for the Sultan’s ascension of the throne on November 18th (Fassi 2003, 183). The following year (1934), November 18th became an annual national holiday by ministerial decree, and the NAC supervised Morocco’s celebrations of “The Festival of the Throne.”³⁸ As Anis Balafrej, son of nationalist leader Ahmed Balafrej recounted:

Mohammed V assumed the throne in 1927. In the beginning, he had no relation with the Nationalist cells. The French were constantly warning him that the Nationalists were going to depose him and threaten the security and stability of the country. The Nationalists faced this by proving their loyalty to him, and that what they called for was improving the living conditions of Moroccans. Mohammed V began listening to the Nationalists after they organized the first festival of the throne on November 18th 1934 in Fez. The French were shocked by that. (Balafrej 2016a)³⁹

³⁷ For an elaborate argument about how a group can be ‘nationalist’ without advocating for separation from an existing empire/union, see Hale (2009).

³⁸ The “Festival of the Throne” would be celebrated on November 18th until the death of Mohammed V, and would live on to become a national holiday during the reign of Hassan II and Mohammed VI marking the dates of their respective ascensions.

³⁹ Personal interview, March 9th 2016, Hotel Sofitel – Rabat, Morocco.

Thus, in inventing the tradition of the Festival of the Throne, the nationalists achieved the tactical goal of dispelling French propaganda and instigating their alliance with Mohammed V. They also launched a more strategic, long-term process of investing nationalist political capital in the institution of the Moroccan monarchy. As longtime UNFP and USFP leader Mohammed El Yazghi explained:

When Sultan Abdulhafidh signed the treaty of Fez with the French in 1912, the Moroccans considered that they no longer had a Sultan ... The Nationalists worked on gaining [Mohammad Ben Youssef] to their side. This was the National Movement's first big success – regaining the Sultanate, through convincing the Sultan of their cause, changing his title to King, and giving him a number [V]. (El Yazghi 2016)⁴⁰

The NAC's tactics fell short of its stated goals. Its leaders recognized that, to pressure the French, they should generate mass support for their cause.⁴¹ In 1937, the NAC experimented with an organizational structure that generated bylaws for an executive committee, a national assembly, local branches and technical committees – in an attempt to build “a democratic party, whose administrators would be elected by secret ballot in a party congress representing the different branches,” (Fassi 2003, 223).⁴² It had a temporary executive committee that adopted two outlets to be its media arms, the Arabic-language *Atlas*, and the French-language *L'Action Populaire*. The brief NAC experiment led to a French wave of repression that would deem it illegal and thus bring about its organizational demise. The pretext of this wave of repression was the NAC's oath that it would have newly joined members swear, “to be faithful to God, Morocco, and the King,” (Fassi 2003, 225) – leaving no room for France or the French.

⁴⁰ Personal interview, March 28th 2016, El Yazghi residence – Rabat, Morocco.

⁴¹ According to Moore (1970), the NAC was an elite establishment that at its peak garnered little more than 7,000 members (75).

⁴² The temporary executive committee would be in charge of inaugurating branches for this party-like structure and registering new recruits.

The conflict between the Nationalists and the French was escalating. Later in 1937, the leaders of the NAC decided to form a more confrontational political association entitled the National Party (الحزب الوطني). This time, the Party would not oblige new recruits to swear any oaths. The ideological foundations of the National Party would be a) The commitment to Islam as a basis for national emancipation and b) The commitment to the Moroccan Monarchy. On October 13th 1937, The National Party would convene a National Assembly that would issue “The National Charter” protesting the behavior of the French Authorities. This development had so irked the French local authorities at the time that the major leaders of the National Party were arrested, and the party was outlawed. Allal Al-Fassi was arrested and exiled to Gabon, and would not return to Morocco until 1946. Meanwhile, upon the arrest/exile of most nationalist leaders in Morocco, it became obvious to the few who had escaped persecution that engaging with the French authorities was futile. Instead, Moroccan nationalists began thinking about independence. “The National Party demanded reforms and freedoms,” said Boucetta. “It appeared that the French did not want to reform, so our thought changed. We had to demand independence,” he added (Boucetta 2016).

Independence became the frame, and the aspired goal. The 1937 wave of repression was followed by a short period of organizational dormancy. The National Party structure had withered away after that round of persecution, but leaders were able to resuscitate it in 1943.⁴³ This time, the recreated political party was called Istiqlal (حزب الإستقلال) – Arabic for independence.⁴⁴ Istiqlal’s leaders declared its advent as a political party on January 11th

⁴³ Gordon H. Browne, a former Vice Consul at Tangier, described Istiqlal leaders at the time as “The Best Moslem Minds in Morocco.” Memorandum entitled “Petition of Moroccan Nationalist Party” dated September 27th 1943. Box 5762.

⁴⁴ Boucetta (2016) identified Balafrej as the first to use the term “Istiqlal”

1944, the day they delivered the Independence Manifesto to Mohammed V, the French resident general Gabriel Puaux, and the British and American consuls in Rabat at the time. The Independence Manifesto had three demands: First, the independence of Morocco and its territorial unity under the leadership of King Mohamed V. Second, requesting that the king seek recognition for Morocco's independence with foreign states. Third, requesting that Morocco join the signatories of the Atlantic Charter, and participate in the peace conference terminating World War II. The signatories included most of the notable figures from the National Party,⁴⁵ some graduates of Moulay Idris College and the Collège Berbère in Azrou, and some independent personalities. The total number of signatories was 66 persons representing most Moroccan cities under French control at the time.⁴⁶

In typical fashion, the French authorities responded with a fresh round of repression, and major Istiqlal leaders were arrested and deported in late January of 1944. However, a wave of bloody civil discontent broke out following the Istiqlal leader arrests in major Moroccan cities such as Fez, Rabat, Salé and Casablanca.⁴⁷ The party had finally resonated with a critical mass of Moroccan urban residents— enabling it to effectively contest political discourse and practice. “We approached all segments: crafts people, traders, students, and so on,” said Boucetta. “And people responded, even though they were scared ... this is how the party grew,” he added (Boucetta 2016). In 1946, upon the arrival of a more lenient French resident-general (Eirik Labonne), Allal al-Fassi and Balafrej were

⁴⁵ Qadiri refers to the secret branch of the National Party as the “sect” (الطائفة), signifying how tightly knit and dedicated they were - perhaps even to the religious and spiritual nature of their quest (1997, 164-87).

⁴⁶ The regional makeup of the signatories was: 23 from Fez, 11 from Rabat, 7 from Salé, 6 from Meknes, 5 from Marrakech, 4 from Kenitra, 3 from Safi, 2 from Casablanca, 1 from Oujda, and 1 from Sidi Qasem (Qadiri 1997, 190).

⁴⁷ Qadiri (1997) recounts a conversation between Mohammed V and resident general Puaux, in which the King tells the resident general that 1805 people were arrested and 1360 of them were charged with felonies throughout the country (450 in Fez alone). “These incidents are more serious than those of 1937, and they show that the National Party has made strides since then,” said the King (290).

allowed to return to Morocco (Ahmed Balafrej was exiled to Corsica after four months under arrest in early 1944). They would team up again and constitute a complementary tandem for Istiqlal, al-Fassi serving as the party ideologue while Balafrej handled the party's organization, as well as its relationship with the French authorities and other foreign delegations.⁴⁸ In September 1946, Balafrej would establish the Arabic-language daily newspaper *Al-'Alam*, which remains Istiqlal's newspaper until today.

Istiqlal's formation history proves my first hypothesis about party formation. Istiqlal formed to contest the discourse and practice of the authoritarian political order. During colonial times, the Nationalists contested both the legality and legitimacy of the French presence by using all available means to expose its repressive nature. Ghallab noted that, as editor-in-chief of *Al-'Alam*, exposing the rigidity of the French censor was of primary importance. "Sometimes we would write an article just so that the authorities would censor it," he said (Ghallab 2016). Entire pages of *Al-'Alam* would be printed empty, indicating the vacuous nature of French discourse regarding the "protectorate."⁴⁹

Most importantly, Istiqlal did *not* form solely to contest political office. At the time of formation, none of Istiqlal's leaders could envision their success at driving the French out of Morocco and establishing political institutions. Moreover, once they drove the French out, political institutions did not follow shortly thereafter. "There were no elections before 1963, so the party competition was in every other arena *except* elections," said long-time Istiqlal leader Mhamed El Khalifa (2015b).⁵⁰ Istiqlal executive committee member

⁴⁸ In their struggle against the French, Moroccan nationalists solicited the aid of the rising global power of the day – the United States (See Figure 1). During this time period, US embassy officials were corresponding with Balafrej with much more frequency than any other Istiqlal leader.

⁴⁹ See Figure 2.

⁵⁰ Personal interview, December 14th 2015, El Khalifa residence – Rabat, Morocco.

and official spokesperson Adil Benhamza was more explicit: “We lived without political institutions from 1956-1978,” he said. “From 1956-1962 we didn’t have a constitution, and we didn’t have a parliament. The 1963 parliament lasted for two years only, then the state of exception occurred in 1965 and parliament was practically suspended until 1977,” he added (Benhamza 2016).⁵¹

Finally, the formation history of Istiqlal shows that the party was not merely interested in controlling political office. Istiqlal was engaged in an ideological and intellectual project. From the outset, Istiqlal sought to re-define who is (and is not) a member of Moroccan society. Its ideological foundations, or *Thawabit*, rested on a number of discursive claims (which I examine in detail in Chapter 3).⁵² Istiqlal’s ideological foundations – mainly the Arabic language, Islam, and the institution of the Monarchy – were also rallying cries around which Istiqlal could mobilize, organize and distinguish Moroccans. The historical evidence thus suggests that Istiqlal’s ambitions were larger than merely controlling political institutions.

The Popular Movement (MP): the amorphous margins⁵³

In the wake of Morocco’s independence in 1956, Istiqlal was primed for dominance. Prior to independence, the party was not the only party in the country; the Moroccan Communist Party was founded by Leon Soltane in 1943, and the Shura and Istiqlal Party was established by Mohammed Hassan Ouezzani in 1946. Both parties participated in the Moroccan National Movement alongside Istiqlal. That said, Istiqlal was

⁵¹ Personal interview, April 29th 2016, Coffee Shop – Rabat, Morocco.

⁵² The foundations or *Thawabit* were Islam, constitutional monarchy, the Arabic language, democracy, “*Al-Ta’aduliyyah*” (economic and social parity), and territorial integrity/unity.

⁵³ A US Embassy communiqué from Rabat characterized the MP as “one of Morocco’s largest but most amorphous political parties.” Memorandum number A-180, entitled “Fifth National Congress of the ‘Mouvement Populaire’,” dated December 2nd 1966. Box 2492.

the undisputed leader of the National Movement. With leverage over the armed insurrection and a mobilized populace, it was Istiqlal that negotiated the exiled Mohammed V's return at the Aix-Les-Baines independence negotiations in September of 1955. In November of that year, Mohammed V returned to Morocco—as a legion of Istiqlali youth under the directorship of Mehdi Ben Barka coordinated the welcoming festivities—and formed his first all-Moroccan government in December. Nine out of twenty-one ministers in that government were members of Istiqlal. That government negotiated independence with the French authorities until its realization on March 2nd 1956. Throughout the negotiations, both government and non-government Istiqlal leaders played a pivotal role. Balafrej would become Morocco's first minister of foreign affairs after independence. This was the apex of Istiqlal's influence. “We reached our apex at independence, when we started implementing the reforms we had in mind,” said Ghallab (2016).

Istiqlal set the tone for Moroccan identity frames since its formation, and in the wake of independence those frames dominated. Istiqlal's dominance was worrisome to two sets of political actors. First among those was the Moroccan monarchy, who came to see Istiqlal as a threat to its hegemonic position after independence. Second, members of the political elite who did not belong to Istiqlal resented the party reaping the rewards of independence. Aided by the Crown Prince at the time, Hassan II, a portion of the latter group rallied around identity frames that were deemed antithetical to Istiqlal. Two notable Moroccan leaders from the military resistance to French presence, the Army of Liberation (ALN), set out to establish a political party along these identity frames, to rival Istiqlal. The first was Abdelkrim El-Khatib, a medical doctor from Al-Jadida. Born to an Algerian father and a Moroccan mother, El-Khatib became Morocco's first surgeon in 1951, and

helped establish the ALN, becoming one of its leaders. The second was Mahjoubi Aherdane, an Amazigh former military man from Oulmes in the Mid-Atlas region. Aherdane had attended the Collège Berbère in Azrou and the Dar al-Baiḍa military college in Meknes, and was appointed *caïd* (district officer) by the French army in 1949. He later also joined the ALN, and became one of its leaders.

Joined by others, El-Khatib and Aherdane sought to build a party and an ideology that directly opposed Istiqlal. Previously mentioned was Istiqlal's urban, educated, upper middle-class roots and its historic championing of the Arabic language. In addition to those distinguishing features, Istiqlal became a governing party at early independence, trying to impose its vision on a transitional Moroccan society and centralize power and decision-making in the newly independent country. Like many at the time, El-Khatib and Aherdane felt that Istiqlal had not attributed the ALN its due stature in independent Morocco, and there was certainly tension between the ALN and the independence governments. At the same time, a variety of linguistic, administrative and social challenges hindered the incorporation of the Moroccan countryside into the new polity – most notably the Rif and Atlas Mountains, which were Amazigh strongholds of the ALN. Hence, Istiqlal struggled to present itself as representing the interests of the whole country. While it was dominant among the conservative, urban middle class, it lagged in the countryside and Amazigh (Berber) areas.⁵⁴

El-Khatib and Aherdane thus planted the early seeds for the formation of the Popular Movement (الحركة الشعبية) – in contradistinction to the National Movement (الحركة الوطنية)

⁵⁴ In 1958, though its membership was estimated by American diplomats to be between 1,000,000-1,500,000, Istiqlal was noticeably weaker in rural and Berber areas than in major cities. See memorandum number 77, entitled “The Organization and Strength of the Istiqlal Party,” dated August 26th 1958. Box 3656.

(الوطنية) that Istiqlal previously led, interestingly juxtaposing the folk/people (الشعب) vs. the nation (الوطن). The existing research has attributed the formation of the Popular Movement (MP) to many factors. In his memoirs, Abdesslam Jibli—an ALN leader who became a UNFP activist—attributes the formation of the MP to Aherdane and El-Khatib’s exploitations of the inner rivalries of the ALN.⁵⁵ Ashford describes the MP’s formation as “a political expression of unquestionable rural strength and strong tribal support in many of the more retarded areas of the new country” (1961, 319). Elsewhere, the formation of the MP has been described as a tribal response pushing for local autonomy from government attempts at monopolizing decision-making – which coincided with the Monarchy’s desire for a Berber party “to uphold traditional social and political structures and prevent social change” (Venema and Mguild 2003, 44). Lastly, the formation of the MP has been attributed to Monarchic maneuvering to appease Berber concerns post-independence (Venema and Mguild 2002), and to weaken Istiqlal (Willis 2012; Boukhars 2010) in a pact between the Monarchy and “Berber rural notables” (Maddy-Weitzman 2007).

Three things were certain in the socio-political environment in which the MP was

⁵⁵ Jibli notes that Aherdane and El-Khatib founded the Popular Movement on the backdrop of Abbas Messaadi’s murder in June 1956 (2015, 126-32). Messaadi (whose original name was Mohamed Al-Nasiri Al-Tawil, but was known for his nom de guerre) had been an Amazigh leader in the ALN. Heavily influenced by the Free Officers movement in Egypt where he received his military training in 1955-1956, Messaadi became radically opposed to political parties and the Moroccan Monarchy. His radical positions led to his alienation within the ALN leadership, most of whom were loyal to Mohammed V. Jibli recounts that El-Khatib told him: “[Messaadi] is a bastard, it is impossible to negotiate with him. He’s not going to backtrack from opposing the Monarch ... he has to be eliminated” (2015, 127). Moreover, Messaadi had a contentious relationship with Istiqlal leader Mehdi Ben Barka and the two had a few confrontations. Messaadi was allegedly murdered by Karim Hajjaj - an ALN leader who belonged to Istiqlal. Hajjaj was arrested but released shortly thereafter. Aherdane and El-Khatib exploited Messaadi’s murder to establish the Popular Movement, and caused local tumult by leading a movement to move his remains from Ain Aicha to Ajdir in 1958, and announce “a new political dawn ... with their establishment of the Popular Movement” (Jibli 2015, 131). According to Ashford, the local authorities tried to prevent this but were unable to – and though Aherdane and El-Khatib were arrested, their followers launched small revolts against the authorities in Oulmes and Tahala in the Mid-Atlas (1961, 212).

established. First, there were legitimate regional and ethnic Amazigh grievances stemming from the independence government's approach towards governing rural regions, particularly pertaining to establishing control over land tenure, and linguistic experiences between residents and administrators. Rabat's dispatch of Arab administrators, fluent in French, eager to implement French-inspired civil laws to the Rif region where residents were used to Spanish and Amazigh administrators provoked regional tension and resentment.⁵⁶ These grievances were supplemented by those of ALN members who felt like they hadn't reaped the fruits of independence. As Ahmed Siba, longtime MP member and director of the party headquarters described:

The MP came as a result of popular pressure, from people who were in the margins, in the countryside, in the resistance and the Army of Liberation (ALN). These are people who fought for the independence of Morocco, and found themselves politically marginalized and without a party to represent them. (Siba 2016)⁵⁷

Second, though the MP attempted a broad appeal, it had an unmistakable ethnic and regional component. Its founders, who exploited this tension between Rabat and the provinces, were mostly Amazigh, from the Rif and Atlas regions – leading to a popular perception that it was an “ethnic” party/movement (Sārah 1990, 84).⁵⁸ These founders were not economically or socially disenfranchised themselves, and in fact were privileged. As Mohammed Laaraj, head of the MP parliamentary delegation described, they were

⁵⁶ In the previously mentioned confidential report entitled “Politics in Morocco: The Rebellious Rif” dated March 14th 1973, Mohammed Medbouh—a Riffian army general who lead a coup attempt against Hassan II in July 1971—is quoted telling a US Embassy Officer in December 1959 that the Rif Rebellion of 1958-1959 occurred because “[Riffians] disliked being administered by uneducated, boorish and dishonest men. Rabat treated the Rif as it were a colony ... There are many men in the Rif with a fine Arab education. They resent being governed by boors who happen to speak French.” Box 2486, number A-35, page 8.

⁵⁷ Personal interview, April 13th 2016, MP party headquarters – Rabat, Morocco.

⁵⁸ Venema and Mguild (2003) note that, in the Mid-Atlas, the Popular Movement is still known locally as the “Berber Party” (44). This is acknowledged by party members today. “At one point, we were called the Amazigh party,” said Ahmed Siba (2016).

“notables, ... who [nonetheless] felt they were marginalized by the urban elite and the existing party landscape” (Laaraj 2016).⁵⁹ Yet their regional and ethnic backgrounds enabled them to vocalize and appropriate the regional and ethnic grievances of the Moroccan countryside at the time. The choice of the party’s name – الحركة الشعبية – reflects a conscious decision to appeal to Amazigh sentiments, contrasting Morocco’s ‘popular culture’ with Arabic or French elite-imposed cultures (Suárez Collado 2013). At the same time, the name reflected a distinction between the allegedly bottom-led, rural ‘Popular Movement’ with the elite, urban, Arabic-championing ‘National Movement’ imposed from the top down. As Siba explained: “Our struggle with Istiqlal was multi-faceted. Istiqlal was an elite party, an urban party. We were a party of the marginalized, the party of the countryside ... Ours was a party of peasants and fighters, the Atlas and Rif people” (Siba 2016).

Third, the MP certainly benefited from Royal patronage, particularly from Crown Prince Hassan II. As Siba described:

Hassan II once said that the movement ‘emerged from the Palace’ – which has a number of meanings. It is a party that has not been imported from outside, does not have pan-Arabist or communist ideas. It is a Moroccan social project. Also, we believe in the Moroccan Monarchy – for a simple reason, that the Monarchy is the guarantor of Amazigh presence in the country. The secessionist projects (of Khatabi, etc.) have all failed. The party is thus an extension of a social segment, with specific interests that were not represented in the existing party platforms. Amazighs never assumed leadership roles, except for those that were delegated by the Monarchy (caids, etc.). (Siba 2016)

This was also the impression of the MP’s rivals at the time. As El Yazghi noted:

The establishment of the MP was part of the Crown Prince’s plan. [He] was talking about the dangers of single-party domination, whereas there were other parties in the country besides Istiqlal ... There were four parties in the country, but the propaganda against single-party domination was strong. The MP did not come about naturally, but by instructions from the Crown Prince [to Khatib and

⁵⁹ Personal interview, March 17th 2016, Parliament – Rabat, Morocco.

Aherdane] – who would go on to establish other parties later on as well [of the same vein]. (El Yazghi 2016)

In that sense, the MP was the first ‘administrative’ party in Morocco: it was established with Palatial aid to serve a particular function at a distinct historical moment, and challenge/weaken another party deemed to be a threat by the Palace.⁶⁰

This Royal patronage is the main reason the MP survived its tumultuous formation process. As Waterbury notes, “typically the palace practiced private assistance without running the risk of public association” (1970, 238). The Movement announced its formation as a party in a manifesto it published on September 27th 1957. One month later, Aherdane publicly identified with the party and made his famous declaration, “We did not fight for independence in order to lose our freedom,” which became a rallying cry for the party activists (Binqaddūr and Walzīn 2010b). In the immediate aftermath, the party was banned by the government for having organized illegally, and Aherdane was terminated from his position as governor of Rabat. The MP continued to exist as an underground political organization for over a year, as its leaders submitted a petition to the King in April of 1958 to recognize and regulate the right to form political parties.⁶¹ On October 2nd 1958, Aherdane and El-Khatib staged a large rally of some 5,000 Riffians in Ajdir, a former ALN hub, which featured the reburial of Abbas Messaadi.⁶² The two men had requested

⁶⁰ Hassan Agourram, a former MP member of parliament recounted a showdown he had with MP founder Mahjoubi Aherdane over accepting ministerial portfolios and government appointments in 1985. At the time, Agourram was favored by the Palace to be Minister of Energy and Minerals, to which Aherdane was opposed. “I went to see Aherdane, and told him if my name is the problem in the ministerial lineup, you can remove it and replace it with anyone else. But you don’t have the right to say no to His Majesty, because whether you like it or not, you did not create this party, the Palace did.” Personal interview, January 30th 2016, Dino’s Coffee Shop – Marrakech, Morocco.

⁶¹ This caused a political crisis, as Prime Minister M’barek Bekkay was sympathetic to the MP and submitted the petition on their behalf. In protest, the Istiqlali ministers in his cabinet resigned because he was aligning with a party he himself had outlawed a few months back. As a result, Bekkay’s government fell and he was forced to resign (Binqaddūr and Walzīn 2010b).

⁶² See footnote 55.

permission for the transfer of Messaadi's body, but were denied. Hence, Aherdane and El-Khatib were arrested for "illegal exhumation, unauthorized organization of a public meeting, and 'outrages' against the agents of authority" and remained in prison for two months (Ashford 1961, 323-24). Shortly thereafter on November 15th, the Dahir (Law) of Public Freedoms (No. 1-58-376) was published. That law regulated the establishment of new political parties, which the MP claimed as a triumph. "We launched the pluralism of Moroccan political party life," said Siba (2016). The MP obtained official recognition and legal status in February 1959, and convened its first congress later in November of that year.

The MP's formation history also partially proves the first hypothesis in Chapter 1. The MP had formed to contest Istiqlal, and hence, was bound by competing with Istiqlal in all the avenues it occupied – the media, the public sphere, and public political office. It thus advocated an alternate definition of Morocco's citizenship – one that downplayed Morocco's Arab identity and privileged its Amazigh roots. Aherdane specifically fiercely resisted Morocco's Arab designation,⁶³ and had a bitter personal enmity with Allal Al-Fassi.⁶⁴ Though aided by the Crown Prince, the MP did not form to legitimate the Monarchy, as the Monarchy's legitimacy was unquestioned in the immediate aftermath of Morocco's independence. Indeed, the Monarchy had unanimous support from almost all political factions in the country, including Istiqlal.

The MP also did not form to represent the interests of a particular social class. Though making claims on behalf of "the people" and "the disenfranchised," the MP itself

⁶³ See ("أحرضان يتهم علال الفاسي بحضور جلسات التعذيب بدار بريشة") <http://www.alyaoum24.com/256421.html>

⁶⁴ See ("أحرضان: علال الفاسي لم يقدم شيئا لاستقلال المغرب غير الكلام في إذاعة القاهرة") <http://www.alyaoum24.com/172006.html>

was (like Istiqlal) an elite-driven project led by elites (or “notables,” as Laaraj described them) who wanted a piece of the political pie for themselves. Lastly, while the MP formed to represent its constituents in political institutions, it did not form merely to contest elections. There were no parliamentary elections held until 1963, and when those were held, the palace formed a party, the Federation for the Defense of Constitutional Institutions (known as FDIC) to contest those elections. Though MP activists participated in the FDIC, the MP was not the chosen “administrative party” at the time of the first parliamentary election of 1963.

The Union of Socialist Popular Forces (USFP): the leftist latecomers

The formation of the MP would only be the beginning of Istiqlal’s troubles, which would only compound after that. If Istiqlal found it easy to dismiss the MP as a leftover of French Colonialism,⁶⁵ it could not easily explain its internal fissures and rivalries – which were multi-faceted, inter-generational, and at the top leadership level. Even before independence, Istiqlal’s leadership did not see eye-to-eye on an independence strategy. Most notably, Allal al-Fassi was against the negotiations of Aix-Les-Baines and refused to attend them. “Allal [al-Fassi] did not agree to Aix-Les-Baines, because he did not consider that it will lead to full independence of Morocco,” said his son Abdelouahed. “He also thought that the armed resistance was gaining ground, and that independence was not only about Morocco, but about Algeria [and the whole Maghreb] as well. He thought the independence that would result would be incomplete,” he added (El Fassi 2016).⁶⁶

After independence, Istiqlal’s leadership differences would only grow. The colonial

⁶⁵ This discourse is pervasive among parties that emerged from the National Movement: Istiqlal, UNFP, USFP, etc.

⁶⁶ Personal interview, April 6th 2016, Allal al-Fassi Foundation – Rabat, Morocco.

struggle on the ground – particularly the armed struggle under the rubric of the ALN – produced leadership figures that, although sympathetic to Istiqlal, were not part of its decision-making bodies. “The executive committee of the Istiqlal Party before independence had a lot of traditional and conservative people. After independence, they no longer had a social or political role. The time had passed them,” said Abdelwahed Radi, a long-serving UNFP/USFP leader. He continued:

There was a new emerging leadership within Istiqlal, especially in the trade union and syndicate arm of the party, and in the armed resistance and the liberation army ... A few people stood out, and had a lot of influence, and the traditional leadership lost touch with them. At the same time, the Party did not give this new emerging elite its due prominence. (Radi 2016)⁶⁷

There was friction at the top, as different personalities clashed and viewpoints collided.⁶⁸ Once Istiqlal was charged with forming the government under Ahmed Balafrej and then Abdallah Ibrahim, this friction would be exacerbated by the jostling over ministerial appointments.⁶⁹

There were also organizational issues that metastasized after independence. The party’s first four national conventions were held in secret during the protectorate period. Amidst calls to hold a post-independence convention to prepare the party for the next phase, there was discord in the leadership regarding the possible attendees. As El Yazghi explained:

⁶⁷ Personal interview, October 11th 2016, Radi residence – Rabat, Morocco.

⁶⁸ Jibli recounted the events of an Istiqlal “Political Committee” meeting where he clashed with Mehdi Ben Barka and Allal al-Fassi over the state of the party (2015, 164-67).

⁶⁹ Anis Balafrej narrated a portion of the leadership rivalry: “Abdallah Ibrahim formed his government by refusing to abide by the party leadership’s decision, and my father refused to join that government despite pleas by Mohammed V. Istiqlal as a party decided not to form the government back then. Abdallah Ibrahim formed the government in a personal capacity. My father resigned because he wanted to keep the party unified” (Anis Balafrej 2016a). Moreover, Abderrahim Bouabid wrote in his memoirs that Mohammed V had instructed Allal al-Fassi to form the government in late 1958, but that some from within the party informed the King that not everyone in Istiqlal accepted al-Fassi’s leadership. This made al-Fassi furious, and he retired to his house in Tangier (Bouabid 2012, 184-85).

Mehdi Ben Barka and those close to him considered that the convention must be democratic – that the delegates in the convention should be elected by the membership base. The other faction (Ahmed Balafrej, Mohammed Lyazidi, Omar Benabdeljalil) considered that there are historic leadership personalities that founded the party, and hence must not be subject to a vote by their peers. (El Yazghi 2016)

Whatever the rationale was behind appointing vs. electing delegates, Istiqlal's executive committee could not agree on this issue, and hence could not hold a party convention.⁷⁰

Then there were what could be described as philosophical or generational differences amongst different segments of Istiqlal.⁷¹ The party was split between a conservative, traditional faction, and a progressive, modernist one. The conservative faction, which included al-Fassi, Qadiri and Benabdeljalil, believed that reforms after independence needed to proceed in a gradual pace, and trusted the King to eventually deliver on these reforms. The progressive faction, which included Ben Barka, Bouabid, and Abdallah Ibrahim, in addition to Mohamed (Faqih) al-Basry (head of the armed resistance) and Mahjoub bin Siddiq (head of the Moroccan Union for Labor – known by its French acronym UMT), believed that the pace of reforms after independence was too slow. “The party's youth had a different vision than the leadership's,” said Radi. “They had a progressive, modernist vision,” he added (Radi 2016).

Finally, and relatedly, Istiqlal's contentious relationship with the monarchy was cause for division within its ranks. Istiqlal had made it quite clear that it sought a democratic system of governance, with only some executive authority for the King.⁷² The

⁷⁰ Jibli notes that the executive committee members wanted to appoint delegates to account for scientific and educational attainment, as they claimed most party members were uneducated (2015, 167).

⁷¹ The ‘generational’ aspect of the leadership rivalry, as many leaders who remained with Istiqlal (E.g. Ghallab, Boucetta, El Khalifa) were of the same age as those who spearheaded the split and eventually formed UNFP (Ben Barka, Bouabid, Ibrahim).

⁷² A US Embassy in Madrid correspondence with Washington, DC dated November 22nd 1955 enclosed a translated Istiqlal communiqué entitled “Istiqlal Wishes to Establish a Political Democracy in Morocco.” Box 3653.

conservative faction within Istiqlal advocated a continued cordial relationship with the Monarchy, despite the delay of implementing democratic reforms. The progressive faction inclined towards confrontation.⁷³ As longtime Istiqlal party activist leader Mhamed El Khalifa exclaimed:

Why did Istiqlal's leadership accept its diminished role in an independent Morocco, and maintain its cordial relationship with the Monarchy? The King got what he wanted— complete control of Morocco—but the people did not get what they wanted – democracy. This is the reason why there was a revolution inside the party. (El Khalifa 2015a)⁷⁴

UNFP leaders emphasized the Monarchic institution's role in independent Morocco as being a key factor in Istiqlal party divisions. El Yazghi said:

The UNFP came about to insure the implementation of the contract reached between Mohammed V and the National Movement before Morocco's independence. We struggled for independence, but also for democracy. There was no turning back to the institution of the Monarchy as it was before the arrival of the French. (El Yazghi 2016)

Abdelwahed Radi concurred: “There were differences between the Istiqlal left and the Istiqlal right, and differences between Istiqlal and the Monarchy, but most significantly – between the Istiqlal left and the Monarchy. This caused the secession” (2016). Both El Yazghi and Radi attributed the formation of the UNFP to differences between the left and right wings of Istiqlal on the character of the party, and the differences between the Istiqlal left and the Crown Prince on the character of independent Morocco.

For all these reasons, Istiqlal suffered a split that would go on to create the National Union of Popular Forces (known by its French acronym, UNFP). On January 25th 1959, the progressive faction—led by Mehdi Ben Barka, Abdallah Ibrahim, Abderrahim

⁷³ Boucetta noted that “Some of us—especially in the armed resistance—thought about deposing Mohammed V. But his popularity was through the roof. How were we supposed to do that? We couldn't” (Boucetta 2016).

⁷⁴ Personal interview, December 5th 2015, El Khalifa residence – Rabat, Morocco.

Bouabid, Mahjoub Bin Siddiq and al-Fqih al-Basri—announced the formation of ‘the Independent Associations of the Istiqlal Party.’ They severed ties with the executive committee of the party and put together local (municipal) party conventions to gather support. As El Yazghi recounted:

Mehdi Ben Barka gathered the regional conventions of Istiqlal. I attended the one in Rabat. There were nine regional conventions for Istiqlal that were held prior to that ... Ben Barka went about it in a democratic way – asking the regional conventions if they wanted to join [us] or not. (El Yazghi 2016)

A few weeks later, the ‘Independent Associations’ wished to register their organization as a political party, and did so under the name of “The United Associations of the Istiqlal Party” on March 6th 1959. The conservative faction, led by Allal al-Fassi and Ahmed Balafrej, would not relinquish the name of their party without a fight. That summer (1959), they took the newly established United Associations to court over the propriety of the Istiqlal name. As some Istiqlal members and leaders rallied around the traditional leadership, and each faction claimed control of different branches in 1959, it became apparent to the secessionists that they could not control the whole party. On September 6th 1959, they held their first party convention, calling themselves the National Union of Popular Forces – الاتحاد الوطني للقوات الشعبية.

The UNFP inaugurated its activism by advocating a slightly different definition of membership in the Moroccan polity than that of Istiqlal. It included the former progressive faction of the Istiqlal, some members of the Shura and Istiqlal Party, some members of the MP, some of members of the Liberal Independents Party (PLI), and some members of the UMT, ALN and the National Union of Moroccan Students (known by its French acronym, UNEM). In its choice of name, it was deliberate in portraying itself as an umbrella organization of ‘National’ (i.e. Moroccan) forces with a ‘popular,’ progressive twist. The

term ‘socialist’ was notably absent from the name at that time. This was due to its association with a French/foreign intellectual reference point in a newly independent polity. As El Yazghi explained:

Ben Barka said we would practice socialism, but it was better not to call ourselves that. Tactically speaking, he believed if we called ourselves socialist, the fight against us would be fiercer. By using ‘National’ in the name, the symbolic framework would remain that of the nation ...The National framework was dominant in the late 1950s, to build the newly independent Morocco. But the progressive framework was [also] present. (El Yazghi 2016)

Radi elaborated:

The word [socialism] was problematic, and you couldn’t use it ... Mehdi wanted the UNFP to be a big party with many elements ... So [he] stressed national unity, more than socialism. Socialism may have been divisive. But a National Union would bind people. (Radi 2016)

The ‘National’ frame championed by Istiqlal was so dominant in the late 1950s that it was unfeasible for those who had emanated from the same movement to challenge it.

The new party quickly began manufacturing ideological differences to differentiate itself from Istiqlal (for a lengthier discussion, see Chapter 3). Former UNFP members and leaders were split on whether or not these ideological differences were real. “There was an ideological difference between Istiqlal and UNFP at formation,” said El Yazghi. “The evidence is that Istiqlal accepted the constitution of 1962 and rallied people to accept it,” he added (El Yazghi 2016). Former member Mohammed Berrada had a different opinion. “In the beginning, there was a lot of intense competition between UNFP and Istiqlal,” he said. “The secession in 1959 was not based on social or ideological reasons. It was not the time yet for an ideological split,” he added (Berrada 2016).⁷⁵ Regardless of whether or not these ideological differences were real, the UNFP realized that it had to distinguish itself

⁷⁵ Personal interview, May 3rd 2016, Coffee Shop – Rabat, Morocco.

from Istiqlal. The most opportune avenue for doing so was in the ideological realm, in advocating a different definition of membership in the Moroccan polity. This was frequently expressed by accusing the Istiqlalis of being reactionary stooges of the Monarchy, and by claims of being the vanguard of the progressive segments of Moroccan society.

The UNFP's rhetorical and discursive investments would lead to a tumultuous early life. Its first few years witnessed some of its members accused in plots to overthrow the regime in 1963, the suspension of parliament and state of exception in 1965, and the abduction and 'disappearance' of its leader Ben Barka also in 1965. In 1972, it would witness a leadership crisis and another internal split, resulting in its current name: The Union for Socialist Popular Forces (USFP) – الإتحاد الاشتراكي للقوات الشعبية. The most notable reason for the formation of the USFP was a disagreement between Abdallah Ibrahim and Abderrahim Bouabid, who were both senior leaders at the UNFP, for the party's direction. It worth quoting at length from El Yazghi:

For Abdallah Ibrahim, [the UNFP] had to reach an agreement with the Palace on the [formation of the] government. He thought we had to return to [leading the] government, and this government [had] to carry out reforms, to be followed by elections – in that order. Abderrahim Bouabid had a different opinion: elections first, and then when the institutions are rectified, we pass reforms. Bouabid rejected the idea of top-down reforms, and believed that reforms needed to be with public participation ... That is why Ibrahim never participated in elections ... For him, UNFP needed to lead the process of reform. For the USFP, the sequence had to be different. Elections first, then reform ... You work within the constraints of the institutions you have, and change it from within. (El Yazghi 2016)

The adoption of the mantra to 'work from within Moroccan political regardless of their imperfections' accompanied some important organizational and ideological tweaking. Organizationally, the USFP severed ties with the powerful labor union UMT, whose members wanted to prioritize syndicate work over political activism and had a strong

influence over UNFP decisions. Ideologically, the USFP felt comfortable enough to adopt the socialist label, while renouncing political violence as an acceptable method of achieving political gains. As Radi said:

We needed to build our party, and we decided that we wanted to reach the government through democratic struggle – through the existing political institutions. We completely separated from the trade union arm (the UMT), and relinquished the idea of armed struggle. (Radi 2016)

El Yazghi elaborated:

Ever since the UNFP was formed, the reference point was a socialist one. But it wasn't until 1975 that we would incorporate that into the name and the literature of the party. We separated ourselves from the communist frame, and placed ourselves in the social democrat frame. (El Yazghi 2016)

It is worth noting that the name of the new party was subject to internal debate. Al-Ikhsasi notes that while most cadres preferred 'The Socialist Union of Popular Forces,' Bouabid himself preferred another name, 'The Democratic Union of Popular Forces,' (2015, 64). Consistent with his democratic principles, Bouabid deferred to the will of the majority of his party cadres.

The formation history of the USFP partially proves the first hypothesis. USFP party leaders were neither representing a different class, nor were they legitimating the Monarchy, nor did they form a party to run for and win electoral office. USFP participation in elections was tactical, the goals of which were not winning, but communication and outreach – broadcasting a political vision and an ideology. Thus participating in elections was part of a broader strategy focused on non-electoral activism and discursive contestation. It is worth quoting El Yazghi at length:

If you're a political party, it is impossible not to participate in elections ... We knew the problems [with elections], and we would say that we are participating in undemocratic, and perhaps anti-democratic circumstances ... [We knew] that the regime forges elections, but the election campaign is a major battle. It is a chance

to communicate with a broad audience, to define your principles, explain your ideological and political choices. Even if we did not win. In the [seventies], if you went out and distributed a pamphlet you got arrested. The campaign was, at the very least, two weeks where you would not – and had the freedom to connect with people. We had massive rallies, to connect with people, with the youth, and not necessarily voters. It was a way to recruit new generations of party activists ... We knew that the regime would not allow us to reach a parliamentary majority, or even a sizeable minority, but we thought connecting with the Moroccan people was of prime importance and the campaign was a golden opportunity to do that. (El Yazghi 2016)

Hence, when the USFP formed, its leaders knew that institutional power was beyond their reach. Instead, they sought to contest political discourse, “shape the debate” and influence politics in other avenues.

The Party of Justice and Development (PJD): The Partisan Islamist Movement

Istiqlal was the product of the colonial struggle era, the MP was the product of Monarchic manipulation and rural unrest, and the USFP was the product of an organizational and ideological fissure within Istiqlal. The Party of Justice and Development (PJD – حزب العدالة والتنمية), however, was produced by the consolidation of many organizations within Morocco’s Islamist movement. As has previously been mentioned, Istiqlal bore the mantle of social conservatism in Morocco since its advent (with only some episodic progressive positions). Furthermore, the Alaouite dynasty had derived much of its legitimacy out of its lineage to the prophet Muhammad, and as such were deemed leaders of both a polity and a religious community.⁷⁶ PJD would emerge from an ambitious Islamist movement, eager to prove itself in a crowded conservative and religious discursive space.

The genealogy of Morocco’s Islamist movement is important for understanding the partisan and non-partisan Islamist organizations that developed out of it. The Moroccan Islamist movement emerged in the early 1970s as a student movement. More ideologically

⁷⁶ As such, the king of Morocco is described as the “Commander of the Faithful” (أمير المؤمنين).

heterogeneous than other Islamist movements, the Moroccan Islamists drew on other movements in the Arab world and fused Islamist political thought with local religious traditions (Wegner 2011).⁷⁷ By the 1990s, two major organizations would come to embody the Islamist movement in Morocco: the Justice and Spirituality Movement (JSM – جماعة العدل والإحسان) and the Movement for Unity and Reform (MUR – حركة الإصلاح والتوحيد). While the JSM developed a radical approach towards formal participation in the Moroccan political system, the MUR (from which PJD emerged) developed a more pragmatic approach, as some of its components actively sought inclusion into the political process since the mid-1980s. However, the journey towards pragmatism, inclusion and moderation was filled with hurdles.

The movement faced an early crisis when some of its fringe element tactics were plunged into the spotlight. One of the earliest and most influential events for the Islamist movement was the creation of the Islamic Youth Association (IYA – جمعية الشبيبة الإسلامية) by Abdel-Karim Mouti‘ in 1970.⁷⁸ Mouti‘ was a schoolteacher and later a Ministry of Education administrator who was heavily influenced by Sayyid Qutb of Egypt. Like Qutb, he saw that his society was living “in a state of pre-Islamic ignorance against which the use of violence was legitimate to achieve an ‘Islamic State’” (Wegner 2011, 21). Such a condition was termed *jahiliyya* (جاهلية)– literally meaning ‘ignorance’ but also chronologically referring to pre-Islam Arabia. Though it was legalized in 1972, the IYA had a revolutionary agenda and a clandestine structure. It utilized its legal stature as an

⁷⁷ As is the case with other Islamist movements, it has been argued that the Moroccan ruling family initially encouraged the Islamist student movement in order to balance against the influence of Leftist student movements deemed to be more threatening (Willis 2012, 156). Yet the heterogeneity of the Moroccan Islamist movement problematizes this argument.

⁷⁸ Mohamed Tozy (1999) argues that the IYA was “Morocco’s first Islamist group” (228).

educational and cultural organization to recruit and educate members (Shahin 1997, 184-85). However, it was only a matter of time before the IYA was exposed, with some of its leaders implicated in the 1975 assassination of USFP leader Omar Benjelloun.

While the IYA was officially dissolved in 1976, it forced a moment of reckoning for the Islamist movement – particularly regarding the use of violence and clandestine work. IYA activists splintered into many different factions: very few members maintained their adoption of violence and secrecy, forming an organization called al-Jihad (الجهاد). Some members would later join the JSM. Some would form local organizations in Rabat and Casablanca, that would merge with other local organizations from Fez and Ksar al-Kabir with no ties to the IYA to form the Rally for the Islamic Future (RIF - رابطة المستقبل الإسلامي) in 1994.⁷⁹ Lastly, some would form a new national organization in 1981 called The Islamic Group Association (IGA - جمعية الجماعة الإسلامية), that would go on to become the Movement for Reform and Renewal (MRR - حركة الإصلاح والتجديد) in 1992. The MRR included Abdallah Baha, Mohammed Yatim, Abdelilah Benkirane, and Saadeddine Othmani (all of whom would become leaders and co-founders of PJD). The MUR formed out of the merger of the two latter groups in 1996.

Othmani recounted the early days of the IGA:

I was a third-year student in medical school in 1981, so I was very young. I had no intention to work in politics ... Most of the founders [of the IGA] were either students or recent graduates, so everyone was in the age range of 20-30 ... We did not have ideas for partisan work, but had general political activity – general political expression, cultural activities, etc. ... We had no political ambition at the time. (Othmani 2016a)⁸⁰

⁷⁹ Qudaimi (2009) argues that while the Islamic Sunrise Association in Rabat, and the Tawhid Group in Casablanca derived from the IYA, the Islamic Association in al-Ksar al-Kbir and the Association for Islamic Predication (Da'wa) in Fez did not have IYA lineage. In an interview, PJD leader Abdelali Hamieddine (2016a) corroborated the Qudaimi genealogy.

⁸⁰ Personal interview, April 6th 2016, Dr. Saadeddine Othmani's Clinic – Rabat, Morocco.

Instead the IGA, focused its effort on cultural awareness and advocacy. Othmani explained:

Though we were a social organization, most of our work was cultural. We held lectures, symposia, and so on. We were particularly active in high schools and universities. The goal was to face the leftist movements, which were dominant in the universities. The movement was very small initially, but then started to grow and branch out. It started to get involved in charitable and social work. It was the competition with leftist movements in universities that was the reason the movement was propelled. (Othmani 2016a)

Early on in its lifetime, the IGA sought to moderate its stance vis-a-vis participation in the Moroccan polity. In 1992, it changed its name to the Movement for Reform and Renewal (MRR). Wegner argues that there were two reasons behind this “appeasement strategy” – appeasement towards the palace, that is: first, the movement wanted to signal that it was *a* representative of the Muslim community, but not *the* representative. Second, the movement wanted its name to reflect its maturation process, that it had come far from its revolutionary past and espoused a reformist future (2011, 23-24). But Abdelali Hamieddine, who was a member of the constitutive council of the RIF/MRR merger narrated a different maturation process, and said that by the late 1980s, the issue of violence was settled due to the Islamist organizational environment at the time.

Secrecy and violent regime change [were] popular ideas since the early 1960s [and became prevalent in the 1970s and 1980s]. But this was the political culture at the time, not solely restricted to the Islamist movement, and within the movement was only restricted to the [IYA]. The components of the [MUR] included part of the [IYA] that made some major revisions in the late 1970s and early 1980s ... which became the MRR. Other components of the MUR always believed in institutional legal and peaceful activism, including Ahmed Raisouni’s Islamic Association in Al-Ksar Al-Kbir – which was engaging in public local activism since 1976. The same can be said for the [Association for Islamic Predication] (Da’wa) of Fez, which was established in 1969 ... Once you establish a legal association, you implicitly accept the law of the land, and activism under this law, renounce violence and secrecy. This reflected an intellectual development for the Islamist movement. (Hamieddine 2016a)⁸¹

⁸¹ Personal interview, March 22nd 2016, Parliament – Rabat, Morocco.

By the early nineties, the two components that eventually made up the MUR (the RIF and MRR) were separately considering forming a political party, before they merged.

Hamieddine explained:

In 1991, the MRR tried to form a political party, and called it ‘The Party of National Renewal’ حزب التجديد الوطني but the local authorities of the Rabat-Salé region banned it for political reasons. The same thing happened in Fez when the RIF tried to form a party called the ‘Unity and Development Party’ حزب الوحدة والتنمية. (Hamieddine 2016a)⁸²

There were numerous reasons why the two organizations sought to form parties. The first, as outlined by Othmani above, was that a party would serve as a tool of expression, to face the leftist discourse in public spaces – schools, universities, syndicates, trade unions, and the media. As Othmani explained:

The first goal of forming a political party is to have a platform, an outlet from which you can express your political opinion. Expression is very important, because through it you can pressure, you can convince, you can develop your discourse as well as the country’s. We have opinions which we want the society ... and the authority to hear. (Othmani 2016a)

Lahcen Daoudi, who was active with the Association for Islamic Predication (Da‘wa) in Fez (and later the RIF, MUR and PJD) elaborated:

We decided to [form a party] because there was an opening in the country’s political life in the 1990s. The USFP was dominating political life, and we were competing bitterly with the left in the university – academically as well as politically ... in Fez, the university was one of the main forums for political competition ... The movement decided to form a party because it felt like it was strong, and had resonated with a wide swath of public opinion, and the global socialist current was subsiding whereas the global Islamist current was on the rise. (Daoudi 2016)⁸³

The second reason for forming a party was that the growth and development of the movement led to a desire, and more importantly an ability, to contest the legislative

⁸² Wegner (2011) argues that the MRR deliberately designed party bylaws “to conform with Moroccan law on political parties, which prohibits religious parties,” but were nonetheless denied because they were deemed religious parties (26).

⁸³ Personal interview, April 27th 2016, Ministry of Higher Education – Rabat, Morocco.

environment. As Othmani outlined:

Social Movements start working on a societal level, as civil society organizations, and then develop on the level of political participation ... They come to the realization that they are on the receiving end of the legislative process, where they could be on the initiating end ... Any movement that has an ideological foundation that it wishes to spread, after it attains a certain level of growth, collides with the reality that it lives under laws it did not make. Thus, it starts wanting to change laws, and broadening its activism, and that's when it starts thinking of political participation. (Othmani 2016a)

Daoudi colorfully outlined the Islamist desire to influence and manage public administration:

Politics is administering public affairs, my dear. You either take care of politics, or it will take care of you. Corruption is rampant, and we can't sit by the sidelines. We don't want Muslims to just lecture and sermon, we want them to practice what they preach, change society and administer public affairs. You want to build a mosque? That's political! Who's going to give you the license? The leftist? No! (Daoudi 2016)

While a desire to influence the political system clearly metastasized in the Islamist movement organizations, a similar desire in contesting and winning elections did not. As Othmani noted:

We did not form the party to run for elections. We did not even dream about running for elections at the time. Those who ended up running in elections had to be convinced – they did not want to. They saw that social work and political activism was more rewarding. (Othmani 2016a)

When the MRR could not form a party on its own, it turned to the only remaining viable option, which was to integrate into an existing party. It first approached Istiqlal about integrating as a bloc and obtaining leadership positions, but Istiqlal leaders rejected the proposition. “Istiqlal did not want us to join as a movement with preexisting organization, thought, projects, and so on, but as individuals – and the movement did not appreciate this,” said Hamieddine (2016a). “[Istiqlal] did not want a bloc inside their party, a lobby, which would create problems for them. Had we joined them, we would have had no weight,” said

Othmani (2016a). It then turned to Abdallah Ibrahim’s dormant UNFP. As Hamieddine said:

It appeared from negotiations with [Ibrahim] that it was going to take a long time, because he wanted to go to lengthy details in crafting party ideology and political culture, and this did not concur with our plans to quickly join the political landscape of the country. (Hamieddine 2016a)

Othmani merely said Ibrahim was “hopeless from the political process, and did not want to proceed” (2016a).

At that point, the MRR turned to another veteran of Moroccan politics, MP co-founder Abdelkrim El-Khatib, who had split from the MP in 1966 and formed the Democratic Constitutional Popular Movement (MPDC – الحركة الشعبية الدستورية الديمقراطية) in February 1967. In El-Khatib, the MRR found a willing and able partner, and struck a deal with him to integrate into his party.⁸⁴ As Hamieddine explained:

El-Khatib was open and practical, and only had [three conditions]: that the party have an Islamic background, believe in Constitutional Monarchy, and renounce violence. The movement leadership adopted this wholeheartedly, and said these are exactly the principles that have driven us to form a political party. (Hamieddine 2016a)

It took four years before the MRR was officially integrated into the MPDC in 1996 – the same year it merged with the RIF to form the MUR – when its leaders joined the party leadership after a special party convention. In 1997, the MUR leaders ran for elections under the MPDC party label. In 1998, they changed the name of the party to “The Party of Justice and Development.” El-Khatib was elected secretary general, and Othmani became his deputy.⁸⁵

⁸⁴ Ideologically, the integration made sense, as El-Khatib had coined the explicitly Anti-Marxist ‘Islamic Socialism’ of the MP. See Sārah (1990, 84-85), and Chapter 3 for more on El-Khatib’s ideological inclinations.

⁸⁵ The PJD was successfully able to separate itself from the MUR, which maintained its core social and cultural activities. As Wegner describes: “In 2000, the Shura Council adopted the ‘document of

The history of PJD's formation partially proves my first hypothesis concerning party formation. PJD party leaders' main incentive was challenging the dominance of the USFP in public spaces and spheres – in the university, in trade unions, in different syndicates and associations. This discursive and ideological contestation, rather than regime legitimization, elections or class representation was what drove the formation of the PJD. The party was certainly not averse to electoral contestation or participation in government. But that was, at best, an eventual goal for PJD leaders, rather than an immediate one. In fact, PJD activists exclaimed that when they were assigned the responsibility of forming a government in 2011, many PJD leaders did not feel like they were ready yet – but still seized that opportunity. Thus, electoral contestation and government participation were not primary drivers for the formation of the PJD.

The Justice and Spirituality Movement (JSM): the '*Non-Partisan*' Islamists

As noted above, the PJD was the product of a consolidation process that brought together different Islamist organizations for the goal of contesting the discourse and practice of politics. Despite the range of organizations PJD included, one notable organization held out: The Justice and Spirituality Movement (JSM). Indeed, the genesis of the JSM bore some similarities, but many more important ideological and teleological differences from PJD. These differences would put the JSM on a very different trajectory.

Around the same time Abdel-Karim Mouti⁴ obtained the legalization of the IYA, another former schoolteacher and Ministry of Education administrator was formulating his

complementarity' that described how the MUR viewed the division of labor: the PJD was defined as a political organization dealing with all political issues of the country and defending Islamic causes in state institutions, whereas the MUR was defined solely as an organization for vocation/mission (*da'wa*) and education" (2011, 57-58).

Islamist political project. Abdessalam Yassine was a self-described “son of a Berber peasant” who had worked in public education since independence in 1956. Like Mouti‘, he had witnessed the corruption of Moroccan public administration upfront, and subsequently went through a spiritual crisis. In 1965, he joined one of Morocco’s largest Sufi *zawiyas* (literally corners, but figuratively brotherhoods), the Boutchichiya. It was there that Yassine had his first experience with organized spirituality, an experience he’d seek to develop in future activism.

Yassine remained with the Boutchichiya for six years, after which he departed and began publishing books on Islam’s prescribed political and social role. Why he left the Boutchichiya is up for scholarly and social debate,⁸⁶ but it was clear that he had personal social ambitions that exceeded what the *zawiya* afforded him. In 1972, Yassine published his first book: ‘al-Islam bayn al-da‘wa wal-dawlah’ (Islam Between The Call and the State), in which he sketched his ‘comprehensive vision’ for the role of Islam in society and politics.⁸⁷ A year later (1973), he published ‘al-Islam ghadan’ (Islam tomorrow), in which he disagreed with the predominant Islamist ascription of societal ills to *jahiliyya*, and rather attributed them to *fitna* – which would go on to have very different implications for Yassine’s prescribed activism.⁸⁸ But it was the year after that (1974) in which Yassine

⁸⁶ Spiegel (2015) argues that Yassine was primed for succeeding the leader of the Boutchichiya, Sheikh Abbas al-Qadiri, and *zawiya* members say he left the *zawiya* when he lost the succession to Abbas’s son, Hamza. JSM members dispute this narrative, and say that the split was amicable, and due to a difference in vision (Spiegel 2015, 40-41). Shahin (1997) argues: “Yassine started to witness signs of deviation and mis-practices among his Sufi brothers. The rift became irreconcilable when he began to urge them to become more active and defend Islam in Morocco. He parted company with them in order to begin a militant and activist career on his own” (Shahin 1997, 193).

⁸⁷ Darif argues that the publication of al-Islam bayn al-da‘wa wal-dawlah should be the point of departure for a history of the JSM. See Darif (1995, 9).

⁸⁸ Yassine described *fitna* as a state where “right is mixed with wrong, manifested in violence, social upheaval and bloodshed, entailing a randomness in will and execution. Modern Islamic societies are not in a state of *jahiliyya*, but live in a time of *fitna*, meaning they are still Muslim, and brought apart (or bewildered) from their Islam by ... biting leaders” (Darif 1995, 22). The term ‘biting leaders’ is used to describe autocrats clinging on to their thrones like dogs biting on bones refusing to let go of them.

published his most famous work, ‘al-Islam aw al-toufan’ (Islam or the deluge) – an open, 114-page letter to King Hassan II advising him, among other things, to “be pious and fearful of God” (Yassine 1974, 37). In effect, al-Islam aw al-toufan was a scathing diatribe against Hassan II and his rule, outlining a “clear protest agenda” against the Moroccan regime (Spiegel 2015, 42), and earning Yassine unparalleled political fame (and a three and a half year sentence to a mental asylum).⁸⁹

Upon his release in early 1978, Yassine was eager to resume his activism. He wished to unify the Islamist movement in Morocco – which at that point was deeply fragmented, and part of which was driven underground. In early 1979, he founded a periodical magazine entitled *Al-Jama‘a* (The Group) and published its first issue in February of that year. Fathallah Arsalan, a close confidant and family friend of Yassine at the time, and eventual co-founder of the JSM, narrated Yassine’s preoccupation at the time: “After Yassine got out of captivity, he started receiving people in his house, and established the magazine *Al-Jama‘a*. He started to call for the consolidation of the Islamist movement ... [and gave lectures in different parts of the country],” (Arsalan 2016).⁹⁰ As a result of the magazine, the house receptions, and the occasional lectures, Yassine began building a small following. JSM co-founder Abdelwahed Moutawakil explained the impact of the magazine and the organizational beginnings:

I was deeply influenced by what I read in *Al-Jama‘a*, and surprised to see people in Morocco writing like this. That is when we – I, Moustafa Hatimi, and Larabi Belkhiliyyah, decided to pay Yassine a visit in his house in Salé ... This was around 1980. We thought *everything* was listening to us. That was the first and most decisive visit ... He led a lecture, and there was a discussion afterwards. After we

⁸⁹ In the introduction of al-Islam aw al-toufan, Yassine writes to the King “By god, I am not afraid of you, and I wish to be martyred for the sake of God, but I hate that my enemy be from the lineage of the prophet” (Yassine 1974, 38). Perhaps because of that, some commentators have labeled the letter “suicidal” (Shahin 1997, 194).

⁹⁰ Personal interview, October 13th 2016, Arsalan residence – Rabat, Morocco.

went back to Safi [where we lived] ... we decided to join him. (Moutawakil 2016)⁹¹

Yassine's calls for Islamist unification did not gain much traction within Islamist circles, and he was reluctant to establish an organization. "Yassine was not eager to form a new organization," said Moutawakil. "He said that the Islamist Movement is already scattered and dispersed, it doesn't need another organization to increase the dispersion of activists," he added (Moutawakil 2016). But this was not uniformly accepted among his small following. After a period where the group met to edit the magazine, the desire to organize became stronger. Moutawakil narrated a fervent internal debate:

At that time co-founder Mohammad Bachiri said 'Until when will we just sit on our hands? People do not want to unify. Until when will we wait? Let's form an organization and start working. If we can unify people, then great.' (Moutawakil 2016)

In September of 1981, Yassine announced the establishment of his first organization. Started by this small group and centered around the editorship of *Al-Jama'a*, the organization was called 'Usrat Al-Jama'a' (أسرة الجماعة) which meant 'The Family of Al-Jama'a.' In an article he wrote in the seventh issue of *Al-Jama'a*, Yassine identified two reasons for the establishment of 'Usrat al-Jama'a: first, the necessity of launching organized field work after practicing 'the jihad of the word' (or verbal/literary proselytization), and second, the failure to unite the different factions of the Moroccan Islamist movement (Darif 1995, 45; Tozy 1999, 194). Yassine added that there were two parameters related to the establishment of 'Usrat al-Jama'a: first, it came as a response to temporary needs, and second, it was an attempt to form and mobilize a group of Islamists, not *the* group of Islamists in the absolute sense (Darif 1995, 46). "[The name] indicated a temporary designation, open to growing into a more comprehensive political organization,"

⁹¹ Personal interview, April 13th 2016, Moutawakil residence – Rabat, Morocco.

said Moutawakil (2016). Arsalan narrated that the magazine was instrumental in the organization's inward and outward growth:

The main emphasis initially was on self-construction, because the members were few. The magazine played a very important role in that regard, despite the siege placed on it. It reverberated with the members of the Islamist movement and those who believed in Islamist thought, because they found in our discourse something new, attractive and exciting. (Arsalan 2016)

In September of 1982, exactly one year after announcing 'Usrat al-Jama'a, Yassine and his colleagues began thinking of a new organizational framework, with a clearer structure, and that would have legal recognition. That is when they established Al-Jama'a Association (جمعية الجماعة), and delivered its bylaws to the designated authorities on October 15th 1982 (Darif 1995, 46). The process displayed what Mohamed Tozy describes as both the authority's disarray in dealing with the nascent movement, and the movement's naiveté (Tozy 1999, 195), and the association would eventually be denied a license.⁹² Undeterred by either the administrative fiasco or the denial, Yassine and his colleagues created a third organization on March 28th 1983, calling it Al-Jama'a Charity Association (جمعية الجماعة الخيرية). This time, the Association held its inaugural meeting on that day, voted on the bylaws, and voted on an administrative committee to lead the organization. Its bylaws were identical to those of Al-Jama'a Association, its administrative committee consisted

⁹² According to a letter drafted by Fathallah Arsalan to the Rabat municipality on February 16th 1983 appealing the license denial, the Association had deposited its bylaws with the designated local authorities on October 15th 1982. Since then, the legal duration had passed (three months and one day) with the authorities completing their paper work, and the Association had neither received a refusal nor a request for modification. Later, Arsalan was recalled by the director of public affairs at the Rabat-Sale municipality, and told that while the Association was accepted, he (the director) needed the deposit receipt (which he claimed was temporary). Though Arsalan believed the deposit receipt was permanent, he acquiesced to the demands of the director. After the director obtained the receipt, he told Arsalan that the Association's request was refused – and that Arsalan had no longer had legal proof for the Association's legality. Arsalan demanded an explanation for the refusal, but the Association never received one. The text of the letter is reprinted in Darif (1995, 46-47).

of nine individuals,⁹³ and its activities would move from print media to audio and video media (Darif 1995, 47).

Though the Association had an overwhelmingly social orientation, the political dimension was present. Article 2 of the Association's bylaws states: "Al-Jama'a Charity Association is an association with a political tone (according to chapter 16 of the April 10th 1973 Dahir [on Public Freedoms]),⁹⁴ which also practices cultural, social, ethical and educational activities that do not clash with its main goal." The bylaws explain the political goal of the Association as:

- 1- Raising the awareness of members and the general public regarding their political rights, and notifying them of their different responsibilities as they appear in the constitution's text and spirit.
- 2- Specifying the political position of the Association regarding national and international issues that impact the country's political direction.
- 3- The Association is not obliged to opine on all issues, and is not responsible for interpretations that do not emanate from its statements.
- 4- The Association is independent and does not belong to any political entity, be it a political party or association or organization, overt or clandestine, inside or outside the country, and thus attributes any agreement with such entities to mere coincidence unless otherwise stated. This does not prevent the Association from opining about political entities if need be.⁹⁵

The bylaws were again delivered to the designated local authorities in April of 1983, but this time the Association obtained a legal permit from the Rabat municipality on April 26th (48/83). Hence, the bylaws became the pillar on which the JSM's future political activism rested, and the permit obtained would solidify its legality – a legality that would be contested and reaffirmed in future run-ins with state authorities. Arsalan explained that the

⁹³ The administrative committee of the Al-Jama'a Charity Association included Abdessalam Yassine, Ahmad Al-Mallakh, Mohammad Al-Abbadi, Abdelwahed Moutawakil, Mohammad Al-'Alawi, Mohammad Bachiri, Abdelhadi Al-Jabbar, Fathallah Arsalan, and Mohammad Al-Naqrah.

⁹⁴ This was an amendment to the previously mentioned Dahir of Public Freedoms issued on November 15th, 1958.

⁹⁵ The bylaws are reprinted in Darif (1995, 47-52).

project was political from the get go:

Yassine's project was comprehensive, and he launched it as such from the very beginning. He focused on the cultural/spiritual element, given that the numbers were very few, and we did not have a large capacity for political action. From a proselytizing standpoint, we were very active, but the political activism was a choice and a necessity at the same time. This is because the authorities besieged us from the beginning, so we had to explain why that was so. We had to engage in political activity right at the start. (Arsalan 2016)

It is worth noting that the Association's administrative committee was made entirely out of education professionals. Two were education inspectors (Yassine and Bachiri), five were teachers (Mallakh, Al-Abbadi, Moutawakil, Al-Jabbar and Arsalan), one was an education councilor (Al-'Alawi) and one was a student (Al-Naqrah).⁹⁶ Arsalan said that, in addition to the magazine, the Association's university presence was crucial for its growth. "Our presence in university was also important to communicate with the student base, which of course had social extensions," he said. "Most of the leaders were university professors, so they had access to this segment," he added.

The fact that the Association obtained legal status did not prevent the state from harassing its members. In November of 1983, the Association would launch a daily newspaper – *Al-Ṣubḥ* – (The Morning) which would publish two issues before being banned. The authorities would use articles Yassine wrote in those two issues to arrest him on December 27th 1983 (he would be sentenced to two years in prison in May of 1984). In January of 1984, Mohammad Bachiri was arrested and sentenced to three months in prison,⁹⁷ and in February of 1984 Fathallah Arsalan was arrested for 40 days without being

⁹⁶ See leadership chart in Darif (1995, 52).

⁹⁷ According to the JSM website, the sentence was for a longer duration but commuted due to an appeal. See ("جماعة العدل والإحسان") <https://bit.ly/1Wbl4RN>.

charged. In July of 1985, the authorities would confiscate the 16th issue of *Al-Jama'a* – which would be the last one.

Despite the arrests and harassments (or perhaps even due to them), the Al-Jama'a Charity Association continued to grow. Yassine was released on December 31st 1985 after two years in prison. In 1986, the Association established an executive council and executive committees (including the student committee, the schoolchildren committee, the education committee and the cadres' committee). In September of 1987, it would finally adopt its current name Al-'Adl wal-Iḥsān – العدل والإحسان – (which they translate into Justice and Spirituality). In “Justice and Benevolence,” the JSM finally found the suitable ideological and cultural framing for its political activism. The name change would also entail important and institutionalizing organizational changes, that announced the JSM's arrival on the grand stage of Moroccan politics.

The formation history of the JSM suggests that ideology played an important role in the formation of the Movement. The desire and capacity for formal political activism, however, did not. The JSM's founders did not consider their activism as geared towards reaching or contesting existent political institutions. The founders prioritized political expression over institutional political action. As such, all their organizational efforts were geared towards enhancing, elevating and broadcasting that expression. They were uninterested in contesting formal political institutions.

Conclusion: Why Parties in Morocco?

Of the four political parties covered in this chapter, three formed before any elections were held or even alluded to in Morocco (Istiqlal, MP, UNFP) – with no regard for elections at the time of formation. The fourth party founders explicitly said they did not

form to run for elections. In fact, the first election in the country's independent history was the municipal elections of 1960. Though parties ran in these elections, their campaigns were more about exhibiting and enhancing discursive influence rather than obtaining institutional office. Moreover, the electoral laws of those particular elections (and every election since) were specifically designed to limit the influence of organized parties.⁹⁸ Both the monarchy and the parties themselves thus approached these elections as very different affairs than those by which public mandates are afforded for official office seekers. The same could be said of the constitutional referendum held for the country's first constitution in 1962, and the first parliamentary elections in 1963. Though the integrity of elections has much improved of late, elections have not been a primary driver of political party formation in Morocco.

Moreover, the four parties and one organization covered in this chapter formed in different ways, for different reasons, in different methods. As the organizations here show, some formed "For God" (PJD, JSM), some formed "For Country" (Istiqlal, UNFP), and some formed "For King" (MP). "For God, Country and King" hence captures the variation in Moroccan party formation. These parties contested politics in different ways, throughout their history. Of paramount importance for all these organizations was the production of literature and media material to frame their political activism. This practice, of contesting the symbolic and discursive space through literature and media would become institutionalized, replicated and widely used by parties in Morocco. Istiqlal's *Al-'Alam* is the prototype here, but other examples abound: The MP produced the Manifesto of 1957,

⁹⁸ See Intelligence report number 8271, entitled "Morocco's May Elections: An Assessment of Likely Trends and Problems," dated May 23rd 1960. National Archives Microfilm Publication M1221, Intelligence Reports, 1941-1961.

the UNFP produced Mehdi Ben Barka's *Al-Ikhtiar al-Thawri* (The Revolutionary Choice) in 1962, The IGA produced *Al-Furqan* magazine and later *Al-Tajdid* newspaper, and the JSM published *Al-Jama'a*. It was through this media material that parties framed their activism and contested political discourse.

The case of Morocco thus invites us to examine the roles that ideology and ideological contestation play in driving political party formation. In our interview, JSM leader Omar Iharchane referred to the JSM's political division as a party-like structure. I thus asked him, what is a party? A professor of public law and political science, he answered very analytically:

In practice, a party is a coalition of individuals who carry the same principles. They may vary in assessments, but they carry the same principles and references and want to work within society in order to implement these principles. So there are three key words: coalition, principles, and work within society – in order to achieve power. It has to aspire for power, or otherwise it's a charity or civil society organization. (Iharchane 2016)⁹⁹

Iharchane's motives for this definition are clear: he wished to place his organization, which “works within society,” on the same level of parties working within state institutions. The reason is that access to these state institutions has been controlled by the regime throughout Moroccan history. Indeed, the case of Morocco shows that when the institutional pursuit of power is blocked or impeded by an authoritarian incumbent, political agents use their ideology to contest discourse, symbols, and language.

This may blur the lines between political parties and social movements. Again, Iharchane had an instructive response. “The main difference between [the JSM's political division] and the other parties is first a legal difference – the state does not recognize the political division. The second is a political difference – the political division boycotts

⁹⁹ Personal interview, February 9th 2016, Casa Port Train Station – Casablanca, Morocco.

elections,” he said (Iharchane 2016). Hence, to be a political party in Morocco, an organization must contest formal political institutions (run for elections). Unless an organization contests both political discourse and political practice (through running for elections), it cannot enjoy the benefits of membership in Morocco’s political institutions. More importantly, it also does not bear the cost of participation in those institutions, and that is perhaps why the JSM has yet to form a legal political party. It refuses to incur the costs of participation in the Moroccan political system. For the other political parties, contesting political discourse runs hand in hand with contesting political practice – both official/institutional and non-official/informal.¹⁰⁰

Lastly, one frequent refrain I heard in my field work addressed the difference between a real party and a fake/administrative party. A real party, I often heard, was capable of producing ideas. It is certain that the parties/organizations covered in this study produced ideas, and articulated social visions and criteria for political membership in the Moroccan polity – what Stephen Hanson (Hanson 2010) calls “ideology.” What were these ideas? How salient were they in Moroccan society? And how did they develop? Those are the questions addressed in the next chapter.

¹⁰⁰ In Chapter 6, I elaborate on the costs and benefits of formal participation in the Moroccan political system.

Chapter 3: What's in a (real) party? Party Ideological Development in Morocco

Introduction

In April of 2016, Morocco's Prime Minister and secretary general of the PJD Abdelilah Benkirane launched a vicious attack in the press on the secretary general of the Party of Authenticity and Modernity (PAM), Ilyas El Omari. Established in 2008 by Fouad Ali El Himma, a close adviser to the King Mohammed VI, PAM represented an ominous development in Moroccan politics: by embodying the historical tactic of 'administration parties'—parties created by the Palace coterie to rival existent political parties—PAM alarmed Moroccan political agents and observers alike. Most Moroccans had come to believe that the 'administrative party' was a relic of the country's tumultuous past. PAM was the first administrative party established during the reign of Mohammed VI, and quickly began accumulating momentum. Up until February 2011, the PAM trajectory had many believing Morocco was following the Tunisian authoritarian model – developing a state-backed political party (such as RCD in Tunisia) to lead the government and manage political appointments in a form of “authoritarian upgrading” (Heydemann 2007).

In his attack, Benkirane promised El Omari to defeat PAM in the upcoming parliamentary election, but in doing so pointed towards a frequent differentiator I encountered within Moroccan partisans between “real” and “fake” political parties.¹⁰¹ In his frequently-used colloquial Moroccan—which he masterfully deployed—Benkirane said: “Why should [PAM] place first in the election? What virtue does it have? *What is its ideology?* What good has its done for this country?” (Emphasis added).¹⁰² Benkirane was

¹⁰¹ In an interview, USFP parliamentarian and political science professor Hassan Tariq told me “What makes a party a party is its clear political project, its ideology, and its independence from the authorities.” Personal interview, January 19th 2016, Coffee Shop – Rabat, Morocco.

¹⁰² See (“ابنكيران للعماري: “صليتي بلا وضوء وتريد حماية الدين”) <http://www.alyaoum24.com/566876.html>

effectively saying that PAM did not have an ideology, or even identifying features by which Moroccans can discern whether or not it merited any consideration in the upcoming election. This was ironic given that, apart from the loose “Islamist reference,” the PJD itself did not have the most discernible of ideologies.

In Chapter 2, I highlighted how party formation in Morocco took on different causal pathways, and examined the discourse and language that parties used to explain their formation and activism. In this chapter, I test my second hypothesis regarding the development of ideology and ideological rigidity for each party. In doing so, I examine the foundational texts, tropes, and cultural terms that cadres and leaders of Istiqlal, the MP, the USFP, the PJD and the JSM have relied on and referred to in building their discourse and describing their activism. In this chapter I present two arguments: I first argue that each party developed ideologies in an isomorphic fashion. Each of the parties/movements considered below developed ideological tenets to distinguish themselves from competitors, frame their activism, and build organizational and societal extensions. In that sense, for each of the five parties/organizations I study, ideological development took place broadly along similar lines.

The second argument I make pertains to variation in ideological development. Here, I argue that variation in each party’s ideological development can be explained by the timing and sequence of formation, with late formers developing more flexible, less restrictive ideologies. Having observed how rigid ideologies restrict the maneuverability of early-forming partisans, and how such ideologies make it difficult to justify certain political choices, late formers have invested in looser, less rigid ideologies. To be sure, all parties studied here have ideologies that render some courses of action politically

impossible. However, late formers have developed their ideologies so that they are less restrictive than earlier formers. As such, my main explanatory variable in this argument is timing, sequence and context of the party formation processes explained in Chapter 2.

I start by explaining why I adopt Stephen Hanson's (2010) definition of ideology, and then proceed to examine individual party ideological references, how they each developed, and similarities and differences between them. By examining each party's ideological history and development, I will identify the dominant discursive frames that each party came to adopt, and how these provided a restricted (or broad) definition of membership in the Moroccan polity. As such, these parties and movements shared a lot in common – they provided answers, however vague those answers may be, to central questions about Moroccan identity. The differences between them have more to do with historical timing, sequence and discursive frames at time of formation, and how each positioned itself in relation and contrast to the other. It is thus impossible to study the ideologies of each in isolation of the broader Moroccan ideological spectrum, as ideology was a main arena of competition for partisan and non-partisan Moroccan political agents. As such, I study how each party attempted to differentiate itself ideologically, and evaluate the costs and benefits of such a differentiation in terms of restricting the actions of partisans or affording them flexibility.

On Ideology

Before I proceed to examine the ideological development of each party / movement, a discussion of the term ideology itself is necessary to identify how I operationalize the term. In Chapter 1, I define ideology as an articulation of membership in a desired political community that structures, informs, and restricts the menu of possible political action,

providing this action with symbolism and meaning. This definition largely corresponds to (and builds on) Stephen Hanson's (2010). Perhaps this definition is unconventional, but this is largely due to the evolution of the term ideology itself. Since its emergence around the time of the French Revolution, the term *ideology* has held different meanings – and indeed continues to signify various connotations depending on its usage.¹⁰³ David McLellan has characterized ideology as “the most elusive concept in the whole of social science” (1995, 1). Addressing the various ways in which ideology has been defined, debated and contested is beyond the scope of this chapter or this dissertation. Yet, it necessary to explain why I am partial to Hanson's definition. Terry Eagleton describes ideology in the classical sense of the term as “the partisan perspective of a social group or class, which then mistakes itself as universal and eternal” (2007, 4). Certain elements of this description make their way into Hanson's articulate, elaborate and precise definition.

Hanson defines ideology as “any clear and consistent definition of the criteria for membership in a desired political order” (2010, 46-47).¹⁰⁴ He thus draws attention to how formal and consistent political viewpoints typically define who is a member of a political community and who is an alien to that community. Hence, “ideologues are people who explicitly choose to politicize their identities by designing recognizable and enforceable group boundaries that can be policed” (47). Unlike ethnic groups, who have implicit group boundaries, ideologies entail explicit boundary formation criteria. That is why, Hanson argues, ideologues are interested in controlling states – to institutionalize such identity boundaries. Moreover, he makes a compelling contention about the effects of ideology:

¹⁰³ For more on the intellectual lineage of ideology, see McLellan (1995) and Eagleton (2007).

¹⁰⁴ His definition is meant to be used as a Weberian ideal-type, towards which different ideologies approximate.

that it facilitates collective action and party formation through artificially elongating time horizons of its adherents and promises of future rewards. As he describes in the preface of his book: “no ideologies, no parties” (xv).

Like Hanson, I also consider identity boundary construction the primary goal of ideology. Like him as well, I consider ideology a *necessary* but *insufficient* condition for political party formation. My own definition emphasizes how ideology structures, informs and restricts the menu of possible political action, and provides this action with symbolism and meaning. Ideology is thus a conceptual toolkit that political party activists use to build their organizations, mobilize constituents, attract members, and frame activism in a political system where the benefits of such activism are not immediately apparent.

This definition helps unpack ideology and ideological innovation in Morocco in several ways. The definitional emphasis on group boundaries that ideologies and their partisans wish to control and police helps understand how these boundaries are created, maintained and contested. When Moroccan parties use ideological labels, they not only provide a reference point for their activism, they also identify and contest who is entitled to use these labels and who is not. This explains why the PJD and JSM fervently compete over the Islamist label. Moreover, the explicit boundary formation criteria in the definition points to some of ideology’s restrictive implications. For Moroccan political parties, ideology as a set of principles has three main functions: a) it binds certain political actors’ behavior, b) it serves as reference points which these actors use to build and mobilize their popular bases and c) it renders certain courses of political action impossible for these actors. Ideology’s restrictive implications are thus of paramount importance.

The following example elucidates this point: when I interviewed Bassima

Hakkaoui, a PJD leader of the women's section and then Minister of Solidarity, Women, Family and Social Development, she described to me how she dealt with proponents of issues deemed ideological anathema for the PJD.

When the National Human Rights Council wanted to debate inheritance equality [between men and women], I said this is a red line, and added – in colloquial Moroccan – ‘You should trust what God says.’ ... We are with individual liberties ... but we are against homosexuality, against inheritance equality, as pertains to the Quranic texts. (Hakkaoui 2016)¹⁰⁵

In other words, the presence of Quranic text on these matters restricts PJD's maneuvering room, and—for a party that prides itself on an ‘Islamist reference’—renders the acceptance of inheritance and gender equality, as well as gay rights, practically impossible. Examples of ideology's restrictive implications abound for all other Moroccan political parties.

Lastly, my definition of ideology (which builds on Hanson's) points to the role that ideology plays in constructing political communities and identities in Morocco. By providing clear and consistent criteria for political membership in Morocco and artificially elongating time horizons of activists, ideology has allowed Moroccan parties to build constituencies and develop platforms to mobilize these constituencies. It has also bestowed credibility, legitimacy and a sense of social purpose upon these parties in a political system where the rewards of party activism were tenuous at best. Ideology is thus best thought of not as a primary *driver* of political party action and activism in Morocco, but rather an *influencer* that weighs on political party decision-making in significant ways that cannot be ignored or neglected.

Istiqlal: the nationalist ‘foundations’

¹⁰⁵ Personal interview, May 9th 2016, Ministry of Solidarity, Women, Family and Social Development – Rabat, Morocco.

Istiqlal's ideological development shows that heavy investments in its early lifetime in the distinct identity of Moroccans – their language, their religion, their traditional institutions such as the Monarchy – enabled it to build a coherent ideology, which would help it mobilize constituents and build organizational and societal extensions. At the same time, the fact that its last major ideological innovation was the creation of 'The Document of Social and Economic Parity' in 1963 is testament to Istiqlal's simultaneous ideological longevity and rigidity. Even if Istiqlal wasn't the oldest political party in the country, its ideology would make it sound so.

Istiqlal's ideology is built on what party members called *Thawabit* (literally, fixtures) – or foundations of political thought. These are Islam,¹⁰⁶ the Arabic language, constitutional monarchy,¹⁰⁷ democracy, economic and social parity (*Al-Ta'aduliyyah*), and territorial unity. These foundations have two sources: Istiqlal's sociological emergence as a Moroccan nationalist anti-colonial movement, and the writings of Allal al-Fassi. From its outset, Istiqlal sought to re-define who is (and is not) a member of Moroccan society. Its ideological investments in Islam and the Arabic language pertain to challenging the French protectorate administration's presence and rule in pre-independence Morocco. They were rallying cries around which Istiqlal could mobilize, organize and distinguish native Moroccans from French settlers. As El Khalifa described: "Our struggle ... was an intellectual struggle, an ideological struggle, one of convictions over how to build ... independent Morocco" (El Khalifa 2015b).

¹⁰⁶ In a US Embassy communiqué from Rabat, an Istiqlal leader is reported to have "expressed sympathy with the Moslem Brotherhood." Ideologically, Istiqlal was very similar in its origins to the Brotherhood. Memorandum number A-482, entitled "Conversation with Istiqlal Leader," dated June 10th 1966. Box 2492.

¹⁰⁷ What Omar Abbasi, secretary general of the Istiqlali Youth, described as the three components of Moroccan identity.

Historically, two fora were critical for Istiqlali leaders to recruit party activists: the school and the mosque. Arabic language schools—the Free Schools, as they were called—were where most Istiqlali leaders received their education. As opposed to the French colonial administration schools, these schools taught in Arabic and became key fora for the dissemination of Istiqlal’s ideas and nationalist awareness. Mosques—particularly Qarawiyyeen in Fez and Ben Youssef in Marrakech—were also springboards from which Istiqlali leaders received their education, met their fellow activists and disseminated their ideas (indeed, most Istiqlalis I interviewed were comfortable calling Istiqlal an Islamist party). Hence, language and religion became key aspects of Istiqlal’s ideology.

But which Islam? Here, I should quote from Allal al-Fassi’s major work of political thought – *Al-Naqd Al-Thati* (Self Criticism). First published in 1952 while al-Fassi was practically exiled in Cairo, *Al-Naqd Al-Thati* outlined Al-Fassi’s vision as pertains to religious, social, political and economic affairs. He is at once in dialogue with writers and thinkers as diverse as Plato, Ibn Khaldoun, Montesquieu, Renan and Duverger. Heavily influenced by the Islamist reformists of what is called *Al-Nahda Al-‘Arabiyya* (The Arab Renaissance) such as Mohammad Abdo and Jamal Al-Din Al-Afghani, Al-Fassi wished to reconcile Islam with modernity. As such, he writes:

What distinguishes Islam is its foundations that enable it to be developed and moved forward ... Islam is a movement, which is why we should continuously move forward, and not cut our ties to the past and try to commence an entirely new direction ... we have to develop in understanding its meanings and significance, and not stray from the path it put us in, but we have to renew the machine [we deploy] and utilize [modern] tools to prevent us from falling into the social ailments we once fell into. (Fassi 2008, 103-7)

Al-Fassi wasn’t merely interested in an Islam that delivers personal spiritual salvation to its adherents. He advocated an Islam of freedom and emancipation, of social action that

directs the attention of its adherents to the quality of its governance (104), an Islam that enhances, elevates and subsumes territorial belonging but does not supplant it (108-112).

He later writes:

In all of his historical stages, the Moroccan never followed a spiritual authority outside the homeland. He adopted Christianity but refused to be subordinate to the official Church, and he adopted Islam but refused to be subordinate to the Abbasid caliphate, or even the nearby Umayyad caliphate in Andalusia ... this did not happen because of ruler or monarchic policies, but because of the nature of the homeland that is proud of its own existence and the nature of the Moroccan who accepts a principle but refuses to be enslaved by anyone for its cause ... the Moroccan is nationalist by upbringing, and he loves the land he lives in, and his nationalism contracts and expands according to the interests advocated by the psychological model he has embraced. (Fassi 2008, 114-115)

Perhaps most notable of Istiqlal's ideological foundations is the prominence of the Moroccan Monarchy. As exhibited from the establishment of the Festival of the Throne in 1934 to negotiating Mohammed V's return in 1955, Istiqlal invested heavily in the Moroccan Monarchy's right to rule over Morocco (an investment that was difficult to get away from when the Monarchy abused its powers).¹⁰⁸ Allal al-Fassi writes "We need to consider the holder of the throne – His Majesty the King – as a personality that is above all parties and political considerations that are open to public debate, as the guardian to the affairs and direction of authority. There needs to develop surrounding him a coterie of government stability, national consciousness, and existential continuity of the state" (2008, 126-27). The behavioral implications of this investment entailed Istiqlal deferring to the King at a critical time of the country's history; M'hamed Boucetta noted that when the

¹⁰⁸ In 1965, Istiqlal leader Mohammed Berrada exclaimed to US diplomats that "privately, it had been concluded that there is little to be hoped for from the present King [Hassan II], who has had ample time to demonstrate whether he possesses a capacity for constructive rule – and who has failed the test. The Party could not have moved to this position at the 1962 Congress; the Party base would not have followed its leaders." Memorandum number A-279, entitles "One View of Istiqlal Party's Seventh National Congress," dated March 5, 1965. Box 2492.

French approached the Istiqlal leaders for independence negotiations in Aix-Le-Bains in 1955, the Istiqlal leaders refused to assume the leadership role – even though they were the force on the ground at the time. “The King should be in charge of negotiations, they said” (Boucetta 2016). That is because the Monarchy was central to the Moroccan nationalist claim of being a distinct nation with a lineage tracing back 1400 years – a claim still widely heard in Morocco today.¹⁰⁹

At the same time, Istiqlal consistently advocated a democratic system of government for the country. Al-Fassi himself does not see a contradiction between a Monarchy “above all parties” and democratic governance, and looks to England as the example that Morocco should follow – a system that evolved gradually, was flexible enough to accommodate change, and most importantly, was a model for constitutional monarchy. He writes that “The reasons for all the tumult that befalls our country is that His Majesty is directly responsible to the people” (2008, 127). As such, he advocates a representative system where government is elected and held accountable for its policies. He believes this is consistent with both Islam and the Monarchic system.

As the judge implements the law on behalf of the King, but bares the responsibility of the judgements he passes, so must be the ministers executing the affairs of the state in the name of the King but bearing the responsibility for their affairs in front of the King as a guardian,¹¹⁰ and in front of the representative councils, once we achieve our goal of a solid constitutional system, after independence of course. (Fassi 2008, 127)

He further writes that Moroccan democracy must be based on a parliamentary system, and advocates for multi-party competition based on a simple majority voting while rejecting

¹⁰⁹ This tactic backfired, because while Istiqlal discursively distanced itself from one repressive order, it was entrenching itself in an alliance with another rising repressive order – leading to what Allal al-Fassi called an “incomplete independence.”

¹¹⁰ Here he uses the Arabic ولي الأمر which could also mean custodian.

single-party domination (130-132). He later lays out the importance of aggregating and institutionalizing interests in the form of political parties to institutionalize democratic practices and avoid “chaos.”

The ideological foundations described above contributed to building the Istiqlal party organization into the most formidable force in the country by independence in 1956. They were also flexible enough to have a progressive interpretation by the ‘Istiqlal left’ until then. After independence was achieved, Istiqlal could no longer keep itself together from an organizational standpoint (as detailed in Chapter 2). Thus, after it suffered its leftist split that produced the UNFP in 1959, it went through an organizational and ideological crisis.¹¹¹ Under the exclusive leadership of Allal al-Fassi, Istiqlal was forced to innovate ideologically between 1960 and 1963, as it tried to fend off the partisan challenges of the MP and UNFP. This was also the period when the country’s major institutional milestones unfolded: the first municipal elections (1960), the first post-independence monarchic succession (1961), the first constitutional draft and referendum (1962), and the first parliamentary elections (1963).

It is worth recounting the specific political context. In March of 1960, Mohammed V assumed leadership of the government himself, dismissing Abdallah Ibrahim (who had joined the UNFP). The country’s first ever municipal elections were held on May 29th, 1960. On February 26th 1961, Mohammed V died from complications following a simple surgical procedure. His son, Hassan, a known antagonist of Istiqlal, assumed the throne. Shortly after he assumed power, Hassan introduced Morocco’s first constitution in 1962. Despite its reservations, Istiqlal decided to support the constitution with reservations,

¹¹¹ The organizational crisis will be examined in detail in the next chapter.

whereas UNFP decided to reject the referendum. The referendum passed, after which Hassan began planning for the country's first ever parliamentary elections.

It was in the period between the constitutional referendum and the parliamentary election that Istiqlal produced its prided *Wathiqat Al-Ta'aduliyyah Al-Iqtisadiyyah wal-Ijtima'iyyah* (وثيقة التعاقدية الاقتصادية والاجتماعية) or Document of Economic and Social Parity, specifically in January of 1963. The document would become one of Istiqlal's main references as it positioned itself "to the left of the right, and to the right of the left" (Bekkali 2016),¹¹² and sought to "reconcile social [justice and provision] with capitalism and free enterprise within [Morocco's] national economy" (Benhamza 2016). The document identified agricultural development, industry, public education and development of human resources as the economic means for social harmony. To achieve these goals, it prescribes a hefty dosage of economic statism that does not stifle the private sector. Its wording is vague enough to be interpreted as a socialist document or a statist/corporatist one. From that point forward, "*Al-Ta'aduliyyah*" (parity) became one of the foundations of Istiqlal's ideology.

Party leaders had different ways to describe economic and social parity. "We have extremely socialist principles – the land is for he who harvests it, the factories are for the workers," said Abdallah Bekkali, Istiqlal executive committee member and editor-in-chief of *Al-'Alam*. Omar Abbasi, secretary general of the Istiqlali youth organization, had another interpretation. "Our party was never anti-market or anti-business. We always adopted a centrist approach towards the interests of business and workers. We were never anti-capital," he said (Abbasi 2015).¹¹³ "Parity is parity of opportunity, not of achievement,"

¹¹² Personal interview, February 24th 2016, *Al-'Alam* newspaper offices – Rabat, Morocco.

¹¹³ Personal interview, December 7th 2015, Istiqlal party headquarters – Rabat, Morocco.

added Abdelouahed al-Fassi, in an often heard conservative refrain (2016). However way party leaders may describe economic and social parity today, it had a specific temporal goal: providing Istiqlal with ideological program on which to run its electoral campaign in the 1963 parliamentary elections and stave off the progressive challenge from the UNFP. That is remains relevant today is a testament to Istiqlal's ideological dedication (and arguably, dogmatism).

Lastly, territorial integrity has always been pervasive in Allal al-Fassi's writings and critical to Istiqlal's nationalist claims. Al-Fassi had always believed in "Al-Maghrib Al-Kabir" or Greater Morocco. He believed that Tunis, Algeria and Mauritania were all parts of Greater Morocco, whose emancipation cannot be separated into individual independence projects. That explains why he was against the negotiations of Aix-Les-Baines, refused to attend them, and considered the resultant independence incomplete (as previously mentioned). And though he granted Tunis and Algeria a distinct character from Al-Maghrib Al-'Aqsa (The Farthermost Maghreb) or what he called Marrakech, he considered the Moroccan frontier to be from Tangier in the north until the Senegal river in the south. That explains why he was personally involved in Morocco's diplomatic efforts to thwart Mauritania's independence.¹¹⁴

Indeed, Morocco's territorial problems continue to feed Istiqlal's advocacy of territorial unity. The legacy of 1956 was the piecemeal achievement of independence: Ceuta and Melilia were kept under Spanish jurisdiction (and remain so today), the Western Sahara was under Spanish military occupation, while Mauritania and Algeria remained under French colonial administration. The subsequent decolonization did not alleviate

¹¹⁴ For a description of the Moroccan crisis borne out of Mauritania's independence, see Ghali (2014). Morocco would not recognize Mauritania's independence until almost 9 years after it was declared.

Morocco's territorial insecurity, as territorial disputes erupted with its newly independent neighbors (militarily in the case of Algeria in 1963). The Green March on the Sahara in 1975 inaugurated a long period of armed crisis with the Polisario front, which led an armed insurrection against the Spanish. This abundance of historical and ongoing disputes explains why territorial unity remains a rallying cry around which Istiqlal can mobilize nationalist Moroccan sentiment.

Istiqlal's ideology was and remains quite strong, in the sense that it provided a clear-cut definition of membership in the Moroccan polity. Allal Al-Fassi famously considered Moroccan Jews to be an integral part of the Moroccan nation, and despite the prominence of Islam and the Arabic language, Istiqlal always privileged territorial identification in its literature. However, the ideology developed in a way that institutionalized the *thawabit* and made any criticism of them sacrilegious. In other words, Istiqlal's ideology *did not* develop past the frames of the forties, fifties and sixties. As a result, the party – while maintaining its presence and organization – did not innovate intellectually past the concept of parity. Istiqlal's investments in Arabic-dominated frames led to it being one of the latest parties to acknowledge the validity of the Amazigh cause, and only did so in 2012 after the 2011 constitution acknowledged Amazigh as a national language (Benhamza 2016). Istiqlal's clinging to the frames of the past was vividly displayed in a recent crisis that engulfed the party. In the end of 2016, Hamid Chabat, the previous secretary-general of Istiqlal, plunged the country into a diplomatic crisis with Mauritania when he questioned Mauritania's independence and made irredentist claims to it, which he was later forced to retract.¹¹⁵ Such episodes highlight the ideological rigidity of the party, and its inability to

¹¹⁵ See (“قال إنها أراض مغربية.. الحزب الحاكم في موريتانيا يرد على شباط”) <https://cnn.it/2JWwreN>. Chabat's statements would be used as a precursor to eliminate Istiqlal from the ongoing government formation discussions.

innovate and create new ideas past 1963. It also displays Istiqlal's inability to keep up with the times, ideologically.

The Popular Movement: “Royalist” contrarians

The ideological development of the Popular Movement (MP) shows that its formation process as Istiqlal's contrarian was insufficient for its development of a coherent ideology. Istiqlal may be an old party with an old ideology, but that ideology is unmistakable. The MP for its part, has fluctuated from 'Islamic Socialism' to conservatism to liberalism throughout its history. As such, its ideological foundations were always shaky – disabling it from producing solid organizational extensions, effectively framing its activism, or developing a solid non-institutional (discursive) presence. In fact, of all the parties studied in this dissertation, MP has the weakest ideological foundations. Initially conceived as a protest movement against Istiqlal, the MP never developed its slogans into a set of clear and coherent ideological texts. Indeed, there is nothing in the MP literature that comes close to forming an ideological cornerstone text such as Al-Fassi's *Al-Naqd Al-Dhati* for Istiqlal or Ben Barka's *Al-Ikhtiar Al-Thawri* for the UNFP/USFP. However, while identifying and analyzing MP ideology is difficult, there remain some discernible ideological elements that the observer can identify from reading party literature and conversing with party cadres.

The party's most recent ideological report cites four foundations for the MP's political identity (Binqaddūr and Walzīn 2010a). The first of those is the Islamic character of Morocco. The second is Morocco's unity. The third is the commitment to Monarchy as the appropriate “political and social system for Morocco” (Binqaddūr and Walzīn 2010a, 36). The fourth is a conceptualization of freedom that pervades party literature and activist

discourse, and which the party has championed since party founder Mahjoubi Aherdane's famous 1957 declaration "We did not fight for independence in order to lose our freedom." It is within these four main principles that the party has historically carved out and articulated its identity.

At the time of its establishment, Islam played a crucial role for the party in which it tried to contest Istiqlal's intellectuals (Istiqlal was still a single party with progressive elements at the time). Party co-founder Abdelkrim El-Khatib had many statements on the centrality of Islam to the ethos of the MP. In the party's inaugural convention in late 1959, El-Khatib said:

Our Popular Movement [is] an Islamic movement, because it is a real expression of [the people's] will for progress and social and political development on the basis of [their] spiritual ideals and Islamic principles. Islam for our people is not just a flag that is raised at a time of struggle as some opportunists and aspirant leaders do, but it is a comprehensive method which our civilization is based upon, and a complete program for social and political progress within the realm of Islamic principles. (Binqaddūr and Walzīn 2010a, 33)

El-Khatib would later pontificate on the term "Islamic Socialism," which the party adopted in its first congress in 1959 and refined in its second congress in 1962.¹¹⁶ He is quoted to have said:

We aim to prevent our people from being drawn to materialism, especially Marxism. We want to build a state that, despite its modernity, is firmly rooted in Islam. We don't believe that we can advance as a society given our nature and inner proclivities without religion. Islam is what forces us to liberate our women, it solves our property and land distribution problems, and even solves our finance and trade problems. (Sārah 1990, 85)

Later, with the departure of El-Khatib from the MP in 1966, the MP would become less

¹¹⁶ It is worth noting that Waterbury (1970) identifies Istiqlal as the first party to use the term Islamic socialism (192). In describing the MP's notion of the term, he writes "The reader may judge for himself the solidity of the new ideology, but it is further evidence that pretensions to socialism in Morocco had not only become acceptable, they had become politically necessary" (244).

innovative and articulate in its expressions of the centrality of Islam.¹¹⁷

The MP's commitment to the Moroccan monarchy and its emphasis on Morocco's unity are related, and also pertain to the party's establishment as a loyalist Amazigh rural party. Previously mentioned in Chapter 2 was the palatial involvement in shielding the MP and its leaders during the early years of independence. Whether or not the party would have survived without this Royal patronage is questionable, given the turmoil in the Rif region which the MP was capitalizing on – and the way in which the Rif Rebellion was suppressed in 1958-1959 under the personal leadership of the then Crown Prince Hassan.¹¹⁸ In other words, the MP's development as a party that opposes secessionist Rif ambitions and Amazigh separatism but still claims to represent rural and Amazigh and rural interests led to its ideological emphasis on unity and the Monarchy simultaneously – what Waterbury describes as “unconditional support for the throne” (Waterbury 1970, 245).

Lastly, with regards to freedom, the party has linked its establishment to the passing of the Dahir of Public freedoms in 1958, and the subsequent legalization of multi-party life which brought about its legal recognition in February 1959. “The first of our ideological principles is that the MP came about to establish partisan plurality, and was critical in instigating the Dahir of Public Freedoms,” said head of the MP parliamentary delegation Mohammed Laaraj (Laaraj 2016). This, in addition to the Aherdane statement mentioned above has lead the party to focus on freedom as being one of its central themes. “The MP ideology since its establishment is an ideology of freedom and liberation, and it is the

¹¹⁷ El-Khatib departed from the MP after falling out with Aherdane over the declaration of the State of Exception (emergency rule) in 1965. Having been Speaker of the lower house of parliament at the time, El-Khatib objected to the declaration of emergency rule, while Aherdane and the remainder of the MP leadership supported it.

¹¹⁸ See the confidential report entitled “Politics in Morocco: The Rebellious Rif” dated March 14th 1973, Box 2486, number A-35, page 9.

principle that MP cadres are still attached to and still defend at the present and in the future” (Binqaddūr and Walzīn 2010a, 8). That said, freedom becomes a secondary consideration should it collide with the other three principles of MP ideology (Islam, Unity, the Monarchy).

MP cadres emphasize that their ideology was homegrown and tailored to fit Moroccan circumstances. “This is a 100 percent Moroccan product – has no ideology either coming from the east or the west,” said party headquarters director Ahmed Siba (2016). “We did not import our ideology,” said Jeddou El Idrissi, member of the party’s National Council. “We were not impacted by popular ideologies of the fifties such as nationalism and socialism ... Our thought is a product of Morocco and Moroccan soil,” he added (El Idrissi 2016).¹¹⁹ “Other parties have imported their ideological references – we did not,” said Fouzia Khamrich, member of the women’s section executive committee. “Our reference is Moroccan. Our reference and identity is from our country, we did not get it from anywhere else,” she added (Khamrich 2016).¹²⁰

However, the fluidity of the MP’s ideological foundations leads to a variety of interpretations by party cadres, who try to personalize them in liberal, centrist or conservative orientations. Some in the party see it as liberal – in the economic, political and social sense. “The party is a centrist, liberal party,” said MP parliamentarian Loubna Amhair. “It’s not extremist, and even though we are Amazigh it’s not a tribal party. It’s open to everyone,” she added (Amhair 2015).¹²¹ “The MP is a liberal party ... For me liberalism is essential,” said youth cadre Jamal Touissi. “I believe in it wholeheartedly –

¹¹⁹ Personal interview, May 3rd 2016, Ministry of Tourism – Rabat, Morocco.

¹²⁰ Personal interview, April 20th 2016, Ministry of Urbanism and Territory Management – Rabat, Morocco.

¹²¹ Personal interview, October 28th 2015, Coffee Shop – Rabat, Morocco.

not economic liberalism, but freedom, democracy, property of thought and rights,” he added (Touissi 2016).¹²² The MP’s liberal current is bolstered by the party’s membership in the Liberal International since 2003, and in the African Liberal Network.

Most cadres I interviewed, though, were quick to qualify the MP’s liberalism.

Ahmed Siba said:

The liberal direction is not one that is accepted by everyone in the party. There is a liberal current, but some notables do not ascribe to it. It is still an ongoing debate in the party – despite our membership in international liberal consortia. (Siba 2016)

Other interviewed concurred with a limited notion of liberalism. “We don’t believe in extreme liberalism, but a controlled liberalism that adheres to the Moroccan reality,” said

El Idrissi (2016). Fouzia Khamrich added:

The MP is economically liberal, but we’re not liberal in other issues. We are not liberal in issues that are against religion ... we are against homosexuality or gay marriage, because we are in a Muslim country and our countryside and Amazigh values don’t support it. So, we are economically liberal, but neither socially nor politically liberal. (Khamrich 2016)

This hesitancy to adopt the liberal label is perhaps a consequence of the MP’s historic unconditional support for the throne. After all, a party so unabashed in its support for an authoritarian center of power cannot claim to be a liberal one. As Mohammed Laaraj said:

The MP is ... a conservative party, in the sense that it is not in a rush to establish a democratic regime in the country. It considers that democracy has to be a consensus between the Monarchy and the political parties of the country. (Laaraj 2016)

While all interviewed cadres and leaders emphasized the pillars of the MP’s activism (advocacy on behalf of the countryside and the Amazigh populations), there were varying interpretations as to where the MP lay on the ideological spectrum – with some (Laaraj,

¹²² Personal interview, April 12th 2016, Coffee Shop – Rabat, Morocco.

Khamrich) saying it is closer to the Islamist PJD and the right, while others saying it is closer to the center and the center-left.

Former MP parliamentarian Hassan Agourram had a radically different description of the MP's political thought.

Aherdane was the party. It had no ideology or program or whatever. Istiqlal at least had some principles, as did the USFP. But for the MP [and other administration parties] these things don't exist. And this impacts party strength, of course. Because in the future, principles and programs are what last ... Let's be serious. The MP today does not have an ideology. (Agourram 2016)

While Agourram may be exaggerating the ideological dearth in his former party, there does seem to be a confusion and lack of clarity in describing the MP's ideological tenets even from within. Besides countering Istiqlal, defending the countryside, and advocating for the Amazigh – the MP has, despite its longevity, not yet developed a Hansonian ideology: “a clear and consistent definition of the criteria for membership in a desired political order.”

The MP's ideological fluctuation – from ‘Islamic socialism’ to conservatism to liberalism – points to a common trait of ‘administrative parties’: ideological opacity and ad hoc party-identity construction. They also point towards party ideology being much more reflective of social identity preferences than administrative/authoritarian manipulation. Despite all the support that the MP received from the Palace, it was unable to manufacture a loyalist Amazigh identity – as most Amazighs remained ambivalent (if not hostile) towards the Monarchy.¹²³ The MP's investments in building a contrarian ideology to Istiqlal helped pigeonhole it as an “ethnic” and “regional” movement by its

¹²³ The latest manifestations of this Amazigh ambivalence has been on display throughout the first six months of 2017 and exhibited by the protest movement rocking the Rif region (and threatening to engulf the whole country) – where slogans of ‘God, Country and the People’ (‘The People’ replacing ‘the King’) were occasionally raised. This shows the exogenous effect of social identity preferences on partisan politics – proving the causal mechanism described in Chapter 1.

opponents. At the same time, this contrarian ideology, and eagerness to prove Amazigh loyalty to the Monarchy may have inadequately represented either of its constituencies (the Amazigh or the rural/mountainous population), and thus prevented it from mobilizing these constituencies to become a real political force in Morocco.

The USFP: from revolutionary nationalism to social democracy

The USFP's ideological evolution is perhaps the most pronounced and marked from all the parties and movements under consideration in the dissertation. The tumultuous and contentious process by which the USFP formed drove much of this ideological recalibration. Since its first organizational incarnation in 1959 under the UNFP banner, the USFP's thoughts with regards to participation in Moroccan political institutions and its relationship with other political actors drastically changed. Indeed, the USFP went from aspirations of rivaling the Monarchy, to arguably deposing it, to coexisting with its flawed institutions and heavy-handed politics (see Chapter 5). Those political stances rested on ideological texts and a discourse that articulated membership in the Moroccan polity, and created boundaries between UNFP/USFP activists and their rivals. A transformation of sorts can be seen in the party's literature and discourse – from revolution to reform.

The party's literature and discourse outline this transformation. The first ideological document that the UNFP produced was *Al-Ikhtiar Al-Thawri* (The Revolutionary Choice) by Mehdi Ben Barka, written in 1962 to prepare for the UNFP's second party convention. Very early on in the text, Ben Barka defines the UNFP as a “revolutionary party” emanating from the “armed resistance and liberation army, comprising of the working masses in cities and villages, and the laboring and student youth,” that has taken upon itself the resumption of the emancipatory movement in

Morocco to give independence a real meaning (Ben Barka 2011, 15). Throughout the text, Ben Barka outlines his party's ideological opposition to the existing Moroccan regime in existential terms, and explains why his party was unable to implement the reforms it sought during the Abdallah Ibrahim government years (1958-1960). In a self-criticism reminiscent of Allal al-Fassi's, he identifies three mistakes his party committed: acceptance of partial solutions for Morocco's independence and short aftermath, facing off with adversaries in a closed context and negotiating without popular participation or support, and "lack of ideological clarity, and lack of definition for our movement's identity" (44).

Ben Barka segments Moroccan society into four segments: the bourgeois segment that has relinquished its political demands and tied its fate to feudalism, the labor class – which can be the main power in society, the petty bourgeois – which has some revolutionary potential, but is reluctant to resume the independence struggle, and the peasantry, who need a framework for their struggle to join the labor class in theirs. The regime has survived, Ben Barka argues, because it has successfully played off these classes against one another to the benefit of colonialism and its remnants. He thus frames the UNFP's struggle in the popular socialist frames of the time. "Ben Barka was writing in a certain context – Frantz Fanon, Che Guevara, the Third World ... this is where the idea for the violent overthrow of the regime emanated," said former UNFP member Mohammed Berrada (2016).

For Ben Barka, scientific socialism entails three elements: "1) a real solution for the problem of governance, in establishing political institutions that allow the popular masses to democratically monitor the state apparatus, redistribute wealth and national income, 2) economic foundations that leave no trace of colonialist control or the control of

its allies: feudalism and the parasitic bourgeois, 3) a political and social organization that forms and educates the popular masses, in order to mobilize them in the general accumulation of resources” (2011, 76). Towards the end of the book, he emphasizes the importance of ideological education to the party.

The party we aspire for is clear in its horizons, solid in its organization, and ought to reach the logical conclusion of its revolutionary path. For that, we have to pay special attention to ideological education in the party, without which our choices would remain in the realm of hope and emotional wishes ... there is no point in announcing the revolutionary choice without cadres that are armed with a revolutionary ideology. (Ben Barka 2011, 87-88)

Lastly, he puts forward his criteria for membership in the party (and the Moroccan polity):

We have to earn the distinction of being the party of the working urban and rural masses, embodying the alliance between workers and peasants and revolutionary intellectuals. We are the party of the Moroccan people, except for the exploitative classes of feudalists and parasitic bourgeoisie – allies and pillars of the new colonialism. (Ben Barka 2011, 89-90)

Only the party, he writes, can lead the revolutionary segments of Moroccan society. “The party alone is entitled to carry the compass of political struggle, and to study and plan the work of the revolutionary movement in the country” (92). Finally, he notes that the name of the party – The National Union of Popular Forces – matches its reality for the first time (95).

El Yazghi described the UNFP’s social program in broad terms: “The UNFP’s social program included the primacy of popular participation in government institutions, social justice, agricultural reform, an industrial program, and social protection for workers, poor people, health benefits, etc.” (El Yazghi 2016). But Ben Barka’s writings implied that the UNFP ideology also meant confrontation with the Monarchy. This confrontation led to the previously mentioned tumult in its early life. After Hassan II suspended political life and parliament in 1965 in what became known as ‘The State of Exception,’ Ben Barka was

abducted and “disappeared” in a high-profile intelligence operation in Paris.

After the military coup attempts in the early seventies, the most sizeable segment within UNFP decided that a new approach was necessary. Instead of confrontation with the Monarchy, these activists favored a gradual approach of entering the political process, entering political institutions, and changing them from within. This transformation was not merely an organizational split, but required some ideological innovation as well – to accommodate the reality that the UNFP had failed in its confrontation with the Monarchy. In the exceptional party convention held in 1975, the newly formed Union for Socialist Popular Forces (USFP) outlined its new ideological vision in its Ideological Report, which was drafted by Mohammed Abed Al-Jabri. Hassan Tariq, USFP member of parliament, explained the context:

Before 1975 the very idea of democratic party competition was not present – for all parties. All parties wanted to be ruling parties, and the party competition arena was closed. The authority was centralized in the Monarchy. The parties of the Left would go into the political institutions to problematize their functionality. A famous slogan back then was ‘Exploding the institutions from within.’ This had to do with the low ceiling of the era. Thus to be a leftist in the sixties and seventies had nothing to do with democracy. For the idea of the left and that of democracy to be reconciled, very important transformations had to occur in Morocco and the world in the seventies. (Tariq 2016)

The most notable ideological innovation in the Ideological Report was the USFP’s newfound commitment to democracy and the democratic struggle from within existing political institutions, which they knew to be flawed. “Despite the problems with the elections – this was our choice. We knew the problems, and we would say that we are participating in undemocratic, and perhaps anti-democratic circumstances,” said El Yazghi. “Because if you do not participate, you only have one recourse: violence,” he

added (El Yazghi 2016). This is known in party circles as “The Democratic Choice.”¹²⁴ It implied a renouncing of violence as a legitimate method to achieve political aims. Of course, the party’s new name also implied a more confident position in adopting the socialist label. “Ever since the UNFP was formed, the reference point was a socialist one. But it wasn’t until 1975 that we would incorporate that into the name and the literature of the party,” said El Yazghi. “We separated ourselves from the communist frame, and placed ourselves in the social democrat frame,” he added (El Yazghi 2016). “We were practicing socialists without the name, since mid 1965. Our terminology was socialist. Our ideology was socialist. Everything matured,” said Radi (2016).

It is hard to overstate the significance of the 1975 name change and ideological evolution within the USFP for its members. “In 1975 we entered a new political era, with the formation of the USFP, and the ideological clarity that came with it – our stance vis-à-vis the regime and the political institutions of the country,” said Tariq (2016). El Yazghi justified the USFP’s pragmatic turn in principled terms:

We wanted 15-, 16-, 17-, 18- year olds to become politically active, to engage in the political and ideological struggle of the country. It is not just a matter of institutions, but a matter of thought. How to plant the democratic choice and the progressive choice in young people’s brains, how to defend the socially disenfranchised, the labor class, battling poverty. You needed to show that you have ideas regarding these problems, and that you have a presence with a broad social base, even if that presence does not translate into your relative presence in the institutions. This was our choice, otherwise we could have just refused to participate or call for a violent revolution to change the regime. (El Yazghi 2016)

Tariq argued that the distorted Moroccan political spectrum led the USFP to these

¹²⁴ The communique of the exceptional party convention held in 1975 states: “Democracy for the USFP is not merely a means but an end in the framework of the socialist choice, and a principle that constitutes a part of our vision for the requirements of building a socialist society, emanating from the specificities of our society and the historical and dialectic analysis of its nature.” See (بيان المؤتمر الاستثنائي 1975) <http://bit.ly/2rd2akJ>

ideological choices:

It is a great contradiction that the Moroccan left defended political liberalism, the political institutions of the country, the primacy of elections, human rights, and led the charge against authoritarianism in the country. It adopted the liberal political legacy and defended liberal values, because in Morocco, there was no real Right that can play this role. (Tariq 2016)

Berrada, not hesitant to criticize the USFP, credited it for this ideological renewal.

“Ideology is not fixed. Ideology is a translation of relations between society, institutions and the world,” he said. “So it is necessary for ideology to be evolving. Who does that? A party that is dynamic,” he added (Berrada 2016). The USFP was indeed able to maneuver from its revolutionary approach to participation in regime institutions while maintaining its advocacy on behalf of “the working masses, of workers, peasants, craftsmen, merchants, employees and intellectuals.”¹²⁵

This had implications that the party did not realize at the time. In relaxing its conditions for participation in political institutions and adopting softer language towards its political opponents, the USFP was broadening and easing its “criteria for membership in a desired political order” while clinging to the socialist label. This new language enabled the USFP to enter Moroccan political institutions in 1978, and it peaked as a party around that time. However, much later, when the USFP was in charge of leading the government in the late 1990s, it presided over the liberalization of many of the state’s assets. The party that branded itself as ‘socialist’ with pride and comfort needed to market an economically liberal program. Ultimately, the USFP’s ideology did not provide the ability to justify the party’s performance in government. It struggled with both internal and external communication, and many of its most notable intellectuals and supporters left. The party’s

¹²⁵ Ibid.

dynamism, it appeared, had run its course by the mid 1980s – as successive secessions and crises depleted it from an ability to renew its discourse.

Thus the USFP's ideological development shows that as long as it developed its discourse, the party could remain politically influential. That development halted in the 1980s, and the party could not intellectually regenerate itself in the 1990s and especially the 2000s. The party's inclusion in government did not moderate its ideological stance, as the moderation predated any government gestures of inclusion. Rather the government experience forced the party to enact policy choices that were still considered antithetical to this ideology. The USFP's ideology, while developed from the early revolutionary days of the UNFP, still restricted the degree to which the party could justify its economic policies while it led the government of the 1990s. In a sense, the ideology became a burden on the party's flexibility.

PJD: in search of the Islamist Reference

The PJD's ideological development shows that late forming parties willfully cast away their most rigid ideological tenets for political expediency purposes. The PJD has liberated itself from the most rigid ideological tenets of the Islamist movement, while maintaining its ability to carve out an ideological niche by referring to the ever-evolving 'Islamist reference.' Whether its ideological evolution was carried out for sincere or pragmatic considerations is almost irrelevant. It has maintained a fluid ideology which conveniently refers to either Quranic texts or conservative societal attitudes to justify its political positions. At the same time, it is hesitant to advocate an ideology which would limit its flexibility and political maneuverability.

As the youngest of the parties examined in this dissertation, the PJD has yet to

formulate a clear and coherent ideology. Simply known as the “Islamist party,” PJD has had to invest substantial resources to show what it does not advocate (violence, terrorism, restricted individual liberties, etc.) as opposed to what it does advocate. With its formation coinciding with the rising tide of all Islamist currents, the PJD has attempted to carve out an identity by distinguishing itself not only from its secular rivals but also its religious counterparts. Its ideology is thus still in formative stages, and can be characterized as residual rather than distinct.

One of the few documents that roughly outlines the sketches of the PJD social program is *Al-waraqā al-madhhabīyya: al-barnāmaj al-‘am* – الورقة المذهبية: البرنامج العام (The doctrinal paper: the general program). Obtained in 2015/2016 during my field research, the document lacks a date and an author – though it seems to have been prepared for a parliamentary election (either 2011 or 2016). In it, the PJD identifies five pillars for its social program: reinforcing Morocco’s authenticity, reinforcing Morocco’s sovereignty and regaining its civilizational radiance, reinforcing the construction of democracy and implementing political reform, contributing to the achievement of sustainable and comprehensive development, and attaining social justice. Though most of the document consists of superfluous and vague language, two subsections of the first pillar (authenticity) pertaining to religion, politics the state and the party deserve highlighting.

Under subsection 1(e) entitled “Religion and the State, Religion and Politics,” the document states:

The issue of the relationship between religion and the state in our country is settled constitutionally, as the constitution states that Islam is the official religion of the state, and that its (Islam’s) related texts cannot be revised. It is also settled historically seen as though Islam persisted and is still the basis of the Moroccan state’s legitimacy ... As for separating religion from public affairs, this is an unimaginable transgression on Islam as a faith and a law. Islam is not just values

and morals and practices, it is also principles and purposes and rules and a method of life for the individual and society. However, this does not mean we should sanctify the political aspects of religion, because with the exception of grand principles and purposes and general rules, the remainder is human and worldly and subject to right and wrong. Hence, the appropriate relationship between religion and the state is neither complete separation ... nor complete identification ... Islam refuses to sanctify human activity and categorically rejects divine rule or theocracy. (28-29)

Under subsection 1(f) entitled “Our party and the Islamist reference,” the document states:

Adopting an Islamist reference means that Islam is our point of departure and framework for different choices and political interpretations and social programs ... The party does not consider itself a guardian over Islam or a spokesperson for it. But it does consider that departing from an Islamist reference is a natural position in a Moroccan society in which Islam has been rooted – in its culture, its history, and its present. Based on this vision, the party considers itself a political party and not a religious party, whose domain is politics and political affairs. It also considers citizenship to be the basis of its membership, as the party is open to all Moroccans so long as they are committed to its direction and programs and bylaws. Given that our party is a political party, its choices and interpretations are human and ... worthy of discussion and revision. They are, after all, interpretations that are offered to the people, and political practice will determine their effectiveness and feasibility. (29-30)

What these excerpts imply is that the PJD has attempted to position itself in a somewhat centrist position, and benefit from the Islamist association without necessarily being hampered by its baggage. It thus adopts a much more pragmatic than ideological approach to politics, and does so deliberately, to be as flexible and adaptable as possible.

PJD leaders and cadres readily acknowledge their ideological murkiness, and offer their own interpretations of PJD’s ideology and party identity. Saadeddine Othmani distinguished between the ideological foundations of the Islamist movement and PJD ideology. Othmani’s father (and most important personal influence) was a member of the Souss ‘Ulama Association. As such, he said that the main reference for the Islamist movement was “the Moroccan National Movement and its Arabic/Islamic reference” (Othmani 2016a). Starting from Allal al-Fassi and al-Mokhtar Al-Soussi, the Moroccan

Islamists went on to read the Eastern school: Sayyid Qutb, Hassan Al-Banna, Mohammad al-Ghazali. “There were Eastern and Western intellectual references for our work ... We read almost everything,” said Othmani (2016a). But when it came to PJD’s ideology, Othmani was much more coy. “The PJD’s political ideology, it’s political program is (social) Justice and (economic) Development! We are at the center of the center,” he said (Othmani 2016a). “We adopt the free market, and free enterprise in the framework of social justice,” he added (Othmani 2016b).¹²⁶ “Anyway, I don’t think identity is crucial today. Now, the identity is democracy – in political activity, the most important thing is democracy. If there is democracy, everything is easy. With no democracy, everybody is in trouble,” he said (Othmani 2016a). Lahcen Daoudi attempted to explain the Islamist reference in direct terms, but provided little clarity beyond a broad commitment to ethics.

Having an Islamist reference is not mysterious. It is an ethical reference, through which you try to create social and economic policy that fits your principles and convictions ... So the ethical element is crucial, as are principles and convictions. That’s non-negotiable ... Islam is an economic and social doctrine, but it has a broad umbrella under which you can administer in different ways as long as you avoid what is Haram ... These principles – justice, social justice, ethics and principles – are not exclusive to Islam, but a Muslim would not waver [on them]. (Daoudi 2016)

Bassima Hakkaoui acknowledged the PJD’s ideological obscurity: “We are a young party. To have political thought, we should accumulate [experiences],” she said (Hakkaoui 2016). However, she dismissed the importance of this ideological obscurity:

People weigh actions more than they weigh thought. Your thought frames your actions and behavior, and the latter is what attracts people. Ideology today is not what concerns people ... If you value things like honesty, dedication, work, loyalty and worthiness – which aren’t Islamist principles and are prevalent in the West – people will feel it ... Islam is not your mechanism ... I am not a scholar of religion, I am a student of social psychology ... that is what forms me in my work, not fatwas and the religious stance ... We don’t need fatwas to administer public security, to build bridges and highways, to have an energy policy and manage water resources,

¹²⁶ Personal interview, April 11th 2016, Dr. Saadeddine Othmani’s Clinic – Rabat, Morocco.

[administer] health. In all sectors, we don't need fatwas, we need to believe in the people's causes, we need projects, and we need to work. (Hakkaoui 2016)

The difference between the PJD's and other political projects in Morocco, Hakkaoui said, was that the PJD's project was "realistic" whereas other projects (such as the JSM's and the communists) were "utopian." She lamented that observers and analysts were quick to label Islamists in a pejorative way.

Some people say that because you are an Islamist you cannot support women's issues. So if you're an Islamist, you support discrimination? You support inequality? You support inequity? People just want to label us by the way we look. They want to fight us for the way we look – not our thought, our behavior, or our decisions. (Hakkaoui 2016)

While acknowledging a vast room for interpretation of Islamic principles, she drew a line for what is and is not permissible.

I always tell people, talk about problems that we can deconstruct and improve people's conditions. Don't discuss areas that you have no right to discuss. When we talk about inheritance equality, we first have to discuss enabling the woman to obtain her legitimate share of the inheritance, we have to discuss the ability of families comprised solely of girls or women to access the inheritance ... But if you come and tell me we need to make inheritance equal between men and women, when there is an explicit Quranic text that speaks to that – I am sorry. (Hakkaoui 2016)

Hakkaoui also said that when it comes to certain discordant issues, such as abortion, inheritance equality and gay rights, her Moroccan reference triumphs over her social science background.

When the issue of abortion comes up, I'd say one thing: I can't use halal and haram, because that's outside my expertise. I would say let's hold a referendum and see what Moroccans want ... In a discordant issue [such as abortion] you cannot only use religion or law only. You have to use democratic tools. (Hakkaoui 2016)

Abdelali Hamieddine said that PJD ideology has been in the making for some time. "It's taken us a while to develop a political identity for the party separate from its Islamist reference point," said Hamieddine, one of the youngest leaders in the PJD's general

secretariat. He considers that there are three ideas central to PJD political thought and practice:

First, I think we have to be centrist as a matter of methodology, not of ideology. In everything, we need to take balance into consideration. For example, on centralization of social provision vs. free enterprise, between socialism and liberalism, we say we are supportive of free enterprise and a role for the state to create a balance between rich and poor ... The second idea, is that we don't have a totalitarian project – we want to contribute to the reform process ... We don't believe it is our responsibility to provide Moroccans with a complete vision for reform, that we claim we can achieve. However, we contribute to the reform process in whatever way we can, believing that we don't have solutions for all the problems and that others should also contribute ... A third idea is that we insure good relations with all ... We respect all political powers and agents in the country, because we believe we cannot work except in collaboration with others. We are not an exclusionary political party. We don't believe that democracy is 50 +1 percent. Even if we get absolute majorities in all institutions, we do not believe that gives us the right to rule unilaterally – even if it was legally and constitutionally permissible. (Hamieddine 2016a)

Hamieddine stressed PJD's character as neither a socialist nor a liberal party. "My opinion is that we are close to Anthony Giddens' third way, you can say social liberals. We are definitely not socialists, but we are also not liberals," he said (Hamieddine 2016a).

Another relatively young PJD leader, parliamentarian Amina Maelainine, readily acknowledged the PJD's lack of discernible ideology:

We still don't have a document that outlines our social and economic program at the party ... The discourse in the party is not yet mature so that all members can say we have a comprehensive social and economic program. We came from an Islamist movement, where we used to talk in general terms about reform. We are new entrants to the field of managing political affairs and all its complications. The different aspects of the program will mature after we have experience in political activism and management ... [Party co-founder] Abdallah Baha once said PJD doesn't have a social program. Its program is that of Moroccans ... Benkirane once said ... we are not Islamists, we are merely Muslims. There are transformations on the level of thought and discourse, but these are not the result of a deep internal discussion. They are the result of individual leaders' exposure to public affairs, which passes on to the party youth. (Maelainine 2016)¹²⁷

¹²⁷ Personal interview, May 19th 2016, Parliament – Rabat, Morocco.

Maelainine highlighted the evolution of the “Islamist reference”:

The party always says it has an Islamist reference, but that develops. The question is: what does that mean? That is a subject of constant discussion within the party, and results in difficulties when we interact with the law and public policy. (Maelainine 2016)

She noted the transformation of PJD discourses on a number of different issues: individual liberties, inheritance, abortion.

These are the forums where calls for modernity and religious texts collide ... In the past, there was no discussion: haram was haram ... When you subject this discourse to public discussion and other forces, it becomes less sharp and more lenient ... we understand that we aren't the only players, and hold on to what we can while putting what can be discussed up for discussion. Now we pay attention to the problems concerning Moroccans: poverty, fragility, and need, more than getting into battles about people's individual liberties. (Maelainine 2016)

Maelainine stressed the generational divide between the party founders, her generation (the mid-level management), and the party youth – which pervades the realm of dress, behavior, inter-gender relations, and more. This indicated that not only was the party's discourse surrounding its environment evolving, but also its own self-conception.

I don't want to call it schizophrenia, but it is definitely a subject of constant debate and development ... I think there are a lot of transformations, and I lament the absence of forums for intellectual discussion [to analyze these transformations] within the party ... We need to know where we're going as a party, what are the elements of its projects, because there might come a time where we don't recognize any elements that bind us together. (Maelainine 2016)

Alarmed at the speed with which PJD is evolving, she sounded a warning.

In the past, we used to say we had a comprehensive Islamist reform project ... But we had a lot of discussions, book readings and pedagogic sessions to develop this, where we compared between our project and that of the Muslim Brotherhood in the east. We read [Rached] Ghannouchi, and [Hassan] al-Turabi, and discussed between ourselves what it meant to be an Islamist party. This doesn't exist anymore, and we no longer theorize ... This crisis started before the government experiment, but the experiment made it worse because our leaders used to write before (Othmani, Yatim, Abouzeid) ... Parties need think tanks to produce knowledge and inform their policies. We don't have that, and we have an immense poverty when it comes to theorizing. (Maelainine 2016)

The above data suggests that the PJD lacks a strong Hansonian ideology. It does not adopt a clear and concise definition for membership in the Moroccan polity. As evident from its leaders' statements, the PJD identifies with the broadest segment of Moroccan society as loosely as possible. Unlike Istiqlal or even the USFP, PJD's ideology does not institutionalize and police social identity boundaries. The PJD deliberately blurs and weakens social identity boundaries for the purpose of gaining majoritarian electoral and societal approval. The party is so preoccupied with dispelling stereotypes and assuaging the fears of different societal actors that it barely hangs on to a few ideological tenets.

That, however, does not seem to be costly for the party in political or electoral terms. In fact, given that the PJD is the strongest of Morocco's political parties today shows that this ideological fluidity is one of the party's assets. The party hasn't run into any situations where its maneuverability has been restricted by its ideology. Nor has it faced any trouble justifying any course of action to its base – most notably, accepting the King's request to form a government after the dismissal (and public humiliation) of its secretary general from the post of Prime Minister in March 2017. The PJD's ideological nebulosity has historically prevented it from costly confrontations with powerful Moroccan entities – most notably, the Monarchy. While that is clearly taking a toll on its cadres and leaders, the PJD remains able to maintain a formidable organizational structure, and strong influence both within and outside of Moroccan political institutions. The party evolved to a pragmatic, 'rational' organization, which has become a political force to be reckoned with. The historical evidence suggests that this transformation occurred before the PJD entered the political system, not as a result of entering it. The evidence also suggests that the ideological lack of clarity is deliberate, and the result of PJD's

assessments of other partisan experiences.

The JSM: a return to the caliphate via building the *Jama'a*

The JSM's ideological development suggests that social movement organizations can advance equally 'strong' ideologies as political parties. As such, the JSM's ideology has developed in a markedly different way than the PJD has, which largely correspond to the movement's goals and formation process (which has historically excluded contesting formal political institutions). Whereas the PJD lacks a single text or author that frames its Islamist political activity, the JSM relies on the writings of its founder – Abdessalam Yassine – as a reference and point of departure for its activism. Indeed, JSM leaders and cadres unanimously used one word to describe Yassine's (and therefore the JSM's) intellectual and practical project: 'comprehensive.' It is thus necessary to unpack the different elements of this comprehensive project, to see how it articulates membership in a political community, and how it structures, informs and restricts the JSM's activism.

From Yassine's previously mentioned ascription of societal ills being a result of *fitna* comes his prescription for the desired political order: a return to the 'caliphate built on the prophetic method.'¹²⁸ To achieve this order and overcome *fitna*, it is not only necessary to determine how it manifests in social and political forms, but to overcome the personal and collective barriers to forming an Islamic *jama'a* (group). To do that, Muslims must move from "personal" Islam to "collective" Islam through building a *jama'a* that, for the time being, is bound by its country.¹²⁹ The move to collective Islam must be bound by

¹²⁸ Darif describes the various stages that Yassine believes Muslim rule has passes through: prophecy, a caliphate built on the prophetic method, biting rule, coercive rule, and a return to the caliphate built on the prophetic method. "Whereas biting rule was the cause of *fitna* in the past, coercive rule is its cause in the present" (Darif 1995, 77).

¹²⁹ Here it is important to clarify the Arabic term used to describe country, *Qutur* (قطر). The term is used in pan-Arabist and Islamist discourse in a pejorative sense, to indicate the arbitrary and unnatural boundaries of the modern Arab/Muslim nation-state. On the necessities of being bound to a specific country, see

three regulations to build an organic *jama'a*: on the emotional level, the *jama'a* must possess a love of God; on the political level, it must govern its affairs through *shura* (consultation); on the behavioral level, its members must exhibit obedience (but not subservience) to the leadership.¹³⁰

Already, one can detect distinguishing features that persisted throughout the JSM's evolution as a different type of Islamist movement: the importance of the spiritual element through the love of God, the specificity of the Moroccan context, and the importance of consultation and discipline. JSM leaders highlighted the importance of the spiritual element as a marked difference between them and other Islamists. "The Islamist movement talks about Islam being comprehensive rhetorically, but practically the spiritual aspect was almost absent," said Fathallah Arsalan (2016). Omar Iharchane, member of the JSM political division's general secretariat, elaborated:

What distinguishes the JSM from other Islamist movements is that it is closer to the Sufi tradition and mysticism, because it prioritizes the social upbringing element – what we refer to as *Ihsan* [Spirituality]. So what the JSM prides itself on having is the privileging of spiritual reinforcement or faithful upbringing. (Iharchane 2016)

JSM leaders also stress that theirs is a distinctly Moroccan project. As Abdelwahed Moutawakil said:

You can say that the JSM represents an authentic Moroccan social experiment ... Its vision is based on the Moroccan reality, history, political system, geography...We cannot adopt other societies' solutions for Morocco. There is a kind of Moroccan specificity that is different than say Tunisia, especially with regards to religion and Islamist movements. (Moutawakil 2016)

Relatedly, the JSM developed a code of principles binding its activism, which Yassine deemed as necessary for building and growing the *jama'a*. These are what leaders

Mutawakkil (1993).

¹³⁰ This is outlined in Yassine's (1989) book *Al-Minhaj Al-Nabawi* (The Prophetic Way) – which Spiegel (2015) describes as "the most pragmatic of all his works" (44).

and members refer to as the ‘Three Nos’ (اللاث الثلاثة). The first of these Nos was a categorical rejection of violence. This came at a time where other Islamist currents in Morocco and elsewhere were unsettled on the issue (and indeed many Islamist currents around the world continue to be). The JSM rejects the use of violence to advance political goals, and does so for a number of reasons: First, it is against the *shari‘a* to use violence against other Muslims. Second, the Islamic calling and Islamic society was not coercive, and spread gradually. Third, that it is impossible to reconcile proselytizing and violence, and that a calling built on violence will easily collapse. Fourth, that violence would be the quickest way to destroy the organization.¹³¹ Moutawakil explained the context of how the rejection of violence was explained and received:

The youth back then asked, what do you do with these tyrannical despotic rulers? There was no other way to influence change [but violence]. From its earliest writings, the JSM renounced violence and considered it childish. It is a matter of principle. This was a clear and honest answer for a very delicate question, and it was difficult for youth at the time to digest it. You don’t practice violence even if it is practiced against you. (Moutawakil 2016)

The second of these Nos was a rejection of secrecy, or underground activism. Again, at a time when many Islamic movements in Morocco and elsewhere were going underground to resist despotic leaders, the JSM advocated overt, transparent, public activism. It did so for legal, political and organizational considerations. As far as *shari‘a* law was concerned, proselytizing publicly was a duty, which should be practiced prudently, confidently, and judiciously – indicating a willingness to suffer the consequences and die for the sake of God. Politically, the JSM was keen on placing itself on the same level as secular political parties who openly advocate their secular programs. From an organizational standpoint, public advocacy would prevent the marginalization and

¹³¹ See Darif (1995, 130-31) for a summary of Yassine’s justifications of rejecting violence.

perversion of the JSM.¹³² Moutawakil elaborated on this ‘No Secrecy’ principle:

Most Islamist movements rejected this wholeheartedly, and thought we were crazy. They said that because Yassine practiced publicly, he must be backed by Mossad or the Moroccan regime. But our point was clear – how could we, as Muslims working for Islam, how could we hide? It was difficult to convince people of [the need for publicity]. (Moutawakil 2016)

The third of the JSM’s Nos was a rejection of ties to foreign entities – either organizations or states, and either financially or organizationally. Related to the specificity of the Moroccan context, the JSM restricted its activism within Morocco for pragmatic, as well as intellectual reasons. Moutawakil explained the rationale behind this:

The JSM was adamant to preserve its financial and organizational independence, at a time where the Muslim Brotherhood was a universal organization making strong claims on representing the ‘nation.’ People would ask us why we wanted to divide the ‘nation,’ but we knew that foreign ties would give the regime an excuse to do whatever it pleased with us. We are in this country, we should work in this country. It is true that unity was an Islamist aspiration, but we wanted to achieve this unity from the bottom-up, not as a top-down organizational phenomenon. (Moutawakil 2016)

Other JSM leaders were emphatic about the JSM’s refusal of funds coming from foreign countries, even if they were sent by Moroccans.

Furthermore, the JSM considers the comprehensiveness of its program to entail a complementarity between proselytizing and political activism. It thus rejects what the PJD and other Islamist organizations/parties have done in separating the proselytizing arms from the political arms of their organizations. Hassan Bennajeh, member of the JSM political division’s general secretariat, elaborated on the ideological and organizational reasons behind this:

[The JSM] is a social and proselytizing movement, broader than only a political party. Political activism is only a part of what the JSM does ... an important part, but still a part ... Yassine once wrote, ‘In the ears of the hungry, the only sound that rings is that of bread.’ *Al-Ihsan* (Spirituality / Beneficence) will not find any

¹³² See Darif (1995, 115-17).

resonance except in the presence of *Al- 'Adl* (Justice). Hungry people will not listen to your calls for beneficence in isolation – you have to be struggling for justice, freedom and dignity. (Bennajeh 2016)¹³³

Arsalan noted that the equation of political and proselytizing/spiritual activities has been a constant since the establishment of the JSM. Speaking of the context in which the JSM was established, Arsalan said:

The presence of this new experiment [the JSM] that was focusing on the cultural/spiritual element while people were suffering from a void in that area, one that had a clear political stance, made us attractive ... Leaders of other Islamist movements even asked Yassine to join while still in their associations – but he refused, because he did not consider himself merely a spiritual leader. (Arsalan 2016)

Thus the JSM maintains a complementary relationship between its political activism and its proselytizing work, refusing to either separate them or to prioritize one over the other.

Lastly, the JSM says that it has developed detailed programs based on research undertaken by its political division – to fend off the reputation that all it does is criticize the government and the regime. Bennajeh explained:

The political division has prepared alternative policies – politically, economically, technically, under its 11 bureaus of expertise, who work on this. We have internally developed our fifth edition of our social program – which under different circumstances we would be ready to carry out. At this time, the social program is not publicly available. (Bennajeh 2016)

As to why the JSM keeps its program a secret, Bannajeh said:

The time is not ripe for us to announce our social program. Why would we announce it now, when we're not a party and have no chance of implementing it? We keep it until its feasible. We don't want to burn ourselves. (Bennajeh 2016)

From a Hansonian standpoint, the JSM has the strongest ideology – the clearest definition of membership criteria in a desired polity. And this ideological strength has

¹³³ Personal interview, October 4th 2016, Coffee Shop – Rabat, Morocco.

allowed the JSM to build arguably the largest and most robust political organization in the country. The JSM's ideology has not only artificially elongated the JSM's time horizons, it has rendered them meaningless. As Arsalan told me: "The time horizon doesn't matter. If we only had this life, we'd say ok, we're getting old and are going to die. But we have the afterlife" (2016). Despite being one of the latest formers, the JSM has developed the most rigid ideology – preventing it from entering the political system. This ideology may prove prohibitively restrictive as the JSM positions itself for a future role while staying true to its principles. Many analysts and observers note that the JSM has the critical mass to enter [and change] Moroccan political institutions. Yet from an ideological standpoint, this may prove impossible.

Conclusion: The Paradox of Ideology

The above discussion and examination of party and organization ideologies points to a few takeaways. First, ideology and ideological development were an important factor in partisan development and competition in Morocco. Each of the five parties/organizations examined developed their ideology to compete with another party/organization, and in relation to another partisan discourse at the time. Istiqlal developed its brand of nationalism first to compete with the Moroccan communist party, and then the UNFP after the 1959 split. The MP articulated its rural/Amazigh identity to compete with the Istiqlal. The UNFP developed its brand of socialism initially as UNFP and later as USFP to compete with Istiqlal and, occasionally, the Monarchy. The PJD utilized the "Islamist reference" to rally the Islamist movement in Morocco behind its partisan activity, and compete initially with the USFP and later with others, including PAM. Lastly, the JSM developed its discourse to compete initially with the USFP on university campuses and with other Islamist

movements at the time, and later primarily with the PJD. Thus ideological development never occurred in a vacuum, and was often an arena of partisan competition.

Second, Ideology is not a constant, but as Hanson (Hanson 2010) argues is a variable that rises and declines. Moreover, Ideology and ideological strength not only vary *within* parties, but also *between* them. One argument I frequently encountered was that USFP (and its ideology) was much stronger in the 1970s and 1980s than in the 2000s. As PJD leader Hakkaoui told me: “The USFP had an identity. You used to be able to tell a USFP cadre from his/her appearance. These are parties that were founded on an idea, and the idea remained within them – they’re not like the administrative parties” (2016). Hakkaoui was thus pointing to the fact that not only was the USFP built on an ideology/identity, but that this varied with time. This ideological character was the differentiator between “real” and “fake” parties in Morocco. But the above discussion also shows that ideology varies *between* parties, and that some party ideologies – regardless of their internal variance/rise and decline – are stronger than others, and as such are more rigid. Assuming a definition of ideological strength as “clarity and consistency of defining the criteria for membership in a desired political order,” the above discussion indicates the following hierarchy of ideological strength/rigidity for the parties under examination (from strongest to weakest): the JSM, Istiqlal, USFP, MP, PJD. As such, despite internal variance over time, the ideology of the JSM has historically been stronger than that of Istiqlal, Istiqlal stronger than the USFP, the USFP stronger than the MP, the MP stronger than the PJD. It is unquestionable that the JSM has the strongest ideology: that is because, as the Arsalan quote above shows, their collective action is facilitated not by an artificially long time horizon, but by an infinite one.

The evidence suggests that, while ideology plays an important role in party formation, survival and continuity, ideological strength/rigidity roughly correlates with time of formation – the MP serving as the notable exception here (perhaps due to its ‘administrative’ origins). The earlier a party formed, the stronger/more rigid its ideology was, increasingly structuring, informing and restricting partisan activity. This is likely attributable to old age. As the quote from Mohammed Berrada above implies, a party has to continuously renew its discourse in order to remain dynamic. Istiqlal stopped innovating ideologically since 1963, the USFP stopped since 1983, while the PJD is still evolving and carving out an ideological niche. Hence, with time, earlier formers grew more ideologically rigid as they struggled to renew themselves. Later formers had more ideological fluidity, were better able to justify political choices that clashed with their principles, and had more ideological room to maneuver. As such, those that have the most ideological freedom run in the reverse order: MP, PJD, USFP, Istiqlal, JSM. This ideological development informs why the JSM has yet to join the official political system and form a party; it cannot afford to bear the costs of such a choice, ideologically.¹³⁴

The inherent paradox of Moroccan political parties is that ideology is a necessary component for building a minimally functional and robust party organization. Such an organization cannot be sustained without binding ideas that energize the activist core and provide their activism with meaning and purpose. Istiqlal and the USFP were able to build robust party organizations that were historically dominant in specific decades (Istiqlal in

¹³⁴ PJD leaders believe they are reaping the political benefits of the JSM’s activism. As Lahcen Daoudi said, “[The PJD has no] ideological competitors. [The JSM] is not a political competitor, and it actually broadens the Islamist base” (Daoudi 2016). “We did not beat [the JSM], because we did not compete with it,” said Othmani. “If it forms a party, we will compete with it,” he added (Othmani 2016b). This is not entirely accurate; the PJD and JSM do compete over the validity of their Islamist discourse. Still, it does reflect the awareness of PJD leaders that they benefit from being the only official Islamist game in town.

the fifties and sixties, USFP in the seventies and eighties) specifically because of their ideological investments. Yet as I will detail in the next chapter, in a non-partisan authoritarian system such as Morocco, ideology is a delicate component, an excess of which may corner political parties and prevent them from weathering the strategic game played with the authoritarian incumbent. The most successful party to date, the PJD, was one that invested in just the right ‘dosage’ of ideology – enough to bind its organization together, but not too much to act as a political obstacle. It is to the topic of organizational development that the next chapter turns.

Chapter 4: Forming the Masses: Party Organizational Development in Morocco

Introduction

Of all the roles of a political party in society, the most important one heard in Morocco does not have a satisfying English translation: Interview subjects most frequently outlined *ta'ṭīr al-jamāhīr* (تأطير الجماهير) as a political party's main duty or role. Possibly borrowed from the French word *encadrement*, *ta'ṭīr* means organizing, educating and mobilizing all at once (the literal translation is framing). *Ta'ṭīr* may also be rooted in the early terminology and goals of European Socialist parties, which Duverger argues “were the first to try and organize the masses, to give them a political education, and to recruit from them the working-class elites” (Duverger 1954, 25). These goals, Duverger argues, relate directly to the organizational development of European Socialist parties. Perhaps the closest English word to *ta'ṭīr* as it is used in modern day Morocco would be “forming:” indicating an active party agenda of educating and mobilizing simultaneously.

Yet, while all parties/movements aspire to “form the masses,” the efficacy with which they do so (and have done so in the past) has varied. This brings attention to organizational development with regards to types of organizational structures that each party / movement has established, and the efficacy of those structures in “forming the masses.” In the previous chapter, I have argued that parties developed ideologies in an isomorphic fashion, and that variation in ideological development can be explained by the timing, sequence and historical context of party formation processes. In this chapter, I similarly argue that a) parties developed organizations in a broadly isomorphic fashion and b) that timing, sequence and context of formation processes have shaped each party / movement's organizational development, and explain the variation between them. Crucial

here is the timing and sequence of each party / movement's formation and development, as later formers have adopted earlier formers' organizational structures and techniques. With the benefit of hindsight, they've adopted not only less binding and rigid ideologies, but also more effective and disciplined organizational structures.

The idea that party organizations develop according to their goals – or ideological tenants – is not one that has is unchallenged in the party organizations literature.¹³⁵ Nevertheless, and as Duverger did seventy something years ago, I will argue that while each party/organization in Morocco has developed organizational bodies and social extensions in relatively isomorphic fashion (indicating the similar competitive constraints each party/movement faces), the efficiency and discipline of these varies, depending on the genesis of each party / movement – the timing, sequence and process of formation. In making this argument, I implicitly test my third hypothesis and its alternatives. Specifically, I argue that quality of ideology (Socialist, Islamist, Conservative) while perhaps impacting organizational structures, has historically had no bearing over the efficiency and discipline of each party organization. Rather, later formers – by virtue of when/how they formed – have developed more efficient and disciplined organizational structure.

Here, it is necessary to explain how I 'measure' effective and disciplined organizational structures. Party organization is effective and disciplined when organizational bodies are able to attract and frame supporters of the party, and 'form' them in the party's discourse. So there is a quantitative element, that is – the sheer number of organizations that a party and its activists have created addressing particular segments

¹³⁵ For an example of a well-articulated rebuttal, see Panebianco (1988).

(labor, youth, women, university students, children, and so on). But as in other measures of this study, the quantitative element is hardly enough to give a full picture for organizational efficacy and discipline. There are other qualitative measures: the societal and media impact of party mobilization (quality and quantity of such mobilization), effectiveness of media and outreach and influence on public discourse, party reputation both internally and for rivals and observers, and overall activist behavior – adherence to leadership structures, bylaws, etc. – and internal measures to produce behavioral outcomes (reward competence, punish dissidence).

To illustrate, I will use a brief anecdote from my field work in Morocco. In the winter/spring of 2016, I attempted to interview Abdallah Saibari, secretary-general of the USFP Youth at the time twice. Saibari and I agreed on meeting at a specific time and place both times. Both times he didn't show up, didn't answer his phone, and didn't apologize. This was unlike other experiences where my efforts to interview partisan leaders and activists were unsuccessful. This was a disregard and disrespect unlike any other I had encountered. Later, I interviewed Hanane Rihhab, a USFP political bureau member, and asked her why Saibari was so unreliable, and how he was doing in the USFP youth. Rihhab lashed out against him and Khaddouj Slassi—head of the USFP women's division—in a surprisingly vicious diatribe (and my interview with her did not end on a positive note).¹³⁶ Throughout my field work, I had heard from the USFP's partisan rivals (other party activists) and independent analysts and observers about how the USFP organization was in shambles. My experience in interviewing (and trying to interview) their junior activists corroborated that. That experience stood in vast contrast to my experience in interviewing

¹³⁶ Personal interview, April 25th 2016, Casa Port Train Station / Casablanca-Rabat Train – Casablanca, Morocco.

junior JSM activists while in Morocco, and what I saw when I visited PJD's electoral headquarters in Rabat, in the fall of 2016. As such, my assessments of party efficiency and discipline are not only reputational, but observational as well – and informed by the history of each party's organizational development.

Istiqlal: from clandestine structure to hegemony to complacent decay?

Istiqlal's organizational development shows that its origins as a colonial resistance movement led to its investments in broad organizational forms targeting different social segments on a mass scale (education, youth, labor, and armed resistance). After independence, it established youth, student and labor unions to mobilize these segments, and these organizations became effective recruitment tools. This was its organizational peak and produced an efficient and disciplined party organization. The legacy of clandestine activism remained present in different organizational innovations that sought to produce a united and disciplined party membership that adheres to a centralized decision-making apparatus. As in the field of ideology, Istiqlal's organization faced some age-related problems, which it has struggled to deal with.

Because it was a clandestine organization for much of its early history, information about the Istiqlal's organizational structure prior to independence is scant. Its first four party congresses were held in secret, in locations and times that the party – seventy plus years after independence – still does not disclose.¹³⁷ Organizationally, Istiqlal developed internal structures that were more effective than its predecessor (the NAC). “The Istiqlal was not organized like the [NAC]. It was organized as a modern party, and it had accountability and internal democracy – for the first time in Morocco,” said Anis Balafrej

¹³⁷ For a chronology of party congresses, see *Ḥizb Al-’istiqlāl: Tārīkh Ḥāfil Bil-Niḍāl* (2009, 50).

(2016a). Douglas Ashford, who details the organizational structure of Istiqlal at its advent in the mid 1940s, notes that cells were the primary unit of organization for the party – “organized on both a neighborhood and a factory basis, with a secretary, a treasurer and an instructor” (1961, 62).¹³⁸ Abdelkrim Ghallab narrated his experience in joining the party in its early stages:

I went back to Morocco in 1947, after 11 years of absence in Egypt. I immediately started working with the National Movement, with the newspaper (*Al-‘Alam*), and with the Istiqlal cells and committees (cultural, political). I became an unofficial member of the executive committee of the party, and then became an official member. Our work was to develop the party internally on an intellectual level. (Ghallab 2016)

Ghallab said that cell work was the most important form of civil activism at the time, due to the constraints the French mandate authorities placed on freedoms of expression and association.

I think the most important non-violent method [of resistance] was the formation of our cells. Publicity and media had to accompany that, but that was the most important one. Publicity and media were restricted by the French authorities anyway, so their validity was limited. (Ghallab 2016)

Following the exile of Mohammed V in 1953, Ghallab spent six-seven months in prison, but at the time the armed insurrection was picking up steam and civil work/party activism was no longer viewed as threatening.

The French authorities realized how futile it was to imprison non-violent, political activists when there was an armed independence insurrection in the country. The day after I got released, I went back to working with the same cells. After a while, demanding independence became a public activity – and we weren’t punished for it. (Ghallab 2016)

Istiqlal maintained some cells in the armed resistance once the ALN was established, according to Mhamed El Khalifa.

Istiqlal had some sleeper cells in the armed resistance, which were called ‘the

¹³⁸ See Ashford (1961, 61-64).

ornamentation committees' – based in Casablanca (under the leadership Mohamed Zerktouni) and Marrakech (under the leadership of Abdessalam Jibli) – charged with displaying the people's happiness during the festival of the throne. (El Khalifa 2015a)

But most of its activism was civil, and consisted mostly of educating Moroccans about the nationalist cause and organizing them in its ranks. As Ashford notes, “the leaders were impressed with the ends to educate the base of the movement and to develop the controlling cadre” (1961, 63). This is where the Free Schools (schools in which the language of instruction was Arabic and were not under French Mandate Authorities' jurisdiction) came to play a formative role for the Istiqlal's growth and recruitment. Thus, “the development of the party beyond small cells of local adherents can almost be followed with the spread of the free schools into the countryside from the major cities” (Ashford 1961, 64). Ashford had estimated Istiqlal to grow from 3,000 members in 1944 to 100,000 in 1951.

Critical to Istiqlal's organizational identity, however, was not only its association with the resistance and the ALN, but also with Morocco's nascent trade union movement in the early 1950s – which would provide an institutional platform for Istiqlal to “form the masses.” The behavior of the French authorities pushed an equivalence between Istiqlal and the trade unions after a sweeping episode of repression in 1952. The Moroccan branch of the Confédération Générale du Travail (CGT) had held a solidarity strike to protest the murder of Tunisian union-leader Farhat Hached. In response, the French administration arrested the union activists and top Istiqlal officers (including the entire executive committee) and outlawed Istiqlal (and the Moroccan Communist Party).¹³⁹ This equivalence led Ashford to write that “the extent to which membership of the unions and the Istiqlal overlapped in the cities before independence cannot be measured accurately”

¹³⁹ That is when Ghallab rose to the “Provisional Executive Committee” of the party.

(1961, 75). Istiqlal's affiliation with the union movement would have repercussions both on internal party dynamics and party life in the country, as each party sought to affiliate with an existing trade union or create its own affiliate union.

At independence, Istiqlal was faced with the challenge of creating public (rather than clandestine) institutions to organize and mobilize members and serve as streams for attracting recruits. In early 1956, Istiqlal 'militants' would establish (or publicize) a number of important mass organizations that they envisaged would be 'parallel organizations' – contributing to the party's goals of educating, organizing and mobilizing Moroccans. The most important of these were the Istiqlali Youth, the National Union of Moroccan Students, and the Union of Moroccan Labor (the latter two of which are known by their French acronyms UNEM and UMT, respectively). The Istiqlali Youth was established in Fes, where it had its inaugural convention on March 25th 1956. UNEM was established on February 4th 1956 in order to serve as the union of advanced secondary school and university students. Finally, UMT was established in secrecy on March 20th 1955 in Casablanca by Istiqlali militants who were previously active in the Moroccan branch of the CGT and chose to establish an independent union.

The Istiqlal Youth in particular featured (and continues to do so) many other organizations under its umbrella that cater to children as young as six years old. No other party has as many organizations that target societal segments at such a young age. On the children's level was the Association for Development and Education (جمعية التربية والتنمية) known as ATT. On the young girls' level, there is the Renaissance Girls (منظمة فتيات الإنبعاث). On the youth level for voluntary and charity work, there is the Builder's Association (جمعية البناء) and the Moroccan Boy Scouts (الكشاف المغربي). On the junior student level, there is the

School Youth (الشبيبة المدرسية). For young workers, there is The Working Youth (الشبيبة الشغيلة). Most of the Istiqlal leaders/cadres I interviewed who had contemporary party responsibilities had joined the party at a very young age through one of these streams. Abdallah Bekkali, current executive committee member, narrates how he joined the party through its local School Youth branch:

I joined Istiqlal in 1975 as a 14-year-old in Laarache. I joined because the Istiqlali youth was very active in my city, and it had a lot of cultural programs. It was enough of an incentive, and I joined the School Youth ... It is difficult for any 14-year-old to have political convictions that explain his joining of a party. But I was simply lured by the cultural activity which I saw as committed and having a high quality. I saw that activity as formative, and decided that I should join the party. It was that simple, and did not come out of a deep analysis to the party's ideological or intellectual reference point. (Bekkali 2016)

Istiqlal was relatively successful in transforming its organizational structure at early independence, and attracting new members from different regions in the country. Estimates of membership between 1956-1959 are difficult to confirm, but Anis Balafrej told me that his father Ahmed built the party organization to reach 1.5 million members in 1957 (Anis Balafrej 2016b).¹⁴⁰ American diplomats at the time also estimated membership to be between 1,000,000-1,500,000.¹⁴¹ Istiqlal was cognizant to structure its organization in order to attract and “form” members. As El Khalifa said: “In the youth divisions, the labor unions, the student associations, our struggle was not one over political or governmental responsibilities, or electoral seats ... We wanted to attract and mobilize the public to our party” (El Khalifa 2015b). Adil Benhamza noted that the parallel organizations remain the most important recruitment bodies for the party. “The professional associations, labor

¹⁴⁰ Personal interview, April 20th 2016, Hotel Sofitel – Rabat, Morocco.

¹⁴¹ See memorandum number 77, entitled “The Organization and Strength of the Istiqlal Party,” dated August 26th 1958. Box 3656. The growth had been so formidable, that Ashford argues Istiqlal set up its organizations in order to limit rather than grow the number of members. See Ashford (1961, 245).

unions, youth organization, women's organization, these are our main membership recruitment tools," he said (Benhamza 2016).

In spite of this growth (or as Ashford has argued, because of it),¹⁴² the legacy of clandestine organization and operations would persist in Istiqlal's organizational structure, exemplified by the position of the "inspector." Distributed geographically across the country, inspectors are "the main working link between the base of the movement and the central offices" (Ashford 1961, 233). Their most important role, according to Ashford, is "organizing new sections and subsections, reviewing the admission of new members, and supervising the submission of reports by the subordinate levels of the organization," (Ashford 1961, 234). But as the name of the title implies, the inspector is a central administrator and disciplinarian – dispatched from the party's headquarters to its regional centers and charged with resolving internal party disputes. In a colonial resistance movement, a premium is placed on both unity and discipline, and the inspector is responsible for insuring unity and discipline of party personnel. Mohamed Soussi, who served as regional inspector of Fes from 1976-1991 and inspector general from 1991-2012, described the regional inspector as "the primary person responsible for the regional affairs of the party – political affairs, organizational affairs (youth, union) etc.," and the inspector general as "responsible for the party organization" (Soussi 2016).¹⁴³ No other party in Morocco has ever had the position of inspector, either on a regional level or a national level – so it remains an Istiqlali innovation (Sassi 2016).¹⁴⁴ The inspectors answer only to the executive committee, which is the party's top decision-making body. "In every region, we

¹⁴² Ashford (1961, 243).

¹⁴³ Personal interview, March 25th 2016, Istiqlal party headquarters – Rabat, Morocco.

¹⁴⁴ Personal interview with Professor Mohammed Sassi, February 3rd 2016, Mohammed V University – Rabat, Morocco.

have a dedicated inspector,” said Soussi (2016).

Istiqlal’s organizational hegemony over most of the country’s mass recruitment bodies after independence would be very short lived. The party split that created the UNFP in 1959 saw the departure of two major parallel organizations from under the Istiqlal umbrella – UMT and UNEM – that joined the nascent progressive party. “We were such pariahs in university, because the Student Union was all with the UNFP,” said Mhamed El Khalifa (2015b). The additional loss of many of Istiqlal’s youthful leaders and cadres left the party in disarray, and caused Allal al-Fassi to leave his voluntary seclusion in Tangier and assume leadership of the party. The ensuing power struggle between him and Ahmed Balafrej would lead to the abolishment of the secretary-general position (held by Balafrej at the time). The accountability and internal democracy to which Anis Balafrej alluded gradually eroded, as al-Fassi—by abolishing the secretary-general position—sought to centralize the decision-making within the party even more that it had been. “It is impossible to disagree with Allal al-Fassi, as a person and a leader,” recounted M’hamed Boucetta (2016).¹⁴⁵ Ghallab elaborated at length:

Allal Al-Fassi’s ability was unparalleled, and his energy was unlimited. He would travel all over the country, and internationally, [to solicit support for our cause]. He also had creative ideas, and the ability to attract followers through his oratory skills and his humility. Balafrej did not have this energy. [He] was an organizer – a rule maker. After independence, we needed to mobilize the masses, and Balafrej couldn’t do that. (Ghallab 2016)

The resolution of the leadership struggle at Istiqlal’s top of the pyramid did not preclude the need for creating parallel organizations to compensate for the ones Istiqlal lost

¹⁴⁵ It should be noted here that this was described in a very salutary way. Indeed, the Istiqlal leaders and cadres reflected on al-Fassi and his actions at the time very favorably. Even Ahmed Balafrej – who was effectively purged from the party by al-Fassi – maintained good relations with him and wrote a moving elegy about him after his death. See Balafrej (1978).

to the UNFP. In March 1960, Istiqlal would establish a new labor union, the General Union of Moroccan Workers (also known by the French acronym UGTM). In 1962, the party would establish its student arm, the General Union of Moroccan Students (known as UGEM). Later in April of 1965, the party would establish a French-language newspaper, *L'Opinion*, to bolster its communications. According to Naima Khaldoun, president of the Istiqlali women's association, this was a matter of necessity.

How are we going to compete if we're not present in the same forum? We're not just going to compete in rhetoric. To compete with you, I have to find you in the university, in the press, in the trade union, in the students association. (Khaldoun 2016)¹⁴⁶

The legacy of centralized decision-making would outlive al-Fassi by far.¹⁴⁷ In 1974, after Allal al-Fassi's death, Istiqlal would bring back the secretary-general position and retire the party leader / president position. Until 2012, the selection of the secretary-general had to be unanimous. In 1974, Boucetta would be chosen by his peers to be secretary-general and would fulfill the post for 24 years – until 1998. In 1998, Abbas Al-Fassi was also selected to lead unanimously until 2012. Adil Benhamza said that the party reformed its leadership criteria in 1998.

We dealt with the leadership issue in 1998, where we brought new generations into the party leadership – the fourth and fifth generation. Now our sectary general can only lead for two four- year terms – and we were the first party to instigate this rule. (Benhamza 2016)

He attributed Istiqlal's leadership stagnation to the state of politics in the country. "When you stay without political institutions for 20 years – from 1956-1977 – that explains why

¹⁴⁶ Personal interview, May 4th 2016, Istiqlal party headquarters – Rabat, Morocco.

¹⁴⁷ Anis Balafrej believed the centralized leadership style remains a facet of Istiqlal until today. "Until this day, Istiqlal took after the leadership style of Allal al-Fassi, which is against my father's leadership style. The style of the traditional leadership and organization – my father did not believe in that," he said (Balafrej 2016b).

we maintained the same leadership,” he noted (Benhamza 2016). El Khalifa acknowledged that Boucetta remained at the top position for too long, but thought that the changes of 1998 led to the party’s organizational decline:

The party was always accused of not wanting to incorporate new elites, that if you joined it you’d had to wait a long time to reach the leadership level ... That is because we had organizational hurdles facing a [member in the executive committee] – who had to spend three terms in the national assembly (15 years) before being eligible for nomination to the executive committee ... When we removed this requirement, many people who had nothing to do with the party became leaders in the executive committee. (El Khalifa 2015b)

What survives today of Istiqlal’s organization is a formidable geographic presence and unmatched number of vertical parallel organizations (reaching across different age groups). Khaldoun (2016) noted that Istiqlal was the first party to establish a women’s association in 1986. Bekkali described the broad reach of the parallel organizations:

There are two paths for attracting members: horizontal and vertical. The vertical organizations (by age) are youth organizations, student associations, women’s associations, etc. The horizontal organizations (by social segment and industrial sector) are the professional associations and labor unions. There are also other organizations that attract members, the Moroccan League for Primary Education, the Moroccan League for Human Rights, the Moroccan Boy Scouts, and so on. We do not only rely on the conventional methods of attracting members. (Bekkali 2016)

Benhamza spoke of the organization’s geographic reach:

We are the party with the most branches around the country (1,100 branches for 1,500 municipalities), and are able to field/nominate candidates in more regions than any other party. Our organization is the principle reason we’ve lasted so long and survived all the challenges. (Benhamza 2016)

Khaldoun concurred: “There is no party in the country that has roots as deep as ours, and as many organizations across the country as we do” (2016).

Despite that, the party has struggled to escape the rigid and centralized organizational legacy it inherited from the leadership of Allal al-Fassi and his colleagues. Hamid Chabat’s brief tenure as secretary-general was the party’s first attempt to escape

this legacy, and was marred with controversies. Chabat had ascended the party leadership through UGMT, and had no relationship to Allal al-Fassi's coterie (often referred to as the Fassi aristocracy), which dominated the party's leadership until 2012. "Chabat is a product of the Istiqlali organizations," historian Moussoui Ajlaoui told me (2016).¹⁴⁸ Yet it was clear that the Istiqlal notables were unhappy about his election, as he ran up against Allal al-Fassi's son Abdelouahed and won. He was the first secretary-general in Istiqlal's history that was elected by majority vote, as the party previously chose its leaders unanimously and by consensus. Chabat was quite brash in his statements, and brought Istiqlal a lot of negative publicity (Boucetta and El Khalifa, historical Istiqlali leaders, expressed their displeasure with his leadership in our interviews). In September of 2017, the party would bring back the al-Fassi coterie through the ballot box – voting for Allal al-Fassi's grandson, Nizar Baraka, to the position of secretary-general in an extremely polarized internal struggle that would earn historically comical notoriety.¹⁴⁹

Almost 45 years after his death, Allal al-Fassi continues to cast a heavy shadow over the party organization. Istiqlal's organizational development directly relates to the structures and frames it invested in constructing since its advent in 1944 and until the early days of independence. It is thus holding on to practices, conventions and positions that may have outlived their necessity. In Chapter 3, I noted that Istiqlal has been conservative in ideological innovation. It has been more conservative with organizational development. Although it has a great number of specialized departments and sub-organizations targeted to all segments of Moroccan society, its leadership struggles and internal discord has

¹⁴⁸ Personal interview, March 3rd 2016, Institute of African Studies – Rabat, Morocco.

¹⁴⁹ The supporters of Chabat and Baraka would engage in a physical altercation during the banquet dinner of the 2017 convention and throw plates at each other. See ("مؤتمر الاستقلاليين يتحول من فضاء للنقاش إلى ساحة" "لمعركة الصحن الطائرة" <http://lakome2.com/politique/31269.html>).

reached epic proportions of late. This seems less a factor of its type of ideology and more so its age. Istiqlal is holding on to what made it once dominant, yearning for an Istiqlali golden age that may never come back.

The Popular Movement: the skeletal party organization

The Popular Movement's (MP) organizational development shows that its origins as a Monarchy-sponsored party aiming to limit Istiqlal's influence in political institutions disabled it from developing solid organizational extensions in society. Its organizational development more closely resembles an "electoral machine" that depends on interpersonal relations of existent social and economic elites, rather than a party organization that recruits and produces its own elites. As a result, its organization has historically been less efficient and disciplined than other parties.

Given its genesis as a regime-supported political project aimed at rivaling Istiqlal inside political institutions, the MP's focus in its early history was solely on contesting political office through elections and government appointments. As a result, it never developed a solid grassroots organizational structure, as its main forum of operation was not so much in society, but in government and official institutions.¹⁵⁰ The lack of a solid organizational structure also meant that most of the party activists were recruited through

¹⁵⁰ The MP suffered a split in 1986 when party founder Mahjoubi Aherdane had a falling out with the Palace over assigning ministerial responsibilities in a cabinet the MP was to participate in. As party leader, Aherdane wanted to control the process, whereas the Palace did not concur. It is worth quoting at length from Hassan Agourram: "Aherdane himself wanted to be in the lineup, and wanted to be the one who doles out the ministerial positions. He wanted to be the man in charge, and not take orders from the Royal Court ... The whole maneuver was so that the party could kick Aherdane out, and I didn't know about it. But the Interior Ministry wanted to do it behind closed doors, and wanted to do it instantaneously. So the MP held an exceptional congress in the Mohammed V theatre in Rabat, and decided that Laenser would become secretary-general, and he would be in government representing the MP alone" (Agourram 2016). As a result, the MP expelled Aherdane from the party, and he went on to form the National Popular Movement (الحركة الوطنية الشعبية) known by its French acronym MNP in 1991. The two parties merged in 2006.

personal connections and family networks. Its organizational development thus had less to do with ‘forming the masses’ than providing an associational vehicle for ambitious politicians and activists.¹⁵¹

Though the MP formed a youth branch called الشبيبة الشعبية or the “Popular Youth,” shortly after its official establishment in 1958, the young party had focused its energy on participating in the municipal elections of 1960 and the parliamentary elections of 1962. As a result, the youth branch never morphed into an independent stream of recruitment as it did for the other political parties studied in this dissertation. Ahmed Siba, one of the few MP subjects interviewed for this dissertation who joined through the youth stream, said the Amazigh cause was the central issue around which the MP youth mobilized. “Back then, the Amazigh flag was banned. Even communicating in the language was stigmatized,” he said (Siba 2016). Fouzia Khamrich, noting the lack of a single important recruiting stream, said “[The party’s founder] Aherdane used to say the MP is like a tent: it has an entrance from wherever you approach it” (2016).

Indeed, most of the MP activists interviewed for this study acknowledged early organizational weakness and a small geographical footprint as characterizing their party. “We didn’t have local organizations and structures,” said Khamrich. “It was Mohammed Ouzzine who was the brain behind building local organizations [in the late 1990s and early 2000s],” she added (Khamrich 2016). Most subjects joined the MP through familial ties and affiliations, rather than through any of the MP’s ‘parallel organizations.’ “The MP has parallel organizations (youth, women, etc.), but historically these weren’t important for recruitment,” said Jeddou El Edrissi. These parallel organizations include a labor union,

¹⁵¹ Of all the organizations under consideration in this study, the MP most closely resembles Aldrich’s (1995) theory of parties serving as institutional vehicles for ambitious politicians.

the Popular Syndicate of Employees (النقابة الشعبية للمأجورين), better known for its French acronym, SPS. “The most important avenue for recruitment has been personal relationships of the individual cadre/official. If we wanted to recruit people, we’d go door-to-door,” added El Idrissi (2016). Youth activist Jamal Touissi elaborated:

The party has its notables, and certain individuals that it knows will succeed in any elections. So it’s not the party structure, but the individuals. It’s an organization that is produced by its individuals, not the other way around. The personal is stronger than the institutional. (Touissi 2016)

Several members cited family and personal ties as the main entry point through which they joined the MP. “You can say that my family was the entry point, because I had an uncle (aunt’s husband) who was a mayor of Had Al Brachoua and activist in the MP. He recruited me to join the party,” said Khamrich (2016). Jeddou El Idrissi shared a similar account:

You can say that my accession to the MP was a hereditary practice, seen as though my father and other family members were also members of the MP. You know that the MP has a strong presence in the countryside, and seen as though I am from the Rif (Oulmes), I’ve interacted with the party since I was a child. At some point, we didn’t hear of any other party. (El Idrissi 2016)

Fatima Zahra Idrissi, a youth leader in the MP who joined the party in 2007, also joined the party through her family network. “My family is Amazigh, from the Mid-Atlas (the Ifrane region) – the birthplace of the MP. So it was only natural to find myself drawn to the party ... Many members of my family belonged to the MP,” she added (Idrissi 2016).¹⁵² MP member of parliament Loubna Amhair said her family’s activism in the party catalyzed her joining. “I started through working in the Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development’s office, who himself was an MP party activist (2006-2007). So the first

¹⁵² Personal interview, April 20th 2016, Ministry of Urbanism and Territory Management – Rabat, Morocco.

factor was the family activism history, and the second was professional life,” she said (Amhair 2015).

In addition to family and personal relationships, elections and professional ties have also been recruitment channels for attracting new members. Several activists mentioned that their membership in the party was the result of running for specific elections. Hassan Agourram, former MP activist and parliamentarian, said the party approached him in 1977 to run under its label, knowing he was a strong candidate.

I first joined the MP during the parliamentary elections of 1977. Before that, I did not have any partisan background. In the 1976 municipal elections, I ran as an independent. In the middle of the 1977 parliamentary campaign, the MP was recruiting independent candidates to run under their party label. They asked about me, and knew that I was going to win the seat in Demnat. (Agourram 2016)

Thirty years later, Mohamed Laaraj, head of the MP parliamentary delegation when I interviewed him, said he joined the MP in 2007 because he wanted to run for parliament in Al Hoceima – a city in the north east of Morocco. “The MP has a good reputation in the northern parts of the country, as it helped pluralize party life in the country,” he said. “You can run as an independent, but it is very difficult to secure the necessary requirements,” he added (Laaraj 2016).

Commentators and other partisan activists view the MP’s lack of extensive organizational extensions and associational dearth as a weakness. While that may indeed be the case, what the MP’s organizational development suggests is also that the MP is a different *type* of party than that which is typical of Morocco. It is not strictly an ‘administrative party’ – or an ‘electoral machine’ as advisers are wont to describe such parties, but neither is it a party that is built on a clear and cohesive ideology that seeks to ‘form the masses.’ As a result, it is not surprising that it is absent from civil society, its

labor union is meager, and its youth and women's arms are not as active as others. Fatima Gouaima Mazzi, head of the MP's women section, exalted the MP's associational dearth, arguing that civil society should not be 'politicized.' "Since our establishment, we did not seek to politicize civil society and social organizations ... we do not manipulate civil society," she said (Gouaima Mazzi 2016).¹⁵³ Rather, the MP relies on its social network and maintains what can be described as a skeletal party organization with all of the basics. It also holds the promise of institutional and bureaucratic experience, for those who seek it. As Khamrich described:

We have a forum for MP qualifications ... which is based on recruiting cadres from the different regions of Morocco to support parliamentary and governmental MP cadres. This gives these people a chance to get experience in institutional work, and an avenue for their ambition to rise up in bureaucratic work. (Khamrich 2016).

That alone is enough to recruit some new members into the party. It is worth quoting at length from Touissi on his reasons for recently joining the MP.

The problem is that in the political offerings in Morocco, there is no political party that is accessible and whose ideas can be close to mine ... I am somewhere between liberal democrat and social democrat. I needed a party that had organizations and institutions, such as a national assembly, a political bureau, a convention etc. A party that had extensions across the country. A party that had a history to a certain extent, not one that just fell off from the sky. (Touissi 2016)

Here it is worth noting that, while the MP geographical footprint is weaker than the other parties and organizations under consideration – there are some areas where it is particularly strong. Laaraj described these regions – the Mid and High Atlas, as well as the Rif as MP "fortresses."

What distinguishes the MP its popular [electoral] fortresses, that no other party can penetrate. The Mid and High Atlas, as well as the Rif ... Even if the candidate does not have a lot of contact with voters, he can run under the MP party label and win these districts. (Laaraj 2016)

¹⁵³ Personal interview, February 5th 2016, MP party headquarters – Rabat, Morocco.

It is thus this combination of organizational sustenance, regional strength, and party history that enables the party to survive and maintain its position in the Moroccan party landscape. It is unlikely to grow in the future, and is indeed threatened by PAM and other administrative parties that may emerge and wrest away its most ambitious and uncommitted members.¹⁵⁴ Thus, the skeletal organization (as well as the party's ideology/identity) may need to be bolstered if the party does not wish to lose more of its membership.

The Union for Socialist Popular Forces: from opposition to governance, and decline

The USFP's organizational development shows that a lack of initial goal clarity and regime persecution prevented the party from building a robust organization. After the 1975 ideological recalibration, the organization was reinforced and the USFP reached its apex. Subsequent splits in the 1980s weakened it, but it was the government experiment that brought about an identity crisis and delivered a severe blow, from which the party has not recovered. The USFP is where the variable "organizational development" has varied the most, reaching an efficient and disciplined state before receding considerably.

Of all the parties and organizations considered in this study, none has witnessed the organizational fluctuation that the USFP has seen. Indeed, few parties and organizations in Morocco's history have gone through as much organizational turbulence. This turbulence is partially due to the fact that, for a considerable proportion of its history, the goals and demands of the party/movement were unclear. Though heavily steeped in leftist-populist language prevalent at the time among movements of national liberation in the developing world, the UNFP (USFP's parent political party) had few clear demands beyond the

¹⁵⁴ Siba told me that in 2009, PAM took 2/3 of the MP's candidates for the municipal election held that year (Siba 2016).

establishment of a constitutional monarchy in Morocco – a demand that it shared with a number of other parties, including Istiqlal. And as I will show below, the moment of clarity in the party's mission was a fleeting one.

The lack of clarity in the UNFP's mission was due to the many different entities that initially made up the party: previous leaders of the Istiqlal, the UMT Labor Union, previous MP and Shura party leaders and activists, as well as previous members of the ALN (armed colonial resistance). Few things brought all of these entities together beyond some vague notion of "marginalization." As Mohammed Berrada explained:

UNFP was based on a crucial alliance between the [ALN] and the [UMT]. Mahjoub Bin Siddiq played a very big role ... The party organization was not in harmony – the syndicate was doing its own thing, the resistance elements were doing their own thing, and the rest were doing their own thing. (Berrada 2016)

Moreover, the UNFP at its advent had a contrarian as opposed to positive approach. As Mohamed El Yazghi told me, "[There] were the two reasons UNFP was formed: the disagreement with the Crown Prince over the type of state we want to build (democratic vs. authoritarian choice), and the internal disagreement within Istiqlal over the party convention" (El Yazghi 2016). The party better knew what it was against than what it stood for.

Furthermore, the issue of party leadership also contributed to the initial organizational chaos of the UNFP. For the party's first few years of existence, its leadership was exercised by a committee of six leaders: Abdallah Ibrahim, Abderrahim Bouabid, Mehdi Ben Barka, Mahjoub Ben Seddik, Al Fqih Al Basri, and Abderrahmane Youssouffi. The party's second convention, held in 1962 did not organize this leadership. Moreover, the party entered a bitter confrontation with the palace in the early 1960s that led to various forms of leadership decapitation – through a combination of murder, exile,

and imprisonment. Youssouffi and Al Basri were arrested in 1963, released two years later and then went into voluntary exile. Ben Barka went into exile in 1963, was sentenced to death in absentia, and then in 1965 “disappeared” in Paris – in what resembled the most notable of the decapitation episodes. Mohammed Berrada elaborated:

Mehdi knew that changing politics requires working from within institutions, and building a party apparatus. He was the dynamo behind Istiqlal in the fifties, and wanted to build a similar party organization for the UNFP. Hassan realized that Mehdi and Omar Ben Jalloun were threats to him, so he dealt with them the way he dealt with his political opponents at the time. (Berrada 2016)

It was around that time that Hassan II suspended political institutions in the country and ruled through the ‘state of exception.’

With its leadership being persecuted, the UNFP had to go underground and resort to the Istiqlali method of organization during colonial times. Cell work became the primary method of organizing party members. Moreover, the UNFP had to exploit other associations, such as UNEM and UMT to attract members. This practice, of an illegal/persecuted party/organization exploiting non-political associations to recruit members and communicate with its social base, harkened back to Istiqlal’s tactics during colonial times, and would be replicated by the JSM later. Fatima Belmouddene, currently a member of the USFP political bureau, joined the UNFP through the UNEM during her first year in university in 1969.

At the time, the UNFP faction in the student movement was very strong. They had a very impressive ability to recruit new students ... (by helping new students with day-to-day affairs) ... We were in the middle of the state of exception, and the UNFP was under siege ... the party was dormant, and the student movement was one of its strongest arms. The UNFP was dominant in the UNEM ... I became a philosophy schoolteacher in Casablanca after I graduated from university. At the time, party activity was restricted to stationary and sectoral cell meetings. We used to work on a cell level more than on a party level. (Belmouddene 2016)¹⁵⁵

¹⁵⁵ Personal interview, May 2nd 2016, USFP party headquarters – Rabat, Morocco.

That organizational structure, with the party's leadership splintered and its activity underground, was ultimately unsustainable. After a couple of military coup attempts in the early 1970s, Hassan II decided to initiate a backchannel dialogue with the UNFP and Istiqlal, the primary components of the parliamentary opposition when Parliament was suspended in 1965, to rejoin the political process and contribute to the amendment of the constitution. The two parties had boycotted the Parliamentary elections of 1970 and formed the National Bloc in the same year to coordinate their opposition activities. The formation of the National Bloc, and the negotiation process with the palace (which eventually failed) brought out some of the internal fissures within the UNFP leadership. Abdelwahed Radi explained the impact of the internal leadership crisis at the UNFP:

The crisis ... showed all the contradictions within UNFP, and that the party would not be able to develop. There were those who wanted to run it like a syndicate, and those who wanted to run it like a political party. We did not have a secretary-general. What happened is that the administrative committee convened and decided to re-enter the political process. That's when we held an exceptional congress, elected a new leadership, and called ourselves the Socialist Union [in 1975]. (Radi 2016)

Led by Abderrahim Bouabid, "Rabat group" broke off from the UNFP and the formed the Socialist Union of Popular Forces (USFP). The secession had a number of organizational implications, and was accompanied by additional clarity to the party's mission. As Radi explained:

We needed to build our party, and we decided that we wanted to reach the government through democratic struggle – through the existing political institutions (parliament, municipalities, etc.). We completely separated from the trade union arm (the UMT). We also completely relinquished the idea of armed struggle ... Our first goal was to build the party ... we got a lot of new recruits, and the party became stronger. (Radi 2016)

The USFP started to gain momentum in the late 1970s. It had youth and childhood recruitment organizations such as the Association for the Education of Moroccan Youth

(known by its French acronym, L'AMEJ), the Shu'la (torch) association, and Mawaheb (talents). It was already influential in the student movement, specifically at UNEM. As Hassan Tariq, a USFP political bureau member and parliamentarian said:

Part of our strength in the USFP, until the 1990s, was the strength of our youth arm – which had a vast presence in the universities and schools, the press, geographical extensions. The youth arm is the first bridge that connects the party with society. (Tariq 2016)

In 1978, the USFP formed its own affiliate labor union, the Democratic Confederation of Labor (known by its French acronym, CDT). It was also influential with other independent syndicates such as the Writer's Union and the Teachers' Syndicate. Organization, El Yazghi said, was the primary arena of party competition.

Competition with other parties was primarily in party organization – the party had a base, in cities and the countryside. Then in trade union extensions, student extensions, youth extensions. There were also other organizations: the merchants union, craftsmen union, the media – through USFP newspapers *Al-Muḥarrir* (المحرر) in Arabic and *Libération* in French. (El Yazghi 2016)

Tariq described the USFP at the time as “primarily an urban political party, representing a large proportion of the Middle Class, with organized ties to the labor class through the [CDT]” (Tariq 2016).

The USFP decided to enter the political system and run for elections regardless of how flawed these processes were. As such, their campaigning strategy was to use those elections to build the party organization and mobilize constituents *outside* of the institutions. The party ran for municipal and parliamentary elections in 1976 and 1977 respectively, and obtained a few seats in both. The state-sponsored forgery against the USFP in those elections is widely-acknowledged. As Radi said:

Our presence inside the institutions did not reflect our influence on society. But everyone knew that; Hassan II knew that, and so did we ... in 1977, we were 15 out of 270 seats, but we should have had 90 seats. People knew our weight. (Radi 2016)

At the time, the USFP viewed the electoral campaign as a brief repression-free window for party recruitment and societal communication (namely, building the organization and projecting its influence), rather than winning elections. In the early eighties, USFP secretary-general Abderrahim Bouabid issued a statement that became a party slogan: “Seats Do Not Concern Us!” (“المقاعد لا تهمنا!”)

The USFP developed organizations to simultaneously contest all the societal arenas that it could. Feeling that it had built substantial momentum, the USFP’s labor union – CDT – called for a general strike on June 20th, 1981 after the government raised the price of basic food materials. That same day, waves of demonstrators in Casablanca were attacked by various security agencies as the military encircled entire neighborhoods with tanks and armories. Hundreds of demonstrators were killed and buried in mass graves (some buried while still alive), and thousands were arrested.¹⁵⁶ The USFP newspapers in Arabic and French, Al-Muḥarrir (المحرر) and Libération, were both shut down, and the government unleashed a massive wave of repression on the party. Belmouddene recounted the party activity at the time:

When party life was restricted, my activism was restricted to the cells. That phase rooted the party in society, because we didn’t have party centers – they were all under surveillance or monitoring, and the security agencies were attacking them at different times to confiscate documents and so on. (Belmouddene 2016)

Belmouddene explained how localized and micro the party organizational structure was. At the most local (neighborhood) level, was the domestic cell. Three or four cells

¹⁵⁶ See (“احتجاجات 1981 بالمغرب... شهداء الكومير”) <http://bit.ly/2Djl0KK>. Driss Basri, the notorious long-serving Minister of Interior under Hassan II, would sarcastically describe the casualties as the “Comera Martyrs” – Comera being a Moroccan term used to describe French Bread (baguette). By using the term, Bassri was ridiculing what he deemed the detached, bourgeois, luxurious nature of the grievances. The term Comera itself comes from the Spanish verb Comer (to eat), but in Morocco signifies French Bread.

comprised a branch. A few branches comprised a region, which largely coincided with a city or town (except for Casablanca, which had more regions). Combining different regions comprised a municipality or province. This structure allowed the party to survive the episodic waves of repression unleashed by the government. She elaborated:

This organizational structure reached the heart of society. At the time, our only source of finance was the contributions of members. This made us strong and independent ... and our idea was clear – it developed after the 1975 convention, and people used to read our ideological report as a book, and knew what we were about. (Belmouddene 2016)

Other USFP members identified this as the USFP golden age, from an organizational standpoint. Berrada said:

The USFP peaked in the Bouabid era [1975-1991]. Bouabid proved himself in negotiations with the Palace. He was a statesman, he was flexible, he had good contacts, he depended on El Yazghi to run the party organization, and he had credibility. (Berrada 2016)

At the same time, there were some notable internal fissures within the party as a result of the political repression – and the disagreements surrounding participating in elections and the official political system. In 1983, a group of USFP activist seceded and formed the Democratic Vanguard Socialist Party (known by the French acronym PADS), under the leadership of Abderrahmane Ben Amrou and Ahmed Benjelloun (Omar Benjelloun's brother). As Radi explained:

[The internal disagreement] was always on the choice of working within or outside the institutions. A number of us were very affected by the repression, and wanted us to boycott because our participation legitimates the system. Abderrahim Bouabid disagreed, because he thought any presence in institutions is better than an empty seat. He also believed [in participating] because that's how he thought we would reach power – through the institutions. (Radi 2016)

Another notable internal fissure occurred in 1989, when the CDT rebelled against the USFP party leadership, demanded a bigger share of the decision-making, and prevented the party

from holding its fifth congress in 1989. Though the party remained largely resilient, these internal fissures chipped away at the party's organizational cohesion.¹⁵⁷

But it was not until the party participated in government that its organizational resilience was decimated, showing a complete lack of efficiency and discipline. The early 1990s witnessed many important developments for institutionalized oppositional politics in Morocco, as Hassan II was trying to insure a smooth succession to his throne and gather some public support for controversial economic policies. In 1996, the USFP supported Hassan II's proposed constitutional amendment. In 1997 it placed first in the parliamentary elections and led the formation of the government for the first time in its history. Its secretary-general at the time, Abderrahmane Youssouffi, became prime minister in charge of leading the *alternance* government in 1998. The decision to lead the government and enter into a partnership with the regime was heavily criticized within the party, and precipitated the internal fissures within. As Belmouddene recounted:

We started our decline when our internal rivalries increased (between the fifth and sixth party conventions 1989-2001). That is when the factors of our internal decomposition became clearer – the tension between the labor arm and the political arm, and the disagreements that occurred between them at all the critical junctures – strikes, municipal elections, parliamentary elections. (Belmouddene 2016)

In leading the government, the USFP had to legitimate a number of different impasses. Hassan II died in 1999, and was succeeded by his son, Mohammed VI. USFP was arguably the most important guarantor for the stability of the power transition. At the same time, it was leading a major privatization effort from within government to sell off state owned enterprises, including Maroc Telecom – which was seen by many commentators as antithetical to the USFP's leftist ideology. The public perception was that

¹⁵⁷ Radi told me the long-term impact of internal discord was difficult to overcome, finally exclaiming: "The entire left spectrum of Moroccan politics is a result of secessions from USFP!" (Radi 2016).

governing transformed the USFP from an opposition party that sought a social democratic program, to a governance party that wanted to ameliorate the regime's liberal economic direction. For a party that wasn't ostensibly concerned with seats, the USFP became obsessed with maintaining its positions in government and parliament. Belmouddene's lengthy reflection offers a brutally honest critique of her party's performance at the time:

We contracted the viruses and ills of Makhzeni work and normalized practices that were antithetical to us, the worst of which was searching for notables to run in elections. This destroyed the party. [After 2001] we became obsessed with attaining seats, regardless of the method of attaining those seats ... Contrary to what Bouabid said, seats started to concern us, more so than our party organization. We started freezing our organizational structures and tailoring them so that they don't impede the process of attaining seats ... elections became the essence of party activism, the parallel organizations and especially the recruitment arms of women and youth were frozen. Our social activism in civil society and cultural associations was finished ... We diminished the values of activism within the party, the value of discipline, the value of systematic accountability ... All our discussions and arguments in the National Council became personal rivalries about positions and political appointments ... we started fighting each other because of political rent. (Belmouddene 2016)

The participation in government precipitated an "explosion within the party" during its sixth congress in 2001, Belmouddene told me, whereby a number of activists and youth activists seceded and formed smaller leftist parties. But if leading the government in 1998 was controversial, the decision to remain in government in 2002 was the final blow. The party had placed first in the parliamentary elections of 2002 and was widely expected to lead the formation of the government again. Yet the new king surprised the USFP and chose a non-partisan, Driss Jettou, to form a cabinet and lead the government. This was an affront to the party, which had gone into a verbal agreement with the previous king that election results would translate into government positions. Its cadres, and the broader public were watching to see how the party would react. Again, Belmouddene's lengthy reflections are instructive:

In the political bureau of the party in 2002, we decided not to participate in the government and to issue a communique that condemns the departure from the democratic method of selecting government. We published the communique, but afterwards, some of the political bureau's members deliberated between them that this way of exiting government might impede the progress of certain projects (infrastructure, reconciliation, social projects etc.) that the party inaugurated in the first government term. All those who were ministers at the time made this argument, especially El Yazghi ... much of our social base held us accountable to the fact that we took a public stance and did not commit to it – that our actions didn't back it up. (Belmouddene 2016)

The USFP returned to participate in a government it did not lead, while denouncing the departure from *alternance*. In doing so, its leadership not only displayed a lack of respect to voters' and members' will, but also did not bind itself to the decisions and procedures of its top executive apparatus. This showed that the party completely lacked discipline, from the very top, to the very bottom. "When you go into government, you don't lose your pants!" exclaimed Berrada (2016).

Since then, the party has not recovered. Electorally, the party placed fifth in the 2007 elections, fifth in the 2011 elections, and sixth in the 2016 elections. Belmouddene elaborated:

I think our popularity declined because of what we did in 2002, and our resultant image that we are a party that is only after seats and positions. This reputation even seeped into the party organizations. Organizationally, we entered a period of stagnation that we had never witnessed before. (Belmouddene 2016)

Today, the USFP still maintains a youth arm, a women's association, a labor union, and various other organizations that aim to "form society." Yet there is a predominant sense of crisis and disarray amidst the party leaders and activists, as to what the party stands for, and what it wants. Heeding the lessons of the past, Abdelwahed Radi said:

Those who build the new left must not have an ambition to rule (be preoccupied with governing). They must focus on building the tools – not participating in government and running the administration. They need to build a party. Because one of the factors that weakened [us] is the pursuit of authority. Governing became

a priority. (Radi 2016)

The organizational development of the USFP shows the irreversibility of investing considerable intellectual and organizational capital in oppositional politics. The party's lust for institutional power overpowered its origins as an opposition party, alienating its membership and decimating its organization. As Hanane Rihhab said: "[Working] within [institutions] does not mean you should withdraw from society ... when we joined the government, we could not maintain both [institutional and societal work]. We lost a lot from our popular cache as a result" (2016). The party's discourse and organizations were built for opposing the Moroccan political system, and working within society. USFP's government experiment took it away from that, imploded the party organization, and plunged it into an identity crisis it has yet to overcome.¹⁵⁸

The Party of Justice and Development: gradual steps to primacy

The PJD's organizational development shows that its formation process, as a party unifying social movement organizations, fashioned it with cadres that already came with discipline and efficiency. Those cadres, believing in a gradual approach to politics and collective political ambition, focused all their energies on building a party organization that was solid, internally democratic, and dedicated to steady and sustained gains. That is why the PJD's organization witnessed a steady ascendance to become the most disciplined and efficient party organization in Morocco.

The PJD's organizational evolution corresponds with the gradual approach it took to formation. The PJD certainly was not born as the most organizationally sophisticated party on the Moroccan political landscape. Nor did it initially have the geographic footprint

¹⁵⁸ The highest executive body at the USFP is still called "the political bureau" - a retainer from communist times.

it has today. Its organizational development was marked by its slow, methodical, consistent gains. When the party's parent organization, the Islamic Group Association (IGA), formed in 1981, it was akin to a cultural club. The movement's goals were cultural, revolving around the circulation and deliberation of Islamist literature. Amina Maelainine, current PJD parliamentarian and member of the general secretariat, said she used to attend IGA pedagogical sessions and Quran recitation and memorization circles when she was ten years old (Maelainine 2016). "Proselytizing work and educational activism was the basis of our activism, and formative for our party," said Lahcen Daoudi. "It created a nucleus for us," he added (Daoudi 2016).

As the movement grew, so did its ambitions and goals. By the early 1990s, the movement – which changed its name to the Movement for Renewal and Reform (MRR) in 1992 – was looking to form a political party, to get a seat at the legislative table. The example that Othmani gave to describe the movement at the time was environmental activism in Europe, which reached its maturation with the formation of Green Parties. "When elections used to come around, we would witness the dynamic and find ourselves out of the game because we did not have a party," said Othmani (2016a). The MRR's attempts at unilaterally forming a party bumped into administrative hurdles – as administrators fell back on a Moroccan law that banned the use of religion for political organizing. The ban was political and administrative rather than legal.

At that point, movement leaders saw that the only path towards a political party was merging into an existing party organization. In Abdelkrim El-Khatib and his Popular Democratic Constitutional Movement (MPDC), they had found a suitable partner. On partnering with El-Khatib and MPDC vs. Istiqlal (which was arguably closer

ideologically), Othmani explained:

Khatib not only agreed that we join the MPDC, but that we build the branches across the country. That is what we did from 1992-1996 ... The MPDC gave us a better opportunity to work and influence through our new ideas. Istiqlal was a big party, and we may have been lost in it. They wanted to nominate some of us [for elections], but we didn't care about nominations. We had new ideas, a new spirit that we wanted to ingrain in the country's political life. (Othmani 2016a)

The same year the MRR was officially integrated into the MPDC (1996), it would merge with the Rally for Islamic Future (RIF) to form the Movement for Unity and Reform (MUR). The latter social organization would remain a strategic partner with the political party and serve as a strong activist recruitment tool. "There was an organic relationship between the movement and the party," said Maelainine. "We called the party the political arm. Now they are [organizationally] independent," she added (Maelainine 2016). PJD was one of the first, if not the first, Islamist parties in the world to separate from its parent proselytizing organization in the late 1990s.

As Othmani's Green Party example seems to suggest though, the ambition of the new entrants into Moroccan partisan politics was indeed tempered. Though the MPDC, and later the PJD, wanted a seat at the legislative table, they did not wish to preside over that table – not yet, anyway. When they did run in their first parliamentary election in 1997, the MPDC fielded 140 candidates (fourth fewest among participating parties), and won 9 out of 325 seats, earning 4 percent of the popular vote.¹⁵⁹ "Building a party is not something you do quickly," said Othmani. "It has to go through stages ... We build our party through methodical, sustained organization – according to modern standards. That is what

¹⁵⁹ See ("الانتخابات التشريعية المغربية قديما وحديثا") <https://bit.ly/2qI3hrQ>. Othmani challenged the veracity of the results: "In 1997 we got 9 seats in parliament, and we had a lot of seats stripped from us through forgery and state intervention. Everybody knows this – around 20 seats, maybe a little less, and 2 seats from Casablanca very late in the process (to the USFP), which exposed the whole enterprise" (Othmani 2016a).

empowered it,” he added (Othmani 2016b). The next stage for the party, which changed its name to the Party of Justice and Development (PJD) in 1998, was to establish a youth association (in 1999), and to institute internal practices that would become the benchmark for all Moroccan political parties.

The PJD was the first party in Morocco to have regular party congresses, to manage internal conflicts transparently and institutionally, and to ban self-nomination for leadership positions. It was also one of the first to introduce term limits for its top leadership. As Othmani said:

We were the first party to hold our conventions and select our leadership regularly, and this was not common in the Moroccan party landscape before the law forced other parties to do the same under the threat of forfeiting their state financial support. We were pioneers in that regard. (Othmani 2016b)

The PJD were also innovative in their nomination mechanism, after seeing that nominations had torn up other parties. Daoudi elaborated:

[Activists] can’t nominate themselves to anything. Other members nominate them. So [they] cannot have personal ambition that supersedes the party’s benefit. So that [the activist] feels that the party nominated him, not that he nominated himself. And if he wins, he will work for the party, not for himself. (Daoudi 2016)

Hicham Lahreche, Rabat City Councilman from the PJD, explained the logic behind the PJD’s organizational regulations:

All our administrators are elected. This gives us immunity against secession and factionalism. It also helps us renew our elites, as parties that do not do that die ... and it makes our members feel that their activism is worthwhile. Authoritarianism in Morocco is a structure that is not just related to the Monarchy. Some of the parties themselves had leaders for life (Lahreche 2016)¹⁶⁰

Othmani added: “Our internal disagreements are very limited, and there are ways to deal with them institutionally” (2016b). All the PJD leaders and cadres interviewed identified

¹⁶⁰ Personal interview, March 3rd 2016, Coffee Shop – Rabat, Morocco.

these auditing and accountability measures as a source of strength, and said they make the PJD stand out. Abdelali Hamieddine lauded the PJD's unity:

PJD is perhaps the only party that did not witness a split yet, that insists on respecting its internal bylaws, and tries to manage its internal disagreements by democratic procedures ... The more democratic the party procedures are, the more insulated the party becomes from fissures and splits. (Hamieddine 2016b)¹⁶¹

These internal procedures have bolstered the party's credibility, which both Lahreche and Said Moumne, former secretary-general of the PJD Youth association in Rabat, identified as its main source of strength. Hamieddine said the party's symbolic power was much greater than its real power.

We don't have a lot of members, but we have a lot of sympathizers. But this sympathy is variable. We don't have a lot of financial capabilities, and rely on state financial support (which depends on election results) and individual donations. We are not a party that has a long history, and that has benefited from asset accumulation. We are quite honestly a modest party. Yet, what we've accumulated since 1997 has made our political capital rely on what Moroccans know as *المعقول* (the credible) – which boils down to honesty, integrity, and efficiency. (Hamieddine 2016a)

The PJD's size in parliament has grown continuously since 1997. In 2002, it won 42 seats, placing third. In 2007, it won 46 seats, placing second. In 2011 it won 107 seats, placing first – after which its secretary-general was charged with forming the government. In 2016, it won 125 seats, placing first again, and its secretary-general was again charged with forming the government. That its size in parliament has grown consistently makes its leaders refer to a certain “performance legitimacy” that has helped grow the party membership.

Performance legitimacy is certainly one avenue of recruitment for the party, but it is not the only. There was no consensus among my PJD interviewees on the most important

¹⁶¹ Personal interview, March 29th 2016, Parliament – Rabat, Morocco.

source of recruitment. “Our biggest recruitment method is through party branches around the country,” said Othmani (2016b). “The most important recruitment tools on the ground are the parallel organizations – PJD youth, PJD doctors, PJD lawyers, the MUR. Also, the party’s media presence and communication strength is crucial,” said Moumne (2016).¹⁶²

Bassima Hakkaoui said recruitment is not a party priority:

There is no recruitment policy within the party. We don’t aspire to recruit cadres. The party has [leaders] that have [recruiting charisma], like Abdelilah Benkirane and others. Our actions also recruit cadres – people see what we do, and how we do it, they see that we are clean and honest and have integrity, that we are reformist, and decide they want to join us. We never sat down and thought about how we will attract people. People just come, we review their files and careers and decide [selectively]. (Hakkaoui 2016)

The degree to which parallel organizations serve as recruitment channels is thus debatable.

PJD interviewees, particularly younger ones, were cautious about their party’s most recent success and growth, modest about its capabilities, and keen not to make the same mistakes other parties have made. Moumne’s lengthy reflection is instructive:

The party is good in comparison [to others], but if you see how the party does electorally – you’d think it’s much bigger and much more capable ... the party is not ready to have members in the millions. Its organizational structure is not ready for accommodating such a number of entrants. (Moumne 2016)

Both Moumne and Maelainine cited the example of USFP as the party whose path is to be avoided.

We need to maintain our organizational progress and maintain the party, maintain our internal democracy to resolve our differences in an effective way. I think we have mechanisms in place, like the leadership selection process, that keep us in check. It helps us manage personal ambitions. I think what is also crucial is maintaining our public image. (Moumne 2016)

¹⁶² Personal interview, April 22nd 2016, Coffee Shop – Rabat, Morocco. Moumne himself did not join the party through any of these parallel organizations; he knocked on the party’s door to volunteer for the 2002 election campaign. He said there were many like him, who knocked on the party’s door to join, especially after 2011. “After 2011, people started knowing us better, and that’s why they flocked towards us. Benkirane himself played a big role, with his communication skills” (Moumne 2016).

We are a party of human beings, so [what happened to the USFP] could happen to us. We have to be alert. We never had any patronage to distribute, so people joined for struggling. Now that we are in the government we will have people who want to join for personal ambition. (Maelainine 2016)

But Maelainine added the government experiment has not hurt the PJD. “We are now [2016] much stronger than we were in 2011. USFP left the government experiment depleted. We have benefited from them a lot,” she concluded (Maelainine 2016). This is because the PJD’s internal procedures, leadership selection methods, and discipline shielded the party from “the viruses and ills of Makhzeni work” that the USFP’s Belmouddene spoke of above in describing the fate of her party. Another reason is that the PJD has been adept in taming its ambitions at certain key junctures. As Maelainine said:

In 2003 after the Casablanca terrorist attacks, the PJD was going to be dissolved. We survived the attack on us and the pressure because we reduced our political ambition for the time. This is what differentiates us: we are a rational, wise, mature party. (Maelainine 2016)

The MP’s Loubna Amhair attested to the PJD’s organizational power: “I’ve seen how they work up close: they are like soldiers, like ants. They are dedicated, have discipline, respect the party decision making process, and very firm in facing corruption” (Amhair 2015).

Recently, the PJD has withstood a stiff organizational test.¹⁶³ Upon its victory in the October 2016 parliamentary election, the king charged the PJD secretary-general Abdelilah Benkirane with the formation of the government. However, government formation talks with smaller parties in parliament had reached a deadlock that lasted until March 15, 2017 – more than five months after the elections were held. The palace’s role in manufacturing the deadlock was beyond suspicion. On March 15, 2017, the King dismissed Benkirane and charged Othmani with forming a government. Othmani formed a coalition

¹⁶³ For details, See Fakir (2017)

government with parties that Benkirane did not wish to partner with. This minimized the PJD's electoral victory, and led many within the party (and the country) to question the party's decision-making process. Benkirane became the center of a factional movement within the party that either supported or objected to him. Some of his supporters sought a third term for him as secretary-general. Yet, in keeping with its bylaws, the PJD voted not to extend the two-term limit and voted for Othmani as secretary-general in its December 2017 party convention. The long-term effects of the government formation ordeal are yet to be clear, but the initial signs are that the PJD has weathered the organizational storm – falling back on its much-heralded internal mechanisms for resolving disputes.

The organizational history of the PJD suggests that its cautious, gradual approach towards recruiting and mobilizing activists has paid off. The party has become masterful at survival in a regime that is intolerant of independent political organizations. It has made few entangling investments and/or alliances, and has stressed its willingness to share the formal and informal political space with other players – be it other parties, the Monarchy or whoever else it needs to coexist with. Its social and political conservatism has not prevented it from developing the most democratic and accountable party organization in the country. In a political landscape where it has few electoral or organizational competitors, it seems primed for continued success.

The Justice and Spirituality Movement: Sustained Oppositional Organization

The JSM's organizational development shows that its formation process—as a radically oppositional social movement organization—enabled it to build an organizational apparatus that is characterized by the same discipline and efficiency found in the PJD. The JSM's social penetration is currently unmatched, on a local level or in sectoral terms (labor,

students, etc.). Whether or not this social penetration can be translated into formal political contestation while maintaining its organizational power is yet to be seen. For now, the JSM is unwilling to become a part of the formal political system.

The JSM's early organizational evolution resembles the PJD's. The JSM initially consisted of a small group of activists mobilized around an identity issue, discussing and disseminating literature. Some aspects of the JSM's organizational development are difficult to assess, given that the movement remains very secretive about its membership numbers. Yet what can be said with a relative degree of confidence is that the movement is perhaps the largest organized political agent in Morocco today. Aman Jaroud, head of the JSM women's division and member of the JSM political division's general secretariat said:

We are the largest organizational political agent, but we are not the largest party. Politics is only one part of our project, and not the only element in our project. This is what differentiates us from political parties. We are a proselytizing movement, that is engaged in a call for God ... In terms of forming the masses, we compete with the other parties. Formation impacts our competition with parties in other areas. (Jaroud 2016)¹⁶⁴

At its outset, the JSM was a miniscule organization, largely consisting of students and disciples of Abdessalam Yassine. Previously mentioned in Chapter 2 was Yassine's establishment of the magazine *Al-Jama'a* (The Group) in 1979 shortly after his release from the mental asylum in which he was incarcerated. The magazine served as a forum for the production and deliberation of Islamist thought, and was part of the 'jihad of the word' phase in Yassine's life. Abdelwahed Moutawakil described the small size of the disciples at the time: "There were few individuals back then, maybe 15 people ... This was the beginning, and we were there from the beginning. That is when we decided we have to

¹⁶⁴ Personal interview, February 23rd 2016, King Abdulaziz Al Saoud Foundation – Casablanca, Morocco.

become organized” (Moutawakil 2016). The editorial board of the magazine served as the nucleus for the first of the JSM’s organizational ancestors, ‘’Usrat Al-Jama‘a’ (The Family of Al-Jama‘a), established in 1981. One year later, the board members sought legal recognition, and established Al-Jama‘a Association.¹⁶⁵

In early 1983, the members would establish Al-Jama‘a Charity Association, vote on bylaws and elect an administrative committee. “From the beginning, we wanted to build a modern organization, addressing modern day dilemmas,” said Fathallah Arsalan (2016). Because the administrative committee of the association was made up entirely out of education professionals, they targeted the education sector first for their proselytizing work.

Most of the leaders were university professors, so they had access to [university students]. Most members of the JSM at the time were below thirty years of age, and those who exceeded thirty were very few ... We targeted all social segments, but the upper classes were more reluctant to join given the pressure we faced from the authorities. Joining us may have meant jeopardizing their social status, so students and youth were more attracted because they had less to lose. (Arsalan 2016)

One of the first tools the association utilized was establishing newspapers, which though short-lived were impactful. “Establishing the newspapers *Al-Ṣubḥ* and *Al-Khitāb* had a very big impact on attracting new members through communicating with the largest possible number of people,” said Arsalan. “We would distribute them by hand,” he added (Arsalan 2016).

Rather than stifle its birth, successive decapitation episodes of the JSM’s leaders served as an organizational boon for the movement. Government persecution followed soon after the establishment of the newspapers, consisting of banning and confiscation of the association’s newspapers and magazines, and imprisonment of varying durations for

¹⁶⁵ See Chapter 2, footnote 92.

main administrative committee figures – the longest of which was Yassine’s. Arsalan spoke of Yassine’s imprisonment:

[Yassine’s] arrest in 1984 ... had a big impact, because the advisory council felt a big responsibility to lead with his absence. This was a blessing in disguise, because the advisory board took the initiative and became independent from the founder’s guardianship. (Arsalan 2016)

In 1987, the association would change its name to Al-‘Adl wal-Iḥsān (Justice and Spirituality Movement) which Arsalan said accompanied the establishment of some key councils in the organization, and marked an improvement in the JSM’s organizational structure. In 1990, the government arrested the entire guidance council of the JSM, which also resulted in a boon for the JSM. Moutawakil recounted the events:

The big explosion [in membership] was when the guidance council was arrested and placed in the Salé prison. We were 7 people, Yassine was under house arrest, and the six of us were arrested plus Abdullah Shibani (Yassine’s son-in-law). We were arrested for two years, during which we expanded in an unrecognizable way. I didn’t recognize most of the people who were members in my city when I came out ... The arrests totally backfired ... When we got out of prison, our main concern was how to absorb these big numbers. I don’t know why we attracted so many people while we were in prison. (Moutawakil 2016)

The arrests of the guidance council shifted the nature of the JSM’s activism. As Arsalan explained:

Before the arrest of the advisory council, most of our activism was personal and inward – we did not have a lot of outreach. After the arrest of the advisory council, we started participating in public events ... becoming more active in public student life. [The JSM] no longer looked inward, as the younger generation took over. (Arsalan 2016)

While the guidance council was in prison, the movement’s base rallied in any of the accessible public forums. Most critically, JSM youth became active in the National Union for Moroccan Students (UNEM) – gradually making it one of their recruitment and activism powerhouses. Omar Iharchane spoke of his early activism with the JSM:

When I started my studies at Hassan II University in Casablanca in 1989, the leftist factions dominated UNEM. We were the first cohort of Islamists that started organizational work within UNEM after a long period of Islamist dormancy. We were able to constitute the main youth leadership of [the JSM]. (Iharchane 2016)

Iharchane, currently on the political division's general secretariat, rose in the ranks of the organization through his student activism. At one point, he headed the JSM Youth division. Hassan Bennajeh, another current member of the political division's general secretariat, was also a student activist with the JSM, who served as secretary-general of UNEM, and later headed the JSM Youth. Because the JSM couldn't establish a student union or a labor union, they worked within the existent unions that were relatively open and non-partisan (UNEM and CDT) and took them over (democratically, it must be stressed).¹⁶⁶ "We did not dominate by force, but through elections," said Boubker Elouankhari, youth leader at the JSM (2016).¹⁶⁷ "We rethought and redevised our organizational structure every three or four years to incorporate the new additions in our memberships," said Moutawakil (2016).

The JSM's organizational structure and finance strategy enabled them to penetrate Moroccan society. Borrowing from the leftist/USFP local organization handbook, on a very local, neighborhood level lies the JSM "family" – consisting of five to ten members. A number of families constitute a division, which includes 30-60 members. 3-6 divisions constitute a district. A number of districts constitute a region (which frequently coincides with a city designation). A number of regions forms a province, and the provinces make

¹⁶⁶ Current student leader Abdelkabar Sahnoun explained the JSM's activism within UNEM. "We make [university] students aware of the JSM's thought and its principles. Some students join, and some students are at least aware of what you stand for, some students fix the distorted image that's spread about you in the press. Our main line of work is through UNEM, the student union ... UNEM is independent, but at different historical stages it has been dominated by different parties and factions" (Sahnoun 2016). Personal interview, April 27th 2016, Coffee Shop – Rabat, Morocco.

¹⁶⁷ Personal interview, March 23rd 2016, Coffee Shop – Casablanca, Morocco.

up the country. The leaders of the provinces constitute the advisory council (مجلس الشورى). The guidance council (مجلس الإرشاد) is the equivalent of an executive committee.¹⁶⁸ Membership also goes through stages: a sympathetic member, a close member, a beginner, a full member, and an administrator. “Our initial recruitments are not through branches because we don’t have any, but is usually done in members’ houses,” said Mounir Jouri, secretary-general of the JSM Youth (Jouri 2015).¹⁶⁹ Financially, the JSM depends on the contributions of its members and sympathizers for survival. Moutawakil explained:

We experienced a deep magnanimity from the Moroccan people, who – once they felt we were honest – were willing to sell their clothes to contribute to our cause. Nobody is obliged to contribute. It is totally voluntary, and therefore fluctuates, but our experience is that at times of crises people contribute much more. (Moutawakil 2016)

It was this combination youth activism and localization that was key to the JSM’s growth.

As Elouankhari explained:

The most important recruitment arm for the JSM is the student sector. Most of the members entered the JSM when they were university or high school students. But in every neighborhood, we have an organization, and we recruit on the basis of neighborhoods. Our presence in neighborhoods and households is our main source of strength ... [which] varies of course, from one neighborhood to another. (Elouankhari 2016)

In 1998, the JSM created a political division. This was ostensibly to deal with the increase in members and to specialize within the organization. Arsalan detailed the JSM rationale:

[The existing] organizational structure could no longer accommodate our size, and we became too big to be run by an executive council. At the same time, we started looking forward ... and we decided that we needed a party-like organization and a dedicated sub-organization for political participation. The existing committees could not provide that ... At the beginning of the political division’s establishment ... the goal was to build the division from an organizational standpoint: it needed

¹⁶⁸ The political division has a general secretariat which serves as its executive committee.

¹⁶⁹ Personal interview, December 15th 2015, Higher Institute for Media and Communication (ISIC) – Rabat, Morocco.

regional offices, parallel organizations ... and all their subdivisions ... We also needed to dedicate resources to outreach, targeting segments that weren't necessarily taken by the proselytization discourse, and more interested in social or political issues. (Arsalan 2016)

The JSM knew that in order to compete, it had to have three crucial activist arms: a youth arm (JSM youth), a women's division (JSM women) and a trade union presence (through the CDT). As Iharchane explained:

[The political division] works according to the methodology of parties – it seeks to build a social base, has different organizational segments and branches: a youth division, a women's division, a trade union presence, a student presence, a research center, regional branches. The main difference between it and the other parties is first a legal difference – the state does not recognize the political division. The second is a political difference – the political division boycotts elections. (Iharchane 2016)

Importantly, and unlike the PJD, the political division was not founded to separate the political from the proselytizing arms. JSM leaders are adamant that not only is such a separation impossible, it is undesirable. Bennajeh elaborated:

We do not subscribe to this problem enmeshing Islamist movements around the world, of separating the political from the proselytizing. The JSM has shown not how the political division's work should be separate, but how it should complement the proselytizing arm. This was a main goal of founding the political division, so that the theorizing does not remain slogans. (Bennajeh 2016)

Additionally, though the political division and the movement have two different hierarchical structures, members and leaders can have multiple responsibilities in both, and overlap is possible.

The concept of the calling [is how we recruit] ... everyone considers themselves a preacher for the calling. This is never relinquished, as a characteristic or a task – regardless of specialization or seniority ... This makes the JSM member committed to the pedagogical sessions and attending prayers in the mosque. (Bennajeh 2016)

In devising their organizational structure, JSM leaders say the experience of other parties and movements in Morocco and elsewhere was very important to understand and

learn from. “On an organizational level, all parties have similar experiences in Morocco. We’ve certainly benefited from these experiences, but we’ve tried to reconcile them with our particular security and political situation,” said Arsalan (2016). The USFP’s Rihhab corroborated this:

The JSM has learned a lot from the experiment of the USFP. They’ve adopted the same strategy, except they’re doing it from outside the institutions. They’re influencing the society, through the protest movements, the labor unions, the civil society, the student movements. [The JSM] also benefited from our organizational structure – we have cells, they have families. They rely on member’s financial resources, as we once did. (Rihhab 2016)

JSM principles also borrowed from the experience of other Moroccan parties and helped define their organizational development. Moutawakil said the JSM was able to avoid the pitfalls of other oppositional organizations.

The three NOs [to violence, secrecy, and foreign affiliation] provided a monitoring mechanism over our work and insulated us from being breached. Secrecy makes it easier for you to be breached by the [intelligence]. Public (non-secretive) advocacy enabled us to uncover a number of state agents working in our midst. (Moutawakil 2016)

Iharchane noted that the JSM was closer to the prototypical Islamist movement, active in many domains, but what set it apart was the “privileging of spiritual reinforcement or faithful upbringing” (Iharchane 2016). Thus in making the political project part and parcel of the social and spiritual one, the JSM had incorporated the lessons of Islamist movements and political parties in Morocco and elsewhere. “We had a proselytizing base, which we considered to be the origin and crux of our work,” said Arsalan. “Our political arm should only take 20 percent of our capabilities – human, financial, and so on” (Arsalan 2016). “Commentators call us the largest political organization in the country, but ... we are a social movement, and more inclined to that orientation than being a political organization,” said Jouri (2015).

Though it is currently the largest institutionalized political agent in the country, JSM leaders do not see that as the movement's major point of strength. As Arsalan said:

It's not just a numbers game. Authoritarian regimes can put tens of thousands in prisons (or mobilize them in protests) ... we do not just bet on our numbers, but bet on our persuasion, our discourse, people's disapproval [of the status quo]. (Arsalan 2016)

Bennajeh elaborated:

Our main measure of strength is our principles, and remaining steadfast in commitment to them ... We don't use our numerical strength to maneuver with any political actor. That is not a way to build a political pact or coalition. Our organizational strength comes from the primacy of our principles ... We won't reach power by any means or methods ... you cannot achieve noble ends with questionable means. (Bennajeh 2016)

The JSM's organizational development suggests that the movement has been very successful at building a social movement organization. That the movement itself does not see itself as merely political indicates that it is not willing to become a part of the political system as it is currently constructed. The movement maintains that the choice on forming a party is not theirs: "That we are under blockade is the state's choice. Nobody wants to be embargoed," said JSM student leader Abdelkadir Sahnoun (2016). But due to its ideological and organizational investments, it is not willing to bear the cost of entering the formal political arena and assimilating with other political parties – costs that other parties have borne themselves. As such, it will stay out of the electoral realm, out of the institutions, and maintain its presence in civil society and protest movements. "We will continue to work within society, because that is the crux of our work," said Iharchane (2016). However, the JSM's sharply variant trajectory from the PJD indicates that movements of the same 'type' or ideological basis need not develop along the same trajectory.

Conclusion: Isomorphism and Divergence in Moroccan Political Organizations

The above discussion and analysis of individual party/movement organizational development makes it clear that the Moroccan political landscape drove key elements of organizational isomorphism. This was not just a product of Morocco's regime type, but rather a product of the competitive organizational landscape (which is influenced by many factors, including the regime type). Over time, all political parties and social movements that were expressions of social identity developed internal mechanisms to institutionalize their procedures and decision-making processes. All parties hold conventions where major decisions are taken. They all have internal legislative and monitoring bodies or "party parliaments," albeit with different names like 'national council,' 'the administrative committee,' and so on. They all also have internal executive bodies under different names such as executive committee, political bureau, general secretariat, and so on. Finally, they all have an elected leader of the party, who had a limited term in his/her post, under the title of secretary-general, first secretary, and so on. So each party/movement had an executive, a legislative, and a judicial branch within its organization.

More importantly, all political parties and social movements that were expressions of social identity developed what was referred to as 'parallel organizations' to "form the masses" – youth bodies, women's bodies, student bodies, labor bodies, affiliate syndicates. These parallel organizations had two main goals, to recruit members from different social segments and age groups to the party/movement, and to "form" members and frame their activism with the party/movement's ideological tenets. These parallel organizations were vital signs of a party's non-electoral activism, which, for much of Morocco's independent history, was the only credible arena and level playing field for party activism. In describing who he thought as 'real parties' in Morocco (which included, Istiqlal, USFP, and PJD),

Abdallah Bekkali of Istiqlal said “these have mass followers, they have social bases, and popular extensions. They have youth organizations, labor organizations, women’s organizations, and student organizations. They have professional associations ... They have party organizations, elected officials, and regional representative offices” (2016).

The above point to facets of party/movement organizational isomorphism. However, there are important divergences in organizational development, and variation in the efficiency and discipline of party organizations included in this study. In this chapter, I have argued that what explains the divergence in organizational development and efficacy of partisan bodies has been formation processes – the timing, sequence of party/movement formation. Istiqlal and USFP exhibited discipline and efficiency in previous decades (the 1950s/1960s for Istiqlal – the 1970s and 1980s for USFP). Later formers such as PJD and the JSM currently exhibit this discipline and efficiency. They have expressed (and continue to express) a conscious and explicit desire to avoid the pitfalls of the earlier nationalist and socialist parties.¹⁷⁰ “The Moroccan model is not to repeat the mistakes of others,” said Hicham Lahreche of PJD (2016). Though he was speaking about other Islamist movements, his quote also applies to other parties in Morocco.

But surely, there is a lurking variable for isomorphism and divergence in party/movement ideological and organizational development in Morocco: the complex

¹⁷⁰ Of all Islamist activists and leaders interviewed for this study, only Lahcen Daoudi attributed his party’s organizational cohesion to Islam. “We have a strong foundation – Islam is a strong cement. As a principle, it trumps private interests. That’s the difference between us and the rest – our principles have priority over our private interests. For the others it’s the opposite,” he said (Daoudi 2016). At the same time, he acknowledged that the experience of other parties was formative for PJD. “We have benefited a lot from other parties’ experiences. The first measure of your strength is how your rhetoric matches your actions. Other parties can call themselves socialists while they are naked capitalists. The Islamists do what they say, and don’t lie to people. You just have to earn people’s trust and maintain it. If you fail, say you failed. Don’t lie to people. Our organization is strong because people have principles.”

relationship between each party/organization and Morocco's authoritarian power center – the Monarchy. It is to that topic that the next chapter turns.

Introduction

In early February of 2018, Abdelilah Benkirane addressed a packed auditorium gathered for the PJD youth's sixth national convention. Less than a year earlier (in March 2017), Benkirane was publicly humiliated by the King after the latter rescinded Benkirane's appointment to form and lead the government. Benkirane's successor, Saadedine Othmani, acquiesced to coalition partners and terms that Benkirane had deemed unacceptable. Benkirane soon found himself not only out of the government, but out of the secretary-general position at the PJD – as his party voted not to extend his leadership for a third term in December of 2017. Still commanding widespread popularity within the youth segment, Benkirane gave an hour-long speech addressing the different impasses that the PJD had gone through recently. For most of the speech, Benkirane sounded defiant: attacking his partisan political opponents, as if the events of the last twelve months hadn't even blemished his political career. However, towards the end of the speech, Benkirane reiterated his personal—and the party's—commitment to the Monarchy. He recounted an episode when a journalist asked him: “Are you more Royalist than the King?” to which he responded, “If he is ok with that, I am ok with that.”¹⁷¹

The fraught relationship between Morocco's organized political agents and its Monarchy has been the central topic of the political science research on Morocco (e.g. Boukhars 2010; Lust-Okar 2005; Storm 2013; Waterbury 1970; Willis 2012). Confirming or refuting the insights of this rich literature is not the purview of this chapter. Rather than describe structural, systematic relationships between the Moroccan regime and

¹⁷¹ See (“كلمة الأخ الأمين العام السابق عبد الإله ابن كيران”) <https://bit.ly/2HAtPoC>

organizations under its domain, I wish to highlight two things. First, that the Moroccan regime, while never escaping the category of full authoritarianism as described by Levitsky and Way (2010), did not remain a constant throughout Morocco's independent history. The procedures, mentalities, and limits with which the Moroccan palace has practiced power have shifted and evolved throughout Morocco's independent history (and certainly before the country's independence). The more secure the Moroccan monarchy became, the less blunt its repression became. In the words of former MP activist Hassan Agourram, "In Hassan II's time, people respected the King. Now people love the King. There's a big difference" (2016). As such, while the Moroccan regime remained within the confines of a non-partisan authoritarian regime as defined in Chapter 1, its level of repression varied in such ways that treating it as a constant is a fraught theoretical and methodological proposition. Moreover, the political parties and forces studied in this dissertation played an important role in this variation. Not only were they products of this regime, but they were producers of this regime.

Second, and relatedly, there is considerable variation in the ways that organized political agents in Morocco have approached and managed their relationship with the Monarchy. Each of the parties and organizations studied in this dissertation have developed relationships with the Moroccan Monarchy from points of departure that were not similar to begin with. In this chapter, I seek to explain this variation in evolving relationships between the different parties/movements and the Monarchy. In doing so, I privilege partisan activist accounts as to how they and their parties/movements interacted and continue to interact with the Monarchy. I do so for a simple reason: there are many academic treatments—both broad theoretical and empirical/regional—analyzing the

motivations of authoritarian incumbents in interacting with political agents in their countries (the coercion-cooptation paradigm). There are far fewer accounts analyzing the motivations of partisan agents, explaining how these agents saw their interaction with the Monarchy in their own terms. I argue that the latter approach better accounts for the variation in partisan relationships with the Moroccan Monarchy.

As in previous chapters, I make two arguments in this chapter: first, all parties/movements (with the exception of the MP) sought to maintain their independent decision-making capacity vis-à-vis the Monarchy. This resulted in considerable similarities in how these parties and movements approached the Monarchy, how they interacted with it, and how they carved out independent spaces and positions from it. So the reader will notice a considerable degree of similarity, and in that sense party development in terms of interaction with the Monarchy was isomorphic.

Second, there was some important variation in the degree to which these parties/movements have been successful at maintaining that independence. Here, I argue that formation processes – timing, sequence, and context of party formation – had a lasting impact on a party's capacity to practice and preserve its independence from the Monarchy. Specifically, those parties that formed at a later stage, having had the benefit of hindsight to learn from earlier formers, have been more adept in developing, nuanced, cautious, and functional relationships with the Monarchy. As such, it was not the type of party (conservative, progressive, Islamist) or the degree of opposition/loyalty that the party took from the Monarchy that was instrumental in party independence. A historical review of each party and movement's developing relationship with the Monarchy reveals that the earliest formers paved the way for the later formers to a) have nuanced relations with the

Monarchy b) better use the Monarchy to achieve political gains and compete with their political opponents.

This chapter should also be prefaced by a note on the quality of allegiance and opposition that these parties and movements exhibited towards the Monarchy. The concepts of allegiance and opposition in the Moroccan political system have always been relative – with only a few political actors categorially rejecting the nature of the regime. As such, the JSM is from the latter group, and is further unique because it's rejection of the nature of the regime did not lend it to support the violent overthrow of the regime (such as the March 23rd movement or *'ila al-'amam* [forward]). The remaining parties in this study all agreed that Monarchy is a suitable system for governing Morocco – but differed, sometimes sharply, over the kind of Monarchy they aspired for.

Istiqlal: from alliance to loyal opposition

Istiqlal's development shows that the party's early investment in the Moroccan Monarchy initially served it well, but turned into a liability once the Monarchy reneged on its post-independence promises. Due to its formation process, the party was bound to its Nationalist discourse and ideological investments in Moroccan traditional institutions, and could not distance itself from the Monarchy when the latter abused its powers. The party maintained its independence throughout most of its history, but struggled to do so after M'hamed Boucetta stepped down as its secretary-general in 1998. After 1998, Istiqlal's leaders lacked the charisma and presence of their presence, and could no longer resist the Monarchy's infractions.

As narrated in Chapter 2, the formation and early activity of Istiqlal was framed around the sovereignty of Morocco and its King. From the 'Festival of the Throne' in 1934

to negotiating the exiled King's return in 1955, the Nationalists and later the Istiqlal party invested much political capital—symbolic, ideological, organizational—in the Alawite King Mohammed Ben Youssef and the institution of the Moroccan Monarchy. By the late 1940s Istiqlal developed a very strong relationship with Mohammed Ben Youssef. At the time, both the party and the King were leveraging the rising American influence to further their interests against the declining French.¹⁷² It is difficult to say whether the amiable relationship between Mohammed V and the Nationalists was strategic or sincere. Istiqlali/nationalist accounts adamantly stress the King's sincerity to their cause. As M'hamed Boucetta told me:

There were many reasons Istiqlal supported the Monarchy. First, Morocco is a country of tribes and fissures. Second, Mohammed V was loyal to the commitment we made to each other ... Third ... When he was exiled in 1953, it really antagonized Moroccans, and we noticed his popularity ... Some of us—especially in the armed resistance—thought about ... deposing Mohammed V. But his popularity was through the roof ... We couldn't. We also thought the Monarchy would be acceptable to Morocco, given that it is not corrupt. This was our conviction, it wasn't a tactic ... we thought it was the best interest of the country and the people. (Boucetta 2016)

Both entities stood to gain much from the alliance. The King, emboldened by Istiqlal's growing membership, sought to use the party to extract concessions from the French. Istiqlal provided Mohammed V with an organized, popular base with which he could threaten the French. "Mohammed V became a great leader in part because the National Movement made him one," said Abdelkrim Ghallab (2016). In turn, Istiqlal sought to use the King to capitalize on his popularity in rural and provincial areas, outside

¹⁷² US Archival documents at the time paid great attention to communist threats. In Istiqlal leaders' repeated interactions with US Embassy officials, they would try to solicit US support for the nationalist movement against the French by making assurances against communist government and pointing out to the French membership of communist parties in Morocco. For example: see memorandum number 404, entitled "Interview with Nationalist Leader Ahmed Balafrej" dated September 12th 1946. Box 7121. See also memorandum number 51, entitled "Feeling of Disillusionment Among Moroccan Nationalists," dated September 13th 1949. Box 7127.

of the urban centers where they were strongest. “During the years of anti-colonialism, the alliance between Istiqlal and the monarchy worked for Istiqlal’s favor,” said Anis Balafrej. “The King gave [Istiqlal] legitimacy – on a popular and international level,” he added (Balafrej 2016b). It was a marriage of convenience (and perhaps some genuine love) between the King and Istiqlal. “The French were intent on isolating the King from the National Movement, but the King remained loyal to us, and we remained loyal to him,” said Boucetta (2016). Mhamed El Khalifa elaborated:

Before 1955, the king and the National Movement were in one corner. Mohammed V was a nationalist, revolutionary king, in every sense of the word ... The Independence Manifesto was crafted in complete agreement between Istiqlal and the King. The agreement was that Istiqlal would lead the fieldwork in pursuit of Moroccan independence, meaning that the King would become the direct ruler of Morocco ... Since the beginning, Istiqlal was linked to the monarchy. (El Khalifa 2015a)

When the inevitable confrontation with the French came, both Mohammed V and Istiqlal capitalized on it. The French exiled Mohammed V to Madagascar in 1953 and appointed a servile King in his place, Mohammed Ben Arfa. Istiqlali leaders believe that the King’s relationship with Istiqlal was part of the reason why. As Ghallab explained:

The King and Istiqlal consulted each other at every major decision. This complementary relationship was the reason why he was banished in 1953. The French told him to either disown Istiqlal or face exile, and when he chose to stand by Istiqlal he was banished. It was also Istiqlal that brought him back from exile in 1955 – through violent resistance. (Ghallab 2016)

With leverage over an armed insurrection and a mobilized intra-regional popular base, Istiqlal negotiated the King’s return at the Aix-Les-Baines independence negotiations in September of 1955.¹⁷³ In November of that year, Mohammed V returned to Morocco to a

¹⁷³ It is worth noting that Allal al-Fassi was against the negotiations of Aix-Les-Baines and refused to attend them. In an interview, his son Abdelouahed noted: “Allal [al-Fassi] did not agree to Aix-Les-Baines, because he did not consider that it will lead to full independence of Morocco. He also thought that the armed resistance was gaining ground, and that independence was not only about Morocco, but about

hero's welcome—as a legion of Istiqlali youth under the directorship of Mehdi Ben Barka coordinated the welcoming festivities—and formed his first all-Moroccan government in December, which would include many Istiqlal leaders and activists.

The honeymoon didn't last long though, as independence exposed the relationship between Istiqlal and the King. Specifically, the first five years of independence would feature power struggles and administrative practices/abuses that would leave a lasting imprint on the trajectory of the newly independent country. Istiqlal and the Monarchy would be at the heart of these struggles, and by that time, the marriage of convenience was beginning to wear itself out. It was no secret that Istiqlal wanted to establish democratic, constitutional governance in Morocco. Its advocacy for a constitutional monarchy with a strong parliament as the source of legislative and executive power began to irk Mohammed V.¹⁷⁴ Shortly after independence, the King made it clear that he was not going to allow Istiqlal to dominate Moroccan politics. As El Khalifa said:

We need to call things as they were. Since 1944 Istiqlal was struggling for two things. First, the independence of Morocco, meaning that the King of Morocco would have complete authority over Morocco. Second, that the King of Morocco would establish a democratic system of governance. This did not happen. (El Khalifa 2015a)

Istiqlal's participation in government, from 1955-1960, antagonized both its supporters and detractors alike – albeit for different reasons. Istiqlal believed it did not have enough power to lead government in the immediate aftermath of independence, while its opponents believed it was practicing power in authoritarian ways. From the problems of

Algeria [and the whole Maghreb] as well. He thought the independence that would result would be incomplete” (2016).

¹⁷⁴ A US Embassy in Madrid correspondence with Washington, DC dated November 22nd 1955 enclosed a translated Istiqlal communiqué entitled “Istiqlal Wishes to Establish a Political Democracy in Morocco.” Box 3653.

integrating the previously Spanish-controlled territories,¹⁷⁵ to the bloody ways Istiqlal dealt with the Shura party, to the poor relationship with the Crown Prince, to the jostling for power in the cabinet, to the internal rivalries within Istiqlal itself – Istiqlali's experience in government eroded the trust between the Monarchy and the party. Istiqlali leaders believe the French were to blame. El Khalifa said:

There were many artificial problems that were created for the governments in which Istiqlal took power—The Bekkay government in 1955, the Balafrej government in 1958, the Ibrahim government also of 1958—problems that had a direct relation to the colonizer. The Rif events, the killing of Abbas Massaidi, and many others that were between 1955 and 1959. All these events showed that there had to be a schism between Istiqlal and the Monarchy. (El Khalifa 2015a)

El Khalifa also added that Mohammed V's opinion of Istiqlal was swayed by his son's.

“It was Hassan that didn't want Istiqlal to rule,” he said. “Some people convinced [him] that if Istiqlal remained this powerful, the Monarchy would not have a role in ruling Morocco,” he added (El Khalifa 2015a). Balafrej described the historical context of Istiqlal joining the government in 1955:

Entering the government was not easy. This is because France demanded certain concessions, like the presence of certain “third way” personalities – loyal to both the king and to France. It also tried to obstruct the independence process as much as possible. It demanded that Istiqlal only comprise a third of the government. The King conceded to the French because the French controlled many key segments of the Moroccan economy and polity – industry, agriculture, water treatment, education, etc. The Istiqlalis were fine with the concessions, because they believed the King would make good on his verbal commitment to the Independence document of 1944. (Balafrej 2016b)

Balafrej identified the culprits of Istiqlal's failures in government directly:

The Crown Prince and the French did everything they could to thwart [my father's] government in 1958, because they wanted a government that was easy to control. They brought about the revolt of the caids, the Rif revolt, etc. Also, there were many in the party were not happy that my father formed the first Istiqlali government ... [most notably], Abdallah Ibrahim, Mahjoub Bin Siddiq, Al-Faqih Al-Basri. (Balafrej 2016a)

¹⁷⁵ See the context of the Popular Movement's formation in Chapter 2.

Mohammed V used the internal discord within Istiqlal to limit the party's influence. In May of 1960, he assumed leadership of the government himself, dismissing Abdallah Ibrahim. He had already designed the electoral laws and districting in the municipal elections to limit the influence of organized parties, with Istiqlal likely weighing the most heavily on his calculations.¹⁷⁶ The next year, on February 26th 1961, Mohammed V died a sudden death from complications following a simple surgical procedure. Under his son, Hassan II, the already-strained relations between Istiqlal and the Monarchy would only get worse. "Hassan II was a completely different man than his father," said Balafrej. "He practically ended the Monarchy's commitments to Istiqlal. It was clear that when Mohammed V died, the *Makhzan* [Palace] went back on all his programs," he added (Balafrej 2016b).

Istiqlal and Hassan II already had a tumultuous history. Hassan had fueled the establishment of the Popular Movement (MP) in 1957 to rival Istiqlal. Istiqlal resented Hassan's meddling in politics as Chief of Staff of the Royal Armed Forces, as it sought to keep Morocco's politics under civilian control and insulated from military influence.¹⁷⁷ Shortly after he assumed power, Hassan introduced Morocco's first constitution in 1962. At the time, Hassan was both head of state and head of government, and Istiqlal believed the constitution allotted him far too much power. Unencumbered, and eager to display his power, Hassan proceeded with a referendum on the constitution. Istiqlal decided to support the constitution with reservations. El Khalifa explained the party's rationale for doing so:

¹⁷⁶ See Intelligence report number 8271, entitled "Morocco's May Elections: An Assessment of Likely Trends and Problems," dated May 23rd 1960. National Archives Microfilm Publication M1221, Intelligence Reports, 1941-1961.

¹⁷⁷ National Intelligence Estimate number NIE 71.1-57, entitled "The Outlook for Morocco," dated January 29th 1957. Foreign Relations of the United States (FRUS), 1955-1957, Volume XVIII.

Allal [al-Fassi] thought a country with a constitution – no matter how bad it was – was better than a country without a constitution. This is because if the constitution was respected and adhered to by all parties in the country, it'd be a limit on monarchic power – it would bind the monarchy. If the constitution was not respected, then the challenge for establishing representative government would be much bigger. (El Khalifa 2015b)

Al-Fassi would be proven wrong. Neither the constitution nor anything else would limit Hassan's power. The referendum passed, after which Hassan began planning for the country's first ever parliamentary elections. Hassan's micromanagement of the Moroccan political sphere manifested in the creation of the Federation for the Defense of Constitutional Institutions (known as FDIC) in March of 1963 by his close associate, Ahmed Rida Gudeira. In May of 1963, the parliamentary elections were held, and as the FDIC won the most seats, Istiqlal deemed them "fraudulent."¹⁷⁸

Despite Hassan's infractions, Istiqlal opposed him within a loyalist discursive frame. "Allal [al-Fassi] believed that we shouldn't leave the King (Hassan) with a corrupt coterie around him. He said we should stay with the King, even if he doesn't want us around him," said Boucetta (2016). Yet this feeling was not reciprocated. In June of 1964, Istiqlal (along with the UNFP) introduced a censure motion in parliament to prevent the government from enacting its economic program (which they deemed was too liberal). A year later, Hassan decided to take the gloves off in dealing with the party. Unimpressed with this usage of institutional channels to challenge his government, the young King dissolved parliament and ruled by decree in what came to be known as the 'state of exception,' which lasted until 1970. "Istiqlal saw [this] as the abortion of institutional

¹⁷⁸ Memorandum number A-472, entitled "Problems and Prospects of Istiqlal," dated April 17th 1964. Box 2492. Boucetta narrated to me a meeting between him and local Marrakech officials where they informed him that, despite being Marrakech's finest man, they were to make sure he was not going to win a seat there (Boucetta 2016).

mechanisms of government that had been in preparation for a long time,” said Abdelouahed al-Fassi (2016).

During this period, Istiqlal struggled to resist Hassan’s assault on political pluralism, and according to Ghallab, was the “primary victim” of the State of Exception (2016). However, Istiqlal had invested so much political capital in the institution of the Monarchy up until that point, that it had to resign itself to being ‘His Majesty’s opposition’ when His Majesty wouldn’t tolerate *any* opposition – loyalist or otherwise. Istiqlal continued to contest the legality (if not the legitimacy) of Hassan’s rule during the state exception, while its calls for the “resumption of normal political life” fell on deaf ears – at least until the King suffered (and survived) a couple of coup attempts in the early 1970s.

After the coup attempts of the early 1970s and the Green March to the Sahara in 1975, Hassan II allowed Istiqlal to return to the political institutions. In 1978, Istiqlal would participate in government, and Boucetta—its secretary-general after the death of Allal al-Fassi in 1974—became Minister of Foreign Affairs. Boucetta was on cordial terms with Hassan II, and would play cards with him on frequent occasions. That personal relationship allowed Boucetta to refuse forming a government in 1993 when Hassan wished to impose notorious Minister of Interior Driss Basri on the government. Istiqlal kept participating in elections and governments knowing well that they were compromised. “We didn’t want to just be a negative influence. A seat in the table is always better than no seats,” said Ghallab (2016). This participation would undoubtedly lead Istiqlal to be affiliated with a repressive political order, which despite its objections and nuances crushed political life in the country.

Istiqlali leaders are adamant that they remain a relevant political force that cannot be

viewed as part of the authoritarian power structures in Morocco, and whose activism has pushed the country forward in terms of democratic gains. Their struggle with the Monarchy, they argue, has yielded positive results – and even changed the quality of the Monarchy. As Adil Benhamza said:

People say ... that because the authoritarian structure has survived this long, then all the political players must be involved in it. Objectively, we cannot compare the authoritarian structures of 2016 with 1980 or 1969. We have made gains over these years, that perhaps if put in their historical context, may seem modest, but what else were we offered? Don't forget that we're the only Monarchy in Africa, that we've lived in a continent where coups were frequent and the military ruled as it pleased. We did not have many options. (Benhamza 2016)

Nacer Benhmidouch, a young Istiqlali activist reflected on the party's relationship with the Monarchy:

We didn't want to control all the executive authority in the country in order to participate in government. We were content with sharing it with the King – similarly to other political systems where the head of state and the head of government are separate – in order to democratize the political practices from within. That way we can also give the executive authority electoral legitimacy. (Benhmidouch 2016)¹⁷⁹

El Khalifa argued that Istiqlal was able to balance its presence in government with its non-governmental activity:

It is certain that for a party like Istiqlal, in the eyes of the public (and not practically), the party is most powerful when it's in the opposition, because governance kills. But Istiqlal was able to escape this, and was always able to balance presence in government with opposition activity. (El Khalifa 2015b)

Abdallah Bekkali believed that the power struggle with the Palace did not have a clear-cut victor:

To me it is inaccurate to say the Monarchy won in the political struggle, because if the Monarchy won, the parties [Istiqlal and other opposition parties] would have ceased to exist. The regime may have won, but the parties were not defeated. The regime persisted, but it offered a lot of concessions ... In part, the parties have survived, and are still operational ... Istiqlal was not defeated.

¹⁷⁹ Personal interview, April 18th 2016, Coffee Shop – Rabat, Morocco.

That being said, since Boucetta stepped down as secretary-general in 1998, Istiqlal's immunity to Palatial interference has been drastically reduced. This has led many to believe the Palace is directly involved in selecting the party's leadership, and to question the party's decision-making independence from the Palace. Hamid Chabat's roller-coaster ride as secretary general of Istiqlal, from 2013 until 2017, is used as evidence of Istiqlal's exposure to palatial manipulation.¹⁸⁰

In conclusion, due to its investments in the institution itself, Istiqlal was never able to escape its affiliation with the Moroccan monarchy – even when relations between them soured to a point of preventing the party from assuming political office. Its earlier leaders preserved the party's independence from Monarchic encroachments, but that immunity wore down after they stepped down and the third generation of Istiqlal took over. As a result, Istiqlal became a producer of the kind of party politics that pervades Morocco today. That is, parties practice a mostly communicative politics (issuing isolated statements and stances on governmental policy), participate in whatever official capacity they are able to, and maintain arbitration channels between the regime and the society. As Bekkali said: “[Istiqlal] still plays an essential role of arbitration between the regime and the people ... the party's continuity depends on this role, and the credibility of its references and its legitimacy. That's what people vote for in elections” (2016). Benhamza added:

We've lived in this country and know its details, we've tried everything that is possible, and this is what is possible. No one says this is ideal, but this is what is possible for us, it reflects our assessment of our strength as a party, and what our country can withstand. (Benhamza 2016)

Istiqlal remains an impressive organizational force in Moroccan society – but one that is

¹⁸⁰ See (“شباط: بعضهم قال لي المخزن ما بقاش باغيك”) <http://www.alyaoum24.com/950348.html>

hampered by the history of its relationship with the Monarchy, and by producing a political system in which wide swaths of the population feel unrepresented, and unable to hold government accountable.

The Popular Movement: “emerged from the palace”

The MP’s development represents an extreme value on the party independence spectrum. As a party whose formation was hastened and facilitated by the Palace, the MP never sought independence from the Monarchy. Of all the parties under consideration, the MP is the only one whose support for the Monarchy was unreserved, unqualified, and unwavering. Though the Monarchy itself varied in terms of quality of governance, the MP’s support for it did not. As such, the historic evidence proves that there was hardly any distance between the MP and the Monarchy since the party’s inception. If the Istiqlal’s activism is associated with loyal opposition, the MP’s activism would be associated with servile obedience.

As previously narrated in Chapter 2, Crown Prince Hassan—who would become King in 1961—played a significant role in the birth of the MP. Since its advent, the party that “emerged from the palace” has called for concentrating more constitutional power in the hands of the King and defended/justified the Monarchy’s authoritarian excesses. In 1965, when Hassan II suspended parliament and ruled by decree in what came to be known as the ‘State of Exception,’ the MP witnessed an internal rift. The speaker of parliament was Abdelkrim El-Khatib, one of the MP’s co-founders. El-Khatib objected to the suspension of parliament, whereas the other MP co-founder, Mahjoubi Aherdane, supported it. El-Khatib ended up splitting from the party and forming the Democratic Constitutional Popular Movement (MPDC), and Aherdane would remain solely at the

helm. Aherdane's stance of supporting the 'State of Exception' would typify how the MP would go on to react to Hassan's authoritarian excesses. As Ahmed Siba said:

Party competition initially concerned influencing the character of the regime. We were a party that always called for reinforcing the Monarchy. There were parties that tried to weaken the Monarchy, even abort it. History has proven that the Monarchy was our safety valve. (Siba 2016)

Numerous MP leaders and activists still defend the Moroccan regime's blatant forgery of elections from the 1960s until the 1990s, calling it a necessary move. "We believe that the election fraud was a necessary measure for building the Moroccan state, and all parties benefited from it – including PPS and USFP," said Siba (2016). They also justify Hassan II's absolutist rule and notorious human rights infringements. "The country's interest demanded that the whole authority be rested in the hands of the King," said Fouzia Khamrich (2016). That the Monarchy itself changed does not seem to faze the MP activists, and they do not see it as a contradiction to their historic support. "Our Monarchy is not like others – it is dynamic, it understands the country's situation. It does this because it needs to be so. If it isn't, it will be deposed," said Loubna Amhair (2015). As Siba said:

The Monarchy ... changed. The monarchy of today is not the one of the fifties and the sixties ... The Monarchy was an absolute one, and developed into a constitutional one... We believe that the Monarchy is the only system in which all Moroccans can be represented. Thankfully today, all parties believe this. (Siba 2016)

MP activists also realize that their advocacy on behalf of the Monarchy may have jeopardized its popularity in the past. But now, they say, the Monarchy's longevity has proven them right. As Jeddou El Idrissi said:

Previously, [a party's] adverse relationship with the monarchy may have [positively] impacted [its] strength. Once, the start-up capital of some parties was criticizing the Monarchy. Today, if you want to weaken yourself, you should

contradict the Monarchy. (El Idrissi 2016)

Amhair added:

I don't believe in the concept of the administration party. Who is against the Monarchy? Istiqlal is against the Monarchy? Everyone is in agreement that the country has constitutional institutions. We oppose governments, projects and stances, but not institutions. The only entity against the constitutional institutions is the JSM – but everyone else is in agreement about the Monarchy. The Monarchy has always been a part of Moroccan life, and was never isolated from the Moroccan people. (Amhair 2015)

A frequent refrain heard from MP activists, whose party is a member of the Liberal International consortium, is that the Monarchy is a “guarantor” in Morocco's political system. As Fatima Zahra Idrissi said: “We are a Royalist party because ... we defend the person as well as the institution. The King is our source of stability, and the arbiter of our differences. He is also our spiritual leader” (2016). Khamrich elaborated at length:

For me, the King is the guarantor of stability, the guarantor of democracy, guarantor of electoral integrity, wherever we face problems the King interferes and resolves them. Any project, without royal support and patronage, would not go through ... Take for example women's representation in parliament. If it wasn't for His Majesty's volition there wouldn't be a single woman in parliament ... The regime in Morocco represents the popular will. The street doesn't want parties, it wants the King to rule. (Khamrich 2016)

It can be noticed that the same person who justified Hassan II's absolutist rule called the King the “guarantor of electoral integrity.” This begs the question, as to what explains the MPs outlandish exhibitions of support and obedience. Why would a self-styled Liberal party advocate for absolute Monarchy?

There are three main factors, all related to the MP's formation process and early development, that explain the MP's unwavering support for the Monarchy. First, the MP's support for Hassan enabled it to grow the wedge between the Monarchy and Istiqlal and position itself as the Monarchy's top choice of party. Being the Crown Prince's and later

the King's party enabled the MP to obtain many political handouts in the newly independent country – ministerial positions, municipal positions, and other types of political rent. In a relatively poor country, such positions were valuable for garnering and maintaining political support (both for Hassan II and the MP). Second, being the Palace's party allowed the MP to attack Istiqlal and other partisan opponents with confidence. By maintaining that the problems facing the newly independent country all related to the governance of Istiqlal rather than the Monarchy, the MP was insulating the Monarch from public accountability while scrutinizing their political opponents in the public sphere. An insulated and unaccountable Monarchy would be better able to dole out political rent to its most obedient servants – and do so unencumbered. Finally, creating and maintaining a loyal Amazigh political faction delegitimized the claims of militant and secessionist Amazigh movements in the Rif and Atlas Mountains, and propagated the notion that the Monarchy is the only protector of the Amazigh minority. As such, the leaders of the MP tried to tie the fate of the Amazigh minority to the Monarchy's, and as such had to justify and cheer on its excesses.

Yet the MP failed to see that, like Istiqlal, it was instituting a pattern of behavior which other 'administrative' parties in the country would replicate soon thereafter. In 1963, the MP participated in the Front for the Defense of Constitutional Institutions (FDIC), a coalition of parties formed by Hassan II's advisor Ahmed Rida Guedira to contest the parliamentary elections. The FDIC won a majority of seats in the 1963 election (whose fairness and freedom was questionable) – and continued to be present in institutions throughout the "state of exception," giving them a partisan façade. But in 1978, Hassan II's brother-in-law and Prime Minister at the time Ahmed Osman formed the National Rally of

Independents (RNI). In 1983, Hassan II's Prime Minister at the time Ma'ati Bouabid formed the Constitutional Union (UC). And finally, in 2008, Mohammed VI's advisor Fouad Ali El Himma established the Party of Authenticity and Modernity (PAM). All of the latter three parties would try to replicate the MP's political behavior, serving as electoral machines for ambitious office seekers to assume political office and provide partisan cover for a semi-absolute Monarchy. Istiqlal's Abdallah Bekkali described the phenomenon of the administrative party:

The regime has seen that it is not feasible to engage in the political struggle as a direct participant ... The regime is supposed to represent the entire population, it cannot become a protagonist with a certain viewpoint vis-à-vis the other political actors. The best alternative was to create an extension of itself in the [party landscape], through parties that would represent its point of view in the political struggle, while it furnishes those parties with resources and capabilities and moral and material support – through ministerial and administrative posts, media, financial resources, in election fraud – to tilt the balances in the political struggle in favor of the regime. (Bekkali 2016)

Hence it is little surprise that MP activists were the most alarmed of all by the establishment and activism of PAM – as the latest administrative party was causing the MP to hemorrhage its membership.

In conclusion, though the MP formed out of real societal cleavages and meaningful regional grievances, its party formation process and history of interaction with the Monarchy instituted the practice of the “administration party” – whereby the Monarchy manipulated and controlled partisan political outcomes and political institutions as much as it could. The result was a partisan landscape that was filled with parties that, like the MP, had no independent decision-making capacity, or ability to distance themselves from the Monarchy's most brutal practices.

Union for Socialist Popular Forces: variants of opposition, tamed by governance

The USFP's party formation process produced a confrontational party that was intent on opposing the Monarchy's authoritarian whims, regardless of the cost of that opposition. Decades of oppositional politics and regime repression eventually wore out the party. Once the party assumed government authority, it did not have a strategy to deal with the Monarchy. What was Morocco's most independent political actor became one of its tamest and most servile after the government experiment. The Monarchy finally broke the party down, and that precipitated the party's organizational and ideological decline in the 2000s.

The origins of the problematic relationship between the Monarchy and the Istiqlal faction that became the UNFP (and later the USFP) lay in the latter's belief that their legitimacy (as part of the National Movement) rivaled the Monarchy's. The belief that the National Movement and the Monarchy were on equal footing, and had a parity of legitimacy, is what led the UNFP to clash with the Moroccan Monarchy – often violently. As such, UNFP/USFP activists believed that their problems with the Monarchy began because it had reneged on the unwritten covenant reached between Mohammed V and the National Movement. As such, Mohamed El Yazghi believed that both institutions – the Monarchy and the National Movement, gained legitimacy from affiliating with one another.

The National Movement resuscitated the Monarchic institution. Morocco's stability does not stem from the age of the Monarchy, it stems from the Monarchy's modern renewal in the 1930s and 1940s through its alliance with the people ... Thus the de facto contract between Mohammed V and the National Movement was a cornerstone in Morocco's history. (El Yazghi 2016)

After independence, the contradictions between Istiqlal and the Monarchy began to surface, and the younger generation of Istiqlal—which would eventually secede and form

the UNFP—adopted a less patient, more confrontational stance towards the Monarchy. As El Yazghi explained:

After independence, the Monarchy had two opinions – that of Mohammed V and the Istiqlal party (of building a modern, democratic state), and that of the Crown Prince Hassan II (of building a strong state that is not necessarily democratic). So the disagreement was over the type of independent state that will be built ... The Crown Prince had a big effect on the King. The King was closer to the consensus choice with the Nationalists. The Crown Prince thought the King should have wide authorities, and that the state should be built on that foundation. (El Yazghi 2016)

The difference with the Monarchy over the type of state to be built in the newly independent country was ultimately one of the reasons the Istiqlal party imploded, and the secession of the progressive faction led to the creation of the UNFP in 1959.

The death of Mohammed V and succession of Hassan II would escalate the confrontation between the Monarchy and the newly created UNFP. Mohammed Berrada, former UNFP and USFP activist, expressed a common sentiment among UNFP and USFP activists towards Hassan II: “Since Hassan II took power, he was preoccupied with erasing or disabling political parties – because they were obstructing his path to absolute monarchy. We wasted more than twenty years, so that Hassan II can establish his absolutist rule” (Berrada 2016). Moussaoui Ajlaoui said that “Mehdi Ben Barka and Bouabid, who were some of the most enthusiastic proponents of the Monarchy, turned on the Monarchy after Hassan’s assumption of the throne” (2016).

The constitution would be the first official confrontation between the UNFP and Hassan II. As El Yazghi explained:

Our first battle was regarding the constitution. The UNFP demanded a constitutive council to draft the constitution. When Hassan II assumed the throne, he drafted a constitution without such a council, and indeed did not accept such a council. It was only UNFP that demanded a constitutive assembly, none of the other parties. We believed that the constitution was granted, and that its legitimacy was questionable, that it was not a product of societal consensus (an elected constitutive council to

draft the constitution). We called for a boycott of the constitutional referendum. (El Yazghi 2016)

It was not only the process by which Hassan II drafted the constitution, but also the quality of the constitution that the UNFP found objectionable. As El Yazghi said, “In the constitution, there was a parliament that did not appoint the government, nor vote on it. The constitution did not grant parliament the authority to appoint government. It had very limited authorities” (2016). Whereas Istiqlal expressed its reservations but supported the constitution, UNFP rejected it. The constitution passed, officially with 97 percent of voters in favor. More importantly though, the fault lines were drawn between Hassan II and the UNFP for their institutional and extra-institutional battles. The next year, the UNFP participated in the parliamentary election, and entered parliament with 28 out of 144 seats.¹⁸¹ Though they claimed the elections were forged, the UNFP nonetheless took their presence in parliament seriously and exploited it as a pulpit from which to attack the regime. As Mohammed Berrada said:

I was supportive of participating in elections and other political institutions ... because I saw the importance of the UNFP presence as a minority in the 1963 parliament. Abderrahmane Youssoufi led that masterfully, despite the repression and the arrests. It was an outlet for us to embarrass the government and publicize our discourse. I also saw that the violent attempts to overthrow the regime were bogus. (Berrada 2016)

The UNFP did not use its presence in parliament to legislate or monitor the government.

It knew that the ability to do so would be compromised by the new regime. Hassan Tariq articulated the logic of UNFP activism at the time:

Before 1975 the very idea of democratic party competition was not present – for all parties. All parties wanted to be ruling parties, and the party competition arena was closed. The authority was centralized in the Monarchy. The parties of the Left

¹⁸¹ The remaining seats were 69 for the newly formed FDIC, 41 for Istiqlal, and 6 for independents. FDIC would ally with the independents and form a government, relegating Istiqlal and the UNFP to the opposition.

would go into the political institutions to problematize their functionality. A famous slogan back in the day was ‘exploding the institutions from within.’ This had to do with the low ceiling of the era. Thus to be a leftist in the sixties and seventies had nothing to do with democracy. For the idea of the left and that of democracy to be reconciled, very important transformations had to occur. (Tariq 2016)

Shortly after the elections in 1963, Hassan II accused UNFP leaders of attempting to overthrow the Monarchy.¹⁸² Many UNFP leaders were arrested, and Fqih Basri and Mehdi Ben Barka were sentenced to death. The relationship worsened when, in October of 1963, war broke out between Algeria and Morocco, and Mehdi Ben Barka publicly supported Algeria. All this was while UNFP maintained a parliamentary presence. In 1965, Hassan II ended the institutional charade altogether. Following civil unrest and riots in Casablanca, he suspended parliament altogether and ruled by decree in what came to be known as the “State of Exception” from 1965-1970. Radi elaborated on the context of the struggle between UNFP and Hassan II during the State of Exception:

5,000 of us were arrested during the State of Exception ... No one threatened the authority of Hassan II, but we wanted to influence the way authority was practiced ... Hassan II was proud to say that there was no separation of powers under his reign, that he was involved in all the powers ... Our main quarrel was about the constitution, it was not personal. But Hassan II wanted to rule by himself, without any partners, let alone competitors. (Radi 2016)

Most significantly, Mehdi Ben Barka was abducted in Paris in late 1965 in a trans-national intelligence operation and “disappeared.” UNFP leaders are adamant that despite this hostility, they were committed to a constitutional Monarchy in Morocco. El Yazghi said:

The UNFP supported the Monarchy, within the realms of the consensus reached with Mohammed V. It was Hassan II that did not agree to this consensus. He was the one who broke the consensus between us and the Monarchy ... I don’t know why the King escalated against us. Maybe he wanted servile parties to go along with him 100 percent. (El Yazghi 2016)

¹⁸² El Yazghi (2016) was adamant that the UNFP was not responsible.

Radi (2016) said that the UNFP did not threaten the regime, but rather the danger was from the army. That said, as detailed in Chapter 3, the UNFP's discourse at the time—if not its practice—was revolutionary.

The relationship between the UNFP and the Monarchy would remain strained until the latter experienced a few existential threats. Hassan II survived two military coup attempts, in 1971 and 1972 – and an armed rebellion led by Fqih Basri in 1973. After the coup attempts, he began a dialogue process with the opposition (Istiqlal and UNFP), which had formed the National Bloc. The dialogue process failed, but signaled that Hassan II was open to resume institutional political life in the country. At that point, there were already signs of internal discord within the UNFP leadership which the National Bloc experiment accelerated. This discord would manifest in the 1975 secession of the 'Rabat faction' of the party led by Abderrahim Bouabid, and the formation of the Union for Socialist Popular Forces (USFP).

The USFP explicitly renounced violent resistance to the regime, and dedicated itself to institutional opposition. As Fatima Belmouddene said, “The party changed from desiring a comprehensive socialist revolution to ... aspiring for democracy through political action. We moved from revolution to reform through political and democratic activism” (2016). Hassan II has his own motives for improving his relationship with the USFP. In November of 1975, Hassan II orchestrated the “Green March” – a mass demonstration to capture the Western Sahara from Spanish control. He needed to build internal consensus for the maneuver and was indeed able to secure full opposition backing towards it. As Ajlaoui said “the Sahara Issue brought the parties and the palace together ... [It] represented a transformation in the relationship between the palace and the parties, because it was a point

of national consensus” (2016).

The USFP thus inaugurated a new institution-based approach to opposition after 1975. It ran for the 1976 municipal elections and the 1977 parliamentary elections, knowing it was unlikely to win in either. Still, as El Yazghi said, “that the regime would have to forge elections against [the USFP] that was a victory for us, because the regime then knew that those supporting it at the time did not win” (2016). Radi explained the adoption of Bouabid’s saying, “Seats Do Not Concern Us” as a party slogan. “We knew that the elections will be forged, and that’s why we said ‘Seats Do Not Concern Us’ – because [the regime] will not allow us to win,” said Radi (2016).

The fact that the USFP changed, and the regime was more receptive to its participation in political institutions did not mean that the repression of the party subsided. Previously narrated in Chapter 4 was the episode of the bread-price demonstrations and general strike in Casablanca in June 1981, which caused the regime to shut down USFP party headquarters and newspapers and arrest affiliate labor union CDT’s leaders. Later that year, Bouabid would be imprisoned for his statements contradicting the Monarchy’s position on the Sahara Issue. Indeed, that period saw the beginning of Driss Basri’s reign of terror as Minister of Interior, which would last from 1979 until 1999.¹⁸³

The relationship between USFP and the Monarchy would remain in this state of unhealthy equilibrium—with the party repressed but participating in political institutions—until the early 1990s. Hasan II made overtures to the party after the passing of Abderrahim Bouabid in 1991 and initiated a new constitutional amendment process. The USFP at the

¹⁸³ Basri’s tenure in government would mark the second half of what would be called the “Years of Lead.” This period, from 1963-1992, was renowned in Morocco for governmental repression and notorious prison and torture facilities such as Tazmamart, Agdz, Kala’at Mgouna, and Derb Moulay Cherif.

time formed another alliance with Istiqlal and other parties called the Democratic Bloc in order to coordinate their opposition activity. The bloc decided to boycott the constitutional vote of 1992, and in 1993 Boucetta (as secretary-general of Istiqlal) rejected Hassan II's offer to form a government because Driss Basri was to remain as Minister of Interior. After parliamentary elections were held and widely tampered with, Youssoufi, recently elected as secretary-general of USFP, resigned and left the country in frustration.

Shortly thereafter, Hassan II would rekindle talks with the USFP – this time promising to bring it to lead government in what has since been termed *alternance* – French for alternation of power. “In 1994 [Hassan II] underwent an extensive period of self-criticism ... since then he tried to reach a consensus with the USFP,” said El Yazghi (2016). In gestures of good faith, Hassan II would issue general pardons, release political prisoners, and allow opposition figures to return to the country from exile (including Fqih Basri). Radi explained the King's motives:

Hassan II was able to be ahead of the times. He changed towards the end of his life, because the world changed, and democracy and human rights became the new international standard in the 1990s. Hassan II understood that he couldn't keep ruling the same way that he did for 30 years. Also, the economic and social situation in Morocco deteriorated. From a human resource standpoint, the opposition parties had the most qualified people in the country to run the administration. His succession was also weighing on him. It showed that he was smart and responsible, and transcended himself, made important concessions and things worked out for the better. (Radi 2016)

The USFP, on its part, agreed to participating in government despite many of its conditions not being met (perhaps most notably, Driss Basri remaining on board as Minister of Interior). “On our part, we made concessions too. We agreed to the constitution of 1996, not because we approved it wholeheartedly, but to diffuse the negative atmosphere of the country,” said Radi (2016). Berrada, who opposed the USFP entering government,

analyzed the party's choice at the time:

My generation was convinced that our party activism will not lead to governing. That is why many people sacrificed. But in politics, you can't just have a party for the sake of having a party. People will hold you accountable, and tell you come and execute your program ... Politics is about people's interests, and can't just be an intellectual exercise. (Berrada 2016)

The USFP approved the constitutional amendments of 1996, participated in the elections of 1997 (winning a plurality of seats for the first time in its history), and its secretary-general Abderrahmane Youssoufi (who had returned in 1995) formed a government in 1998. As Belmouddene explained, this was not the first time the party allied with the regime facing an impasse. "We always entered a pact with the regime when the issues we faced were decisive – such as the independence of 1956, the Green March in 1975, and the monarchical succession in the late 1990s," she said (Belmouddene 2016). This latest alliance, however, would have drastic repercussions. The transformation, from opposition party to governing party, took a heavy toll on the USFP's identity and organization (as detailed in Chapter 4). Many believed the party had been coopted. As Radi reflected:

I personally think that when we were in the opposition, our demands had a very high ceiling, and set up citizens for the notion that should we rule we would implement all these demands – such as free compulsory education, full employment, health care provision. We mismanaged expectations, because this was impossible, and things remained as they were before we came to govern. There was no harmony between what we promised and what we delivered. This is not just our mistake, because these reforms required structural reforms which were politically unpopular. (Radi 2016)

Hassan II died on July 23rd 1999, and his son Mohammed VI assumed the throne. The USFP maintained that, though it led the government, it did not have a free hand to implement its program. As Radi said:

I personally don't think there was alternation. I think there was participation in

government, and that experiment was successful. The Yousseoufi government did not take full authority, it only had partial authority – which prevented it from implementing its program in its entirety. (Radi 2016)

The USFP did take credit, however, for insuring a smooth transition of power in the country. As USFP political bureau member Abdelkrim Benanti told me:

Our biggest gain from the [government experiment] is that we achieved a smooth transition of power from one king to another ... We now have a king that has clean hands. His father passed away with a lot of blood on his hands. (Benatiq 2016)¹⁸⁴

That being said, there was widespread belief within party activists that the regime backed away from its promises to the party once the transition was secure. The party had been used. As Belmouddene said, “once the new king was able to secure the regime and his control over it, *alternance* was aborted” (2016). When the party won a plurality of seats in the 2002 parliamentary elections, the new King Mohammed VI chose a non-partisan to form and lead the government. Many in the party believed the USFP should withdraw, but it nonetheless decided to participate in the government. To many, this marked an alarming departure from the democratic process, and from the agreement the party reached with Hassan II in the mid 1990s. Just like the Monarchy reneging on its covenant with Istiqlal post-independence; the regime got what it wanted from the party, but the party escaped empty handed. Radi reflected on the decision to stay in government in 2002:

Everyone says [agreeing to participate in the 2002 government] was a mistake now, but it was everyone’s mistake, even the Palace. The democratic experiment was thwarted. It was also Istiqlal’s mistake, which was in a hurry to lead the government, and thus shattered the Democratic Bloc.¹⁸⁵ The Palace saw this and exploited it, saying if we were quarrelling between us it was under no obligation to follow through. (Radi 2016)

¹⁸⁴ Personal interview, April 21st 2016, USFP party headquarters – Rabat, Morocco.

¹⁸⁵ Part of the reason USFP couldn’t form a government with a majority in parliament in 2002, was that Istiqlal argued that it was due to lead the government (after allowing USFP to lead in 1998). It’s secretary-general Abbas Al-Fassi’s intransigence is one of the widely cited reasons the *alternance* experiment failed. See Blaouali (2016).

After the government experiment, the USFP's relationship with the Monarchy entered a period of cold dormancy. Until today, the party hasn't recovered from the blow in its identity and organization that the experiment left. Belmouddene sounded resigned in evaluating the party's history:

When we launched our party in 1975, we knew our horizon. But the reality led us to certain choices and mechanisms that we may have not preferred, and we made alliances that may not have been beneficial. This causes any party ... to at best fall short of realizing its goals. (Belmouddene 2016)

Berrada was harsher in evaluating the party he left. "They threw the sacrifices of forty years down the drain. I think Youssoufi could have gotten the 2011 constitution in 1998," he said (Berrada 2016). The party today considers its mere survival an accomplishment. As Tariq told me, "[The USFP] is rare in its ability to persevere in an authoritarian setting. Usually, authoritarian regimes maintain parties but render them meaningless ... The regime failed in killing the party, and the party failed in changing the regime" (2016).

The USFP's history is instructive in evaluating a party that formed out of hostility to an authoritarian power center. Neither the Monarchy nor the party were ever able to get over the sown mistrust between the UNFP and Hassan II in the early 1960s. As Radi said, "We became weaker because we were fought by the government. Throughout our tenure, we were at war with the government, and that had a long-term impact on our ability to withstand" (2016). They both sought to manipulate each other to improve their popular and political standing in the country at various times. The USFP never matured from an opposition organization to a programmatic party that transcends assuming authority. The Monarchy on its part gave the USFP just enough authority to diffuse its pressures (and ultimately destroy its organization) but not enough to gain any short-term political or economic success (much less to limit Monarchic power within political institutions).

Organizationally and ideologically, it was better able to withstand the many years of repression than the few years of governance. Once in government, any critical distance between the party and the Monarchy was erased. It became the prototype of an opposition party whose independence is compromised by a government experiment.

It is worth stating that the Monarchy of today is not the same as Hassan II's absolute Monarchy. The Monarchy changed its authoritarian practices, and even launched an Equity and Reconciliation Commission in 2004 to investigate and reckon with past abuses. The USFP can claim that it pushed the Monarchy in this direction towards "softer" authoritarianism. In the process though, the party sacrificed itself on the altar of authoritarian resistance. The USFP itself is no longer the party that can mobilize society. What's more, it can no longer maintain an independent political stance from the Palace.¹⁸⁶ After such a rich history of independent activism and projecting parity of legitimacy with the Monarchy, the USFP has become a tame, servile party.

Party of Justice and Development: the logic of non-confrontation

PJD's party formation process yielded a gradualist, patient party that was able to develop a cautious, sophisticated, mutually beneficial relationship with the Monarchy. As is the case for all independent political forces and movements in Morocco, the relationship between the Palace and the Islamist movement departed from a position of suspicion and unease. The PJD, however, was able to transcend this beginning and establish a fragile but functional relationship with the Monarchy. In doing so, it has internalized the lessons of

¹⁸⁶ In the Spring of 2016, I attended a press conference where USFP secretary-general Driss Lashgar identified a string of foreign conspiracies against Morocco. Lashgar said that Wikileaks, the Panama Papers, and the forgery of the 2011 parliamentary elections (which PJD won) were all facets of an American-led conspiracy against the country. Though certainly the most absurd, this was one of many episodes I encountered of USFP leaders apologizing for and defending Moroccan authoritarianism. See ("لشكر بشكك في نزاهة انتخابات 2011 ويعتبر أوراق باناما مؤامرة") <http://www.alyaoum24.com/580352.html>.

other political parties in the country – and adopted a logic of non-confrontation.

The earliest goals for the PJD's organizational ancestor, the Islamic Group Association (whose core leaders later formed the MRR, the MUR and the PJD) was to face off with leftist movements and organizations in public fora (universities, trade unions, media, etc.) both ideologically and organizationally. As such, their attentions weren't directed against the Monarchy or the regime, but against their ideological adversaries. In fact, many commentators attribute the rise of Islamist currents in Morocco (and other Arab countries) to preferential treatment from the regime.¹⁸⁷ Islamist activists themselves reject this notion, and instead point to the history of repression and harassment they suffered at the hands of the regime. Whether the Monarchy encouraged, or repressed Islamist political movements is a debate that this section will not resolve. Suffice it to say that the IGA's social and cultural activities were tolerated by the regime, if not outwardly promoted or repressed.

But if Islamist social and cultural activism was tolerated, Islamist political activism was not. This lack of tolerance persisted throughout the 1970s, 1980s and early 1990s when the MRR and RIF's efforts at establishing a political party were thwarted. Those organizations had to go some lengths at assuring the authorities that they do not threaten the regime, and the only available partisan avenue for them was to join an existing party. As Saadeddine Othmani said:

We went through a party formation process that insured we did not clash with the state. The first time we were banned, the second time we were denied, the third time we joined the Democratic Constitutional Popular Movement (MPDC) ... Joining MPDC took four years, and it was gradual enough that, by then, the state's attitude towards us changed. (Othmani 2016a)

¹⁸⁷ See Miller (2013); Shahin (1997); Willis (2012).

The context of the mid 1990s, when the MRR joined the MPDC was also one in which Hassan II was making overtures to the partisan opposition to join government, and as such was relaxing his repression of partisan political actors. The MRR was able to take advantage of that.

The discourse of the movement also transformed itself, concentrating on the concepts of 'Islāh إصلاح (reform) and Mushāraka مشاركة (participation). Implicit was the denunciation of revolutionary thought, violent regime change, and domination of institutions that had previously permeated Islamist rhetoric in Morocco and elsewhere.

Hicham Lahreche elaborated:

The reformist logic has conditions ... You have to work within the institutions of the country. We adopted the logic of participation in our literature and our media ... These transformations were intellectual in their origin ... we created a culture of participation within the party, and these discussions took more than ten years. This path was preceded by an intellectual discussion and psychological preparation for a generation that at one point had seeds of revolting against the regime. (Lahreche 2016)

As Lahreche saw it, this was one of two options the MRR had if they wanted to be political agents:

It was either that or we choose to topple government. There is no third choice. You're either a reformist or a revolutionary movement ... If you're not a revolutionary or a reformist, you're a spectator – and no longer an agent. (Lahreche 2016)

Othmani elaborated on the logic of participation:

What are you going to do? Remain on the margin? Look, societies differ. In a case like Morocco, which absorbs reform gradually, it is best to participate. Because through participation you can develop momentum within institutions – change some laws, pressure to develop some conditions, and that is what happened. Elections today are completely different than the first elections we ran in 1997. (Othmani 2016a)

The MPDC took part in the 1997 elections and won 9 seats in parliament (it claims

to have won more, but that these were stripped and given to the USFP). It thus commenced its experience in the parliamentary opposition to the USFP government. Othmani reflected on the party's modest choices at the time. "In politics, it's not all or nothing," he said. "Participating in elections is for the purpose of improving the conditions of holding elections. It is, in its own right, a contribution to the development of the democratic process," he added (Othmani 2016a). As such, the MPDC, and later the PJD, knew it was running in elections whose integrity is likely to be compromised by the regime, and agreed to do so nonetheless – emphasizing to the regime that it did not resemble a threat, and was willing to play within the slanted rules that it had devised for participation.¹⁸⁸

The logic of non-confrontation was pervasive in the discourse of PJD activists. Othmani was defensive when asked about the PJD's contemporary relationship with the Monarchy.

Why should we fight the monarchy? Why should we not have good relations with it? The monarchy is a given, it is a fact, and it has social and historical roots in Morocco. Moreover, the monarchy has earned a national legitimacy [through Mohammed V], one that it deserved ... The Monarchy has also obtained a reformist legitimacy, because for the last 25 years it has participated in, suggested, or led the reform process in Morocco. Why do you want us to sour our relationship with it? There is no justification. We face the forces of despotism and tyranny, even if they are close to the Monarchy. We face them strongly, but we are aware that the Monarchy is the guarantor of Moroccan stability. We will not succeed at the expense of Morocco. What is difficult today, and what would be politically brilliant, is the ability to reform in the framework of the Monarchy. (Othmani 2016b)

Lahcen Daoudi echoed the non-confrontational logic in simpler terms:

[We] don't compete with the Monarchy, because ... [We] alone cannot guarantee stability, so [we] have to cooperate with the Monarchy. The Monarchy has continuity that has outlived any other political agent. So there is complementarity, not competition. (Daoudi 2016)

Abdelali Hamieddine discussed collaborating with, rather than confronting, the Monarchy

¹⁸⁸ For a lengthier and more complete treatment, see Brown (2012).

at length:

From the beginning, we have sought to strengthen the democratic institutions of the country ... but what distinguishes us from the rest – particularly from the left – is that we demand these reforms under the umbrella of consensus with the King and not within a struggle against the monarchy. We do not want to strip the King of authorities and give them to other institutions. Our method is based on collaboration, and mutual convincing and consensus. This comes from a realization that the state's benefit is to bolster the credibility of institutions and increase political participation, in order to give citizens hope that reform from within institutions is possible and undercut radical currents. I think the Monarchy is wise enough to appreciate its own, the state's, and country's best long-term interests. (Hamieddine 2016b)

Hicham Lahreche echoed that the PJD's approach to the Monarchy is different than the parties that emanated from the National Movement (USFP and Istiqlal).

Parties have played an important role in this country's history ... But it was the logic of confrontation between the regime and the parties that [squandered all of this] ... the Monarchy in Morocco was never opposed to society, and was always part of it ... The problems in Morocco started when parties believed they can challenge the legitimacy of the Monarchy, pitting national/nationalist legitimacy against historical legitimacy ... these legitimacies must coexist, and there is no alternative to their coexistence. (Lahreche 2016)

Amina Maelainine further explained how the PJD learned from the National Movement parties' history of Monarchic confrontation:

The National [Movement] parties went into an open confrontation with the Monarchy, and many of Morocco's democratic gains were made because of their sacrifices. After that period, they were tamed ... Democratic struggle does not entail challenging the legitimacy of the Monarchy, because that is settled. But the Monarchy's domain must be clear, because when it isn't that leaves the door open for [administrative abuses].[These administrative abuses] is what we have to deal with ... we entered the political process knowing this. You have a choice: either enter an open battle with those who are stronger than you (and end up like the MB in Egypt), or struggle at a slower pace. (Maelainine 2016)

The party has made gains in every election it participated in. But until 2011, it had never joined a government coalition. "The reform process is complex, and does not have a singular gateway, and you can contribute to it without necessarily being in executive

authority,” said Othmani (2016b). But the most alarming development for the party and the country was the formation of the Party of Authenticity and Modernity (PAM) in 2008 by the King’s advisor and friend – Fouad Ali El Himma. PAM was created for the explicit reason of competing with PJD in the political institutions, and has had overt and covert Monarchic support. This reflected Monarchic distrust of and anxiety about PJD’s electoral (and societal) ascent.

In response, the PJD has been masterful at discursively distinguishing between the King and the *Makhzan*, and attempting to pit the former against the latter. Here, it is necessary to briefly explain the concept of the *Makhzan*. John Waterbury (1970) has explained the history and development of the term, arguing that “the makhzan [historically] consisted of two sections, the first being the sultan’s court and retinue and the second the administration proper” (23). With time, the term has developed to refer to the first section, but depending on who is using the term, can also mean the central authority, the Palace, the administration, or the judicial system. Moroccan parties have developed a practice of discursively separating between the King and the *Makhzan*, as the criticism of the latter has historically been much more tolerable and widespread. As such, when parties want to criticize the Monarchy, they criticize the *Makhzan*. When they want to praise it, they praise the King. With time, this has insulated the King (personally, and as an institution) from public criticism but has provided a feedback mechanism for the Monarchy and a channel through which Monarchic politics and policy can be contested. Simultaneously, it has insulated partisan activists from being persecuted for criticizing the Monarchy, or the King himself.

Though other parties have historically attacked the *Makhzan*’s authoritarianism and

corruption, none have done so with the skill of the PJD. As such, it's been able to preserve its independence from Monarchic maneuvering, while maintaining its credibility in the eyes of supporters as a force that combats *Tahakkum* تحكم (authoritarian control). As Lahreche said:

The key to maintain your relationship with the monarchy is maintaining your independent internal decision. That's a red line that you have to draw in your relationship with the monarchy ... In critical moments like 2011 dependent parties disappear. The country needs real political agents, not manufactured political agents. So when parties own their internal decision, they are able to play their societal role more effectively. (Lahreche 2016)

Whereas PJD activists described coexisting with the King in favorable terms, they weren't as favorable in describing the *Makhzan*. As Maelainine said, "With the Makhzan, you are either coopted or [coerced]. The process of coexisting with the Makhzan is itself a battle, that [we] will have to manage wisely" (2016). The PJD thus uses the King, and its favorable attitude towards him, to attack its partisan and non-partisan political rivals, mainly PAM and the *Makhzan*. Consider the statements of Hamieddine:

The problem is not just on the level of the Monarchy ... I think the King has settled the issue of democratic governance, and he does not have this problem. But there is an essential problem with elites and parties, when the demand for authoritarianism is a partisan demand, and when you have parties whose organization and administration reflect poorly on democratic logic. (Hamieddine 2016b)

Finally, in his recent speech to the PJD youth convention (which I referred to at the beginning of this chapter), former secretary-general Abdelilah Benkirane said: "We are Royalists, but we are not Makhzanites."¹⁸⁹

In 2011, PJD assumed leadership of the government after it won a plurality of seats in parliament. In contrast to the USFP, the government experience has benefited the PJD.

¹⁸⁹ See ("كلمة الأخ الأمين العام السابق عبد الإله ابن كيران") <https://bit.ly/2HAtPoC>

The party positioned itself as the most suitable arbiter between the regime and the society.

As Maelainine said:

People started understanding us [after 2011], whereas before they didn't know us. Even the Monarchy only knew us from intermediaries who were hostile towards us, and thus was anxious towards our agenda ... After 2011, everyone saw that we are a reformist party, and have a lot in common with the Monarchy. (Maelainine 2016)

The PJD contented itself in working with the King and accepting his authority over most governmental domains. As Hamieddine said:

At the end of the day, we are working in a Monarchy where the head of state has authority, and has choices related to the future of the state, and not just the daily administration of political life. For governmental work to be successful, it must be in harmony with the state's long term strategy and the large scale equilibria that a partisan actor may not take into account. (Hamieddine 2016a)

The PJD has thus been able to communicate to the King its willingness to accept whatever role is dedicated to it, without appearing as a party that is chasing governmental seats, political appointments, and authoritarian rent (unlike USFP).¹⁹⁰ In doing so, it shielded itself and its organization from Monarchic meddling and maintained a robust organization and coherent discourse. Othmani dismissed the Monarchy as a factor in party strength/weakness. "The Monarchy has nothing to do with a party's strength. The party has to be strong on a popular level, organizationally, intellectually, and electorally," said Othmani (2016b).

The events of early 2017, with the King stripping Benkirane of his governmental authority, have shaken PJD and its relationship with the Monarchy. The party had bended

¹⁹⁰ It is worth quoting at length from Hakkaoui: "We are not here to enrich ourselves. We are not here to get cars and villas and palaces. This seat doesn't mean anything to me, whereas others who lost their seats were hospitalized ... We know of people who have become wealthy due to their ministerial power, those who have owned whole cities due to their positions in the authority. We don't want any of that, so that is what distinguishes us" (2016).

over backward to reassure the Monarchy that it is a trustworthy political agent, and that it does not threaten the Monarchy's vast political (or economic) interests. Benkirane's dismissal from the head of the government was widely seen as a Monarchic attempt to break the PJD by targeting what Ibtsam Fakir (2017) called its "most valuable asset." But the party has bounced back, organizationally and politically. Its electoral gains may be in jeopardy, but for now, the PJD remains the most adept independent political force in positioning itself vis-à-vis the Monarchy.

Justice and Spirituality Movement: radical, non-violent opposition

The JSM's formation process produced a social movement organization that internalized the lessons of other opposition movements in the country. While PJD learned from earlier partisan actors to adopt and internalize the logic of non-confrontation, the JSM learned how to maintain its radical opposition while preserving its organizational and societal presence. It also learned how to best utilize the Monarchy to attack its political opponents not by affiliating with the Monarchy itself, but accusing opponents of being Monarchic pawns.

Ever since Abdessalam Yassine sent Hassan II his infamous letter of advice, *Islam or the Deluge*, in 1974 – the tone was set for him and his followers. As previously mentioned in Chapter 2, the letter challenged the religious and political credentials of the King. Implicit was also a rejection of the Alaouite dynasty's legitimacy. As such, when the JSM's early incarnations were formed in the early 1980s, activists expected the repression to follow shortly thereafter. As Fathallah Arsalan said:

From the beginning, we used to talk to the new entrants, that we were facing repression from the authority, and that our path was filled with thorns ... Whoever could not tolerate this repression would be excused from bearing responsibility within the organization ... So when the repression came and the leadership was all

arrested, it was almost expected, and it was a normal part of our activism. (Arsalan 2016)

During the early 1980s, the Moroccan regime was severely repressing opposition parties and movements in the country, as Driss Basri was inaugurating his reign of terror at the Ministry of Interior. As such, the era's legacy was formative for the organization and its members. Omar Iharchane recounted:

I witnessed the events of 1981, and I was 12 at the time. These events shaped my impression of the regime. When you as a child witness a large security deployment, random shooting, random tear gas, a state of emergency, it leaves a lasting impression on you. We used to play football in Derb Moulay Cherif, and knew that we were atop a secret prison – or play near a cemetery where we knew that people were buried alive in the days of Driss Basri. (Iharchane 2016)

Iharchane proceeded to describe why he joined the JSM, rather than the USFP, in 1987.

It is true that the USFP was an opposition party, but it was an opposition from within the official political establishment. It worked within the institutions, and most people did not have faith in the institutions, or the parliamentary majority or opposition ... I did not see the USFP as a radical enough opposition force that would advocate public demands. It was an opposition that worked within certain bounds and balances, restricted by a political ceiling and the official rules of the political game. (Iharchane 2016)

Mounir Jouri spoke of how the movement came of age during the 1980s, and how that impacted its thought, practice, and political approach.

Since the beginning, the JSM has laid foundations for its political vision based on resisting injustice and tyranny, and refusing to appease it or to deal with it piecemeal. We don't think we can fix this injustice and tyranny from within, we have to change it through external pressure – and cannot be a part of it. This position was formulated when Hassan II was arresting and assassinating his political opponents ... the JSM's literature is all in this vein: it refuses to give in to the regime's legitimization through the concept of 'Commander of the Faithful' or through its history. It wants a regime based on democratic legitimization. (Jouri 2015)

In the 1990s, Hassan II approached his opposition differently. As signs of a political opening engulfed the entire country, Hassan instigated negotiations with the JSM. The regime sent emissaries to the imprisoned JSM leadership. Abdelwahed Moutawakil

recounted:

The authorities – seeing that we were attracting big numbers or when they realized they made a mistake – tried to negotiate with us from prison. We refused, given that we were fragmented and imprisoned. They brought Yassine to the prison so that we can discuss this between us. We said ‘You know we were being treated unjustly, just let us go.’ The negotiations failed, but this was important for our credibility – that people saw that we preferred prison to capitulating. (Moutawakil 2016)

Arsalan noted that before joining efforts with the MRR, Abdelkrim El-Khatib of MPDC contacted the JSM to gauge their interest in joining his political party.

The state felt like the Islamist current was on the rise, especially after what happened in Algeria, so they started thinking about how to manage and contain it. They looked for the right person to be loyal to *Al-Makhzan* and could play this role, so they chose Abdelkrim Khatib. Khatib approached us before he approached the MRR. We made it clear that our opposition to the regime was what he considered to be radical, so he directed his attention to the MRR. (Arsalan 2016)

The JSM, as many other political forces, knew the regime wanted to insure the impending Monarchic succession. Moutawakil spoke of the regime’s tactics at the time.

In the late nineties we recognized that the regime was in a transitional phase and that nothing will change once it secures the succession. I was banned from leaving Morocco for 20 years, but after Hassan II died they brought my passport to my home. We were not stupid, and knew they wanted to insure the succession with minimal tumult. (Moutawakil 2016)

The monarchic succession transpired without the JSM’s participation or endorsement. Hassan Bennajeh recounted an episode, in 1999, when the new King sent an emissary to test the JSM’s willingness to cooperate with him.¹⁹¹ Bennajeh did not consider this a negotiation process. “The regime does not negotiate with anyone, and has never

¹⁹¹ Hassan Bennajeh said that, at the beginning of Mohammed V’s reign in 1999, he sent his official spokesman, Hassan Aourid, with a message from the regime. “In 1999/2000, the regime sent ... Aourid with a message that the regime would like to lift the embargo on Yassine. We understood that they did not want to resolve the JSM’s problems, but to relieve the regime from the burden of the JSM file. We said if you wish to lift the embargo on Yassine, do so – that doesn’t need our approval ... We said our cause is not just Yassine’s embargo, it is the embargo placed on the Movement and the project. We had 12 students under arrest, and many other bans on our activities. If you’d like to discuss all of that, then we welcome it (Bennajeh 2016).”

negotiated at any point in history. The regime dictates terms ... because negotiating presupposes parity,” he said (Bennajeh 2016). Upon the failure of this latest round of talks between the regime and the JSM, Yassine issued another scathing letter, this time to Mohammed VI, entitled *'Ilā man yahummuhu al-'amr* إلى من يهمله الأمر (To Whom It May Concern), denouncing his father's rule, asking him to use the family's fortune to pay Morocco's debt, and to build on the dismissal of Driss Basri from the Ministry of Interior. The concluding paragraph captures the gist of the 32 page letter:

Atone for your father's many injustices, and reduce his difficult judgement! Return to your people what was stolen from them. Repent to God, atone for your sins, and fear the King of Kings [God]. God takes care of good men. (Yassine 1999)¹⁹²

With those words, the JSM's insured a continuously hostile relationship with Mohammed VI, as it had with his father. At every social impasse, the JSM refused to compromise on its ideas regarding the Monarchy. However, with time, it developed a discursive method of justifying its social activism while using the Monarchy to discredit other independent political forces in the country. Consider, for example, Arsalan's following statement. “Political parties compete over serving the project of the ruler, or serving their interest. This may not be their intentions – I don't accuse anyone's intentions. But practically, no one is going to change anything by forming a political party” (Arsalan 2016). Or the following by Iharchane:

Politically, the balance of power is against the partisan agent. What do elections accomplish? They're supposed to furnish parties with political legitimacy, but they do not do that. Parties know that they reach parliament or government through an electoral minority. In 2011, there were 24 million people eligible to vote in Morocco. PJD formed a government with only 1 million votes. The partisan agent cannot obtain the electoral legitimacy to feel empowered enough to challenge the regime – the regime will easily point to the numbers. (Iharchane 2016)

¹⁹² Translation is my own. Original text in Arabic:

كفّر عن مظالم أبيك المسكين وخفف عنه الحساب العسير! رُدّ إلى شعبك ما سلب منه! تُبّ إلى الله وكفّر عن خطاياك وخف ملك الملوك! والله يتولى الصالحين.

Or the following by Moutawakil:

Both choices of enacting change by violence or within the institutions have failed. That's because the regime knows what parties want when they enter the institutions and will work very hard to coopt parties and encircle them. Every party that entered institutions failed. That's why we won't join. We've learned from everyone else's experience. Why do people want us to repeat their mistakes? (Moutawakil 2016)

Statements such as these indicate that the JSM has developed a discourse that assigns independent political parties with the responsibility for the Moroccan regime's failures.

At the same time, the JSM's advocacy for open, non-violent, non-institutional opposition to the regime puts the Monarchy in a bind. The JSM's non-secretive and non-violent approach makes it more difficult for the Monarchy to repress the movement heavily-handedly. As Mohamed Salmi, head of the JSM's legal division said:

Our conflicted relationship with the state comes from the clarity of our demands (strong institutions on democratic bases) ... The state is afraid of a clear discourse from an independent group of people who have no material aspirations, or secretive backgrounds. (Salmi 2016)¹⁹³

Bennajeh described the JSM's activism as a "third way" for the country.

We refuse to participate in institutions and "reform from within," but we are categorically against violence. We want to affect political change by political tools, but we won't be a part of the regime game. We want to be strong and socially present, but not violent. The result is nonviolent social activism ... This is a choice: we want to reach power, but we are not necessarily in a hurry. The issue takes time, to build the necessary social structure, and we will eventually reach power on our own terms. (Bennajeh 2016)

JSM activists know that the non-secrecy and non-violence protect them from being persecuted, and afford them a margin with which to operate. As Mounir Jouri said:

The regime knows that the JSM represents a safety valve in society, because it acts as a bulwark against extremism and against violence ... that's why the state does not want to see the JSM wither away but wants to control it. Of course, the JSM benefits from this margin of operation. (Jouri 2015)

¹⁹³ Personal interview, March 8th 2016, École de Gouvernance et d'Économie – Rabat, Morocco.

The JSM knows it's dealing with a less blunt Monarchy today, one that is tactical and cautious about the type of repression it imposes on its opponents. But they are reluctant to acknowledge meaningful change, much less give the Monarchy credit for it. As Aman Jaroud said, "All this talk about constitutional monarchy is an illusion. Morocco doesn't have a constitutional monarchy, it has an executive monarchy, an administrative monarchy" (2016). Jouri elaborated:

The change that has happened [to the political system] did not take place because the regime was convinced it needed to change, but because it faced pressures (internally and externally) and was forced to change ... Despite that, I think the changes reflect the regime's cunning – because it didn't change its essence, but only changed its cover. The changes were just cosmetic ... [and] the JSM has adapted [to them]. (Jouri 2015)

At its core, though, the JSM's ideas about governance run counter to the idea of a ruling Monarch – regardless how benign such a Monarch may be. As Abdelkadir Sahnoun said:

The problem is that the Monarchic establishment controls decision and public affairs. That is antithetical to democracy, where the ruler must be held accountable to the people ... in a previous constitution, the king was sacred. Today, he is de facto sacred. (Sahnoun 2016)

But that doesn't mean the JSM views its activism as non-participation. As Jouri said:

We differentiate between electoral and political participation. Electoral participation is occasional and finite, but political participation is continuous. We are present on an everyday basis in the country's politics and participate in the public discussion. We are also present in the protest movements taking place in the country, regardless of the level of demands ... The protest method is more effective than going through the political institutions (Jouri 2015)

That is why the JSM led the February 20th protest movement in 2011, which accelerated the constitutional amendment process. Arsalan accused the parties of betraying the February 20th movement.

The parties in Tunis allied with the revolution, against the ruler. The parties here all allied with the ruler against the revolution, including PJD. The revolution stayed in the street, isolated from the parties. So when the King proposed a new

constitution, the parties went along. We were against this, because the king chose the constitutional committee. (Arsalan 2016)

The relationship between the Monarchy and the JSM has developed such that the movement has positioned itself as the weightiest radical opposition in the country.¹⁹⁴ Its commitment to non-violence has allowed the JSM to build its organization and avoid violent confrontation with the regime. At the same time, its position vis-à-vis the Monarchy allows it to attack its political opponents – whom it accuses of serving the authoritarian order and giving the Monarchy undue legitimacy. As Salmi said, “The parties cannot carry out their programs, even when they’re in the government. The parties and the government do not rule. Reaching the government under these conditions is political suicide, it’s not victory” (2016). As such, it is pivoting for a power arrangement in which the Monarch has less power – regardless of whether or not that power arrangement materializes, and when it does. As Jouri concludes: “When we have institutions that have real authority, and are independent, and are not controlled by the regime, we won’t mind participating in elections ... but in the current state of institutions we will not participate” (Jouri 2015).

Conclusion

The history of the interaction between political parties in Morocco and the Monarchy reflect two distinct patterns. First, all parties that did not emanate from Royal decree tried to maintain their independent-decision making and insulate their organizations from Monarchic manipulation. The success with which they did so varied, but that aspiration produced a regularized mode of interaction between parties and the Monarchy. In this mode of interaction, parties attempted to fine-tune their positions vis-à-vis the Monarchy to reach the suitable proximity to / distance from the Monarchy. This was a

¹⁹⁴ As Jouri (2015) said: “The JSM opposes, opposes strongly, and opposes the head of the system.”

preoccupation of all partisan political agents in Morocco and produced some isomorphic behavior.

Second, the Monarchy itself did not remain a constant throughout the country's independent history. It did not have a one-size-fits-all solution to political parties it could not directly control. At different historical junctures, the Monarchy has allied with parties, repressed them, coopted them, and resigned itself to their activism. That meant that in turn, the political parties had to continuously adapt their stances towards the Monarchy. As this chapter has shown, there was considerable variation in how parties and movements positioned themselves vis-à-vis with the Monarchy.

The key variable that explains this variation is the individual party formation – timing, sequence and context of party formation. In general, later formers have developed much more sophisticated and nuanced approaches to dealing with the Moroccan Monarchy, and have been able to use their relationship with the Monarchy to more effectively attack their political opponents. Whether they ally with the Monarchy (PJD) or oppose it (JSM), late formers have learned what to avoid from the previous generation of independent political forces in the country (Istiqlal and USFP). As such, it wasn't the type of party (Islamist, leftist, conservative) nor the degree of opposition that determined how these parties approached the Monarchy. This chapter has shown that a party/movement need not develop hostility towards the Monarchy to protect its independence. Nor does it need to align with the Monarchy completely in order to achieve its partisan and ideological goals.

This chapter also suggests that the relationship between political parties and the Moroccan Monarchy is far too complex, varied, and rich to be captured by a coercion/cooptation dichotomy. As such, the coercion-cooptation paradigm is unsuitable

for explaining the complexity of party-Monarchy interaction. The USFP's alliances with Hassan II at some of his most vulnerable points (1975, 1998) show that parties did not merely view the Monarchy as a coercive apparatus. If the 1998 outcome can be explained by party cooptation in the form of government positions, the 1975 outcome cannot. The Monarchy's constant attempts to weaken the PJD despite the latter's professed allegiance and loyalty is also testament to the unsuitability of the coercion-cooptation dichotomy – as the PJD has neither been coopted nor coerced. This chapter has resembled an attempt at refining the theoretical and historical academic accounts of partisan interaction with the Moroccan Monarchy. Further research is needed to improve upon its insights and conclusions, but it has shown that a new paradigm for studying Monarchy-party relations in Morocco (and possibly other regional cases) is long overdue.

Chapter 6: Party Competition and Influence in Morocco

Introduction

In this dissertation, I have accounted for two main variables concerning political party outcomes in Morocco. The first variable is that of political party formation. I have argued that political parties in Morocco have formed to contest political discourse and practice in the broadest terms possible. Whereas ideology has been the main tool with which they have contested political discourse, formal institutional activism has been the main tool with which they have contested political practice. Political parties in Morocco have formed in order to advance distinct ideologies – articulations of membership in a desired political community. The second variable, broadly defined, is that of political party development. Once formed, these parties have developed—sometimes with significant divergence—in three main areas: ideology, organization, and relationship with the Monarchy. The main variable explaining divergent political party development has been party formation processes – timing, sequence, and historical context of individual party formation.

In this concluding chapter, I'd like to further explore the implications of such a formation and development pattern on political science theory, Middle East and North Africa (MENA) political science, and the future of party activism in Morocco. I'd also like to explore how political parties contest discourse and practice, the implications of partisan activism for the Moroccan political system, and the role parties play in transforming and/or reproducing the Moroccan regime. In doing so, I point to new direction for political party research on political party formation, for both similar non-partisan authoritarian regimes and other regime types. I also discuss implications of this dissertation on Middle East and

North Africa (MENA) political science research and policy discourse. Finally, I discuss the implications of my findings on the future of party development in Morocco, particularly with regards to the JSM.

An Ideational Theory of Party Formation: Theoretical and Empirical Implications

There are several theoretical implications for my ideational theory of political party formation. First, with regards to political party formation literature, the theory presented here supplements the current scholarship in important ways, by accounting for political party formation in contexts when ‘winning’ is not an immediate concern. There is a considerable number of parties that have formed in dictatorships and democracies that do not have immediate ambitions of gaining political office. Nevertheless, parties that form to “shape the debate” and advance certain ideologies by contesting the broad public political space can be extremely consequential in determining policy outcomes (e.g. Brexit). And as recent results of elections from Europe show us, these parties can ultimately end up ‘winning’ by gaining political office once the political discourse shifts in a favorable direction. There are many parties that fit this typology in democracies: the Green Party and Tea Party in the United States, the UK Independence Party in the UK, various populist and extreme-right parties in Europe, and so on. In authoritarian systems, there are many more examples of parties that form knowing their chance of ‘winning’ is minimal. The existence of such parties, in democracies and dictatorships, indicates that discursive competition, ideological contestation, or plainly “shifting the debate” are all important drivers of political party formation. To the best of my knowledge, neither rationalist (e.g. Aldrich 1995; Brownlee 2007; Greene 2009; Slater 2010), nor sociological (Lipset and Rokkan 1990) theories of political party formation account for these factors in explaining political

party formation. Future research should build on this dissertation and explore other episodes where political parties formed to advance distinct ideologies in public political space.

With regards to non-partisan authoritarian regimes specifically, the theory presented here presents a generalizable framework for explaining political party formation and development in these regimes. These include, but are not limited to, Arab parliamentary monarchies such as Jordan, Kuwait, and Bahrain. They also include other current non-Monarchies such as Iran, or various historical non-Monarchies such as junta regimes in Argentina and Chile – where political parties are tightly restricted and controlled, but nonetheless operational. In these types of regimes, the logic of political party activism departs from the typical pursuit of power observable in democracies or partisan authoritarian regimes. Instead, political parties in non-partisan authoritarian regimes follow a different logic of political party activism, where presence in institutions cannot be taken for granted – which I will explain below for the case of Morocco.

At stake in exploring the logic of political party activism in non-partisan authoritarian regimes is a refined account of authoritarian politics in these contexts. The current literature on authoritarianism in the Middle East and North Africa has found difficulty escaping the “authoritarian robustness” (Bellin 2004) or authoritarian resilience paradigm – privileging factors such as the security apparatus, coercion/cooptation, defense expenditures, and civil-military relations to explain political outcomes. As previously mentioned, the MENA politics literature tends to privilege “top-down” explanations that afford substantial importance to authoritarian dictates. But as I argue in this dissertation and expand on in the below section, authoritarian politics in the Middle East has seldom

gone unchecked, and has often faced stiff resistance, in both associational and non-associational forms. As such, exploring how politics is debated and contested among these different associations, using a “bottom-up” approach yields valuable insights into the delicate balancing act that is authoritarian politics. The implications of this dissertation are thus to explain authoritarian political outcomes as set of partial, temporary equilibria between competing forces – the authoritarian power center being only one of those. Future research should build on the insights presented in this dissertation to explore associational life in authoritarian regimes, to further break down the black box of authoritarianism.

Finally, the empirical research on Islamist political agency in the MENA region tends to study Islamist politics in a vacuum (e.g. Schwedler 2006; Spiegel 2015; Wegner 2011). While this is perhaps related to the spike in interest in Islamist politics after the horrific attacks of September 11th, 2001, this literature does little to explain the political landscape in which Islamist political forces have had to compete. In this dissertation, I study the timing, sequence, and historical context of Islamist political party and movement organization formation and development. In doing so, I study the ideological predecessors of Islamist political agents, and track the ideological, organizational, and interactional similarities and differences between these predecessors and Islamists. Future studies on organized political agency in the MENA region should expand on the insights of this dissertation and provide a more thorough and contextualized account for the rise of Islamist political forces in the region.

Party competition and influence in Morocco

In this dissertation, I have argued that party formation, development, and activism in Morocco is driven by ideas and ideology, rather than tangible material gains (legislative

or executive seats, political rent, and so on). As Hicham Lahreche of PJD told me:

In the west, a party is born out of the will to participate, not the other way around. In Morocco, the party is born out of the nationalist movement, and colonial resistance. That is why the Moroccan party has had to have an ideology, symbolic presence and value, leadership figures, and philosophy and relations akin to a *zawiya*.¹⁹⁵ (Lahreche 2016)

That party activism is driven by ideational (rather than purely material) incentives has bearing on their competition. After all, if parties are not only competing for seats in legislature, ministerial posts, political rent, or other kinds of tangible material resources, then what else do parties compete over? Historically, the material competition has been severely restricted, controlled, and manipulated by the Moroccan Monarchy. As such, almost all political party activists interviewed for this study said a party should balance between its presence in public forums on the one hand, and political institutions on the other. Each group of party activists framed this balancing act differently, but in ways that seem to converge.

The case for presence in institutions was forcefully made by all interviewed political party activists, which points to its importance for informing and framing their activism. Presence in institutions offers parties a valuable forum from which to influence, if not entirely control, the legislative and administrative process. As Jeddou El Idrissi of the MP noted:

Why do you practice politics? In order to govern ... I won't practice politics if I don't care about seats. How are you going to implement your program if you are not in the institutions? You can influence politics from outside of the institutions, but I always said if you want to impose yourself, your opinions and inclinations on the discourse you have to be present in the institutions. (El Idrissi 2016)

¹⁹⁵ A *zawiya* is a Sufi religious order or brotherhood, whose social structure emphasizes the importance of leadership and ideals. On the link between Moroccan political parties and *zawiyas*, See Hammoudi (1997, 136-137) and Rezette (1955, 249, 316-22).

Even for a historically oppositional political party such as the USFP, presence in institutions has been a valuable resource. As Abdelwahed Radi of the USFP said:

It was a comprehensive effort. The repression was in the street, but holding the government accountable was in Parliament. Democracy is the state of institutions, it's the presence of institutions and working from within institutions. There are no democracies that function without political institutions. No real democracy would function without institutions. (Radi 2016)

Hanane Rihhab, member of the USFP political bureau, said: "It is better to struggle from within the institutions, because you are in direct contact with the citizen and can provide direct help for him or her" (2016). Mohamed El Yazghi of USFP was more blunt:

You can't change the country through demonstrations ... Parliament is where laws are issued. Who issues the laws? Who approves the budget? Who debates economic policy? Should we subsidize industry, or agriculture? ... How we manage our daily lives is important ... Highways, electricity, water, schools, and hospitals are strategic matters as far as I'm concerned, because they impact the welfare of Moroccans. [They are incentives for a party to want to control government]. (El Yazghi 2016)

PJD activists further elaborated on the importance of institutional presence, and the futility of exclusively non-institutional activism (in a rather conspicuous reference to the JSM). As Abdelali Hamieddine said at length:

To influence political discourse from outside the institutions is difficult, if not impossible ... The cultural and educational associations we had were not able to transmit our voices into the institutions. So at some point we needed a party so that we can influence political decision-making and discourse ... I don't believe you can influence political decision-making from outside the institutions with peaceful activism. The movements that try to do that gradually wither away, because they don't produce decisions. They might produce a rhetoric that tickles people's emotions, but they don't produce decisions. They remain circumscribed to the circles of civil society. (Hamieddine 2016b)

Bassima Hakkaoui elaborated:

I don't agree with the assessment that [working outside institutions is better]. Working within institutions has its legitimacy – from a historical, popular and legal standpoint. You just need to practice with a faithfulness to all these references. The problem is not with the political institutions, but the quality of practices within these

institutions, and the belief in institutions and their role. Morocco is advancing because of its institutions. (Hakkaoui 2016)

Amina Maelainine added that “influencing outside the institutions is anathema to PJD” (2016).

However, Moroccan political parties have learned that institutional presence cannot be taken for granted. The sheer scale of the regime’s manipulation of institutional outcomes in the past has rendered these institutions an incredible measure for political party strength and influence. It has also taught political parties not to rely solely on institutional contestation for exacting political gains. Abdallah Bekkali of Istiqlal elaborated at length:

[Morocco is reaching] a level of transparency in elections that approaches the minimum threshold for reflecting political party popularity ... In the past, this was not attainable at all, because the elections were completely forged, and the political party’s popularity would be measured by the people’s responsiveness to its initiatives: in general strikes, in the censure motion, etc. We would notice that public opinion would be very responsive to the initiatives of the National Movement parties [Istiqlal and USFP]. (Bekkali 2016)

Naimah Khaldoun of Istiqlal noted:

Elections ... are not the benchmark of party competition. Some parties aren’t even represented in parliament, but still [have a presence]. Elections are only one of many other indicators. [When] we have an electoral process that is actually free and fair, transparent and democratic, then elections can become the main indicator. But we’re not there yet, and that’s why the party competition has been elsewhere. (Khaldoun 2016)

El Idrissi added:

It isn’t seats that determine party influence, there are parties that don’t have seats in parliament but their word is heard in society. It’s always better to have a voice in institutions, and now perhaps seats are better indicators, but historically speaking the Leftist parties ... far outweighed their presence in institutions. (El Idrissi 2016)

As such, parties have had to develop other measures for their strength and influence. This is widely acknowledged not only by the partisan activists themselves, but most analysts and scholars of Moroccan politics. Of these, historical legitimacy, organizational

coherence, social presence, ideational and discursive influence, and mobilization capacity are the most important. As Nacer Benhmidouch of Istiqlal said, “I never relied on the party gaining electoral results. I think Istiqlal is strong because it has societal roots, historical significance, an identity that springs from that of Moroccan society, and organizational power” (2016). Mohamed Laaraj of the MP noted, “The party’s strength lies in its historical legitimacy ... The party gets its strength from its social base – not its presence in parliament” (2016). Abdelkrim Benatiq of USFP added, “[A party’s] presence in social battles, in social issues through labor unions, in professional sectors ... in non-political institutions is an indicator [of party strength]” (2016). Hassan Tariq of USFP also said, “[A party] can also influence through presence in civil society organizations, have intellectuals and leadership figures that influence public opinion, rally around trans-national causes such as the Palestinian cause” (2016). Fatima Zahra Idrissi of the MP acknowledged the importance of discourse:

We have a measure of electoral seats. But in my opinion the measure is how much the party can influence the political path with its ideas and discourse and proposals of laws that can benefit society. You can have a small parliamentary team that can do that. So there are things besides seats that we need to take into account. (Idrissi 2016)

Hicham Fikri, secretary general of the MP Youth, added:

Any party’s power is in the media and public sphere, institutionally, organizationally, from a rhetoric standpoint, and public presence in the street ... but you have to combine all of that with presence in public institutions and performance in elections. (Fikri 2016)¹⁹⁶

The JSM’s Omar Iharchane elaborated at length on what constitutes a strong party:

Popular mobilization, media influence, presence in pressure groups, owning a political position ... these are benchmarks of political party strength ... When you see a party with a strong trade union sector, a strong women’s sector, a strong student and youth sector, and a presence in civil society organizations and

¹⁹⁶ Personal interview, March 5th 2016, MP party headquarters – Rabat, Morocco.

universities – those are all elements of strength. There are also party elites that produce ideas, and also constitute a party strength. But the main measures are independence, organizational coherence, and social presence (and not electoral presence). (Iharchane 2016)

Mohamed Salmi, also from the JSM, added:

Your presence in society, and your geographical footprint, your contribution to societal debates – economic, political and social, contributing to the formation of the youth, your media presence, the state's relationship with the party (how much the state takes you into consideration) ... your ability to mobilize the populace. (Salmi 2016)

Critical for any party's evaluation of its strength is its ability to mobilize constituents and supporters for political demonstration. Adil Benhamza of Istiqlal noted the importance of non-institutional mobilization:

We've always balanced between working within institutions and working outside. We're always present on the social front, and were present in the strikes of 1981 and 1990. It was our trade union that called for the strike of 1990. It was also our trade union that called for a general strike while our secretary general was heading the government in 2009. We've always maintained this protest culture, and our protest wing, because it is part of our arsenal when making demands and pressuring the government. (Benhamza 2016)

Partisans, analysts and scholars refer to 1981 and 1990 as historical junctures where USFP and Istiqlal respectively advanced their goals, extracted concessions, or 'shaped the debate' through popular mobilization. Though PJD activists shun non-institutional activism above, they frequently refer to a 2002 demonstration protesting the National Plan of Action to Integrate Women in Development (NPATW) as an example of popular pressure producing a policy victory. "Since that day, we haven't been allowed to hold a demonstration in Casablanca," said Saadeddine Othmani, boasting the demonstration's impact (2016b).¹⁹⁷

¹⁹⁷ Commenting on the PJD's non-institutional strength, MP activist Loubna Amhair said: "They are strong both within institutions and outside of them. They are stronger outside the institutions – because they compete with less parties." Here she is implying that as an Islamist party, the PJD's only competitor in the non-institutional arena is the JSM. "This is what I argue within my own party: that we need to be strong outside of the institutions in order to compete with PJD," she added (Amhair 2015).

Thus the non-institutional arena in Morocco has historically been a crucial arena for party competition and activism, which future research on political parties in non-partisan authoritarian regimes should not neglect.

The costs of party activism and authoritarian maintenance

While the promise of institutional presence has historically provided an incentive for Moroccan parties to contest political office, this has hardly offset the material and symbolic costs of independent partisan activism in the country. Historically, the cost of independent partisan activism has been high on two counts. First, independent party activism has been rife with security and other material threats, imposing a significant material cost. As Bekkali said:

The parties have sacrificed greatly for the cause of Moroccan democracy ... in the late seventies and early eighties in Morocco, we had more than 10,000 political prisoners. We had legendary prisons: Tazmamart, Kalaat M’Gouna, Agdz, Derb Moulay Cherif. These were not known to exist – they were not legal. Belonging to a political party was a crime punishable by law. These parties could have just colluded with the regime and gotten privileges, but they chose not to. (Bekkali 2016)

The material cost of independent partisan activism in Morocco has thus been undeniable, even to the parties’ erstwhile opponents. Second, and perhaps more significantly, are the symbolic costs of participating in a repressive political system. Given its levels of freedom and miserable development indicators,¹⁹⁸ there are significant reputational costs for participating in the Moroccan political system. There is little that is appealing about participating in a political system where the head of state and de facto ruler is shielded from public accountability, and parties bear the brunt of public backlash to official policy. Moreover, the public perception about independent political parties’ interaction with the

¹⁹⁸ According to UNESCO figures, the total Moroccan literacy rate—as of 2012—was 69.43 percent. See <https://en.unesco.org/countries/morocco>.

authoritarian center is so delicate that a reputation of cooptation threatens to debilitate an independent party permanently. In other words, in a closed political system, reputations are sticky and political parties have to avoid the cooptation label should they hope to survive. That is why so much hinges on a party's independence, and a party's credibility. The USFP's fate after the government experiment is a cautionary tale to abide by. The cooptation literature, while greatly contributing to our understanding of authoritarian politics, does not consider this nearly as much as it should. For independent parties in Morocco, proximity to an authoritarian center—while potential could bear material fruits—often breeds societal scorn.

This is one of the main implications of my political party definition, which emphasizes the contestation of both the formal and discursive political arenas. In a non-partisan authoritarian system, parties and movements alike may be willing to withstand the material costs of their activism (repression). But only political parties bear the symbolic and reputational costs of participation in the political system (lack of independence, cooptation). That is what differentiates them from social movements, or protest movements. Additionally, this is why all partisan activists I interviewed emphasized the importance of independence for a political party – to maintain its organizational cohesion and influence. As Mohammed Berrada, formerly of USFP said, “to deserve the name “political party” and have any credibility, you have to distinguish yourself from the *Makhzan* – you have to be independent” (2016). Omar Abbasi of Istiqlal added, “I think if a party is independent, transparent and democratic, it will be able to resist the meddling of the authority” (2015). Even the JSM's Iharchane acknowledges that this is possible. “The most important measure of a party's influence is its independence – from the political

authority, from capital, from the security apparatus,” he said (Iharchane 2016). As such, for Moroccan partisan activists, independence from the Monarchy is a constitutive element of a political party.

Indeed, asking partisans to define a political party is an instructive exercise. Laaraj elaborated at length:

I think a political party in Morocco is the association that can mediate between society and the state. It is a balancing act, and you should not tilt one way or the other too much, either towards the state or towards society. It is not winning elections. It is also not ideology or the party program. (Laaraj 2016)

As such, Laaraj’s definition implies that in a system such as Morocco’s, only parties that are able to delicately balance their leanings can prosper. Additionally, there is a minimum threshold of requirements an organization has to meet in order to call itself a party. According to Hassan Tariq, “What makes a party a party is its clear political project, its ideology, and its independence from the authorities” (2016). As for Bekkali, he believes a party requires “performance legitimacy, historical legitimacy, organization, independent political positions, cadres and ideologues, and a party leadership” (2016).

The above discussion posits a legitimate question: to what extent are political parties, that willingly bear the costs of official participation, responsible for the reproduction of authoritarian politics in Morocco? In other words, are Moroccan political parties part of the authoritarian regime? Positing these questions to partisan activists yields a range of responses (from defensive to compelling) based on five main themes: The first theme that appears in the responses is the necessity to differentiate between different types of parties (alluded to in Chapter 4). “We can’t say the parties are part of the authoritarian structure, because not all parties are the same, and party activism is what got us the legal and constitutional democratic achievements we’ve gotten,” said Istiqlal’s Abdelouahed al-

Fassi (2016). Said Moumne of PJD elaborated on the difference between independent and non-independent parties:

Not all parties in Morocco are authoritarian parties. And not all are democratic parties. You cannot compare the USFP or Istiqlal to the [Constitutional Union – UC]. There are parties that are national forces, which struggled for and achieved independence and struggled to push the democratic progress of the country ... these are parties that emanated from the people, and were not established by the state. It is dishonest and disingenuous to put all Moroccan parties in one basket. (Moumne 2016)

Hassan Tariq elaborated on the implications of the ‘administrative party’ on party competition and the artificial partisan cover for authoritarian politics:

If the administration did not create its own parties, it may have been possible for the country to have two ideological poles represented by Istiqlal and the USFP ... These administrative parties were never real parties – neither parties of cadres nor parties of masses. They were networks of notables, predominantly rural. The electoral districting guaranteed them a majority of seats in parliament – that is because most of the citizens of Morocco in the sixties, seventies and eighties were country-dwellers ... The countryside still votes for parties that are close to the authorities, whereas the cities vote for parties that have some independence. (Tariq 2016)

The second theme that emanates from partisan responses is the long history of partisan activism against absolute Monarchy, authoritarian abuses, and in defense of democracy. As Bekkali said. “The current constitution is the product of a historic accumulation, which started in the seventies, [when Istiqlal and USFP began advocating for constitutional reform]” (2016). Hassan Tariq elaborated at length:

I believe that political parties contributed greatly to the dismantling of authoritarianism and political change [in Morocco]. The regime wagered on coopting the parties and emptying them from their content, and the parties wagered on democratizing the regime. The history of the country is the history of this contest. [Neither entity has won its wager]. What Morocco achieved in terms of democratic gains can be attributed to the activism of political parties. (Tariq 2016)

Othmani supplemented this response:

It is not fair to say the parties are part of the authoritarian structure. Most of the

parties spent decades in prisons and in exile. All of the reforms that were done before 2011 are due in large part to the dynamism created by political parties. (Othmani 2016b)

Abbasi said that independent parties have been inconvenient for the Moroccan regime, and remain so. “Moroccan parties remain forces that are annoying for the regime, struggling for democracy, constitutional rule and freedom,” he said (Abbasi 2015). As such, independent parties and the regime coexist, but do so uncomfortably. As Benatiq said:

We decided to be complementary with the state, to be independent from it, and to disagree with it ... We are convinced that the state is not a unitary actor, that it is a body of different entities that may have contradictory interests. We have to be a party of this texture/web ... we are not going to invest in the impossible ... nobody can rule the country on their own. What is possible is a kind of co-existence, a consensus of sorts. (Benatiq 2016)

The third theme in partisan responses to the question about authoritarian maintenance is the benefit of strong independent parties for protecting against societal shocks. The reason Morocco didn’t descend into civil strife during the wave of protest engulfing the Arab World, partisans argue, is the presence of parties as arbitrating institutions. “I think part of the reason we didn’t witness the upheavals of 2011 is because we had mediating institutions, such as political parties,” said Abbasi (2015). Othmani added “If it weren’t for that partial reform done by the parties, [the February 20th protest movement] would not have emerged in that way” (2016b). El Yazghi elaborated:

We are the only Arab country where the 2011 protests were received well. This is because of the long struggle of democratic parties. No one was against the protests, not the King, not the Government (and I was part of it). Everyone responded well to the protest movement. I don’t think Morocco is exceptional – we have the same problems as most other Arab countries. But we’ve had a long democratic struggle, which lasted for tens of years. We paid our dues, in assassinations, in prison sentences, in repression, in loss of employment. This is why we are in a relatively comfortable position today, and the protest movement positively affected political party life in the country. (El Yazghi 2016)

Moroccans, argued Bekkali, know the value and importance of having such arbitrating institutions.

The Moroccan political party still plays an essential role of arbitration between the regime and the people ... the party's continuity depends on it this role, and the credibility of its references and its legitimacy. That's what people vote for in elections. (Bekkali 2016)

The fourth theme that emerges from partisans in explaining their anti-authoritarianism is the close resemblance between their own discourse and the February 20th protest movement's slogans. As Anass Bendarkawi, National Bureau member of the USFP youth, said: "February 20th is a culmination of many years of partisan activism ... it took our demands out to the street" (2016).¹⁹⁹ Benhmidouch elaborated:

If you take the February 20th Movement's demands, you will find that they are very similar to the demands of certain political parties – documented in their congresses, communiques, news releases, etc. The difference (with February 20th) is that these parties believes in producing this change from within political institutions. (Benhmidouch 2016)

Lastly, the fifth theme that emerges when parties are asked to explain their complicity in the Moroccan political system, is that Moroccan democracy—though developing at a snail like pace—is developing, and that independent parties have pushed in this direction. Berrada noted:

We have to admit that even in the worst epochs of repression, political expression was always possible in Morocco ... The parties did advance the democratic process in Morocco ... but they are just going through a crisis right now ... the *Makhzan* renewed itself, but [most of] the parties did not renew either their cadres or their discourse. (Berrada 2016)

Moumne concurred that the regime always allotted a margin for partisan activism

Morocco was never a democratic country, but it was always never a totalitarian country. There was always a situation where parties could survive and continue – they did not get much power or authority, but they also were not killed ... it was always political, rather than legal reasons, that kept parties out of the decision-

¹⁹⁹ Personal interview, April 29th 2016, Coffee Shop – Casablanca, Morocco.

making circles ... Democracy cannot be realized instantaneously. Democracy is a pathway, where we are treading slowly, but treading nonetheless. (Moumne 2016)

In a long interjection about the perils of accelerating democratic governance, and

Morocco's upgraded and softer authoritarianism, Omar Abbasi noted:

You cannot run towards democracy ... we have seen the examples in Egypt, Syria, Libya. Running towards democracy is running towards the abyss, especially when dealing with multi-ethnic societies. I don't want that. Democratic construction is long, and hard, and requires patience. What is important is that we don't stop and persist ... political change is contingent on social change. It is unfair to talk about authoritarian regimes as if they are all one. (Abbasi 2015)

Maelainine talked of gradual improvements to the political system. "We are chipping away at authoritarian structures, and parliament has come a long way from the days of Hassan II. Still, we have not done away with executive monarchy," she said (Maelainine 2016). "There are no drastic changes, because we don't believe in drastic changes. We believe in gradualism and plurality and complementarity between the institutions," added her co-partisan, Bassima Hakkaoui (2016). Othmani put the evolution of Morocco's political system in perspective:

What is important is that we are progressing ... In the 2011 constitution, it was the first time the government was charged with executive authority, whereas previously this was the purview of the King ... I think this gradual improvement is important. (Othmani 2016b)

In sum, while independent parties are willing to bear the costs of formal participation, and therefore legitimate the political system, their coexistence with the authoritarian regime is an uncomfortable one. Moreover, it is uncomfortable for both entities. The parties themselves have had to advocate their ideologies while balancing their social and institutional presence on the one hand, and avoid regime coercion *and* cooptation on the other. The regime, on its part, has invested many resources in gerrymandering, election forgery, manufacturing of administrative parties in order to control and manage

the partisan landscape. It is this interaction that has produced the Moroccan political system and continues to reproduce it in both its liberal/democratic and repressive/authoritarian dynamics.

The JSM: whither party “formation”?

Given the above discussion, where does the JSM stand? And why is it hesitant to join the formal political system? Will it end up forming an official party? If nothing else, 2011 has shown the precariousness of prediction as far as Middle East and North African politics is concerned. Nevertheless, an analysis of the JSM’s current trajectory—given its history and development—is possible, especially in comparison to other independent political forces in Morocco. The JSM considers that, given the above party-regime dynamics, the protest-based approach is beneficial, and holding off on official participation is in its advantage. The party activists themselves do not discount the importance of social mobilization to influence politics. As Hassan Tariq of the USFP said:

Many times, these protests cause a change in policy, or a shift in the implementation. February 20th had a lot of social ramifications. You can see these results, because these parties influence the street. This influence does not always translate to electoral success – either because some of these (such as the JSM and the Democratic Path) don’t believe in the electoral process, or because some (such as the FGD) don’t have a consistent view of participating in the process, and some can’t translate their influence into electoral results when they participate. (Tariq 2016)

JSM leaders know that their movement has a significant influence on Moroccan politics.

As Fathallah Arsalan said, noting the regime’s reactions to JSM activism:

There are a lot of issues that the JSM has influenced – too many to name. For one, the initiatives of the King: his charity work in Ramadan and otherwise came as a direct response to the JSM’s activism. The authorities tried to undercut the JSM by making the monarch the face of these initiatives. Also, the authorities’ work in fighting illiteracy, which the JSM also was very active in. The state’s sponsoring of Sufi *zawiyas* and emphasizing their spiritual activism was also a response to us – given our emphasis on spiritual life. The political party laws were devised to

undercut us, the laws have certain conditions as reactions to our political activism. Even the demonstration laws – licensed associations have to apply for demonstration permits now, rather than individuals. (Arsalan 2016)

JSM leaders know that their influence is not only numerical and quantitative, but symbolic.

As Iharchane told me:

We do not wish to claim a larger presence in society than the one we have ... We have internal assessments of our membership, that we do not wish to publicize. We have a bigger influence now that we're outside the institutions ... The track record of 2011 shows this ... If [we] participated in elections, [we] would easily get more than 1 million votes. We definitely have more than 1 million voters. We don't exploit this support electorally, because we do not want to risk our credibility in front of our sympathizers. We don't want them to vote for us on the premise of deliverables that cannot be attained. (Iharchane 2016)

Other JSM leaders also highlighted the movement's social (and symbolic) influence. As

Abdelwahed Moutawakil said:

We have a presence in society ... and we raise people's awareness and share their concerns. We are present in all meaningful protest movements in the country. We do not claim to represent all these movements, but we participate in most of them. We are keen on having other partners, because we've been burnt by the media when we worked alone. (Moutawakil 2016)

Here Moutawakil points to the JSM's discursive strategy of investing in social protest. The JSM may not claim to represent all the social protest movements in the country. However, the movement appropriates the significance of social protest all over the country, as social protests validate the JSM's discourse, and its approach to political activism. In other words, all signs of social discontent—which is abundant in Morocco—validate the strategy of social activism rather than formal political participation. As JSM student leader Abdelkadir Sahnoun said:

The small change that happened in Morocco happened because of February 20th. So the real influence is in the street, not with the political parties ... the JSM was the backbone of February 20th ... we are always present in the street. (Sahnoun 2016)

Iharchane elaborated at length:

There are no parties that have influence, unfortunately. In Morocco, the people who influence decision making are not parties. At least since 2011 until today, the influential people are untraditional forces. For example, the most important organized movement that influenced, if not shook, the Moroccan political system was February 20th. It brought back amending the constitution, integrity of elections, nature of the political system and separation of powers to the forefront of Moroccan politics. For the parties, these were taboos or red lines that they couldn't cross. Today, there are a number of protest issues and movements – doctors, trainee teachers, electricity and water in the North of the country. Parties do not lead, influence or form these protests. (Iharchane 2016)

Thus the movement's discursive strategy has two pillars. First, they argue that the Moroccan regime hasn't meaningfully changed since the Years of Lead (1963-1992). Second, whatever change did occur to the regime, was the result of popular pressure in the streets (which it has championed and led), rather than formal political activism.

As it stands, the JSM has nothing but scorn for political parties in the country. As Moutawakil said:

All [political parties], with no exceptions, have lost their credibility. Some were formed by the *Makhzan*, and some were formed independently by social forces and became part of the *Makhzan*. People can ascertain to what extent your rhetoric matches your actions, and judge you accordingly ... [Political] institutions [in Morocco] are cosmetic, and forged ... if parties enter them, they don't accomplish anything, and lose their credibility. We are outside of the institutions, and even though we don't accomplish anything, we keep our credibility. (Moutawakil 2016)

Iharchane elaborated:

A party does not have to be oppositional in order to be strong. It just has to be clear in what it wants. Its political program has to be clear ... A party's legitimacy is determined not by its program or its ideology, it is determined by its performance – what it has accomplished. There is a big difference between what parties promise and what they accomplish. We are not promising anything we cannot deliver. This is the essence of democracy, people vote for you based on what you've done for them lately and your fulfillment of campaign promises. (Iharchane 2016)

Thus for the JSM, parties do not have sufficient authority to carry out their programs, even assuming they wanted to do so. As Sahnoun said:

Those who are voted in by the people should have real authority, and if they don't we should pinpoint who exactly is responsible. We say the authoritarian totalitarian regime [is responsible] ... and we're excluded because we pinpoint who is responsible ... the constitution does not allow any political party to change things in the country. (Sahnoun 2016)

Unlike the parties, the JSM is unwilling to bear the cost of participation in the formal political system. Given the current constitutional configuration, this is unlikely to change. As Hassan Bennajeh said:

The parties persist because they are part of this façade democracy ... that is why we won't join the political system, unless it is truly democratic ... The parties take the beatings on behalf of the regime, so that explains our refusal to join. That said, we are not just standing by, we are preparing society so that it grows and moves. We expected what happened in 2011 ... and expect more in the future, because the same factors are present ... We don't want future explosions and chaos. We also want stability and prosperity. That is why we refused to engage in any violent activity in 2011. (Bennajeh 2016)

Additionally, having invested so much political capital in discrediting the regime, official participation is a risky proposition for the JSM. As Aman Jaroud said:

If we accept the conditions of the political game, we will lose our popularity, and our credibility. It would be a big adventure, and a big gamble. We do not refuse participation out of principle, but we refuse to participate in the current conditions, because we think it is not rewarding/feasible. We'd be lying to ourselves and to the Moroccans if we promise anything ... This is not puritanical, it is just to be clear. The conditions for honest institutional political agency is absent. We are comfortable with our position and are in ethical harmony with it ... We will participate when there are no conditions to our participation, when we do not need to make concessions. (Jaroud 2016)

Predictably, partisan activists scoff at the JSM's political approach. "If you criticize without engaging in institutional work, your criticism remains without weight," said the MP's Fouzia Khamrich (2016). "JSM is like a couple afraid to commit to marriage," said Fatima Gouaima Mazzi, also from the MP, alluding to the fact that the JSM may be afraid of the public scrutiny that comes with formal activity (2016). "It's great to be a permanent oppositionist – you never make mistakes!" said USFP's Benatiq (2016). Perhaps the most

sympathetic was El Yazghi, who said “I feel for [the JSM], because they have a lot of integrity. But politically, their position is untenable” (2016). When asked if the JSM competes with his Islamist party, Said Moumne of PJD said:

I do not think the JSM competes with us ... it is very far from the political reality in Morocco ... I don't think people flock to PJD only because of the Islamic reference ... we think the JSM is in the refrigerator, and is a captive of its slogans. I don't think the JSM is very influential because it doesn't know where to go. (Moumne 2016)

The feeling is mutual, as the JSM also doesn't consider that it competes with the parties either. As Arsalan said:

We don't want to enter into competition with anyone, because competition implies something to compete over: parliament, government, or something like that. So 'competition' here is between two parentheses. We have a discourse, and we have a description of our reality, and we make arguments, and we tell everyone join us to build the foundations of the next era. We do not claim that we are the only people who will find a solution. We are just saying enough with this, let's move on and work on a new era – together. (Arsalan 2016)

On the ostensible lack of competition, both the JSM and its detractors are disingenuous. There is little doubt that political parties and the JSM compete directly, which is why they invest so much in discrediting each other. Moreover, the JSM engages in all the facets of non-institutional competition described above, and does so proactively. Perhaps the most bitter competition is between the JSM and the PJD, as they both try to “form the masses” along an Islamist reference.²⁰⁰ Boubker Elouankhari of the JSM tried to downgrade this by telling me:

I think after the Arab spring the ideological classifications (Islamist/secularist) no longer apply – because the Islamists are not a monolith ... and secularists aren't either. Now, you are either a movement for change or not, either with authoritarianism, or against it. (Elouankhari 2016)

But what is noticeable is that the PJD and the JSM constitute a hole in each other's

²⁰⁰ For more on the PJD-JSM rivalry, see Spiegel (2015).

discourse and respective logics of activism.

In sum, the JSM is undoubtedly an important part of Morocco's political landscape, one that competes non-institutionally with parties in "forming the masses," and may compete with them institutionally in the future. It has all the markings of a strong political party in the Moroccan context: organizational discipline, independence from the Monarchy, and a cohesive discourse and ideology. That it is unwilling to bear the costs of participation now does not mean it will do so indefinitely. Asked under what conditions the JSM will participate in official institutions, Iharchane said:

We need to see real political pluralism in the country. We cannot continue to see certain segments such as [the JSM] barred from political activity. Our right to politically organize is not subject to negotiation. If we are going to participate in elections, we need guarantees that they will be free and fair. And if we are going to enter parliament, we need guarantees for real parliamentary authority. So these are the three issues we demand for participating in the political system: real political pluralism, electoral reform, and constitutional reform. (Iharchane 2016)

Jaroud added:

We need to have an inclusive covenant, between all the political agents in the country, where we reach a consensus about the direction in which we want to proceed with strong guarantees about the implementation of this covenant. At the very least, we need to have a dialogue without red lines, without any exclusion, with the belief that everyone who lives in this country has a right to an opinion about it ... and the last word must be to the people. (Jaroud 2016)

For now, the JSM is content with its social activism. Elouankhari said:

The JSM works in all domains, with the available tools, to change politics. Our preoccupation is not entering the political institutions, it is to improve ourselves and change politics ... We are working, and we will take advantage of any opportunities that emerge. (Elouankhari 2016)

The appropriate power configuration that will usher the JSM into the formal political system may not be immediately tenable. Still, Mounir Jouri said, there is no telling when the current power arrangement may change. When the time comes, the JSM will be ready.

What happened in our region recently has disqualified timing as a variable of when things will/might happen. What happened in Tunis was extremely unlikely, and so [whether or not we will participate soon] doesn't have to do with timing but with the interaction of many different developments altogether. (Jouri 2015)

That they are not in an immediate hurry, and indeed have infinite time horizons,²⁰¹ makes it almost certain that the JSM will continue to play an important role in Morocco's political future.

Conclusion

The phenomenon of political party formation and development in Morocco points to a new direction for studying Middle East and North African (MENA) politics, and non-partisan authoritarian regimes more broadly. First, it is equally important, if not more so, to examine non-institutional as well as institutional competition and competitors in any given landscape. The above discussion shows the energy that partisan activists expend to compete with each other in the non-institutional public space. The size and influence of the JSM is suggestive that an organization need not form an official political party and compete in elections to influence society and politics. The battle over symbols, discourse, and meaning is as important to Moroccan political parties as the competition over seats in Parliament or ministerial appointments.

Second, political parties never form in a vacuum, and always form to compete with other political forces. This competition is equally as important as challenging, competing, or reckoning with an authoritarian power center. It is thus impossible to understand Islamist partisan and non-partisan political activism without situating it in its broader national and regional context. This dissertation has been an attempt to explain the context of nationalist,

²⁰¹ As previously mentioned in Chapter 2, Arsalan told me "The time horizon doesn't matter. If we only had this life, we'd say ok, we're getting old and are going to die. But we have the afterlife" (2016).

socialist, and Islamist political activism in Morocco, in order to better understand their respective trajectories. Explaining Islamist activism in other settings requires similar contextualization.

Finally, authoritarian incumbents constantly have to balance the power of independent societal and political forces. The number of ‘administrative parties’ the regime created in Morocco is a testament to how preoccupied it was with independent political parties. The maneuvering hasn’t stopped: the palace still tries, sometimes with questionable success, to defang independent political parties. In this context, dictators rarely dictate their whims to docile societies. There is always pushback, it frequently gets bloody, and on more than a few occasions, the independent political forces regain the initiative from the regime. Non-partisan authoritarian politics is thus best explained and described as a tug of war, a duel, or a dance between the authoritarians and institutionalized political agents in their societies. History suggests that the authoritarians are battling time – regardless of how powerful and secure they may temporarily feel.

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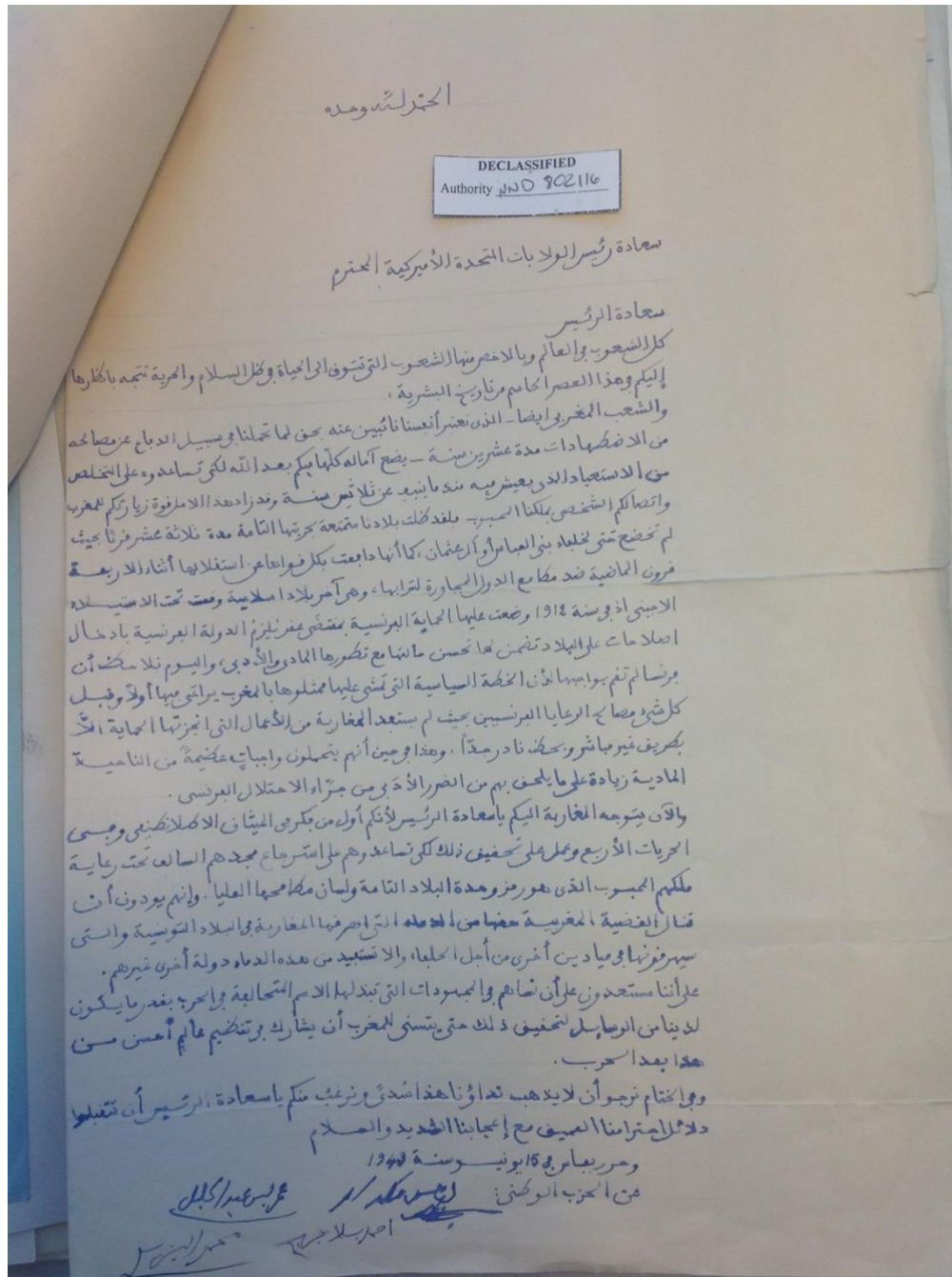
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Appendices

Figure 1: Letter from Nationalist leaders (Ahmed Balafrej, Ahmed Mekouar, Omar Benabdeljalil, Mohammed Lyazidi) to President Roosevelt soliciting help from the United States in the Moroccan National Struggle, written on June 15, 1943. Box 1509.



الطركات البحر
قضية

تمت بحسب
للشؤون في مقابلة
البلد - و تعتبر
تعيد التحقيق
ويرى للاخطار
في آخر هذه
في عائلاتها
ويعم قراء العالم
منها والميزان
ما يروج في
في الزمن
على ضفاف النيل
ثم تقدم الزمن
و دار الدهر
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السودا
و
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الاستعدادات في
الدف

واشنطن ١٨ - بدأت في واشنطن
لجنة مشتركة من مجلس الكونغرس
الامريكي تحقيقا سريا في وسائل
الدفاع المدني ضد الهجوم النووي.

معاهدة صداقة
بين الباكستان وايران

طهران ١٨ - امضى اليوم السيد
غزنكري علي خان سفير الباكستان
بطهران والدكتور اكبر السيام
وزير خارجية ايران اتفاقا
بين دولتي الباكستان وايران

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