

DEMOCRATIC TRANSITION IN MOROCCO, 1996 -2011

*Dissertation submitted to Jawaharlal Nehru University
in partial fulfilment of the requirements
for the award of the Degree of*

MASTER OF PHILOSOPHY

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2012

Date: 27.07.2012

DECLARATION

I declare that the dissertation entitled “**Democratic Transition in Morocco, 1996 - 2011,**” submitted by me in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the award of the degree of **Master of Philosophy** of Jawaharlal Nehru University is my own work. The dissertation has not been submitted for any other degree of this University nor of any other university.

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CERTIFICATE

We recommend that this dissertation be placed to the examiners for evaluation.

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Dedicated to

MY PARENTS

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

I take this opportunity with much pleasure to thank all the people who have helped me through my research work. I sincerely thank my supervisor, Dr Aswini K. Mahapatra, for his guidance, help and motivation. I would like to thank all my teachers at the Centre for West Asian Studies for their guidance throughout my course work, I am also thankful to the staff members of my centre.

I am indebted to my parents, without whose support this higher study would not have been possible for me. My family has always been a source of inspiration and encouragement. I will specially thank my father and mother who always inspired me.

I am very thankful to all my friends whose valuable support and observation made my work a good one. They really supported me a lot and gave me encouragement during my study.

For all the errors and omissions in this work, I am solely to be held responsible.

27.07.2012

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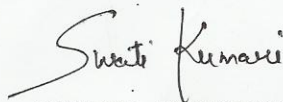
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CHAPTER - I

INTRODUCTION

MAP 1.1: – MAP OF MOROCCO



Source: <http://www.worldatlas.com/webimage/countrys/africa/ma.htm>

Modern history has been marked up by numerous experiences of democratic transition. It refers to a period when a country moves away from dictatorial rule towards democracy. It is thus defined as the ‘interval’ between an authoritarian regime and consolidated democracy.¹ A democratic transition is complete, when institutional structure has been established, when sufficient agreement has been reached about political procedures to produce an elected government, and when a government comes to power through a free and popular vote. What follows next is democratic consolidation, a slow but purposeful process during which behavioural, attitudinal and institutional dimensions indicate that democracy is accepted by all forces in society.²

In short, democratic transition, also popularly known as democratization is a movement “from less accountable to more accountable government, from less competitive (non-existent) elections to freer and fairer competitive elections; from severely restricted to better protected civil and political rights, and from weak (or non-existent) autonomous associations in civil society to more autonomous and more numerous associations.”³ Democratization is a progressive evolution of these components (accountability, elections, civil and political rights, and autonomous associations) in the context of, and conditioned by, state and political institutions, economic development, social divisions, civil society, political culture and ideas, and transnational and international engagements. The end product is a minimalist definition of democracy, which, according to Bruce Russett, “in the contemporary era . . . denotes a country in which nearly everyone can vote, elections are freely contested, the chief

¹Guillermo O’Donnell Schmitter and Laurence Whitehead (1986), *Transition from Authoritarian Rule: Prospects for democracy*, Baltimore, MA: the Johns Hopkins University Press. Also, see Thomas Carothers (2002), “The End of The Transition Paradigm”, *Journal of Democracy*, Vol.13, No.1,pp.5-21

²Juan J. Linz and Alfred Stepan (1996), *Problems of Democratic Transition and Consolidation* , *Southern Europe , South America and Post Communist Europe* ,London : the Johns Hopkins University Press

³David Potter et al. (eds.) (1997), *Democratization*, Cambridge: Polity Press, p.6.

executive is chosen by popular vote or by an elected parliament and civil rights and civil liberties are substantially guaranteed.”⁴

Before discussing further the concept of democratic transition and the factors accounting for this process, it would be analytically useful to have an overview of the meaning of democracy and its contemporary usages. ‘Democracy’ may be defined by its inherent nature and by its empirical conditions. Aristotle defined democracy as ‘rule by the people’ (Greek *demokratia*: *demos* - people *kratia* - rule), and the idea that the people govern themselves is still the core meaning of democracy. But around this idea, several related themes have developed that are now considered as integral to what democracy is. One is that the people govern themselves by regular elections through which their leaders are periodically elected (representative democracy) or policies governing them are chosen (direct democracy). It is a system that makes it possible to get rid of a government without spilling blood.⁵ Universal suffrage and free elections are only rudimentary components of a democracy. These must be enhanced by constitutional limitations on the government, the rule of law, and the protection of human rights. A minimalist definition of democracy, based on popular power and popular sovereignty, must be the beginning, not the end, of a democratization process. Only when supplemented with constitutionally enshrined separation of powers, political pluralism, and individual rights and freedoms can a minimalist concept serve as the basis for the development of a liberal, pluralist, tolerant, and stable society. These components are also found in Robert Dahl’s more inclusive concept of ‘polyarchy’.⁶

Extending Dahl’s concept of polyarchy, Larry Diamond defines democracy as a “system of government that meets three essential conditions meaningful and extensive

⁴Bruce Russett (1998), “A Structure for Peace: A Democratic, Interdependent, and Institutionalized Order”, in Takashi Inoguchi et al. (eds.) *The Changing Nature of Democracy*, Tokyo: United Nations University Press, p.160.

⁵Ralf Dahrendorf (2003), “A Definition of Democracy”, *Journal of Democracy*, Vol.14, No.4, p.103.

⁶Polyarchy includes elected officials; free and fair elections; inclusive suffrage; right to run for office; freedom of expression; alternative information protected by law; and associational autonomy. This definition is still very limited and focuses mainly on structures. Moreover, these requirements are relatively easy to meet, even without significant loss of power for political leaders, and they also do not extend democracy to the economic, social, and cultural aspects of political life. Robert A. Dahl (1989), *Democracy and Its Critics*, New Haven, CT: Yale University Press.

competition among individuals and groups for all effective positions of government power, at regular intervals and excluding the use of force, a highly inclusive level of political participation in the selection of leaders and policies, at least through regular and fair elections, such that no major social group is excluded; and a level of civil and political liberties - freedom of expression, freedom of the press, freedom to form and join organizations sufficient to ensure the integrity of political competition and participation.”⁷ Referring to the above definition Sartori states that the state is a key actor in developing countries. Thus, a theory of liberal democracy that stresses the limitation of the role of the state is not always relevant to these societies. However, there is not one complete form of democracy, it has many forms, According to Schmitter and Karl the democracy is based on consensus, some where it’s the rule of majority and sometimes it is the power sharing of minority.⁸

Democracy is an egalitarian form of government in which all the citizens of a nation together determine public policy, the laws and the actions of their state, requiring that all citizens (meeting certain qualifications) have an equal opportunity to express their opinion. Elements considered essential to democracy include freedom of political expression, freedom of speech, and freedom of the press, so that citizens are adequately informed and able to vote according to their own best interests as they see them.⁹ The term "democracy" is often used as shorthand for liberal democracy, which may include elements such as political pluralism; equality before the law; the right to petition elected officials for redress of grievances; due process; civil liberties; human rights; and elements of civil society outside the government. Former US President Abraham Lincoln (1809-1865) defined democracy as: Government of the people, by the people and for the people.

Democracy, as we know it today, is a relatively recent phenomenon. While some of the Greek City-States and medieval Poland had regimes that had democratic aspects,

⁷Larry Diamond (1996), “Is the Third Wave Over?” , *Journal of Democracy*, Vol. 7, No.3, p. 33.

⁸Terry Lynn Karl (1990), “Dilemmas of democracy in Latin America”, *Comparative Politics*, Vol.23, No.1, pp.1-21.

⁹See Alex Woolf and John Michael Rawcliffe (2005), *Democracy*, London: Evan Brothers Ltd.

modern democracy only dates from the late 18th Century.¹⁰ To be considered democratic, a country must choose its leaders through fair and competitive elections, ensure basic civil liberties, and respect the rule of law. Some observers also claim that a democracy has to have a capitalist economy and a strong civil-society and civic culture, though not all political scientists would include two criteria.¹¹ Dahl has, for instance, argued for adequate institutions and a citizenry especially a middle class receptive to democratic ideals as pre-requisites for democracy. His definition of formal democracy includes “the basic civil liberties that should, in principle, guarantee that the democratic process is inclusive, free of repression and enables citizens to participate in an informed and autonomous manner.”¹²

The “third wave” of democratization has seen a growing divergence between the form of electoral democracy and the deeper structure of liberal democracy. The regular, free, and fair elections is not only enough but also a strong rule of law, an independent judiciary and other institutions of accountability is must that can check the abuse of power, protect civil and political freedoms, and thereby help to foster a pluralistic and vigorous civil society.¹³ Democracy and democratization have been historically and theoretically justified in number of ways and they include broad ideals such as liberty, equality or justice and also more specific notions such as expression of the common will

¹⁰Modern democracies developed throughout the 20th century. Democracies have resulted from wars, revolutions, de-colonisation and economic circumstances. The number of democracies continues to grow and it has been speculated that this trend will continue in the future where democratic nation-states will become the standard form of human society. According to Samuel Huntington, there might be push for democracy in the coming decades towards a fourth wave of democratic transition. Samuel Huntington (1991) *The Third Wave: Democratization in the late twentieth century*, Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, p. 15.

¹¹Moor Barrington Jr. (1966), *Social Origins of Dictatorship and Democracy: Lord and Peasant in the Making of the Modern World*, Beacon Press: D. Rueschemeyer, pp.60-70.

¹²Robert Dahl has given electoral –procedural definition of democracy and sets six criteria , two of which emphasis elections , elected officials ,free fair and frequent elections, freedom of expression, access to alternative , independent source of information , autonomous associations and inclusive citizenship, See Robert Dahl. (1989), *Democracy and Its Critics*, New Haven: Yale University Press ,pp.47

¹³Daniel Brumberg (2002), “The Trap of Liberalized Autocracy,” *Journal of Democracy*, Vol.13, No. 4, pp. 56-67. Liberalized autocracy are the states which promotes a measures of political opening and reforms sufficient enough to meet the demands for change but it should not pose danger or threat to the rulers political survival .

the moral development of the individual, the need to respect human dignity.¹⁴ Under this system, the people elect representatives to make decisions on their behalf. Every few years an election is held and the people are given the chance to vote for the people they want to represent them. Democracy is thus regarded as a method for making political decisions. Huntington, who follows the Shumpeterian tradition, defines democracy as a system in which “its most powerful collective decision makers are selected through fair, honest, and periodic elections in which candidates freely compete for votes and in which virtually all the adult population is eligible to vote”.¹⁵ In addition, democracy also implies civil and political freedoms such as freedom to speak, to publish, to assemble and to organize. Hence, three aspects are identified as central components of democracy: competition, participation, and civil liberties and political rights.

According to Huntington, elections are the central fundamentals of a democracy.¹⁶ Modernization theory helps existing democracy to flourish and survive and in short economic development generates and sustains democracy.¹⁷ The famous device “the more well-to-do a nation, the greater the chances that it will sustain democracy” is the core of Lipset’s argument.¹⁸ Economic development is beneficial for the survival of

¹⁴Philippe C. Schmitter,(1998) “Some Basic Assumptions about the Consolidation of Democracy,” in Takashi Inoguchi, Edward Newman, and John Keane, eds., *The Changing Nature of Democracy*, Tokyo: United Nations University Press, p. 32.

¹⁵The third wave of democratization was coined by him also know as democracy third wave .it’s one of the most popular concept in political science.

¹⁶Huntington , *The Third Wave* , pp316

¹⁷The modernization theory is a much wider concept. The modernization school adopted both evolutionary and functionalist ideas to develop theories that could explain modernization in the Third World. Among the most famous is Walt Rostow’s study from 1964. Modernization is a phased process, it is a homogenizing process, and it represents an Europeanization or Americanization. Moreover, modernization is an irreversible, progressive, and lengthy process. In addition, based on functionalist theory, modernization is a systematic, transformative, and immanent process

¹⁸Lipset also argues that a higher degree of wealth makes the population more receptive to democratic values and norms. Due to the increase of wealth, a generous welfare policy is possible and minor changes in the distribution of wealth are less important than in poor societies. Lipset also argues that increased wealth generates greater tolerance from other classes towards the poor sections. In a wealthy and modern society, there is also less space for nepotism. The emergence of a middle class coincides with the emergence of organizations that may serve as a vital counterweight to the state, and organizational activity may be a method to train citizens in the “skills in politics” and thereby increase citizen participation. In contrast to a traditional society, a modern society is more complex and consequently comprises several crosscutting cleavages that reduce social conflict and political extremism

democracy once initial transition has taken place. The poorer the country, the greater likelihood of reversion to authoritarianism in any given year, yet once a certain level of development is reached (\$9300 per capita income in 2004 purchasing power parity U.S. dollars) the probability of authoritarian intervention drops dramatically and the survivability of democracy appears virtually assured.¹⁹ According to Diamond, economic development drives, or greatly facilitates democratization in two ways first, by transforming the social and economic structure of the country, it shifts power from the state to society, dispersing power to a much wider set of societal actors, making it difficult for one man, one junta, one party or any other small elite to sustain monopolistic power. Moreover, by generating urbanization, better education, more and free information, economic development “profoundly shifts attitudes and values in a democrat direction.”²⁰ If there are no developed states, societies become too complex and socially mobilized to be governed by authoritarian means.²¹

Democratization

Democratization is a long process and it has several stages, the first stage is transition in which states moves away from the authoritarian rule towards a semi democratic regime called electoral democracy.²² The process tends to unfold in a set sequence of stages: opening, breakthrough and consolidation. In explaining the consolidation of democracies, Linz and Stepan have identified “three minimal conditions”, which include stateness, a complete democratic transition and a government

¹⁹Larry Diamond points out that as well as there being no cases of democratic breakdown for states above this level of per capita income during the four-decade period of study of the Przeworski et al. study (1950-1990), no one ever has in the subsequent period. The two wealthiest cases of democratic breakdown were Russia in 2000 (\$8,600) and Thailand in 2005, where it was approximately the same.

²⁰Larry Diamond, Juan J. Linz, and Seymour Martin Lipset, (1990 eds), *Politics in Developing Countries: Comparing Experiences with Democracy*, Boulder, CO: Lynne Rienner Publishers.

²¹Rex Bryen , Bahgat, Korany and Paul Noble (1995), *Political Liberalisation and Democratization in the Arab World :Comparatives Experiences*, Vol. 1 and 2, Boulder: Lynne Rienner Publisher, pp.1-28.

²²There are differences between political liberalization and democratization. While the former encompasses the more modest goal of loosening restriction and increasing civil liberties within an authoritarian regime, the later concept of democratization is much wider, it includes political participation and providing meaningful rights to citizens.

that rules democratically.²³ Further, democratic consolidation is defined as a combination of behaviourally attitudinal and constitutional dimensions. In other words, consolidation of democracy takes place when behaviorally, no significant political group seriously attempt to overthrow the democratic regime, attitudinally, widespread public opinion begins to believe in democratic procedures and constitutionally, political conflict within the state will be resolved according to established norms.

Unlike Linz and Stepan, O'Donnell has analysed the available theories of democratic consolidation and tried to apply the formal rules of polyarchy to understand the informally organised democracy.²⁴ Transition is thus defined as the 'interval' between an authoritarian regime and consolidated democracy.²⁵ The external factors play a very important in the democratic transition, here the British factors played a very important role in implementing democracy in the former colonies and it continues till now. US play an important role in the democracy promotion. The American idea of democracy promotion dates back to the time of Woodrow Wilson. The idea is to bring stability and peace in the world. External powers such as US and EU promotes democracy through foreign aid and they try to build popular support within the region.²⁶ Some of the terms used for democracy by political analysts are façade democracy and pseudo-democracy; sometimes they are characterized as including semi-democracy, formal democracy, electoral democracy, pseudo-democracy, weak democracy, partial democracy, illiberal democracy, and virtual democracy. The concepts of democracy are old indeed, Schumpeter's definition focuses on electoral competition among political elites and parties, "The Democratic method is that institutional arrangement for arriving

²³Linz and Stepan, *Problems of Democratic Transition*, pp.49

²⁴Guillemot O'Donnell and Philippi. C Schmitter (1986), *Transition from Authoritarian Rule, Tentative Conclusion about Uncertain Democracies*, Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press.

²⁶Geoffrey Pridham, (1997) "The International Dimensions of Democratization: Theory, Practice and Inter-regional Comparisons" in Geoffrey Pridham, Eric Herring and George Sanford (eds.), *Building Democracy: International Dimensions of Democratization in Eastern Europe*, London: Leicester University Press, pp.23-39

at political decisions in which individuals acquire the power to decide by means of a competitive struggle for the people's vote."²⁷

According to some scholars such as O'Donnell and Schmitter, the transition to democracy is marked by three stages namely the phase of authoritarian rule, the transitionary phase and finally the consolidated phase.²⁸ Democracy can be viewed as a ongoing and a development process, democratic institution needs to be improved, deepened and may needed to be consolidated, there should be fair elections and the people must have the right to exercise their rights. Democratic developments would bring changes in the developing countries. Democracy generally emerges in various stages, and it has expanded since the development of the third wave of democratization²⁹, for instance the number of democratic countries had increased to 117 in 1996. . Democratic politics is a system of interactions and accountability between rulers and its people there has to be a need to provide the effective accountability so that the position of the rulers depends on their ability to appeal to the majority.³⁰ This accountability of elites to the masses through elections is one of the characteristic features of democracy. A democratic citizen is one who "believes in individual liberty and is politically tolerant, has a certain distrust of political authority but at the same time is trusting of fellow citizens, is obedient but nonetheless willing to assert rights against the state, and views the state as constrained by legality".³¹ The consolidation of democracy requires that "all significant political actors, at both the elite and mass levels, believe that the democratic regime is the

²⁷Joseph Schumpeter (1976), *Capitalism, Socialism and Democracy*, New York: Taylor and Francis.

²⁸O'Donnell and Schmitter, *Transition from Authoritarian Rule*, pp. 45

²⁹Samuel Huntington termed the post 1974 period as the third wave of global democratic expansion. This is a process where a democratic system of government becomes irreversible because it based on electoral choice with free and fair election; there is rule of law and basic civil and political rights.

³⁰Giovanni Sartori (1976), *Parties and Party Systems: A Framework for Analysis*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

³¹James L Gibson, "The Resilience of Mass Support for Democratic Institutions and Processes in the Nascent Russian and Ukrainian Democracies" in V. Tismaneanu, ed., *Political Culture and Civil Society in Russia and the New States of Eurasia*, ed.. New York: M. E. Sharpe.

most right and appropriate for their society, better than any other realistic alternative they can imagine.”³²

Democracy building is a “long-term process” and there are many paths to democracy before it is built and the sustainable democracies should have certain fundamental characteristics such as “respect for human and civil rights, peaceful competition for political power, free and fair elections, respect for the rule of law, accountable government and an environment that encourages participation by all sectors of the population.”³³ For the transition period in many cases is painfully long and erratic. There can be sudden advances, followed by long periods of stagnation or protracted periods of reluctant and partial reform, followed by a perhaps unexpectedly complete and abrupt breakthrough. It is also subject to reversals what analysts call “sudden death” or “slow death.”³⁴ Thus, not all those undergoing transition reach the stage of becoming a consolidated democracy.

The first phase of democratic transition begins by moving away from the authoritarian regime to a democratic one. Countries that are in transition to democracy have chances of weak political institutions and inadequate safeguards to ensure a successful and a stable democracy. It is the autocratic regimes that are repressive and that lack a supportive infrastructure. Throughout transitions, divisions within the authoritarian elite and within the opposition are crucial. O’Donnell categorized the regime supporters into hardliners and softliners,³⁵ the latter being more willing to negotiate with the opposition and to entertain possibilities of promoting liberalization. However, all the

³²Guillermo O’Donnell (1996), “Illusions about Consolidations”, *Journal of Democracy*, Vol. 7, No.2, pp 43-51.

³⁴Guillermo O’ Donnell (1992) ,‘Transitions , Continuities and Paradoxes’, in S .Mainwaring , G O’ Donnell and S Valenzuela (eds), *Issues in Democractic Consolidation : The New South American Democracies in comparatives Perspectives* ,Notre Dame : University of Notre Dame Press, pp17-56.

³⁵O’ Donnell and Schmitter , *Transition from Authoritarian Rule* , pp16.

transitional countries cannot be called liberal; the transitional countries are neither dictatorial nor clearly headed towards democracy.³⁶

One of the most widely accepted notion is that the first phase towards democratic transition occurs with a split within the authoritarian regime. Democratic transition is characterized by a very high degree of uncertainty. There are country specific reasons that drive the process either towards progression or towards regression. Basing the analysis on a number of Southern European and Latin American cases, O'Donnell and Schmitter asserted emphatically that: "there is no transition whose beginning is not the consequence – direct or indirect – of important divisions within the authoritarian regime itself" typically "between hard-liners and soft liners."³⁷ According to this , the transitions in Latin America, Greece, Spain, and also in several Asian and African countries were followed by the first step in which the transition to democracy became the division of the authoritarian elite into factions over internal or popular protest and the question of how to achieve the legitimation of the authoritarian regime. The new emerging democracies are the one who have made a transition from different forms of authoritarian rule to an electoral democracy. The most striking differences between the development of democracy in the old centuries and the new one are the time scale.³⁸

Most of the old democracies evolved in their time and it was a gradual process and the new democracies have emerged only decades back with the help of electoral democracy so the process toward more stable democracy from the new one is going to take time. Any democratic system takes time to mature because there has to be a functioning state, an effective administration. During the cold war their priority was to prevent the spread of communism. Over the years efforts have been made to prevent democracy from waging war against each other and further the spread of democracy

³⁶Carothers, "The End of the Transition paradigm", pp.18.

³⁷ O'Donnell and Schmitter, '*Transition from Authoritarian Rule*', pp .15

³⁸Ibid

would increase international security and it would help people protect their rights.³⁹ During the transition it is obvious to have divisions between the authoritarian ruling party and the opposition transition and moreover transition usually begins with splits within the regimes. Labour unions, the peasants groups, the church and the NGOs plays major role and one cannot underestimate the role of common people. They also take part in the protest, movements and institutions, which are influenced by the other sources.

Democracy has often been the result of international confrontations between the enduring alliances of western democracy and shifting counter alliances of antidemocratic regimes. Thus the regimes change and the moving away from authoritarian is often the result of power struggle between the two opposing powers. Western democracies have used their powers to impose democracy or power change within the regions and external pressure has introduced the electoral forms of democracy but they often remain ineffective. Many new democracies have effective election but there is lack of civic freedom and political rights. That debate has been shaped by Fareed Zakaria's introduction of the term "illiberal democracy" to characterize regimes that now choose their rulers through reasonably free and fair elections, but are deficient in the rule of law and the protection of individual and minority rights.⁴⁰

The main divisions within the opposition are among the opportunistic opposition, generally comprising former regime supporters who have no serious commitment to democracy. Autocratic regimes base their judicial responsibilities within repression. It is this repression that the state in while autocracies can certainly exhibit long periods of longevity on occasion, their longevity is primarily based on authoritarian means such as repression, patronage and class distinction along ethnic, racial, tribal lines or adherence to a single party (such as Iraq's Baath Party).⁴¹ When democratic processes are present but weak, the elites in power seeks to manipulate the processes in order to manipulate the emerging political system. None of these measures are dependent upon transitioning to a

³⁹Spencer R. Weart (1997), *Never at War: Why Democracies Will Not Fight One Another*, New Haven: Yale University Press.

⁴⁰Fareed Zakaria (1997), "The Rise of Illiberal Democracy", *Foreign Affairs*, Vol. 76 , No. 22, pp.14-32.

⁴¹Ibid

democracy; the autocracy lacks the basic infrastructure that is vital to sustaining a stable democracy such as a powerful judicial system, accountability and the ideology of compromise and adherence to a fair electoral process.

When the process of democratization is incomplete, the ruling party finds it difficult to manage or control the emerging politicized masses and the various interest groups as well as trying to ensure its own survival. As the newly emerging democratic institutions are not yet powerful enough to fill the vacuum, the state loses its ability to enforce a strong internal policy to establish control.⁴² At this point of internal collapse, Huntington states “the autocracy splits into praetorian societies, with each individual group looking out for its own interests.

Overall policy decisions are nonexistent as small deals brokering power are bartered within an autocratic market in which interests collide among the armed forces, students, the workers, the economic sector, etc. Powerful cartels are formed, usually along militarist, imperialist, and economic lines. These cartels can quickly produce conflict with outside interests. Authoritarian regimes do not provide democracy's requirements, such as political participation, pluralism, and peaceful alternation of power through free, transparent, and competitive elections”.⁴³ The authoritarian regime show signs of a limited pluralism of political parties, limited competition over power, a constrained space for political participation, the personalization of power, and its monopoly by an individual or a minority .It has been argued by Immanuel Kant that a world in which every state were governed by a republican constitution would be in a state of perpetual peace because citizens, being the ones who bear the burdens of war, would be much more reluctant than rulers to wage it. Mansfield & Snyder hold that the democratic peace is not the result of popular distaste for war or democratic norms but rather the result of strong executive constraints in democratic states preventing leaders from waging unnecessary wars.⁴⁴ Democratic peace theory argues that democracies do

⁴²Ibid

⁴³Laurence Whitehead (2002), *Democratisation Theory and Experience*, Oxford: Oxford University Press.

⁴⁴Mansfield D Edward and Jack Snyder (1995), “Democratization and the Danger of War”, *International Security*, Vol. 20, No.1, pp.5-38.

not wage war on other democracies because well-established internal norms of peaceful compromise prevent disputes between democracies from escalating into wars. Normative peace theory argues democracies are more inclined toward peaceful solutions and more proficient at non-violent dispute resolution than autocracies⁴⁵

Today democracy has a kind of dual characteristics. For a regime to be consolidated, it must not only protect the rights of individuals and minorities in other words. It must guarantee the freedom or liberty of its citizens as well.⁴⁶ Liberal democracy requires the maintenance of a successful balance between majority rule and individual and minority rights, and this is known as *populism*. The definition of populism is quite controversial among social scientists and historians. Democracy is defined as “a political movement that emphasizes the interests, cultural traits, and spontaneous feelings of the common people, as opposed to those of privileged elite. For legitimation, populist movements often appeal to the majority will directly through mass gatherings, referendums, or other forms of popular democracy without much concern for checks and balances or the rights of minorities.”⁴⁷ Populists tend to view “the people” as a homogeneous or uniform grouping in cultural as well as economic terms. Those who differ from the majority in basic cultural traits are more typically viewed as enemies of the people rather than as potential allies.

Democratic transition from authoritarianism also depends on the solidarity that dominates society, the nature of authoritarian relations on the family level, cultural variables (which are related more to Arab culture than to Islam), the level of education, and the degree of the edification of authority. Democratic politics allows for more popular participation, because only few citizens are well informed and the decision making process in democracies is largely restricted to elites. It can appear that democratic politics depends almost exclusively on elite interactions. According to some scholars, a democratic citizen is one who “believes in individual liberty and is politically tolerant,

⁴⁵ Edward and Snyder, “ Democratization and the Danger” , pp. 35

⁴⁶ Ibid

⁴⁷ Torcuato S. Di Tella (1995), ‘Populism’, in Seymour Martin Lipset (eds), *The Encyclopedia of Democracy*, Washington, D.C : Congressional Quarterly Books, pp. 985–89.

has a certain distrust of political authority but at the same time is trusting of fellow citizens, is obedient but nonetheless willing to assert rights against the state, and views the state as constrained by legality”. The success of democracy depends upon the values and attitudes of the ordinary citizens. The consolidation of democracy requires that “all significant political actors, at both the elite and mass levels, believe that the democratic regime is the most right and appropriate for their society, better than any other realistic alternative they can imagine”⁴⁸

Civil Society Activism

As already noted, democracy becomes consolidated only when “institutional infrastructure of democracy” is present, which refers to the autonomous and active civil society, relatively independent political parties, a strong state based on rights and an efficient economy. Civil society is a kind of intermediary space located between citizens’ private sphere and the state in which various individuals act publicly, usually in collective form, to express and advance their interests, make demands of the state, and oversee the work of the government. In its institutional form, civil society encompasses an array of associations and groups such as the Non-Governmental Organisations (NGOs), human rights organisations, social movement agents, faith-based organisations, professional associations, trade unions, business associations and advocacy groups. Because the constituent elements of civil society freely associate and disengage, it is difficult to have a homogenous or cohesive civil society. Instead, different groups represent different interests, and none seeks to monopolise political space claiming that it represents the only legitimate path. In other words, civil society means allowing the disparate political and social formations to inhabit their space un-coerced by fear of repression. Normatively thus civil society implies values and behavioural codes of tolerating, if not accepting, opposing viewpoints, and willingness to compromise. Apart from developing such democratic attributes, civil society serves democracy by restraining the exercise of state power, enhancing accountability and responsiveness and encouraging political participation through its rich associational life.

⁴⁸ O’Donnell, “Illusions about Consolidations”, pp 34-51.

Besides, it is also argued by many that civil society can contribute to the qualitative transformation of authoritarian regimes by generating pressures from below. In Philippines, Eastern European countries, South Africa, Serbia, and most recently Georgia, for example, citizens have used civil society organizations to carve out independent political space, to learn about democracy, to articulate a democratic alternative to the status quo, to spread this idea within society, and to mobilize fellow citizens against repressive regimes. In democracies, civil society organizations provide citizens to pursue shared interests political, social, or spiritual and freely, collectively, and peacefully.⁴⁹ Through civil society citizens learn about fundamental democratic values of participation and collective action and they disseminate these values within their communities.⁵⁰ In the process of democratization civil society plays an important role in transition from authoritarian. The existence of active civil society is considered to be important for a positive development of democracy because it promotes the interaction of people in a voluntary setting, where differences of opinion have to be taken into account because such groups have diverse interests. A number of extensive studies have been done on the active emerging role of the civil society. The rapid expansion of civil society cannot be underestimated that it has major impact on the political system⁵¹.

Civil society seems particularly appealing as the solution to the challenge of promoting democracy in the Arab world. Arab non-governmental organizations (NGOs) have grown in number and prominence in recent years. There have been four main phases of civil society development in the Arab world. Before the European penetration of the region in the nineteenth and early twentieth century's, civil society consisted mainly of community-based self-help groups, guilds, and religiously oriented charitable and educational institutions, these last funded by Islamic endowments known as *waqfs*. A second phase began during the period of European colonialism. "Modern" forms of associative life, such as professional associations, trade unions, secular charities, cultural clubs, and Islamist organizations such as the Muslim Brotherhood, emerged across the

⁴⁹Liath Kubba (2002), "The Awakening of Civil Society", *Journal of Democracy*, Vol.11, No.3, pp.84-90.

⁵⁰Larry Diamond (1999), *Developing Democracy: Towards Consolidation*, Baltimore: Johns Hopkins Press, pp. 218-60.

⁵¹Ali R. Abootalebi (1998), "Civil society, Democracy and the Middle East", *Middle East Review of International Affairs*, Vol. 2, No. 3, pp. 46-59.

region. Many of these organizations were politically active, and they played an important role in nationalist struggles and in supporting pan-Arab causes.⁵²

When Arab countries gained independence, a complete new restrictive third phase began. New regimes feared that pluralistic, independent associative life would undermine national unity and threaten their own attempts to consolidate power. Thus independent civic activity was brought under tight state control as civil society organizations were transformed into state-dominated institutions or were repressed. The fourth phase, which has seen a relative liberalization and diversification of the civil society sphere, began in the 1980s and continues to the present day. Several factors have contributed to this phase. The spread of Islamist movements has led to a proliferation of religiously affiliated groups active in civil society. Many Arab governments began to implement limited economic and political liberalization as a way of staying in power. They have allowed some new NGOs to form, and they expanded the operating space for existing groups. International influences also played an important role.⁵³

The rise of the global human rights and democratic movements encouraged the formation of Arab human rights and democracy organizations. The dramatic increase in foreign aid channeled to NGOs encouraged the growth of these and other civil society groups. In broad terms, Arab civil society today comprises of five sectors. First, in most Arab countries, the Islamic sector made up of a wide array of groups, associations, and movements whose common objective is upholding and propagating the faith of Islam by considering it to be the most active and widespread form of associative life. Islamic organizations provide charitable and social services such as medical care, education, employment assistance, tutoring, and matchmaking, as well as religious instruction and spiritual guidance.⁵⁴ Egypt, Jordan, and Yemen, as relatively poor Arab countries that

⁵² Daniel L. Byman (2005) "The Implications of Leadership Change in the Arab World", *Political Science Quarterly*, Vol. 120, No.1, pp.59-83.

⁵³ Augustus Richard Norton (1993) "The Future of Civil Society in the Middle East", *Middle East Journal*, Vol.47, No. 2, pp.211.

⁵⁴ John Esposito and James Piscatori (1991), "Democratization and Islam", *Middle East Journal*, Vol. 45, No. 3, pp. 407-26

receive large amounts of foreign aid, have large service-NGO sectors, whereas Morocco, Lebanon, and the Palestinian have active civil societies in the region.⁵⁵ Most scholars now affirm that that "both intermediate powers and autonomous social groups exist in the Middle East."⁵⁶ However, the civil society debate in the WANA has focused on changes in formal governance procedures rather than substantive change in state-society relations.⁵⁷

There is thus a need for the well organized and institutionalized groups and associations. The major obstacles to inaugurating democracy in the WANA region are the presence of strong states and weak societies while there are no effective groups and associations to limit the state's power.⁵⁸ Even the people are highly uneducated, they are not aware and there is lack of development. There are certain essential elements for the developments of democracy which cannot be ignored. The rise of civil society and democracy necessitates a certain level of socioeconomic development but, more importantly, it requires a balanced development. There has always been the dominance of the state ruled by powerful royal families, and military and bureaucratic sub-classes. The growth of independent groups and associations has been very slow. The society is weak and divided which makes the political participation poor and hence, the reforms do not prove to be effective enough to bring about a systemic change.

It is vital to create the right conditions for a public space that is open and plural, to produce an independent-minded civil society that is active and fully engaged in the political process. The creation of such a space incorporates the fundamental conditions of democracy, those that guarantee the free expression of ideas, vibrant communities, structured political dialogue and professional and responsible media. The degree to which the revolutionary movements have mobilized Arab youth in the past year shows the real

⁵⁵ Ibid

⁵⁶ Sadowski, Yahya (1993), "The New Orientalism and the Democracy Debate", *Middle East Report* , Vol.14,No.21,pp 17

⁵⁷ Ibid

⁵⁸ Augustus Richard Norton (1995), 'Civil Society in the Middle East', Vol. 1 and 2, New York: EJ Brill.

strengths of the societies affected by these changes.⁵⁹ This unique phenomenon is actually laying the foundations for a strong and inclusive civil society, a vital factor in the realization of democratic ideals. Revolutionary movements represent a passionate appeal by citizens for the creation, in the long term, of a public space that encourages freedom of expression for every member of society. Although an active civil society is a vital ingredient of democracy, the ability and determination of individuals to participate in the democratic process and to choose the way they are governed does not automatically follow. It is therefore necessary to create the conditions in which these rights will be effectively and consciously exercised, at the same time eliminating the obstacles that constrain or prevent the exercise of such rights.⁶⁰

Democratization in West Asia and North Africa (WANA)

Over the past years, efforts have been made to bring reforms in West Asia .There has been ongoing demand to remove the authoritarian regimes. Since the Second World War, there were several democratic developments in all over the world, but West Asia and North African (WANA) remains somehow intrinsically resistant to democratic imperatives.⁶¹ Many scholars have suggested that the weak civil society in the region plays an important role in the failure of democratization in the region, while others attribute it to the incompatible nature of Islam and democracy leading them to label it “West Asian exceptionalism.”⁶² The other major reason is the presence of oil within the region, which helps sustain authoritarian regimes. Over and above, ‘democracy deficit’ in the Arab world is attributed by some observers primarily to absence or weakness of external forces that have driven democratisation elsewhere.⁶³ Thus, obstacles to the

⁵⁹ Bernad Lewis (1994), *The Shaping of Modern Middle East*, New York: Oxford University Press.

⁶⁰ Lisa Anderson (1987), "The State in the Middle East and North Africa," *Comparative Politics*, Vol. 20, No. 1, p. 14.

⁶¹ Daniel Brumberg(2002), “Middle East Studies after 9/11,” *Journal of Democracy*, Vol. 13, No.3, pp. 109-116

⁶² Ghassan Salame, *Democracy without Democrats – The Renewal of Politics in the Muslim World***; Barry Rubin(2002) *The Tragedy of the Middle East* ,New York: Cambridge University Press, p 17; Gudrun Krämer(1993), "Islamist Notions of Democracy," *Middle East Report*, No. 183 , pp. 2-8.

⁶³ Gary C. Gambill (2003), ‘Explaining the Arab Democracy Deficit, Part II: American Policy’, *Middle East Intelligence Bulletin*, Vol. 5, pp. 8-9.

process of democratisation in the WANA region in general and the Arab world in particular cannot be explained either by internal structural or external factors. In other words, obstacles to democracy in the Arab world go well beyond the autocratic nature of present regimes to span a host of factors, from the underdeveloped bourgeoisie and the prevalence of patrimonialism in state structures to the fear of Islamist electoral victory and the multiple Western security concerns that guarantee external support to the region's authoritarian states.⁶⁴ All this has led to a situation where politics in most Arab countries is a family business and the democratic initiatives are suppressed by the robust security apparatus of the state.⁶⁵

There is, however, difference of opinion among scholars whether democracy will flourish in West Asia. While some view the current situation as positive despite the prevalent uncertainty, others argue that the political parties are largely ineffective, playing mostly a ceremonial role serving to legitimate state policies. The emergence of independent sites of social and political expressions within an authoritarian setting is not the same as the emergence of civil society, at least not in its liberal conception."⁶⁶ The growing influence of Islam is the latter's major source of concern.⁶⁷ There have long been debates about Islam's proper role in political affairs, including, more recently, its compatibility with conceptions of governance based on democracy, pluralism, and popular sovereignty. Whereas democracy requires openness, competition, pluralism, and tolerance of diversity, Islam encourages intellectual conformity and an uncritical acceptance of authority. International public opinion towards Islamist movements and parties has been influenced by dramatic events such as the terrorist attacks on the United States on 11 September 2001.

⁶⁴ Aswini K. Mohapatra (2008), "Democratization in the Arab World: Relevance of the Turkish Model", *International Studies*, Vol. 45, No. 4, pp. 271 -294.

⁶⁵ Eva Bellin (2004), "The Robustness of Authoritarianism in the Middle East", *Comparative Politics*, (January), pp.139-157; Allan Richards (2005), 'Democracy in the Arab Region: Getting There from Here', *Middle East Policy*, Vol. 12, No. 2, pp. 28-35.

⁶⁶ Lisa Anderson (1995), "Peace and Democracy in the Middle East," *Journal of International Affairs*, Vol.49, No.1, pp. 25-44.

⁶⁷ Mark. Tessler (2002), "Islam and Democracy in the Middle East: The Impact of Religious Orientations on Attitudes Toward Democracy in Four Arab Countries." *Comparative Politics* , Vol. 34, pp .337-254.

In the past few years, however, there is a change of trend in the democratization process with the increasing role of Islamist. The Islamist mass movements have emerged as the major political player in the region representing in some Arab countries the only viable opposition force to existing undemocratic regimes. The immediate political goal of Islamist is to become a powerful force by participating in the normal politics of their country.⁶⁸ Some of the Islamist groups claim their commitment to democracy and have managed to incorporate key elements of the liberal platform, demands for accountability, constitutional reform, and an end to political repression, and clean government into their agenda. Indeed, the only true ideological competition Islamist parties face in the Arab world is ethnic or religious nationalisms.⁶⁹

Democratization in Morocco

The Arab uprising and the new political reforms in Egypt and Tunisia have brought the demand for changes in Morocco too. It is widely accepted that the revolutions in the WANA in 2011 have been sparked by four factors such as unequal economic development, demography, a lack of political freedom and corruption. Morocco is usually seen as more stable, more advanced and more democratic than many other countries in North Africa. The Kingdom of Morocco is hardly a police state compared to Algeria, Tunisia and Egypt. It has, instead, shown the liberalising trend since the early 1980s when King Hassan II set off the reform process to regain regime legitimacy in the wake of several failed coup attempts, periodic civic protests and bread riots triggered by a severe economic crisis. Accordingly, Morocco experienced tentative moves towards the establishment of democratic governance and the high point in this long transition was reached in 1997–98, when King Hassan II launched his *alternance* (an accountable, competitive government) initiative following Morocco's engagement with the European Union through the Euro-Mediterranean Partnership (EuroMed or EMP) project, later changed to European Neighbourhood Policy (ENP).

⁶⁸ Ibid

⁶⁹ Najib Ghadbian (1997), *Democratization and the Islamist Challenge in the Arab World*, Boulder, CO:Lynne Rienner Publisher .

Morocco initiated its democratization process as a means to avoid radicalization, instability, and violence.⁷⁰ The Key actors in Morocco are very much aware of the need to preserve the kingdom's reputation for tolerance and stability as its strategy for dealing with social change is, in large part, based on political liberalization. Maintaining political stability in Morocco has been one of the most important priorities of the king. The Morocco king has always been open to political liberalisation, the new king is a symbol for hope to introduce democratic changes within the region. The press can examine the government policies. Associational laws are simpler than before, and there are numbers of NGOs and organizations working across the country. Parliament and the political parties operate legally and properly, and there are regular elections and that the public enjoys full participatory rights under Moroccan democracy. However, the press, the political parties, and other civic institutions still cannot cross question and criticize the royal family, or any of the Moroccan foreign relations.

Morocco has made great gains in recent years, but still faces formidable challenges. Among the most important are rising poverty, due to high levels of unemployment Morocco's Human Development Index (as calculated by the United Nations) places Morocco closer to a low-income country (like Bangladesh) than a middle-income country (like Jordan).⁷¹ Despite the external shocks and low economic growth economic liberalization has been slow but steady, Democracy has progressed since 1999, with fair and transparent national elections for the first time since Morocco's independence. Yet, the advance of democracy is offset by continuing lack of economic opportunities.

Amidst the anti-regime protests with the spread of the Arab Spring, the king is playing a tactical game as he announced to introduce a new consultation in response to the demands of protesters and thus to shore up the monarchy's legitimacy. However, the king seems less inclined to make meaningful changes to the power balance in the near future. The new Moroccan constitution with 180 articles approved overwhelmingly in the 1 July 2011 referendum though included important constitutional changes and

⁷⁰ William I Zartman (1964), *Morocco :Problems of New Power* , New York : Atharons

⁷¹ Rémy Leveau (1997) , "Morocco at the Crossroads", *Mediterranean Politics*, Vol. 2, No. 2, pp. 95.

improvement related to human rights, the monarchy ceded none of its essential prerogatives, thus preserving its control of the Moroccan political scene intact. The King has, for instance, retained his role as Commander of the Faithful and thus the highest religious authority of the country, as well as maintained his power over the country's armed forces and foreign policy. As commented by a critic, "the new Moroccan constitution is not yet the people's constitution; it is the regime's constitution."⁷²

While Morocco has a form of participatory system, it is not a democracy because constitutionally, sovereignty cannot reside with the people given the central role of the king. Hence, there remains a contradiction at the core of the political reforms which, according to an observer, "might not be resolvable and may indeed blight its eventual outcome."⁷³ It is thus arguable that in the absence of a fundamental change in balance of power between the palace and the elected institutions, Morocco will likely remain in the 'grey zone' as a 'liberalised autocracy' rather a transitional democracy.

⁷² Abdeslam M Maghraoui (2011), "Constitutional reforms in Morocco: between consensus and subaltern politics", *The Journal of North African Studies*, Vol. 16, no. 4, December, p. 680; also see Irene Fernandez Molina (2011), "The Monarchy vs the 20February Movement: Who Holds the Reins of Political Change in Morocco?", *Mediterranean Politics*, Vol. 16, No. 3, pp. 435-441.

⁷³ George Joffe (2009), "Morocco's Reform Process: Wider Implications", *Mediterranean Politics*, Vol. 14, No. 2, p.156.

CHAPTER – II

POLITICAL SYSTEM IN MOROCCO

Morocco is a country of about 32 million people. It has a unique place in the West Asia and the North Africa region (WANA). It is located in the Atlantic, the Mediterranean and the Strait of Gibraltar and the Great Sahara.⁷⁴ The country has a privileged position in the Maghreb as well as in the Western Mediterranean area. It is called a Maghreb as well an Arab, and Muslim, Saharan, African, Mediterranean and oceanic country. Moroccans are predominantly Sunni Muslims of Arab, Berber, or mixed Arab-Berber ancestry. There is also a small Jewish community as well as some Christian population. Both enjoy religious freedom and full civil rights. Its urban population is increasing day by day. In terms of economic growth it is the least developing. There is wide spread poverty and low levels of economic developments. In 2005, Morocco had the second-largest non-oil GDP. It has GDP growth about 4.5%. It has a large tourism industry and a growing manufacture sector. Foreign investments are also increasing. France remains its primary creditor and foreign investor. European Union invests about 73.5% in Morocco.⁷⁵ It still has good relation with its colonizers Spain and France. French is widely spoken in Morocco and it remains the second language of the country.

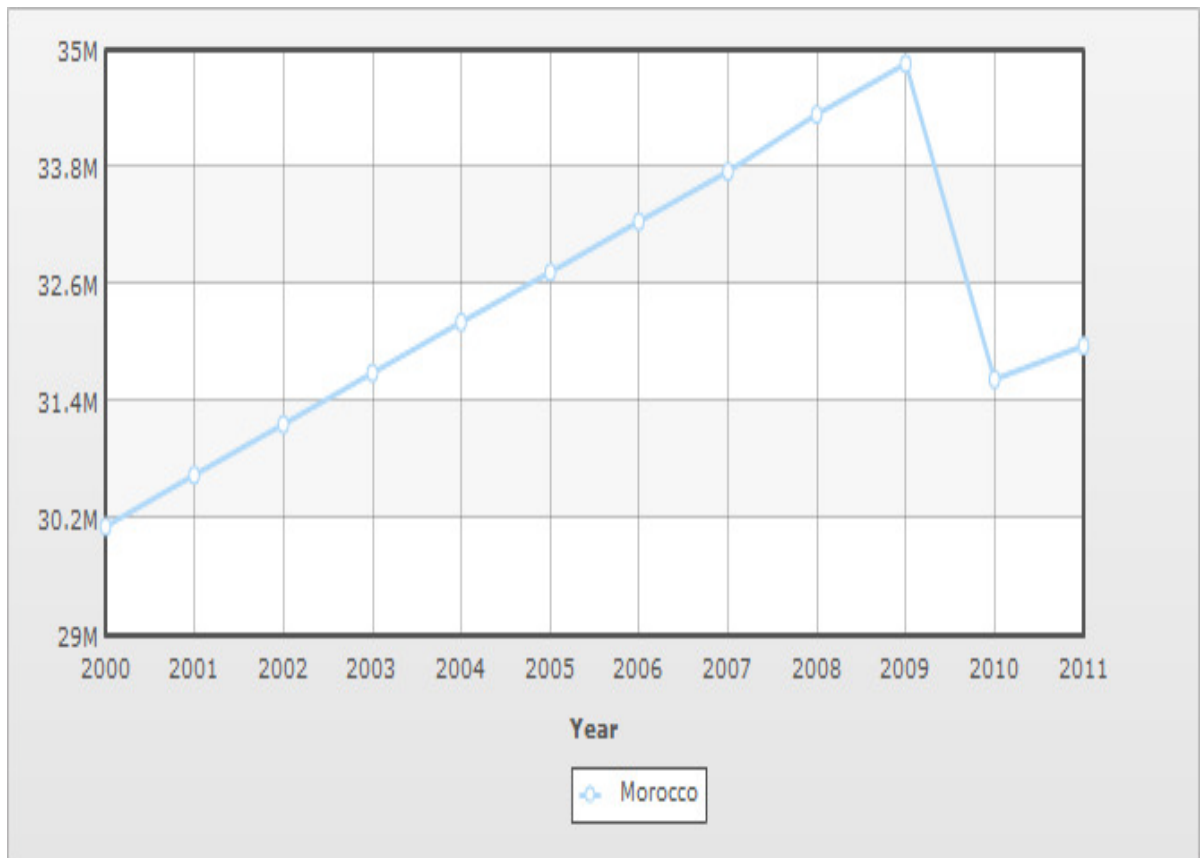
Morocco's relationship with the western countries is related with its past colonial history. The country always had substantial importance for the West. It was one of its key allies in the region during the Cold War. The relevance of Morocco did not disappear at the end of the Cold War. It has very strong relationship with the western ally especially with United States and European Union (EU) in order to gain economic and political benefits.⁷⁶ According to the United Nations report on developing countries 2011, Morocco ranks at 114 almost fifteen percent of population lives below the poverty line.

⁷⁴ C. R. Pennell (2000), *Morocco since 1830: A History*, London: C. Hurst and Co Ltd.

⁷⁵ Larry A. Barrie (1996), "Morocco." In the *Encyclopedia of the Modern Middle East*. (Eds), Reeva S. Simon, Philip Mattar and Richard W. Bulliet., New York: Simon & Schuster Macmillan.

⁷⁶ [http://www.nationsencyclopedia.com/World-Leaders-2003/Morocco-Foreign policy .html](http://www.nationsencyclopedia.com/World-Leaders-2003/Morocco-Foreign%20policy.html)

FIGURE 1.1: POPULATION OF MOROCCO FROM 2000 TO 2011



Country	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011
Morocco	30,122,350	30,645,300	31,167,780	31,689,260	32,209,100	32,725,850	33,241,260	33,757,180	34,343,220	34,859,360	31,627,430	31,968,360

Source: index mundi, historical data graph per year,

<http://www.indexmundi.com/g/g.aspx?c=mo&v=66>

TABLE 1.1 - GROSS DOMESTIC PRODUCTS (GDP)

Moroccan GDP growth (IMF)	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2004–2010
Moroccan GDP(PPP)	101.904	108.171	120.365	126.943	138.177	148.109	159.007	NA
Moroccan GDP(Nominal)	56.948	59.524	65.640	75.116	90.470	97.68	106.59	NA
Moroccan GDP(PPP) per capita	3,409	3,585	3,945	4,093	4,432	4,725	5,025	NA
Percentage of GDP growth	4.8	3.0	7.8	2.7	6.5	4.4 (est.)	4.4 (est.)	Av. of 5.2%
Public Debt (percentage of GDP)	59.4	63.1	58.1	53.6	51.9	51.8 (est.)	50.1 (est.)	NA

Source: Morocco GDP Growth Rate and The IMF
http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Economy_of_Morocco

Historical Background

Modern Morocco dates back to seventh century, when Arabs settlers established them. Berber and Arab dynasties traded power throughout the Middle Ages, until the Alaouites gained political control in the mid-1600s. Around the 12th century BC, the area was colonized by Arab-Phoenicians, who developed trading colonies and integrated the area into the Mediterranean trading economy. From the eighth to the second centuries BC, Carthage held sway over northwestern Africa, until it was defeated by Rome in 146 BC.⁷⁷ The fall of Rome in the fifth century AD left Morocco open to invasion by the Vandals, the Visigoths, and then the Byzantine Greeks.

The kingdom resisted foreign control until the 19th century, when French and British colonial dominance was established over North Africa. Gradually, the French gained special status over most of the Maghreb. In 1912, Morocco became a French protectorate, while Spain assumed control over the Sahara and some Northern regions.⁷⁸ Spain was awarded control over Western Sahara. As a protectorate, Morocco retained sovereignty, and the Sultan was the country's leader. However, Morocco was ruled by a colonial administration. National political parties came into existence for the demand of independence. The *istitqlal party* founded in 1944 was one of the earliest demanding for freedom. , Mohammed V, returned from exile in 1955 to lead a revolution against the French,⁷⁹ who ruled the country via a protectorate. Morocco gained independence in 1956 after signing of French Morocco agreement on March 2, 1956.⁸⁰

⁷⁷ Ahmed Balafrej (1956), "Morocco Plans for Independence", *Foreign Affairs*, Vol.34, No.3, pp.483-489.

⁷⁸ Willard A. Beling (1964), "Some Implications of the New Constitutional Monarchy in Morocco", *Middle East Journal*, Vol.18, No.2, pp.163-179.

⁷⁹ In 1953 when French gained control over morocco. There was demands for changes by the educated people of morocco and *Istitqlal* party was formed with the support of the sultan of Morocco Mohammed V, French were opposed to the idea of independence and seeing as a threat ,king was forcefully sent to exile from 1953 to 1955

Alawite Dynasty

The legitimacy of the ruling Alawite dynasty, which emerged in the 17th century, has been based on the Sharifian ancestry, the Arabian origin related to Prophet Mohammad via his daughter Fatima and his cousin Ali.⁸¹ In addition to his noble religious ancestry, the King is also traditionally seen as the dispenser of God's blessing (*baraka*). The *Sharific* status, however, confers on the monarch religious authority in his capacity as "commander of the faithful" (*amir al-mu'minin*). Thus, the monarch has "a political function, maintained through his monopoly on the state and on the means of coercion, and a religious function, enhanced by his prophetic lineage".⁸² This dual power allows the King to legitimately mobilize Islam in order to define some of the legal, political, and moral norms that govern the nation.

The sacred character of the monarch was further strengthened in the Article 19 of the 1962 constitution, which states, "The King, commander of the faithful, supreme representative of the nation, symbol of its unity, and guarantor of the endurance and continuity of the state, keeps watch over Islam and the Constitution".⁸³ The monarchy also derives its legitimacy from the religion, Islam. The monarchy in Morocco is not just a dynasty, it has ruled the country for almost three centuries, and a descendent from the prophetic lineage through the 'Alawite family, this *Sharific* status gives to the monarch religious authority in his capacity as "commander of the faithful" (*amir al-mu'minin*).⁸⁴ The monarch has "a political function, maintained through his monopoly on the state and

⁸⁰ Balafrej, "Morocco Plans", pp.486

⁸¹Gregory White (2011), "Kingdom of Morocco" in David E. Long, B. Reich and Mark Gasiorowski, eds., *The Government and Politics of the Middle East and North Africa*, Boulder CO: Westview Press, pp. 447 – 478.

⁸²Lise Storm(2010), 'Democratization in Morocco: The Political Elite and Struggles for Power in the Post-Independence State', London: Routledge , pp.1-220

⁸³ The constitution of 1962 was country's first ever constitution. although the constitution was based on democratic principles it was not based on popular elected representation, the main problem was the position of the government , it all consist of non elected elite and all subordinate to the King.

⁸⁴Malika Zeghal (2008),*Islamism in Morocco: Religion, Authoritarianism and Electoral Politics*, Princeton, NJ: Markus Wiener Publishers.

on the means of coercion, and a religious function, enhanced by his prophetic lineage”.⁸⁵ This dual power allows the King to “legitimately mobilize Islam in order to define some of the legal, political, and moral norms that govern the nation” .Summing up the position of the Moroccan monarch as symbol of unity and continuity, an analyst has commented, “Although the political legitimacy of the Moroccan monarchy is rooted in a symbolic order that may be considered ‘traditional,’ it is no longer regulated by hereditary personal qualities, nor is it necessarily unresponsive to modern social and political demands”.⁸⁶

Constitutional Monarchy

Since its independence from France in 1956, it has a political system based on “authoritarian pluralism”. Morocco has both the authoritarian character embodied in the executive pre-eminence of the monarchy and a democratic one reflected in the presence of multiparty political system civil society activism.⁸⁷ The King has the supreme powers, all the political institutions, whether legislative, executive, or judicial are subordinate to it. The King has a unique and dominant position in the Morocco Constitution. Article 19 of the 1962 Constitution, for instance, identifies the King as the guarantor of independence, unity, and the continuity of the state.⁸⁸ The King is also the protector of the faith and the Constitution. This effectively presents the King with absolute power over all aspects of the state apparatus. King Hassan II, for instance, often reminded his subjects of his position: “It is necessary that your King, protector of the Constitution and defender of everyone’s liberties, can at all time control and conduct the affairs of the state”.⁸⁹ The King has the absolute powers in morocco. Unfortunately King Mohammed V couldn’t rule for a long after the revolution and his son assumed the powers. The people have lot of expectations from him, but he continued with his authoritarian nature

⁸⁵ Ibid

⁸⁶Francesco Cavatorta (2001), “ Geopolitical Challenges to the Success of Democracy in North Africa: Algeria , Tunisia and Morocco, *Democratization*, Vol. 8, No.4, pp.175-194

⁸⁷ Ibid

⁸⁸ Omar Bendourou(1996), “Power and opposition in Morocco” *Journal of Democracy* ,Vol.7, No.3,pp. 108-122

and had a lot of control on the system.⁹⁰ It was only in 1990 that he had increased the role of the legislature and set up the Royal Council for Human Rights.

The Makhzen

After independence, the Moroccan monarchs developed a powerful coercive apparatus, the *Makhzen*, to control the army and the administration and placed it under the direct control of the palace. In common discourse the term *Makhzen* refers to the government and all its public services. Among the regime-critics, the term is used to refer to the royal establishment made up of a network which declares devotion to the King in return for material benefits. The term is frequently used to avoid using the word ‘King’⁹¹. Faced with considerable challenges, including attempted coups d’état in the 1970s, King Hassan resorted to the policy of repression and cooptation of the opponents. During these “*années de plomb*” (years of lead), hundreds of palace opponents were abducted and thousands were imprisoned and sometimes tortured.⁹² The majority was made up of leftists, but Islamists, advocates of Western Saharan independence, and military personnel implicated in several unsuccessful coups all experienced their share of repression. At the same time, revisions of the constitution took place in 1970 and 1980, which, however, left that pattern of domination intact, even enhancing it in key ways. Political parties were, for instance, allowed to exist, but Hassan’s strategies of division and co-option rendered them largely ineffectual. A pluralistic system was encouraged by the King as a strategy to prevent the rise of a powerful party. In order to survive and enjoy the favour of the palace, parties had to accept the theocratic concept of power,

⁸⁹ Ibid

⁹⁰ Barrie, *Morocco*, pp.125

⁹¹ William I. Zartman (1964), *Destiny of a Dynasty: The Search for Institutions in Morocco’s Developing Society*, Columbia: University of South Carolina Press.

⁹² Storm, *Democratization in Morocco* , pp.1-220

which made the King the political and spiritual head of the country and the uncontested guide of the nation.⁹³

.Monarchical Authoritarian

The Moroccan monarch is invested with the power of the divine will in his capacity as the Commander of the Faithful. He appoints all the members of the government and also maintains both a temporal and a religious status as the political leader of a community of believers.⁹⁴ The tradition of rule in Morocco was that of the Caliphate style. The powers of the sultan were limited and carefully specified; the sultan had executive but not legislative authority. It was the *Ulema* who exercised sovereignty and their power limited the status of the sultan. For instance, the heir would officially become the sultan only after receiving their formal act of allegiance. The *Ulema* also have the right to dethrone a sultan if this latter did not fulfill his mission.⁹⁵ This was the case in Morocco till the time of the protectorate in 1912 when the French ended the sultan with all the powers in order to be able to rule through him. After independence in 1956, the *Istiqlal* party which was composed of leaders of the nationalist movement presented itself as the “natural party of power” and wanted to make of Morocco a monarchy after the British model where the sovereign reigns but does not rule.⁹⁶

After returning to Morocco from exile, the King Mohammed V found himself forced to embrace the *Istiqlal* party and share the exercise of power with it. Besides the threat this presence in government would pose, the monarchy came to grips with it by supporting the creation of new parties and enforcing any divisions within the *Istiqlal* party.⁹⁷ After six years of independence, Morocco drafted its first constitution. King Hassan II solely designed the document without involving any political party, and that is how the monarchy maintained its position as the foundation of the political system in the

⁹³ Ibid

⁹⁴ Penell ,*Morocco since 1830*, pp 42

⁹⁵ Bendourou , *Power and opposition in Morocco* ,pp .108-122

⁹⁶Balfrej, *Morocco*, pp. 483-489.

⁹⁷ Ibid

country.

This sacred character of the monarch was further strengthened in the 1962 constitution in article 19, which states that “The King, commander of the faithful, supreme representative of the nation, symbol of its unity, and guarantor of the endurance and continuity of the state, keeps watch over Islam and the Constitution. He is the guardian of the rights and liberties of citizens, social groups, and collectivities.”⁹⁸

After independence, the Moroccan monarchs have situated themselves as the arbiters of the political game, above any other political actors, whom they have divided in order to rule. The monarch developed a powerful coercive apparatus, the *Makhzen*, to control the army and the administration and placed it under the direct control of the palace.⁹⁹ Multipartism is another strategy used by the monarchy to prevent the rise of a powerful party. The monarchy encouraged a pluralistic system so that if one party emerged too powerfully, than it could be crushed by the supporters to weaken them. *Ulema* played an important role in Morocco during the colonial period. The power of *Ulema* reached its zenith at the end of the nineteenth century and at the beginning of the twentieth century, partly as a result of the pressures faced by the *makhzen*. Many of the *Ulema* took an impeccably anti-colonial line which increased both its popular standing amongst the population and its importance for the *makhzen*.¹⁰⁰

The *makhzen* began increasingly to seek the help of the *ulema* in order to justify their policies in the face of an increasingly hostile population, by producing *afatwa* (religious decree) of support. One of the most famous *fatwas* issued by the *Ulema* was that of the Fagih Sidi Ali Tasuli, which was centred on the state administration during times of foreign invasion. Yet the *Ulema's* support for the *makhzen* was itself conditional, depending on a correct attitude on the part of the state towards the colonial powers. The *Ulema* were to participate in the deposition of Mulay Abd al-Aziz and Mulay Abd al-Hadfidh following their failed attempt to launch a *jihad* (holy war) against the colonial

⁹⁸ Douglas E. Ashord (1961), *Political Change in Morocco*, Princeton, N.J.:Princeton

⁹⁹ Ibid

¹⁰⁰ Ibid

powers which led to the signing of the Protectorate Treaty in 1912.¹⁰¹

In order to survive and enjoy the favour of the palace, parties had to accept the theocratic concept of power, which made the King the political and spiritual head of the country and the uncontested guide of the nation.¹⁰² The opposition has struggled for so long to share in the exercise of power. In the late 1980s, King Hassan II promised opposition leaders stability and the support of a majority in parliament for the first of what he envisioned as a series of “alternating leftist and rightist government”. The opposition and the King realized the rising threat of Islamists. The King, as the commander of the faithful, monopolizes religious authority and tolerates no competition in that area, and he even uses the means of threats if he feels destabilized.¹⁰³

Moroccan Parliamentary System

After the independence in 1956, Morocco established a constitutional monarchy with the king as head of state. Several parties were inherited from the independence movement, so a multiparty system was included in the new state.¹⁰⁴ In 1962, King Hassan II drafted a constitution and gave extensive powers to the King and established a unicameral parliamentary system based on competitive elections. Accordingly, the first elections were held in 1963.¹⁰⁵ The opposition did well in the elections, but the King had many opposition deputies arrested on accusations of electoral fraud, and in November 1963 the Supreme Court annulled many other races won by opposition members. The next two years saw extensive social and political unrest in Morocco, and riots in March 1965 led the King to suspend Parliament, ban all political activity, and appoint a new government with himself as Prime Minister. The King thus assumed both legislative and

¹⁰¹ Hassan II (1978), *The Challenges: The Memoris of King Hassan II of Morocco*, London: Macmillan Limited.

¹⁰² Bendourou , *Power and opposition in Morocco*, pp.108-122.

¹⁰³ Marvine Howe (2000), “Morocco's Democratic Experience”, *World Policy Journal*, Vol.17, No.1, pp. 65-70.

¹⁰⁴ Ibid

¹⁰⁵ The King's new party, *Front for the Defence of the Constitutional Institutions*, (FDIC) emerged as victorious in the parliamentary elections. The main opposition parties were the istiqlal party and the national union for popular forces

executive power. For the next five years, Morocco remained without a parliament. In July 1970, the King and his advisers prepared a new constitution and it was approved by another national referendum followed by another parliamentary election. In many places these elections were rigged in favour of the pro-monarchy parties, and the opposition boycott merely ensured their victory.¹⁰⁶ The King apparently guaranteed that the parliament would pose no threat by guaranteeing the election results.

Following the abortive military coups against the King in 1971 and 1972, another constitution was submitted for a popular referendum in 1972.¹⁰⁷ This time, it gave additional powers to the parliament and provided for regular elections every six years. Two-thirds of the deputies were to be directly elected and one-third selected by an electoral college of local officials. In 1992, the major opposition parties formed the *National Front (al-Koutla)* to contest government policies and demand electoral reforms, guarantees for fair elections, lowering the minimum age for voting, and greater powers for the legislature.¹⁰⁸ In response, the King proposed amendments to the constitution to meet some of these demands. The 1992 constitution made changes in key areas for more accountable government. It empowers the Prime Minister to select his or her own ministers and places the cabinet under the Prime Minister's authority. Previously, the King both chose and ruled the cabinet directly. In addition, the Parliament's oversight power over the cabinet was enhanced, and the Prime Minister and cabinet were held increasingly accountable for policy decisions.

¹⁰⁶. Waterbury Laurence (1970) *The Commander of the Faithful: The Moroccan Political Elite. A Study in Segmented Politics* New York: Columbia University Press, p118.

¹⁰⁷ In 1971 there was an attempt of the first military coup with the support of Libya , General Madbouh and Colonel Ababou organized this at the function in king's palace. there were important guest as Belgain ambassador Marcel Dupert. the 1972 military coup was done by the the Royal Moroccan Air Force firing the four F-5 military upon the King's Boeing 727 while he was traveling back to Rabat from France. The survived both the military coups.

¹⁰⁸ Moshe Gershovich (2008), "Democratization in Morocco: Political Transition of a North African Kingdom", *The Middle East Institute Policy Brief*, pp .1 -11.

Faced with the domestic challenges, the king snapped to address the political aspirations of the mobilised urban middle classes through ‘a controlled opening’ of the political system. These classes in Morocco were not well integrated into the channels of the monarchy and are more likely to press their interests through formal organizations and institutions such as political parties, interest groups, NGOs, syndicates, trade unions and Parliament. Many opposition activists saw this as evidence that King Hassan II had absolutely no inclination toward creating a parliament with independent powers. The King announced that he wanted to provide a mechanism for *alternance* in the political system. The King offered the opposition the opportunity to form a government, but refused to grant them the portfolios of the Interior, Foreign Relations and Justice or Finance ministries.¹⁰⁹ The opposition balked at this proposal.

Encouraged by the social, political and economic situation of the country, the two important opposition leaders returned from exile to convince the opposition to forge ahead – unilaterally, if necessary to negotiate a compromise with the government. They were Abderrahmane Youssoufi, the leader of the opposition party (Socialist Union of People’s Forces—USFP), and Mohamed “Fqih” Basri, (Nationalist Union of People’s Forces— UNFP).¹¹⁰ Conjointly, the two men worked to find a mutual solution between the government and the opposition bloc.¹¹¹ King Hassan did not cooperate with any of the two (USFP and UNFP) parties and ironically he attempted no new changes in the political system¹¹².

¹⁰⁹ Ibid

¹¹⁰William I. Zartman (1964) *Destiny of a Dynasty: The Search for Institutions in Morocco’s Developing Society*, Columbia: University of South Carolina Press.

¹¹¹ Catherine Sweet(2001) “Democratization without Democracy: Political Openings and Closures in Modern Morocco,” *Middle East Report*, No. 218, pg. 23.

¹¹²Marina Ottoway and Meredith Riley (2006) “Morocco: From Top-down Reform to Democratic Transition.”, http://www.carnegieendowment.org/files/cp71_ottaway_final.pdf

Role of Political Parties

Participation and the structuring of a representative parliament are an important link between civil and political society.¹¹³ The development of a sustainable democracy is difficult without the emergence of political society as an arena in which the system specifically arranges itself for political contestation in order to gain control over public power and the state apparatus. As argued by some analyst's democratic transition must involve political society, and the composition and consolidation of a democratic polity must entail serious thought and action about those core institutions of a democratic political society. Political parties, elections, electoral rules, political leadership, intra party alliances, and legislatures through which civil society can constitute itself politically to select and monitor democratic government.¹¹⁴

Many see the parties in Morocco as suffering from narrow bases of support, unclear platforms and vulnerability to manipulation from the palace. The result is a weak political party system and a polity in which decisions regarding reform emanate nearly exclusively from the palace.¹¹⁵ Unless Morocco peacefully generates politically representative institutions, the democratization process will likely remain in the hands of predatory rulers whose commitment to the process is tenuous, or fall prey to violent opponents of the state. The parliaments were adjusted from time to time to meet both the demands for greater openness and maintain the stability of the state.¹¹⁶ Twenty-five years ago, Moroccan political parties were nothing more than an open-ended devoid of ideological content.¹¹⁷ With the opposition parties venting their frustration and in obvious disarray following the 1993 elections, it was clear that if democratization were to

¹¹³ Abdeslam M. Maghraoui(2001)“Monarchy and Political Reform in Morocco,” *Journal of Democracy*, Vol .12, pg.16

¹¹⁴ Bendourou, “ Power and Opposition in Morocco”, pp .129

¹¹⁵ Ibid

¹¹⁶ King Hassan introduced the new constitution 1996 just to ensure a smooth democratic transition.in reality the 1996 constitution did not bring any new changes.he also wanted to secure from the emerging opposition parties.

¹¹⁷ Waterbury, *The Commander*, p 118.

continue, then the structure and opportunity for representation in Morocco would have to change.

The 1996 Constitution

A new constitution was drafted in 1996 and it marked an important phase in Morocco political system allowing for an opposition-led coalition to form a government, thereby strengthening Morocco's political party system.¹¹⁸ These changes in the Moroccan political system were made possible through the shift from unicameralism to bicameralism. Moroccan citizens directly elect members to the lower house of the new parliament. At the same time, members of the upper house were to be elected via regional assemblies and professional organizations. The upper house ensures that the parliament will represent local and elite interests and also control the power to dissolve the parliament. According to some analysts suggest the Morocco new bicameral legislature was a significant step forward in the Democratization process. An extensive study has been done on the cases of unicameral to bicameral shifts as part of a democratization program. The most significant aspect of the 1996 constitution is its establishment of a directly elected lower chamber, the 325-member Chamber of Representatives (*Majlis an-Nawab*). An upper Chamber of Councilors (*Majlis al-Mustachareen*) of 270 members is appointed by local councils, professional organizations and labor syndicates.¹¹⁹ White notes, that in contrast to the previous system, the new bicameral system should have less of a structural bias in favour of the palace than the unicameral Majlis.¹²⁰ The constitution creating the new parliament was drafted between 1994 and 1996, with the assistance of three French constitutional scholars - Georges Vedel, Yves Gaudemet, and Michel Rousset.¹²¹ The 1996 constitution provides that the lower house be elected for five year terms by direct suffrage, and the upper house be elected for nine years with one-third of the chamber up for reelection every third year.

¹¹⁸ Gregory White (1997), *The Advent of Electoral Democracy in Morocco? The Referendum of 1996*, *Middle East Journal*, Vol.51, No.3, p 395.

¹¹⁹ Ibid

¹²⁰ Ibid

¹²¹ Denooux and Abdeslam Mahgraoui, "King Hassan.s Strategy of Political Dualism",p.107

The three-fifths members of the upper house are elected by a regional electoral college consisting of local bodies known as *collectivites locales*. The remaining two-fifths are chosen by electoral colleges composed of representatives from professional associations. This arrangement is part of a larger government initiative to decentralize state functions to local authorities. King Hassan has, at times, invoked the German model in his vision of Morocco which needs to move to a more federal system.¹²² Article 50 of the Constitution, however, accords pre-eminence to the lower house that possesses greater powers with regard to the composition of the ministerial cabinet, and alone can vote after the cabinet submits a programme. Like Italy and South Africa, Morocco is the third countries in the world to give its upper house the power too censure the government (Article 70).

The constitutional amendment of 1996 and the general elections of 1997 were supported by a considerable majority of the major political forces including the main opposition parties that had so strongly protested the 1993 elections. For example, .Abd al-Rahman Yusufi, leader of the socialist USFP who had fled after the 1993 elections, returned to active political life, ran for office, and is now the Prime Minister. The control of the lower house by the USFP-led coalition finally allowed the opposition to take control of many of the key ministries and bring to fruition the King's plan for robust political parties alternating power.¹²³ One of the major justifications of Morocco going for a bicameral is the ability of two chambers to represent class or other interests that would otherwise be left out of the political arena. Another possible explanation could be that bicameralism rests on the notion that two chambers allow for the simultaneous representation of aggregate national views as well as the special outlook of geographical components such as regions or states.¹²⁴ While Morocco could not be classified as having a strong federalist structure, there has been an increasing emphasis on the regional level of government and that is clearly reflected in the composition of the new upper house. Bicameralism is also often justified as an institutional that checks the power of

¹²² Ibid

¹²³ White, "The Advent of" ,pp.345

¹²⁴ James P. Ketterer,(2001), "From one chamber to another :the case of Morocco", *Journal of Legislative Studies*, Vol .7, No. 1 , pp .135-150.

each other. It is mechanism for avoiding the legislative excess and ill-conceived or hasty decisions. It can be said that bicameralism might bring stability in the Morocco political system.¹²⁵ The period of 1980 and 1990 was marked by a series of changes in Morocco. It made some serious changes to bring some openness in the political system. The unicameral legislature was marked by a limited representation as it was mostly dominated by the elite one, the one who has been in the system for a very long time, Followed by some of the political changes in 1990.¹²⁶

Islamist Forces in Morocco

The influence and the role of Islam have been growing in the past times in the West Asia and the North Africa region. The Islamist movements have developed out of a long and complex political, philosophical and cultural tradition, advocating a return to the true spirit of Islam.¹²⁷ Some of these movements have deep historical roots dating back to the beginning of the 20th century, which have a basis in a reaction to colonial cultural, social and political influences. Islamism has acquired renewed support in the past two decades, as a reaction to the political crisis in the region and some aspects of relations between the region and the rest of the world.¹²⁸ Islamism is now a “new mass ideology” of the 21st century. There is immense growing support for such movements. In most countries of the region, Islamist movements represent the only viable opposition to existing authoritarian regimes. They have a vast popular support and there is a new change with the growing of the Islamist within the region. Many definitions have been used by the scholars to define different trends among Islamism such as moderate vs. radical or extremist, reformist vs. revolutionary, peaceful civilian vs. violent or armed movements, and so on.¹²⁹

All the Islamist movements or parties have participated in the electoral process in their respective countries .However due to the resilience of the authoritarian rule

¹²⁵ Ibid

¹²⁶ Ibid

¹²⁷ John Esposito and James Piscatori (1991) "Democratization and Islam," *Middle East Journal*, Vol.45, No.3, pp .407-26.

¹²⁸ Marvine Howe (2005), *Morocco: The Islamist Awakening and Other Challenges*, Oxford: Oxford University Press.

¹²⁹ Ibid

behind formally more participatory institutions, the Islamists' democratic strategies were not sufficiently rewarded to convince the movements or parties to continuously and unambiguously proceed in direction. The growing influence of Islamists was worry for the opposition parties as well. It is important to know the difference between an Islamist movement and an Islamist party. "While a party operates in the institutional arena, an Islamist movement does not and, therefore, is not subject to those institutional constraints that apply to political parties such as building coalitions and compromise with other political parties to advance their policy goals".¹³⁰ So the opposition parties were promoting the integration of Islamist parties as a containment strategy to put them under control.

Three types of Islamist movements have developed in Morocco and established differing relationships with the monarchy¹³¹. First were the radical *Qutbists*,¹³² like the jihadists elsewhere believed in the pursuit of jihad against the secular regime for the establishment of an Islamic state eliminate secularist intellectuals and destroy the state. This movement was harshly repressed, and most of its adherents converted to legal political action in the 1990s. Second type was the one led by Sheik Abdessalam Yassine's, which uses Sufi and messianic narratives, that borrow from the monarchy's vocabulary and structures, as well as themes from Morocco's long religious history. This movement were put down to suppressed subjected to legal, political action. This Sufi movement has been weakened by a third type of Islamism represented by the Party of Justice and Development (*Hizbo al-'adala wa atanmia*), the PJD whose ideology is rooted in nineteenth-century Morocco and has managed to emerge with new visibility in

¹³⁰Najib Ghadbian(1997), *Democratization and the Islamist Challenge in the Arab World*, Boulder, CO: Lynne Rienner Publisher.

¹³¹ Zegal, *Islamism in Morocco*, pp. 49

¹³² Qutbists is believed to be an advance ideology of extreme jihadism, it integrates the Islamist teachings of Maududi and al Banna with the arguments of Sayyid Qutb to justify armed jihad in the advance of Islam, and other violent methods utilized by twentieth century militants. It justifies terrorism against non-Muslims and apostates in an effort to bring about the reign of God. Others, i.e., Ayman Al-Zawahiri, Abdullah Azzam, and Osama bin Laden built terrorist organizations based on the principles of Qutbism and turned the ideology of Islamic-Fascism into a global action plan. See Dale C. Eikmeier (2007), "Qutbsim: An Ideology of Islamic-Facism", Parameters, pp 85-98, <http://www.carlisle.army.mil/usawc/parameters/Articles/07spring/eikmeier.htm>

the political arena due to the strategy of the monarchy.¹³³ The Islamist movements have evolved through times and they have complex character the major Islamist movements in Morocco are the Party of Justice and Development (PJDS).

Sheikh Abdessalam Yassine Movement

Sheikh Abdessalam Yassine's movement known as *Jama'at al-'Adl wal Ihsan*, Justice and Charity (JC) is considered a "clandestine organization"; which is officially outlawed but reluctantly tolerated and closely watched.¹³⁴ Differences between the JC and the monarchy stretch back to 1974 when Sheikh Yassine sent a missive to King Hassan II entitled "Al-Islam au al-Tufan", "Islam or the Deluge", which called on the king to step down.¹³⁵ As a result, Sheikh Yassine was arrested and a series of ongoing confrontations with the regime began. Sheikh Yassine always refused to ask for pardon for his words of defiance and continued to publish his rebellious views. After King Mohammed VI acceded to the throne, Sheikh Yassine sent another ferocious letter. This time, he urged the young king to restore his father's fortune, which he estimated to be between \$40 and \$50 billion, to people. In his thirty five pages letter, Sheikh Yassine called the king a "novice" and highlighted the country's pressing problems: the poverty, inequalities, unemployment, corruption, and illiteracy. The new King Mohamed VI changed strategy with regard to the movement and responded to Yassine's epistle by ending his surveillance. Since then, the movement has consistently demanded legalization.¹³⁶ The JC's ideology revolves around the desire to "Islamicise" the Moroccan society, it wanted to revive the supremacy of Islam and combat the evils of globalization and imperialism, the JC is highly critical of the monarchy. The movement does not hesitate to openly criticize the king calling for the construction of an Islamic republic. According to Nadia Yassine, the daughter of Sheikh Yassine, "the monarchy is not made for Morocco", "the Constitution deserves to be thrown upon the garbage of

¹³³ Ibid

¹³⁴ Francesco Cavatorta (2006), "Civil Society, Islamism and Democratisation: The Case of Morocco", *Journal of Modern African Studies*, Vol.44, No.2, pp.203–222.

¹³⁵ Ibid

¹³⁶ Howe, *Morocco: The Islamist*, pp 142.

history”, and “all signs indicate that the monarchy will soon collapse”.¹³⁷ This critical anti-monarchical attitude sets the movement in an open conflict with the regime, which subjects it to permanent repression.

In contrast, the Party of Justice and Development (PJD) represents what might be dubbed as “legitimized Islam” or “state Islam”. The party does not question the Moroccan kingdom’s political foundations and does not endorse a revolutionary rhetoric¹³⁸. It holds that the state and society are not to be Islamicised because Morocco is already an Islamic country. Nonetheless, the PJD insists on its role as a defender of the Moroccan society’s Islamic identity when that identity is threatened. This way, the PJD succeeded in separating the function of Islamist da’wa from its political functions. Accordingly, the PJD has turned them into a pure political organization directed by an Islamist reference and run by professional politicians.

The PJD emerged in the wake of the constitutional reforms introduced by King Hassan II in the 1990s. Following the failure of two coups d’état, the King turned to political parties mainly the opposition aiming to bring them into the regime to help counter the army¹³⁹. He liberalized the functioning of the political regime and attributed more power to political parties and Parliament without affecting the authoritarian nature of the political regime. Besides, he allowed a new Islamist political party, the PJD, to enter the legal system of political competition.¹⁴⁰

The Party of Justice and Development (PJD) is the first Islamic organization in Morocco also known as *Chabiba Islamiyya* (Islamic Youth).¹⁴¹ In the early 1980s, former members of the *Chabiba* created a number of new organizations, among them the

¹³⁷ Samir Amghar(2007), “Political Islam in Morocco” *Centre for European Policy Studies* 269, available at: <http://www.ceps.be>).

¹³⁸ Amr Hamzawy (2008), “Party for Justice and Development in Morocco: Participation and its Discontents” *Carnegie Papers*, 93.

¹³⁹ Bendourou, *Power and opposition in Morocco*, pp 120

¹⁴⁰ Michael J. Willis(2002) “Political Parties in the Maghrib: Ideology and Identification. A suggested Typology”, *Journal of North African Studies*, Vol.7, No.3, pp. 1–28.

¹⁴¹ Ibid

Jami'yyat al Jama'a al Islamiyya (Association of the Islamic Community) which decided itself to have a purely political strategy and to recognize the political prerogatives and religious legitimacy of the king in return for being allowed to enter the formal political scene. In 1992, name of the organization was again changed to *Al Islâh wat-Tajdîd* ('Reform and Renewal'), just to distinguish their group from activities and organizations in neighbouring Algeria. It was only in 1996 that they secured official recognition as political party by joining an existing political party, the Constitutional and Democratic Popular Movement (MPCD). In 1997, its efforts at integrating into the formal political sphere were crowned by its participation (under the name of the MPDC) in the parliamentary elections, where it gained 9 out of 325 seats in parliament.¹⁴²

In 1998, the party changed its name to its present one, the Party of Justice and Development, the PJD. In parallel, the original Islamist organization merged with a number of other splinter organizations of the *Chabiba Islamiyya* and changed its name to its current name *Harakat al-Islâh wa at-Tawhid* ,Movement of Reform and Unity, (MUR).¹⁴³ PJD is basically a conservative Islamist movement, which draws inspiration both from the Muslim Brotherhood as well as from *Wahhabi salafism*. MUR and PJD are completely independently organization. The PJD began to concentrates on the parliamentary arena whereas the MUR remained an autonomous civil society organization which puts its main emphasis on *da'wa* (propagation, "calling" to Islam) and associational activities.¹⁴⁴

PJD is politically active and it has taken part in parliamentary elections of September 2007 and municipal elections of June 2009. In the 2002 legislative elections, the PJD won 42 out of 295 seats, becoming one of the country's main political forces. In 2004, Saad Eddine Othmani became the party's Secretary General. In Parliament, PJD politicians downplay religious themes and questions related to religious faith in favour of more political and secular matter. PJD has openly come forward in the support of

¹⁴² Ibid

¹⁴³ Mohamed Tozy (2008), "Islamists, Technocrats, and the Palace", *Journal of Democracy*, Vol. 19, No.1, pp.34-41

¹⁴⁴ Zeghal, *Islamism in Morocco*, pp 145

democratisation process and that has involved it in conflict with the monarch.¹⁴⁵ In its early stages, the PJD was dependent on its founding movement, Movement of Unification and Reform (MUR) and gradually established itself as an autonomous party by devoting its loyalty and interests to its own survival rather than the movement organization. At first, the party relied on the MUR for human resources, propaganda, and infrastructure. During the period between 1997 and 2004, the relationship between the PJD and the MUR underwent an emancipation process; the PJD managed to broaden its popularity and increase its membership, which rose up to 15 000 members by 2004.¹⁴⁶ The PJD also expended its independent resources by creating “parallel structures” to the MUR such as the “Commission for Women and the Family” and a youth organization, the “Youth of Justice and Development” challenging to the MRU’s support base.¹⁴⁷

The PJD’s *Forum de Development* was founded in 2002. It is “a forum of cadres who are either members or supporters of the party. It is designed to develop party policies, to support the parliamentary group, and to give technical and political training to the party’s deputies”.¹⁴⁸ All these additional organizations are uniquely financed by the party. The autonomous status of the party was further enhanced by the institutionalization of the PJD’s organization through the “establishment of boundaries vis-à-vis the environment” and reviewing its by-laws. The institutionalization of the party’s organization provided an “intra-organizational source” to legitimize the role of party leaders at all levels of the organizational hierarchy and lessened the scope for an informal interference of other organizations on the party’s decisions. The dissociation between the PJD and the MUR can also be traced the ideological level. In their first elections, both the PJD and the MUR supported the 1998 ‘alternate government’ “as a necessity for consolidating former king

¹⁴⁵ Francesco Cavatorta (2009), “Divided They Stand, Divided They fail’: Opposition Politics in Morocco”, *Democratization*, Vol.16, No.1, pp.137–156.

¹⁴⁶ Ibid

¹⁴⁷ Bendourou, “Power and opposition”, pp.122

¹⁴⁸ Mohamed Daadaoui (2010), “Rituals of Power and Political Parties in Morocco: Limited Elections as Positional Strategies”, *Middle Eastern Studies*, Vol. 46, No.20, pp.195-219.

Hassan II's toleration of the Islamists' electoral participation".¹⁴⁹ They sought to displace the impression that "Islamist are a 'current of refusal' and instead projected the image of a constructive movement supporting the kings' initiative for a consensual government. However, the liberal kind of policies conducted by the socialist government in power did not align with the PJD's Islamic agenda. For instance, in 2000 the government proposed a new modern and liberalized version of the Moroccan Personal Status Code known also as the *Moudawana*. Supporting the government, the PJD would have had to approve a bill that the MUR and the entire Islamist Movement strongly opposed. The reform called for the abolition of polygamy and the right of women to arrange marriages without a "marital tutor", which Islamists considered anti-Islamic.¹⁵⁰

The inconsistency in the PJD's ideology appeared to be a source of conflict in the 2002 parliamentary elections when the PJD increased its seats from 9 to 42. With the PJD's strong electoral performance in the fall of 2002, the party could have obtained six to seven ministries if it had joined the government. However, the MUR stated that the PJD should not participate in an "un-Islamic" government and urged the party to stick to its Islamic cause. The PJD leadership responded to the MUR's demands mainly because cabinet participation would make it more difficult to maintain its image as "non-corrupt challengers of the Moroccan elite".¹⁵¹ The PJD leaders also feared the loss of its supporters in future elections by joining a government that was unlikely to improve the socio-economic condition of the voters. Nonetheless, by acquiring its independent mobilization resources and becoming stronger in terms of popular support, the PJD changed its attitude towards the government. After the 2003 municipal elections, the PJD formed alliances with all the existing Moroccan parties. After the terrorist attacks that targeted the city of Casablanca in 2003, the PJD clearly distanced itself from the MUR. In the 2007 elections, the party expressed its desire to take part in the government, yet the regime was not ready to welcome such government.¹⁵²

¹⁴⁹ Ibid

¹⁵⁰ For details on issue see Mohammed , *Morocco's Elections*, pp .34–41

¹⁵¹ Krämer Gertrud (2000). "Good Counsel to the King: The Islamist Opposition in Saudi Arabia, Jordan and Morocco" in Joseph Kostiner (ed.), *Middle East Monarchies – the Challenge of Modernity*, Boulder: Lynne Rienner, pp. 257–287.

¹⁵² White, "Electoral", pp. 399

As the PJD became more independent of the radical Islamist movement it was increasingly viewed as a moderate identity¹⁵³. At the same time, the PJD remained careful not to forgo its religious frame, which sets it apart from its secular opponents. The significant electoral success the party achieved was not just a temporary breakthrough; it allowed the party to become dominant in the eyes of the public, which made it more difficult for the regime to ignore its popularity and exclude it from the political competition.

In fragmenting the political potent Islamist movements, the Monarch played a major role. The monarchy through its “divide and rule” tactics along with the official recognition of Islamist into “radicals” and “moderates”, undermined Islamist movement that posed a regions important challenge so much so that Abdessalam Yassines remained excluded from legal political competition.¹⁵⁴The monarchy allowed the entry of the Islamist party into secular spaces where religious arguments and lines of reasoning were not authorized except by the monarchy itself: This way the king was able to subjugate them. While the Moroccan state defines itself as a “Muslim state” thus legitimizing its acts of mobilizing religion, it deters its competitors by establishing and imposing specific spaces of secularity.¹⁵⁵ The PJD seems to abide by the rules of the game, while they stress on their Islamic rooted ideology, they tend to marginalize it when it comes to electoral competition so as not to be denounced by the political society.¹⁵⁶ Both, the state and its rivals are knowledgeable about the rules of the game; however, each interprets and performs them for different purposes and with different strategies. This demarcation is due to the unequal distribution of opportunity. Obviously, the supremacy of the monarchy prevails.

Islamist v/s Secularist

¹⁵³ Howe, “Morocco: The Islamist Awakening”, pp.123-143.

¹⁵⁴ Ibid

¹⁵⁵ William I. Zartman(1987), *The Political Economy of Morocco*, New York: Praeger

¹⁵⁶ Henry Munson(1993), *Religion and Power in Islam*, CT: Yale University Press.

The ideological cleavage between Islamists and secularists is one of the most important obstacles to democratization in Morocco. Traditional opposition parties have perceived the rise of Islamism in Morocco as a threat to society and the future of the country. As a result, leftists have participated in the government without real power or political guarantees.¹⁵⁷ Meanwhile, in Morocco as in other Maghreb countries, there is also a strong anti-religious trend, especially among Francophone elites. It has its intellectual roots in the anticlerical tradition of French Laicism and Marxism. This “secular-fundamentalist” tendency can be found among university professors and students, Berber intellectuals, senior police and military officers, and members of the central administration. It includes intellectuals and politicians, such as the historian and philosopher Abdellah Laroui, Berber Ahmed Aassid, former chief of national security Hamidou Laanigri, former spokesman of the royal palace Hassan Aourid, the former leader of Morocco’s principal microcredit NGO Al Amana Fouad Abdelmoumni, as well as journalists Mohammed Labrini, Omar Brouksy, Said Lakhhal, and Jamal Hachem.¹⁵⁸

Despite strong criticisms of them, the majority of Islamists (those belonging to AWI or the PJD parties) have shown a willingness to cooperate with secular movements, in order to accelerate Morocco’s political opening process. Islamists developed vastly and easily mobilized grassroots networks through charitable organizations and mosques. The leadership is often younger and more dynamic, with strong ties to the community, and the party organizations brim with energy and ideas, attracting those who are seeking change”.¹⁵⁹ In addition, Islamists feel Arab countries as their home where Islam is the “natural” ideology of most of the people. Contrary to the secular actors, Islamists do not face the challenge of having to convince the population that their way is the right way. The framework of Islam is so strong that in the 1960s and 1970s even some of Morocco’s socialists, including Marxists, justified their political programs by referring to Islam. For instance, Ali Yata, founder and former Secretary General of Morocco’s communist party (the Party of Progress and Socialism) often started his speeches with religious

¹⁵⁷ Zeghal , *Islamism in Morocco*, pp 94

¹⁵⁸ Cavatorta, “Civil Society, Islamism and Democratisation”, pp.203–222.

¹⁵⁹ Howe, *Morocco*, pp .68

comments.¹⁶⁰ Islamists take advantage of the fact that in Morocco, social time and social services are both strongly infused with religiosity. Islamists have been famous for assisting the poorest people, which enhances their popularity. This charity makes political Islam popular in impoverished districts; it secures a loyal political basis that can be mobilized at any time. Similar behavior of political entities distributing money or services in a secular milieu would be perceived as a sign of corruption.¹⁶¹ Practically, secular actors see Islamist parties as unfair competition. Some of them favor a total separation between religion and politics. Islamism's social and political effectiveness explains why many intellectuals and leaders of secular organizations are less than enthusiastic about the prospect of a free Western-style democracy in Morocco.

While it remains notoriously difficult and risky to predict future developments, it would seem most likely that no major changes are to occur within the near future, either within the major Islamist organizations (*Al Adl and MUR/PJD*) or in the regime's responses to them.¹⁶² In practice, it seems most likely that the *MUR/PJD* will be allowed to continue on the formal political scene in return for its continued support of the regime and the fundamental rules of the political game.¹⁶³ Also, it seems likely that they will not be allowed to gain considerably in influence but will be kept 'in place' at their current level of support and influence via electoral rules and continued support to the PAM (which was the winner of the 2012 parliamentary elections).¹⁶⁴

To sum up ,the developments during the period from 1990 till the end of 1996 proved to be one most significant in the history of Morocco since independence. During this period a number of reforms introduced by the monarch created sufficient political

¹⁶⁰ Maghraoui Driss (2009) "The Strengths and Limits of Religious Reforms in Morocco", *Mediterranean Politics*, Vol. 14, No. 2, pp.195–211.

¹⁶¹ Zartman ,*The Political Economy of Morocco*, pp.47

¹⁶² Cavatorta, "Divided They Stand, Divided They fail", pp.137–156.

¹⁶³ Ibid

¹⁶⁴ With regard to *Al Adl*, it seems most likely that they will retain their current principled position against the authoritarian regime. Some observers consider it possible that this will be followed by a splintering of the organization along its two main lines (spirituality and social justice), implying the participation of those predominantly engaged in the latter aspect in formal politics. However, the majority of them did not consider this to be a likely or (for *Al Adl* activists) a positive scenario.

space for diverse forces, without, however, undermining the primacy of the king political and legal supremacy. In spite of the impressive display of democratic-looking institutions, a bicameral parliament, multiparty electoral competition and an opposition government, no significant power devolved outside the regime. In other words, true democratization cannot exist without constitutional limitations on the King's power.

CHAPTER – III

***POLITICAL REFORMS AND DEMOCRATIC
TRANSITION***

As discussed in the preceding chapters, the signs of liberalising trend were seen in the beginning of 1980 when King Hassan II set off the reform process to regain regime legitimacy. What arguably led the King to initiate reforms was an interplay of internal pressure as well as the role of external actors. The former was reflected in coup attempts, periodic civic protests and bread riots due to severe economic crisis. Consequently, Morocco experienced tentative moves towards the establishment of democratic governance. There was easing of press censorship, the release of some political figures from opposition parties and holding the 1984 parliamentary elections. The high point in this long transition was reached in 1997–98, when King Hassan II launched his alternative (an accountable, competitive government) initiative following Morocco's engagement with the European Union through the Euro-Mediterranean Partnership (EuroMed or EMP) project, later changed to European Neighbourhood Policy (ENP).¹⁶⁵

As discussed in the preceding chapter, one way of bringing democratisation is through progressive reforms in political system.¹⁶⁶ Democratisation takes place due to external pressure and also due to internal political developments or sometimes it's both. Morocco fits into the third category that is both where internal play of domestic factors forces the king to effects incremental changes in the evolution of democratic polity and there are effects of external factors as well.¹⁶⁷ The impacts of external powers have made significant changes in socio economic issues. EU and U.S has made serious efforts to pressurize the Moroccan government for implementing real democratic changes. Both maintain a good relation with Morocco.

¹⁶⁵ Abdeslam M. Maghraoui (2001), "Monarchy and Political Reform in Morocco", *Journal of Democracy*, Vol.12, No.1, pp.73–86.

¹⁶⁶ Geoffrey Pridham,(1997) "The International Dimensions of Democratization: Theory, Practice and Inter-regional Comparisons" in Geoffrey Pridham, Eric Herring and George Sanford (eds.), *Building Democracy: International Dimensions of Democratization in Eastern Europe*, London: Leicester University Press, pp.23-39

¹⁶⁷ Philippart (2003), "The Euro-Mediterranean Partnership: A Critical Evaluation of an Ambitious Scheme", *European Foreign Affairs Review*, Vol.8, No.2,pp 45

External Actors: role of EU and US

The geographical location and the density of the historical relationship with Europe have helped Morocco to develop relations with the European Union. EU is the most active partner of Morocco. The strategy democracy development through of economic development has been considered as one of the most successful policy. The European Union has generally preferred to highlight ‘positive developments’ in the political situation of the country emphasising new legislation aimed at improving individual liberties¹⁶⁸. EU has decided to focus on the positive developments under the Mohammed VI rule related to the Equity and Reconciliation Commission, and the veneer of democracy in the country. According to the strategy document published in December 2001 the EU believed that “significant progress in terms of individual freedoms and fundamental rights” had been made. All the new initiative in the EU Morocco relationship has put a lot of pressure on the Morocco for political reforms.¹⁶⁹

The end of the Cold War increased the external pressure on the monarchy particularly in 1992 after the European Parliament denied Morocco an aid package because of its poor human rights record. There are great concern about improving socio economic issues between EU and Morocco. The urgency of developing a cooperation agenda with Morocco results partly from the very close economic dependency of the Maghreb on the EU, geographic proximity and strong post-colonial ties with France and Spain. The focus has been on the security issues, there are new priorities concerns on civil society. At the same time, the EU is demanding ‘shared responsibility’ for combating illegal cross-border activities.¹⁷⁰ The ENP is essentially a form of development aid that is compensating for the disappearance of trading preferences while promoting economic transition. Instead of fostering principles of tolerance and civility, CSOs are being coerced to become agents and guardians of Western interests of

¹⁶⁸ Said Haddadi (2002), “Two Cheers for Whom? The European Union and Democratisation in Morocco”, *Democratization*, Vol. 9, No1, pp.149-69.

¹⁶⁹ Ibid

¹⁷⁰ Richard Youngs(1989), “The European Union and Democracy Promotion in the Mediterranean: A New or Disingenuous Strategy?”, *Democratisation*, Vol.12, pp. 40-62

economic hegemony¹⁷¹. The guiding principle behind the ENP is recognition that if the EU wants to become a credible actor in the southern Mediterranean, then the promotion of democracy and stable societies in the region will require a more active role on the part of the EU.¹⁷² It will necessitate a dialogue in which not only economic development (e.g. the creation of a free trade area) but also broader political and cultural aspects are prioritised.¹⁷³ As a result, the problem of reconciling inclusionary partnership policies with exclusionary security policies is perhaps particularly pronounced in EU–Moroccan relations.

Notably, there appears to be little interaction between the principal actors involved in the ENP and the CSOs. Among the challenges facing Moroccan CSOs are the strong resistance to shifts from grassroots-based to professional organisations and the need to maintain independence through avoiding dependency on EU funding.¹⁷⁴ The foreign funding is quite essential for the survival of a large number of CSOs; there is a general awareness of the associated risks and the possible negative effects of dependency on external funding.¹⁷⁵ According to some analysis the professionalisation of NGOs can substitute their preoccupations with charity, solidarity and development. The EU’s top-down, ‘one-size-fits-all’ approach is not conducive to the advancement of a vibrant and diverse civil society.¹⁷⁶ A lack of coordination among international donors as well as among governmental agencies led to the duplication of activities or the adoption of different strategies that are not always compatible. Most public and international funding is received on a project basis, which has several consequences.¹⁷⁷ Morocco’s strategy of deepening its relations with the EU has resulted in the State’s adoption of civil society

¹⁷¹Ivan Martín (2009), “EU-Morocco Relations: How Advanced is the ‘Advanced Status’ “,*Mediterranean Politics*, Vol. 14, No 2, pp. 239-245.

¹⁷² Ibid

¹⁷³ European Commission (2004), EU–Morocco Action Plan, Brussels http://ec.europa.eu/world/enp/pdf/action_plans/morocco_enp_ap_final_en.pdf

¹⁷⁴Kausch Kristina (2008), “How serious is the EU about supporting democracy and human rights in Morocco”, *ECFR Working Paper*, [Online: Web] Accessed on 22 September 2011, URL: <http://www.fride.org/publication/431>.

¹⁷⁵ Ibid

¹⁷⁶Ben S. Nefissa (2001), *NGOs, Governance and Development in the Arab World*, Discussion Paper No. 46, UNESCO, Paris: <http://www.unesco.org/most/nefissae.htm>

¹⁷⁷ Ibid

discourse and it allows the state to encourage the activities of certain CSOs. Nonetheless, the assumption that civil society is integral to the state and therefore lacking the potential for change or confrontation is analytically reductive. While some CSOs are more directly governed by the *makhzen*, others have to fight for official recognition. The economic and the security issues are more primary for the EU than the issues like democratic progress, sustainable developments and the human rights. These issues have become one sided. Morocco has always played an important role in international arena. However its role is quite complicated due to its strategic position, it finds itself not only as a bridge between the Arab world and the Western world, but also as a bridge between Black Africa and Arab Africa. Morocco has had a long connection with sub-Saharan Africa.¹⁷⁸

The role of United States has expanded after the incident of 9/11. Morocco has never challenged the interest of U.S and has always cooperated on the issues regarding international terrorism.¹⁷⁹ The United States have good relations with the PJD, it believes that PJD is committed to democratic principles and it would not turn Morocco into an Islamic state. The most important contribution of United States and European countries was to facilitate the transformation of the major secular parties through pressure on their leaderships. The United States has already trying to strengthen political parties in Morocco. The National Democratic Institute for International Affairs and the International Republican Institute, nongovernmental agencies are tied to the two major U.S. political parties.¹⁸⁰ These organizations provide training for political parties, at either the national or the local level. The real challenge is to convince the leadership of the secular parties that their best successful way against the Islamist parties is to bring constitutional reforms. The task of reforms in the political process is quite important one.

¹⁷⁸ Henri Barkey (1995), "Can the Middle East Compete?", *Journal of Democracy*, Vol.6, No.2, pp.113-127.

¹⁷⁹ Amy Hawthorne (2003) "Can the United States promote Democracy in the Middle east?", *Current History*, Vol.102, No.660, pp. 21-26

¹⁸⁰ Ibid

Internal Factors

Despite liberalization efforts over the 15 years, the Moroccan economy was unable to keep up with growing social demands. They could not meet the demands of young and fast-growing population in terms of health, education, and other basic social services. Hassan II stability was threatened by the several droughts of 1960 -1961. He had to face several droughts and there were failed coups and bread riots.¹⁸¹ The bread riots took place due to the extreme economic problems. There was sudden rise in the price of bread and items related to basic needs. The economy was on complete decline. There are wide range of issues that come under internal factors such as issues of health and employment, human rights issues, the position of women in society. The roles of internal factors are quite important in the democratic transition of Morocco.¹⁸² The following chapter will highlight the issues which interlink the internal issues. The key issues related to internal factors are as following:-

Human Rights Issues

While the country's human rights record improved in the years preceding Hassan's death, there were many areas of concern. Despite strong United States-Moroccan relations, the United States Department of State *Country Report for 1998* pointed out Morocco's questionable human rights record. It noted that there was some improvement under the Youssoufi government, but expressed concern over the use of torture and abuse of detainees by security forces, harsh prison conditions, illegal detention, faulty judicial procedural processes, a judiciary corrupted by the interior ministry, media censorship, restriction of demonstrations and child labor.¹⁸³ Other areas of concern included restrictions on freedom of speech, assembly, association, religion and

¹⁸¹ Morocco Country and Research Area Report (2011), PROJECT No. 4 [Online: Web] Accessed on 14 October 2011, URL: <http://www.imi.ox.ac.uk/pdfs/research-projects-pdfs/eumagine-pdfs/eumagine-project-paper-4-morocco-country-and-research>

¹⁸² Ibid

¹⁸³ United States Department of State, Country Reports, 1998, *United State Department of State Country Report: Morocco 1998*. Washington, DC: Department of State.

movement, discrimination against women and the underreporting and under-investigating of domestic violence against women. While there had been three years of no new cases of government-forced disappearances prior to 1998, there were still hundreds of unsolved cases dating back some twenty years. Some of the citizens who had been released were still being harassed by the security apparatus.¹⁸⁴ Moroccan human rights groups struggled to both publicize the government's abuses and to put pressure on the administration of Hassan II to improve its human rights record. However, these human rights organizations had limited success. The impotence of domestic human rights organizations derives, in part, from their close ties to the various political parties in Morocco.¹⁸⁵ One of the first human rights organizations, the *Association Marocaine des Droits de l'Homme* (AMDF), 1972, was linked with left wing political parties, and since the political left were themselves targets of the regime, the organization had very little room for maneuver. The emergence of a right wing affiliated human rights organization, *Ligue Marocaine des Droits de l'Homme* (LMDH), strained the legitimacy of the human rights movement because of the organization's unwillingness to denounce regime attacks on members of the left.¹⁸⁶

The legitimacy of both these organizations was questioned due to their unwillingness to deal with domestic issues. Their unwillingness to question the occupation of the Western Sahara, to demand information on the disappeared Saharawis, and to fully articulate the human rights issues of women. Later, as the organizations became bolder, the unwillingness of Moroccan media to release any communiqués from the human rights groups about domestic human rights issues hindered the organizations effectiveness. In addition to being hurt by their connections to various political parties, internal human rights groups have struggled with the repressive environment in which they have tried to operate. One of the first independent human rights organization, the *Organisation Marocaine des Droits de l'Homme* (OMDH) also known Moroccan Human Rights Organisation emerged on the scene and their presence, along with Hassan II's

¹⁸⁴ Ibid

¹⁸⁵ Mohamed Tozy (2008), "Islamists, Technocrats, and the Palace", *Journal of Democracy*, Vol. 19, No.1, pp.34-41.

¹⁸⁶ Ibid

attempt at recovering Morocco's image after its invasion of the Western Sahara, contributed to the 1979 ratification of both human rights covenants (the *International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights* and the *International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights* 1966), a significant though minor step.¹⁸⁷ Many really had doubts that whether the King or the Monarchy was seriously concerned about the human rights abuses. In an attempt to ensure that no group or movement remained outside his control for too long, the king established the *Concile Consultative des Droits l'Homme* (CCDH).¹⁸⁸ The CCDH was to act as an advisor to the king on human rights; but more importantly, its role was to appease criticism from the outside by demonstrating the King's dedication to human rights. Morocco's relationship with various external human rights organizations over the years was strained at best. The role of outside human rights groups and international pressure regarding Morocco's human rights record has been critical for the advancement of the human rights agenda in Morocco. Human rights groups such as Amnesty International (AI) had worked diligently to gain access to information about Morocco's political prisoners and those who had disappeared. Hassan's well-reported battles with AI left Morocco bruised on the world stage.¹⁸⁹

The Kings' refusal to admit the existence of the notorious Tazmamart prison¹⁹⁰ caused the regime much embarrassment when AI released its report about the abuses that had occurred. Later, the regime let it be known that the prison was closed and the King commented, "That chapter is closed. It was; it is no more." In response to international pressure, apparently spurred on by AI, the regime released hundreds of political prisoners despite the King's repeated statements denying their existence.¹⁹¹ In 1993, as a result of the international pressure, Morocco ratified the Convention on the Elimination of All forms of Discrimination against Women, the Convention against Torture and Other

¹⁸⁷Remy Le'veau, (1997), "Morocco at the Crossroads", *Mediterranean Politics*, Vol. 2, No.2 ,pp. 95-113.

¹⁸⁸ Ibid

¹⁸⁹ Amnesty International (2000), *Morocco Crackdown on Freedom of Expression*, London: Amnesty International.

¹⁹⁰ Tazmamart is a secret prison in morocco, holding political prisoners , it was built in 1972 after the second failed coup attempt against the late Hassan II, there was allegation anout the prison but the higher authority always denied it .the condition of the prisoners were extreme harsh and torture was done to them

¹⁹¹Amnesty International, *Morocco Crackdown* .

Cruel, or Inhuman or Degrading Treatment, the Convention on the Rights of the Child and the Convention on the Rights of Migrants. Additionally, the preamble to the 1996 constitution expressed Morocco's unreserved commitment to human rights as universally recognized. Despite these recent improvements, AI noted in 1999 in an open letter to the King that there had been no accountability for those who had disappeared, including hundreds in the Western Sahara, and no investigations had been conducted into the torture and deaths of persons while in custody. Also, in 1999, AI noted that torture continued, as did the illegal detention of political prisoners. AI has called for those responsible to be brought to justice and the victims compensated.¹⁹²

The positive changes that occurred in the last years of Hassan's II's rule included the release of roughly 95 percent of all political prisoners, the signing of international human rights conventions, the acceptance of internationally promulgated human rights norms in the constitution and a rise in consciousness about human rights among Moroccans. However, important officials, continued to view the human rights movement as a threat to the cohesion and stability of the state. For those in the human rights movement, exacting justice on those responsible for past human rights abuses has been to be an area of concern. This seems particularly difficult given that most of the perpetrators of human rights abuses remained in power.¹⁹³

Issues Related to Women

Morocco, like many Islamic countries is struggling with the challenges of modernity in the context of religious and cultural dictates. There is struggle over issues of gender, specifically what role women should play in society and how best to integrate their concerns with the policies which govern the state. Certainly any discussion of human rights and democracy in Morocco cannot be complete without the discussion of the status of one-half of its population, its women. In Morocco, women are subject to secular law as well as religious law under the *Mudawwanah*, the Personal Status Code.

¹⁹² Amnesty International. Open Letter to his Majesty King Mohammed VI of Morocco, August 8.[Online Web] Accessed on 12 April 2012, URL http://www.africanews...Morocco/stories/19990804_feat1.html, 1999

¹⁹³ Ibid

The Moroccan government has fought off all Islamist attempts at influencing policy, except where it concerns women, instead allowing the *ulama* (Muslim religious leaders) enormous say over the fate of women. Moroccan human rights groups have been relatively silent on the issue of women's rights. While these groups have demanded a civil society with political equality, they have not challenged the dual legal system that women are forced to endure.¹⁹⁴ Many in Morocco, including academics, religious and political leaders, have tried to dismiss feminism as a Western or imperialist ideology, but as Naciri notes, this divests the women's movement of all legitimacy because this discourse implies that the demands made by the movement are not among the preoccupations of the overwhelming majority of women.¹⁹⁵ The women's movement in Morocco can be divided into two phases: the first phase was focused on literacy and social assistance for women and children, and the second, developed in the mid-1980s, focused on the re-evaluation of women's identity and status in society. These are issues relevant to all women and the movement is driven by Moroccan women who want change, not exclusion. The concerns raised by the women's groups are more in line with Islamic teachings, especially those emerging out of Islam's golden age, than current *ulama* (Muslim religious leaders) are willing to admit.¹⁹⁶

The role of Moroccan women is increasing day by day to promote their concerns. Recent changes are both evident and subtle. There has been an increased activity of women's organizations since 1985. In the same year there was opening of the first shelter for battered women. According to the activist and Islamic legal expert biggest problem facing women is illiteracy. According to UNICEF, in 2000 illiteracy rates for males fifteen and older was 38.1 percent while for females it was 63.9 percent. This problem is furthered by the disparity in access to education for girls. Women's rate of primary and secondary school attendance is abysmal. Yet, women represent the majority of graduates from institutions of higher education. Increasingly, Moroccan society is relying on

¹⁹⁴ Naciri Rabea (1998) *The Women's Movement and Political Discourse in Morocco*. Geneva: United Nations Research Institute for Social Development.

¹⁹⁵ *Ibid*

¹⁹⁶ The golden age refers to a 400-year period beginning in the mid-9th century when Islamic culture began to emerge as a dominant force in learning and the Arts. Women's conditions improved in many countries as Islam spread across the West Asia, North Africa and Asia.

women to keep its economic sectors viable. Yet these same women face a variety of discriminatory practices which affect their full participation in economic and political life. Perhaps a more fruitful way to assist women would be to demand equal pay for women and acceptable working conditions. Hassan II recognized women's key role in the political arena when he said that it was women and intellectuals (apparently mutually exclusive categories) who were the bulwarks against the spread of the Islamist movement in Morocco. Yet their acceptance in public life in Morocco remains dictated by the rules established by the men in power. As women increasingly enter into the public arena through the job market, changes are bound to occur. Morocco's divorce rate is a staggering fifty percent. Also, it is no longer only men who are fleeing for the economic opportunities of Europe, women too have been emigrating. Their experiences abroad will no doubt alter their perceptions of their own culture, as will continued exposure to the world beyond Morocco's borders.

Civil Society Activism

Civil society has been playing a very important role in improving the role of the government and governance everywhere in the world. In Morocco civil society has experienced great development during the last decades. There are about 50,000 active civil society organisations¹⁹⁷. The significant development of civil society can be seen because of the population's lack of confidence in structures of traditional representation, as well as state disengagement from public services with a tremendous increase in the population's needs. Thus, the people in need turns to civil society to fill the gap left behind by the state. The major development was seen during 1990 when civil society played the role in bringing openness within the society.¹⁹⁸ There are various categories of organization working in Morocco. Some of them work on human rights issues, other focuses on education and poverty, many of others work for the women improvement and issues related to labour welfare.

¹⁹⁷ Driss Khrouz (2008), "A Dynamic Civil Society", *Journal of Democracy*, Vol. 9, No.1, pp.42-49

¹⁹⁸ Driss Maghraoui (2008), "The Dynamics of Civil Society in Morocco", in E.L. Okar & S. Zrhouni, (eds), *Political Participation in the Middle East*, Boulder Co: Lynne Rienner Publishers.

The most important NGOs and CSOs are perceived as relatively influential through their role of resistance and by reporting abuses. This is particularly the case in the human rights and advocacy spheres. NGOs that work on the local level or participate in providing access to services such as education, water, literacy. However, their influence generally remains moderate and their impacts are only local. A less developed part of civil society that has an invisible impact is constituted of NGOs and consumer organisations.¹⁹⁹ The use of the concept of civil society in transitional politics has been related to the analysis of opposition to authoritarian states.²⁰⁰ There has been great support for the human rights and the women's rights by the civil society organization. The emphasis on civil and political rights does not necessarily reflect the main concerns of the civil society organization. There are some socio economic issues which are equally important.²⁰¹ The importance of socio-economic CSOs has increased rapidly in recent years, often in response to the state's inability to deal with the socio-economic problems of Moroccan citizens. Similarly, the education, employment and health sectors have never been a priority for the EU since economic liberalisation, and lately security, tend to dominate the EU–Morocco agenda. As pointed out by one civil society activist, “the state finds it convenient to delegate rather unpopular tasks to the civil society sector, arguing that it goes beyond its capacity. It has been a useful tool to attract foreign financial aid.”²⁰²

The civil society has left a great impact on Morocco experiencing in fascinating changes where it has gone under drastic changes in the recent years and so there has been increase in number of civil society organisation. It's a basic assumption that civil society leads to a more democratic ways, as they are more open to the system. There are two kinds of the 'development' associations. The first groups are the Islamic charity organizations, they provide services to the marginalised communities outside the major urban centers and to groups affected by poverty and social exclusion. It refers to the voluntary health associations that seek to compensate for the absence of the state in the

¹⁹⁹ Augustus Richard Norton (1995) *Civil Society in the Middle East*, Vol. I, Leiden: E.J. Brill, pp .11–12.

²⁰⁰ Ibid

²⁰¹ Norton, *Civil Society*, pp 12

²⁰² See European Commission, EU–Morocco Action Plan, Brussels, 2004, [Online Web] Accessed on 24 February, 2012 http://ec.europa.eu/world/enp/pdf/action_plans/morocco_enp_ap_final_en.pdf.

health care. Most of them are excluded from Western financial assistance and some of them refuse foreign aid. The vast majorities of them operate without an overall support structure and are highly reliant on citizen participation and activism. Their efficiency, volunteer base and strong grassroots links have been considered a new threat to the state, but they are a product of the state's deficiency in addressing the socio-economic problems facing Moroccan society.²⁰³

To counter the societal force of Islamic associations, the state has launched a strategy of establishing a second group of development CSOs and introducing new initiatives. Some CSOs have assumed responsibility for socio-economic matters such as health care, support of basic urban services, poverty reduction and education. Many of the social welfare providers are set up by local councils or governmental bodies. This empowerment of civil society in the area of development has been received positively by the international donor community. Majority of such NGO'S are funded by them .The state authorities look after the details of the funding. For instance, the National Initiative for Human Development established by the king has immediately attracted international funding, including European Commission allocations, and it is closely monitored by the state authorities.²⁰⁴

Environmentalist groups too have also been taking on the state's role and responsibilities for protection of the environment. Like many other socio-economic CSOs, these groups are funded on a project basis by international donors. Instead of putting pressure on the state or on the EU and its member states, environmental issues are sporadically addressed by local and international CSOs. The opening up of the Moroccan economy, with few obligations or regulations for foreign investors, can bring short-term benefits.²⁰⁵

²⁰³ James N. Sater (2007), *Civil Society and Political Change in Morocco*: Routledge.

²⁰⁴ *ibid*

²⁰⁵ *Ibid*

Reforms under King Hassan II

As discussed in the preceding chapters the political system of Hassan II inherited in 1961 was characterized by direct monarchical control, centralization of power, a weak and fragmented political party system²⁰⁶. Over the next thirty years, King Hassan II ruled the country with “an iron fist and consolidated his position even further, undermining the opposition and stifling all independent political life through a mixture of institutional manipulation, reliance on clientelistic networks, and outright repression.”²⁰⁷ The 1962 constitution confirmed the pattern of royal domination by giving the monarch the power to nominate and dismiss the Prime Minister and cabinet at his discretion without regard for election results, to dissolve parliament, and to assume unlimited emergency powers. Article 19 of the Moroccan constitution, proclaimed the King as the “supreme representative of the nation.”²⁰⁸

King Hassan II solely designed the document without involving any political party, which referred the political life of Morocco a “unilateral royal act”.²⁰⁹ The monarchy maintained its position as the foundation of the political system in the country. Although subsequent revisions of the 1962 text improved the balance of power between the legislative and the executive branches, the King's arbitrary powers remained virtually unchanged. At the same time the King developed a powerful coercive apparatus called *Makhzen*²¹⁰ to control the army and the administration and placed it under the direct control of the palace. In common term *Makhzen* refers to the government and all its public services. Among the regime-critics, the term is used to refer to the royal

²⁰⁶ William I Zartman(1987), *The Political Economy of Morocco*, New York: Praeger

²⁰⁷ Waterbury , *The Commander* , pp 143

²⁰⁸ Michael M .Laskier (2003), “A Difficult Inheritance: Moroccan Society under King Muhammad VI”, *Middle East Review of International Affairs*, Vol.7, No.3, pp.1-20.

²⁰⁹ Zeghal , *Islamism in Morocco*, pp. 48

²¹⁰ Makhzen literally means warehouse where king servants use to collect wages and taxes , in morocco makhzen is referred as the governing elites who centers around king such as royal person , top military officials , businessman and wealthy landlords ,security officials , tribal leaders and important official in the system

establishment which declares devotion to the King in return for material benefits. The term is frequently used in a pejorative sense to avoid using the word 'King'.²¹¹

Faced with considerable challenges, including attempted coups d'état in the 1970s, King Hassan resorted to the policy of repression and cooptation of the opponents. During these "*années de plomb*" (years of lead), hundreds of palace opponents were abducted and thousands were imprisoned and sometimes tortured.²¹² The majority was made up of leftists, but Islamists, advocates of Western Saharan independence,²¹³ and military personnel implicated in several unsuccessful coups all experienced their share of repression. At the same time, revisions of the constitution took place in 1970 and 1980, which, however, left that pattern of domination intact, even enhancing it in key ways. Political parties were, for instance, allowed to exist, but Hassan's strategies of division and co-option rendered them largely ineffectual. A pluralistic system was encouraged by the King as a strategy to prevent the rise of a powerful party. In order to survive and enjoy the favour of the palace, parties had to accept the theocratic concept of power, which made the King the political and spiritual head of the country and the uncontested guide of the nation.²¹⁴ Instead of a democratic constitutional monarchy, it was popularly known as Hassanian democracy. This democracy allowed for multiple political parties as long as the king's position as leader of the country and the faith was not questioned. Despite a Hassanian democracy, the Moroccan political was marred by a state of emergency (1965-71), two failed military coups (1971 and 1972), corrupt elections, including vote-buying, rigid patron-client relationships, and administrative interference, media censorship, and the use of deadly force to crush true opposition. One of the most disturbing examples of the regime's intolerance of opposition was the 1965 riots in which hundreds of protesters were killed by government forces. The riots symbolized the growing rift between the monarchy and the opposition who were calling for an end to

²¹¹ William I Zartman (1964), *Destiny of a Dynasty: The Search for Institutions in Morocco's Developing Society*, Columbia: University of South Carolina Press.

²¹² Lise Storm (2010), *Democratization in Morocco: The Political Elite and Struggles for Power in the Post-Independence State*, London: Routledge.

²¹³ Morocco has claimed the Western Sahara from Centuries, and a final settlement was made on 1998 with the UN peace plan and it came into effects in 1991.

²¹⁴ Ibid

monarchical rule in Morocco. Opposition to the monarchy got extreme over into other riots as well in 1981, 1984, 1990, 1999, each effectively crushed by the security apparatus.²¹⁵ Morocco remained in political stasis until the early 1990s, when King Hassan II started a slow process of opening up the political system. The period from 1962 to 1975 was dominated by a power struggle between the monarchy and nationalist opposition parties. The second period (1975-92) saw the forging of a national consensus that removed such political issues from the reform agenda.²¹⁶ Hassan II took some important measures to bring democratic opening in the country. Further, the example of neighbouring Algeria to the mid -1990's plunged into a bloody war between security forces and Islamists who had turned to violence after being deprived of an election victory.

After ascending to the throne in 1999, the present King Mohammed VI sought to base the political system on modernity and democratic respectability by defining it as an “executive constitutional monarchy”. For years Hassan II argued that Morocco was an open and democratic society. During all that time, the international community had raised questions about these assertions. The appointment, in February of 1998, of opposition leader Abderrahmane Youssoufi of the Socialist Union for Popular Forces (USFP) as Prime Minister was at first heralded by many as evidence that Morocco not only tolerated opposition²¹⁷. The 1997 elections, which was better than other elections left an impression that Morocco was moving toward democracy. The end of the cold war brought many political changes around the world. The downfall of communism and the triumph of democracy put pressure on all authoritarian regimes to begin to democratize. The kings recognized the changing situation and understood that the ways and methods to deal with the situations will not be accepted internationally anymore. As a result, the government-led *Mouvement de Contestation* (or the questioning of the system or protest

²¹⁵ Ibid

²¹⁶ Domestically, a series of severe droughts had forced many rural residents to move to the cities, resulting in unprecedented levels of both unemployment and social discontent. This led to increasing support for Islamist groups which was quite dangerous for the future of monarchy. Lastly, Morocco faced an imminent succession because of the King's advancing age along with his grave illness provided further incentive for Hassan II to introduce changes.

²¹⁷ Maghraoui, “Monarch”, pp.73–86.

movement) was launched in 1995. This was an attempt by the administration to respond to outside demands for democracy and transparency and resulted in yet another constitution in 1996.²¹⁸ This constitution was supported by the former opposition USFP, but was opposed by others including the Islamists and many Berber organizations. Prior to the 1996 constitution and the subsequent 1997 elections, the king's administration had a pattern of interfering with the political parties. This interference included preventing left and center left parties from participating, and arresting their leaders. The King had tried to keep a close watch on the Islamist organizations and parties within the state as well.²¹⁹ The 1997 elections which began the new electoral cycle of the 1996 constitution included elections for the lower house of the bicameral legislature, the *Majlis an-Nawwab*, using a system where the candidate with the maximum votes wins. This contrasts with the proportional representation system, which provides for representation based on the percentage of votes received by each party. The upper house, *Majlis al-Mustasharin*, is elected by municipalities, trade unions, and professional organizations.²²⁰ The 1997 elections were generally considered an improvement over previous elections, yet there were still doubts about its legitimacy. There was administrative interference in elections.

One of the key Moroccan administrative figures who remained uninterested in democracy was the Interior Minister Driss Basri. He was in charge of the state security apparatus. Over the years, Basri and his vast network of patron-client relationships had proven too formidable to challenge. Despite the prevalence of the opposition USFP in the government, the King would continue to appoint both the Minister of the Interior and the Foreign Minister. Thus there are two political layers in Morocco, one where the actual power lies, and another where the political parties operate. This has created an illusion that has enabled the monarchy to give the impression that multi-party democracy is at work.²²¹ Retention of the right to appoint the interior and foreign ministers as well as retention of the right for final approval of all cabinet ministers suggests that the recently

²¹⁸ Joffe, "Morocco's Reform Process: Wider Implications", pp.151-164

²¹⁹ Ibid

²²⁰ White, *Electoral*, pp. 94

²²¹ Maghraoui, *Monarchy*, pp. 82

administered changes, including the *Mouvement de Contestation* and appointment of Youssoufi as Prime Minister, were part of Hassan II's tradition of a democracy shell game.²²²

Multiparty Elections

The elections are the symbol of democratic setup in any country. The elections mark an important step in the country's process of creating greater transparency and accountability in its political life. Elections are the important development in Morocco political system from transition to a consolidated government. Although the protests never reached a critical mass in terms of participants, the monarchy quickly responded introducing a plan for political reforms in line with his standing commitment to liberalize Moroccan political life. While few disputes that substantial changes have occurred since Mohammed VI ascended to the throne in July 1999, many experts argue that the King does not in fact intend to voluntarily devolve substantive powers or decrease his involvement in political life.²²³

The reform processes are entangled by a number of longstanding issues that have overshadowed Moroccan elections for decades. At the top of the list is the Moroccan public's general attitude towards the vote. Under Mohammed VI, the voting process in parliamentary elections has been largely purged of the corruption and irregularities which marred earlier elections. By most accounts, the 2002 and 2007 parliamentary elections were far more transparent and drew praise from foreign monitors. But the Moroccan public has kept its distance from the polls (37 percent participated in the 2007 parliamentary elections),²²⁴ indicating widespread skepticism regarding the efficacy of the process. If the upcoming elections are intended to provide a public endorsement of possible change, voter turnout will be crucial.

²²² Ibid

²²³ <http://www.europeanforum.net/country/morocco>

²²⁴ http://www.carnegieendowment.org/files/moroccan_parliamentary_elections_final.pdf

The parliamentary elections in September 2002 proved reasonably well-administered, with election authorities sanctioning domestic monitors for the first time, ensuring access to the media for all political parties, and launching government-sponsored voter education initiatives.²²⁵ The elections also marked an enhanced role for women in the political realm through a national list that all parties agreed to reserve for women candidates. This step dramatically increased the number of female members of parliament from two to. The openness of the process created momentum for pushing on other human rights, social and economic reforms, such as the family code (*moudawana*) and the Equity and Reconciliation Commission. It also focused attention on additional political reforms that would prompt the creation of a responsible government that has a clear public mandate and can coalesce around a well-defined program once in office.²²⁶

In 2002, the Moroccan government officially completed a reform of electoral laws in preparation for elections that same year. This system remains in effect with recent minor modifications. The Moroccan government chose a two-tiered proportional representation electoral system,²²⁷ with multi-member districts, to replace its former first-past-the-post system, with single-member districts. Under this system, each party interested in running in a particular district puts forth a list of candidates equal to the number of seats in the district. On the ballot, voters indicate their preference for a particular party, rather than a candidate.²²⁸ The Moroccan system is a closed system, meaning each party fixes the order in which the candidates are listed and elected. The voter can select which party he or she prefers, but not which candidate within the party list he or she would like to see elected. Those changes also included a move to a single ballot, a positive step that reduced opportunities for vote-buying. The two-tiered, proportional-representation system as applied in Morocco, using a remainder system for allocating seats, makes it very difficult for individual parties to win more than one seat per district and increases the likelihood that seats in parliament are distributed relatively

²²⁵ James N. Sater (2003), "Morocco after the Parliamentary Elections of 2002", *Mediterranean Politics*, Vol. 8, No1, pp. 32 -47

²²⁶ Ibid

²²⁷ Michael J. Willis (2004), "Morocco's Islamists and the Legislative Elections of 2002: The Strange Case of the Party That Did Not Want to Win", *Mediterranean Politics*, Vol. 9, No.1, pp. 53-81.

²²⁸ Ibid

evenly among major parties. Revisions to the electoral law were finalized in early 2007.

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FIGURE 1.2: GRAPHIC SHOWING VOTER TURNOUT IN EVERY POLL IN MOROCCO FROM 1963- 2011



SOURCE: Morocco Country Report 1996 - 2011

<http://globalvoicesonline.org/2011/11/28/morocco-islamist-pjd-victory-in-post-reform-parliamentary-election/>

²²⁹ National Democratic Institute (NDI), *Final Report on the Moroccan Legislative Elections, September 7, 2007* Washington, DC: NDI, May 15, 2008.

While the revisions could have provided the opportunity for making representation within the parliament more in line with the popular vote, the final version did little to address the problem of parties not being able to gain more than one seat in a district. The code did, however, raise the threshold required to take seats in the parliament from three to six percent, while proposals to raise the threshold to 10 percent were rejected. The change to the threshold is unlikely to have an impact on the distribution of seats at the district level, but could affect the distribution of seats among the national women's list. In early 2007, several adjustments were also made to districts, raising their numbers to 95 and creating a maximum number of seats per district of five. In the meantime, a stipulation that a party needed to have received three percent of the vote in 2002 in order to stand for elections in 2007 was struck down by the Constitutional Council.²³⁰ The net effect of these changes did not alter the likely impact of the system's design: relatively equal distribution of seats among major parties notwithstanding potentially significantly different vote totals among the larger parties.

2007 Elections

Although the 2007 Moroccan parliamentary elections were widely held complete fair and transparent, there were reports of violations of the elections.²³¹ Unfair means were used such as buying of vote's .the poor performances by the political parties have further complicated the issue. All the political parties have failed to make an equal distribution of power. The political system has always been over showed by the influence of King. The 2007 parliamentary election was an important political opportunity for Moroccan people. The results were quite positive, it marked with little more opening and there was hope for more democratic system. There were many positive factors of the 2007 parliamentary election, including an invigorated effort by major political parties to differentiate themselves through issue based platforms and more competitive campaigns based on voter interests.²³² Similarly, voter registration and civic education efforts have aggressively sought to reverse downward trends in voter turnout, particularly among

²³⁰ Ibid

²³¹ National Democratic Institute (2008), *Final Report on the Moroccan Legislative Elections, September 7, 2007* Washington, DC.

²³² Ibid

younger voters. In addition, the administrative preparations for the elections seem to be impressive.²³³ The role played by civil society in terms of policy advocacy, voter education, and in preparing for domestic observation of the upcoming elections has been noteworthy and positive.

TABLE 1.1: Results of elections for House of Representatives on September 7, 2007

Party	Number of seats
Istiqlal Party	52
Justice and Development Party (PJD)	47
Popular Movement Party	43
National Rally of Independents	38
Socialist Union of Popular Forces	36
Constitutional Union	27
Party of Progress and Socialism	17
Front of Democratic Forces	9
Social Democratic Movement	9
National Democratic Party-Al Ahd Union (Joint List)	8
Al Ahd Party	3
National Democratic Party	3
PADS-CNI-PSU Union (Joint List)	6
Labor Party	5
Environment and Development Party	5
Party of Renewal and Equity	4
Socialist Party	2
Democratic Union	2
National Congress Party	1
Citizens Forces Party	1
Citizenship and Development Initiative	1
Party of Renaissance and Virtue	1

- Voter Turnout: 37%, the lowest in the history of Moroccan national elections

SOURCE: Arab Political System, Base Line Information and Reforms: Morocco
www.carnegieendowment.org/files/Morocco_APS.doc

²³³http://www.carnegieendowment.org/files/moroccan_parliamentary_elections_final.pdf

There are several weaknesses in the electoral process most of which relate to the overwhelming power of the executive. Major decisions are taken by the monarchy's technocrats and advisers, and there is hardly any involvement of other political parties in the decision. The constitution designates the monarchy as the embodiment of the nation and this supremacy pervades the electoral system. The political parties in Morocco lack the clear platform. They don't play an important and effective role in opposing the government policies. Parties also are discredited by the tendency of individuals to switch parties after elections for opportunistic reasons.²³⁴ There has been no recent change to reduce the power of the monarch. The King is both head of state and head of government and according to the constitution; He is Commander of the Faithful. He appoints and can dismiss the prime minister, other ministers, ambassadors, governors, and heads of public agencies. The prime minister has no independent authority and his ability to shape policy is less than that of key royal advisers.²³⁵ The two prime ministers since 2006, Driss Jettou and Abbas El-Fassi, repeatedly were simply informed of important government decisions reached without their knowledge by the royal cabinet. In important ministries, including the Ministry of Interior, royal advisers serving as deputy ministers exercise more influence than the ministers to whom they nominally report. Meanwhile, at the local and regional levels, governors, not local councils and mayors, make all key decisions.

The 2011 Parliamentary Elections

The Moroccan election held in November 2011 was the result of the popular protest which broke out in Morocco in 2011 known as the "February 20 Movement", against "political corruption". The parliamentary elections held on 25 November 2011 were a test of whether the king's approach of gradual reforms was still popular in the country. The Islamist PJD (Party of Justice and Development) emerged as the winner. "This indicated that the one who wants real change in the country wanted this to be

²³⁴ Moroccans refer to this practice as electoral nomadism or political transhumance.

²³⁵ Michael McFaul and Tamara Cofman Wittes(2008), "The Limits of Limited Reforms" , *Journal of Democracy*, Vol. 19,No.1,pp.19-33

achieved within the system by more effective reforms, not through revolts”.²³⁶ The "February 20 Movement", for its part, has called for a boycott of the elections, arguing that introducing "top-down" reforms.

This positive election activity, however, occurs in the context of declining popular confidence in political institutions and systemic structures that could limit the impact of the elections. The impressive efforts aimed at increasing voter turnout reflect the substantial concern regarding the risks to democratic development posed by voter disaffection, resulting in low turnout. At the same time, given the mechanics of the election law, it will be extremely difficult for any party to achieve a substantial plurality in the parliament. Also, there could be a significant disconnect between the popular vote totals garnered by the various parties and their representation in the elected parliament. There are active efforts to promote the role of women. Ongoing focus, however, will be necessary to determine the best means to increase women’s political empowerment. Also, recent episodes of challenges to the press could have an effect on political coverage and, therefore, on the election.²³⁷

The PJD victory has been possible for four factors. First, it focused issues on a strong anti-corruption programme for example, delivering good governance and social justice, fighting endemic corruption, revamping the country’s abysmal education system, and improving people’s economic condition. The party benefitted as there was demands for change. The PJD was able to assure the middle class that it was not totally “Islamist” but rather had an “Islamic reference” that linked Islam with political dignity. The party had in recent years moderated its tone and compromised on matters such as the reform of the family code. After 2003 terrorist’s attacks, the PJD reiterated its total opposition to any form of violence, absolute repudiation of terrorism, and its open and peaceful character. The monarchy played an important role as encouraging Islamists who oppose violence and support the monarchy to participate in the political game.²³⁸

²³⁶ Laila Lalami,(2011) "Morocco's Moderate Revolution", *Foreign Policy*.
http://www.foreignpolicy.com/articles/2011/02/21/moroccos_moderate_revolution

²³⁷ Ibid

²³⁸ Ibid

The parliamentary election of 2011 was seen as hope for change but just after the elections the youth-led movement “February 20”, some left-wing parties and the outlawed Justice and Charity movement founded by Sheikh Yassine called for a boycott and organised demonstrations in all major cities.²³⁹ The protests were in demands of the illegal and unfair means used in the elections. Moroccans suffer from the same problems as do others across the Arab world. There are issues of corruption, poor housing, widespread poverty, social inequality, and increasing unemployment. Yet, unlike their counterparts in Tunisia, Egypt, Libya and elsewhere they will probably not go down the path of revolution. Morocco is presently on the threshold of profound social, political and economic transformation. The major political parties can play an important role in bringing the change. The PJD now faces bigger challenges ahead and it needs to ensure that the governing coalition is a strong one, able to ensure that it is not over-constrained by the previous rules of the palace. The PJD will have to demonstrate that it is willing to work within the system, thus reassuring worried observers that it is able to compromise and to maintain the country’s diversity and liberal lifestyle. Morocco remains unique among the countries affected by the “Arab spring”: ruled by a monarch who is not a dictator and is supported by the great majority of the population, with a government that has been able both to maintain its specificity while maintaining close ties with Europe and the United States.²⁴⁰

In any case, it is clear that the current political system works to exacerbate the weaknesses and undermine the strengths of political parties and the parliament, contributing to the ongoing decline in the public perception of the efficacy of both. As a result, it appears that voters expressed their dissatisfaction with the status quo through high rates of abstention and protest ballots cast. If the Moroccan authorities hope to engage a substantial majority of the public in the political process, they will need to undertake substantial political reforms designed to strengthen elected institutions, empower elected officials and solidify the bond and concomitant accountability between

²³⁹http://pomed.org/wordpress/wp-content/uploads/2011/11/POMEDNotes_BeyondMoroccoco.

²⁴⁰ Ibid

political parties, elected officials and the electorate. The major weakness in the running up the elections is that the political structures are weak. The political players have limited powers in the system. Moreover, the Moroccan electoral system makes it difficult for parties to consolidate power within the elected institution in such a way that would allow them effectively to take advantage of the limited powers afforded to such institutions. Morocco employs a multi-member district system. It has a large number of districts. Each district has a relatively small number of seats generally three or four per district. The seats are allocated within each district using a proportional representation, remainder system. The combination of these elements has had the predictable effect of allocating seats in the parliament relatively equally among the major parties and fracturing power within the legislature. In all eight of the 95 multi-member districts, no party won more than one seat. Given the difficulty in winning more than one seat, but the relatively low barrier to winning that one seat, this structure has a tendency to lead to a reliance on candidates with significant personal followings in local areas. The Moroccan electoral districts are relatively small, a party may need to win as little as eight to 10 percent of the vote in a district to win a seat there. One way to achieve that is through a strong party campaign; another is to find a candidate with a significant personal following who may or may not have strong party ties.

The elected chamber operates in a relatively weak position and the capacity of political parties within the chamber is highly diminished. As a result, strong policy in response to public interests has to emanate from where power exists, which is the King. Whatever the strengths or weaknesses of Moroccan political parties and candidates, the current political system works to exacerbate those weaknesses and undermine those strengths. It will be important for Moroccan authorities to allow for maximum openness for campaigning and the free exchange of ideas in the run-up to the election. Equally important, in the wake of the elections, effort will have to be made to insure that representation in the successor government reflects, as fully as possible, the expressed will of the Moroccan people, and that the elected government and parliament are given increased capacity to represent citizen interests and be effective in their role. In order to be effective, the democratic process must connect voter preferences to policy decisions.

To sum up the Moroccan constitution is “an extremely ambiguous document at this point,” which “could be implemented in an array of different fashions.”²⁴¹ The constitution does not clearly provide for a constitutional monarchy, rather, it allows the King to rule. Further he states that Moroccan political parties have not been utilizing the political space allowed by the new constitution. Thus, regardless of the election results, the parties will not put much pressure against the monarchy.²⁴² There was no active participation of people in the elections of Morocco. The Moroccan political parties and candidates have failed to inspire voters and carry responsibility for the weakness of the political system. The very nature of Morocco’s system of monarchy, where the elected lower house of parliament has limited powers and the election system encourages fragmentation of those powers, undermines political parties and fails to inspire voter confidence in elected officials, candidates and parties. After the King Mohammed VI succeeded his father Hassan II in July 1999, he became a symbol of hope for democratic Morocco.

Despite the changes and the early reforms of 1990 the system is authoritarian in nature. He has been unable to bring the significant changes. It is clear that prospects for democratic change in Morocco remain weak. The major obstacle to democratization is the inability of the major political players, the King, the political parties and the Islamists. It is nowhere close to a democratic setup. The next chapter would examine with King Muhammad VI sweeping political reforms that would radically alter Morocco’s system of governance.

²⁴¹Marina and Meredith Riley, “Morocco: From Top down Reform”, pp. 76

²⁴² Ibid

CHAPTER IV

***STRUCTURAL AND IDEOLOGICAL CHALLENGES
TO TRANSITION***

Morocco since its independence from France in 1956 has a political system based on “authoritarian pluralism” - an unaccountable authoritarian leader coexisting with a certain degree of pluralism so long as this does not undermine his rule. In other words, Morocco has both the authoritarian character embodied in the executive pre-eminence of the monarchy and a democratic one reflected in the presence of multiparty political system and growth of civil society activism. Although the royal family has always permitted a degree of political pluralism giving the impression that the country is transiting to complete democratic governance, this has never materialised. While the first post-colonial 1962 constitution was king-centred, the four successive constitutions promulgated in 1970, 1972, 1992 and 1996 respectively confirm the pre-eminence of the monarchy and the subordination to it of all other political institutions, whether legislative, executive, or judicial. As a result, Morocco was never closer to a decisive democratic breakthrough despite an impressive progress in political reforms. This chapter is devoted to analyzing the factors that account for Morocco’s democratic deficiency followed by an assessment of its prospects of becoming a democratic state in the backdrop of the recent top-down reform process triggered by the anti-regime protests spread across the Arab world in 2011.

Centralized Power Structure

Apart from serious social and economic difficulties, biggest challenge to Morocco’s democratic transition emanates from the country’s existing power structure. Officially, Morocco is a constitutional monarchy, but in practice, ultimate authority continues to rest with the king.²⁴³ Universal suffrage was granted in 1960, but the electoral process was constantly manipulated to maintain the king's allies in government while keeping alive the opposition's hope that it could one day accede to power. Besides, there are also significant limitations to democracy deriving mainly from the central role

²⁴³ Abdeslam M Maghraoui (2001), “Monarchy and Political Reform in Morocco”, *Journal of Democracy*, Vol.12, No.1, pp.77, See also Szmolka (2010), “Party System fragmentation in Morocco”, *Journal of North African Studies*, Vol. 15, No.1, pp.13-37.

played by the Monarchy in the political system and from the lack of autonomy in institutions such as the Government and Parliament. The legislative, executive, the judicial, the military, the economic and the religious powers are all concentrated in the hands of the King, although some institutions of the democratic accountability exist. The King appoints the prime minister, as well as the ministers of interior, foreign affairs, justice and Islamic affairs. He may also “terminate the services of the Government either on his own initiative or because of their resignation,”²⁴⁴ and can dismiss either or both houses of parliament (the House of Representatives and the House of Counselors) by royal decree. The parliament is elected from a variety of political parties, and members of parliament as well as opposition groups may criticize the government except in three key areas, known as the “sacred limits.”²⁴⁵

No one has the authority to question the monarchy. Mohammed VI has made some efforts to change the image which was built by his father Hassan II of being an autocratic ruler. Yet the King remains to be a strange thing for the common people of Morocco.²⁴⁶ Even though he calls for drastic change in political system, easing restrictions on the freedom of expression and setting up rule of law, state control is still practiced. More importantly, the king himself has made major decisions that bypass formal procedures and institutions.²⁴⁷ When he dismissed the unpopular minister of the interior and appointed a new one in November 1999, the prime minister was not consulted about the new appointee and was not informed of the decision. He learned of the major change to his own cabinet through informal channels while traveling abroad. In another case, the King pardoned journalists who had been sentenced to prison for libeling

²⁴⁴ <http://www.al-bab.com/maroc/gov/con96.htm>

²⁴⁵ James N. Sater (2007), *Civil society and political change in Morocco*, USA: Routledge:

²⁴⁶ Steven Adolf (2011), ‘Morocco on the Move: Towards Democracy and Prosperity’, *FORUM* Report. [Online: Web] Accessed on 14 October 2011, URL: <http://www.forum.nl/Portals/International/Englishpdf/Morocco%20on%20the%20move.pdf>.

²⁴⁷ Michael M. Laskier, (2003), “A Difficult Inheritance: Moroccan Society under King Muhammad VI”, *Middle East Review of International Affairs*, Vol.7, No.3, pp.1-20.

the foreign minister last June. Although well-intended, his decision sidestepped formal appeal procedures and reaffirmed his absolute power above the judiciary.²⁴⁸

Weak Judiciary

The weak judiciary of the Morocco is one of the major obstacles to freedom of association, human rights and public liberties in general. The effectiveness, transparency and accountability are the key to an independent judiciary. The judiciary acts as the backbone of the any country. At the same time, there was broad consensus that the weakness of the judiciary in Morocco is directly linked to the overarching lack of a separation of powers, which can only be established due to comprehensive constitutional reform.²⁴⁹ The judiciary is not recognized in the constitution as a separate power, and both the executive and the legislature are subject to the veto power of the King. The prime minister and parliament lack real and effective power.²⁵⁰ In other words, formal democratic institutions are bereft of their democratic content, as decision-making power does not lie in the hands of elected, representative organs. Instead, the three powers are in reality being run by the same people and thus do not comply with their function of providing effective vigilance and control over each other. The King in practice not only possesses greatest executive power but also exercises significant competences in justice and legislative matters. Operational changes can be made by the elected government alone, but strategic/sensitive matters are dealt with by the palace and its entourage. With decision-making power so concentrated and no effective control mechanisms in place, political decision making and legal procedures are neither transparent nor accountable.²⁵¹

Deep State Structure: *Makhzen*

The dualism of formal and informal rules that becomes apparent in legislation is also reflected in official institutions: behind the formally democratic governance scaffold, the Makhzen constitutes a shadow power structure that extends from the palace over the

²⁴⁸ Ibid

²⁴⁹ Kristina Kausch (2008) "Morocco: Negotiating Change with the Makhzen" *Project on Freedom of Association in the Middle East and North Africa*, pp 1 -28

²⁵⁰ Ibid

²⁵¹ Ibid

media, business and down to the local councils. Royal counsellors are the true decision makers in all ministries of strategic political importance. The role of the government, appointed according to the King's will following legislative elections, hence degenerates into little more than the state's operations manager, with independent decision making power only in politically harmless areas.²⁵² It is thus clear that the Parliament is weak and the major decisions are taken by the King. While the King enjoys an unchallenged status, the political parties have no meaningful participation in decision-making. Likewise, civil society organizations exist and even grow in numbers, but they are variously controlled and regulated by the state.

Fragile Civil Society

The Moroccan civil society organizations, notably the Organization of Human rights and the press play a crucial role by relaying and supporting the actions of the humanitarian organizations.²⁵³ The progressive measures for improved process of human rights are being prolonged due to the measurements taken by King Mohammed VI, aiming to regulate the cases of forced disappearances, the exile for political reasons and at rehabilitating the victims. In December 2003, the commission for "Authority Equity and Reconciliation" carried out a comprehensive assessment of the former violations, payment of the cases of forced disappearances and arbitrary detentions, and to continue researching the cases of unreported missing persons. The authority had received 5,127 requests of compensation and paid, by February 2003, more than 4,000 final awards. It inspired the relief of some 450 political prisoners and encouraged the return of the exiled. Finally, several areas and communities having suffered from the abuses of the past, benefited from the program "Compensation for damage". Recently the King has introduced several initiatives that are marked advances in selected areas of human rights practices. Most notably, the parliament enacted revolutionary changes to the Family Code, or *Moudawana*, in January 2004, making polygamy rare by requiring permission of a judge and the man's first wife, raising the legal age for marriage for girls to 18, and

²⁵² Ibid

²⁵³ Emmanuel Sivan (1990), "The Islamic Resurgence: Civil Society Strikes Back," *Journal of Contemporary History*, Vol.25, No.2, pp .353-64

simplifying divorce procedures for women, among other changes aimed at improving the status of women. However, family court judges have not applied the law strictly and women continue to suffer from inequality, a lack of access to the justice system, and violence.²⁵⁴

Morocco has, doubtless, experienced a real explosion of civil society activism with the number of associations rising to nearly 80, 000. It is within civil society that some of the most sensitive issues are being discussed.”²⁵⁵ For example, the Berbers or Amazigh—the ancient indigenous people of North Africa west of the Nile River—formed almost three-dozen associations to preserve their heritage and restore Amazigh as a living language.²⁵⁶ As the political parties were discredited and increasingly perceived as self-serving “mediators between the political elite and the real wielder of power”, civil society organisations in Morocco emerged as the primary instigators of change and provided space for genuine opposition politics to take place.²⁵⁷ Despite the growing civil society activism, there was no substantial progress on Morocco’s democratic transition because of the absolute executive primacy of the monarchy and its policy of cooptation and repression.²⁵⁸ Moreover, Moroccan civil society is structurally dependent on the regime and fragmented between the Islamists and the rest, which undermine its effectiveness either as a barrier against the state or promoter of democratic ethos.²⁵⁹

²⁵⁴Larbi Sadiki (2000), “Popular Uprisings and Arab Democratization”, *International Journal of Middle Eastern Studies*, Vol. 32, No.1, pp. 71-95.

²⁵⁵ Francesco Cavatorta and Vincent Durac (2011), *Civil Society and Democratization in the Arab World: The Dynamics of Activism*, New York: Routledge, pp.59-60

²⁵⁶Driss Maghraoui (2008), ‘The Dynamics of Civil Society in Morocco’, in E.L. Okar & S. Zrhouni (eds), *Political Participation in the Middle East*, Boulder Co: Lynne Rienner Publishers

²⁵⁷ Francesco Cavatorta (2005), “The International Context of Morocco's Stalled Democratization”, *Democratization*, Vol.12, No.4, pp.58.

²⁵⁸ Cavatorta and Durac , *Civil Society and Democratization* , pp .60

²⁵⁹ Marina Ottaway (2011), “The New Moroccan Constitution: Real Change or More of the Same?” *Carnegie Endowment for International Peace*, URL, <http://carnegieendowment.org/2011/06/20/new-moroccan-constitution-real-change-or-more-of-same/51>

Human Rights

King Mohammed's most solid and successful record lies in the issue of human rights. However, there are still outstanding concerns. The Moroccan state has not officially admitted responsibility for past human rights violations. Information regarding the number, dates, places and conditions of disappearances is censored. Those responsible for torture and killings have not been brought to trial. The large number of violations of human rights goes largely unreported, which poignantly reflect the continuity of the *makhzen's* authority in Morocco.²⁶⁰ On the political front, the king established a truth and reconciliation commission in 2004, designed to investigate human rights abuses committed during his father's reign. This is the first commission of its kind in an Arab- Islamic country. Freedom House's *Freedom in the World 2010* survey concluded that Morocco is a "partly free" country, and noted a downward trend owing to "increased concentration of power in the hands of political elites aligned with the monarchy."²⁶¹ At the beginning of the 1970's, Morocco had just exited the period of the state of exception which lasted since March 1965. This context was marked by the illegal arrests and disappearances, violations of human rights, result of a coercive treatment reserved for the social movements, disputes, street demonstrations and riots, strikes and the conscience movements. It is at the exit of this phase from the history of the country (1972), commonly known as the "Iron years", that the term "human rights" appeared. Many of the human rights organization has been active and has pressurized the government to bring reforms.²⁶² The problem of prisoners of conscience was thus the entry platform to the issue of the human rights in Morocco. It has allowed the mobilization of the political and associative actors who fought for public freedom, even if other breaches for the freedom of opinion, of the right to create associations, the right for strike, the physical integrity, the right to circulation, safety, the right to work, the non violation of the private life all these represented notable aspects of the Iron years.²⁶³

²⁶⁰ Ibid

²⁶¹ <http://www.freedomhouse.org>

²⁶² Ibid

²⁶³ <http://www.carnegieendowment.org/publications/index.cfm?fa=view&id=19569&prog=zgp&proj=zme>

The role of outside human rights groups and international pressure regarding Morocco's Human Rights record has been critical for the advancement of the human rights agenda in Morocco. Human rights groups such as Amnesty International (AI) had worked diligently to gain access to information about Morocco's political prisoners and those who had disappeared. Hassan's well-reported battles with AI left Morocco bruised on the world stage. The kings' refusal to admit the existence of the notorious Tazmamart prison caused the regime much embarrassment when AI released its report about the abuses that had been occurring there. Later, the regime let it be known that the prison was closed and the king commented, "That chapter is closed. It was; it is no more." In response to international pressure, apparently spurred on by AI, the regime released hundreds of political prisoners despite the king's repeated statements denying their existence. In 1993, as a result of the international pressure, Morocco ratified the Convention on the Elimination of All forms of Discrimination Against Women, the Convention Against Torture and Other Cruel, or Inhuman or Degrading Treatment, the Convention on the Rights of the Child and the Convention on the Rights of Migrants, albeit with substantial reservations. The positive changes that occurred in the last years of Hassan II's rule when there was the release of 95 percent of all political prisoners, the signing of international human rights conventions, the acceptance of internationally promulgated human rights norms in the constitution and a rise in consciousness about human rights among Moroccans.²⁶⁴

Widespread Corruption

Typical of any authoritarian regime, the malice of corruption in Morocco has been the source of popular discontent, which, in turn, spawns the loss of trust on the functioning of the system. In fact, corruption was the central issue of the February 2011

²⁶⁴Michael J. Willis (2009), "Conclusion: The Dynamics of Reform in Morocco", *Mediterranean Politics*, Vol.14, No.2, pp. 229-237. At the start of the year 1990, initiatives were taken to resolve the issue of Human rights, following the adoption of a series of measurements and reforms directed towards a balance of power and a consolidation of the State of law. The creation in 1990 of the Advisory Council of Human rights constitutes a political expansion involving important changes in this field. Also, the constitutional revisions of 1992 and 1996, introduced new standards regarding the primacy of law, the development of means of control of the Parliament on the government policy and the relative autonomy of the Prime Minister

anti-regime protest in the country.²⁶⁵ According to the Central Authority for the Prevention of Corruption (ICPC) and its report, the issues of corruption must be immediately checked and it should be the responsibility of the government to create the awareness and remove the defects in the law.²⁶⁶ The report highlights legal loopholes in anti-corruption policies. According to the ICPC; the list of crimes and offenses includes practically the same elements as the United Nations' anti-corruption convention. The report also criticized for the lack of legal protection for witnesses. In terms of prevention, there is no legislative framework to guarantee access rights to information. Over the last two to three years, the government has taken a number of important measures to step up its engagement to fight corruption. In March 2007, parliament passed a law on money laundering and financial crime that prohibits the use of the financial system for criminal purposes, as well as addressing the transfer of funds stemming from illicit sources. The law punishes offenders with prison sentences and large fines. A new financial investigation unit answering to the Office of the Prime Minister has been established with a mandate to receive, analyze and disseminate information on suspicious transactions, and collect data on money laundering operations.

In November 2006, the Government adopted a draft decree establishing the Central Body for the Prevention of Corruption both of the measures are considered as important steps against corruption.²⁶⁷ Experts and members of civil society have noted that the Moroccan legislation raises a number of important questions. If the primary function of the “Central Body” is that of coordination, then the complex governance structure envisioned under the decree which includes a plenary assembly, executive commission and general secretariat may prove to be too detached and elaborate. This function needs to be embedded directly under the prime minister and/or cabinet and reflect their central authority for the line departments to take it seriously.²⁶⁸ A second issue surrounds the independence of such an agency. There has to be an elaborate governance structure, which is presumably intended. The new constitution and the

²⁶⁵ <http://www.business-anti-corruption.com/country-profiles/middle-east-north-africa/morocco/>

²⁶⁶ <http://www.moroccoboard.com/news/34-news-release/1096-icpc-issues-corruption-report>

²⁶⁷ Ibid

²⁶⁸ Ibid

political reforms in Morocco might bring the changes but it will be only possible if there is continuous pressure on the King. The impact of the new constitution depends on the way it will be implemented. The parliament will have to adopt some necessary changes and it must ensure that there are spaces for all kinds of political activities. There is an immediate need for change for proper political and economic development. The corruption is very much embedded in the political system of Morocco.

The *makhzen* system tends to have tremendous levels of corruption across the government bureaucracy and there are wide spread fraud both at the private and public sectors. The keystone of the Moroccan political system is known as the *makhzen*. Although the King plays a pivotal role at its centre, the *makhzen* is actually a system of its own.²⁶⁹ As a specific term, the word is used to describe the circle of technocratic managers, financiers and advisers surrounding the palace, many of whom originate from powerful families and have been educated at elite universities in France and the United States. The political position is gained by all the influential elites and they are Kings all time favorite. While Morocco's monarch could be credited for having reacted swiftly to the legitimate demands of his subjects, unlike other countries in the region, a sizeable proportion of the population still feels that these reforms fall short of responding to their legitimate demands. They feel that the *makhzen* on of royal institution of power in Moroccan political system is still a key of privileges and not of rights.²⁷⁰ As a system of power based on vertical not horizontal legitimacy, the *makhzen* still perceives Moroccans as subjects, not citizens. Thus, the new constitution, as the social contract between the ruler and the ruled, states in Article 1 that "the system of government in Morocco is a constitutional, democratic, parliamentary, and social Monarchy."²⁷¹

²⁶⁹ Laskier, *A Difficult Inheritance*, pp.1-20.

²⁷⁰ Catherine Sweet (2001), "Democratization without Democracy: Political Openings and Closures in Modern Morocco", *Middle East Report*, pp.22-25.

²⁷¹ Ibid

Socio Economic Challenges

In the United Nations report on developing countries published in 2010, Morocco ranks in 114th Place. This was compiled using an index based on the gross national product per head of Population, illiteracy and life expectancy. Powerful elites and political leaders with connections to the royal palace enjoy a privilege position. By virtue of their position, they benefit from state contracts, land concessions, free utilities, reduced taxes, regional monopolies and all manner of tariff protections. With King Hassan's knowledge and approval, the major power brokers and their families and trusted clients divided Morocco's agricultural regions and industrial zones among themselves, each taking care of his cronies and chasing away undesirable intruders. It is difficult to imagine how the system can be reformed with these groups are still using the power and privileges The Moroccan population is increasing day by day; it increased from 25% in 1960 to 55 percent in 2000.²⁷² Many of them live in extreme poverty. Morocco has the highest level of illiteracy (50 percent) in the Arab world.²⁷³ These issues have become more complicated and there is frequent call for change.

In 2005, the King launched an ambitious development program called the National Initiative for Human Development (INDH).²⁷⁴ The focus of Muhammad VI was to set three priorities firstly to reduce the social deficit (both urban and rural) through better access to basic infrastructure; secondly to promote income generating activities and employment; and thirdly to offer assistance to the most vulnerable social groups to help them emerge from their precarious social positions. The effects are still to be seen. Large portions of Morocco's gross domestic product (19.2%) and labor force (44.6%) continue to depend on agriculture. The current government's goals include achieving 6% GDP growth rate.

²⁷² Iván Martín, (2006) Morocco: The Basis for a New Development Model? Area: Mediterranean and Arab World, Real Instituto Elcano. http://www.realinstitutoelcano.org/analisis/966/966_Martin_MoroccoII.pdf

²⁷³ Ibid

²⁷⁴ ibid

Rise of Islamist Terrorism

The rise of the Islamists has greatly complicated the process of democratization in Morocco. On the one hand, many strands of the Islamist movement are pursuing many of the same values that the modernists are, such as equal justice before the law, accountability in government, and greater popular participation in the resolution of developmental challenges. On the other hand, other elements of the Islamist movement are susceptible to more extremist currents that have been sweeping through the region and which seek to overthrow the system altogether.

The bombing of Casablanca, 2003 was a terrible shock for the country. It raised important issues within the Morocco political system. After the bombing the issue of security was an issue for major concern in the country. There are still many concerns about the human rights issues in Morocco. The media and the Islamist had to go a very hard way after the terrorist attack. According to a report of Human Rights Watch on Morocco, the controversial new law reversed many of the press freedoms only recently enforced by the revised 2002 Press Code. The attacks gave the government legitimate reasons to restrict the power of the media.²⁷⁵ Article 41 of the anti-terror legislation set stricter limits on and penalties for speech offences, all in the name of national security and Moroccan territorial integrity. The regime tried to regain its control over the media through their dependence of subsidies, advertising allocation, stricter regulation and licensing procedures.²⁷⁶

The King was sure that such activities will be in control. Mohammed VI announced various religious reforms stressing the fact that these reforms were carried out to assure the tolerance of Moroccan Islam.²⁷⁷ Just like his father in the first years of the 1980s, Mohammed VI has reduced the role of the mosque as a public space (opening them only for prayer), controlled the Friday sermons, and, even more importantly, has heightened control over the *Conseil Supérieur des Ouléma* in discussing and delivering *fatwas*. The Moroccan King, the government and several opinion makers stressed that the

²⁷⁵ K.Z.Elliott (2009), "Reforming the Moroccan Personal Status Code: A Revolution for Whom?", *Mediterranean Politics*, Vol.14, No.2, pp.213-227.

²⁷⁶ U.S. State Department, *Country Reports on Terrorism 2009*, released on August 5, 2010, <http://www.state.gov/s/ct/rls/cret/2009/index.htm>

²⁷⁷ Ibid

terrorist attacks of Casablanca, just as 9/11 or other attacks, were not part of Islam. The image that the Moroccan government is portraying of Islam is one of openness and tolerance. As the King put it “This terrorist aggression is against our tolerant and generous faith. Even more so, the commissioners and the executioners (of these acts) are wretched criminals who cannot claim to be part of Morocco or authentic Islam, because they ignore the tolerance which characterizes this religion”.²⁷⁸ According to the King, Moroccans have always stressed their Muslim identity through open negotiations with local cultures and other civilizations by using the imaginative effort of *ijtihad* .

Role of External Actors

The geographical location and the density of the historical relationship with Europe have helped Morocco to develop relations with the European Union. EU is the most active partner of Morocco. The strategy democracy development through of economic development has been considered as one of the most successful policy. The European Union has generally preferred to highlight ‘positive developments’ in the political situation of the country emphasising new legislation aimed at improving individual liberties²⁷⁹. EU has decided to focus on the positive developments under the Mohammed VI rule related to the Equity and Reconciliation Commission, and the veneer of democracy in the country. According to the strategy document published in December 2001 the EU believed that “significant progress in terms of individual freedoms and fundamental rights” had been made. All the new initiative in the EU Morocco relationship has put a lot of pressure on the Morocco for political reforms.²⁸⁰

²⁷⁸ Ministère de la communication (2003), H.M. King Mohammed VI, Discourse to the nation after the Casablanca attacks of the 16th of May 2003, Available at <http://www.maroc.ma> (subheading: ‘French’ and ‘discours du roi’).

²⁷⁹ Said Haddadi (2002), “Two Cheers for Whom ? The European Union and Democratisation in Morocco”, *Democratization*, Vol.9, No1, pp.149-69.

²⁸⁰ Ibid

Non-Implementation of Reforms

After close to two years on the throne, the King has effected no systemic change. Notwithstanding his genuine modesty and concern for the poor and powerless, King Mohammed VI has appointed no serious team of reformers and announced no discernible program of reforms. Three important signs confirm the new King's inability to reform the authoritarian system he has inherited. His initiatives seem impulsive rather than guided by a clear reformist strategy. He bypasses due process and formal decision-making institutions, damaging his professed aim to establish the rule of law. Third, King Mohammed's personal initiatives reproduce, in a different form, the old image of the benevolent despot. The medieval mechanisms of exercising political authority in Morocco are still in place. Despite the Moroccan government's effort to present itself to the outside world as reformist, the political system which is centered on the King is far from the constitutional monarchy that it claims to be. The King has strong executive powers and dominates political life: he names the prime minister and the cabinet and can dismiss either at any time; can dissolve parliament; can pass decrees or veto laws approved by parliament; heads the armed forces and presides over the Supreme Council of the Judiciary which appoints all judges. Morocco does have a limited multi-party system; holds regular elections which are relatively free; has alternating governments; and the parties that win the most votes at the election are invited to head the government. But while elections lead to changes of government, the winning parties do not really govern. They run the administration, but ministers have much less power than the king's counsellors. In short, political parties are in government but not in power.

The lack for proper implementation of government policies may be the major obstacles in democratization process, there have been various political reforms in 1990 and 2002, and however the changes will come if they are implemented properly.²⁸¹ There is lack of correct implementation of law by the authorities; the government has always claimed that is implementation of laws but the results are quite different. The second set

²⁸¹ Mohamed Tozy (2008), "Islamists, Technocrats, and the Palace", *Journal of Democracy*, Vol.19, No.1, pp.34-41.

of impediments to free association revealed by Moroccan NGOs related to access to the public sphere for non-governmental organisations, which is often hindered by a whole range of formal and informal provisions. There is a complete lack for the freedom of expression or the lack for free press The legal base for freedom of expression remains weak as long as the press code's formulations remain vague, and especially as long as it names "defamation" as an exception, without defining the term more concretely. By a similar token, what does or does not constitute an "offence" to the King is very much a matter of arbitrary interpretation, and the "deontology of the profession" is too vague and exploitable a term to define the limits of freedom of the press.

February 2011 Youth Development

A large number of political demonstrations took place in Moroccan cities since early February, in response to the popular unrest called "Arab Spring." Inspired by the anti-authoritarian protests of 2011 in Tunisia and Egypt, the young Moroccans merely using social networking websites launched a joint call for a large national mobilisation on 20 February that gave them their name.²⁸² As the movement supported by the leftwing political parties, Islamic opposition groups and human rights organisations spread to other parts of the country, king Mohammad VI, wary of the 'domino effect' of what has become known as the Arab Spring announced the drafting of a new constitution that would increase powers of the prime minister, establish a separation powers and independence of judiciary, and increase civic liberties.²⁸³ Protesters rejected the constitutional changes as insufficient and continued calls for greater democracy and anticorruption efforts. Analysts have debated that the protests represent threat for the Moroccan monarchy, with most concluding that the government's relative respect for civil liberties and the public's general esteem for the institutions of the monarchy provide significant protection for the regime.²⁸⁴ However, most demonstrators express support for

²⁸² Marina Ottaway (2011), "*The New Moroccan Constitution: Real Change or More of the Same?*", [Online: Web], Accessed on 12 January 2012, URL: <http://carnegieendowment.org/2011/06/20/new-moroccan-constitution-real-change-or-more-of-same/51>

²⁸³ Ibid

²⁸⁴ R.Smith Andrew and Fadoua, Loudiy (2005), "Testing the Red Lines: On the Liberalization of Speech in Morocco", *Human Rights Quarterly*, Vol. 27, No.3, pp.1069-1119.

the monarchy while calling for a greater devolution of executive powers to elected representatives. On February 20, tens of thousands of Moroccans turned out in the capital, Rabat, and other cities in what organizers termed a “Movement for Change.” Protesters called for democratic reforms, including a new constitution. Some also reportedly raised slogans against “autocracy,” corruption, and the centralisation of powers in the hands of kings.²⁸⁵ Although the protests did not turn violent as was the case elsewhere in the region, demonstrations organized by the “February 20 Movement,” was a loosely organized, leaderless. It gained popularity through social media like Face Book, YouTube and Twitter which in turn mounted pressure on the king to address the issue of democratisation.

Although major problems facing Morocco are similar to many other Arab states such as declining living standard, increasing number of unemployment and widespread corruption, there was no popular demand for the overthrow of monarchy.²⁸⁶ Nevertheless, the Kings who have been concerned about the reforms in the country will now have to be more careful about the youth-led non-violent protest in the country. Unlike in Tunisia, Egypt and Libya, King Mohammed VI was not removed from power but the driving force behind the protest was the same. There was a call for greater democracy and freedom, increased transparency, the need to check corruption and improvements to a series of basic provisions and needs. The protests also targeted the special power of the country, the *makhzen*, the term used to describe the system of advisers and financial interests centered on the King, the government and the political parties. There were calls for the removal of a number of leading advisers to the palace and the Prime Minister.²⁸⁷

²⁸⁵ Silvia Colombo (2011), “Morocco at the Crossroad: seizing the window of opportunity for sustainable developments”, *MEDPRO Technical Report*, [Online: Web] Accessed on 21 November 2011, URL: <http://www.ceps.eu/book/morocco-crossroads-seizing-window-opportunity-sustainable-development>.

²⁸⁶ For details, see Gershovich Moshe, (2008), ‘Democratization in Morocco: Political Transition of a North African Kingdom’, *The Middle East Institute Policy Brief*, Accessed on 12 Sept. 2011, URL: kms1.isn.ethz.ch/.../No_08_Democratization_in_Morocco.pdf.

²⁸⁷ Ibid

Despite the wide-ranging debate in the wake of the youth protests of 20 February, there was no direct response from government.²⁸⁸ There was no direct address by the king in response to the protests. The major obstacle to democratization is the inability of the major political players, the King, the political parties and the Islamists. These actors are caught up in the traps of authenticity and cultural specificity that makes it difficult to negotiate political modernity. The protests are expecting support from European countries, as well as from the United States, and this support was generally given on an individual basis. Politically active migrants from Europe also travelled to Morocco to take part in the protests. The protests were supported by websites from abroad and open letters to the King were posted on YouTube. The tone of these was generally significantly more radical than the protests in Morocco itself, there were direct attacks on the King, who was held personally responsible for the abuses.

The youth section of Sheikh Abdessalam Yassine's semi-tolerated fundamental movement *Al Adl Wal Ihsane* (Justice and Charity) played a prominent role in the march. The organisation has long had a reputation as a well-organised extra parliamentary opposition movement. Officially, the movement is banned.²⁸⁹ Sheikh Yassine, who is now elderly and has withdrawn from public life, based his movement on the example of the Sufi brotherhoods. As early as the 1970s, Yassine invoked the wrath of his contemporary King Hassan after publishing an open letter (*Islam or the Flood*). In it, he predicted the downfall of the Moroccan monarchy as a result of corruption, greed and the neglect of the true Islam. Yassine was a proponent of the Caliphate and there is little doubt that he had his eye on the position of the great leader.²⁹⁰

The New Constitution

On the day after the protests, the *Conseil Économique et Social* (CES) was officially installed, with the hastily-organised ceremonies giving the impression that the pressure of circumstances had forced it to be brought forward in the agenda. Just a week

²⁸⁸ The protests were directly against the King, and there were slogans to remove the powerful ministers such as the prime minister and the secretary to the King.

²⁸⁹ Ibid

²⁹⁰ Ibid

later, a second council was launched, the *Conseil National des Droits de l'Homme* (CNDH), replacing the existing *Conseil Consultatif des Droits de l'Homme*, to advise the King on human rights.²⁹¹ A new constitution was formed on July 2011.²⁹² It has a various reforms and changes such as the position of the prime -minister the bicameral legislature, and the judiciary; to promote human rights, women's rights, and Berber (Amazigh) cultural rights; and to encourage decentralization and good governance. The new constitution provides greater insulation for the judiciary from executive power by increasing the independence and authority of the Supreme Council of the Judiciary, although the king would continue to chair the council It also introduces new guarantees as to the primacy of law over public figures and institutions (Art. 6); the protection of political parties, unions, and civil society groups from being dissolved by the state (Arts. 9 and 12); equal socioeconomic rights for women (Art. 19); protection of citizens from extrajudicial detention (Art. 23); and access to government information (Art. 27). It also retains from the 1996 constitution a reference to Islam as the "religion of the state" alongside guarantees "to all" of "the free exercise of their religious affairs" (Art. 3), along with freedom of expression and association (Arts. 25 and 27) and the right to free enterprise (Art. 35).²⁹³

The new drafted constitution introduced some check and balances in the Morocco's political system though the King retains significant executive authorities as the following features of the constitution reveals:

- the Prime Minister will be appointed by him , although he is now required to choose a member of the party with the highest proportion of the vote in legislative elections (Art. 47)

- King continues to appoint government ministers, although he is supposed to do so

²⁹¹ Ibid

²⁹² The new constitution was praised by French president Nicolas Sarkozy , he saluted the Morocco's "Exemplary process," while Foreign Minister Alain Juppé hailed the "clear and historic decision of the people of Morocco."

²⁹³ James Liddell (2008) "Morocco: Modern Politics or Politics of Modernity?" *Arab Reform Bulletin*, Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, December 2008. <http://www.carnegieendowment.org/sada/2008/12/02/morocco-modern-politics-or-politics-of-modernity/6bje>

based on a proposal by the prime minister (Art. 47)

- King retains the authority to fire government ministers (Art. 47), and continues to preside over cabinet meetings and retains the authority to convene such meetings (Art. 48)²⁹⁴

--- King retains the power to dissolve parliament (Art. 51) remains commander-in-chief of the armed forces (Art. 53); and the country's supreme Islamic religious authority as "Commander of the Faithful" (Art. 41).²⁹⁵

The major political parties also supported the new drafted constitution. The major parties were Islamist Justice and Development Party, The Party for Authenticity and Modernity (PAM), Socialist Union of Popular Forces (USFP) all the parties considered it as the major development.²⁹⁶ The reforms have also been praised by the international community as well as by the citizens of Morocco but they still have not given proper representation to the Moroccan citizens. Mohammed VI has put emphasis on the new changes by the introduction of the empowerment of an elected parliament, a strengthened prime minister, a mandate to create an independent judiciary, guarantees to provide equality for women and, above all, efforts to reinforce the position of the monarch both as King as well as Commander of the Faithful.²⁹⁷ It is very early to state that whether the new powers will limit the role of King. However there will be certain changes in the powers for sure. These changes are quite adequate and were needed for Morocco, The King states that these measures will enrich democratic institutions, and will protect existing rights.²⁹⁸

The new setup of constitution was done by the commission of expert's setup by the king therefore it means that it could be possible that it might have been done on the wishes of the King. The new constitution was criticized by the protestors on the way is

²⁹⁴ Ibid

²⁹⁵ Ibid

²⁹⁶ Inmaculada Szmolka,(2010),"Party System fragmentation in Morocco", *Journal of North African Studies*, V ol.15, No.1, pp.13-37.

²⁹⁷ Ibid

²⁹⁸ <http://www.arab-reform.net/spip.php?article5009>, [Online web]Accessed on the 15 June 2011

had been drafted, there were no proper representation of the people or any representative organization.²⁹⁹ The new constitution has thus hardly any major impact on the protest. If the changes are not going to be effective the protests are likely to recur, the youth protesters oppose the new reforms and would like to bring further changes within the system.³⁰⁰ Already there are reports of violent clashes between the protesters and security forces and bomb explosion at a popular tourist café in Marrakesh, killing 17 people in April 2011.³⁰¹

Indeed, the official Moroccan response to the demands of the February 20th youth movement for major political changes including the reform of the constitution highlighted once again the Royal Palace's hegemonic control of the political process there.³⁰² The new Moroccan constitution with 180 articles approved overwhelmingly in the 1 July 2011 referendum though included important constitutional changes and improvement related to human rights, the monarchy ceded none of its essential prerogatives, thus preserving its control of the Moroccan political scene intact. As commented by a critic, "the new Moroccan constitution is not yet the people's constitution; it is the regime's constitution."³⁰³

²⁹⁹ <http://carnegieendowment.org/2011/06/20/new-moroccan-constitution-real-change-or-more-of-same/51>

³⁰⁰ Ibid

³⁰¹ Thomas Luijken(2011), 'The Prospects for Constitutional Change in Morocco', *PISM*, [Online: Web] Accessed on 14 October 2011, URL: <http://www.esdp-course.ethz.ch/content/pubkms/detail.cfm?lng=en&id=130713>.

³⁰² Maghraoui, "Monarchy and Political Reforms", pp.73-86

³⁰³ Ibid

CHAPTER V

CONCLUSION

Democratic transition is a complex historical process consisting of several stages, and political liberalisation marks the first stage of transition during which a state moves away from authoritarian rule towards democracy. A democratic transition is complete when the institutional structure is established, when sufficient agreement is reached about political procedures to form an elected government and when a government comes to power through a free and popular vote. What follows next is democratic consolidation, a slow but purposeful process during which behavioural, attitudinal and institutional dimensions indicate that democracy is accepted by all forces in society as the 'only game in town'.³⁰⁴ However, not all those undergoing the transition reach this consolidation stage. While some relapse into authoritarianism, others enter the 'political gray zone' in which regimes are neither dictatorial nor clearly headed towards democracy.

Many countries have adopted democratic regimes only to see them collapse in a military coup or relapse into authoritarian rule instead. Another criterion raised by many experts is the peaceful transfer of power from one political party or coalition to the former Opposition. Such a transition is critical because it indicates that the major political forces in a country are prepared to settle their disputes without violence and to accept that they will all spend periods of time out of office.³⁰⁵ As the definition of the term suggests, the importance of democratisation is easy to see at first glance, but it is much more complicated in practice.

The Kingdom of Morocco has undergone progressive political liberalization since the early 1990s, but is never closer to a decisive democratic breakthrough. The key obstacles in the way of the democratisation process include the lack of the rule of law, and institutional autonomy, ineffective party-system, fragmented civil society, crony capitalism and high level of corruption by the ruling elites. Despite the King's support of

³⁰⁴Juan J. Linz and Alfred C. Stepan (1996), *Problems of Democratic Transition and Consolidation: Southern Europe, South America and Post-Communist Europe*, Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University, p.5. Also see Andreas Schedler (2001), 'Taking Uncertainty Seriously: The Blurred Boundaries of Democratic Transition and Consolidation', *Democratisation*, Vol.8, No.4, p.1

³⁰⁵Tim Niblock (1998), "Democratisation: A Theoretical and Practical Debate", *British Journal of Middle Eastern Studies*, Vol.25, No.2, p.230.

democracy and the existence of blatantly pro-democracy associations, Morocco remains in the ‘political gray zone’ as a liberalized autocracy’ that promotes competitiveness without inclusiveness, free elections without meaningful participation in decision-making.³⁰⁶ It is “a type of political system whose institutions, rules, and logic defy any linear model of democratisation.”³⁰⁷

Since the late 1990s, especially with the adoption of the 1996 constitution and the parliamentary elections of 1997, Morocco has made significant step-forward in the democratization process, which was the result of interplay of external pressures mainly by the EU through its EuroMed project on one hand and the internal political developments, notably failed coup attempts, civic protests and bread riots.³⁰⁸ Following the relatively free and fair parliamentary elections of 1997, parties that had been previously in opposition formed a new government in 1998 and the king delegated some real powers to this new government. Soon after launching the *alternance*, King Hassan II died and his son Mohammed VI succeeded him. The new king demonstrated a willingness to accelerate the process of democratic transition by introducing a series of political reforms, notably the establishment of an Equity and Reconciliation Commission (IER) to formally investigate human rights violations committed since 1956. The IER was hailed as a revolutionary initiative in Moroccan politics. Other such widely praised reforms included a comprehensive revision of family code (*mudawanna*) regulating marriage, divorce, child custody, and other aspects of family relations, amendments of the 1958 decree concerning the freedom of association and creation of the Non-Governmental Organisations (NGOs), changes in Press Code and the integration of the moderate Islamist Justice and Development Party (PJD) into the political process.

³⁰⁶For discussions of the two distinguishable dimensions of democratization, competition and inclusiveness, see Georg Sorensen (1998), *Democracy and Democratisation: Processes and Prospects in a Changing World*. Boulder: Westview, pp.15-22.

³⁰⁷Daniel Brumberg (2002), “Democratisation in the Arab World?, The Trap of Liberalized Autocracy”, *Journal of Democracy*, Vol. 13, No. 4, p. 56.

³⁰⁸Lise Storm (2010), *Democratization in Morocco: The Political Elite and Struggles for Power in the Post-Independence State*, London: Routledge.

Consequently, a real explosion of civil society activism began in Morocco where the number of associations is estimated at between 30, 000 to 80, 000 and it is within civil society that some of the most sensitive issues are being discussed. For example, the Berbers or Amazigh—the ancient indigenous people of North Africa west of the Nile River— formed almost three-dozen associations to preserve their heritage and restore Amazigh as a living language.³⁰⁹ No wonder, all through the 1990s Morocco was considered as one of the most progressive countries of the WAN region.

Over and above, the government worked to reduce corruption and hold relatively transparent elections. The 2002 and 2007 elections were indeed carried out in compliance with parliamentary mandates though King Mohamed VI did not follow the 1998 precedent by selecting the prime minister from the victorious parties in the 2002 parliamentary vote. Instead he picked a non-partisan technocrat. In advance of the 2007 elections, the king announced his intention to name a premier who reflected the voters' preferences, giving added meaning to the vote. The 2007 elections were, however, free and fair with the opposition and pro-government parties competing on an equal playing field. At the same, Mohamed VI continued to integrate the Islamist party, the Party for Justice and Development (PJD), into Parliament. Despite severe limitations and constraints placed on the party, the PJD was successful in demonstrating both its electoral strength and determination to remain an opposition.³¹⁰

The reform process lasted, with ups and downs, until the 2003 suicide attacks in Casablanca. Although the king did not reverse the course on liberalization afterwards, he injected no further substance into the democratic process by, for example, increasing parliamentary authority or redefining the monarchy's relations to the state. "The Constitution still plainly locates sovereignty with the king, limiting the role of the

³⁰⁹For details, see Khrouz Driss (2008), "A Dynamic Civil Society", *Journal of Democracy*, Vol. 19, No. 1, pp. 42 -49.

³¹⁰See Francesco Cavatorta (2009), "Divided They Stand, Divided They fail': Opposition Politics in Morocco", *Democratization*, Vol. 16, no. 1, February, 137–156 ; Michael J., Willis (2004), "Morocco's Islamists and the Legislative Elections of 2002: The Strange Case of the Party That Did No Want to Win," *Mediterranean Politics*, Vol. 9, No. 1 pp 53-81.

government and the parliament to managing social and economic affairs.”³¹¹ Interestingly, the major political parties accepted this ‘division of labour’ and virtually disengaged from the political sphere.³¹² Moreover, the fractious relationships between secular/liberal movements on the one side and Islamist ones on the other undermined the prospects of forging unity among the opposition groups. The regime–controlled electoral system and its ‘divide and rule’ tactics not merely reinforced the division, but also weakened the emerging force of Islamist movements. By integrating the Justice and Development Party (PJD) into political system and isolating Sheikh Yassine’s Justice and Charity group, the king was able to contain the most potent threat to royal authoritarianism.

As the political parties were discredited, civil society organisations in Morocco emerged as the primary instigators of change and provided space for genuine opposition politics to take place. Despite the growing civil society activism, there was no substantial progress on Morocco’s democratic transition because of the absolute executive primacy of the monarchy and its policy of cooptation and repression. Thus, the steps toward democratization taken until the 2007 elections fell far short of transforming the Moroccan monarchy into a democracy. While Morocco has a form of participatory system, it is not a democracy because constitutionally, sovereignty cannot reside with the people given the central role of the king. Hence, there remains a contradiction at the core of the political reforms which, according to Joffe, “might not be resolvable and may indeed blight its eventual outcome.”³¹³

Indeed, the official Moroccan response to the demands of the February 20th youth movement for major political changes including the reform of the constitution highlighted once again the Royal Palace’s hegemonic control of the political process there (Maghraoui 2011). Inspired by the anti-authoritarian protests of 2011 in Tunisia and

³¹¹Abdeslam M Maghraoui (2002), “Depoliticization in Morocco”, *Journal of Democracy*, Vol. 13, No. 4, p. 30

³¹² Strom (2010), *Democratization in Morocco*, pp. 146 -158.

³¹³George Joffe (2009), “Morocco’s Reform Process: Wider Implications”, *Mediterranean Politics*, Vol. 14, No. 2, p. 156.

Egypt, the young Moroccans merely using social networking websites launched a joint call for a large national mobilisation on 20 February that gave them their name (Molina 2011). As the movement supported by the leftwing political parties, Islamic opposition groups and human rights organisations spread to other parts of the country, king Mohammad VI, wary of the ‘domino effect’ of what has become known as the Arab Spring announced the drafting of a new constitution that would increase powers of the prime minister, establish a separation powers and independence of judiciary, and increase civic liberties. The new Moroccan constitution with 180 articles approved overwhelmingly in the 1 July 2011 referendum though included important constitutional changes and improvement related to human rights, the monarchy ceded none of its essential prerogatives, thus preserving its control of the Moroccan political scene intact. “As long as the monarchy's preferred governance style is based on top-down management and the formal participation of selected elites, the elections were *not* a true test for the powers that be, either in terms of measuring the success or failure of transition.”³¹⁴

However, the new constitution might bring about a democratic breakthrough provided the Moroccans continue to exercise pressure on the king for the implementation these far reaching changes. The political history of the Kingdom shows the importance of pressure. The first major wave of change came when King Hassan was approaching the end of his life and understood the importance of opening up the political system some in order to facilitate his son’s rise to the throne. He was under pressure to make changes. King Mohammed followed on the path of reform, but progress was made increasingly slowly as he felt surer of his position. The recent changes in the country were also inspired by the wave of changes that happened in the neighbouring Tunisia, Libya and Egypt. The effects were so intense that the King responded immediately. The people of the Morocco see the new King as a reformer and one of the most politically salient aspects of the 2011 elections is the upsurge of youth power. The youthful leaders of the protest movements, no doubt, voted against the proposed constitutional reforms in a symbolic move so as to keep the doors open for further amendments to Morocco’s political system. They are thus likely to keep pressure high on Morocco’s government,

³¹⁴Mohamed Tozy (2008), “Islamists, Technocrats, and the Palace”, *Journal of Democracy*, Vol. 19, No. 1, p. 39.

and influence the future of the reform process for a qualitative transformation the existing political system.³¹⁵

The impact of the new constitution depends on the way in which it is implemented. One must realize that the parliament has to adopt the necessary legislation and make sure that it provides maximum space for the political forces. Although Morocco has a stronger tradition of political parties than most of the other Arab countries, the parties suffer from the some of the same problems such as they are undemocratic, dominated by single leadership. In this context, it is worth noting that the Islamist PJD that won the recent elections will have to work effectively to forge broad consensus on the tone and tenor of the reform process. To what extent the King and the informal shadow governance structure, the *Makhzen* are prepared to accept the structural changes that entail the risk of diluting their entrenched political primacy.

In any case, democratic transition is a long and painful process and cannot be completed in a definite time period. Despite decade-old reform process, Morocco has a long way to go in accomplishing its controversial democratic experiment that ends up in transforming the political system wherein the decision-making power lies in the hands of elected individuals and institutions, not the king any more. In other words, Morocco will be ranked as 'democratic' only when it undergoes a fundamental change in balance of power between the palace and the elected institutions. Until then it remains in the political 'grey zone' as liberalized autocracy and that too without any guarantee of being transformed into democracy in near future.

³¹⁵Thomas Luijken (2011), 'The Prospects for Constitutional Change in Morocco', *PISM*, [Online: Web] Accessed on 14 October 2011, URL: <http://www.esdp-course.ethz.ch/content/pubkms/detail.cfm?lng=en&id=130713>.

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