Significance of Civil Society

Despite its long history and the present proliferation of civil society, its concept remains ambiguous. Understandings of civil society also vary significantly in different parts of the world, influenced by diverse historical, socio-cultural, political, and intellectual trajectories and contexts (Malena, 2008:184). Civil society can be traced back to the period when modern ideas of democracy were beginning to take root. Historically, it is also connected with the rise of capitalism and the evolution of a modern state in the Weberian sense of rational-legal structures of governance. Civil society is as much an integral part of the development of the West as is either market or state. However, theorists differ in terms of what they consider the nature of civil society to be and how it relates to the state (Hyden et al, 2004:58).

The classical understanding of civil society as a politically organized commonwealth received its first coherent formulation in the cities of ancient Greece. The observation that people live together in distinct yet related associations stimulated debate about uniqueness, commonality, particularism and universalism. Systematic political theory arose out of these discussions, and political categories framed the first approach to civil society (Ehrenberg, 1999:3). As a concept, civil society is essentially an intellectual product of 18th century Europe, when citizens sought to define their place in society independently of the aristocratic state and when simultaneously, the certainty of a status-based social order began to suffer irreversible decline (Anheier, 2004:20). During this time, the rising bourgeois classes were in the process of emancipating themselves from the strictures of absolute monarchy, church and feudal estates, as well as traditional bonds of kinship. This process was championed by philosophers such as Ferguson, Hegel...
and DeTocqueville who, each in his own way, envisioned a society of autonomous individuals who on a voluntary basis would group together in order to defend and promote their common interests, vis-à-vis the state's authorities (Harmsen, 2008:19).

Thus, the very concept “civil society” has developed into a major topic in both scholarly research and political activism. Civil society refers to the development of independent voluntary organizations and enhanced opportunities for public sphere participation on the part of citizens. Specifically, this usually entails a focus on the emergence of non-state actors such as political parties and interest groups, and therefore pluralism in the form of various types of autonomous associations. But civil society also includes an emphasis on the increasing ability to debate political issues openly in the public sphere. The idea of civil society, then, suggests that the concept of “development” be viewed not just in terms of economic growth, nor even in terms of the democratization of formal government institutions, but also as increased personal and societal freedoms. These freedoms in turn imply a greater role for the press and other information media (Ryan, 2002:17-18).

According to Keith Tester, the term, “civil society” can be applied to all those social relationships, which involve the voluntary association and participation of individuals acting in their private capacities. In a simple and perhaps even simplistic formula, civil society can be said to equal the milieu of private contractual relationships. It is a coming together of private individuals, an edifice of those who are otherwise strange to one another. Civil society is clearly distinct from the state. It involves all those relationships which go beyond the purely familial and yet are not of the state (Tester, 1992: 8). Similarly, according to Michael Walzer, “in civil society, individuals form a multitude of associations and freely move from one group to another or form activist membership to peripheral passivity...They aim to advance some particular good in interest groups, or to deliver some general benefit in philanthropies and foundations. Civil society makes room for all these aims and includes all the resulting associations, by virtue of their free and consensual character. This means that it reaches to politics and economics as well as to the multitude of social activities” (Walzer, 2002: 35).
In short, Azzedine Layachi emphasised that civil society refers to the independent association of groups and individuals for protecting their particular interests and for influencing public policy. It includes associations, political parties, unions, various informal groupings, an independent press, and individuals such as intellectuals and opinion leaders (Layachi, 1999: 51-52). Thus, there is a general acceptance that the critical sphere of civil society consists of the space between citizens and the state. Civil society, therefore, is composed of the associations and organizations whose primary objective is to promote or represent the views and interests or organize the activities of different groups of citizens. The bodies concerned have to be autonomous of the state. At the same time, however, they need to be operating within a context where the state safeguards their freedom of operation – preferably within a clearly articulated legal framework but at least in a manner where their autonomy is assured. The associations themselves, moreover, need to act in a manner where they respect each other’s right to operate (Niblock, 2005: 487).

Civil Society and Its Role in Fostering Democratic Process

Despite the concepts of civil society having a rich history, it is only in the last fifteen years that they have moved to the centre of the international stage. There are a number of reasons for this development; the fall of communism and the democratic openings that followed, disenchantment with the economic and political models of the past, a yearning for togetherness in a world that seems ever more insecure and the rapid rise of non-governmental organizations (NGOs) on the global stage. Depending on the prevalent system in each particular country, civil society can be a specific product of the nation-state and capitalism arising spontaneously to mediate conflicts between social life and the market economy when the industrial revolution fractured traditional bonds of kin and community. It also arises from a universal expression of the collective life of individuals in all countries but expressed in different ways according to history, culture, and context. Since nation-states in much of the developing world are largely a colonial creation and the market economy has only a fragile hold, civil societies in developed countries are bound to differ from those that emerged in developing countries (Edwards, 2009: 2-3).
In western liberal thinking, civil society, understood as the zone of voluntary associative life beyond family and clan affiliations but separate from the state and the market, has a very close association with democracy and democratization. Studies on processes of democratization often highlight the strong link between the growth in civil society activism and democratic transformations, pointing to the role of independent civil society organizations in demanding, through their ability to mobilize citizens, increased governmental accountability and significant institutional reforms on the basis of the rights of the individual (Cavatorta, 2009: 29). Under the right conditions, civil society can contribute to the democratization of authoritarian regimes and can help to sustain a democratic system once it is established. In democracies, civil society organizations provide forums for citizens to pursue shared interests – political, social, or spiritual – freely, collectively, and peacefully. Through involvement in civil society, citizens learn about fundamental democratic values of participation and collective action and they disseminate these values within their communities. Civil society movements that represent citizen interests can shape both government policy and social attitudes. By constituting a sphere of citizen activity beyond the direct control of government, civil society can form a counterweight to state power (Hawthorne, 2005: 82-83).

A healthy democracy requires many voluntary associations and local activity. Greater engagement, deeper commitment, more participation, and heightened solidarity seem desirable in any social order, particularly one plagued by cheapened politics and civic decline. Contemporary thought is characterized by a pervasive scepticism of the state and of the possibilities afforded by broad political action. Now it is civil society that is supposed to revive communities, train effective citizens, build habits of respect and cooperation, provide a moral alternative to self-interest, limit intrusive bureaucracies, and reinvigorate the public sphere, all this in an environment of small government and local politics (Ehrenberg, 1999: 233). From a democratic perspective, a strong civil society can prevent the agglomeration of power that threatens autonomy and choice, provide effective checks against the abuse of state authority, and protect a democratic public sphere in which citizens can debate the ends and means of governance. For instance, the role of NGOs and social movements in mobilizing opposition to authoritarian rule and
supporting progress towards multi-party elections has been well documented in Africa, Eastern Europe and Latin America (Edwards, 2009: 15). The democratic deficit and social stagnation in much of the West Asian countries is made worse by inadequate knowledge about the contours and potential of civil society institutions. Across the world, civil society has become a major item on the political agenda including West Asia. Yet, political agendas change and the seat at the policy table that has been gained in some countries may be more difficult to maintain for long unless civil society leaders have more and better information to support both their political positions and the policy arguments that they wish to put forward (Anheier, 2004: 10-13).

The rise of civil society and democracy necessitates a certain level of socioeconomic development but more important, it requires a balanced development. Balanced development in turn depends on the state’s role and policies vis-à-vis the society. Indeed, it is quite possible for societal preconditions for democracy to exist and yet authoritarian rule to persist where the state refuses to give in to pressures from society for popular participation. The dominant position of the state has meant the rule of politics by powerful families, elites, and military and bureaucratic sub-classes. In other words, the inauguration and stability of democracy is possible only when its social requisites are present (Abootalebi, 1998: 47-48). In broad terms, Arab civil society comprises of various groups representing varied interests, such as Islamist movements, Non-Governmental Organisations, professional organizations, and pro-democracy associations. Among these groups, the pro-democracy sector is the newest and the most fledgling. Both Jordan and Morroco have diverse and active civil societies in the region (Hawthorne, 2005: 85-89). The strongest social institutions that inhabit the area between citizen and state in West Asia, have traditionally been those based on clan/tribal groupings or on religious communities. If these are included in the definition of civil society, then West Asian civil society has been relatively strong, at least in some countries. If they are excluded, civil society premised on those social institutions has not been significant (Niblock, 2005: 488).
To Mustapha Kamel al-Sayyid, the debate on the term, "civil society" is not limited to its contours; rather it extends, more seriously to the appropriateness of the concept as a tool for the understanding of social and political processes presumably taking place in non-Western societies. Arab intellectuals, espousing different ideological causes have engaged their theoretical arsenals in this battle. They had preoccupations of their own, stemming from particular features of their societies and polities. It depends on the definition of civil society as well as on the social structure and political system prevailing in any particular country. Political parties and secondary associations of all types are unanimously accepted by Arab commentators as the backbone of civil society. Political parties, professional associations, business groups, trade unions, social clubs, literary and scientific societies are all accepted as part of civil society (al-Sayyid, 1995: 131-137). A nascent and fast-growing Islamic political and cultural movement has started to interact and work closely with global civil society, seeing it as a hopeful alternative to both isolation and alienation. The shift in position towards global civil society by a small but growing segment of the Islamic movement is a significant development in the way the Arab world interacts with social movements originating in other regions (Said, 2005: 61).

The Nature of civil society in Jordan and Morocco

Where civil society is stronger and networks between social organizations are denser, opposition should be able to use mass discontent to demand political change. The dominant perception is that strong civic organisations are more likely to facilitate demands for political change. In turn, political liberalization begins to promote a relatively stable transition to democratization. Opposition elites embedded in stronger professional associations, trade unions, civic organizations and political parties are more likely to demand political change, especially where these groups have significant resources and are highly interconnected. In this context, Jordanian opposition elites had much weaker organizational structure than Moroccan opposition movements. In Jordan, all political parties were driven underground in 1957 and the trade unions were effectively depoliticized in the early 1970s. Human rights organizations, women's groups, and other social organizations were also very limited and generally under the
direct patronage of the royal Hashemite. Thus, the professional associations and the Muslim Brotherhood, operating as a charitable society became the most important outlets for political expression both during and following the period of martial law. In Morocco, civil society was more developed. Political parties were allowed to operate openly from the early 1970s, and the two main opposition parties, the Socialist Union of Popular Forces (USFP) and Istiqlal had particularly close ties with two of the three large umbrella unions. The USFP had ties with the Democratic Labor Confederation; the Istiqlal Party was intricately linked to the General Union of Moroccan Workers. Through the unions, the parties were able to mobilize popular protests, demanding political as well as economic reforms. By the early 1980s, Morocco had also developed nearly 3,000 relatively independent associations for human rights, women issues, and other social groups (Lust-Okar, 2005: 11-13).

During the twentieth century, modern states have emerged virtually in Muslim societies. This was a major change not only because institutional forms were different but also as the historical conditions within which the change occurred were special. The impact was profoundly disturbing for Muslims in their institutional configurations and in their moral consciousness. New relationships with the historical ‘Other’ (Europe) were built and profound revisions of traditional world views undertaken under the influence (or against the challenge) of modern philosophical and political theories. On the one hand, the institutions of modern states were imposed from the outside. The complex processes through which modern nation states emerged in Europe had not been directly experienced by Muslims. The ‘imported’ state, as it was called, had to accommodate existing patterns of governance, traditional views of legitimacy and at the same time, modern expectations. Thus, the modern state was supposed not only to control effectively the whole territory and the whole population but also to transform territory, population, economy and the prevailing culture. It was also to define new relationships with former colonizing powers. It led to dismembering of traditional society. At the same time, traditional conceptions of political legitimacy kept their influence on prevailing attitudes, even as formulations for new expectations made their way to the consciousness of the people (Filali-Ansary, 2004: 304-305).
Generally, even non-democratic regimes also have a stratum of supportive elements that constitute a political discourse outside the immediate reach of the state, in the form of civil society. In such instance, civil society may take patriarchal, Islamic, Christian, Communist, or Fascist form (Sater, 2007: 4). The resulting organizational and ideological fragmentation of civil society in Jordan and Morocco has undercut the influence of human rights organizations, women groups, and other key bodies that might otherwise play a part in promoting competitive democracy (Brumberg, 2002: 25).

The Civil society in Jordan

With liberalization emerging in the 1990s, civil society in Jordan began redefining its own role and more active advocate of citizen participation and social equity. The number of organizations has clearly grown since 1989. Research centres became popular, conducting studies and holding seminars on current issues, as well as opinion polls on the performance of governments. The adoption of more democratic processes by the state meant that civil society could also function in roles that it had not been able to undertake before, ensuring the state accountable for certain issues (Talal, 2004: 86). However, in a context of political liberalization heavily controlled from above, the state carefully manages and monitors civil society organizations. By creating restrictive requirements for civil society organizations and overtly managing some of them, the state in fact enhances its control over society through the very institutions that are supposed to provide a space (Nanes, 2008: 68).

Cooptation leaves the basic patron-client relationship between state and society intact. The limited autonomy granted for tribal structures, professional associations, voluntary associations, political parties and Islamic movements is only a means to defuse socio-political tensions and unrest. State’s punitive actions remain vigil if members of a voluntary association engage in political activity considered unlawful, if a newspaper editorial criticizes the regime of a neighbouring Arab country, or if a peaceful demonstration is considered politically dangerous. The liberalization process (1989) makes the condition that the status of the monarchy as the final arbiter would not be
questioned by political and civil society forces (Harmsen, 2008: 102-105). Except token reforms, even after a decade of liberalization, elected representatives and civil society organizations remain essentially toothless (Singh, 2002: 68). Significantly, despite measures to curb free expression in the country, numerous Non-Governmental Organisations and civil society associations have been actively involved in public sphere even before the early 1990s liberalisation process.

Associations and Political Activism

Unlike civil society actors, the Non-Governmental Organisations’ function is not to achieve direct political power but to promote the common interests outside of the realm of struggle for political and economic spheres. In the case of Jordan, NGOs’ involvement in the realm of politics exists (Harmsen, 2008: 149). Particularly, the 1989 political liberalization offered opportunities for NGOs to become actively involved in a more politicized agenda. It enabled the NGOs a broad base to address social conditions in the country as part of the wider political agenda beyond the delivery of services. Political liberalization and the increased interest among donors in funding NGOs offered certain advantages. While in the 1980s, most NGOs had to go through government channels to approach foreign donors, with liberalization they were able to forego this system. Some foreign states also established small assistance programmes within their embassies, which enabled NGOs to receive grants directly without going through government channels. Moreover, the "Framework Convention" signed by the government with the European Union paved the way for direct funding to local NGOs. At the same time, greater access to external aid and opportunities for partnership relations with foreign NGOs and donors created more competition for funding (Talal, 2004: 88-89).

Regarding NGO, the government requires all social development societies to be members of the General Union of Voluntary Societies (GUVS), an umbrella organization administered by the state. The main purpose is to monitor and bind organizational activity to the regime. Social groups are prohibited from political activity. The government sanctions token funds to the GUVS-affiliated units (Jamal, 2007: 120).
In the 1980s, the fiscal crisis was increasingly threatening populist commitments of past decades, which provided a minimum of social welfare services – education, health care, subsidies on primary food products in exchange for political support and acquiescence especially from the urban lower and middle classes, peasants, and workers. While expectations on such public commitments remained, the ability of the state to continue its largess weakened (Moore and Salloukh, 2003). Moreover, in adopting economic liberalization, a major part of the International Monetary Fund (IMF) policy was to reduce aspects of state involvement in the economy while simultaneously increasing its regulatory role. The external aid was declining and to gain future support from the donor community the state had to introduce economic liberalization (Knowles, 2005: 72).

With the beginning of economic liberalisation in the 1990s, the state withdrew from the bulk of providing social welfare. State welfare policies conflicted with neo-liberal economic reforms. The termination of state welfare in Jordan removed a main source of market security for much of the population. The alternative source of social security net fell on the private sector. Those with specialized skills invest in professional associations to preserve their investment and social security. These associations provide health insurance, pensions, and other benefits. Similarly, manufacturing workers organize in union/labour but manufacturing sector is limited in Jordan. They make demands on the state concerning their profession and secure their interests. The largest and most dynamic sector is services, much of which is informal. Service and informal employment is notorious for its seasonality and instability. Service jobs include office workers, repair personnel, retail shop workers, and vendors. It also includes tourism, the airline industry, hotels, restaurants, hospitals, and travel agencies (Baylouny, 2010: 73-79).

**Professional Associations**

Professional associations are another means of social welfare in the private sector. Skilled professionals are small with about 13 percent. The membership in the associations is mandatory. Lawyers were first to form a professional union in 1950, and physicians and engineers unionized shortly thereafter. The social activities of the unions began in the
1970s starting with housing. The next priorities were pensions, health insurance, and credit provisions (Baylouny, 2010: 88). Since economic reforms, skill-based associations have expanded and 14 professional associations are active in Jordan. Members include doctors, dentists, pharmacists, veterinaries, nurses and midwives, engineers, agricultural engineers, geologists, lawyers, journalists, writers, auditors, construction contractors, and artists (Neimat, 2010). While these associations occasionally take on characteristics of traditional unions, they closely resemble political bodies (International Business, 2011: 112).

Most associations have only a few hundred members with the total membership of approximately 120,000 professional members. After 1967, professional associations in alliance with trade unionists, coordinated and increased their activity and re-emerged as a powerful force in the late 1970s when there was few forums for political expression. As the government could not legally interfere in the governance of these professional associations, they had the distinction of holding the only free and democratic elections in Jordan (Hasso, 2005: 20-21).

Professional associations are the most powerful civil society associations in Jordan. These associations play active role in giving expression on issues not directly related to professional life, such as the Palestine problem, Iraq situation, democracy, and human rights, often of an opposition nature. All paying members of an association constitute its General Assembly, which meets annually and elects the association’s council and president every two years. The council organizes education and training activities for its members. Further, the presidents of all professional associations constitute a coordinating committee over all unit associations. The associations also have disciplinary committees to ensure professional code of conduct among its members. Given that a membership in a professional association is a legal requirement to pursue a profession, it serves as a strong deterrent against possible violation of association’s regulations (Harmsen, 2008: 119-121).
Professional associations had for many years served as an informal substitute for party life when political parties were banned in 1957 (Moore and Salloukh, 2003). In the absence of formal provisions for democracy, elections in associations were the only means of measuring the political activity in the country. In these forums, a semblance of political life came to the fore. Elections were actively contested, which provides political space even if that means a small role. The activities of these associations were contained by increasingly strict enforcement of charities law and surveillance by intelligence service. In response, to acknowledge the covert role of the intelligence obvious, many organizations stipulates in their rulebook the requirement that a member of the General Intelligence Directorate had to be present at the annual general meeting of the organization before the proceedings could formally get underway (Milton-Edwards and Hinchcliffe, 2009: 45).

On 14 May 1990, the professional associations staged a mass protest against Russian Jews immigration to Israel and in support of the Palestinian’s right of return. In a clash between security forces and demonstrators, many were injured in the worst eruption of violence since the bread riots in April 1989 (Susser, 1990: 467). Particularly, in the aftermath of 1994 peace treaty with Israel, the professional associations mobilised public opinion in their opposition to normalisation. For instance, the associations banned all contact between their members and Israel. Boycotting Israel was their best option in the anti-normalisation campaign. They condemned the government of collaborating with Israel while turning its back on the Arab people. The associations took disciplinary action against their members who engaged with Israel. The Writers’ Association expelled a member for giving an interview to an Israeli television. Apparently, their activities provoked the palace to reassess the role of the associations and legislation with the declared intention of curtailing their involvement in politics. The campaign was consistently supported by the press, which in turn faced royal censure. However, the search for mutual compromise on the disputed issue remains unsettled (Susser, 1995: 391-393).
A broad range of professional associations voiced their protests against the US-led coalition military actions and the United Nations sanctions on Iraq. After the US and the UK bombed Iraq on 16 December 1998 in response to Iraqi government’s refusal to comply with UN weapons inspectors (Youngs and Oakes, 1999: 25), various associations called on Jordanians to eschew all activities organized by the US and British embassies in Amman. For its part, the Jordanian Medical Association and the Pharmacists Association urged a blacklist of American and British medical products. In 2000, the Jordanian Bar Association attempted to rent a private airplane to break the UN air embargo imposed on Iraq. In the same year, the Jordanian Construction Contractors Association and the Agricultural Associations Council organized a similar solidarity flight protests. The other popular group, National Mobilisation Committee for the Defense of Iraq (NMCDI) composed of assorted representatives from political parties and associations focused on raising public awareness and lobbying the kingdom’s politicians. In addition to sending public letters to Jordan’s prime minister and parliament speaker, NMCDI initiated several nation-wide collection drives to dispatch goods to Iraq (Schenker, 2003: 68-71).

While humanitarian concerns, political affinity and economic interest are the proximate reasons for the close Jordanian connection to Iraq, the Jordanian elite have an even more personal reason to feel the bond with Iraq. Until 1962, Jordan had no public university system and thus, two generations of Jordanians spent a formative period of their student lives in Baghdad. Iraq built institutions of higher education considered among the finest in the Arab world. The country’s oil wealth gave it the resources to extend subsidies to Jordanians and other Arab students, offering prized opportunities for a quality education at very low cost of education fees (Schenker, 2003: 72-73). As the Jordanian regime moved closer to the US and continued its normalization bid with Israel, it found the constant opposition of the professional associations an increasingly intolerable annoyance. In 2005, Amman governor announced that prior approval was required for any kind of mass gathering except for weddings. In March 2005, Prime Minister Fayez’s government presented a draft professional associations’ law to parliament. In one controversial section, the law would authorize the Audit Bureau to monitor each
association’s funds to ensure they are being spent only on internal activities (Hamid, 2010: 127).

Debate has been raised over the matter of venues for political activism, especially after legalisation of political parties. Successive governments have maintained that political parties are the legal vehicles for political expression, specifically calling on professional associations to restrict their role to professional issues. The associations have countered that their involvement is not tied to political but to national issue (Talal, 2004: 87). In recent opposition demonstrations, on 24 June 2011, along with political parties and other civil society organisations, professional associations called for sacking the government of Prime Minister Bakhit. Their demands also included efforts to check corruption, genuine social, political, and economic reforms, and address poverty and unemployment issues (Xinhua News Agency, 2011).

Among the professional groups, teachers are barred to form association in the country. In 1994, a decision by the Higher Council for the Interpretation of the Constitution declared the establishment of a professional teachers’ association as unconstitutional. In 2010, teachers renewed a series of protests in front of their schools, ministries, and government agencies, demanding their right to form a professional teachers’ association (Zaitoun, 2010). Given the large number of teachers across the country, the government is wary about teachers’ demands, which it fears may lead to their entry into politics like other professional associations. The government stressed on the need to keep education away from negative influence of politics. Indeed, following a nationwide strike by teachers in 2010, the government took several measures to improve teachers’ financial and social conditions (Azzeh, 2011).

**Chamber of Commerce**

Until the mid-1980s, the two main institutions of the private sector in Jordan were the Chamber of Commerce and Chamber of Industry. In 1985, the Jordanian Businessmen Association (JBA) was formed with select membership of around 400 representing the
The core of the association. During the 1980s, with the state's economy in crisis, members of the business elite created JBA to protect their interests, which immediately became an influential player behind the scenes in the economic decision-making process (Knowles, 2005: 74-76).

The merchants of Jordan predated the establishment of the state itself. A few decades prior to the formation of the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan, merchants from Syria and Palestine immigrated to Transjordan in the waning years of Ottoman rule. Amman Chamber of Commerce (ACC) was established in 1923 in the same year as that of British Mandate in Transjordan. Attracted by the increased security, merchants from Nablus and Damascus emigrated to Salt, Irbid, and eventually to Amman. It was an autonomous institution relying on membership dues for its operating funds and deciding upon its internal features was the prerogative of the members, not the state. During the mandate period, the ACC provided ad hoc funding to the monarch and forged close influential relations with King Abdullah, enhancing the ACC’s position in terms of economic policies. In the 1960s with the waves of Palestinian refugees into the country, the Palestinians began to dominate the ACC leadership (Moore, 2004: 57-68).

Years following the disengagement from the West Bank, the Federation of Jordanian Chambers of Commerce (FJCC) was established in 1995, as the representative of the private sector in all economic, commercial, and service fields (Brand, 1994: 56). Further, on 12 June 2003, a Provisional Law, No. 70 was enacted in which Jordan Chamber of Commerce (JCC) was established to take over the role of the FJCC (Jordan Chamber of Commerce, 2006). Every 16 governorate in Jordan has its own chamber with Amman Chamber of Commerce as the largest and oldest elected private sector body in Jordan (Sha’sha, 1991: 74).

In political aspect, the role of business representatives in parliament was less. After independence, the state created separate districts for representation in the Lower House of parliament between the East and West Banks. The electoral law ensured more representations for East Bank than the urban-based Palestinians did, consequently, the
ACC elites were at disadvantage. For instance, in the period 1960s and 80s, prominent ACC-affiliated members accounted for maximum two seats. As for Upper House, early ACC presidents were regularly appointed by the monarch. Given the country’s nascent economic institutions in the 1950s and 1960s, the ACC was well placed to provide expert advice and affect economic policies. In 1962 due to leadership conflict within ACC, the breakaway faction led by Muhammed Bdair established Amman Chamber of Industry (ACI), while membership in the ACC remained obligatory (Moore, 2004: 70-83).

Chamber of Industry

In the 1970s and early 1980s, the state allowed the private sector to develop with few risks. The risk-free environment tended to disguise sectoral cleavages and resulted in a private sector that was relatively homogenous in its relationship with the state. However, with the advent of economic crisis and the donor community’s attempts to introduce economic liberalisation, the comfortable symbiosis among the private establishments was threatened. As the 1990s wore on, the cleavages along sectoral lines and demographic division became apparent. Moreover, the perception of the Transjordanian-Palestinain divide remains strong with the former being associated with the public sector and supposedly obstructive to the private sector (Knowles, 2005: 201). Thus, social divisions and new competitive needs were responsible for the split of the Amman Chamber of Industry into regional chambers of industry. Since the 1970s, the state has encouraged industrial development outside Amman through tax incentives system and the formation of industrial estates. In 1999, several industrialists outside Amman decided to create their own local industry chambers. The move arose in part from social and personal rivalries. Christians and minorities felt under-represented in the existing ACI and that it failed to take other regions outside of Amman seriously. The new chambers also arose from the distinct concerns of geographical area and the pressure for more intensive services (Carroll, 2003: 157).

Amman Chamber of Industry (ACI) covers the area of Amman and the governorate of Balqa, Madba, Kerak, Maan, Altafeeleh and Aqaba. Apart from Amman Chamber of
Industry, two more chambers were established in recent years. In 1998, Zarq Chamber of Industry (ZCI) was established, comprising two geographical areas of Zarqa and Mafraq. In 1999, Irbid Chamber of Industry (ICI) was set up with the provinces of Irbid, Jerash, and Ajloun under its domain. At the national level, the Jordan Chamber of Industry was established in 2005 under the Chambers of Industry Law No.10. As an apex body, it embraces under its organisation all the three chambers of industry in Jordan. The JCI is represented in on various forums in national and international levels. As a statutory body, the government consults the chamber on policies, law, regulations, strategies, and programmes on national industry issue (Jordan Chamber of Industry, 2006).

Despite popular anti-normalisation campaign, Jordanian business sector, particularly pragmatic young business generation, largely Western-educated were driven to expand business enterprises regardless of politics. They saw the opportunity from cooperating with Israeli companies under the Qualifying Industrial Zones (QIZ) agreement signed between Israel, Jordan and United States at Doha Conference in November 1997. However, the entrepreneurs maintained low profile in their business dealings with Israel to avoid retribution from anti-normalisation movement. The pressure on business segment was perhaps most visibly exerted when an Israeli trade fair was planned to organize in Amman in November 1996 and repeatedly delayed. When the fair finally opened in January 1997, there were few visitors, while a broad coalition of political activists, trade unions, and professional associations organized in a “Committee for the Cancellation of the Israeli Trade Fair” demonstrated outside the fair. In 2000 and 2001, the “Committee against Normalisation” a coalition body involving most of the professional associations published a “blacklist” of companies accused of normalization with Israel, prompting the government to crack down on the movement. Albeit strong pressure exerted by popular public opinion, tacit business cooperation continued with Israel (Bouillon, 2004: 61-66).

In 2002, in another instance of business pragmatic approach, as waves of condemnation and protests against perceived United States’ failure to halt Israeli aggression against the Palestinians swept across Jordan and other Arab states, the Jordanian business
community appeared divided over the feasibility of a call to boycott US products. The US had been one of Jordan’s major trade partners in the previous year. While some business segments urged an immediate boycott, others concluded that the proposed sanctions would harm the national economy, considering that boycott would adversely affect importing important goods and Jordanian investors in the US. In addition, the fact that Jordan is a small market would mean that boycott would have little impact on the US. Ultimately, Jordan was absent from a session in April 2002 of the Damascus-based Central Boycott Office of the Arab League (Europa, 2003: 638).

Trade Unions

Similar to other associations, the annexation of the West Bank in 1950 was the prime mover behind the emergence of the trade union movement in Jordan. While the Jordanian authorities reined in the activities of the West Bank-based labour movements, activists continued its work underground. The intervention of International Labour Organisation (ILO) in combination with a relatively liberal policy of the new appointed government of Prime Minister Fawzi al-Mulqi led to the legalization of labour unions in 1953 under Jordanian Labour Law 35. Specifically, the law forbade engaging in any non-labour related political activity. With the result, on 18 January 1954, the Construction Workers‘ Union with headquarters in Amman was the first trade union to be established under the new law. Several more unions were established in rapid succession and on 25 July 1954, they federated into the General Federation of Trade Unions in Jordan (GFTUJ). From that year onward, the two main progressive currents in the West Bank, the Communists and the Ba’athists (Arab nationalists aligned with Syria), stepped up their efforts to organize a broad-based mass movement (Hiltermann, 1991: 60-61).

The Communists set up more trade unions, founded the Democratic Youth Association, encouraged women’s group, and pushed for cultivators’ associations. By 1955, Jordanian Communist Party was the most highly organized body in the West Bank. In fact, the West Bankers played the leading role in the country. In 1955, there were thirty-six trade unions, twenty-five of which were affiliated with the GFTUJ. In 1957, trade unions faced
repression and some unions were banned outright as a result of ban on political parties (Hiltermann, 1991: 61). In 1965 and 1969, Jordan was represented in the International Confederation of Free Trade Unions (ICFTU), but not again until 1995, when GFTUJ represented the country (Docherty, 2004: 149).

In 1970, in the wake of military crackdown on Palestinian militants, when GFTUJ called for reconciliation, the government dissolved the federation’s executive committee and replaced with new committee, with changes in the federation’s constitution ensuring greater state access and influence. In 1970s, strikes for higher wages and working conditions occurred frequently, prompting the government to revise the labour law and empowered Ministry of Labour to reorganize unions without having to consult the GFTUJ. When new laws and pressure tactics did not deter the union’s activities, the government adopted means that are more direct. The regime convinced potential candidates not to run for union elections and imprisoned activists or dismissed them form their jobs. By the mid-1980s, the government had gained control of most trade unions (Jamal, 2007: 122). Traditionally, left parties have controlled the trade unions’ leadership. In the 1990s, the decline of leftist parties’ influence and increased factionalisation within the federation impacted negatively on the trade union movement (Harmsen, 2008: 129). In the 1990s, Islamists have gained strongholds in the trade unions’ executive body.

In the present labour scenario, Jordan has a labour force of 1.8 million, of which the domestic members are generally well educated as compared to approximately 322,000 registered foreign workers, who are mainly employed in construction, agriculture, and domestic service. Unemployment officially averaged 12.5 percent throughout 2010, a slight decrease from 2009’s average of 12.9 percent. Labour unions serve primarily as intermediaries between workers and the Ministry of Labour and engage in collective bargaining on behalf of workers (International Business, 2011: 112). The 17 trade unions, for which only private sector workers are eligible have voluntary membership. The only exception is the land Transport and Mechanics union having mandatory membership, which is the largest among the workers’ union (Baylouny, 2010: 89).
Students’ Organizations

Students’ activism can be attributed to British Mandate period when they were mobilised by the Jordanian National Movement for independence. Educational influences continued to be particularly important for Jordanians and Palestinians after Jordan brought West Bank under its control in 1950. The movement’s leadership set up party cells throughout the school system to recruit student activists. Ba’athist, Communist, and Arab Nationalist parties initiated students’ organisations in urban areas on both banks of the river. Since no university existed in the country before 1962, the activists in this movement were secondary school students at home and university students studying abroad. In 1951, students from three secondary schools in Amman held a meeting to discuss student issues. From the conference, a document was prepared calling for establishing a national university; to form a Jordanian Student Union; to achieve a reduction in the fees in private schools; and to highlight the importance of Arab culture and heritage. These party-affiliated students played significant role in disseminating parties’ ideologies to more students in the country through secret meetings. Between conferences, students organised political lectures in their schools and wrote for the Jordanian and Arab newspapers, voicing their political concerns. They participated in large numbers for all major demonstrations throughout the decade. For instance, during the 1950s and 1960s, they supported establishment of Jordan’s political relations with the Arab organisations as a strategic alliance to oppose Zionism and the West (Anderson, 2005: 120-121).

Until 1975, the nomenclature of Jordanian Student Union was preserved despite the fact that all student members were Palestinian. In that year, with the establishment of the Palestine Communist Organisation, the Jordanian Student Union was renamed the Palestine Student Union (PSU). The change came with the communists’ quest for autonomy from the Jordanian Communist party (Sahliyeh, 1988: 118-119). Generally, academic freedom is assured in Jordan, albeit within the legally defined limits on criticism of subjects as in the case of the royal family. The authorities nevertheless keep a watchful eye on the universities. Sometimes, they intervene, usually quietly but occasionally heavy-handedly, especially concern over Islamists’ activism in the
universities. In 2002, eight Islamic lecturers were dismissed for refusing to amend their teaching curricula to describe Palestinian bombings in Israel as “suicide bombings” rather than “martyr operations”. Five of the lecturers were at the University of Jordan, two at Mu'tah University, and one lecturer at Yarmouk University. The present students’ activities in the country are mainly confined within the university campuses. Jordan has no national students’ union. Instead, each university has its own elected student council, which acts as a conduit between the student body and the university authorities (George, 2005: 233-236).

Students, particularly those at the University of Jordan and Yarmouk University were active on Palestinian issues apart from economic and academic matters related to students, despite arrests and expulsions. In 1973 and 1974, the government agreed to the formation of the Union of Jordan Students at the University of Jordan, which was dominated by Democratic Front, Communist Party and leftist groups (Hasso, 2005: 21). By the middle of the decade, as the share of wealth declined for the majority and increased for a minority, political tension increased. For example, in 1986 serious demonstrations broke out at the University of Yarmouk as students protesting a rise in university fees engaged in a pitched battle against the police and army (Milton-Edwards and Hinchcliffe, 2009: 45).

In 1999, universities in Jordan changed elections system of students’ union to one-person, one-vote on par with national electoral system. The friction between the IAF and the palace was also reflected in the university campuses. Following the change in voting system, Islamist students had claimed that the universities’ move was intended to weaken their representation, when they lost elections at the Jordan University of Science and Technology in Irbid (Braverman, 2000: 338). In March 2000, University of Jordan amended the regulations governing student elections to grant university’s president the right to appoint half the 80-member student council, including its chairperson. The move, viewed widely as an effort to curb the influence of Islamists’ sparked a series of students’ demonstrations and clashes with police forces. In an attempt to curb Islamism, the authorities try to find ways of boosting the non-Islamist representation in student
elections. While Islamists were most affected, students demonstrating over Iraq issue or supporting Palestinians are also considered oppositionist (U.S. Department of State, 2008: 1926).

In 2000, a day before the elections for the students’ union in University of Jordan, the Islamist students held a rally and on election day, they clashed with riot police on the campus. In the elections, pro-government and tribal candidates secured majority votes in student council and the university appointed a medical student as chairperson of the student council. This was the first time a student council chairperson was appointed by the university president and not elected by the student council since 1990 (Braverman, 2000: 339).

Since the outbreak of the al-Aqsa intifada in September 2000, Jordanian police had frequently clashed with Islamist groups who took to the streets to protest against Israel. In 2000 and 2001, Jordan had imposed tough laws banning demonstrations after public sympathy with the Palestinians uprising produced the largest street protests in more than a decade. On rare occasions, the government allows them to proceed in a gesture to public opinion. In March 2002, however, the authorities announced that organisers of demonstrations must apply for permits. Israel’s reoccupation of Palestinian-controlled population centres in the West Bank in March 2002 provoked mass street protests. On 1 April 2002, hundreds of students at the University of Jordan held a rally chanting pro-Palestinian slogans, burning Israeli flags and demanding that Jordan break off diplomatic ties with Israel. Riot police intervened when students stormed campus gates and tried to take their protests to the streets of the capital (Europa, 2003: 637).

Overall, since 1990s, the Islamists had gained considerable support in the professional associations and managed to get their nominees elected to most of the executive council seats and presidencies. In 2000, however, some Islamist nominees faced disappointment in the elections. In the Jordanian Pharmacists Association, the Islamist candidates lost to a coalition of independent candidates. In the Jordan Dentists Association, the nationalist candidates won all the seats and the presidency. On the other hand, in the Jordan
Engineers Association, the Islamists won all eleven seats on the executive council as well as the presidency. They were similarly successful in the Jordan Agricultural Engineers Association (Braverman, 2000: 334).

**Status of Jordanian Women and Participation**

Although women’s public participation in Jordan has relevance since the 1940s, concern about their participation in politics appeared late on the agenda of the women’s movement. Women’s activities then involved indirect action. After the Arab defeat of 1967 and the flight of many Palestinians to Arab countries, especially Jordan, women's activities began to appear as part of the general political mobilization. Thousands of women took part in the demonstrations but this did not happen through the medium of specific organizations. Women’s formal activism returned at the beginning of the 1970s (al-Attiyat, 2005: 27). The alliance of conservatism between the state, rigid religious interpretations and the tribal structure has contributed to marginalization of women from the public sphere, especially in the political domain in Jordan. However, the 1990s witnessed a characteristic change in the way society looked at the woman as traditional alliances began to crumble due to national, regional and international developments. The state began to take initiatives to integrate women into its national strategies; Islamic parties began forming women’s committees; and society began to move towards a more sensitive consideration and understanding of women’s rights (Hanieh, 2008: 79-80). Still, women’s organizations based on women’s rights are few. Most of their organizations are involved in providing care and assistance. Women’s participation on the administrative boards of charitable associations is higher than women’s participation in civil society groups and political parties given that membership in charitable associations is practically compulsory. The percentages drop in the countryside and among the Badiya (community of Bedouin) (al-Attiyat, 2005: 31-32).

One of the key reforms is getting Jordanian women more involved in public affairs. In 2003, after dissolving the parliament, King Abdullah appointed seven women, the highest number ever to a new 55-member body. He also created a special quota system to ensure
women would be elected to the lower chamber where they now number six out of 110 members. He also appointed a female minister, Asma Khader, a prominent lawyer and champion of human rights, particularly women's rights to serve as the government's spokesperson. However, sceptics abound from within the country on engineering change from above in Jordan's traditional society. With male dominance, even in a free and fair election getting women elected remains an uphill task. Few women already in the Parliament are a case of exception and not the rule (Gavlak, 2004).

In Jordan, the women's NGO sector is mostly under the patronage of the royal family with personal involvement of Queen Rania and Princess Basma Bin Talal and is particularly active and sophisticated. Educated and ambitious women have found the NGO sector an important entry point into participation in public life. Some important women NGOs are Jordanian Hashemite Fund for Development (JOHUD), Jordan Forum for Business and Professional Women, Jordan Women's Union, Jordanian National Commission for Women (JNCW) (A semi-governmental commission established by a Cabinet decision in 1992. It acts as liaison between the government and NGOs), National Council for Family Affairs (NCFA), Princess Basma Youth Center, and Queen Zein Al Sharaf Institute for Development (ZENID). Mizan provides legal counseling services as well as legal rights and human rights education for women in low-income communities and the National Strategy for Women outline an agenda for advancing the status of women. The Jordanian National Commission for Women (JNCW) and the Jordan National Forum for Women provide leadership and coordination of development programmes for women including working with NGOs. The Jordan Women's Union, established in 1945 was the first women's NGO in Jordan. It was dissolved in 1975 and again in 1981 and was finally re-established in 1989 (USAID, March 2003: 9-10).

On the issue of "honour killings" efforts to impose a harsher penalty on men who kill their daughters and sisters suffered a fresh setback in parliament in 2003, after deputies refused to sanction an amendment to the penal code. The day after parliament sat, three brothers killed their two sisters over honour. It is widely agreed that the root of honour killing is a complex, historical phenomenon, which has no justification in the Quran.
Nonetheless, it is the insistence within the given culture of the need to preserve women's purity and the disgrace that any stain may bring upon the family that makes it tough to stamp out the crime. The social, cultural and traditional pressures on men being reminded constantly of family honour at stake, that they are virtually blackmailed. Even female relatives play a role in honour crimes for fear of being tarred with the same brush if they refuse to co-operate (Murphy 2003). In 1980, Jordan signed the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW) and ratified it in 1992. Initially, Jordan held reservations on Article 15 (4) of the convention on the freedom of movement and residency rights for women but in 2009, the reservation was lifted (Euromed Gender Equality Programme, 2011: 35). A special tribunal was set up to hear cases related to honour killings to handle cases as regular murders (Husseini 2010). Yet, Articles 340 and 98 of the Jordanian penal code sanction honour killings and excuse the perpetrators. Article 98 imposes only a lenient penalty on the honour crimes perpetrators (BBC News, 2003).

Responding to the United Nations, in its resolution 55/66 calling for elimination of honour crimes against women, on 5 June 2002, Jordan stated that the crimes, which were committed within the family were dealt with in the Jordanian Penal Code. Jordan indicated that honour crimes occurred primarily as a result of weakening of religious consciousness and legal confusion and erroneous notions of Islamic law and tribal customs. However, measures to eliminate honour crimes in Jordan need substantive amendments to the national laws, in particular the repeal of article 340 of the Penal Code, which exonerated perpetrators and its replacement with a provision providing for the punishment of perpetrators of such crimes (United Nations General Assembly, 2002: 3). Both King Hussein and King Abdullah II have explicitly asked for amendment to the discriminatory laws but the parliament insisted on status quo. Such issues bear upon even legal regulations to deal with prevalent deep-rooted culture and tradition (Euromed Gender Equality Programme, 2011: 31).

Freedom of association in Jordan has a strong legal foundation, with guarantees enunciated in the 1952 Jordanian Constitution. Article 15 of the Constitution guarantees
freedom of opinion, and Article 16 explicitly mentions, "Jordanians are entitled to
establish societies and political parties". Likewise, Article 17 states, "Jordanians are
entitled to address the public authorities...on any matter relative to public affairs". However, the greatest impediment to Jordan's realization of authentic political reform is
the government's fear of the security consequences that may result from granting the
public additional freedoms. The government has enacted a number of measures: Terrorist
Economic Crimes Law (1993), Correction and Rehabilitation Centers Law (2004), and
amendments to the State Security Court Law and the Appropriation Law (2000), which
have led to encroachments on basic political freedoms (Jarrah 2009: 3-4).

On top of legal constraints, civil societies face challenges related to poor funding, limited
organizational capacity, and a weak domestic constituency. As a result, Jordanian civic
groups have not succeeded in playing a significant role in voicing public demands for
democratic reform. New civil society law passed by the Jordanian parliament in July
2008 threatened to further over-turn the current state of affairs. It directly contradicts
Jordan's obligations under the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights,
which Jordan's parliament approved in 2006, by violating Articles 21 and 22 that
guarantee the right to peaceful assembly and association. In particular, the state's security
apparatus must approve all NGO registrations, elections, leaders, and members.
Intimidation by the security services has constrained many NGO activities relating to
policy or political issues. The fact that NGOs themselves are not necessarily democratic
and lack of transparency eroded their credibility and blunted the impact of their work and
advocacy (Jarrah 2009: 5-10).

More recently, a decision by the Court of Cassation to subject news websites and
electronic media to the Press and Publications Law has stirred controversy among
journalists as the ruling is likely to limit healthy national debates on some respected sites.
Some websites have played a major role in the development of democracy by giving
citizens a means to freely express themselves (Jordan Times, 2010). In this context, the
Jordanian Network of Civil Society Organisations, which includes 20 member
organizations, deliberated upon the Jordanian Societies Law No. 51 of 2008. The activists proposed the deletion of the expression "or the achievement of any political goals" at the end of Paragraph (A) of Article 3. Such stipulations make Civil Society Organizations (CSOs) vulnerable to severe penalties. In addition, Article 13 clearly restricts the opening of branches of the society in the country and even opening of limited branches conditional to cabinet approval (Amman Center for Human Rights Studies, 2009).

Civil Society in Morocco

The current Moroccan political system is the product of a power relationship between the state and political parties that has evolved slowly but unsteadily in favour of civil society. The process started before independence. Unfortunately, it was halted by a sequence of alliances between King Hassan II and the factions within the nationalist party, Istiqlal (Independence), which eventually split up in 1959. Moroccan civil society was thus considerably weakened and in the hands of a powerful regime. Starting from the 1970’s, public liberties progressively re-emerged in Morocco, with the creation of civil institutions such as the Moroccan Human Rights Organisation (OMDH), the Kutla (Block) electoral alliance, and the revitalization of trade union (Garon, 2003: 81). Until the mid-1980s, Moroccan political parties dominated the civil associations to bolster their bargaining power in relation to the monarchy. The political struggle made organizations of civil society fulfill a specific function, that of reaching out to population. The lack of autonomy prevented the clear articulation of any associations’ interest and resulted in the weakening of its associative activities. However, such close proximity benefited citizen’s awareness of public participation and issues relevant for their welfare (Sater, 2007: 40-41). Moroccan society is undergoing widespread and profound changes towards a modern type of society as found in European democracies, accelerated by government decisions to adhere to the European Community policies (Boyle and Sheen, 1997: 48). The present map of civil society in Morocco spans a variety of areas such as human rights, women and children, development, civic educations and Islamic associations. The political opening of the 1990s constituted both an opportunity and a challenge for civil society as
it was trying to broaden its political agenda to include human rights, democracy and social and economic justice, without however upsetting the state (Haddadi, 2004: 80).

In fact, associative life in Morocco is old and was consecrated by the royal charter and the Dahir (decree) of November 1958. Many of the traditional associations, which focused mainly on communal works, ritual gatherings, and utilitarian purposes, have been replaced in the last twenty years by modern groupings. Many associations are mostly concentrated in large cities like Casablanca, Fez, Rabat, and Marrakech, and attract mainly young and educated people (Layachi, 1999: 52). Modern Moroccan institutions are replacing traditional system as the principle arenas for political socialisation. The first consists of those institutions that promote identity with and support for the dominant monarchical culture, which includes state-run schools, the electronic media (radio and television); the government controlled print media; officially sanctioned mosques and other religious bodies; state controlled business enterprises, corporate institutions; military; and comprehensive national and sub-national governmental structure. The second milieu comprises those institutions that have mixed capacities, mainly serving as the mediums for anti-government sentiment on political and economic issues. Important institutions are political parties, universities, and independent organisations (professional, labour, human rights, and student associations) (Entelis, 1996: 114).

The major development of civil society organisations emerged in the middle of the 1990s with political liberalisation. Among civil society organisations, their goals and influence varies. Some have advocacy missions, while others do not go beyond providing services or raising awareness. Some have national scope and others work locally and concentrate in particular areas. Indeed, civil society is much diversified when it comes to the way interests are pursued. Prominent organisations as in the case of human rights organisations are perceived as relatively influential through their role of resistance and by reporting abuses (Akesbi, 2011: 21-23). Some segments of Moroccan civil society are excluded from the public sphere. Groups that do not accept the status quo imposed by the political elite are shunned by the regime. For instance, some Islamists, sections of Berber and Sahrawi groups are considered anti-constitutional for their refusal to recognise the
spiritual authority and political legitimacy of the king (Dimitrovova, 2009: 5). Significantly, in 2001, with a gesture of inclusiveness towards agitating Berbers community, the government established the Royal Institute of Amazigh Culture as a recognition and revival of Berbers' language – Amazigh partly by introducing it in schools and universities (Ennaji, 2010).

Socio-economic based organisations have also increased rapidly in recent years given the inability of the state to provide all social. However, a lack of economic dynamism makes a daunting task for the private sector to meet many of the fundamental needs of the population. Islamic charity organisations have been important providers of many basic services for a long time, particularly to marginalised communities outside the major urban centres. Majority of the organisations operate without an overall support structure and are highly reliant on citizen participation and activism. The most visible popular organisation is Justice and Charity movement. In turn, to counter Islamic associations, the government launched state-sponsored welfare service organisations. For instance, Association Marocaine de Solidarité et de Développement (AMSED) and the Association Marocaine d'Appui à la Promotion de la Petite Entreprise (AMAPPE). These associations assume responsibility for issues like health care, support of basic urban services, poverty reduction, and provision of education. Other social welfare providers are similarly initiated at the local council levels (Dimitrovova, 2009: 10-11).

**Human Rights Organisations**

Public debate over human rights started when North African state leaders responded to public demands for political participation with measures of security control and tried to deal with socio-economic problems by increasing state repression in the 1970s and 1980s. New political actors set the question of human rights on the agenda, challenging the legitimacy of the repressive governments. Nevertheless, they did not seek political power or to overthrow the regimes (Granzer, 1999: 109).

The development of human rights norms in Morocco rests on four kinds of abuses:
disappearances of opponents, torture, extrajudicial killings and detentions without trial. The repression which gave rise to the regular violations of human rights in the 1970s resulted from main conflicts between society and state, especially the two attempted military coups in 1971 and 1972. Civil and military resistance resulted in state repression. In the 1980s, conflict was grounded in socio-economic conditions. A sudden rise in the prices of staple food because of structural adjustment measures gave rise to rebellions and mass demonstrations. The state reacted with oppressive measures to control the population. Those deemed responsible for the uprisings were arrested, tortured, and confined to secret prisons. The practice of “disappearances” as a means of prosecuting opposition groups or individuals was extended and systematised with the occupation of the Western Sahara in 1975. Disappeared persons were rarely killed but tortured and detained for decades in secret prisons. Extrajudicial executions mainly occurred in instances when torture resulted in death or during violent clashes between the police and opposition groups. Early 1990s saw a gradual transformation in human rights despite some occasional setbacks. Between 1990 and 1994, several royal acts of clemency released long-term political prisoners and the government announced the closure of secret prison at Tazmamart (Granzer, 1999: 112-115).

The shift in the state's strategy from oppression to support and encouragement of civil society organisations, particularly human rights brought a new dimension to state-civil society relations. In January 2004, Morocco established truth commission - the Equity and Reconciliation Commission (IER), which investigated and documented the forced disappearances, arbitrary detentions and other abuses that occurred from 1956 to 1999. Since its establishment, IER has awarded financial compensation to 9,000 victims and survivors of state-sanctioned abuses and proposed safeguards against human rights violations from recurring (Ennaji, 2010). Two major political organisations shaped political and civic rights in the face of the state's strategies of containment of civil society discourses. In 1973, Istiqlał party founded the first human rights organisation – Ligue Marocaine pour la Defense des Droits de l'Homme, LMDDH (The Moroccan League for the Defense of Human Rights) against the state repression in the aftermath of two military coup attempts of 1971 and 1972. In 1979, the USFP party established the
Association Marocaine des Droits de l'Homme, AMDH (Moroccan Association for Human Rights). Unlike the LMDDH, which focused its activities within the country, AMDH was set up particularly with the mission to uncover and to publicise human rights abroad. The explicit goal was to create international pressure on the Moroccan government to rectify the human rights situation. The necessity to establish it was as much a political move as it was a consequence of unrelenting human rights abuses in the country (Sater, 2007: 43).

In 1988, faced with the vacuum left by human rights NGOs from 1983 to 1987 and with serious human rights violations, a group of members from USFP, PPS and unaffiliated human rights activists established Organisation Marocaine des Droits de l'Homme, OMDH (Moroccan Organisation for Human Rights). The organisation is distinguished by its independence and professionalism. The OMDH and the AMDH make use of opposition newspapers according to their political affiliations. For instance, they use al-Ittihad al Ichtiraki, al Bayan, and Anoual. Moreover, AMDH has its own monthly journal called Attadamoun (Solidarity). Professionals like lawyers, academics, doctors, and architects have always formed the majority of membership in human rights NGOs. Lawyers have a tradition of independence from the government's intervention in their association. The association do not tend to suffer from the financial crunch that beset many human rights NGOs (Nouaydi, 2003: 173-178).

The Moroccan Organisation for Human Rights stays outside the party-based struggles, accepting the political status quo while addressing the deficiencies of human rights practices. Yet, its proclaimed independence from the political structures has come under scrutiny by its decision to cooperate with the state and European Commission-sponsored CCDH. Its cooperation with the regime was seen as legitimising the arbitrary power of the palace. On the contrary, the Moroccan Association for Human Rights directly challenges the democratic deficits of the current political system and the centralisation of the monarch's power but within a defined framework of mutual acceptance. Its persistent struggle for human rights and demands for changes to the constitution have provoked several confrontations with the state authorities, surveillance, and repression of their
activities. Moreover, since May 2003 terrorist attack in Casablanca, the government has tightened security measures, often at the expense of human rights (Dimitrovova, 2009: 7-8).

Personal and informal contacts between domestic human rights groups in Morocco and Moroccan emigrant groups in Europe transmitted information about the human rights violations to European and international human rights organisations. With France as the centre of Moroccan exile opposition and the country with the largest Moroccan community, support committees of the Association de Soutien des and the Association of Relatives of Disappeared Persons were established in France. Their activities concentrated on regular publication of information brochures and occasional demonstrations in Europe. They also provided regular information to Amnesty International, the Lawyers' Committee of Human Rights, and Human Rights Watch. In the 1990s, the intensive networking process propelled the Moroccan government to take affirmative measures against human rights abuses (Granzer, 1999: 119-123).

Business Associations

In the 1990s, Moroccan entrepreneurs emerged as interest groups in the public space and established themselves as central personalities in the economic activity. Liberalisation and privatisation processes gave boost to their new status as public actors owing to relative withdrawal of the state from economic life in the 1980s, which linked them to the heart of the political system. Significantly, the General Confederation of Morocco's Enterprises (CGEM) evolved into an independent status from the state within the framework of liberalisation. It displayed its capacity to help highlight the interest of Moroccan employers at international agreements with European Union and United States, and in negotiations with the new government on economic and social negotiations on many occasions. The CGEM works as interest groups and lobbyists to push through its interests. It meets every year on the discussion of the law of finances in parliament. For instance, on the eve of 2002 parliamentary elections, it sent ten questions to all the chairpersons of the parliamentary committees and after the elections, it placed sixty law
drafts. At times, it only receives courtesy responses but the law on insurances was a case in point. Under pressure from the CGEM, the government affected insurance compulsory for everyone. The relations between CGEM and the legislature are intense given that more than 95 percent of law initiatives come from the government (Ali, 2005: 6-9).

The case of Morocco’s Free Trade Agreement (FTA) with the United States was significant in relation to business associations. The US negotiators were very clear about the content and method of the negotiation and the practical implementation of the agreement, which was to be negotiated in a single session. The task of drafting a reciprocal FTA in one session presented a considerable challenge for the Moroccan official and business representatives. To uphold its commitments, the government was compelled to open dialogue with the professional associations to assess the implications of the FTA. The Association Marocaine des Industries du Textile et de l’Habillage – AMITH (Moroccan Association of Textile and Apparel Industries) played a decisive role in the signing of the agreement on 15 June 2004, which came into force on 1 January 2006. In preparation, the association launched an in-depth internal inquiry into the strategic restructuring of the industry. Armed with information, AMITH was the first professional organisation to sign a contract with the government, laying out the rights and obligations of both parties (Benabderrazik, 2009: 80). In the 1990s, AMITH as a representative body of textile and apparel producers has grown influential among the business organisation in economic decisions in the country. By lobbying on broad issues and concerns for private sectors, the AMITH promoted business interests both within and beyond the textile and clothing sectors (Cammett, 2007: 153-154).

**Labour Unions**

Moroccan labour union dates back to the era of French protectorate (1912 - 1956). From the beginning of 1950s, the unions aligned with the national movement for independence. In 1956, the Moroccan Work Union (MWU) was established and since then it is more or less affiliated to political parties. In the 1960s, the MWU was closely linked to the National Union of Popular Forces (NUPF). Other trade unions are the creation of political
parties. The General Union of Moroccan Workers (GUMW) was established by Istiqlal party, while Workers Democratic Confederation (WDC) is linked to the Socialist Union of Popular Forces (UFSP) but in 2002, WDC detached itself from the UFSP party. The members are composed of government employees and wage earners in the public sector. While the MWU is limited to professional concerns with less political life, the GUMW and the WDC are politically active other than professional unionist demands. The MWU is represented only in the Chamber of Counsellors, whereas, the other two organisations have active representation in the lower house, the Chamber of Representatives. Although, labour unions in general have powerful influence on the level of negotiation of labour relations, they are weak in the realm of legislative process unlike the business organisation, the CGEM, which intervenes in political and electoral debates. The workers' unions often limit themselves to specific stand in their demands or denounce on issues and policies of the government (Ali, 2005: 9-11).

Major trade unions’ activism occurred in early 1996 as in the case of renewed labour unrest, leading to strikes and demonstrations by public sector employees demanding better working conditions. The unrest culminated in a general strike in June 1996 during which there were serious clashes between demonstrators and the security forces. The strike was organised by the Union Generale des Travailleurs Marocains (UGTM) and the Confederation democratique du travail (CDT), which urged the government to increase the minimum wage and to establish a national fund for the unemployed. Finally, the government made concessions and in July 1996 concluded a new accord on labour relations with UGTM, the CDT and the employers' union, Confederation Generale des Entreprises du Maroc (Europa, 2003: 825).

**Status of Moroccan Women and Participation**

Public debate has dramatically shifted in the last few years in Morocco with civil society concept now constitutes the core of public discourse. Social actions in the form of associations fill a gap where the state is simply deficient. Civil society that currently exists in the Moroccan context accommodates for the active participation of varying
associations with political payoff in public debate (Bargach, 2002: 193-195). The expansion of Islamist movement has also prompted a response from secular sectors, especially the women’s organisations. The feminist movement has been particularly active, as it perceives itself as a potential victim of Islamist resurgence and this points to an expansion of the sphere of autonomy and debate that can be beneficial to the process of democratisation (Cavatorta, 2006: 217). The mid-1980s saw the emergence of a new generation of women’s organizations operating outside the formal political circles. As women’s educational and work opportunities increased and frustrations mounted due to marginalisation, they began to organize outside the conventional political arena. Feminist consciousness and political commitment for women’s emancipation gained serious momentum mostly during this period. Women started pressing gender-based demands with more audacity to their priorities. Women’s organization comprises mostly middle-class, professional, and left-wing political activists targeting all expressions of gender inequality and subordination. In the late 1990s, Morocco saw at least 35 recognized nongovernmental women’s organizations (Skalli, 2007: 122-123). Morocco’s movement towards more democratic policies continue to be the result of collaborated efforts among individuals, civil society organizations, international actors and the government. Association des Femmes Chefs Enterprises du Maroc and the Association Marocaine pour la Promotion de l’Entreprise Feminine hope to bring about a stronger class of female leadership capable of influencing not only the economic sector but the political and social realms as well (Mbagaya, 2009).

The likes of vocal feminist association, The Association Democratic des Femmes du Maroc (ADFM) cite verses from the Quran in order to build support for incorporating elements of a universalistic definition of human rights into law. Conversely, Islamist groups quote verses from the Quran to deny their demands. Whereas the liberal women’s organizations want to emancipate the individual from the constraints of society, Islamist organizations want to situate the individual firmly within the collectivity (Cohen and Jaidi, 2006: 80). In 2001, seven leading women’s organizations for the promotion of women’s rights established an advocacy group, lobbying the most controversial aspect of the Action Plan: revisions of Moudawana (the Family Law). It involved the publication
of a series of press releases, poster, and articles in the national dailies explaining the discriminatory provisions of legal texts in matters of divorce, child support, and domestic violence (Skalli, 2007: 131). The Moroccan 1996 Constitution declares that women are equal citizens to men in all aspects of life. In reality, women face discrimination even within the law, reinforced by cultural norms that often prevent them from exercising their rights (Laskier, 2003: 12).

Throughout the 1990s, the question of women’s status in Morocco was a significant subject for a society experiencing rapid social and economic change and political uncertainty. In 1999, liberal government ministers submitted a draft Plan of National Action for the Integration of Women in Development. At the centre of the 25-page proposal were radical alterations relating to inferior legal status of women in the Moudawanna. The proposals drew strong opposition from both the religious establishment and Islamist groups, initiated by PJD and Justice and Charity Group (JCG). Although, King Muhammad repeatedly stressed the need to promote women’s rights, but aware of the highly charged nature of the issue, culturally, politically and socially, the King refrained from entering into specifics of the dispute. Stunned perhaps by the strength of the fluid situation, the government quickly shelved the development plan. King Muhammad, while sympathetic with the tenor of the liberal trend, clearly preferred to proceed slowly on the matter (Maddy-Weitzman, 2002: 427-428). Whereas, for Islamists, the ultimate sources of legal legitimacy are sharia (religious law/texts), secular women’s organization refer to international law and Morocco’s obligations as a signatory to UN conventions on women’s rights. However, the King’s astuteness and his religious authority were instrumental in the adoption of a revised Moudawana in February 2004.

The new code undoubtedly represents a significant step in women’s rights in the Arab world. Its implementation, however, has been slow owing to a variety of factors such as a

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19 The government intended to revise the code by bestowing on Moroccan women greater equality with men. On the controversial Moudawana, it called for addressing the issues of raising the age of marriage for girls from fifteen to eighteen; granting women a voice in Islamic courts to present their side in divorce cases; canceling the guardianship requirement for adult women; outlawing polygamy except in certain cases; and allowing women the right to half of their husband’s property after divorce, as well as to maintain custody of their children if they remarry (Laskier, 2003: 5).
lack of information and awareness among women about the new law and an ineffective judicial system (Dimitrovova, 2009: 6-7).

The vibrancy of Morocco’s civil society includes more than 30,000 legally declared associations. Some of them involves in investigative roles to monitor, expose, confront and criticize official policies and practices. The fact that Morocco boasts many truly independent associations cannot excuse the arbitrary means by which authorities deprive scores of other associations of their right under law to register. The effected associations include several working to defend the human rights of the Sahrawi and the Amazigh (Berber) populations, and others that promote the rights of unemployed persons and of immigrants in Morocco from sub-Saharan Africa. In other instances, the administration blocks charitable and educational associations from obtaining legal recognition merely because these groups have selected as their leaders persons affiliated with the country’s most potent Islamist movement, Justice and Charity Movement (Human Rights Watch, 2009: 2-3). In this backdrop, it is imperative to highlight the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR), which Morocco has ratified, states in Article 22, “Everyone shall have the right to freedom of association with others, including the right to form and join trade unions for the protection of his interest”. Article 9 of the Moroccan constitution guarantees freedom of association and in 1979 Morocco ratified without reservation the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights. Overall, it is quite intriguing that an association that favours secular Morocco could be seen as undermining Islam; one that favours independence for Western Sahara could be seen as undermining the integrity of national territory; and one that advocates redistribution of power in Morocco could be seen as undermining the monarchy. Morocco does have a law that generally requires authorities to state the justification behind any individual administrative decision that disfavour an interested party. In practice, however, they do not always furnish an explanation (Human Rights Watch, 2009: 10).

Various associations and unions are the most active civil organisations in Jordan and Morocco. With their constituents’ higher level of education and political consciousness and their relatively independent financial resources enabled associations to spearhead
civil society in their respective countries. When political parties are prohibited or
restricted, the associations have served many of their functions through the articulation
and debating of public issues, formulation of public policy alternatives, and exertion of
pressure on decision makers. Their elections, generally fair and honest, are competitive,
and are widely followed by the public at large (Ibrahim, 1995: 39-40).

Islamic Civil Societies and Democracy

The relationship between Islam, including Islamist movements, and civil society has been
the subject of extensive academic debate, with some scholars under the impression that
Islam and civil society remain fundamentally incompatible. At the opposite end of the
spectrum are those who claim that, if properly implemented, Islam inherently leads to
strong, effective and flourishing civil societies. In between the two poles, there are those
who acknowledge the possibility as well as actual existence of “Islamic civil societies”,
but posit no single and unequivocal relationship between Islam and civil society. Instead,
they see positive as well as negative Islamic phenomena and tendencies in terms of civil
society principles (Harmsen, 2008: 45). Islamist movements have often been prominent
in raising human rights issues and calling for democratic change. Sometimes, indeed,
they have been more strident in pressing for democratic change than have non-religious
political parties. Among those which have stressed democratic and human rights agendas
have been the Movement for Justice and Development Party (PJD) in Morocco and the
Muslim Brotherhood in Jordan (Niblock, 2005: 495-496). The prevalent social system
has also contributed to the growth of Islamic groups. Thus, these groups are not simply
political, economic, or religious groups but are social groups. In fact, these Islamic
movements are an expression of the vital will of Jordanian and Moroccan societies to
maintain and perpetuate themselves (Dwyer, 1991: 138).

Although there is no organized, unitary Islamic sector, the popular phrases in currency,
for instance – Islamic economy, traditionalist reawakening, social Islam – refer to the
same phenomenon: the sprawling growth of voluntary religious associations founded on
Islamist ideas. In many Arab metropolises, their institutional infrastructure provides
charitable venues and social services to fill voids where the state has withdrawn; their raison d'etre demands the imposition of Islamic law (Sharia), more extreme voices calling for violence but many articulating peaceful means. Though often banned, they have Islamised Arab societies through the back door, penetrating educational institutions, the language of politics, and even other Civil Society Organisations (CSOs), thereby giving ordinary citizens their real sense of political participation. The controversy over Islamists’ role in democratic reforms reflects the difficulty of measuring the effectiveness of Arab civil society. If only secular democrats count, then the civic sector appears weak and fragmented, unable to extract weighty reforms from regimes. The Arab street appears passionate and popular, as measured by the Islamists’ membership and resources, add on numerous fronts seems on the brink of mounting a frontal assault on the regimes (Yom, 2005: 20-21).

One effective tactic of many leaders has been to co-opt the Islamists by giving them limited power. In Jordan and Morocco, this has meant allowing Islamists to run openly for parliament. In order to contain the Islamists, however, the kings have neutered their various parliaments, leaving them with only limited constitutional and legislative powers. The final say in all critical matters is usually left with the sovereign (Brown, 2006: 109-110). According to Thomas Butko, “Islamists organizations should be viewed primarily as modern social movements whose success is rooted in their ability to mobilize the population towards a concrete goal” (Butko, 2004: 34). Therefore, while the Islamists may espouse and articulate their message within a religious or moral framework, their support is predicated upon the particular socio-economic context of that society. The individuals who support these groups do so not necessarily for religious reasons, but because they desire a radical restructuring of the current order, a change they believe can only be provided by contemporary Islamist movements.

Islamist Activism

Political Islam is comparable to many previous movements in Europe and in West Asian history, including communism, fascism, nationalism, socialism, and liberalism. Islamism
is a political creed, a response to very modern problems. Since it began in the early seventh century, the Islamic religion enjoyed remarkable military and political successes. Consolidating its base of support in the cities of Medina and then Mecca, Islam spread further by its direct appeal and even more significant, the fact that Muslim armies defeated both the Byzantine and Persian Empires. An extensive empire was created stretching from Afghanistan in the east, through the Fertile Crescent, Egypt and North Africa, and even all the way to Spain in the West. According to Barry Rubin, "indeed political Islamism claims legitimacy by arguing that it is this era of perceived high piety, close adherence to their religion's tenets, and Islam's political domination that is the proper model for living and governing current society" (Rubin, 2010: xiii-xiv). The decline of Ottoman and Persian power in the face of European imperial might provided the impetus for Muslims to re-examine the tenets of Islam and the foundations of the Islamic polity. As in centuries past, the crisis milieu produced an indigenous response – a return to Islam and its fundamental precepts. The movement back to Islamic roots has assumed a powerful self-propelling dynamic with significant religious, political, economic, and strategic implications (Dekmejian, 1995: 3).

The persistence of Western imperialism and the mounting socio-economic problems of the Muslim countries precipitated a new revivists movement of a populist type. Islamist movement developed extensive network of activities across the region, notably the Muslim Brotherhood (Niva, 1999: 160). Kirk H. Sowell surmised Islamists' ideology that, "its central focus was on creating an Islamic society. By creating an Islamic society, an Islamic state based around the shari'a could be formed and this would empower the Egyptian people to shake off the vestiges of European rule" (Sowell, 2004: 225).

The origins of contemporary Islamist thought and organizations can be traced to the society of the Muslim Brotherhood established by Hasan al-Banna in Egypt in 1928, and the Jamaat-i Islami of Pakistan founded by Abul-Ala Maudi in 1941. Islamists consider that the society will be Islamised only through social and political action. They intervene directly in political life and since the 1960s have attempted to gain power. The current Islamist movement was created outside the body of traditional ulamas, although over
time moderate Islamists have gained ground within these establishments and recruited from among the ulamas. The Islamists reproach the ulamas for two things. One is their servility to the powers in place, which leads them to accept a secular government and laws that do not conform to the sharia. The other is their compromise with Western modernity: the ulamas have accepted modernity, where the Islamists reject it (acceptance of the separation of religion and politics) and maintained the tradition where the Islamists reject it (indifference to modern science, rigid teachings, rejection of political and social action) (Roy, 1994: 35-37).

Significantly, Hasan al-Banna planted the intellectual seeds of a socio-religious and mass-oriented movement that has played a significant role in the politics and society of West Asia and North Africa. The Muslim Brotherhood has undoubtedly made a strong ideological impact on a significant section of the Arab and Muslim intelligentsia. The thought structure of Muslim Brotherhood, as moulded by Hassan al-Banna is based on a world-view of Islam understood as a religion, civilization, a way of life, ideology, and a state. Al-Banna considered Sufism as a method of spiritual training, a way of life, and a world-view. He remained a committed Sufi even after he founded Muslim Brotherhood. This contrasts sharply with many contemporary Muslim Brotherhood leaders hold negative perspectives about Sufism. For instance, Samih A. al-Zayn, an influential contemporary Brotherhood thinker contended that Islam and Sufism are two poles apart. To al-Zayn, whereas the former is the primordial religion, the latter is a vehicle of both moral and physical decay. As a political movement, the Brotherhood discarded al-Banna's early Sufi ideas and challenged popular Sufism in modern Egyptian society (Abu-Rabi, 1996: 64-69).

Thus, the conflict between the proponents of a secular state and those advocating the establishment of an Islamic polity is a central dialectic in Muslim societies. While the modernists seek to reform Islam and adapt it to contemporary life, the conservatives cling to traditional Islamic precepts and reject Western and other influences. The inner-directed spiritualism of the Sufis usually emphasizes a personal quest for union with God in the context of a liberal interpretation of Islamic precepts. On the contrary, Islamist activists
insist on the strict observance of Islam coupled with political action as a means to reshape society (Dekmejian, 1995: 19-21). Within the Islamist spectrum, the growing dominance of mainstream Islamism is manifest in most Arab countries. The Islamist mainstream is an amorphous movement encompassing the Muslim Brotherhood, its affiliates outside Egypt and independent sheikhs and intellectuals who have chosen to remain outside the main groups. Six decades after Hasan al-Banna’s call for socio-spiritual renewal, Islam has been transformed into a potent socio-political force both within and outside the Islamic world. The presence of political Islam in the Arab world in the midst of persistent crisis has rendered regimes vulnerable to the Islamist challenge (Dekmejian, 1995: 211-213).

The phenomenon of Islamic revivalism since the late 1970s, particularly the outbreak of the Islamic Revolution in Iran in 1979, saw the increasing evidence of religious reassertion in several Islamic countries. Islamist movements operate in different environments and under divergent conditions. Some function in a multi-party system and in an atmosphere of relative political liberalization while others exist under authoritarian systems with a dominant single party. These conditions naturally affect the behaviour of the movements and their responses to the ruling regimes. Political, social, and economic issues are now becoming central, particularly as many of them have opted for active participation in the political process. Modernity, democracy, nationalism, women, minorities, and relations with the West are still topics of vigorous debate and often contention among Islamists (Shahin, 1998: 2-7). The politically oriented activist movements have mostly abandoned their revolutionary and militant aspirations for an evolutionary moderate path within the state domain. Instead of striving to replace the secular national state with an Islamic state, they aim at participation in the political order and taking part in elections as a regular political party. The benefits of using political channels have appeared greater than the costs of armed confrontation with the state that controls a powerful and experienced security apparatus (Netherlands Scientific Council for Government Policy, 2006: 98).

Islamist Movement in Jordan
The Islamist movement in Jordan has historically been divided between an accommodative tendency led by the Muslim Brotherhood and a radical movement led by the organisations, *Hizb al-Tahrir al-Islami* (Islamic Liberation Party), Jaish Mohammad (Mohammad’s Army) and Salafis movement. The MB’s ideological opposition to socialism, communism, and Arab nationalism, especially Nasserism during its formative years made it a useful ally of the monarchy, which felt threatened by these ideologies (Hafez, 2003: 56).

In 1952, Taqiy al-Din al-Nabahani, a Palestinian lawyer established Islamic Liberation Party (ILP) in Jerusalem. al-Nabahani left Muslim Brotherhood who felt MB’s inadequate support for the Palestinians’ cause. The party rejects the MB’s political accommodation but it advocates the resurgence of an Islamic caliphate and a peaceful overthrow of the regime in Jordan. The organisation is an avowedly political party in nature despite its failure to register as a legal party. Although, there has been no open confrontation between the ILP and the authorities in recent years, the regime regards it as a hostile entity. The authorities blamed the party for inciting riots in 1989 in various Jordanian towns (Ayubi, 1991: 74). In 1992, the Ministry of Interior denied the last application of the Liberation Party for registration (Hammerstein, 2010: 32). The movement gradually lost its connection with Palestine. The movement has considerable following abroad with major base in the U.K and members in U.S, northern Europe, Turkey, Pakistan, and Central Asia. The movement eschews ties with other radical movements and refrains from terrorist activities. In 2001, it escaped mention in the lists of terrorist organisations prepared by the U.S and the U.K (Sfeir, 2007: 186).

The other strand of radical element is the Jaish Mohammad (Mohammad’s Army), which was established in 1988 by Samih Abu Zaydan after he left Muslim Brotherhood disillusioned and Abdullah Azzam, a Palestinian Islamist. Both had participated in the Arab mujahideen in Afghanistan War and envisioned the liberation of West Asian Muslim states from the Western inspired secular regimes. The movement shares the ideology with Islamic Liberation party that of establishing an Islamic state based on *shari‘a* and the eventual resurrection of a caliphate state. Its followers come from within
Jordan and other West Asian countries. In 1992, the government responded with repression. The activists were arrested and put on trial for possession of weapons and making slanderous remarks about the King (Alianak, 2007: 32). In December 1999, the authorities arrested 14 militant members of Jaish Mohammed, including 12 Jordanians, an Algerian, and an Iraqi all of whom had experience in Afghanistan. The arrest preceded their planned attacks at non-Muslim major tourist sites in the country (Sfeir, 2007: 187).

The Salafis constitute another important Islamic group in Jordan and their use of informal social networks sharply contrasts with the organization of the Muslim Brothers. The Salafis believe that over centuries of practice of errant Muslims have introduced religious innovations and distortions that corrupt the pure message of the Prophet Mohammed. To rectify this condition, the movement advocates a strict return to the fundamentals of the religion as outlined in the Qur'an, Sunna (actions and sayings of the Prophet). While the MB is the most politically active Islamic group, Salafi leaders dominate the ‘ulama’ (religious scholars) of Jordan (Wiktorowicz 2001: 5-6). Salafism emerged in Jordan in the 1970s, advocated by Nasr al-Din al-Albani, a Syrian scholar who ultimately moved his activities to Jordan in 1979 when the regime in Damascus cracked down on the Syrian Islamists. The unsuccessful Islamists’ struggles against regimes in Egypt and Algeria and the presence of U.S. hegemony in the region, the jihadi strand of Salafism gained in importance. Unlike the educated middle class constituency of the MB, jihadi Salafists were able to recruit predominantly Transjordanians in the poor and less educated realm of society. Whereas their network to accumulate resources is relatively weak in comparison to the MB, the Salafi doctrine successfully competes with the MB in mosques, private realms, and in religious scholarly publications. The movement’s strict interpretation of Islam and the emergence of several violent Salafi groups in the 1990s challenged regime’s power. As a result, the regime has limited the organization opportunities of the movement (Hammerstein, 2010: 34-36).

It is notable that not all of the Salafi adherents endorse violence and the overthrow of the existing political systems. The moderates are often reformists and tend to focus on education and religious precepts. However, Salafis of the jihadi groups of which al-Qaida
is most well known, adopt militant postures responsible for terrorist incidents that threaten regional regimes and Western interests. The Salafi jihadi groups gained considerable strength after fighters returned from the Afghanistan War in 1979 but it was in the aftermath of the 1991 Gulf War that militant groups emerged in Jordan. Militant Salafi jihadi leaders Abu Muhammad al-Maqdisi and Abu Mus'ab al-Zarqawi rose from these groups with trans-national links. Despite the growth of Salafi extremist in the 1990s, Jordan did not experience any large-scale attacks until the November 2005 hotel bombings in Amman, which were carried out by Iraqi militants and not by Jordanian extremists. The attacks tend to be targeted towards symbols of Western cultures, Western hotels and nightclubs. In October 2002, a senior U.S Agency for International Development administrator Laurence Foley was fatally shot outside his home in Amman. In August 2005 the militants launched rocket attack on two U.S Navy ships in Aqaba (Kaye et al, 2008: 65-67).

The Muslim Brotherhood

In 1945, Abu Qurah founded the Jordanian branch of Muslim Brotherhood in Amman. His primary goal was to support the Palestinian resistance movement against a growing Israeli predominance. Its primary constituency derived from educated professionals of established Transjordanian families, and later predominantly Jordanians of Palestinian origin. The MB is not a monolithic bloc but incorporates moderate and radical ideologies. However, all of them adhere to the school of Hasan al-Banna. The MB’s network even expanded in the private realm between Islamists and non-Islamists and strengthened horizontal ties among the middle class (Hammerstein, 2010: 28-29).

The Jordanian Brotherhood has historically enjoyed an amicable relationship with the regime. It has never attempted to overthrow the ruling Hashemite family, espoused violence, or operated underground. Its criticisms of government policy are always leveled at the policies themselves, rather than the structure of the political system or regime legitimacy. As a result, the regime has manipulated the state apparatus to favour the formal organization of the Brotherhood through a variety of Islamic NGOs in civil
society. These organizations do not challenge the raison d'etre of the state or threaten to mobilize mass-based social protest against the regime. Instead, they are devoted to promoting social and religious change through charity and cultural activities. The MB has grown to become the single most formally organized social movement in the kingdom, which provides it with a familiar public face. This high profile has led to successful campaigns in professional associations and electoral politics at the local and national levels (Wiktorowicz 2001: 4-5).

The movement has a large membership and organizational machinery. The Secretary-General functions as the head of the Jordanian Brotherhood. The basic unit is *shu'ba* (branch). Each branch is represented in *Majlis al-Shura* (legislative assembly), which in turn elects the executive branch. The leadership and the representatives from all the districts and branches participate in the council and plan policies related to the movement's agenda. Every four years, the members elect the council, and in turn, the council elects the Secretary-General. The seven-member executive committee functions as a kind of government within the movement, which is responsible for MB administration throughout the kingdom. The committee has three sections: Section for Preaching and Spreading the Islamic Message; *Usra* (Families) section; Institutions and Unions Section (Tal, 2005: 188-189). The MB rejects capitalism and Marxian socialism as alien to the Muslim tradition. The movement considers Islam as capable of providing social justice and Islamic law as sufficiently applicable to modern life in all its aspects. To MB, science and religion are mutually accepted. In the realm of foreign affairs, the Brethren tend to be hostile towards the Western as well as the Communist powers (Aruri, 1972: 99).

The MB's basic objective of disseminating Islamic values in Jordanian society propelled the movement to participate in the political process as far as the regime permits. Before each election campaign, it had to balance unqualified loyalty to Islamic ideology with the flexibility to succeed in Jordan's realpolitik. Earlier, before the creation of IAF, it participated in the elections of 1962, 1967, and 1983, but not without a serious internal debate that characterized each elections period. In the late 1980s and early 1990s, two
main ideological approaches dominated the movement: the pragmatic-moderate approach that espoused cooperation with the regime, participation in the political process; and the hard-line approach that opposed any form of compromise. However, the moderates’ position often sways the movement’s political goal. To moderates, as Islam is democratic in its outlook, it would accept the majority vote and not impose its opinion on an unwilling public. For the hawks, their approach towards political participation is premised on the perspective that if a choice had to be made between democracy and dictatorship, the Islamists would prefer democracy, yet if the choice were between democracy and Islam, the latter is mandated (Tal, 2005: 189-191).

The MB’s stand vis-à-vis Iraq’s invasion of Kuwait in 1989 reflects its ideological perspectives. Secular rulers in Iraq did not bode well with Brotherhood and its relation with Iraq was weak. Yet, once Allied forces were stationed in Saudi Arabia, where Islam’s holy shrines are located, Islamist movements in general and the Muslim Brotherhood in particular reversed their positions (Tal, 2005: 192).

Like elsewhere in Arab states, Islamic political opposition in Jordan was to some extent stimulated by the Iranian revolution. Many Jordanians were angry that the King had supported the Shah up to the Iranian revolution. The decision to favour secular-oriented Iraq in the Gulf War between Iran and Iraq was also troublesome. Khomeini’s tirade against Israel and his linking of the Iranian revolution with the liberation of Jerusalem appealed to the Palestinian population. These events served as examples of Islam serving as a rallying point for opposition to the government. King Hussein took actions to give the impression that the monarchy was not only in tune with the growing appeal of political Islam but also its leader. As a result, the amount of religious programming on state-run television and radio increased. The government also encouraged payment of Zakat (charity) and enforced bans on smoking and alcohol during Ramadan. Another response was the creation of the Jordanian Islamic Bank for Finance and Investment, which does not charge interest. The bank also offers clients the opportunity to participate in building low and middle-income housing and to invest in small businesses (Price, 1999: 53-54).
The establishment of Islamic banks in the second half of the twentieth century could be seen as a practical application of the ideological view that Islam contained within it an alternative means of running economic and financial affairs. The Jordan Islamic Bank was officially registered on 28 November 1978 and obtained a licence permitting it to begin its work on 26 March 1979. The role of prominent Muslim Brotherhood leaders played a decisive role in helping the bank gain early support and its establishment. However, the MB recognized that being too closely linked to the bank might lead to apprehension in some government circles, and thus it never attempted to make the bank an institution of their movement (Malley, 2004: 192-196). The JIB spends approximately JD 200,000 a year on charitable contributions and donations to various Islamic causes, many of which are linked to the MB. The JIB has been a frequent donor to the MB run network of religious schools in Jordan (Malley, 2004: 209).

Moreover, the 1970s was a decade of extensive institutionalization for Islamists in Jordan. In the aftermath of the 1967 War, the popularity of Islamic movements and Islamism as an ideology increased throughout the Arab World, including Jordan. By siding with the monarchy in Jordan’s 1970 civil war, the Muslim Brotherhood in Jordan began enjoying an almost semi-official status in the 1970s, a status that enabled it to establish numerous new charitable, educational and healthcare institutions in the kingdom (Malley, 2004: 191-192).

The MB expended great energy on education, establishing an independent educational system to imbibe its followers with the Islamic message from an early age. The MB’s charity institution, the Islamic Centre Charity Society (ICCS) established commercial private elementary and secondary schools for the middle class, as an alternative to the Western-influenced state educational system and for those unable to afford elite private schools. Simultaneously, these institutions provide jobs to Jordan’s educated middle-class professionals. The profits that accrue from these private ventures are directed back into the schools and hospitals. The ICCS also runs premium Islamic Hospital in Amman. These institutions are a result of a conscious decision by the ICCS to build powerful Islamic symbols of alternative to the state. While the MB was founded by largely
Transjordanian merchants, since the late 1940s and particularly the early 1950s, its leadership and membership have been dominated increasingly by Palestinian middle-class professionals. By the 1980s, it politically dominated the student councils of all university campuses in Jordan at the expense of leftist groups. In the absence of national elections, many of the professional associations, such as the Engineers' Association became highly politicized as the MB channelled the associations’ platforms to vocalize their message (Clark, 2004: 83-86).

Despite the fact that the ICCS is a member of GUYS and that one of the roles of GUYS is to provide financial assistance to NGOs, the ICCS operating budget is larger than that of GUYS. The ICCS is the largest and the most financially solvent of all the NGOs in Jordan except those NGOs established and patronized by members of the royal family (Clark, 2004: 89-91). The Brotherhood’s influence was especially strong in universities with faculties of Islamic studies. In 1995 elections, it obtained a strong position in the physicians, lawyers, and pharmacists unions. The MB’s standing in the associations and academia reflected the Islamic trend’s surge over the alliance of pan-Arabism and left-wing forces that had dominated the trade union in the past. The single factor that contributed to MB’s popularity was its involvement in education, health, and welfare services it provided especially to the weak sections of society. Occasionally the MB faces political setbacks notwithstanding its popularity among the population. Despite their success in the universities and trade unions, the MB and IAF suffered a setback in local elections held on 11 July 1995. They lost their traditional control in Zarqa and Ruseifa. Out of 250 municipalities, only thirteen municipalities were headed by the Islamists (Tal, 2005: 187-188). However, in the last decade, the Islamists had gained considerable support in fourteen professional associations and managed to get their nominees elected to most of the executive council seats and presidencies (Braverman 2002: 334).

Muslim Brotherhood leaders from both East Bank Jordanians and Palestinians recognise the strength and importance of the Palestinian element. Two main factors prompted the Palestinians in Jordan to join the Muslim Brotherhood. First, the movement’s Islamic ideology was without a national-territorial-ethnic dimension, rendering it the only
political framework in the Kingdom that granted legitimacy to the Palestinians' political activity. Second, the movement expanded its activity into the refugee camps in the early 1970s. The Palestinians have significant representation in the MB's leadership and institutions. In three election campaigns in the 1990s, between two and three out of seven members on the MB executive committee were Palestinians. The same held true in the IAF, where fifty Palestinians were elected to the 120 member Shura Council in December 1997, and four Palestinians out of thirteen members to the IAF's executive committee. Palestinian representation in the parliament through IAF party was significant in proportion to the East Bank Jordanian representation. Seven Palestinians out of twenty-two delegates entered parliament in the 1989 elections and in the 1993 elections, eight Palestinians out of seventeen candidates were elected (Tal, 2005: 198-199).

The cooperation between the Transjordanian and Palestinians was not without tensions within the movement. In 2001, Transjordan members of the IAF who rejected the increasing influence of the MB and Palestinians within the IAF established Hizb al-Wasat al-Islam (The Islamic Centre Party). The party adheres to the MB's moderate non-revolutionary approach. Its foundation was an attempt to create a political alternative to the MB hegemony. The party accepts the Jordan-Israeli peace treaty while MB is opposed to the regime's policy of reconciliation with Israel. A similar logic applies for the creation of the Dua’a Party in 1993 (formerly the Arab Islamic Democratic Movement) as an alternative to the MB. Nevertheless, its political ideology did not resonate with the public as the party attempted to merge Arab-nationalist ideology with Islamic virtues. The party is committed to democracy and advocates an enlightened approach to a modern Islamic democracy (Hammerstein, 2010: 31-32).

Historically, the MB has maintained close ties with Hamas, but which is also a source of disputes within the MB factions between moderates and hardliners. Hamas, as an offshoot of the MB, was created after the Intifada in 1987 as a Palestinian resistance movement. The monarchy's indirect acceptance of Hamas ended when King Abdullah II expelled its administration in 1999 and banned Hamas in 2006 in the aftermath of Hamas' electoral success. Nevertheless, the influence of Hamas on the MB as its "natural
ally” and on the Palestinian majority of the Jordanian population remains. Consequently, Hamas’ political approach and its success in Palestine on the one level, and the regime’s approach to Hamas on the other scenario, affect the MB’s strategic behaviour (Hammerstein, 2010: 33).

The MB is aware that a head-on confrontation with the regime would be self-defeating, and perhaps even suicidal. This assessment, for a long time accepted by the MB stemmed from essential deterrent factors: the monarchy, its status, personality and authority; Jordan’s geopolitical position; and the operational methods employed by the state’s security and intelligence services (Tal, 2005: 227-228). The relative moderation of MB was influenced by the regime’s strategy to channel all Islamist contention toward the institutional arena while strictly prohibiting extra-institutional protest or mass mobilization. The state seeks to maintain strict control over mosques, Islamic associations, and charitable works to ensure that these avenues do not turn into clandestine Islamist networks. Such regulation takes place through legal codes and administrative hurdles (Hafez, 2003: 57).

The state also directly sponsors its own Islamic organizations to propagate its particular variant of Islam. Through Islamic Cultural Centers and a few NGOs sponsored by the royal family, the regime articulates a ritualistic and non-confrontational interpretation of Islam. The state runs 26 Islamic Cultural Centres throughout the kingdom, 13 centres each for men and women (Wiktorowicz, 2001: 76-77). The palace has increasingly adopted a policy of cooperation with, and co-optation of the ulama. It has striven to appear as the sponsors of an intellectual and cultural Islamic tradition perpetuated by through the Ministry of Awqaf and the Higher Council for Islamic Affairs (Ayubi, 1991: 94).

In 1992, largely in response to the Brotherhood’s success in 1989 elections, the government passed a new political party law, which outlined a number of criteria potential parties had to meet. To participate, the Muslim Brotherhood would have had to restructure the entire organization as a political party. Instead, the MB established its
political wing, the Islamic Action Front (IAF). The Jordanian Government's relationship with the Muslim Brotherhood has changed. Initially, when the organization shied away from politics, the Muslim Brotherhood and the government enjoyed an alliance. As the Muslim Brotherhood became politically active, the government has become more motivated to co-opt the movement (Freer, Kubinec and Tatum, 2010: 24-26).

The MB often asserts that Palestine is an Islamic land and that to give up any Palestinian or Islamic right over Palestine was prohibited by the Shari‘a. Later with liberalization process, being engaged in relatively open and free debates with non-Islamists in parliament and the public sphere and having to win the sympathy and the votes of a largely well educated and politically aware electorate required a discourse more focused on practical and appealing solutions to political and socio-economic issues. Narrowly defined religious issues like the prohibition of alcohol, gender segregation and ritual life no longer sufficed in the new social setting. Its political wing, the IAF was charged with adopting new approach based on key concepts like “national interests” “democracy”, “freedom and equality before the law”, and less by direct references to the shari‘a. Rather than theological reasoning, its main focus is on lack of democracy and public freedoms, deteriorating socio-economic conditions and anti-normalization with Israel (Harmsen, 2008: 143-144).

Inception of Islamist Movements in Morocco

Morocco has largely been spared the kind of challenges to Algeria and Egypt from the Islamists’ movements. Morocco continues to witness Islamist activism within its borders. Nevertheless, the monarch presides over the country’s political and more importantly religious establishments, thus, limiting the ability for Islamist groups to portray themselves as champions of Islam and Islamic values against the secularist rule (Willis, 1996: 17-18). King Hassan forged a “religious-nationalist synthesis” that has had wide appeal among different segments of Morocco’s pluralist society (Dekmejian, 1995: 208-209). However, the evolution of Islamist opposition on in the region was not without influence in Morocco. The Iranian revolution of 1979 had significant impact on young
Moroccan Islamists, for whom the overthrow of powerful monarchy by groups representing Islam became conceivable (Zeghal, 2008: 162).

In 1969, Abd al-Karim Muti established Harkat al-Shabiba al-Islamiyya (Islamic Youth Movement or Mouvement jeunesse islamique, MJI), which the government recognised in 1972. The movement's establishment was a response to Marxist movement, which was a tacit palace strategy of ideological containment of the left. In later years, three streams of Islamist movements have occurred in Moroccan society: reformist, revolutionary, and jihadi movements. In the 1970s, MJI adopted revolutionary approach openly and subversively challenged monarchy and its call for conforming to the principles of Islam in all aspects of lives prompted the regime to ban the movement (Enhaili, 2010: 336-339; Lust-Okar, 2007: 50). Its leader, Muti fled the country and took refuge in Europe and some Arab capitals and he preached armed struggle to overthrow the monarchy. The regime's crackdown on the organisation in 1975 led to a division within the movement. In 1983, the remnants of the organization formed Jama'at Islamiyya (the Islamic Group) committing itself to working through peaceful and legal methods to achieve its goals. It renamed itself Harakat al-Islah wa al-Tajdid bel-Maghreb or HATM (Movement of Reform and Renewal) (Willis, 1996: 18). From then on, it stopped criticising the institution of the monarchy and focused on reforms within the existing institutions (Deeb, 2002: 251).

In the 1960, the monarch allowed the Islamist movements to grow in an effort to contain the leftists and nationalist opposition. After the mid-1970s, when situation became clear that the Islamists might be able to challenge the monarchical institution independently, King Hassan II played a delicate balancing game. He allowed these movements to remain strong enough to threaten the legal opposition but he weakened Islamists if they appeared capable of challenging the regime. Thus, when al-Shabiba al-Islamiyya began to directly confront the monarchy, it had to be repressed to bring back the status quo as the King eventually realised that Islamists could pose a greater threat to his regime than the secular left. Having defused al-Shabiba movement, the government turned to Abd al-Salam Yasin's Justice and Charity, giving it space to engage with opposition. Although, the
movement rejects monarchy, it is somewhat less militant thereby filling part of the vacuum left by al-shabiba movement’s exit (Lust-Okar, 2005: 158-159).

There are two mainstream Islamist movements in Morocco. An absolute condition of being allowed to take part in the formal political life is to recognize the monarchy, his powers, and the monarch’s capacity of being *amir al-mu’minin* (Commander of the Faithful). The first is the Movement for Unity and Reform (MUR), which is the mainstay of the legal political party, Justice and Development Party (PJD). The party recognizes and accepts the monarchy. The other, possibly even more popular is *Jama’at al-Adl wal-Ihsan* (Justice and Charity Society)\textsuperscript{20}, also known as AI under the leadership of Abdelsalam Yassine and his daughter Nadia Yassine. Non-violent but the movement refuse to accept the monarchy and argued for replacing it with a republic system of government (Utvik, and Tonnessen, 2008: 14). These movements remain the dominant actors in Moroccan religio-political landscape (Pruzan-Jorgensen, 2010: 10).

**Movement of Unity and Renewal (MUR)**

In 1996, the Movement of Unity and Renewal was formed through a merger of several separate groups of the original *al-Shabiba Islamiyya*. Most prominent among them were the Movement for Reform and Renewal under the leadership of Abdelilah Ben Kirane, Muhammad Yatni and others and the Union for the Islamic Future under the leadership of Ahmad-al-Raissouni. In a parallel to the situation of the Muslim Brothers in Jordan, the MUR is the parent body of the PJD (Utvik and Tonnesen, 2008: 14). The tumultuous history of the MUR under various organisational forms in different stages of its existence not only faced difficulties of gaining official recognition but it also reflects its complex ideological basis. It has made serious political compromises and gone through organisational mutations to reach the current position. The MUR has its ideological foundation, which was inspired from both the Muslim Brotherhood and Wahabi salafism. Since the break from *al-Shabiba* movement, it was set on a course of moderate path,

\textsuperscript{20} Different authors describe *Jama’at al-Adl wal-Ihsan* in various english nomenclatures: Justice and Beneficence Society, Justice and Benevolent Movement, and Justice and Spirituality Movement.
renouncing violence. The MUR retains conservativeness in culture, social, and religious aspects but it is complacent when it comes to the political prerogatives and religious legitimacy of the monarchy (Pruzan-Jorgensen, 2010: 11-13).

On the social front, the MUR promotes charitable organisations spread throughout the country. The MUR is responsible for finance and overall direction (Sfier, 2007: 132). The MUR charter emphasises the concept of freedom of worship, which helps to reassure the public about the movement’s tolerance but also to justify the political rights of the Islamist movement. In September 1998, the movement published Political Vision that outlines the main principles of political action. It places the rule of law, democracy and the rights of individuals within Islamic perspective. While its political wing, PJD is publicly monarchist, the MUR is ambiguous on this issue. With pragmatism, the movement recognises the principle of the constitutional monarchy. It asserts that the principle of the Islamic identity of the state is superior to all the articles of the constitution. It also endorses democracy in the sense of respect for popular sovereignty that people must have the right of choice and of censure of the government, and the right to hold leaders responsible. The MUR’s opposition to Western liberal democracy and its preference for democracy based on the model of shura (consultation) is vague (Zeghal, 2008: 195-197).

The MUR is not affiliated to any regional or international Islamic movements like Muslim Brotherhood but preferred instead to remain independent. In the aftermath of PJD’s electoral success, the MUR began to clarify its functional relationship with the party. While the MUR leadership regard proselytising and religious education as its responsibility, matters pertaining to the conduct of political affairs come under the PJD. This was further reinforced after 2003 Casablanca bombings and repercussions, explicitly laid out in 2006 in a policy paper, Political Participation and the Relationship between Movement (MUR) and the Party (PJD). The MUR’s strategy for separating religious activities from politics is based on the premise that the movement is an Islamic component of Moroccan society and it cannot present itself as an alternative to existing political and social forces. In a way, it has been able to display that political discourse can
change according to the pragmatic needs of the current politics, which is more or less strategic in nature for survival. Even the PJD leadership urges its MUR preachers to distance themselves from participating in its electoral campaigns, arguing that such acts would demean the MUR’s raison d’etre. The movement and the party realise that confining the functions to their own specific area works best for their interests, and advantage for party’s continuity and political efficacy (Tammam, 2011).

**Jama’at al-Adl wal-Ihsan (Justice and Charity Movement)**

The other movement, Justice and Charity Movement (JCM), ultimately more popular movement formed around the charismatic Shaykh Abdessalem Yassin, an influential Islamic thinker, who in contrast to the MUR’s policy of co-operation and slight deference to the regime was more willing to be critical and confrontational towards the state. As a movement, it was founded in 1981. However, there was a continuity of intellectual activities going back to Yassin and his associates’ public letter of admonition addressed to King Hassan II in 1974 under the title *Islam or the Deluge* (Utvik and Tonnessen, 2008: 17). Within the Islamist arena, he gained recognition from 1971 as a prolific thinker with some 20 or more works (Enhaili, 2010: 343).

In his letter, Yassine admonished the King to hold firmly to the teachings of Islam and forsake the “unIslamic” policies he had been pursuing. Yassine’s demands landed him in a psychiatric hospital-prison for the next three years. Upon his release in 1978, Yassine published the Islamic periodical *al-Jama*. With the banning of the periodical in 1983, he began publishing the daily *al-Subh* (The Morning). This newspaper was also banned and he was sentenced to two years in prison for publication of the Quranic verse, “Morning will be their hour; the morning isn’t it very close?” The authorities presumed that Yassine was threatening an Iranian form of Islamic revolution. Though partly tolerated, JCM suffered from systemic police harassment. Scores of its members were arrested, tortured, and sentenced to long prison terms. Yassine was arrested again in December 1989 and placed under house arrest in Sale until his release in May 2000 (Laskier, 2003: 4-5; Islamic Human Rights Commission, 2007).
Many sections in Moroccan society admire Yassine for standing up to the monarchy and speaking on their behalf on vital social and economic issues. His daughter Nadia Yassine is also an outspoken member of the JCM and a leading democracy and human rights activist, representing the younger generation within the group's ranks (Zambelis, 2006). In recent years, Yassine has openly challenged the new king, Muhammad VI, to take actions to atone for his father's "crimes." Like other Islamists, Yassine expresses anger towards Western states for preaching the universality of human rights while cosying up to repressive regimes when their interests suit them. His discourse converges at many points with the anti-globalization, pro-Palestinian, anti-Israeli, and anti-American messages disseminated by the West's own activists of the Left. As the monarchy remains resilient, Yassine has refined his message. He no longer de-legitimises the monarchical institution, yet he has boldly challenged Muhammad VI by sending a 35-page memorandum on 14 November 1999, and made it public in early 2000. It was addressed "to whom it may concern" rather than the King, to avoid violating Article 23 of the Moroccan constitution, which declares the person of the king to be "inviolable and sacred." He is emphatic on one thing as he declared, "Our democracy, *shura* (consultation) is not Western democracy". Yassine's political philosophy is similar to that of other Islamists. He envisions a democratic process in which Islam is established in power. In essence, Yassine's endorsement of some democratic principles is utilitarian but conditional (Maddy-Weitzman, 2003).

Although, rejecting the use of violence, Yassine's movement, which has a more lower class base of support than the MUR's predominantly middle class and intellectual following is more closely monitored and restricted by the regime. Justice and Charity was officially banned in 1990, its newspapers contained and Yassine's activities has been restricted by the regime (Willis, 1996: 18). Yassine articulates his perceptions of the role and extent of secularism in Moroccan society. To Yassine, historically, Islam has constituted an integral component of Moroccan political and social culture as well as a source of legitimacy for the state. He asserts that the political system and its official discourse must truly declare a commitment to Islam. For Yassine, the post-independence
Moroccan state is secular in content, even though it does not explicitly adopt a secular path (Shahin, 1996: 174-175).

The movement advocates a peaceful transition to what it terms, “a true Muslim society and state”. In essence, the movement like other mainstream movements advocates a pluralist democracy in a state governed by the Shari’a. It is significant that Yassine has stated explicitly in 1994 that the group firmly believes in taking part in competition between parties under conditions of political freedom. Should the people then choose to vote for something else than an Islamic system, the Islamists would have to accept that and endeavour to improve their work to gain a majority next time around. However, the group refused to play by the current rules of the political game. Most specifically, it refuses to accept the monarch’s title “Commander of the Faithful”. Such public stances immediately barred the group from access to the sphere of legal political contestation in the country. Instead, the movement sticks to a strategy of reforming society through education of its members. Hence, the movement focuses on its campaign, which includes literacy classes, Koran reading, ethical lessons, and discussions of the economic and political problems of society. It also has a separate women’s organization, akhawat al-akhira (the Sisters of the Hereafter) headed by his daughter Nadia Yassine, an outspoken defender of an increased role for women. Unlike MUR/PJD related women’s movement, which has a rather autonomous status, women wing is an integral part of the parent organization (Utvik and Tonnessen, 2008: 17-18).

The movement has a rather complex organisational set up with many small cells organised on national, provincial, regional levels, and down to the individual families. It has Majlis al-Shura (Consultative Council), which meets annually and its executive body is Majlis al-Irchad (Guiding Council). A comprehensive political party structure has been established within the organisation under the leadership of Abd del-wahed Motawakil, which includes regional branches as well as separate trade union, student and women’s wings (Pruzan-Jorgensen, 2010: 16-17).
In an effort to recruit more members, Justice and Charity movement built a network of over 200 social and cultural associations. There were also institutions for providing for poor living in rural areas and on the peripheries of large urban centres. These services included schoolbooks, medical aid, and payment for burial costs. It also set up a labour union – Union League with the members mostly from railway workers. To support these programmes, the movement collected money from lucrative commercial activities, summer camps and donations from members from the country and abroad. Pursuing these activities was not without hurdles. For instance, in 2000, the government banned Islamist summer camps mainly to prevent indoctrination of youths (Enhaili, 2010: 342).

Generally, Islamists provide social services in place of state's deficiencies. The sections of society neglected by the government have access to free social services. In hospitals, the Islamist personnel have a good reputation with their approach towards patients with greater compassion. They visit the sick and helpless people, especially those with no relatives. In poorer neighbourhoods, Islamists reach out to unemployed, needy students to support their education and taking care of expenses of marriage ceremonies of poor couples. Through charity activities, Islamists garner support when they need to mobilise large demonstrations on domestic and foreign political issues, as in the case of Israeli-Palestinian conflicts or the wars in Afghanistan and Iraq (Enhaili, 2010: 343-345).

The JC represents quite well the Islamist sector of civil society activism, given its involvement in both developmental and political issues. It has a membership variously estimated between 50,000 and 600,000 but the association is technically illegal. The movement embraces Islamic ethos whereby it envisions political, social, and economic problems of the country can only be solved if there is a widespread return of all citizens to the true spiritual values of the faith. It sees political participation as a strategic mistake that many opposition groups make, being co-opted by the regime without obtaining either power sharing or the change needed to turn the country around (Cavatorta, 2006: 212-213).
Radical Movements

The radical movements are not only active within the country but they also have links with international organisations. In the early 1990s, radical segments emerged with the return of Moroccan Jihadis who fought in Afghanistan. These are small groups, which include *al-Sirat al-Moustaqim* (Fair Voice or Juste Voix, JV), *Salafiyya Jihadyyaa* (SJ), *Jama'at al-Taouhid wal-Jihad fil-Maghrib* (Unity of Jihad in Morocco Group, GUJM), *Attakfir wal-Hijra fil-Maghrib* (Excommunication and Emigration in Morocco), and *Ansar al-Mahdi* (Mahdi Companions, AM). These movements called for the purification of Islam of every foreign cultural or social trace. To them, only violence could hasten the advent of the caliphate. They legitimised war against the regimes considered apostates and the Western countries. Even secular intellectuals, government officials, and feminists face their hostile targets. These movements claimed responsibility for several attacks including 2003 Casablanca attack. Among these groups, the Salafi movement, Moroccan Islamic Combatant Group (GICM) is the main representative of the international branch of Moroccan jihad. GICM was established in Pakistan between 1993 and 1998. It seeks to overthrow the Moroccan monarchy to establish the caliphate, which has links to al-Qai’da network (Enhaili, 2010: 342).

As part of the broader international jihadist movement, GICM activists operate in Western Europe, Canada, and Afghanistan apart from Morocco (US Department of State, 2005: 123). In the wake of Gulf War in 1991, new wave of radicalised Islamists emerged rejecting the US presence in Saudi Arabia and by extension threatened the monarchy. Although they suffered arrest and were prevented from using official mosques, they set up unofficial mosques in the poor regions attracting significant followings. Moroccan Islamic Combatant activists live among the migrant communities in Europe. They were held responsible for the Madrid train bombings in March 2004. In 2005, the movement’s leader, Abdelkrim Mejatti was killed in Saudi Arabia (Joffe, 2010: 80-81). In 2007, six militants blew themselves on different occasions causing intense alarm, which has seen relative peace in the country. Three suicide bombers killed themselves when the police raided their hideout in Hay Farah district and some days later two men exploded themselves near the American Consulate in Casablanca. Another militant blew himself up
inside a cyber café in Casablanca. In this backdrop, Moroccans had debated the complicated causes behind the bombings. The elements included anger over the Iraq war; the reach of al-Qai’da’s jihadist model in the region; and importantly how poverty may feed extremism. Four of the six suicide bombers lived in slum area in Sidi Moumen region, including the militants involved in 2003 Casablanca attacks (Fisher, 2007).

Except Justice and Charity movement, most Moroccan Islamist movements established in the 1970s have either evolved towards compromise with the regime or turned radicals. Radical organizations were subdued by repression and weakened by their internal division and inability to stage a popular upheaval. In recent years, both the mainstream Islamist movements have infiltrated various parts of society, especially the poor neighbourhoods and the schools and universities of major cities, and have even recruited many urban professionals. Their infiltration was facilitated by their social and charitable services in poor neighbourhoods, by their championing of the demands and grievances of students, and by their denunciation of corrupt political leaders. They also have infiltrated political parties, labour unions, and professional associations and have used them as legal outlets for criticism and demands (Layachi, 1999: 54-55). On foreign political issues, PJD and JC movement have been vocal as in the case of the large demonstrations against the Gulf war in February 1991, or the US-British led bombing of Iraq, which attracted supporters between 300,000 and 700,000 people (Ramonet, 2000).

In both Jordan and Morocco, civil society organisations have emerged along with the states’ establishment. In the case of Jordan, associations have been active in the absence of political parties due to their restrictions. In the sphere of politics, Jordanian professional associations are the most influential and engage with the government even after the legalisation of political parties. In Morocco, some associations are as old as the nationalist movements even if they were protégés of the political parties. In reforms, human rights organisations have spearheaded the cause for human rights and justice, whereas business associations plays active role in economic policies. In most of the associations, Islamists have successfully entered their executive branches in both countries.
Islamist movements in Jordan and Morocco have more or less similar pattern in their participation in political, social, and economic spheres. Moderates dominate the debate and issues of the country and their activities permeate majority of the populations. Although they may not agree with the government on contentious issues, their pragmatic politics have assured the palace to tolerate their activities. However, strands of radical elements at times have challenged the status quo and thereby disturbing the equilibrium. This affects the moderates due to regimes’ response in the form of repressive measures, thus exerting pressures even on the mainstream Islamists.

In relation to the civil society organisations, Hans Kelsen statement provides an insightful reminder when he stated that “a democracy without public opinion is a contradiction in terms. Insofar as public opinion can arise only where intellectual freedom, freedom of speech and press and religion are guaranteed, democracy coincides with political liberalism” (Kelsen, 2009: 288).