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The Emergence and Development of Moroccan Associations within the Framework of the Istiqlal Party and the Shura and Istiqlal Party (1945–1962)

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Abstract

this research examines the emergence and development of Moroccan associations within the framework of the Istiqlal Party and the Shura and Istiqlal Party during the period between 1945 and 1962.

The text highlights the role of national forces and educated elites in the Maghreb in confronting French colonial policies, which relied on fragmentation and divisive strategies. Despite the severity and inhumane practices of colonialism, these elites successfully fostered national awareness, solidarity, and fraternity among the people and across the region. They worked collectively to support national liberation movements, spread internal national awareness, and unify positions internationally to expose French colonialism until independence was achieved.

Keywords: Moroccan Associations, Istiqlal Party, Shura and Istiqlal Party, French Colonialism, National Liberation Movements, National Awareness.

Introduction:

The strength of French colonial rule and the inhumane practices to which the colonial authorities increasingly resorted in the Maghreb had a profound impact, prompting the peoples of the region to support one another in their struggle against colonialism and its policy of fragmenting the human, cultural, and economic unity of the region. This policy sought to sow discord among its constituent elements by adopting a strategy of division, both among the inhabitants of the same country and between them and the other peoples of the nation in its national and broader Arab dimension. These colonial schemes ultimately failed, largely owing to the awareness and struggle of the peoples of the region and their educated elites, who led the liberation movements during the struggle for independence. Once these elites recognized the true objectives of colonialism and its ulterior motives, they worked to foster a sense of unity, solidarity, and fraternity among their people. They also sought to support one another in the struggle to secure the independence of their countries, liberate their peoples collectively, and exchange assistance in order to expel foreign armies from their territories. Their efforts in this regard were based on the dedication of their people and scholars, who worked to spread national awareness internally and to unify positions on the international stage in order to expose French colonialism.

First: The Historical Roots of Moroccan Associations:

During the first half of the twentieth century, the Maghreb region witnessed profound political and social transformations resulting from the circumstances surrounding the French and Spanish occupation of Morocco, the French occupation of Algeria, as well as the particular status of the city of Tangier, which had been subject since 1923 to an international regime distinct from that of the other parts of Morocco. These complex colonial circumstances contributed to the emergence of a growing national consciousness among political and intellectual elites and reformist associations, which viewed political struggle and mass organization as the most effective means of confronting colonial projects of domination.

With the end of the Second World War, a new phase in the history of the region began. The Maghreb national movements were influenced by the global wave of liberation that swept across Asia and Africa, while also drawing inspiration from the principles of the 1945 United Nations Charter, which called for the right of peoples to self-determination. In Morocco, calls intensified for the abolition of the protectorate system imposed under the Treaty of Fez of 1912, for the unification of the country, for an end to the division between the French and Spanish zones, and for the abolition of Tangier's international status. These demands were led by major political parties, such as the Istiqlal Party and the Moroccan Communist Party, with broad support from cultural, religious, and student associations, which linked the Moroccan national struggle to Arab national causes.

In this context, Sultan Mohammed V's visit to the city of Tangier in April 1947

ⁱreaffirmed the unity of Moroccan territory and its deep ties with the Arab world, while clearly declaring support for Arab causes, foremost among them the Palestinian cause. This historic visit angered the French authorities, who responded with a series of repressive measures, most notably tightening their control over the national movement and attempting to divide its ranks, ultimately leading to the deposition of the Sultan and his exile on 20 August 1953. This, in turn, triggered a broad wave of armed and popular resistance.ⁱⁱ

With the outbreak of the Algerian Revolution on 1 November 1954, Moroccan nationalists found themselves at a decisive turning point. They regarded the Algerian people's struggle against French colonialism as an extension of their own struggle and considered support for the Algerian Revolution a national and moral duty. This period provided broad opportunities for coordination among the various Maghreb national movements, as Moroccan associations student, cultural, and trade-union organizations played a prominent role in popular mobilization, fundraising, and providing logistical support to the Algerian mujahideen. Some Moroccan cities also became rear bases for the revolution, particularly in the eastern border region.

In addition, the major Moroccan political parties foremost among them the Istiqlal Party and the Shura and Istiqlal Party contributed to raising the Algerian issue at both the Arab and international levels, whether through the Arab League or through international conferences opposing colonialism. The Algerian cause was also linked to the discourse of Maghreb unity adopted by forces within the national movement, which was embodied in meetings and joint agreements such as the "Tangier Pact" of 1958, which brought together the leaders of the liberation movements in Morocco, Algeria, and Tunisia around the objective of achieving complete independence and future integration among the Maghreb states.

The period extending from 1954 to 1962 witnessed intensive interaction between the Moroccan and Algerian struggles, as historical and cultural ties became intertwined with political and strategic interests. The Moroccan national movement recognized that Moroccan independence would not be complete without Algerian independence and that confronting French colonialism required a united Maghreb front. This led Moroccan associations and political parties, despite their differing orientations, to become deeply involved in supporting the Algerian Revolution until its victory and the proclamation of Algeria's independence in July 1962.ⁱⁱⁱ

During the first half of the twentieth century, Morocco witnessed the emergence of social and political movements that took the form of civic and trade-union associations and became associated with the national struggle against French colonialism. As political awareness increased during the 1930s and 1940s, both the Istiqlal Party and the Shura and Istiqlal Party came to regard associational activity as an effective means of organizing supporters and attracting educated groups and sections of the working class.

As for the Istiqlal Party, which was officially established in 1944 following the presentation of the Independence Manifesto, it used cultural, charitable, and educational associations as platforms for organizing citizens and disseminating national awareness, particularly in major cities such as Fez, Rabat, and Casablanca. These associations in the form of cultural clubs, professional associations, and school organizations provided a space for training national cadres and strengthening ties among political elites, the middle class, and the working class, while emphasizing the promotion of Arabic education, the preservation of national identity, and the organization of cultural and social activities with a clear political message.

The Shura and Istiqlal Party, which emerged in 1946 as an extension of the constitutional reformist current advocating gradual reforms and the establishment of a representative constitutional system, likewise turned to establishing and supporting professional, cultural, and charitable associations characterized by their educational and cultural orientation. These activities included literacy classes, theatrical performances, intellectual lectures, as well as charitable work through relief and social-assistance organizations. The activities of these associations were less confrontational toward the Protectorate authorities than those of associations affiliated with the Istiqlal Party; nevertheless, they played an important role in broadening the party's base and linking cultural and social activity to its political reform project.

Thus, the associational sphere in the major Moroccan cities became an arena of political competition between the two parties. Each side sought to direct trade-union and cultural cadres in accordance with its political line, turning national associations despite their diverse orientations into an integral part of the organizational structure of the Moroccan national movement.^{iv}

Second: Associations of the Istiqlal Party:

During the first half of the twentieth century, Morocco underwent profound political and social transformations, shaped, on the one hand, by the reality of French and Spanish occupation and, on the other, by the rise of the national movement through its various organizational and cultural instruments. Among the most important tools employed by the national elite to mobilize the masses and educate the younger generation was the ****Scout movement****, which was not merely a recreational or educational framework, but gradually became a school for struggle and covert political activity. Historical circumstances prepared it to occupy a central position in the national movement.

Within this context, the ****Hassania Moroccan Scouts**** were established in the 1940s by ****Allal al-Fassi****, who recognized the importance of scouting in shaping a disciplined generation aware of the issues of the homeland. This Scout organization represented a natural extension of the ideology of the national movement and the Istiqlal Party. It contributed to educating young people in the values of discipline, public service, and national commitment at a time when colonialism sought to contain emerging energies and direct them away from political activity.^v

From its inception, the Hassania Scouts were distinguished by the fact that their activities were not limited to traditional scouting. Rather, they consciously became involved in the national struggle against colonialism through mobilization and organizational training. This explains their close connection with the Istiqlal Party, which served as their

principal political framework. The party provided the organization with an ideological and organizational foundation that enabled it to expand and spread, while also allowing it to play strategic roles during critical periods in Morocco's history.^{vi}

Their influence was not confined to Morocco but extended to the ****Algerian Revolution****, to which they provided moral and organizational support for the Algerian mujahideen, in keeping with the spirit of Maghreb solidarity that characterized the national movement in North Africa. Thus, the experience of the Hassania Scouts should not be viewed merely as an approach to the history of a youth association; rather, it provides an essential entry point for understanding how scouting activities were employed in the service of the national and broader Arab project.^{vii}

The Establishment of the Hassania Scouts:

The Scout movement first appeared in Morocco in 1920, through the establishment of branches of French Scout organizations. This beginning represented an extension of the international Scout movement, which had begun to spread throughout different parts of the world. Over time, signs began to emerge of the formation of Scout groups comprising Moroccan members. In 1932, a Scout group was formed from Moroccan youths who had received their training within French Scout organizations. This group was affiliated with the Rabat-Salé Sports Association. It was in this context that Allal al-Fassi took the initiative to establish a purely national Scout organization, which came to be known as the ****Hassania Moroccan Scouts****. This organization was established in December 1933, at a critical period in Moroccan history characterized by the intensification of national activism and the maturation of youth organizations operating alongside the Istiqlal Party.^{viii}

The choice of the name "Hassania" was not arbitrary; it carried symbolic connotations associated with Moroccan identity and historical legitimacy, as it referred to the Alaouite-Hassani dynasty as a symbol of continuity and national unity.^{ix} In this sense, the Hassania Scout organization embodied the convergence of the national dimension with the religious and political dimensions of the Istiqlal Party's project.^x

The organization was founded in 1933 in the city of Rabat by Allal al-Fassi, who was one of the most prominent figures of the Moroccan national movement at the time. In his book **The Moroccan National Movement**, Allal al-Fassi explained that this Scout organization emerged from the struggle for national independence. He stated in his memoirs: "We worked to establish a new youth organization called the Hassania Scouts in 1933. Its aim was to educate the younger generation in discipline and virtue and to connect them with the cause of the homeland and religion."^{xi}

Al-Mahdi Ben Barka likewise confirms in his memoirs that this Scout initiative constituted one of the fundamental pillars upon which the national movement relied. He noted that: "The Hassania Scouts, founded by Allal al-Fassi in Rabat in 1933, were one of the infrastructures of the national movement, as they produced members who later joined the Istiqlal Party."^{xii}

On the other hand, Mohammed Daoud, in his study of the national movement and liberation in Morocco, states that this Scout organization was one of the earliest national Scout organizations in Morocco, saying: "The Hassania Scouts, established in 1933, are considered among the oldest national Scout organizations, and from the outset they were associated with national political activity and the Istiqlal Party."^{xiii}

From the moment of its establishment, the Hassania Scouts adopted objectives that went beyond the recreational or sporting dimension, focusing on:

- * Educating young people in the values of patriotism and discipline.
- * Preparing an organized generation capable of contributing to the struggle for liberation.
- * Creating a network of youth cadres loyal to the Istiqlal Party to serve as a human resource for the party.^{xiv}

During its early years, the Hassania Scouts achieved considerable expansion in major cities such as Fez, Rabat, and Casablanca, where these centers represented strongholds of the national movement. The existence of free schools and institutions affiliated with the Istiqlal Party helped provide a suitable social base for the emergence of the new Scout organization.^{xv}

From the outset, the Hassania Scouts represented a movement with a dual dimension: ****Scout-organizational**** on the one hand, and ****political-national**** on the other. This distinguished them from other Scout organizations associated with colonialism or from those that the French Protectorate authorities attempted to direct in accordance with their own interests.^{xvi}

From the moment of its establishment, the Hassania Scouts were closely linked to the Istiqlal Party. They were not merely an independent youth organization, but rather functioned as a parallel educational and organizational body of the party. Allal al-Fassi himself, as one of the most prominent leaders of the Istiqlal Party, was the founder and first director of this organization, which explains the partisan character that marked its activities from the very beginning.^{xvii}

The leaders of the Istiqlal Party recognized the importance of scouting as an effective means of instilling the values of patriotism and discipline in the younger generation. Accordingly, the Hassania Scouts were entrusted with tasks that went beyond their recreational or sporting character, as they became a means of shaping a generation of young people ideologically committed and imbued with the spirit of resistance.^{xviii}

The organization established Scout camps, but these were in reality spaces for political education and national mobilization. The slogan adopted was: ****"Educating young people through scouting, national, and Islamic education,"**** a slogan that accurately reflected the ideological orientation of the Istiqlal Party.^{xix}

The Hassania Scouts expanded across various Moroccan cities, becoming something of a ****"party school"**** for preparing future political cadres. Some accounts indicate that a number of Istiqlal Party leaders during the 1950s and 1960s had risen through this Scout organization, highlighting its role in shaping the political elite.^{xx}

The Istiqlal Party provided the Hassania Scouts with substantial material and logistical support by making premises available for meetings and organizing activities in the party's affiliated free schools. In this sense, the organization was not merely a Scout movement, but rather formed part of the organizational strategy of the Istiqlal Party.^{xxi}

Second: The Hassania Scouts and Their Support for the Algerian Revolution:

With the outbreak of the Algerian Liberation Revolution on 1 November 1954, Moroccans saw it as an extension of their own struggle against French colonialism. Since the Hassania Scouts had emerged from within the national movement, they assumed the task of providing direct support to the Algerian revolutionaries, particularly given the strong relationship that had existed between Moroccan and Algerian nationalists since the 1940s.^{xxii}

The Hassania Scouts provided various forms of support, most notably establishing networks for shelter and concealment. Scouts used their uniforms to conceal the movements of Algerian activists within Moroccan territory. They also contributed to transporting weapons and supplies to the revolutionaries across Morocco's eastern border. This is confirmed by testimonies from a number of Algerian revolutionary leaders who praised the effectiveness of the Hassania Scout apparatus in concealment and movement.

In addition to their field activities, the Hassania Scouts played an important propaganda role by organizing Scout festivals and solidarity activities that carried slogans clearly expressing Moroccan-Algerian solidarity. Summer camps also became spaces for politically educating young people and convincing them of the justness of the Algerian cause.^{xxiii}

Some documents indicate that the Algerian National Liberation Front established direct channels of communication with the leadership of the Hassania Scouts with the aim of coordinating efforts and facilitating the passage of fighters through Morocco. Indeed, some Moroccan Scout leaders joined the Algerian Revolution in the field, reflecting the convergence of the Moroccan and Algerian dimensions within the framework of the common Maghreb struggle.

These positions provoked the ire of the French colonial administration, which attempted to undermine the Hassania Scouts by accusing them of involvement in activities that were "non-Scout" and "against the law." However, these pressures did not deter the organization from maintaining its support for the Algerian Revolution. This support also received a favorable response in the Arab and Maghreb press, which highlighted the role of Moroccan youth in strengthening Maghreb unity.^{xxiv}

Following Morocco's independence in 1956, the Hassania Scouts entered a new phase in their history. They evolved from a militant organization directly associated with the national movement into an officially recognized national youth organization. This transition was not easy; rather, it required comprehensive restructuring to adapt the organization to the requirements of building the national state.^{xxv} During the first years of independence, new leadership institutions emerged within the organization. The National Office of the Hassania Scouts was established to oversee the organization of regional and local branches. Internal regulations were also introduced to govern relations between the grassroots and central structures, giving the movement a more coherent national character.^{xxvi}

The Hassania Scouts also played a prominent role in the solidarity activities organized by the Moroccan Istiqlal Party in support of the Algerian Revolution. The party sought to employ sporting and cultural activities as instruments of popular mobilization and to rally political and moral support for the Algerian cause. In this context, the party organized a major sporting festival at the Tetouan stadium under the leadership of Allal al-Fassi. The event included football matches and a cycling competition, in addition to a parade by Hassania Scout units. The parade acquired a symbolic dimension, as it represented the national values and discipline that characterized the Scout movement. Allal al-Fassi also addressed the popular crowds, explicitly calling for support for the Algerian people and for every possible means to be employed in support of their struggle for liberation.^{xxvii}

This activity was not an isolated event. The same scene was repeated at other sporting festivals, including a sporting festival organized in late 1957, which likewise featured Hassania Scout parades. On that occasion, the same leader used the opportunity to renew his call for support for and solidarity with the Algerian Revolution.^{xxviii}

Third: Associations of Former Students:

At the beginning of the 1920s, the French Protectorate authorities in Morocco sought to shape Islamic-French education into a means of restructuring the local elites in accordance with the needs of the colonial administration. They considered that the modern school could produce a new social class imbued with the values of "French civilization," capable of serving the colonial project and ensuring its continuity. Within this framework, the authorities encouraged the establishment of alumni organizations known as Associations of Former Students, whose declared objective was to "strengthen ties among learners and facilitate their integration into society."^{xxix}

However, administrative documents issued at the time reveal that the true purpose of these associations was not purely social or cultural, but primarily political and ideological. France sought to turn them into instruments of propaganda in favor of what it described as the "advantages of Islamic-French education." A memorandum issued by the Director of Public Education on 16 March 1934 stated that "the function of these associations is to highlight the merits of Islamic-French education and ensure that graduates remain under the supervision of the administration." This explains the requirement that the director of the French institution be a permanent member of the boards of these associations.^{xxx}

1- The First Associations:

Within this context, the first associations appeared in Morocco's major cities. The Association of Former Students of Moulay Idriss Secondary School in Fez was established in 1921 and is considered the oldest. It was followed by the Association of Former Students of the School for the Sons of Notables in Casablanca in 1922, the Islamic Literary Club in Salé in 1927, the Association of Former Students of the Islamic Schools in Marrakesh in 1929, the Association of Former Students of Moulay Youssef Secondary School in Rabat in 1930, and finally the Association of Former Students of Meknes Secondary School in 1931.^{xxxi} Later, specifically in 1942, the Association of Former Students of Azrou

Secondary School was established for graduates of the "Berber School," in an attempt by the colonial authorities to promote the well-known Berber policy.^{xxxii}

The official objectives of these associations consisted of organizing cultural meetings among graduates, providing social assistance to some members, and organizing sporting and literary activities. However, their organizational structure clearly reflected the dominance of the Protectorate authorities, as the internal regulations required the French director, or his representative, to be a member of the executive board in order to ensure the continuation of supervision and control.^{xxxiii}

2- The Beginning of the Establishment:

At the beginning of the 1930s, the first signs began to emerge of the national movement's penetration of these associations. Nationalists capitalized on their strong presence, particularly in Fez and Rabat, to transform the associations from mere social spaces into platforms for national propaganda. Reports by the colonial administration indicate that the Association of Former Students of Fez Secondary School had become "a center for conveying national instructions to the other associations," which aroused the concern of the French authorities.^{xxxiv}

The events surrounding the Berber Dahir of 1930 accelerated this process. Many graduates of these associations participated in demonstrations and marches opposing the Dahir, thereby reinforcing the integration of these organizations into the emerging national movement. Indeed, some leaders of the National Action Bloc who emerged after 1934 were prominent members of these associations.

In 1934, nationalists sought to capitalize on the momentum generated by the protest movement against the Berber Dahir by establishing a national federation of former students, with the aim of unifying the efforts of the associations and strengthening their national character. However, the Protectorate authorities quickly rejected the request, considering the project "contrary to the natural objectives of these associations," and issued an official decision banning the federation. This step reflected their awareness of the political dimension that these organizations were beginning to acquire.^{xxxv}

Fourth: The Development and Connection with the Istiqlal Party (1939–1956)

- The Period of the Second World War (1939–1945)

The period of the Second World War witnessed profound transformations in the trajectory of the Associations of Former Students. The Protectorate authorities were preoccupied with the military and political situation in Europe, which led to a relative decline in their supervision of these associations. This situation was exploited by nationalist elements to penetrate the associations' executive boards and take control of them.

In 1943, Mehdi Ben Barka was elected president of the Association of Former Students of Moulay Youssef Secondary School in Rabat. This represented a significant event in the history of these associations, as the election of an explicitly nationalist figure reflected the political shift they had begun to experience. Other nationalist figures also emerged in the leadership of various associations, including Abd al-Rahim Bouabid, Mohammed al-Zghari, and Ahmed Bahnini.^{xxxvi}

This stage was decisive in transforming the associations from semi-official institutions affiliated with the administration into parallel political instruments that spread national awareness among educated groups and organized meetings and activities with a political dimension under a cultural or social guise.

This transformation reached its peak with the associations' contribution to the preparation and presentation of the Manifesto of Independence on 11 January 1944. Documents indicate that approximately 20% of those who signed the manifesto were graduates of, or leaders within, Associations of Former Students.^{xxxvii}

These individuals coordinated directly with the Istiqlal Party which was then known as the National Party to organize the signing process and distribute copies of the manifesto to Sultan Mohammed Ben Youssef, foreign consulates, and the French Resident-General. Among the most prominent figures who played a central role were Mehdi Ben Barka, Abd al-Rahim Bouabid, and Ahmed Bahnini, all of whom were active within these associations.^{xxxviii}

The associations' contribution to the Independence Manifesto reflects their definitive transition into the sphere of the national struggle, as they moved beyond their initial social function to become part of the political organization of the national movement.

The response of the French administration was not long in coming. Only a few days after the presentation of the Independence Manifesto, it issued decisions dissolving most of the Associations of Former Students, confiscating their premises and archives, and arresting a number of their leaders, considering these associations to have become "centers of conspiracy against the authority of the Protectorate."^{xxxix}

However, this legal dissolution did not bring an end to the associations' activities. Their activists continued their work under the auspices of the Istiqlal Party, which adopted these organizations as instruments of political education and mobilization. They thus became "parallel organizations" of the party, working to attract educated elites and connect them with the project of national independence.^{xl}

Fifth: Organizations Parallel to the Istiqlal Party:

From the mid-1940s until Morocco's independence in 1956, the Associations of Former Students became an essential instrument of the Istiqlal Party in several fields:

Intellectual and political education: through cultural meetings that appeared on the surface to be literary or scholarly in nature, but which in reality provided opportunities for disseminating nationalist ideas and discussing plans for action against colonialism.

Mass mobilization: Former students played a role in leading student and popular demonstrations, particularly during the events surrounding the exile of Sultan Mohammed V in 1953, when many of the organizers were members of these associations.^{xli}

Legal legitimacy: Owing to their status as associations, these organizations were able to operate during periods when the National Party was subject to strict surveillance, thereby providing it with a channel through which to conduct legal activities.

This organic connection between the associations and the Istiqlal Party made them an integral part of the Moroccan national movement and contributed to preparing a generation of political leaders who would play central roles after independence.

Sixth: Support for the Algerian Revolution and Its Forms (1956–1962)

Following Morocco's independence in March 1956, the Moroccan national movement, led by the Istiqlal Party and its organizational networks, became involved in a new struggle: supporting the Algerian Revolution, which had erupted in November 1954. This support formed part of a vision of Maghreb unity, expressed by Sultan Mohammed V in more than one speech, when he affirmed that Morocco's independence would not be complete without the independence of Algeria and Tunisia.^{xlii}

Within this context, the Associations of Former Students found themselves integrated into this dynamic, given their influential educational and political role and their organic ties to the Istiqlal Party.

Through their activists within the Istiqlal Party, the associations contributed to shaping political positions in support of the Algerian Revolution. They participated in mobilizing support for the Tangier Conference (April 1958), which brought together the Istiqlal Party of Morocco, the Neo Destour Party of Tunisia, and the National Liberation Front of Algeria. The conference reaffirmed the unity of the Maghreb and support for the Algerian Revolution by all available means.^{xliii}

Leaders affiliated with these associations also acted as intermediaries between the Moroccan authorities and Algerian delegations and contributed to opening channels of communication with the Arab League and the United Nations in order to convey Algeria's voice to international forums.^{xliv}

One of the most prominent forms of support provided by the Associations of Former Students to the Algerian Revolution was media activity. Many graduates of these associations assumed responsibilities within the national press, such as *Al-Alam*, the newspaper representing the Istiqlal Party, where they devoted entire columns to publishing statements issued by the National Liberation Front and exposing French crimes in Algeria.^{xlv}

Parallel student associations, such as the North African Students' Association, which brought together Moroccans, Algerians, and Tunisians, also promoted the idea of Maghreb unity and defended the Algerian cause at international student conferences. At the Tunis Conference in 1955, the students affirmed that "Algeria is an integral part of the Greater Maghreb," a position that was greatly reinforced by the activities of former students within these organizations.^{xlvi}

The associations contributed to mobilizing Moroccan public opinion in support of the Algerian Revolution by organizing campaigns to collect money and supplies, particularly in the cities of Oujda, Berkane, and Nador, which served as rear bases for the revolution. Their members also participated in organizing days of popular solidarity and general strikes known as the "Algeria Days," during which demonstrations were held to denounce French colonialism.^{xlvii}

Documents have demonstrated that the Associations of Former Students constituted one of the most important networks of the Istiqlal Party involved in managing this logistical support, benefiting from their legal status and their links with a broad segment of educated people and civil servants.^{xlviii}

Moroccan support for the Algerian Revolution also acquired practical dimensions on the ground that went beyond the symbolic or financial sphere. The Moroccan authorities permitted the establishment of a federation of the National Liberation Front in Morocco, which functioned as a kind of "embassy" for the Algerian Revolution. Reports issued by this federation indicate that the support included:

Establishing training centers for volunteers.

Setting up medical clinics to treat wounded Algerians.

Providing arms and supply depots on farms and in border areas.

Establishing radio communication facilities to ensure contact with the Algerian interior.^{xlix}

Graduates of the Associations of Former Students who were activists in the Istiqlal Party played prominent roles in coordinating these operations, providing the organizational and administrative expertise required. French sources indicate that shipments of weapons that arrived at the port of Tangier in 1957 were transported under the supervision of Istiqlal activists, including former members of Associations of Former Students, to the Oujda region, where they were handed over to the Algerian revolutionaries (9).

Conclusion

It is clear from this period that the Associations of Former Students evolved from spaces of education and cultural guidance into political networks with a Maghrebi dimension, contributing to the support of the Algerian Revolution at the political, media, financial, and logistical levels. This represented a natural extension of their national trajectory, consolidating their identity as part of the organizational structure of the Istiqlal Party and as a source of support for the Algerian Revolution until independence was achieved in 1962.

The Associations of Former Students represented one of the most significant organizational phenomena in the history of modern Morocco. Throughout their long trajectory (1921–1962), they underwent a profound transformation from social and cultural frameworks established by the French Protectorate authorities, into national organizations affiliated with the independence movement, and subsequently into networks supporting the Algerian Revolution within the broader project of Maghrebi unity.

During the founding phase (1921–1934), these associations were established by the colonial administration with the aim of improving the image of French-Islamic education and ensuring control over graduates. However, they soon became

spaces in which national consciousness developed, particularly following the events surrounding the Berber Dahir in 1930 and the attempt to establish a national federation in 1934.

During the Second World War (1939–1945), the supervision exercised by the Protectorate authorities weakened, enabling nationalists to take control of the associations' offices. In 1944, former students played an active role in preparing and presenting the Manifesto of Independence, which led the French administration to decide to dissolve the associations and repress their members. Nevertheless, they continued their activities clandestinely and became part of the organizational structure of the Istiqlal Party, which relied on them as parallel organizations for the political education and organization of students and intellectuals.

With Morocco's independence in 1956, these associations entered a new phase characterized by greater openness to the Maghrebi dimension, contributing to the political, diplomatic, media, financial, and logistical support of the Algerian Revolution. Their leaders participated in the Tangier Conference in 1958, while their newspapers devoted columns to defending the Revolution. They also contributed to organizing popular solidarity campaigns and providing shelter for Algerian refugees, and even provided logistical support through the networks of the Istiqlal Party and the Federation of the National Liberation Front in Morocco.

This trajectory confirms that the Associations of Former Students constituted, in a distinctive manner, a national–Maghrebi school that contributed to producing a generation of political and intellectual leaders and played a pivotal role in linking the Moroccan national movement with the Algerian Revolution. Thus, Algeria's independence in 1962 marked the culmination of a long history of solidarity, of which these associations were among its most prominent driving forces.

ⁱ Khalil Jawda al-Khafaji, "Spain and the Issue of Deposing King Mohammed V of Morocco from the Throne in 1953," *Al-Bahith Journal*, Issue No. 39, University of Karbala, Center for Strategic Studies, p. 606.

ⁱⁱ Al-Hussein Barada, *Mohammed V and His Political Positions to Save Morocco from the Darkness of Protectorate Rule*, 1st ed., Al-Amin Press, Rabat, Morocco, 2006, p. 27.

ⁱⁱⁱ Asaad Lahlali and Salwa Lahlali, "Moroccan Political and Diplomatic Support for the Algerian Revolution, 1954–1962," *Mediterranean Dialogue Journal*, Vol. 10, No. 3, 2020, pp. 256–276.

^{iv} Albert Ayache, *The Trade Union Movement in Morocco, 1919–1942*, trans. Nour al-Din Sabri, rev. al-Arabi Mefdhil, Dar al-Khattabi Publishing, pp. 97–104, 137–140.

^v Allal al-Fassi, *The Independence Movements in the Maghreb*, Rabat ed., Dar al-Fikr, 1948, p. 215.

^{vi} Abd al-Karim Ghallab, *The Moroccan National Movement: Its Development and Thought*, Casablanca: Al-Najah Al-Jadida Press, 1981, p. 327.

^{vii} Mohammed al-Mazali, *Testimonies on the Maghrebi Struggle*, Tunis: Tunisian Publishing House, 1976, p. 144.

^{viii} Mohammed al-Arabi al-Khattabi, *Moroccan Scouting: Its Origins and Development*, Rabat: Akadh Publications, 1992, p. 41.

^{ix} Allal al-Fassi, *The Independence Movements in the Maghreb*, op. cit., p. 215.

^x *Ibid.*

^{xi} Allal al-Fassi, *The Moroccan National Movement*, op. cit., p. 112.

^{xii} al-Mahdi Bennouna, *Memoirs on the Course of the National Movement*, p. 89.

^{xiii} Mohammed Daoud, *The National Movement and Liberation in Morocco*, Part Two, p. 233.

^{xiv} Abd al-Karim Ghallab, *The Moroccan National Movement: Its Development and Thought*, p. 329.

^{xv} Abd al-Hadi Boutaleb, *Memories and Testimonies*, Casablanca: Al-Najah Press, 1998, p. 178.

^{xvi} Mohammed al-Mazali, *Testimonies on the Maghrebi Struggle*, p. 145.

^{xvii} Allal al-Fassi, *The Independence Movements in the Maghreb*, p. 220.

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