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# Political Parties in the Maghrib: The Illusion of Significance?

MICHAEL J. WILLIS

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A large part of the academic and media attention that has focused on political developments in the Maghrib is concerned with the place and role played by political parties. These parties are portrayed by both outside observers and the regimes in the countries themselves as being at the centre of supposed moves towards 'liberalisation' and 'democratisation' in the region. However, it is argued that the role and significance of parties in Algeria, Tunisia and Morocco is in reality fairly limited and certainly different from the role played by political parties in Western Europe where they play a dominant role. The article examines the role played by parties in the political systems of the three countries and sets out some basic characteristics of both the parties and the party political systems in which they operate. Control and interference from the regime is found to be the main characteristic both of parties and the party political system in the three states. Other main common features include the prevalence of single dominant leaders (the phenomenon of the *zaim*) in parties, the importance of patron-client networks and the parallel absence of Western-style ideologies.

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## Introduction

A substantial part of the media attention that has focused on political changes occurring in the Maghrib over the past decade or so has concentrated on the role played by political parties: their leaders, their statements and their performance in elections. The assumption has been that these political parties are playing a central role in political change in the region. It is believed that the emergence and expansion of increasing numbers of political parties in Morocco, Algeria and Tunisia is part of a process of developing political pluralism and as such indicates progress towards fuller democratisation.

These assumptions are called into question when a closer look is taken at the exact role played by the parties in the political systems of these countries. The reality is that parties play a strictly secondary role that is significantly removed from the dominant role played by political parties in

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most European states where parties are the effective holders and wielders of state power. A dominant role is played by a political party in the Tunisian system. However, the complete dominance that this party – the Rassemblement Constitutionnel Démocratique (RCD) – is able to exercise over the system to the exclusion of all other parties and its subservience to the state presidency negates any meaningful comparison with European party systems. Indeed, despite the increasingly multi-party character of the political systems in the Maghrib, the space that parties occupy in these systems is of limited significance and is thus not the primary foci of political power.

This article attempts to explain the real role played by political parties in the three states of the central Maghrib and suggests some common characteristics of both political parties and party systems across the region.

### **Political Power in the Maghrib**

If political parties are not the main wielders of political power in the Maghrib, it is important to understand who does exercise this power. The real location of political power varies between the states of the region but has the common factor of being concentrated in the hands of a relatively restricted group of people. In Morocco ultimate political authority continues to be exercised by the traditional Monarch; in Algeria it is the senior figures in the country's military who make all the key decisions in the state; and in Tunisia it is a powerful presidency backed by a hegemonic political party that dominates the state. It is these three entities or groups that control the quasi-totality of political power in their respective states – a reality that is faithfully reflected in the constitutions of each country, particularly Morocco and Tunisia. In Algeria the constitution accords preponderant political power to a president, but this individual is traditionally either drawn from or closely tied to the military.

In political terms, all three states are effectively dominated and run by the executive branch of government (presidency in Tunisia and Algeria, monarchy in Morocco). Comparatively little political space and power is afforded to the branches and institutions of government – primarily local and national legislatures – in which the political parties are active or have the potential to control. In addition to this fundamental feature is the fact that even this limited space given to the political parties within these institutions and organs is controlled and circumscribed by the executive elites. Elections to representative bodies at both national and local level are subject to varying degrees of control regarding acceptance of both candidates and parties, restrictions on parties' agendas and activities and similarly varying degrees of control and manipulation of the results of these elections.

The weakness and marginal status of political parties can be illustrated by various examples. First, only four of Morocco's eleven post-independence prime ministers have had a formal party affiliation, representing 12 years out of 46. The vast majority have been officially apolitical technocrats appointed by the palace. Second, in Algeria in 1995 a charter drawn up by political parties that had collectively attracted in excess of 80 per cent of the votes cast in the previous national legislative elections was able to be rejected out of hand by the Algerian government. Third, in Tunisia no party other than the ruling RCD (and its forerunners) has ever held political power and no political party other than the RCD was represented in the national parliament until 1994 or stood in presidential elections until 1999. Non-RCD deputies currently hold just 18 per cent of the seats in the parliament and non-RCD candidates in the 1999 presidential election were credited with just 0.55 per cent of the popular vote.

### **The Place of Political Parties**

Given their marginal status and clear domination by the executive elites in each country, it is logical to ask what role – if any – do the parties fulfil in the system. They clearly provide some sort of service to these elites, otherwise their presence in the system would not be tolerated.

It is apparent that the primary purpose of the political parties – and why their presence is not only tolerated but also frequently encouraged by those in power – is to provide the regimes in the region with a greater degree of perceived legitimacy. By creating and maintaining a system in which many different political parties operate, it is hoped by the regimes in each country that the impression is being given that their countries are effectively reproducing the multi-party democratic systems of Europe and North America. Through the creation of such an impression it is furthermore hoped that the ordinary populations of the three states feel that they have a genuine say in and impact upon the political process through support of and involvement in political parties – as occurs in Europe and North America. The achievement of this popular sense of legitimacy leads to greater overall support for the wider regime and aids stability and social peace. Legitimacy in the eyes of the outside world is similarly important in a region that is heavily dependent on foreign trade and loans. Over recent years, the industrialised democracies have given increasing consideration to the development of internal democratisation when examining trade and aid relations with the Maghrib.

Allowing greater party political proliferation also has the benefit of creating for the political power-holders more avenues of contact with the ordinary population in each state. This contact is important for several

reasons. First, shifting patterns in popular membership and support of different political parties allows the regime to monitor the views and reactions of the population and thus be aware of any particular and especially threatening trends. The regime can react to these trends either by adapting policies to placate them or by selectively repressing those threatening elements that have come to express themselves through individual political parties. In this way political parties bring potential dissent out into the open much more quickly than would be the case if no plurality of political parties were permitted. Once in the open such dissent can be observed, controlled and, if need be, repressed. Second, political parties' contacts with the ordinary population can be useful to the regime as a tool of popular mobilisation – the regime using the parties to mobilise people behind a particular cause or in reaction to a perceived threat. The perfect example of this was King Hassan II's close involvement of all of Morocco's political parties in a hugely successful attempt to channel and mobilise support for the country's claim to the former Spanish Sahara from the mid-1970s.<sup>1</sup>

Political parties thus play a role that is very different from that played by their counterparts in the liberal democracies of western Europe and North America. Rather than controlling the state, they themselves are controlled by the state. It is furthermore striking that the functions that Maghribi parties provide for the state – mobilisation, a 'transmission belt' for popular opinion – are remarkably similar to those provided by the classic single-party regimes that were once so prevalent in the developing and communist worlds. Is it possible that the new multi-party political systems developing both in the Maghrib and beyond are simply new variations on the classic one-party state that is now widely thought to be virtually extinct as a state-form? Has it been reborn in a new guise?

### **Features of Maghribi Political Parties and Party Systems**

Having established that the role and function of political parties in the Maghrib is very different from the role of parties in Europe and North America, it is now worth looking in more detail at some of the characteristics that both the individual parties and the wider party systems have in common across the region.

#### *Regime Interference*

It has already been shown that control and manipulation of political parties by the power-holding elites is perhaps the fundamental feature of political parties in Algeria, Tunisia and Morocco. This control and intervention takes several forms but can be divided into two broad categories: 'legal' and 'covert.'

The legal forms of interference consist primarily of the use of laws and legal instruments designed to restrict and control the parties. The most basic of these is the legal right of the authorities in all three states to control which parties are active in the political system. All political parties are required to have official legal recognition in order to participate in elections and sit in representative bodies. The regimes reserve the right to refuse legal recognition to a party, meaning that it cannot participate in normal political activities. It is a right that has been widely exercised in all three countries. When Algeria and Tunisia opened up their hitherto single-party political systems in the 1980s, many parties applied for official recognition but several were refused. Even in Morocco, which has maintained a multi-party system since independence, many parties have been denied official recognition despite regular application for such recognition. Once legally in the system, parties are also not immune from being formally ejected from it. Algeria, which blocked relatively few parties from achieving legal recognition when it first established multi-partyism in 1989, proceeded to expel a number of parties from the political arena in the 1990s. The most notable of these was the Front Islamique du Salut (FIS) which – despite establishing itself as clearly the most popular party in elections in 1990 and 1991 – was not able to save itself from legal dissolution by the authorities in 1992. New political parties that the Algerian regime has perceived as trying to replace the FIS have similarly been denied official recognition.<sup>2</sup>

A second legal ‘tool’ used to control parties has been the establishment of formal restrictions on what parties can call themselves and what they can put in their statutes and political platforms. Alleged violation of these stipulations form the basis for at least the formal justification for initial exclusion or later expulsion of parties from the system. In 1997 the Algerian government introduced legal provisions that Hugh Roberts has described as representing ‘a potentially crippling assault on the prerogatives and prospects of the existing political parties’.<sup>3</sup> In addition to stipulating minimum regional memberships and probation periods for new parties, the new provisions demanded that political parties should not make reference to – amongst other things – religion and ethnic identity in their names, founding statutes and political platforms. As a result several parties were obliged to change their names. For example, the Islamic Ennahda Party dropped its religious prefix and the Movement for an Islamic Society (Harakat al-Mujtama’ al-Islamiyya) became the Movement for a *Peaceful* Society. Those parties that refused to conform to the new law had their legal recognition withdrawn and were thus unable to participate in local and national elections held later that year.<sup>4</sup>

Both Algeria and Tunisia have similarly made use of introduced stipulations to block the candidatures of certain party leaders in presidential

elections held in the two countries. In Algeria, Mahfoud Nahnah, the leader of the Movement for a Peaceful Society, was prevented from standing in the 1999 presidential election because of his alleged inability to prove that he played an active role in the liberation struggle against France between 1954 and 1962. This was despite the fact that Nahnah had been allowed to compete in the previous presidential election three-and-a-half years earlier in 1995. However, the fact that Nahnah had performed well in that election (coming a strong second to the officially backed candidate) perhaps explains the real reason for his exclusion. At the time of the 1995 poll another, similarly contrived condition – that of having a native born Algerian spouse – was used to exclude certain potentially popular candidates. In Tunisia, participation in the 1999 presidential election (the first ever multi-candidate affair<sup>5</sup>) was made conditional on the fact that candidates had to have been leader of their particular political party for at least five years. Such a stipulation excluded the candidacy of several opposition figures including the leader of the biggest opposition party. This move echoed the exclusion of the same party's popular leader 13 years earlier in legislative elections held in 1986. In a reverse process, but illustrating the same mechanism of control, parties in Morocco that had initially been denied access to the political system were afforded entry once they were able to demonstrate (albeit in a less formal fashion than in Algeria) that they had changed certain aspects of their platforms and discourse.

The primary purpose of these legal restrictions on parties is to ensure that no political party is able to represent a threat to the ruling order in each state. Potential parties that might pose such a threat – either in terms of a radically critical agenda or through being able to attract large-scale popular support – are prevented from joining the legal political field. Those parties that demonstrate such characteristics once inside the system are ejected. It is notable that the FIS in Algeria was banned only *after* it had demonstrated itself to be very popular by winning elections and being on the verge of securing a majority in the National Assembly. Similarly, those parties that can demonstrate that they no longer represent a threat are allowed into the system. In the latter case, Morocco allowed both the former communist party<sup>6</sup> and an Islamist party<sup>7</sup> into the system once it was satisfied that both had changed their hitherto overtly critical discourses towards the authorities (and specifically the monarchy).

The regimes in the Maghrib states have also used more covert methods to weaken, manipulate and control parties as supplementary measures to those of a more overt and legal form explained above. The first of these methods has taken the form of indirect intervention into both the party political system as well as into the internal affairs of individual parties. The

two main forms of interference in the party system have been, first, sponsorship of the creation of new political parties and, second, the exacerbation of rivalries between existing parties.

The creation of new political parties serves a double purpose for the regime: it allows the creation of new parties that are favourable to or allied to the regime and it also helps further splinter and fragment the party political scene in order to prevent the emergence of just one or two powerful political parties. This is the main reason why both the Moroccan and Algerian party political systems consist of relatively large numbers of parties. Morocco provides the best example of what clearly amounts to a 'divide and rule' strategy on the part of the ruling elites. From the early days of independence when King Mohammed V encouraged parties like the Mouvement Populaire (MP) to grow and rival the dominant Istiqlal party, the Moroccan palace and its supporters have sought to swell and fragment the party political spectrum to such a degree that the most popular political party in the national legislative elections of 1997 was only able to attract 14 per cent of the votes cast. In Algeria, undoubtedly part of the reason why those in power in 1989 prevented so few parties from receiving legal recognition was a wish to see Algeria follow Morocco's route and become what one observer has termed '*Makhzen à l'algérienne*' (*Makhzen* is the phrase used to describe the power structures surrounding the monarchy in Morocco) where no one individual party was strong enough to be a threat. A number of prominent Algerian political personalities claimed that they had been approached to this end by the regime to form new political parties and many political parties that were created from 1989 were widely suspected and accused of being set up to serve this purpose.<sup>9</sup>

On occasion, the regime has often sponsored the creation of a new party with the intention of undermining support for an existing political party – particularly one that is perceived as being too strong and thus a potential threat. Sometimes new parties are encouraged with the expectation that they will undermine and attract support away from movements and parties that are *outside* the legal system. This was certainly the case with the legalisation of the Islamist Party of Justice and Development (PJD, note 7) in Morocco which the regime hoped would draw support away from the legally unrecognised but powerful Islamist Al-Adl wa-Ihsan movement. In Algeria the authorities' continued tolerance of Islamist parties is explained by a similar desire to undercut residual support for the now dissolved FIS. Similarly, in Tunisia one of the main reasons for the legalisation of the Parti d'Unité Populaire (PUP) in 1983 was because it was hoped that it would weaken the larger and still illegal Mouvement d'Unité Populaire (MUP) that had been formed by Ahmed Ben Salah, a dissident figure in exile and from which the PUP had broken away.

The exacerbation of rivalries between parties has also been practised by regimes. They have often sought to play parties off against each other, to foment tensions and thus ensure that the parties' aggressive energies are directed more at each other than at the regime. This is particularly the case for parties that are competing either for the backing of the same particular section of the electorate or for leadership of an allied bloc of parties. In the former case the Algerian authorities have sought to create conflict between the two main parties competing for the ethnic Berber Kabyle vote – the Front des Forces Socialistes (FFS) and the Rassemblement pour la Culture et la Démocratie (RCD) – and at various times have promoted rivalry between the country's various Islamist parties (including the FIS during its legal lifetime). In Morocco, the Makhzen has been served by simmering rivalries between the two largest parties in the opposition *kutla* bloc of parties – the Istiqlal Party and the Union Socialiste des Forces Populaires (USFP) – for leadership of the *kutla*. In both cases the regime ensured that results from elections produced either close results between the parties or otherwise alternately favoured one party over another – both with the aim of fostering tensions.<sup>10</sup>

Regimes interfere in the internal affairs of individual parties by playing on existing divisions within them and sponsoring rifts and splits – many of which develop into formal scissions and new parties, thus furthering the objective of 'divide and rule' outlined above. Nowhere is this form of interference more widely practised than in Morocco. The vast majority of the now numerous parties in the Moroccan parliament are the product of splits within and secessions from existing parties, nearly all of which have been encouraged by the Makhzen. It is a strategy that has been employed since the early years of independence when King Mohammed V played on existing tensions within the dominant Istiqlal to help produce the scission that led to the creation of the Union Nationale des Forces Populaires (UNFP).<sup>11</sup> Since then no party has been immune from officially sponsored splits. Even those parties traditionally allied to the administration have had this practice used against them when it was felt that the party was becoming either too powerful or its leadership was showing too much independence.<sup>12</sup>

The promotion of internal party rifts is a technique that has also come to be used in Algeria. The authorities have sought to undermine the leadership of parties critical of the regime by sponsoring dissident factions within the parties against the leadership of the party. The objective, however, is slightly different than in the Moroccan case, in that rather than seceding from the party, it is hoped that the dissident faction is able to take control of the leadership of the party and bring the party under the closer control of the regime. A good example of this was the successful internal *coup d'état* that was launched against the leadership of the Front de Libération Nationale

(FLN) in early 1996. Despite being the historic single party of state since independence, following the liberalisation of 1989 the party had become increasingly critical of the regime under the reformist secretary-general Abdelhamid Mehri. Mehri's signature of an accord with the FIS and most other major opposition parties setting out a peace plan and demanding the re-legalisation of the FIS in Rome in January 1995 proved a step too far for the Algerian authorities who engineered Mehri's replacement with a figure much more willing to support the regime. A similar fate befell another signatory of the Rome Accord, the Ennahda party. In 1999 its leadership also fell under the control of figures willing to co-operate with the authorities, although its leader and founder, Abdallah Djaballah, decided to leave and create a new party to preserve a more critical line. The remaining major signatory of the Accord, the FFS, has experienced regular attempts to subvert its leadership although up until now its leadership has survived – dissident factions usually leaving the party to set up a new organisation.<sup>13</sup>

The authorities have been able to intervene in internal and intra-party affairs in this way through the use of stick and carrot policies. Individual politicians and even whole political parties have shown themselves willing to moderate their discourse and agenda and even openly co-operate with the authorities in return for political and material benefits. Opposition parties and politicians have been particularly tempted by the lure of political office. This was clearly a factor in the success of the two internal *coups* launched against the leaderships of the FLN and the Ennahda in Algeria. It was no coincidence that both parties were invited into government and senior figures given ministerial portfolios following the change in leadership. Similarly, it was the promise of local government office and patronage that led a number of parties to 'break ranks' within the common front that had been organised by the opposition parties to protest against electoral fraud that had occurred in the local elections in Algeria in October 1997. In Tunisia, such is the weakness and level of co-optation of political parties that 'opposition' parties and leaders regularly publicly express their support not only for the regime in general but also for the leader of the RCD, as national president, and have even proposed common candidate lists with the ruling RCD.<sup>14</sup>

Individual politicians are also regularly tempted away from opposition parties into ones supportive of the regime. This was particularly the case in Tunisia where many opposition figures defected to the ruling RCD having been lured away through appointments to government and diplomatic positions, a development that in the view of William Zartman 'tore apart' the leadership of the largest opposition party, the Mouvement des Démocrates Socialistes (MDS).<sup>15</sup> This also occurred in Morocco where a number of senior figures in pro-Palace parties were once members of the

Istiqlal, UNFP or USFP. Such figures may not even need to leave their existing parties to benefit from official support. In Morocco most parties have at least one senior figure who is widely acknowledged to be close to – and to all intents and purposes controlled by – the Minister of the Interior. Some parties even came to be under the full effective control of the Ministry. Following the departure of the long-serving Interior Minister Driss Basri in 1999, one senior figure in the Union Constitutionnel (UC) spoke of the UC having been ‘hostage to the Ministry of Interior’ through the ‘systematic infiltration by Basri-istes’ of the party, a practice he alleged was common in all the pro-administration parties during Basri’s period in office.<sup>16</sup>

In addition to using the ‘carrots’ of political office and material benefits to control and manipulate parties, regimes have also shown a willingness to use various coercive ‘sticks’ to achieve the same ends by punishing those parties that are perceived to be overly critical or even insufficiently co-operative. In Morocco in 1996 the decision by the Organisation de L’Action Démocratique et Populaire (OADP) to boycott the referendum on a new constitution – the only party to do so – led to a formal scission in the party and the creation of a new breakaway party. Although the move was officially prompted by the supposed unhappiness of certain members with the party’s hard-line stance, the split was more widely seen – not least by the OADP’s leader – as being deliberately engineered by the Minister of the Interior to punish the party for its lack of co-operation.<sup>17</sup> Most frequently this punishment takes the form of withdrawal (or the threat of it) of official recognition or support. It has been a weapon that has been used against most of the so-called ‘administration’, or pro-Palace, parties in Morocco at some time. For example in 1986 the UC, a prominent administration party which had dominated elections in 1983–84, saw royal support effectively removed from it following clashes between Maati Bouabid, the party’s founder and leader, and the King’s financial advisors. Thereafter the party failed to exercise the same dominance at elections.<sup>18</sup> Less frequently, more active measures have been applied to force parties to comply with the regime. Opposition parties in Algeria have regularly complained about harassment from the authorities which has ranged from prevention of meetings and arrest of members to physical attacks on and even murder of supporters and leaders.<sup>19</sup> One party – the RCD – that had been part of the governing coalition complained of severe physical harassment by the regime following its decision to withdraw from the government in May 2001.<sup>20</sup> In Morocco, the refusal of leading opposition figures such as Mehdi Ben Barka and Omar Benjelloun to co-operate with the regime has been seen as the real cause of their abduction and murder.<sup>21</sup> In Tunisia in 1995, the two most senior leaders of the largest opposition party, Mohammed Moadda and his

deputy Khemais Chamhari of the Mouvement des Démocrates Socialistes (MDS), were arrested and charged with espionage immediately after launching public criticisms of the Tunisian regime.<sup>22</sup> Unsurprisingly, the Tunisian authorities subsequently ensured that in the elections within the MDS to replace its jailed leaders the candidate that was more supportive of the regime defeated a more critical challenger. Those members (in probability a majority) of the MDS that remained supportive of the imprisoned leadership found themselves prevented by the authorities from using the party's official buildings.<sup>23</sup>

The final way in which regimes interfere with parties and the party system has been through the control and manipulation of elections. All three states under consideration have now seen several sets of multi-party elections held for local councils, the national legislature and (in the case of Algeria and Tunisia), the national presidency. However, none of these elections has succeeded in avoiding accusations of serious irregularities from both inside and outside the country. The alleged irregularities more specifically involve the following practices: manipulation of voting lists, interference with voting procedures and straightforward falsification of final voting figures. Examples documenting these practises could be provided for each election in each country; however cases from the most recent elections in each will hopefully suffice. In Algeria, a study of the June 1997 National Assembly elections, whilst arguing that fraud was not as prevalent as some observers argued, acknowledged that it did occur and that consequently 'the composition of the [National Assembly] Chamber is without doubt more a reflection of the situation of power currently existing in Algeria than of the wishes of the electorate.'<sup>24</sup> The election to the Algerian national presidency held two years later in April 1999 saw the withdrawal of all but one of the candidates on the eve of the ballot in protest against alleged fraud in favour of the one remaining candidate who was universally seen as enjoying the backing of the country's all-powerful military.<sup>25</sup> In Morocco, the November 1997 elections to the national Chamber of Deputies were generally regarded as being the least manipulated ever. This did not, however, prevent significant protests being lodged by numerous parties and candidates complaining of fraud. Significantly, these complaints did not come only from unsuccessful parties or defeated candidates. Two officially *victorious* candidates from the successful USFP alleged that the authorities had falsified results to help them win in seats where Islamist candidates were widely recognised to have topped the poll. In both cases the 'elected' candidates refused to take up their seats in the Chamber of Deputies until the matter had been resolved. In Tunisia, in the presidential and legislative elections held in 1999 there was little evidence of direct electoral fraud. However, the reason for that

was that the regime saw no need for it, given the effectiveness with which it was able to control political life more generally having successfully cowed all forms of meaningful opposition. In the presidential election, the regime not only succeeded in restricting the number of candidates running against the incumbent president Zine el-Abdine Ben Ali, but even ensured that one of the two candidates allowed to stand was so supportive of the regime that he publicly proclaimed that Ben Ali was the best candidate for the post of president!<sup>26</sup> In the event, Ben Ali secured 99.4 per cent of the votes cast in the presidential election, whilst the ruling RCD took 91.5 per cent of the ballots in the elections to the national assembly.<sup>27</sup>

### *The Importance of Leadership: the 'Zaïm'*

After regime interference, the second major characteristic of Maghribi political parties is the importance given to the leader of a party. Nearly all parties are focused around a single individual figure who dominates the external image of the party as well as having the primary say in decision-making within the party. It is a phenomenon usually associated and explained with reference to the traditional Arab concept of the *zaïm* and which in the view of Frank Tachau reflects the persistence of traditional structures of patrimonialism found throughout the Middle East.<sup>28</sup>

The importance attached to leadership has several consequences for the nature, structure and running of parties. First, it has meant that nearly all political parties were founded not on a movement or a class, but around the personality and ambitions of a single individual. The notable exceptions to this case were the historic nationalist parties that arose in each state during the colonial period. The desire of these parties to create as broad and consensual an organisation as possible militated against the emergence of a single leader<sup>29</sup> – although in the case of the Neo-Destour party in Tunisia such a situation lasted barely beyond independence when Habib Bourguiba established full control over the party. Most of the parties created subsequent to independence have followed the pattern of focusing on a single leader. An examination of the new political parties that came into being following the move to multi-partyism in Tunisia and Algeria in the 1980s shows that virtually all were closely, sometimes exclusively, associated with an individual figure. In an observation that was equally true of other parties Arun Kapil commented on the Mouvement Algérien pour la Justice et le Développement (MAJD) set up by a former prime minister, Kasdi Merbah, in Algeria in 1990 that 'the MAJD ... had no other purpose than to serve as a vehicle for Merbah's ambition to be president of Algeria.' The MAJD was also similar to most other parties created at that time in being primarily made up of 'friends and associates' of the leader.<sup>30</sup> Similar observations were made about Tunisia's new political parties, Emma

Murphy concluding that a lot of them were simply based on the 'personal networks of leaders'.<sup>31</sup> This trend has continued in Algeria. The presidential election of 1999 spawned the creation of a number of new parties that subsequently emerged from the individual candidacies of various personalities who had contested the election.<sup>32</sup>

The fact that so many parties were created by and around an individual means that the party comes to be perceived – not least by the leader himself – as not only a personal vehicle but also frequently as a personal possession. This has led to problems over the issue of leadership succession – the identity of the party and the leader being so tightly intertwined that transition to a new leader becomes extremely difficult. As a consequence, changes of leaders of parties have only usually occurred upon the death of an incumbent leader. This is particularly noticeable in Morocco, where on only one occasion has one of the major political parties replaced a living leader.<sup>33</sup> Similar trends in Tunisia and Algeria are less evident mainly because parties are generally much younger than their Moroccan counterparts, but also because, as discussed earlier, succession has been forced on several parties by the regime.

The failure to establish formalised mechanisms of succession has inevitably led to the build up of tensions within parties – potential successors to the leadership of a party finding themselves blocked and frustrated. It has been these frustrations that have been regularly exploited by the regimes to weaken and control parties. They are a major factor in explaining the splits and formal scissions that regularly occur in parties – frustrated individuals choosing to leave a party and establish a new organisation.<sup>34</sup> Significantly, it is usually the frustrated ambitions of an *individual* figure rather than a group that leads to such a split thus further underlining the importance of individual leaders. Personal rivalries between a leader and other senior figures within a party and also between potential successors to an existing leader are a major feature of political parties in the region, particularly in Morocco, and are far more important in explaining divisions within parties than references to party strategy or ideology.<sup>35</sup> The multiplication and fragmentation of political parties has also been sustained by the persistence of rivalries between individuals. Regular calls for greater co-operation and even formal union between political parties have invariably foundered on such rivalries. Whilst most party leaders recognise the advantages of size and strength that union and fusion with other parties represent, none have so far been willing to run the risk of merging 'their' party with another and seeing themselves become subservient to the leader of the other party. In this way parties with virtually identical ideologies and support bases can co-exist in the same system – the boundary between them being maintained and defined often only by personal antipathy between leaders.

The phenomenon of the *zaim* could also be seen to weaken parties in other respects. Although the existence of a single well-known figure as leader may attract the loyalty and support of certain groups of people, notably those from his home region, ethnic group or family, the very personal nature of leadership can also repel as many – and probably more – potential supporters as it attracts.<sup>36</sup> A leader without such a personal profile might avoid such problems.

### *Patron–Client Networks*

Closely linked with the phenomenon of the *zaim* – or primacy of the leader – is the importance of traditional patron–client networks to political parties. Networks of mutual support and favour are a common feature of traditional societies and North Africa is not alone in seeing these structures become part of its modern political framework – particularly through political parties. As Frank Tachau has observed of political parties across the Middle East region generally:

as parties have emerged, they have often incorporated within their structures and functions pre-existing patron–client relationships. The party thus becomes a new political instrument of traditional local notables; or, alternatively, the party serves to rechannel a set of traditional relationships.<sup>37</sup>

Part of the support a *zaim* or leader is able to attract is due to his ability to reward his supporters with material benefits he has access to. Through competing for political office (no matter how minor) political parties and their leaders provide access routes to material resources and patronage that can be distributed to supporters who have helped elect members of the party.

The importance of the patron–client structure within modern political parties has had a number of consequences for the recruitment, structure and performance of parties in the Maghrib. In Morocco in particular, where privatisation projects have particularly suited patron–client networks,<sup>38</sup> many political parties have become little more than large-scale interlinking patron–client networks. This is demonstrated by the fact that recruitment drives by most parties consist not of public appeals to ordinary citizens but of the co-opting of notables and leaders from a local area or community into the party in the expectation that these figures will be able to ‘deliver’ the support and votes of their local area or community. The effectiveness of this strategy is illustrated by the sudden success individual parties are able to have in certain areas.<sup>39</sup> Indeed this success has been seen to achieve national proportions. In 1983 the Union Constitutionnel (UC) was, within a matter of months after its creation, able to dominate elections to local communes and went on to become the largest party in the national parliament in

elections the following year, defeating much older and more established parties. It was undoubtedly true that much of this success was due to substantial backing and support from the palace – the UC being the latest vehicle for royal political interests. However, it was equally true that the party had been able to attract significant amounts of genuine popular support from people who recognised that the effective royal seal of approval given to the party meant that it was likely to be allowed to gain seats in local and national government and thus be in a position to reward supporters and give them access to power structures.<sup>40</sup> The importance of attaining royal support reveals that in Morocco's patronage networks the ultimate patron remains the King himself – a factor that helps explain the ongoing dominance of the monarchy and the persistent weakness and dependence of all the political parties in Morocco.

Although much less prevalent than in Morocco, patron–client networks are also present amongst Algeria's political parties. In his study of the 1997 legislative elections, Daho Djerbal observed that a number of political parties – notably those close to the regime<sup>41</sup> – made particular use of traditional networks of family, tribe and *zaouia* connections.<sup>42</sup> As in Morocco, it was in the more traditional areas of the country – overwhelmingly the rural regions – where the local support networks were particularly mobilised: established patterns of social organisation and patronage remained largely intact in these areas. However, although these traditional networks were most heavily exploited by parties close to the regime, opposition parties with rural bases of support – notably the FFS in rural Kabylia – also relied on them.

Another consequence of the presence of patron–client networks in the party system has been the very fluid nature of party allegiance. This fluidity is present not just at the level of voters, but also at the level of members, activists and even elected representatives. A significant proportion of the elected members of both the current Algerian and Moroccan national legislatures are no longer members of the party under whose banner they were originally elected. Switching party allegiance once in parliament has become a common feature of both legislatures.<sup>43</sup> In Morocco, 12 deputies changed party allegiance during the first two months following their election in November 1997 and by the end of the third year of the parliament a total of 102 had switched parties – many more than once.<sup>44</sup> Although this fluidity can be explained with reference to internal rivalries and frictions and other factors, the majority of inter-party defections can be explained by the working of patron–client relationships. Members of parliament leave one party to join another because they believe that their interests (and those of their clients) are best served by joining another party. It is no coincidence that the majority of cross-party defections consist of a

member moving *from* a party that does not hold any political office and *to* one that does. That the movement of deputies between the parties has continued in the face of direct appeals from the Moroccan King that the practice should cease, is evidence of the strength of the importance of patron–client networks in the Moroccan system.<sup>45</sup> For Clement Henry Moore the persistence and strength of patron–client networks in the Maghrib can perhaps be explained by the fact that they are the only real intermediaries operating in what he calls the region's 'constricted interstices between state and society'.<sup>46</sup>

### *The Role of Ideology*

The pre-eminence of individual leaders and of patron–client ties in shaping party identity, development and recruitment has inevitably meant that the role played by ideology – the factor that has traditionally demarcated political parties from one another in Europe – is significantly reduced. This point is illustrated by the fact that although many of the Maghrib's political parties have incorporated ideological terms into their party titles and employed ideological language in their programmes, there is frequently little to distinguish one from the other in terms of real policies and ideas. A good example of this is the parties of the (so-called) Moroccan left. Although many still call themselves 'socialist' or even 'Marxist', and speak of 'scientific socialism' in their platforms, most of them espouse values that appear to come from a rather different ideological source. The Party of Progress and Socialism (PPS) – the successor to the Moroccan Communist Party – called in its 1997 election platform for an acceleration of the process of economic privatisation.<sup>47</sup> Moreover, the new government appointed in 1998, although largely made up of nominally leftist parties, has presided over an economic policy that is little different from that pursued by its supposedly rightist and neo-liberal predecessor. However whilst this fact has been pointed out by members of the former government,<sup>48</sup> leaders of the leftist parties now in government (not least the new prime minister) have also drawn attention to the fact that during the previous government's tenure the state bureaucracy swelled continually despite a supposedly ideological commitment to reduce its size.<sup>49</sup> In Algeria too, most political parties whatever their nominal ideology, share a commitment to further liberalisation of the economy and a reduced role for the state (although there is some criticism of the role played by international financial institutions). In Tunisia, the hegemony operated by the ruling RCD and the much tighter controls operated over parties ensure that there is little deviation from the official line favouring market-driven reforms.

The increasingly blurred distinction between party programmes and ideologies is not a development unique to the Maghrib. European socialist

parties, in particular, have moved since the 1980s to adopt and endorse policies once exclusively identified with the neo-liberal right. Indeed, this is a fact acknowledged and highlighted by certain 'socialist' politicians such as the USFP's Fathallah Oualalou – now Morocco's Finance Minister.<sup>50</sup> Nevertheless, European parties have not seen the large-scale defections between parties of supposedly vastly differing ideologies<sup>51</sup> that Morocco has, or seen a party leader openly admit that his party did not have a programme and was instead relying on the appeal of individual candidates in an election.<sup>52</sup> These phenomena are more readily explained by the workings of patron–client and similar factors – a point that is tacitly acknowledged by many Moroccan politicians who are fond of stressing the specificity of the Moroccan case and the difficulty of applying labels such as 'right' and 'left' to the Moroccan political scene. In Algeria, the absence of traditional ideological divisions has been commented on by outside observers. In 1968, William Quandt in his study of the Algerian political system concluded that 'ideology as an explanation for Algerian political behaviour is simply not convincing to most observers'.<sup>53</sup> Over a quarter of a century later, Hugh Roberts returned to this observation to reiterate its fundamental truth even for the new multi-party political system now operating in the country.<sup>54</sup>

The relative absence of ideology from the Maghribi political scene can, however, be overstated. Whilst it is true that the main ideological doctrines that have dominated European politics such as 'socialism', 'Marxism', 'neo-liberalism' and even 'environmentalism' are of strictly limited importance in the region, it would not be true to say that no policy and worldview differences exist between parties at all. Such differences do exist but they largely relate to issues that are wholly different from those that concern European politicians and political parties. Whereas the political debates that dominate Europe and the rest of the Western world concern the role of the state in the economy, the nature of the welfare state and regional economic integration, the controversies and challenges that matter in the Maghrib revolve around different subjects. It can be said that three general major contentious issues exist in the Maghrib and along which parties divide and which in this way can be described as 'ideological' in nature. Very broadly they can be summarised as different viewpoints over

- (a) the role of religion in the state;
- (b) the role of minority identities in the state; and most importantly,
- (c) the continued centralisation of political power in the state.

It is differences on these questions that open the way for the elaboration of a general typology of political parties, which while still having most of the characteristics of parties examined above (dominant leader, patron–client

networks, negligible western-style ideology) do to a greater or lesser extent distinguish themselves from each other on these points. Reasons of space necessitate that details of this suggested typology are explored in a separate article.

## Conclusion

This article has attempted to set out some of the main distinguishing features of political parties in North Africa. In doing so perhaps a rather bleak picture has been drawn of the parties' role and relevance in their respective political systems. Maghribi parties are still a long way from fully resembling the types of political party found in Western Europe and North America and which the vast majority of them aspire to be like. However, there are indications – albeit weak – that movement in this direction is possible.

As has been shown, control and interference by regimes is the biggest impediment to the development of parties. Nevertheless, it cannot be denied that in relative terms political parties now play a more significant and influential role in the political systems of all three states than they did 20 years ago. The very fact that in 1980 neither Algeria nor Tunisia had a multi-party system indicates that there has been change. Moreover, it is possible to argue that once adopted, a multi-party system assumes a certain dynamic of its own despite repression and control from the authorities. It is true that all three regimes have used the existence of multi-partyism as supposed evidence of the development of democracy in their states in order to temper external – particularly Western – criticism as well as domestic discontent with the authoritarian nature of the existing systems. As Zartman has observed of parties: 'their continued existence is protected only by their position as guarantors of the multi-party quality of the system.'<sup>55</sup> However, this very position can be exploited by the parties who can try to use their new found position in the system to draw both foreign and domestic attention to the fact that the mere existence of parties is not an automatic indicator of the existence of pluralistic democracy. Indeed, opposition parties in all three states have used foreign visits, interviews with domestic and foreign media, and parliamentary debates to emphasise these points. Although regimes have sought to curtail such tactics, they arguably have had some effect. Zartman himself has noted that in Morocco – the state that has had the longest experience of multi-partyism – the USFP has been 'remarkably successful in achieving its demands' despite being nearly continually out of power. He argues that the fact that the Monarch has acted on a number of the party's proposals is indicative of the influence – albeit publicly unacknowledged by the King – the party is able to exert.<sup>56</sup> In this

way, the USFP shows itself able to fulfil a role similar to political parties in the Western democracies who, when out of power, are able to put pressure on the existing government through mobilising public opinion on particular issues.

Henry Clement Moore has suggested that another development that might also help to strengthen the political parties is the ongoing process of economic liberalisation and privatisation that has been occurring in all three states over recent decades. He argues that these processes are likely to reduce the resources that are used by the regime to tie political parties to them through the dispensing of patronage.<sup>57</sup> The debilitating effects of patronage on the independence, vigour and ideological clarity of political parties has long been recognised. Interestingly, the leader of Morocco's oldest 'Administration' party, the Mouvement Populaire, stated that he thought that his party's move out of government to make way for the 'alternance' government of the long time opposition parties from 1998 might actually help the party. He argued that away from political office and thus resources for supporting patronage, the party would attract support only from those who were genuinely committed to its goals and agenda rather than those who saw the party merely as a route to power and resources.<sup>58</sup> It remains to be seen whether the parties that make up the government that assumed power in Morocco in 1998 will fall prey to the same problems as it attracts support from groups and individuals that have no genuine interest in the government's longer term agenda and vision. It could be argued that this potential weakening of the ideological purpose of parties like the USFP through the assumption of political office was even behind the Palace's decision to appoint the government of alternance in the first place. Nevertheless, the rotation of parties in power – as occurs in established liberal democracies – clearly stands to have a positive effect on the independence and vigour of these parties.

Significant obstacles, however, remain to the establishment of western-style political parties in the region. Whilst many commentators stress the importance of developing greater grass-roots appeal and more democratic internal structures, the fundamental obstacles relate to the overall structure of the political systems in which they operate. The iron grip the ruling elites in Algeria, Tunisia and Morocco have been able to exercise over the levers of power in their states continues to ensure that despite the presence and activity of a multiplicity of political parties, the activities of these parties are essentially peripheral to the business of real political power.

## NOTES

1. See J. Damis, 'The Impact of the Saharan Dispute on Moroccan Foreign and Domestic Policy' in I.W. Zartman (ed.), *The Political Economy of Morocco* (New York: Praeger 1987).
2. For example, in November 2000 the authorities refused official recognition to Wafa, a political party formed the previous year. The Algerian Minister of the Interior, responsible for the issue, justified the decision on the grounds that Wafa represented a 'restitution of the dissolved party' – a reference to the FIS. *El Watan* (Algiers) 9 Nov. 2000.
3. H. Roberts, 'The Zeroual Memorandum', *The Journal of Algerian Studies* 1 (1996) p.14.
4. The Mouvement pour la Démocratie en Algérie (MDA) was the most prominent casualty of this ruling. The party, led by the former president Ahmed Ben Bella, had refused to remove references to Arab nationalism from its founding statutes.
5. In the previous presidential election in 1994 endorsement of a certain number of elected members of local and national legislatures was made a prerequisite of candidacy. Only the ruling RCD party was able to fulfil this requirement and thus the incumbent president, Zine al-Abdine Ben Ali was the sole candidate in the election.
6. The Party of Progress and Socialism (PPS) was the direct successor party to the Moroccan Communist Party that had been banned in 1960. The party reconstituted itself as the PPS in 1974 and was accorded legal recognition mainly because of its greater acceptance of the monarchical system and because of its energetic support for the Monarch's policy in the Western Sahara.
7. The Party of Justice and Development (PJD) was an Islamist party whose legal recognition came through the circuitous route of metamorphosis from an existing and legally recognised political party – the Mouvement Populaire Démocratique et Constitutionnel (MPDC) – which the authorities had allowed Islamists from the Al-Islah wa At-Tajdid organisation to join and effectively take control of in 1996. This followed a long process during which Al-Islah wa At-Tajdid had sought to persuade the authorities that the group's violent and anti-monarchical past in the 1970s had been jettisoned and that it should therefore be allowed to form its own political party. For more details see M.J. Willis, 'Between *Alternance* and the *Makhzen*: At-Tawhid wa Al-Islah's Entry into Moroccan Politics', *The Journal of North African Studies* 4/3 (Autumn 1999).
8. M. Harbi in *Sou'at*, 9–10 July 1989, quoted in B. Korany and S. Amrani, 'Explosive Civil Society and Democratization from Below: Algeria' in B. Korany, R. Brynen and P. Noble (eds.), *Political Liberalization and Democratization in the Arab World*, vol.2 *Comparative Experiences* (London: Lynne Rienner 1998).
9. See M. Willis, *The Islamist Challenge in Algeria: A Political History* (Reading: Ithaca 1996) p.121n for details.
10. For example, in the local elections of June 1997 the Istiqlal emerged with the biggest share of the vote and with the most local councils seats, whereas the USFP trailed in fourth place behind two other parties. Only five months later, in the elections to the national legislature, it was the USFP that emerged with the largest number of seats whilst the Istiqlal languished in fifth place.
11. For full details of this split plus the various techniques used by the Palace to hasten it see J. Waterbury, *The Commander of the Faithful: The Moroccan Political Elite – A Study of Segmented Politics* (London: Weidenfeld and Nicolson 1970) pp.168–95.
12. The Mouvement Populaire, for example, has experienced regular scissions leading to the creation of new parties such as the Mouvement Populaire, Démocratique et Constitutionnel (MPDC) (1967), the Mouvement Nationale et Populaire (MNP) (1991) and the Mouvement Social et Démocratique (MDS) (1996). All these (including the continuing Mouvement Populaire itself) now have seats in the Moroccan parliament.
13. The leader of the FFS, Hocine Ait Ahmed, has accused sections of the Algerian press of being used by the Algerian authorities to regularly run stories concerning splits in the party with the aim of fostering tensions. He argued that this was done 'to punish the FFS' for being unwilling to ally itself with the regime. *La Tribune* (Algiers) 1 June 2000.
14. *Le Monde* 5/6 March 2000. The opposition parties' slogan for the municipal elections of May 2000 was 'We are all behind President Ben Ali.'

15. I.W. Zartman, 'The Conduct of Political Reform: The Path Toward Democracy' in *Tunisia: The Political Economy of Reform* (Boulder, CO and London: Lynne Rienner 1991) p.19. See also E.C. Murphy, *Economic and Political Change in Tunisia: From Bourguiba to Ben Ali* (London: Macmillan 1999) p.183.
16. Interview with Mohammed Alaoui M'hamdi, member of the Politbureau of the UC, *Maroc Hebdo International* 19 Nov. 1999; *La Nouvelle Tribune* 2 Dec. 1999.
17. The leader of the OADP, Mohammed Bensaid Ait Idder spoke of the state provoking a 'punitive scission' in the party. Interview in *Libération* (Rabat) 1/2 April 2000.
18. D.M. Mednicoff, 'Morocco' in F. Tachau (ed.), *Political Parties in the Middle East and North Africa* (London: Greenwood Press 1994) p.398.
19. For details of cases relating to the Ennahda party see M. Willis: 'Algeria's Other Islamists: Abdallah Djaballah and the Ennahda Movement' *The Journal of North African Studies* 3/3 (1998) pp.53,60.
20. *El Watan* (Algiers) 7 Jan. 2002.
21. C.H. Moore, 'Political Parties' in I.W. Zartman and W.M. Habeeb (eds.), *Polity and Society in Contemporary North Africa* (Boulder, CO: Westview 1993) p.44. Mehdi Ben Barka, a leader of the UNFP, was abducted in Paris in 1965 and has never been seen since and Omar Benjelloun, of the USFP, was assassinated in 1975. Although various theories abound as to the identity of the perpetrators of both incidents, many identify the Makhzen as being ultimately behind both liquidations.
22. Specifically, Moadda had attacked the 'official' results of the local elections of 1995 that credited his party with less than 1% of the votes cast.
23. M.P. Angrist, 'Parties, Parliament and Political Dissent in Tunisia' in *The Journal of North African Studies* 4/4 (Winter 1999) p.96.
24. J. Fontaine, 'Résultats et Evolution des Forces Politiques' in 'Les Elections Legislatives du 5 Juin 1997 en Algérie' *Maghreb-Machrek* 157 (July–Sept. 1997) p.178. Fontaine also observed that where fraud did appear to occur it invariably worked to the benefit of parties close to the regime – notably the Rassemblement National Démocratique (RND).
25. The candidates had withdrawn primarily in protest at alleged malpractices that had occurred during balloting of the military which took place immediately before voting by the rest of the country.
26. *The Economist*, 23 Oct. 1999.
27. *Jeune Afrique*, 2 Nov. 1999.
28. Tachau (note 18) p.xx.
29. In Algeria the FLN had made a conscious decision to maintain a collective leadership during the liberation struggle in reaction to what had been seen as the autocratic and thus divisive leadership that had been exercised by the veteran nationalist leader Messali Hadj before 1954 and from whose organisation most of the founders and leaders of the FLN came.
30. Arun Kapil: 'Algeria' in Tachau (note 18) p.44.
31. Murphy (note 15) p.213.
32. For example, former foreign minister Ahmed Taleb Ibrahim created Wafa and Forces Démocratiques (FD) consolidated around former prime minister Sid Ahmed Ghazali.
33. In February 1998 the Istiqlal party replaced Mohammed Boucetta with Abbes Al-Fassi.
34. Defenders of the scission that occurred in the OADP in Morocco in 1996 and detailed above claimed that rather than being the result of manipulation by the authorities, the split was the result of frustration at the lack of democracy arising from the phenomenon of the *zaïm* within the party. *La Gazette du Maroc*, 17 Nov. 1999. In 2001, dissidents in the Mouvement National Populaire (MNP) accused the party leader Mahjoubi Aherdane of treating the party as his 'personal estate'. Interview with Mohammed Fadili in *La Gazette du Maroc*, 11 April 2001.
35. As a further illustration of this point, the author, in an analysis of splits and divisions that occurred in the FIS in 1991 constructed an elaborate explanation based on strategic and ideological differences that existed between various senior party figures, see Willis (note 9). However, a subsequent interview with one of the members of the FIS's ruling council at the time revealed that in the opinion of the interviewee personal rivalries played a much larger role than ideological or strategic considerations. Author's interview with Kamededine

- Kherbane, London, 28 June 1997.
36. William Zartman has argued that this factor was especially true in the case of the MP in Morocco and the FFS in Algeria, where a long-standing leader with a very distinct personal profile put off some potential supporters. I.W. Zartman, 'The Challenge of Democratic Alternatives in the Maghrib' in J. Ruedy (ed.), *Islamism and Secularism in North Africa* (London: Macmillan 1994) p.212.
  37. Tachau (note 18) p.xx.
  38. H. Moore (note 21) p.43.
  39. For example in one area of central Morocco the locally elected members of both the lower house (Chamber of Deputies) and upper house (Chamber of Counsellors) and the president of the local commune are all currently members of the PPS when less than ten years earlier, the party had virtually no elected presence in the region whatsoever. It was the successful co-option of an important local family by the PPS (the upper and lower house members are brothers) that paved the way to this domination.
  40. D.F. Eickelman, 'Changing Perceptions of State Authority: Morocco, Egypt and Oman' in Ghassan Salame (ed.), *The Foundations of the Arab State* (London: Croom Helm 1987) p.194.
  41. Specifically the RND, FLN and MSP.
  42. Daho Djerbal, 'Enjeux Politiques, Logiques et Acteurs' in 'Les Elections Legislatives du 5 Juin 1997 en Algérie', *Maghrib-Machrek* (note 24) p.160 .
  43. It should be noted that whilst formal changing of party allegiance is allowed in the Moroccan parliament, it is not officially recognised in the Algerian parliament. Nevertheless, effective *de facto* defections regularly occur in the latter.
  44. *Maroc Hebdo International* (Rabat) 24 Jan. 1998; *Le Reporter* (Rabat) 23 Nov. 2000.
  45. *La Gazette du Maroc* (Rabat) 28 Jan. 1998.
  46. H. Moore (note 21) p.43.
  47. *La Nouvelle Tribune* (Rabat) 16 Oct. 1997. For an interesting discussion of the evolution of the PPS's ideological platform see Abdelkebir Khatibi, *L'Alternance et les Partis Politiques* (Casablanca: Editions EDDIF 1998) pp.57-61.
  48. See reactions from former government members to the new government programme announced in April 1998, *Le Reporter* (Rabat) 21 April 1998.
  49. Interview with Abderrahman Youssoufi in *Le Quotidien du Maroc Magazine*, 14 Nov. 1997.
  50. Interview with Fathallah Oualalou in *La Gazette du Maroc*, 30 June 1999.
  51. In 1998 a number of deputies of the nominally rightist Parti National Démocratique (PND) defected to the Front des Forces Démocratiques (FFD) – a splinter from the formerly communist PPS.
  52. In May 1997, Mahjoubi Aherdane, the leader of the MNP, responded to the charge that his party had no programme for the upcoming local elections by stating that 'the programme does not interest people, it is primarily the man that they vote for. The programme comes later.' Interview with Mahjoubi Aherdane in *Le Temps du Maroc*, 23 May 1997.
  53. W. Quandt, *Revolution and Political Leadership: Algeria, 1954-1968* (London: MIT Press 1969) p.266.
  54. H. Roberts, 'Algeria's Ruinous Impasse and the Honourable Way Out' in *International Affairs* 71, 2 (1995) p.253.
  55. Zartman (note 36) p.216.
  56. I.W. Zartman: 'Opposition as Support of the State' in Giacomo Luciani (ed.), *The Arab State* (London: Routledge 1990) pp.228-9. Several specific examples are cited.
  57. Moore (note 21) p.66. Although much of these processes have represented less of a divesting of economic interests of the power-holders than a strategic rearrangement of them, it is true that the overall trend has been away from state control and ownership.
  58. Author's interview with Mohand Laensar, Leader of Mouvement Populaire, Rabat, 9 June 2000.