

THE DYNAMICS OF DEMOCRACY PROMOTION:
FROM WASHINGTON TO RABAT

A thesis

Presented to

The College of Graduate and Professional Studies

Department of Political Science

Indiana State University

Terre Haute, Indiana

In Partial Fulfillment

of the Requirements for the Degree

Master of Arts

by

Priya Ramachandran

August 2012

© Priya Ramachandran 2012

COMMITTEE MEMBERS

Committee Chair: Glenn E. Perry, Ph.D.

Professor Emeritus of Political Science

Indiana State University

Committee Member: Samory Rashid, Ph.D.

Associate Professor of Political Science

Indiana State University

Committee Member: Bassam Yousif, Ph.D.

Associate Professor of Economics

Indiana State University

ABSTRACT

For nearly a decade now, Morocco has stood as a pillar of U.S. democracy promotion in the Middle East and North Africa. This has been a result of a number of factors such as Morocco's historical accessibility to the United States, a young pro-U.S. monarch who is seemingly a reform-enthusiast, and the highly advertised U.S. goal of democratizing Arab nations in the post 9/11 era. However, there have been studies that have focused on particular aspects of U.S. policies toward Morocco and have indicated mixed results. The more critical works suggest that democracy is not a desired goal of U.S. policy toward this North African country. Others suggest that the methods chosen are ineffective even though the goal might be an earnest one. The least critical observers suggest democratic gradualism as being the essence of U.S. policy on Morocco. In this study, I have delved into the question of U.S. democracy promotion in Morocco through a comprehensive analysis of the various dimensions of the superpower's policy. Using a theoretical framework derived from the liberalization-versus-democratization model of Daniel Brumberg and the rhetoric-versus-reality model of Glenn E. Perry, I conclude that while some degree of democratization is facilitated, the existing structure of the political system in Morocco is ultimately reinforced.

PREFACE

The foreign policy of the United States, for several decades has revolved around the buzz word “democratization.” This word has been evoked time and again, whether in the battle against the communist world, in the battle against particular regimes in the Middle East and North Africa (MENA), or in the war on terrorism following the September 11th attacks in 2001. In order to contribute to studies of U.S. democracy promotion in the MENA, this research delves into the Moroccan case. Being the closest “Arab” state to the West—geographically and perhaps politically—Morocco makes for a particularly interesting case. One would imagine the U.S. democracy promotion in this country to be less affected by other variables, such as oil-politics, or the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. Moreover, Morocco has been frequently praised by the West for its democratic progress. These attributes of Morocco prompt the central question of this thesis: What effect does the U.S. policy in Morocco have on the democratization of the latter?

Derived from theories established by Joseph Schumpeter,¹ as well as Robert A. Dahl,² the definition of democracy in this study focuses on two dimensions—contestation and inclusiveness. In Schumpeter’s view, one that has been most commonly referred to by American

¹ Joseph Schumpeter, *Capitalism, Socialism, and Democracy* (London: George Allen and Unwin, 1943), 269.

² Robert Dahl, *Dilemmas of Pluralist Democracy: Autonomy vs. Control* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1982), 11.

social scientists,³ democracy refers to the institutional setup that accords power to individuals to influence decision-making through a competitive process for the people's votes. Dahl's "polyarchy" (commonly referred to as democracy) is a system of governance where the power to make decisions is vested in elected officials, who are chosen periodically by the adult citizenry through a fairly conducted electoral process. There are also additional conditions that must be present according to Dahl's theory, for democracy to exist. These include the citizens' right to run for governmental offices, to express freely on political matters, access to alternative sources of information that are protected by law, and to form independent associations, independent political parties and interest groups.⁴ Therefore, democracy is defined here as a system in which political decisions are made by officials who are periodically elected by the adult citizens, who are also granted the freedom of expression, press, and the right to form independent associations.

In the current literature on U.S. democracy promotion, Marina Ottaway and Thomas Carothers have noted that the United States is bound—in its policy toward MENA states—by a combination of interests that are inherently at conflict with one another, and that democracy does not rank highly in importance.⁵ Katerina Dalacoura on the other hand holds that, in the U.S. perspective there are two categories of Arab states—the friends and the foes. Dalacoura has found that Washington's democracy promotion voice is raised in the case of "foes," but not so much with "friends."⁶ Glenn E. Perry has provided a framework of viewing U.S. democracy promotion policies in the MENA through a dichotomous lens—the superpower's rhetoric on the

³ Philippe Schmitter and Terry Lynn Karl, "What Democracy Is... and Is Not," in *Journal of Democracy* 2, no.3 (1991), 109.

⁴ Dahl, *Dilemmas of Pluralist Democracy*, 11.

⁵ Thomas Carothers and Marina Ottaway, *Uncharted Journey: Promoting Democracy in The Middle East* (Washington, DC: Carnegie Endowment, 2005), 253.

⁶ Katerina Dalacoura, "US democracy promotion in the Arab Middle East since 11 September 2001: a critique" in *International Affairs* 81, no. 5, (2005), 969.

subject versus the reality of depending on authoritarian regimes as allies in the face of popular opposition to its policies. Perry's study describes the interplay between the normative and the rational.⁷

Focusing on the Maghreb states (Morocco, Algeria, and Tunisia,) Yahia H. Zoubir reiterates that Morocco is the pillar of U.S. activity in North Africa.⁸ Zoubir has found that U.S. interests elsewhere in the MENA are in fact a driving force in the superpower's interests in this Maghreb country. However, he has also suggested that economic factors including U.S. competition with the European Union (EU), for influence, might play a role as well. The findings in a study by Marina Ottaway and Meredith Riley indicate that U.S. policies might result in a degree of liberalization at certain levels of the Moroccan political system. However, democracy as such is not facilitated by these policies⁹—a finding that is in line with Daniel Brumberg's distinction between political liberalization and democratization.¹⁰

In the current study, I have attempted to engage in a comprehensive qualitative analysis of U.S. policies in Morocco in the post 9/11 era. I have divided U.S. policies into two categories—policies of “democracy” promotion, and policies of regime maintenance. I have then analyzed three major reform initiatives undertaken by the Moroccan monarch in addition to other minor moves that are democratic in nature. While the two categories of U.S. policies are opposite in nature, there is a net effect that tilts heavily toward one side—regime maintenance.

⁷ Glenn E. Perry, “Imperial democratization: Rhetoric and reality” in *Arab Studies Quarterly*, 28, n.3/4 (2006): 55-87.

⁸ Yahia H. Zoubir, “American Policy in the Maghreb: The Conquest of a New Region?” in *Working Paper, Area: Mediterranean & Arab World- WP 13* (2006), 3.

⁹ Marina Ottaway and Meredith Riley, “Morocco: From Top-down Reform to Democratic Transition?” in *Carnegie Papers* (Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, 2006), 18.

¹⁰ Daniel Brumberg, “Democratization versus Liberalization in the Arab World: Dilemmas and Challenges for U.S. Foreign Policy,” *Strategic Studies Institute* (2005), 13.

My findings suggest that U.S. policies may promote political liberalization not as a step toward democracy, but rather as a substitute for it. It also emerges that in the current scheme of politics, U.S. promotion of democracy as such remains largely within the realm of rhetoric, while it is inhibited in reality by conflicting interests. Additionally, I suggest that it is possible that the U.S. democracy promotion policy is at work for a larger interest—the transformation of the population’s psychology from the current degree of pro-Islamist and anti-U.S. leaning to something more favorable. If successful, such a change would make democracy in Morocco less threatening to U.S. interests and security concerns.

The facts and figures pertaining to U.S. assistance to Morocco were obtained from primary as well as secondary sources. Much of the information on democracy assistance as well as military and security alliance were collected from U.S. governmental documents and websites of U.S. agencies. Likewise, key points on the Western Sahara issue were derived from congressional committee reports. In addition, congressional research service (CRS) reports and scholarly works have served as secondary sources.

This thesis is divided into five chapters. In Chapter 1, I have provided an overview of theories on U.S. democracy promotion in the MENA. This is followed by a summary of the evolution of U.S. interests in Morocco, leading into the turn of the millennium, which is the period of focus for this study. In the next chapter, facts, figures, and details pertaining to U.S. democracy assistance to Morocco are presented and discussed. Chapter 3 includes evidence pertaining to “regime maintenance”—U.S. policies on military and security assistance, trade, and Western Sahara. In Chapter 4, I have examined the democratizing initiatives undertaken by the Moroccan regime, and the U.S. influence in such policies. In this chapter I have also provided a detailed analysis of the stakes and interests of the United States in Moroccan democratization.

The thesis concludes with Chapter 5 in which I have detailed the observations and findings of this study.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

COMMITTEE MEMBERS	ii
ABSTRACT.....	iii
PREFACE.....	iv
CHAPTER 1: BACKGROUND, THEORIES, AND THE EVOLUTION OF U.S.-MORROCCO RELATIONS	1
Introduction.....	1
The Theoretical Framework.....	2
The Evolution of U.S.-Morocco Relations	4
Conclusion	16
CHAPTER 2: U.S. DEMOCRACY PROMOTION IN MOROCCO	18
Introduction.....	18
Methods of Democracy Promotion.....	19
The Promoters and the Targets	20
Conclusion	43
CHAPTER 3: THE RELATIONSHIP WITH THE REGIME	45
Introduction.....	45
The Three Main Platforms	46
Conclusion	59

CHAPTER 4: AN ANALYSIS OF DEMOCRATIZATION IN MOROCCO	60
Introduction.....	60
Examining Political Liberalization and Reforms.....	61
Moroccan Democracy, an Asset or a Nuisance?	71
Final Analysis	80
Conclusion	85
CHAPTER 5: OBSERVATIONS AND CONCLUSIONS	87
Introduction.....	87
Key Observations.....	88
Conclusion	91
BIBLIOGRAPHY	93

CHAPTER 1

BACKGROUND, THEORIES, AND THE EVOLUTION OF U.S.-MOROCCO RELATIONS

Introduction

For nearly a decade, Morocco has been viewed as one of the most promising candidates in the U.S. democracy promotion mission—laden with complexities as it may be—in the Middle East and North Africa (MENA.) Officials in the U.S. government and international observers frequently praise King Mohammed VI for his impressive portfolio of political reforms in Morocco, which in the West are received as signals of democratization. This portrayal, however, is contested by theories emerging from scholarly works on the MENA, that identify contradictions to democratization, both within U.S. policies on this region as well as in the reform initiatives undertaken by Arab leaders. Following an overview of the theoretical influences on this study, this chapter sheds light on the nature of relations between the United States and Morocco, as a bouncing-off point for the analyses that follow in subsequent sections of this thesis.

The Theoretical Framework

The theoretical premises that inform and influence this study are drawn from the works of Daniel Brumberg¹¹ and Glenn E. Perry.¹² Brumberg has noted an important distinction between political liberalization and democratization. While political liberalization has been viewed as a stepping stone toward democratization, it often does not occur as a phase in a linear path toward democracy. Instead, it sometimes ends up as the destination of a country's journey to pluralism, as is most often the case in MENA states. Liberalization gives a ruler the capability to coopt opposition movements that may otherwise gain grounds among the broader population of a country, independent of the state. By opening up the political platform to such forces, the ruler absorbs the opposition which in turn enjoys a sense of wielding influence in policy making. The key however is that the ruler retains authority and ultimate power where it really matters for the survival of the regime and the current form of political system. Nevertheless, by taking the approach of inclusivism, the ruler in effect negotiates with the opposition and builds a consensus wherein both parties benefit to a higher degree than they would in the absence of such a deal. The former gains legitimacy—both domestic and international—for being more inclusive, and the latter gains a modest degree of power to influence legislation, which if nothing else, serves as an avenue to release some of its urge to oppose. According to Brumberg, such political liberalization in a semi-autocratic system reinforces the existing power structure, turning the state into a “liberalized autocracy.”¹³ This conceptual separation of liberalization from

¹¹ Ibid, 3.

¹² Perry, *Imperial Democratization*, 55-87.

¹³ Brumberg, *Democratization Versus Liberalization in the Arab World*, 9.

democratization serves as an analytical tool while examining the prospects of democracy in Morocco.¹⁴

Providing an additional dimension to the study of U.S. democracy promotion, Glenn E. Perry offers a theoretical framework that projects this phenomenon through a dichotomous lens—the rhetoric versus the reality.¹⁵ The “rhetoric” here is the proclaimed role of the United States as a patron of democracy in the MENA, particularly in the post-9/11 era. The “reality” on the other hand refers to the superpower’s need to maintain certain “client-regimes” in the region, in order to pursue its material interests. What is described here is the contest between idealism and realism, in which the former takes the backseat to the latter, although less blatantly and in a rather masked manner than pure realism would call for. This aspect of Perry’s theory fits the constructivist view that policies of realism are often carried out under a normative blanket established by policymakers themselves, made up of ideals that garner them legitimacy domestically as well as abroad. In the case of the MENA, the United States finds it no longer wise to blatantly support friendly authoritarian regimes, as the seriousness of its legitimacy deficit abroad became apparent as airplanes flew into U.S. skyscrapers. However, this new realization does not take away from the reality of the need for pro-U.S. client-regimes in the region that happen to be invariably autocratic in nature. Hence, a complex game of active “democracy promotion” is played, in which the rhetoric is superficially met by policies of

¹⁴ Thomas Carothers, “The End of the Transition Paradigm,” in *Journal of Democracy*, 13, no. 1, (2002): 5-21. The discourse in this work is complementary to Brumberg’s distinction between political liberalization and democratization. Carothers identifies the theoretical weaknesses of the “transition paradigm” which has long assumed political liberalization to be a part of a three-step process—opening, breakthrough, and consolidation—of transition to democracy.

¹⁵ Perry, *Imperial Democratization*, 58.

modest and limited political liberalization in MENA states, while in reality, this announced policy is laden with obstacles posed by the “imperial imperatives” of realism.¹⁶

The relevance of these theories to this thesis is unraveled as this study of the Moroccan case progresses. As will be seen in the following section of this chapter, there is many a reason that would dictate the U.S. government to maintain its friendly ties with the regime. Do such reasons mar the justice that the United States can do to its “democracy promotion” rhetoric? The answer to this question is derived from analyses that follow in this thesis.

The Evolution of U.S.-Morocco Relations

In order to analyze the scope of U.S. democracy promotion in Morocco, it is important to understand the dynamics of the relationship between the two countries, as the superpower’s policies are likely a product of a complex matrix of considerations. While the Maghreb region—comprised of Tunisia, Algeria, and Morocco (although at times is stretched to include Libya and Mauritania)—has been considered by scholars to have been of less consequence hence of less interest to the United States than the more narrowly defined Middle East,¹⁷ Morocco has been an exception since the early stages of its independence. In this section, I identify the evolution and key stages in this relationship, placing emphasis on post-Cold War developments, the Free Trade Agreement, and Morocco’s status as a major non-NATO ally of the United States.

¹⁶ Ibid, 61.

¹⁷ Yahia Zoubir and Karima Benabdallah-Gambier, "The United States and the North African Imbroglia: Balancing Interests in Algeria, Morocco, and the Western Sahara," in *Mediterranean Politics* 10, no. 2 (2005), 181.

Pro-American Tendencies

Throughout history, U.S. policymakers have regarded Morocco a stable Arab state that has proven to be congenial to American interests during sensitive times. It is also frequently touted in congressional committees that the country has been a reliable ally since the creation of the United States, as Morocco was the first nation to officially recognize the latter as a sovereign state. The first diplomatic post and the longest one to have been occupied by the United States in a foreign territory, has been in Morocco, dating back to 1821. The United States also has its oldest peace treaty (1787) with Morocco. These historical facts become relevant in the current study of the dynamics of the U.S-Morocco relationship for the simple reason that policymakers regularly refer to past relationships as they pursue matters pertaining to North Africa in the twenty-first century.^{18,19,20}

During the Cold War, under the rule of King Hassan II, Morocco served as a key ally to the United States in containing the spread of communism, and it was a recipient of American economic and military assistance. With the end of the Cold War, the strategic value of Morocco temporarily declined, leading to a decrease in such assistance, which congressional budget limitations contributed to. This trough in U.S.-Morocco ties soon took a turn at the advent of the Gulf war of 1991, during which Morocco once again demonstrated its pro-American leanings by supporting the war and sending two thousand Moroccan troops to Saudi Arabia.²¹

¹⁸ Committee on Foreign Affairs. "U.S. Policy Challenges in North Africa." U.S. House of Representatives. First Session, June 6, 2007. Serial no. 110-76. U.S. Government Printing Office, Washington, 26.

¹⁹ Committee on Foreign Affairs. "U.S. Policy Toward the Conflict in the Western Sahara." U.S. House of Representatives, September, 1982. U.S. Government Printing Office, Washington, 7, 20.

²⁰ Committee on Foreign Affairs. "The Impact of U.S. Foreign Policy on Seven African Countries." U.S. House of Representatives, March 9, 1983. U.S. Government Printing Office, Washington, 37.

²¹ Patricia Campbell, "Morocco in Transition: Overcoming the Democratic and Human Rights Legacy of King Hassan II," in *African Studies Quarterly* 7, no.1 (2003), 51.

The next period of heightened U.S. interest in Morocco resulted from the tumultuous situation in Algeria. In the 1990's, Algeria was plagued by a decade long internal conflict, while the government was struggling to survive and religious extremism was on a steep rise. This eruption of radical Islamism that hovered over much of North Africa and Europe came with staunchly anti-Western sentiments. This was yet another chapter in the U.S-Morocco connection, when Morocco successfully played its role as “America’s Pillar in the Maghreb”²² by thwarting the radical Islamist threat and preventing it from damaging American and Western interests in the region. The regime once again benefited from strong American support to prevent the propagation of radical Islamism. What is noteworthy here is that, the containment of radical Islamism in Morocco was achieved by King Hassan II by the use of soft and somewhat legitimate means of repression rather than brutal force.²³ The traditional legitimacy claimed by the Moroccan monarch, who holds the title “Commander of the Faithful”—widely accepted among his population—enabled Hassan II to institutionalize the emerging Islamism.²⁴ In doing this, the monarch was able to personally set constraints to its scope, channeling it away from the fiercely anti-Western posture prevalent in Algeria’s radical groups. Within such limits, minority Islamist groups were allowed to continue activity in the country. Thus to Western observers, Morocco reinforced itself as a conservative religious bulwark against radical Islamism. It is for reasons such as these that successive U.S. administrations, of both political parties, have viewed Morocco as a steady and close ally as well as a protector of Western interests. To the United States, the events of the 1990’s also set the stage for the desirability of a persistently stable

²² Zoubir, *American Policy in the Maghreb*, 3.

²³ Zoubir and Benabdallah-Gambier, *The United States and the North African Imbroglia*, 188.

²⁴ Campbell, *Morocco in Transition*, 40.

Moroccan government, as the Algerian example had demonstrated the chaotic and threatening consequences of destabilization.

U.S. Interest in a Stable Morocco

Another major policy arena where the United States has bestowed its support on Morocco pertains to the Western Sahara issue. Morocco occupies eighty percent of Western Sahara, and has throughout the conflict (since 1975) insisted on its sovereignty over the territory. This conflict has involved in its geopolitical dimensions the independence seeking Sahrawi Arab Democratic Republic (SADR), Morocco, its North African neighbors (Algeria and Mauritania), its European neighbors (Spain and France), and—more relevant to this study—the United States.

Among the Western powers, while France has directly sympathized with the Moroccan view of the conflict the United States has adopted an official stance that is much more ambivalent. The United States in theory has supported the United Nations Charter that guarantees the right to self-determination of the Sahrawi people. On the other hand, as a more rational actor than an idealistic entity, its political and economic imperatives dictate policies that are contradictory to this stance, making for a classic case of the ‘rhetoric versus reality’ dichotomy.²⁵ The U.S. rationale has fluctuated in various directions in connection with the political currents on the international world stage. During the Cold War, deterring Soviet expansion was the key American focus. Although there not being any Soviet nurturing of the Sahrawi nationalist movement, the United States feared the potential spread of Marxist and Leninist ideologies in the territory, and in the worst case scenario, the emergence of a pro-Soviet state in Western Sahara. This perceived potential threat skewed the U.S. position vis-à-vis the

²⁵ Perry, *Imperial Democratization*, 55.

Sahrawi conflict in favor of Morocco, leading to a revived arms sales policy to Morocco aiding in its war in the desert.

In the aftermath of the Cold War and the years of crisis in Algeria, the realities have changed, consequently influencing the U.S. rationale regarding the Western Sahara conflict. The new reality that marks this era is the U.S. policy of thawing its relationship with Algeria as the latter is no longer viewed as a revolutionary state hostile toward American interests or Morocco. This shift in its international relations has enabled subsequent U.S. administrations to adopt a more even-handed policy toward the Western Sahara conflict, in that there is relatively more vocalized support for the United Nations settlement plan and self-determination for the Sahrawi people. The political phenomenon here resonates with the constructivist view that norms and realities change; while states may be self-interested, they continuously re-define what that means.²⁶ Insofar as the rhetoric and reality are not at a stark contradiction with one another, a superpower can afford to abide by its announced principles, such as the right to independence of the SADR in Western Sahara. However, in spite of supporting the settlement plan, the United States remains unswerving in its commitment to ensure a stable, secure Morocco, and one whose political climate is not disrupted by the unpredictability of a new sovereign state to its south. As a result, in its dialogue with Morocco, the U.S. position on the conflict has seamlessly morphed into a support for an autonomy plan charted and proposed by Morocco according to which it would ultimately retain its sovereignty over the currently “occupied territory” as it is viewed by many.²⁷ This U.S. position on Western Sahara is enhanced in the current decade as the strategic

²⁶ Barnett, *Dialogues in Arab Politics*.

²⁷ Committee on Foreign Affairs, U.S. House of Representatives. “U.S. Policy Challenges in North Africa.” First Session, June 6, 2007. U.S. Government Printing Office, Washington: 2007-13.

value of Morocco and the American stakes in the region have become all the more intensified in the aftermath of the terrorist attacks of September 11th (9/11), 2001.

The 9/11 Ripple Effect?

The factors discussed in the preceding section have positioned Morocco as a key ally in the western Mediterranean region in the U.S. fight against Islamist terrorism. Morocco in turn has demonstrated its capability as well as cooperation in curtailing radical Islamism in the region—with U.S. and European assistance. It should be noted that Morocco is not the only Maghrebi state recruited by the United States in its team approach to combatting terrorism. The larger scheme of U.S. strategy calls for the development of a closer partnership in the entire Maghreb region on the economic, military and security fronts. This would enable the United States to secure a comprehensive North African cooperation. In 2004, the United States military's U.S European Command (EUCOM) organized a two-day joint meeting summoning the heads of the three Maghrebi states' armed forces in conjunction with those of the Sahel states (Mauritania, Mali, Chad, Niger, and Senegal) to coordinate counter-terrorism efforts. Nonetheless, what enables Morocco to continue holding its unique position with the United States is the contrasting incongruity in Algerian and U.S. stances on a number of key issues. Algeria's positions regarding Western Sahara, the Israeli-Palestinian question, and Syria, to name a few remain in opposition to that of the United States. Therefore, the relatively thawed U.S.-Algeria relations are confined in scope to the security sector and hydrocarbons.²⁸ In addition, the states of the surrounding Sahel region are relatively of less vitality as compared to Morocco, in terms of the U.S. political initiatives in the broader MENA. Thus the post 9/11

²⁸ Zoubir, *American Policy in the Maghreb*, 10.

politics have significantly strengthened the U.S.-Morocco bilateral ties that now include the landmark free trade agreement (FTA) of 2006²⁹ and the designation of Morocco as a major non-NATO ally of the United States.

The Free Trade Agreement

On March 2, 2004, the United States and Morocco reached a free trade agreement (FTA), which came into effect in 2006. According to the Congressional Research Service, this FTA is intended to strengthen the bilateral relationship between the two countries, elevate trade and investment flows, and bolster Morocco's position in the MENA as a moderate and flourishing Arab state.³⁰ Analysts and scholars have viewed this agreement through varied lenses. To some, the FTA reflects U.S. economic interests in the region and no more; whereas to others the agreement is a part and parcel of the U.S. political agenda in the MENA. However, an analysis of congressional documents and committee reports suggests that to the U.S. policymakers, this step was a milestone in one of the most valued alliances in the MENA and a means to realize an array of future gains in the region politically, economically, and security-wise.

Key Provisions

Perhaps as a prelude to the U.S.-Morocco FTA, Morocco had undertaken a series of accelerated economic reforms and the liberalization of the market consisting of large scale privatizations. In doing so, Morocco also signaled its willingness to diversify its economic

²⁹ Migdalovitz, *Morocco: Current Issues*, 5.

³⁰ U.S. Library of Congress, Congressional Research Service. *Morocco-U.S. Free Trade Agreement*, by Raymond J. Ahearn. CRS Report RS21464 (Washington DC: Office of Congressional Information and Publishing, April 13, 2005), 1.

partners. Such economic policies are exactly what the United States upholds as its ideological objectives and promotes in the international scene. Hence it is no surprise that Morocco won increased American support on the economic front. The key provisions of the U.S.-Morocco FTA are discussed below.

One of the fundamental clauses of the FTA is the opening of barriers to more than 95 percent of the trade between the two countries. The main sectors targeted by the agreement are Moroccan agricultural imports and textile exports, the U.S. financial sector and telecommunications. The FTA makes provisions for facilitating the establishment of U.S. financial firms in Morocco, opening of the Moroccan insurance market to American products, and in telecommunications a mutual commitment to non-discrimination for the users of the existing networks.³¹ In addition to the economic concerns, the FTA addresses environmental policies, labor conditions, and social rights. It also contains clauses that deal with administrative transparency and ‘good governance’, though not directly imposing steps toward democratization in Morocco.

Economic Gains

During the initial debate in the U.S. government over the decision of a U.S.-Moroccan FTA, questions were raised regarding the benefits of such an agreement, to the United States in particular. In response, the Bush Administration, backed by a coalition of U.S. companies that support this agreement, stated that it would serve U.S. interests on the economic and the political fronts. Although the current study is concerned with the political implications of U.S. policies,

³¹ From the U.S.-Morocco FTA official document available online at: <http://www.ustr.gov/trade-agreements/free-trade-agreements/morocco-fta/final-text>

democratization in particular, the economic stakes of this agreement should be explored also, as these are often the motivating forces behind political decisions and outcomes. From the American perspective, there are a number of economic benefits to be reaped, which have been identified and taken into account by policymakers, according to congressional reports.³² One benefit pertains to the U.S. versus European Union (EU) dynamic. In the context of the international political economy the EU is one of the foremost competitors of the United States. Throughout the past decades, it is the EU that has been Morocco's primary economic focus, partly because the two entities are neighbors, and also as a continuation of their historical relationship, notably colonization. In addition, Europe had already signed a trade agreement that would give it preferential access to Morocco. By entering into an FTA with Morocco, the United States gains a certain leverage in its economic position vis-à-vis the EU.³³ Secondly, the average tariffs faced by U.S. exports (20%) will be decreased and gradually even eliminated, thereby expanding two-way trade flows between the two countries.³⁴ A third benefit would be increased access that American firms will have to a variety of Morocco's service sectors. In addition, the agreement is viewed by the United States as an essential building block for its broader and long term objective in the MENA—the establishment of a regional free trade area. A fifth economic benefit that is of a much more global scope, at least as purported by the Bush Administration, is the positive advertisement for the U.S. trade strategy of “competitive liberalization.”³⁵ In other words, policymakers believe that the U.S-Morocco FTA could demonstrate to the developing

³² Ahearn, *Morocco-U.S. Free Trade Agreement*, 4.

³³ Office of the United States Trade Representative (USTR), *Free Trade With Morocco*, January 21, 2003. Found at <http://www.ustr.gov>.

³⁴ Ahearn, *Morocco-U.S. Free Trade Agreement*, p. 4.; The U.S.-Morocco FTA will include the agricultural sector, which is currently excluded from the Morocco-E.U. agreement. Many U.S. agricultural interest groups believe that this would put them at an advantage over vis-à-vis the E.U., and hence support the FTA with Morocco.

³⁵ *Ibid*, 3.

world the benefits of economic reforms and liberalization, and also promote the benefits of the World Trade Organization's Doha Development Agenda.

Political Gains

According to the officials at the U.S. Trade Representative (USTR) office, one of the primary goals of the Moroccan FTA is to promote the economic growth and political progress of this long-time ally in the MENA, and to shape it as a model of openness, tolerance, and moderateness. Some scholars as well as government officials view the FTA as also a reward for persistent cooperation with the United States in the war against Islamist terrorism and an incentive for further joint efforts.^{36,37,38} Secondly, the trade agreement with the United States is believed to effect economic growth and prosperity in Morocco, which could lay the foundation for the eventual emergence of a full-fledged democracy. What is interesting in this reasoning is that it suggests that a fully democratized Morocco will indeed be a political gain for the United States as compared to the status-quo. This point will be elaborated and analyzed in later chapters. A third perceived benefit is that economic growth based on trade and foreign investment would foster mutually friendly attitudes among the two countries, which would not only be limited to the regime level in Morocco but also extend to the popular level. In addition such prosperity would help reduce poverty and conditions of despair which is a proven formula of a fertile breeding ground for terrorists. Finally, by signing an FTA with Morocco, the United States could potentially earn goodwill in other parts of MENA. One reason is that the United

³⁶ Ibid, 4.

³⁷ Zoubir and Benabdallah-Gambier, *The United States and the North African Imbrolio*, 197.

³⁸ Ahmed Galal and Robert Lawrence, "Egypt-US and Morocco-US Free Trade Agreements," in *The Egyptian Center for Economic Studies*, ECES WP87 (2003), 20.

States indirectly signals that it is willing to enter into partnerships in the MENA beyond just Israel and its neighbors (the U.S.-Jordan FTA).³⁹ This would hold true to the extent that there are positive outcomes for the population of Morocco. Assuming that such benefits do materialize, Morocco could serve as an example for other countries in the region which might be persuaded to follow suit and may adopt similar political stances toward the West.

It is evident that to the United States the FTA with Morocco does not only result in economic advantages but that broader political stakes are also involved. In fact, some scholars argue that the economic benefits would be of less significance considering the size of the U.S. economy and the level of trade between the two countries; and that the real attraction of the FTA is its usefulness as a foreign policy tool.⁴⁰ This paradigm will be addressed in chapter 3 where the effects of the FTA on Morocco's democratization will be analyzed.

The Major Non-NATO Ally

While the FTA has bound the United States and Morocco economically, and to some degree politically, the bilateral ties between the two countries have been particularly strengthened in the area of security and military. The Bush Administration designated Morocco as a major non-NATO ally of the United States, a position unique to Morocco in the extended Maghreb and Sahel region. In this capacity Morocco participates in NATO's Operation Active Endeavor which is a joint operation in the Mediterranean Sea, monitoring for terrorists. The U.S. Trans-Sahara Counterterrorism Partnership (TSPCTP) is another joint security initiative that Morocco takes part in. In addition, Morocco is also regularly engaged in bilateral military

³⁹ Israel; Jordan FTA- available online at <http://www.ustr.gov/trade-agreements/free-trade-agreements>.

⁴⁰ Jean F. Crombois, "The US-Morocco Free Trade Agreement," in *Mediterranean Politics* 10, no. 2 (2005), 220.

exercises with the United States. The FBI and CIA have provided assistance to Moroccan security forces in the investigation of the Casablanca bombings, and the agencies' directors have visited Rabat to provide consultations to Moroccan counterparts. The non-NATO ally status also makes Morocco eligible for additional military and security aids. For instance, the United States has increased military assistance resulting in a Foreign Military Financing (FMF) grant of up to \$2.4 billion to Morocco, which was announced by the Defense Department in December 2007, scheduled to be delivered during the period 2011 through 2015. In the following section, U.S. aid to Morocco at large will be discussed.

U.S. Aid to Morocco

In any discourse on countries that receive U.S. aid, the foremost names that emerge are Israel, and Egypt, followed by Jordan. At least two of these countries no doubt eclipse the other aid recipients in the MENA as well as the world. A sizable part of their aid could be arguably attributable to their direct involvement and proximity to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. It is in the next tier of countries receiving U.S. aid where Morocco ranks at the top. An increase in foreign aid in the aftermath of 9/11 was briefly discussed in previous sections, but it should be noted that Morocco has long been a grantee of a significant share of American aid.

Since the time of its decolonization in 1956, Morocco has been the single biggest recipient of American financial assistance, among all Arab states except Egypt. Between the time of decolonization of Western Sahara by Spain in 1975 and the turn of the twenty-first century, more than one-fifth of the total American aid to Africa was allotted to Morocco. Of this, military aid alone accounted for more than US\$1 billion. More recently, following the 9/11 terrorist attacks, U.S. aid allocated to the North African ally took a steep climb. In 2002 for

instance, nearly 75% of the total American assistance to the three Maghreb states was granted to Morocco. This percentage once again rose in 2005 to 81.8, or nearly US\$58 million. After 2005, the military aid alone has been hiked up to US\$20 million in order to enable Morocco to continue its cooperation with the United States in combatting terrorism, as well as protecting its own borders from transnational terrorism.⁴¹ In 2007, the Defense Department announced a grant for the sale of military aircrafts, equipment, and services. In addition, after the U.S.-Morocco FTA took effect in 2006, the United States has increased the aid to further assist its ally toward economic progress, fighting poverty, and democratization. To this effect, a five-year grant to Morocco in the amount of US\$697.5 million was approved by the Millenium Challenge Corporation Board in August 2007.⁴² This is consistent with a previously made promise by the head of the USTR Robert Zoellick that the United States plans to provide ongoing development assistance and trade-related technical assistance to enable Morocco to fulfill the terms and commitments that are a part of the FTA.⁴³

Conclusion

In order to analyze the effects of U.S. foreign policy on democratization in Morocco, it is essential to first understand the theoretical foundations that explain the superpower's policies in the overall MENA region. Brumberg's distinction between political liberalization and democratization, along with Perry's dichotomous view of Washington's rhetoric versus the reality regarding democracy promotion, serve as analytical tools for this case study of Morocco.

⁴¹ Zoubir, *American Policy in the Maghreb*, 4.

⁴² Migdalovitz, *Morocco: Current Issues* (2010), 9.

⁴³ Galal and Lawrence, *Egypt-US and Morocco-US Free Trade Agreements*, 20.

Next, an overview of the evolution of relations and interests between the United States and Morocco is rather telling of the importance of the latter's stability to the superpower. While Egypt and Jordan have served as key Arab allies in the Middle East, in the Maghreb, it is Morocco that occupies this unique position vis-à-vis the United States. It is noteworthy that since the end of the Cold War as well as the crisis in Algeria, the United States has also improved relations and developed significant security cooperation with this neighbor of Morocco. However, due to its long history of persistent pro-American leanings, Morocco has not only maintained its special relationship with the United States, but has also now become a major non-NATO ally.

As a result of Morocco's unique strategic value to the United States, the two countries have entered into an FTA. These developments have qualified Morocco for increased assistance from the United States on the economic front. In addition, Morocco has served as an important ally in the American war against terrorism. As a result, the North African kingdom enjoys substantial increases in military and security assistance from the United States. This alliance has also led to a tempered U.S. policy regarding the conflict in Western Sahara, one that is not unfavorable to Morocco.

CHAPTER 2

U.S. DEMOCRACY PROMOTION IN MOROCCO

Introduction

With reference to democratization in Morocco, U.S. officials often evoke two main ideas that motivate the superpower's promotion efforts.⁴⁴ First, by facilitating the prosperity and peace that would result from democratization in this accessible state at the crossroads of the MENA and Europe, the United States might win the goodwill of populations in the Arab core. This might lead to a desirable ripple effect of other states in the region welcoming U.S. policies that call for political and especially economic reforms. Second is the realization that the security of the West is very much tied to the stability and peace in the MENA, which democracy is thought to bring. With respect to Morocco, NATO has repeatedly informed the United States that Western Europe cannot realize full security as long as there is discontent among the population of its southern neighbor. Similar concerns were expressed in the United States in the 1990's by various high-ranking officials including former Secretary of State Madeleine Albright.⁴⁵

Democracy promotion became a core principle of U.S. foreign policy during the term of

⁴⁴ The term "democratization" is used by U.S. policymakers to refer to a broad range of political liberalization, with the assumption that liberalization is a phase in the transition to democracy. It should be noted that U.S. democracy assistance therefore targets political liberalization in general and is not exclusively aimed at what Robert A. Dahl or Joseph Schumpeter identify as necessary conditions for democracy (see notes 1 and 2).

⁴⁵ Daniela Huber, "Democracy Assistance in the Middle East and North Africa: A Comparison of US and EU Policies," in *Mediterranean Politics*, 13, no.1 (2008), 43.

President Clinton. However, it is the jolt of the September 11th attacks that brought the issue to the forefront as highly urgent and critical to U.S. and Western security, making it a top rhetoric in U.S-MENA relations. Although this rhetoric on democratization is filled with conflicts of interests for the United States, Morocco has emerged as one of the high-priority targets of this U.S. policy. In this chapter, I explore in detail the extent of the U.S. effort, the approach, and the specific sectors in Morocco that are targeted for this purpose.

Methods of Democracy Promotion

Before delving into the facts and figures pertaining to U.S. policy on Morocco, there needs to be an understanding of what is meant by democracy promotion as it comes in a variety of forms. It could entail a number of direct or indirect measures to induce reforms in the targeted country. Coercive measures like military action, the metaphorical carrot and stick method, democracy assistance such as aid, and economic or political incentives, are examples of direct means. Indirect means include economic policies that are accompanied by conditionality binding the recipient in an implicit compact, and economic or social policies that affect the bottom layers of society that in turn would exert upward pressure for democratization. With respect to Morocco, the U.S. policy is a combination of measures such as democracy assistance, incentives, social and economic policies including those with some conditionality. Therefore, democracy promotion is defined here as all assistance that is intended to effect in democratic reforms in state institutions, as well as aid and policies that are intended to indirectly facilitate democratic progression.

At the state level in Morocco, the United States pursues a course of bilateral diplomacy where U.S. officials engage and support the Moroccan government in reform initiatives. These

include improvements to parliamentary processes, the electoral system, and to some degree, the judicial system. Apart from these direct measures, there are U.S.-led programs involving the Moroccan government to address economic issues that elevate the unemployment level, poverty, and consequently the vulnerability of some pockets of society to radicalization out of hopelessness. Other initiatives have engaged Moroccan political parties to improve their structural and functional aspects. In addition to the institutional level, U.S. programs have been heavily involved in building a strong civil society by empowering various segments of Moroccan society. It is believed in Washington that strengthening the social platform and nurturing the society's associational capabilities are key necessities for improving local governance and the political progress of a nation. In the following sections, I examine the magnitude and extent of the U.S. democracy promotion strategy in Morocco, which encompasses programs targeting society and state at various levels. Whether or not this strategy is really aimed at bringing a full-fledge democracy in Morocco is a question that will be answered based on the analysis in the subsequent chapters of this thesis.

The Promoters & the Targets

What is certain is that U.S. assistance goes toward a multitude of elements in Morocco's social, political and economic spheres to facilitate reforms and liberalization. The funding for this is channeled through the Middle East Partnership Initiative (MEPI), United States Agency for International Development (USAID), and the State Department's Bureau of Democracy, Human Rights, and Labor (DRL.) The MEPI funds target political parties, the judicial sector,

grassroots and local organizations, women's training, and entrepreneurship programs.⁴⁶

USAID's democracy and governance funds have been invested in decentralization of power, support for local government, reforms in the Moroccan Parliament, and national budget planning systems. In addition, USAID has heavily focused on creating programs to uplift citizens and prime them for integration into the political and economic systems of Morocco. Some assistance projects however cannot be strictly classified as belonging to MEPI or USAID, because efforts might be merged. Moreover, USAID provides an institutional umbrella in Morocco, and most MEPI projects are administered by the organization. This does not however take away from MEPI's own set of priorities and goals according to which projects are designed.

Strengthening the Social Platform

The U.S. assistance program in Morocco places a special emphasis on the demand-side of the equation, or what officials in the Bush administration have described as a bottom-up approach to promoting democracy. In other words, in addition to state level reforms, the policy is also concerned with improving social components that would become an integral part of a more pluralistic political system. For this purpose, issues such as access to education, women's status, poverty, unemployment, and at-risk underprivileged youth are addressed. U.S. policymakers purport that tackling these issues is the first step toward building a strong civil society that can either make or break a democratic system. Reports published by the Congressional Research Service (CRS) frequently reiterate the belief that democratic units

⁴⁶ Haim Malka and Jon B. Alterman, *Arab Reform and Foreign Aid: Lessons from Morocco* (Washington, DC: The CSIS Press, 2006).

cannot thrive at the local or national level if the subjects within them are too ill-equipped to uphold it.

The notion of a strong civil society being crucial for establishing democracy has been prevalent among scholars as well as policymakers, although the extent of its importance has been highly debated among the latter. Augustus Richard Norton for example has stated that the development of a strong civil society is a vital step to build a freer Middle East. Without it, the chances of sustainable democracy are much lower.⁴⁷ Even scholars like Vickie Langohr and Thomas Carothers who have been more critical of its value have agreed that a vibrant civil society that is geared toward the right causes is a building block of pluralism.^{48,49} Both Carothers and Langohr have however identified that too much focus on this social component may be futile because it is not sufficient in itself to bring democracy to a country. U.S. policymakers have seemed much more convinced of the returns of civil society than political scientists. In a 2010 address in Krakow, Poland, Secretary of State Hillary Clinton stressed that focusing on civil society is a core value of the U.S. democracy promotion strategy. She added that throughout history, non-governmental organizations and associations have been the instrumental in upholding as well as improving democracy in the United States.⁵⁰ This ideology is strongly reflected in U.S. efforts in Morocco which include a plethora of programs targeting the Moroccan society.

⁴⁷ Augustus Norton, "The Future of Civil Society in the Middle East," in *The Middle East Journal*, 47, no.2 (1993), 220.

⁴⁸ Thomas Carothers, "Think Again: Civil Society," in *Foreign Policy*: (1999-2000).

⁴⁹ Vickie Langohr, "Too Much Civil Society, Too Little Politics: Egypt and Liberalizing Arab Regimes," in *Comparative Politics*, 36, no.2 (2004).

⁵⁰ U.S. Department of State. "Civil Society: Supporting Democracy in the 21st Century." July 3, 2010. Speech by Secretary of State Hillary Rodham Clinton. <http://www.state.gov/secretary/rm/2010/07/143952.htm>.

Integration of the Disenfranchised

One of the key issues in Morocco that might obstruct democratic progress is the population distribution. Nearly a half of all resident Moroccans are within thirty years of age.⁵¹ Yet this population is mostly isolated from the political processes of the country. This statistic becomes particularly problematic and challenging in the poor sectors of society. Lack of access to formal education deprives these citizens of the opportunities to participate in the local political process or influence decision making. The U.S. government has partnered with the government of Morocco to design programs to address the marginalization of these youth. Within the last decade, the number of underprivileged youth has been on the rise, especially young males who are crossing over from marginalization to disaffection. Having no meaningful place in public or civil society institutions and no hope in the current political system, they have become a pool of easy recruits for radical Islamist groups. The two cases of terrorist attacks in the Casablanca region in 2003 and 2007 attest to this, as the bombings were carried out by youth from this sector. To help the Moroccan government uplift this disaffected group and positively engage them in society, USAID provides assistance to the Ministry of Education. From this assistance, three programs emerged between 2004 and 2008 that provide improved education.⁵² The largest share from the U.S. funding for education is allocated for restructuring high school programs to suit the demands of the market place. These include employable skills targeted toward particular industries such as agricultural business, tourism, and other vocational sectors. In 2005, more than \$7 million was invested in selecting target schools, consulting with business sectors, creating programs to match business needs, and providing teacher training. In addition, the same

⁵¹ USAID/Morocco Assistance Objectives, <http://transition.usaid.gov/ma/policy/Morocco-assistance.doc>.

⁵² Advancing Learning and Employability for a Better Future (ALEF), The Moroccan Education for Employment Alliance (MEEA), and Civic Education. Available online at www.usaid.gov.

year, a similar amount was invested in basic education improvement. According to the updated education assistance strategy of 2009, USAID has increased funds to target youth who do not have the means for formal education, as well as to enhance the education of youth who are already enrolled.

As a complementary initiative by the U.S. government, the Millennium Challenge Corporation (MCC) works to combat unemployment and poverty in Morocco. The five-year compact with Morocco (the first and only MENA country to have qualified for MCC other than Jordan) was signed in 2007, for nearly \$700 million. Much of this aid is committed for programs alleviating unemployment and poverty, and to uplift disenfranchised rural communities. As a measure against unemployment, the Enterprise Support Project facilitates the Moroccan government's training initiatives encouraging a greater entrepreneurial culture, especially among young university graduates. Nearly \$25 million out of a projected \$33.8 million is committed toward this project which includes measuring the actual impact made by the initiative, and helping the government to better manage this program.⁵³

The fundamental goal of the U.S. government in such social projects is to harness the Moroccan society's involvement in the political activity of the country. For this, USAID has guided the Moroccan Civic Education Center in implementing special education programs on the principles of democracy. Students are taught to identify problems or needs in their local community, research existing policies, examine solution options, construct proposals for policy action, and present and negotiate with their local authorities. In addition, training is also provided

⁵³ Millennium Challenge Corporation. "Quarterly Status Report: Morocco Compact." September 2011. <http://www.mcc.gov/documents/reports/qsr-2010002031806-morocco.pdf>.

to local educators in order to expand the eventual outreach of this program. Between 2004 and 2008, several hundred secondary schools across Morocco were included in this initiative.⁵⁴

Integration of Women

In 2003 the Moroccan government made progressive reforms to the Family Code laws called the Moudawana, particularly in areas that affect women's rights. However, its implementation continues to suffer due to local judges who are under-trained in these new laws, compounded by rural women's lack of knowledge on the matter mainly due to illiteracy. USAID, partnered with Morocco's State Secretariat for Literacy and Non-formal Education, introduced an innovative "bridge" program to educate women.⁵⁵ This includes reading, writing, and basic Arabic which is different from Morocco's native tongues (Derija and Tamazight). The program is aimed to enable women to read and comprehend basic legal rights, which are documented in Arabic and French. Therefore it includes instruction of the new Family Code educating them on their legal socioeconomic rights especially concerning marriage and divorce. As of 2009, this program has experienced over 90% retention rates (out of 400 women) in a pilot group spanning sixteen provinces. This again is in line with the U.S. policy to better equip the currently disenfranchised segments of Moroccan society for participation in democratic processes.

⁵⁴ USAID/Morocco. "Advancing Learning and Employability for a Better Future," http://www1.usaid.gov/ma/programs/ed_activities.html.

⁵⁵ "A Bridge to Reading: New Training Methods Boost Women's Literacy." Available online at www.usaid.gov.

Involving the Civil Society

U.S. agencies work extensively with the Moroccan civil society, in order to promote its input and influence in decision making at the local and national levels. One prominent area has been USAID's Parliamentary Support Project that has created avenues for citizens to engage in the political process. In 2007, the team organized debates over the Internet on democracy issues, hosted by TANMIA—Morocco's premier Civil Society Organizations online network.⁵⁶ This event was timed to coincide with the parliamentary debates taking place on similar issues. Among the reforms addressed in these debates, were the ratification of the International Convention Against Corruption and increasing public access to governmental data and information. The other main area of focus was decentralization, calling for more executive powers to be devolved to locally elected officials. This USAID project enabled TANMIA to post on the Internet, important Moroccan legal resources including the Constitution, and the internal rules for both parliamentary houses. This online resource was tapped into by several thousands of users within the first three months.⁵⁷

As a consequence of the USAID-TANMIA initiative, sixty seven civil society organizations formed coalitions to negotiate with the parliament on a wide variety of issues including access to governmental information and an open budget. Subsequently, the USAID-Morocco Parliamentary Support Project organized a conference along with the national Budget Analysis Office, on the parliamentary oversight of the national budget. This was an initiative for an inclusive approach that would engage citizens in the discussion of the national budget cycle.

⁵⁶ Le Portail Tanmia.ma, www.tanmia.ma.

⁵⁷ USAID/Morocco. "Democracy & Governance." Last updated June 16, 2009. http://transition.usaid.gov/ma/programs/dg_overview.html.

It encompassed Moroccan civil society organizations along with selected budget experts, and representatives from various factions of the national as well as local governments.

According to the Morocco Country Assistance Strategy of 2009, the U.S. government has further increased its emphasis on strengthening the country's civil society. It is a five-year strategy that is geared toward increasing pluralism in the government's functioning. There are projects to expand the scope and capacity of civil society to advocate more effectively with the government, and ultimately influence policy making. This expanded outreach provides linkage with reforms initiated in the judicial sector during this period. American agencies have guided the participation of civil society in these legal reforms, by way of providing legal analysis, technical support, advocacy for citizen concerns, and in calling for increased accountability of the branch.

It is evident from the 2009-2013 U.S. democracy assistance strategy for Morocco that policymakers continue to follow the Bush administration's bottom-up approach. Scholars have rightly observed that there is a tendency among U.S. democracy promotion programs to focus heavily on people, rather than placing all the eggs in the institutional basket.⁵⁸ That said, programs targeting political parties, governmental institutions, and the Makhzen are equally if not more important data for the current analysis, because ultimately these are the entities directly making political reform.

Political Parties

Somewhere between the people and their civil societies on the one side, and the state institutions on the other, lie political parties. In theory, they form an interface through which

⁵⁸ Malka and Alterman, *Arab Reform and Foreign Aid*, 63.

citizens would make their needs heard, which in turn would translate these needs to the policy making arena and influence decisions. But in actuality, this process is not nearly as feasible or clear-cut in states that are newly transforming into democracies or only partially as in Morocco's case.⁵⁹ One of the main reasons for this is the lack of strong party structures and inefficient or even negative organizational tendencies. For example, parties in Morocco for the most part have been internally elitist with power concentrated among a few. Non-transparent and non-diversified sources of party funding are another weakness. In addition, most of Morocco's more than thirty parties lack a clear and a consistent policy-profile which prevents them from building a solid membership base. As a result, historically speaking, parties in Morocco have not provided the linkage between citizens and the state, as should be their primary role. From the experience of Western countries, organized parties well-rooted in society have been essential in the evolution and functioning of democracies. With this reasoning, U.S. promotion of democracy in Morocco includes what appears to be impressive assistance to political parties. The scale of activities for party assistance in Morocco clearly indicates its importance among donors.⁶⁰

There are two main quasi-governmental U.S. organizations that carry out the implementation of party assistance programs—the National Democratic Institute for International Affairs (NDI) and the International Republican Institute (IRI). Their main goals are strengthening internal structures of individual parties, improving their capacity to develop policy positions that are politically viable, and establishing stronger interactive channels with voters. In

⁵⁹ Nicole Bolleyer and Lise Storm, "Problems of party assistance in hybrid regimes: the case of Morocco," in *Democratization*, 17, no.6 (2010), 1205.

⁶⁰ *Ibid.*

addition the two organizations also work to strengthen the overall party system as a collective political entity. Following is a detailed analysis of U.S. led activities in this realm.

The Islamist Dilemma

The American providers of party-assistance in Morocco have typically invited the six largest parties, ranging across the entire ideological spectrum, to participate in their activities. The activities have directly corresponded to the three broad goals listed above. However, while selecting the parties to work with, U.S. policymakers have experienced a fundamental dilemma—to include or to exclude Islamist parties.

There are two main Islamist organizations in Morocco, one of them a political party and the other designated as a charity organization. The Justice and Development Party (known by its French acronym PJD) is a non-revolutionary Islamist party that rose to prominence by gaining seats in the 1997 parliamentary elections and subsequently in 2002. In conformance with the traditional Moroccan view of the King as the “Commander of the Faithful”,⁶¹ the party does not challenge the regime’s authority as such. The other group, known as Justice and Charity (JCO) is only recognized as a charity organization in spite of its very loud discourse on Moroccan politics. One seemingly obvious reason for its not obtaining “party” status is its rejection of the monarchy’s legitimacy. However, this reason is perhaps only a corollary to the main cause of its exclusion—its own refusal to participate in Moroccan politics due to its view that the entire political system is corrupt.⁶² For this section of the current study, it is therefore the PJD that is

⁶¹ In Morocco, the King’s authority is derived from his dynasty’s claimed descent from Muhammad, the prophet of Islam.

⁶² Ottaway and Riley, *Morocco*, 16.

more relevant, because it is an official political party, hence a subject of debate in the party-assistance strategy of U.S. democracy promotion.

Returning to the dilemma faced in Washington, the PJD has suffered from a trust deficit among U.S. policymakers simply because of its being an Islamist group. This is likely rooted in the fundamental Western view of non-secularism as counter-democratic. According to the congressional research body, there have been contradicting projections of the PJD's true character. Some have posited that due to its religious self-identification, it is bound to work toward turning Morocco into an Islamic state, where Sharia or Islamic Law would be the primary basis for legislation. They fear that U.S. involvement with this party might empower it and might lead to an outcome like the 2006 Palestinian Authority election, which was won by Hamas. Others have interpreted PJD's principles as being deliberately more centrist because its leaders generally try to strike a balance between opposition to the government on some issues and willingness to work with the state on most other issues. The party's most vocal criticisms of the government however, have been on the grounds of corruption and nepotism which are evidently secular concerns.

One comforting signal to U.S. policymakers has been the evolution of PJD's stance regarding the reforms made to the Moroccan Family Code, the Moudawana. There was initially wide opposition from within the Islamist pockets of Morocco, viewing the reforms as a sign of Western imperial influence. This opposition was eventually overcome by the king in 2004 when he pushed through the new laws. Although the monarch claimed to operate within the confines of Islamic law, these reforms were a major deviation from the mainstream interpretations of Sharia elsewhere in the broader MENA. But this event was not nearly as groundbreaking as PJD's acceptance of this revision which ordained women with rights that would be unimaginable

to Islamist organizations across the world.⁶³ Reflecting on this progressive position in 2005, the party's spokespeople have commented that, because the PJD is committed to Islamic as well as democratic principles it accepts this revision to the family code, as it was democratically enacted. To re-iterate the party's commitment to democracy Vice-Secretary Abdelah Baha even went so far as to liken the party to the American evangelicals, stating that PJD's Islam and democracy can go together just as Christianity and democracy.

It is not only U.S. policymakers who have faced a dilemma regarding the party-assistance strategy. The party too seems to have undergone much internal contemplation over what exactly it stands for and how it should receive U.S. policy in Morocco. On the outset, the party was formed by a conglomeration of several Islamist groups which has made its membership diverse across the ideological spectrum. As a result, the party has had to maintain a careful balancing act so as to maintain its appeal to both ends of this spectrum. The significance here to U.S. policymakers is that, as they have pondered over this Islamist question this party has displayed mixed signals. Just when reports in Congress were cautioning against PJD's possible fundamentalist agenda, the party took stances hinting that it is after all a political player that is pragmatic and prone to adapting to the demands of politics as any secular party. In the early 2000's the PJD rejected meeting any officials who were connected to Washington. However, by 2005 this position had evolved into a willingness to work with U.S. representatives, although still maintaining its rhetoric of opposition to the invasion of Iraq.

While PJD is an official political party, it also has affiliations with organizations that make up its religious wing. However, what is also comforting to the United States is that the

⁶³ Amr Hamzawy, *The 2007 Moroccan Parliamentary Elections: Results and Implications*, Carnegie Endowment for International Peace: Middle East Program, September 11, 2007, http://www.carnegieendowment.org/files/moroccan_parliamentary_elections_final.pdf.

party maintains an agreeable degree of separation of its politics from its religious body. It also holds that there is no need for further Islamization of the state or society as Morocco is already a Muslim country. What the PJD insists on however, is defending the Islamic identity and not crossing that line in legislation. Exactly what this means for the long run is quite unclear. Nonetheless, U.S. policymakers have been welcoming of the party's centrist positions, which to the West appears far more moderate compared to Islamist movements in other countries.

Perhaps the most significant factor to the United States is that the PJD does not call into question the political foundations of the kingdom. Unlike the JCO, the party does not seek to dismantle the monarchy, neither in its policies nor rhetoric. As a result, in spite of its being the opposition party, the palace has officially allowed the party to grow and stay active in the political system. The palace's decision was also calculated by the fact that some 45% of Morocco's constituency supports the PJD, which indicates that suppressing it might be suicidal like the Algerian experience in the previous decade. On the other hand, legitimizing and institutionalizing the party would convert it into "state Islam", a trick that was proven successful by King Hassan II.⁶⁴ To the U.S. policymakers, this relationship between the palace and the PJD boosts their confidence in the king's capacity to keep the party in check. This, enhanced by the party's own pragmatic moves, and its change of stance vis-à-vis U.S. democracy promoters, has served as a tipping point in Washington's dilemma. Beginning mid-2000's, the United States has pursued an inclusivist policy with the PJD.

In March and May 2006, both the PJD and the U.S. State Department's International Visitor's Program sponsored mutual visits to expand dialogue and coordinate democracy promotion efforts in the future. While the United States is careful in not over-emphasizing its

⁶⁴ See chapter 1 for detailed explanation.

involvement with the PJD, there have been several U.S. sponsored programs in which the party has been an active participant. Within the year 2006, the relationship between the two entities became “fairly good” according to scholars.⁶⁵ The party’s members who are seemingly ambitious have taken full advantage of the training opportunities and technical support offered to them by the NDI and the IRI programs. The party has occasionally boycotted events directly sponsored by the U.S. government, and continues to voice its opposition to U.S. policy in Iraq. But such rhetoric does not constitute to its exclusion by U.S. organizations. Moreover, including the PJD also helps the United States contradict its image of being categorically opposed to Islamic groups.

The Secular Parties

Among the numerous secular parties, there have been two prominent ones over the last few decades—the Istiqlal party and the Union Socialiste des Forces Populaires (USFP). Although these two groups have been important players in Moroccan politics with considerable following since the country’s independence, they have become passive and have lacked a clear initiative in the recent years. Like the other secular parties in Morocco, they are highly fragmented. The vigor and the drive with which the PJD has operated over the last decade are not visible in these parties. This is not to say that the two main parties have lost their mass appeal, but they have lacked the leadership to take effective strides and increase their following. On the other hand, the Islamists do exactly that and have been increasingly successful. Many U.S. government officials have insisted that secular parties should be strengthened and propped up as non-Islamist democratic alternatives to Moroccans. It should be noted however that the

⁶⁵ Ottaway and Riley, *Morocco*, 19.

secular parties of Morocco are not militant secularists who demand the removal of every hint of religion from the public space as seen in France's model. They do recognize the overarching Islamic nature of the country and the king's role as its spiritual head. Nonetheless due to their otherwise secular political ideology and no strong radically inspired anti-U.S. positions, one could argue that U.S. party assistance is by default aimed at these groups, and that the PJD is just a by-product recipient. In fact, including the PJD has resulted in some backlashes from the other parties who fear the strengthening of an Islamist group in Morocco.

U.S. Support for Parties

One of the main areas of focus in U.S. party assistance has been the development of policy positions. In the past in Moroccan parliamentary elections, it was often individuals who contested for elections with less emphasis on the parties that they belonged to. As a result, the party base has remained weak and somewhat fluid. It has not been uncommon for a candidate to switch parties between one election and the next. The parties' policy profiles too have suffered due to the lack of strong affiliations between the parties and the leading individuals. Such an environment also leaves room for policy-hopping both at the individual member level and at the party level. As a result most parties have lacked the ability to harness and more importantly maintain loyal support in the constituency. In addition, low voter-turnouts in elections have proven that there is a lack of confidence or faith in the parties and their political stances. To address these issues, USAID has commissioned NDI and IRI to hold training programs to improve the capacity of parties to develop thorough and feasible policy stances, and then reach out to the voters in a more effective manner. Interestingly, the one party that has been relatively free of the problems mentioned here is the PJD, which has maintained a much more coherent

policy portfolio and an active communication channel with voters. Its leaders have nevertheless availed the opportunities for further development offered by U.S. led programs and other international efforts.

Among the U.S. NGO's involved, the NDI and IRI are the primary actors in this area. Their activities are part of a broader international effort of which the United Nations Development Program is a key representative. Together these organizations have implemented the following measures to improve individual parties as well as the party system as a whole:

- Regulating the individual party's internal structure and establishing democratic decision-making practices such as leadership selection
- Regulating the party's finance, assuring transparency and diversification of party funding
- Professionalizing party office-holders to increase law-making competence
- Training party leaders to build stronger linkages with the constituency
- Encouraging increased inter-organizational ties such as with unions
- Supporting professional recruitment for membership
- Facilitating dialogues with other parties to provide inter-organizational learning
- Improving a party's media communication to better inform citizens of its policies
- Implementing grassroots initiatives to engage typically marginalized groups such as youth, women, and the poor

While there is an ongoing effort to support the improvements mentioned above, the peak of U.S. attention to political parties seems to occur during the period leading up to elections.

Preceding the 2007 elections, the NDI organized a conference entitled "Manage to Win:

Planning and Organizing a National Election Campaign.”⁶⁶ The special focus of the forum was developing a detailed organizational strategy, a clear message, and a centralized national campaign. Training was provided for creating a national campaign management team that would design, coordinate and implement all the electoral activities of the parties.

During election years, U.S. agencies have also held several one-on-one meetings series with four of the most prominent (secular) parties. Strangely, the Istiqlal has not been listed as one of them, although it ended up securing maximum seats in the 2007 elections surpassing the projected winner—PJD. Regardless, according to a USAID Democracy and Governance report, much has been done to reinforce parties’ organizational components and structures, with an emphasis on a strong national electoral campaign.⁶⁷ The report also informs that, resulting from these U.S. led efforts the four parties have adopted the use of national campaign management teams to run their campaigns. Consequently they have developed improved and more structured messages to deliver to citizens. The only party that has been described as already having such structures in place is again the PJD, which went on to win the 2011 elections⁶⁸ with a wide margin over the 2007 winner, the Istiqlal.

The U.S. policy regarding political parties extends to the local levels as well. The IRI has employed similar party-assistance measures at the regional and local levels as at the national levels. The primary goals identified at the top such as strengthening party structures and improving internal democracy and communication are applied also in the local context. To summarize, the data makes it evident that the health of the party system is given much

⁶⁶ USAID/Morocco, “Democracy & Governance.” Last updated June 16, 2009.
http://transition.usaid.gov/ma/programs/dg_overview.html.

⁶⁷ Ibid.

⁶⁸ As a reaction to the February 20th Youth Movement calling for greater democracy and better representation, the King moved forward the 2012 Parliamentary elections, held instead on November 25th, 2011.

importance, at least in the Moroccan case. It has been observed by scholars that Morocco seems to be a highly favored target for U.S. party-assistance.⁶⁹

Targeting the State

Apart from efforts to strengthen the non-state actors such as civil society and political parties, U.S. democracy promotion also encompasses the state, up to a certain level. The main institutions or functions of the state to be touched are the Parliament, elections, and the judicial branch. USAID and other bodies have encouraged and supported reforms in these legs of the state, although with caution so as to not disturb the Makhzen too much.

Elections

The United States agencies have provided assistance to improve what they regard as the hallmark of democracies—the election process. One of the high profile activities has been opinion polling undertaken by the IRI prior to past parliamentary elections. In addition the NDI too has conducted a large number of focus groups as part of a particular opinion polling technique, to gauge the Moroccan public's inclinations.⁷⁰ USAID's Parliamentary Support Project facilitated pre-election online debates in 2007 bringing in the media community into the platform. One of the focal points in this project was the anti-corruption forum. As a result of the discussions in this forum the media vocalized its call for candidates to be required to declare their property and financial assets prior to running for Parliamentary elections. The same was demanded of candidates in local elections.

⁶⁹ Bolleyer and Storm, *Problems of Party Assistance in Hybrid Regimes*, 1210.

⁷⁰ Anna Khakee, "Pragmatism Rather than Backlash: Moroccan Perceptions of Western Democracy Promotion," in *Euromesco* (2008), 73.

The NDI has also headed a large team for an international election observation mission to Morocco. During the 2007 Parliamentary election this team along with an election assessment team, were delegated to ensure the quality, efficiency, transparency and professionalism of the process. The fifty members of this delegation were comprised of legislators, former government ministers, ambassadors, as well as region specialists and experts in elections. Moroccan polling stations were visited and observed by the delegates. Resulting in part from this effort, these elections were found by the teams to have been the most transparent and fair elections in the history of Morocco, as of 2007. The main drawback identified was the low voter turnout, and recommendations were made to improve it. The NDI has actively worked with Moroccan civil society organizations to push for higher voter participation, which incidentally did occur in the 2011 parliamentary elections though it was a modest improvement.⁷¹

In addition to the national level, the U.S. government has also focused on improving regional and municipal elections. As part of its policy of promoting reform among the inner layers of society, U.S. assistance is directed toward increasing the transparency, accountability, and performance of local representational bodies. As per the 2009-2013 Morocco Country Assistance Strategy, USAID has increased its efforts to engage the public in local elections and decision-making.

Parliament

U.S. involvement with the Moroccan Parliament has been driven by three primary concerns. First, the assisting organizations work to improve the fairness of the system. That is

⁷¹ Al Arabiya with Agencies. November 26, 2011. "Morocco voter turnout 45%, up from 2007 polls; voting tests king's reform drive." Al Arabiya News. <http://www.alarabiya.net/articles/2011/11/26/179198.html>. The voter turnout in the 2002 Moroccan parliamentary elections was 37%, and went up to 45% during the 2011 elections.

to say, ensuring there is transparency, lack of corruption, and true representation of the people. Secondly, U.S. agencies support the parliament in enacting the kind of legislation that delivers the promised benefits to the constituencies. Thirdly, the U.S. government promotes reforms that would enhance the role of the parliament in the state's functioning. The emphasis seems to be on addressing the public's grievances and nurturing a more inclusive legislative environment that does not ignore people's needs.

Between October 2004 and June 2008, the Center for International Development, an entity belonging to the State University of New York implemented a project to improve the capabilities of the Moroccan Parliament. This was a three-year program that provided technical assistance and training. The project was designed to specifically strengthen three function areas of the Parliament: 1) its capacity to oversee public finances; 2) reviewing legislation and policy; and 3) engaging in dialogue with citizens and fostering increased public participation in parliamentary decision-making processes.⁷²

In 2008, USAID's Morocco Parliament Support Project partnered with the Parliament's Budget Analysis Office (BAB) to organize a large scale conference on parliamentary oversight of the national budget involving a multitude of entities. It consisted of key representatives of diverse levels of the Moroccan government, selected budget experts, the Arab Parliamentary Union,⁷³ and Moroccan civil society organizations. One of the key goals to have emerged from this initiative is to pursue substantial reforms in the national government that would expand the role of the parliament in the national budget cycle. This would extend to the total evaluation of the annual budget before it is officially adopted by the government. The BAB itself serves as an

⁷² USAID, *Democracy & Governance*.

⁷³ The Arab Inter-parliamentary Union is an organization composed of parliamentary groups representing twenty-two Arab Parliaments.

interface between the members of parliament and the executive branch. In this conference, the upper house announced that the total budget for BAB would be doubled for the fiscal year 2009. All in all, this initiative was a multi-pronged effort to furbish a more inclusive approach in the national budget process, where the parliament plays a bigger role and the citizens are also engaged in the discussions.

In a measure to increase the transparency of the government, USAID has provided technical support and equipment that puts the parliament “on the record.”⁷⁴ According to the agency’s Democracy and Governance branch, the details of parliamentary discussions are critical data that should be easily available to journalists, civil society, citizens, as well as members of parliament, so that these groups can be involved in policy debates and influence decision making. However as of 2006, the Moroccan legislature had fallen three years behind in publishing this information. This was due to outdated and labor-intensive transcription methods as well as cumbersome internal regulations that slowed the process even more. USAID’s Parliament Support Project has since resolved this problem by providing technical and human resources to get caught-up on the backlog. But more importantly, the U.S. agency has provided the Moroccan parliament with new technology that transcribes the parliamentary sessions in real time. As a result, the process has become more transparent, giving citizens timely access to the debates, thus fostering a more democratic culture.

Local Governance

Democracy promotion activities at the local government level are carried out by USAID’s Morocco Local Government Project (LGP). Between 2005 and 2008, the agency

⁷⁴ USAID, *Democracy & Governance*.

contracted the Research Triangle Institute (RTI)⁷⁵ to implement a three-year program of technical assistance and training in order to improve the democratic functions of several regional and local governmental bodies. Among those included in the program, were the Ministry of Interior, Ministry of Housing and Urban Development, and the governments of seven provinces and twenty-six communes.⁷⁶ In addition, in the field itself, the LGP maintains close working relations with the elected officials of more than ten partner cities across three major regions. It works to increasingly connect the citizens and these officials in the decision-making process.⁷⁷ In addition, USAID has supported the Casablanca city council to initiate a series of forums involving public, civil society, and elected officials to discuss local governance issues in this largest and most populous city of Morocco.

Judicial Assistance

On the Moroccan judicial front, the U.S. government provides assistance and technical training through several channels. The Department of State, the MEPI, and USAID are among the bigger players in this area, while there have been other smaller organizations backed by the United States that have also carried out reform initiatives.

One high-priority reform area has been the laws concerning corruption at various levels of the criminal justice system.⁷⁸ U.S. support has mobilized legal associations that have been engaged in a constructive dialogue with the Moroccan government, pushing for necessary

⁷⁵ RTI is an independent, nonprofit institute that provides research, development, and technical services to government and commercial clients worldwide. Source: http://www.rti.org/page.cfm/About_RTI.

⁷⁶ RTI International. "Communities Powering Moroccan Government." http://www.rti.org/brochures/morocco_local_governance_program.pdf. RTI 5933 1208.

⁷⁷ USAID, *Democracy & Governance*.

⁷⁸ U.S. Library of Congress, Congressional Research Service. *Morocco: Current Issues*, by Alexis Arieff. CRS Report RS21579. Washington DC: Office of Congressional Information and Publishing, December 20, 2011, 24.

judicial reforms. Purportedly because of this effort, the government has developed a national anticorruption strategy—a set of revised legal procedures. In addition it has established a public awareness campaign and an anticorruption hotline. The U.S. government has also funded the creation of three pilot public anticorruption assistance centers in Morocco.⁷⁹

The U.S. Department of State and MEPI implemented a Legal and Judicial Development Program from 2005 to 2009 to assist the Moroccan Ministry of Justice (MOJ) with legal and judicial development such as the drafting of a judicial ethics charter which was adopted in March of 2009.⁸⁰ Also in 2009, these U.S. entities funded and organized a training program for Moroccan judicial authorities on the reformed laws pertaining to women’s socioeconomic rights. In the past, undertrained judiciaries have been an obstacle in the proper application of these laws.

Another program—initiated by the U.S. Embassy, implemented by USAID and the U.S. Bureau of International Narcotics and Law Enforcement Affairs (INL)—has focused on developing alternative sentencing or pre-trial diversion programs particularly aimed toward at-risk youth who are apprehended for petty criminal behavior or non-violent criminal activity. The reforms recommended here seek to provide positive engagement avenues for these youth. The U.S. democracy promotion program tends to pay special attention to the marginalized youth population because they make up a significant percent of the Moroccan population.

The U.S. government has promoted improvements to the court systems by providing judicial training to Moroccan officials. There have been several issue-specific reform initiatives that have been recommended or supported at all judicial levels in Morocco. But as a

⁷⁹ U.S. Department of State. “Advancing Freedom and Democracy Reports.” May 2010. Bureau of Democracy, Human Rights, and Labor. <http://www.state.gov/j/drl/rls/afdr/2010/nea/129797.htm>.

⁸⁰ USAID. “Morocco Rule of Law Assessment: Final Report.” September 2010. http://pdf.usaid.gov/pdf_docs/PNADT305.pdf.

comprehensive measure for judicial reform, the USAID/Morocco Mission has supported the development of a national reform strategy by the MOJ. While the exact timeline for this project was unclear as of late 2010, USAID officials see a positive sign in the King's recent pronouncements regarding this strategy.⁸¹

Conclusion

In its effort to promote democracy in the MENA, the United States has found Morocco to be the most accessible state. While this policy was hardly prevalent in the previous decades, in the post-9/11 era, the U.S. government has invested extensively in promoting reforms in this North African ally.

U.S. Democracy promotion efforts span over a broad spectrum of the Moroccan society. Scholars have observed, as is also evident from the facts and figures presented in this chapter that U.S. agencies tend to focus heavily on the demand-side, i.e., the citizens. The foundation for this was laid by the Bush Administration's bottom-up approach by which, U.S. agencies have sought to empower various pockets of the marginalized populations of Morocco. This is considered by the policymakers to be a crucial step toward building strong civil societies which are an important component of a democratic political system. For the same reason, U.S. donor organizations foster the involvement of civil societies in the local, regional, as well as national decision making processes.

In addition to the people-side of the equation, U.S. democracy assistance is directed toward strengthening political parties and the party-system as a whole. The Moroccan electoral processes are also targets of U.S. agencies. Elections at the parliamentary level, as well as

⁸¹ Ibid.

regional levels have been monitored and supported by U.S. programs, at times in conjunction with international teams delegated for this purpose.

Finally, U.S. agencies have invested heavily in improving the capabilities of the Moroccan state institutions. Programs have been implemented to strengthen and expand the role of the parliament. Similarly, assistance measures have also been directed toward reforms in the judicial branch. In both these branches, increased transparency and accountability have been recommended and supported by U.S. agencies.

In conclusion, the evidence presented in this chapter illustrates that the United States is extensively involved in Morocco, promoting improved governance and strengthening democratic processes in the country. However, the information examined here does not indicate much U.S. activity targeting the democratization of the highest levels of governance. In the next chapter, the relationship between the United States and the Moroccan monarchy will be discussed and analyzed.

CHAPTER 3

RELATIONSHIP WITH THE REGIME

Introduction

Throughout the historical interplay between Morocco and the West, in every era the United States has had a stake in nurturing a stable and friendly Morocco. For a number of decades it was Cold War politics that dictated U.S. interests and policies. In the 1990's it was Morocco's physical proximity to the Algerian crisis that motivated U.S. policies. In the current decade, the war on terrorism and the rise of militant Islamism throughout the Middle East and North Africa make it crucial for the United States to facilitate stability in Morocco. As in previous decades, this necessitates that the existing regime—the primary pro-U.S. force in the country—remain intact and capable of countering potential threats to its survival. In other words the “stability” sought by the United States has been that of the government. Historically in MENA the U.S. method of ensuring this has been an almost unconditional support for friendly authoritarian regimes. However, the lessons from terrorist attacks over the past decade, especially 9/11, have made the United States question this approach, as experts have said that wide-spread discontent in these countries due to the lack of democracy has produced terrorism as a way of rebellion. While the United States has for this reason adopted the policy of promoting democratization as discussed in the previous chapter, the superpower nonetheless also provides

ample support for the maintenance of the regime. The main avenues of support that have a strengthening effect on the monarchy are the trade agreement, security and military assistance, and the U.S. position regarding Western Sahara.

The Three Main Platforms

FTA: Economic Support for the Regime

The trade agreement between Rabat and Washington has prompted some interesting questions among scholars. It would make more economic sense to spectators for Morocco to enter into an agreement with the EU because as trade theorists put the matter, Western Europe is after all Morocco's "natural" trading partner. During the planning years of the U.S.-Morocco agreement the EU accounted for approximately 60 percent of Morocco's imports and about 75 percent of its exports. France alone accounted for one-fourth of the imports and one-third of the exports. In contrast, the United States had been a relatively minor trading partner. In the early 2000's it constituted only around 5 percent of Moroccan trade and the U.S. foreign investment too had been small. Adding to the special nature of this FTA, there are areas where the United States has shown extra generosity or leniency toward Morocco. For instance, it has looked the other way when it comes to child labor usage, which is expected to rise with the growth of the textile industry—an industry that receives considerable U.S. support as part of the FTA. According to *The Economist*, Morocco has long fallen short of meeting the standards established by UNICEF and International Labor Organization, regardless of which the country receives support from the U.S. for those very industries.⁸² Also, the Moroccan FTA has come with a

⁸² Gregory W. White, "Free Trade as a Strategic Instrument in the War on Terror?: The 2004 US-Moroccan Free Trade Agreement," in *The Middle East Journal*, 59, no.4 (2005), 606.

significant increase in aid from the United States, from \$20 million in 2004 to \$57 million in 2005. What is noteworthy here is that, even though this increase is not officially a part of the agreement, trade agreements in general have not come with such aid enhancements. Gregory W. White points out that, when Mexico for example was harnessed into the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA), there was no accompanying elevation of U.S. aid. It should also be noted that Morocco had already been the recipient of the largest aid package from the United States in the Maghreb.

Considering such unique factors surrounding the U.S.-Morocco FTA, one wonders what has motivated the superpower to enter into the agreement in the first place. The answer is perhaps hidden in a statement made by President Bush, indicating that the agreement is a milestone in strengthening ties with this strong and moderate ally. The “ally” referred to here is doubtless the king and the makhzen. The FTA, when analyzed is a strengthening agent for the monarch and little benefit to the country’s overall economy.

The analysis of Ahmed Galal and Robert Lawrence supports a part of this reasoning, by recognizing that the primary drivers of the trade agreement are in fact political factors.⁸³ Although these scholars agree that the realization of all the perceived political gains for the United States is subject to considerable uncertainty, they have identified a number of desirable effects generally projected by proponents of the FTA. A quick examination of congressional research reports confirms this list. First, Morocco’s reform process might be enhanced as a result of the agreement terms, and its governance and institutions improved. These changes are believed to be stimulants of economic growth. In addition, it is posited that prosperity resulting from a market system could improve political stability. It is also argued by the proponents of the

⁸³ Galal and Lawrence, *Egypt-US and Morocco-US Free Trade Agreements*, 23.

FTA that such economic progress would facilitate the emergence of a full-fledged democracy. What exactly the connection is between the supposed economic progress and democratization remains to be explained at least in the case of Morocco, because the gains are likely to be reaped by only a niche of the population. This point will become evident as the discussion proceeds.

A third and more crucial objective to U.S. policymakers is to strengthen the superpower's connection with Morocco by engaging in increased trade and foreign investment, ultimately leading to heightened cooperation. This cooperation ranges from the security and counter-terrorism arena to the Moroccan regime's position vis-à-vis Israel. It is after all the monarch's willingness to cooperate in such matters that has made Morocco a pillar of U.S. interests in North Africa, and a top recipient of U.S. military aid. The fourth expected outcome of a Moroccan FTA is that overall prosperity would reduce conditions of despair and discontent, the primary contributing factors for youth radicalization in Morocco. What is baffling here is that studies do not particularly indicate that positive economic outcomes of the FTA will be so far reaching.

While these effects are certainly in the interest of the United States, they are not necessarily assured, and are they contingent on a multitude of policies and training that would be required for facilitating such widespread economic progress. In addition, as mentioned above, the trade between the United States and Morocco is so small that it may not even result in the kind of economic progress projected by policymakers. It should also be pointed out that economic liberalization without the necessary preconditions could end up having an adverse effect on the overall welfare of the population. On the other hand, such reforms help certain pockets of the population—the economic and political elite.

This phenomenon has been highlighted by Joseph E. Stiglitz's analysis of globalization and its lopsided effects. Speaking of the International Monetary Fund's (IMF) push for

liberalization in developing nations, Stiglitz has argued that forcing countries to open up to imported products that would compete with those produced locally in vulnerable industries could result in severe adverse effects—both economic and social. Trade liberalization that occurs in the absence of established safety nets in fact exacerbates the unemployment problem, leading to increased poverty. To summarize Stiglitz’s argument, economic liberalization such as that resulting from the FTA has very often failed to induce the promised growth and has contributed to further marginalization of the poor.⁸⁴ Moreover, according to Stiglitz any economic growth caused by such reforms has been confined to the extremely wealthy, especially the top economic tier of society. This in Morocco’s case is the royal family and its close-knit circle. Therefore in order to understand who exactly will enjoy this American induced “economic progress”, it is important to discuss the economic ambit of the king.

Although the full extent of the king’s wealth and holdings is not accurately known, there is enough data revealing that Morocco’s economy is significantly controlled by the royal family, which owns most of the country’s main industries. An example is the nation’s phosphate reserves, the nation’s primary natural resource. Phosphate is a mineral that is vital to a broad array of industries across the world and hence in high demand in developed as well as newly industrializing countries. With nearly 85 percent of the earth’s phosphate reserves under its soil, Morocco has come to be considered the Saudi Arabia of phosphates.⁸⁵ Nearly three-quarters of these reserves are under the ownership of the royal family. King Mohammed VI is the overseer of Office Chérifien des Phosphates (OCP), Morocco’s largest industrial company and also the state-owned monopoly of the nation’s phosphates. In addition, he is also Morocco’s biggest

⁸⁴ Joseph E. Stiglitz, *Globalization and its Discontents*, (New York: W.W. Norton and Company, 2002), 17.

⁸⁵ Bloomberg Businessweek Magazine. November 04, 2010. “Phosphate: Morocco’s White Gold.” http://www.businessweek.com/magazine/content/10_46/b4203080895976.htm#p1.

banker, land owner, farmer and grocer, and he controls the national markets for staples such as sugar, milk, and much more. The king holds a controlling stake in the Groupe Omnium Nord Africain (ONA), a company that maintains near-monopolies on Moroccan sugar and steel.

Morocco's largest conglomerate, the SNI group, is owned by the royal family. The SNI revenues alone have at times reached as much as 8 percent of the nation's annual GDP. The royal family owns a mutual fund that is made up of nine dummy companies, the most famous of which is called Siger, or "regis" (king) spelled backward. The CEO of this company is also the king's private secretary and a very close personal associate. As an added cue regarding the royal family's economic power, a U.S. diplomatic cable that became public in 2010 via WikiLeaks quoted a prominent businessman reporting that Morocco's major investment decisions are essentially made by three individuals—the king, his long-time friend and former interior minister, and the CEO of Siger. For several years until 2009, the royal businesses were required to keep transparent financial records in order to comply with the rules regarding publicly traded companies. Inconveniently for the monarch, these records divulged that since his ascendance to power, the royal group's profit and the dividends earned by the royal family increased nearly sevenfold. This phenomenon triggered a series of distasteful press coverage which prompted Siger and its eight sister companies to engage in the nation's biggest ever buyout in 2010 in order to go private. The companies bought up their own groups' shares, exited the stock market, and relieved themselves of the transparency requirements. This act further attests to the economic power held by the king and his associates. Thus the very top crust of Morocco's rich is made up of none other than the royal family itself. Tying this fact back to economic theories on the effects of free trade and liberalization, one can infer that the U.S.-Morocco FTA is likely to keep further empowering the monarch.

In addition to enhancing the economic power of the monarch, the FTA also indirectly strengthens the political support for the makhzen causing it to remain unthreatened by popular forces that call for democracy. This too, is due to the elitist ramifications of the FTA. As mentioned already, scholars have explained the results of globalization and free trade in developing countries as being heavily tilted, benefiting only the top socio-economic layers of society. In Morocco, since the time of independence, the monarchy has ensured that the bulk of wealth remain concentrated among two small factions of society—the traditional rural notability and the urban Fassi community.⁸⁶ As of 1956, the former group consisting of about 7,500 individuals controlled a quarter of cultivable land in Morocco. The latter group, which made up only 15 percent of the urban population, controlled most of the country's economic activities other than agriculture. When the colonial population exited the country its assets were transferred to these elite, which naturally led to their strong alliance with the monarch. Since then, these major economic actors have had a stake in the upkeep of the monarch because of the intertwinement of their wealth with the makhzen. Over time, the monarch has further intensified this symbiotic relationship and consequent political support from this sector by heavily encouraging elite investment in the Moroccan economy as well as prebendalism.⁸⁷ The theory of prebendalism, originating from Richard A. Joseph's study of Nigerian democracy, holds that state offices can become sources of material benefits for office holders, and can be appropriated as such.⁸⁸ Officials then generate such benefits not only for themselves but also for their

⁸⁶ J. Waterbury, *North for the Trade: The Life and Times of a Berber Merchant*, (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1972). The "Fassi" community consists of elites of the country who hailed from the city of Fes and spread into Casablanca and other major cities. They made up the religious elite, commercial elites, and administrative elites.

⁸⁷ George Joffé, "Morocco's Reform Process: Wider Implications," in *Mediterranean Politics*, 14, no.2 (2009), 157.

⁸⁸ Richard A. Joseph, *Democracy and Prebendal Politics of Nigeria: the Rise and Fall of the Second Republic*, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1987).

constituencies or support groups. The relevance of all this is that economic reforms yielding benefits for the elite also result in increased political support for the monarch, again making the U.S.-Morocco FTA a major source of regime maintenance.

Security, War on Terrorism, Military

Studies on U.S. military aid and internal security assistance have revealed that, in the cases where the recipient is a non-democratic or even transitioning regime, the aid ends up strengthening the ruling forces.⁸⁹ This is partially because in non-democratic systems, the military and security forces are not subject to the kind of transparency and accountability that is required in democratic systems. As a result, these forces often become power tools at the disposal of the authoritarian regime, and can be used for more than purely security purposes, including the containment of opposition or pro-democracy movements. It is not uncommon for such movements to get tagged as security threats or terrorist in nature, thereby legitimizing their curtailment. Such regimes also benefit from the fact that the United States is often unable to implement thorough vetting processes—especially in the MENA—to ensure that the recipient government refrain from using its improved capabilities for un-democratic ends. This is because in this region in particular, it is in the vital interests of the United States to help curb militancy and terrorism, at any cost including the compromise of democratic values. Such priorities have therefore led policymakers to empower the military forces of key allies such as Morocco, in order to improve their interoperability with U.S. counter-terrorism measures. Also in return for such support, the superpower gains access to Moroccan ports, and other forms of operations in

⁸⁹ Seth G. Jones, et al, *Securing Tyrants or Fostering Reform? U.S. Internal Security Assistance to Repressive and Transitioning Regimes*, RAND Corporation (2006).

the country. However, a key consequence of this policy is that it also improves the regime's ability and effectiveness in repressing pro-democracy forces.

This phenomenon is enhanced in countries like Morocco because the military and security forces are headed by none other than the king himself, who is the commander-in-chief. Moreover, the institutional structure is such that they are not accountable to any other entities besides the Makhzen and their interests are essentially tied to the interests of the king. Therefore, military and security assistance from the United States also bolsters the power of the palace. While this contradicts the highly promoted democratization cause, the superpower nevertheless sees bigger stakes in enhancing the might of the regime in order to foster increased cooperation on a number of fronts. For this reason, the United States has in the last decade elevated its military assistance to Morocco, which is briefly described below.

While the overall U.S. involvement with Morocco experienced a steep hike post-9/11, the military component alone rose to \$20 million in the early to mid-2000s. This was further enhanced by designating Morocco as a major non-NATO ally in 2004, which makes the country eligible for additional perks from the United States. The country has also been harnessed into NATO's Mediterranean Dialogue and has joined the Operation Active Endeavor which involves monitoring the Mediterranean for terrorist activities. It has regularly hosted and participated in NATO military exercises. The U.S. Trans-Sahara Counterterrorism Partnership (TSCTP) is yet another platform where Morocco collaborates and receives American assistance. In 2007, the U.S. Department of Defense authorized a Foreign Military Financing (FMF) sale to Morocco including aircraft, equipment, and related services for \$2.4 billion. Morocco signed a contract for this with Lockheed-Martin in 2008. According to officials in the Pentagon, this would enhance Morocco's capability to support the U.S. war on terrorism and will contribute to

America's main national security and foreign policy objectives. In addition to technology and equipment, there have also been numerous training efforts and bilateral exercises. Morocco is one of the top twenty recipients worldwide of the International Military Education and Training (IMET) program, which provides higher level training to Moroccan military officials on U.S. soil.⁹⁰ Like icing on the cake, Morocco is also one of the top five recipients of Excess Defense Articles grants—which supply rather abundantly military trucks, tracked vehicles, and other equipment. The list of such good grace and defense assistance from the United States to Morocco has been growing over the recent years to include highly sophisticated war games such as Phoenix Express and African Lion in collaboration with the kingdom's Royal Armed Forces. What is of interest here is not so much the absolute extent of U.S. assistance as the relativity of it. That is to say, Morocco is among those few chosen regimes that receive such special support despite the contradiction such support with the U.S. democracy promotion rhetoric.

However, in explaining such bolstered security aid to Morocco, U.S. government officials have described it as support for Morocco's legitimate need for its own self-defense.⁹¹ This makes one wonder exactly how much of a security threat there really is to Morocco—the kind of threat to the country beyond just the government. Granted that terrorism has been an issue that has surfaced every few years, its magnitude has not been such that it would require the kind of military and security assistance that is given by the United States. There is also the question of possible conflict with Algeria. However, with the two countries being U.S. allies in the war on terrorism, it is highly unlikely that the United States or NATO would allow an armed

⁹⁰ U.S. Library of Congress, Congressional Research Service. *Morocco: Current Issues*, by Carol Migdalovitz. CRS Report RS21579. Washington DC: Office of Congressional Information and Publishing, December 04, 2008.

⁹¹ Netherlands aid. "Deciphering Morocco's Military Procurement Strategy." By T.B. Ahmed. June 1, 2011. <http://www.nl-aid.org/continent/northern-africa/deciphering-morocco%E2%80%99s-military-procurement-strategy/>.

conflict at such a time that would seriously disrupt regional stability. In other words, threats to Morocco in the conventional warlike sense are not significant at present. Yet the monarch has acquired weapons worth billions of dollars, thanks to the special relationship with the United States, at a time when Morocco's national budget deficit underwent a steep climb. This only alludes to one thing—such military engagement with the superpower is a means of keeping it committed to supporting the regime. In turn, the United States too benefits from a persistently friendly monarchy that moves in concert with its own national interests, be it in its fight against radical Islamism, terrorism, and not in the least with regards to Israel which will be discussed in the following chapter. It should be noted that Morocco's acquisitions of U.S. military assistance also benefit the U.S. defense industry, which could be attributed to the influence of the military-industrial-complex that is often mentioned in theories on U.S. foreign policy.⁹² To the superpower, this policy of active and increased military and security assistance to Morocco is yet another means of accentuating the symbiotic relationship with one of the most congenial MENA regimes. This is a classic case of what scholars call regime maintenance, which ironically takes place in conjunction with “democracy” promotion.

The Western Sahara Issue

Not entirely unconnected with the security policy of the United States vis-à-vis Morocco, there is also the issue of Western Sahara regarding which the monarch enjoys a significant degree of passive support. The Sahel region in general has been a topic of nervousness for the U.S. government. This is due to its low population density, permeable borders, and the resulting

⁹² Jerel A. Rosati and James Scott, *The Politic of United States Foreign Policy*, (Belmont, CA: Thomson and Wadsworth, 2007).

vulnerability to radicalization and terrorist activities. This fear overrides the support for democracy and concerns for human rights, and hence the United States has long ignored the questionable policies of the Moroccan government regarding the Western Sahara issue, within this territory as well as in the country in general. For example in Morocco, criticism of the monarchy's policies toward this desert region is not tolerated to any degree. Public expression or demonstrations on this issue are unthinkable. International press and human rights groups are prevented from entering the territory or gaining a full view of this problem. Even more serious are the reports obtained by the U.S. State Department pertaining to torture, beatings, and possible disappearances in the region, which are allegedly carried out by the country's security forces. While there has been a strong expression of concern by the U.S. government, there have not been any pressure tactics or punitive actions exerted over the Moroccan regime. During the 1990s Algerian crisis, the United States could not afford any kind of instability in its main ally in the Maghreb and so the status-quo was preferred in Western Sahara. But even in the current decade—the era of heightened democracy promotion—the undemocratic aspects of the situation has been broadly ignored. Save for the 2012 conditionality applied on a component of the Foreign Military Financing (FMF), there has not been any serious effort to urge its ally to adopt democratic policies on this matter. Even this conditionality pertains to the easing of human rights violations and brutal oppression, and no more. Perhaps responding this conditionality or perhaps out of his own initiative, the king has undertaken since 2007 some degree of decentralization and improved rights for the Saharawi population. This has not gone un-praised, but this ends the scope of the carrot and the stick that the United States could employ in a more serious democracy promotion effort in Morocco.

The United Nations has for many years called for holding a referendum to determine whether the Western Sahara would obtain independence or come under Moroccan sovereignty. In the early 2000s, the U.S. government supported this plan. However, there were conceptual disagreements between the Moroccan government and the Polisario,⁹³ especially with regards to the electorate that would participate in the referendum. Each group wished to carve out the voting population in a way that would guarantee its own victory. The referendum has therefore been stalled over the years. But in response to nudges from the United States, the king charted a proposal in 2007 that would grant autonomy to Western Sahara, although ultimate sovereignty would still remain with the palace. Foreign policy and defense would be under the control of the Moroccan government. This has not been acceptable to the Polisario and the Saharawi people who demand sovereignty. The United States however has welcomed and supported this plan, though in a very confusing manner. On the one hand, U.S. officials have often announced that they do not recognize Moroccan sovereignty over the territory. At the same time, they have repeatedly praised and supported the king's autonomy plan which indeed gives the monarchy sovereignty over Western Sahara. Likewise, the U.S. policy regarding the usage of its economic aid to Morocco has been equally ambivalent. Until 2012, Morocco was not authorized to apply U.S. economic aid to Western Sahara, as that would indicate that the United States officially recognized Moroccan sovereignty over the region. But recently, as indicated by the 2012 Consolidated Appropriations Act, this policy appears to have changed. Here, it is stated that U.S. economic assistance funds can be used in all of Morocco including its territories. This would make Western Sahara an eligible region. But again, State Department officials have

⁹³ Polisario is the official organization representing the Saharawi movement for self-determination.

reiterated that U.S. regulation on the usage of funds is not likely to change from what it has been in the past—in reference to this region. Ultimately, U.S. policies pertaining to this issue have reflected a passiveness or indifference, which is inconsistent with the democracy promotion philosophy.

Additionally, I argue that the “indifference” demonstrates a clear pro-regime leaning on the part of the U.S. government. An examination of Congressional Research Reports as well as minutes from the 2007 session of the House Committee on Foreign Affairs divulges a soft corner in the United States for the king’s position on the even though there have been reports of human rights violations and repressive policies. Officials have rationalized their partiality by considering the Western Sahara issue a serious security threat to Morocco, and as a patron superpower, it is only natural that full support be given to the king’s detailed autonomy plan, which the U.S. government has called highly credible and desirable. On the same note, Polisario has been described as insincere and not so credible in its version of a proposed solution. This very pro-monarch leaning of the United States is summarized in a statement in a 2012 congressional research report noting that U.S. officials prefer a solution to the Western Sahara conflict that would not threaten King Mohammed VI’s rule. For this reason, Washington believes in and supports the king’s autonomy plan, in which the sovereignty would remain with the monarchy.

Conclusion

For the Moroccan regime, its special relationship with the United States has been tantamount to foreign insurance for its survival and international legitimacy and helps offset the growing deficit of domestic goodwill. Also, the anti-terrorism policies bolstered by U.S.

assistance serve to thwart or contain the domestic opposition to the authoritarian rule and its support of U.S. policies that contradict popular Moroccan sentiments. In addition, through its co-participation in U.S. and NATO military and security strategies in the west Mediterranean region, the regime gets an opportunity to underline its importance to the West thereby qualifying it for continued U.S. and European support. The FTA and other U.S. economic assistance programs are examples of this phenomenon, as argued above.

From the U.S. perspective, this position of the monarchy perfectly suits its needs and interests in MENA. Thus the symbiosis persists between it and the Moroccan monarch, which ultimately strengthens and maintains the regime, and also allows it to continue its rule in the disputed territory of Western Sahara. Inconsistently with its proclaimed exportation of democracy to Morocco, the United States is heavily invested in the upkeep of the authoritarian ruler.

CHAPTER 4

AN ANALYSIS OF DEMOCRATIZATION IN MOROCCO

Introduction

Succeeding King Hassan II just before the increased U.S. involvement with Morocco, King Mohammed VI ascended the throne in 1999. He proceeded with what seemed like an agenda of liberalizing—perhaps politically, perhaps economically, or both. As a signal to domestic as well as international observers, of his intent to bring positive change to the country and to relax the tight authoritarian grip held by the palace during his father's rule, the king dismissed the nearly invincible and extremely unpopular Minister of Interior Driss Basri. Coinciding with the higher emphasis placed by the United States on democratization of MENA states, he began introducing a number of changes and reforms in the country. Among the most lauded endeavors are the Instance Équité et Réconciliation (IER) and the changes to the Family Code or Moudawana, which will be discussed in this chapter.

The monarchy has also heightened the importance given to parliamentary elections. In addition to these efforts, there have been a number of measures in the area of political liberalization in the parliamentary and judicial structures, as well as the constitution itself in 2011. This portfolio is rather impressive for an authoritarian regime in MENA, and has been highly encouraged as well as facilitated by the United States as discussed in Chapter 2. The

monarch in turn has received a friendly response from abroad, with both Moroccan and foreign governments constantly reiterating to the world the significance of these reforms in terms of democratic progress and transition.

In this chapter, I analyze the three main reform initiatives mentioned above, and their relationship to bringing actual democracy, followed by a discussion on the implications of a democratic Morocco to U.S. interests in MENA. The conclusion that emerges from the analysis is twofold: first, the political liberalization in Morocco is not sufficient to lead to transition to democracy and, on the contrary, solidifies authoritarian power; secondly, given the U.S. interests in the region and domestic politics surrounding Washington, the superpower could not possibly desire a Moroccan transition to democracy nor are its policies toward this ally truly designed to influence such a breakthrough.

Examining Political Liberalization and Reforms

Instance Équité et Réconciliation (IER)

In their 2005 study, Charles Kenney and Dean Spears analyzed the effects of truth commissions on democracy. Focusing primarily on South American cases, these scholars found a statistically significant relationship between truth commissions and lasting democracy. The commissions appear to have an enduring positive effect on all levels of democracy.⁹⁴ According to John Hursh, this finding although distant from the MENA, is encouraging as one considers the IER initiative undertaken by the king of Morocco in 2004.⁹⁵ As the U.S. government was

⁹⁴ Charles Kenney and Dean Spears, "Truth and Consequences: Do Truth Commissions Promote Democratization?" *Paper presented at the annual meeting of the American Political Science Association, Marriott Wardman Park, Omni Shoreham, Washington Hilton, Washington, DC, September 1, 2005.*

⁹⁵ John Hursh, "Moving toward Democracy in Morocco?" in *Air and Space Power Journal: Africa/Francophonie* (2010), 69.

increasing its democracy assistance and promotion in Morocco and as the FTA was being negotiated as a means of strengthening the relationship between the two entities, the monarch launched this truth and reconciliation commission to account for and rectify the past mistakes of the state. The goal of this was to reconcile and compensate state violence from the time of independence until the end of Hassan II's rule. As an added symbol of justice, former leftist political prisoner Driss Benzekri was appointed to head the commission along with sixteen other human rights activists and former prisoners.

This truth commission was a landmark achievement for the king because this was the first and only such state endeavor in all of MENA. The IER investigated over 20,000 cases of human rights abuses, and nearly 13,000 victims were offered financial reparations. Moreover, according to the commission's spokespeople, they received almost total cooperation from public institutions and security forces. These state entities granted almost full access to information and complied with any request for assistance. With such favorable conditions, one might regard this initiative as a long stride toward democratization of the country. However, other realities have marred the scope of this groundbreaking effort. First, the commission only considered human rights violations only until 1999 when the current king ascended the throne. Therefore it did not necessarily subject the current monarch to such accountability, which arguably constitute a more authentic stepping stone to democracy. Second, there is no law that binds the state institutions to provide information and cooperation as needed by the commission, and it is owing to the king's support of the IER that such compliance was available. Third, such a grandiose and truly laudable step toward democratization has been simultaneously counteracted by the resumption of state abuses and human rights violations in the post-Hassan II era. Such actions peaked after the terrorist attacks on Casablanca in 2003, when thousands of Islamists were arrested without due

process and tortured by state security forces. Such conflicting trends suggest that the truth commission was a tentative step rather than a deep-rooted one toward democratization.

However, the IER achieved its goal of providing social catharsis to some degree, appeasing the perpetually frustrated population.

In spite of its weakness in effecting democratic change, the IER has carried much value for two main entities—the monarch and the U.S. government. For the former, this earned international praise as a democratizing king, and consequently reinforced material as well as political support from the West.⁹⁶ For the latter, the IER came as an asset perfect for “impression management” especially among the displeased MENA population.⁹⁷ As the United States has been increasingly viewed and despised as a supporter of oppressive Arab autocrats, this move by the Moroccan king has served as a rebuttal to such assertions, by demonstrating that the superpower is indeed true to its rhetoric of promoting democracy in the region. Beyond reasserting the legitimacy of U.S. policy and of the monarchy, the IER has done little in relation to promoting democracy and pluralism in Morocco. This is not to deny the merit of this one act bringing justice and closure to victims of state abuse.

To view this phenomenon within a theoretical framework however, I find it useful to again refer to Kenney and Spears. Based on the results of their study, the authors conclude that the effects of truth commissions on democracy though significant could be fragile. It is because such initiatives would operate amidst several structural and environmental variables depending on the contexts of a given state. Such variables in the Moroccan case might include the limited

⁹⁶ Pierre Hazan, “Morocco: Betting on a Truth and Reconciliation Commission,” in *United States Institute of Peace, Special Report* (2006), 165.

⁹⁷ Michael N. Barnett, *Dialogues in Arab Politics: Negotiations in Regional Order*, (New York, NY: Columbia University Press, 1993). Source of the term: “Impression Management” where it was used to describe certain 20th century Arab regimes.

scope of the IER in terms of the eras it covered, the resumption of aggressive policies following a security crisis in the country, and the lack of laws that obligate state institutions including the palace to provide such justice to the population.

Elections

Moroccan Parliamentary elections have been among the areas that U.S. democracy assistance programs have heavily focused on. The key mark of a pluralistic political system is after all the electoral process. According to Thomas Carothers, the traditional scholars of democratic transitions hold “very high expectations for what the establishment of regular genuine elections will do for democratization.”⁹⁸ Understanding the importance of this to his image as a democratizing monarch, the king allowed the first truly free Moroccan parliamentary elections to take place in 2002, in contrast to the controversial and rigged elections of the past. In theory, the monarch has placed a heavy emphasis on the electoral process, and has made considerable effort to publicly communicate its value to the democratization of Morocco as well as his own commitment to the cause. Like the 2002 elections, the 2007 elections were also praised for their transparency. In fact the latter elections were held under the auspices of heightened international—especially American—support and technical assistance. The international monitors declared this round of elections to be as free and fair as can be found in any well-functioning democracy. This came as a blessing for all those who have a vested interest in viewing the Moroccan government as one in steady transition. However, a deeper look at the facts surrounding the Moroccan electoral process reveals the ambivalence treatment

⁹⁸ Carothers, *The End of the Transition Paradigm*, 8.

of election, undermining their utility for change. It also strongly indicates that a democratic transition is not necessarily what might result from holding these periodic elections.

Contradicting his emerging image as a reformer promoter pluralism as opposed to the old school authoritarianism of King Hassan II, King Mohammed VI took a step backward after the 2002 elections. Instead of appointing the leader of the winning party as Prime Minister as had been the practice under his father's "gouvernement d'alternance", the new monarch acted autonomously from such constitutional constraints and instead appointed a technocrat for the position.⁹⁹ The party that won the elections—the USFP— and some of the political elite of Morocco became irate and frustrated following this development. After negotiating with the party for several weeks the king finally carried out a swapping strategy granting the Ministry of Justice portfolio to the winning party as compensation for its conceding the Prime Minister's office to the appointed technocrat.

These dealings bring two important points to the surface. First, in spite of including the citizens in an electoral process, the king can choose how much of the results actually will affect governance. Secondly, with or without elections, the reins of the kingdom are held in the monarch's hands, and the entire structure of government is fluid and can be tweaked in whatever ways the monarch deems appropriate. In a converse example, following the protests in 2011 known as the February 20th movement, the king made some amendments to the constitution, including the requirement that he choose a Prime Minister exclusively from the winning party.¹⁰⁰ While this reversal sounds fantastic as a foundation for democracy, it also reiterates that it is up to the monarchy to make or break the foundation.

⁹⁹ Sater, *Parliamentary Elections and Authoritarian Rule in Morocco*, 386.

¹⁰⁰ Ahmed Benchemsi, "Morocco: Outfoxing the Opposition," in *Journal of Democracy*, 23, no.1 (2012), 59.

It is perhaps this non-committal nature of the political system that led to the steep fall in the voter turnout in the 2007 elections. Although these elections have been internationally acknowledged as being highly transparent and free, it should be noted that the number of voters was at the lowest, with a 37% turnout. Even more noteworthy is that one-fifth of the voters cast spoiled ballots, in some cases including anti-monarch notes, as a rebellion against the regime. Ironically, this was a time when the king, with the assistance and support of the United States had heightened the promotion of elections as a vital necessity for political reform in Morocco. Evidently the population did not see them as having much potential for change. This is reflected in a survey conducted in 2007 by the Al Akhawayn University in Ifrane, Morocco, as shown by James N. Sater.¹⁰¹ The results showed that among the Moroccan population, trust in unelected seats of power is greater than trust in elected bodies. The survey indicates that while the general political awareness in the population is modest, there is an inherent understanding that true power rests with the non-competitive centers of power. Moreover, this survey also points out that at the local level, the public's primary concern is the realization of its immediate economic concerns as opposed to some abstract political ideals such as pluralism and the balance of powers. It is no wonder then that the population's attitude toward elections has been so indifferent and faith so low.

In addition to this indirectly undermined position of the voting population, the government's policies regarding political parties are in themselves counter-productive for the emergence of democracy in Morocco. The setup of electoral districts and proportional representation in Morocco is such that there is no leeway for the rise of a strong opposition

¹⁰¹ Sater, *Parliamentary Elections and Authoritarian Rule in Morocco*, 391.

party.¹⁰² There also are new additional political parties created by the monarchy to which members from the country's economic and political elite have been recruited. According to Sater allegiance is diverted to such parties, or highly scattered, countering those opposed to the current system or in a position to win the absolute majority. Such a fragmented arena impedes the scope of elections as an avenue for democracy. Some parties have at times been nationally shamed for their alleged vote-buying while others have been generally ignored.¹⁰³ This inconsistency in managing the party system contributes to the weakening of the democratic process rather than enhancing it.

From these ongoing patterns in the system, politicians in Morocco have learned that reaching consensus with the palace is the only way of guaranteeing themselves a viable career in the government. This became more evident than ever during the 2011 elections.¹⁰⁴ As a result of the February 20th movement, which might have in part been inspired by the Arab Spring in the east, the monarchy found itself in a somewhat vulnerable position, though not threatened. However, in line with his history of making reforms and liberalizing selected facets of the political system, the monarch responded to these calls for reform and made point-specific revisions to the Moroccan constitution. It was during this concerning period for the palace, that the newly elected politicians entered the parliament with a unique opportunity to advance their powers vis-à-vis the executive branch.¹⁰⁵ However, once in office, they appear to have retreated to more passive roles, once again illustrating that the electoral process, which has received significant U.S. assistance, is not necessarily paving the way for democracy in Morocco.

¹⁰² Jack Kalpakian, "Implications of the 2007 Elections on Moroccan Political Development," in *Institute for Security Studies Situation Report* (2007).

¹⁰³ Sater, *Parliamentary Elections and Authoritarian Rule in Morocco*, 388.

¹⁰⁴ In reaction to the February 20th movement that took place around the same time as the Arab Spring of late 2010 and early 2011, the monarch moved forward the elections that would have normally been held in 2012 to late 2011.

¹⁰⁵ Benchemsi, *Morocco: Outfoxing the Opposition*, 104.

Moudawana

In a case study on Iran conducted by the Initiative for Inclusive Security, it was found that the fight for equal rights for women in Iran was intertwined with the society's broader struggle for the transformation of the country into a democracy.¹⁰⁶ Perhaps the same could be said of Morocco, where for several years women's groups and social activists had mobilized the society, demanding equal rights for women vis-à-vis men. Although it should be noted that both culturally and politically Morocco has remained by far the least constricting on women in comparison with most of the MENA, it is the concept of demanding legislation for equality that is comparable in the two societies. In Morocco, the cause had been taken up by various women's groups and other social activists—male and female. Therefore, when the king implemented reforms to the Moudawana (Family Code) in 2004, international politicians and analysts alike applauded what they considered a leap toward pluralism, and better yet, a testimony to the powers of civil society in bringing political change. It validated the notion that has emerged from traditional democratic theory that civil society activism in a country predisposes it to democratization.¹⁰⁷ Considering the already prevalent preference of the United States to focus its democracy promotion efforts in Morocco on a bottom-up strategy, the victory of the women's rights movements reinforced the wisdom of such a strategy. This U.S. perspective does not take into account a less optimistic body of studies regarding the value of civil society to democracy. This literature places higher emphasis on a strong and un-fragmented

¹⁰⁶ "Women's Rights and Democracy: Peaceful Transformation in Iran." *The Initiative for Inclusive Security Policy Commission*, ed. Jolynn Shoemaker (Hunt Alternatives Fund, May 2006). The Initiative for Inclusive Security (including The Women Waging Peace Network), is a program of Hunt Alternatives Fund, advocates for the full participation of all stakeholders, especially women, in peace processes.

¹⁰⁷ Francesco Cavatorta and Emmanuela Dalmaso, "Liberal outcomes through undemocratic means: the reform of the code de statut personnel in Morocco," in *Journal of Modern African Studies*, 47, no. 4 (2009), 489.

political party system.^{108,109} Moreover, in the case of reform to the Moroccan Family Code, the very premise that it is social activism that pressured the king is in itself flawed.

It is true that the activists for several years worked for this cause and succeeded in mobilizing broad sections of the society. In fact according to Francesco Cavatorta and Emanuela Dalmasso's study, two major Moroccan feminist groups have confirmed that they relentlessly lobbied the government to improve and protect women's rights. However, given the structure of the Moroccan political system, it is naïve to conclude that such efforts could effect change in all areas of activism—constitutional changes or changes to the political system for example. In fact, in Morocco, civil society organizations are required to obtain licenses in order to function without much interference from state forces. The process of obtaining a license is complicated, and depends on the government's will. Being unlicensed, however, would imply lack of legal status, no reliable funding and resources, and possible dismantling by state forces. In other words, the government seems to employ the carrot-and-stick method to ensure that civil society organizations operate within acceptable boundaries. Therefore, I argue that if the women's rights groups were indeed instrumental in the Moudawana reforms, this only because granting equal status to women vis-à-vis their male relatives is not a matter that is detrimental to any other aspects of the political system—notably, prevalent power structure.

On the contrary, it should be noted that it was through the powers of the monarch—the non-democratic entity—that this reform materialized. It was in the interest of the regime to advance women's rights, something that is undoubtedly viewed as a watershed event in MENA by Western observers, garnering increased support from entities like the United States and the

¹⁰⁸ Ibid, 489.

¹⁰⁹ Langohr, *Too Much Civil Society, Too Little Politics*, 181-204.

European Union. On the domestic front, the reforms proposed by the king were faced with strong opposition from the Islamists.¹¹⁰ Fortunately for the women's rights activists and the palace, the Casablanca bombings in 2003 stripped Islamists of their credibility and capabilities to oppose, clearing the path for the monarch to push through the changes without friction. Interestingly, Moroccan Islamists proved to be an adaptive lot, as they soon came around in their position and even supported the reforms, while all it took from the king was to present the new laws with reference to Islamic interpretations. Cavatorta and Dalmaso have argued however that one of the reasons for this ideological shift is the fact that these reforms were the monarch's pet-project. It would have been politically unwise for the Islamists to continue opposing the new laws, only to alienate themselves from the power-center and risk becoming marginalized.

What emerges from this analysis is that for a significant change to take effect, such as the Moudawana reforms, the monarch has to be a central force. Enlightened policies conducted by a monarch exemplify enlightened despotism—even if in some way they promote a more democratic society—rather than political democratization. Reforms targeting a specific social issue like gender equality may be democratic in character, but are hardly a prelude to a democratic transition. As for civil society activism, the outcome may relate to whether or not there is an alignment of—or at least a lack of conflict of—interests between the monarch and the associations rather than the ability of organizations to pressure the ruler in favor of liberal outcomes. The means of achieving the outcome is therefore not through a process of pluralism. Instead of pursuing the more democratic channels, such as taking the issue to the parliament, the women's rights activists bypassed all the elected institutions and lobbied the palace instead.

¹¹⁰ Refer to Chapter 2.

Therefore, the liberal outcome that was achieved in Morocco both reflected and reinforced the authoritarian nature of government.¹¹¹

Moroccan Democracy, an Asset or a Nuisance?

The decade-long intensified U.S. democracy promotion and assistance, concurrent with Washington's perpetual support for the authoritarian regime prompts one question: what does the United States really aim for? It is true that following the September 11th attacks, the wisdom in Washington changed with regards to supporting undemocratic regimes in MENA, with the realization that perhaps only democracy would neutralize a vast hostile population. Then came, the elections in some parts of the region, in which fiercely anti-Western and hardline Islamist parties experienced sweeping victories, while in other countries, Islamists already had popularity.¹¹²

All of this prompts yet another question: what would be the implications of democracy in Morocco to the United States when all else is equal? There are two main areas of concern. One is the possible rise of hardline Islamists to power that are antagonistic to the United States. Second is the Israel factor. As a democracy Morocco is almost certain to be less congenial to Israeli interests than as a pro-Western monarchy, whether Islamists or secular nationalists predominated. Considering the centrality of Washington's support—whether because of domestic politics or pursuit of strategic interests—for Israel, this would be as much Washington's problem as it would be Tel Aviv's. In the following section, I discuss the scope of these two factors to impact U.S. interests.

¹¹¹ Cavatorta and Dalmaso, *Liberal Outcomes through Undemocratic Means*, 500.

¹¹² Examples: Hamas in the Palestinian Authority in 2006; Hezbollah in Lebanon in 2005.

The Islamist Question

There is no doubt that recent years have seen a striking rise in the appeal of Islamism amongst the Moroccan population.¹¹³ According to most analyses, this is attributable to the increase in conditions of despair, such as socio-economic marginalization, and the state's failure to bring about a decent quality of life. In addition, the widespread opposition to the U.S. war on Iraq and U.S. policies toward Israel has accentuated the appeal of the Islamist message, which proclaims the movement as a force against such Western imperialism in the Islamic world.¹¹⁴ But more importantly, where the government has failed to provide basic social security to the poor or even the lower middle-class, Islamists have filled the gap. Through highly organized channels, these groups have set up what Jeremy Sharp calls "alternative state structures" that provide health care, education, and other services to fulfill the fundamental needs of society.¹¹⁵ As a result, there is a widespread notion that it is the Islamic ethic of these groups that enables them to deliver to the needy, in contrast to the apparently less concerned elitist groups that incidentally happen to be more secular. Impressed by such social dynamics of Islamists, there are sectors of the population other than the poor who have also come to view the Islamists as the reliable and compassionate groups. It naturally follows then that the Islamist political positions are also deemed equally righteous. This is reflected in the polls presented in Bruce Maddy-Weitzman's study.¹¹⁶ While 64 percent of the Moroccans held a favorable view of the American public as such, a striking 72 percent empathized with al-Qaeda's goal to force the United States to withdraw from Muslim lands. It should be noted however that this does not indicate support

¹¹³ Bruce Maddy-Weitzman, "Morocco's Berbers and Israel" in *Middle East Quarterly* (Winter 2011), 79.

¹¹⁴ *Ibid*, 79.

¹¹⁵ U.S. Library of Congress, Congressional Research Service. *U.S. Democracy Promotion Policy in the Middle East: The Islamist Dilemma*, by Jeremy M. Sharp. CRS Report RL33486. Washington DC: Office of Congressional Information and Publishing, (June 15, 2006), 3.

¹¹⁶ Maddy-Weitzman, *Morocco's Berbers and Israel*, 79.

for al-Qaeda itself, and only a very small number of respondents expressed support for attacks on American civilians. But interestingly, more than half the population suspects that the 9/11 attacks were an American or Israeli conspiracy. From such data, it is logical to conclude that given democracy, Islamists would rise to power in Morocco.

However, there is an interesting dynamic in Weitzman's data on Morocco that questions this conclusion. Simultaneously with the spread of Islamism, Berber activism has also been on the rise—reaching greater heights than ever in the recent years. This group is opposed to Islamism in spite of being just as Muslim as non-Berber Moroccans. This is not surprising considering that Islamism has inherently brought in a sense of pan-Arabism, which is much more noticeable in a country like Morocco whose population is not homogenously Arab and in which a non-Arab ethnic group has remained distinct in culture and identity.¹¹⁷ Islamist groups are often influenced by certain religious movements in the heart of the Arab MENA, with a commitment to Arabizing the society and state, thus undermining the Berber heritage of Morocco.¹¹⁸ As a result of the Islamists' attempts to erode Morocco's plural identity, the Berber movement is generally at odds with these groups. Due to their opposition to Arabization's takeover of society, they have gone so far as to empathize with the historical experience of Jews, and consequently in some cases expressing a sense of affinity to Israel.¹¹⁹ This data becomes relevant for the analysis of Islamism in Morocco, because around 40 to 45 percent of the population is not Arab, and Arabic is not its mother-tongue. This is despite the Arabization of much of the Berber population in big cities. These facts indicate that nearly half the population might potentially be mobilized against the rise of Islamists to power. In addition to the Berbers,

¹¹⁷ Ibid, 80.

¹¹⁸ Kalpakian, *Implications of the 2007 Elections on Moroccan Political Development*, 6.

¹¹⁹ Maddy-Weitzman, *Morocco's Berbers and Israel*, 81.

there are also sectors in the broader population that are secular or at least not in favor of hardline Islamism. Many non-secular Moroccans too oppose the Islamists' opposition to the more inclusive sufi-inspired Moroccan Islam, and their fitting the country into the religious mold of imported versions from abroad. So there are enough data and evidence to believe that democracy in Morocco, unlike in certain other MENA states, may not necessarily result in a monolithic political system monopolized by Islamists. Moreover, the 2007 elections in which the predicted victory of the Islamist party did not happen support this reasoning. The citizens had the opportunity to give a sweeping victory to the Islamists, but they chose not to do so. Even the ones who wished to demonstrate their outrage at the regime did so by spoiling the ballots rather than voting for the Islamists, who are the main opposition force in the country. Although the Islamist-oriented Justice and Development Party (PJD) did win the largest bloc of seats in the 2011 elections, it failed to gain an absolute majority.

It is also noteworthy that the PJD is considered by scholars and analysts to be by far the most moderate in the MENA.¹²⁰ Several scholars have noted that the Islamist movements in Morocco are the most liberal in the region, support the implementation of a pluralistic form of government, and are open to liberal reforms if they can be explained with some level of Islamic reference.¹²¹ The PJD has illustrated this point in the past by displaying its rational side along with its endorsement of Islamic values. Hence there seem to be variables at play in the Moroccan case causing it to perhaps not completely fit the general patterns of the MENA, although the extent to which this is true—as well as the exact nature of such factors—awaits further studies. Some scholars have attributed this to Morocco's heterogeneous and adaptive

¹²⁰ Ottaway and Riley, *Morocco*, 19.

¹²¹ Hursh, *Moving Toward Democracy in Morocco*, 74.

Islam as opposed to the more rigid or orthodox versions that undermine indigenous cultural influences.

Although such data and analogy may be somewhat comforting, a rational United States would nonetheless be cautious in allowing democracy to take shape. While hardline Islamism may not be a certainty in the case of Morocco, it would be a risk all the same. These possibilities are discussed in reports to Congress shedding light on America's "Islamist dilemma" in Morocco.¹²² What might be a more certain outcome is that, Islamism or not, democracy would make opposition to specific American policies possible—such as to the war on Iraq in 2003, despite which the monarch remained cooperative and allied with the United States. Democracy would not allow for such unconditional cooperation, nor are Islamists the only faction opposed to the regime's passiveness with regard to such Western policies. It is no wonder then that the United States continues to proclaim to promote democracy while providing ample support to the authoritarian regime.

The Israel Factor

When analyzing the prospects of democratization of the MENA one cannot ignore the Israel factor. This is particularly true for U.S. policymakers. It is because the projected ramifications for Israel are likely to bind the United States in ways that determine its foreign policy choices. This is supported by a vast body of literature that attests to the centrality of pro-Israel interest groups in U.S. decision making on matters that have any relevance to

¹²² Sharp, *U.S. Democracy Promotion Policy in the Middle East: The Islamist Dilemma*.

Israel.^{123,124,125} While there have been debates among scholars on the influencing capabilities of this lobby, there is enough evidence showing that policies that are undesirable to Israel are most likely to be shelved or sent to the back-burner in Washington, and that is the point of interest in this analysis.

An illustration of Israel's aversion toward Arab democracy is seen in Israeli reactions to the events of the Arab Spring in late 2010 and early 2011. One of the central themes of Israel's most prominent annual political gathering—the Herzliya Conference—that year, was hostility to the idea of Arab democracy.¹²⁶ Emphasizing the importance of maintaining the status-quo in certain Arab states, one Israeli Major General, “In the Arab world, there is no room for democracy.” Another high ranking Israeli official even complained that the United States has “become an agent of revolutionary change in the Middle East, at the expense of stability.” These sentiments echoed several other such declarations of concern and discontent—the most significant of which came from Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu—regarding any semblance of democratization in the region, and more particularly the fall of existing authoritarian regimes.¹²⁷

It follows that in the case of Morocco, if the U.S. policy is aimed at bringing a change in the political system where the power is significantly devolved from the monarch, then it would indirectly be unfavorable to Israeli interests. One of the most prevalent sentiments regarding the

¹²³ Edward Tivnan, *The Lobby: Jewish Political Power and American Foreign Policy* (New York, NY: Simon and Schuster Inc., 1987).

¹²⁴ David Hirst, *The Gun and the Olive Branch*. (New York, NY: Thunder's Mouth Press, 2003).

¹²⁵ John J. Mearsheimer and Stephen M. Walt, “The Israel Lobby and U.S. Foreign Policy,” in *Middle East Policy* 8, no. 3 (2006): 29-87.

¹²⁶ Matthew Duss, “Letter from Herzliya, Neocon Woodstock,” in *The Nation*, February 14, 2011. <http://www.thenation.com/article/158547/letter-herzliya-neocon-woodstock>.

¹²⁷ Yossi Verter, “The Arab Spring turned Netanyahu into the national fearmonger,” in *Haaretz*, December 16, 2011.

superpower in the MENA is the resentment toward the unconditional U.S. support for Israel.¹²⁸ In addition, Moroccan leaders have faced strong domestic opposition to having any kind of relations with the Jewish state. This animosity toward Israel is not confined to Islamists or those with greater Islamic tendencies. Opposition to Israeli policies is almost unanimous, though it should be noted that Moroccans are not unfriendly to Jews as such, especially to ones who share their origins. Scholars have also noted that Morocco has a history of pluralism that has allowed thousands of Jews to live in genuine freedom in the country.¹²⁹ Therefore anti-Semitism as such may not be a concern for U.S. interest groups or policymakers. However hostility toward Israel, particularly Zionism, would be certain to come to the surface and affect the regime's position on Israel if Morocco were to become a democracy. But thus far, authoritarianism has stood as a wall between the angered MENA populations and policies on Israel.

It is an open secret that the Moroccan regime maintains relations with Israel, which is unsurprising for at least one reason. As Mohameden Ould-Mey has described, when it comes to seeking friendly relations with the United States, there is a “*Coriolis Force* of Normalization with Israel.”¹³⁰ Originally an expression in the field of geography, the phrase is used by Ould-Mey to describe what appears to be a precondition for Mauritania to have normalized relations with the United States—that is, normalized relations with Israel. A similar point is made by Bruce Maddy-Weitzman, that Morocco has been aware that the road to Washington gets

¹²⁸ Maddy-Weitzman, *Morocco's Berbers and Israel*, 79-85.

¹²⁹ Hursh, *Moving Toward Democracy in Morocco*, 73.

¹³⁰ Mohameden Ould-Mey, “U.S.-Mauritania Relations and the *Coriolis Force* of Normalization with Israel,” In *Les Etats-Unis et le Maghreb; Regain d'Intérêt?* sous la direction de Abdennour Benantar, (Alger: Centre de Recherche en Economie Appliquée au Développement, 2007).

smoother if it passes via Jerusalem.¹³¹ It is thus fully understandable that the Moroccan monarchs remain cordial toward Israel.

The Moroccan regime's "special relationship" dates back to independence. But this is strictly limited to the regime level in this Arab state.¹³² Geographically the most distant from the Middle East conflict, Morocco has been described by many as Israel's closest friend in the Arab world.¹³³ A point of unique significance—for an Arab state—is that one of the senior advisors to the king is a Moroccan Jew who has links with Israeli officials.¹³⁴ This Moroccan trend of forging relations with Israel was enhanced by King Hassan II, who in a break with "Arab solidarity on Palestine" even held a public meeting once with Israeli Prime Minister Shimon Peres at the royal palace in Morocco.¹³⁵ The monarch also played an active role in mediating talks between Israeli and Palestinian leaders, encouraging the Middle East process. By 1994, an Israeli mission and liaison offices—though not technically a full-fledged embassy—were set up in Morocco. Since the current monarch ascended the throne, he has followed in his father's footsteps by maintaining these ties with Israel. Outwardly however, diplomatic relations were severed in October 2000, following the eruption of the second Palestinian Intifada. But again, beginning in 2003, there have been diplomatic visits and meetings between Moroccan and Israeli officials. These have been mostly unpublicized in the kingdom due to domestic disapproval.¹³⁶

In one high profile instance, indirectly snubbing Iranian President Mahmud Ahmadinejad's Holocaust-questioning Muslim solidarity statements, the king authorized a

¹³¹ Maddy-Weitzman, *Morocco's Berbers and Israel*, 37.

¹³² Daniel Zisenwine, "A New Stage in Israeli-Moroccan Relations?" in *The Jaffee Center for Strategic Studies and The Moshe Dayan Center for Middle Eastern and African Studies* (09/07/2003).

¹³³ Palestine Facts, *Israel-Morocco Relationship*, http://www.palestinefacts.org/pf_1967to1991_hassan_peres_1986.php

¹³⁴ Marc Perelman, "Morocco Considering Renewed Relations," in *The Jewish Daily Forward* (10//03/2003).

¹³⁵ Zisenwine, *A New Stage in Israeli-Moroccan Relations*.

¹³⁶ *Ibid.*

speech for a Paris ceremony read in his name, acknowledging the evils of the Holocaust. Carol Migdalovitz's congressional research report notes that this landmark speech was a phenomenon coming from the Arab world, where no leader has publicly taken such a stand regarding the Holocaust.¹³⁷ This too is contradictory to popular Moroccan opinion. Maddy-Weitzman's data shows that the Moroccan people disapprove of evoking memories of these World War II events in the media because of the sympathy it fosters for Israel at the expense of the Palestinians.¹³⁸

Morocco is of particular interest to Israel also because of its genetic and cultural affiliations with Israel. At present, some 600,000 Israelis are of Moroccan origin most of whom maintain ties with the home country. One could attribute a sense of dual nationality to this population. Any given year, nearly half that number travel to Morocco.¹³⁹ In addition, Morocco itself has around 5,000 Jews who live in free conditions while maintaining ties with Israel. This data on Jewish presence in Morocco is without taking into account the emigrants in France and Canada (Quebec) many of whom have connections with the country also. Such factors makes Moroccan politics an area of concern for Israel and consequently for U.S. policymakers. After all, it is possible that, at times of heightened Israeli aggression in Palestine, the Moroccan population's normally neutral disposition toward Jews could make way for hostile feelings toward those with Israeli ties.

It becomes evident then, that a democratically elected Moroccan government would likely not maintain such amicable ties with Israel—officially or unofficially. It also follows that it would not cooperate with the United States to the extent that the monarchy does, in light of the continual U.S. support for Israel and Moroccan public's disapproval of it. In addition, domestic

¹³⁷ Migdalovitz, *Morocco: Current Issues* (2010), 9.

¹³⁸ Maddy-Weitzman, *Morocco's Berbers and Israel*, 80.

¹³⁹ Migdalovitz, *Morocco: Current Issues* (2010), 8.

pressures in the United States would also oppose the facilitation of a political system in Morocco that would threaten the privileges historically enjoyed by Israelis in the kingdom. Hence the only option all of this leaves for U.S. policymakers is to maintain the status-quo to some level, which contradicts the democracy promotion policy. Thus a hybrid policy that proclaims support for democratization but is heavily tilted toward regime maintenance becomes the viable solution.

Final Analysis

The American Role in Moroccan Democracy

The above analysis explains the reasons for the United States to be conservative in its promotion of democracy in Morocco. These factors pose a conflict of interests to U.S. policymakers. Referring to Michael Barnett's application of the constructivist framework to explain Arab politics, I find a number of parallels in the U.S. involvement with Morocco. On the one hand, realpolitik would call for the maintenance of the monarch who has been consistently cooperative especially international affairs, and is viewed as the only assurance for regional stability. On the other hand, the United States is in need, now more than ever, to construct an image of itself as an altruistic force in the MENA, committed to causes such as liberalizing the disenfranchised populations of the region. This has become a particular necessity for the sake of mending some of the serious damage to its reputation among the Arab public due to its track-record of supporting autocrats who have not met the demands and needs of the populations. For this, Washington has assumed the role in Morocco as a patron of democracy. One of the primary goals here is also to demonstrate to the rest of MENA its intent and ability to bring positive change in the region and the appearance of supporting democracy builds support at home for Washington's Middle East policies. This however is not Washington's only role, as is evident

from the facts analyzed in the chapter titled “Maintenance of the Moroccan regime”. This is also not a very feasible role if concerns on Islamism and Israel are taken into account, as discussed above. Thus the superpower appears to have fallen in a “symbolic entrapment”. It is constricted by its own normative rhetoric about its mission of supporting democracy and is therefore forced to juggle between policies of reason and policies of altruism.¹⁴⁰

Chapter 2 demonstrated that much of the U.S. support for political reform is concentrated on the non-institutional layers of society. It is often described by officials in the U.S. government as a bottom-up approach, with references to theories concerning the need for a strong civil society in order to facilitate democracy. However, it could also be argued that too much support for civil society could actually indirectly reinforce authoritarianism.¹⁴¹ These associations are often very narrow in focus and cause-specific. Their primary goals are typically directed toward a single reform at a given time.¹⁴² Such policy changes could be just as well implemented by an authoritarian government as by a democratic one. It is therefore not within the scope of these organizations to bring dynamic changes to an entire political system.

By enhancing the Moroccan society’s ability to organize in associations, the United States helps pockets of the population resolve their local issues and realize basic needs. It has been noted by scholars that in the opinion of a vast portion of the population, the most important role of the government is to address society’s economic needs, and implement policies accordingly. It is not so much their concern that it be done by an elected leader as opposed to an autocrat. It follows then that by implementing programs for improving the basic quality of life for these masses, and helping to implement policies that address some of their fundamental

¹⁴⁰ Barnett, *Dialogue in Arab Politics*. “Symbolic Entrapment” is a phrase used by Michael Barnett

¹⁴¹ Langohr, *Too Much Civil Society, Too Little Politics*: 181-204.

¹⁴² Cavatorta and Dalmaso, *Liberal Outcomes through Undemocratic Means*, 492.

needs, the United States helps the Moroccan monarch eliminate some serious grievances against the government. This would also decrease society's urge to push for a systemic change that would destabilize the current order in the region. In addition, these actions compete with the services rendered by Islamists. Therefore, an indirect effect of the American bottom-up strategy could be the gradual depletion of the anti-U.S. sentiment, and consequently the Islamist appeal in the long run. These I argue might be the bigger motives in U.S. policy than a full Moroccan transition to democracy in the short run.

On another level, the United States provides significant "democracy" assistance to liberalize Morocco's political institutions as well. The electoral process, political parties, and the judicial sector have enjoyed considerable U.S. support, as was discussed in the Chapter 3. However, it should be noted that in the Moroccan political system, real power is concentrated around the king and the appointed technocrats or royal affiliates. While the lower house of the parliament—the only directly elected body—has legislative powers, most major reforms or legislations have come down as royal decrees from the king himself. Therefore, providing support to these state institutions is not tantamount to paving the road for democracy. Some degree of political liberalization might be achieved, as has been the case in Morocco. The king has recently accorded increased powers and capabilities to the Prime Minister, in addition to binding himself to appoint a leader from the winning party in parliamentary elections. However these are what scholars have described as cosmetic changes, of a "managed democracy," and typically do not lead to a full democracy. Sater explains that political liberalization that occurs where the economic and political elite are in alliance with the broader population can lead to democracy. However, democracy is not likely to follow political liberalization in societies

where the economic and political elites are in alliance with the regime.¹⁴³ In the Moroccan case, as discussed in the Chapter 3, the elite alliance is with the monarch. Thus while it suits the interests of all parties—the United States, the Moroccan public, and the monarchy—to improve the certain democratic institutions within this authoritarian system, it does not endanger regional stability, which appears to be a more pressing U.S. goal for the short run.

It therefore seems that, what are called U.S. democracy promotion policies are actually policies that help the regime appease a disenfranchised population that might someday organize and overthrow it or carry out a revolution as in Iran and, more recently, some Arab countries. By periodically addressing the population's grievances, and by maintaining some kinds of liberalization, the monarch may succeed in preventing regime destabilization. Borrowing from Daniel Brumberg and Glenn E. Perry's similar arguments on MENA regimes, these changes or improvements are only superficial compared to the big picture, and by implementing political liberalization as a substitution, the Moroccan regime can forestall a complete transition.^{144,145} The outcome is in alignment with U.S. interests of regional security and Morocco's stability, hence the continued support for such controlled political reform.

The Illusion of Democratic Gradualism

One might suppose that the democratic transition in Morocco is not designed to be a rapid one, and that the Western patrons promote the idea of gradualism. In fact policymakers in the United States and European Union are supporters of this notion.¹⁴⁶ This could be a

¹⁴³ Sater, *Parliamentary Elections and Authoritarian Rule in Morocco*, 395.

¹⁴⁴ Brumberg, *Democratization Versus Liberalization in the Arab World*.

¹⁴⁵ Perry, *Imperial Democratization*: 55-87.

¹⁴⁶ Malka and Alterman, *Arab Reform and Foreign Aid*, 5.

delusional view as all the changes that have been promoted or have taken place have reinforced the current institutions. The February 20th movement for example called for three things: a parliamentary monarchy; separation of powers; and accountability of those in power. In response to these demands, and as a preemptive measure following revolts in Tunisia and Egypt, the monarch addressed all three of these demands. As per the revised constitution that received an unusually high percentage of votes in the referendum that followed, the king abandoned the “sacredness” clause, at least in the French version of the constitution.¹⁴⁷ He implemented a relatively more democratic form for the Prime Minister’s office. Finally, the new constitution cuts official ties between judges and the Judicial Ministry. However, Ahmed Benchemsi has noted that upon a closer look the most significant autocratic elements remain despite these revisions.¹⁴⁸ The monarchy’s monopoly over power still prevails. On the other hand these reforms have been described by the U.S. government, as a sign of Morocco’s steady strides toward democracy. Here, I argue that these reforms have only put to rest some of the vivacity of the movement. The regime in effect made deals with the population, buying back some of the lost legitimacy. The overarching system however carries on. The Moroccan political system seems to function in such a way that the critical mass usually required for a transition to occur may never be attained. Hence the notion of gradualism is not an assuring one, as there are many signs indicating that a real transformation to democracy is not likely happen within the present scheme of things.

It should also be noted that the stability of the monarchy is not solely a result of Western support or autocratic policies. Despite the grievances in society, and mass opposition to the

¹⁴⁷ See the term “Amir ul-Mouminin” in Chapter 1.

¹⁴⁸ Benchemsi, *Morocco: Outfoxing the Opposition*, 59.

status-quo, there is a widespread sense of legitimacy accorded to the Moroccan king. This sets the monarchy apart from authoritarian regimes in Arab republics. The title “Commander of the Faithful”—one of the titles given to caliphs from the seventh century on—that is established by the constitution, is a deeply rooted notion stemming from religious and cultural tradition. This in itself makes the king a revered entity that the majority of the population may not attempt to overthrow. In addition to this almost automatic source of legitimacy for tradition-minded segments of the population, the king has undertaken certain reforms that have carried highly symbolic value. The dismissal of former Minister of Interior Driss Basri and the IER effort have illustrated to the population that this king cares for justice. Therefore, the public’s grievances and opposition often are not aimed at uprooting the monarchy or at establishing popular control. Even the February 20th movement, the biggest popular uprising against the government in recent times, did not call for regime change. The demands were centered on higher levels of pluralism not denouncing the powers of the monarch. Therefore the legitimacy attributed to the king acts in confluence with U.S. and Moroccan efforts to appease the population with political reforms, preventing opposition movements from reaching a magnitude that might bring total change.

Conclusion

Responding to nudges from the United States to modify some of the authoritarian features in the kingdom coupled with sporadic domestic demands, the Moroccan regime has maintained a record of being a liberalizing one. There have been efforts for better governance and increased representation such as the IER, reforms to the Family Code, and improvements to the electoral process for the parliament. These have been regarded, and perhaps rightfully so, as landmark steps in improving the country’s political system and the quality of life for certain

marginalized segments of society. These, along with a number of ongoing fringe reforms have also been described by U.S. and other Western officials as steady strides toward the establishment of a full-fledge democracy in Morocco. The analysis in this chapter however shows that while individually these reforms have a liberalizing effect, they actually help consolidate the existing system, making it less vulnerable to any potential movement calling for democratization. In addition, an analysis of the stakes and implications surrounding a Moroccan transition reveals that the United States would not likely seek such a transformation in the near future. The U.S. policy toward Moroccan democratization is intertwined with two major factors: the specter of Islamism (or, for that matter, a secular nationalism, as in the past and, conceivably, the future) and the U.S.-Morocco-Israel triangle. These factors are not likely to change drastically soon. In conclusion, U.S. democracy promotion in Morocco is negated by fears of a real transition to democracy, while the superpower's relationship with the monarch continues to reinforce the status of the authoritarian regime.

CHAPTER 5

OBSERVATIONS AND CONCLUSIONS

Introduction

This study has brought to light a number of points. It confirms that many generalizations pertaining to U.S. involvement in the MENA apply to Morocco in particular. For example, this case study reiterates the observations of Daniel Brumberg, Thomas Carothers, and Marina Ottaway, among others, that what the United States actually promotes in certain MENA states is a kind of political liberalization—some degree of contestation, which actually may strengthen an authoritarian regime as opposed to democratization.^{149,150,151} It also adds Morocco to the list of MENA countries where the United States experiences a tug-of-war between its altruistic image as a patron of democracy and the demands of realpolitik.¹⁵² However, an additional nuance that emerges is the possibility that U.S. “democracy promotion” initiatives at the bottom layers of society may not result entirely from Washington’s need to present a favorable image of itself. Rather, these might also be aimed at transforming the psychological orientation of the Moroccan

¹⁴⁹ Brumberg, *Democratization Versus Liberalization in the Arab World*.

¹⁵⁰ Marina Ottaway and Thomas Carothers, “Think Again: Middle East Democracy,” in *Foreign Policy* (November 1, 2004).

¹⁵¹ Ottaway and Riley, *Morocco: From Top-down Reform to Democratic Transition*.

¹⁵² Perry, *Imperial Democratization*: 55-87.

population in the long run vis-à-vis Islamists as well as the United States. This will be elaborated in the following section, which highlights my findings.

Key Observations

Findings from Democracy Promotion, Regime Maintenance, and Moroccan Democratization

The information presented in Chapter 2 on U.S. democracy promotion in Morocco reveal a number of points. First, there is a strong tendency to emphasize certain social issues—e.g., gender equality and encouraging the formation and strengthening of “civil society” organizations – that do not necessarily undermine authoritarianism. Second, there is considerable effort invested in improving Morocco’s existing pluralistic institutions, such as the electoral system and the parliamentary processes. In addition, there has also been a stronger U.S. push for Morocco’s political liberalization and some devolution of power to lower levels of government. In effect, the U.S. policy in Morocco does call for a modestly higher level of democratization within the existing political framework, thereby fostering the legitimacy of the current ruler. However, I have also shown that, U.S. democracy promotion does not in fact address the establishment of democracy at the top. In other words, no part of the extensive data on U.S. assistance presented in Chapter 2 indicates policies that call for a systemic transition to democracy, which necessarily would involve transformation of the monarchy (if it is to be kept at all) into a formality on the model of, say, the British queen and allow full electoral contestation to determine who governs.

The deficit in democracy is compounded by United States support for the regime, which empowers the monarch economically, politically, and militarily. For example the Free Trade Agreement (FTA) is likely to benefit and economically strengthen the country’s elite, especially

the top crust, which, as shown in Chapter 3, is comprised of the royal family and its close associates. It also has the potential to exacerbate unemployment and poverty, marginalizing certain segments of the population. Likewise, the extensive military and security assistance provided by the United States enhances the military might of the regime, considering that the monarch has nearly exclusive authority over the security forces. In addition, U.S. support for the king's autonomy plan in Western Sahara—retaining Morocco's sovereignty over the territory—reinforces the power of the monarchy and disregards the Sahrawi people's aspiration for self-determination.

The liberalization initiatives that have been underway in Morocco appear impressive in themselves. The current monarch has undertaken a series of unprecedented political reforms that make his policies unique in the region and have garnered praise from the West as representing democratization. This began with the dismissal of a Minister of Interior who was much despised by the Moroccan population. Next, the IER truth and reconciliation commission was a groundbreaking move for an Arab authoritarian ruler and stood out as the only one of its kind in the history of the MENA. Reform of the Family Code or Moudawana laws was yet another watershed event in the region and also a perceived victory for civil society organizations that lobbied for this legislation. The United States has supported and praised these moves, pressing the monarch to stay steady on this liberalizing path. The king has also improved the functioning of the electoral system, with significant assistance and technical support from the United States. The parliamentary elections that have taken place since the current ruler ascended the throne have been ranked highly for their transparency and fairness.

However, when all of this is viewed in the broader context of the political system, they reveal that the reforms do not change the basic political framework, as they have bypassed

allowing democracy from taking over the top layers of government. This status-quo is further aided by the policies of the United States that empower the regime as well as remain passive regarding an actual transition to democratization.

Concerns in Washington

The U.S. preference for maintaining the status-quo is explained by two factors. There is the fear of a possible Islamist takeover if democracy emerges. This is in spite of signs that Moroccan Islamism may not be tantamount to an entirely anti-Western Islamic theocracy (which in recent years has come to be seen as the main anti-Western, anti-imperialist, nationalist force). Also, this is in spite of the evident heterogeneity in the population's attitudes toward religion and pan-Arabism. The question of Israel is another primary consideration in U.S. foreign policy in general, and therefore it follows that this would be a factor in policies toward Morocco as well. While the Moroccan monarchy has long maintained friendly—if secret—ties with Israel, this might not be the case if the country were to become a democracy. Such a prospect presumably would impede Washington's desire for any significant change in Morocco's political system. Owing to these factors, it is not likely that U.S. policy will push for a transition to democracy under foreseeable circumstances. However, based on the data presented in Chapter 2, I suggest that U.S. policies might be amenable to democratization in the long run, under other circumstances.

While U.S. policymakers hold that empowering the disenfranchised population is a stepping stone in fostering the development of a strong civil society—considered essential for democracy building by many—there is also another parallel phenomenon that could be happening here. It has to do with the rectification of discontent toward the West, in contrast to

the growing Islamist appeal. Over the years, the necessities of the poorer segments of society in large part have been addressed by Islamist organizations via highly developed channels discussed in Chapter 4. Basic health care, education, and other everyday needs have been provided for by these organizations, whereas the government has failed to meet such needs. It is partly due to such charitable endeavors of the Islamists that their appeal has risen so drastically, tilting the political leanings toward them and away from the pro-Western factions and the less Islamic government. In other words, pro-Western groups have appeared as hegemonic and self-interested, while the Islamist groups appear to be servicing the society's fundamental needs without any obvious vested interests. Thus anti-U.S. sentiments have risen over time. However, through social-assistance programs of the MEPI and USAID, as seen in Chapter 2, the United States could over time diminish the anti-U.S. sentiments. In addition, by competing with the Islamists' uplifting initiatives for Moroccan society, the superpower can also temper down the appeal of hardline Islamist groups. It therefore emerges from this analysis that the so-called U.S. democracy promotion programs are more geared toward neutralizing an anti-U.S. and pro-Islamist society in the long run so that the advent of a real democracy—if it were to come—would not be so threatening to U.S. interests in the region. This is the study's nuanced version of the existing scholarly view that Washington's democracy promotion initiatives are mostly a result of having to provide something to back up its pro-democracy rhetoric while its policy mostly focuses on empowering regimes.

Conclusion

A number of themes and ideas have emerged from this thesis. First, borrowing from Michael Barnett, America's need for "impression management" in the MENA, particularly in the

post-9/11 world order, requires it to take on the altruistic role of a democracy promoter, although mostly in rhetoric. Due to Morocco's long-standing relations with the United States, the general Western view of Morocco as an accessible and moderate country, and its proximity to Western Europe, this North African state has become a prime target for the U.S. democracy promotion experiment. Secondly, Washington's altruistic role is incompatible with the dictates of political realism, which require sustaining the stability of the reliable ally—the monarchy. Regional security concerns have prompted the United States to strengthen its relations with the regime, thereby further empowering it. In addition, the fear of the possible rise of Islamists to power in a democratic Morocco adds to the U.S. hesitation to push for a full democracy. Concerns over the Moroccan policy toward Israel, in the advent of democracy, is yet another factor contributing to this hesitation. Thus, in the current scheme of politics, U.S. democracy promotion in Morocco remains largely in the realm of rhetoric, while it is inhibited in reality by conflicting interests. Yet, it is possible that the U.S. democracy promotion policy is at work for a larger interest—the transformation of the population's psychology from the current degree of pro-Islamist and anti-U.S. leaning to something more favorable. This indeed would ease some of the inhibitions in Washington regarding the actual democratization of Morocco.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

Books, CRS Reports, Journal Articles, and Occasional Papers

- Ahearn, Raymond J. *See* U.S. Library of Congress. Congressional Research Service.
- Arieff, Alexis. *See* U.S. Library of Congress. Congressional Research Service.
- Barnett, Michael N. *Dialogues in Arab Politics: Negotiations in Regional Order*. New York, NY: Columbia University Press, 1998.
- Benantar, Abdennour. "NATO, Maghreb and Europe." *Mediterranean Politics* 11, no. 2 (2006): 167-88.
- Benchemsi, Ahmed. "Morocco: Outfoxing the Opposition." *Journal of Democracy* 23, no.1 (2012): 57-69.
- Ben-Layashi, Samir. "Morocco's 2007 Elections: A Social Reading." *Middle East Review of International Affairs* 11, no. 4 (2007): 72-8.
- Ben-Meir, Alon. "Challenges to Democracy in the Arab and Muslim World." *The Political Quarterly* 77, no. 3 (2006): 328-33.
- Bolleyer, Nicole and Storm, Lise. "Problems of Party Assistance in Hybrid Regimes: the Case of Morocco." *Democratization* 17, no. 6 (2010): 1202-1224.
- Brumberg, Daniel. "Democratization versus Liberalization in the Arab World: Dilemmas and Challenges for U.S. Foreign Policy." *Strategic Studies Institute*, (2005).
<http://www.strategicstudiesinstitute.army.mil/pdf/files/pub620.pdf>.
- Campbell, Patricia J. "Morocco in Transition: Overcoming the Democratic and Human Rights Legacy of King Hassan II." *African Studies Quarterly* 7, no. 1 (2003): 38-58.
<http://www.africa.ufl.edu/asq/v7/v7i1a3.htm>.
- Carapico, Sheila. "Foreign Aid for Promoting Democracy in the Arab World." *Middle East Journal* 56, no. 3 (2002): 379-95.

- Carothers, Thomas. "Think Again: Civil Society." *Foreign Policy*, (Winter 1999-2000): 18-29. <http://www.carnegieendowment.org/pdf/CivilSociety.pdf>.
- . "The End of the Transition Paradigm." *Journal of Democracy* 13, no. 1 (2002): 5-21.
- Carothers, Thomas and Marina Ottaway. *Uncharted Journey: Promoting Democracy In The Middle East*. Washington, Dc: Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, 2005.
- Cavatorta, Francesco. "Geopolitical Challenges to the Success of Democracy in North Africa: Algeria, Tunisia and Morocco." *Democratization* 8, no. 4 (Winter 2001): 175-94.
- . "Civil society, Islamism and Democratization: the Case of Morocco." *Journal of Modern African Studies* 44, no. 2 (2006): 203-22.
- . "Neither Participation nor Revolution: The Strategy of the Moroccan Jamiat al-Adl wal-Ihsan." *Mediterranean Politics* 12, no. 3 (2007): 381-397.
- Cavatorta, Francesco and Emanuela Dalmasso. "Liberal Outcomes through Undemocratic Means: the Reform of the Code de Statut Personnel in Morocco." *Journal of Modern African Studies* 47, no. 4 (2009): 487-506.
- Cordesman, Anthony H. "Winning the War on Terrorism: A Fundamentally Different Strategy". *Middle East Policy* 8, no. 3 (2006): 101-8.
- Crombois, Jean F. "The US-Morocco Free Trade Agreement." *Mediterranean Politics* 10, no. 2 (2005): 219-23.
- Daadaoui, Mohamed. *Moroccan Monarchy and the Islamist Challenge*. New York, NY: Palgrave MacMillan, 2011.
- Dahl, Robert. *Dilemmas of Pluralist Democracy: Autonomy vs. Control*. New Haven: Yale University Press, 1982.
- Dalacoura, Katerina. "US democracy promotion in the Arab Middle East since 11 September 2001: a critique." *International Affairs* 81, no. 5 (2005): 963-79.
- Day, Stephen. "Barriers to Federal Democracy in Iraq: Lessons from Yemen". *Middle East Policy* 8, no. 3 (2006): 121-39.
- Eickelman, Dale F. "Islam Modernity and Public Diplomacy in the Arab World: A Moroccan Snapshot." *Country Portraits*, Hoover Press: Garfinkle/Terrorism, rev1: 61-75.
- El Fssayli, Taieb. *Code de la Famille*. Marrakech, Maroc: El BadII, 2004.
- Esposito, John L. "Shades of Islamism: Islamists and US Foreign Policy." *ISIM Review* 18 (2006): 6-7.

- Filali-Ansary, Abdou. "Questions for the Future." *Journal of Democracy* 19, no. 1 (2008): 50-4.
- Findley, Paul. "Paul Findley: Congress and the Pro-Israel Lobby." *Journal of Palestine Studies* 15, no. 1 (1985): 104-13.
- Galal, Ahmed and Lawrence, Robert. "Egypt-US and Morocco-US Free Trade Agreements." *The Egyptian Center for Economic Studies*, ECES WP87 (2003).
- Gause III, Gregory F. "Can Democracy Stop Terrorism?" *Foreign Affairs*: September / October, 2005.
http://people.virginia.edu/~jrw3k/mediamatters/readings/Foreign.Affairs_Can.Democracy.Stop.Terrorism_F.Gregory.Gause_Sept.Oct.2005.pdf.
- Glennie, Alex and Mephram, David. "Reform in Morocco: The Role of Political Islamists." *Institute for Public Policy Research*, September, 2007.
http://www.centreforcities.org/assets/files/pdfs/reform_in_morocco.pdf.
- Hamzawy, Amr. "The 2007 Moroccan Parliamentary Elections: Results and Implications." *Carnegie Endowment for International Peace: Middle East Program*, September 11, 2007.
http://www.carnegieendowment.org/files/moroccan_parliamentary_elections_final.pdf.
- Hazan, Pierre. "Morocco: Betting on a Truth and Reconciliation Commission." *United States Institute of Peace*, Special Report 165, July 2006.
<http://www.usip.org/files/resources/sr165.pdf>.
- Hirst, David. *The Gun and the Olive Branch*. New York, NY: Thunder's Mouth Press, 2003.
- Hogan, Will. "Morocco: Challenges to Democracy." *Perspectives on Global Issues*, Fall 2008.
<http://www.perspectivesonglobalissues.com/0301/morocco.pdf>.
- Huber, Daniela. "Democracy Assistance in the Middle East and North Africa: A Comparison of US and EU Policies." *Mediterranean Politics* 13, no. 1 (2008): 43-62.
- Hursh, John. "Moving toward Democracy in Morocco?" *Air and Space Power Journal: Africa / Francophonie*, Fall (2010): 64-78. http://www.airpower.au.af.mil/apjinternational/apj-af/2010/2010-3/eng/2010_3_09-E-Hursh.pdf.
- Ismael, Tareq Y. *Middle East Politics Today: Government and Civil Society*. Gainesville, FL: University Press of Florida, 2001.
- Jentleson, Bruce W. *American Foreign Policy: The Dynamics of Choice in the 21st Century*. New York, NY: W.W. Norton & Company, Inc., 2004.
- Joffé, George. "Morocco's Reform Process: Wider Implications." *Mediterranean Politics* 14, no. 2 (2009): 151-64.

- Johnson, Loch K. *Seven Sins of American Foreign Policy*. New York: NY. Pearson Longman, 2007.
- Jones, Seth G, Olga Oliker, Peter Chalk, Christine C. Fair, Rollie Lal, and James Dobbins. "Securing Tyrants or Fostering Reform? U.S. Internal Security Assistance to Repressive and Transitioning Regimes." *RAND Corporation*, 2006. http://www.rand.org/pubs/monographs/2006/RAND_MG550.pdf.
- Joseph, Richard A. *Democracy and Prebendal Politics of Nigeria: the Rise and Fall of the Second Republic*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1987.
- Kalpakian, Jack. "Implications of the 2007 Elections on Moroccan Political Development". *Institute for Security Studies Situation Report*, 2007. <http://www.isn.ethz.ch/isn/Digital-Library/Publications/Detail/?ots591=cab359a3-9328-19cc-a1d2-8023e646b22c&lng=en&id=99997>.
- Kamrava, Mehran. "The Middle East's Democracy Deficit in Comparative Perspective." *Perspectives on Global Development and Technology* 6 (2007): 189-213.
- Kenney, Charles, and Dean Spears. "Truth and Consequences: Do Truth Commissions Promote Democratization?" Paper presented at the 2005 annual meeting of the American Political Science Association, Marriott Wardman Park, Omni Shoreham, Washington Hilton, Washington, DC, September 1-4, 2005. http://www.allacademic.com/meta/p41874_index.html.
- Khakee, Anna. "Pragmatism Rather than Backlash: Moroccan Perceptions of Western Democracy Promotion." *Euromesco Papers*, Paper 73, November 2008. <http://www.euromesco.net/images/paper73eng.pdf>.
- Langohr, Vickie. "Too Much Civil Society, Too Little Politics: Egypt and Liberalizing Arab Regimes." *Comparative Politics* 36, no. 2 (2004): 181-204.
- Laskier, Michael M. "A Difficult Inheritance: Moroccan Society under King Muhammad VI." *Middle East Review of International Affairs* 7, no. 3 (2003): 1-20.
- Maddy-Weitzman, Bruce. "Israel and Morocco: A Special Relationship." *The Maghreb Review* 21, no. 1-2 (1996): 36-48.
- . "Morocco's Berbers and Israel." *Middle East Quarterly*, Winter (2011): 79-85.
- . "Is Morocco Immune to Upheaval?" *Middle East Quarterly*, Winter (2012): 87-93.
- Maghraoui, Abdeslam. "Monarchy and Political Reform in Morocco." *Journal of Democracy* 12, no. 1 (2001): 73-84.

- . “Political Authority in Crisis: Mohammed VI’s Morocco.” *Middle East Report* 218 (2001): 12-17.
- . “Depoliticization in Morocco.” *Journal of Democracy* 13, no. 4 (2002): 24-32.
- Malka, Haim and Jon B. Alterman. *Arab Reform and Foreign Aid: Lessons from Morocco*. Washington: DC. The CSIS Press, 2006.
- McFaul, Michael and Tamara Cofman Wittes. “Morocco’s Elections: The Limits of Limited Reforms.” *Journal of Democracy* 19, no. 1 (2008): 19-33.
- Mearsheimer, John J. and Stephen M. Walt. “The Israel Lobby and U.S. Foreign Policy.” *Middle East Policy* 8, no. 3 (2006): 29-87.
- Migdalovitz, Carol. See U.S. Library of Congress. Congressional Research Service.
- Mitchell, Timothy. “Dreamland: The Neoliberalism of Your Desires.” *Middle East Report* 210 (1999): 28-33.
- Monjib, Maati. “The “Democratization” Process in Morocco: Progress, Obstacles, and the Impact of the Islamist-Secularist Divide.” *Working Paper. The Saban Center for Middle East Policy at The Brookings Institution*. November 5, 2011.
http://www.brookings.edu/~media/research/files/papers/2011/8/morocco%20monjib/08_morocco_monjib.pdf.
- Norton, Augustus Richard. “The Future of Civil Society in the Middle East.” *The Middle East Journal* 47, no. 2 (1993): 205-16.
- Ottaway, Marina and Thomas Carothers. “Think Again: Middle East Democracy.” *Foreign Policy*, November 1, 2004.
<http://www.strategicstudiesinstitute.army.mil/pdf/files/pub620.pdf>.
- Ottaway, Marina and Meredith Riley. “Morocco: From Top-down Reform to Democratic Transition?” *Carnegie Endowment for International Peace*, Carnegie Paper no. 71, October 2006. <http://www.carnegieendowment.org/2006/10/03/morocco-from-top-down-reform-to-democratic-transition/92>.
- Ould-Mey, Mohameden. *Global Restructuring and Peripheral States: The Carrot and the Stick in Mauritania*. Lanham, MD: Littlefield Adams Books, 1996.
- . “U.S.-Mauritania Relations and the Coriolis Force of Normalization with Israel.” In *Les Etats-Unis et le Maghreb : Regain d’Intérêt?* sous la direction de Abdennour Benantar, Alger: *Centre de Recherche en Economie Appliquée au Développement* (2007): 227-263.
- Perry, Glenn E. “Imperial democratization: Rhetoric and reality”. *Arab Studies Quarterly* 28, no. 3&4 (2006): 55-87.

- Pfeifer, Karen. "How Tunisia, Morocco, and Jordan and even Egypt became IMF Success Stories in the 1990s." *Middle East Report*, 210 (1999): 23-27.
- Posusney, Marsha Pripstein, and Michele Penner Angrist. *Authoritarianism in the Middle East: Regimes and Resistance*. Boulder, CO: Lynne Rienner Publishers, 2005.
- Razi, Hossein G. "Legitimacy, Religion, and Nationalism in the Middle East." *The American Political Science Review* 84, no. 1 (1990): 69-91.
- Rosati, Jerel A. and James M. Scott. *The Politics of United States Foreign Policy*. Belmont, CA: Thomson & Wadsworth, 2007.
- Rubenberg, Cheryl A. *Israel and the American National Interest*. Urbana, IL: University of Illinois Press, 1986.
- Russett, Bruce, Harvey Starr and David Kinsella. *World Politics: The Menu for Choice*. Bedford, NY: St. Martin's, 2006.
- Sabir, Abderrahim. "One Step Forward, Two Steps Back: Democracy and Legal Reform in Morocco." *Human Rights Brief* 11, no.1 (2003): 16-18.
- Saidy, Brahim. "American Interests in the Western Sahara Conflict." *American Foreign Policy Interests* 33 (2011): 86-92.
- Sater, James N. "Parliamentary Elections and Authoritarian Rule in Morocco." *Middle East Journal* 63, no. 3 (2009): 381-400.
- Schmitter, Philippe C. and Terry Lynn Karl. "What Democracy Is...and Is Not." *Journal of Democracy* 2, no.3 (1991): 75-88.
- Schumpeter, Joseph. *Capitalism, Socialism, and Democracy*. London: George Allen and Unwin, 1943.
- Sharp, Jeremy M. See U.S. Library of Congress. Congressional Research Service.
- Shoemaker, Jolynn, ed. "Women's Rights and Democracy: Peaceful Transformation in Iran." *The Initiative for Inclusive Security Policy Commission*. Hunt Alternatives Fund, May 2006. http://www.huntalternatives.org/download/101_iran_report_final09_29_06.pdf.
- Silverstein, Paul and David Crawford. "Amazigh Activism and the Moroccan State." *Middle East Report*, no. 223 (2004): 44-8.
- Slyomovics, Susan. "A Truth Commission for Morocco." *Middle East Report*, no. 218, Spring (2001): 18-21.

- Smith, Andrew R. and Fadoua Loudiy. "Testing the Red Lines: On the Liberalization of Speech in Morocco." *Human Rights Quarterly* 27, no. 3 (2005): 1069-1119.
- Stiglitz, Joseph E. *Globalization and its Discontents*. New York: W.W. Norton and Company, 2002.
- Storm, Lise. "The Persistence of Authoritarianism as a Source of Radicalization in North Africa." *International Affairs* 85, no. 5 (2009): 997-1013.
- Sweet, Catherine. "Democratization without Democracy: Political Openings and Closures in Modern Morocco." *Middle East Report* no. 218, Spring (2001): 22-5.
- Tessler, Mark. "Islam and Democracy in the Middle East: The Impact of Religious Orientations on Attitudes toward Democracy in Four Arab Countries." *Comparative Politics* 34, no. 3 (2002): 337-54.
- Tivnan, Edward. *The Lobby: Jewish Political Power and American Foreign Policy*. New York, NY: Simon & Schuster Inc, 1987.
- Tozy, Mohamed. "Islamists, Technocrats, and the Palace." *Journal of Democracy* 19 no. 1 (2008): 34-41.
- U.S. Library of Congress, Congressional Research Service. *Morocco-U.S. Free Trade Agreement*, by Raymond J. Ahearn. CRS Report RS21464. Washington DC: Office of Congressional Information and Publishing, April 13, 2005.
- . *Morocco: Current Issues*, by Alexis Arieff. CRS Report RS21579. Washington DC: Office of Congressional Information and Publishing, December 20, 2011.
- . *Western Sahara*, by Alexis Arieff. CRS Report RS20962. Washington DC: Office of Congressional Information and Publishing, April 05, 2012.
- . *Morocco: Current Issues*, by Carol Migdalovitz. CRS Report RS21579. Washington DC: Office of Congressional Information and Publishing, December 04, 2008.
- . *Morocco: Current Issues*, by Carol Migdalovitz. CRS Report RS21579. Washington DC: Office of Congressional Information and Publishing, February 03, 2010.
- . *The Broader Middle East and North Africa Initiative: An Overview*, by Jeremy M. Sharp. CRS Report RS22053. Washington DC: Office of Congressional Information and Publishing, February 15, 2005.
- . *U.S. Democracy Promotion Policy in the Middle East: The Islamist Dilemma*, by Jeremy M. Sharp. CRS Report RL33486. Washington DC: Office of Congressional Information and Publishing, June 15, 2006.

- Waterbury, J. *North for the Trade: The Life and Times of a Berber Merchant*. Berkeley: University of California Press, 1972.
- Wegner, Eva. "The Contribution of Inclusivist Approaches towards the Islamist Opposition to Regime Stability in Arab States: The Case of the Moroccan Parti de la Justice et du Développement." *European University Institute Robert Schuman Centre for Advanced Studies*, Mediterranean Programme Series, Working Paper RSCAS No.2004/42, 2004. http://cadmus.eui.eu/bitstream/handle/1814/2784/04_42.pdf;jsessionid=BB20589DB3D3529E1ED696A0E967D489?sequence=1.
- White, Gregory W. "Free Trade as a Strategic Instrument in the War on Terror? The 2004 US-Moroccan Free Trade Agreement." *The Middle East Journal* 59, no. 4 (Autumn 2005): 597-616.
- . "The End of the Era of Leniency in Morocco". In *North Africa: Politics, Region, and the Limits of Transformation*. Edited by Yahia H. Zoubir and Haizam Amirah- Fernández. Routledge (2007): 90-108.
- Zehfuss, Maja. *Constructivism in International Relations: The Politics of Reality*. Cambridge University Press, 2002.
- Zemni, Sami and Koenraad Bogaert. "Morocco and the Mirages of Democracy and Good Governance." *UNISCI Discussion Papers*, no. 12 (October 2006): 103-120. <http://redalyc.uaemex.mx/redalyc/pdf/767/76701206.pdf>.
- Zisenwine, Daniel. "A New Stage in Israeli-Moroccan Relations?" *The Jaffee Center for Strategic Studies and The Moshe Dayan Center for Middle Eastern and African Studies*, September 07, 2003. <http://www.tau.ac.il/dayancenter/TAU%20Notes86.pdf>.
- Zoubir, Yahia H. "American Policy in the Maghreb: The Conquest of a New Region?" *Working Paper, Area: Mediterranean & Arab World*, WP 13, 2006.
- . "La Politique étrangère américaine au Maghreb: Constances et Adaptations." *Journal d'Etude des Relations Internationales au Moyen-Orient* 1, no. 1 (2006): 115-33.
- Zoubir, Yahia H. and Karima Benabdallah-Gambier. "The United States and the North African Imbroglia: Balancing Interests in Algeria, Morocco, and the Western Sahara." *Mediterranean Politics* 10, no. 2 (2005): 181-202.

News Articles and Primary Sources

- Al Arabiya with Agencies. "Morocco Voter Turnout 45%, up from 2007 Polls; Voting Tests King's Reform Drive." *Al Arabiya News*. November 26, 2011. <http://www.alarabiya.net/articles/2011/11/26/179198.html>.

Army Logistics University.

http://www.almc.army.mil/ALU_INTERNAT/CountryNotes/AFRICOM/MOROCCO.pdf.

Bloomberg Businessweek Magazine. "Phosphate: Morocco's White Gold." November 04, 2010. http://www.businessweek.com/magazine/content/10_46/b4203080895976.htm#p1.

Committee on Foreign Affairs. "U.S. Policy toward the Conflict in the Western Sahara." U.S. House of Representatives, September, 1982. U.S. Government Printing Office, Washington.

—. "The Impact of U.S. Foreign Policy on Seven African Countries." U.S. House of Representatives, March 9, 1983. U.S. Government Printing Office, Washington.

—. "U.S. Policy Challenges in North Africa." U.S. House of Representatives. First Session, June 6, 2007. Serial no. 110-76. U.S. Government Printing Office, Washington.

Duss, Matthew. "Letter from Herziya, Neocon Woodstock," *The Nation*, February 14, 2011. <http://www.thenation.com/article/158547/letter-herzliya-neocon-woodstock>.

Foreign Assistance Website. www.foreignassistance.gov.

Office of the United States Trade Representative. <http://www.ustr.gov/trade-agreements/free-trade-agreements/morocco-fta/final-text>.

Middle East Partnership Initiative. <http://mepi.state.gov/>.

Millennium Challenge Corporation. "Quarterly Status Report: Morocco Compact." September 2011. <http://www.mcc.gov/documents/reports/qsr-2010002031806-morocco.pdf>.

Morocco on the Move. "Morocco is Committed to Creating a Deeper Military and Economic Alliance with the United States." *Moroccan American Center for Policy*, 2012. https://moroccoonthemove.files.wordpress.com/2012/03/fs_moroccousmilitaryeconomicsalliance10january2012.pdf.

Office of the United States Trade Representative. <http://www.ustr.gov/trade-agreements/>.

Palestine Facts. (Author and Date Not Available.) "Israel-Morocco Relationship." http://www.palestinefacts.org/pf_1967to1991_hassan_peres_1986.php

Perelman, Marc. "Morocco Considering Renewed Relations." *The Jewish Daily Forward*, October 03, 2003. <http://forward.com/articles/8286/morocco-considering-renewed-relations/>.

RTI International. "About RTI." http://www.rti.org/page.cfm/About_RTI.

- “Communities Powering Moroccan Government.”
http://www.rti.org/brochures/morocco_local_governance_program.pdf. RTI 5933 1208.
- Stratricks. “American Troops Deploy to Morocco.” *Drill, Military, News*. April 22, 2012.
<http://stratricks.com/geostrat/5675>.
- T.B., Ahmed. “Deciphering Morocco’s Military Procurement Strategy.” *Blog and News Agency: Netherlands Aid*. June 1, 2011. <http://www.nl-aid.org/continent/northern-africa/deciphering-morocco%E2%80%99s-military-procurement-strategy/>.
- Tanmia. www.tanmia.ma.
- USAID/Morocco. www.usaid.gov/ma.
- “Advancing Freedom and Democracy Reports.” *Bureau of Democracy, Human Rights, and Labor*. May 2010. <http://www.state.gov/j/drl/rls/afdr/2010/nea/129797.htm>.
- “Advancing Learning and Employability for a Better Future.”
http://www1.usaid.gov/ma/programs/ed_activities.html.
- Assistance Objectives. <http://transition.usaid.gov/ma/policy/Morocco-assistance.doc>.
- Country Assistance Strategy. <http://transition.usaid.gov/ma/policy/Morocco-CAS.pdf>.
- “Democracy & Governance.” Last updated June 16, 2009.
http://transition.usaid.gov/ma/programs/dg_overview.html.
- “Education.” Last updated March 06, 2009.
http://www1.usaid.gov/ma/programs/ed_overview.html.
- USAID. “Morocco Rule of Law Assessment: Final Report.” September 2010.
http://pdf.usaid.gov/pdf_docs/PNADT305.pdf
- U.S. Department of State. <http://www.state.gov>.
- U.S. Department of State. “Advancing Freedom and Democracy Reports.” May 2010. Bureau of Democracy, Human Rights, and Labor.
<http://www.state.gov/j/drl/rls/afdr/2010/nea/129797.htm>.
- “Civil Society: Supporting Democracy in the 21st Century.” July 3, 2010. Speech by Secretary of State Hillary Rodham Clinton.
<http://www.state.gov/secretary/rm/2010/07/143952.htm>.
- Verter, Yossi. “The Arab Spring Turned Netanyahu into the National Fearmonger,” *Haaretz*, December 16, 2011. <http://www.haaretz.com/weekend/week-s-end/the-arab-spring-turned-netanyahu-into-the-national-fearmonger-1.401760>.