The Nationalist Movement in Morocco and the Struggle for Independence between Civil Protest and Religious Propaganda (1930-1956)

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Abstract   In precolonial Morocco, dominated by a sultanate of religious origin (the Alawite dynasty), political fault lines referred to clans and guilds, in a social and cultural context firmly based on Islam. To defend its borders against both Ottomans and Europeans, Morocco chose a more closed policy than that current in the Middle East, staying at the edge of the progressive and secularizing reforms which were affecting nineteenth century culture and institutions of other Muslim countries such as Turkey, Egypt and Tunisia (Burke 1972). The treaty of Fes of March 30, 1912, which placed the country under a protectorate (Rivet 1996), profoundly changed this situation, plunging Morocco into modern dynamics. Though the process was doubtless gradual, it's possible to establish the moment when pre-colonial political dialectics gave way to new forms which would lead the country towards new expressions and contents, in the events which followed the publication of the Berber dahir on May 16, 1930.

Summary   1 The Berber Dahir and the Birth of Moroccan Nationalism. – 2 *Plan de Réformes* and Propaganda. – 3 Istiqlal. – 4 Conclusions.

Keywords   Morocco. Nationalism. Protectorate. Secularism.

In precolonial Morocco, dominated by a sultanate of religious origin (the Alawite dynasty),[1] political fault lines referred to clans and guilds, in a social and cultural context firmly based on Islam. To defend its borders against both Ottomans and Europeans, Morocco chose a more closed policy than that current in the Middle East, staying at the edge of the progressive and secularizing reforms which were affecting nineteenth century culture and institutions of other Muslim countries such as Turkey, Egypt and Tunisia (Burke 1972). The treaty of Fes of March 30, 1912, which placed the country under a protectorate (Rivet 1996), profoundly changed this situ-

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[1]   The Alawite dynasty has been ruling Morocco since about 1666. Due to their descent from the Prophet, the Alawite sultans/kings call themselves *amīr al-muʾminīn*, commanders of the faithful, or *imām*, a title attributed to the legitimate successors of Muḥammad. Though not claiming the function of caliph, they do claim religious authority over their subjects (Agnouche 1987; Laroui 1993; Levi-Provençal 1991).

ation, plunging Morocco into modern dynamics.[2] Though the process was doubtless gradual, it's possible to establish the moment when pre-colonial political dialectics gave way to new forms which would lead the country towards new expressions and contents, in the events which followed the publication of the Berber dahir on May 16, 1930.

1   The Berber Dahir and the Birth of Moroccan Nationalism

The famous decree, intended to deislamicize and directly frenchify the Berber regions, through an administration juridically independent from Islamic courts (Ageron 1972; Lafuente 1999; Marty 1925), unleashed the first public anti-French reaction, giving voice to Moroccan proto-nationalism (Rézette 1955, Halstead 1969, Damis 1973, Cagne 1988). In accordance with local culture, response to the dahir was expressed in Islamic terms, mainly mobilizing the religious sensitivity which had hitherto dominated the reflections of the more anti-French intelligentsia (the attack on Islam by the infidels). Especially, Muḥammad al-Yazīdī and ʿAbd al-Laṭīf Ṣbiḥī (Halstead 1969, p. 181; Lafuente 1999, p. 187) came up with the idea of adapting the most immediate, popular and resounding manner of invoking divine aid when Islam is threatened to the political contingency; they thus turned *laṭīf*, prayer against natural disasters (such as earthquakes and locusts) into a collective prayer against the French. Starting in Rabat and Salè, where some youth came together to recite it in the mosques, *laṭīf* had an immediate impact on the population, which took part in mass demonstrations in the main cities until September. In August, in order to support and organize protests, the ten young promoters of the *laṭīf* in Fes founded the Jamāʿa al-waṭaniyya (Patriotic Group) to defend 'religion, fatherland and throne'. Among these young men were ʿAllāl al-Fāsī, Ḥasan al-Wazzānī, Aḥmad Makwār, Ḥasan Būʿayyād, ʿAbd al-Qādir al-Tāzī and Muḥammad al-Dyūrī (Halstead 1969, p. 182), some of the future leaders of the Moroccan nationalist movement.

   The protectorate reacted harshly against the anti-dahir campaign, carrying out a wave of arrests which led the Patriotic Group to mobilize outside Morocco's borders, in Europe and the Middle East. The strategic turning point in the nationalist movement came at this very beginning, thanks to the meeting with the well-known Lebanese nationalist Šakīb Arslān[3]

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2   The sultanate survived French occupation, turning into a monarchy which at times cooperated and at times was at odds with the nationalist movement, a relationship which it managed to turn to its own advantage at the time of independence (De Poli 2013).

3   Šakīb Arslān, born in a Druze village in the mountains of Lebanon in 1869, first supported Ottoman nationalism in an anti-imperialist perspective, then with the fall of the Empire in 1922 became a key figure of the pan-Arab independence movement. Especially in

(Cleveland 1985; Lafuente 1999; 'Azūz Hakīm 1980). During the anti-dahir campaign, Arslān went to Morocco passing through Tangier, and on August 14, 1930, reached Tétouan, where he met the leaders of the nationalist groups of Rabat and Fes, including Aḥmad Balāfrīj, 'Umar 'Abd al-Jalīl and Muḥammad al-Fāsī. It was then, it seems, that he advised the young Moroccan nationalists to remove any reference or action which could bring to mind the idea of jihad (war for faith) from the anti-colonial campaign, and instead to stress the violation of civil rights stemming directly from the Fes treaty ('Azūz Hakīm 1980, p. 16). This was a decisive meeting, since it allowed the young Moroccan activists to outgrow strategic archaism already during the founding stage, taking on a modern and secular political vision which would soon emerge in terms of propaganda and practical demands[4] – without, however, abandoning religious language.

The relationship which the nationalist movement would have with the two different political discourses (religious and secular) should also be seen in the light of the cultural education of its militants.

Summer 1930 saw the birth of two clandestine groups: al-Zāwiya, a more elite organization, born to study problems caused by foreign occupation, and al-Ṭā'ifa, open to new sympathizers and designed to establish new cells in the main towns. The goal of both was to denounce the abuses of French colonial policy in Morocco *tout court*, and in summer 1933 a committee was established by al-Zāwiya, called Kutla al-'Amal al-Waṭanī, better known by its French name 'Comité d'Action Marocain' (CAM) to draw up a reform plan. The internal composition of the three groups – CAM, al-Zāwiya and al-Ṭā'ifa – reveal their culturally mixed nature: the reins of the protests and the nationalist movement were in the hands of a youthful urban intelligentsia (Echaoui 1993), mainly fresh university graduates from Fes and Rabat with a modern or traditional religious education. Traditional Islamic education took place in the *madrasas*, especially the Qarawiyyīn in Fes, and was based on religious subjects (mainly Islamic law and exegesis), while modern education was provided in the new schools founded by the French: the Franco-Muslim colleges, bilingual (Arabic and French) with a Franco-Moroccan culture, or directly in the *lycées* established in Morocco for colonizers and later in universities in France (Paye 1992, Merrouni 1981, Gaudefroy-Demombynes 1928, Spillmann 1938, Berque 1949).

Within the nationalist movement, the two cultural currents would blend in a shared desire to fight the protectorate, but during the nationalist

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Europe where he lived for many years, he had a fundamental influence on the communities of exiles and on young Arabs completing their studies in the West.

4   However, local demonstrations with a fully religious character continued taking places, such as the riots in Khemisset in 1937, which broke out in defence of the shariah, or those at Meknes in protest against usurpation of a *habous* estate (the water of the river Boufekrane, mortmain of religious establishments). Rézette (1955, p. 281) says that «the list is endless».

struggle, different vocations, the use of different instruments and strategies would emerge and leave a mark on the future of Morocco.

Out of twenty-nine members, mostly from Rabat and Fes, thirteen spoke French and eight of these had at least a higher modern education[5] while one had a traditional higher education as well.[6] Out of Arabic speakers, seven had a higher Islamic education[7] (Halstead 1969, pp. 278-280). Altogether, therefore, French speakers were a minority, but could count on a better *curriculum studiorum* than their colleagues. In any case, one can see that, as a whole, they worked together and distributed their roles according to aptitudes and skills (Halstead 1969; Rézette 1955). Leadership, theoretical and organisational work seem to have been split up indifferently between Arabic and French speakers, and while propaganda in France fell to the French speakers (especially al-Wazzānī, Balāfrīj, Muḥammad al-Fāsī, b. Jallūn and al-Ḫultī) the Arabic speakers – among whom ʿAllāl al-Fāsī stood out – managed domestic propaganda and propaganda in the Arab Orient. All the propagandists in France had attended Parisian universities, knew the cultural and political milieu of the capital, cultivated contacts and support among anti-imperialist politicians and journalists (Oved 1978, 1984). Much the same can be said concerning the choice of members having an Islamic education for propaganda at home and in the Arab world.

However, the modernist approach forcefully emerges in the document called *Plan de Réformes Marocaines*, drawn up by the CAM and published in 1934*.*

2   *Plan de Réformes* and Propaganda

The reform plan drawn up by CAM did not call for an end to the mandate of the protectorate; on the contrary, it called for stricter and more consistent application of the principles agreed upon in the treaty of Fes, by which France engaged to assist Morocco in its process of modernization. Espe-

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5 Aḥmad al-Šarqāwī, Muḥammad al-Dyūrī, Makkī al-Nāṣīrī, Muḥammad and ʿUmar al-Sabtī, Muḥammad al-Yazīdī graduated from the School of Higher Moroccan Studies, ʿAbd al-Kabīr al-Fāsī, graduated in Moroccan legal studies in 1926, ʿUmar ʿAbd al-Jalīl, graduated from the School of Agriculture in Montpellier in 1925; ʿAbd al-Qādir b. Jallūn, Muḥammad al-Fāsī, Muḥammad al-Ḫultī, Ḥasan al-Wazzānī, and Aḥmad Balāfrīj, all of whom graduated from the Sorbonne between 1927 and 1934.

6 Muḥammad al-Fāsī, but many others graduated with degrees in Arabic or, like the perfectly bilingual Ḥassan al-Wazzānī, had studied Arabic privately.

7 ʿAllāl al-Fāsī, Muḥammad al-Ġāzī, Ibrāhīm al-Kattānī, Saʿīd al-Ḥajj, Būšta Jamāʿī, Muḥammad al-Fāsī, Ḥasan Būʿayyād.

cially, it called for suppression of signs of direct administration[8] invoking participation by Moroccans in the government of their own country, in a system based on full public liberty.[9]

The document was largely the result of collective work. Witnesses say (Halstead 1969, p. 210) that some chapters were written entirely by one person and then reviewed in a meeting, while other parts were the outcome of group discussions. The minutes of the meetings were drawn up in Arabic, as were the first drafts of the *Plan de Réformes* and the final manuscript. The first edition, in a limited number of copies, was printed in Arabic in Cairo in September 1934, whereas the French version – which became the de facto official version and which I have dealt with as such – was published in Paris the following November and submitted to the authorities on December 1st.

For details, I refer the reader to the original document; however, even a superficial reading of the *Plan de Réformes* shows the powerful influence on it of militants of French culture, something which appears both from the wording and the theoretical and technical guidelines of the reform project, that reveals a very secularized approach. Although it was a shared project, the Western sources used to express political, economic and social concepts clearly emerge: for example, the project of civil and legal administration was based on the French one, the ideas of economic reform based on nationalisation were taken from socialist ideology, and those on civil rights from liberalism (Halstead 1969, p. 216); and even the administrative model held to be ideally suited to Morocco corresponds, in its general outline, to the administrative practice of the French administration already in force, while the partiality and discrimination of this administration are denounced. The project for modernizing the country touches every sphere – social, economic, legal, administrative, educational, technological – and the text does not complain of any attack on Islam, which appears to be mainly a matter of values; the only references are to

8   In the *Plans de Réformes* (Comité d'Action 1934, VIII-X) we read, concerning the policy of the protectorate: «It is racial [...]; it promotes fiscal and budgetary favouritism [...]; it is obscurantist [...]; anti-liberal [...]; colonialist [...]; assimilationist: it is based on the principle of direct administration and takes the shape of an organised struggle against our institutions, our Arab culture and our traditions».

9   The same document proposes reforms involving various sectors of society, as can be seen from the list of chapters: Political reforms (1 – Administrative organization; 2 – Private and public freedom; 3 – Moroccan nationality and civil state); Judicial reforms (4 – Justice and penitentiary system); Social reforms (5 – Teaching; 6 – Habous; Public health and welfare; Labor); Economic and financial reforms (9 – Political economy; 10- Colonization and Moroccan agriculture; 11 – Real estate regime; 12 – Taxes and *tertib*); Special reforms (13 – Berber policy and proselytism; 14 – Arabic official language; 15 – Other reforms).

shariah, which appears to be restricted to the area of family law[10] and to religious teaching limited to the Qarawiyyīn – while a modern system of education is prefigured.

The *Plan de Réformes* represents a decisive step in the development of Morocco's nationalist movement, although it failed to achieve the result it looked forward to. The failure of the project, which was not taken into any consideration by the Residency, put a temporary stop to the activities of CAM, but also determined its future development. Since the most significant French criticism of the document highlighted the fact that it claimed to represent a population which was actually mostly indifferent to colonial policy,[11] quest for popular support became a crucial issue for the Committee. As Rézette (1955, p. 97) put it: «It is not enough to speak in the name of the 'Moroccan people'. One needs to prove it».

The first party congress, held in Rabat on October 25, 1936 (Halstead 1969, p. 320; Rézette 1955, p. 98; El Alami 1975, p. 66) decided to extend the base of the *Kutla* by convening popular assemblies throughout Morocco. Especially, the policy of détente inaugurated by the new Resident General, Charles Noguès, who in late 1936 granted amnesty to about 37 nationalists and in January authorized nationalist magazines, gave the movement breathing space. The *Kutla* aimed at establishing a large scale and firm organization, based on the widest possible popular participation, opening new branches. To this end, an Executive Committee, a High Council, technical committees and local sections were set up, launching a recruitment campaign.

It is worth mentioning that, while the *Plan de Réformes*, mainly disseminated in French, expressed modern and almost secular positions, when proselytizing, the *Kutla* again appealed, in Arabic, to religious feelings (Halstead 1969, p. 241). With success: in a short time, CAM gathered a membership of 6,500 people, and 20 new branches throughout the country were added to the 12 extant ones, mainly located in the north. Journalism too, which thanks to Noguès' tolerant policy flourished, showed a double discourse: in Rabat, two weeklies – *al-Atlas* (The Atlas) in Arabic and *L'Action populaire* in French – came out as the 'Organe Hebdomadaire du Parti d'Action Marocaine'. *Al-Maġrib* (Maghreb), in Arabic, also controlled

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10   Point 6 specifies: «Distinction between two classes of jurisdiction both depending on the Vizierate of Justice : a) Chraâ jurisdictions dealing with personal status, inheritance and real estate disputes; b) Makhzen jurisdictions dealing with all business other than that for which the Chraâ are competent».

11   However, documents in the archive of the Department of the Interior include a letter sent to the Resident General by the inhabitants of Salé in support of the *Plan of Reforms* and signed by some hundred notables and ulama. The papers of the Interior Office show that the Residency deemed the matter worthy of extreme attention and caution. *AD, Maroc, DI, 365, 1934-35.*

by the *Kutla*, was more moderate, while the monthly *La voix du Maroc* was published by the CAM office in Paris. In January 1937, al-Wazzānī also began to publish *L'action du peuple* and in April, the first issue of *al-ʿAmal* (Action) came out. The fact that each organ in Arabic of the movement was accompanied by one in French (or vice versa) gives an idea of how complementary the two cultures were to each other for the nationalist movement. Cooperation between French educated al-Wazzānī and islamically educated ʿAllāl al-Fāsī in designing the new structure of CAM in late 1936 seems equally to fit this line.

The success of the *Kutla*, marked by opening of new branches and the success of its publications, soon led to it being banned by decree on March 18, 1937. Censorship was not however extended to newspapers, and at first the movement was able to operate clandestinely without excessive losses. The party was founded again, de facto, in Rabat in April under the name of Al-Ḥizb al-Waṭanī li-Taḥqīq al-Maṭālib (National Party for the Realization of Demands, PN) while the internal conflict proceeded, leading to the withdrawal of al-Wazzānī, who decided to establish his own party, the Popular Movement (MP),[12] which would end up playing a secondary role. However, in autumn, a wave of repression deprived the movement of its leaders, almost all of whom were arrested, driven into exile or flight abroad. From then to the end of World War II, the nationalist movement largely went into lethargy.

3 Istiqlal

Though a new generation of militants with modern education, such as Mahdī b. Barka, ʿAbd al-Raḥmān Būʿabīd or ʿAbd al-Raḥmān al-Yūsufī (Daoud, Monjib 1996) had brought fresh blood into the party during the war, the PI was rebuilt only by return from prison or exile of the old leadership,[13] when the party was able to start activity again, promoting propaganda and demands. In 1943, when the leadership decided to move on to demand independence, with the publication of the *Manifeste de l'Indépendance du Maroc*, the PN turned into the Ḥizb al-Istiqlāl (Independence Party, IP), launching the final phase of the nationalist struggle (Lacouture 1958, Bouaziz 1997, Rivet 1999).

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12 There was a largely personal clash with ʿAllāl al-Fāsī for leadership of the movement, which however involved a conflict opposing a more democratic vision of the party (al-Wazzānī) to a more authoritarian and hierarchical one (al-Fāsī). Intervention by the ulama and by Šakīb Arslān failed to heal the split (Rézette 1955, p. 103; Halstead 1969, p. 244; al-Dafālī 1992, p. 94; al-Fāsī 1993, p. 224; al-Wazzānī 1982, vol. 513; Ouazzani 1989, p. 13).

13 Balāfrīj came back from the Spanish zone in January 1943, took leadership of the Rabat school back in his hands along with that of Istiqlal (ʿAllāl al-Fāsī, while remaining the official leader of the party, returned from Gabon only in 1947).

A short but complete picture of Istiqlal activity in 1952, when the party was at the peak of its popularity – before a new repressive phase by the Residency – appears in the «Synthèse activité extrémiste» which the Controller of the Civil Region of Rabat delivered to the Department of the Interior.[14]

This document confirms that the PI was the most influential political force and was highly organized. Its followers were divided into *militants* (those who dedicated their lives to the party were few: the treasurer secretaries, cell lecturers, students and teachers), *members* (who took part in meetings, obeyed party discipline, paid dues) and *sympathizers* (the base – middle class, merchants, functionaries, who were content to help financially, sometimes with important sums – and to follow directives: days of mourning, fasting, closing of shops). The Controller estimated the approximate total, throughout the country, to be 679 militants, 6,565 members, 13,600 sympathizers.

This intelligence document especially calls attention to the quality of action by the PI, the propaganda of which had penetrated every milieu. Different sectors of activity are identified, especially education[15] and its complements – sports (the PI had founded many football, boxing, cycling, athletics and basketball clubs), scouting (Paye 1938), student associations, theatre groups. The document also informs of Istiqlal's activity among workers, thanks to the alliance with trade unions, orchestrated especially by Būʻabīd. The party also controlled certain guild and the Chambers of Commerce (Abdelkader Ben Barka 1966, p. 61). Other means of propaganda were the press *Al-ʻAlam* (The Banner), founded in September 1946, and *Journal de l'Istiqlal,* founded in 1951, party organs in Arabic and French (Aouchar 1990) and handing out leaflets.[16]

As a whole, the tools used to spread nationalist thinking turned out to be very effective: «This is certainly one of the most dangerous aspects of Istiqlal», wrote the Rabat Controller, adding: «Istiqlal propaganda is relatively well done, and knows how to adapt to its recipients. So it often exploits the religious domain, especially suitable since it largely escapes any kind of repression» (*AD, Maroc, DI. 360-364*). The themes most frequently used in Arabic languages propaganda were appeals to «Arab and Muslim brothers», to «Arab honour and Berber courage» and the use of Islamic calls («we are far from following the example of the Prophet»; «let us imitate our ancestors who, when their religion was threatened, united to

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14 «Synthèse activité extrémiste, 26.6.1952», *AD, Maroc, DI. 354, 1948-52.*

15 The party made great efforts in this field, starting in 1946, especially through so-called 'free schools', institutions with a modern approach but independent from the protectorate – six just in Rabat –, attended by about 4,500 students altogether (Damis 1973, 1975; Morizot s.d.; Maʻnīnū s.d; Marty 1925; Girardère 1938; Paye 1992, p. 404; Gerbier 1948a, 1948b).

16 At the Diplomatic Archives of Nantes, we counted six folders full of leaflets (*AD, Maroc, DI. 360, 361, 362, 363, 363 bis, 364*).

punish the outrage»; «the Islamic world must stand united»; «we must raise the standard of Islam high»; «the French are treading on your religion and on the Qur'an»; «the French wish to distract you from religious feelings», «they disdain your religious traditions», etc. [*AD, Maroc, DI. 360-364*]).

These aspects of Istiqlal strategy give an account of action by the party, totally focused on achieving independence and keeping hegemony over the territory and on the political front. However, the strategic determination – as the Controller too notes – makes use of propaganda themes which are as powerful as they are instrumental (rights, democracy, alliance with the sultan, religion, anti-colonialism)[17] or demagogic ('bread-justice-education'), revealing little of PI's ideological orientation. Rézette (1955, p. 277) comments that politicization of the masses was a purely tactical move: «the masses are not the source of all legitimacy for the party, but are simply the political force it needs to achieve its aims».

Further evidence of this opportunistic approach comes from the proselytizing campaign in the countryside. In order to extend its influence, the leadership of the PI (but the issue had already been touched by the National Party in the late thirties) realized that the farming population could be politicized only in its own social context, since lack of education and political training of rural inhabitants made it difficult to create and find acceptance for an organisational framework which was incompatible with what farmers knew already. Rézette (1955, p. 282) explains: «The structures familiar to rural populations with which the party must deal are those of the religious confraternity». The Civil Controller of the Rabat region, in his report on the activities of the PI, notes: «Istiqlal, after having wished, like the Sultan, to suppress them, thus seeks to exploit religious forces, especially the confraternities, but at present it is encountering great difficulties in doing so».[18] Though religious congregations had lost significant ground in urban contexts (Laroui 1993, pp. 126-152), they were still a deeply rooted model of association in the mentality of farmers, who welcomed the party as a new confraternity. As Rézette (1955, p. 282) notes: «The masses reply to ʿAllāl al-Fāsī's theological speculations, to a doctrine of Arabism which they find hard to understand, by calling ʿAllāl al-Fāsī the

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17   The study by Zakia Lahlou-Alaoui (1991), though one may not share certain historical interpretations which reveal the clearly subservient character of her work, has the merit of providing a careful lexical and discursive analysis of the nationalist and colonial discourse. Her analysis shows that among the key words and slogans used in the nationalist discourse, the main theme is the claim of legitimate rights, mentioned in speeches, posters and public statements. Especially, the researcher, in the repertoire she works on, finds that 'duty' and related terms (rights, legitimacy) appears 300 times; the term 'pray' (God and equivalent words) 200 times; the term 'develop' (development, reform, democracy) 200 times.

18   «Synthèse activité extrémiste, 26.6.1952», *AD, Maroc, DI. 354, 1948-52.*, p. 16.

'sheikh'[19] and his partisans the 'Allaliyin' applying the terminology of the confraternities to those very people who condemn the heterodoxy of the confraternities».[20]

4   Conclusions

Right from the outset, the nationalist movement proved its ability to handle different language codes according to different needs, adapting them to the addressee. In a country which was still largely illiterate and tied – especially in the countryside – to premodern cultural models, the proselytising campaign launched in the late thirties and consolidated after World War II hinged on the religious element, the one which had most popular appeal. In this sense, the figures of al-Fāsī and of the traditionalist leaders took on major importance. Instead, direct discourse against the occupier, in Morocco or in France, was provided by Western educated members, who also managed the tools used in the struggle as well as matters more strictly related to organization: the use of telegrams to protest, delegations, public demonstrations, printing propaganda. In a similar manner, the hierarchical structure of the *Kutla* and later of Istiqlal – a model perfected when the latter turned into a mass party – was based on study of the structures of European parties, especially left-wing ones (Halstead 1969, p. 205).

During the nationalist struggle, a strategic approach prevailed over an ideological one – the latter an entirely secondary issue until independence[21] –, but the cultural dualism which led to associating Arabic with Islam and cultural conservatism, and French with modernity and secularization, in the end also brought out internal tensions within the Istiqlal leadership. Already during the last stages of the protectorate, political leaders with a modern French speaking background, being better suited thanks to their skills for expressing modern political thought and organizing and managing a party structure, would end up by prevailing within Istiqlal. 'Allāl al-Fāsī, formally the undisputed *za'īm* (leader) of the party, preserved a charismatic role and an Islamic legitimation useful for firmly rooting the PI among the masses; this however masked his de facto politi-

19   Literally 'elder', a title attributed to prestigious personalities, including leaders of confraternities.

20   According to the scholar, if we put aside the paradox of a party turning into what it opposed, taking on the features of a confraternity gave considerable strength to the PI: the hierarchical character of a confraternity ensured absolute obedience to Istiqlal on the part of its militants.

21   No political, economic or social programme was ever proposed going beyond achievement of independence or the use of vague terms such as 'constitutional monarchy', 'democracy'.

cal marginalization within the executive, dominated by Balāfrīj and the French speakers (Rézette 1955, pp. 287, 319; Lacouture 1958; Ben Barka 1966). This situation was confirmed during the Aix-les-Bains independence conference, attended by Būʿabīd, b. Barka, al-Yazīdī and ʿAbd al-Jalīl. No member with an Islamic background accompanied the delegation (Ouazzani 1989; Julien 1978).

The power balance within nationalist leadership at the dawn of independence gave a prefiguration of post-independence political and social tensions and of future splits. In 1959, as ʿAllāl al-Fāsī progressively gained undisputed control of Istiqlal, turning it into a conservative party based on clans and notables (Waterbury 1975), militants of a more secular and socialist bent, guided by B. Barka (1999) and Būʿabīd (Bouabid 1996), who aimed at leading the country towards newer ideological horizons, abandoned the party and founded the National Union of Popular Forces (Bouaziz 1997; Monjib 1992). The distance between Arab and French culture also led to a national debate on school policy (De Poli 2005), revolving mainly on the use of Arabic and French; a debate that concealed a struggle between conservatives and progressives, but also marked the distance between (Arabic speaking) mass and (French speaking) elite. The use of language and the access to French teaching was thus also to define the sphere of social and political domination (Boukous 1999).

Therefore, the (often fictional) dichotomy between Arabic and French, between conservatism and progressivism, between Islam and secularism triggered during the protectorate, will prove to be a long lasting element of conflict even in independent Morocco, and an equally long lasting power tool and ideological marker.

Archives

AD = Nantes, Archives Diplomatiques, série «Maroc».
DI = Paris, Direction de l'Intérieur, 360/64, *Nationalisme marocain*, *Tracts*, 1936-5; 354, *Nationalisme marocain*, *Informations diverses sources gouvernementales*, 1948-52.

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