

# Networking for independence: the Moroccan nationalist movement and its global campaign against French colonialism

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The former nationalists of the Istiqlal Party as well as the royal family continue to suppress any discussion of Morocco's post-independence era, when both sides used any means necessary to take over national politics. The outcome of this decade-long struggle, an authoritarian monarchy dominating an array of weak and fragmented political parties, was not only the result of the clash between Morocco's two dominant institutions during the years of state formation, but was also shaped by early Cold War international politics. The Istiqlalis had commenced a global campaign to influence the nascent 'world opinion' to support their cause many years prior to independence in 1956. In order to influence the political discourse from the pages of the American media to the corridors of Capitol Hill and the UN building, the nationalists created a network of supporters that enabled them to spread their message to the United States and later on inspired the Algerian *Front de Libération Nationale*. This project argues that the very structure of the nationalists' non-hierarchical and flexible propaganda network and their activities abroad helped them prevail in their struggle against the French, but also enabled the Sultan to co-opt it after independence and turn the Istiqlal into an opposition party. Its informal nature, the lack of a clearly defined membership and loyalty, and the absence of a coherent ideology constituted an advantage at first, but eventually turned into a serious liability. Furthermore, the skills, resources, and personal connections, which the nationalists had acquired during their campaign abroad, fell into the hands of the Sultan and strengthened his position once he had co-opted many of the network's participants. It is by looking at the intersections of the formal and the informal, the foreign and the domestic, the individual and the structural that we can begin to understand the complicated dynamics that underlay this crucial period of Moroccan history.

**Keywords:** Morocco; protectorate; propaganda; decolonisation; social network; nationalism; Cold War

## Introduction

What were the consequences of the Moroccan nationalists' decision to conduct a massive international propaganda campaign against the French Protectorate, instead of limiting their efforts

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solely to the domestic sphere? Did the strategy to organise their anti-colonial activities as an informal network and not just as an institutionalised party prove beneficial in the short term, but detrimental in the long run? Why could the monarch successfully outmanoeuvre the Istiqlal (independence) party in the period after the end of the Protectorate in 1956 and establish himself as the dominant actor on the political stage?

I argue that the very structure of the nationalists' non-hierarchical and flexible organisation helped them prevail in their struggle against the French, but also enabled the Sultan to co-opt it after independence and turn the Istiqlal into just another opposition party. Its informal nature, the lack of a clearly defined membership and loyalty, and the absence of a coherent ideology constituted an advantage at first, but eventually turned into a serious liability. Furthermore, the skills, resources, and personal connections which the nationalists had acquired during their activities abroad fell into the hands of the Sultan and strengthened his position once he had pocketed many of the network's participants. At its core, this project deals with two issues: the connection between domestic and foreign factors in shaping political movements, and the relationship between informal and institutionalised forms of organising social activism.

Most scholars have explained post-independence state formation in Morocco by looking solely at institutional and domestic factors (Geertz 1968, Waterbury 1970, Leveau 1985). They argued that the bourgeois Istiqlal had failed to establish a powerbase in the countryside and that the Sultan exploited this weakness by playing off the working class and royalist rural elements against the urban elites. However, this view is incomplete, because the nationalists' local and global activities were so interwoven that we cannot understand them apart from each other. Many of the Istiqlal leaders spent more time abroad in exile than on Moroccan soil during the two decades preceding independence. The official party structure of the Istiqlal in itself also constitutes an inadequate unit of analysis for understanding Moroccan nationalism.<sup>1</sup> Although the Istiqlal eventually became an institutionalised organisation, it also constituted the nodal point of a number of overlapping networks. Due to the limited scope of this project, I will focus primarily on Moroccan activities in the United States. However, their campaigns in the Middle East and Europe are just as important in answering our question, and I thus included a cursory overview of the nationalists' efforts both in Egypt and France.

The Moroccan nationalists were among the first colonised peoples that engaged in post-Second World War (WWII) international relations to a significant extent. Westad's (2005) path-breaking book demonstrated that the 'Third World' constituted more than just a secondary arena of the Cold War, and that non-Western people repeatedly challenged the undertakings of the two superpowers. Brussels, Cairo, Bandung, Havana, and Belgrade were some of the locations where global activists met to devise strategies to challenge the constraints of the bi-polar global system (Prashad 2007). In the 1970s, the guerrillas of the Palestine Liberation Organization constituted one such organisation that not only opposed the system through violent means, but also benefited from a network of supporters and ideas that reached from Hanoi and Beijing, via Algiers, to the United States and Europe (Chamberlin 2011). The Algerian *Front de Libération Nationale* (FLN) successfully influenced decision makers in both Washington and Paris, not only through an armed struggle against French colonialism from 1954 until 1962, but also with diplomatic campaigns around the world (Connelly 2002). However, we cannot understand the phenomenon of 'Third-worldism' without looking at the Moroccan nationalists, who were among the first non-state actors to lobby world opinion for their cause, and who passed on their knowledge and skills to the Algerians and others when they later decided to follow the Moroccan example.

### **Significance**

The recent wave of anti-government protest that swept across the Middle East and North Africa has demonstrated that national political developments cannot be understood in isolation from each other. Countless journalists and scholars are currently assessing the influence which training in Eastern Europe had on Arab oppositionists and how it prepared them to face their own authoritarian governments. Internet activists throughout the region were also closely connected to each other and exchanged skills and resources through formal channels, such as official conferences and meetings, and informal ones, like online platforms and communication tools. My project analyses an early predecessor of domestic political activism paired with global propaganda efforts. It appears quite plausible that the networks of activists that are currently creating such a furore will experience the same combination of short-term success and long-term defeat as the Istiqlalis did six decades ago. The effects of networking do not appear to be as uniformly positive as the current media hype makes us believe. My historical analysis of a similar case will alert us to the contingency of possible outcomes, rather than the much hoped for teleological progression of the Middle East towards 'freedom' and 'liberal democracy'.

### **Social networks**

Informal social networks are structures composed of several actors (or organisations), some of whose members are connected by a set of one or more relations, such as friendship, ideology, common interest, knowledge, or kinship (Knoke and Yang 2008). Informal social networks are efficient tools for lobbying for desired policy changes in ways that formal venues of participation, such as labour unions and political parties, are not (Singerman 1995). Due to their relatively 'open' character, flexibility, and lack of doctrines, they also lend themselves to heterogeneous memberships that substantially increase the overall resources at their disposal. Most networks consist of subgroups of individuals that maintain stronger ties with each other than with other groupings, and which, if taken all together, make up the macrostructure (Doreian *et al.* 2005). Informal networks can link heterogeneous cultures, geographical spaces, and economic classes, as well as formal institutions and informal spheres. Furthermore, they are able to manoeuvre and manipulate social structures and political institutions more effectively than institutionalised political organisations are.

However, their very strengths also constitute their major weaknesses. Because informal social networks are more open towards new members, they are much more likely to attract individuals with mutually contradicting viewpoints and intentions. Their lack of clearly defined rituals that secure the attention and devotion of their members, such as monthly membership fees or annual congresses common in political parties, as well as their non-hierarchical structure offer little stability in the long run and expose them to attacks from their opponents (Granovetter 2007). A large, heterogeneous network containing several self-contained 'cliques' enhances the resources available to the network as a whole, while simultaneously increasing the likelihood of the network falling apart into smaller sub-groups. Finally, because central 'brokers' hold structurally important positions within the network that other members cannot simply replace in their absence, the network can easily come undone if these participants withdraw from it for any reason (Padgett and Ansell 1993).

In our case, the network consisted of three types of participants: (Ia) Moroccan nationalists who were registered members of the Istiqlal, or one of the other Moroccan parties such as Abdelkhalek Torres' *Hizb al-Islah al-Watani*, and actively sought to end the French

Protectorate; (Ib) Sultan Mohammed V who publicly began supporting the campaign for independence from around 1947 on; (II) individuals (predominantly non-Moroccan) who were not members of the party, but maintained strong connections over a longer period of time to the core of activists, while actively assisting them in their endeavour; (III) foreign sympathisers that maintained weak connections to the core of activists during a short period of time, while supporting them through a very limited number of transactions. The network consisted of several subgroups of strongly connected individuals, but all these cliques were connected both to the Istiqlalis and the Sultan and together they successfully lobbied foreign politicians and diplomats to help end the French Protectorate. However, the network of supporters proved unstable in the long run and it disintegrated into its various subgroups after Morocco gained independence. The disappearance of its international base of supporters became one of the reasons why the Istiqlal was unable to dominate the political stage after 1956 and we can thus argue that the very structure of the international propaganda network thus helped the nationalists succeed in the short term, but also caused them loose out in the long run.

### *The international origins of Moroccan nationalism*

From its very inception, the Moroccan nationalist movement had demonstrated an internationalist outlook on politics. Several of the Istiqlal's future leaders had been to Egypt, where they enrolled at the Western-style Fuad University or the Islamic al-Azhar University and came into direct contact with the main intellectual trends of the Middle East (Halstead 1967, p. 279).<sup>2</sup> Furthermore, many of them studied in France during the late 1920s and early 1930s and subsequently became disciples of the notorious pan-Islamist activist Shakib Arslan, who resided in Geneva at that time and lobbied the League of Nations to grant Syria and the other Arab provinces independence from British and French rule. He introduced the Moroccans to members of the French anti-colonial Left who in turn provided them with important assistance for their struggle against the Protectorate.

With Arslan's support, Ahmad Balafrej, Muhammad Hassan al-Ouazzani, Mekki Naciri, and other North Africans founded the *Association des Etudiants Musulmans Nord-Africains en France* in Paris in 1927, headed by its first secretary general Mohammed al-Fassi (Cleveland 1985, p. 93). The North African Muslim Students Association/Association des étudiants musulmans nord-africains constituted a clearing house for nationalist ideas, where the Moroccans encountered students from all over the Maghreb, as well as activists from the labour-union-backed Tunisian Neo-Destour and Algerian Messali Hajj's proletarian Étoile Nord-Africaine/North African Star. The North African students published pamphlets and other materials advocating their demands, most of which Arslan and his supporters edited and printed in Geneva and subsequently shipped to Paris (Ageron 1983, p. 30). Furthermore, he introduced the Moroccans to French socialists who helped them publish *Maghreb*, a monthly Paris-based magazine that 'address[ed] itself to the enlightened public opinion and parliamentarians' and advocated reforming the Protectorate.<sup>3</sup> At the same time, Naciri, Balafrej, Bennouna, and others set up 'Committees for the Defense of Morocco' in Syria, Palestine, Iraq, and Egypt to systematically attract the attention of the Arab public (Bennouna 1951, p. 70).

Arslan not only gave them advice, but also provided their protest with a voice by offering them access to his network of newspapers and other publications. When the French authorities passed the Berber Dahir in May 1930, the nationalists claimed that this edict aimed at separating and dividing the native population into Arabs and Berbers and instigated mass protests across Morocco. Arslan's pan-Islamic *al-Fath*, *al-Manar*, and *La Nation Arabe* covered the demonstrations against the

Berber Dahir in detail and thereby introduced the Moroccan nationalist movement to the wider Islamic world. Arslan also organised the sending of letters, telegrams, and petitions to the League, the French government, and the chancelleries of all European powers in order to obtain their attention as well. The international propaganda campaign against the Berber Dahir constituted an astonishing first success for the Moroccans, as the demonstrations and other manifestations of solidarity from Cairo to Jakarta proved (Cleveland 1985, p. 98). In August of 1930, Arslan travelled to Morocco and spent 9 days in Tangier and Tetuan, where jubilant crowds of local people as well as nationalist delegations from Rabat and Fes greeted him. Throughout the 1930s, the Moroccans stayed in close contact with the 'Prince of Eloquence', whom they later described as the 'tactician behind the nationalist movement' (Cleveland 1985, p. 102).

Arslan's influence was central to the nationalists during the early years of their activities. He had already spent more than a decade lobbying the League of Nations on behalf of Syria's and Palestine's independence from France and Britain, and thus was an expert in this field. Not only did the Moroccans learn the importance of raising international awareness and support from him, but also gained the necessary personal contacts and access to newspapers to do so. Finally, by associating himself with the Moroccan cause, Arslan equipped the nationalists with legitimacy in the eyes of Middle Eastern Arabs they had lacked until then. Western historiography has traditionally dismissed Arslan due to his personal and financial links to Fascist Italy and Germany, but his fatherly relationship to the 'moderate' Moroccan nationalists puts into question such simple black-and-white portrayal of him being a mere populist demagogue. His death in 1946 deprived them of a key figure in their international network, a person that served as a bridge to groups the Moroccans otherwise had difficulty reaching. Because they could not simply replace him, the Istiqlalis decided to fill the gap by reaching out to the Middle Eastern and French publics by themselves.

In 1947, the Istiqlalis set up the 'Office of the Arab Maghrib' in Cairo under the direction of nationalist leader and Islamic scholar 'Allal al-Fassi, just months after their mentor and spokesperson Arslan had died (al-Fassi 1948, p. 379). Together with Tunisian and Algerian nationalists, they now lobbied the Arab League as well as public opinion in the Middle Eastern by themselves through publications and press conferences. The Istiqlalis appeared regularly on the anti-colonial Cairo-based 'Voice of the Arabs' broadcast, which proved very fruitful because cheap transistor radios had become widespread in the Arab world at exactly that time. Stuart Schaar argued in 1968 that the nationalists' statements, together with news announcements and broadcasts of United Nations (UN) debates, 'turned the airwaves into means of communion with popular heroes (...) and ended Morocco's isolation from the outside world' (Schaar 1968, pp. 1–2). Simultaneously, the *Comité France-Maghreb* under the leadership of leading politicians and intellectuals continued to pressurise the French government for an end of the colonial project (Bernard 1968, p. 128). The network of the nationalists connected their activities inside Morocco to those in Europe and the Middle East. However, at the same time, the nationalists realised the dramatic transformations in international politics that had occurred after the end of WWII and subsequently decided to expand their efforts to the United States as well.

### ***The impact of World War II***

The outbreak of WWII marked a turning point in Moroccan–American relations. The United States government allowed Vichy France to import food and manufactured goods to sustain its colonies. In return, Washington dispatched a group of 'economic controllers' under the leadership of emissary Robert Murphy, whose job it was to ensure that no war-related material fell

into Axis hands. The French were well aware, though, that these ‘twelve Apostles’ were nothing more than intelligence officers who reported back directly to James Rives Childs at the Tangier delegation (Hoisington 1984, p. 197). Together with other Office of Strategic Services (OSS) agents in the region, they prepared the ground for ‘Operation Torch’, the Allied invasion of North Africa that was soon to follow (Winks 1987, pp. 181–183). One of the not-so-secret operatives, Kenneth Pendar, later remembered how ‘by midsummer of 1941, we were ready for two years of adventure, spying, political manoeuvring and international intrigue almost incredible to Yankee minds’ (Pendar 1945, p. 11).

The agents concerned themselves predominantly with geography, climate, infrastructure, and logistics, but also provided detailed summaries of existing natural resources, especially phosphates and cobalt (OSS 1942, vol. II, p. 114). The French authorities closely observed their interest in the mining industry around Marrakesh and concluded that the United States aimed at replacing them as the dominant imperial power in the region due to economic and security considerations (Lacroix-Riz 1988, p. 14). Furthermore, the American agents also attempted to assess the political situation on the ground. A 1942 OSS dossier on Morocco dismissed the nationalists as pro-Axis, claiming that ‘the chief of the movement [Balafrej] (...) visits Berlin monthly (...) and has received 25,000,000 Francs from Germany and 15,000,000 Francs from the Spaniards’ (OSS 1942, vol. I, p. 100). Instead, the intelligence officers rested their hopes on a small group of pro-Allied natives, the local Jewish community, and the Sultan who allegedly would be ‘delighted with an American protectorate over Morocco’ (OSS 1942, vol. I, p. 98). Obviously, the American authorities remained very sceptical of the Moroccan nationalist movement during the first years of WWII.

The Allied Forces’ North Africa Campaign began with coordinated landings in Morocco and Algeria in November 1942, resulting in the conquest of the entire region. Just as the Germans had done 3 years before, the Americans easily defeated the French army, thereby exposing the weakness of the colonial masters. Also, the Moroccans were familiar with the Wilsonian principles and the Atlantic Charter, both of which had promised all peoples the right to self-determination, and many among the urban elites welcomed the arrival of the American troops (Kenbib 1988, p. 220). Moreover, when President Roosevelt met with Mohammed V during the Anfa conference in January 1943, the Sultan felt that the US president had guaranteed him Morocco’s independence once the war was over (Roosevelt 1946, pp. 109–112). Whether true or not, the Moroccan activists instantly took up this promise and used it as a justification for their aspirations.

The nationalists had not been formally organised up to that point, and they decided to seize the opportunity created by the US presence on Moroccan soil and the impending victory over Nazi Germany. They founded the Istiqlal party under the leadership of Balafrej and Mohammed Lyazidi and, on 11 January 1944, presented their ‘Independence Manifesto’ to the Sultan, the Protectorate authorities, and the American and British consuls in Rabat (Halstead 1967, p. 262). Rejecting their own pre-war calls for reform, they now demanded full independence from France ‘within the framework of a constitutional-democratic monarchy’ and requested the assistance of ‘the Allies, who are shedding their blood for the cause of liberty’ (Hizb al-Istiqlal 1946, pp. 1–3). However, their calls fell on deaf ears, not least because the global political constellation was not yet to their advantage.

The major shift of power towards North America that occurred after WWII radically reshaped the realm of international diplomacy. The Allied victory proved US superiority with regard to shaping global events and a proportional increase in ‘soft power’ accompanied it. The Soviet Union became the second major pillar of the new world order, which, together with

the 'emerging' African and Asian nations, challenged the continuation of Western colonialism. The establishment of the UN in 1945 symbolised the rise of the new super powers that came to dominate the Cold War era. Geneva, home to the now defunct League of Nations, and the European capitals lost in importance in proportion to the ascendance of Moscow, Cairo, Washington, and New York. The simple fact that the US government did not enact the Foreign Agents Registration Act until 1938 indicates that foreign lobbying had not occurred on any significant scale prior to WWII. All of a sudden, international relations were decided 'across' the Atlantic Ocean and international players had to adapt to the new rules.

The United States remained extremely ambivalent towards the aspirations of the colonised peoples throughout the early Cold War era. Washington's main concern was to strengthen the North Atlantic alliance vis-à-vis the Communist bloc, fearing that anti-colonial nationalism would weaken Europe and simultaneously increase Soviet influence in Asia and Africa. Sangmuah (1989, p. 11) pointed out that 'the American decolonization policy (...) revolved around order, the hierarchy of peoples, the need for tutelage for those lower in the hierarchy, and the inviolability of liberal capitalism', and US officials regularly recommended that France adopt the same method of gradual decolonisation that had proven to be 'effective' in the Philippines a decade earlier. With regard to Morocco, few officials in the State Department were openly sympathetic to the demands of the nationalists. The security of the military bases and access to natural resources in the region were more important to Washington than obtaining justice and independence for the world's colonised peoples.

The growing involvement of the United States in world affairs greatly influenced the Moroccan nationalists. They had already recognised the importance of foreign support ever since their first contacts with Arslan and their pre-war campaign to shore up support for their cause in France, the Middle East, and the wider Islamic world. Now, they had to factor in the USA and the UN, which constituted keys to global politics in the early Cold War era. The initial constellation proved unfavourable to them, because the interests of the NATO member France appeared to outweigh those of an obscure group of African activists during the early Cold War era. Nonetheless, the Moroccans decided to extend their network across the Atlantic and bend the rules of international diplomacy in their favour. 'We knew that we [had to] have foreign support if we were to succeed; therefore, we thought it proper to declare before the opinion of the world our grievances and our demands' as the nationalist Mohammed Zeghari later recalled (Blair 1970, pp. 101–102).

Shortly after the arrival of the Americans, Abdelatif Sbihi and other nationalists founded the 'Roosevelt Club', in which Moroccan activists and US officers met to exchange economic and political ideas (Blair 1970, pp. 98–99). They also repeatedly petitioned the American and British consuls in Rabat to support them against French colonialism, but to no avail. In 1945, the acting president of the Istiqlal at that time, Mohammed Lyazidi, travelled to San Francisco and vainly asked 'the organization of a new world on the basis of justice and liberty (...) [to] be allowed to send representatives to the international gatherings to defend their just cause' (Hizb al-Istiqlal 1946, p. 19). Two years later, in July 1947, Mahdi Bennouna migrated across the Atlantic, registered with the US Department of Justice as the spokesperson of the Moroccan nationalist movement, and subsequently began the nationalist propaganda campaign from an office in downtown Manhattan (Kennedy 1947). Together with Messali Hajj's representative from Algeria, who had arrived 2 years before, Bennouna formed the North African vanguard in North America that sought to influence US public opinion and lobby diplomats at the UN.

The UN did not constitute the freedom-seeking anti-colonial institution it claimed to be, despite all statements to the contrary. Mark Mazower has shown that it was at least a partial

copy of the League with the main purpose of keeping together the anti-Axis alliance. It displayed little interest in encouraging Third World nationalism, and even its two-tier structure of the Security Council and the General Assembly emphasised the organisation's hierarchical and conservative nature. However, beginning with Nehru's successful attack on South Africa's treatment of its Indian minority in 1946, the non-Western states slowly began exerting influence in the UN. 'India's U.N. strategy (...) blazed a path others would follow, for the General Assembly had proven itself as a forum for publicity', Mazower (2009, p. 188) remarked. Although the Moroccans arrived on the Upper East Side at a time when 'Third World' peoples had already begun asserting their claims to equality and independence, they nonetheless faced an uphill battle to make their demands heard on the global stage.

### *Rom Landau: the central 'broker' of the network*

The Istiqlalis had prepared the groundwork to expand their effort to the United States, but they still lacked a 'broker', a person with the skills and reputation necessary to woo the American public, just the way Arslan had served as their spokesperson two decades earlier. They did not have to wait for long. In 1949, a British citizen of Polish-German origins arrived in the international city of Tangier. Rom Landau had enlisted in the Royal Air Force 1939–1941, and served as an intelligence officer for the Foreign Office for the remainder of the war. He had established a minor reputation in Europe as a writer covering history, art, and comparative religion; 'Pilsudski: hero of Poland' (1930), 'God is my adventure' (1935), and 'Sex, Life and Faith' (1946) were his best-known oeuvres. Landau had made the acquaintance of many European intellectuals, and was in contact with T.S. Elliot, George Bernard Shaw, and Maynard Keynes. With the blessing of the British authorities, he had toured the Middle East in 1938, and met with Hajj Amin al Husseini, the Mufti of Jerusalem, and 'Abdul 'Aziz Ibn Sa'ud, the ruler of Saudi Arabia, to convince them to join Sir Francis Younghusband's 'World Congress of Faiths' (Landau 1949, pp. 119–131). When Landau decided to write a travel book on North Africa, the French authorities greeted him with open arms and generously helped him plan his tour of Morocco.

As soon as Landau arrived, the local representative of the Moroccan Sultan introduced him to 'Allal al-Fassi, Ahmed Balafrej, and other nationalists. They asked Landau to help devise propaganda material to welcome a unit of 16 US Navy ships visiting Tangier, a task he gladly fulfilled by creating a leaflet that welcomed the sailors in the name of Morocco and reminded them of their shared 'free, enlightened, and democratic way of life'.<sup>4</sup> They also arranged a meeting with Crown Prince Hassan, who set up an audience for Landau with his father the Sultan the same afternoon. The visit convinced Landau to support the Moroccans in their quest for cultural and political independence from France. Upon his return to England, he quickly 'threw [him]self wholeheartedly into [his] self-appointed task, and within a year or so there were few among the leading British journals in which [he] had not published articles on Morocco' (Landau 1961, p. 22). Starting in 1950, the party newspaper *al-'Alam* began to occasionally publish his articles.

Landau remained in close contact with 'Allal al-Fassi during this period, and even sent him the manuscript of his upcoming book 'Invitation to Morocco' to obtain feedback before publishing it.<sup>5</sup> The president of the Istiqlal called Landau 'the teacher who does not shy away from making our English friends see the entire truth', and informed him that the nationalists had translated one of his articles into Arabic and circulated it throughout Morocco.<sup>6</sup> Although al-Fassi emphasised that the nationalists had 'no right to supervise [foreign] authors' writing on Morocco, he also pointed out articles to Landau that he found to be 'in dissonance with [Landau's] usual tone',



because they (allegedly) downplayed the popularity of the Istiqlal among the urban poor and rural elements.<sup>7</sup> Landau not only provided the nationalists with publicity abroad, but also allowed them to demonstrate that they had the support of a reputable Westerner, thereby increasing their standing inside Morocco.

At the end of 1950, Landau generously distributed unsolicited copies of his book among the British political and intellectual elite. Anthony Eden, Winston Churchill, Arnold Toynbee, and others courteously acknowledged receiving unsolicited copies, and even King George VI conveyed 'his sincere thanks (...) for sending him a copy of (...) "Invitation to Morocco", which he [was] much pleased to accept'.<sup>8</sup> Apparently, his private propaganda campaign had the desired effect, because the French prevented him from crossing the border into their Protectorate when Landau returned to the international zone of Tangier in 1951. Mohammed Laghzaoui, 'Abderrahman Anegai, 'Abdelkhalek Torres, and other friends therefore came to visit him in the neutral city. Right before his planned departure, they asked him to travel to the United States in order to 'enlighten certain authorities as to the true situation in Morocco' (Landau 1961, p. 23). Landau had never been across the Atlantic and had to borrow money for the trip, but he agreed to his friends' request and departed for Washington right away.

Landau became a member of the nationalists' network not only due to a strong sense of justice, but also because he wanted to preserve the 'authentic' Morocco from the onslaught of colonialism. He was a true Orientalist and his aversion of modernity caused his attraction to the romantic idea of an 'East' filled with exotic natives whose simple but friendly nature promised a welcome alternative to the rational and cold attitude prevalent in the 'West'. He admired 'the Moslem (...) [who] like a child (...) throws all caution in the wind and seeks all the luxuries' while, at the same time, 'a degree of complacency makes him an easy prey of the rapacity of greedy pashas and effendis' (Landau 1952b). Landau later entrusted to a Moroccan journalist that 'I had chosen Morocco as "wife", and I cannot marry two wives – and I am happy with my spouse, because she delights me' (al-Anba 1969). The Istiqlalis did not care that Landau viewed the Sultan as the essence of Moroccan society and that he did not necessarily share their plans of sidelining the monarchy after achieving independence.

When Landau decided to embark on his journey to the United States, Mohammed Laghzaoui decided to accompany him with his entire family in order to avoid arrest by the French. A prominent industrial capitalist from Fez who had made a fortune in real estate and chocolate production, Laghzaoui had long been at odds with the Protectorate authorities, due to his role as one of the Istiqlal's chief financiers. (Landau 1961, pp. 103–110). At first, Laghzaoui joined Mahdi Bennouna, Mahdi Benaboud, and other North African activists in organising meetings, often at local churches, to synchronise their activities and get the attention of the American media (*New York Times* 1952a). In October 1952, Laghzaoui rented an apartment on 60 Sutton Place South, just a few blocks away from the UN compound, that came to serve as the unofficial headquarter for the Istiqlal's activities (*New York Times* 1952b). Following his initial efforts at setting up the Istiqlal's infrastructure in the United States, he subsequently withdrew from the limelight and kept a very low profile. Instead, he occupied himself by setting up a commercial enterprise from his residence in a suburb of Washington DC, while awaiting the end of the 5-year waiting period required to obtain US citizenship (Rézette 1955, p. 219).

As soon as Landau arrived, he called on an old acquaintance, who provided him with a substantial stipend to cover his expenses and introduced him to several well-connected people in Washington. Landau met with Secretary of State Dean Acheson, Senator Tom Connally, Chairman of the Senate's Foreign Relations Committee, and many other important politicians on Capitol Hill. He lectured at two Ivy League universities, briefed the experts at the Council

on Foreign Affairs, wrote articles for several influential journals, and even gave a few TV and radio interviews. Back in Europe, Landau finished his contribution to the Carnegie Foundation's renowned 'International Conciliation' series in January 1952 in which he reminded the readership that 'in a world in which all international politics have become global politics (...) the outcome of the Moroccan crisis may possibly stem from events in Tunis, Cairo, or Moscow' (Landau 1952a, p. 356, 1961, p. 24). After having spent the two preceding decades switching jobs and homes almost every other year, Landau had finally found a task that fulfilled him, and he enjoyed the privilege and attention he obtained as the unofficial spokesperson and mentor of the Moroccan nationalists movement.

In short, then, Landau bridged the structural gap between the Moroccans and the Anglophone world. His command of the English language, extroverted personality, charisma, and reputation as a reliable, 'unbiased', and 'impartial' observer made him the perfect spokesperson for the Moroccan cause in Britain and the United States. The Istiqlalis made him a central player in their network, because he could reach Western audiences in a way they themselves could not. Together, the nationalists hoped, they could influence American and global public opinion.

### *The Moroccan Office for Information and Documentation in New York*

When the Arab-Asian bloc of nations decided to put the Moroccan question on the agenda of the seventh regular session of the General Assembly in December 1952, Balafrej and Landau agreed that it was time to present their case to the 'public platform where the world's opinion on international affairs could be formed' (Free Morocco 1953). They joined Benaboud, who had set up the 'Moroccan Office for Information and Documentation' (MOID) in Queens the previous December. The MOID served as the Istiqlal's official propaganda headquarters in the United States, from which they send countless letters to the editors of leading newspapers, and published various pamphlets that were supposed to inform the American public about the situation in Morocco.<sup>9</sup> When the Algerian FLN commenced its own propaganda campaign in the United States just months after the outbreak of the Algerian Revolution in 1954, their representative Jabhat al-Tahrir al-Qawmi operated out of the MOID until he set up his own office the following year (al-Qawmi 1955). Laghzaoui bankrolled not only the MOID, but also the FLN's delegation, at least initially (Morgan 1999, p. 294).

From their office in New York, the Istiqlalis steered through the world of global politics and interest groups to bring the Moroccan question to public attention. Landau's main duty was to edit two new periodicals, the 'Moroccan News Bulletin' and 'Free Morocco' (Hizb al-Istiqlal 1952–56, 1953–55). A self-confessed Roman Catholic, Landau established contacts to religious groups and achieved very favourable press coverage in the Catholic weekly 'America'.<sup>10</sup> Furthermore, he gave talks at private clubs, think tanks, and universities to make the elites of American society aware of a political conflict most of them did not know much about. While Perkins (1976, p. 77) is certainly right that the Istiqlalis did not reach the general public with their campaign, they nonetheless had considerable success in attracting the interest of several important public figures to their cause.

Some of those 'enlightened' by the nationalists' campaign subsequently decided to support the efforts of the MOID. One example was student leader Gilbert Jonas of the National Student Association (NSA), who heard Landau speak at Columbia University and was so fascinated by the talk that he volunteered as an unpaid staffer at the MOID (Jonas 2006, p. 774). Jonas later became a public relations advisor to the Algerian and other African independence movements during the 1950s, and the *National Association for the Advancement of Colored*

*Peoples* chief fund-raiser from 1965 until 1995 (Fox 2006). In 1967, *Ramparts* magazine revealed that the Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) had infiltrated the NSA and used its international programme as a conduit for funding overseas anti-communist operations. The association dissolved itself a few years after this revelation had destroyed its credibility (Schwartz 2006, p. 565). Although it is impossible to say, whether Jonas was an intelligence operative or not, his association with the MOID raises the possibility that branches of the US government were also involved in the Moroccan campaign for independence.

Another supporter was Benjamin Rivlin, who worked as a political scientist at Brooklyn College. Due to his jobs as consultant to the World Bank, the UN, and the State Department, he provided much need information and connections. Rivlin also published numerous journal articles that looked very favourably upon the aspirations of the North African nationalist movements (Rivlin 1949, 1952, 1953a, 1955). At a conference at the Waldorf-Astoria Hotel in New York, he emphasised that 'East and West are competing with each other for the bodies and souls of the colonial peoples' and warned that 'if the United States does not heed (...) it will come out with the short end of the stick' (Rivlin 1953b). Rivlin was both a staunch Zionist and an American patriot, having served with the OSS in North Africa during WWII, and he supported Moroccan independence not only for its own sake, but also because he deemed it in the interest of the USA and Israel.

In October 1954, Rivlin arranged a meeting between the Istiqlalis and delegates of the pro-Zionist American Jewish Committee (AJC). Worried about the rise of nationalism inside Morocco, they expressed their 'interest and concern in the problem (...) of the Jewish community', but the nationalists proved extremely accommodating and declared that they would issue a communiqué reiterating their belief in religious and ethnic equality. After viewing the first draft, the AJC demanded several revisions, which Balafrej willingly incorporated. Just a few weeks prior to the UN's ninth regular session, he issued a statement from his office in Elmhurst promising Jews the 'same rights and privileges as their Muslim compatriots' in post-independence Morocco.<sup>11</sup>

The Istiqlalis also became aware of the existence of an outspoken liberal elite, whose support they needed to sway public opinion in their favour. Rom Landau visited former First Lady Eleanor Roosevelt at her estate in upstate New York to talk about the Moroccan problem. He easily convinced her and Mrs Roosevelt dedicated her next widely read and fairly influential syndicated press column 'My Day' to the Moroccan cause, urging readers to 'get as much enlightenment as possible on this situation' (Roosevelt 1953). A few months later, when Landau visited Los Angeles, the two Roosevelt children Anna and Elliott invited him to a family dinner. Landau continued sending Eleanor Roosevelt his latest publications, and the former First Lady politely thanked him every time.<sup>12</sup> The former First Lady was one of the most esteemed public figures of the time, and her support could open the doors not only to American political leaders, but also at the UN since she had been one of that institution's founders.

Supreme Court Justice William O. Douglas, inspired by a meeting with Landau, contacted Ahmed Balafrej, and, with the help of the Istiqlal, travelled to Morocco the next year. Upon his return, he published an article in the popular *LOOK* magazine in which he lambasted the French 'police state' as a menace to world justice and peace (Douglas 1954, p. 36). According to his biographer Bruce Murphy, 'the independent-minded libertarian Douglas' was a sworn enemy of the Soviet Union and all other forms of imperialism (Murphy 2003, p. 336). He not only had his own literary agent, but was also an experienced globetrotter whom editors and publishers paid to report on his foreign adventures, and thus constituted an excellent conduit for getting the Moroccans' message out to the American public. The French Embassy apparently

shared this assessment and published a 27-page 'answer' in which it proclaimed that 'democratic freedoms are guaranteed to all Moroccans' while blaming 'the extremist party "al-Istiqlal"' for the troublesome situation inside the Protectorate (Ambassade de France 1954, pp. 14 and 15a). This passionate response demonstrated that the French had not only become aware of the Istiqlalis campaign in the USA, but also deemed it necessary to counteract their increasingly successful attempts to gather the support of the American elite.

Jonas, Rivlin, Eleanor Roosevelt, and Douglas did not become full members of the nationalists' network, because they supported them only on a single issue for a short period of time. However, they contributed to their efforts significantly in several ways. Jonas and Rivlin introduced and connected the Moroccans to influential organisations that could support the MOID financially and logistically, while Roosevelt and Douglas raised awareness for the Moroccan cause by throwing their considerable prestige behind the campaign.

At the same time, Mohammed V had asked Landau to write his biography and provided him with otherwise unavailable documents. The fruit of Landau's labour constituted an illustrated hagiography rather than a serious piece of scholarship, putting emphasis on the monarch's 'sagacity, diplomatic skill and (...) talent for moderation' (Landau 1951, p. 36). By distributing it as propaganda material among the diplomats prior to the UN debate on Morocco, the Istiqlalis showed that their partisan political interests were secondary to the welfare of the country. Throughout their campaign abroad, they portrayed Mohammed V as the personification of national unity, which appeared to be a clever move, because it enabled them to reduce their demands to a few simple slogans. Also, the idea of Morocco as home to freedom loving people under the leadership of a wise monarch played on common stereotypes and created a picture of Oriental modernity that could easily catch the imagination of Westerners they encountered at the UN.

The Istiqlalis, who had no diplomatic status and therefore had to gate-crash the meetings of the General Assembly, were joined by 'Allal al-Fassi who had just come to New York after finishing a speaking tour in Latin America. Eventually, though, the Pakistani delegation made Balafrej an official member and furnished Landau with a press ticket, thus enabling them enter the building (Landau 1961, p. 27). Foreign Minister Zafrullah Khan gave the most important speech to the UN on behalf of the Moroccans, throwing the full weight of the Islamic world behind them. The Istiqlalis gained at least a partial victory with the General Assembly's resolution on 17 December 1952, which confirmed 'the fundamental liberties of the people of Morocco' despite France's desperate attempts to keep all North African issues off the agenda (United Nation's General Assembly Resolution A/RES/612(VII) 1952, Blair 1970, p. 165). The resolution was mild in tone and failed to condemn the Protectorate outright, but the nationalists interpreted 'the very fact (...) [that] the U.N. considered itself competent to deal with the Moroccan problem and pass a resolution (...) [as] no mean victory for the Moroccans' (Moroccan Office of Information and Documentation 1956, p. 2). Under the aegis of their British mentor, the MOID's campaign had achieved its first victory on the global stage and successfully undermined the moral and legal foundations of French colonialism.

After finishing his tasks on the east coast, Landau commenced a public lecture tour in California, while still providing advice to the MOID and writing articles for 'Free Morocco'.<sup>13</sup> In 1954, he became a full-time professor of Islamic and North African studies at the American Academy in San Francisco and, from 1956 on, the University of the Pacific, Stockton. When Morocco finally gained independence on 2 March 1956, years of hard work had finally borne fruit and Balafrej assumed that 'the great outcome (...) provided [Landau] with great satisfaction'.<sup>14</sup> His mentorship proved crucial to the Moroccan campaign for independence in the USA,

a fact the renowned pro-colonial French scholar Robert Montagne had already pointed out in 1953 (p. 227). Landau was a central node in the Moroccan propaganda network that constituted 'a bridge or channel of information between the oppressed nation and the wider world', as Gellner (1963, p. 175) later remarked.

### *The network of supporters: US labour*

Another important group in the Moroccan network in the United States was labour union activists, who viewed it as their duty to fight for the rights of workers across the globe. Especially the American Federation of Labour (AFL), and their European representative Irving Brown in particular, contributed to their struggle. They gave concrete organisational advice to Moroccan labour activists under the leadership of Mahjoub Ben Siddiq, published letters and pamphlets in the United States, and lobbied Congress to exert pressure on the French authorities in Rabat (Ayache 1982, Vol. III, p. 183). In 1951, Brown helped Tunisian leader Habib Bourguiba obtain a visa for the United States so that he could attend the annual AFL congress in San Francisco and deliver a keynote address (*New York Times* 1951). The MOID regularly cited speeches and letters by American union leaders in its publications.

The American activists fought hard for the right of indigenous Moroccans to form their own independent union. Until 1950, Moroccans were only permitted to join the *Confédération Générale du Travail*, which stood under the umbrella of the French Communist Party. After repeated strikes and clashes with the French authorities, labour activists finally founded the *Union Marocaine du Travail* (UMT), the first truly independent Moroccan labour union in March 1955. Advised by experienced American union officials, they created its organisational structure and immediately joined the 'International Conference of Free Trade Unions' (ICFTU) instead of the pro-Soviet 'World Federation of Trade Unions' (WFTU). Although it was associated with the Istiqlal, the UMT remained largely independent in character and quickly set up a grass-roots mass organisation that surpassed that of the party (Ashford 1960, pp. 315–316). The international activities of the AFL were financed not only through funds diverted from the Marshall Plan, but also by direct CIA support (Morgan 1999, p. 285). From his headquarter in Paris, Irving Brown roamed all across Europe, encouraging labour activists to join the ICFTU, which stood in radical opposition to the WFTU (*Time Magazine* 1952). American business interests and the intelligence community had bankrolled this well-organised campaign for two reasons: to reduce the influence of France and French businessmen in the region and to ensure that newly independent states would turn into bulwarks against Soviet influence. In 1954, at the annual convention, Brown summarised the AFL leaders' hope that 'any victory for the free labour forces in North Africa would result in the beginning of the end of the WFTU's and Cominform's drive to win over the Arab masses' (American Federation of Labor 1954, p. 506).

While the Istiqlalis were aware of these motivations, they did not deem them objectionable as long as they benefited from them. The AFL was not only an influential organisation in the United States and Europe whose backing meant a radical increase in *pro bono* public relations, but its close link to the CIA also allowed for access to some very powerful people in Washington DC. Furthermore, the labour activists, the intelligence agents, and the Moroccan nationalists shared their hostility towards the Department of State, which lobbied both the Truman and Eisenhower administrations on behalf of the French government in order to secure its support for the nascent NATO. Similar motivations characterised the relationship between the Moroccan nationalists and a group of US businessmen, who had resided in Morocco since WWII.

### *The network of supporters: US businessmen*

With the landing of the Allied forces on the Atlantic shore in November 1942, tens of thousands of Government Issues entered Morocco. Upon their discharge, many soldiers decided to return to Morocco and become entrepreneurs. Attracted by the post-WWII economic boom and low taxes, they focused predominantly on mining, heavy industries, and import–export trade (Maldidier 1955, p. 19). The former soldiers took advantage of a legal loophole that put them in a privileged position vis-à-vis their French and Moroccan competitors: with the beginning of the French Protectorate in 1912, the United States was the only country that did not renounce its nineteenth-century capitulations that conferred extraterritorial jurisdiction over its citizens residing in Morocco. Americans were thus not subject to the commercial regulations of the Protectorate authorities and they used this privilege to circumvent the strict regulations on the currency exports and import licences (Sangmuah 1988, p. 161). In order to gain a foothold on the local market, they usually teamed up with native businessmen (many of whom were supporters or members of the Istiqlal) who provided the necessary contacts for their enterprises.

The French quickly saw through this scheme and began applying the existing import–export regulations to all foreign residents in December 1948. Infuriated by the loss of their privileges, the American capitalists commenced a well-organised anti-French campaign in the United States, led by the president of the American Trade Association in Morocco, Robert E. Rodes, who even testified before the Senate’s Foreign Relations Committee in March 1950. Throughout the following years, Rodes continued his activities against France and the US State Department, which he claimed ‘support[ed] the French position’, from his office in the Hotel Continental in Washington DC.<sup>15</sup> In 1955, ‘Free Morocco’ published a lengthy article of his, condemning France for ‘contraven[ing] our national foreign policies (...) and American private investments abroad’ (Rodes 1955). His wife supported him wholeheartedly by publishing booklets in coordination with both the AFL and the MOID (Rodes 1954a,b).

Their propaganda efforts in the media and their lobbying in Congress ultimately led to the passing of the Hickenlooper amendment in 1950, which ordered the president to halt all Marshall Plan aid to countries that violated treaties to which the United States were a partner (Maldidier 1955, p. 26). The whole issue ultimately landed before the International Court of Justice, which awarded the Americans a partial victory by confirming some of their privileges while rejecting others. In an editorial after the verdict, the *New York Times* condemned the government’s role in ‘protecting the privileges of a small group of American businessmen’ and thereby jeopardising diplomatic relations with France (*New York Times* 1952c). From early 1954 on, a more moderate group of businessmen took over the American Chamber of Commerce, sidelined Rodes and his aggressive tactics, and adopted a much more conciliatory attitude towards the French authorities. Nonetheless, pro-nationalist businessmen continued to incite American public opinion against France’s North Africa policy until Algeria’s independence in 1962.<sup>16</sup>

The connection between the Istiqlal and the American capitalists was much more complex than appears at first: many of the American businessmen were former members of the OSS, among them Rodes and his friends (Campbell 1947). Especially interesting, however, was the role of Coca-Cola, which symbolised the arrival of the much-admired American culture. Former intelligence agents Kenneth Pendar and James H. Hall ran the *Compagnie des Boissons Hygiéniques*, which bottled the drink in Casablanca (Kahn 1960, p. 38). Four Moroccan nationalists sat on the company’s board and the Sultan’s brother was a major shareholder. When the pro-French Arab press spread rumours that the beverage contained pork, its sales came to an almost complete halt. Unsurprisingly, its directors easily managed to persuade the Sultan and

his son to consume the drink in public, thereby helping Coca-Cola regain most of its market share (Sulzberger 1952). The company also became the main advertiser in the nationalist *al-'Alam* newspaper from October 1948 on, thus underlining its close connection to the Istiqlal. The French security forces constantly harassed the company by conducting regular security checks at the factory, because they believed that Pendar, together with members of the AFL, was supplying the nationalists with arms (Sangmuah 1988, p. 168).

The Casablanca-based bottling plant also secured the company's unrestricted access to the metropolitan market. Due to numerous economic and cultural considerations, the French government had repeatedly undermined Coca-Cola's efforts to gain a foothold in France. In 1949, the company retaliated and simply shipped a central ingredient from Casablanca to its plant in Marseille, which was completely legal since 'Moroccan' products could always be imported without a licence (Kuisel 1991, p. 105). Soon enough, though, a French judge ruled that this law did not apply to Coca-Cola and closed the loophole (Wall 1991, p. 124). Due to its excellent contacts to influential politicians in Washington, Coca-Cola was in a unique position to exert indirect pressure on the French government. Just like other companies that tried to access the Moroccan market and exploit the country's natural resources, it persistently lobbied the American government to punish the French for their economic policies (Wall 1991, p. 121/185). The Istiqlal's network thus gained further connections to important decision makers in the United States by working with these American capitalists.

### *Post-independence*

International and domestic pressure finally convinced the French government to abandon the Protectorate and Morocco became an independent and sovereign nation on 2 March 1956. Within the next few years, Mohammed V managed to co-opt the nationalists' propaganda network by drawing many of its members to his side, while sidelining those unwilling to subordinate themselves to him. He sidestepped the Istiqlal's original desire to create a constitutional monarchy and instead established himself, and subsequently his son, as the authoritarian leaders of the nation (Monjib 1992). Within a less than 3 years after independence, the Istiqlal joined the opposition and became just one among many players on the political stage.

'Allal al-Fassi was a popular hero who toured the country and excited the masses with his speeches, but gradually disappeared from the political stage he and his colleagues had dominated during the struggle for independence. Some former members of the Istiqlal's international network joined either Mohammed V's side, like Mahdi Bennouna who became a spokesman for the royal family, or Mahdi Benaboud, who became Morocco's first ambassador to the United States. Others quickly fell into oblivion, like Ahmed Balafrej after his brief assignments as Foreign and Prime Minister (*New York Times* 1963). The now-King also brought the Ministry of Information under his control and the radio, hitherto the voice of the nationalists in exile, became 'the chief vehicle for dramatically presenting royal propaganda to the masses', according to Schaar (1968, p. 2). The royal court had come out triumphant and the idea of a constitutional monarchy evaporated into thin air.

Upon the personal request of his friend Mohammed V, Mohammed Laghzaoui returned from his self-imposed exile in 1956 in such haste that he forgot to clear out his account at Chase Bank in Manhattan (*New York Times* 1976).<sup>17</sup> Although he had no background that might have justified his new role, he build up the police force of the nascent kingdom as the first security chief, and retained the job until handing over the newly created and staunchly royalist force to Colonel

Oufkir in 1960. Until this day, the police and the Royal Armed Forces remain the central pillars securing Morocco's monarchy. As a reward for his services, he became head of the Moroccan phosphate industries, the most important industry in the country, and later even served as the ambassador to London for 2 years under King Hassan II (Landau 1961, p. 106). In August 1962, Laghzaoui met with an AFL activist, who had been paid by the CIA, to discuss Algeria's independence with him (Morgan 1999, p. 294). The former chief financier behind the Istiqlal's activities had sided with the Monarch and brought with him the contacts he had made in the US capital during his time abroad, probably not only to businessmen but also security officials who could provide Morocco with both expertise and arms.

When Landau finally returned to Morocco in 1956, he gave speeches at the Istiqlal headquarters, toured the countryside to participate in discussions with local party members, and prepared a series of radio talks on the story of Morocco's struggle for independence (Landau 1961, pp. 30–33). However, the Sultan was well aware of the symbolic importance Landau had inside Morocco and decided to draw him ever closer to his side. In 1957, Mohammed V made him a Commander of the *Ouissam Alaouit* order, the highest honour of the state. The same year, upon the completion of his new biography, the King invited Landau to accompany him on his first official visit to the former Spanish zone in northern Morocco. After Hassan II ascended the throne in 1961, Landau finished his official biography just in time for the new King's visit to the United States in August of the following year. He presented the manuscript to the Moroccan monarch at a private audience before joining him on a state trip to Tangier (Ambassade de France 1962, p. 2). He also volunteered to join Hassan II's entourage in Washington, a suggestion to which the Moroccans gladly agreed. After retiring in 1968 from his faculty position at the University of the Pacific, Stockton, Rom Landau relocated to Morocco and lived in Marrakesh until his death in 1974.

In November 1957, the efforts of the anti-French propaganda network in the United States finally came full circle: King Mohammed V embarked on a 3-week trip to America, joined by his daughters and sons, his brother, Secretary of State Ahmed Balafrej, and several other dignitaries. Kenneth Pendar, the Casablanca-based Coca-Cola manager, also accompanied him (Kahn 1960, p. 38). Prior to the trip, US Navy Lt. Com. Blair met with Chief of the Royal Cabinet, Anegai, to help him polish the English-language text of the speeches the King intended to give on his journey. Commissioned by the royal palace, Rom Landau wrote 'Mohammed V, King of Morocco', an updated biography of the monarch that the Moroccans intended to hand out during their visit. Because the printers completed the book only a few days prior to the scheduled trip, the US Navy shipped it on one of its transport planes out of Port Lyautey to ensure its timely distribution (Blair 1970, p. 221). Although he did not get together with President Eisenhower, who was very sick at the time, the King met John Foster Dulles to discuss economic issues, the violent clashes between Moroccan and Spanish troops in the Western Sahara, and the situation of the US military bases in North Africa.

Apart from dealing with political matters, Mohammed V used the trip to dispose the American public in his favour. Judging by the plentiful stories in the news media about his flamboyant receptions, trips to the New York Zoo, and charming daughters, his visit was a total public relations success. The King also used the occasion to visit the AFL–CIO headquarters in Washington and thank labour president George Meany for his support during the anti-colonial struggle (Schmidt 1957). Almost all the stops he made throughout his trip were in communities from which Naval Air reserve squadrons had been dispatched to Morocco the preceding year, thereby demonstrating the King's appreciation for the presence of the American armed forces (Blair 1970, p. 219). Finally, he insisted on visiting the University of the Pacific, Stockton, to



the complete dismay of the head of protocol at the State Department, who did not understand why a head of state would want to visit such an obscure institution. In a speech at the official reception, Mohammed V thanked his 'good friend Rom Landau' emphasising that Moroccans 'will always be grateful to him for what he has done (...) standing by our side in our most difficult days' (University of the Pacific 1957, p. 9).<sup>18</sup>

### *The legacy of the propaganda network*

By co-opting many of the important members of the network that the nationalists had created to carry their message abroad, the King strengthened his own position on the domestic political stage. In Rom Landau, the monarchy had a well-known spokesperson abroad, who could legitimise its rule through his position as an acclaimed expert on all things North African. Furthermore, he brought with him the countless contacts to famous and important people he had established during his campaign abroad, the young and aspiring Senator John F. Kennedy among them. At the same time, the King could legitimise himself inside Morocco by demonstrating his close friendship with a reputable Westerner who had contributed significantly to its independence. Within a few years, Landau turned from a spokesman for the Istiqlal into a 'court historian', as Blair (1970, p. 311) later described him.

The King also offered Mohammed Laghzaoui and Mahdi Bennouna high-profile jobs in his entourage and thus benefited from the skills they had acquired abroad. Bennouna's time as a spokesman and organiser of the Istiqlal had acquainted him with important persons in the Arab world and the United States, but also taught him 'proper' Arabic and good English, as well as the tricks and techniques of modern public relations. It appears obvious how the monarch benefited from such skills. Although it is not entirely clear what exactly Laghzaoui did during his 5 years in a suburb of Washington DC aside from establishing business contacts, it appears at least possible that he made some contacts with the US security apparatus, especially given the role (former) US intelligence agents played in the Istiqlal's campaign overall. This would also explain his role as chief security adviser, despite his total lack of expertise in this area. By putting him in charge of phosphate mining, the King also placed an ardent pro-American figure in the key industry US officials had cast a covetous eye on ever since the arrival of the 'twelve Apostles'. Unsurprisingly, the amount of natural minerals exported to the United States doubled between 1956 and 1962, although overall production slightly fell (*Société générale pour favoriser le développement du commerce et de l'industrie en France* 1963, p. 14).

Most American capitalists had supported the Istiqlal's struggle for independence due to economic considerations, rather than ideological ones. To them, Mohammed V was a pillar of stability and reliability in a country engulfed in domestic turmoil, neighbouring revolutionary Algeria that had sunk into total chaos at that time. The King, on the other hand, had good use for their capital and know-how as he tried to assert himself in a poor and economically 'undeveloped' nation that lacked but the most fundamental industrial capabilities. Morocco also retained a business climate very favourable to foreign investors, and many US companies set up their regional production centres. Until this day, the bottling plant in Casablanca remains one of Coca-Cola's most important 'forward operating base[s]' in the world (Afrik.com. 2001).

Mohammed V was definitely well-disposed towards the AFL-CIO's global struggle against Communism. Left-wing activists remained the main challengers to his own regime and the King thus had a vital interest in a German-style cooperative labour movement that accepted his suzerainty, rather than a radical anti-authoritarian union similar to those common in France and Italy. Irving Brown and his colleagues liked the idea of a staunchly anti-Soviet

head of state, although they did not necessarily support the monarch's increasingly authoritarian attitude vis-à-vis all subjects who dared to challenge his rule.

It is obvious that many of the participants of the international propaganda network had connections with the OSS and the CIA one way or another. The US intelligence community saw it as one of its main tasks to counteract all forms of perceived Communist influence around the globe, and Mohammed V was an ideal partner in the highly volatile region ranging from Algeria to West Africa. At the same time, the King maintained a direct contact to important decision makers in Washington DC that was not noticed by outside observers. Also, the skills, equipment, technology, and financial resources of the highly efficient American intelligence community definitely constituted a boon for his struggle to strengthen his dominion over the kingdom. When a border dispute between Morocco and Algeria erupted into full war in 1963, the revolutionary Cuban government saw the hand of the USA behind the conflict and send soldiers to support the Algerians against 'Hassan [II] who ha[d] become a trained bear (...) and for this he receive[d] dollars and guns' (Gleijeses 2002). However, this analysis by the revolutionary leaders in Havana was not completely accurate, because the USA did not become Morocco's main supplier of weapons until the 1970s (Pennell 2000, p. 343). Future research might uncover the details of the relationship between the Moroccan monarch and branches of the United States government at the height of the Cold War.

## Conclusion

The Moroccan nationalists' informal propaganda network encompassed a heterogeneous group of individuals who contributed to a global campaign that achieved success at the UN and in Washington. Most were not aware of the other's existence, because of the organisational structure of the lobbying effort, its secrecy, and the absence of a clear chain of command. These cells were divided along lines of geography (some lived in the United States others in France), religion and culture (Christians and Muslim), interest and motivations (Islamists and CIA agents, British Orientalists and French socialists, labour activists and businessmen). After their informal and indirect alliance had achieved the only goal held in common, the end of the French Protectorate, the network quickly fell apart. The Sultan contributed to its demise by co-opting individual participants and sub-groups through promises, charisma, and/or coercion.

The example of the Moroccan global campaign for independence underlines the utility of applying concepts developed by network analysis to understand historical phenomena. This paper demonstrates that such approaches not only broaden our perspective by including individuals that previously were considered marginal to the historical developments under scrutiny, but also uncover connections and patterns that have eluded scholars so far. Some work remains to be done before historians can claim that they have developed tools for the coherent analyses of social networks, but hopefully the near future will see further fruitful attempts to further our methodological and theoretical understanding in this vein.

## Notes

1. Examples of traditional structural–functional approaches are Halstead (1967), Bernard (1968), Ashford (1961), and Zisenwine (2010).
2. Mekki Naciri, Abdelkhalek Torres, Mohammed Bennouna, and Ahmed Balafrej studied first in Cairo and then in Paris. Both Mohammed al-Fassi and Hassan al-Ouezzani studied only in the French capital (Halstead 1967, p. 279).
3. Bessis 1978, p. 480; the quote comes from 'Pourquoi Nous Lançons 'Maghreb'. *Maghreb*, July 1932, p. 2

4. Leaflet 'American Sailors'. MSS 68. Holt-Atherton Department of Special Collections, University of the Pacific Library', Series 1, Box 4.
5. 'A. al-Fassi to R. Landau (personal communication, 29 January 1950). MSS 68. Holt-Atherton Department of Special Collections, University of the Pacific Library', Series 1, Box 1.
6. 'A. al-Fassi to R. Landau (personal communication, 26 October 1949). MSS 68. Holt-Atherton Department of Special Collections, University of the Pacific Library', Series 1, Box 1.
7. 'A. al-Fassi to R. Landau (personal communication, 26 October 1949 and 11 June 1950). MSS 68. Holt-Atherton Department of Special Collections, University of the Pacific Library', Series 1, Box 1.
8. M.E. Adeane to R. Landau (personal communication, 26 March 1951) MSS 63. Department of Special Collections, Davidson Library, University of California, Santa Barbara.
9. Some examples are Hizb al-Istiqlal (1951a, 1951b, 1952).
10. One example among several is Landau (1953).
11. Memorandum on AJC meetings with Istiqlal party leaders. October 1954. AJC Information Center and Digital Archives, New York 1947–1960.
12. E. Roosevelt to R. Landau (personal communication, 2 March 1953 and 25 February 1954) MSS63, UCSB.
13. A. Balafrej to R. Landau (personal communication, 27 April 1953). 'Rom Landau Middle East Collection. MSS 68. Holt-Atherton Department of Special Collections, University of the Pacific Library'. Series 1, Box 1.
14. A. Balafrej to R. Landau (personal communication, 12 April 1956). MSS 68. Holt-Atherton Department of Special Collections, University of the Pacific Library', Series 1, Box 1.
15. See for example Rodes to Assistant Secretary of State Byroads (personal communication, 17 November 1953). MS 068, UoP, Series I, Box 4.
16. Two of many examples are Toby (1959, 1963).
17. This anecdote also hints at the immense wealth Laghzaoui must have possessed at that time.
18. Pamphlet issued by the UoP after the royal visit.

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