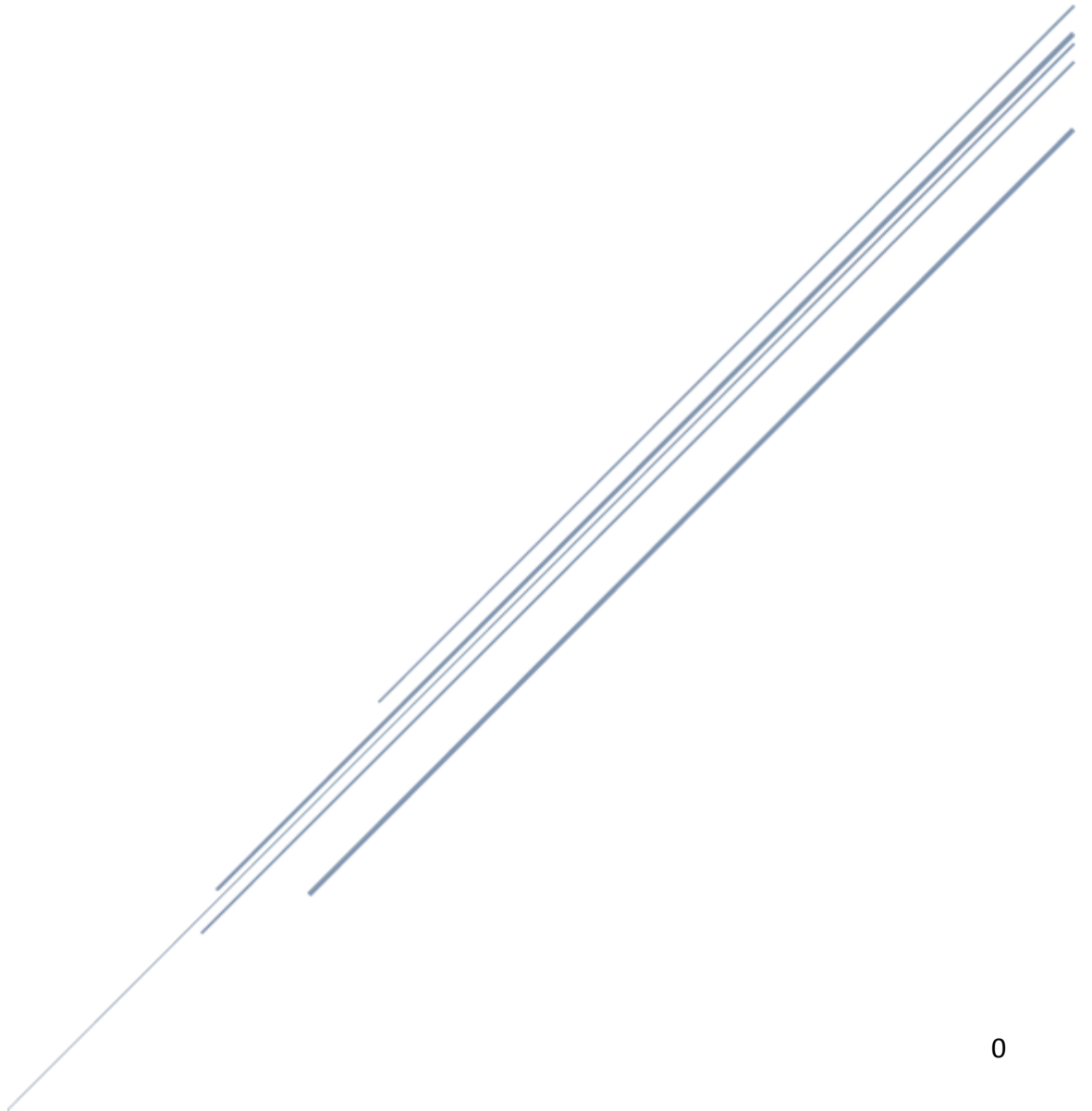


WATER UNDER THE BRIDGE?

Analyzing the medium-term effects of Truth Commissions
on post-transition political symbolism in Morocco and
South Africa



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Analyzing the medium-term effects of Truth Commissions on post-transition political symbolism
in Morocco and South Africa

B.A. Thesis Paper

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Abstract:

Truth Commissions are becoming increasingly popular as a way of dealing with large-scale human rights violations, particularly in cases where the government has been the perpetrator of said crimes against humanity. The effects of Truth Commissions in long-term political life, however, remain unclear. Evidence has suggested that Truth Commissions struggle to provide material or psychological gains for victims in the long term. Given a lack of evidence so far to defend Truth Commissions' tangible, hard-power capabilities, I look to analyze whether Truth Commissions have a longer-lasting symbolic, soft-power effect on national politics in two case studies. I test this argument by evaluating the presence of Truth Commission mentions and human rights arguments in Twitter discussions about current political issues, finding that Truth Commissions are generally absent from current day political discussions.

Contents

Introduction	4
Literature Review	6
Truth Commissions	6
Cases	8
The South African Case	9
The Moroccan Case	10
Truth Telling	12
Studies of Truth Commission Effectiveness to date	15
Short Term	15
Long Term	17
Civil Society in Political Life	18
State-Civil Society Interactions	19
Online Activism	22
Theory Building: Interviews of Moroccan and South African Subjects	23
Methods	23
Definition and Scope	23
Formulating the hypothesis	24
Interview Results	25
Demographic Tendencies	25
Qualitative Content:	26
Hypothesis	30
Testing the Hypothesis	31
Methods	31
Social Media Data Results	33
Discussion of Results	36
What mobilizes constituents	37
The goal of a TC	38
Conclusion	39
Appendix A	42

Table 1: Tweets obtained per set of keywords	42
Table 2: Demographic profile of respondents in Morocco	42
Table 3: Demographic profile of respondents in South Africa	43
Figure 1: High frequency terms associated with “political protest” in Morocco:	44
Figure 2: High frequency terms associated with “the Rif protests” in Morocco:	44
Figure 3: High frequency terms associated with “political protest” in South Africa	45
Figure 4: High frequency terms associated with “Cosatu March” in South Africa:	46
Figure 5: High frequency terms associated with the Cape Town water crisis	46
Table 5: Most frequently associated tuples of 2 words in tweets about Morocco	47
Table 6: Most frequently associated words in tweets about South Africa	47
Appendix B: Tweets on TCs	48
Works cited	54

Introduction

Truth Commissions (TCs) are temporary, extra-governmental institutions implemented after instances of human rights violations, often carried out by the state. While the details of their implementation vary, TCs are normally tasked with investigating the extent and nature of the violations perpetrated, as well as with either recommending or directly distributing some form of reparations¹.

The effectiveness of holding TCs is debated across many spheres, yet no work to date has addressed their effect on symbolic aspects of political discussion in the long term. The literature seems to agree that TCs are not very effective at ensuring material reparations and institutional reform. However, if TC's content is picked up by civil society and activists in how they subsequently understand politics, they might still have lasting effects through symbolic mechanisms.

Here, I hypothesize that, as truth telling institutions, TCs can have a symbolic effect in reshaping historical conceptions of local politics and changing the rules of the game. If this is true, then such effect would suggest that TCs have a long-term effect on the symbolic sphere by shaping political discourse, even if they lack long term material impact. Alternatively, if TCs lack

¹ Reparations can range in nature and be either or both material or symbolic. In this paper, I will take a wide definition of the word. Hence, in this paper "reparations" refers to any retribution to victims or their loved ones by the state that is explicitly linked to the past human rights violations and which requires the expenditure of governmental resources. For instance, reparations as used here might mean a monetary compensation for healthcare costs incurred, the repatriation of a loved-one's remains, or a symbolic recognition of the victim's suffering on some public monument. A public statement could be considered a reparation but only if it making such statement implies a significant cost to the authority at hand and it is perceived as a reparation by the victims.

such impact, this would suggest that the concern with TCs short-lived effects expands beyond the material sphere and might suggest ways in which to update future TC policy.

Truth Commissions are becoming increasingly popular as a way of dealing with past large-scale human rights violations, particularly in cases where the government has been the perpetrator of said crimes against humanity (Schmid, 2012). The popularity of TCs as political transition mechanisms is especially prevalent among African countries: of the 40 TCs detailed by Hayner (2011), 14 were implemented in African countries. Furthermore, implementation of TCs in African Countries is likely to continue. In fact, a TC is being implemented in Tunisia as this paper is written (Abé, 2017).

Evidence has suggested that TCs struggle to provide material or psychological gains for victims in the long term. Once the TC is dissolved, there are no enforcement mechanisms in place to guarantee that political authorities will implement the TC's recommendations or continue the reparations program (Perry, 2015). Similarly, a psychological study by Mendeloff found mixed to no evidence that participating in a TC improves mental health for victims. A similar line of argument suggests that TCs' recommendations regarding institutional change are unlikely to be implemented as there is no enforcing agency to guarantee their implementation.

Whether TCs' investigative work has a longer-standing effect, however, remains unaddressed. Even if TCs have no way of guaranteeing material or psychological gains for victims after their dissolution, it is conceivable that the information TCs uncover and compile has the potential to reshape the way the public at large perceives the government and national

politics. The latter has been suggested by the literature as well as by theory-building interviews I conducted with political activists and political scientists in the countries here studied.

Given a lack of evidence so far to defend TSs' tangible, hard-power capabilities, I look to analyze whether TCs have a longer-lasting symbolic, soft-power effect on national politics in two case studies. I hypothesize that, even if they lack observable material long-term impact, TCs can have a long-standing effect on political life by changing the way history and governmental accountability are seen and propose a mechanism by which the narratives of history that TCs uncover give current-day activist groups symbolic tools with which to gain leverage on their specific demands. Furthermore, I argue that this occurs because post-TC governments want to avoid being associated with the human rights violations that the TC uncovered.

For this I implemented both theory-building in-person interviews and a public opinion natural-text analysis approach to test this hypothesis. The former allow for a preliminary illustration of what members of different demographic groups think about their country's TC (if they know it at all) as well as what they would have liked said-TCs to be. While these are not statistically representative of the overall population, they suggest a community-grounded understanding of what TCs have been and what they could be. For this, I began this project with 35 (total) field interviews in Morocco and South Africa regarding public perception of the respective TCs. While perception and knowledge of TCs is diverse across groups and individuals, many respondents presented positive views of TCs as an opportunity.

For the latter, this paper uses data from social media (Twitter) regarding current political conflicts to analyze whether TCs have any observable symbolic effect on perceptions of current political conflict. I focus on how TCs and the human rights arguments related to those TCs are reflected, if at all, in current political debates in the same areas. Results suggest that TCs' effects are rather limited in the long term and that they are largely absent from current political debates, which would imply that TCs are not fulfilling their potential in people's perceptions.

Literature Review

Truth Commissions

According to Bakiner, a TC can be defined as a "temporary body established with an official mandate to investigate past human rights violations, identify the patterns and causes of violence, and publish a final report through a politically autonomous procedure" (2015, p. 24). TCs' functions can be summarized into three main categories: investigation of past human rights violations, publication of the findings, and distribution or recommendation of reparations. Additionally, TCs may be tasked with recommending institutional changes that future governments can implement to prevent the repetition of the past.

In the last three decades, TCs have gained significant popularity as an alternative within the context of Transitional Justice² approaches (Hazan, 2010, pp. 57-58). TCs are seen as a main

² Transitional justice arose as a response to cases that exceed the scope of traditional justice systems (Andrieu, 2010, p. 2). In this sense, Merwe, Baxter, and Chapman, define Transitional Justice as "societal responses to severe repression, societal violence, and systematic human rights violations that seek to establish the truth about the past, determine accountability, and offer some form of redress, at least of a symbolic nature" (Loudiy, 2014, p. 31). Such models, ideally, provide an alternative form of justice administration which is independent of the previous government and which focuses on reconciling both parts in the conflict.

tool in the repertoire of Transitional Justice mechanisms that may be implemented to aid a country in recovering from past atrocities. TCs have the unique opportunity to use government resources to compensate victims while remaining outside political life and beyond the control of any elected officials. Especially in situations of political transition, TCs can provide the services and attention to victimized citizens that the new, post-transition government may not be ready to address. For instance, the Moroccan IER provided health care for some of the country's victims (Human Rights Watch, 2005) and distributed nearly 100 million US dollars in monetary reparations (Perry, 2015).

TCs have often been implemented in combination with other mechanisms for justice administration or the provision of retributions to victims and their families (reparations), a phenomenon that Hazan terms "the Package approach" (2010, pp. 57-58). Furthermore, as Chandra Lekha Sriram points out in "Transitional Justice and Peacebuilding", over the past three decades TCs have been designed and implemented in a variety of manners, differing slightly from case to case (2010, p. 1). This has led the label Truth Commission to refer to a diverse grouping of institutions.

However, the main characteristic shared by all TCs to date is aptly conveyed by their name. TCs are characterized by the mandate to investigate the details pertaining to past human rights violations and to subsequently publish the uncovered information in a final report, a function which is sometimes referred to as truth finding. Hence, while as noted before TCs are often mandated to exercise a diversity of functions, all TCs are expected to investigate and report their findings on past human rights violations. Moreover, while TCs are often equipped with the resources to carry out investigations themselves, in all other areas of influence TCs are

only expected to present recommendations, with execution resting in the hands of the government, non-profit organizations, or international bodies such as the United Nations.

In spite of the central role of truth telling in defining TCs' functions, no studies to date have analyzed whether a TC's report has any direct impact in subsequent politics. The study here presented aims to fill such gap.

Cases

The cases selected differ in terms of geographic region they belong to within Africa, as well as in terms of political and socioeconomic characteristics. Additionally, both Truth Commissions can be distinguished based on the investigative powers allocated to them, their scale, and degree of attention they have received from previous research, with the IER appearing on a limited number of works while South Africa's TRC has become the staple model for Truth Commission design across the continent.

However, the TRC and IER share several crucial characteristics. Beyond having resorted to government appointed truth commissions as a restorative justice mechanism following human rights violations by a previous government, both are considered relatively successful in the literature. As well, both have led to similar results in terms of report publication, degree of public participation and lack of implementation of their policy recommendations. As such, they propose a fascinating subset of cases for the study of efficacy perception's connection to institutional design.

The South African Case

The history of South Africa's Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC) can be traced to the 1990 liberation of Nelson Mandela from imprisonment in Robben Island and the accompanying cease of a ban on anti-apartheid political organizations, including the African National Congress (ANC) led by Mandela (Allais, 2011). In 1994, a new constitution granting equal rights to all South Africans, regardless of race, was sanctioned. As a result, Nelson Mandela was elected president of the new Republic of South Africa (Inman and Rubinfeld, 2013, pp. 1-3). This event put an end to over 40 years of an apartheid regime that "required the separation of the races and gave societal and legal preferences to whites" (Phelps, 2004, p 106), including the violent enforcement of apartheid rules.

Negotiations between the ANC and the previously ruling National Party leading up to the election determined the establishment of the TRC in 1995 through the National Unity and Reconciliation Act (Allais, 2011, pp. 17-20). The TRC was composed of 17 commissioners representing a wide subsection of civil society and elected by members across political divides. This TC was mandated to investigate human rights violations committed between March 1960 and December 1993 (ibidem). Hearings of victims as well as perpetrators (who were offered conditional amnesty in exchange for full accounts of politically motivated crimes) were held in a public setting and widely televised.

Volume one of the TRC report claims as its purpose:

The Commission was conceived as part of the bridge-building process designed to help lead the nation away from a deeply divided past to a future founded on the recognition of human rights and democracy. Its purpose needs to be understood in the context of a number of other instruments aimed at the promotion of democracy, such as the Land Claims Court, the Constitutional Court and the Human Rights,

Gender and Youth Commissions, all institutional 'tools' in the transformation of South African society.
(TRC, 1998)

The TRC's mandate extended through 1998, although the commission continued its work through 2001 (Allais, 2011, p. 39). Its final report was published in five volumes including the results of the TRC investigation as well as policy recommendations for the new government. Additionally, the South African TRC granted 125 requests for amnesty (Dorsman, Hartman, Notenboom-Kronemeijer, 1999, p.71). However, these recommendations were never implemented in spite of the ANC remaining in power until today (Hayner, 2011, p. 31) and the redistributive goals stated by the TRC report have remained largely unaddressed.

The Moroccan Case

Morocco's 2004 Instance Équité et Réconciliation (IER) was established by King Mohammed VI to address human rights violations at the hands of the post-colonial state between 1956 and 1999 (under the rule of his grandfather Mohammed V and his father Hassan II) (Hazan, 2010, pp. 93-95). The violations in question were those associated with "the Years of Lead", a historical period of intense repression and political persecution implemented under the rule of King Hassan II (Loudiy, 2014, p. 5). The IER had been preceded by Hassan II's creation of a Consultative Committee on Human Rights (CCHR) in 1990 and by the implementation of a reparations program in 1999, the year of Hassan II's death, the Commission of Independent Arbitrage (CIA) (Perry and Sayndee, 2015).

The 2004 IER was composed of CCHR members, as well as representatives of civil society, including multiple ex-victims of the political repression that characterized the Years of

Led (Grotti, 2005, p. 20). However, the IER generally lacked ethnic and gender diversity, failing to represent women and minority groups such as the Amazigh (ibidem). The IER held three public hearings and published a report that is significantly shorter than its South African counterpart (Perry and Sayndee, 2015). However, this report also combines a description of uncovered past violations with recommendations for the government moving forwards. These have unfortunately not been implemented either (IER, 2005).

In its report, the IER defined its mission as follows:

“The Commission was mandated to assess, research, investigate, arbitrate and make recommendations about the gross human rights violations that occurred between 1956 and the end of 1999. This mission’s goal is to foster development and dialogue, and to create the grounds for national reconciliation that is crucial for a democratic transition in our country towards a state of justice and law, and for advancing the values and culture of citizenship and human rights.” (CNDH, 2006)

Such text conveys a concern both with finding the truth about the past (the TC’s truth telling mission) as well as with developing a framework for a future in which human rights are upheld and maintained in Morocco. Interestingly, the report mentions democratization (which implies an alteration of political institutions). In this sense, the report echoes the perception by much of the literature on TCs that these institutions be involved both with assessing the past and building a different future.

Truth Telling

TCs are of interest within the spectrum of post-conflict justice mechanisms because of their uniquely symbolic role. While TCs may implement their material resources in a variety of

ways, their main function is to investigate, clarify and publicize new versions of National history.

Truth telling is a valuable function of TCs for two reasons. In the first place, only an investigation of the events that have taken place can allow future governments and non-governmental organizations to adapt their responses to the true needs of society. Furthermore, preventing the future reoccurrence of similar events requires some understanding of what originally happened. On the other hand, Quinn (2010) argues that such confrontation with reality (whether by the recount of one's own experiences to the Commission or by an encounter with someone else's narrative) is necessary for individuals affected by the past atrocities to begin to cope and reconnect with civil society. In her opinion, official acknowledgement of victims' experience is a requirement of reconstructing a cohesive social fabric. Phelps (2004) further argues that a TCs report can help shape subsequent political life depending on how it presents the voices of those whose narratives it puts forward.

TCs present several advantages as truth-building institutions. In the first place, TCs are established as independent and temporary committees, meaning their reports can challenge and rewrite official narratives of history. Furthermore, TCs are usually led by members of civil society who are not politicians, as was the case with Bishop Desmond Tutu in South Africa (Hayner, 2000, p. 45) or writer Ernesto Sabato in Argentina (Hayner, 2000, p. 45). This implies that TCs can operate beyond the control of either the pre- or post- transition governments, as is perhaps best illustrated by the fact that the South African Truth Commission's Final Report

implicated members of both the outgoing National Party regime and the newly elected African National Congress (Van Zyl, 1999, p. 647).

This autonomy is reinforced by TCs' temporary nature and specifically defined objectives, as there is little room for politicians to co-opt a TC by nominating future members or assigning to it a different mission. In this sense, TCs are advantageously positioned to bring to light aspects of history that governments may want to hide or deemphasize.

At the same time, TCs can deploy the authority and resources of a national institution, since they are established through mandate by national governments or coalitions. This allows for TCs to gain access to generous budgets and - in some cases - to enjoy far-reaching investigative powers, such as the capacity to Subpoena records and grant amnesties, as was the case with the South African TRC (Van Zyl, 1999, pp. 654-655). In this sense, TCs enjoy a privileged condition, having access to the resources of a governmental institution while at the same time operating as independent bodies that can confront the government. Because of this, TCs present advantages over both traditional Court Systems and non-governmental organizations.

Additionally, TCs enjoy a large degree of symbolic authority. In discussing TC's potential capacity to address socioeconomic inequality, Laplante (2008, p. 348) sustains that TCs can "set the stage for national reconciliation projects". Furthermore, Laplante observes that TCs create national awareness and legitimate the processes they investigate (*idem*, p. 355). In fact, often TCs' work becomes incorporated into history books and curricula, granting official credibility and visibility to the narratives they report (Thompson & Rotberg, 2000, p. 264). Hence, TCs can

be particularly effective at Truth Building, as they combine significant resources, authority to investigate, credibility, political autonomy and the capacity to make their findings heard.

Nevertheless, certain limitations must be considered regarding TCs' Truth Building capacities. To begin with, TCs as defined here are limited to assessing national-scope human rights violations in cases in which part or all the details about the violations perpetrated are not well known. In contexts that are not national in scope, it might be impractical to establish a complex and costly institution as is a TC for truth-seeking purposes (Van Zyl, 1999, pp. 651-653). Similarly, if the violations perpetrated are already known or occurred in plain sight (as may happen in a civil war), further investigating the events is unlikely to grant new authority to the findings or to significantly change the way a country's history is perceived. Instead, the investigation runs the risk of having a detrimental effect by reopening old wounds (Shaw, 2005, pp. 1, 6-7).

Moreover, the condition that the events investigated be largely unknown before the TC's involvement in most cases implies that the human rights violations addressed will have been carried out by the government, which can hide its operations from public scrutiny. As a result, another condition that is implied in this scenario is that a regime change or governmental compliance must allow for the TC to be implemented. While International Pressure has been shown to encourage governmental compliance in the case of South Africa, (Van Zyl, 2000, p. 649) it is unlikely that an institution such as a TC can be effectively implemented without the agreement of local authorities. In addition, it is important that the

Truth commission be composed of legitimately apolitical staff with the capacity to properly communicate with the affected communities (Hayner, 2011).

Given these conditions, TCs are uniquely situated in a position to leverage governmental resources to establish a new, not government-sanctioned version of national history. As such, even if they lack the capacity to execute reparations, they might be able to reshape how political actions are perceived and what civil society actors can require of their governments in future political confrontations. Hence, I hypothesize that long term effects of TC can be observed in the political discourse around post-TC issues through public opinion content.

Studies of Truth Commission Effectiveness to date

Over three decades after the inauguration of the first TCs, the question arises of whether these institutions have been effective. The following section reviews preexisting studies of TC effectiveness in the short and long term.

Short Term

In the short term³, TCs have demonstrated some ability to fulfill their roles across three main functions: providing reparations, investigating the past, and publishing a report. According to Hayner's detailed review of 40 TCs (including the early TCs implemented in South America and Eastern Europe), 35 published final reports, at least 10 implemented material reparations programs within 6 years, and 13 published recommendations for future governments. (Hayner, 2011, pp. 261-279).

³ Which I will take to mean during the years that the Truth Commission is functioning

Specifically regarding the case studies relevant to this project, both the TRC and IER published reports that reshaped conceptions of national history and recommended institutional reforms. However, the interviews presented in the next section suggest that the TRC achieved much more renown among South Africans than the IER did among Moroccans.

Regarding material reparations, both the South African TRC and Morocco's IER distributed monetary reparations and benefits among some victims. The IER distributed approximately \$85 million USD in reparations among 16,000 individual victims, as well as access to medical services to victims considered deserving (United States Institute for Peace, 2018b). Similarly, the South African TRC provided reparations for approximately 21,000 victims (United States Institute for Peace, 2018a). Additionally, these TCs provided platforms for 21,000 (in South Africa) and 8,000 (in Morocco) victims to speak their truth, which was then published in each TC's respective report. However, the recommendations formulated by both TCs were not generally implemented (Hayner, 2011; Perry 2015).

Beyond material effects, literature from the fields of Transitional Justice and Psychology suggests that the truth-telling function of TCs can foster peace and democratization in transitioning countries, with the potential to heal social wounds left open by past conflict and encourage reconciliation (Mendeloff, 2009, p. 597). Yet, this theory is contested by those who claim that reopening past wounds might instead prove harmful to victims. In Phelps' words, "truth reports can do harm as well as good" (2004, p. 119).

Research on the psychological effects of Truth Commissions remains inconclusive (Mendeloff, 2009). Focusing on evidence from South Africa and the International Criminal Court

for Yugoslavia, Mendeloff has found that evidence cannot confirm whether TCs have a positive psychological effect on the lives of victims involved. Similarly, critics of Transitional Justice in countries like South Africa contest the idea that the transitional process that created a TC was sufficient to bridge the wide social cleavages that generated conflict in the first place (Boshomane, 2016).

There are no studies to date that focus on the effect TCs' investigative functions may have on subsequent political life. As such, this BA contributes to the literature by attempting to answer these previously unasked questions on the effect TC's truth-seeking can have after its implementation.

Long Term

While most TC reports have recommended institutional reforms, community services and further reparation programs, Hayner (2011) notes that ultimate implementation of these recommendations will depend on subsequent interest from governmental institutions. She agrees with other sources cited that implementation remains weak. While specificity in recommendations, international and local activism may help, the implementation of recommendations falls beyond the influence of the TC because it is meant to occur after the TC's mandate is over and because TCs do not possess executive authority.

However, it is possible that TCs still influence subsequent political life by altering the way local civil society perceives history, the government, and political life. While a TC has no way of ensuring that material resources and executive capabilities are provided for the implementation of its recommendations, it can ensure the publication and subsequent

knowledge of its report. If the report sheds sufficient light on past violations, it could hence alter the way politics as usual is perceived locally and thus reform the dynamic between civil society and the government. My hypothesis supports this alternative.

In spite of its central role in the functions of a TC, the symbolic work of TCs' truth-seeking remains largely unaddressed by previous literature. Whether such truth telling affects the political environment a posteriori remains unclear. In what ways does the publication of TCs' findings alter subsequent political life, if any? While the effects of TC hearings and discovery processes on the psychological well-being of victims has been studied (Mendeloff, 2009), no scholarship to this date has searched for a systematic way in which to trace the effects of Truth Building by national TC or the way activists and post-transition governments interact. This BA Thesis project tests whether the South African and Moroccan TCs have had a symbolic effect on post transition politics within each country.

Civil Society in Political Life

Staffed by members of civil society yet capable of leveraging governmental resources towards making historically relevant information publicly available, Truth Commissions are positioned in an advantageous middle ground between the government and civil society. Therefore, even if TCs may be unable to instill long-term material influence on their contexts, they might be able to significantly influence the soft-power balance by leveraging civil society.

In this sense, Meyer points out that the way people understand their identity is crucial in shaping social movements. Moreover, she suggests that identity in civil society is "forged from the interaction between people and [the] state." (2002, p. 5). If this is true, a TCs report

could alter the way identities crucial to civil society are perceived by changing the way people think of past interactions with their government.

Dawson and Sinwell note that scholars have often ignored the questions of public resistance and political protest in favor of studying “structural problems” (2012, pp. 4-8). In citing Harrison, they further note that much scholarship on African politics has ignored the capacity of “social groups to innovate, resist, challenge and elaborate new ideals of liberation” (idem, p. 8). Similarly, Anceschi, Gervasio and Teti highlight how formal and informal areas of politics are often considered as separate spaces, with implicit biases placing formal politics above its informal counterpart (2014, pp. 1-8).

As Durac and Cavatorta note, civil society is often identified as a necessary actor in transitions towards democracy (2015, pp. 1-11). In this sense, if TCs help leverage the interest of civil society, then it can aid in transition towards a more democratic society and the advancement of civil society’s interests. A similar argument could be made regarding civil society’s role in Transitional Justice. In this sense, this BA contributes by bridging the gap in studies that focus on official institutions - as are Truth Commissions - and studies that focus on informal, grassroots politics by considering the intersection of both through the lens of Truth Commissions’ truth-seeking function.

State-Civil Society Interactions

According to “political opportunity structure theory”, social movements require some unpopular cause or actor to mobilize against in order to exist. Such unpopular or offending elements facilitate the collective action and commitment necessary for groups of people to

carry out activism (Lipschutz, 2006). If this is true, the fact that Truth Commissions evidence past crimes committed by the government could help mobilize members of civil society who associate the current government with the past atrocities.

In analyzing South-Asian social movements, Vincent Boudreau notes that “patterns of state repression influence the institutions, social bases, and collective repertoires available to dissidents” (2002, pp. 28-29). The way in which the state interacts with and responds to civil society, he claims, is crucial in understanding the way social movements shape their own identities. (idem, p. 29) According to him, historical patterns of interaction between the state and social movements create relational patterns that determine how future social movements will position themselves vis-a-vis the state.

Along these lines, in studying the formation of the South African National Union of Mineworkers, T. Dunbar Moodie (2002, pp. 47-49) highlights that “movements and [other civil society] actors appropriate political opportunities as they take advantage of changes in social structures” (idem, p. 51). This process, he argues, involves as much material change as changes in perceptions within the minds of activists and members of civil society. Moreover, Moodie argues that ideological and material changes are intertwined and cannot be separated in analyzing social movements’ actions. Similarly, in studying Liverpool workers movements’ Colin Barker and Michael Lavalette have pointed out that the way activists construct their identities and missions fundamentally alters the work they carry out. (2002, p. 121). For Meyer, “understandings of past political outcomes converge with present identities and frame activists’ interpretations of current political opportunities” (2002, p. 122).

If this is true, then, Truth Commissions' capacity to reshape historical narratives could operate as the mechanisms that provide activists with new identities and narratives around which to frame their protests. At the same time, uncovering evidence of past repression from the government could motivate current day social movements to push back against a potential new repressor.

According to Lipschutz, scholarly studies of social movements have historically perceived them as threatening to the State (2006, p. 3). However, studying women's movements in India, Manisha Desai highlights that social movements need not be completely adversarial or fully allied with a given government (2002, pp. 66-68). Rather, as demands and postures change, social movements may work with certain elements of the government and challenge others. Similarly, she highlights states may choose to work with movements or oppose them depending on whether their interests align. (idem, p. 83) In this sense, Truth Commissions could be understood as a mediating state organization which stands between adversarial government and social organizations.

Marc Steinberg highlights how "collective identities, media events, rituals, ideologies, and narratives" shape the way social movements perceive themselves and their missions. (2002, p. 208). For him, the formation of these identities is neither stable nor discrete but rather a dialogic process in constant change. (idem, p. 213-216). In his words, "An irony of social movements is that to achieve their aims of social change, movements must produce rhetorical packages that explain their claims within extant, culturally legitimate boundaries". (idem, p. 247) Rhys H Williams also points out that societies use "symbolic repertoires" inherited from the past to understand their present (2002, p. 247). In this sense, it is

conceivable that as Truth Commissions findings are uncovered, the way in which Social Movements understand their own missions and identities changes.

At the same time, in reviewing the history of Social Movement studies, Lipschutz cites Antonio Gramsci and Alejandro Colas in stating that civil society's actions can infuse the government with elements that were not previously part of it yet are meaningful to the identities picked up by civil society (2006, pp. 3-15). Such assertions suggest that social movements might be a key mechanism that enables Truth Commission's narratives of history in influencing current politics. If social movements can alter governments by instilling them with elements of their own identities, and social movements respond to Truth Commissions' truth-seeking, this might allow the truths unveiled to reshape political life.

Such arguments are in line with Lisa Laplante's theorization of Truth Commissions as agents of socioeconomic change (2008, pp. 331-355): According to Laplante, if a Truth Commission raises awareness of structural inequalities, it can compel governments to address those inequalities by empowering the appropriate narratives. These theories all suggest mechanisms by which TCs can have a lasting effect of soft-power politics.

Online Activism

In studying the 2017 #RhodesMustFall campaign in the University of Cape Town, Tanja Bosch (2017) notes that social media, and Twitter specifically, played a significant role in the development of the campaign. According to Bosch, Twitter served the #RMF campaign by spreading word of the protests, providing youth with a new platform for political debate, and by attracting the attention of mainstream mass media (idem). The latter points suggest that

Twitter records can capture civil society's mobilizers' opinions and actions during protest campaigns. If such dynamic was true of the #RMF campaign, then there is room to believe a similar pattern might be observable in the campaigns that this project analyzes.

Joss Hands similarly notes that social media and fast-speed communication has become a key player in mobilizing protesters across the board (2011, pp. 123-124). Such technologies, Hands claims, can provide a mechanism to translate dissent (disagreement, refusal of acceptance) into direct action (mobilization into a protest or some other disruptive act) (ibidem). Such recruitment mechanisms have acquired the name of mobil(e)isation (idem, p. 124), giving civil society members incentives to post their political attitudes online.

Such research would suggest that social media can be a fruitful platform for the analysis of social movements and anti-government mobilization. If this is true, the Twitter data included in this study should allow for a large-sample look at the attitudes that civil society members hold regarding politics in both countries. Such information provides a window into whether local civil society is capturing and reflecting the messages put out by the respective Truth Commissions. In other words, we can test whether TCs are having a soft-power effect by testing whether people refer to them or their findings in posterior political action. In this project, I will analyze trends within political discourse in both countries studied in an attempt to identify trends within it that signal the effect of TCs work.

Theory Building: Interviews of Moroccan and South African Subjects

Methods

Definition and Scope

In this study I assume a definition of TCs which is solely concerned with their investigative function. For the purposes of this study, I will thus adopt this minimal definition of a TC as a truth finding institution, leaving all other aspects of a package approach outside of consideration.

Furthermore, I focus here solely on Truth Commissions addressing human rights violations perpetrated by the State. Implied in my hypothesis that civil society can use past human rights violations to threaten linking current governments to human rights abuses is the fact that the past human rights violations be in fact perpetrated by the government.

Another reason to focus on state-perpetrated violations is that States have the institutional capacity to hide their actions (Van Zyl, 1999, p. 652). Hence it is reasonable to assume that Truth Commissions in such contexts would uncover a significant amount of new information pertaining to national history through their truth-seeking function. In cases where the details regarding violations perpetrated are already well known, Truth Commissions are unlikely to serve a truth-seeking function and thus those cases fall beyond the scope of this study.

Formulating the hypothesis

This BA project is concerned with elucidating how Truth Commission's retelling of history and the symbols generated by the publishing of its final report (truth telling) alter civil society's perceptions of the post-Truth Commission political setting. To answer this question, I

focus on two case studies: The Instance Équité et Réconciliation (IER) in Morocco and the Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC) of South Africa.

I began this research with a series of 31 theory-building interviews conducted in Rabat (Morocco's Political Capital) and Cape Town (the seat of South Africa's parliament and main site of the TRC). In both cases, I have conducted open ended interviews with adult local-residents who fit any of three categories:

- (1) people directly affected by the Truth Commission (victims or their friends and family)
- (2) people professionally involved with the truth commission (through participation in the commission itself or with some institution that directly interacted with it such as an NGO)
- (3) citizens not directly involved in the Truth Commission process.

Employing a diverse sample of respondents with different relationships to the Truth Commission has allowed me to tap into perceptions by groups with different experiences of the Truth Commission, as well as into the general public's perception of the TRC and IER. I conducted these interviews in a semi-structured style focusing on understanding people's relationship to and perception of the Truth Commission, as well as the reasons the public associates with whether the Truth Commission was successful (or not). For them I relied on a snowball sampling model with assistance from Amideast Rabat and faculty and students from the University of Cape Town.

From the content of these interviews and an analysis of the preexisting literature, I have constructed a hypothesis to be tested on large-n data.

Interview Results

The following tables summarize the demographic characteristics of interviewees in each country. These individuals agreed to participate in open ended interviews regarding their respective country's TC and to provide their opinion and a summary of their knowledge of it.

As stated, sampling for these interviews was conducted through a snowball mechanism. As such, certain biases are apparent in the sample, such as an overrepresentation of highly educated individuals and French and English speakers in Morocco, and an overrepresentation of older, white, and high socioeconomic status individuals in South Africa. Similarly, it should be considered that these interviews were conducted mostly in urban areas and for a small (15 in Morocco, 16 in South Africa) sample. As such, they cannot be expected to provide a statistically significant picture of the countries here studied. Rather, these interviews began as a way of tapping into local perceptions of the Truth Commissions in order to construct the theory that I later tested among large-N social media samples.

Given the sensitive nature of the subject, all interviewees remain anonymous. However, I am providing basic demographic characteristics and age ranges so as to contextualize the answers provided. (For these, see appendix A Tables 2 and 3).

Demographic Tendencies

Certain observations become apparent already from the demographic characteristics. In the first place, the tables display that many more south Africans are aware of the TRC than Moroccans who know about the IER.

In Morocco, knowledge of the IER appears to be highly correlated with either personal involvement or work with the IER. People who did not have a personal connection to victims, perpetrators or staff of the IER and who are not professionally or academically involved in politics tended not to recognize the name. Furthermore, when I followed up by explaining what institution the name IER referred to, they confirmed they had not heard about it. Interestingly, this was true across age groups: even people who were alive during the work of the IER but who had no personal involvement with it tended to not recognize it.

While South Africans also displayed a correlation between higher socioeconomic status and greater knowledge about the TRC, the only respondents who had no knowledge of the TRC were those who had not grown up in South Africa (the two Zimbabwean respondents). Hence, it would appear that nationality (and perhaps involvement in the local education system) is correlated with knowledge of the TRC.

Finally, in both countries people who were alive at the time of the respective TC's implementation appeared more likely to have in-depth knowledge and opinions on it, while younger respondent spoke from the knowledge acquired in their classes or failed to recognize the institution.

Qualitative Content:

Morocco

Regarding Morocco, all respondents who identified the IER agreed that there was a lack of implementation of its recommendations and identified this as an issue with the institution. Similarly, many respondents including some which did not know of the IER considered that lack

of education on the subject – for instance, its exclusion from syllabi of National History – should be addressed.

Another concern expressed by some respondents was the elitist nature of civil society and its lack of real power. For academic and professional respondents, Moroccan civil society lacks a strong connection with the population at large and is mostly confined to highly educated, wealthy minorities. Perhaps for this reason, they observed that Moroccan society is at large rather demobilized and that key groups such as the Amazigh (Berber) community and the Islamist parties were left out of negotiations regarding the IER. In spite of this, two respondents suggested that Internet and Social media access have increased mobilization since the 2011 Arab Spring movement and may continue to do so in the future.

Another frequently observed pattern was the consideration by some respondents that the IER served as part of a public image campaign on behalf of the government so as to create a perception of greater democracy. However, this was often perceived as a façade accompanied by little change in the actual allocation of power within the Moroccan government. For one respondent, the TRC was part of a three-pronged approach (together with the Arab Spring Constitutional Reform and the inclusion of Tamazight as an official language) to build a benevolent ruler persona around current monarch Mohammed VI. In another respondent's words there was "change on paper, but not in practice".

Also frequently mentioned was the publicization of the hearings within the IER. While respondents old enough to have watched them remembered these hearings being featured at prime-time and gaining great popularity, concern was expressed regarding the not-live

broadcast. In this sense, one respondent characterized the first set of hearings as “more popular than a match between Barca and Real Madrid”, a classic soccer match that is very well regarded in Morocco. Nevertheless, a few other respondents expressed concern that the hearings were featured after serious editing and left out both the names of perpetrators (According to IER design) as well as any bits of testimony considered too crude for air television.

Nevertheless, a number of respondents, especially among academics, considered it valuable that the IER started a conversation regarding Human Rights. For two respondents in particular, it was of value that even if the IER is not well known and violence continues to plague Moroccan politics, it is now both lawful and commonplace to discuss the Human Rights standing of the makhzen (the palace). One of my academic interviewees, however, was not convinced that this symbolic change within conversations has reduced the level of violence experienced by activists in current day Morocco.

One of my interviewees who had previously been professionally involved with the IER suggested that the value of it was one of omission. According to him, while the IER may not have granted further rights or benefits to Moroccan civil society, it made certain practices admissible before its implementation (such as the incarceration of dissidents) no longer acceptable. Other respondents considered this a result of post-Cold War politics.

Regarding international pressure and involvement, those respondents who felt qualified to make a comment shared a rather negative view. According to most respondents, foreign aid was more concerned with increasing stability within the country (a key ally of the Global West in curbing terrorism and illegal immigration to Europe) than with increasing justice and

democratization. Moreover, one of my respondents suggested that the bureaucratic procedures required by many international donors had damaged rather than aided IER efforts.

South Africa

Among South African Respondents, I identified three groups based on tendencies within their responses: foreigners, white South Africans and colored South Africans.

For foreign respondents, the TRC is not a well-known institution. They are, however, familiar with the concept of Apartheid and its effects. While generally not too involved in local politics, these respondents expressed a concern that was later echoed by South African respondents: that legal changes have not brought about Socio Economic changes to revert previous racially biased tendencies and overall economic inequalities.

For white respondents (which were overall of greater socioeconomic status, as poor white South Africans are unfortunately underrepresented in my sample), the TRC ranged from ineffective to the point of being considered irrelevant to being benign but meek in its effect. Most suggested that the TRC had been too long yet inefficient. Some respondents in this group suggested that the TRC was “old news”, implying its relevance for current day politics is limited at best. For them, current issues revolve around ineffective ANC leadership⁴ and lack of good economic practices among South African leaders. Some respondents went as far as to suggest that anti-apartheid rhetoric had grown to the point that being white in South Africa can be a disadvantage. Other respondents -especially those with significant others or relatives of color- suggested that, while they understood racial inequalities remained relevant and frequently

⁴ 7 months after I collected these responses, president Jacob Zuma of the ANC would be impeached among corruption accusations.

observed them affect colored people's lives, the main concerns should be economic and based on current-day problems.

Respondents who identified as people of color (many of whom had lost family members to apartheid-era violence) suggested the opposite: for them, the TRC had been a step in the right direction but either too small or too short. One respondent suggested it should have lasted longer and taken place later in time, as he suggested the transition away from apartheid happened too quickly to be properly implemented. For him, change is likely to happen but over the course of many lifetimes. My youngest respondent fit within this latter group. He mentioned that he had studied the TRC in school and at University as a requirement, which he considered beneficial. For him the TRC was also a good practice but it did not reach enough people. Finally, one of my respondents – a professor and a person of color whose family members had also been hurt by apartheid – suggested that the TRC should not be analyzed in terms of its prominence today but rather in terms of how it altered perceptions of history. For him, the main effect of the TRC was that it altered the way history is interpreted in South Africa, legitimizing or highlighting the claims of some of apartheid's victims.

Hypothesis

From the content of these interviews and an analysis of the preexisting literature, I have constructed the following hypothesis: the language and symbols that arise from Truth Commission's reports can be picked up and utilized by activists to reframe current events in terms of past atrocities that, if true, can reshape future political disputes. In this way, even if a

TC does not have lasting material effects on the region for which it is implemented, longer term effects can be found for TCs in the symbolic sphere.

Testing the Hypothesis

Methods

To test this hypothesis, I looked for mentions of TCs and related terms in discussions of current day political disputes by taking advantage of the preponderant role social media has earned in recent political events. The logic connecting TCs and current protests would be that, if activists or members of civil society can associate current issues with past, TC-relevant violations, then governments will be compelled to concede or avoid targeted behaviors because they want to avoid being associated with human rights violations.

The number of interviews and snowball sampling mechanism here presented cannot be considered a statistically significant sample, and hence may imply a biased perception. As a result, I tested the presented hypothesis against a large-n sample of commentary on political protests collected through Twitter.

For this, I requested 8 batches of 10,000 unique tweets⁵ in English (South Africa) and French (Morocco)⁶ for each of five sets of keywords encompassing tweets from January 4th to January 24th, 2018. This is to say that, for each set of keywords, I requested a random sample of tweets containing those keywords up to a count of 10000 tweets per attempt and repeated

⁵ This implies removal of retweets

⁶ Both the countries here studied have multilingual societies and multiple official languages. It is not overlooked that restricting the samples to French and English will diminish representation of certain subgroups who might choose to express their ideas in other languages. Nevertheless, the languages implemented here are those for which the text processing software is most reliable and also the languages in which most political activity is conducted in both countries.

this process 8 times. Additionally, I manually collected all tweets produced during January 2018 regarding TCs in each country. (For a reproduction of the latter, see appendix B). I performed this query through R implementing the TwitterR library. The samples include both general tweets regarding political protests and specific protests' content in hopes to observe whether the presence of a vested interest alters how people discuss political action.

Two of the sets of keywords were programmed to return tweets containing the terms “political protest” (for South Africa) and “protestation politique” (for Morocco). The other three were programmed to capture tweets containing the names of one of three recent protestation movements in these countries: The Rif protests in Morocco (keywords: al hoceima, rif, al hirak), the Cape Town water crisis (keywords: water cape town, water4capetown, water crisis) and the Cosatu March (keywords: #COSATUmarch, cosatu march). These protests were selected based on the criteria of being recent or ongoing at the time of data collection, of spanning diverse regions of each country, that they pertain to diverse topics of political conflict and that they be significant enough to attract large amounts of attention, so as to tap into as many areas of current day political discourse as possible.

While other keywords could have been used for each protest here represented, the goal was not to capture every tweet regarding these protests but rather to collect a broad enough sample of tweets each of which referred to these protests or phenomena. It should be noted that, while I requested 80000 tweets for each set of keywords, at times Twitter failed to find sufficient unique tweets containing any of those keywords so as to fulfill that quota. (For a tally of tweets retrieved per keyword set, see Appendix A, Table 1) While this limitation reduced the

sample size on the one hand (see number of tweets per keyword on table 2) it also implies that the query collected all possible tweets regarding that topic that were available in January 2017.

Twitter data presents a number of advantages for this analysis: In the first place, Tweets can be considered a no pre-test sample, in which users' statements are published unprompted and not biased by the act of measuring attitudes. Additionally, the popularity of Twitter as a platform - particularly among political actors in recent years - allows for a large sample within which randomization is possible. These two elements provide advantages over the use of traditional surveys or further interviews. Additionally, Twitter has gathered popularity in the last decade as a platform for political mobilization, particularly among activists, a phenomenon sometimes referred to as "clicktivism" and is largely available to anyone with an internet connection, which suggests that a large number of protesters are likely to have "tweeted" their opinions. Finally, Twitter content is usually redacted in colloquial language, without editorial constraints and freely available to any smartphone user, which suggests a Twitter analysis is likely to represent a wider audience than analyzing newspaper letters to the editor and blog posts. Therefore, Twitter presents a fertile platform on which to analyze the unfiltered opinions of a large sample of the population.

Having collected information on 127,017 tweets, I conducted a content analysis through Python scripts implementing the Pandas and Wordcloud libraries. I began by identifying the most common topics within each of the 5 keyword-based sets and computing the most common word associations in each. Additionally, I looked for the words most commonly

associated with each Truth Commission's name and with the terms "human rights", "apartheid", "years of lead", "Truth Commission", "violence" and "repression".

Social Media Data Results

Given the limited nature of the interview sample, I proceeded to further test my hypothesis among social media data regarding political protests in Morocco and South Africa. If TCs can have a lasting symbolic effect on local politics, some of the discourse on political issues should reflect part of the message of each TC's report, or some discussion of the Human Rights platform that both Truth Commissions operated under.

This test presents the important limitation that we do not count with pre-test samples regarding political discussion before the TCs were implemented. Twitter was inaugurated as a platform in 2011. However, this test does not depend on the observation of a differential between the presence of Human Rights and TC-related discourse before and after the TC. If political discourse was not concerned with TC-related content before the TC but is after its implementation, then this would imply that political protesters are picking up or at least agree with the TC's position. However, even if Human Rights and TC-related discourse was already present before its implementation, presence afterwards would imply that the TC echoed the preexisting concerns of political protesters, providing them with legitimacy, if not new content, and amplifying said discourse. Finally, if TC-related discourse had diminished or disappeared after its implementation, this would imply that the TC either failed to amplify civil society' concerns or that it focused on fleeting concerns that are not prone to long-term impact.

I began by establishing the more frequent terms and expressions related to political protests in general and to specific campaigns in each country, which are reflected by the following Word Cloud graphs. For these, see appendix a, Figures 1 through 4.

The Word Cloud data suggests two tendencies. In the queries regarding general political process, the majority of tweets are concerned with recent events (such as Trump's denomination of certain African states as "shithole countries") and the ongoing conflict with Algeria. In queries about specific movements, the major frequency terms either paraphrase the issue of concern for the movement or refer to individuals relevant for the cause (such as Omar Radi in Morocco and Nkosazana Dlamini-Zuma in South Africa). The water crisis stands out in its emphasis of time-related terms and of geographical terms. However, there is little evidence of language echoing the work of TCs.

Additionally, I computed the more common word associations within each sample. See appendix A Tables 4 and 5.

These two-word tuples reflect the main concerns behind each protest or in local politics at the time of the query according to Twitter users, be it Amazigh (Berber) concerns in the Rif, low-water predictions in Cape Town, women's issues in Morocco, South Africa's diplomatic relations with the Trump administration or the economic concerns behind COSATU march. Overall, the tuples reflect concern with material or high-impact issues. Yet this language does not reflect much discussion of Human Rights or TC material.

Additionally, I requested any Tweets containing the name of each country and the words "Truth Commission" as well as the names of each respective Truth Commission produced

during January 2018. The results were much limited in number (see table below), and are reproduced in appendix B.

Table 1: Count of tweets in January 2018 concerning each TC

Keywords	Truth Commission South Africa	Truth and Reconciliation Commission South Africa	Commission Vérité Maroc	Instance Équité et Reconciliation
Count	5	34	1	3

The volume of these tweets suggests that the individual Truth Commissions are more often discussed than TCs at large or as a concept with respect to the individual countries. Regarding their content, the majority of tweets regarding the keywords “Truth Commission South Africa” were concerned with summary analysis of the TCs impact and its role or suggested a similar institution’s implementation and use elsewhere (for instance, in Zimbabwe).

Similarly, the majority of discussions about the TRC in South Africa revolve around the applicability of the model elsewhere (including a discussion of Comedian Dave Chappelle’s suggestion to implement one for sexual abuse victims in the USA), or around historical discussions of what made the TRC and transition possible in South Africa. Overall, these tweets refer to the TRC as part of the historical past and refer to the acts of prominent men (Nelson “Madiba” Mandela, Archbishop Desmond Tutu) and contextual cues that made the TRC possible.

The number of tweets referring to TCs in Morocco and to the IER is much smaller. The one tweet corresponding to the keywords “Commission Vérité Maroc” (Truth Commission Morocco) celebrates the election of Morocco to a truth commission dedicated to Algeria. This, however, does not refer to a TC as defined in this paper. Among those pertaining to the IER specifically, two announced articles referring to an overview of this institution, yet one denounced the IER as an institution that failed to curve injustice.

Discussion of Results

Effects of TCs

The results presented above do not lend support to the hypothesis that TCs have a long-term impact in political discourse about current issues. The face that gazes into the future seems to have little impact on the future it regards. At large, TCs and the topics with which they deal (primarily discussions of human rights in light of past abuses) are missing from current conversations about politically salient issues as far as this research has shown.

In contrast, discussions of the TCs – generally or regarding specific cases – frame these institutions as historical events that are considered finalized and a matter of the past; perhaps an example to be followed or a source of lessons for the future. This would suggest that TCs are perceived as historical bodies yet not as ongoing processes that influence current day events.

Interestingly, specific TCs seem to gather more attention than the concept at large, perhaps because of the highly local nature of their work. TCs are not implemented as a way of joining a global human rights movement but rather to address past atrocities that occurred in the local political sphere. Moreover, each TC is implemented in slightly different terms and at

the discretion of local authorities, leading each TC to be its own kind of institution. Even as past TCs are considered templates for future implementations, discussions center on which aspects of a given TC or another can be implemented in alternative circumstances, and which ones are not exportable.

These observations would lead us to conclude that TCs do not have long-term effects on the symbolic sphere even if they have gained their place in history books (which is not true of all TCs). Such lack of long-term results is in line with previous research that has shown TCs have little long-term effects as far as material and psychological gains are concerned.

What mobilizes constituents

On the other hand, the analysis of social media presented here shows that most discussion of political issues is centered on the immediate sources and impact of said issues, and on the individuals considered central to the issue at hand. This phenomenon might help explain why TCs have not reached long term effectiveness in either the symbolic nor the material spheres: If people are most concerned with their material needs, they are more likely to pay attention to and pick up messages from institutional bodies that can speak to those material needs, rather than from those which have proved incapable of delivering tangible benefits. Such dissatisfaction can be traced already in the responses of some of my interviewees, who tended to agree their respective TC was ineffective or insufficient.

The goal of a TC

Certain groups remain highly aware of TCs: victims, their immediate circles, professionals involved with the TC and highly educated individuals. These groups tend to both

know more about TCs and be more supportive of them. While unsurprising, this fact highlights the fact that, in spite a lack of success, TCs remain relevant elements in the transition away from past atrocities. Overall, some Truth Commission seems better than no Truth Commission (with some exceptions).

Additionally, it is notable that in both the social media sample and the interviews, people who did not previously know about these TCs expressed their desire to learn more about them. Beyond citizens' interest in their national history, this suggests that the truth-finding function of TCs is still relevant and welcome. What might be necessary for them to become effective is, perhaps, sufficient resources and authority to make that truth well known and to implement meaningful reparations. It is observable in data from these countries that incorporation of TC history into the national curriculum correlates with greater knowledge and appreciation for a TC. While most South Africans know of the TRC, which is covered in school history lessons, most Moroccans do not have the opportunity to encounter the IER unless they are personally involved or pursue highly specific studies of national history in university. A greater incorporation of TC and Human rights into school curricula might have the capacity to increase TC impact.

Conclusion

In spite of the limitations of this empirical test, the results fall in line with multiple previous approaches, which have found that TCs tend to fail to exert long-term influence in their political contexts. This research was intended to test such hypothesis from yet another —previously unaddressed — angle in search for what could have been an ignored area of TC

long-term influence. Evidence that TCs will need stronger executive powers and guarantees on implementation, however, continues to grow.

Both the literature and the text of TCs' reports suggest that TCs are double-faced institutions. While part of their mission is to elucidate the past, the other face of the same coin gazes into the future, looking to implement recommendations and lessons from the truths uncovered. If TCs had a symbolic long-term effect, it is likely they would reshape post-TC political action as governments try to avoid association with past human rights violations as revealed by the truth commission. Hence, the symbols that activists could pick up from TC narratives could be used as deterrents or pressure elements against the government.

The research here presented refutes the idea that TCs may have observable long-term effects on how members of civil society discuss current political issues to this day in Morocco and South Africa. While each TC and each country has its own peculiarities, the extent to which other TCs have shared elements with these two cases suggest similar results might be found elsewhere. Such testing of additional TCs falls, unfortunately, outside the scope of this paper but might be a point of departure for future studies.

Such short-lived influence of TCs appears connected to the lack of implementation of their recommendations and a lack of material benefits provided by the TC. While this does not invalidate the truth-finding and history-telling function TCs serve, and the space they give to victims and their loved ones to grieve, it does suggest that there is much room for improvement. What policies may be implemented to increase TC effectiveness remains beyond the scope of this paper, yet public opinion and the literature both suggest that increasing the

power of TCs to ensure implementation of reparations and recommendations might lead to greater effectiveness both in terms of purely material gains as well as in symbolic impact. In this sense, increased autonomy over execution of reforms and reparations, independence in administering their budget and a longer time span for implementation after the publication of a report might all serve to increase the influence of TCs in the future. Similarly, including TC content in history syllabi within public education can increase the influence of a TC's work.

If this relationship between symbolic and material effects is true, it would lend further relevance to the role of TCs as more than truth finding institutions. The “package approach” might need to be considered the norm if the symbolic effect of TCs depends on some degree of material effectiveness. In other words, TCs might need to accrue executive power before their history-telling and truth-finding powers can be fully grasped. This would suggest that the current institutional design which TCs follow should reach beyond favoring report writing and investigation so as to support the implementation of reparations.

At the same time, this relationship might appear circular: greater material consequences would increase the popularity and symbolic relevance of the TC. At the same time, we hypothesize that greater symbolic relevance would allow TCs to impulse the efforts of political dissenters and bring about greater material change in the future. While it is true that this relationship is circular in nature, it might suggest that the initial impulse for a TC is crucial: If a TC can achieve greater material impact in its first few years, while memory of the events that made a TC necessary is fresh and the issue is prominent, it might have greater symbolic and material influence in the future. It is hard to know in anticipation what will be a powerful

symbol, yet association with past impact might be a way of ensuring that a certain aspect of political life is perceived as meaningful.

It is, however, still possible that TCs as they stand have unspoken effects: as some respondents suggested in the interviews, perhaps TCs' effects can be observed in the absence of further atrocities rather than in some form of positive change. Such claims, however, exceed the scope of this research and would require an analysis of the means of coercion implemented by governments in response to dissent before and after the TC. Such a test would also face constraints as far as controlling for other factors is concerned: the scrutiny and regulations placed on governments nowadays is more prominent than it was in the 20th century when the rule of Apartheid and Hassan II's Years of Lead brought South Africa and Morocco (respectively) to experience the need for a TC.

Finally, TCs might serve as a signaling mechanism. Even if their impact is not large, establishing a TC serves to mark a moment of clear transition and to express to both the world and local constituents that human rights have become part of the conversation. Such a function would be accomplished independently of how much impact a TC can have in the medium- and long-term political context in which it operates so long as the TC is widely known and publicized at the time of its implementation. Even then, increasing TC visibility after the transition can help solidify this function.

TCs have already become a popular topic for academic inquiry. This paper suggests new routes for analyzing TCs from the perspective of studying their effects and highlights some areas that remain unaddressed. As more TCs around the world are reaching their first few

decades of age and others continue to be implemented, we might be situated at an advantageous point in time to study their longer-term effects.

Appendix A

Table 1: Tweets obtained per set of keywords

Keywords	Political Protest	Water Crisis, Water Cape Town, #Water4capetown	#Cosatumarch, Cosatu March	Protestation Politique	Al Hoceima, Rif, Al Hirak
Tweets Obtained Overall	40933	18199	15772	50015	2098 T = 127,017

Table 2: Demographic profile of respondents in Morocco

<i>Morocco cities:</i>		<i>Rabat and Fes</i>			
<i>Index</i>	<i>Gender</i>	<i>Age Range</i>	<i>Description</i>	<i>Do they know the IER?</i>	<i>Language of interview</i>
1	M	20-30	US college student from Morocco	Y	English
2	F	30-40	American NGO staff	N	English
3	M	20-30	Comp Sci degree holder	N	French, Arabic and English
4	M	40-50	PLSC Prof	Y	French
5	M	20-30	High school graduate	N	English
6	F	30-40	Prof, ex activist	Y	French,
7	M	50-60	AMDH staff, ex activist	Y	French
8	M	50-60	IER member, professor	Y	French and English
9	F	50-60	housewife, ex office worker	N	French

10	F	60-70	retired bank teller	N	French
11	M	60-70	retired school teacher	N	French
12	M	20-30	leather tanner	N	French and Arabic
13	M	20-30	leather tanner	N	French and Arabic
14	M	20-30	leather tanner	N	French and Arabic
15	M	20-30	Arabic instructor to foreign students	N	English
Totals	F = 27% M = 73%	20-30 = 46% 30-40 = 13% 40-50 = 6% 50-60 = 20% 60-70 = 13%		Y= 33% N= 66%	

Table 3: Demographic profile of respondents in South Africa

South Africa City:		Cape Town and Port Elizabeth			
Index	Gender	Age	Description	Do they know the IER?	Language of interview
16	M	20-30	Uber driver, Zimbabwean living in SA	N	English, some Arabic
17	F	50-60	Upper class white woman	Y	English
18	F	60-70	Upper class white woman	Y	English
19	M	18-20	Black College Student at UCT	Y	English
20	M	40-50	Black law professor at UCT	Y	English
21	F	50-60	Upper class white woman	Y	English
22	F	50-60	Upper class white woman	Y	English
23	F	50-60	Upper class white woman	Y	English
24	M	50-60	Upper class white man	Y	English
25	M	50-60	Upper class white man	Y	English
26	M	50-60	Upper class white man	Y	English
27	M	50-60	Upper class white man	Y	English

Table 5: Most frequently associated tuples of 2 words in tweets about Morocco

Morocco, political protests in general		Morocco, political protests regarding the Rif region		
des femmes	1146		rt omarradi	493
sa vie	1087		al hoceima	430
place des	1070		sidi abed	391
dans monde	1063		apoyo al	340
vie e	1062		au quartier	339
e defendre	1057		quartier sidi	339
consacre sa	1056		al hirak	335
defendre place	1056		le rif	324
elle consacre	1056		del rif	307
de protestation	1051		hirak del	300
son pays	1039		de madrid	259
portrait de	1026		hoceima au	209
rt brutofficiel	1026		abed et	204
femmes musulmanes	1022		dal hoceima	204
monde dans	1022		e tamassint	204
musulmanes dans	1022		manifestations e	204
pays portrait	1022		moment manifestations	204
brutofficiel elle	1020		ressort dans	204
rt zaksnowmdr	877		rif ressort	204
enfant e	867		rue en	204
un enfant	866		tamassint hirak	204
allocations familiales	862		omarradi le	201
familiales de	862		acto del	199
pour allocations	862		apoyando hoy	199
pas eligibl	861		moment manifestations	204

Table 6: Most frequently associated words in tweets about South Africa

South Africa, political protests in general		South Africa, protests around COSATU march			
Phrase	Freq.	Phrase	Freq.	Phrase	Freq.
diplomatic protest	3577	tony leon	1907	run water	15526
trumps shithole	3456	tell capetonians	1641	town first	13966
issue diplomatic	3080	capetonians raining	980	world run	13451
united states	2836	da pays	965	city world	13432
protest united	2811	pays tony	963	first city	13107
shithole countries	2538	leon r	928	time cape	11515
cape town	2414	sdumo dlamini	913	water crisis	9376
will issue	2349	raining cosatu	871	cape towns	4492
hugh masekela	1670	myanc cosatu	827	water httpstcovgklysjtf	4246
rt spectatorindex	1615	million rand	698	running water	3487
president trumps	1401	rand tell	698	towns water	3379
states president	1390	ex employee	690	town days	3190
states trumps	1376	leon ex	690	days away	3156
foreign ministry	1340	employee city	676	away running	3120
countries remarks	1299	half million	668	town water	2994
south african	1294			day zero	2479
hampm stores	1262	paid half	661	httpstcojtrsehlfl httpstcouretbrh	2310
diplomatic protest	3577	town paid	661	water httpstcojtrsehlfl	2310
trumps shithole	3456	tandontunja tony	656	crisis caused	2226
protest trumps	1139	cosatu cosatugs	625	early march	2222
trumps remarks	917	gwedemantashe mgigaba	414	projections suggest	2222
formally protest	882	president sdumo	405	water run	2222
find daughter	792	blackstlandst gwedemantashe	402	run water	15526
friend tebogo	792	mgigaba cyrilramaphosa	396	town first	13966

tebogo ditlhoiso	792	lunganindumiso mrsekatane	382	recent projections	2221
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Appendix B: Tweets on TCs

Keywords: Truth Commission South Africa

Date	User	Text
1/29/18	@pauldelaney2012	South Africa's social and economic issues are completely irrelevant to it's truth commission 20 odd years ago, fact remains it was a good example of how things could be done as it seemed to work were as ours is a corrupt money racket for solicitors & scam justice groups.
1/29/18	@spot49ty	Today in Black History for January 28th 1. 1997 - At South Africa's Truth Commission, police confessed to the... https://fb.me/1Gbg944RD
1/23/18	@Deebiosi	In South Africa they had the Truth Commission because they explicitly understood that without full and honest truth there would always be residual anger at phony revisionist history and representation. Whilst we aren't talking apartheid the gist is the same
1/7/18	@solleilbrille18	2/...it may take something like South Africa's truth commission (complete confessions in exchange for immunity) too root out all this rot. To be, or not to be.
1/5/18	@solleilbrille18	2/..life so fragile, that a full and complete disclosure, and some punishments are required to reduce likelihood of this ever happening again. South Africa truth commission may be one model. Nuremberg another. The AG and WH chief of staff went to jail for Watergate. This is worse

Keywords: Truth and Reconciliation Commission South Africa

Date	User	Text
1/31/18	@brendan_morley 2	The fundamental reason why a Truth & Reconciliation Commission 'worked' in South Africa is because the conflict ended with a clear winner & clear loser. The NI peace process is based on the myth that there were no winners and losers. A T&RC becomes a means of claiming victory.
1/31/19	@NyashaKMutizwa	That is debatable. However, speaking about Truth and Reconciliation Commission of South Africa, the biggest critique was that its approach focused on encouraging South Africans to "forget the past". Which approach should the @NPRCZim take?
1/30/18	@africasacountry	It is worth remembering that in 1997 political economist #SampieTerreblanche testified in front of South Africa's Truth and Reconciliation Commission on the need for a wealth tax
1/29/18	@aliracelpearl	Students proposed that perhaps truth telling by the oppressors (admitting to their oppressive actions) can serve as a form of historical rewriting and asked how something like South Africa's Truth and Reconciliation Commission would function in the U.S.
1/29/18	@MarquetteGlobal	Join us this Wednesday for Soup with Substance! Mary Burton, former national president of the Black Sash and elected to sit on the Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC), will join us via Skype from South Africa. #MarquetteGlobal #SouthAfrica https://www.facebook.com/events/198388054046773/ ...
1/29/18	@hallaboutafrica	South Africa's South Africa's Truth and Reconciliation Commission that addressed racial divisions is seen as model for the US to heal divide between sexual predators and victims. Suggested by comedian Dave Chappelle, the idea is being seriously considered. http://time.com/5022229/metoo-dave-chappelle-truth-reconciliation/?utm_sourc

		e=time.com&utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=the-brief&utm_content=2018012911am&xid=newsletter-brief ...
1/25/18	@jessehixx	Restorative justice exists outside the confines of the book. It's what drove the Truth and Reconciliation Commission in South Africa. In my peace and conflict studies course I spent a week or two covering non-retributive justice.
1/25/18	@djmer1	We need some sort of "Truth and Reconciliation Commission" but I think not like South Africa but more like a federally-funded Museum clearing house of historical information and understanding. Like our War Memorials.
1/24/18	@Kokoshi	If you have time, treat yourself with some hope & optimism. The Truth & Reconciliation Commission of South Africa turned what was to be another bloodthirsty civil war into a peaceful transition and made prominent Nelson Mandela & Archbishop Desmond Tutu.
1/24/18	@GilWritesHere	Agree, mate. But that happens with deeply emotional and personal issues. While South Africa still has far to go, its immediate post-apartheid Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC) made great strides and could prove a useful model worldwide.
1/18/18	@LincolnTapper	Telling historical truth is extremely painful but that is why South Africa went down the truth and reconciliation commission path. The pain was excruciating but forgiveness didn't mean forgetting. USA Truth & Reconciliation commission, now is the time!
1/18/18	@Shonah25	Time - Ideas @TIME , Dave Chappelle, Ilan Lax proposent des solutions contre le harcèlement : une commission fonctionnant comme la Commission de la Vérité et de la Réconciliation TRC - South Africa's Truth and Reconciliation Commission. Confession - réparation - amnistie. #MeToo

1/17/18	@kasule_ivan	Hello Kesby, how are you? I heard your interview with the South African about the truth and reconciliation commission. I wonder whether you had to fly to south Africa to do that interview.
1/17/18	@RosariumLane	Establishing the Truth and Reconciliation Commission in South Africa became possible AFTER the abolition of apartheid. What I see and hear from within #Myanmar is that the venom of discriminating thoughts and beliefs and acts of hate are still very present. #Rohingya #refoulement
1/17/18	@kris10doberer	Look into the Truth and Reconciliation Commission in South Africa. Desmond Tutu & Nelson Mandela led a whole movement on forgiveness in order to start healing from the apartheid. I think Desmond Tutu has written a book on it!
1/16/18	@rebeccakesby1	Confronting South Africa's brutal past. The emotional journey through the Truth and Reconciliation Commission in the 90's. Judge Sisi Khampepe tells me of the challenges of trying to help the country to heal.
1/15/18	@ListenHistoryFM	New episode from "Witness": South Africa's Truth And Reconciliation Commission
1/15/18	@ahmadianalireza	A great edition of #Witness on BBC World Service - South Africa's Truth And Reconciliation Commission http://www.bbc.co.uk/programmes/w3csvtx2 ... #TRC
1/15/18	@13thgenusa	Look at South Africa's Truth and Reconciliation Commission. https://en.m.wikipedia.org/wiki/Truth_and_Reconciliation_Commission_(South_Africa) ... or the restorative justice work being done in prisons and schools here in the USA. http://restorativejustice.org/#sthash.dM9c9Zck.dpbs ...
1/15/18	@bostonfilmvideo	America's racist past continues to corrupt our collective mind. A national conversation on the impact of slavery is long overdue. Like South Africa after the fall of apartheid, this country needs a 'truth and reconciliation' commission'.

1/15/18	@AdamRogers2030	<p>Could a #SouthAfrica -style "Truth and Reconciliation Commission" bring hope to #Myanmar and its relationship with the #Rohingya / #RohingyaCrisis ?</p> <p>Analysis from @Reuters : http://news.trust.org/item/20180111140701-kdsIx/ ...</p>
1/11/18	@bbbozzz	<p>Megan, this reminds me of what Nelson Mandela, Desmond Tutu, and others did with the Truth and Reconciliation Commission in South Africa. It's an example of Restorative Justice in action. You have that same wisdom Mandela and Tutu had.</p> <p>https://en.m.wikipedia.org/wiki/Restorative_justice ...</p>
1/10/18	@Isaac_Moselane	<p>Pastor Bushiri is the biggest scam in South Africa since Mandela announced that we will have a Truth and Reconciliation Commission instead of a full scale prosecution.</p>
1/9/18	@grasshoppr93	<p>I second that! You also educated me--I didn't know about the "Truth & Reconciliation Commission" in South Africa, and now I do--so thank you for that as well!</p>
1/9/18	@thikalbrad	<p>@shahid_siddiqui @sagarikaghose Prior to South Africa's 1st free elections, de Klerk granted clemency to 4,000 members of the South African police&security services. But after winning those elections, ANC overturned de Klerk's action&created Truth and Reconciliation Commission.</p>
1/9/18	@KervaalAE	<p>I n my opinion the greatest thing Nelson Mandela ever did was not becoming the first black president of South Africa. Instead it was forming the "Truth and Reconciliation Commission." Mandela realised that forgiveness and peace was more important than punishment and justice. ½</p> <p>How can you heal a broken country with punishment and justice? Is punishment really anything more than revenge? Mandela saw past punishing the oppressors. He saw a future where South Africa stood united and realised that he needed to build a path of forgiveness to get there. 2/2</p>

1/6/18	@Real AJHobson	<p>I never understood the reluctance for NI to follow South Africa and have it's own Truth and Reconciliation commission.</p> <p>Running never ending commissions and then trials isn't justice or closure.</p> <p>It keeps the sores open, it feeds that mindset that wants to perpetuate hate.</p>
1/5/18	@realmissbeeswax	<p>An important part of the process that happened in South Africa is contained in the name of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission.</p> <p>I fear we will never get to the one without the other.</p>
1/4/18	@AlufKwabenaBey	<p>One of the duties of South Africa's post-apartheid Truth and Reconciliation Commission, besides investigating... https://fb.me/uhSpuUn7</p>
1/2/18	@KenyaBradshaw	<p>I really wish Memphis city leadership instead of signs and backwards parades would look at the work of South Africa and undertake a Truth & Reconciliation commission in Memphis & then create a plan on how it will remedy inequities.</p> <p>That would truly be an honor to Dr. King & MLK50</p>
1/2/18	@yunglevain	<p>Chappelle's CK masturbating bit was mostly bad but I thought the part where he talked about Hollywood needing a truth and reconciliation commission like post-apartheid South Africa was interesting</p>
1/2/18	@DavidSLewis83	<p>We should have a Truth and Reconciliation Commission, similar to South Africa's.</p> <p>Until everyone understands everyone's role in today's compartmentalized, unequal society, it will be difficult to convince voters to reach for true change, equality.</p>
1/1/18	@tatenda101983	<p>To move on and get closure , I think we must have a truth and reconciliation commission like in south africa and also take a leaf from the way Rwanda handled it's own dark history</p>

Keywords: commission verité maroc

Date	User	Text
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1/27/18	@AwadTaoufik1	La vérité finit toujours par éclater! Et Pas un mot dans le Monde Afrique sur l'élection triomphale du Maroc dans la Commission dédiée à Alger depuis 22 ans! Vous avez dit bizarre?
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Keywords: Instance équité et réconciliation

Date	User	Text
1/13/18	@MarocAvignon	On partage avec vous l'article intitulé "Instance équité et réconciliation, treize ans après !". Ecrit par notre...
1/13/18	@moutaouakil_m	Instance équité et réconciliation, treize ans après... Courrier de l'Atlas http://www.lecourrierdelatlas.com/instance-equite-et-reconciliation-treize-ans-apres--10235#.WlpUNUqqmZk.twitter ...
1/11/18	@Un_Rif	Replying to @SBKHR @YasmineFrgsn and 2 others les grosses parts d ombree de 58-59 resteront : les exactions des FAR (viol d enfant, vols etc) meme l instance Equite èt réconciliation a fait du boulot il en reste Bcp Et la marginalisation qui suivra.

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