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Spatial Justice in Morocco and Its Surrounding Conflict Dynamics: Hirak Al-Rif as a Case Study

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Introduction

Territorial justice (la justice territoriale)[1] is a phenomenon with undeniable historical roots, placing it at the heart of public debate in Morocco. This is reflected in major trends and subsequent programs and policies adopted by the state over the years, particularly in the last decade. Despite official claims to find solutions aimed at responding to territorial justice based on equitable wealth distribution and development opportunities, reality has prevented this and made it a growing social demand, where stakeholders seek to restore the dignity of marginalized communities and respond to the injustices suffered by their inhabitants.

One of the real problems with policies announced by the state is they are designed centrally (la centralisation) and implemented vertically in a way that excludes stakeholder participation – policies imposed in the name of all without their participation – and negates the condition of spatial specificity that determines the priorities and needs of each region separately, reflecting the state's vision of spatial justice as a phenomenon linked to public development trends. This gives rise to a situation of conflict and struggle whose manifestations vary between what is visible on the surface and what remains hidden in the context of "soft conflict". There are stakeholders, namely marginalized inhabitants, who demand spatial justice, and there is the state, represented by its official institutions, namely the monarchy, the government, and parliament.

This paper analyzes the interaction between three key parties through a deductive approach (general to specific). There is the monarchy whose influence oscillates between symbolic and actual presence, which determines the country's major orientations; and there are the government and parliament, which make decisions through policies in line with development demands. We also find stakeholders demanding the right to spatial justice. They act as pressure groups exposing policy limitations and perhaps challenge the dominant official discourse in order to influence official actors' behavior, directing them towards their demands and forcing them, in many cases, to adopt particular decisions. This can be seen in the case of the Al-Hoceima movement in northern Morocco,[2] where spatial justice became a declared social demand after the region witnessed, in late October 2016, a popular uprising following the killing of fishmonger Mouhcine Fikri.

Development Policies: An Analysis of the State's Strategy and Its Compatibility with Demands for Spatial Justice

Development policies in Morocco are linked to the multiplicity of actors who influence decision-making according to their position in the hierarchy of power. In addition to the monarchy, the government, and parliament, there are also local communities and political parties.[3] Whether or not the latter belong to the circle of power, they attempt, one way or another, to influence citizens, as well as their role as opposition that monitors and observes the government's work, if they are represented in parliament. There are other constitutional institutions, such as the Supreme Audit Court; the Economic, Social and Environmental Council; the National Human Rights Council; and the Competition Council, which influence public policy through their annual reports and advisory opinions.

The official authorities in Morocco have implemented several policies to achieve spatial justice as a development requirement, starting with "advanced regionalization" workshops as a policy based on strengthening the position of Morocco's 12 regions and promoting their development.[4] A "Program to Reduce Spatial and Social Disparities in Rural Areas 2017-2023" was also launched – a structural plan with a budget of 50 billion Moroccan dirhams (approximately US$5.4 billion) aimed at addressing the spatial divide. There are also sectoral policies, such as the National Rural Health Plan, the National Initiative for Human Development, and programs such as "Taysir", "Orash", and "Forsa", in addition to community schools, mobile health centers, etc.

With regard to Al-Hoceima, as a case study in the context of this paper, it is worth noting that the region remained isolated since the dawn of independence, for political and historical reasons. It was not until the 2004 earthquake when direct budgets were allocated for reconstruction and equipment. Other projects were also developed under royal directives in October 2015 as part of the "Al-Hoceima Mediterranean Lighthouse" program (i.e., a year before "Al-Hoceima" or "Rif" movements, which will be discussed in the next section). However, this program did not actually begin until 2017, with projects distributed across infrastructure, regional development, and social, economic, environmental, and religious sectors. A total budget of 7.2 billion Moroccan dirhams (approximately US$784 million) were allocated to the program. According to official sources, 98% of the projects planned for 2022 have been completed, and there is no denying the intention to reform, particularly in terms of infrastructure, as evidenced by the construction of a new regional hospital and other public facilities. However, questions remain about a number of projects that are still closed to the public, and whether the implementation of this reform is based on a clear development vision or is merely a reaction without strategic foundations.

The programs and policies that the state presents as solutions in the context of its approach to development problems, and the issue of spatial injustice in particular, can be described as an implicit acknowledgment by the state of the existence of a crisis and, secondly, of its responsibility for it. Despite the existence of these programs and policies, reality has shown that they have focused more on material resources without paying attention to the human element, and are therefore insufficient. This is evidenced by the fact that the guidelines of the "Special Committee on the Development Model"[5] highlights the existence of glaring territorial imbalances. For example, rural areas cover 90% of the country's total area and account for 43% of its total wealth. They provide a significant proportion of its grain, milk, meat, and other needs.[6] However, according to the High Commission for Planning, demographic dynamics are higher in urban areas than in rural areas, with 70% of Morocco's total population concentrated in only five regions: Casablanca-Settat, Rabat-Salé-Kénitra, Marrakech-Safi, Fès-Meknès, and Tanger-Tétouan-Al-Hoceima.[7] Despite the importance of rural areas, there is an imbalance in terms of population distribution and development, with large cities monopolizing the best investment opportunities. This raises several issues that upsets the

balance between supply and demand and leads to rural migration, accompanied by the spread of marginal neighborhoods.

Certain policies exacerbate this problem, worsening the situation, such as the recent regional division,[8] which reduced Morocco from 16 to 12 regions, in a flagrant violation of regional specificities and the common denominator that unites them. The division was based on unclear grounds from a developmental and reform perspective. It separates regions that had common interests, culture, and social ties, deliberately breaking these bonds and impoverishing and marginalizing some regions in favor of other, more fortunate regions, in development terms. Examples include Al-Hoceima and Nador, which were separated despite the social and cultural ties that strengthened them; as well as Tafilalet, which was separated from Meknes to form the region of Fez-Meknes; and Daraa, which was stripped of its only coastline, transitioning it from the Souss-Massa-Daraa region to the land-locked Daraa-Tafilalet region. These paradoxes have been acknowledged by many analysts specializing in territorial issues in Morocco.

State policies to solve the problem of spatial injustice usually stem from the choices made by official political, economic, or social bodies based on what they see as a solution to the problem, as can be seen, for example, in mountainous or desert regions, such as the Rif, the southeast, the Atlas, and others. The common factor is marginalization and the resulting lack of spatial justice, as the state directs its huge budget investments in infrastructure and basic facilities to coastal areas, such as Rabat, Casablanca, Kenitra, and Tangier. In other words, it disregards the principle of fairness in the distribution of wealth and opportunities, prioritizing the coastline at the expense of other mountainous or desert regions. Perhaps official discourse now presents large cities, such as Casablanca, as the economic engine of the country, while describing other regions as poor and fragile, portraying the problem of spatial injustice as a natural and inevitable fact that must be accepted. It is therefore an economic choice that is closer to enshrining the “law of the strong” (la loi du plus fort), as powerful cities continue to attract investment and strengthen their position, becoming ever more powerful. Smaller cities, however, remain marginalized, becoming ever weaker in a vicious circle.

Spatial Justice and the Role of Property Ownership in Containing Crises and Social Tensions

Moroccan state policies are formulated and implemented through an overlapping and complex network of public actors who influence, in one way or another, the construction of the official narrative. Here, we must mention the influence of the monarchy, given its symbolism in the Moroccan state. This influence ranges from symbolic to actual, playing a pivotal role in determining the country’s major orientations (public policy). The king has several powers, foremost among them is the Caliphate as a religious authority.[9] He is:

> *The head of state, its supreme representative, the national symbol of unity, and the guarantor of the state’s permanence and continuity, and the supreme authority among its institutions, ensuring respect for the constitution... and the preservation of democratic choice, and the rights and freedoms of citizens...* .[10]

The king has the power to appoint the head of government from a political party that wins the elections, as well as appoint members of the government (upon the recommendation of its head), and relieve one or more members from their duties, extending his powers to the executive branch. In addition, his powers encompass the legislative branch, allowing him to dissolve both houses of parliament – the House of Representatives and the House of Councilors. He is also commander-in-chief of the Royal Armed Forces and has the right to appoint personnel (military authority). Consequently, the king in Morocco enjoys broad powers and prerogatives, confirming that his

presence is not merely symbolic or ceremonial, as in other monarchies such as Britain, combining symbolic and actual presence.

It is worth noting in the context of the Moroccan experience that there is a difference between "public policy" and "general policies", which is not only a conceptual difference[11] but also an institutional one enshrined in the constitution. The country's public policy is a political decision determined by the Council of Ministers, chaired by the king, which sets the broad guidelines, including general guidelines for the draft finance bill, prior to its preparation by the government; bearing in mind that the latter deliberates on public policy before presenting it to the Council of Ministers.[12] General policies are the responsibility of the Government Council, chaired by the head of government, which determines the programs, policies, and measures through which public policy orientations are implemented. Oversight is exercised by the legislative authority, represented by parliament. The work of parliament is limited to two functions: voting on laws and overseeing the work of government. However, with the 2011 Constitution, its tasks also include evaluating general policies rather than public policy.[13] Consequently, the government, as the main actor, is responsible for deliberating on general policies through its ministries and various government sectors that translate this into a government program. There are also local communities,[14] which contribute to the implementation of the state's public policy on the one hand, and prepare their own policies through their representatives in the Council of Advisors, on the other.[15]

Returning to the issue of the absence of spatial justice, from the perspective of official discourse in Morocco, this cannot be done in isolation from the monarchy as a key actor, especially since there have been royal speeches that have clearly addressed the issue of spatial justice, most notably the 2017 throne speech, which stated: "development projects and political and institutional reforms have a single goal, which is to serve citizens wherever they are, with no distinction between north and south, east and west, or between urban and rural populations." It is therefore a frank speech that recognizes development as a goal that does not discriminate between categories of citizen or their geographical affiliations – the essence of spatial justice. With regard to responsibility, the royal speech links it to political and administrative officials, considering that they "rush to the forefront when the results are positive, and when the opposite is true, they hide behind the royal palace and refer matters back to it".[16] The monarchy therefore explicitly acknowledges the problem of spatial injustice, but does holding administrative and political officials responsible mean that they have the power to deliver on reform priorities? Or can they be considered mere recipients of central directives?

In the latest royal speech on the occasion of Throne Day (2025), the issue of spatial injustice was also addressed, emphasizing that no matter how high the level of economic development, it is not satisfactory "if our accomplishments contribute, in a tangible manner, to improving the living conditions of citizens from all social classes, and in all areas and regions". Despite all of Morocco's development efforts, according to the royal speech:

> *Sadly, however, some regions – particularly rural areas – are still suffering from poverty and vulnerability... This is not in line with my vision for Morocco today, nor does it fit in with our efforts to promote social development and achieve inter-regional equity. It is not acceptable for Morocco – today or at any time in the future – to be a two-speed country*.[17]

The speech thus reiterated that development must translate into tangible improvements in people's lives, regardless of their geographical location or affiliation. The speech sparked a broad public debate and reaffirmed the symbolic legitimacy of the king in the eyes of the people.

Perhaps one of the most notable observations recorded in the 2016 "Rural Movement" is that the street addressed the monarchy directly, without regard for the government, indicating that the king is the only person who is practically and politically capable of resolving the crisis.[18] For its part, the

monarchy did not intervene directly to resolve the problem, leaving it to other institutions, primarily the Ministry of the Interior. Unlike previous historical events, such as the 1984 protests that turned violent in Al-Hoceima and other parts of Morocco in response to the high cost of living.[19] At that time, the royal institution responded with a direct speech that was described as "harsh" by the protesters, as it used words unprecedented in royal speeches to describe the protesters in the countryside.[20]

Consequently, despite the policies promoted to achieve regional justice, areas such as Al-Hoceima remained marginalized and fragile. In addition to those events of 1984, there is a hidden apprehension and political sensitivity between the state and rural areas in general. This apprehension is linked to the memory of both sides since the dawn of independence,[21] against the backdrop of the 1958 uprising when rural activists raised their demands, and opinions were divided between those who considered them political demands with "separatist" dimensions, and those who considered them social demands, calling for improved conditions and the involvement of the population in managing their own affairs. This history of protest accompanied the exclusion of rural areas – unlike other regions – from development projects and opportunities for a long time, until the devastating earthquake that struck Al-Hoceima in 2004, prompting royal directives for reconstruction.

It could be said that we are living in an "executive dominance phase",[22] as coined by James E. Anderson.[23] In this phase, the government relies entirely on "executive leadership"[24] in the formulation and implementation of public policies. Anderson derived this phenomenon from the reality of the president in the United States of America. He then moved on to "developing countries" where the executive authority has a greater and stronger influence on policymaking compared to any "developed country". Given the limited number of public policy issues that warrant discussion and policy formulation, a large proportion of them are escalated to the cabinet, forcing the government to discuss them at the highest level.[25]

Peaceful Protest in Al-Hoceima: An Analysis of the Dynamics of "Action and Counteraction"

Working on the subject under discussion requires looking at it from the perspective of action and counteraction as a phenomenon that explains its transformation from a social problem to a public problem. According to Gabriel A. Almond and George B. Powell Jr., political culture can be either "consensual" or "conflictual" with regard to public policy issues.[26] In consensual political culture, citizens tend to agree on the appropriate means of political decision-making and share views on the nature of the main problems and how to solve them. In conflictual culture, citizens are sharply divided,[27] and their divisions often revolve around the legitimacy of the system and the solution to major problems.[28]

The demand for spatial justice in Morocco has been linked to a series of protest movements. With the emergence of the "Arab Spring" in 2011, the "February 20 Movement" emerged as a popular expression to demand reform. It was not a direct call for spatial justice as a social issue, but rather a turning point in breaking the wall of silence and publicly expressing major demands, such as freedom, dignity, and the fight against corruption. If the 2011 movement was a turning point in the history of protest in Morocco, "Hirak Al-Rif" contributed directly to highlighting the problem of spatial injustice and reintroducing it as a central issue in public debate.

The events began with a shocking incident following the death of fishmonger Mouhcine Fikri on 28 October 2016, after local authorities confiscated his goods at the port of Al-Hoceima. Fikri refused to accept this and protested by throwing himself into a garbage truck. He was killed in the incident known as "grind him".[29] This was the first spark of the protest, where political parties and government programs were criticized, linking the marginalization of Al-Hoceima, and the Rif region

in general, to historical contexts. Activists raised slogans demanding an investigation into Fikri's death, demands that resonated with their base, adopting the issue on social media and taking to the streets to protest.

"Spontaneous interest groups" formed as a result of the population's similar response to a situation that caused them frustration,[30] where latent discontent exploded after the incident. Actors and influencers contributed to this mobilization, such as activists in Al-Hoceima who formed an organizing and media committee from the outset, alongside informal bodies such as civil society associations concerned with human rights. The media also contributed to spreading the news, and social media had a significant impact in shaping these events and mobilizing individuals. The protest went beyond geographical boundaries in the streets but went on to digital platforms that embraced the movement, supporting activists' demands and conveying their messages to the people of Al-Hoceima. Nasser Zafzafi and his comrades led the movement and drafted a comprehensive list of demands: prosecution for those involved in the killing of Mouhcine Fikri, construction of a cancer treatment hospital, a multidisciplinary university, and others. Thus, Fikri's killing was no longer the sole driving force behind the movement.

The protests were peaceful from the outset, as Zafzafi and his comrades advocated for nonviolence, despite some demonstrators getting into altercations and confrontations with security forces. However, the authorities responded by suppressing the protesters and preventing them from expressing their calls. The state then resorted to using "misinformation" as a weapon to abort the protest movement[31] – a form of repression aimed at isolating the issue and silencing dissent, which constitutes authoritarian rhetoric and an attempt at symbolic exclusion.

The movement's activists raised many slogans, most notably those describing the parties as "political shops", criticizing party elites and mercenary associations (politicized associations). They therefore addressed the Moroccan monarch directly and called on him to intervene to resolve the crisis in the Rif region, indicating a loss of confidence in the political class as an official actor. This independence from party organizations has, in the eyes of many, preserved the movement's credibility.[32]

Nasser Zafzafi was arrested on 29 May 2017, after objecting to a Friday sermon in which the preacher accused the Al-Hoceima movement of "sowing discord". A move that was construed as religious exploitation in the current political context; designed to influence public opinion and "politicize religious discourse". Activists were arrested one after another – Nabil Ahmijek, Mohamed Haki, Mohamed Jaloul, Al-Murtada Imrasha, and many others. These activists formed the core and main driving force behind the movement, winning the approval of the people of Al-Hoceima for their representation and organization on marches. They faced trials for multiple charges – especially the leaders – and were ultimately sentenced to prison.

Despite the state's adoption of a strict security approach, it failed to curb the protests' momentum. People demonstrated in other major cities, such as Rabat, Casablanca, Tangier, and elsewhere, in solidarity with the detainees. The Al-Hoceima movement challenged authorities by continuing to demonstrate and devising new forms of protest, such as remonstrating on rooftops, banging pots and pans at night to express their discontent, and resorting to protests in the middle of the sea. When the authorities banned the march on 20 July 2017 in Al-Hoceima and closed the entrances to prevent protesters from gathering, they resorted to nearby mountains and speedboats to enter the city through unconventional routes that were difficult for authorities to follow. These are new tactics in the history of protests in Morocco,[33] reflecting the depth of social discontent and the extent of popular demands.

The official authorities in Morocco, in all their diversity and political colors, are therefore faced with a powerful force: actors who, directly or indirectly, influence the formulation and evaluation of

policies implemented by the state, reflecting an emergence of a government in action (l'etat en action). The pressure exerted by these collective forces to influence official bodies, guiding their behavior and aligning their decisions with their demands and causes, cannot be denied.

By analyzing the state's strategies in response to the Al-Hoceima movement, which was a counterreaction to its policies, we find that the state initially reacted with a kind of neutrality, on the basis that the crowd was expressing normal social demands in response to a mere passing incident – the death of a fishmonger. It attempted to contain the situation by limiting itself to legal action, placing responsibility on local authorities and the truck driver. In other words, the state attempted to "dilute the problem" in order to avoid legitimizing it as a general issue with social, political, and historical dimensions.

Despite current developments in the city of Al-Hoceima, the official discourse returned to justifying policies that had already addressed protesters' demands, specifically the "Al-Hoceima Mediterranean Lighthouse" project, which was approved a year before the uprising. While it is true that the project was launched, its delayed implementation and impact on the population were a cause of escalating social demands, forming part of the discourse of Al-Hoceima activists, particularly in relation to the regional hospital and employment opportunities. Completion setbacks and poor communication with those involved in the project turned it into a bargaining chip, prompting questions directed at the relevant stakeholders – particularly the Tangier-Tetouan-Al-Hoceima Regional Council, the Al-Hoceima Municipal Council, and the ministerial departments involved in local coordination and implementation.

The state subsequently adopted a security rationale, accusing the movement of inciting unauthorized demonstrations and undermining national unity and public order, serving as justification for the next phase and legitimizing a wave of arrests that fueled domestic and international criticism for human rights violations. However, amid the conflict between levels of authority and stakeholders and between official discourse and the demands of the Al-Hoceima movement, the problem and the existence of spatial and developmental imbalances were acknowledged – the 2017 royal speech, the acceleration of the actual implementation of the "Al-Hoceima Mediterranean Lighthouse" project, etc. This implies the state wanted to regain control within its institutional framework, rather than being driven by stakeholders' demands in the public sphere.

The Limitations of State Policies and Protest Movements

Despite decision-makers' efforts and their promotion of development programs aimed at achieving spatial justice to preserve the rights of all without discrimination, the continuing gap in spatial development opportunities reflects the failure of government – the target of all accusations and blame. While the government has always pursued the idea of development, reality shows its inability to keep pace with it and to meet the social demands that stakeholders adopt, press for, and defend through various forms of protest.

French thinker Paul-Henri Chombart de Lauwe[34] says the communication channel from top to bottom in our society is well thought out, and governments take great care to analyze the links that enable them to convey their decisions at all levels, even the smallest. When sociologists are asked to conduct studies, the aim is to find out how to make decisions acceptable to the general public. These are therefore "acceptance studies". What matters is the reverse movement, i.e., from the bottom to the top, which is based on studying the aspirations of all segments of the population and examining how these aspirations can be transformed into demands that elected representatives can present to the decision-making center. If the decisions respond to the aspirations presented by the grassroots, then they are democratic decisions.[35]

The Al-Hoceima movement revealed the issue of spatial injustice, as a general problem, is not merely a geographical reality, but that the state's response was purely driven by security dimensions, taking the form of carefully considered strategies to preserve the state's "prestige" and to crack down on activists – used to justify the imprisonment of the "leaders of the Al-Hoceima movement" to this day, as well as the imprisonment of a number of journalists and violent protest suppression. These are indirect solutions that the state sees as a way to reframe the problem in line with the balance of power between itself and society. In contrast, protest is a counter-action that challenges hegemony and security confrontation, exposing the reality and limitations of the policies adopted by decision-makers.

Perhaps the Generation Z protests we are witnessing today, and subsequent destruction of public property – an "irresponsible" reaction to the security forces' intervention to suppress demonstrators – are a good example of how "violence begets violence" and of the limitations of a security-focused approach in dealing with protest movements in Morocco.

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[1] Spatial justice, as it is called in Morocco, references space. In other countries the term could be "geographical justice" in reference to place.

[2] The term "Rif" does not refer to the distinction between rural and urban areas, but rather to a Moroccan region stretching across the Rif mountain range in northern Morocco, which includes Moroccan cities that share a common cultural character, such as Al-Hoceima, Nador, Tetouan, and others.

[3] الفصل 135 من الدستور المغربي: "الجماعات الترابية للمملكة هي الجهات والعمالات والأقاليم والجماعات. الجماعات الترابية أشخاص اعتبارية، خاضعة للقانون العام، تسير شؤونها بكيفية ديمقراطية".

[4] The enactment of regulatory laws relating to local communities began in 2015, see General Government Secretariat (SGG), "General Provisions", Official Bulletin No. 6380, 23 July 2015, https://www.sgg.gov.ma/BO/bo_ar/2015/BO_6380_Ar.pdf (Arabic); namely: Regulatory Law No. 111.14 (regions), pp. 6585–6624; Regulatory Law No. 112.14 (provinces and prefectures), pp. 6625–6659; and Regulatory Law No. 113.14 (communities), pp. 6660–6708.

[5] Special Commission on the Development Model (SCMD) is an official advisory commission appointed by the King in 2019. It is composed of 35 members from various scientific and professional backgrounds and is chaired by Chakib Benmoussa. Its goal is to formulate a new Moroccan development model. Special Commission on the Development Model (SCMD), "Main" (Arabic), https://csmd.abweb.ma/

[6] المجلس الاقتصادي والاجتماعي والبيئي، التقرير السنوي لسنة 2017، متاح على https://www.cese.ma/wp-content/uploads/2023/12/...2017.pdf

[7] The urban population rose from around 3.4 million in 1960 to 23.1 million in 2024, representing an annual growth rate of 3.04%. The rural population grew from 8.2 million to 13.7 million during the same period, representing an annual growth rate of no more than 0.8%. High Commission for Planning, "General Population and Housing Census", 2024, https://resultats2024.rgphapps.ma/superset/dashboard/.../

[8] With Morocco's adoption of advanced regionalization and stronger decentralization, the Kingdom's administrative division was reorganized, reducing the number of regions from 16 to 12; SGG, "General Provisions: Royal Decree No. 1.11.91", Article 1: "The territorial organization of the Kingdom is decentralized and based on advanced regionalization" (Arabic).

[9] SGG, "General Provisions: Royal Decree No. 1.11.91", Article 41.

[10] SGG, "General Provisions: Royal Decree No. 1.11.91", Article 42.

[11] There is a conceptual problem with the translation of "politiques générales" and "politiques publiques", as distinguished by Morocco, since the Latin origin does not make a verbal distinction between the two concepts. In French, we say "les politiques publiques" and in English, "public policy". However, this does not negate the need to emphasize the difference between them, especially from an institutional point of view in the case of the Moroccan constitution.

[12] SGG, "General Provisions: Royal Decree No. 1.11.91", Article 92.

[13] SGG, "General Provisions: Royal Decree No. 1.11.91", Article 70.

[14] A distinction must be made here between “decentralization” (la décentralisation), which refers to local authorities as elected bodies, and “deconcentration” (la déconcentration), which is part of the “centralization” system, where we are talking about appointment rather than election – the appointment of governors and officials, for example.
[15] SGG, “General Provisions: Royal Decree No. 1.11.91”, Article 137.
[16] H. M. King Mohammed VI, “Full Text of Royal Speech on the Occasion of the Throne Day”, National Portal of the Kingdom of Morocco, 29 July 2017, https://www.maroc.ma/en/royal-speeches-and-messages/royal-speeches/full-text-royal-speech-occasion-throne-day
[17] H.M. King Mohammed VI, “HM the King Delivers Speech to the Nation on Throne Day (Full Text)”, 29 July 2025, National Portal of the Kingdom of Morocco, https://www.maroc.ma/en/royal-speeches-and-messages/royal-speeches/hm-king-delivers-speech-nation-throne-day-full-text
[18] عزيز بن حريميدا، "هل يتدخل الملك في حل أزمة حراك الريف؟"، موقع صوت العدالة، 13 يونيو/حزيران 2017، متاح على https://satv.ma/....html
[19] The cities of Al-Hoceima, Berkane, Nador, Tetouan, Marrakesh, etc.
[20] King Hassan II speech following the rural uprising, 22 January 1984.
[21] It should be noted that during the early years of independence, Morocco was going through a difficult transition, with the Liberation Army continuing to eliminate the remnants of colonialism and the political arena becoming increasingly tense amid ideological conflicts between ruling parties – Independence Party and the Socialist Union of Popular Forces.
[22] The author believes that the modern state developed in stages and that there are different types of hegemony: “legislative hegemony”, where parliament is the center of power in setting policies and laws, and “executive hegemony”, which accompanied the complexity and expansion of the state’s functions, with the government becoming the dominant force in policy formulation and implementation.
[23] James E. Anderson, *Public Policymaking*, Amer Al-Kubaisi (trans.), Dar Al-Masirah Publishing, 2017, pp. 58–59. (Anderson, *Public Policymaking*); It is worth noting that Anderson is an American researcher specializing in the field of public policy analysis, best known for the aforementioned book, in which he discusses the nature of political power in the modern state and the stages of public policymaking.
[24] Executive leadership includes the head of the executive branch, represented by the president or king in a monarchy, and the government with its various agencies. In other words, the government is part of the executive leadership. What the author means is that it does not set policies on its own, rather it derives them from the orientations and decisions of the higher executive leadership (president or king). In other words, the actual decision is not made within the government, but is directed to it from the top of the executive power hierarchy.
[25] Anderson, *Public Policymaking*.
[26] Gabriel A. Almond and G. Bingham Powell Jr., *Comparative Politics: A Developmental Approach*, Little, Brown and Company, 1966; They are among the most prominent researchers in comparative politics during the 20th century. Their primary interest is in political culture, including individuals’ values, beliefs, and attitudes, and its impact on the performance and stability of political systems.
[27] The general idea is the more consensus and harmony there is on public policy, the more stable the existing political system will be. The more conflict there is over public policy, the more disagreements and conflicting orientations will prevail, leading to crises that destabilize the political system.
[28] Gabriel Almond and G. Bingham Powell Jr., *Comparative Politics Today: A World View*, Hisham Abdullah (trans.), Samir Nassar (reviewer), Al-Dar Al-Ahlia for Publishing and Distribution, 1998, p. 73. (Almond and Powell, *Comparative Politics Today*)
[29] A Moroccan colloquial expression that can be translated into Arabic as “grind him”, a derogatory term referring to the mistreatment of fishmonger Mouhcine Fikri by a man in authority. Fikri protested the confiscation of his goods and climbed into a garbage truck, at which point the man in authority ordered the truck driver to grind him and his goods in an expressive and irresponsible manner.
[30] Almond and Powell, *Comparative Politics Today*, p. 109.
[31] Accusing activists, especially leaders, of receiving foreign funds and of being agents and separatists.

[32] Mohammed Masbah, “A New Generation of Protests in Morocco: How Hirak Al-Rif Endures”, Arab Reform Initiative, 7 November 2017, https://www.arab-reform.net/publication/a-new-generation-of-protests-in-morocco-how-hirak-al-rif-endures/ (Masbah, “A New Generation of Protests in Morocco”)
[33] Masbah, “A New Generation of Protests in Morocco”.
[34] A French thinker specializing in urban sociology wrote about the daily life of populations and post-war reconstruction, linking architecture and social relations. His most famous writings are on *Sociologie Urbaine*; Jacqueline Beaujeu-Garnier et al., *Man and the City in Today’s World*, Center for the Study of Contemporary Civilization, Desclée de Brouwer, 1969, pp. 68–69. (Beaujeu-Garnier, *Man and the City*)
[35] Beaujeu-Garnier et al., *Man and the City*.