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Traders and Troublemakers:

Sovereignty in Southern Morocco at the End of the 19th Century

An Honors Paper for the Department of History

By Joseph Campbell Hilleary

Bowdoin College, 2020

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I would be remiss not to thank the fabulous Bowdoin library staff, particularly Carmen Greenlee, for their amazing support of this research. They time and time again helped me acquire the sources I needed from around the globe and scanned hundreds of pages of source materials for me when it became evident I would have to finish this project from home.

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A Note on Transliteration and Translation

I have attempted in my transliteration to maximize readability for the non-Arabist. To that end, I have primarily used the *International Journal of Middle East Studies* standard for the transliteration of Arabic terms and names with the variation, in accordance with many of the secondary sources I read for this project, of omitting diacritics except for the letters ع and ء which are denoted through the use of apostrophes. The exceptions to this rule are terms with a common English standard already in use and names. In Morocco, the prevalence of French spellings complicates the issue of transliterating proper nouns, so I have generally held to the spellings most common in Morocco today for places and persons except for those which are widely known in the anglophone world by an English name. Thus, I use Oued Noun instead of Wad Nun, but Fez instead of Fes or Fas.

All translations from Arabic and French are my own unless otherwise noted. I am deeply indebted to Dr. Pamela Klasova and Dr. Meryem Belkaïd for their assistance and advice in dealing with these sources. They both provided invaluable support for questions I had about particularly perplexing terms and phrasing. Any errors that still remain are entirely my own.

Introduction: The Sultan and *Siba*

Moroccan historiography is haunted by the twin specters of *bilad al-siba*, "the land of dissidence," and *bilad al-makhzan*, "the land of government." These two terms arose from French colonial era theorizations of pre-colonial Morocco as divided into two parts. Supposedly, the partition distinguished the areas that were firmly under the sway of the central royal government, known as the *makhzan*, from the continually rebelling tribes that acknowledged the sultan's religious authority but refused his political control. In this paper, I set out to determine what in the late nineteenth century caused later French ethnographers to label southern Morocco as part of *bilad al-siba*. At first, this question seems to be exceedingly narrow and germane only to the historiographic discourse of a single country. Ultimately, however, this paper is about something much more universal – the nature and practice of political authority.

The *makhzan*/*siba* divide has been the focus of debate for much of the last century and a great deal has been written on the topic. The traditional construction of the *makhzan*/*siba* dichotomy in Western academic literature stems from French colonial scholarship which repurposed Arabic terms to define a mostly static, territorial division based primarily on perceived racial distinctions between Arab and Amazigh communities.[1] Most French knowledge about Morocco at the beginning of the twentieth century came from the reports of French military instructors in the Moroccan army and European travel accounts.[2] These sources were then supplemented by the work of French ethnographers from neighboring Algeria. It was with the establishment of the Mission scientifique du Maroc in 1903, however, that French scholarship on Morocco really took off. Led in its early years by Georges Salmon and Édouard Michaux-Bellaire, the

[1] Daniel Rivet, "Sība," in *Encyclopaedia of Islam*, ed. P. Bearman et al. (Brill Online, 2012), https://referenceworks.brillonline.com/entries/encyclopaedia-of-islam-2/siba-SIM_8899; Jonathan Wyrtzen, *Making Morocco: Colonial Intervention and the Politics of Identity* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2015), 16.
[2] Edmund Burke III, *The Ethnographic State: France and the Invention of Moroccan Islam* (Oakland: University of California Press, 2014), 36.

Mission began producing *Archives marocaines,* an enormously influential publication for later scholars. *Archives marocaines* may have predated the protectorate, but it was explicitly intended to provide information on the organization of Moroccan society for colonial policy makers.[3] While there are a few prominent early examples of French scholars who opposed the idea of the *makhzan*/*siba* binary, namely Edmond Doutté and Eugène Aubin, by 1904 Michaux-Bellaire's view of Morocco as two "organisms" – *bilad al-siba* and *bilad al-makhzan* – had become a matter of orthodoxy.[4]

The impact of this work extended far beyond the early stages of French colonialism, however, and the debate over the nature and even the existence of any *makhzan*/*siba* divide continues to this day. During the period of the protectorate, the French scholar Robert Montagne further developed and embellished this concept.[5] His work then represented the foundation for mid-twentieth century British and American anthropologists such as Ernest Gellner and Bernard Hoffman who came to define the zones along on ethnic and linguistic lines.[6] This position was then rebutted by post-independence, nationalist Moroccan scholars, most notably Germain Ayache, who fully dismissed the conception of *bilad al-siba* as merely a French colonial project to divide the country.[7] These scholars pointed to French policies toward the Amazigh Kabyle in Algeria and the 1930 Berber *dahir* – a colonial edict that created a separate legal structure for Moroccan Amazigh communities – as evidence of the colonial invention of this division.[8] Ayache instead described a devolved power-sharing system in the pre-colonial period in which the sultan was mediator-in-chief and rebellions were really quite rare. While Ayache's argument that this framework arose

[3] Burke III, 60–61.
[4] Burke III, 75; 79.
[5] Ernest Gellner, "The Sociology of Robert Montagne," *Daedalus* 105, no. 1 (Winter 1976): 142–43.
[6] C.R. Pennell, "Makhzen and Siba in Morocco," in *Tribe and State: Essays in Honour of David Montgomery Hart*, ed. Michel Le Gall and C.R. Pennell (Austin: University of Texas Press, 1991), 159–60; Ernest Gellner, *Saints of the Atlas* (London: Weidenfeld and Nicolson, 1969), 1–2.
[7] Pennell, "Makhzen and Siba in Morocco," 161.
[8] Bruce Maddy-Weitzman, *The Berber Identity Movement and the Challenge to North African States* (Austin: University of Texas Press, 2011), 56.

explicitly from the colonial project is convincing, many academics objected to his complete repudiation of any kind of internal, pre-colonial divisions. In the 1980s and 90s, scholars such as C.R. Pennell began to critique Ayache's stance, claiming his explanation glossed over the historical reality that rebellions did occur with great regularity in the final decades of the nineteenth century to the point that they that impeded the ability of the sultan to negotiate with European powers. In rehabilitating the usefulness of a notion of pre-colonial division, Pennell pointed to ideological, rather than racial, differences and rooted the divide in regional adherence to Shari'a law or local custom.[9] As recently as 2015, historian Jonathan Wyrtzen was still redefining the framework, articulating the relationship between *bilad al-makhzan* and *bilad al-siba* as a kind of symbiosis in which the two regions served as material resources for and threats to one another.[10] From this continued debate, we see how the notion of *makhzan*/*siba* continues to influence scholarship despite the lack of a clear consensus in the literature over the reality and basis of the divide.[11]

From its conception, however, determining the existence and nature of this division has been more than an academic exercise. As shown above, the *makhzan*/*siba* divide is inherently tied to the French colonial project. Outrage over the 1930 Berber *dahir,* which turned the theory into policy, is often considered the beginning of the nationalist movement in Morocco.[12] Even in the time since independence, many of the regions associated with *bilad al-siba* continue to be hotbeds of discontent toward a government still run by the direct descendant of the pre-colonial sultans. In particular, the notion of a Morocco historically separated along ethnic lines provides fuel for the

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[9] Pennell, "Makhzen and Siba in Morocco," 180–81.
[10] Wyrtzen, *Making Morocco: Colonial Intervention and the Politics of Identity*, 15–16.
[11] Susan Gilson Miller, *A History of Modern Morocco* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2013); C.R. Pennell, *Morocco since 1830: A History* (New York: New York University Press, 2000); Burke III, *The Ethnographic State: France and the Invention of Moroccan Islam*; Rivet, "Sība."
[12] William A. Hoisington, "Cities in Revolt: The Berber Dahir (1930) and France's Urban Strategy in Morocco," *Journal of Contemporary History* 13, no. 3 (July 1978): 1.

nascent Amazigh nationalist movement which has increasingly challenged the governments of North Africa in recent years.[13]

In this paper, I seek not to reassociate the *makhzan*/*siba* framework with any historic reality, but rather to understand the phenomena that caused these labels to be constructed in the first place. To this end, I have carried out a close study of southern Morocco, particularly the district of the Sous, during a period I conceptualize as the "long reign of Hassan I." The Sous, as one of the regions of Morocco most strongly associated with *bilad al-siba*, makes for an excellent case study to explore how the unique events of the late nineteenth century led to the development of this concept. Bounded by the Atlas Mountains, the Atlantic Ocean, and the Sahara, the region has for centuries attracted the interest of political powers for its fertile soil, mining potential, and ability to control the northern stretch of the lucrative trans-Saharan trade.[14] In the seventeenth century, following the demise of the Sa'dian dynasty, the Sous, like most of Morocco, operated as an independent principality.[15] Ruled during this period from Illigh by the Emir of Tazerwalt, the tribes of the Sous traded Sudanese gold and Sahelian ostrich feathers to the English, French, and Dutch.[16] In 1670, Illigh and the Sous fell to the 'Alawites during their rise to power and were reincorporated into a unified sultanate, remaining a part of Morocco to this day.[17]

The time period examined covers the reign of Sultan Hassan I (1873-1894), an adroit politician and member of the 'Alawite dynasty whose skill at keeping the European powers at bay diplomatically allowed him to focus on reforms and domestic issues. He is typically considered the last, great pre-colonial ruler of Morocco. I have extended the dates of his reign to encompass the entire period from 1863 when he first became responsible for government policy in the Sous on

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[13] Maddy-Weitzman, *The Berber Identity Movement and the Challenge to North African States*, 202–4.
[14] Michel Abitbol, "Maraboutism and State Formation in Southern Morocco," in *The Early State in African Perspective*, ed. S. N. Eisenstadt, Michel Abitbol, and Naomi Chazan (Leiden: Brill, 1988), 134.
[15] Abdallah Laroui, *The History of the Maghrib* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1977), 271.
[16] Abitbol, "Maraboutism and State Formation in Southern Morocco," 139–41.
[17] Abitbol, 140.

behalf of his father Sultan Muhammad IV (reigned 1859-1873) to 1900 when the regency of his vizier Ba Ahmad, who had largely continued his policies, ended with the ascension of Hassan I's son 'Abd al-Aziz.[18] While the traditional end date for the periodization of pre-colonial Moroccan history is 1912, which marked the signing of the Treaty of Fez and the imposition of the French protectorate, I believe 1900 to be a more apt date for this particular study. In addition to the enthronement of the twenty-year-old Sultan 'Abd al-'Aziz, who lacked Hassan I's deft ability and experience with government, the first French seizure of Moroccan territory with the annexation of the 'In Salah and Touat Oasis also occurred in 1900.[19] This military incursion and the civil war which followed caused the collapse of the central Moroccan government. Thus, comments on the "traditional" relationship between the tribal periphery and the central power of the sultan refer to the period of relative stability before that year.

In order to understand why French scholars came to develop the *makhzan/siba* framework, it is vital to understand the backdrop against which they were examining Moroccan society. During Hassan I's reign, the primary issue of the day in Morocco concerned state revenue. Following Morocco's defeat by the Spanish in the 1860 War of Tetouan, the government was saddled with an enormous indemnity. This obligation obliterated the royal treasury, forcing Morocco into debt. Burdened by funds owed to European powers, while at the same time attempting to rapidly modernize and reform the country, Hassan I and his immediate predecessors relied on income from custom duties.[20] This reliance placed control of trade at the top of the sultan's list of policy priorities. Trade with Europeans was confined to a handful of specially designated ports which allowed the sultan to closely police foreign merchants and limit European interaction with the

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[18] Gilson Miller, *A History of Modern Morocco*, 56–59.

[19] Edmund Burke III, *Prelude to Protectorate in Morocco: Precolonial Protest and Resistance 1860-1912* (Chicago and London: The University of Chicago Press, 1976), xx.

[20] Gilson Miller, *A History of Modern Morocco*, 33.

Moroccan hinterland.[21] Chief among these cities was Essaouira, the southernmost of the royal ports through which all trade with the Sous was intended to flow. However, Essaouira was located significantly north of the Sous leaving the region without a local, royally sanctioned port. In response, select local elites negotiated directly with European traders to open illegal black-market ports that operated without paying royal customs.[22] As a result, the central government repeatedly intervened to put a stop to the practice. In this paper, I will argue that these interventions, which I explore in the first two chapters, created debates over sovereignty that were then a key element in the later French formulation of the *makhzan*/*siba* framework.

One of the major contributions of this work is to place this Moroccan phenomenon in the context of the more broadly studied process of British colonialism, a task to which the third chapter is largely devoted. During the nineteenth century, Britain, rather than France, was the dominant European power in Morocco and most of the companies involved in establishing these black-market ports were British. As a result, we can view the foundation of these ports through the lens of John Gallagher and Ronald Robinson's notion of British "informal empire." Through this idea, Gallagher and Robinson sought to explain why the British Empire grew during the mid and late nineteenth century even as the British Foreign Office largely opposed colonial expansion.[23] Closely tied to their conception of the "imperialism of free trade," Gallagher and Robinson posited that it was the actions of independent British companies operating on the periphery of existing states that repeatedly incited crises forcing the hand of the Foreign Office.[24] The basic premise of their argument is that British economic activity expanded continuously during the nineteenth century in regions outside of the formal empire, and it was the impulse to protect these commercial interests that led to

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[21] Daniel J. Schroeter, *Merchants of Essaouira* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1988), 1–2.
[22] Schroeter, 180–81.
[23] John Gallagher and Ronald Robinson, "The Imperialism of Free Trade," in *The Robinson and Gallagher Controversy*, ed. WM. Roger Louis (New York and London: New Viewpoints, 1976), 53.
[24] Gallagher and Robinson, 54.

further annexations in Africa and Asia during the late Victorian era.[25] The theory of informal empire has since been nuanced and refined by subsequent scholars. P.J. Cain and A.G. Hopkins, in particular, worked to better identify the source of Gallagher and Robinson's "crises on the periphery."[26] They examined more closely the agents of this informal empire, the entrepreneurial adventurers who championed British imperialism while engaging in trade of dubious legality on the edges of the empire. It was these men, they argue who tried to trigger British intervention by crafting narratives that framed British free trade to be under threat from despotic local rulers.[27] Though Morocco never became a British colony, I will show it was this very same process that contributed to questions over Moroccan sovereignty in the Sous and consequently the application of the term *bilad al-siba* to the region.

Before diving more deeply into the crisis over sovereignty triggered by British agents of informal empire in southern Morocco, it is important to clarify my usage of the term sovereignty. The meaning of the word is hardly static and has differed across time and cultural context.[28] Critically for this study, during the nineteenth century, sovereignty became the dominant discourse in Europe through which the rights of the state were articulated, as shown through the use of the term in the 1885 General Act of the Berlin Conference as well as the numerous uses of the term in the Western travel accounts I cite in this paper.[29] While I will examine the unique construction of this concept in more detail in the second chapter, nineteenth century sovereignty with its emphasis on state monopolies over violent force is but one way of thinking about political authority. At other times, in other cultures, and in other contexts, different frameworks are used. Within the Islamic world at this time, for instance, religious prestige and the ability to defend the Muslim community

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[25] Gallagher and Robinson, 68.

[26] P.J. Cain and A.G. Hopkins, "'The Imperious and Irresistible Necessity': Britain and the Partition of Africa," in *British Imperialism 1688-2000*, Second (Harlow, England: Longman, 2002), 304.

[27] Cain and Hopkins, 315.

[28] Jens Bartelson, *A Genealogy of Sovereignty* (Cambridge and New York: Cambridge University Press, 1995).

[29] "General Act of the Berlin Conference on West Africa" (1885).

continued to be important sources of political authority. All ways of thinking about political authority share a common essence, however, sitting at the nexus of power and legitimacy. At some level, they mean that an individual or group has derived the ability to dictate the actions of other individuals in a certain area on the basis of some form of understood right to command. The central divisions among various forms of political authority thus fall along two axes – how power is practiced and maintained and the source of the leader or government's claim of the right to command. In this paper, I will examine a couple of the ways political authority is practiced – textually, through written correspondence and coercively, through violent force. I will also look at the ways authority and specifically sovereignty are constructed on both external foundations through international discourse and internal foundations through relationships with subjects.

Ultimately, I argue that the phenomenon of British informal empire in southern Morocco caused Western powers to question the *makhzan*'s authority, especially its sovereignty, over these regions. The reason for this is two-fold. On the one hand, Western merchants had a vested interest in avoiding the sultan's taxes which ate into their profits, so they had an economic incentive to cast aspersions on Moroccan sultan's right to control trade in the region through bad faith depictions, and, given their cultural context, they used the discourse of sovereignty to do so. At the same time, the form of political authority practiced by Hassan I was distinct from the kind of political authority which had developed in Europe, that is sovereignty, and thus was less legible to the imperial powers. Beyond their rhetoric impact, the pressure exerted by these British traders also led Hassan I to actually change the kind of political authority he practiced in the Sous. Internally, he shifted from a form of authority based on his relationship with local elites and practiced through epistolary correspondence to a more direct incorporation of those elites within the bureaucratic structure of the central state. At the same time, he moved to externalize his claims to authority. By embarking on a series of military expeditions, or *mahalla*s, Hassan I sought to reinvigorate his claims through his Islamic role as *amir al-mu'minin*, or "commander of the faithful," while demonstrating to

outside, especially Western, observers, that his political authority was akin or at least comparable to sovereignty. These shifts and differing notions of political authority are relevant to the construction of the *bilad al-makhzan*/*bilad al-siba* framework due to the textual battle that occurred following these expeditions over the narrative. This contestation between the *makhzan* and Western authors played out in diplomatic and published accounts of the *mahalla*s. In the end, both the *makhzan* and Western authors were successful to some extent. The very existence of this debate, however, created ambiguity, at least from the Western perspective, over the sultan's authority, particularly his sovereignty, in the Sous. I posit this ambiguity then led directly to the later theorization of a *bilad al-siba* in which the sultan was at once both sovereign and not sovereign, as the accounts generated in this narrative contestation were the very source base used by early French colonial scholars.

Chapter I
"Our Very Dear Friend": Relations between the *Makhzan* and the House of Illigh (1863-1894)

Introduction

The global spread of European commercial imperialism in the second half of the nineteenth century created both economic opportunity and domestic tensions in the regions it touched. In southern Morocco, the adventurism of European trading companies, especially British ones, put pressure on the relationship between the central Moroccan government, or *makhzan*, and the districts on the periphery of the state. Enticed by the potential of free trade with Europe without having to pay the duties levied by the Sultan, elite trading families began to challenge the economic control of the *makhzan* by inviting Europeans to open ports in the Sous. In response, Sultan Hassan I adjusted the type of political authority he practiced in the region in order to reassert his power over the Sous's economy and halt the black-market trade. Specifically, he moved from a more relaxed, relationship-based form of authority to a more institutionalized form. This shift occurred through changes in his relationships with key local elites like the Simlali family of Illigh, whom he slowly incorporated directly into the *makhzan* apparatus over the course of a thirty-year period. From the beginning of his relationship with the Simlalis, Hassan I relied on them as both advisors and proxies, leveraging their local networks to shore up his authority through internal channels. While retaining this central aspect of the relationship, Hassan I altered its structure allowing him to practice a different form of political authority better suited to maintaining his economic control in the face of the new European threat.

The Simlali family were the descendants of the 17th century emirs of Tazerwalt who ruled the Sous from their seat at Illigh during a period of interregnum between the fall of the Sa'dian dynasty and the 1670 'Alawite reincorporation of the region into a unified Morocco.[30] Though the

[30] Abitbol, "Maraboutism and State Formation in Southern Morocco," 139–41.

emirate of Tazerwalt was gone, the Simlalis remained prominent elites, and by the nineteenth century, led one of the two major *lef*s, or tribal confederations, in the area.[31] Additionally, along with their rivals, the Bayruk family – who were centered in the region of Oued Noun further south in the Sous – they were one of the two most prominent Moroccan players in the trans-Saharan caravan trade.[32] From 1842 until his death in 1885, Husayn bin Hashim served as the patriarch of the family and the most powerful local leader in the Sous. Following his death, his son Muhammad assumed this role for the remainder of the precolonial period.[33]

As prominent regional figures, both bin Hashim and his son maintained written correspondence with the Sultan and other area elites and were the recipients of hundreds of letters during the second half of the nineteenth century, which will serve as my main source for this chapter. The sultan's correspondence with the Simlalis is particularly central to the narrative of his control in the Sous because of the challenges faced by the *qa'ids*, or governors, he appointed to the region. By turning to local elites like the Simlalis rather than *makhzan* administrators to exercise his authority in the region, Hassan acknowledged the greater efficacy of the House of Illigh's networks in pursuing his agenda. These letters were kept in the family archives in Illigh until they were opened to Franco-Moroccan historian Paul Pascon in the 1980s.[34] In writing this chapter, I have used Pascon's annotated French translations of the documents which were published by his student Mohammed Ennaji following Pascon's untimely death in 1985. In addition to letters from the Simlali archives addressed to bin Hashim and Muhammad, the collection also contains several written by them to the sultan and between members of the *makhzan* on matters relating to the House of Illigh.

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[31] Abitbol, 143.
[32] Mohamed Hassan Mohamed, *Between Caravan and Sultan: The Bayruk of Southern Morocco* (Leiden: Brill, 2012), 271; Schroeter, *Merchants of Essaouira*, 161.
[33] Schroeter, *Merchants of Essaouira*, 194.
[34] Mohammed Ennaji, ed., *Le Makhzen et Le Sous Al-Aqsa: La Correspondance Politique de La Maison d'Iligh, 1821-1894*, trans. Paul Pascon (Paris: Editions du C.N.R.S., 1988), 7.

Analysis of this collection of correspondence between Hassan I and the heads of the Simlali dynasty shows a distinct shift in how the sultan wielded his political authority from his first letters as a prince in the 1860s to his final ones just before his death in 1894. These letters, in and of themselves, are the material substance of a kind of textually practiced political authority. The discourse contained within them assumes the preeminence and authority of the Moroccan sultan over the Sous and in so doing constituted his authority there. We can perhaps understand this way of practicing political authority through the lens of J.L Austin's theory of performative speech acts. In Austin's definition, certain utterances are performative. Rather than being a statement about something, they are an action.[35] In this case the "utterances" are Hassan I's letters dictating orders to someone he considers to be a subject – the Simlali patriarch. The recipient of the letters then responds in a way that fulfills the formula accepting the notion Hassan I has the authority to make such claims of him. As a result, these letters are not merely describing orders and a relationship between a ruler and a subject, they *are* the orders and the relationship. Basically, because both the sultan and local elites acted through written correspondence as though he possessed political authority in the Sous, he did. Thus, changes in content and rhetoric of the letters reflect changes in the kind of authority being wielded. The correspondence shows continuity in the Simlali family's self-identification as subjects of the *makhzan* and service as surrogates through which the sultan assured his authority in the Sous. However, it also reflects a change in the basis, and therefore type, of the sultan's authority. At first, Hassan I's right to command was primarily based on the sultan's personal relationship with the recipient, but as time progressed, this right became grounded in the position of the recipient within the formal state bureaucracy.

To highlight this shift, I have divided the letters into three periods which represent different stages of the transition from a personal to bureaucratized foundation. In the first period, the private

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[35] J.L Austin, J.O. Urmson, and G.J. Warnock, "Performative Utterances," in *Philosophical Papers* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1979).

relationship between Hassan I and bin Hashim appears to have been the basis of Hassan I's authority. During this phase, the two regarded one another as situationally expedient partners — albeit with bin Hashim as the junior partner — in pursuing their respective interests in the Sous. Hassan I called on bin Hashim's services on an as-needed basis, utilizing his personal relationship with the local leader to gain access to his parochial networks and knowledge base. After the failure of this kind of authority to achieve Hassan I's goals of ousting the European traders and reasserting economic control in the region, however, he began to change the structure of this relationship to facilitate a more institutionally based type of authority. In this second phase, Hassan I began to take a more active role in the Sous, utilizing bin Hashim as a proxy for himself and starting to integrate the family more formally into the *makhzan* bureaucracy. Finally, by the third stage, as shown through Hassan I's relationship with bin Hashim's son Muhammad, this integration was complete. Through Muhammad, who was officially a part of the *makhzan*, Hassan I wielded an institutionally based form of authority which proved far more effective at giving him economic control. The need for this change in Hassan I's internal expression of political authority along with his simultaneous efforts to externalize his claims to sovereignty — to be explored further in the next chapter — demonstrates the way the late nineteenth century phenomena of the imperialism of free trade and British informal empire forced the sultan to develop different modes of political authority to project his power over the periphery of the state.

Situationally Expedient Partners (1863-1882)

While Husayn bin Hashim had previously corresponded with Hassan I's father and grandfather Sultans Muhammad IV and 'Abd al-Rahman, respectively, the first documented letter

from Hassan I to the House of Illigh dates to 1863.[36] At that time, Hassan I was still Hassan Khalifa, a prince acting on behalf of his father. During this early period of bin Hashim's interaction with Hassan I, the correspondence suggests that sultan employed a form of authority grounded in their informal, personal relationship to manage his affairs in the Sous. Hassan I and bin Hashim only appear to have activated their relationship as need arose in the pursuit of their respective interests. While the letters show that bin Hashim saw himself as subordinate to and acted on behalf of the *makhzan,* helping to enforce their trading policies, he did so chiefly when it furthered his own economic wellbeing. For their part, Hassan I and his father used bin Hashim as a proxy in the Sous and relied on his support. At the same time, they do not appear to have fully trusted him and allowed the relationship to ebb when he was no longer needed. Ultimately, this style of informal, personal relationship-based authority failed to grant Hassan I the ability to effectively rein in European trade, leading him to begin changing the form of his political authority in the subsequent period.

From Hassan I's first letter to bin Hashim, the power differential and relative positions of the two men are made clear. The sultan is unequivocally above bin Hashim, while at the same time, bin Hashim is outside of the more formal governing structure of the *makhzan*. In the letter, Hassan I addresses bin Hashim with the style "*muhibbna,*" following in the pattern of his father and grandfather. This term, derived from the Arabic stem for love, is translated by Pascon as "notre ami très cher" or "our very dear friend." Pascon points out that within the epistolary protocols of the period this title distinguishes bin Hashim, not as a political administrator, but rather as a renowned man of learning, despite the political nature of the letter itself.[37] The use of this title suggests that, at the time, the 'Alawites viewed bin Hashim as an important and useful subject, but not someone who

[36] Hassan Khalifa to Husayn bin Hashim, September 14, 1863, in *Le Makhzen et Le Sous Al-Aqsa*, trans. Paul Pascon (Paris: Editions du C.N.R.S., 1988), 56–58.
[37] Ennaji, *Le Makhzen et Le Sous Al-Aqsa: La Correspondance Politique de La Maison d'Iligh, 1821-1894*, 9–10.

was formally in charge of the Sous in any capacity. This power differential is also elucidated in bin Hashim own letters to Hassan I from this period. Respectful and acquiescent in the extreme, bin Hashim refers to the prince as "the one who takes the place of our lord and master" clearly acknowledging the 'Alawites as his rulers rather than allies.[38] Through the use of these respective titles for one another, bin Hashim and Hassan I defined their relationship in ways that reinforced the primacy of the 'Alawites over the Sous.

In accordance with the notion that bin Hashim recognized the authority of the sultan over himself, Hassan I's letters suggest bin Hashim was a frequent partner in carrying out the *makhzan* agenda in the Sous. In one letter, this idea his made explicit as Hassan I reiterates the friendship his father the sultan feels for bin Hashim. He writes: "You have taken care of the execution of orders and the obedience and friendship you have shown have increased our master's [Sultan Muhammad IV] desire to take care of you and compliment you… the esteem you enjoy with our master, may God assist him, has not changed, it has even grown."[39] This passage recognizes bin Hashim's loyalty in carrying out royal commands and suggests that he had repeatedly acted on behalf of the sultan in the affairs of the Sous, receiving direct orders that he then carried out. It also locates these actions as taking place within the context of a friendship, or personal relationship rather than an institutional structure.

Though bin Hashim may have viewed himself as a subject and often acted on the orders of the 'Alawite sultans, there was also a heavy dose of self-service during this period in the relationship. At the time Hassan I's initial letter was received, the prince was actually in the Sous with royal troops at bin Hashim's request. Bin Hashim had claimed his rival and relative by marriage al-Habib Bayruk had negotiated with Spanish traders to open a port in the region, and in

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[38] Husayn bin Hashim to Hassan Khalifa, July 14, 1866, in *Le Makhzen et Le Sous Al-Aqsa*, trans. Paul Pascon (Paris: Editions du C.N.R.S., 1988), 65.
[39] Hassan Khalifa to bin Hashim, September 14, 1863.

response the sultan had sent his son Hassan I to deal with the situation.[40] In asking for royal troops, bin Hashim accomplished two goals. On the one hand, he promoted *makhzan* interests and helped them to enforce their trading policies, and on the other, he helped his own business by tattling on his competitor. This kind of self-interested activation of his ties to the *makhzan* shows how, at this stage, the relationship was defined by situational expedience. Both parties appear to have interacted only as it benefited their interest. The idea that the relationship during this period was founded on self-interest is further reinforced in a later letter from 1866 in which bin Hashim discusses traveling to Guelmim, the seat of the Bayruk family, to lecture them on the necessity of obedience to the sultan, on behalf of the prince. He condemns the Bayruks as greedy for seeking an "exemption from customs duties and the monopoly of the sale of ostrich feathers to Essaouira," yet later on he requests these same benefits on their behalf.[41] This last aspect sheds light the reciprocal nature of bin Hashim's relationship with the *makhzan*. The sultan and the prince may have used him to pursue their agenda in the region from a distance, but bin Hashim in turn leveraged this relationship to benefit his business interests. In summoning royal troops to deal with Bayruk he seems to have sought to humble his rivals in trade by bringing the wrath of the state down upon them, while in this case he used the goodwill he had accrued in an attempt to secure preferential treatment for his relatives.

Perhaps because of the intermittent nature of the relationship at this stage there was also a great deal of mistrust between the two parties. For example, most of the first missive relates to bin Hashim's concern that Hassan I and the royal forces were, in fact, seeking bin Hashim's arrest despite his having requested the troops, himself. After addressing other concerns, Hassan I puts bin Hashim at ease stating, "as for the news that the slanderers have sent you, that the troops intended

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[40] Sidi Muhammad to Husayn bin Hashim, July 11, 1862, in *Le Makhzen et Le Sous Al-Aqsa*, trans. Paul Pascon (Paris: Editions du C.N.R.S., 1988), 54.
[41] bin Hashim to Hassan Khalifa, July 14, 1866.

to arrest you, these are false and unfounded allegations."[42] The need for such reassurance reveals that bin Hashim was still quite wary of the *makhzan* in spite of his partnership with them. The existence of this suspicion is reinforced by the fact the bin Hashim avoided personally encountering Hassan I.[43] Such evasive action demonstrates his standing with the *makhzan* to have been far more uncertain then Hassan I's letter suggests. This wariness seems to have persisted through this first phase of the relationship as another exchange from 1864 reveals. The prince wrote to bin Hashem while again preparing to lead troops into the Sous to deal with Bayruk. In this letter, Hassan I exhorts bin Hashim to rally the local tribes to join the royal troops and to meet with him in person. In fact, Hassan I writes "set us an appointment, which we both have to respect. Let there be no discomfort in your chest about what you hear from slanderers."[44] In spite of this direct order, no such meeting occurred, suggesting bin Hashim again intentionally evaded the prince, a notion corroborated by local oral tradition.[45] Hassan I's directive also intimates that bin Hashim would have been nervous about such a meeting, something a loyal subject would seemingly have no reason to fear.

Following these exchanges surrounding the Bayruk, correspondence between bin Hashim and Hassan I appears to have died down. Only five additional letters are documented in the archive until 1880, well after Hassan I's ascension to the throne in 1874. Those few letters mostly acknowledge the receipt of gifts and declarations of loyalty rather than dealing with any matters of regional policy. The lack of royal missives from this period is, in and of itself, telling of Hassan I's relationship to bin Hashim. Either, no letters exist, in which case the absence may suggest a cooling of Hassan I's relationship with bin Hashim in favor of other proxies, or letters were written only to

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[42] Hassan Khalifa to bin Hashim, September 14, 1863.
[43] Ennaji, *Le Makhzen et Le Sous Al-Aqsa: La Correspondance Politique de La Maison d'Iligh, 1821-1894*, 57.
[44] Hassan Khalifa to Husayn bin Hashim, January 6, 1864, in *Le Makhzen et Le Sous Al-Aqsa*, trans. Paul Pascon (Paris: Editions du C.N.R.S., 1988), 59-60.
[45] Ennaji, *Le Makhzen et Le Sous Al-Aqsa: La Correspondance Politique de La Maison d'Iligh, 1821-1894*, 15–16.

be subsequently destroyed or hidden away by the Simlali family, perhaps to avoid a negative portrayal of their ancestor when the archive was opened to historians. Pascon, himself, suggests that Hassan I's attention was merely turned elsewhere during these years and the dearth of letters reflects this change in focus.[46] As correspondence slacked off, the European encroachment that the *makhzan* had relied on bin Hashim to counter continued to increased, which further suggests that this relationship was critical to the kind of political authority Hassan I was practicing in the region at that time. In 1879, a British company led by Donald Mackenzie established a trading base at Cape Juby on Bayruk land near Tarfaya, and bin Hashim, himself, entered into negotiations with French merchants from Marseille to establish a competing port. Although bin Hashim ended his negotiations with the French due to the lack of the sultan's approval, in 1880 another group of British merchants claimed his support for the opening of a trading post at Arksis — support bin Hashim denied giving.[47] With the failure of this personal relationship-based authority to provide him with the tools to counter these growing threats, Hassan I was forced to change the nature of his political authority in the region. To accomplish this task, he took more direct action, renewing his correspondence with bin Hashim and traveling in person to the Sous on two military expeditions, or *mahallas,* in 1882 and 1886 as covered in the next chapter.

Formalizing the Relationship (1882-1886)

Royal correspondence with Husayn bin Hashim recommenced in earnest with Hassan I's first expedition to the Sous as sultan in 1882. While the next chapter will further explore the significance of these expeditions in Hassan I's shift to toward externalizing his claims to sovereignty and political authority more broadly, the epistolary record shows he also continued rely on internal

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[46] Ennaji, 32.
[47] Schroeter, *Merchants of Essaouira*, 189–91.

relationships like that with the House of Illigh. In the multitude of letters exchange in the period during and between Hassan I's two *mahalla*s, the sultan appears to have sought to change the type of political authority he exercised by changing his relationship with bin Hashim. During this time, he renewed his correspondence with Illigh and came to rely on bin Hashim as both an advisor and a surrogate in the region. Communication became far more frequent and consistent with more than forty letters exchanged between them in the four years between the first *mahalla* and bin Hashim's death in 1886. Over the course of this reinvigorated correspondence, bin Hashim morphed from a periodic partner into a quasi-official of the state. Though not yet fully incorporated into the *makhzan* bureaucracy, bin Hashim's relationship to the sultan became much more formalized and he carried out responsibilities key to statecraft such as maintaining peace between tribes, advising royal governors, and of course combating the influence of European traders. The new more institutionalized relational authority that developed out of Hassan I's recasting of this relationship better allowed the sultan to tap into bin Hashim's local networks to project his influence and reinforce his authority over trade.

In Hassan I's first letter to bin Hashim while on the *mahalla* in 1882, the sultan immediately sought to repair the damage the relationship had incurred in the previous decade. In acknowledging the delegation bin Hashim had sent to pledge fealty, Hassan I writes, "you say that you are the slave of the house, constantly supporting its allies and looking after these customers, and even if you have shown any negligence in service or let a discrepancy or alteration in your conduct appear, our generous Majesty turns a blind eye to defects and forgives missteps."[48] This passage shows that Hassan I was clearly aware of bin Hashim's duplicity but chose to rehabilitate him rather than pursue his destruction. Hassan I's willingness to move past bin Hashim's transgressions suggests the sultan saw something unique in bin Hashim that another proxy would

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[48] Hassan I to Husayn bin Hashim, July 24, 1882, in *Le Makhzen et Le Sous Al-Aqsa*, trans. Paul Pascon (Paris: Editions du C.N.R.S., 1988), 74.

have been unable to offer. I argue that this advantage was bin Hashim's own personal, local prestige and ties to other elites as well as his intimate knowledge of the region's politics. As result, the sultan moved to change the nature of the relationship rather than the actor. This fixation on repairing the relationship also shows how central the personal dynamic between Hassan I and bin Hashim continued to be to the form of political authority the sultan was practicing at the beginning of this transitionary period.

Another letter from July 1882 shows these networks and Hassan I's reliance on bin Hashim's local expertise more clearly. One of the major goals of the 1882 *mahalla* was to establish a *makhzan*-controlled port in the Sous where the tribes could import European food stuffs to relieve an ongoing famine. To this end, Hassan I appointed a new governor in the region, al-Rashidi, a loyal member of the *makhzan* establishment from central Morocco.[49] While al-Rashidi may have been trustworthy, he lacked networks in and knowledge of the Sous. As a result, Hassan I wrote to bin Hashim, saying "We have directed the latter [al-Rashidi] to consult you and act according to your instructions, for you are the "foresight" and the pillar of the *makhzan* in these regions. We need to enlighten him, advise him and assist him."[50] This letter shows Hassan I's willingness to effectively subordinate his own royal governor to bin Hashim in recognition of the latter's greater regional expertise. It also demonstrates a continued reliance of the sultan on his personal relationship with bin Hashim in wielding authority in the Sous in contrast to a more institutionally formulated relationship like that between Hassan I and al-Rashidi. Despite the authority he granted to bin Hashim, however, Hassan I did not make his position official. He was merely an advisor, not a ruler or administrator in his own right. Yet his partnership with the bureaucracy in this instance shows the increasing proximity of the personal relationship to the institutional structures of the *makhzan*.

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[49] Ennaji, *Le Makhzen et Le Sous Al-Aqsa: La Correspondance Politique de La Maison d'Iligh, 1821-1894*, 75–76.
[50] Hassan I to Husayn bin Hashim, July 25, 1882, in *Le Makhzen et Le Sous Al-Aqsa*, trans. Paul Pascon (Paris: Editions du C.N.R.S., 1988), 75.

Hassan I's reliance on bin Hashim extended beyond having him instruct the royal governor. The sultan, himself, requested bin Hashim's input as the establishment of the port proceeded. In a letter to bin Hashim announcing the decision to open a port to the Europeans at Asaca, Hassan I invited him to contradict the decision, writing "If our views are not shared, let us be told and the reasons explained to us." [51] Such an invitation demonstrates the value Hassan I appears to have placed on bin Hashim's candid opinion. Later in the same letter, Hassan I asks bin Hashim, if the tribal governors he has appointed to oversee and manage the port are likely to follow through on their promises, writing "Give us your personal opinion because we make great use of your judgements and the counsel you give us on the projects that interest these regions."[52] In this line, Hassan I explicitly states the usefulness of bin Hashim's advice in advancing his economic agenda. Messages like this one show that bin Hashim's knowledge of the region and the networks he possessed were valuable tools Hassan I utilized to ensure his policies were implemented smoothly.

Beyond advice, in other situations bin Hashim acted as a direct surrogate for the sultan. One of the key responsibilities of the Moroccan sultan as leader of all Muslims was maintaining the peace between tribes.[53] Multiple times during this period Hassan I fulfilled this obligation by sending bin Hashim, rather than one of his governors, to settle a conflict between warring factions, writing with regard to one such incident "you are the linchpin of the region, you must work to dispel the animosity between the two parties. Apply yourself with him (may God reward you with his favors) to resolve their dispute with great dedication."[54] In referring to bin Hashim as a linchpin, "le pivot" in Pascon's translation, Hassan I references bin Hashim's networks among the elites.

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[51] Hassan I to Husayn bin Hashim, September 13, 1882, in *Le Makhzen et Le Sous Al-Aqsa*, trans. Paul Pascon (Paris: Editions du C.N.R.S., 1988), 76.
[52] Hassan I to bin Hashim.
[53] John Waterbury, *Commander of the Faithful* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1970), 17–18.
[54] Hassan I to Husayn bin Hashim, August 30, 1883, in *Le Makhzen et Le Sous Al-Aqsa*, trans. Paul Pascon (Paris: Editions du C.N.R.S., 1988), 84-85.

Hassan I's use of bin Hashim, rather than an official proxy allowed him to exploit this network in carrying out his royal responsibilities and performing his role as commander of the faithful.

Hassan I's relationship with bin Hashim, also continued to work to the advantage of the House of Illigh. Leveraging the sultan's reliance on his advice, bin Hashim attempted to persuade Hassan I to actions that benefited his personal interests. In 1883, for instance, bin Hashim successfully obtained the release and pardon of a prisoner whose son he wished to appease. In a letter notifying him of the pardon the sultan writes, "we have granted your intervention on behalf of al-Hadj 'Ali al-Qadi and have ordered his release. What could cause your disgrace would also disgrace us and we are the first to want to avoid that."[55] This line shows the influence bin Hashim could wield with the sultan by making clear that bin Hashim's intercession was the primary reason for the man's release. Bin Hashim's pursuit of his self-interest also extended to his counsel on the issue of the European traders. In the same letter, the sultan mentions advice bin Hashim had given about the deployment of troops to secure the coast against the Europeans. Rather than using royal troops, bin Hashim suggested that the sultan "leave the soldiers together and entrust the tribes with the mission of monitoring the points indicated."[56] While Hassan I agreed to consider this proposal, he seems to have been skeptical and states "we have written to the servant al-Abubi to ask him if this means seems likely to lead to the result sought."[57] Though not as successful as the first request, given that the sultan felt the need to seek additional counsel, we still see in this suggestion bin Hashim moving to his own advantage. With fewer troops in the area, his role as an intermediary would have to be increased and there would be less chance of bin Hashim, himself, being caught in any illicit dealings he might have had with Europeans. A similar motivation may have been behind his advice to the sultan, to abandon the goal of fortifying Tiznit, which Hassan I intended to become

[55] Hassan I to Husayn bin Hashim, July 31, 1883, in Le Makhzen et Le Sous Al-Aqsa, trans. Paul Pascon (Paris: Editions du C.N.R.S., 1988), 80-81.
[56] Hassan I to bin Hashim.
[57] Hassan I to bin Hashim.

a *makhzan* military outpost in the Sous. Ostensibly, his suggestion was based on the notion that the residents of the city might become disloyal if a wall were built because they would feel protected. In a response to that suggestion, the sultan wrote, "Your proposal, which is worthy of consideration, has caught our attention. But as soon as the decision was made, the news of the opening of the work spread. It is as if we had started and under these conditions it is not possible for us to reverse our decision."[58] Obviously, had he wanted to, there would have been no real barrier to Hassan I's ceasing the construction of the fortifications. Instead, the sultan, appears to disagree but make excuses so as to soften the blow and preserve the relationship. Bin Hashim similarly responded to the rejection with grace stating, "We can only be sincere, give good advice, and our lord knows better than we do that which needs to be done."[59] This exchange, in addition to showing bin Hashim's maneuvering, demonstrates that both parties, even when opposed on a given policy, attempted to keep the relationship on the best terms possible. This desire continues to suggest that the personal aspect of this relationship remained significant in the construction of the sultan's authority in the Sous.

After the matter of the port was settled, the fortifications constructed, and Hassan I returned to his court, we might assume the relationship would again abate as it had following Hassan I's expedition two decades prior. In this period, however, the strength of this relationship was maintained through bin Hashim's son Muhammad whom he sent to the sultan with gifts and pledges of loyalty. Later, in 1884, Hassan would respond by making Muhammad an official makhzan *qa'id,* or provincial administrator.[60] By incorporating bin Hashim's eldest son into the *makhzan* ruling apparatus, Hassan I began the formalization of his relationship with the House of Illigh. Given

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[58] Hassan I to Husayn bin Hashim, August 30, 1883, in Le Makhzen et Le Sous Al-Aqsa, trans. Paul Pascon (Paris: Editions du C.N.R.S., 1988), 82-83.
[59] Husayn bin Hashim to Hassan I, September 30, 1883, in Le Makhzen et Le Sous Al-Aqsa, trans. Paul Pascon (Paris: Editions du C.N.R.S., 1988), 83.
[60] Hassan I to Husayn bin Hashim, February 8, 1884, in *Le Makhzen et Le Sous Al-Aqsa*, trans. Paul Pascon (Paris: Editions du C.N.R.S., 1988), 89.

his distance from the Sous in the northern courts of Marrakesh, Fez, and Meknes, Hassan I relied heavily on bin Hashim for news of the region. In particular, he provided the sultan with critical intelligence about the doings of the British merchant companies. In a letter in which Hassan I acknowledged the receipt of such information, the sultan writes "we received your letter in which you brought to our knowledge that… the Christian settled in the land of the Sbuya [a tribe near Arksis] received a steamer… that the people of the Sbuya tribe had come to the Christian, that they had built him a large pen in the center of which he had placed his tent, [and] that they had appointed him sixty infantrymen as a guard each night."[61] Intelligence missives like this one, which reveals the treachery of the Sbuya tribe and their support of the British enterprise, were critical to Hassan I's ability to keep tabs on this peripheral region of the state. By mid-1884, Hassan I's trust in bin Hashim's information had grown to the point that he promised "in the future we [Hassan I] will share with you [Husayn bin Hashim] all the news, true or false, that will reach us on these regions so that you can confirm it and verify its accuracy."[62] This line is a remarkable promise to someone who was not actually a member of the sultan's government and shows that Hassan I had come to trust bin Hashim deeply, perhaps more than his own governors. It also demonstrates the way the relationship was becoming more institutionalized. In fact in 1885, two *makhzan* governors along with the elites of the groups they governed arrived at Illigh where Hassan I ordered bin Hashim to reconcile the tribes.[63] By turning to bin Hashim as arbiter rather than the royal governor, Hassan I demonstrated that at this point the sultan considered him the foremost surrogate of the *makhzan* in the Sous in spite of his lack of an official position within the administration.

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[61] Hassan I to Husayn bin Hashim, March 25, 1883, in *Le Makhzen et Le Sous Al-Aqsa*, trans. Paul Pascon (Paris: Editions du C.N.R.S., 1988), 77.
[62] Hassan I to bin Hashim, August 30, 1883.
[63] Hassan I to Husayn bin Hashim, January 25, 1885, in *Le Makhzen et Le Sous Al-Aqsa*, trans. Paul Pascon (Paris: Editions du C.N.R.S., 1988), 109-110.

The changes in Hassan I's relationship with bin Hashim during these years reflect an institutionalizing impulse. Though bin Hashim never became a formal member of the *makhzan*, he clearly developed into a kind of quasi-official. His responsibilities included many of the aspects of statecraft that the *makhzan* governors normally oversaw, but that he was better suited to carry out in the Sous given his knowledge of and connections in the region. This status was also reflected in the fact that upon his death in November of 1886, his son Muhammad sent an emissary to deliver condolences to the sultan.[64] This practice, typically reserved for those who served the sultan in some official role, suggests that to Muhammad, at least, his father's relationship to the sultan was servile and formal enough to warrant this tradition.[65] In beginning to formalize his relationship with bin Hashim, Hassan I also changed the kind of political authority he practiced in the Sous. Rather than a form of authority based on a personal relationship that was only periodically exercised, Hassan I shifted to a kind of authority in which his correspondence with regional elites was consistently maintained and regularly utilized as part of the state governing apparatus.

Extension of the *Makhzan* (1886-1894)

Given the significance of specific individuals in a relationship-based model of authority, bin Hashim's death marked the beginning of a new era in Hassan I's practice of political authority in the Sous. Following the death of Husayn bin Hashim in 1886, his son Muhammad became the new leader of the Simlali family. Because he was already an official *qa'id*, his assumption of his father's role as patriarch meant that the House of Illigh was at last formally a part of the *makhzan* state apparatus – the culmination of Hassan I's shift toward an institutionally based form of political authority in the region. This new kind of authority proved far more effective in allowing Hassan I to

[64] Hassan I to Muhammad bin Husayn bin Hashim, November 1, 1886, in *Le Makhzen et Le Sous Al-Aqsa*, trans. Paul Pascon (Paris: Editions du C.N.R.S., 1988), 148.
[65] Ennaji, *Le Makhzen et Le Sous Al-Aqsa: La Correspondance Politique de La Maison d'Iligh, 1821-1894*, 148.

achieve his goal of repulsing the European traders and regaining economic control over the region. Even while bin Hashim was still alive, Hassan I had begun corresponding more and more with Muhammad, whose relationship with the sultan differed greatly from his father's as a result of his official position within the *makhzan*. While he continued to be a critical source of regional intelligence and a surrogate for the sultan in local matters, Muhammad was far more oriented toward the central state than his father, and he proactively pursued *makhzan* interests. Through his close, institutionalized relationship with Muhammad, Hassan I was finally able to regain control of the Sousi economy for the remainder of his life.

From the beginning of his relationship with Muhammad, Hassan I sought to ensure the continuity of his relationship with the House of Illigh. In an early letter from 1886 he reassured Muhammad that he would inherit the good standing his father had cultivated, writing "You occupy with us the same rank as him and the same place. May God lead you on the right path, put you on the same footing as your father, and make of you his most worthy successor."[66] From this statement, we see that Hassan I viewed his relationship with Muhammad as a continuation of the relationship he had developed with bin Hashim. Rather than a completely new dynamic, Muhammad's greater integration with the *makhzan* was the end result of the formalizing efforts Hassan I had begun in his relationship with bin Hashim. This continuity also played out in the kinds of responsibilities Muhammad took over from his father on behalf of the sultan. He still primarily helped to provide intelligence to the sultan and used his networks to maintain the peace and mitigate the presence of European traders. In February 1889, for instance, he wrote that "Dahman bin Bayruk [had] headed with his company, soldiers and others, to the port of Tarfaya, with a view to demolishing it and dispersing those who trade there with the Christians." [67] After attacking the

[66] Hassan I to Muhammad bin Husayn bin Hashim, January 16, 1886, in *Le Makhzen et Le Sous Al-Aqsa*, trans. Paul Pascon (Paris: Editions du C.N.R.S., 1988), 125.
[67] Hassan I to Muhammad bin Husayn bin Hashim, July 19, 1889, in *Le Makhzen et Le Sous Al-Aqsa*, trans. Paul Pascon (Paris: Editions du C.N.R.S., 1988), 171.

traders, Muhammad reports that Bayruk's men were thwarted by nomadic tribes who defended the fort until they left.[68] This letter demonstrates that Illigh was still a vital source of information about the continuing presence of Mackenzie's company. Additionally, the contents of the update suggest a change in the temperament of at least one member of the Bayruk family toward the European traders. In fact, Muhammad was a key intermediary for the sultan in bringing the Bayruk in line. In a later letter, Muhammad wrote to Hassan I stating "that one of the Bayruk sons named Bashir [Dahman], who is in the port of Tarfaya asked to meet his generous Majesty through his [Muhammad's] mediation... and what forced him to maintain commercial relations with Christians was the injustice of his uncle. He asks to confer on the subject of Christians, etc." [69] This overture toward the sultan via Muhammad on the topic of the European traders, highlights the importance of Muhammad's position as middleman in facilitating the expulsion of these groups, one of Hassan I's key goals in the region. Like his father, he also acted as a surrogate for the sultan in negotiating between warring tribes. In 1891, for instance, he apparently traveled "to Oued Noun, in order to try to appease [a] quarrel among the Tekna and conclude peace among them."[70] By leveraging his connections in the service of the *makhzan*, Muhammad, like bin Hashim before him, was able to extend the sultan's authority to the far reaches of the state even in the absence of Hassan I.

Muhammad, however, was both much closer and more subordinate to the sultan than his father. This change is reflected in Hassan I's use of a different style in addressing Muhammad. Rather than the title of *muhibbna*, the sultan consistently referred to Muhammad in his letters as "our very well-behaved servant" or another variation on "servant."[71] This change in address

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[68] Hassan I to bin Husayn bin Hashim.
[69] Muhammad bin Husayn bin Hashim to Hassan I, November 30, 1890, in *Le Makhzen et Le Sous Al-Aqsa*, trans. Paul Pascon (Paris: Editions du C.N.R.S., 1988), 198.
[70] Hassan I to Muhammad bin Husayn bin Hashim, January 6, 1891, in *Le Makhzen et Le Sous Al-Aqsa*, trans. Paul Pascon (Paris: Editions du C.N.R.S., 1988), 200.
[71] Hassan I to Muhammad bin Husayn bin Hashim, June 24, 1886, in *Le Makhzen et Le Sous Al-Aqsa*, trans. Paul Pascon (Paris: Editions du C.N.R.S., 1988), 144.

between father and son reiterates that Muhammad was fully within the *makhzan* system and worked for the sultan in an official capacity. For his own part, Muhammad cleaved much more closely to the sultan and exercised less autonomy than his predecessor. For example, taking advantage of Hassan I's presence during the 1886 *mahalla*, Muhammad requested the sultan's intercession in a personal dispute. He asked the sultan "that he [Hassan I] in person reconcile us (with them), to cut short the continual increase in the dispute between us and against them, and to answer for us in all things."[72] He says that "we have opted for the elimination of these abuses through our lord, so that security and trust can be achieved for us and for them."[73] By laying this judgement before the sultan, Muhammad sacrificed some of his autonomy as a local leader, but the decision to do so demonstrates his faith in the support of Hassan I. His explanation as to why he was seeking royal mediation also speaks to the notion that he viewed Hassan I as above both himself and his disputants in such a way that would permit both parties to trust in the verdict. Similarly, Muhammad was more prone to consulting the sultan on local issues as in a letter from 1888 that requested "that he [The sultan] prescribe to us what should be done on this subject [the murder of a local woman]."[74] This greater submission was also reflected in Muhammad's business pursuits. In one of Muhammad's first requests to the sultan on behalf of the House of Illigh he asked for a house in Essaouira which would have facilitated his ability to trade there. Seeking greater investment in Essaouira suggests Muhammad was less interested in trying to open up his own ports in the Sous than the prior generation and more firmly committed to operating within *makhzan* authority.

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[72] Muhammad bin Husayn bin Hashim to Hassan I, May 1, 1886, in *Le Makhzen et Le Sous Al-Aqsa*, trans. Paul Pascon (Paris: Editions du C.N.R.S., 1988), 135.
[73] bin Husayn bin Hashim to Hassan I.
[74] Muhammad bin Husayn bin Hashim to Hassan I, December 28, 1888, in *Le Makhzen et Le Sous Al-Aqsa*, trans. Paul Pascon (Paris: Editions du C.N.R.S., 1988), 161-162.

This greater seeming subordination may also simply be reflective of a greater degree of closeness between the sultan and the House of Illigh at the time Muhammad took over as the family's leader. By 1886, In contrast to the *mahalla* of 1882 which had been preceded by decades of frigidity between the House of Illigh and the sultan, the relationship between the sultan and the Simlalis was the warmest it had ever been. This friendship is evidenced by a letter from Hassan I following the reception at Illigh of his son, the future Sultan 'Abd al-'Aziz. In this letter Hassan I writes, "in all ways you are ours, you count among the people who enjoy our affection. Your house is our house, your home, ours."[75] This expression of warmth appears to show that a deep and abiding connection between the sultan and the House of Illigh had been formed by this point in contrast to the mistrust that had characterized the early relationship between the two. The sheer volume of communication in the period following Hassan's return north after the *mahalla* also demonstrates a greater closeness. Hassan I encouraged much more frequent updates from Muhammad, ordering the *qa'id* to keep him up to date on the happenings in the Sous. His letters from this period frequently include lines like "you did the right thing by informing. Don't deprive us of any news."[76] It is hard to say if such commands were indicative of what the sultan felt was too little information coming through or simply a blanket reminder of Muhammad's responsibility as an informant. Nevertheless, they show that far from letting the relationship slip, Hassan I wanted to hear regularly from the new patriarch of Illigh. These admonitions seem to have been effective, as the average number of letters per year exchanged between the two and documented in the collection nearly doubled over the next few years. Muhammad also took to heart the order not to deprive the sultan of any news, sending frequent, brief updates even when little was happening. A missive from one such period reads "there is nothing new in these regions that can cause concern,

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[75] Hassan I to Husayn bin Hashim, June 7, 1886, in *Le Makhzen et Le Sous Al-Aqsa*, trans. Paul Pascon (Paris: Editions du C.N.R.S., 1988), 142.
[76] Hassan I to Muhammad bin Husayn bin Hashim, December 11, 1888, in *Le Makhzen et Le Sous Al-Aqsa*, trans. Paul Pascon (Paris: Editions du C.N.R.S., 1988), 160.

except that God, whose name is blessed and exalted, has filled his servants with blessings and sent upon them rains as their lands have become green and fertile… similarly, prices have fallen, and Muslims lead a gentle and quiet life."[77] This regular correspondence on relatively mundane matters stands in stark contrast to the letters Hassan I exchanged with bin Hashim, which chiefly concerned only the most pressing issues such as wars between the tribes and the doings of the European traders. Muhammad's greater back and forth as well as his greater tendency to appeal to the sultan's judgement show he was far more firmly integrated into the *makhzan* system than his father. There were certainly limits to Muhammad's ability to act as a proxy for the sultan, however, perhaps because more of his power was ultimately derived from Hassan I, rather than his own, regional legitimacy. At times, these limitations forced the sultan to interfere directly. In one letter, the Hassan I gently chastised Muhammad for asserting his good relation with the *zawiyas*, or religious brotherhoods, when he was unable to prevent tax evaders from taking shelter in one and was forced to ask the sultan for a royal order of cessation.[78] In spite of small incidents like this one, though, Muhammad appears to have been an extraordinarily effective surrogate for the sultan.

One of the key differences to emerge from the greater institutionalization of Muhammad's relationship to Hassan I was his proactivity on behalf of the *makhzan.* Following his father's death, and a brief slump in communications after the end of the 1886 *mahalla,* Muhammad set about trying to increase his ability to serve his now distant master. To this end, he tried to repair his family's relationships with other elites. For instance, in August 1888 he wrote the sultan, stating "reconciliation took place between us and him [al-Dlimi, an important member of the Sousi elite], which has cut short the continual increase in disagreement, the breakdown of relations, and the mutual abandonment that took place between him and my father… we submitted to it having

[77] Muhammad bin Husayn bin Hashim to Hassan I, February 2, 1889, in *Le Makhzen et Le Sous Al-Aqsa*, trans. Paul Pascon (Paris: Editions du C.N.R.S., 1988), 164.
[78] Hassan I to Muhammad bin Husayn bin Hashim, September 4, 1890, in *Le Makhzen et Le Sous Al-Aqsa*, trans. Paul Pascon (Paris: Editions du C.N.R.S., 1988), 194.

regard toward mutual aid with him in the affairs of the *makhzan.*"[79] In this passage, Muhammad explicitly links his attempts at reconnection to his ability to serve the *makhzan.* As Pascon notes, Muhammad obviously understood the needs of the state in the Sous and built his network in order to facilitate its goals.[80]

In addition to his involvement on behalf of the sultan's interests in controlling coastal trade, Muhammad sought to expand the *makhzan*'s involvement in the local economy. For instance in 1890, he advised the sultan "that there [were] two copper and lead mines in the mining region of the Sous" and suggested the sultan "take possession of this (the deposits) for the public treasury." [81] This initiative on behalf of the central government went far beyond anything his father did. More than simply following orders and providing intel on the politics of the region, Muhammad actively promoted the state's control over economic production. Muhammad's efforts on the sultan's behalf were not unrewarded, in the case of the mines, Hassan I put him personally in charge of extraction, so it is possible to see his actions in the light of pursuing his own interests in addition to those of the state. Either way, Muhammad clearly saw his fate as closely linked with that of the central government.[82]

The overall effectiveness of this shift in Hassan I's mode of political authority to a more institutional variety through the formalization of his relationship with the patriarchs of the Simlalis is perhaps best demonstrated in an episode involving the British traders from near the end of Hassan I's life. The success of the sultan's agenda in this case can be directly traced to mutual trust created by the nature of his relationship with Muhammad. First, Muhammad immediately reported to the sultan when European ships appeared on the Sousi coast. This early warning allowed Hassan

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[79] Muhammad bin Husayn bin Hashim to Hassan I, August 17, 1888, in *Le Makhzen et Le Sous Al-Aqsa*, trans. Paul Pascon (Paris: Editions du C.N.R.S., 1988), 156.
[80] Ennaji, *Le Makhzen et Le Sous Al-Aqsa: La Correspondance Politique de La Maison d'Iligh, 1821-1894*, 156.
[81] Hassan I to Muhammad bin Husayn bin Hashim, June 26, 1890, in *Le Makhzen et Le Sous Al-Aqsa*, trans. Paul Pascon (Paris: Editions du C.N.R.S., 1988), 189.
[82] Hassan I to bin Husayn bin Hashim.

I to "enact[] our sharifian order to our servants, the governors of the tribes of the ports of the Sous, who are responsible for their (ports) protection, to pay full attention to bring order there, estimating their numbers and selecting their recruits."[83] This preparation meant that the garrisons of the Sous would be prepared to rebuff any Europeans who might attempt to make land fall for the purposes of smuggling. The sultan then placed Muhammad in charge of this defense ordering him to "assist them [the governors] in this mission and support them in reestablishing order… until our sharifian order is carried out in accordance with its provisions ."[84] In the thick of the affair, Muhammad received a letter from Mackenzie and the North West Africa Company that stated "we are willing if you approve this [offer] to conclude a treaty of trade with you that will bring us profit, you and us, by the power and strength of God."[85] Rather than be tempted by this offer, however, Muhammad doubled down on his defense of the coasts. When emissaries of the sultan came to Illigh after visiting the coastal towns of the Sous and reported that all was being conducting in accordance with the sultan's orders, Muhammad followed up. He then wrote a letter to the sultan stating "We investigated the reality of the affair and we found that it was the opposite of what they had reported to us. In fact, the guard in these ports has been interrupted for years to the present day."[86] Muhammad then went so far as to suggest "that some of the soldiers settled in the territory of the Ait Ba 'Amran and Oued Noun should be distributed in these ports and established there… for guarding the tribes, without the army being enjoined, it is a difficult undertaking for them and cannot hold."[87] Not only does he suggest policy to the sultan, demonstrating his role as an advisor, his suggestion is in direct contrast to that of his father's more self-interested advice of the decade

[83] Hassan I to Muhammad bin Husayn bin Hashim, November 11, 1891, in *Le Makhzen et Le Sous Al-Aqsa*, trans. Paul Pascon (Paris: Editions du C.N.R.S., 1988), 209-210.
[84] Hassan I to bin Husayn bin Hashim.
[85] North West African Company ltd. to Muhammad bin Husayn bin Hashim, February 4, 1892, in *Le Makhzen et Le Sous Al-Aqsa*, trans. Paul Pascon (Paris: Editions du C.N.R.S., 1988), 212.
[86] Muhammad bin Husayn bin Hashim to Hassan I, May 21, 1892, in *Le Makhzen et Le Sous Al-Aqsa*, trans. Paul Pascon (Paris: Editions du C.N.R.S., 1988), 215-216.
[87] bin Husayn bin Hashim to Hassan I.

before. Muhammad calls for additional *makhzan* soldiers to guard the coasts, showing his dedication to the sultan's agenda even after receiving a potentially lucrative offer from Mackenzie who had previously bought off a number of other elites.[88] In the margins of this letter, Pascon notes, the sultan has written "he [Muhammad] showed the way, may God lead him; put it into practice."[89] This note clearly demonstrates the sultan's whole hearted approval of Muhammad's actions. In response, Hassan I demonstrated his trust by placing Muhammad over the other governors of the region to ensure his orders were carried out.[90] This position made Muhammad officially the most powerful man in the Sous, what Pascon terms a "super-governor."[91] In his new role, Muhammad investigated the other governors further and suggested to the sultan "it is appropriate to send them a reprimand on the part of our master, because they are negligent with regard to custody, contrary to what is proposed." [92] Beyond this suggestion, Muhammad even reportedly "engaged in a struggle with the al-Afrana for their refusal and opposition to carry out *makhzan* service."[93] From these actions, it is clear that in shifting approaches, Hassan I had developed a powerful servant, loyal to the state and capable of leveraging his networks and relationships to promote the sultan's authority in the Sous by reining in the tribes and policing trade. Through a new more institutional form of political authority expressed in the formalization his relationship with Muhammad, Hassan managed to project his power through internal channels to control this peripheral region far more effectively than he had been able to three decades prior.

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[88] Ennaji, *Le Makhzen et Le Sous Al-Aqsa: La Correspondance Politique de La Maison d'Iligh, 1821-1894*, 208.
[89] Ennaji, 216.
[90] Hassan I to Muhammad bin Husayn bin Hashim, January 14, 1893, in Le Makhzen et Le Sous Al-Aqsa, trans. Paul Pascon (Paris: Editions du C.N.R.S., 1988), 223.
[91] Ennaji, *Le Makhzen et Le Sous Al-Aqsa: La Correspondance Politique de La Maison d'Iligh, 1821-1894*, 223.
[92] Muhammad bin Husayn bin Hashim to Hassan I, March 14, 1893, in *Le Makhzen et Le Sous Al-Aqsa*, trans. Paul Pascon (Paris: Editions du C.N.R.S., 1988), 223-224.
[93] bin Husayn bin Hashim to Hassan I.

Conclusion

In response to the growing threat of European companies conducting illicit, untaxed trade with the elites in the Sous, during the second half of the nineteenth century, Sultan Hassan I drew on his political authority in an attempt to exert power over the local economy. By using the patriarchs of the House of Illigh as proxies in the region, Hassan I attempted to leverage his authority to restore *makhzan* control over trade with the Europeans. At first, the more personal relationship-based form of political authority the sultan employed struggled to meet his aims, requiring his direct interference and the externalization of claims of political authority through the *mahallas*. Later, however, through the increasing formalization of his relationship with Husayn bin Hashim and his son Muhammad, Hassan I managed a complementary policy of promoting his authority internally by leveraging the connections of the House of Illigh within the Sous. While bin Hashim remained self-interested, often dealing behind the sultan's back, particularly during the cooling of the relationship in the 1870s, following the *mahalla* of 1882, Hassan I cultivated a more formalized relationship with him that led to a new institutionalized type of political authority. This new form of authority, cemented in the governorship of bin Hashim's successor Muhammad, ultimately proved far more effective in achieving the sultan's agenda of halting the black-market European trade.

As surrogates of the *makhzan* the Simlalis acted as mediators between tribes on the sultan's behalf, provided intelligence on events in the Sous, and, most importantly, policed trade with the Europeans. While the proximity of British companies like Mackenzie's North West Africa Company tempted Sousi leaders with the promise of wealth through direct, tax free trade agreements with European companies, the sultan was able to dampen enthusiasm for the trade by projecting his authority internally through the networks of the Simlali family. This new strategy coupled with the externalization of the question of authority succeeded in securing the Hassan I's dominance over

the Sousi economy for the duration of his lifetime. At the same time, his reliance on forms of political authority that differed from those practiced in the West had already planted the seeds for Europeans to contest his claims.

Chapter II
On the Road: Competing Visions of the *Mahalla*

Introduction

This chapter overlaps chronologically with the one before, but rather than looking at changes between forms of political authority rooted in domestic relationships, this section will examine Hassan I's attempts to externalize his claims to authority. In the context of political authority, externalization consists of grounding the basis of the right to command in the recognition of that right by outside powers. To demonstrate this attempt at externalization, I will focus on the three great military expeditions of Hassan I to southern Morocco – the 1882 and 1886 *mahalla*s to the Sous and the 1892 *mahalla* to Tafilalt. These expeditions reflected Hassan I's attempts to practice different kinds of political authority for the benefit of different observers. Furthermore, the textual accounts of these *mahalla*s show us the ways narrative contestation became increasingly critical as Hassan I was forced by the continued economic incursion of European powers to turn toward the external recognition of other states as an important basis for establishing his political authority.

The three great expeditions represented unique opportunities for authors, both Moroccan and Western, to define the sultan's authority over the southern edges of his state. Because he came into direct contact with the tribes that inhabited these zones far from the royal capitals, these *mahalla*s were a rare opportunity to observe and comment directly on the underlying relationship between the sultan and those areas. Through the diplomatic and quasi-diplomatic documents such as official histories, travelogues, and consular reports that stemmed from these observations, authors competed to craft narratives to either legitimize or cast aspersions on the sultan's authority over these southern borderlands in accordance with their political agendas. Western diplomats wrote to facilitate the colonial project, while Moroccan accounts tried to oppose it. In other words,

these documents served as political tools in the diplomatic confrontation between Morocco and the imperial powers.

These narratives also reveal a fundamental difference between how Western and Moroccan observers understood political authority. Western authors implicitly defined political authority in terms of state control over the economy and violent force — a discourse tied to the European notion of sovereignty. This Western conception of the state, which would find its best articulation in the work of the German sociologist Max Weber, developed from the political shifts in Europe during the nineteenth century. Ultimately, the West came to establish a unique definition of political authority, which it referred to as sovereignty, in which the right to command individuals was delegated to a state based on its bureaucratic capability to implement a complete monopoly on violence in a defined geographic space.[94] The choice of this metric for political authority, however, cannot be wholly detached from the desire of imperialists to deny legitimacy to rulers like the sultan, as shown by its use in documents like the 1885 Treaty of Berlin that set out the framework for the "Scramble for Africa."[95] In contrast, within the Islamic context, religious prestige and the ability to defend the Muslim community continued to be important bases upon which political authority could be established. This construction, though dating back to the earliest Islamic caliphates, was especially salient during the nineteenth century as Islamic states increasingly fell under European — and more concerningly Christian —control.[96] In addition to reflecting these divergent understandings of political authority, the authors also show Hassan I's awareness of the increased importance of the European construction of sovereignty. The descriptions of his expeditions demonstrate how he attempted to adapt older tools such as the *mahalla* in order to

[94] Richard Ned Lebow, "Max Weber and International Relations," in *Max Weber and International Relations*, ed. Richard Ned Lebow (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2017), 17–18.
[95] General Act of the Berlin Conference on West Africa.
[96] Abdellah Hammoudi, *Master and Disciple: The Cultural Foundations of Moroccan Authoritarianism* (Chicago and London: University of Chicago Press, 1997), 54–55.

perform political authority in novel ways that would be legible to audiences domestically and abroad.

Hassan I spent about a quarter of his reign on *mahalla*s, meaning that they were a central component of his statesmanship. Translated literally, the term *mahalla* means “encampment,”[97] but it is more often rendered as “expedition,” especially in the Moroccan context.[98] It is also used interchangeably with another Arabic term *harka* which refers more specifically to a military operation and carries ideas of movement.[99] Most frequently these expeditions were from one of his four capitals – Fez, Marrakesh, Meknes, and Rabat – to another, passing through the lands of tribes such as the Beni Musa and the Beni Hassan in order to maintain the peace.[100] At the same time, he would collect taxes and receive reaffirmations of loyalty from local notables in the form of a ceremony known as the *bay’a*, which has its origins in the oaths of allegiance sworn by the companions of the prophet Muhammad.[101] During the *bay’a*, important regional figures would gather in a public space to acknowledge the authority of the sultan and his status as caliph according to the Sunni tradition.[102] The core of Hassan I’s troops on these *mahalla*s consisted of his elite soldiers – the *‘askar nizami* [regular military]. The product of Hassan I and his father’s efforts to reform the royal military, this corps was equipped with modern weapons and trained by European and Ottoman instructors.[103] In addition to nearly five-thousand *‘askar nizami*, the *mahalla*s included eleven to twelve-thousand irregular troops and cavalry sourced from loyal

[97] Hans Wehr, “Mahalla,” in *A Dictionary of Modern Written Arabic*, ed. J Milton Cowan (Wiesbaden: Otto Harrassowitz KG, 1994).
[98] Louis Arnaud, *Au Temps Des “Mehallas” Ou Le Maroc de 1860 à 1912* (Casablanca: Éditions Atlantides, 1952), 6; Pennell, *Morocco since 1830: A History*, 22.
[99] Hans Wehr, “Harka,” in *A Dictionary of Modern Written Arabic*, ed. J Milton Cowan (Wiesbaden: Otto Harrassowitz KG, 1994).
[100] Pennell, *Morocco since 1830: A History*, 98; 104.
[101] Gilson Miller, *A History of Modern Morocco*, 41.
[102] Andrew Marsham, “Bay’a,” in *Encyclopaedia of Islam*, ed. Kate Fleet et al. (Brill Online, 2014), https://referenceworks.brillonline.com/entries/encyclopaedia-of-islam-3/baya-COM_24878?s.num=0&s.f.s2_parent=s.f.book.encyclopaedia-of-islam-3&s.q=ba%27ya.
[103] Gilson Miller, *A History of Modern Morocco*, 39–41.

tribes.[104] The sheer size of these troop movements made them extremely costly for the *makhzan* to field. The burden often fell most heavily, however, on the tribes whose territory they passed through, as these hosts were obligated to care for and feed the sultan's troops.[105] These supplies were extracted in the form of a *muna* [provisions] – a traditional offering of livestock, grain, and hot food given to the sultan or visitors under his protection by the chieftains of the lands in which they were traveling.[106]

*Mahalla*s were not unique to Hassan I, however. Such expeditions have a long history in in Morocco and the Islamic world. The practice of the *mahalla* has origins in the early Islamic empires, even in the conquests of Muhammad, himself. This kind of military excursion and the idea of an itinerant ruler formed a critical element in the expansion of Islam.[107] For the 'Alawite dynasty in particular, the idea of what Moroccan anthropologist Abdellah Hammoudi terms a "peripatetic center" was crucial to basic governance. [108] This kind of mobile power hub provided the sultan with a means to suppress dissent among the many internal factions of the state. Since the beginning of the dynasty, all previous sultans had undertaken such expeditions, just not with the frequency of Hassan I.[109] Furthermore, Hassan I adapted this tool in novel ways to address the distinct challenges he faced at the end of the nineteenth century.

The three *expedition*s addressed in this chapter were unique for a number of reasons that demonstrate how Hassan I revamped the *mahalla* to meet the new challenges of this period. Rather than journeys between centers of *makhzan* power, as was typical of earlier expeditions, they were excursions to the parts of the Moroccan state most distant from the seats of 'Alawite authority.

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[104] Pennell, *Morocco since 1830: A History*, 104.
[105] Pennell, 104.
[106] Edmondo De Amicis, *Morocco: Its People and Places*, trans. Caroline Roll-Tilton (London, Paris, and New York: Cassell, Petter, Galpin & Co., 1882), 103.
[107] Ali Anooshahr, *The Ghazi Sultans and the Frontiers of Islam: A Comparative Study of the Late Medieval and Early Modern Periods* (New York: Routledge, 2009), 2.
[108] Hammoudi, *Master and Disciple: The Cultural Foundations of Moroccan Authoritarianism*, 62.
[109] Pennell, *Morocco since 1830: A History*, 104.

Additionally, these *mahalla*s were mostly self-sufficient, bringing food and supplies along with them, rather than relying on local tribes.[110] Actual fighting was quite limited, which shows the three expeditions served a purpose beyond the simple suppression of armed rebellion. Instead, I will argue that the sultan used these *mahalla*s to make the *makhzan* political authority over the periphery of his state legible to both domestic opposition and Western powers.

This chapter draws from a number of primary source materials dating from the late nineteenth century. In particular, I will compare the account of a *makhzani* historian with European travelogues and American consular reports from the same period. This selection of sources will allow me to interrogate how different actors portrayed Hassan I's *mahalla*s in accordance with their political agendas. Additionally, the varying emphases of these texts will show how Hassan I used these expeditions to cater to the differing notions of political authority in the Western and Islamic contexts. Both kinds of accounts reveal that during this period, trade with Europeans was the central source of tension between Hassan I and the tribes of southern Morocco. Where the accounts diverge is in their characterization of the *mahalla* and the independence of the southern tribes. On the one hand, the official Moroccan account depicts these *mahalla*s to southern Morocco as largely peaceful restorations of royal, political authority in rebellious regions of the sultanate, while Western sources describe these expeditions as largely predatory attempts to subjugate independent groups. As in the case of the letters from the previous chapter, these diplomatic and quasi-diplomatic documents can be viewed as constitutive speech acts. Because in an externalized model of political authority, the perception and acceptance of outside powers is the basis of the claim to authority, in writing narratives of the existence or absence of political authority documentarians were actually helping to establish that very existence or absence. Ultimately, these accounts, in chronicling the *mahalla*s of Hassan I, became sites of narrative contestation about the

[110] Pennell, 105.

legitimacy of the sultan's claims to authority over southern Morocco and critical components in the transformation of that authority to an externalized model.

Ports, Profits, and Politics: The 1882 *Mahalla* to the Sous

The initial *mahalla* I will examine is that to the Sous in 1882. This expedition was largely a political campaign to counter increasing European influence in the Sous, which grew in the period following Morocco's loss of the War of Tetouan in 1860.[111] During the expedition, the sultan was accompanied by 25,000-40,000 soldiers and fifteen to thirty artillery pieces.[112] In a departure from the norm for *mahallas*, the sultan did not require the Sousis — rendered destitute by a famine that swept through the region that year – to feed his army. Instead, a ship supplied the forces from the sea.[113] Despite this large number of troops, very little fighting occurred. Rather than military action, Hassan I appointed governors, received oaths of loyalty (*bay'as*), gathered taxes, re-establish a *makhzan* base at Tiznit, and constructed a port at Asaca.[114]

The first account I will analyze is that of the Moroccan chronicler Ahmad ibn Khalid al-Nasiri found in his magnum opus *Kitab al-istiqsa li-akhbar duwal al-maghrib al-aqsa* [The Book of Investigation for News of the Nations of the Islamic Far West]. First published in Cairo in 1894, the complete volume covers the entire history of the Maghrib from the Arab conquest in the 700s until the ascension to the throne of Abd al-Aziz, the son of Hassan I in 1894.[115] The author, al-Nasiri, was born in Salé in 1835 to a notable family and spent much of his life as a *makhzan* official. He held various rolls in the customs service, the royal household, and as a superintendent of state

[111] Gilson Miller, *A History of Modern Morocco*, 26–27.
[112] Pennell, *Morocco since 1830: A History*, 105.
[113] Pennell, 105.
[114] Pennell, 105.
[115] Évariste Leví-Provençal, "Al-Nāṣir al-Salāwī," in *Encyclopaedia of Islam*, ed. P. Bearman et al. (Brill Online, 2012), https://referenceworks.brillonline.com/entries/encyclopaedia-of-islam-2/al-nasir-al-salawi-SIM_5828.

possessions before returning to Salé where he taught and wrote several books.[116] He combined the role of a civil servant and a historian, which places al-Nasiri in a long tradition of scholars in the Islamic world whose works functioned as quasi-legal documents that facilitated state power. *Kitab al-istiqsa* is a particularly noteworthy tome for a number of reasons. In addition to providing a firsthand account of the reign of Hassan I, it was one of the earliest Moroccan attempts to produce a general history of the country. It was also the first Moroccan history to reference European sources and to be read by European orientalists immediately upon its publication.[117] Because al-Nasiri was writing for both Arab and European audiences, the book heralded a new period in Moroccan historiography. Al-Nasiri was a member of the *makhzan* at the time these events occurred, so he is a first-hand witness to the royal perspective. His narrative even includes direct quotes from Hassan I that illuminate the sultan's intentions.[118] Given the author's background and connection to Hassan I – the book is actually dedicated to him – the narrative in *Kitab al-istiqsa*, particularly for the nineteenth century, reflects the viewpoint of the *makhzan*.[119]

Al-Nasiri and Western writers tend to agree on most of the details of the 1882 *mahalla* to the Sous, but they differ greatly in terms of how they portray the expedition's intent. As a loyal member of the *makhzan,* al-Nasiri crafted his narrative in accordance with the political needs of the sultan. In particular, al-Nasiri describes the *mahalla* in such a way as to combat any doubt of the Hassan I's political authority over the region, especially from an Islamic standpoint. Notably, al-Nasiri uses the term *ghazw*, rather than *mahalla* or *harka*, when referring to the sultan's expedition.[120] A term heavily steeped in the tradition of the Islamic conquest, *ghazw* is most often

[116] Leví-Provençal.
[117] Leví-Provençal.
[118] Leví-Provençal; Ahmad bin Khalid al-Nasiri, *Kitab al-istiqsa li-akhbar duwal al-maghrib al-aqsa*, vol. 8 (Casablanca: Ministry of Culture and Communication, 2001), 192.
[119] Leví-Provençal, "Al-Nāṣir al-Salāwī."
[120] al-Nasiri, *Kitab al-istiqsa li-akhbar duwal al-maghrib al-aqsa*.

translated as "invasion," "raid," or "assault."[121] The decision to use this term is significant as it links this expedition to the battles of the Prophet which are often referred to by the same root.[122] Al-Nasiri's audience would have been deeply familiar with the connotation of this word and so would have associated these expeditions with the religious element of the sultan's authority.

In addition to his choice of terminology, al-Nasiri depicts the *mahalla,* after its arrival in the Sous, as consisting primarily of meetings between Hassan I and various local notables.[123] He spends a large section of his account depicting oaths of loyalty. He describes the "tribal elders, notables, and sheiks" of the region as "organized in lines of listening and obedience and collective service" and states that "their sharifs and their marabouts prostrated themselves in recognition before our Most Honored [the sultan]."[124] He also states that other important figures "stretched the necks of deference and extended the hands of peacefulness [to Hassan I]."[125] This emphasis on obedience and deference highlights the allegiance and loyalty of the region to Hassan I. In particular, the reference to the local sharifs and marabouts' recognition of Hassan I is important as both groups had the potential to compete with the sultan's religious authority. The sharifs, like the sultan, often referred to as his Sharifian Majesty, were direct descendants of the prophet Muhammad and thus had the similar claims to divine blessing (or *baraka*) as Hassan I.[126] Marabouts were also important local religious figures akin to saints in the North African context. While not necessarily of Muhammad's bloodline, marabouts possessed *baraka* which manifested in great religious devotion

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[121] Hans Wehr, "Ghazw," in *A Dictionary of Modern Written Arabic*, ed. J Milton Cowan (Wiesbaden: Otto Harrassowitz KG, 1994).
[122] David B. Cook, "Ghazw," in *Encyclopaedia of Islam*, ed. Kate Fleet et al. (Brill Online, 2013), https://referenceworks.brillonline.com/entries/encyclopaedia-of-islam-3/ghazw-COM_27455?s.num=0&s.f.s2_parent=s.f.book.encyclopaedia-of-islam-3&s.q=ghazw.
[123] al-Nasiri, *Kitab al-istiqsa li-akhbar duwal al-maghrib al-aqsa*, 8:193.
[124] al-Nasiri, 8:193.
[125] al-Nasiri, 8:193.
[126] al-Nasiri, 8:193; Mohamed El Mansour, "The Sanctuary in Precolonial Morocco," in *In the Shadow of the Sultan: Culture, Power, and Politics in Morocco*, ed. Rahma Bourqia and Susan Gilson Miller (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1999), 59.

or miraculous acts.[127] By dwelling on the submission of these key political and religious figures, al-Nasiri emphasizes Hassan I's supremacy within the Islamic community as the *amir al-mu'minin* or commander of the faithful. This title, held by the 'Alawite sultan to this day, underscores the personal religious authority of the sultan and his claim to be the rightly guided leader of all Muslims.[128] Both sharifs and marabouts possessed elements of religious legitimacy due to their possession of *baraka*, so by depicting their deference, al-Nasiri helped Hassan I to co-opt their authority to shore up his own according to the Islamic conception.

Al-Nasiri also reaffirms the sultan's Islamic political authority in his description of the appointment of judges during the *mahalla*. In al-Nasiri's words, following the expedition "we [the *makhzan*] were in charge of them through judges including enough to establish the divine teachings of religion."[129] This action, like the oaths of fealty, demonstrated the power of the sultan over the region, as the judges Hassan I appointed would continue to project his influence and rule after the sultan himself returned north. As in his descriptions of the oaths of loyalty, al-Nasiri reminds his reader of the religious basis for Hassan I's authority, appealing to Islamic notions of political authority. In mentioning the appointment of judges, al-Nasiri presents the sultan performing the role of a proper Muslim ruler, whose foremost concern is the appropriate practice of Islam. For those Muslim critics of Hassan I who were concerned by a number of his reforms, particularly those they saw as concessions to the Europeans, this description would speak to the sultan's fitness as a ruler.[130]

In depicting Hassan I's construction of a new port, al-Nasiri shows his awareness of the need to present the sultan's political authority to a European audience as well. According to al-Nasiri, "[the sultan] opened the port in Oued Noun at place called Asaca on the land of the two

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[127] El Mansour, "The Sanctuary in Precolonial Morocco," 59.
[128] Pennell, *Morocco since 1830: A History*, 14.
[129] al-Nasiri, *Kitab al-istiqsa li-akhbar duwal al-maghrib al-aqsa*, 8:193.
[130] Pennell, *Morocco since 1830: A History*, 106.

tribes, the Takna and Ait Ba 'Amran. With its opening, it creates a sound defense and facilitates selling and buying for the people of that place."[131] This aspect of his narrative addresses certain aspects of the Western notion of sovereignty at this time. By showing the sultan as the source of economic infrastructure and a facilitator of capitalist markets, al-Nasiri speaks to the Western conception of a sovereign state's ability to impact the economy and a modern state's support for capitalism. As a scholar who was in active exchange with Europeans, this passage demonstrates al-Nasiri's contribution to Hassan I's project of making *makhzan* authority legible to both the Islamic world and Europeans. Yet, al-Nasiri is careful to claim that the motivation for the *mahalla* was not completely economic. He writes, "the more important goal than these blessed aspects was the protection of the sacred honor of these Muslims and the defense of their lands and their necks and their money from those [Europeans] who aspired to it."[132] By portraying the event in this way, al-Nasiri returns to Islamic notions of political authority, making the case that the *mahalla* was essentially protective in nature, rather than a means of acquiring territory. As a result, the *mahalla* becomes a part of a *makhzan* narrative of Hassan I's executing his duty to defend the Muslim community from exploitive infidels.

In addition to al-Nasiri, two Western observers documented the 1882 *mahalla* in a travelogue called *Moorish Loto Leaves*. This account echoes many of the narrative details of al-Nasiri's account, but places more of an emphasis on the militant aspect of the *mahalla*. The authors, two English adventurers, George D. Cowan and R. L. N. Johnston, spoke Arabic and lived in Essaouira where Johnston was at one point British vice consul.[133] In 1882, while exploring Southern Morocco, they briefly visited Hassan I's troops who were in the midst of the *mahalla*. Unlike al-Nasiri, Cowan and Johnston write about the troops' tendency to demand provisions of the regions

[131] al-Nasiri, *Kitab al-istiqsa li-akhbar duwal al-maghrib al-aqsa*, 8:193.
[132] al-Nasiri, 8:193.
[133] John Fisher, *Outskirts of Empire: Studies in British Power Projection* (New York: Routledge, 2019), 146.

they passed through and their willingness to use force to extract them. In one passage, they claim "Not seldom, on arriving within a district where supplies have been withheld and other symptoms of sulkiness exist, his majesty has ordered shells to be discharged, at midnight, in all directions; thereby considerably astonishing and occasionally inconveniencing the natives."[134] By referencing the refusal of tribes to render the expected supplies to royal forces, Cowan and Johnston undercut the sultan's claims to political authority from a particularly Western perspective. They contribute to a narrative where the sultan lacks the ability to establish economic policy in this region in contrast to the Western definition of sovereignty. The authors use of the term "sulkiness" is really an implicit assertion that the sultan does not truly possess authority over these tribes. Simultaneously, their stress on the resort to violent force reveals how Cowan and Johnston conceptualize sovereignty within a Weberian definition where a monopoly on violence is at the core of state power. The authors also talk about the *mahalla* as a means for the royal troops to supplement their pay through pillage, writing "No wonder that, on such pay, the prospect of 'eating up' an unruly tribe should immediately bring the battalions up to their full strength"[135] and asserting that "subsequent wants of his [a given *qa'id's*] little regiment may be supplied from the legitimate 'spoils of war,' i.e., the homesteads and matamoras of rebel clans."[136] This emphasis on pillage, sharply contrasts with al-Nasiri's depiction of the *mahalla* as protective. Instead, Cowan and Johnston present the *mahalla* as a predatory excursion in which force is used to extract wealth from violently resistant regions. Again, this presentation challenges the notion that the sultan possessed authority over this area at least according to the Western metric of sovereignty. If a state can wage war with a territory, that territory is not yet a part of the state.

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[134] George D. Cowan and R. L. N. Johnston, *Moorish Lotos Leaves: Glimpses of Southern Morocco* (London: Tinsley Brothers, 1883), 226.
[135] Cowan and Johnston, 225.
[136] Cowan and Johnston, 227.

Notably in the case of the 1882 *mahalla*, however, they mention the restraint of the sultan in allowing the kind of looting they contend was typical of the *mahalla*. The following conversation with a drillmaster in the sultan's army returning from the expedition is particularly elucidating on this front:

> He [a drillmaster] went on to say:
>
> "Thank God, this expedition is over! Since you were with us in Messah [Massa], the Faithful have been dying more than a score a day. Rice was once at tenpence a pound… the sultan would not let us fight, or we might have helped ourselves."
>
> "Had you no fighting then at all?"
>
> "Only a trifle. We knocked down a few houses with cannon after the tribe had run away. I'll not lie to you. The Soos [Sous] people are too weak this year from famine to resist, and they brought into camp all they had of what Cidna (our sovereign) wants."[137]

This passage corroborates the lack of violence during the Sous campaign and swift capitulation of the region to the demands of the sultan. Nevertheless, Cowan and Johnston are quick to undercut the idea that this obedience is evidence of the Western notion of sovereignty by tying this lack of resistance to an ongoing famine. By including this quote, they explain away the appearance of the sultan's control in the region by implying he would have been militarily challenged if not for extenuating circumstances. At the same time, the comment of the drillmaster on the connection between the lack of fighting and the malnourishment of the army also reinforces that the *mahalla* more typically relied on pillaging as a means of sustaining itself.

With regard to the motivations for the *mahalla*, Cowan and Johnston are less charitable than al-Nasiri, but they still name the threat of European trade as the immediate cause of the expedition.

[137] Cowan and Johnston, 231.

They begin by establishing "For more than seventy years the large trans-Atlasian provinces of Soos [Sous], Ait Bou Amran [Ait Ba 'Amran], and Noon [Oued Noun] had been practically independent."[138] The political nature of their characterization of the Sous is extremely explicit in this passage. Through their labeling of the region as "practically independent," they overtly reject the legitimacy of the sultan's claims over the region. By contextualizing this independence as stretching back more than a generation, they assert a long-standing precedent for autonomy. Furthermore they assert that the father of Husayn bin Hashim, whom they call the region's most powerful chief, actually renounced the authority of Hassan I's predecessor Sultan Sliman in 1810.[139] These details create a picture of the Sous as, at the least, an unwilling part of Morocco and, at the most, a separate political entity that occasionally came into conflict with the 'Alawite sultanate. As a British vice-consul, Johnston in particular had a vested political interest in portraying this region as beyond the boundaries of the sultan's authority. Because of the sultan's opposition to European traders south of the port of Essouria, if Johnston could belie the sultan's claim to the region, he could legitimize, in Western eyes, the British attempts to open the economic relations with the tribes of the Sous through local leaders like bin Hashim.

Like al-Nasiri, Cowan and Johnston mention the threat of the Sousi tribes opening their own port. Although al-Nasiri claims this demand for a port was related to the implementation of the Treaty of Tetouan, Cowan and Johnston disagree. Instead, they assert it would be the result of negotiations between bin Hashim and the Europeans.[140] They also imply a potentially vengeful motivation, claiming that Hassan I, as a prince, had been humiliated by bin Hashim. In their telling, when Hassan I arrived with a few hundred troops in the early 1870s bin Hashim had threatened him, saying "'If you come in peace you will return to your place; should you cross the river [the

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[138] Cowan and Johnston, 202.
[139] Cowan and Johnston, 202.
[140] Cowan and Johnston, 202.

Massa], upon your head be the consequence.'"[141] Based on the correspondence analyzed in the previous chapter, this anecdote seems to be untrue. In Cowan and Johnston's narrative, only once Hassan I arrived in the Sous and the Sousi tribes had paid him homage and presented him with petitions explaining the difficulty of transporting trade goods to the port at Essaouira, did he announce the opening of the port at Asaca.[142] Thus, rather than depicting the *mahalla* as benevolent attempt to protect the Sous from predatory European traders as in al-Nasiri's telling, the account presented in *Moorish Lotos Leaves*, portrays the expedition as an opportunistic attempt to subsume the authority of the local leader of an independent region.

The American consular dispatches from the early 1880s also cover the 1882 *mahalla* to the Sous. During the period being examined, the primary U.S. diplomat in Morocco was the consul at the American Legation in Tangier, who would regularly compose missives to the American secretary of state informing him of developments and happenings throughout the country. This information was largely sourced through a network of local "protégés" who worked for the consul in exchange for diplomatic immunity and other privileges.[143] For the majority of Hassan I's reign the consul general was Felix A. Matthews, who was replaced in 1894 shortly before Hassan I's death. Born in Tangier, Matthews later immigrated to the U.S. from Spain where he served in the American Civil War. After the war, in 1870, having achieved the rank of colonel, Matthews return to Morocco as the American Consul General.[144] Matthews had a unique insight into Morocco thanks to his Arabic language abilities and his long association. Despite his distance from the events, his letters provide a more detailed Western account than Cowan and Johnston's book.

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[141] Cowan and Johnston, 203.
[142] Cowan and Johnston, 204.
[143] Gilson Miller, *A History of Modern Morocco*, 43–44.
[144] "Tangier's Portuguese-American Connection Is Focus of Legation Hosted Event," *Tangier American Legation* (blog), 2011, http://legation.ipower.com/blog/?p=290.

Matthews, like the others, points to European trade with the Sousi tribes as the trigger for the *mahalla*. Specifically, he names Donald Mackenzie's establishment of a trading post at Cape Juby or Tarfaya, a town at the southern edge of the Sous, under the auspices of the North West Africa Company as the primary threat. According to Matthews' letter on June 12, 1881, Hassan I "in April and May 1880… [wrote] to the principal chieftain of the Wadnoon [Oued Noun] independent tribes or semi republics requesting him to repulse all direct intercourse with Europeans… [promising] to give the chief a sum of forty thousand dollars by compensation."[145] Matthews goes on to write that the sultan failed to pay this sum and the chief – Husayn bin Hashim – returned to trading with the Europeans.[146] It is *this* breakdown in negotiations, rather than one al-Nasiri mentions about the Treaty of Tetouan that Matthews references in his 1882 letter explaining the *mahalla* to the American secretary of state.[147] In this anecdote, Matthews, like Cowan and Johnston, contests the notion of Hassan I's sovereignty over the Sous. The sultan's inability to control his own economic policy without paying off local leaders, coupled with the depiction of the *makhzan* as too economically impotent to even come up with the offered funds undercuts Hassan I's claims to political authority from a Western perspective. Matthews' assertions are even less subtle than Cowan and Johnston's in their political nature, likely because his reports are explicitly diplomatic documents. This naked politicism shown through his reference to the tribes of the Oued Noun as "independent" and even as "semi-republics." As an American diplomat speaking to an American audience, Matthew's use of "republic" is no accident. This claim of republicanism implicitly calls for the United States to support these tribes as ideological bedfellows against the authoritarian Moroccan state.

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[145] Felix A. Matthews, "Operations of the French in Wadnoon, West Coast of Africa," Consular Dispatch (Tangier: United States Consulate at Tangier, June 12, 1881), TALIM.
[146] Matthews.
[147] Felix A. Matthews, "Morocco Affairs," Consular Dispatch (Tangier: United States Consulate at Tangier, June 29, 1882), TALIM.

In addition to punishing bin Hashim for illicit trade with the English at Cape Juby and creating a competing port for Sousi produce, Matthews also explicitly states the goals of the *mahalla* as "subjecting these tribes" and "to reduce these tribes to a fitting recognition of the claims of the Imperial Treasury."[148] Through the use of the term "subjecting" Matthews asserts that these tribes are not already subjects of the sultan. He furthermore suggests, like Cowan and Johnston, that the *mahalla* may be in part a personal vendetta of Hassan I against bin Hashim over the sultan's humiliation while a prince. Above all, though, Matthews stresses the monetary nature of this endeavor writing, "Nothing short of a heavy contribution to the treasury will dissuade… the Emperor from attempting to chastise this formidable vassal."[149] By making the *mahalla* about money along with his consistent (except in the above quotation) reference to the tribes as "independent," Matthews contributes to a narrative, contrary to al-Nasiri's, that Hassan I is pillaging rather than protecting. Matthew's account aligns with his role as a Western political figure working for a government sympathetic to, if not directly involved in, the imperial project in Africa. His commentary portrays a petty, spiteful ruler whose fractured regime falls short of the Western definition of sovereignty.

Despite their competing agendas, these sources collectively establish historical events which show the ways Hassan I attempted to adapt the *mahalla* to make his political authority legible to both Muslim and Western audiences. Aware of the importance of ensuring the European imperial powers understood his authority, Hassan I used the *mahalla* to build economic and military infrastructure. The incorporation of this task into the expedition was a departure from the ways the *mahalla* had been used in the past, which had chiefly involved fighting and tax collection. The creation of the port at Asaca served to reinforce *makhzan* control over trade and appealed to Western notions that a sovereign state could set economic policy in its lands. The rebuilding of the

[148] Matthews.
[149] Matthews.

base at Tiznit similarly supported Hassan I's claim to a monopoly over force as required in the Weberian conception of sovereignty, by discouraging armed rebellion. On the other hand, Hassan I's appointment of Islamic judges along with his receipt of oaths of loyalty from local religious elites spoke directly to his political authority in the Islamic construction. As the decedent of the prophet, a caliph, and the *amir al-mu'minin*, these aspects of the expedition, bolstered the religious pillars of his claim to authority, by showing him to be pious and rightly guided.

Beating Back the British: The 1886 Return to the Sous

Despite the structures Hassan I put in place during the *mahalla* of 1882, trade between the Sousi tribes and the Europeans outside of the legal channels persisted. In Tarfaya, the Bayruk family of prominent Sousi caravanners continued to allow Donald MacKenzie and the British North West Africa Company to operate a black-market port.[150] With the new royal port in Asaca, Hassan I refused to tolerate this continued illicit European trading presence in the southern territories and set forth from Marrakesh in 1885, three years after his earlier expedition.[151] On this *mahalla,* he traveled further south than in 1882, reaching Guelmim and Tarfaya, itself. By 1886, the *mahalla* had reached Tiznit, a major Sousi town, where the main army stayed while a smaller group continued on to Oued Noun.[152] They successfully evicted Donald Mackenzie and the British North West Africa Company from their base at Cape Juby later that year.[153] This removal of the European traders shored up 'Alawite supremacy in the region. Unlike the *mahalla* of 1882, this smaller expedition did not draw the attention of European travelers or the American consul. Al-Nasiri, on the other hand does dedicate a few pages to it and in doing so once more attempts to assert the sultan's Islamic

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[150] Mohamed, *Between Caravan and Sultan: The Bayruk of Southern Morocco*, 331–32.
[151] Arnaud, *Au Temps Des "Mehallas" Ou Le Maroc de 1860 à 1912*, 65.
[152] Arnaud, 66.
[153] Pennell, *Morocco since 1830: A History*, 105.

political authority over the region by portraying him as the consummate *amir al-mu'minin.* While the change in framing demonstrates more clearly how the presence of British traders tested the bonds between the *makhzan* and the Sous, it also shows how Hassan I continued to respond in ways that would make his authority legible to both European and Moroccan observers.

According to al-Nasiri, the *mahalla* began when Hassan I left Marrakesh for the Sous on the 27th of March 1885.[154] The sultan had "heard of the tumult of the subjects in those lands and the expulsion of their governor and that some English traders had erected a port on those coasts called Tarfaya, intent on selling and buying with some of the tribes" and so he "rose to put an end to the source of this corruption."[155] Once again, al-Nasiri portrays Hassan I in the defense of the Islamic community, protecting Muslims from the corruption (*fasad*) of the Christian traders. This defense of the community was directly tied to Hassan I's responsibility as an Islamic ruler, so al-Nasiri's account of 1886 *mahalla* clearly contributes to his narrative of the sultan's political authority over the Sous. As in his account of the 1882 *mahalla*, al-Nasiri focuses a great deal on how the local tribes received the sultan. He writes that Hassan I was met by "rallies of their masses accompanied by their notables and those considered among their experts in Islamic jurisprudence (*fuqaha*) and their sharifs and their marabouts."[156] The large and joyous greeting, especially by experts in Islamic law and those invested with *baraka*, buttresses al-Nasiri's implicit assertion that Hassan I is the rightful ruler of these lands. One section in particular makes clear this emphasis, when al-Nasiri, describes the sultan's welcome at Guelmim on the thirteenth of May, 1886, stating "there the sheiks of the Arabs of the M'aqil and their submissive and compliant elders rejoiced at the presentation of the sultan."[157] Al-Nasiri's choice to describe the elders as submissive (*khad'in*) and compliant (*muti'in*) obviously furthers his narrative that these territories are firmly loyal to Hassan I.

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[154] al-Nasiri, *Kitab al-istiqsa li-akhbar duwal al-maghrib al-aqsa*, 8:197.
[155] al-Nasiri, 8:197.
[156] al-Nasiri, 8:197.
[157] al-Nasiri, 8:198.

Beyond the engagement with the tribes, al-Nasiri also briefly treats the encounter between the sultan and the English at Cape Juby, stating that the sultan took "a battalion of his army to the port at Tarfaya … to those traders of the English there, and… those of the Nazerenes [Christians] who were there ran to their boats which were upon that coast."[158] Al-Nasiri makes explicit his attempt to tie this *mahalla* to the ideals of Islamic political authority in his use of the term "Nazerene." By drawing attention to the religion of the traders rather than referring to them as Englishmen, as he does elsewhere in the chronicle, al-Nasiri places their interaction with Hassan I in the context of the sultan's role as the protector of Islamic lands. By describing Christians fleeing before the might of the *amir al-mu'minin*, al-Nasiri would have been reassuring his Muslim readers that Hassan I was a true ruler capable of fulfilling his protective duties as caliph.

As in the accounts from the 1882 *mahalla*, the basic historical details of the 1886 *mahalla* show how Hassan I used this expedition to try to reinforce both Islamic and Western understandings of his political authority in the region. The crackdown on illicit trading was a clear response to the failure of the reforms from the 1882 *mahalla*. Hassan I understood that without control of trade, he would not be taken seriously by the European powers. As a result, this second expedition culminated in the physical removal the British competition to the *makhzan*'s new port. Furthermore, Hassan I's ability to not once, but twice bring an army through the Sous without military contestation from the local tribes would have demonstrated the *makhkzan*'s monopoly on power in the region was not simply a result of the famine during the previous expedition. In addition to these techniques for appealing to Western definitions of sovereignty, as al-Nasiri shows, Hassan I deftly used traditions to signal his authority to Muslim audiences. His reception of the *bay'a* along with his successful military expulsion of Christians from Tarfaya (even if they were

[158] al-Nasiri, 8:198–99.

merely traders and not an army) directly spoke to the sources of his right to command in the Islamic context.

The Last Great Journey: The *Mahalla* to Tafilalt in 1892

The last of Hassan I's great expeditions was to Tafilalt from 1892 to 1893, as he died on campaign in 1894, shortly after his return.[159] During the final years of his reign, Hassan I feared that Europeans would cite tribal unrest as demonstrative of his lack of sovereignty and as grounds for imperial occupation as had occurred in Tunisia in 1881.[160] As a result, when tribal discontent began to stir on the edge of Morocco's border with Algeria, Hassan I departed with 15-30,000 troops in order to restore stability in the region.[161] Like the Sous, Tafilalt was a region on the boundaries of the state that was facing increasing European pressure, in this case from the French in colonized Algeria. Tafilalt also held a great deal of personal and religious significance for Hassan I as the place from which the 'Alawite dynasty emerged in the mid-seventeenth century to take control of Morocco and the site of his ancestors' graves.[162] On this *mahalla,* Hassan I took a rather circuitous path to Tafilalt, marching in a large arc from Fez to Tafilalt and back to Marrakesh, crisscrossing the Atlas mountains.[163] As in the *mahalla*s to the Sous, little fighting was involved, the focus being on the collection of taxes and oaths of loyalty.[164]

Al-Nasiri's description of the expedition to Tafilalt is the longest of his three *mahalla* accounts. The majority of this section, however, consists of a letter to the governors of Morocco

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[159] Pennell, *Morocco since 1830: A History*, 108.
[160] Jamil M. Abun-Nasr, *A History of the Maghrib in the Islamic Period* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1987), 291.
[161] Pennell, *Morocco since 1830: A History*, 105.
[162] Abun-Nasr, *A History of the Maghrib in the Islamic Period*, 230.
[163] Pennell, *Morocco since 1830: A History*, 105.
[164] Pennell, 105.

ostensibly from the sultan, himself.[165] Through his framing of the narrative, Hassan I addresses questions of his authority over the region, defending it against both domestic and international objections by focusing on his reception by the various tribes he encountered *en route*, emphasizing their loyalty, joy at seeing him, and military support.

Hassan I's descriptions of the journey and, in particular, the couching of his interactions with the mountain tribes serve to reinforce his claims to political authority by shoring up the bases of his legitimacy. Early in his narrative Hassan I suggests the difficulty of the trip, writing "it was difficult of advance… so we relaxed, God exalted, and we trusted entirely in him [God] and we delegated the thing entirely to him."[166] Despite conceding that the success of his expedition was not given, this line reinforces the image of Hassan I's piety and role as a chosen one of God. By depicting himself in this light, Hassan I reminds his Muslim audience of the religious basis of his authority in the Islamic context. Notwithstanding this early concession about the potential difficulties of the trip, Hassan I spends most of the letter relating the tribes' loyalty, contesting the narrative that these regions were beyond the limits of his political authority. In a passage speaking about two of these groups, he states "we traversed the lands of the Ait Yusi repeatedly, and we crossed the lands of the Beni Mguild, and we found them all driven to obedience, completely docile."[167] This emphasis on the tribes' passivity is a means of asserting his dominance over them and establishing that those territories were firmly a part of his state. Highlighting their passivity, Hassan I describes these tribes' obedience in a way that responds to the frequent European characterization of the Atlas tribes as unruly and beyond the reach of the *makhzan*.

[165] al-Nasiri, *Kitab al-istiqsa li-akhbar duwal al-maghrib al-aqsa*, 8:214.
[166] al-Nasiri, 8:214.
[167] al-Nasiri, 8:215.

Even when he relates an encounter with an unfriendly tribe, Hassan I does so in a fashion that shores up his legitimacy as their rightful leader. This strategy is made clear in the description of his interaction with the Ait Azdig:

> "the flags of delusion and temptation rolled up from them, and we met with the chiefs of their lands, afraid… and scared of the power of God. We dispensed forgiveness altruistically… and abandoning killing due to the youths and elderly and sheiks and weak... treating with forgiveness those among them who were lost and astray and taking the words of the Almighty: 'Verily forgiving is closest to being strong.'"[168]

Two primary themes immerge from this passage corresponding to the two definitions of political authority Hassan I was attempting to satisfy. First, Hassan I presents his army as unchallengeable. This idea is reinforced by the fear of the chiefs and Hassan I's comment that he *chose* not to kill them. By emphasizing the supremacy of his military, Hassan I speaks implicitly to the Weberian construction. Second, Hassan I casts the entire encounter in a religious light. His reference to the Quran, the centrality of forgiveness, and his label of the tribe as deluded and astray, all shift this interaction from one of political-military conflict to one of a religious leader guiding his lost flock. Thus, Hassan I establishes his authority over the region within the Islamic conception in spite of the tribe's opposition. The deft framing of this encounter is a prime example of the way in which Hassan I attempted to speak to two distinct audiences.

Later in the letter, Hassan I describes the jubilant reception that awaited him upon his arrival at Tafilalt. He writes: "all the sharifs and the public met us, men and women and our youth and the elderly and middle-aged flocking in crowds and individually and in pairs and creating great congestion in our vision, and they were filled with joy and delight at our presentation."[169] This

[168] al-Nasiri, 8:215.
[169] al-Nasiri, 8:216.

depiction of overwhelming enthusiasm upon the sultan's arrival again seeks to establish the loyalty of these far-off regions. Especially in the dynasty's hometown, this kind of reaction was critical for indicating the continued loyalty of the people and their acknowledgement of his authority over them. As in al-Nasiri's accounts of the *mahalla*s to the Sous, this passage highlights the role of the sharifs in welcoming the sultan. The choice to include this detail, reinforces the narrative of Hassan I's Islamic authority by investing him with the accumulated gravitas of the local religious elite.

Hassan I's depiction of his journey contrasts sharply with the report American consul Felix A. Matthews sent to the Secretary of State about the expedition. Matthews only dedicates a single letter to the *mahalla* to Tafilalt, as he was more preoccupied at the time with an uprising in the Rif against the Spanish in Melilla. Nonetheless, his account challenges Hassan I's narrative of docile tribes and grand welcomes.[170] According to Matthews' letter on October 15, 1883, "the Emperor [Hassan I] with his Army of about twenty thousand men were surrounded and cut off by the warlike Tribes of the Atlas Mountains."[171] This line alone tells a very different story. "Surrounded and cut off" makes clear a high degree of animosity toward the *makhzan* forces from at least some of the Atlas tribes. Additionally, this passage contests Hassan I's sovereignty by undercutting the idea of *makhzan*'s monopoly over violent force. If the tribes of the Atlas could successfully wield enough military power to cut off the sultan's expedition, he was hardly sovereign over them. Matthews goes onto to write that "he [Hassan I] may return to his capital foregoing his visit to Tafilet [Tafilalt], where his power is hardly nominal."[172] Historically, Hassan I did in fact continue to Tafilalt, casting some doubt on the quality of Matthews' sources. Nevertheless, Matthews puts forward the narrative that a possible early return due to the resistance of the tribes was at least plausible. Furthermore, he explicitly attacks the sultan's claims to authority over Tafilalt, calling his power

[170] Pennell, *Morocco since 1830: A History*, 105.
[171] Felix A. Matthews, "Sultan's Expedition to Tafilet," Consular Dispatch (Tangier: United States Consulate at Tangier, October 15, 1893), TALIM.
[172] Matthews.

"nominal." In spite of Hassan I's claims to Tafilalt, if he could not exert economic and military control over the region, in Matthews' mind that authority was purely imagined. This assertion that the sultan's power was almost non-existent in this region also feeds into the European narrative of the Tafilalt region's de facto independence.

While Matthews acknowledges the familial importance of Tafilalt to the 'Alawites as "the birth-place of their [the 'Alawites] sovereign powers called Bilad-Sherfa, "Country of the Shereefs [Sharifs]," he writes that "The Emperors never visit Tafilet [Tafilalt] except as dethroned exiles."[173] This statement also reinforces the idea that Tafilalt was peripheral to the state to the extent that it would be an acceptable place of exile. Such peripheralizing suggests Matthews is trying to support his ongoing narrative of Tafilalt as beyond the power of the sultan and the impression of weak governance in spite of evidence to the contrary.

Walter B. Harris provides further details of the sultan's stay at Tafilalt in his travelogue entitled *Tafilet: The Narrative Journey of Exploration in the Atlas Mountains and the Oases of the North-West Sahara*. Harris was an English adventurer and an accomplished linguist, fluent in French, Spanish, and Arabic, including the Moroccan dialect. Though born and raised in London, at the age of eighteen Harris moved to Morocco, remaining there as a reporter for *The Times* for the better part of forty years.[174] Often disguising himself as a sharif, he reveled in travelling to parts of the country that were off limits to Christians.[175] In 1893, hearing of Hassan I's visit to Tafilalt, he set off – without invite – to see the territory.[176] Ultimately, Harris reached the camp of the *mahalla* at Tafilalt, gravely ill, and stayed several days there as an unwanted guest.[177] Harris' firsthand account

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[173] Matthews.
[174] "Mr. Walter Harris," *The Times*, April 5, 1933, The Times Digital Archive.
[175] Walter B. Harris F.R.G.S., *The Land of an African Sultan: Travels in Morocco 1887, 1888, and 1889* (London: Sampson Low, Marston, Searle & Rivington, 1889).
[176] Walter B. Harris F.R.G.S., *Tafilet: The Narrative Journey of Exploration in the Atlas Mountains and the Oases of the North-West Sahara* (Edinburgh and London: William Blackwood and Sons, 1895), 1.
[177] Harris F.R.G.S., 234.

describes in vivid detail the sultan's camp and touches on Hassan I's interactions with the local tribes during his stay, noting his attempts at mediation and influence of the tribes over him.

Harris contradicts Matthew's tale of a sultan trapped by hostile tribes in the mountains. Instead, he claims that "although… no opposition was put to his progress, he must necessarily have been during the whole expedition in a state of great anxiety."[178] While Harris's statement refutes the idea of any actual opposition to the sultan's journey, he does allow for the possibility, suggesting that advanced bribery of the tribes along the route was the source of his safe passage.[179] Though he does not go as far as Matthews in asserting a contestation of the sultan's military supremacy, Harris still casts doubt on Hassan I's monopoly over violent force and thus over his sovereignty in the Western conception. As the only writer not in an explicitly political position, Harris' depiction of the *mahalla* in such a way that cast aspersions on the sultan's sovereignty shows how even civilian accounts from the period are imbued with a fundamentally political narrative.

Harris also provides us with a sense of the sultan's interactions with the tribes of the area. In one particular anecdote, he relates:

> At the time of my stay in the Sultan's camp a skirmish took place between the two [the Ahl Subah and the Amazigh] in the very presence of Mulai el Hassen [Hassan I], several on both sides being killed, altogether some fifteen it is said. The Sultan promptly imprisoned the ringleaders of each party; but such force was brought to bear upon him by the prisoners' fellow-tribesmen that he was obliged to release them in the course of a few days.[180]

This incident defines Hassan I's relationship to tribes in two important ways. While Harris does allow that Hassan I is an arbiter of justice as seen through his imprisonment of the two leaders, he

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[178] Harris F.R.G.S., 381.
[179] Harris F.R.G.S., 4.
[180] Harris F.R.G.S., 287.

still undermines the idea of his sovereignty. By claiming that even in the midst of his army, the tribes had enough authority to force Hassan I to undo his act of justice, Harris depicts the sultan's fear of the tribes, thus implicitly contesting his monopoly over force. In spite of the sultan's great authority as a judge, Harris ultimately asserts that Hassan I's power depended on the acquiescence of the tribes, and therefore did not meet the Western standards of sovereignty.

Conclusion

These descriptions of the 1882 and 1886 *mahalla*s to the Sous and the 1892-1893 *mahalla* to Tafilalt demonstrate the ways in which diplomatic and quasi-diplomatic documents formed a space of narrative contestation over Hassan I's political authority in southern borderlands of Morocco at the end of the nineteenth century. In other words, these accounts are fundamentally political attempts to define the relationship between the sultan and the Moroccan periphery in the context of European economic imperialism. Through a diverse array of primary sources from different and competing perspectives, we are able to see how Western and Moroccan observers used their narratives of these events to advance certain political agendas. In addition, these documents show how the authors applied different definitions of political authority to this question and articulated implicit arguments that would have been legible to their respective audiences. While al-Nasiri contributes to a royal narrative of the sultan's rightful authority over these territories, he does so primarily in a way that would be understandable in an Islamic, rather than Western context. Matthews, Harris, and Cowan and Johnston, on the other hand, mostly contest the sultan's claims to political authority and do so by asserting that he does not meet the Western definition of sovereignty based on economic control and a monopoly on force. With the exception of Harris, these men are official agents of their respective governments and all their accounts reflect attempts to construct narratives of the relationship between the sultan and southern Morocco that

facilitate their political agendas. Ultimately, these documents are performative speech acts with repercussions for the externalized basis of Hassan I's political authority, so through these competing narratives, the authors are actually constructing or attacking *makhzan* authority, itself.

In addition to revealing the role of diplomatic documents in constructing political authority and differing definitions used in doing so, these accounts show how Hassan I attempted to make his authority legible to both domestic challengers and Western observers. Faced with increased European intrusion at the end of the nineteenth century, Hassan I set about consolidating his domestic power and adapted traditional political tools such as the *mahalla* to shore up his authority in the eyes of new audiences. Rather than violent military conquests the bulk of these *mahalla*s were a kind of political theater intended to make *makhzan* power legible on the boundaries of the state. The sultan appointed judges and governors, collected of oaths of loyalty, and held physical audiences with subjects and notables, all of which supported his claims to political authority in the Islamic conception. He understood that his physical presence, particularly due to his personal religious significance and *baraka* allowed him to exert greater influence over these regions, from which he was normally far removed. For that reason, these expeditions included numerous opportunities for the sultan to be seen and for the local religious elites to pay him homage. They also highlighted his ability to defend the Islamic community from Christian incursion. However, the changing dynamics of the late nineteenth century, particularly the increased presence of Europeans, required him to appeal to more than just Islamic ideas of political authority. Through the successful completion of long military campaigns to the edges of his state, Hassan I tried to show the monopoly of the *makhzan* over violent force, appealing to the Western conception of sovereignty in the Weberian framework. Additionally, through the construction of a new port, the removal of European competitors, and the repeated reprimand of tribes that engaged in black-market trade, Hassan I tried to shore up his control over the economy. In accomplishing the goals of making his political authority legible to two different audiences, the reformation of the *mahalla*

formed a crucial part of Hassan I's arsenal of policies. It allowed him to practice his authority in a way that simultaneously addressed both domestic and foreign challenges.

Chapter III
The *Tourmaline* Incident and British Informal Empire

Introduction

Following the *mahalla*s of the 1880s, contestation of the *makhzan*'s authority over the Sous quieted for a few years. Both Hassan I's efforts to change the kind of domestic political authority he practiced in the region and his simultaneous attempts to establish an externalized basis for his authority seem to have been at least temporarily successful. The latter efforts culminated in the 1895 Anglo-Moroccan Treaty signed just after his death. This treaty negotiated the Moroccan buy-out of Mackenzie's problematic trading outpost in exchange for British recognition of Moroccan sovereignty as far south as the 26th parallel to what is now Boujdour in the Western Sahara.[181] In 1897, however, three years into the reign of Ba Ahmad, the regent for Hassan I's son 'Abd al-'Aziz, the question was raised to the international stage once more during a series of events that came to be known as the *Tourmaline* Incident. A diplomatic debacle between the British Empire and the Moroccan Sultanate, the affair involved a number of British citizens acting in a private capacity who internationalized a Sousi claim of independence during an attempt to reopen trade with the region.

Though ultimately a failure, this endeavor provides us with an excellent opportunity to examine the role of the phenomenon of British informal empire and the imperialism of free trade, as theorized by Robinson and Gallagher, in stoking the sovereignty crisis in southern Morocco. In particular, this incident is notable as it generated both an enormous amount of coverage in newspapers and diplomatic circles as well as two popular accounts written by the leader and another member of the expedition. Though the venture was formally condemned by the British government, and the authors were actually tried in English courts for their crimes against Morocco, the popular presentation of the events through the published, personal accounts had lasting

[181] Pennell, *Morocco since 1830: A History*, 118.

ramifications on perceptions of the relationship between the southern tribes and the Moroccan state. Additionally, through examining the presentation of *makhzani* sovereignty in these accounts, we are able to see how non-official narratives engaged in the same documentary contestation as official accounts, and so also contribute to the construction of externally based forms of political authority.

The Foreign Office and the Agents of Informal Empire

The story of the *Tourmaline* incident begins in May of 1896 with an Austrian conman pretending to be a Moroccan royal physician named Abdul Kerim Bey.[182] Kerim Bey, whose real name was Gehling, claimed to hold a concession for a trading monopoly in the Sous that he managed to sell to the Globe Venture Syndicate in London.[183] The board of this corporation included multiple former ambassadors and notable figures in international commerce, directly linking the Syndicate with the world of British foreign affairs.[184] This connection of a private company established to trade on the periphery of a foreign state to the political sphere immediately placed the Syndicate in the larger context of the British firms that Cain and Hopkins identify as the agents of informal empire.[185] Given the influential men involved in the project, the company might reasonably expect there was a chance of the British military bailing them out if anything went awry.

From the very beginning of the endeavor, however, the Foreign Office was suspicious of the corporation's activities. The concession the company claimed to hold purportedly granted the holder exclusive import and mining rights in Oued Noun as well as the ability to acquire

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[182] Justice Wright, Globe Venture Syndicate Ltd, No. 153 (The High Court of Justice Companies (Winding Up) May 30, 1900).
[183] Major Arthur Gibbon Spilsbury, *The Tourmaline Expedition* (London: J. M. Dent & Co., 1906), 9–10.
[184] "A New Trading Sphere the Charter of the Suss Commercializing Southern Morocco," *The Pall Mall Gazette*, November 10, 1896, The National Archives, Kew.
[185] Cain and Hopkins, "'The Imperious and Irresistible Necessity': Britain and the Partition of Africa," 307.

property.[186] The company further alleged the concession had been granted by "the council of the chiefs of all the independent tribes of the Suss [Sous]", rather than the sultan, though it did allegedly have his approval.[187] Neither of these claims sat right with Arthur Nicolson, at that time the British Minister in Tangier and the primary British diplomat in Morocco. He believed the sultan was unlikely to have approved such an action, which was contrary to the continued policy of prohibiting European trade with the Sous.[188] Nicolson's suspicions and the reticence of the Foreign Office to support the Globe Venture Syndicate in this case is indicative of what Robinson and Gallagher argue was the reluctant nature of British formal empire more generally.[189] If we assume their framework for the purpose of analyzing this incident, we see that in Morocco the British government would have had no interest in establishing a colony or otherwise annexing the country.[190] The British already dominated foreign trade and had close ties to a strong, well established central government, so it would not suit British interests to create internal tension or to invoke the ire of other European powers which might upset that balance. This argument is supported by the Office's continued application of the 1895 Anglo-Moroccan Treaty throughout the affair. As a result, rather than acting as an extension of official British foreign policy, the Syndicate's expedition dragged the Foreign Office into a conflict over sovereignty it had previously resolved.

The suspicions of the Foreign Office were confirmed by a letter from the Grand Vizier and regent, Ba Ahmad on the 20th of December which, in the official consular translation, stated that

> "this region [Oued Noun] and its inhabitants are at the disposal and under the protection and guardianship of the Government – God exalt it – and that none of these inhabitants have

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[186] "A New Trading Sphere the Charter of the Suss Commercializing Southern Morocco"; Wright, Globe Venture Syndicate Ltd.
[187] "A New Trading Sphere the Charter of the Suss Commercializing Southern Morocco."
[188] Arthur Nicholson, "No. 3 Sir A. Nicolson to the Marquess of Salisbury," Consular, December 14, 1896, The National Archives, Kew.
[189] Gallagher and Robinson, "The Imperialism of Free Trade," 54–55.
[190] Pennell, *Morocco since 1830: A History*, 118.

the power to make any agreement with any of the merchants about anything of this or even speak of it… a warning is given to whoever entangles himself and goes there, that his life and the consequences rest with himself."[191]

The Moroccan government was not the only group upset by these assertions. The news of the Syndicate caused a significant stir in Spain which had claims to certain territories in southern Morocco as part of the 1860 Treaty of Tetouan. In February of 1897, the following ran in *El Pais,* a republican paper in Madrid: "If this Syndicate realizes its projects it will do so by ignoring the sovereignty of the Sultan in the Suss [Sous] territory, by establishing the autonomy of the Chiefs and tribes against the hegemony of a State recognized by all Powers; by altering the Status Quo of Morocco; by modifying the boundaries of its territory; by contemptuously ignoring our rights under the Treaty of Tetuan [sic]." [192] Here we see both that the *makhzan*'s claims to the Sous were now internationally accepted and that it was the actions of a British company that were again throwing that sovereignty into question for European powers.

Based on the warnings of the Foreign Office that they would receive no support unless they obtained the consent of the sultan, in late February 1897, the Syndicate sent Major Arthur Gibbon Spilsbury of the Militia Division Royal Engineers to accompany Kerim Bey to the royal court in Marrakesh.[193] By March 20th, the pair had arrived in Tangier where they met with Arthur Nicolson.[194] During this meeting, Nicolson conveyed the stance of the sultan and the threats of Ba Ahmad to seize the merchandise of and arrest any Europeans who landed in the Sous.[195] In this

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[191] Ahmad bin Musa, "Inclosure 1 in No. 4 Cid Hamed-Ben-Moussa to Sir A. Nicolson," Consular, December 20, 1896, The National Archives, Kew.
[192] Henry Drummond Wolff, "No. 50 Sir Henry Drummond Wolff to the Marquis of Salisbury," Consular, February 20, 1897, The National Archives, Kew.
[193] Gerald Raoul de Courcy Perry, "Inclosure to No. 50. Consul General de Courcy Perry to Sir F. Plunkett," December 14, 1897, The National Archives, Kew; Edward Thornton, "No. 6 Sir E. Thornton to Foreign Office," January 26, 1897, The National Archives, Kew.
[194] Arthur Nicholson, "No. 16 Sir A. Nicolson to the Marquess of Salisbury," Consular, March 20, 1897, The National Archives, Kew.
[195] Spilsbury, *The Tourmaline Expedition*, 16.

interaction we see that Nicolson had no interest in helping Spilsbury press the company's dubious claim. Any imperial impulse to override the sultan's authority came from the corporation and not from the government officials.

In spite of these warnings, Spilsbury insisted on continuing to Marrakesh, while claiming that the Sousi chiefs were independent from the sultan.[196] From Tangier, the pair traveled to Marrakesh where Spilsbury received an audience with Ba Ahmad who repudiated beyond a shadow of a doubt the legitimacy of the concession that Kerim Bey claimed to hold.[197] Following the regent's refusal to consider any other proposals allowing the Globe Venture Syndicate to trade in the Sous and his prohibition of Spilsbury's visiting the region, the major departed Marrakesh for Essaouira.

Upon arriving in Essaouira, Spilsbury met with British Vice Consul R. L. N Johnston who warned him against crossing the Atlas Mountains into the Sous upon the request of Robert Gascoyne-Cecil, the Marquess of Salisbury and the British Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs.[198] This warning further establishes opposition to the venture as part of the broader policy of the Foreign Office and not just the stance of Nicolson personally. It also falls in line with Robinson and Gallagher's claim that Salisbury was "infuriated by the 'superficial philanthropy' and 'roguery' of the 'fanatics' who advocated expansion."[199] Salisbury's opposition to men like Spilsbury who as agents of informal empire dragged Britain into new overseas conflicts demonstrates the division between British policy and the actions of independent corporations like the Globe Venture Syndicate in the expansion of the empire.

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[196] Arthur Nicholson, "No. 19 Sir A. Nicolson to the Marquess of Salisbury," Consular, March 20, 1897, The National Archives, Kew; Henry Drummond Wolff, "No. 13 Sir H. Drummond Wolff to the Marquess of Salisbury," Consular, March 10, 1897, The National Archives, Kew.
[197] Spilsbury, *The Tourmaline Expedition*, 90.
[198] R. L. N. Johnston, "Inclosure 3 in No. 28 Vice-Consul Johnston to Mr. White," Consular, July 3, 1897, The National Archives, Kew.
[199] Gallagher and Robinson, "The Imperialism of Free Trade," 66.

After his meeting with Vice Consul Johnston, Major Spilsbury met two men who he claimed told him they spoke on behalf of Husayn bin Hashim.[200] In reality, they represented bin Hashim's son Muhammad as Husayn had died eleven years before.[201] After corresponding with Muhammad about the terms, on July 2 these three men signed a treaty, attested to by Vice Consul Johnston, granting Major Spilsbury exclusive trading rights in the Sous at the ports of Asaca and Arksis.[202] Having acquired this contract, Spilsbury violated the orders of the Foreign Office by traveling to Arksis where he met again with the two men from Essaouira as well as other tribal leaders, though not bin Hashim, and promised to return with goods for trade, in particular, rifles and ammunition.[203] In this encounter Spilsbury conforms to Cain and Hopkin's model of an agent of informal empire. He engaged in trade of a dubious nature on the periphery of a state in the British zone of influence against the wishes of the Foreign Office and promised to provide arms to a group that was planning to revolt, setting the stage for the kind of incident that might trigger imperial intervention.[204]

The underlying threat of rebellion as recognized by both Moroccan and British officials demonstrates that Sousi leaders were not mere passive participants in the expansion of informal British empire, but rather attempted to exploit agents like Spilsbury to further their own agendas. In particular, Muhammad bin Hashim believed that the British government would ultimately back the Syndicate in the event of an incident as it had done with other companies elsewhere on the continent.[205] This assumption shows his underlying awareness of the mechanisms of informal British empire and his willingness to utilize imperial power as leverage within a domestic economic

[200] Spilsbury, *The Tourmaline Expedition*, 129.
[201] Ennaji, *Le Makhzen et Le Sous Al-Aqsa: La Correspondance Politique de La Maison d'Iligh, 1821-1894*, 9.
[202] Spilsbury, *The Tourmaline Expedition*, 137–38.
[203] Spilsbury, 164.
[204] Arthur Nicholson, "No. 42 Sir A. Nicolson to the Marquess of Salisbury," October 9, 1897, The National Archives, Kew.
[205] Arthur Nicholson, "No. 53 A. Nicolson to the Marquess of Salisbury," Consular, August 11, 1898, The National Archives, Kew.

dispute. Muhammad's involvement in this whole affair adds an interesting aspect as well. Here was the man who a decade prior had been the close confident of the sultan and the super governor of the Sous, but now, rather than promoting *makhzan* authority, he was actively contesting the Moroccan claim over the Sous in order to trade with a British company in the exact same way his Bayruk relatives had a generation prior. In both cases, first with MacKenzie and then with Spilsbury, it was the arrival of a British merchant company that provided to the spark to challenge the sultan's authority.

In spite of the growing tension and warnings of the Foreign Office that they would not support or protect him in the endeavor, Spilsbury continued in his mission. He arrived back in England on August 5th where he met with the directors of the Globe Venture Syndicate. Together they decided to press their claims on the basis of Spilsbury's new contract despite the opposition of the sultan and the Foreign Office and without informing their investors of the change or the fraudulent nature of the original concession.[206] The chairman, himself a member of the Foreign Office, opposed the trade of ammunitions, so the board approved the measure in his absence.[207] The necessity of hiding this act from the chairman of the board again highlights the disconnect between official agents of British policy and the agents of informal empire such as Spilsbury, who were much more gung-ho about foreign interventionism.

After this meeting, Spilsbury assembled a crew and purchased a steamboat, the *Tourmaline*, before sailing to Antwerp where he acquired 3,650 Mannlicher rifles and 500,000 rounds of ammunition, lying to customs officials by saying variously that he was returning to England or was passing the winter in the Canary Islands.[208] Instead, from Belgium, the *Tourmaline* headed to

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[206] Spilsbury, *The Tourmaline Expedition*, 166; Wright, Globe Venture Syndicate Ltd.
[207] Spilsbury, *The Tourmaline Expedition*, 170–71.
[208] Spilsbury, 171; In the Privy Council on Appeal from the Supreme Court of Gibraltar between Albert Gybbon Spilsbury and the Queen, No. 5 (Privy Council 1899); de Courcy Perry, "Inclosure to No. 50. Consul General de Courcy Perry to Sir F. Plunkett," December 14, 1897.

Arksis.[209] Spilsbury's lies about his destination suggest he had clear knowledge of the illegality of his venture from the outset and believed he would be stopped by official authorities had his true intent been known. This attitude places Spilsbury and the Globe Venture Syndicate in the category identified by Cain and Hopkins of the British "rejuvenators of empire" in the late nineteenth century whose "willingness to cut corners on the frontiers of empire was often frowned on in London."[210] In this way, the events around the *Tourmaline* incident were indicative of a larger phenomenon throughout the periphery of the "informal empire."

When the *Tourmaline* arrived, many members of the Ait Arbain, or Amazigh war council, with which Spilsbury had been dealing were present, but bin Hashim remained absent, so Spilsbury determined to wait before unloading all of the rifles.[211] After a few days, however, the Moroccan royal steamship the *Hassani* arrived to arrest the crew of the *Tourmaline* and bring them back to Essaouira, as per the threats of Ba Ahmad. After signaling the *Tourmaline* to stop, the *Hassani* lowered three boats of soldiers into the water to prevent the *Tourmaline* from picking up the crew on shore and escaping. In response, the Spilsbury signaled that he would fire on the *Hassani* if it did not leave. He then demonstrated the seriousness of his threat by shooting rifles and the *Tourmaline*'s deck cannon across the bow of the *Hassani*. Spilsbury's aggressive attitude toward the Moroccan flagship and his willingness to escalate the situation demonstrates a proclivity to start a violent confrontation with local authorities. Had such an incident occurred in Morocco, as it did in other instances of the provocation of agents of informal empire, it might have forced the hand of the British government causing them to intervene militarily in the pattern Robinson and Gallagher identified in other parts of Africa.

[209] Spilsbury, *The Tourmaline Expedition*, 177.
[210] Cain and Hopkins, "'The Imperious and Irresistible Necessity': Britain and the Partition of Africa," 307–8.
[211] Spilsbury, *The Tourmaline Expedition*, 179; Henry M. Grey, *In Moorish Captivity: An Account of the "Tourmaline" to Sus 1897-1898* (London: Edward Arnold, 1899), 65.

Instead, in this instance, Spilsbury returned to Essaouria and eventually to London without further incident following the arrest of five of his crew members who had remained on shore during the negotiations with the tribal leaders. The five men in question were taken to Essaouira after several weeks and delivered to the governor, Haj 'Ali bin al-Haj, who then transferred them to British consular custody.[212] The primary cause of this delay was the sultan's insistence that the British government pledge to properly punish the Globe Venture Syndicate and the crew of the *Tourmaline* for what he viewed as an attempt to incite rebellion and cause the Sous to secede.[213] The prisoners were finally delivered to the British consulate in Tangier on April 29th, 1898, only after the issuing of a warrant for the arrest of Major Spilsbury and lengthy negotiations between the British and Moroccan governments over the repercussions he and the other members of the Syndicate would face.[214]

While one of the men was a German national who was promptly released by the German authorities, the other four men were tried in British consular court for gun running. Two of the men who were more involved with the Syndicate were sentenced to four months of imprisonment, while the others who were hired sailors received three weeks under the assumption that they were not aware of the illegal nature of the expedition when they signed onto the *Tourmaline*'s crew.[215] In this case, we see a willingness on the part of the Foreign Office to press charges and penalize British citizens who violated the laws of foreign nations in the pursuit of trade. This attitude stands in contrast to the German response toward their citizen who was involved in the same incident and

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[212] Grey, *In Moorish Captivity: An Account of the "Tourmaline" to Sus 1897-1898*, 333.
[213] Arthur Nicholson, "No. 101 A. Nicolson to the Marquess of Salisbury," Consular, March 23, 1898, The National Archives, Kew.
[214] Nicholson, "No. 131 A. Nicolson to the Marquess of Salisbury," Consular, April 29, 1898, The National Archives, Kew; Arthur Nicholson, "No. 130 A. Nicolson to the Marquess of Salisbury," Consular, April 16, 1898, The National Archives, Kew.
[215] Arthur Nicholson, EXTRADITION: Gun-running in Morocco. Trial of "Tourmaline" prisoners and their imprisonment at Gibraltar (British Consular Court Tangier August 2, 1898).

demonstrates the connection between this case and the broader conflict between the Foreign Office and agents of informal empire.

The British government applied this same animosity toward Major Spilsbury when he arrived back in London. In swift order he was kicked out of the army, found that the directors of the Syndicate claimed complete ignorance of his dealing in arms, and then on July 1st was arrested under the warrant issued by Nicolson.[216] His trial began on August 5th when he was tried before the Supreme Court of Gibraltar for "on the coast of the Sous in the territorial waters of the Empire of Morocco unlawfully and riotously assembl[ing] and riotously mak[ing] an assault upon certain soldiers of the Sultan of Morocco by firing on the Sultan's ship named the 'Hassanie' [*Hassani]*."[217] Because he was tried under the Foreign Jurisdiction Act, however, there was no jury at his initial trial. Due to this lack of a jury trial, he appealed his case to the Privy Counsel and was granted another trial this time by a jury comprised of residents of Gibraltar, which swiftly acquitted him of any wrongdoing on April 20th, 1899.[218] The Globe Venture Syndicate, on the other hand, was found guilty in a separate case of defrauding its investors and ordered to be wound up.[219]

The press and droves of sympathetic British citizens closely followed Spilsbury's exploits and especially his trial. His attempt to smuggle arms was favorably compared to the Jameson Raid against the Transvaal as a similarly unsuccessful attempt to spread British influence. He was furthermore applauded for his demand of a jury trial, while the Foreign Office was condemned as weak for trying to abrogate the rights of a British citizen in favor of an "eastern" power.[220] Following the trial, the general opinion on Gibraltar was that the Sous was not a part of Morocco.[221]

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[216] Spilsbury, *The Tourmaline Expedition*, 211–13.
[217] In the Privy Council on Appeal from the Supreme Court of Gibraltar between Albert Gybbon Spilsbury and the Queen.
[218] Herbert E. White, "Herbert E. White to Grand Vizier," April 22, 1899; "Tourmaline Case," *Gibraltar Chronicle and Official Gazette*, April 20, 1899.
[219] Wright, Globe Venture Syndicate Ltd.
[220] "British Policy on Morocco," *Al-Moghreb Al-Aksa*, April 22, 1899, TALIM.
[221] "Tourmaline Case."

Despite the clear and consistent opposition of the British Government, the narrative about Moroccan sovereignty forwarded by Spilsbury during his trial proved immensely popular both in Britain and abroad.

The *Tourmaline* expedition was a series of events fundamentally opposed to the British political agenda in Morocco at the time. Rather than complementing official British policy, or being tacitly supported by government officials, the affair occurred in spite of their explicit and repeated attempts to prevent it. Following the 1895 Anglo-Moroccan Agreement, intended in part to clarify lingering land disputes over Cape Juby and to counter French incursions in the Sahara, the British government affirmed and recognized the sovereignty of the Moroccan sultan well south of the Sous.[222] This recognition was not merely lip service either, in addition to their opposition to the Globe Venture Syndicate's foray in the region, during the period from 1896 to 1899, the Foreign Office successfully discouraged two other English companies from pursuing trading concessions in southern Morocco without explicit permission from the sultan.[223] This break between Spilsbury and the Foreign Office is indicative of the mechanisms of informal empire that dragged British governments deeper into the colonial project during this period. Spilsbury's case in particular is interesting as it highlights the influence of such endeavors over British public perception of international issues of sovereignty even in the case of failure. Further, it demonstrates how local elites like Muhammad bin Hashim attempted to exploit these mechanisms of empire. The presence of corporate enterprises like the Globe Venture Syndicate that were byproducts of this imperial phenomenon presented opportunities for such regional leaders to gain an advantage in domestic power struggles. Thus, we can see that the particular phenomenon of British informal empire was a key element in the new pressures on the relationship between the sultan and the tribes of southern Morocco that led to the crises of sovereignty in the Sous at the end of the nineteenth century.

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[222] Frank Trout, *Morocco's Sarahan Fontiers* (Geneva: Librairie Droz S.A., 1969), 173–75.
[223] *Further Correspondence Respecting the Affairs of Morocco*, vol. 14–18 (London: British Foreign Office, 1900).

Popular Accounts in the Construction of Sovereignty

As a result of their role as informal agents of empire, who acted in opposition to their government, the members of the *Tourmaline* expedition attempted to construct Moroccan sovereignty from a radically different position than the authors analyzed in the previous chapters. Rather than working hand in glove with the political agenda of their country, their narratives are fundamentally anti-diplomatic documents. As a result, Spilsbury and Grey's popularly published accounts show how non-official documents, even those that work against political authorities, still participate and are in fact highly influential in the process of the narrative construction of sovereignty and other types of political authority.

Spilsbury's Account

Capitalizing on the celebrity generated by his trial and the media coverage of the *Tourmaline* Incident, in 1906 Spilsbury published his official account of the affair. Entitled *The Tourmaline Expedition*, the book was published with a five chapter appendix by W. R. Stewart, a former member of the Niger Company, calling for the colonization of "Southwest Barbary." Over the course of 225 pages, Spilsbury lays out his version of the events, presenting them in such a way as to assert his complete innocence. A critical part of his argument is that the sultan of Morocco had no legitimate claim to the Sous and was not recognized by the tribes therein. If this were the case, then it would follow, in his logic, that he not only had every right to trade in the region, but also to defend himself from the illegal disruption of that trade by a foreign power. The book is also a stinging criticism of the Foreign Office and the Moroccan government by a man who felt wronged by both. Throughout his account, Spilsbury stresses his perception of the independence of the Sous while trying to make the sultan out to be a poor and vindictive ruler without any control over the

lands he claimed. The structure of this argument mirrors the implicit assumptions found in the other European accounts of the Sous from nearly fifteen years earlier.

The first part of Spilsbury's narrative consists of a general description of Morocco and the towns and regions through which he passed on the way to Marrakesh. In this section he uses the opportunity to portray Morocco as an impoverished, dangerous place largely due to the misrule of the sultan. He describes the royal city of Meknes as surrounded by "piles of rotting manure, with dust and rubbish, decomposing carcases [sic] of camels, donkeys and dogs every conceivable refuse in huge heaps."[224] He also critiques the country's infrastructure claiming "Bridges are an unknown luxury, and I only met with half-a-dozen in the immediate vicinity of the towns; most of these were ruinous, and no attempts were made to keep them in repair."[225] These two quotations are merely representative, but by highlighting squalor and portraying the disrepair of road systems, Spilsbury taps into the narratives of "backwardsness" and "primitiveness" used to justify European colonialism throughout the continent. If the sultan was unable to maintain his country, the implication was that he was unfit to rule it. This idea is further developed through Spilsbury's emphasis on the inability of the *mazkhan* to secure the roads and countryside. In one passage he states that "outside all Moorish towns there is no security for life or property after dark."[226] As in the other passages this line is an indirect condemnation of the sultan's governance, and through that critique, his right to rule. He explicitly uses this idea to develop the notion of the sultan's supposed weakness. In an extended passage about the Beni Zemur he describes them as "the dreaded Zemmuri, who are no respecters of our lord the Sultan, tempted by the rich prizes being led by their very doors, rush out from their wild haunts, and raid the sacred property of their master."[227] In addition to declaring their lack of respect for their supposed sovereign he attempts to

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[224] Spilsbury, *The Tourmaline Expedition*, 37.
[225] Spilsbury, 46.
[226] Spilsbury, 56.
[227] Spilsbury, 63.

demonstrate that the sultan lacks the ability to control or even reign them in, writing "in travelling from one capital to the other [the sultan] has invariably to make a huge detour by the coast in order to escape the depredations of these fierce and war-like mountaineers."[228] As in the previously examined European accounts, what Spilsbury is challenging in these passages is implicitly the notion of a state monopoly over force. He is making claims about a lack of sovereignty by showing the sultan as the victim of stronger domestic military forces.

Spilsbury also dwells on graphic descriptions of physical punishments practiced by the *makhzan* authorities. For example, in one passage he describes the ordeal of the salt, a favorite topic for European travelers attempting to depict the Moroccan government as cruel and "barbaric." According to Spilsbury, in order to punish certain offenders "The executioner cuts three or four gashes in the palm of the victim's right hand, then closes the hand over a lump of salt, or quicklime, and binds up the whole with strips of raw green hide. These strips as they dry in the air, contract till the fingers are forced through the palm, the salt or quicklime adding to the agony of the torture."[229] The explicit detail of this section along with its inclusion in a narrative that is ostensibly about Spilsbury's own experiences (he never witnessed it in person) shows the rhetorical intent of this passage is to shock and horrify his reader, presumably into a condemnation of the Moroccan legal system. Coincidentally, that legal system is the same one that charged Spilsbury with inciting rebellion, so he clearly had a vested interest in persuading his readers to repudiate it. Through this strategy he also seems to appeal explicitly to the other branch of informal empire identified by Gallagher and Robinson – humanitarian groups which sought British influence abroad as part of a "civilizing mission."[230]

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[228] Spilsbury, 60.
[229] Spilsbury, 73.
[230] Gallagher and Robinson, "The Imperialism of Free Trade," 64.

Finally, Spilsbury spends a significant amount of time attacking the sultan's claims to the Sous specifically. He reiterates *ad nauseum* his belief that the tribes do not recognize the sultan, though oddly he never puts those words into the mouth of any of the Sousi men with whom he interacts. His central arguments for this claim are summarized in the following passage:

> I have always upheld the view that the tribes of Sous do not recognise the authority of the Sultan, and are de facto independent, since in the first place the Moorish Government does not include the Sous in that portion of its dominions which is affected by the treaty with Great Britain, for they will not allow any foreigner, if they can help it, to travel, trade and reside in that district ; they have no effective means of governing or collecting taxes, except by occasional armed incursions into the country, which have rarely met with anything but temporary success.

Essentially, Spilsbury asserts that the only reason Europeans were not allowed to enter the Sous was because the sultan was unable to militarily control the tribes there. While he does allow for the sultan's *mahalla*s to the region, he depicts these as raids rather than tools of governance. He develops this idea further in another passage, stating "While I was in Morocco one of the many expeditions for collecting taxes was despatched over the Atlas to the Sous country, where the Sultan's authority is not recognised by the tribes, except in the immediate neighbourhood of Tarudant [Taroudant], and where tax collecting is only a polite term for wholesale rapine and slaughter."[231] By associating the *mahalla*s with theft and wanton violence, rather than a legitimate application of force, Spilsbury denies they satisfy the rubric he has established for sovereignty. In a different passage he expands, explicitly claiming that occupation is required in order for a power to be sovereign, seemingly in reference to the 1885 Treaty of Berlin. He writes, "if, as in the rest of Africa, sovereignty is only recognised where there is efficient occupation of a district, then the

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[231] Spilsbury, *The Tourmaline Expedition*, 88.

Sultan's rights are confined to Tarudant [Taroundant] and its district, for beyond occasional raids… his authority is absolutely nil."[232] Spilsbury's confidence in his understanding of sovereignty was astounding. Not only did he make the same arguments regarding sovereignty to almost every British official he interacted with, but, at least according to himself, during an audience with Ba Ahmad he "pointed out that at present the rights of the Mahksen [*makhzan*] over the tribes were of a very shadowy nature and were not recognised by the tribes."[233] It seems questionable at best whether he would have truly been so blunt with the effective ruler of Morocco, but at the very least his presenting this encounter to his readers reinforces the apparent strength of his conviction.

The last major point Spilsbury makes about Moroccan sovereignty revolves around the Anglo-Moroccan Treaty of 1895. From the beginning, Spilsbury makes the false assertion that the British recognition of Moroccan sovereignty over the coast as far as Boujdour was not made until 1899, after his excursion to the Sous. He also repeatedly raises the Spanish claim to the unidentified, historic settlement of Santa Cruz de Mar Pequefia in the 1860 Treaty of Tetouan, arguing that the British could not legally grant recognition to Morocco of territory that might have been ceded to Spain.[234] This line of legalistic argument serves as a final backstop to his other approaches. Should his reader not accept his qualitative descriptions of Morocco as evidence of misrule and barbarism that rendered the sultan unfit to govern, nor his Weberian-style arguments about the lack of military occupation and monopoly on force, then the contradiction of the two treaties should suggest that at best, sovereignty in the area was legally murky.

Spilsbury's account is first and foremost attempt to exonerate himself. Any claims he makes about Moroccan sovereignty seem based in the desire to prove to the public that he did nothing wrong. Instead he plays the victim claiming abuse at the hands of a weak and misguided British

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[232] Spilsbury, 91.
[233] Spilsbury, 90.
[234] Spilsbury, 223.

Foreign Office and a cruel and vindictive Moroccan government. Nevertheless, in composing these arguments, Spilsbury joined the ranks of authors contesting the notion of Moroccan sovereignty in the Sous at the end of the nineteenth century. While Spilsbury uses the same rhetorical devices and evaluative framework found other Western accounts, he is distinguished by acting against rather than on behalf of a political power. Additionally, the notoriety generated by his trial along with the availability of his book to the general public, ensured his narrative had far more influence on public opinion in the Anglophone world than did, for instance, the consular reports in the prior chapter.

Grey's Account

The other account of the *Tourmaline* Incident was published in 1899 immediately following Spilsbury's trial. In it, the author, Henry M. Grey, one of the men who had been left at Arksis and then arrested and sentenced to four months imprisonment, tried to respond to some of the elements in Spilsbury's version of the events. Like Spilsbury, Grey was outraged at the Foreign Office and the Government of Morocco, but he also had a bone to pick with Spilsbury, himself, as he blamed Spilsbury for leaving him on the shore where he was subsequently captured.[235] Furthermore, part of Grey's defense revolved around claiming to have been duped by Spilsbury and the Syndicate into what he did not know was an illegal enterprise.[236] Though Grey's account competes with Spilsbury's in terms of the details of events, they are of one accord with relationship to the sultan's sovereignty in the Sous. Grey uses a few different devices from Spilsbury in making his case for the independence of the Sous though many of his lines of argument echo Spilsbury's.

One novel technique Grey utilizes to underscore what he sees as the separateness of the Sous is differentiating the demonyms he uses for its inhabitants from those he uses for the people

[235] Grey, *In Moorish Captivity: An Account of the "Tourmaline" to Sus 1897-1898*, 69.
[236] Grey, 7.

living in what he considers Morocco. Specifically, while Spilsbury refers to both groups as Moors, Grey consistently refers to the Moroccans as Moors, but to the Sousi tribesmen as either the Sousi or Berbers. This distinction is highlighted in a number of passages like the following where the two groups are compared to one another, "the Sousi had plenty of money, but that they, like the Moors, were treacherous in the extreme."[237] By continuously placing the groups in contrast, Grey reinforces his assertion that the two are fundamentally different and belong to two different nations, a particularly potent concept in the late nineteenth century as the idea of the nation state was taking root. Grey also builds on this concept through a comparison to the Irish. He writes that "Like the Irish, they [the Sousi tribes] have their burning question of Home Rule, and their discussions suggested the proceedings of an Irish Parliament."[238] By equating the question of sovereignty in the Sous to that in Ireland, Grey makes the conflict relatable for his readers in Britain. Through this connection he is also able to map on the assertion that, like the Irish, the Sousi are an occupied people and whether or not they are temporarily beneath the rule of the sultan, they are a separate nation that longs for independence.

Grey also presents a number of arguments we have seen in other accounts. Like Spilsbury, he draws attention to what he calls "terrible conditions of life that [they] obtain under the autocratic and tyrannical rule of the descendant of the Prophet."[239] By attacking the quality of life and system of government, Grey is really attacking the legitimacy of the sultan's regime. He also positions Europeans as benevolent saviors, who ameliorate the conditions in the country through their presence: "the influence of European civilization has, however, done something of late years towards mitigating these and similar horrors in Northern Morocco."[240] Additionally, he makes the distinction we have seen before between the acknowledgement of religious and political authority,

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[237] Grey, 41.
[238] Grey, 74.
[239] Grey, 22.
[240] Grey, 24.

asserting "Throughout Sous the sovereignty of the sultan is recognised only in spiritual matters. He is the acknowledged head of the Church, but in temporal matters each tribe is a republic, governed by its Ait Arbain, or Council of Forty, elected from among its members."[241] The choice of "republic" echoes Consul Matthews' use of the same word and again is implicitly contrasted with the "autocracy" of the sultanate. Like the Irish comparison, Grey's use of "republic" familiarizes the Sous, making it seem to fit into Western political structures.

Though Grey's narrative is much longer than Spilsbury's, much of it is given over to the description of his imprisonment and his various marches. The final chapter, however, is largely a critique of the Foreign Office's approach to the whole affair. Rather than commenting on the political reality of existent treaties, Grey makes the argument that Britain should put its international prestige and commercial interests above diplomacy. This argument again highlights his role as one of the informal agents seeking to drive Britain into the pursuit of empire. To some extent, he seems not to care whether the Moroccan claims to the Sous are legitimate. Regardless, he claims the British consuls should have backed the endeavor and taken a strong stance against the Moroccans. Instead, having failed to do so, he asserts Britain has appeared weak especially in comparison to Germany, which simply released their citizen without trial or reprimand.[242]

Grey's account like Spilsbury's demonstrates a rejection of British policy while at the same time playing a vital role in shaping discourse around international recognition of Moroccan sovereignty in the Sous. Excerpts from Grey's book were published around the world further internationalizing what was initially a domestic question in Morocco.[243] Like other accounts, through his contestation of Moroccan sovereignty in the Sous, Grey actually contributed to the

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[241] Grey, 64.
[242] Grey, 335–37.
[243] Henry M. Grey, "The Kaid Said El Giluli.," *New York Times*, January 14, 1900.

construction of limitations on that sovereignty even if he did so on his own behalf rather than for a government.

Conclusion

The *Tourmaline* incident offers an exceptional lens into the dynamics that defined the negotiation of political authority and especially sovereignty in the Sous at the end of the nineteenth century. The event itself demonstrated the continued willingness of the Sousi tribes to engage with European traders in spite of the sultan's prohibition, challenging his secular authority. It also showed the ways in which the British imperialism of free trade through informal empire stressed the relationships between the central *makhzan* authorities and local leaders on the periphery. The two accounts of the expedition by Grey and Spilsbury also provide an opportunity to explore the ways in which documents that are not aligned with official policy nevertheless impact the construction of political concepts such as sovereignty.

Grey and Spilsbury's narratives contributed to the process of constructing and defining Moroccan sovereignty in spite of, or rather because of, their opposition to the British government. The ability of these informal documents to engage in the same process as diplomatic ones demonstrates how the documentary act itself is imbued with constitutive power, rather than being invested with it by the political power that promotes it. Rather than serving a national political agenda, Grey and Spilsbury's accounts serve personal ones. This difference, though, in no way precluded them from engaging in the same debate as the consuls or royal historians from the previous chapter.

Conclusion: The Impact of British Informal Empire on *Makhzan*/*Siba*

In the late nineteenth century, the Moroccan central government faced a novel threat. English trading companies as part of the larger phenomenon of British informal empire increasingly raised challenges to Morocco's political authority along the southern periphery of the state. By enticing local elites to renounce the sultan's authority in order to gain access to lucrative customs-free trading agreements, these companies repeatedly triggered domestic crises that required the Moroccan sultan to change the kind of authority he practiced both internally and externally in order to better ensure his control over trade. At the same time, the *makhzan* became embroiled in a contest of narratives about the changes that were taking place. While the *makhzan* attempted to demonstrate the continuity of Moroccan political authority in the region, Western authors, both within and outside official channels, cast aspersions on the validity of this authority, both because it differed from the definition of sovereignty that had gained currency in Europe during this period, particularly in the wake of the Berlin Conference, and because doing so served imperial political agendas.

The changes in the kind of political authority employed by the sultan discussed in this paper and the narrative contestation that accompanied them then directly influenced the concept of *bilad al-siba* developed by French colonial scholars and applied to southern Morocco in the beginning of the twentieth century. In attempting to understand "traditional" Morocco, such incidents informed French beliefs about the relationship between the Sultan and the Sous, meaning the phenomenon of British informal empire was at least a factor in the creation of the *makhzan*/*siba* dichotomy. For example, one of the most influential early treatises on southern Morocco that laid the foundation for the French theorization of an Arab/Amazigh *makhzan*/*siba* was that of Colonel Léopold Justinard, a French military officer. Justinard, explicitly references European travel accounts depicting the 1882 *mahalla* and its connection the English trading companies while claiming that it

was an invasion of territory that had previously been beyond the borders of the sultanate.[244] Montagne, too, one of the chief propagators of the theory, writes about relationship between the *makhzan* and Husayn bin Hashim, calling them enemies, a characterization that probably stems from the kinds of Western accounts presented here.[245] Though these incidents may have involved the British rather than the French, it seems likely that they least somewhat influenced French perceptions of the connection between the sultan and southern Morocco. By raising the question of Moroccan political authority, particularly within the European framework of sovereignty, to the international stage, British merchants involved in the processes of British informal empire contributed to the creation of ambiguity in Western understandings of the relationship between southern Morocco and the rest of the country. This ambiguity, in turn, led to the need somehow articulate a theory of the historical Moroccan sultanate in which certain regions could at once be included and excluded from the state. Ultimately, French colonial scholars resolved this need through the creation of the notion of *bilad al-siba*, a label which has stuck ever since.

[244] Léopold Justinard, *Tribus Berbères* (Paris: Champion, 1930), 99–100.
[245] Schroeter, *Merchants of Essaouira*, 180.

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