

I

The Legitimacy Problem in Arab Politics

Without legitimacy, argued Max Weber, a ruler, regime, or governmental system is hard-pressed to attain the conflict-management capability essential for long-run stability and good government. While the stability of an order may be maintained for a time through fear or expediency or custom, the optimal or most harmonious relationship between the ruler and the ruled is that in which the ruled accept the rightness of the ruler's superior power.¹ Contemporary scholars agree. As David Easton puts it:

The inculcation of a sense of legitimacy is probably the single most effective device for regulating the flow of diffuse support in favor both of the authorities and of the regime. A member may be willing to obey the authorities and conform to the requirements of the regime for many different reasons. But the most stable support will derive from the conviction on the part of the member that it is right and proper for him to accept and obey the authorities and to abide by the requirements of the regime. It reflects the fact that in some vague or explicit way he sees these objects as conforming to his own moral principles, his own sense of what is right and proper in the political sphere. The strength of support implicit in this attitude derives from the fact that it is not contingent on specific inducements or rewards of any kind, except in the very long run.²

Ted Gurr, after identifying a number of common synonyms or near-synonyms for legitimacy such as "political community," "political myth," "support," "authoritativeness," and "system affect," proposes that regimes are legitimate "to the extent that their citizens regard

1. Max Weber, *The Theory of Social and Economic Organization* (translated by A. M. Henderson and Talcott Parsons; edited with an introduction by Talcott Parsons) (New York: Oxford University Press, 1947), pp. 124-26, Reinhard Bendix, *Max Weber* (New York: Doubleday, 1960), pp. 294-95.

2. David Easton, *A Systems Analysis of Political Life* (New York: Wiley, 1965), p. 270.

them as proper and deserving of support."³ It is the extent to which leadership and regimes are perceived by elites and masses as congruent and compatible with the society's fundamental myths—those "value-impregnated beliefs" (as Robert MacIver puts it) that hold society together.⁴ The governmental system and leadership that is genuinely national, that partakes of the nation's history, that acts in accordance with the society's values, and that protects its broadest concerns is likely to be regarded as legitimate, even though particular decisions and leaders may be unpopular or unwise. A ruler, regime, or governmental process (procedures, arrangements for collective choice) that is not widely perceived as clothed in legitimacy is not able to function authoritatively.

The central problem of government in the Arab world today is political legitimacy. The shortage of this indispensable political resource largely accounts for the volatile nature of Arab politics and the autocratic, unstable character of all the present Arab governments. If one were called upon to describe the contemporary style of politics in the Arab world—a region that stretches from Morocco to Kuwait, organized into eighteen sovereign states (excluding Mauritania and Somalia, which recently joined the Arab League) embracing some 125 million people—the adjectives that immediately spring to mind include mercurial, hyperbolic, irrational, mysterious, uncertain, even dangerous. Arab politics today are not just unstable, although instability remains a prominent feature, they are also unpredictable to participants and observers alike. Fed by rumor, misinformation, and lack of information, the Arab political process is cloaked in obscurity and Arab politicians are beset by insecurity and fear of the unknown. If their behavior appears at times quixotic or even paranoid, the irrationality lies less within themselves than in their situation. Whether in power or in the opposition, Arab politicians must operate in a political environment in which the legitimacy of rulers, regimes, and the institutions of the states themselves is sporadic and, at best, scarce. Under these conditions seemingly irrational behavior, such as assassinations, coups d'état, and official repression, may in fact derive from rational calculations. The consequences of such behavior, which itself stems from the low legitimacy accorded to political processes and institutions, contribute further to the prevailing popular cynicism about politics. These consequences, so dysfunctional for political development by almost any definition, are all the more damaging

3. Ted Robert Gurr, *Why Men Rebel* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1970), pp. 103-05.

4. Robert M. MacIver, *The Web of Government* (New York: Macmillan, 1917), pp. 4-5.

when juxtaposed against the revolutionary and nationalist values that are today so widely and intensely held by the Arab people. These values include liberation of the entire national homeland by regaining Palestine and throwing off indirect forms of external influence; fulfillment of Arab national identity through integration, if not fusion, of the numerous sovereignties; and the establishment of democratic political structures through which social justice and equality can be achieved. Such are the staples of virtually all political platforms in the Arab states, regardless of regime orientation; and such appeals have amply proved their political salience from one end of the Arab world to the other, as evidenced by the wave of independence and revolutionary movement throughout the region since World War I. So widespread are these appeals that every Arab politician of consequence has felt compelled to endorse and exploit them; and today, as we shall see, even the ideologically conservative monarchies have become fervent advocates of Arabism, democracy, and social justice. But such vast, if not utopian, ideals, held by so many with almost sacred fervor, contrast strikingly with the grim realities of political life. This incongruence cannot but complicate the task of building a legitimate order. Indeed, one observes from conversations with politicians and government officials across the Arab world a sense of frustration. They find themselves caught between ideology and political-administrative realities. They discover apathy, indifference, and corruption within their own bureaucracies and among the constituencies to be served. One also observes a widespread negative attitude, even fear, toward government among ordinary people. Even census taking in countries such as Sa'udi Arabia, Yemen, the United Arab Emirates, and, of course, Lebanon is regarded with suspicion. Such attitudes cannot be satisfactorily explained simply as the superstitions of "traditional" people but rather appear to be rationally derived from unhappy prior experience with "the authorities."

STRUCTURE OF THE ARAB LEGITIMACY PROBLEM

To analyze the Arab legitimacy problem most fruitfully, we must look beyond explanations rooted in the alleged uniqueness of the area itself. While it is easy to demonstrate the uniqueness of Arab culture, it is fallacious to assume that this uniqueness decisively shapes the political behavior of Arabs. Instead, we must seek our explanation in terms of universally applicable categories of analysis. Apart from the well-known objections to an area-oriented approach on general empirical grounds, an additional reason for looking to general theory is

the dubious character of existing reductionist concepts of the Arab or Islamic mind, personality, and national character.

The legitimacy problem in the Arab world is basically the same as that in most newly independent, rapidly modernizing states. In essence, it results from the lack of what Dankwart Rustow has designated as the three prerequisites for political modernity: authority, identity, and equality.⁵ The legitimate order requires a distinct sense of corporate selfhood: the people within a territory must feel a sense of political community which does not conflict with other subnational or supra-national communal identifications. If distinct communal solidarity may be understood as the necessary horizontal axis for the legitimate political order, there must as well be a strong, authoritative vertical linkage between the governors and the governed. Without authoritative political structures endowed with "rightness" and efficacy, political life is certain to be violent and unpredictable.

Equality, the third prerequisite for political legitimacy, is specifically a product of the modern age, which in the Arab world may be dated from the Napoleonic invasion of Egypt in 1798. Certainly the nationalist stirrings in various parts of the Arab world, which began in the late nineteenth century and came to fruition in the post-World War I period, have been increasingly infused with liberal and radical ideology. The ideas of freedom, democracy, and socialism are today inextricable criteria for legitimate political order in the Arab world, as in most of the Third World, and are, unfortunately, far from being achieved. This singular failing, however, does not vitiate the importance of equality as a functional prerequisite for legitimacy in Arab politics; indeed, I shall argue that it stands as the single greatest impediment (though not the only one) to the development of political legitimacy in the Arab world.

It is now virtually a truism that the process of modernization, or social mobilization as Karl Deutsch has called it, has profound effects on the politics of the new states, effects that are both functional and dysfunctional for building political legitimacy.⁶ The social mobilization "package," which includes increasing urbanization, literacy, education, media exposure, and wealth, appears, on the one hand, to enhance the possibilities of developing a civic, liberal political order inasmuch as it broadens people's identifications and affiliations, integrates their

5. Dankwart A. Rustow, *A World of Nations: Problems of Political Modernization* (Washington, D.C.: Brookings Institution, 1967), esp. chaps. 2 and 3.

6. Karl W. Deutsch, "Social Mobilization and Political Development," *American Political Science Review*, 55:3 (September 1961), pp. 493-514, esp. pp. 498-502.

socioeconomic behavior, and standardizes to some extent their cultural norms. It also, in theory, enlarges the capabilities of government and administration. On the other hand, social mobilization is disruptive of traditional political relationships: the newly mobilized, politicized masses do not find old patterns of identity and authority relevant, and the process of developing new ones is rarely peaceful and sometimes revolutionary. Furthermore, rapid social mobilization certainly accentuates the importance of equality as a prerequisite norm for political legitimacy. The effects of social mobilization are discussed in chapter 6.

SPECIFIC FEATURES OF THE ARAB LEGITIMACY PROBLEM

The politics of the Arab states can and should be analyzed in terms of the foregoing general framework, which is equally applicable to all modernizing politics. But there are several features of the Arab situation that require special attention for a full understanding of the Arab legitimacy problem. Indeed, to approach the legitimacy problem of any particular Arab state without reference to conditions and issues common and salient to all Arabs, or to what most Arabs refer to as the Arab nation, would result in a monochromatic, two-dimensional analysis. To put the matter in a slightly different way, Arab politicians and Arab political behavior are evaluated not solely according to internal, intrastate criteria. It is impossible to make an adequate diagnosis of the legitimacy of a particular Arab political system, regime, leader, or politician without reference to factors external to the Arab world. External sources of legitimacy, as we shall see in the comparative case studies below, are of two types: The first is the influence, defined largely in terms of the classical instruments of power, such as threat, coercion, promise, and reward, from contiguous or neighboring regimes and movements. For example, Syria or Egypt will "interfere" in the affairs of a neighboring Arab country by trying to enhance or reduce the legitimacy of a given politician or regime. The second type of external factor is more broadly identified as a set of evaluative standards that the noted Lebanese writer Clovis Maksoud has called all-Arab core concerns. The legitimacy of given leaders in a given state is determined to an important extent by their fidelity to these core concerns. At the present time, as I have indicated, Palestine is the foremost all-Arab core concern, although not the only one.

The fact that the Arab world in the late 1970s is divided into eighteen sovereign jurisdictions plus the Palestinian community enormously complicates the problem of developing two of the prerequisites of legitimacy—national identity and authority. National identity in the

Arab *umma* is at best multidimensional, at worst mired in irreconcilable contradictions. Legitimate authority is hard to develop within state structures whose boundaries are inherently incompatible with those of the nation. To make matters worse, the state interests of particular regimes are often incompatible with one another, so that conflict of varying degrees of severity often characterizes the relations between Arab states instead of the cooperation and harmony so obviously in the "national interest." One of the most perplexing features of contemporary Arab politics is the simultaneous growth of integrative cross-national behavior—as indexed by the proliferation of functional organizations and by flows of trade, finance, development projects, tourists, elites, and leaders—and the persistence of intrastate tensions, which have sometimes escalated into sabotage and armed violence, as in disputes between Syria and Jordan, Syria and Iraq, Egypt and Saudi Arabia, Saudi Arabia and the People's Democratic Republic of Yemen (PDRY, "south" Yemen), the PDRY and the Yemen Arab Republic (YAR, "north" Yemen), Libya and Morocco, and Algeria and Morocco—to take the most prominent examples from the mid-1960s through the mid-1970s. In recent years, particularly since the decline of Nasserism in the mid-1960s, some writers on Arab affairs have argued that the pan-Arab urge, never very successful, is now on the wane.⁷ The failure of the highly touted unification or federation efforts by Egypt and Syria in the late 1950s and by Egypt, Syria, the Sudan, and Libya in the early 1970s would seem to support such a conclusion. But the fact that such efforts persist is surely as significant, if not more so, as the fact that they have thus far failed; and the fact that organizations with pan-Arab commitments such as the Ba'th party and the Palestinian national movement are now quite institutionalized without having forsaken their goal of all-Arab solidarity also suggests that pan-Arab perspectives have not lost their salience. Arab nationalism remains a formidable legitimizing resource for kings and presidents alike, and the considerable potential power of a revolutionary like George Habash derives in no small measure from his impeccable Arab nationalist credentials.

Given the fact that sovereign power in the Arab world today is distributed among several states, it is necessary to analyze the legitimacy problem of each within its own territorial context, but it would be a mistake not to recognize the importance of the pan-Arab environ-

7. For an interesting discussion of this theory, see Richard H. Pfaff, "The Function of Arab Nationalism," *Comparative Politics*, 2:2 (January 1970), pp. 147-68.

ment in both its power and moral dimensions for intrastate legitimacy. I attempt to give due consideration to this factor in the comparative case studies below. In doing so I also attempt to recognize that the salience of all-Arab concerns for political legitimacy varies within the Arab world.

LEGITIMACY AND CHANGE: THREE PERSPECTIVES

I have suggested that the problem of community and conflict in the Arab world today arises from a legitimacy shortage and that this shortage in turn is the result of the profound transformation occurring throughout Arab society and culture. As indicated above, scholars are less certain than they once were about the nature of modernization, particularly its political ramifications. One can discern three theoretical approaches that help reveal the implications of social change for building legitimacy. Broadly, each suggests a different range of possibilities for a legitimate political order. The "transformationist" model envisages the possibility, indeed to some the inevitability, of the complete displacement of traditional by rational sociopolitical systems through the cataclysm of revolution that in turn is induced by contradictions in the changing social structure. The Arab world political counterparts are several new republics with ideologies dedicated to a thoroughgoing social revolution surpassing in scope simple nationalist assimilation. The "mosaic" model emphasizes the persistence of primordial and parochial loyalties even during rapid modernization, and in some conditions even predicts their strengthening. The implication of this model for building legitimacy is that reconciliation, bargaining, and conflict management procedures are the only viable course short of brutal, forced assimilation for achieving community. Finally, the social mobilization model conceives of political outcomes, including ultimately legitimacy, as the product of a constellation of not necessarily harmonious social forces interacting with a given political culture. In its liberal version, the social mobilization model holds out the possibility of modernization giving rise to an educated, tolerant "civic" polity. In another version it is seen giving rise to efficient despotism or anarchy. I will discuss each of the three models briefly.

The transformationist model conceives of a fundamental system change from tradition to rationality through the medium of revolution. The revolution is a watershed that separates the new rational order from its traditional roots. Hisham Sharabi, discussing the Arab world, draws the distinction clearly: "Revolutionary leadership is 'rational,' choosing specific means to achieve specific ends, whereas patriarchal

leadership is 'traditional,' accepting inherited values and goals and employing customary means to achieve them."⁹ Sharabi, observing the coups d'état in the Arab world between 1949 and 1963, sees the transition process as relatively sudden and discontinuous through the traumatic event of revolution.¹⁰ Power has to be seized; it is possible for men to transform a polity from the traditional to the rational by making a revolution; there is "a revolutionary wave" that is challenging both the remaining traditional states and the "intermediate" states.¹¹ It is noteworthy that in his recent writings Sharabi is consistent in maintaining his radical optimism, that is, his belief in the possibility of men creating a rational political order, despite the receding of the revolutionary wave in the Arab world after 1967 and the weakening of the Palestinian national movement in Jordan 1970-71 and Lebanon in 1976. Optimism is still possible because the Marxist liberationist position insists that Arab society, with its medieval disabilities, contains fundamental destabilizing contradictions which, when triggered, will generate the mass revolutionary consciousness that has been missing thus far.¹² Sharabi's analysis, which is partially correct, implies that once the revolution has been triggered a new and rational legitimacy formula will emerge, one that is deeply rooted and congruent with the new revolutionary worker and peasant class consciousness. The indisputably valid part of this analysis is the clarity with which it distinguishes traditional orientations from revolutionary ideologies and the significance it bestows on the revolutionary event in the transformation of political systems. Certainly once the revolution has occurred, there must be some change in the legitimacy formula. Less certain is whether revolutionary legitimacy formulas can sweep away traditional values and become deeply rooted themselves, that is, whether there can be a successful resolution of the revolution.

Similarly, Manfred Halpern invokes the metaphor of "the shattering of the glass" to depict the impact of secular modernism on traditional Islamic society.¹³ Again, the image is one of the complete displacement of a system of balanced traditional beliefs and certainties by a disruptive force that, initially at least, offers no coherent system to replace it. One

9. Hisham B. Sharabi, *Nationalism and Revolution in the Arab World* (Princeton: Van Nostrand, 1966), p. 53.

10. *Ibid.*, chap. 4.

11. *Ibid.*, pp. 72-79.

12. Hisham B. Sharabi, "Liberation or Settlement: The Dialectics of Palestinian Struggle," *Journal of Palestine Studies*, 3:2 (Winter 1973), pp. 33-48.

13. Manfred Halpern, *The Politics of Social Change in the Middle East and North Africa* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1963), chap. 2.

does not need to accept Halpern's assertion that a new professional middle class is building a new, pragmatic science- and technology-based legitimacy formula to appreciate his insight into the profundity of the social changes that are taking place. Nor does one have to share Sharabi's radical optimism to benefit from his emphasis on the importance of the political sector in the process of change and of the very sharp contradictions in belief systems manifest in that sector.

The mosaic model, which has received renewed scholarly attention, questions the assumption underlying the transformationist and social mobilization models, namely that major sociopolitical development is likely or necessary. It questions even the possibility of revolution. The mosaic model asserts the persistence of traditional particularist identifications even under conditions of modernization or political revolution. It stresses the permanence of parochial and corporatist orientations. Among the most prominent social scientists to stress the deep-rootedness of "primordial" identifications, ethnic, religious, racial, and linguistic, is Clifford Geertz who, in a well-known article, indicated their possibly explosive salience for political developments in the new states.¹⁴ Milton Esman asserts that "ethnic, racial, and religious solidarities are likely to touch deeper emotional levels" than other cleavages, implying that it cannot be easy for modernizing regimes to replace them with new loyalties.¹⁵ Ronald Rogowski and Lois Wasserspring have challenged the logic of the Weberian secularization model (as expounded by Marion Levy).¹⁶ That model, they suggest, asserts that with specialization, division of labor, and greater interaction of subsystems a society inevitably becomes more homogeneous, so that particularist, corporate subgroups lose their cohesion and distinctiveness. But they go on to argue that the assumption that the greater the social interaction, the greater the cognitive problem of distinguishing individuals and of placing them in society is erroneous, at least for societies that tend to be corporatist rather than individualist, that is, societies in which there are substantial identifiable majorities or stigmatized groups.

The implications for developing legitimacy that flow from the mosaic image are somber. Because ethnicity is so deep-rooted, the possibilities

13. Clifford Geertz, "The Integrative Revolution: Primordial Sentiments and Civil Politics in the New States," in Clifford Geertz (ed.), *Old Societies and New States* (New York: Free Press of Glencoe, 1963), pp. 105-57.

14. Milton Esman, "The Management of Communal Conflict," *Public Affairs* 21:1 (Winter 1973), pp. 49-78, 54.

15. Ronald Rogowski and Lois Wasserspring, "Legitimacy and Stability in Corporatist Societies," paper delivered at the 1969 annual meeting of the American Political Science Association, pp. 1-7.

for the integration of new polities along modern lines, let alone revolutionary transformation, are remote; but insofar as assimilative, modernizing ideologies have an irreversible momentum of their own, the prospects for continuous conflict—a permanent legitimacy crisis—are far from negligible. The anthropologist M. G. Smith has developed a model of the plural society, characterized by deeply divided subcultures whose cohesion can only be maintained by a coercive elite.¹⁶ Walker Connor, in a sharp attack on the assimilationist assumption in conventional models of nation-building, finds that only 10 percent of the world's states are ethnically homogeneous while in some 30 percent the largest ethnic group fails to account for half the total population. "These are significant figures if it is also true, as he asserts, that 'the prime cause of political disunity is the absence of a single psychological focus shared by all segments of the population.'" ¹⁷ Alvin Rabushka and Kenneth Shepsle propose a model of the essential instability of multicentric polities, owing to a tendency toward "the politics of outbidding."¹⁸ On the empirical level, in his cross-national study of civil strife in 119 polities, Ted Robert Gurr found that indicators of "group discrimination" and "political separatism" were "consistently and positively related to levels of civil violence."¹⁹ Similarly, Douglas Hibbs, in his analysis of data from Charles Taylor's and my *World Handbook of Political and Social Indicators*, discovered a "powerful interactive impact manifested by the conjunction of social mobilization and ethnolinguistic fractionalization . . . (which provides striking evidence for theories arguing that a mobilized and differentiated population is a particularly explosive combination)."²⁰ Then of course there are the numerous contemporary intrastate conflicts that strikingly illustrate

16. M. G. Smith, "Social and Cultural Pluralism," in M. G. Smith, *The Plural Society in the British West Indies* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1965), pp. 75-91. See also Leo Kuper, "Sociology: Some Aspects of Urban Plural Societies," in R. A. Lystad (ed.), *The African World: A Survey of Social Research* (London: Pall Mall Press, 1965), pp. 107-30; and Leo Kuper, "Plural Societies: Perspectives and Problems," in Leo Kuper and M. G. Smith (eds.), *Pluralism in Africa* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1969), pp. 7-26.

17. Walker Connor, "Nation Building or Nation Destroying?" *World Politics*, 24:3 (April 1972), pp. 319-55, 326, 353.

18. Alvin Rabushka and Kenneth Shepsle, *Politics in Plural Societies* (Columbus, Ohio: Charles E. Merrill, 1972).

19. Ted Gurr, with Charles Ruttensberg, *The Conditions of Civil Violence: First Test of a Causal Model*, Princeton University Center of International Studies, 1967, p. 108. See also Gurr, *Why Men Rebel*, chap. 1 and Appendix.

20. Douglas A. Hibbs, Jr., *Mass Political Violence: A Cross-National Causal Analysis* (New York: Wiley, 1973), pp. 76-78. Data are drawn largely from Charles L. Taylor and Michael G. Hudson et al., *World Handbook of Political and Social Indicators*, Second Edition (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1972).

the salience of ethnic identifications and conflict: Northern Ireland, Pakistan, Nigeria, Sri Lanka, Philippines, Ruanda-Urundi, and Ethiopia, to name only a few of the most prominent.

What of the applicability of the mosaic model to the Arab world? This examination of Arab political culture will make clear that it is permeated with primordial sentiments and honeycombed with stigmatized groups—religious, ethnolinguistic, racial, tribal, and class; it thus tends toward the corporatist or segmented rather than the individualist type. At least half of the Arab countries exhibit politically salient (often conflict-ridden) divisions: Morocco, Sudan, Iraq, Syria, Lebanon, Jordan, the two Yemens, Oman, and Bahrain.²¹ In Arab society, then, "particularism can survive modernization."²² The same is true of the non-Arab Middle Eastern states of Cyprus and Iran. The problems thus posed for developing political system legitimacy are serious indeed, especially in polities that have recently undergone modernizing coups or revolutions. Even under the comparatively optimistic transformationist and social mobilization models, it is not easy for elites to compose a strong legitimacy formula, but at least they can draw some solace from theories that predict the acceptance of universal symbols and norms sooner or later. The implantation of common revered loyalties and "rules of the game" can be expected. But if the political culture remains tenaciously parochial and segmented despite modernization (and the political ferment it generates)—if, indeed, modernization may in some cases actually exacerbate such separatist tendencies—then the problem of developing a political system legitimacy formula is not likely to solve itself as modernization continues; instead the nature of the problem itself is changed. In such cases, strategies of legitimacy based on transformationist or social mobilization models should be rejected, some scholars have argued, in favor of strategies of accommodation. For example, Iliya Harik asserts that "the new states of the Middle East are in need of accommodating particularistic tendencies and by constructive policy channeling them in the service of the civic order with patience and endurance."²³

Perhaps the most satisfactory conception of the third model of change, the social mobilization model, is found in the work of Karl Deutsch.²⁴ His work, like that of other major development theorists such as Matten Levy, David Apter, and Gabriel Almond, falls within

21. Rogowski and Wasserspring, op. cit., p. 4.

22. Iliya Harik, "The Ethnic Revolution and Political Integration in the Middle East," *International Journal of Middle East Studies*, 3:3 (July 1972), pp. 303-23, 312.

23. Deutsch, op. cit. See also his classic *Nationalism and Social Communication* (New York: Wiley, 1953).

the Weberian tradition. This tradition (though not Weber himself) conceives of the transition from traditional to rational-legal societies through the process of secularization. In Deutsch's well-known formulation, social mobilization is posited as an interrelated set of growth processes including economic development, mass media exposure, interpersonal communications, urbanization, and the expansion of literacy and education. The implications of social mobilization for political system legitimacy are profound, especially in the Arab world where the growth rates are so high; but they do not all pull in the same direction. There are two areas of impact: the loads-capabilities equation, which relates the political system to the society, and the integration of the political culture itself. Social mobilization expands the politically relevant population by politicizing the masses and by both enlarging and fragmenting the elite. Thus it may create new and contradictory demands on government. The aspects of social mobilization bearing on infrastructure growth (urbanization, industrialization, etc.) may also generate heavier administrative demands on the decision-making apparatus and bureaucracy. On the other hand, the government and other structures of the political system may themselves grow, and their capabilities for institutionalizing participation, initiating development, and controlling subversion -- in short, for coping with modernity -- may be more than adequate to meet the new demands. Unfortunately, it is not easy to discern empirically whether the net effect is positive or negative in any particular case. Similarly, while the growth of communications networks associated with social mobilization may solidify the communal identity of groups having some primordial characteristics in common, such as language, race, ethnicity, or religion, it may actually divide societies in which there are several such semidistinct groupings: instead of all enhancing their identifications to the society bounded by the state, they may develop subnational or supranational affinities that weaken the state's legitimacy formula. The effects of social mobilization upon system legitimacy, therefore, are complex and even possibly contradictory, as Deutsch has always recognized. But his conceptualization of the process illuminates the possibilities more clearly perhaps than any other. It certainly illuminates the obstacles to legitimacy in fast mobilizing, culturally heterogeneous societies.

The psychological dimension of social mobilization also has important implications for the legitimacy problem. In his pioneering study of social change in the Middle East, Daniel Lerner suggests that empathy -- the quality of an individual being able to imagine himself in somebody else's role -- is one consequence of exposure to modernity

(or social mobilization).²⁴ Empathy may ease the transition from tradition to modernity; it may promote the tolerance and ability to compromise, to associate together on instrumental and rational grounds instead of through primordial affinities. The implication is that new bases for community -- a new legitimacy formula -- are not only possible but predictable as a function of the rate of social mobilization.

But there is also a pessimistic side to this psychological coin. In modern society the social atomization of the individual produces apathy and alienation. These characteristics, Kornhauser argues, in turn facilitate the manipulation of the individual by the state or organized political movements.²⁵ His observations about mass society are based on the highly modernized societies of the West, and even the most modernized areas of the Arab world do not reach the same levels of industrialization or social differentiation. But they are relevant nonetheless. Even partial modernization generates severe pressures on the medieval mosaic of primordial affiliations that has always held Arab society together. And Arab society (perhaps because it is only partially modernized) lacks the web of secondary associations and cross-cutting group memberships of Western society so well celebrated by Tocqueville. Thus when old solidarities are broken down, Arab society probably lacks the "cushion" of secondary associations that in the West serve to some extent to counteract alienation. The implications for legitimacy are again ambivalent. On the one hand, mass alienation may be considered functional for establishing a new and rational legitimacy formula because it uproots people from old affiliations and renders them manipulatable, although this is not how Arab revolutionaries would describe the development of mass revolutionary consciousness. On the other hand, if alienation is a relatively permanent condition in a long period of social change, it may make the establishment of any permanent and active loyalties very difficult for the new regime as well as the old. An apathetic and perhaps unreliable population is an obstacle to the achievement of revolutionary objectives, and the nonachievement of objectives in turn is a new drain upon legitimacy.²⁶

Granting that each of the three perspectives contains valuable insights, is it possible to ascertain which is the most valid for this

24. Daniel Lerner, *The Passing of Traditional Society* (Glencoe: Free Press, 1956), pp. 17-18.

25. William Kornhauser, *The Politics of Mass Society* (Chicago: Free Press, 1957), esp. chaps. 4, 7, and 8.

26. Cf. Halim Barakat, "Al-Ightibah wal-thawra" (Alienation and Revolution), *Manooj* (Beirut), 5 (1969).

inquiry? The radical ideological transformation in Arab politics is a fact of undeniable importance, notwithstanding the equally obvious fact that the Arab revolutions thus far have accomplished far less than they were intended to. Customary authority has sharply declined in importance at the national level in over half the countries of the area and is beginning to give way at the local level as well. In the Arab political vocabulary modern ideological symbols of liberation, democracy, and socialism are crowding out the parochial kinship and religious symbols of an earlier era as the basis for the legitimate political order. Ever so gradually centers of power are evolving that rest upon the egalitarian concerns not of a "new middle class" but of the great mass of urban and rural laboring people, as the established revolutionary movements seek to create a mass base to justify their rule. Imperfect as they may appear when judged against classical socialist standards, the revolutionary systems in Syria and Iraq, Algeria, Tunisia, the PDRY, and even post-Nasir Egypt, to mention the most notable cases, are indeed radical by comparison with the regimes that preceded them. Nevertheless, the radical optimism of the late 1950s and early 1960s that detected or anticipated a "shattering of the glass" and the creation of a coherent new basis for legitimacy on "modern" grounds was clearly mistaken. New legitimacy norms are not to be instantly and comprehensively implanted, and old values and attachments, whose incompatibility with modernity was exaggerated by the revolutionaries, are not going to be eradicated quickly.

But to admit that the validity of the transformationist model is only partial is not to concede superior validity to the mosaic model, for it too is defective. The chief merit of the mosaic perspective is its emphasis on the persistence of traditional solidarity patterns, with its obvious negative implications for radical sociopolitical engineering. But as the basis for a workable strategy for legitimacy, the mosaic model presents difficulties. On balance, there is little evidence to suggest that the Arab states are undergoing an "ethnic revolution." It is true that important ethnoreligious minorities, such as the Kurds, Sudanese blacks, and Lebanese Catholics, have been politicized perhaps to an even greater degree by social mobilization than the majority populations and have tried, with important Western help, to assert or defend their political independence. It is also true that other primordial groupings, such as the North African Berbers and the Alawite and Shiite Muslims of the eastern Arab world, exhibit the potential for political autonomy. But the spread of Arab identity and the imperatives to functional coordination arising out of technological and economic development suggest that Balkanization of the present Arab sov-

ignities and the larger Arab community, notwithstanding their own precarious and unconsolidated legitimacy, is not a deep-running trend. Even the Lebanese civil war has been a manifestation of sociopolitical rather than primordial-parochial cleavages. The image of an Arab Middle East dominated by particularist sectarian or ethnic elites is appealing to some for various reasons, but it is probably not an accurate forecast of the Arab future. The legitimacy of any new fragmentarities certainly would be severely challenged by the radical, secularist, assimilative, nation-building elements in Arab politics, which remain the strongest shapers of Arab goals and world views. Even though much Arab nationalist ideology of the 1950s and 1960s, with its calls for unity and social transformation, must be regarded as romantic and unrealistic, the trend is likely to remain toward assimilation rather than fragmentation, toward fewer and larger states, and toward greater functional coordination.

Is the social mobilization model, then, the most valid of the three? I feel that it is, in that it takes better account of the relevant factors. But I do not therefore conclude that the road to legitimacy in Arab politics is either smooth or short. It should be apparent from what I have said about the transformationist and mosaic perspectives that the social mobilization model, at least in its "melting pot" version, is seriously oversimplified. Thus this approach, like the other two, is unable to lead directly to a solution of the Arab legitimacy problem. Although this study ultimately concludes that the principal "cure" for the legitimacy problem is a significant degree of institutionalized participation through parliaments, parties, or equivalent bodies, it is not because social mobilization is producing bodies politic that are more individualized, liberal, educated, and tolerant, and thus "ready" for democracy. I cannot optimistically accept the old liberal arguments that a certain level of economic and social attainment (which the Arabs today are capable of reaching) are prerequisites for liberal democracy, as Lipset tried to demonstrate in general and Issawi tried to apply to Middle Eastern societies in particular.²⁷ Rather, it is because the political realities of an expanding, more differentiated, more organized, more sophisticated, politically mobilized population will require more representative institutions if a higher degree of political legitimacy is to be achieved. This is not to say, of course, that the requirement will be met, and it is entirely possible that higher degrees of legitimacy will

27. Seymour Martin Lipset, *Political Man* (New York: Doubleday, 1959), chap. 2; Charles Issawi, "Economic and Social Foundations of Democracy in the Middle East," *International Affairs*, 32:1 (1956), pp. 27-42.

not be achieved. The two alternatives — chronic instability or more efficient despotism underpinned by fear and corruption — are equally foreseeable possibilities.

The particular merit of the social mobilization model lies not so much in its ability to predict a particular future as in its explication of the interplay of factors that will determine that future. Social mobilization is changing the structure of Arab politics. The possibility of assimilative nation-building remains real, though it will not occur within a short time; but, as I have indicated, the outcome is the result of the interaction between an expanding, more complex political arena, on the one hand, and the growth of government itself, on the other. These processes have profound implications for the development of government authority and political identity. Given the peculiarities of the Arab nation and the several Arab states and the sharply different levels of social mobilization in different parts of the Arab world and within particular states, it is no simple matter to sort out these implications. Consequently, it is easier to describe and analyze the struggle for legitimacy in different parts of the Arab world than it is to predict whether the Arabs are likely to develop more legitimate political systems in the future. I shall, however, hazard some opinions on this subject in the final chapter.

STRATEGIES FOR BUILDING LEGITIMACY

I have tried to expose the nature of the legitimacy problem in the Arab world in all its gravity and complexity. I turn now to another question: how is legitimacy developed under these difficult conditions? It might be argued that, for some regimes at least, no legitimacy whatever is developed. Indeed, John Waterbury, in an ingenious discussion of corruption in Morocco, goes even further and suggests that the system's stability depends on its pervasive illegitimacy.²⁸ But only the most cynical observers would contend that Arab political systems are totally devoid of legitimacy and thus completely dependent upon raw coercion for such stability as they may possess. Some systems enjoy greater legitimacy than others, and the legitimacy of particular ones fluctuates over time.

Leaders, regimes, and oppositions cope with the problem in various ways, using the instruments of legitimation at their disposal in varying combinations and trying to develop and maintain a reservoir of diffuse support as well as a specific coalition of supporters. What kind

²⁸ John Waterbury, "Endemic and Planned Corruption in a Monarchical Regime," *World Politics*, 25:1 (July 1973), pp. 533-55.

of legitimacy resources can they rely on? Again, Weber's insights are germane. He states that the legitimacy of an order can be established by tradition, by positive affectual, emotional attitudes, by rational belief in its absolute value, or by recognition of its legality. In modern societies, he suggests, "the most usual basis of legitimacy is the belief in *legality*, the readiness to conform with rules which are formally correct and have been imposed by accepted procedure."²⁹ The difficulties confronting Arab politicians are obvious. First, Arab society is no longer traditional in the sense that any significant sectors can be swayed by appeals to custom, status, or superstition. Too much has happened in this century to disrupt customary authority relations and the status of old elites; too much social mobilization has occurred in the last generation for "primitive" superstition or fatalism to remain as reliable bases for rule. But if contemporary Arab society is no longer traditional, it is far from being fully modern; rather it is, in S. N. Eisenstadt's terminology, "post-traditional" — an obscure, ambivalent condition conducive neither to traditional legitimacy nor to rational-legal legitimacy.³⁰

Second, the possibility of legitimacy based on rational belief in absolute values, expressed for example in the acceptance of natural law philosophy in the medieval West, is diminished in the modern Arab world because of the decline of Islamic jurisprudence as a significant factor in the formation of public policy. I am not suggesting that Islam is in decline as a popular religion; indeed, its importance as a solidarity bond and a component of Arabism remains undiminished. But the growing irrelevance of Islamic standards and criteria in the issues, conflicts, and policy processes of modern Arab politics and the diminishing influence of Islamic authorities in politics reduce the importance of an Islamic variant of Weber's "natural law" as a basis for legitimacy.

Third, as I have hinted, the struggle to develop legitimacy based on legality, which is the core of the Arab legitimacy problem, is only beginning. The norm that there should be "right rules of the game" is almost universally accepted by Arab elites, but the rules themselves in general have not been spelled out, have not remained permanent, and have been only sporadically effective. Given the newness of all the present Arab political systems (including the so-called traditional monarchies), it could hardly be otherwise. In short, Weber's "accepted

²⁹ Weber, *op. cit.*, pp. 130-32, 134.

³⁰ S. N. Eisenstadt, "Post-Traditional Societies and the Continuity and Reconstruction of Tradition," *Daedalus*, 102:1 (Winter 1973), pp. 1-28.

procedures" are still largely absent. Little wonder, then, that what passes for regime support or popularity — transitory legitimacy — is so strongly infused with affect, emotion, and charisma. Little wonder too that it is so sporadic, mercurial, and insubstantial; it lacks solid institutional underpinnings.

I must now examine the instruments and strategies of legitimacy-building that politicians operating under the austere conditions of Arab politics can employ. What structural and cultural resources can they draw upon to generate citizen attitudes that the regime is "proper and deserving of support"?³¹ David Easton has provided a useful threefold classification of legitimacy resources: personal, ideological, and structural. A strong personal leader may generate legitimacy for a regime or an entire system. The regime or opposition movement that succeeds in identifying itself with a highly salient ideological program may win positive support. Certainly in the Arab world those leaders who successfully associate themselves with the fulfillment of abstract but highly valued goals pertaining to sacred obligations, corporate identity, or deeply valued principles are likely to last longer and perform better than those who can induce compliance only on the basis of fear or expediency. Such leaders may even succeed in generating the scarcest but most enduring kind of legitimacy of all — structural or legal legitimacy, that is, a generalized respect for the rightness of the decision making and adjudicative roles and procedures of the political system itself. I will discuss briefly each of Easton's three types as they constitute the framework of analysis employed in the case studies in chapters 7, 8, and 9.

Personal

In systems "where the behavior and personalities of the occupants of authority role are of dominating importance," suggests Easton, the personal basis of legitimacy may be an important component of the overall legitimacy formula.³² He goes on to suggest that the leader enjoying high personal legitimacy "may violate the norms and prescribed procedures of the regime and . . . ignore its regular structural arrangements." Moreover, "all political leadership, and not the charismatic type alone, if it is effective in winning support at all, carries with it this legitimizing potential; hence the concept of personal legitimacy covers a broader range of leadership phenomena than

31. Easton, *op. cit.*, p. 185.

32. Easton, *op. cit.*, pp. 302-03.

charisma, in Weber's original sense, and includes the latter."³³ The political systems of the Arab world, as we shall see, have certainly assigned a strong role to personal leadership, historically and culturally. Furthermore, Arab leaders in the modern age, operating in systems that are poorly institutionalized and in the throes of ideological change, have had to carry more of the legitimacy burden than they can easily bear. Some, like Nasir and Bourguiba have exerted charisma (valid or spurious) over their followers and have single-handedly bestowed substantial coherence to their systems. Most of the region's numerous other strongmen have lacked comparable magnetism and failed to impart similar coherence, yet they have still accounted for much of whatever system legitimacy exists. One thinks of leaders like Ja'far al-Numayri of the Sudan, Mu'ammār al-Qadhafi of Libya, Hafiz al-Asad of Syria, Abd al-Karim Qassim of Iraq, and Houari Boumediene of Algeria. That even those leaders incapable of casting magical spells over their followers can still perform a legitimizing function is due partly to the vacuum in legitimacy from other sources and partly to the historical-cultural importance assigned to personal leadership. Once again, strong leadership proves to be an unusually important common legitimizing factor in both the traditional and nontraditional regimes.

Personal leadership plays a major legitimizing role, of course, in the Arab monarchies; in fact, in all of them the king, amir, shaykh, or sultan does not merely reign but rules. It should be made clear that I am now speaking of personal, not structural, legitimacy. In traditional Arabian tribal politics we cannot say that "the office makes the man." On the contrary, the leader must demonstrate his personal competence if he is to earn the traditional oath of allegiance. What is perhaps more surprising is the persistence of monolithic personal authority structures in most of the revolutionary republican politics of the region. There is a curious continuity of personalist rule in the most traditional and the most rational systems — from Ibn Khaldun's concept of royal authority to the absolutistic presidential authority of a Nasir or Qadhafi. Since the Arab cases suggest that personal legitimacy is at least as salient in the nontraditional systems as it is in the traditional, it is difficult to accept Moore's opinion that "personal legitimacy" is meaningless outside a traditional framework, even though he concedes that a charismatic leader can contribute

to rational legitimacy by articulating a rational formula.³⁵ Surely the leader's contributions to system legitimacy in Tunisia (and certainly in Egypt) are far more extensive and intensive in themselves than the rational ideologies that they propagate.

Notwithstanding the process through which new and dissonant values are taking root, the deferential orientations that support personalist rule seem to be little diminished. Yet theory would indicate that personalist legitimacy is increasingly vulnerable to erosion as societies modernize and become exposed to norms hostile to absolutism and dictatorship. If this proposition is sound, then—other things being equal—we would expect continued ferment in the monarchical and republican systems prevalent in the region. Such indeed is probably the long-term trend. But at present, personalist leadership is still a formidable legitimacy resource partly because of the absence of countervailing structures and partly because the leaders have been able to embody in themselves some of the diffuse legitimizing values arising out of political culture, most notably nationalism.

Ideological

Ideologies, Easton tells us, are "articulated sets of ideals, ends, and purposes, which help the members of the system to interpret the past, explain the present, and offer a vision for the future. . . . From a manipulative or instrumental point of view they may be interpreted as categories of thought to corral the energies of men; from an expressive point of view we may see them as ideals capable of rousing and inspiring men to action thought to be related to their achievement."³⁶ Ideology bulks large as a legitimacy resource in Arab politics. Indeed, political discourse in the Arab world over the past quarter century has been awash in ideology. If one were to measure frequency of symbols of nationalism, such as Islam, Palestine, democracy, liberation, and social justice, in the public speeches of Arab leaders, it would in all probability dwarf the discussion of policy alternatives, projects, and day-to-day politics; it would almost certainly exceed the attention given to comparably profound issues of identity, authority, and the ultimate good society in the political vocabulary of more settled political systems.³⁶

The psychologically disruptive effects of social mobilization have

35 Clement H. Moore, *Politics in Arab Africa* (Boston: Little, Brown, 1970), p. 94, n. 5.

36 Easton, *op. cit.*, p. 299.

36 For a succinct essay on the language of Arab politics, see Hisham B. Sharabi, *Nationalism and Revolution in the Arab World* (Pittsford: Van Nostrand, 1966), chap. 7.

generated not just an interest but a need for the masses newly interested in politics to identify with valued, meaningful collective goals and politicians who credibly associate themselves with these goals. The socially disruptive effects of social mobilization have created at the same time objective conditions of poverty and inequality among the rural and urban lower classes which render ideologies of socialism, redistribution, and social welfare more salient than they might have been fifty years ago. Furthermore, in the absence of structural legitimacy, ideological legitimacy assumes paramount importance almost by default. Ideology becomes a substitute for institutionalization. Perhaps, however, it serves to buy the necessary time for structural legitimacy to develop.

All the Arab regimes, whether "conservative" or "progressive," exploit ideology assiduously in their pursuit of legitimacy. But in the revolutionary republics it has been magnified into what David Apter calls political religion. To understand political religion it is necessary to extract from Apter's complex treatment of modernization his conceptualization of the consummatory and the instrumental aspects of legitimacy.³⁷ The consummatory aspects of legitimacy are solidarity and identity and the instrumental aspects are concerned with the effectiveness of policy making or political performance evaluated in terms of specified goals. Consummatory legitimizing values flow from Apter's "sacred-collectivity" model of the political system; instrumental ones pertain to his "secular-libertarian" model. Drawing his inspiration from Tolstoy, Apter suggests that through the mechanism of political religion, the political sector can communicate throughout society the symbols which may help satisfy the transcendental needs of individuals. These needs, which he identifies as the necessity of accepting death, establishing an individual personality, and identifying objectives, are doubtless acutely felt by people living through a period of rapid social change. The dilemma of successfully implanting new community values in societies undergoing political upheaval is obvious, and nowhere more so than in the Arab world where the religious character of society is so evident. One strategy for building a viable new mythology is to propagate a mythology that taps the need for the sacred without sacrificing the new requirements of modernity and rationality. Apter suggests that "the sacred may now be employed to develop a system of political legitimacy and to aid in mobilizing the community for secular ends."³⁸ The Arab, revolutionary

37 David E. Apter, *The Politics of Modernization* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1965), p. 266, and chap. 8.

38 *Ibid.*, pp. 30, 268, and 292.

regimes conform in theory to Apter's "mobilization system" type in which values of the sacred collectivity model are predominant to the exclusion of the secular-libertarian. Those that have come close include Iraq, Syria, Libya, the PDRY, and Algeria. Certainly "political religion" performs a central legitimizing function in these systems. It also performs a lesser role in those that have fallen short, which Apter might classify as the "neomercantilist" system—Egypt, Tunisia, the Sudan, and the Yemen Arab Republic. In all these cases the primary values invoked are secular nationalism and modernity, and their effectiveness has been enhanced by historical-cultural orientations and the powerful irritant of Western imperialism. In each system the ruling elite attempts to harmonize (in varying degrees, to be sure) religion and nationalism, kinship group and political movement, the legacy of the past and the promise of the future, the sacred and the secular, and the consummatory and the instrumental.

Political religion, however, is a problem as well as a solution from the point of view of those who favor the development of secular liberal democracies legitimized by law. As Apter puts it, "Can mobilization systems with political religions transform themselves into reconciliation systems, whose commitment is to a liberal framework of law? This is a question of great concern to the West." While such a complete transformation seems unlikely, the possibility exists for the emergence of a mixed neomercantilist system through the ritualization of political religion. Ritualization "would limit the functional consequences of religion without destroying its relation to authority." And, "If a mobilization system should begin to ritualize its leadership and traditionalize its consummatory values, by making them into a new and effective link between novelty and the past, this important alternative system becomes possible."⁴⁰ This process has been evident in the revolutionary regimes and may account in part for the superficial stability which several of them have displayed in recent years. But whether it can lay groundwork for structural legitimacy in the long run is a more doubtful proposition.

Structural

Political structures in themselves are also an important source of legitimacy. To the extent that they are seen to constitute the framework within which "accepted procedures" are carried out, they bestow legal legitimacy upon the system. In the traditional Arab politics, the offices of caliph, sultan, and shaykh generate respect

based upon religion or custom, although such legitimacy is even more strongly affected by the personal reputation of the officeholder. The highly developed bureaucracies of some of the premodern dynastic Arab empires contributed to legitimacy by virtue of their pervasive presence and their control and extractive capabilities.

In trying to assess the impact of structural conditions on legitimacy in the contemporary Arab states, the concept of institutionalization as explicated by Samuel Huntington in his important study of political modernization serves as a guide. "Institutionalization," says Huntington, "is the process by which organizations and procedures acquire value and stability."⁴¹ The more a governmental system or major structures within it are institutionalized, that is, exhibit adaptability, complexity, autonomy, and coherence, the more positively they will contribute to system legitimacy, that is, generate what Easton calls "independent belief in validity of the structure and norms."⁴² Legitimacy is also enhanced by the scope of support accorded to structures; Clement Moore makes a strong case for the importance of this characteristic in his analysis of political development in North Africa.⁴³ The legitimizing constituency becomes larger and more widespread as society modernizes. The enlargement occurs on both the elite and mass levels. It is not easy for a political system to develop a legitimacy formula that will have wide appeal in both the enlarged mass and elite constituencies and also be capable of managing the new conflict cleavages within and between them that accompany the expansion of what Deutsch would call the population available for political participation. The extent to which the present-day Arab regimes can develop structural legitimacy is primarily a function of their ability to develop bureaucratic and party structural capabilities that extend to government and politics from the settled area (the *bilad al-makhlazan*) to the hinterland (the *bilad al-siba*) to perform service as well as extractive functions. Theory suggests that structurally based legitimacy may be the most durable, but of the three categories Easton proposes, this one has been the most difficult for contemporary Arab politics, whether patrimonial or republican, to develop.

Although the structural legitimacy of most of the modern Arab regimes is weak, it is also important to consider the possibility that it is getting stronger. It is easy for observers preoccupied by the feverish, conflict-ridden nature of Arab politics to forget that there has been a

40. Samuel P. Huntington, *Political Order in Changing Societies* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1968), pp. 12-24.

41. Easton, *op. cit.*, p. 287.

42. Moore, *op. cit.*, pp. 91-93.

steady, unspectacular but very important development of a modern judiciary and public administration throughout the region. Unlike the early 1960s, there are today very few places in the Arab world where law and order and a governmental presence do not exist. Political scientists have not explored sufficiently the growth of modern civil and criminal codes alongside or in place of Islamic legal institutions. The considerable growth in the size of civil service and military bureaucracies in nearly all the Arab countries has added new weight to governmental authority. Furthermore, above and beyond the growing control capabilities of government there is also a growing service capability. If it is true that the growing, socially mobilized populations of the Arab world tend increasingly to judge politicians and evaluate the legitimacy of regimes by how well they perform, then it is important to consider policy formation and implementation in assessing overall legitimacy. Unfortunately, too little attention has been paid to policy outcomes, and so it is difficult to make comprehensive assessments of this complex subject.

For all the growth of bureaucratic structures, however, there has been little development of structures of political participation that are integrated within the formal political system. Parties and movements have appeared in most countries of the region, to be sure, but those that are not bureaucratized extensions of the leader or regime have usually played a dysfunctional, revolutionary, sometimes subversive role, challenging rather than consolidating such system legitimacy as may exist. Inasmuch as the liberal tradition in Arab politics was recent and of short duration, this situation is not surprising; the idea of "desert democracy" is too limited to a particular social situation to provide much historical precedent for participation in a modern setting. Nevertheless, this failing, while understandable, is of more than academic importance today because virtually all Arab politicians, conservative and progressive, whether in power or in the opposition, proclaim democracy as a central political goal. And the idea of popular participation has become widely circulated, and presumably widely accepted, by the socially mobilized masses during the last half-century. Today "government by the people, for the people, and of the people" is a criterion of political legitimacy in the Arab world, and the fact that none of the present Arab regimes meets this standard stands as a formidable obstacle to developing genuine structural legitimacy, as opposed merely to the extension of governmental control and patronage.

PATHWAYS TO LEGITIMACY

Burdened with many loads—identity problems, social change, radical ideologies, and incompletely integrated political cultures—the

Arab political systems function fitfully with their meager legitimacy resources. These systems cope with the pressures in two basic ways. One formula, in which traditional autocratic authority combined with diffuse nationalism and the ethos of development, is followed by the modernizing monarchies. The other, in which autocracy clothed in modern democratic norms and buttressed with more militant nationalism and a commitment to social equality as well as development, is practiced in the Arab republics. Most of these republics have been established recently through revolutions or struggles for independence.

The Modernizing Monarchies

With the exception of Morocco, the monarchies form a continuous group embracing most of the Arabian peninsula: Jordan, Sa'udi Arabia, Kuwait, the United Arab Emirates, Qatar, Bahrain, and Oman. Their authority is patrimonial both in theory and in fact, notwithstanding the accommodations that some of them have made toward democratic values and structures. The monarchies are legitimated primarily by the monarch's personal reputation and secondarily by the tradition of kingship (which in most cases is not firmly rooted) and an ideology emphasizing religious rectitude and kinship obligation. Ruling monarchs are nearly extinct outside the Arab world, but within this region their remarkable persistence suggests that the legitimacy formula that they embody exhibits greater congruence with socio-cultural values than observers have thought. The monarchical legitimacy strategy may be designated as patriarchal in order to convey the character of the king's authority; in a fatherly way he governs each tribe and sect. King Hussein frequently speaks of Jordan as a "family." The metaphor has more than passing relevance for a culture in which the family is so central and revered and in which the father traditionally enjoys a high degree of deference from other members. Like many another father, however, Arab kings have frequently had to deal with rebellious children whose own growth and outside education incite them to challenge the established order. Historically, leadership in the tribal societies of the Arab world has fallen to chieftains whose authority has derived in part from their real or mythical kinship status, and in the Islamic politics of the past kinship has been an important legitimizing tradition.

The modern monarchies of the Arab world, not surprisingly, have exploited kinship and religion as legitimizing values: patriarchal authority is presented as normal, and the ruler's piety and dynastic proximity to the line of the Prophet Muhammad is often emphasized. But most of the present monarchs in the region have not been reticent about appropriating more modern values, presenting themselves as

champions of economic development and pillars of secularized nationalism. In certain cases attempts have been made to align the monarchy with a form of parliamentary system although there has been little parliamentary independence.

Personal legitimacy, of course, bulks large among the sources of systemic legitimacy in the monarchies. Strong individual leadership as well as family or religious status are important determinants of the authority to be bestowed upon a king and, by extension, of the legitimacy of his regime. The office of monarch generates a certain structural legitimacy, but the performance of the incumbent is more important. Apart from the structural legitimacy of kingship itself, the contemporary monarchies have also succeeded in varying degree in institutionalizing their regimes more broadly. They have devoted considerable resources toward developing elaborate and capable administrative structures, particularly in the field of internal security. A different kind of structural embellishment was exemplified best until recently by Kuwait, which had developed a semiautonomous parliament and electoral system. I shall suggest that the surviving monarchies in general have been quite resourceful in exploiting the available systemic and symbolic building blocks of legitimacy.

In terms of their orientation to change, the patriarchal systems may best be described as conservative. They accept existing traditional group identities and accommodate them. They exploit traditional rivalries and play one group against another rather than trying to build a new order. The monarchs build their constituency on the traditional power holders: the upper-middle-class commercial and business elite, the large landowners, the clerical establishment, and the local notables of good families. As such they are pursuing a legitimacy strategy of accommodation rather than trying to assimilate traditional groupings into a new national identity; in this orientation they differ from the revolutionary leaders. Yet it would be misleading to suggest that the monarchs are insensitive to the legitimacy potential of certain nontraditional values. Several of the kings have sought to associate themselves with selected modern norms, particularly nationalism and development. But instead of building a new nationalism unfettered by tradition, the monarchs have simply superimposed nationalism onto existing political culture patterns without trying to eliminate them. Similarly, every monarchy in the region has set out energetically to show that it can deliver prosperity and growth just as effectively as progressive regimes. But they are wary of the more directly liberal, democratic, participatory values associated with

modernity. Although they seek economic growth, they are reluctant to see the masses politicized and unwilling to permit significant mass participation or autonomous opposition groups. The Arab kings of the 1970s vary considerably in their benevolence, but they are fairly uniform in their refusal to open up their political processes in conformity with the ideals of democracy and egalitarianism, which are increasingly prevalent in their modernizing countries. Therein lies one of the principal weaknesses in the monarchical legitimacy formula.

The Revolutionary Republics

The Arab republics (with the qualified exception of Lebanon) share in varying degrees a revolutionary legitimacy. They share the traumatic experience of the revolutionary or independence event. This event serves as a watershed separating these new regimes from the web of traditional patterns of authority and influence one finds in the monarchies, and the patriarchal, deferential, sacred, and quasi-feudal values underlying them. The new regime confronts both an opportunity and a host of problems as it attempts to fill the legitimacy vacuum with modern, reformist symbols and myths. Several of the postrevolutionary regimes and leaders I shall analyze have derived considerable legitimacy simply through having participated in the independence struggle or revolutionary coup.

But beyond this exploitation of what might be called a fixed and diminishing legitimacy resource, the revolutionary republics have also sought to develop new and positive bases for government. In contrast to the conservative accommodation of existing identity and authority patterns, they have tried to break them down and integrate people into new ones. The authority problem is addressed with populist ideology and "popular organizations," bureaucratic parties and functional organizations subservient to the authorities. They have tried to build a new community committed to secular nationalism, strong central government, progress, and modernization. They seek their legitimacy through secular, rational, and universal norms. Yet, this nation-building is seriously impeded by the persistence of traditional primordial and parochial orientations. They emphasize Arabism and the importance of fulfilling hitherto frustrated national aspirations because they are well aware of the salience of these issues in Arab public opinion. But at the same time the quixotic, sporadic, uncoordinated, and usually unsuccessful efforts to achieve these ends also complicate the search for legitimacy. Indeed, the single most important delegitimizing factor for the regimes in what I shall call the pan-Arab

core, has been their consistent failure to match words with effective deeds on the Palestine issue. Yet legitimacy requires at least that the words be uttered.

Under such circumstances it should be obvious why the building of structural legitimacy has been so slow, painful and as yet incomplete a process. In the absence of solid structural legitimacy, therefore, there has been an inordinate reliance on affective ideological symbols for legitimation, which accounts for the comparatively frenetic and hyperbolic style of revolutionary politics. This absence also helps explain the prominence of personalist leadership in the legitimacy formulas of the revolutionary republics.

It is useful to divide the revolutionary republics into two groups, those of the pan-Arab core and the republics of the periphery. The first group includes the older republics of the area in which Arab nationalism was born and the development of independent political structures and processes has been most complete. The politics of legitimacy in this area continues today to be shaped (and frustrated) by all-Arab concerns and by the Palestine question in particular. This group includes Egypt, Syria, Iraq, Lebanon, and the Palestinian community; in comparing their political behavior I attempt to evaluate the Nasirist, Ba'hist, Palestinian nationalist, and Lebanese pluralist approaches to the Arab legitimacy problem. The second group is more disparate, comprising Libya, Sudan, the two Yemens, Algeria, and Tunisia. Generally speaking, these political systems are newer than those of the pan-Arab core, having assumed their present forms from the late 1950s to the early 1970s. Geographically far removed from the pan-Arab core, their socioeconomic linkages with it until recently have been relatively tenuous. They share significantly in the Arab historical experience, but they also have their distinct local characteristics. Even though all-Arab concerns are becoming increasingly salient in all of the peripheral republics, and unmistakably so in Libya and Algeria, these values are not as overwhelmingly central as they are in the pan-Arab core.

As the Arab world advances toward the year 2000 is the legitimacy problem becoming more serious or less so? Scholars are divided on this question. Some are optimistic insofar as they predict the emergence of a new Arab man, or a new middle class, or new personalities embodying empathy and tolerance, or a new generation presumably more enlightened than its predecessors. Other scholars are pessimistic, seeing instead a vicious circle of praetorian instability, the monopoly of power by opportunistic military men, or even the persistence of inherent defects in the Arab mind that render modern civilized

government difficult to achieve. But such visions, whether optimistic or pessimistic, must be treated with some skepticism since they suffer from a common analytical weakness: the reification of single-factor causes that lack convincing empirical support. In fact, to summarize and anticipate at the same time, the prospects for legitimacy depend on a more complicated set of conditions. On the one hand, the modernization process has sharply disrupted a political culture that even in its "traditional" state was parochial, fragmented, and dissonant. The social mobilization of the Arab masses, which is the most important fact for any political analysis of the region, has multiplied the often incompatible or contradictory policy demands made on the political system, and it has presented an array of new opportunities for opposition movements which regard existing regimes as illegitimate. Democracy, for example, is newly salient but conspicuously absent throughout the region. It has also placed additional administrative loads on governments insofar as social welfare and development responsibilities have become conventionally accepted, in conservative and progressive regimes alike. The new awareness of politics, moreover, has exacerbated the social and communal tensions latent in traditional Arab society, a development which, other things equal, suggests that ethnic and working class (urban and rural) upheavals will continue or be intensified in the coming years.

On the other hand, other things are not likely to remain equal, for the same modernization process will also generate conditions favorable for the development of legitimacy. The growth of a transportation, communications, and economic infrastructure has woven societies more closely together, thus enhancing the solidarity within specific countries and the Arab region as a whole. The new availability of the masses for politics has enhanced the integrative and legitimizing functions of Islam and even more so of Arabism. What was until only three decades ago primarily an intellectual movement, capable of mobilizing the masses only sporadically, has now developed into a significant wellspring of diffuse support for leaders and regimes skillful enough to identify themselves effectively with Arab-Islamic political goals. No less important is sheer growth in potential capabilities. The new power of governments facilitates legitimacy formation in two ways. One is through enhanced security. Although the legitimacy of a government is hardly proportional to the fight which it can inspire in its citizens, it is clear that a government with weak internal security is unlikely to generate either the support or the longevity necessary to convince people of its claims to legitimacy. Even more important is the dramatically expanded ability of Arab governments over the

last two decades to make their administrative presence felt throughout their territories and to deliver new social services. Bigger governments and more secure regimes also may be able to satisfy some of the intangible value demands concerning national dignity, Palestine, and the Arab nation and in so doing yield perhaps the most important (though hardest to measure) legitimacy dividends.

I foresee neither a revolutionary leap forward into a new rational-legal consensus nor the resurgence of the Islamic polity with its ethnoreligious mosaics and stable class system. Despite the breathtaking socioeconomic development taking place in the Arab world, with all its implications for the growth of political system capabilities, the Arab political future seems cloudy. The fragmentation of the Arab nation into separate sovereignties appears largely irreversible, and only limited progress has been made toward inter-Arab coordination. So the chances for the advancement of all-Arab causes, notably Palestine, do not appear good, even as the salience of these causes in Arab public opinion intensifies. Thus, an important source of the Arab legitimacy problem, common to the monarchies as well as the republics, is not likely to diminish. Internally, the future of systems which rely mainly on traditional legitimacy is not bright, notwithstanding their unexpected durability; and the legitimacy potential of the revolutionary systems, while brighter than the analysts of practionarism foresee, is still seriously marred by the intractability of the participation problem.