The Arab Spring

Will It Lead to Democratic Transitions?

Edited by Clement Henry and Jang Ji-Hyang

The Asan Institute for Policy Studies

CONTENTS

Introduction

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On November 4-5, 2011, the Asan Institute for Policy Studies held the first *Asan Middle East Conference*, a biennial gathering of the world's foremost experts on the Middle East and North Africa (MENA) region. The conference, titled "Democracy and Development in the Wake of the Arab Spring," examined the multiple dimensions to the political turbulence that has fundamentally transformed the region over the past year. Furthermore, the conference sought to analyze the prospects for states across the region to make the successful transition to democratic government within the context of unprecedented social and political change.

At its core, the conference asked the question: What is the Arab Spring? Is it a singular or multiple processes? Is it an event that happened and may be essentially over or ending, or is it in fact the beginning of a long-term historical process? Describing an intra-regional political phenomenon that is occurring in multiple states at different velocities, the term Arab Spring is over-determined. Drawing from the examples of conference participants, one way of conceptually simplifying the "Arab Spring" phenomenon is to broadly distinguish between two distinct temporal processes: regime change/dynamics (or continuity) and transition. As conference participants stressed, it is too early to claim that the Arab Spring is a "domino effect" of democratization in the Middle East and North Africa, paralleling earlier democratization trends in Latin American and Eastern Europe. Only three authoritarian leaders have been forced from power, and only one of those states, Tunisia, had entered the transition process by November 2011, when this conference was held. Saudi military intervention apparently crushed the Bahraini opposition. Regime and opposition in Syria and Yemen appeared to have entered a protracted and bloody stalemate, where the outcome was far from clear, whereas most of the other regimes in the region appeared to have successfully navigated the waves of popular demonstrations that spread from Tunis between January and March 2011.

This book, co-edited by Dr. Jang Ji-Hyang, Director of the Middle East and North Africa (MENA) Center at the Asan Institute for Policy Studies, and Dr. Clement Henry, Chair of the Political Science Department at the American University in Cairo, expands upon these discussions and analyses presented at the *2011 Asan Middle East Conference*, and presents a brief epilogue by way of conclusion, to bring the discussions up to date. It seeks to offer policymakers and researchers a more nuanced appreciation of the opportunities and challenges that the Arab Spring presents for the region. The book is organized into six sections covering a range of themes that have all influenced the shape, scope, and speed of political change in the region: 1) Domestic Political Transition and Regional Spillover; 2) Economic Correlates of Political Mobilization; 3) Social Networks and Civil Society; 4) Varieties of Political Islam; 5) Uprisings in Libya and Syria; and 6) Dilemmas of the United States.

Domestic Political Transition and Regional Spillovers

Focusing on regime change, Lisa Anderson suggests that we look closely at the role timing

and place played in Egypt and Tunisia, the "early adopters." The intensity and size of the initial wave of popular protest in January 2011 took those regimes and the international community by surprise—neither had a road map to navigate unprecedented pressure from the street. Initial political missteps by both Tunis and Cairo sharply reduced their capacity to endure the storm of protests. The West abandoned Zine Ben Ali after the third week of mass demonstrations given that Tunisia has never been a key regional strategic ally. In contrast, hesitating between President Obama's "A New Beginning" 2009 Cairo speech and its historic Middle East strategy, the American position vis-à-vis the protest movement and Hosni Mubarak regime alike wavered in the initial days of protest in Egypt. Perhaps American inaction induced Mubarak to make the wrong political calculations, increasingly alienating Egyptian citizens, the military and the United States, and ultimately leading to his forced resignation.

While a Tunisia-inspired regime change demonstration effect seems to be circumscribed to the Egyptian case, the "neighborhood effect" is salient in the post-Mubarak Arab Spring. Regional and international considerations, which historically played a role in the persistence of authoritarianism in the region but which had seemingly been sidelined by the shock effect of the January protests, returned to the fore in March, April, and May 2011, as regional and international players became involved in the battles pitting incumbent regimes against mass demonstration. In Bahrain and Libya, for example, oil and other strategic dimensions were at stake. Here, regional and international forces entered what had hitherto been domestic disputes, though they did so in divergent ways. NATO coordinated airstrikes with the Qatari-armed Libyan Transitional National Council (TNC) to undermine Muammar Qadhafi, whereas Saudi Arabia sent troops into Bahrain to support al-Khalifa's crackdown on popular protest. Qatar's intervention in Libya indicates that the hydrocarbon rich micro-monarchy plans to play an increasingly important role in regional foreign policy, whereas Saudi Arabia has made it clear that it will not tolerate democratizing reform in the microstates of the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC). Syria, by contrast, may be fair game for GCC countries, but its strategic position between Israel, Iraq, Jordan, Lebanon, and Turkey raises the specter of a fragmented, if not broken polity post Bashar al-Assad. Syria has thus been able, at least temporarily, to keep regional and international intervention at arm's-length. Summing the "neighborhood effect," as Lisa Anderson stressed, "Where you live matters in terms of what options you have as a regime facing opposition, or as the opposition."

Yet the term Arab Spring also connotes political transition. Though Eva Bellin rightly stresses that discussion of political transition appears premature, a number of factors could be important to Egypt, Libya, and Tunisia, if not future transitioning regimes: antecedent institutional development and the demonstration effects of successful transition in neighboring states. Anderson and Bellin stress that a history of bureaucratic development will likely prevent Egypt and Tunisian from falling into post-authoritarian chaos: the regime is gone but the state remains. Bellin explains at length why Tunisia appears to have navigated a political transition more effectively than Egypt. Her explanation of the differences leads us to a more general discussion of possible economic correlates to political mobilization and democratic transition.

Economic Correlates of Political Mobilization

Part two of the book focuses on the impact that specific socio-economic and political variations have had in explaining the intensity of mass demonstrations and the regime's margin of maneuver in the different MENA states. Extant economic grievances, size and development of civil society, and regime type are all factors that explain why some regimes have fallen, some are barely holding together, while still others appear insulated from Arab Spring pressures. In this vein, Steven Heydemann [illegible] common structural feature of the Arab Spring: a deep popular memory of the state's appropriate role matched with intense economic grievances, partly based on a perceived increase in corruption, economic exclusion, and unemployment. While the state's role in the economy has slowly diminished over the last thirty years, Heydemann argues that the state's ability to implement social justice and guarantee economic security has plunged over the past decade in most MENA states.

The declining quality of life is degrading and has touched the Arab citizen's basic dignity, or *karama*. "Karama protests" have been a critical factor animating the Arab Spring, beginning with Mohamed Bouazizi's self-immolation in Tunisia. However, while economic grievances are necessary, a number of scholars have noted that they do not seem to be a sufficient condition to transform economic disgruntlement into anti-regime political protests: in several states, on-going and widespread economic protests have yet to coalesce into political demonstrations.

Parsing Arab regimes by the development of their financial sectors, Clement Henry, too, approaches the Arab Spring through an economic lens. He offers three broad political economic regime types, each with varying degrees of exposure to or insulation from the momentum of the Arab Spring: "Arab Monarchies," "Bully Republics," and "Bunker Regimes." Arab Monarchies have been the least affected by the Arab Spring, echoing Eva Bellin's suggestion that the truisms of the "persistence of authoritarianism" literature still seem to hold in these polities. The GCC states, Jordan, and Morocco have resorted to a time-tested repertoire of political strategies: monarchs appear to have stayed above the fray by cultivating legitimacy linked to tradition and by distributing economic largess. For instance, Saudi Arabia has injected billions of dollars into its economy, while the Jordanian and Moroccan monarchs have promised to "force" their parliaments to deepen democratic reforms.

To date, the Arab Republics appear to be facing the storm alone. Henry argues that we should broadly divide the republics by the structure of their banking system, suggesting Bully Republics have more developed banking and financial systems than Bunker Regimes. The more developed economies of Bully Republics, he argues, have a developing division of labor, and thus denser civil societies than Bunker Regimes. While "bullied" by the regime, associational life nevertheless has persisted in the Bully Republics, straddling clandestinity and formal recognition.

Social Networks and Civil Society

When the wave of protests hit Tunisia and Egypt, civil society indeed surged from the shadows, and emboldened protester calls for regime change. Mohammed Kerrou's discussion on the development of social networks in Tunisia provides a salient example to this. Over the

past decade, disgruntled Tunisians took to the web to express their frustration with corruption and authoritarianism. When riots broke out in Sidi Bouzid in December 2010, cyber dissidents projected the images of regime violence over Facebook and Twitter, generating widespread popular revulsion, breaking the antecedent cycle of fear. These networks helped mobilize trade unions, students, and professional associations. Similar events transpired in Egypt in late January and February 2011.

Transitions in Egypt and Tunisia, and subsequently in Libya, could also affect the domestic politics of their North African neighbors. Arguing that Algeria does not seem at risk to regime change pressures from the street, Robert Parks suggests that the outcome of the Tunisian transition could nevertheless profoundly reconfigure Algerian politics. A successful Tunisian transition led by the Islamist Ennahda party could have a two-fold demonstration effect. On the one hand, it would show Algerians that political Islamists can play by the democratic rules of the game; on the other hand, it could push Algerian Islamists to re-think both strategy and discourse. A failed Ennahda-led transition, however, will likely confirm the Algerian political class' suspicions of political Islam.

Breaking the trend, three MENA republics have witnessed remarkably little political protest: Algeria, Iran, and Lebanon. Arang Keshavarzian and Robert Parks argue that the relatively open nature of the Iranian and Algerian regimes has absorbed or demobilized demands for regime change, though in different ways. Keshavarzian suggests that the Iranian regime is able to manage elite conflict through formal and informal institutions, using a robust repertoire of political strategies, including elite bargaining and horse-trading, patronage and redistribution, popular parliamentary and presidential elections, as well as violence, coercion and intimidation. Rather than a call for regime change, the violent outcome of the June 2009 presidential elections reflects the tension between current centralizing trends and long standing social and political transformations that has expanded the size of the Iranian elite.

In contrast, the last two decades of Algerian politics have been characterized by the growth of a relatively vocal independent press and multiplication of civil society groups and political parties that have real room to publicly criticize the government. Parks suggests, however, that the toothless nature of the parliament as well as political parties and civil society's inability to address citizen demands have increasingly demobilized the population. Parties and civic groups are no longer viewed as credible articulation mechanisms linking the citizen to the state, and have been altogether bypassed in favor of neighborhood riots and sectoral strikes, thus confirming Heydemann's suggestion of deep-rooted economic malaise, while explaining the absence of anti-regime protests.

Varieties of Political Islam

For many, the Arab Spring might simply be characterized as the profound change of mood and perception that has seized Arab citizen and regime alike since Ben Ali's departure from Tunisia. But the principal beneficiary, albeit not the catalyst, has often been political Islam, the perennial boogeyman of the Arab World.

Arab regimes and their international backers have long used the specter of Islamic extremism and terrorism to justify authoritarian practices. However, in January and February

2011, neither the Egyptian Muslim Brotherhood nor Tunisian Islamists appeared to have been at the forefront of the Arab Spring protests that forced Ben Ali and Mubarak from power. Nor has the boogeyman of al-Qa'ida captured or been able to significantly influence the subsequent anti-regime momentum. This led some pundits to talk about a post-Islamist era. Recent events in both states, however, have shown that while extremism is at an impasse, mainstream political Islam is hardly extinguished as a political force in the Arab World: Egypt's Muslim Brotherhood is increasingly flexing its muscles, and the Islamist Ennahda party in Tunisia won over 40 percent of the seats in the October 2011 Constituent Assembly elections. Similarly, in Egypt, the Muslim Brotherhood's Freedom and Justice Party did equally well, and the Nour Party of Salafi Islamists won an additional 24.4 percent of the seats.

Fawaz Gerges notes that while the Islamist movement has matured considerably over the last eighty years, political Islamist parties such as the Muslim Brotherhood and Ennahda will face a number of hurdles as they integrate into the political scene—hurdles that none had been forced to overcome when they were excluded from the political mainstream. For example, the Egyptian Muslim Brotherhood will have to negotiate serious generational differences over ideas and strategies if it hopes to maintain political unity in the future. Hitherto excluded from politics, the movement does not seem to have developed clear economic or political positions that can define domestic politics or geo-strategically situate Egypt. And while the Tunisian Ennahda party and Egyptian Muslim Brotherhood have accepted the rules of the political game, both have unclear visions of the relationship between civil society and the state. As such, Gerges suggests, Arab Islamists are unable to conceptually create a baseline by which voters can measure their project, other than by taking their word.

This may change, however, as they are forced to tackle pressing economic and political issues once in power. Indeed, Jang Ji-Hyang asks whether legal status and increased Islamist involvement in business activity might clarify the positions of mainstream Islamist political movements. Citing the case of the Turkish Islamist movement, Jang suggests capitalism can co-opt and moderate political Islam. The "Anatolian tigers" have been a major source of financing for Turkish political Islamists over the last thirty years. As the impact of their business activities has increased, these "Green Capitalists" have pushed the Islamist leadership to answer hard questions, forcing it to make political compromises and to moderate populist and moralistic rhetoric. This thirty-year process, Jang suggests, has culminated in three successive electoral victories for President Recep Erdogan's Justice and Development Party (AKP). Indeed, Islamic capital in Turkey and probably Egypt has served to promote Muslim democracy rather than to finance terrorism. This economic logic of pro-Islamic party institutionalization provides policy implications for the post-Arab Spring Middle East and North Africa.

Looking at the same case, however, Kemal Kirisci is unsure that a "Turkish model" of political Islam can be exported to the Arab World. Given the idiosyncratic development of Turkish politics, as well as ongoing tensions within the Turkish polity over the role of Islam in the public sphere, Kirisci suggests that the Turkish demonstration effect is as far as we can go. Supporting this argument, he points to the Egyptian Muslim Brotherhood's reaction to

Turkish Prime Minister Erdogan's recent call for a secular state founded on personal Muslim conviction. The speech reverberated throughout the Arab World, leading former Algerian Prime Minister Abdelaziz Belkhadem to argue that the "Malaysian model" of Muslim development might be better suited for Arabs than the AKP and Turkish experience.

Protracted Violence in Libya and Syria

The less developed civil societies of most Bunker Regimes are less able to articulate political and economic grievances. While Syrian protesters seem to have largely avoided organization along sectarian lines to date, in Libya and Yemen tribal politics have surged to the fore. That regime-opposition mobilization has begun to fall along tribal lines might explain the intensity of violence in Yemen. The lack of non-governmental articulation mechanisms linking state and society also hinders negotiation by hardening positions. Indeed, both Diederik Vandewalle and Bassam Haddad's respective discussions of Libya and Syria underscore the development of an "all or nothing" perception among the upper echelons of power at the outset of mass demonstrations.

Egypt and Tunisia stand in stark contrast to Libya, where Qadhafi de-institutionalized an already fragile state while encouraging tribal and regional cleavages, leaving the post-Qadhafi country in what one may call "an institutional wasteland." Indeed, given the Libyan Transitional National Council's tandem task of nation-building and state-building, Vandewalle remains skeptical of the short-term prospects of a democratic transition in Libya. Those same state institutions, however, might also block democratic transition. Haddad soberly notes that "regime change" might not be the correct word for describing post-Mubarak Egypt: the military and many other key institutions and players remain in power, and may well subvert liberalizing reform.

In Syria, civil society was not able to articulate economic grievances prior to the uprisings, but the initial Friday protests were at least partly linked to the perception that the al-Assad regime had ceded public policy to economic liberals. As Haddad explains, the demand for *karama* was both economic and political, a response to a degrading quality of life as well intimidation and humiliation at the hands of security forces.

Dilemmas of the United States and Israel

The Arab Spring highlights many of the inconsistencies in US foreign policy, Michael Hudson suggests, partly because policy makers are confused on many of the points discussed elsewhere in the conference: Is the Arab Spring change or continuity? Is it a democratic transition? Is it still happening? What are its long-term implications? Is it singular or plural? Whatever the case, the Arab Spring has brought to the fore long-standing contradictions in US Middle East policy, which has historically been based on secure access to oil, a strategic alliance with Israel, and fighting the "War on Terror."

Part of the tension revolves around the spirit of President Obama's 2009 "A New Beginning" Cairo speech, and how it should be applied, if at all, in the context of the Arab Spring. While the spirit seems to have been implemented vis-à-vis Tunisia, the same spirit wavered when it came to dealing with Mubarak (and Saleh in Yemen). And it certainly has not been applied in the cases of Bahrain or Palestine. Mubarak was viewed as a strategic ally

in maintaining the 1978 Camp David Accords, and was abandoned once the US administration reached an agreement with the Egyptian military: shed Mubarak, keep the peace with Israel, and continue to enjoy the financial rent of the peace dividend. However, shedding Mubarak created a new set of problems. Popular opinion in Egypt is more important now than it ever has been, and it apparently favors pushing the military into the barracks and re-evaluating Egyptian-Israeli ties. The Obama administration now walks a fine line: it is encouraging a transition that its main partner, the military, wishes to control from above. As a result of these ongoing tensions, the United States standing is at a record low in Egyptian public opinion.

The Obama administration's veto of the Security Council vote to accept Palestine into the United Nations and the recent withdrawal of US funding to UNESCO both appear to contradict the Obama Cairo speech. The veto and the UNESCO scandal, Uzi Rabi notes, have signaled to Palestinians that the United States can no longer play the role of a third party arbiter in the Palestine-Israel conflict. Palestinians are actively seeking new negotiation partners, eroding US hegemony over the peace process.

Hudson and Rabi also note that abandoning Mubarak affected US relations with its key strategic partner Saudi Arabia, in multiple ways. On the one hand, Mubarak's fall may have signaled to Saudi rulers that they could no longer absolutely count on American military and political support. If the Americans could abandon Mubarak in Egypt, what would prevent them from abandoning the House of Ibn Saud? On the other hand, the lack of a clear American policy on the Arab Spring has forced the Saudis to unilaterally adopt a regional foreign policy for its own back yard, the GCC. While Saudi intervention in Bahrain—a major hydrocarbon producer and home of the US Navy's Fifth Fleet—may not have ruffled too many feathers in Washington, continued Saudi support of the Saleh administration in Yemen increasingly jeopardizes the prospects of a negotiated and ordered transition, raising the specter of another Libya should the regime collapse.

Finally, Rabi suggests that the instability caused by the downfall of Ben Ali and Mubarak are in line with the interests of the Islamic Republic of Iran and al-Qa'ida: pro-Western regimes are falling and public opinion in the Arab world is increasingly hostile toward the United States. This, Rabi suggests, together with the humiliating US withdrawal from Iraq, and tensions with the Karzai government in Afghanistan, signals to Iran the slow erosion of American power projection capacities in the region. Whether this will have an impact on Iran's relationship with and role in Bahrain, Iraq, Lebanon, and Syria is a question that remains unclear.

"Democracy and Development in the Wake of the Arab Spring" underscored the wide number of factors involved in the changes provoked by the Arab Spring. The discussions stressed the importance of time, place, structural, and strategic factors in explaining extant regime change (and future prospects for change) as well as democratic transition in the region. Varying domestic and international configurations explain the fall of Ben Ali, Mubarak, and Qadhafi, as much as they explain the uncertainty of al-Khalifa in Bahrain, al-Assad in Syria, and Saleh in Yemen, and the apparent calm in Algeria, Iran, Jordan, Morocco, and Saudi Arabia. In sum, there appear to be multiple Arab Springs, characterized by the regime change of the early adopters and the indeterminacy and stasis of politics in regimes later hit by Arab

Spring protests. For Egypt, Libya, and Tunisia, the transition process remains in flux. Will their transitions result in democratization? The outcome in the transition of those states, moreover, will affect regional politics in both anticipated and unanticipated ways. Nearly two years since protests first began the very notion of the "Arab Spring" continues to remain in question.

Part 1
Domestic Political Transition and Regional Spillover

"Early Adopters" and "Neighborhood Effects"
Lisa Anderson, The American University in Cairo

A Modest Transformation: Political Change in the Arab World after the "Arab Spring"
Eva Bellin, Brandeis University

"Early Adopters" and "Neighborhood Effects"

Lisa Anderson, The American University in Cairo

Introduction

By the spring of 2011, it was apparent that the "early adopters" among the Arab upheavals would see very different trajectories. Thanks in part to their different modern encounters with Europe—the French, British and Italians left distinctive institutional traces—and the impact of decades under regimes that reflected the personalities and proclivities of very different rulers, Tunisia, Egypt, and Libya faced vastly different challenges.[1]

By the fall of that year, as other countries were caught up in, or excluded from, the "Arab Spring," it was becoming apparent that the regional dynamics were more intricate than merely the "contagion effect" that had seemed so powerful only months earlier. In fact, regional interventions (or withheld interventions) were becoming increasingly visible as factors, indeed sometimes decisive elements, in the trajectories and outcomes of the transitions in the region. Not only had many of the region's regimes apparently weathered domestic upheavals, making modest political concessions and pumping money into their economies, but the momentum of regime change, even where it has seemed to be gathering steam, appeared to have stalled. The government in Bahrain seemed to be settling in for the long haul, and the governments of Syria and Yemen were battling domestic opponents to no clear conclusion. Indeed, the regional involvement and implications were quite complex, and the regional dynamics suggested that there are several sorts of "neighborhood effects" on political stability and change. Four hypotheses suggest themselves.

A "Protected Place in Space and Time" is Useful

As the first to move, Tunisia—or rather the opponents to the Ben Ali regime—benefitted from what Charles Tilly once described in a different context as "a protected place in time and space." Although Tunisia was a staunch and useful ally to Europe and the United States in the War on Terror, it was not, in the larger scheme of things, very important, and as the War on Terror began to lose steam, international investment in Tunisia's military and security cooperation lessened. Hence, when the uprisings began, none of Ben Ali's foreign patrons were prepared to support him against what was largely a peaceful civilian uprising. Had Tunisia played a more important strategic role in regional politics, the regime might have been able to call in reinforcements.

Moreover, the military establishment was willing to sacrifice the regime—the Tunisian military establishment has never seen combat and was not a major player in the domestic economy. The armed services had been built almost entirely for domestic security—Ben Ali himself came from military intelligence and the police—and while the army played an important role in refusing to support the regime, it did not participate meaningfully in managing the transition. This conviction that the military—and its external allies—had little

[1] I have already examined the importance of domestic dynamics in my essay in *Foreign Affairs*, "Demystifying the Arab Spring." (May/June 2011).

to lose in a regime change was no doubt conveyed to those with whom Tunisia enjoyed "security cooperation."

Demonstration Effects and Political Pressure Can Be Powerful

Egypt's subsequent upheaval created far more serious challenges for both regional and international actors. For the US, Obama's speech in Cairo almost two years earlier had been, if nothing else, virtually a clarion call for exactly the kind of opposition that had developed, which made the US position in support of Mubarak after the protests broke out exceptionally difficult. Having said that he had "an unyielding belief that all people yearn for certain things: the ability to speak your mind and have a say in how you are governed; confidence in the rule of law and the equal administration of justice; government that is transparent and doesn't steal from the people; the freedom to live as you choose. Those are not just American ideas, they are human rights, and that is why we will support them everywhere." Having supported regime change in Tunisia, Obama was in a difficult position.

The carefully calibrated intervention of the army reflected the continuing power of a military establishment honed in equal parts of patronage and patriotism and as the Supreme Council of the Armed Forces (SCAF) took control of the state after Mubarak's departure, they revealed the enormous weight of the armed services in Egypt. They also revealed that they would not abandon Egypt's longstanding cooperation with the US and its regional allies, notably Israel. Run by generals who earned their stripes in the 1967 and 1973 wars, military cooperation with the US, after the Camp David Peace Treaty with Israel, has been intense, intimate, and sustained. The inability of Mubarak's political circles to respond deftly to the challenges of the protests, combined with the US's evident willingness to deal with the military leadership directly, sealed the willingness of the SCAF to follow their Tunisian counterpart's approach and sacrifice the regime for their own good and that of their country.

Money Becomes Increasingly Important For a Variety of Purposes

As the spring wore on, upheavals in Libya, Yemen, and Bahrain captured public attention but only one of them produced regime change. In all three, however, two GCC states played important and contradictory roles. Beginning in Bahrain and extending to Yemen, Saudi Arabia made it clear that it would not brook serious upheaval on its borders. Saudi troops were sent into Bahrain directly, and while they might entertain a symbolic change in the head of state in Yemen at some less heated juncture, the Saudis quite pointedly returned the recuperating Ali Abdullah Saleh to Sanaa from his medical treatment following an assassination attempt as soon as he was well enough to travel. The Saudis do not intend to permit genuine popular participation in government anywhere on the Arabian Peninsula.

Qatar, by contrast, had welcomed the change in regime in Egypt, having had testy relations with the Mubarak government for some time, and actively supported the rebellion in Libya. Although the NATO intervention received much more international attention, Qatar contributed at least 400 million dollars to the Libyan war effort and, equally importantly, provided military training and assistance. What was at first portrayed as the sort of essentially peaceful protest against the government that the Tunisians and Egyptians had mounted was, in fact, a secession—or perhaps multiple defections—from a failed state. Not only was there

little or no public bureaucracy, armed force had been distributed across a deliberately confusing and uncoordinated array of police, army, revolutionary guards, and other special services; Qatari money and technical assistance proved decisive in ensuring what modicum of coordination exhibited by the military operations of the Transitional National Council. The motives of the Qatari regime in supporting regime change are not altogether clear, although in the short run, the satisfaction of seeing two of their regional opponents—Mubarak and Qadhafi—unseated may be enough to explain their policies.

There is a "Neighborhood Effect" but it is Different from a Demonstration Effect

Syria's regime continued to survive, less because there was great enthusiasm for it regionally or internationally, but because most of its neighbors, and most of their international and regional supporters, feared that were the regime to fall, the country risked descending into a civil strife already sadly familiar to Lebanon and Iraq, and they were not prepared to risk the spillover effects that discord might have in their own territories. Hence, they elected, sometimes gleefully, sometimes regretfully, to bear witness to the slow crippling of the Assad regime, but stopped short of either definitely shoring it up or decisively pushing it over.

A Modest Transformation: Political Change in the Arab World after the "Arab Spring"

Eva Bellin, Brandeis University

Introduction

2011 was an extraordinarily eventful year in the world of Arab politics. Unprecedented levels of mass protest shook the foundations of authoritarian regimes across the region. The fall of three long-entrenched dictators in relatively quick succession[2] fueled expectations that a region-wide domino effect might be in the making and that authoritarianism's grip on the region might finally be pried open. The hope was that that the Arab world would, at last, catch the third wave of democratization, an ambition that had long eluded this part of the world.

In fact, the impact of the Arab Spring has been much more modest than many observers might have hoped. At least in the short term, the *geographic spread* of political opening has been limited and the *depth of the opening*, in the sense of initiating true democratic transition, has been minimal. This is not to underestimate the political importance of the past year's experience. Crucial precedents have been set that fundamentally challenge the status quo ante. And new tools of mobilization have been exercised in ways that will forever challenge the invulnerability of authoritarianism in this region and beyond. Nevertheless, the heavy hand of history and the variability of context have prevented a uniform sweep of the old regimes into the dustbin of history. Instead a complicated and diverse political path manifests itself in the countries of the region.

Limited Geographical Spread

The limited geographical reach of the Arab Spring is one of the most important observations to make about the events of the past year. While every country in the region had citizens receptive to the contagion of the "awakening," in fact, the vast majority of Arab countries successfully avoided the mass mobilization of protest. Algeria, Morocco, Lebanon, Jordan, Kuwait, Saudi Arabia, Oman, the UAE, and Palestine all experienced episodic spurts of popular protest. But none sustained the huge, cross class, regime-threatening mobilization of protest such as that witnessed in Tunisia or Egypt. In fact, out of the nineteen Arab countries in the Middle East and North Africa, only six (that is, about one third) saw regime threatening mass protests (Tunisia, Egypt, Bahrain, Libya, Yemen, and Syria). Furthermore, only four of these—Tunisia, Egypt, Libya, and Yemen—(that is, about one fifth of the region) saw their dictators jettisoned in the wake of this protest. The remaining two (Bahrain and Syria) saw their autocrats remain in place, thanks to military intervention on the part of Saudi Arabia (in the case of Bahrain) and the willingness of the autocrat to wage merciless war against his own people (in the case of Syria).

In short, a good portion of the Arab world experienced a "silent spring" in 2011. Not that the events in Tunisia and Egypt went unnoticed. To the contrary, by mid-March every

[2] The three jettisoned dictators were Ben Ali in Tunisia, Mubarak in Egypt and Qadhafi in Libya.

neighboring autocrat was scrambling to find the right mix of coercion and cooptation to keep the lid on political change. Wealthy Gulf countries such as Saudi Arabia responded by doling out bulked up welfare packages and mobilizing their security forces in public view to discourage the assembly of protest. The resource-poor monarchies—Jordan and Morocco—resorted to their usual mix of moderate concession and reform to take the edge off the protests (even as their regimes remained fundamentally unchanged). In short, most countries resorted to their classic strategies of survival, strategies that had sustained the persistence of authoritarianism for decades. For much of the region then, politics remained "business as usual."

Jettisoning the Dictator vs. Regime Change

Still, in four countries—Tunisia, Egypt, Libya, and Yemen—the protests of the Arab Spring *did* lead to fundamental political change in the form of jettisoning the long entrenched dictator. The logic driving this process (and its variable consequences) had as much to do with the character of the "coercive apparatus" as anything else.[3] But whatever the conditioning factors, the consequences were nonetheless huge and unprecedented. It was thrilling to see the pillars of dictatorship fall in response to the citizenry's exercise of "people power." Nevertheless, the implications of these events in terms of delivering fundamental regime change should not be overstated.

As Barbara Geddes argued long ago, there is a wide gulf between triggering authoritarian breakdown and carrying through effective regime change (i.e. democratic transition).[4] While authoritarian breakdown is a prerequisite for democratic transition it is not a sufficient condition for such transition. To the contrary, most authoritarian regimes that break down have historically been replaced by other authoritarian regimes. Exemplary of this is the case of Iran after the fall of the Shah. In fact, only a minority of those countries that had jettisoned authoritarian regimes between 1974 and 1999 developed into stable democracies by the start of the new millennium.[5] And the vast majority of countries that brought down communism after the fall of the Berlin wall in 1989 are still not democracies today (They are, at best, hybrid regimes).[6] So while the elimination of autocracy is the first step that must be taken to work towards democratic transition, it is only a first step.

In short, even in these four vanguard countries of the Arab Spring, transition to democracy is hardly a sure shot. To the contrary, one should expect a diversity of outcomes based on the diversity of their structural endowments (socio-economic, institutional, and ethnic) as well as their performance along five political variables. A review of each of these, country by country, will suggest the possibilities and challenges they face. Overall, Tunisia's future looks most promising in terms of transitioning successfully to democracy. Egypt shows some potential for transition, but its political future is shakier. By contrast, Libya and Yemen seem quite far

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[3] Eva Bellin, "Reconsidering the Robustness of Authoritarianism: Lessons from the Arab Spring," *Comparative Politics* (January 2012).
[4] Barbara Geddes, "What do We Know About Democratization After 20 Years," *Annual Review of Political Science* 2 (1999): 115-144.
[5] Ibid.
[6] Personal communication with Valerie Bunce (2011).

from achieving democratic transition given the fact that both countries face the fundamental challenge of building both state and nation at the same time that they hope to carry out regime change. A closer look at each will make this clear.

Tunisia: On the Way

Of all the countries in the Arab world today, Tunisia looks best positioned to effectively transition to democracy. Tunisia is endowed with certain structural conditions that are favorable to democratic transition. In addition, the country has made several political choices that also favor a democratic outcome. In terms of structural conditions: Tunisia is blessed, firstly, in socio-cultural terms. As any student of democratization knows, national unity—or at least some sense of common solidarity—is an essential underpinning of democracy.[7] Divisions over identity (ethnic, religious, linguistic) are the most difficult to resolve when trying to build a new democracy. In this regard, Tunisia is quite lucky. Tunisia enjoys a level of religious and ethnic homogeneity that is rare in the region. All but a small minority of Tunisians are Sunni Muslims and Arabic speakers. Consequently, the divisions over identity that might prove insurmountable to other democratic aspirants do not hobble Tunisia.

Second, Tunisia is blessed in institutional terms. To flourish, democracy requires the foundation of an effective state equipped with institutions like a civil bureaucracy, police force, and judiciary that can deliver fair, predictable order to its citizens (Democracy cannot flourish in a context of chaos). Tunisia is lucky in that it has a strong state with state institutions (military, bureaucracy, and, to a lesser degree, judiciary) that are relatively meritocratic and professionalized. In this way, the pillars of social order are basically present.

Third, Tunisia is blessed in socio-economic terms. One of the most robust findings of three decades of democratization studies is that GNP per capita is very strongly correlated with the vitality of electoral democracy. The causal mechanism underlying this correlation is debatable. Among the explanatory candidates are the higher literacy levels that are associated with higher income levels, the presence of a larger middle class, and the greater economic "give" available to grease the wheels of toleration and compromise—all factors that are conducive to the health of democracy. But whatever the reason, statistically speaking, higher GNP yields greater "survivability" for democracy. The magic number seems to lie somewhere in the range of $3,500 to $5,500 (in 1985 PPP dollars).[8] Taking account for inflation this range might be closer to $7,000-$11,000 today. Happily for Tunisia, in 2011 its GNP per capita clocked in at just over $9,000. Happily for Tunisia, in 2010 its GNP per capita clocked in at $4,160. While this income level does not make enduring democracy a statistically "sure thing" in Tunisia, it nonetheless puts this political ambition in the realm of

[7] The political scientist Dankwart Rustow said it best when he paraphrased constitutionalist scholar Ivor Jennings: "The people cannot decide until somebody decides who are the people" Rustow Dankwar, "Transitions toward Democracy: A Dynamic Model," *Journal of Comparative Politics* 2, no. 3 (April 1970): 337-363.

[8] Alfred Stepan and Graeme Robertson, "An 'Arab' More than a 'Muslim' Democracy Gap," *Journal of Democracy* 14, no. 3 (July 2003).

reasonable possibility.[9]

In this way, Tunisia is endowed with structural conditions that favor the success of democratic transition. In addition, Tunisia has also performed well along five other variables that Linz and Stepan identify as key in shaping the possibilities of effective democratic transition.[10] These include:

(a) Whether rising political elites are persuaded that "democracy is the least worst political system" (thanks to their past political experience) and so are committed to protecting the process;
(b) Whether the process of institution building during the transition process has been inclusive so that everyone has a stake in the process;
(c) Whether the military has been given the right incentives so that the cost of staying on in power is higher than the cost of giving it up;
(d) Whether the political institutions put in place during the transition process deny any one group majority control and create incentives for compromise and collaboration among opposing groups;
(e) Whether there is a history of negotiation and bridge building between opposition forces such that their shared commitment to the political process is greater than what divides them.

Tunisia's performance along each of these lines has been surprisingly good. First, rising political leaders have demonstrated a commitment to the democratic process. This is most notable with regard to the party that commands the largest popular base in the country (and is the best organized), namely, Ennahda. In their oft-voiced public rhetoric, the leaders of the Ennahda party have expressed commitment to the democratic process and, perhaps even more surprisingly for an Islamist party, commitment to liberal principles such as gender equality, freedom of speech, and equal rights for (religious) minorities. To some degree, this commitment is a consequence of their experience forged in the fire of repression (under Ben Ali and Bourguiba). And apparently their liberal inclinations were further nurtured by the exposure of the party's leadership to liberal ideas while in exile in Western Europe.[11] However, even before Ben Ali and exile, the party's leadership was well known for its relatively liberal starting point ideologically. The fact that the party embraced the electoral process for Tunisia's constituent assembly (and ultimately won the largest share of seats in the October election 2011 for Tunisia's constituent assembly (and the acting parliament) suggests a commitment to democratic procedures and principles by an important percentage

[9] Beyond just meeting this GNP per capita target, Tunisia does indeed boast a relatively sizeable middle class and high rates of literacy, both of which are conducive to the vitality of democracy.
[10] Juan Linz and Alfred Stepan, *Problems of Democratic Transition and Consolidation* (Johns Hopkins University Press, 1996).
[11] *New York Times*, February 17, 2012.

of Tunisia's political elite.[12]

Second, the institution building process has been very inclusive. The Committee for the Protection of the Revolution (later renamed the Higher Commission for Political Reform) which hammered out the rules governing the first constituent assembly/parliamentary elections in Tunisia embraced elites from across the political and social spectrum. Starting with 71 members and eventually expanding to 155, the Committee included representatives of the trade union movement, the bar association, 12 political parties (from the Communists to the Islamists), women, youth, remote regions, and a wide range of civil society and professional associations. This inclusiveness spelled extraordinary "buy-in" and popular legitimacy for the elections and the constituent assembly it created. It also led to the embrace of proportional representation in the electoral system. The latter meant small parties had a good chance of winning a seat in the constituent assembly—another strike for inclusiveness that legitimized the fledgling democratic institutions.

Third, the military in Tunisia has long been small, professionalized, and removed from the political sphere. Early on, General Rachid Amar made clear that he would "protect the revolution" and after Ben Ali's departure he immediately ceded control to the constitutionally designated successor to the fallen dictator. In the year since the transition process took off, the military has proven true to its tradition and has not intervened in high politics. In Tunisia, the military did not have to be persuaded to "give up power" in large part because it never sought to seize it.

Fourth, Tunisia embraced a system of proportional representation in its first elections in the hopes of providing representation to even small parties and, in a break with the country's past experience of single party rule, denying an overwhelming majority to any one party. The country was lucky in that this electoral system did indeed return results that denied any party a majority. Even the most successful party, Ennahda, won only 41 percent of the seats. Besides Ennahda, 19 other parties made it into the assembly (along with eight independents). This meant that no party could rule alone. All were obliged to "work across the aisle" and embrace compromise and collaboration if they hoped to make policy happen.

Fifth, Tunisia began the transition process with a lucky back story. As described by Stepan, there is a significant history of negotiation and bridge-building between key opposition forces in Tunisia.[13] This meant that "the shared commitment to the process of democratic transition is greater than what divides them." Apparently, leading forces in both the secularist and Islamist camps had been meeting for the last five years of Ben Ali's rule in the hopes of collaborating on a common path out of dictatorship. This created an important foundation of cooperation that eased the process of transition once Ben Ali had been ejected.

In short, Tunisia is politically well-positioned to carry out democratic transition successfully. If the Tunisian economy improves as well (thereby quelling tendencies toward extremism and demagoguery), the political prospects for the country look very good.

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[12] In addition, of course are the numerous other (smaller) parties, both from the left and the right who expressly declare their commitment to democratic process and who together compose the lion's share of the constituent assembly/parliament.

[13] Alfred Stepan, "Tunisia's Transition and the Twin Tolerations," *Journal of Democracy* 22, no. 3 (April 2012): 90-105.

Egypt: Shakier Ground

By comparison to Tunisia, Egypt looks less well positioned to transition to democracy, although the prospects are not entirely grim. Like Tunisia, Egypt enjoys certain structural endowments that are favorable for transition but they are not altogether so. In contrast to Tunisia, Egypt is less well positioned in terms of the five political variables outlined above as key to the success of this process.

In terms of structural conditions, the picture is mixed. Like Tunisia, Egypt is relatively homogenous ethnically, linguistically, and religiously. The country is largely Sunni Muslim (although there is a Christian minority that constitutes 7-10 percent of the population) and there are no significant linguistic minorities. Egyptians enjoy a historically rich sense of national identity, rare for its clarity in the region. As such, deep identity cleavages do not hobble Egypt's transition. In addition, Egypt is endowed with a strong state with solid (if unwieldy) state institutions. With a relatively professionalized military and judiciary, and a large (if deeply inefficient) civil service, the foundations of order are present. However, in terms of economic endowment, Egypt is less well positioned than Tunisia. Egypt's GNP per capita clocked in at about $6,000 in 2011, well below the statistically favored threshold for successfully enduring transition. In addition, with nearly 43 percent of the country living below the poverty line and with illiteracy rates still hovering around 25 percent, the sociological underpinnings of a vibrant democracy remain compromised.

As for the five political factors that are significant for effective transition, Egypt's position is less than robust. First, the commitment of major players to the democratic system is less certain in Egypt than in Tunisia. The largest Islamist party, the Muslim Brotherhood's Freedom and Justice Party has rhetorically expressed its commitment to democratic process for over a decade ,[14] but its commitment to foundational liberal principles is much less clear.[15] Over the course of the past year the Muslim Brotherhood has declared its commitment to a "civil state" in Egypt but when pressed, the leadership defines "civil" as a contrast to "theocratic" (as opposed to fully endorsing civil rights and liberties). In other words, they express commitment to the principle of popular sovereignty (rather than rule by clerics or by "God") but do not rule out the possibility of popular majorities voting in extremely illiberal policies (e.g. denying full equality to women and minorities; denying full freedom of speech and religion).[16]

Altogether, the Muslim Brotherhood's democratic credentials seem thinner than that of Ennahda, and their leadership seems less unified around a common stand on this issue. Since the Freedom and Justice Party controls 43 percent of the newly elected parliament, this is troubling. Further tipping the balance against elite commitment to democratic process is the fact that 25 percent of the parliament is peopled by members of three Salafi parties. The willingness of the Salafis to play the democratic game is an entirely new phenomenon and the

[14] Nathan Brown, *When Victory is Not an Option: Islamist Movements in Arab Politics* (Cornell University Press, 2012).
[15] Bruce Rutherford, "What Do Islamists Want? Moderate Islam and the Rise of Islamic Constitutionalism," *Middle East Journal* 60, no. 4 (October 2006): 707-735.
[16] Personal communication with Samer Shehata (2011).

depth of their commitment to democratic principles is largely unclear.

Second, the process of institution building during this first post-Mubarak year has hardly been inclusive. To the contrary, the process for determining the electoral rules for the country's first free elections was largely opaque and dictated, top down, by the ruling Supreme Council of the Armed Forces (SCAF).[17] Although Egypt's first elections for parliament were conducted in a relatively free and fair fashion and were inclusive in the sense of bringing to power more than 16 parties from across the political spectrum, the fact that the rules governing the new regime were not worked out in an inclusive fashion does not reinforce the legitimacy of the process.

Third, the military in Egypt has not been given sufficient incentive to bow out of politics. In contrast to the Tunisian case, the military has played a central role in governing Egypt since the ouster of the autocrat. The SCAF has significant reason not to be enthusiastic about surrendering political power. Part of this is due to the military's extensive economic ventures which had been protected by the old regime and which the military did not wish to subject to public review. But beyond these interests, the military elite are undoubtedly also concerned about its susceptibility to public retribution for its role in suppressing opposition (before, during, and after the uprising). This concern is augmented by the persistent demand by some activists for "justice" vis-à-vis the old regime's elites. Without some promise of amnesty, the military is hardly provided with sufficient incentives to cede power.

Fourth, the design of the electoral system has resulted in a situation that incentivizes some degree of cross-aisle collaboration, but perhaps not as much as would be ideal. After much vacillation, the SCAF finally settled on an electoral system that awarded one-third of the seats in parliament through a first-past-the-post system and two-thirds of the seats through a system of proportional representation (party lists). The elections delivered 43 percent of the parliamentary seats to the Muslim Brotherhood's Freedom and Justice Party (another two percent went to smaller parties that were partners in its umbrella Democratic Alliance). It also delivered 25 percent of the seats to an alliance of three Salafi parties. The remaining 32 percent of the seats were divided among a host of 15 other parties, independents, and state appointed MPs.

While the electoral system succeeded in denying a majority position to any one party (thereby obliging cross-aisle collaboration) it did deliver an overwhelming majority of seats (68 percent) to Islamist parties.[18] The result may mean less collaboration among Islamists and non-Islamists in shaping Egypt's new regime (although early indications are that the Muslim Brotherhood may seek pragmatic alliances with secularists more than might have been anticipated). In any event, given the strong popular standing of the Muslim Brotherhood

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[17] In fact, the rules governing the first elections went through three iterations, with the SCAF announcing different percentages of the seats to be elected via proportional representation vs. first-past-the-post. The final version was decided after opposition figures threatened to boycott the elections. After consulting with party leaders the SCAF announced the final version. So some element of inclusion was integrated into the process of rule designation, although only in a very blunt way.

[18] For a detailed account of Egypt's electoral results see: "Results of Egypt's People's Assembly Election" CEIP: http://egyptelections.carnegieendowment.org/2012/01/25/results-of-egypt%E2%80%99s-people%E2%80%99s-assembly-elections.

in Egyptian society, clever electoral engineering might not have been able to transform this result.

Fifth, there is less evidence of prior bridge building between opposition forces than seems to be the case in Tunisia. Secular parties were suspicious of the Muslim Brotherhood and largely avoided alliances with it during the Mubarak era. And the Salafi parties were non-existent prior to the fall of the old regime. Still, the long shared experience of repression under Mubarak may create a shared commitment to a reformed political process and, with luck, this may prove "greater than what divides them," at least in the short run.

In sum, Egypt faces a bumpier path to effective democratic transition than Tunisia. But given that the military has some interest in bowing out (at the least to be liberated from primary responsibility for the country's daunting economic and political challenges) and given the leading party's seeming commitment to democratic process (forged in the fire of Mubarak's repression), the challenges to democratization in Egypt do not seem altogether fatal.

Libya: Where is the State?

Libya, the third state to jettison its dictator in the wake of the Arab Spring, is significantly less well positioned to undertake democratic transition than either Egypt or Tunisia. The reason lies primarily in the fact that Libya lacks the basic structural underpinnings that make democratic rule sustainable. Most importantly, Libya does not have a state, or at least, it does not have the basic institutions of a state. As Max Weber argued long ago, the irreducible component of "stateness" lies in the state's capacity to exercise a legitimate monopoly over the means of coercion within its given territory. The government of Libya, post-Qadhafi, has not yet achieved this fundamental goal. Libya is still controlled by a host of rival militia's that control different parts of the country and so far have not been willing to turn in their arms and sign on to centralized control.[19] Consequently, the acting government has not yet been able to exert authority evenly throughout Libya. In addition, it has yet to build the basic institutions (taxing, judicial, bureaucratic) that would enable a central government to exercise its authority. Without these basic foundations of "stateness," discussion of democratic transition is meaningless. How can one exercise choice over collective policy if there are no institutions to carry through that choice? Even those scholars who are skeptical about the need to sequence state building prior to democratization admit that some basic foundations of stateness (e.g. monopoly on the means of coercion) need to be established before democratic transition can effectively proceed.

In addition to lacking a state, however, Libya is also hobbled by the lack of a nation. Libyan society is still dominated by tribal allegiances, and loyalty to the center cannot be taken for granted. Tribal forces remain highly centrifugal, jeopardizing the unity of the country.[20] This lack of common identity is historically one of the most devastating challenges to a successful transition to democracy.

Of course, Libya has one asset that is absent in both the Tunisian and Egyptian cases.

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[19] *New York Times*, March 3, 2012.

[20] For more see: "Libya to see endless war of tribal feuds" (http://rt.com/news/libya-war-tribes-cyrenaica-229/

Libya sits on enormous oil wealth and if the fledgling central government can establish control over the distribution of oil profits and handles this distribution fairly, this capability can go far toward building loyalty to the center, common identity, and effective state institutions. But this is a big "if." If history is any predictor, it is just as likely that a large portion of this revenue will be squandered on favoritism and corruption and this would have as much centrifugal as centripetal impact on state and nation building in the country.

Yemen: Even Worse?

The Yemeni case, like the Libyan case, faces the challenges of simultaneously building state and nation at the same time as it tries to transition to democracy. As in Libya, the irreducible component of "stateness," a coercive apparatus with a monopoly on the means of coercion, is not secure. The military is sorely lacking in professionalism and threatens to fragment along "tribal" lines.[21] In addition, the central government based in Sana'a has yet to win the loyalty of all of Yemen's people. Many still harbor primary loyalty to their tribe and sub-region. Earlier experiments with democratization foundered along the lines of tribal divisions.[22] And in contrast to Libya, Yemen lacks access to bottomless oil revenues to cultivate loyalty and grease the wheel of national unity. In comparison to these challenges, the ambition of building democracy seems wholly secondary in priority and in sequence.

The crux of this analysis is that important political change is afoot in each of these four countries, but democratic transition is not a sure bet in any of them. Of the four, Tunisia has the likeliest prospects of successfully transitioning and Libya and Yemen the least.

Whither Bahrain and Syria?

Two additional countries were caught up in the maelstrom of the protest during the Arab Spring, but their democratic prospects look significantly bleaker than that of the four already discussed. In the case of Bahrain, popular protests significantly challenged the survival of the monarchy, but the hope of bringing down the old regime was extinguished by the extreme force mustered by the regime to repress the protests. The Bahraini military's willingness to shoot on civilians, facilitated by the "otherness" of the protesters (mostly Shi'a in contrast to the Sunni ruling family and military elite) and reinforced by Saudi military support, constituted the major difference between this case and that of the first comers, Tunisia and Egypt. So long as the Saudi regime is willing to back up the Bahraini monarchy with might and money, no one should expect regime change in this island kingdom.

As for Syria, this is perhaps the most tragic case of all the Arab states seized by last year's "awakening." As in the other cases discussed here, Syria saw a steady rise in popular protest, initially non-violent, spread throughout the country. In contrast to Egypt and Tunisia (but like Bahrain), the military elite proved willing to repress civilians brutally, not sparing the deadliest of fire power and tactics. Unlike the case in Bahrain, however, the balance of power between regime and opposition is less clear. While the Syrian regime can, in the short run, outgun the opposition militarily, it faces the long term challenge of maintaining army morale

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[21] "Yemen's Quiet Change," *Washington Post*, March 1, 2012.
[22] Sheila Carapico, *Civil Society Yemen* (Cambridge University Press, 1998).

and cohesion (in the face of prolonged massacres) and maintaining fiscal viability as it draws down its resources (and confronts international sanctions). The opposition, for its part, can draw on years of pent up hatred of the regime, widespread through the population, but it is also deeply divided and disorganized. Should outside powers (China, Russia, and Iran) decide to persist in propping up the regime and should Western powers decide to arm the opposition, what is likely to happen is a prolonged stalemate and a violent war of attrition.[23] Neither a quick clean resolution to this conflict nor transition to democracy appears likely in the Syrian case.

In conclusion, the Arab world is a different place politically, thanks to the Arab Spring. There is new energy and a new sense of possibility thanks to the openings forced on Tunisia, Egypt and beyond. And the success of new technological tools such as social media and satellite television in facilitating protest have forever changed politics in the region and beyond. No authoritarian regime will enjoy immunity from collective action or immunity from international exposure of its atrocities as was possible in the past. Will this make for a domino-effect with regard to the region's transition to democracy? Hardly. Still, the contagion of protest that began in Tunisia and spread throughout the region suggests the importance of the demonstration effect to the course of politics in the region. Should Tunisia succeed at transitioning to democracy (and all indications are that it will) then perhaps this country will also model democratization in a contagious fashion in the years to come.

[23] Joshua Landis, "The Syrian Uprising of 2011: Why the Asad Regime is Likely to Survive to 2012," *Middle East Policy* (February, 2012); and Jeffery White, "Indirect Intervention in Sryia: Crafting an Effective Response to the Crisis," *Washington Institute for Near East Policy*, Policy Watch #1904, February 21, 2012.

Part 2
Economic Correlates of Political Mobilization

Political Economies of Transition

Clement Henry, The University of Texas at Austin and The American University in Cairo

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Introduction

Tunisia and Syria were among the more preposterous as well as repressive of the region's authoritarian regimes. Preposterous in Syria, as Lisa Wedeen brilliantly illustrated with cartoons and thick descriptions of the cult of Assad (father), inculcating obedience by requiring performances of fealty in which nobody believed.[24] Ridiculous in Tunisia for having Ben Ali, a mediocre apparatchik from military intelligence services, not only overthrow the Supreme Warrior Habib Bourguiba but also mimic his personality cult with a narrative that was "peculiar in its *naïveté*."[25] Perhaps, as Kai Hafez has argued, the two regimes were also among the region's most repressive because each was defending an unpopular secular ideal.[26] Whatever the possible similarities, however, this chapter underlines major structural differences between Syria and Tunisia that explain the critical variations not only in their recent political awakenings but also why Egypt, not Syria or Libya, could be Tunisia's most faithful echo. The big structural difference concerns their respective private sectors and banking systems. Tunisia, like Egypt, had generated a substantial, if politically subordinate private sector, from a restructured socialist economy, whereas Syria, like Libya and Yemen, had consigned theirs, either by design or lack of financial capacity, to the shadows of the informal economy. While the IMF and World Bank had pressured most of these countries to engage in neo-liberal reform, private sector development varied significantly. Tunisian and Egyptian businesses enjoyed considerably more commercial bank financing than the others.

This chapter focuses, then, on the specific national differences that explain variations in the mobilization of Arab protest movements and their potential outcomes, possibly "transitions to democracy," rather than on general economic determinants of unrest or "revolution," such as youth bulges and unemployment, growing inequalities in income distribution, the alienation of previously protected public sector labor and the like that are common to the entire region.[27] Economic grievances, discussed by Steven Heydemann at our conference,[28] were fairly

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[24] Lisa Wedeen, *Ambiguities of Domination: Politics, Rhetoric, and Symbols in Contemporary Syria* (University of Chicago Press, 1999).

[25] As observed by Laryssa Chomiak, "Confronting Authoritarianism: Order, Dissent, and Everyday Politics in Modern Tunisia." (Ph.D. diss., University of Maryland, College Park, 2011), comparing the cult with that of Asad and various fascists. Quoted here with her permission.

[26] Kai Hafez, *Radicalism and Political Reform in the Islamic and Western Worlds* (Cambridge University Press, 2010), 26.

[27] For an excellent overview see: Omar S. Dahi, "Understanding the Political Economy of the Arab Revolts," *Middle East Report* 259 (Summer 2011): 2-6.

[28] In his presentation on November 4, 2011, Heydemann summarized the basic grievances of "a region-wide, structural deficit in job creation that has kept unemployment rates at staggering levels for almost two decades, with especially high unemployment among university-educated Arab youth … the deepening of market-oriented economic reforms that improved macro-level economic performance in some cases, but were accompanied by the erosion of social welfare programs, and by increasing levels of poverty, inequality, and economic insecurity among Arab citizens; and the capture of liberalized sectors of the economy by predatory, privileged economic networks and the exclusion from such sectors of large segments of Arab societies from such sectors; as well as increasing (and increasingly visible) levels of corruption among political and economic elites." Heydemann

similar throughout the Southern Mediterranean, and arguably the countries faced similar pressures, but my concern is to understand why rising discontent and widespread perceptions of regime illegitimacy took the forms and timing that they did across the region between December 2010 and the following long summer of 2011, with no end of transitions in sight.

Let me also confess at the outset that my argument hinges on a practical convergence of Franco-American with German conceptions civil society. For the former, as illustrated by Alexis de Tocqueville, the art of association lies at the root of democracy's defense against the tyranny of the majority. For Hegel and Marx, on the other hand, civil society is simply bourgeois political economy—the private sector buttressed by law courts and police forces. These very different intellectual traditions do converge, however, in very concrete ways, whether in Paris, Berlin, Cairo, or Tunis. Associations, whatever their cause, need funding from private enterprises or foundations if they are to display any independence in expressing the interests of their constituents. Let me offer two quick illustrations from my portfolio of interviews of Tunisians over the years: Ahmed Mestiri could not sustain many editions of his opposition party's newspaper in 1986 because local businesses did not dare advertise in it for fear of antagonizing the government. More recently, in June 2011, Abdeljelil Bedoui, president of Tunisia's Higher Education Union and close to other trade union circles, announced a new labor party to contest the Islamists. One of his first steps was to contact elements of the business community (presumably in such sectors as tourism concerned to contain the Islamist Ennahda and other more rabidly Islamist parties) to raise the funds for establishing a national network of party offices to campaign in the October elections. Whether in 1986 or 2011, such experiences were inconceivable in Syria or any other of the Arab states with weak to non-existent private business sectors.[29]

Intermediary bodies or secondary associations, whether they be interest groups or political parties, are weak throughout the Arab region: Tocqeville's art of association, axiomatic in American political science as expressed in Arthur Bentley's seminal work,[30] did not travel well from north to southern Italy, much less points further south.[31] Consequently, "limited pluralism," the defining feature of "authoritarian" regimes, makes less sense in Arab countries than in Franco's Spain, which inspired Juan Linz with the concept.[32] The entire

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stressed the importance of "memories and expectations about the distributive role of the state, its obligation to provide for the economic security of citizens, and its responsibility to ensure economic and social justice in accounting for the escalation of economic grievances that culminated in the Arab uprisings of 2011."

[29] See Eva Bellin, "Contingent Democrats: Industrialists, Labor and Democratization in Late-Developing Countries," *World Politics* 52 (January 2000): 175-205; and *Stalled Democracy: Capital, Labor, and the Paradox of State-Sponsored Development* (Cornell University Press, 2002). Eva explains why business and labor were weak and dependent in the countries such as Egypt and Tunisia whereas I make distinctions between these cases, with their greater potential for autonomy, and less promising ones.

[30] Arthur Fisher Bentley, *The Process of Government*¸ ed. Peter H. Odegard (Harvard University Press, 1967). The original edition was published in 1908. As Odegard summarizes the axiom on page xix: "So integral is the relation of individual process and group process that to ask which is the more important is like asking whether the area of a triangle depends more on its base than its altitude."

[31] Robert D. Putnam, *Making Democracy Work: Civic Traditions in Modern Italy* (Princeton University Press, 1994).

[32] Recent French comparative political studies also contest the utility of limited pluralism from a somewhat different perspective and tear down distinctions between modern democracies and authoritarian regimes. See Olivier Dabène, Vincent Geisser, and Gilles Massardier, eds., *Autoritarismes démocratique et démocraties*

transitions to democracy literature connotes starting and end points, but these get blurred in the absence of intermediary bodies and at least "limited" pluralism. "Pacted" democracies characteristic of some Latin American and Southern European transitions, for instance, entail viable intermediaries representing various constituencies. I am not arguing that the Arab countries are necessarily stuck in some hybrid halfway house.[33] Rather, terms with emotive meaning like "democracy" and even "transition" are moving targets, bound to specific national contexts. To the extent, however, that "transition to democracy" connotes a move to liberal pluralism (as well as to supposedly free and fair electoral performances), the concept is more applicable to countries that host private business communities and support associations (including labor unions) than to those in which private enterprise remains small, furtive, and informal. Transitions gain more traction in Egypt and Tunisia, countries with more private businesses and stronger associations, than in Libya, Syria, or Yemen.

Typologies of Political Economies

Robert Springborg and I presented a typology of Arab political systems before January 2011 that roughly coincided with variations in their respective command and control systems for allocating credit to the economy.[34] On the political front, there was only one true formal democracy, Lebanon, amid a variety of monarchies and undemocratic forms of republican rule. Democracy went hand in hand in Lebanon (as in Turkey) with a relatively competitive, privately owned commercial banking system. Some of the monarchies also harbored banking structures that were privately owned and appeared to be relatively competitive, although ruling families usually wielded decisive influence behind the scenes—as was perhaps still the case in the formal democracy, Hariri's Lebanon.

Of special interest for understanding the Arab awakening, however, were the differences among the more authoritarian republics. Egypt and Tunisia, the bully police states depicted in Table 1 (below), have stronger states than the bunkers. They deploy power through relatively autonomous administrative structures and other controlled intermediary bodies interacting with them. Egypt's Mohammed Ali and Tunisia's Ahmed Bey engaged in modern state building already in the nineteenth century, and, unlike the other Arab republics, enjoyed previous legacies as political entities living off their respective sedentary tax bases.[35] They also substantially altered the commanding heights of their respective economies in the 1970s. To open up their respective economies to foreign investment, they encouraged private

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autoritaires au XXIe siècle : Convergences Nord-Sud, Mélanges offerts à Michel Camau (Paris : La Découverte, 2008) ; and Michel Camau and Gilles Massardier, eds., *Démocraties et authoritarismes: Fragmentation et hybridation des régimes* (Paris: Editions Karthala, 2009).

[33] Thomas Carothers, "The End of the Transition Paradigm," *Journal of Democracy* 13, no. 1 (January 2002): 5-21.

[34] Clement M. Henry and Robert Springborg, *Globalization and the Politics of Development in the Middle East* (Cambridge University Press, 2010).

[35] Karl A. Wittfogel, *Oriental Despotism: the Comparative Study of Total Power* (Yale University Press, 1957). Wittfogel presents the classic argument relating taxation to hydraulic engineering, but the extended coastal Sahel of Tunisia was also, like the Nile Valley, a relatively rich tax base. Fernand Braudel offers a somewhat different explanation in his *Memory and the Mediterranean* (New York: Vintage, 2002): clearing the shores and draining the swamps for agriculture required remarkable social coordination in Neolithic times.

ownership in their commercial banking systems, although a heavy influence of state-owned banks remained. As Table 1 also shows, the bankers in these bully state regimes allocated substantially more credit to the private sector than did those in the bunkers, who were not real bankers but usually continued, as in the heady days of state socialism, to be state officials doling out off-budget patronage.

The bunker regimes are legacies of less developed states. There is little civil society: the state, to borrow the expression of French political scientist Jean Leca discussing Algeria, is "folded in" on the society and directly managed by clans, tribes or personal networks, not developed bureaucracies.[36] None of the bunker regimes allows credible intermediary bodies capable of making "pacted" transitions: there are no principals capable of representing critical constituencies other than primary groups of family, clan, tribe, sect, or clientele. By contrast, the bullies maintained appearances of intermediary bodies in supposedly vibrant civil societies, even if the reality was police control, taken to absurd extremes in Tunisia.

Progressive monarchies, notably those of Morocco and to a lesser extent the more recently reinvented dynasties of Bahrain, Jordan, and Kuwait, also nurtured a variety of intermediaries that serve as shock absorbers and might perform "pacted" transitions to democracy. On the smallest scale, Bahrain, which like Kuwait had occasionally experimented with parliamentary representation, might have experienced genuine reform had Saudi Arabia not intervened. The other family-run municipalities and larger members of the GCC seem more akin to the bunker republics, however, for their prime intermediaries, too, are families, tribes, and patron-client networks, not political parties or other forms of secondary associations. Much wealthier than the other bunkers, however, they have pre-empted any revolt of their potentially restive populations with substantial social spending programs. Their bunkers, to pursue the metaphor, are more akin to bank vaults than to underground military fortresses.

Table 1 shows that our political typology correlates closely with commercial banking structures, the command and control systems of the political economy. These political and economic structures also bear an interesting correlation with the second column of the table, Contract Intensive Money (CIM). CIM is the percentage of money supply (M2) held by the domestic banks rather than by individuals who prefer to keep their cash away from these public institutions. It indicates the outreach of a country's financial infrastructure and possibly also the security more generally of property rights under the rule of law.[37] As Lewis Snider observed,

> Where institutions are highly informal, i.e. where contract enforcement and security of property rights are inadequate, and the policy environment is uncertain, transactions will generally be self-enforcing and currency will be the only money that is widely used. Where there is a high degree of public confidence in the security of property rights and

[36] Andrea Liverani, *Civil Society in Algeria: The Political Functions of Associational Life* (Hoboken New Jersey: Allen and Francis, 2007), xii.

[37] Christopher Clague, Philip Keefer, Stephen Knack, and Mancur Olson, "Contract-Intensive Money: Contract Enforcement, Property Rights, and Economic Performance," Working Paper 151, *Center for Institutional Reform and the Informal Sector*, The University of Maryland, College Park (revised October 4, 1997), http://chenry.webhost.utexas.edu/global/coursemats/2006/about%20indicators/ClagueKeeferOlson1997.pdf.

> in contract enforcement, other types of money that are held or invested in banks and other financial institutions and instruments assume much more importance.[38]

The one Arab democracy and the small wealthy GCC countries enjoy the highest CIM scores, whereas the bunker regimes score lowest, indeed reflecting a general distrust of any public institutions and preferences for informal economy. Libya's Qadhafi at one point banned money altogether—virtually expropriating the middle classes—but then, floating on oil revenues generating a relatively high per capita income, Libya became the sole bunker to exceed a CIM of 80 percent and surpass Morocco despite its much smaller trickle of credit to the private sector. Table 1 shows the relative amounts of credit to the private sector that the various types of regime allocate. It is hardly surprising that the higher the CIM, the greater the amounts of credit a banking system may generate. Note that only Iraq, bunkered in its Green Zone, allocates even less credit as a percentage of GDP to the private sector than Libya.

Table 1 – Regime Types, CIM, Credit, and Commercial Banking Structures

Regime type	2007		CIM Ranking (2007)	Credit 2007 (constant mm USD 2000)	as % GDP		Banking Structure	
							Ownership	Market
democracy	97.9%		Lebanon	$15,822	75.6%		Private	Competitive
monarchy	96.6%		Kuwait	$35,279	69.6%		Private	Oligopoly
monarchy	96.2%		Qatar	$9,222.	41.6%		Private	Oligopoly
monarchy	95.4%		Bahrain	$6,686.	78.4%		Private	Competitive
monarchy	95.4%		UAE	$68,851	64.3%		Private	Competitive
monarchy	90.9%		Saudi Arabia	$97,777	40.4%		Private	Oligopoly
monarchy	90.8%		Oman	$8,562	32.0%		Private	Oligopoly
bully	86.5%		Egypt	$68,805	50.6%		Public	Competitive
monarchy	86.2%		Jordan	$12,731	99.0%		Private	Competitive
bully	85.4%		Tunisia	$17,435	64.3%		Public	Competitive
monarchy	81.4%		Morocco	$36,521	69.9%		Private	Oligopoly
bunker	82.3%		Libya	$3,265	7.2%		Public	Oligopoly
bunker	77.1%		Algeria	$9,745	13.3%		Public	Oligopoly
bunker	71.9%		Yemen	$977	7.9%		Public	Oligopoly
bunker	71.4%		Sudan	$2,712	12.5%			
bunker	68.1%		Syria	$4,315	16.2%		Public	Oligopoly
bunker	47.9%		Iraq	$799	3.9%			

Note: CIM= (M2 minus Money Outside Domestic Banking System)/M2

Source: IMF Financial Statistics, lines 14a, 34 and 35, from Henry and Springborg (2010):81, 95, 104.

[38] Lewis W. Snider, *Growth, Debt, and Politics: Economic Adjustment and the Political Performance of Developing Countries* (Boulder: Westview Press, 1996), 9.

Commercial banking systems tend to be the mirror image of the real economy and to reflect its structure. The banks may be publicly or privately owned, and their market shares may be concentrated into a small number of banks or less concentrated, and therefore potentially more competitive in structure. Table 1 indicates the four possibilities. The bunkers all fall into the category of concentrated public ownership, whereas the bullies, while retaining predominantly public ownership, display more diversified banking systems as well as consistently greater credit allocations to the private sector. The monarchies, by contrast all display predominantly privately owned banks, albeit with varieties of concentration ranging from greater competition in Jordan to a relatively concentrated, oligopolistic system of royal control in Morocco.

It seems no coincidence that the bully regimes were the first to experience the Arab awakening. After practicing state socialism in the 1960s, they also developed dense webs of private sector interests, as indicated by outstanding credits to the economy, which could support civil society. Monarchies of course also harbor significant private sectors but usually manipulate them more astutely: the Moroccan *makhzan*, for instance, used the concentrated banking system to leverage new forms of royal patronage. The bullies were less skilled in not only the political but also financial arts. Their patronage generated substantially larger proportions of non-performing loans, as regime sycophants as well as public enterprises simply neglected to repay their debts. Politically, too, the presidents who relied on ruling parties appeared less able than monarchs to stay above politics. Bullying their civil societies required ever larger security forces, up to one police person (including plainclothesmen and thugs) for every fifty Egyptians and every seventy Tunisians.

A cross-sectional view of commercial banking structures taken in the mid-1990s can be interpreted, indeed, as the march of civil society across the broader region of the Middle East and North Africa, including Iran, Israel, and, of special interest to observers of the Arab awakening, Turkey, the bellwether of praetorian statist regimes that moved furthest toward democracy. In the 1930s and 1940s, before the advent of a multiparty system, its banks were largely government owned and dominated by three or four big ones. By the 1990s, more of them were privately owned and the structure was less concentrated.

Table 2 shows a scatter plot of the region's commercial banking structures, indicating the degree of state ownership along the horizontal x axis and the degree of concentration of their respective markets along the vertical y axis.[39] Our praetorian bunker states are all lined up in the upper right hand quadrant of highly concentrated state-owned banking systems. Further down, still largely state-owned, are Egypt and Tunisia, marching in a path toward Turkish and Lebanese democracy, reflected in their diversified, predominantly privately owned commercial banks.

The monarchies—and Israel for that matter—tend to have more concentrated banking systems, reflecting the oligopolistic control of their ruling families, who are also heavily steeped in commerce and control the working capital provided by the banks.

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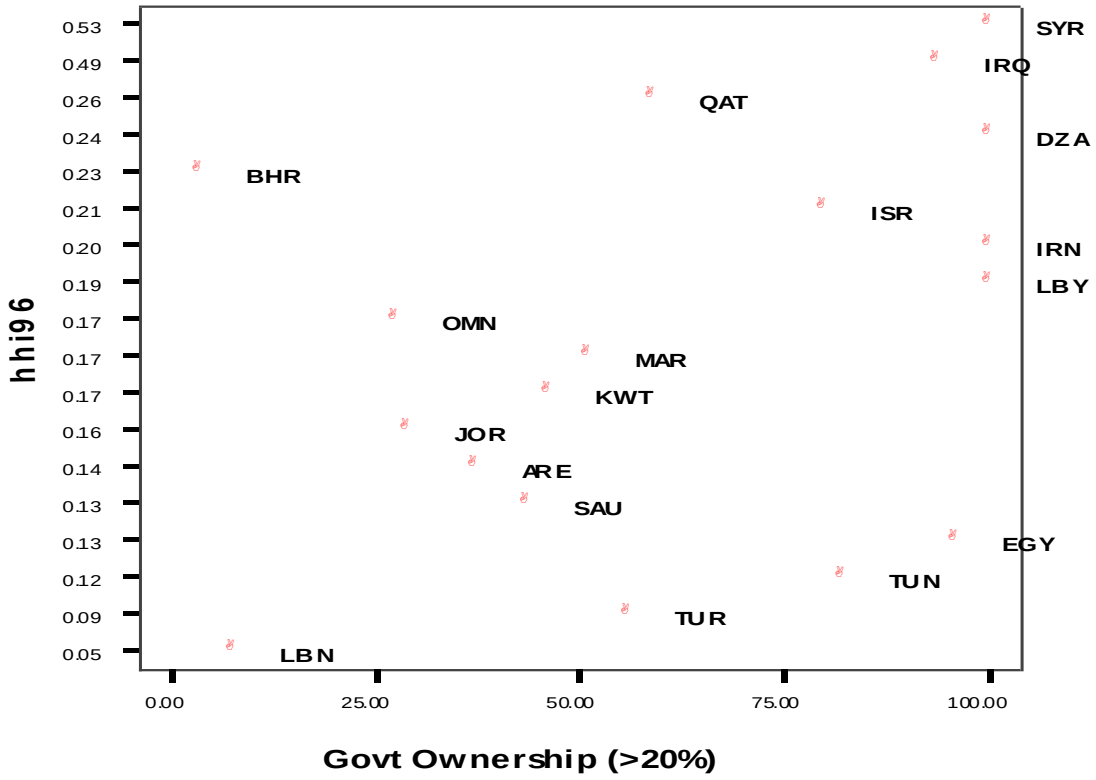
[39] HHI, the Herfindahl-Hirschman Index of concentration, is simply the sum of the squares of market shares of the commercial banks, ranging from 1, a monopoly, to very small numbers as in Lebanon.

Table 2 – Bank ownership and concentration mid-1990s



This temporal cross-section of the region's commercial banking structures offers further clues about potential political transitions. Among the republics, Tunisia has marched slightly further down the line than Egypt, and both of them are clearly much closer to Turkey than Libya, Algeria, Iraq, and Syria—or Iran for that matter. The two bullies by the mid-1990s had clearly emerged from the bunkers of state socialism. In the heyday of Arab socialism, Egypt, with its four state-owned banks, would have clustered with Algeria, Syria, and Iraq at the extremities of concentration and state ownership, extremes that Tunisia's more prudent leadership had avoided. The two bully regimes had progressed the furthest in structural adjustment by the 1990s and were enjoying steady five percent growth rates in much of the following decade. Many social and political strains accompanied the new dynamic.

Tunisia and Egypt

Before 2011 Tunisia's "sweet little" rogue regime, positioned among the "Worst of the Worst," already seemed the ripest candidate in the region for political change.[40] Of the non-

[40] Clement M. Henry, "Tunisia's 'Sweet Little' Regime," in *Worst of the Worst: Dealing with Repressive and Rogue Nations*, ed. Robert Rotberg (Brookings Institution Press, 2007), 300-323. See also: "Reverberations in the Central Maghreb of the "Global War on Terror," in Yahia H. Zoubir and Haizam Amira-Fernandes, eds.,

oil states its per capita income was second only to Lebanon's. Prudent economic management had generated the highest average per capita wealth growth rate since 1987, the year General Zine El Abidine Ben Ali succeeded Habib Bourguiba as president. The regime boasted of home ownership for 80 percent of the population as a sign of growing middle and lower middle classes. Its carefully crafted policies of export-led growth had fostered a light manufacturing base with as much value-added as neighboring Algeria's, with triple Tunisia's population. Economic success indeed rendered Ben Ali's crude dictatorship a political anomaly. His police regime tortured dissidents, mugged investigative journalists, imprisoned youth for circumventing Internet filters, and destroyed any semblance of judicial autonomy but could not insulate its largely literate population from constant interaction with their European neighbors, the closest of which was only ninety miles across the Mediterranean. As Jack Goldstone observes,

> For a revolution to succeed, a number of factors have to come together. The government must appear so irremediably unjust or inept that it is widely viewed as a threat to the country's future; elites (especially in the military) must be alienated from the state and no longer willing to defend it; a broad-based section of the population, spanning ethnic and religious groups and socioeconomic classes, must mobilize; and international powers must either refuse to step in to defend the government or constrain it from using maximum force to defend itself.[41]

Such description fitted Tunisia perfectly, if "state" in this context is taken to mean "regime."

By 2010 the government's "irremediable" injustice was as apparent to rural folk as to upscale Tunis' chattering classes. Wikileaks confirmed much of the gossip about Leila Trabelsi, Ben Ali's wife, and other members of her notorious family as well as other Ben Ali in-laws, thanks to judicious reporting by US Ambassador Robert F. Godec.[42] After 2007 the invasion of the Ben Ali and Trabelsi clans into lucrative slices of the Tunisian economy accelerated. Credit to this web of some 114 individuals reached 3 billion dinars by 2011 ($2.2 billion) and even more serious, in the opinion of Dr. Mustapha Nabli, Tunisia's highly respected new governor of the Central Bank brought in to clean up the mess, was how it had doubled in 2009 and again in 2010, revealing how ravenous the appetites of the ruling thieves were becoming.[43] Family members had gained control of two of the country's principal private sector banks.

North Africa: Politics, Region, and the Limits of Transformation (New York: Routledge, 2008), 298. Here Henry recommends Tunisia as the best testing ground in the region for promoting democracy.

[41] Jack A. Goldstone, "Understanding the Revolutions of 2011," *Foreign Affairs* 90, no. 3 (May/June 2011): 8. Note, however, that he proceeds to conflate our bullies and bunkers into "sultanism" and therefore cannot make necessary distinctions between the various sorts of processes at work in the region.

[42] WikiLeaks, *New York Times*, November 28, 2011, http://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2010/11/28/world/20101128-cables-viewer.html#report/tunisia-09TUNIS492.

[43] Interview, June 20, 2011. For a summary of the family and its holdings see "Ali Baba gone, but what about the 40 thieves?" *The Economist*, January 20, 2011, http://www.economist.com/node/17959620?story_id=17959620.

They were highly visible, and information about their predations traveled rapidly across the country via Facebook as well as word of mouth, but mobilizing the population required intermediaries on the ground as well. As the sheer amount of outstanding credit to the private sector noted in Table 1 suggests, civil society had the potential organizational capacity.

Structural variables cannot offer tipping points or explain how one particular case of self-immolation of the many that had happened in Tunisia since the 1990s can set off the sort of chain reaction on December 17, 2010 that sent Ben Ali packing 28 days later, on January 14. Nor does the profile of a bully police state explain why one started off an Arab chain reaction and not the other. Tunisia was perhaps better positioned than Egypt because it was smaller, with an eighth of Egypt's 83 million people, wealthier, and had less geopolitical weight. The Americans could be and were, at little cost, on the right side of history.

Tunisia's greater wealth was also correlated with greater associational activity, Internet connectivity, and, proportionate to population, greater Facebook membership, as Table 3 indicates. Perhaps equally important, it's very success in building up an export and services led economy may have led to the dictator's downfall. The contrast between a relatively dynamic economy, blocked only by visible, top-heavy centralized corruption, became too great for Tunisia's marginalized elites. Yet Tunisia's economic growth could not keep pace with an ever expanding education system. Over 50 percent of its secondary and university educated were unemployed in 2005, a record in North Africa; and possibly the aftershocks of world recession, coupled with high food prices, more adversely affected Tunisia than its neighbors because trade constitutes a substantially larger proportion of its GDP.

The other factor conducive to a successful revolution in Jack Goldstone's view was a military "alienated from the state and no longer willing to defend it." There were, and indeed still are, major structural differences between the Egyptian and Tunisian military, but the overriding similarity was that each was prepared to defend the state against a corrupt leadership and dirty police. Egypt and Tunisia after all exemplified the strongest, most developed states in the region. The differences were that the Tunisian armed forces were small, professional, and distrusted and marginalized by Ben Ali, whereas the Egyptian armed forces were an integral part of the regime, embedded in its political economy, and headed by a Supreme Council (SCAF) that could trace its ancestry to Nasser's Revolutionary Command Council. These differences, however, did not affect the outbreak of popular protest nor the military's role in each case of defending the protestors against paramilitary security forces and thugs of the incumbent leadership.

The catalyst to Tunisia's Revolution of January 14 mirrored the country's economic predicaments yet also acted out earlier visions of political change. The self-immolated youth, Mohamed Bouazizi, a high school dropout who had aspired to go to university, was a replica of Manfred Halpern's New Middle Class, the putative regional dynamo of the 1960s.[44] But the new catalyst lived in Sidi Bouzid, a rural periphery at Tunisia's geographic center, not the capital city. Village protest in Sidi Bouzid resonated in other peripheral centers, notably Thala and Kasserine, where the Tunisian army prevented further police brutality. As protest spread

[44] Manfred Halpern, *The Politics of Social Change in the Middle East and North Africa* (Princeton University Press, 1963).

finally east to Sfax and up the coast to Tunis, the army remained studiously neutral while security forces eventually fractured, accelerating Ben Ali's departure on January 14.[45] Only eleven days later the "Tunisation"[46] of other Arabs proceeded with Egypt's first Day of Rage. Perhaps some electronic exchanges between Tunisian and Egyptian youth facilitated Egypt's quick awakening. Certainly Egypt's Day of Rage, although planned before Ben Ali's demise, would not have had such a spectacular outcome without the Tunisian precedent. But the two countries also displayed their structural similarities, including a private sector and civil society of sorts. Despite a poorer, more rural, less literate society, it then took the Egyptians only 18 days, compared to Tunisia's 28, to oust their dictator. But just as the structures of political economy underlay these early Arab uprisings, they also conditioned their resultant dilemmas.

In Tunisia the armed forces have few economic interests apart from their own upkeep and have stayed out of politics. The contrast with Egypt could not be sharper. In Egypt, revolution was pretty much confined to major cities, not the rural peripheries that had grounded Tunisian urban protest. And while ostensibly defending the Egyptian insurgents against a counter-revolution managed by security police thugs, the Egyptian military connived to expel the president while preserving its economic interests, hence those of the *ancien régime*.

Tunisia and Egypt both experienced political decapitations but with very different consequences. The Tunisian revolutionaries, liberated from Ben Ali and protected by the military, could purge the *ancien régime*, up to a point, whereas their Egyptian counterparts were blocked. Egypt's Supreme Council of the Armed Forces (SCAF), headed by Field Marshal Hussein Tantawi, protected the extensive economic interests of the senior and retired officer corps. SCAF was happy to see Mubarak and his sons go because they threatened these interests. But only if popular insurrection precipitated changes within the army command might the Egyptian revolutionaries clean out the corrupt networks of its political economy.

The business networks of the two bully regimes also displayed significant differences. Corruption in Tunisia was highly centralized and top-heavy. Cut off the head and then the cancer, directly infecting some 113 individuals, is curable with further judicial surgery.[47] Indeed, were Tunisia to continue its prudent export oriented economic policies, the new political climate could attract the substantial local as well as foreign investment that the

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[45] The rumor at the time was that Army Chief of Staff Rachid Ammar had elegantly engineered Ben Ali's departure. See Ezza Rurki, "Tout sur la fuite de Ben Ali," *Réalités*, February 4, 2011. However, many knowledgeable Tunisians were still publicly asking about the real conditions under which Ben Ali departed. Noureddine Jebnoun points to crucial splits within the security establishment, not the army, in "'The People Want the Fall of the Regime:' The Arab Uprisings and the Future of Arab Politics," a paper presented at the Annual Symposium of the Center for Contemporary Arab Studies, March 22-23, 2012 (forthcoming).

[46] Subsequently, however, at a Conference on Arab Revolutions conducted in Doha on April 22, "Bishara dismissed the idea that the experiences of Tunisia and Egypt could be replicated in other Arab countries, explaining that other countries do not exhibit the same level of social homogeneity and thus no clear institutional separation [between state and regime] as in the cases of Tunisia and Egypt," http://english.dohainstitute.org/Home/Details?entityID=f4c16d5a-893e-4b10-bce4-fda7bb6493c7&resourceId=9e5f7395-fb84-4515-9074-7086ba61b73b.

[47] Just seizing the assets of the presidential family turned out to be more complex than beheading a snake, however. Ben Ali's three daughters by his first marriage, for instance, had parked their assets with their mother, who was not under investigation. See Slim Bagga, *L'Audace* no. 2, March 17-30, 2011, http://www.paperblog.fr/4302914/indiscretions-sur-le-clan-ben-ali-source-le-journal-l-audace/.

kleptocracy had deterred. In Egypt, by contrast, the cancer was more widespread, and SCAF, committed to protecting its extensive interests, did not wish to probe too deeply. SCAF and the Tunisian transitional authorities might compete with one another in exposing the financial misdemeanors of their former presidential families, but they faced different problems.

Each country enjoyed the advantage—unlike the bunkers—of a state with a functioning bureaucracy detached from social forces. As Shain and Linz have argued, "…one of the most important elements for ensuring a democratic outcome by any interim government is for the state to retain sufficient bureaucratic apparatus and minimal respect for the rule of law."[48] In post-Mubarak Egypt, SCAF even enjoyed a certain legitimacy, buttressed by a referendum in March in support of their proposed constitutional amendments. In Tunis, many might also have welcomed provisional military rule, but General Rachid Ammar wisely determined to preserve Bourguiba's legacy of civilian rule. The revolutionary youth and their supporters, however, perceived the incumbent authorities, whether in Egypt or Tunisia, to be illegitimate.

Differences in the respective transitions did not appear immediately. More protests in Tahrir Square led to Egypt's change of prime ministers in early February, preceding a similar change in Tunisia. There, as in Egypt, the revolutionaries staged sporadic mass protests in iconic locations. Finally on February 27 the protests of "Kasbah 2" (referring to the open spaces adjoining and overlooking the prime minister's office where multitudes gathered to demonstrate) induced the long serving prime minister to resign. He was a technocrat who, however well meaning, was too tarred by association with Ben Ali to be acceptable. The provisional president's choice of his former patron, 85-year-old Beji Caid Essebsi, to be the new prime minister was a stroke of luck, for as a former interior and defense minister under Bourguiba, he had requisite political as well as technical skills.

Equally important, as a result of Kasbah 2, was the expansion of Tunisia's Commission for Constitutional Reform, a technical committee of jurists headed by Yahd Ben Achour, a former law school dean, into the Higher Instance for the Preservation of the Objectives of the Revolution, Political Reform, and Democratic Transition. It became a mini-parliament of 155 members, representing a variety of self-coopted political parties, trade unions, professional associations, and human rights groups. At its opening meeting on March 17 it had 72 members but then expanded as more of Tunisia's civil society knocked at its doors.[49] Limited to only three seats, however, the Ennahda Party officially withdrew in June. Meanwhile the Higher Instance had drafted an electoral law of pure proportional representation, favoring smaller parties, as well as the requirement that women constitute at least half, in fair order, of every party list. It also elected an independent commission to supervise the elections to a Constituent Assembly and managed successfully to negotiate with the prime minister to delay them, originally scheduled for July, to October, to give the smaller parties more time to organize.

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[48] Yossi Shain and Juan J. Linz, eds., *Between States: Interim Governments and Democratic Transitions* (Cambridge University Press, 1995), 94.

[49] Interview with Yahd Ben Achour, June 20, 2011. See also his interview in *Le Monde* on April 23 2011 and the carefully crafted summary in *Wikipedia* of the High Instance's history online at http://fr.wikipedia.org/wiki/Haute_instance_pour_la_r%C3%A9alisation_des_objectifs_de_la_r%C3%A9volution,_de_la_r%C3%A9forme_politique_et_de_la_transition_d%C3%A9mocratique.

In Egypt, by contrast, SCAF retained control of the transition and organized a constitutional referendum on March 19, 2011, to ratify amendments originally promised while Mubarak was still in power. The "no" vote supported by much of the revolutionary youth and their senior supporters such as Mohamed ElBaradei obtained only 23 percent of the vote. SCAF then proceeded in the Constitutional Declaration of March 30 to issue its ground rules for the transition process but meanwhile remained in full control, with a thirty-year Emergency Law still in place. Efforts to coopt civilian advisory councils as in Tunisia failed, and civil society remained disconnected, apart from sporadic rioting, from the transition process. Tacit understandings between SCAF and the Muslim Brotherhood finally led to a series of legislative elections scheduled for November 2011.

Consolidating a political transition seemed more likely in Tunisia than Egypt, but even so, the Tunisian revolutionaries faced severe political obstacles of an erstwhile hegemonic single-party regime with deeper historical roots than Egypt's ruling party cliques. Distinguishing the revolutionary enemies was a daunting task in a country where many technically competent people had been obliged, like their counterparts in Baathist Iraq, to join the ruling party. And in Tunisia as in Egypt, an Islamist party, the Ennahda, was the largest outside the officially disbanded ruling party. The latter was possibly regrouping in several smaller parties, and it was still not clear which former leaders of the ruling party were to be excluded from the elections.[50]

Whatever the outcome of their respective transitions, the two bully regimes had relatively autonomous bureaucracies, grounded in centuries of state development. The other Arab regimes governed more problematic states with weaker administrative and civil infrastructures. The bunkers of Syria, Yemen, and Libya viciously lashed out at insurgent populations, one family, clan, tribe or sect against another without the insulation of either a bureaucracy or a professional military.

The Monarchies

By contrast, monarchies, especially the more progressive ones of Morocco and Jordan, had perfected styles of divide and rule of intermediary bodies, coupled with periodic promises of reform that postponed any frontal mass assaults of the type waged in Egypt and Tunisia. Their underlying political economies offer a partial insight into tactics of survival.

The financial command and control structures of the monarchies, clustered, for the most part, in the center of our graph (Table 2), offer a fascinating clue. To the extent that banking concentration reflects royal control, as in Morocco, of the political economy, there are ways of controlling businesses and civil society organizations while giving up some formal levers of power. Morocco effectively deregulated parts of the economy and moved toward a market economy in the early 1990s—but only after the *makhzan* had first established effective control of the banking system and some associated conglomerates. In effect Hassan II

[50] Former Foreign Minister Kamel Morjane, for instance, officially inaugurated his new party at a well-attended event in downtown Tunis on June 19, 2011. See: "KamelMorjane: un grand meeting dimanche au palais des congrès à Tunis," http://www.leaders.com.tn/article/kamel-morjane-un-grand-meeting-dimanche-au-palais-des-congres-a-tunis?id=5504.

reconstructed and expanded his system of royal patronage by commanding many of the spaces of private enterprise. Two decades later under a new king, the *makhzan's* portfolio, concentrated in a holding company SIDER ("of the king," in Latin, spelled backwards) has been rationalized. While centralizing control and leveraging assets may carry some financial risks, they also offer cushions for further political as well as financial engineering.[51]

To contain the awakening of his people, articulated in the February 20 Movement, King Mohammed VI promised on March 9, 2011, to delegate substantial powers to an elected prime minister. Drafted by experts supervised by the Palace, the new constitution offers greater powers to an elected prime minister but "reserves for the king three areas as his exclusive domain: religion, security issues, and strategic major policy choices."[52] It was adopted by referendum on July 1 by an overwhelming 98.6 percent majority but contested by the February 20 Movement. It may in reality reenact King Hassan II's political opening in 1997, when he appointed a prime minister from a leading opposition party and allowed him to form a government but reserved key domains for royal appointees. The extensive royal patronage machine serviced by the political economy ensures royal control while offering an appearance of big changes toward constitutional monarchy.

The region's other monarchies rest on less established state foundations than Morocco, which is ruled by a dynasty dating from the seventeenth century and supplemented by a modern administration inherited from the French Protectorate. There are fewer intermediary bodies, in the sense of either private sector enterprises or civil society or professional associations that might transcend primary cleavages. The small wealthy Arab states, with the exception of Bahrain (see Table 3), field few NGOs as most public matters are discussed in ruling family circles, such as *diwaniya*, which serve as receptions for notables. Not even Jordan, much less the GCC members, has Morocco's rich assortment of political parties and civil society associations. Relatively large private sectors point, however, to a potential development of civil society. The GCC countries, with the exception of Oman, are also at the forefront of Islamic finance in the region, raising eventual possibilities of an Islamic bourgeoisie emerging in competition with ruling families. Meanwhile, however, the tragedy of Bahrain reflects a Saudi determination to block any significant reform. As suggested at the outset of this chapter, many of the wealthy oil states still resembled the bunkers.

Bahrain, where oil was first discovered, was the most educated of the GCC countries with the most vibrant civil society, but it was also the closest to Saudi Arabia and major oil reserves. Host to offshore banking in the 1970s and to Islamic finance since the 1990s, Bahrain is a miniature Lebanon, the region's financial hub until 1975. Power sharing in Bahrain was as problematic as in Lebanon. The predominately Shi'ite population enjoyed substantial private wealth, but the monarchy was Sunni, just as wealth had also been spread

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[51] On *makhzan* finances, see: Henry and Springborg, *Globalization*, 216-224. Catherine Graciet and Eric Laurent, two investigative French journalists, observe in *Le Roiprédateur: main bassesur le Maroc* (Paris: Editions du Seuil, 2012) that Mohammed VI is greedier and exercises even tighter economic control than his father.

[52] For the details, see: Marina Ottaway, "The New Moroccan Constitution: Real Change or More of the Same?" *Carnegie Endowmnet*, June 20, 2011, http://carnegieendowment.org/publications/index.cfm?fa=view&id=44731&solr_hilite=Morocco.

across confessions in Lebanon although Christians had retained political hegemony. Bahrain seems also to have suffered Lebanon's earlier fates of sectarian discord and foreign intervention. The treaty founding the GCC in 1981 gave Saudi Arabia license to intervene in any of the peninsula's coastal municipalities, and the Causeway completed in 1986 gave the Saudis quick access to Bahrain. Consequently the Saudis could back support for the hardliner Bahraini prime minister with a physical presence and sabotage any efforts of the soft line crown prince to mediate and contain a predominately but not exclusively Shi'ite opposition. Bahrain might yet, however, be the catalyst that ignites the rest of the GCC, including its larger neighbor, where young, rapidly growing, educated populations remain underemployed, and the private sector is largely under expatriate management.

The Arab awakening is happening from the ground up, and external intervention can only exacerbate it, even if change is temporarily postponed. This paper has therefore focused on some of the internal drivers for change. Relatively strong states, such as Egypt, Jordan, Morocco, and Tunisia, offered more hospitable environments for mobilization than the bunker states: where necessary, a professional military stepped in to contain the excesses of the police. The monarchies proved their ability to contain protest through adept preemptive maneuvers, whereas bully presidents had to be sacrificed. The commanding heights of the political economy helped to explain why both bullies and monarchies had adequate protection in the form of viable civil societies—heavily policed, to be sure, but available, too, to engage populations in new political experiences, once they gained greater freedom. Each aroused citizenry was grounded in a particular political economy. It is no accident that Tunisians were the first to awaken. Tunisia's blatantly distorted political economy made it the prime candidate for a regime change. Nor in retrospect is it so surprising that Egypt followed suit, for its structures resembled Tunisia's more than those of any other Arab state. And finally, the more politically experienced Moroccan regime could offer modest reforms without endangering its pervasive patronage networks.

Table 3 – Indicators of potential social mobilization

Country name	Per capita income $ 000s (PPP) (2009)	Density of associations (NGOs per 100,000 pop.) (2001)	Urbanization (percent pop.) (2009)	Mobile cellular subscriptions (per 100 pop.) (2009)	Internet Usage (percent pop.) (2010)	Facebook FB members (2010)
Qatar	$91,379	95.7	175	51.6%	26.5%	373,000
UAE	$57,7443	77.9	232	75.9%	35.1%	1,616,000
Kuwait	$48,631	98.4	107	39.4%	16.7%	498,000
Bahrain	$35,174	88.6	199	88%	27.2%	215,000
Israel	$27,656	91.7	121	71.6%	38.5%	2,901,000
Oman	$25,462	71.7	140	41.7%	5.3%	152,000
Saudi	$23,480	82.3	177	38.1%	8.8%	2,901,000
Libya	$16,502	77.7	78	5.5%	2.2%	144,000
Turkey	$13,668	69.1	84	44.4%	31.1%	22,552,540
Lebanon	$13,070	87.1	36	24.2%	22%	931,000
Iran	$11,558	69	72	43.2%		
Tunisia	$8,273	66.9	94	34%	14.9%	1,555,000
Algeria	$8,173	65.9	94	13.6%	2.4%	845,000
Egypt	$5,673	42.8	67	21.2%	4.3%	3,360,000
Jordan	$5,597	78.5	101	27.2%	14%	884,000
Syria	$4,730	54.6	46	17.7%	0%	0
Morocco	$4,494	56.4	79	33%	5.6%	1,767,000
Iraq	$3,548	66.5	63	1.1%	0.6%	189,000
West Bank and Gaza		72	30	14.2%	4.5%	179,000
Djibouti	$2,470	87.7	15	3.5%	3.4%	29,000
Yemen	$2,320	31.2	16	1.8%	0.4%	97,000
Italy	$32,430	68	151	35.8%	27.6%	16,647,260
Valle d'Aosta			265			
Trentino-Alte Adige		182				
Puglia		54				

Sources: Salim Nasr, UNDP; Putnam, Italy; World Bank Development Indicators: http://www.internetworldstats.com/list2.htm; http://www.internetworldstats.com/stats4.htm; http://logicks.com/pdf/2010-05-22-MENA_Facebook_Digest.pdf; http://www.guardian.co.uk/technology/blog/2010/jul/22/facebook-countries-population-use#data.

Part 3
Social Networks and Civil Society

New Actors of the Revolution and the Political Transition in Tunisia

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Introduction

Spontaneous, popular, and without leadership, the social movement initiated by the act of immolation of Mohamed Bouazizi, which led to the fall of the former head of state, is the work of new social and political actors in Tunisia. At the forefront of these new actors are the youth, who were believed to be subordinated to the control of the dictatorship and to the culture of indifference, but who turned out to be the main leverage of political change. Such a change at the top of the State was unexpected and unpredictable; therefore the political role of the youth, non-enrolled in the parties and associations, had been, until then, unconceivable.

The novelty of this actor lies not in the affiliation to the socio-demographic category of the youth, which is variable and shifting, but rather in their political role and their different ways of expressing their demands. The political role of engaged young people radiates in all categories of society and draws in its wake, teenagers and adults, women and men, the middle class and the poor. This is the reason why the uprising against Ben Ali's dictatorship was the work of an entire people. It is true that the most unfortunate were the driving force of the protest movement that, in turn, led to the Tunisian revolution and to the first episode of the tempestuous transition that witnessed the fall of the second government of Mohamed Ghannouchi, following the sit-in of Kasbah 2, organized on February 27, 2011.

The two-fold question that immediately arises is: who are the new actors and what are their forms of expression, as well as the impact of their commitment? From a sociological point of view, by new social and political actors, we understand the ensemble of individuals that carry out collective action, of public nature, developed outside the old public sphere and inducing a significant change in motivations and political purposes. The demands of the new actors are in sharp contrast with the gradual ones of old actors because of their formulations and the types of mobilization characterized by the more or less radical opposition to the current political system. In fact, social movements that consist of determined collective action and aimed at changing the existent order are successful, as the sociologist A. Touraine puts it, if the company has a strong "historicity," that is, an ability to transform itself through critical awareness and the willingness of individual members.

From a philosophical and political point of view, it involves thinking about what actors do, and how they do it. More precisely, it is important to study the 'forms of rationality' that organize the ways of these actors. For Foucault, actors interact and organize their way of action according to three main registers: the control of things, the relation to others and the relation to themselves. Ultimately, the interaction between actors brings about issues of individual bodies and political and symbolical society issues.

In the case of Tunisia, amongst the most visible political and social actors at play, from the January 14 revolution and the consequent transition period, four stand out in imposing themselves in the virtual and actual political arena: the cyber-activists, the unemployed graduates, the basic trade union activists, and the lawyers. It is mainly these four new groups who have played a role in the uprising that led to the end of the dictatorship and the

beginning of a new era. While the outcome is still uncertain, Tunisia seems engaged in a historical process of democratic transition that will probably be long and full of tensions and political struggles.

The choice of these four new actors might find justification in the founding scene of the revolution, namely the act of immolation, in the city of Sidi Bouzid, Mohamed Bouazizi's hometown. Bouazizi was a young street vendor with an average level of education, and whose support came from the people close to him—trade unionists and unemployed graduates in particular, as well as lawyers—both at the local and regional level. Subsequently, the movement spread nationwide, in the form of a display of solidarity, aimed at the recovery of dignity and freedom, usurped by a corrupt political system where the King had become naked.

Before analyzing the role and weight of these new actors, it is important that we highlight the fact that the former political sphere was dominated by the party-controlled State of Democratic Constitutional Assembly (RCD), Ben Ali's party, that orbited the official opposition formed by moderate political parties and mass organizations such as the Tunisian General Labour Union (UGTT), the main trade union, whose leadership publicly supported the ruling regime and its all-powerful president.

A new political public sphere has progressively emerged these past years, with the advent of new actors that became visible because of changes in local and global society, and particularly through new communication and information technologies. Thus, the new public sphere has become increasingly focused on the new media (Internet, mobile phone networks, satellite chains, and so forth) and their means of expression, organized into digital images and social networks. This new public and media sphere is inconsistent with the old public sphere, based on the submission of the governors to the party-state rule and to the cult of personality used to extend infinite presidential terms and to cover the abuses and embezzlements of Ben Ali and his family.

It is true that the game of old actors, such as trade unionists, feminists and human rights advocates, as well as political parties of the opposition, such as Islamists, liberals, and the left, might intersect with that of the new actors of the revolution and the transition. However, the underlying logic of the actors differs radically, as does the content of their relationships and political views. Hence, it is important to study the individuality of the new actors and to question the depth and duration of their actions. What is the social and political status of the new actors and how are they different from the old actors? Is it about isolated individuals that provoke spontaneous acts or individuals capable of triggering structured collective behavior within real social movements? In either case, the study of new actors falls, by the nature of their actions, into the category of civil society's public sphere that comprises, according to Habermas, a sphere of debate and change, organized around the usage of public reason and the organic link to the national state.[53] Such a conception as it applied to Europe throughout the eighteenth and twentieth centuries deserves to be extended to a transnational public

[53] Jurgen Habermas ,Sara Lennox, and Frank Lennox, "The Public Sphere: An Encyclopedia Article," *New German Critique*, no. 3 (Autumn 1974): 49-55, http://www.jstor.org/discover/10.2307/487737?uid=3738392&uid=2&uid=4&sid=21101125168137.

sphere that competes against the national public sphere.[54]

Through the concept of the transnational public sphere, one should re-think democracy theory within the present post-national constellation, marked by the emergence of discursive arenas based on new technologies of information and communication that go beyond the frontiers of nation-states. Keeping in mind the transformations of the public sphere that tend increasingly towards trans-nationalization, the problematic nature of the current research is articulated around dynamics, interactions and issues that led the actors to project the local into the national and international levels, so as to take mobilizing collective action in favor of requirements based on the rejection of injustice and of the former political regime characterized by corruption and social and regional inequalities. In short, the question is whether the political dynamics propelled by the new actors are interdependent social movements with a specific identity and forms of organization, capable of following through with the conflicts and transforming the actions of protest in the shape of proposals contributing to the process of transition and democratic construction.

Cyber-Activists: Between Local Censorship and International Visibility

The figure of Ammar 404 is emblematic of the state of censorship and control of the media space that prevailed during the dictatorship of Ben Ali. An imaginary and caricatured image, it was personified by the Tunisian Internet users who, unable to access the desired links (YouTube, Dailymotion, etc.), were troubled to see displayed on the screen of their computers a blank page with the words "Not Found Error 404." With the purpose of shaping this arbitrary and absurd censorship targeting political and pornographic websites, the use of "proxy servers" allowed for the free use of the Internet anonymously.

Closing the media field by the authorities has corresponded, for about five years, to the emergence of blogs and social networks where freedom of expression is maintained and carried out by a new type of militant. Thus, an area of freedom uncontrolled by the state and propelled by individuals and not by political groups was formed progressively. Unlike traditional players made up of political parties and trade unions, cyber-activists do not obey a pyramidal and hierarchical organization. They have, therefore, an unequalled margin of flexibility and freedom of thought.

In an ever-growing number, blogs are interactive electronic journals that allow a broad exchange of ideas reinforced by an informational intersection with social networks, especially Facebook. The success of this network on an international scale and comprising the South, displays the need for communication at the interface between the private and the public sphere. Facebook becomes highly political when it covers an event related to a relationship of domination seen as unfair and unacceptable.

The strength of the new media and the social networks powered by the Internet is to bridge the individual and the collective on the one hand, with the local and global on the other. With these new relationships, the individual escapes loneliness and isolation. He or she is connected, from an anchor point of home or a public place ("publinet") to the rest of the

[54] Nancy Fraser, "Transnationalizing the Public Sphere: On the Legitimacy and Efficacy of Public Opinion in a Post-Westphalian World," *Theory, Culture & Society* 2007 24, no. 4 (London: SAGE): 7–30.

planet and to others, near and far. The slogan “Facebook stronger than Ben Ali” is an authentic challenge in that it points to a technological change whose consequences had not been taken into account by those in power. Suddenly, the web became a political weapon in the hands of large sections of people silenced by the repressive apparatus of the police state.

Indeed, the Tunisian revolution is not the product of Facebook, but this social network to which millions of nationals were affiliated, played a catalytic role in the dissemination of the information and the organization of the protest movement. The same is true of Twitter, the micro-blogging network, through which information, consisting of short messages sent via mobile phones connected to the Internet, had a spontaneous spread and expanded to the entire globe. The Internet thus transmitted the revolution through Twitter and Facebook that in turn were directly amplified by satellite channels. Al Jazeera, in particular, accompanied the entire protest movement and provided it with unparalleled visibility. “Sayeb Salah ya Ammar” (O Ammar make concessions) and “Nhar ‘ala Ammar” (Your day will come Ammar) condense, in the short, ironic, and meaningful slogans, the fight against cyber-citizen repression in Tunisia.

The cyber-activists borrowed new ways of communication such as the “flash mobs,” which could be found in a given place and for a short period of time, as was the case of residents of Tunis who were sitting at the outdoor cafes on Avenue Bourguiba at the beginning of summer 2010, wearing t-shirts with the inscription “Sayeb Salah” intended publicly to denounce government censorship of Internet sites. Similarly, the platform “nawaat.org,” a collective blog launched in 2004, helped bring together many bloggers and online activists such as Slim Amamou, Aziz Amami, Yassine Ayari, Sofien Chourabi, and Lina Ben Mhenni, and created a sort of technological and political "strike force” directed against excessive individual and familiar power, increasingly rejected by the Tunisians.

Police surveillance and arrest of bloggers was not ignored in the least, because of the echo reflected at the international level and the sympathy which these bloggers had benefited from by the users in the four corners of the globe, particularly in Europe. The emergence of a Tunisian pirate party enjoyed the support of the “Anonymous” international group that dedicated itself, in a crisis situation triggered by the wave of protests, to interfere with government sites and sow a sort of technological anarchy by means of international solidarity. For its part, Wilkileaks revealed and confirmed what many Tunisians already knew: the indecent corruption of the president’s family and the mismanagement of the national economy by the local mafia.

The lifting of the censorship, decided by Ben Ali in his speech of January 13, 2011, on the eve of his departure, came too late to convey any liberalization from above. Rather, it signaled the collapse of a political regime and its “strong man,” ousted after less than a month of protests by “the public.” The echo of the protest borrowed from computer sites as diverse as Facebook, Twitter, and YouTube, engaged a relatively small audience, given Tunisia’s digital divide, but it massively reverberated in satellite channel broadcasts, especially those of Al-Jazeera that filmed live events from mobile phones, often commented upon by local witnesses.

In sum, cyber-activists broadcast a “street movement” that would otherwise have been, like the riots of the Redeyef mines in 2008, isolated and repressed, lacking the resonance and the

diffusion, on a large-scale, via the Internet, of images related to outrageous police actions that captured the attention of both national and worldwide audiences.

The other line of strength of this movement is its ability to relay the traditional political actors, as evidenced by the increased importance that political parties give to their visibility on the internet, developing Facebook pages and discussion groups related to major events, the art of persuasion and the images they want to present of themselves to an audience more and more likely to register on the Facebook network and interested in the "res pubblica" as well as 'information' and "disinformation." Still, the cyber-activism, which continued in the aftermath of the revolution, seems to lack political content, and its modes of action project much more negative and destructive criticism than any positive and constructive elements.

It is true that the appointment of a cyber-activist, in the person of Slim Amamou, within the government team, illustrated both the individual need of political integration and the denial of recovery expressed by many other dissidents who remained wary of the democratic legitimacy, fragile and uncertain period of transition. The participation of cyber-activists in the Constituent Assembly elections certainly revealed the weight of the virtual movement and its ability or inability to become a real political force. The question is to find the extent to which the media can be the engine of the new configuration of the new social and political actors and is capable of propelling a dynamic of transition fit to that of the revolution, which it had actively participated in. It is perhaps at the cost of this successful conversion that we could speak of a new independent public and media sphere, innovative and separated from the old public sphere, focused solely on the parties and unions designed in relation to subjection to the national state.

The Unemployed Graduates: the Educated Poor in Search of Dignity

It was during the last five years before the outbreak of the revolution, that committees of unemployed graduates began to be organized at a regional level, in order to defend the cause of this new helpless and frustrated social category. The same phenomenon was visible elsewhere, particularly in Morocco, where the decommissioning of graduates (i.e. their loss of student perks and subsequent unemployment) was increasing and thereby extending social misery and the sense of injustice. Moreover, the riots of the mining of Redeyef in 2008 were consistent with those of the fishing port of Sidi Ifni in Morocco where the reason for revolt was the same: the anger of the unemployed against an organized recruitment based on nepotism and on the corruption of local officials.

At the core of these spontaneous social movements, we find unemployment and insecurity that go beyond the already alarming official figures of 9.7 percent in Morocco and 14.1 percent in Tunisia in 2010. It was in Morocco that the protest of unemployed graduates had grown so much by 1991 that they created a national association to engage in collective action. In Tunisia, the problem of graduate unemployment became more severe than in Morocco, reaching 42.5 percent of the unemployed in the past decade (2000-2010), compared to Morocco's rate of 29.6 percent.[55] The high number of unemployed Tunisians is explained by

[55] World Bank Development Indicators, http://data.worldbank.org/data-catalog/world-development-indicators.

the massive investments made by the State in the sector of education as well as the mismatch between training, the labor market, and the needs of the national economy. Finally, in 2007, graduates who had not found work took the initiative of founding a movement of unemployed graduates, to be organized at both the local and national level. Practically, one out of two graduates finds themselves unemployed and lives with their family. Hence, the claim of a right to work that emerged first in the Gafsa region and then extended to others became more visible in Tunisia, amplified by the unemployed students.

In January 2011, the Union of Unemployed Graduates (UDC) was launched as a legal association with local coordinators in the different regions of Tunisia, particularly those most affected by job insecurity (Siliana, Sidi Bouzid, Regueb, Maknassy, Redeyef, Moularès, Sbeïtla, Kasserine, and Kairouan) and the coastal urban centers (Sfax, Sousse, Nabeul, and Bizerte). Unemployed graduates are heirs to a culture of student activism. It is within the academic arena that students earned their combat weapons by learning to take action, speak out, criticize the system, and face the forces of order. Such a consolidated socialization attached to a specific political culture, radical for the most part, goes beyond the university premises in order to be found in the public space. The phenomenon became relevant because of the increasing number of graduates, rising each year from 80,000 to 85,000—of which only 60,000 to 65,000 were employed. Neither the growth rate of 5 percent per year, nor the incentives for the recruitment of young people taken by the government were able to overcome this structural phenomenon and the endemic unemployment.

The act of immolation of Mohamed Bouazizi galvanized the youth of Sidi Bouzid, whose protesting core consisted of a large number of unemployed people, supported by trade unionists, lawyers and human rights activists. The “revolution of dignity and freedom” was triggered because of the precariousness and social injustice aggravated by very uneven regional development. These are the inland regions that have been and still are, as living conditions have not improved, the focus of the challenge to government policy.

The issue of unemployment in general, and that of unemployed graduates in particular, poses a challenge for politicians that, whatever their tendency, dare not, for electoral reasons, talk the language of truth and admit the inability to absorb unemployment in the coming years, due to weak economic growth and the decline in domestic and international investments. Currently estimated at around 700,000 unemployed, the drama is getting worse, with poverty and despair on the rise, leading to a crisis of confidence in the institutions and official discourse.

Hope lies in the resumption of growth and the opening of the Libyan market, which, together, could alleviate the catastrophic situation of employment and the precariousness of society's most vulnerable. The new actors, unemployed graduates, are currently in such need and despair that they will begin to be courted by some parties, such as the Free Patriotic Union (UPL) or the Islamist Ennahdha, who promise subsidies and hopes of finding a job. As dramatic as the economic and psychological situation of unemployed graduates may be, it is about a social category where transitional membership is not stable but is linked to the possibility of employment. That is the reason why the social movement of unemployed graduates, relatively visible in the political and media space (Internet and the Facebook network), is not a structured movement especially as its representative structure, the UDC,

has no major political weight. Its role in protest precludes the possibility of a strong and powerful structure, such as the Union Générale Tunisienne du Travail (Tunisian General Union of Labor, UGTT), which includes employees and officials affiliated on the basis of a voluntary membership.

Junior Trade Union Militants and the Rage against Corrupt Leaders

The existence of a long tradition of the independent union type, dating from 1946-1984, was eclipsed by the growing subservience of the UGTT to the authority of Ben Ali (1987-2011), who managed to dominate this mass organization by alternating police pressure, collective bargaining and financial and administrative favoritism for staff union leaders. It gradually widened a gap between union leaders at national and regional levels, and union members, including junior activists who, in addition to their modest income and living conditions, felt more betrayed by their privileged leaders. It is this material, political and symbolic gap that explains the vitality of trade unionism in Tunisia during the last twenty years, in spite of its orbiting by Ben Ali's mafia system.

Subjected to the regime, the General Union nevertheless played an important role in the structuring of the revolution and continues to throw its weight into the current phase of political transition. Concerning the "revolution," the role of the Trade Union was essentially confined to that of the grassroots activists who supported the rebellious youth. The local and national leaders were slow to support the popular movement, joining it only after two weeks of street protests. The union protest finally took the form of general strikes dictated at a regional level. Thus, on January 14, it was the turn of the regional union of Tunis to maintain its byword of a general strike. In the morning, the rally started in front of Mohamed Ali Square and moved towards the Bourguiba Avenue where it found a huge crowd who managed, in unison, to say and make Ben Ali 'disappear,' through support from the army that surrounded the presidential palace and the strategic locations of power.

During the revolution, unlike the riots of January 1978 ("Black Thursday") and 1984 (the "bread riots"), the role of the General Union was decisive. The general strike was the responsibility of regional unions that better mobilized their members and took action according to their means without direct exposure to the reactions of a political power at bay. For example, in the interior cities, as in Tunis, it was the basic trade union activists who launched the great mobilization that directed the leaders to support and take the side of the people against the dictator and the allied Trabelsi family, who had pillaged the country of its wealth.

The mobilization of the Union, gradual and calculated, will continue during the current transition period. It will now be conducted in collaboration between the base, the union officials and the national leadership. It will be surrounded by difficulties due to the involvement of many actors and the constant criticism directed at the Secretary General of the Trade Union Confederation, Abdeslam J'rad, charged by Internet users with complicity with the former regime and financial corruption.

So far, the UGTT has managed to defend labor unity through the electoral legitimacy of its leadership and by keeping its distance from all political tendencies, while cleverly positioning itself on the national scene. As such, the central role of the UGTT during demonstrations in

the Kasbah 1 and 2 should be noted. By refusing to be members of the transitional governments attended by former RCD, the trade union took the grievances of the public and conducted a field action within the committees for the protection of the revolution, in order to position itself on the political spectrum. It thus endorsed the need for a break with the past, a national unity government and a Constituent Assembly elected for the development of a new constitution. The Union's national headquarters gained political and media visibility by recalling its history as an essential partner for any national consensus. Thus, the UGTT demonstrated that it was, and still remains, a key player in political life while remaining faithful to its purpose of defending employees, workers, and officials.

In fact, the history of the UGTT is that of a pendulum between the corporatist claims of the basic unions—transportation, education, health, and jobs——campaigning for social justice and the political aspirations of the leaders, tending to the sharing of economic and political power. The pendulum continues to shape the Trade Union and the political issues of its fights. For a few months now a break-away trade union has challenged it in the name of pluralism, as has the birth of a Labour Party supported by part of the administration.

The struggles within the UGTT have developed between the radical or politicized base and the "gentrified" administration, on the one hand, and, secondly, between the "leaders" of the administration who, lacking charisma, form partnerships among themselves and with the trade unions. The result is a delicate balance where the equation is difficult to solve in ways other than in an external alliance with the political powers. Hence, the next Congress of the Confederation, scheduled during the month of December 2011, is expected to arrange an exit door for the Secretary General and to ensure a redistribution of the cards within the administration, depending on the composition of the next national unity government.

Evidently, everything will depend on the economic situation marked nowadays by recession and rising unemployment and the deterioration of the purchasing power of the middle class. That is why the negotiations, led by the future government, between the General Union and the Union Tunisienne de l'Industrie, du Commerce et de l'Artisanat (UTICA, the Employers Union), will be crucial for Tunisia after October 23, the date of elections of the Constituent Assembly. UTICA is in turn subject to an identity crisis after the fall of Ben Ali to which it was totally subservient, That being said, the actor represented by the UGTT is both old in terms of its history, and new for the rise, radicalization and public visibility of grassroots activists. During the revolution and the first phase of transition, the union activists were mainly from "the UGTT's left" but it is highly possible that the Islamist unionists will impose themselves in the case of a breakthrough of "Ennahdha" during elections for the Constituent Assembly.

In any case, the militant union actor appears, despite the low participation of women, a rudimentary visibility at the level of information technology, and the archaism of its speech, to be the most structured and capable of stimulating a social movement within the public space, because of its existence as an alternative association, its establishment of trade unions in all the professional environments, and the tradition of political activism that continues to operate at the end of the revolutionary phase and the beginning of the transition.

Lawyers or Spokespersons of the Radical Protest

The lawyers were, together with the union members, among the first to support the protest movement that took shape in the wake of the immolation of Mohamed Bouazizi on December 17, 2010. Street demonstrations began in the Midwest (Sidi Bouzid, Menzel Bouzaiane, Thala, and Kasserine) before spreading throughout Tunisia. From the beginning, they were directed against the political regime seen as responsible for the unemployment and misery of the people. They are the expression of a demand for dignity that was soon to be associated with a demand for freedom. It was the body of lawyers who expressed these aspirations about ten days after the heroic and symbolic act of Bouazizi.

As early as December 27, 2010, the lawyers organized a demonstration in Tunis, between the Ministry of Justice and the Prime Minister's office, to support the demonstrators from Sidi Bouzid who were surrounded and being suppressed by the police. There were only a few hundred who protested, but the movement grew through the mobilization, on that same day, of union members who claimed the right to work and complain, in Mohamed Ali Square, in front of the headquarters of the Trade Union Confederation, against the corruption of the Mafia clan in power.

Lawyers have a long militant history that began with the militant nationalist movement and continued during the post-colonial period, under the regimes of Bourguiba and Ben Ali, who resorted to summary trials to imprison opponents of opinion. But the new fact is the output of lawyers in large numbers in the public square and their visibility as an established, politically mobilized, and protesting body of the established order. In this sense, lawyers form a new player in the revolution and the political transition. They play an important role and give the opposition a symbolic legal dimension that enhances the legitimacy of speech of the people against the tyranny of the President and the corruption of the ruling family.

The movement of popular mobilization continued *in crescendo* and, on January 14, 2011, lawyers found themselves dressed in their black robes, leading the extraordinary rally in front of the Ministry of Interior that succeeded in driving Ben Ali from power. By the gesture of participating that day and voicing the decisive word "Leave" with the tremendous force of a people united around a single cause, the lawyers entered history as a political actor in the foreground. They amplified the voice of protest broadcasted by all social groups and bodies set up, without a particular leadership. It is as if the lawyers were informal leaders that gave professional legitimacy to the movement, combined with other types of legitimacy: historical, revolutionary, and democratic.

The appearance of Abdenaceur Laouina, author of the famous cry in a deserted street of the city of Tunis, on the evening of January 14, "Hrab Ben Ali" ("Ben Ali ran away"), is the ultimate symbolic act and testimony to the meteoric rise of the lawyer as a revolutionary actor. In fact, the public visibility of lawyers enclosed, that day, a cycle of resistance that is renewed and strengthened during the transition period by the requirement of an independent justice for the judgment of the symbols of the old regime. The battle was then launched against Ghannouchi's government to exclude ministers from the RCD and demand the resignation of the entire team and continue to act as an opposition force demanding a break with the old regime.

Crossed by numerous professional and political-ideological contradictions, the world of lawyers is not a body that is isolated from the other institutional bodies. Among them are

judges, who advocate a reform of the justice system, and law professors, who find themselves in the three committees chaired by Yadh Ben Achour, Abdelfattah Amor, and Taoufik Bouderbala. Between these three actors from the legal sphere, contradictions prevail because their political interests diverge and their respective professions of advocacy, adjudication, and scholarship do not necessarily agree on a political role that is still torn, in the words of Weber, between "the ethics of persuasion" and "ethics of responsibility. For instance, the Bar Association, as a democratically elected body, is critical of the Department of Justice and the Commission of Investigation on corruption and embezzlement that have not disclosed abuses by some judges during Ben Ali's reign. The National Council of the Bar Association echoed the "vox populi" by claiming, since the departure of Ben Ali, the formation of a government of national salvation, the confiscation of property of the family of the ousted president, and the establishment of an independent judiciary system as guarantor of the rights and freedoms of the citizens.

Still, the Committee of Investigation into cases of corruption and embezzlement found lists of lawyers and judges in the presidential palace of Carthage that is likely to exacerbate tensions within this profession. Being named is not certain proof of a lawyer’s involvement in the embezzlement of the old regime, but it poses more problems for judges who have practiced court orders and have been involved in corruption cases. The fact that the names have not yet been made public demonstrates the close connections between justice and power and all that they entail in terms of negotiations, understandings, and competition.

It is at this level that the group of 25 lawyers intervened, arguing for a new judicial system based on transitional justice where the symbols of the former regime could be held accountable for crimes committed during their rule. In the absence of a firm commitment by the public ministry, it is this group which constitutes a civil party in most cases of corruption and malfeasance that bring justice to the former leaders of the party-State. Thus, a number of councilors, ministers, and other officials were arrested and are awaiting trial, albeit without any general settlement of accounts as required by the principles of transitional justice. The question also arises as to how this group of 25 lawyers, in fact about forty members of the Bar Association, does not compete with the structure of the Bar Association itself that is elected and is representative of the legal profession. Traversed by all political currents, the lawyers seem more attuned to the radical ones of Arab nationalism, political Islam and the Left than others in the political and media arena.

Ultimately, if the lawyers are the informal spokesmen for the revolutionary and transitional protest, their heroic actions remain fragmented, with no continuity and no political consistency in a configuration that tends to form a true professional and citizen pressure group, much less propel a social movement that carries a coherent project and an overview of the political order.

Civil Society in Formation

Yet their ingenuity should not be underestimated. The former dean of the Faculty of Law of the University of Tunis was none other than Yahd Ben Achour, who engineered the emergence of civil society after the Revolution of January 14. Originally he headed a commission of jurists designated to offer advice on a new Tunisian constitution, but this

commission grew into the High Instance for the Achievement of the Objectives of the Revolution, Political Reform, and Democratic Transition. It became a sort of unelected parliament, selected and negotiated to represent civil society. It was composed of 155 members from 12 political parties, 19 professional unions and associations, and representatives from different geographical regions and from families of martyrs of the revolution.

The High Instance was formally inaugurated on March 19, 2012, two months after Ben Ali's departure, it concluded its work on October 13, 2012, giving way to the National Constituent Assembly which was elected on October 23, 2012 and was dominated by the Islamist Ennahda movement, which won the elections with the largest relative majority and formed a new government in alliance with the Congrès pour la république (Congress for the Republic; CPR) and the Forum pour les libertés démocratiques (Democratic Forum for Labor and Liberties; known alternatively as"Ettakatol," or FDTL). In the course of its work the High Instance democratically debated the principal issues concerning the political transition, just as it developed laws concerning political parties and associations, the press, and the electoral law for the Constituent Assembly, which the entire group of political party representatives agreed was to be limited to one year of activity. The electoral law selected was that of proportional representation with the largest remainder method so as to avoid domination by a single party and the marginalization of small political formations. In addition, the principle of male-female parity undeniably constitutes a major innovation for Tunisia, resulting in a strong presence of women on the party lists and in the Constituent Assembly.

Even if the debates in the High Instance had difficult moments marked by discord and tension between different tendencies, it is consensus that finally won out, with the exception of the provisional withdrawal of the Ennahda Party and the freezing of participation by the Parti démocratique progressiste (Progressive Democracy Party, PDP), in June 2012, because of disagreements about the principle of transparency in party finances and about the Republican Pact to be signed by the different political parties.

In the final analysis the double merit of the High Instance is, on the one hand, to have inaugurated democratic debate for the first time in Tunisia's history that until then had been dominated by an authoritarian regime and, on the other hand, to have created two institutions of distinguished experts: the Higher Instance of Elections, which supervised to a successful conclusion the elections of October 23, 2011, and the National Committee of Information and Communication Reform (l'Instance Nationale pour la Réforme de l'Information et de la Communication; INRIC), which elaborated an entire reform program for this key sector for democratic transition.

C**onclusions and Perspectives**

The four new social and political actors that have imposed themselves in the Tunisian political field of today are mainly cyber-activists, unemployed graduates, trade union members, and lawyers. These new players have contributed to the revolutionary act of the fall of the dictator and continue to play a decisive role in the political transition period following January 14, 2011. The list of new players is not exhaustive but indicative. We have limited ourselves in the framework of this present contribution to the most important ones and those

whose outlines are visible and possible to define.

The four new players selected have a visibility that is at the heart of the public and media sphere. Their visibility is both national and transnational. Hence their strength and ability to transform the political stage by means of persuasion and joining with other players, whether new or old, local or international. As far as the new players are concerned, the key element is the media coverage that situates these actors at the heart of the public sphere to the extent that, through the control of ICT and the use of blogs, Twitter, Facebook, and other Internet links, they provide an instant level of information and transmission of images placed locally and distributed internationally. This way, the cyber-activists have the ability to open up events and forge a transnational public opinion that thwarts national censorship. Therefore, cyber-activism is constituted as a driving force of the new public sphere that extends through several other spheres such as the sphere of association, the legal sphere, the economic sphere, and so on.

Despite the critical skills and the intermittent mobilizations, the strength of cyber-activism is, however, diminished by individualism and the inability to propel a social movement capable of offering a structured societal and cultural project. This structural downfall is not typical of cyber-activism, but it encompasses virtually all other players, except trade unionists who have a vision that is both critical and constructive but are rather limited by the leadership, where the political, material and symbolic interests do not agree with those of the mass of union members. Nevertheless, this limitation is compensated for by the current economic climate that is favorable to political change and to trade union affiliation to political parties, associations, and pressure groups bearing an alternative project.

It is here that new social and political actors meet former players and the key trends of Islamism, secularism, feminism, unionism, socialism, liberalism, populism, and so on. New and old players find themselves in the public and media sphere with different and complementary contributions that predispose them to play a major role despite their differences of opinion and conflicts of interest. Coexistence between the different actors will take the necessary time to reach a consensus on common values and a gradual reduction in the political strife that seems, for now, saturated by the large number of political parties, at least 111 of them having been recognized to contest the October 2011 elections.

The two other new players—unemployed graduates and lawyers—have called for a higher profile during the transition period because of the urgency for the national community to find solutions, on the one hand, to the rising issue of unemployment and increasing job insecurity and, on the other hand, to the question of the independence of the judicial system, the backbone of democracy and public confidence in state institutions. Without social and legal justice, democratic transition will not be realized. These two challenges, of the economic and social order and of the legal and political order, are not easy to overcome because of the economic recession and the resistance on the part of the judicial body, as well as that of some lawyers, to the changes in the judicial laws submitted to combat corruption.

To sum up, the new social and political actors of the revolution and the transition seem, by their diversity and their strategic positioning in the political and media spheres, destined to intervene and throw their weight to ensure that each of them achieve hegemony and greater public visibility. In the absence of a dominant player and given the choice of a voting system

that does not favor the emergence of such a player, the question today is how to gather all actors around a social or republican pact establishing a consensus on national emergencies, by listing these emergencies in all areas—economic, political, social, cultural, environmental—and offering practical and concrete solutions.

Algeria and the Arab Uprisings

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Algeria and the Arab Spring

In December 2010 and January 2011, Algerians and Tunisians took to the streets. While in Tunisia hundreds of thousands of citizens stood up to bully dictator Zine al-Abdine Ben Ali, to the West, cities across Algeria erupted into widespread rioting. Though the December 29-January 10 riots were of an intensity not seen since the October 1988 uprising that put an end to the former single-party system of the National Liberation Front (FLN), they dissipated as suddenly as they began, with no bloodshed. Meanwhile, Tunisian mass demonstrations ultimately forced Ben Ali to flee, both marking the Tunisian Revolution of January 14 and debuting the Arab Spring.

Karama, or dignity protests, as they have been subsequently described, erupted across the region in the months that followed. In little more than a year's time, four Arab leaders have been chased from power. Ben Ali, Mubarak, Qadhafi, and Saleh are now specters of the past, while Bashar al-Assad's days look increasingly numbered. Since, post-authoritarian Egypt and Tunisia successfully organized legislative elections: anchored Islamist political movements-cum-parties won resounding victories in both, as they did in Morocco, where King Mohammed V organized early elections in response to Morocco's own protest movement. Meanwhile, tribal, regionalist, and sectarian violence appear to be on the rise in Libya and Yemen—calling into question their ability to move forward with organized fair and free elections—while the specter of this scenario in Syria haunts regional and international powers now calling for al-Assad to step down. Whereas less than a year ago it appeared that the thread binding the so called "Arab Spring" was a fundamental reorientation of how Arab regimes and society perceive and engage politics, the thread now seems frayed, if not split into two strands: Islamist electoral victory at the polls or prolonged violence and quasi-civil war (and foreign intervention).

A year and a half into the Arab Spring, the Algerian regime finds itself in a remarkable position. It has defied the two trends that dominate the scholar and policy debates on the region. First, the Algerian regime has bucked the larger trend affecting Arab republican regimes: protests from the streets have not coalesced into widespread popular calls for regime change.[56] Second, the political Islamist establishment has been unable to convert regional Islamist electoral victories into local victory. Far from winning a plurality of seats in the May 10, 2012 legislative elections, Algeria's Islamist bloc lost its overall percentage of seats in parliament.

Though this set of circumstances appears remarkable at first glimpse, this chapter argues that there is hardly an "Algerian exceptionalism" within the context of the Arab Spring.

Part One shows that political configuration of Algerian domestic politics did not lend itself to the type of widespread *protesta* seen in other Arab republican regimes. Unlike those

[56] For a critique of the idea that republican regimes are more prone to revolution than monarchies, see: Jillian Schwedler, "The end of monarchical exceptionalism," *Al Jazeera*, June 22, 2011, http://www.aljazeera.com/indepth/opinion/2011/06/201162115573250 1502.html.

regimes,[57] the Algerian political system is relatively open, with more than 44 accredited political parties,[58] 93,000 registered associations, and a vibrant press. The widespread perception that political parties and civil society are incapable of promoting change has de-mobilized Algerian citizens from those traditional lines of political articulation. In lieu, Algerians increasingly participate in localized and sectorally organized wildcat strikes and neighborhood riots that demand short-term solutions to ongoing socio-economic problems. This societal structural shift impedes the coalescence of widespread, popular manifestation for regime change (and reform).

Part Two demonstrates that Algerian political Islam no longer maintains the societal anchorage and resonance it had in the early 1990s. Unlike Egypt, Morocco, and Tunisia, where significant portions of the population believe "Islam is the solution," Algerian political Islam is a known quantity. Algeria's political Islamists have been on the scene for more than 25 years, either assaulting the state in an armed uprising that cost between 50,000-150,000 lives or participating in a coalition government behind current president Abdelaziz Bouteflika.

The Ingredients for an Arab Spring Revolution?

While many pundits anticipated an early "Arab Spring" domino effect in Algeria, a year and a half after the January 14, 2011 Tunisian Revolution, many more are now asking: "Why no Arab Spring in Algeria?"[59] Why did the "Arab uprisings" spread from Tunisia to Egypt and Libya in the East, and not to Algeria in the West?

After all, most observers agree that Algerian citizens are highly disgruntled with the political system and have been for some time.[60] The ingredients for unrest and upheaval are clearly present: a deep sense of *al-hogra*, or government contempt, toward the population is widely felt among the citizenry. Corruption is said to benefit the few at the expense of the many. The promised political opening in the late 1980s, ended in a failed transition culminating into a coup d'état and civil war that cost between 50,000 and 150,000 lives. Several thousand more citizens disappeared and while the government has settled with many of the families of those victims following the 2006 National Reconciliation, their whereabouts still have not been accounted for.[61]

The origins of the current Algerian political system can be traced to October 1988, what many Algerians refer to as the "first Arab Spring." That month, Algerians took to the streets in massive demonstrations, that initially decried the rising cost of living, social welfare cuts, and increased social inequality, but which quickly transformed into anti-regime protests. Like the Tunisian case in 2010-2011, the regime's initial brutal response outraged citizens, amplifying the size and distribution of subsequent demonstrations. In the aftermath of the

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[57] Specifically, Egypt, Libya, Syria, Tunisia, and Yemen.
[58] Twenty-six parties held seats in the 2007-2012 parliament.
[59] "No Arab Spring" has been a recurrent title in the international press articles on Algeria.
[60] Wided Khadraoui, "Is Algeria Next?" *Foreign Policy in Focus*, February 24, 2011.
[61] Algerian anger and disappointment at the reconciliation process, which neither identified nor charged participants of human rights abuse during the Algerian Civil War, is similar to the feelings that some Moroccan citizens have about their own post-Hassan II reconciliation process. See: Susan Slyomovics, *The Performance of Human Right in Morocco* (Philadelphia: University of Philadelphia Press, 2005).

violence, President Chadli Bendjedid promised a fundamental revision of the Algerian constitution, to end the single-party regime and expand political and civic rights, ushering the 1988-1991 Algerian transition. Over the next three years, thousands of civic organizations and political parties were founded, and the foundations for a free, independent press were laid.

The transition process culminated in the December 1991 legislative polls, in which the Islamic Salvation Front (Front Islamique du Salut, FIS) won a majority of seats in the first round of elections. In early January, the military forced President Chadli Bendjedid from office, annulled the elections, formed a ruling junta called the High Council of State (HCS), declared a state of emergency, and began arresting FIS sympathizers and pro-democracy activists. The crisis quickly degraded into a civil war pitting the Algerian state against armed Islamist groups. The violence claimed between 50,000 and 150,000 lives.[62]

In an effort to end the crisis, in the mid-1990s, the Algerian regime promised a return to the electoral process and a strengthening of civilian political institutions. In 1995, then head of the HCE, General Liamine Zeroual, was elected president in what many observers viewed as a fairly free and genuinely popular plebiscite. In 1996, President Zeroual proposed a reformed constitution that increased presidential powers over a bicameral system with a parliament and partially co-opted upper house.[63] The 1997 legislative elections were marred with irregularities. International observers nevertheless celebrated elections as a step toward return to civilian rule, and the outcome was said to more or less reflect the broad trends of Algerian politics.[64] In 1999, President Zeroual announced his resignation amid speculation that *Le Pouvoir*—the murky nexus of secret service, military intelligence agents, generals, and corrupt politicians that canceled the 1991 elections—was sabotaging his earnest attempts to end the Islamist insurgency.

Current President Abdelaziz Bouteflika was elected in late 1999, and subsequently re-elected in 2004 and 2009, [65] following a constitutional amendment that removed the limitation on presidential mandates.[66] A progressive weakening of the legislative branch has marked President Bouteflika's tenure in office. Known for his disdain for the 1996 constitution, which gives the legislature substantial authority, Bouteflika's use of presidential decree has effectively sidelined the Algerian parliament from the law-making process. Nor is it clear that the 2002 or 2007 assemblies would have openly challenged the president. Since 1997, the National Assembly has been controlled by a "Presidential Alliance"[67] between the former ruling party, the National Liberation Front (Front de Libération Nationale, FLN), National Rally for Democracy (Rassemblement NationalDémocratique, RND), and the Islamist Movement of Society for Peace (Mouvement de la Société pour la Paix, MSP).

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[62] For more on the Algerian Civil War, see: Luis Martinez, *The Algerian Civil War, 1990-1998*, trans. Jonathan Derrick (New York: Columbia University Press 2000).

[63] One third of Senate seats are nominated by the President.

[64] For more on the 1990s transition period, see: William B. Quandt, *Between Ballots and Bullets: Algeria's Transition from Authoritarianism* (Washington, D.C.: Brookings Institution Press, 1998); Isabelle Werenfels, *Managing Instability in Algeria: Elites and Political Change Since 1995* (London: Routledge, 2007).

[65] Robert P. Parks, "An Unexpected Mandate? The April 8, 2004 Algerian Presidential Elections," *Middle East Journal* 59, no. 1 (2005): 96-106.

[66] Robert P. Parks, "Algeria: Debate on Constitutional Reform," *Arab Reform Bulletin* 4, no. 2 (2006).

[67] The term itself was adopted in 2004, during President Bouteflika's campaign for a second mandate.

Lacking teeth and controlled by pro-regime parties, the Algerian legislature has lost its credibility. This is partially reflected in decreasing electoral participation.[68] Political participation in legislative elections dropped from 65.49 percent in 1997, to 46.06 percent in 2002, to 35.65 percent in 2007.[69] Between 1997 and 2007, participation had fallen by close to 46 percent. Commenting on the all-time low participation rates in the 2007 elections, one scholar noted: "At the very heart of the matter, abstention is the manifestation of the political representation crisis besetting the Algerian system of government since the collapse of "revolutionary legitimacy" in October 1988."[70] Echoing this sentiment, the Arab Barometer Surveys reveal that between 2006 and 2011, the percentage of Algerians who claimed to have little or no confidence in parliament jumped from 63.7 to 75 percent.[71]

Widespread disenchantment with Algerian political institutions is on the rise and extends to most state institutions. Like the parliament, the Algerian cabinet is viewed as ineffectual and/or corrupt. While constitutional reforms in 2009 removed the Prime Minister's official oversight of the cabinet, the transfer of authority from the legislative to the executive branch has already occurred informally. Constitutionally, the President is not required to choose his Prime Minister from the parliamentary majority, and many of President Bouteflika's ministers have held portfolios for the duration of his tenure. Government reshuffles are said to be a game of musical chairs.[72] Unsurprisingly, this has eroded confidence in the cabinet's ability to serve the interests of the Algerian people, while buttressing the impression that ministers serve their own interests. According to the 2011 Arab Barometer Survey, the percentage of Algerians who stated they had little or no confidence in their ministers jumped from 30 percent in 2006 to 67 percent in 2011. According ot the same survey, 62 percent of Algerians view government performance as negative or "catastrophic."

December 2010 – January 2011: "In Algeria, spring does not last."[73]

In late December 2010, riots erupted in several poor neighborhoods in Algiers. Residents of Les Palmiers, Draâ el Guendoul, Baraki, Diar Chems, Laâqiba, and Cervantes blocked major

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[68] *Wall Street Journal*, "Algeria: record low election turnout as Berbers organize boycott," June 12, 2002; *International Crisis Group*, "Diminishing Returns: Algeria's 2002 Legislative Elections," June 24, 2002; *BBC*, "Low turnout in Algeria elections," May 17, 2002; Mohammed Hachemaoui, "Algeria's May 17, 2007 parliamentary elections or the political representation crisis," *Arab Reform Initiative*, July 2007.

[69] For a more in-depth analysis of Algeria's legislative elections since 1991, see: Hugh Roberts, 1998. "Algeria's Contested Elections," MERIP on-line (1998), http://www.merip.org/mer/mer209/algerias-contested-elections; Hugh Roberts, "Musical Chairs in Algeria," MERIP on-line (2002) http://www.merip.org/mero/mero060402.

[70] Mohammed Hachemaoui, "Algeria's May 17, 2007 parlamentary elections or the political representation crisis," *Arab Reform Bulletin*, 17 July 2007.

[71] Henceforth, data presented from the 2006 or 2011 Arab Barometer Survey is derived from: "Comparative Findings of all Arab Barometer Surveys in Jordan, Palestine, Morocco, Algeria and Kuwait" (2006), http://www.arabbarometer.org/reports/countryreports/comparisonresutls06.html; "Algeria Country Report" (2011) http://www.arabbarometer.org/arabic/reports/ABII/countyreportyAlgeria.pdf.

[72] Ahmed Ouyahia, Noureddine Zerhouni, Abdelaziz Belkhadem, Daho Ould Kablia, Abdelmalek Sellal, Abdelhamid Temmar, Cherif Rahmani, Amar Tou, Said Barkat, and Tayeb Louh have all held ministerial posts for the duration of President Bouteflika's tenure in office.

[73] In French, "Le Printemps, chez nous, ne dure pas.." From: Mouloud Mammeri. 1978 [1952]. *La colline oubliée*. Paris: Union Générale d'Editions: 11.

thoroughfares, burned car tires, and threw rocks at police in an effort to bring attention to their specific plight: none of their names were on the lists of inhabitants attributed new apartments under a prefectural-administered national housing amelioration scheme. On January 3, 2011, the neighborhoods of Hamri, Petit Lac, and Tirigo in Oran, Algeria's second largest city, also erupted into riots. Those protests focused on a more generalized grievance: a rapidly increasing cost of living. Algerians spend an estimated 50 percent of their household economy on foodstuffs, and in December 2010, the price of cooking oil and sugar had increased by 30 percent. The following day, the same grievances led youth in the iconic Algiers working class neighborhood Bab el Oued to the streets. In addition to decrying the rising cost of living, rioting youth underscored the price their elders had paid in the repression of the October 1988 demonstrations, as well as the lives lost in the 2001 mudslide, and 2003 earthquake, chanting "Bab el Oued echouhada!" (Bab el Oued the Martyr). By January 6, youth riots had spread to cities and villages in nearly half of Algeria's 48 prefectures: Algiers, Bechar, Bejaia, Biskra, Blida, Bordj Bou Arredj, Bouira, Boumerdes, Constantine, Djelfa, Jijel, Mascara, Mila, Mostaghanem, Msila, Ouargla, Oum el Bouaghi, Setif, Sidi Bel Abbes, Souk Ahras, Tizi Ouzou, and Tlemcen. Two days later, the government announced it would lower taxes on sugar and cooking oil, and would investigate allegations of wholesalers' price gouging in foodstuffs with state-subsidized prices. The populist reaction to bread and butter demands seemed to have an effect: by January 10, the nation-wide riots had fizzled out as quickly as they had begun.

A protestor in Algiers best summed the tenor of the riots: "This is a revolt against misery, against unemployment. We don't want to live this dog's life. We're claiming our part of the riches of this country." Unlike October 1988 or Tunisia in 2011, where economic grievances quickly transformed into widespread anti-regime demonstrations, the 2011 Algerian *protesta* remained largely an economic issue. Lawyers, judges, and union activists did not rally, as they had done in Tunisia, and political parties were caught unaware by both the suddenness and intensity of the riots.[74] Tellingly, when former FIS number-two Ali Belhadj attempted to mobilize youth in Bab el Oued, as he had done twenty-four years earlier, in October 1988, he was stoned and chased from the neighborhood by youth who cried: "We are not sheep of our parent's herd."

It took ten days for opposition parties, civic groups, and independent trade unions to agree on a date to discuss a joint reaction. On January 21, Algeria's most vocal opposition parties and civic associations, including the Rally for Culture and Democracy (RCD), Socialist and Democratic Movement (MDS), Algerian League for the Defense of Human Rights (LADDH), and the unaccredited National Union of Public Employees (SNAPAP) with a coterie of smaller unaccredited parties, trade unions and civic groups formed the National Coordination for Change and Democracy (Coordination Nationale pour le Changement et la Démocratie, CNCD), calling for indefinite Saturday demonstrations, beginning on February 12, 2011.[75]

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[74] As were the Socialist Forces Front (*Front des Forces Socialistes*, FFS) and Rally for Culture and Democracy (*Rassemblement pour la Culture et la Démocratie*, RCD) during the 2001 riots in Kabylia.

[75] The FFS participated in talks on January 20, 2011, but refused to participate in coordination with the RCD and withdrew from the Coordination.

Seeking to capture the momentum, the RCD organized an independent rally in downtown Algiers on January 22. The unauthorized protest attracted close to 500 people. Many more potential demonstrators were blocked by large, unarmed police cordon around RCD party headquarters. Perhaps responding to a feared perception of momentum, on February 3, President Bouteflika announced a series of planned reforms to deepen democratization. The CNCD February 12 demonstrations were also prohibited. Planned simultaneously in Algeria's major cities, the demonstrations were a failure. Again, police cordoned off the coordinated meeting point, severely limiting the number of protestors: estimates for Algiers and Oran accord between 3,000-5,000 and 300-500 demonstrators, respectively.[76] While there were claims on Twitter and Facebook of violence, police officers were ordered to check their firearms at their local stations before the protest, and there were no serious casualties. Organizers were unable to rally significant support elsewhere. Over the following week (February 13-18), CNCD activists met to identify why their call had largely failed to attract support. Though police outnumbered protesters by 10 to 1 in the first march, civic groups blamed lower than expected turnout on the political tenor of the marches, and asked political parties to desist from future marches in Algiers, while demonstrations in Oran were called off altogether.

Undaunted, Said Sadi's RCD party joined the demonstrations in Algiers on February 19, which drew only 2,000 people. Subsequent marches attracted fewer and fewer people, possibly in reaction to President Bouteflika's April 15 speech to the nation, in which he announced widespread constitutional reforms. And in lieu of political marches, local trade union branches and student unions rallied for better wages and annual stipends. By May, a month before the weekly demonstration was called off, Said Sadi had earned the nickname "Said Samedi" (literally, Said Saturday), in reference to his commitment to increasingly ineffective and unpopular Saturday protests.

Why No Arab Spring? What Happened?

Why were political and civic groups and activists, such as former FIS number-two Ali Belhadj, the RCD, and CNCD unable to convince citizens to take to the streets following the December 2010 through January 2011 riots, as others had been able to do in Tunisia, and later in Egypt, Yemen, and Syria?

Over the past year, discussions on "why no Arab Spring in Algeria" have generally pointed to five factors to explain Algeria's relative calm, the same factors which previously explained Algeria's lingering authoritarianism: hydrocarbon rent and (re)distribution, October 1988, Islamism, *Le Pouvoir*, and Civil War. Often intertwined, the dominant explanations are expressed in a variety of narratives: 1) The Algerian regime has been able to buy peace and stability by redistributing oil rent; 2) Algeria's Arab Spring happened in October 1988; 3) Algerians fear the effects of another lurch toward political Islam; 4) Algerians fear the ferocity of their military, which is willing to do whatever it takes to remain in power; and 5) Algerians do not want to return to *fitna*, or civil war. While each is compelling in many ways,

[76] At Place 1er Mai in Algiers and Place 1 Novembre in Oran.

these explanations are nevertheless problematic. None of the commonly cited factors explaining "no Arab Spring in Algeria" can account for rapid the explosion of violence in late December 2010 and quick return to relative stability in early January 2011. They are more hard pressed to cogently explain why political and civic groups and activists were unable to capture the breach of momentum those riots created.

Moreover, these arguments are drawn from the dominant themes that have characterized research on Algerian authoritarianism for the past two decades. While these explanations have been telling in understanding Algerian politics, relying too much on those variables is problematic. If the Arab Spring has shown us anything, it is that the old explanations of enduring Arab authoritarianism need to be re-examined (but not necessarily abandoned), and that political scientists of the region need to look beyond the topographical variables that have for so long dominated the field. For example, the factors that explained the robustness of the Ben Ali regime in Tunisia certainly do not explain the January 14, 2011 revolution: Tunisia experienced "enduring authoritarianism" until it did not. A dominant focus on extant forms of domination has its limits, and in some cases has obscured other forms of everyday resistance as well as informal or hard to see micro-political practices and evolving political behavior.[77]

One frequently overlooked characteristic of Algerian political society that might partially explain why economic riots did not evolve into larger anti-regime demonstrations is the evolving relationship Algerian citizens have with state institutions on the one hand and political parties and civic groups on the other. As noted above, Algerian citizens are increasingly disengaged from the state. They too are disaffected from political parties and civic groups.

In the 2006 Arab Barometer Survey, 72.3 percent of Algerians claimed to have little or no confidence in political parties. In the 2011 survey administered in April, two months after the January uprising and during the ongoing CNCD demonstrations, 97 percent of Algerians claimed they did not belong to a political party. This is not for lack of choice: 26 parties held seats in the 2007-2012 National Assembly; another 18 were accredited in late 2011 and early 2012. Rather, disaffection with Algeria's political parties is most likely linked to their lack of clear political, economic, or social platforms and inability to reform state institutions from within, or in the opposition.

This is not surprising: Algeria's parliament plays little role in policy articulation or formation. With few exceptions, the FLN and RND parties—direct descendants of the former single-party regime, and the closest to the presidency—support presidential economic and social policy, adopting it as their own, while focusing on how to better capture and distribute new forms of rent that those policies generate.[78] Crowded out of the policy-making and implementing process, opposition parties tend to focus on core identity issues: e.g. the

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[77] See: Laryssa Chomiak, "Confronting Authoritariansim: Order, Dissent, and Everyday Politics in Modern Tunisia," (Ph.D. diss., University of Maryland, 2011); Laryssa Chomiak and John P. Entelis, "Contesting Order in Tunisia: Crafting Political Identity," in *Civil Society Activism Under Authoritarian Rule*, ed. Francesco Cavatorta (London: Routledge, 2011).

[78] See: Robert P. Parks, "Local-National Relations and the Politics of Property Rights in Algeria and Tunisia," (Ph.D. diss., University of Texas at Austin, 2011). Esp. Chapter Five.

incorporation of Shari'a or a bi-lingual state that caters to the interests of the Berber minority. Identity issues compensate for their inability to legislate, obfuscating policy-relevant platforms, which themselves are framed as slogans. Limited in their ability to implement their identity-politics, and totally relegated from economic policy making, political parties' continued participation in a toothless system is viewed by the public as serving political parties' self-interests, not those of the citizen.

This trend amplifies as it moves from national to local institutions. More than 96 percent of respondents to a 2011 *El Watan* survey claimed they did not believe local elected officials listen to society.[79] As a result, 94.5 percent of respondents claimed to have no confidence in locally elected officials.[80]

Algerian associations face a similar dilemma. On paper, Algeria has a flourishing civic society—there are close to 94,000 registered associations, nearly one for every three hundred and eighty citizens.[81] A closer look at associative life, however, is revealing. Twenty percent of registered Algerian civic groups are neighborhood groups, while another 50 percent are parent, sports, or religious associations,[82] many situated in the same locality. Because the vast majority of Algerian civic groups are dependent on the state for their administrative and programmatic operations, associations often view other local groups as potential financial rivals and actively seek to discredit them. Their close proximity to the state for financial reasons limits their capacity to rigorously criticize local politics or city management.[83] This, in addition to the perceived personification of many associations with local notables who use state monies allocated to these groups for personal gain, has lowered expectations and decreased confidence in civic life. Sixty percent of respondents to the 2011 Arab Barometer Survey claimed to have little or no confidence in civil society. Perhaps the most salient indicator of disenchantment is membership: according to the 2011 Arab Barometer Survey, only 5.8 percent of Algerian respondents belong to charitable groups, 2.1 percent to trade unions, 7.4 percent to youth, cultural or sports associations, and 1.5 percent to neighborhood associations. As Algerian's like to stress, many civil society associations are *coquilles vides*—empty shells.

Unsurprisingly, then, lack of confidence in political parties and civil society is at an all-time high: according to a 2011 *El Watan* survey, 80.4 percent of Algerians do not believe civil society can intervene to solve basic societal problems,[84] while 79.5 percent of respondents to the 2011 Arab Barometer Survey claimed to have little or no interest in politics. Counter-intuitively, however, 73 percent of respondents to that same survey claim to regularly follow political news. The CNCD's critical February 2011 self-evaluation appears to have been on target: Algerians are not apolitical; they are unhappy with their political and civic choices.

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[79] Though not methodologically rigorous, the *El Watan Surveys* nevertheless give insight into Algerian perceptions, that widely follow the contours of results from the Arab Barometer Survey. *El Watan Survey*, http://www.elwatan.com/sondages/apc-06-04-2011-119409_166.php.

[80] *El Watan Survey*, http://www.elwatan.com/sondages/les-elus-30-03-2011-118378_166.php.

[81] http://www.interieur.gov.dz/Dynamics/frmItem.aspx?html=2&s=29.

[82] Ibid.

[83] Andrea Liverani, *Civil Society in Algeria: The Political Foundations of Associational Life* (London: Routledge, 2008).

[84] *El Watan Survey*, http://www.elwatan.com/sondages/elus-13-04-2011-120396_166.php.

The Politics of Riots in the Arab Spring

The traditional articulation mechanisms linking citizen and state—political parties and civil society groups—appear broken. Political parties and civil society are no longer trusted intermediaries. Lacking confidence in both institutions and political and civic intermediaries, Algerians are deactivated from traditional political venues.

They are not, however, silent. Our focus on declining electoral participation has obscured a defining feature of Algerian politics over the past half-decade: the multiplication of micro-demonstrations and riots. In order to satisfy basic needs, such as access to water, gas, electricity, housing, or basic food prices, Algerians increasingly take to the streets. Lacking organizing intermediaries, protests frequently devolve into riots pitting neighborhood youth against anti-riot police squads. Though the wide distribution of rioting in December 2010 and January 2011 had been unseen since the October 1988 riots, multiple riots are a daily phenomenon, and have been for several years. Indeed, in 2009, Algeria witnessed close to 9,000 riots.[85] In a January 2012 assessment, Director General of the Algerian National Police, General Abdelghani Hamel, indicated that anti-riot police units were dispatched to contain 10,910 disturbances in 2011.[86]

Unlike the protests of October 1988, or Tunisia in January 2011, few Algerian riots are citywide. Instead, they occur in neighborhoods, blocks of neighborhoods, or along specific streets. Indeed, even during the December 2010 and January 2011 *protesta*, rioting was localized in specific neighborhoods, and while based on national grievances, occurred according to local logics. In the eastern city of Annaba, for example, working class Sidi Salem, a neighborhood where citizens are just as affected by rising food prices as others, did not riot. When asked why, youth explained their refusal to participate in the larger January 2011 cost of living riots. Their main reason was a perception that other working class and poor neighborhoods did not take to the streets to support them during their own June 2010 local housing allocation protests—protests similar to those that sparked December 2010 in Algiers. Similarly, in the western city of Oran, the majority of youth from Hamri, Petit Lac, and Terigo refused to participate in the February 12, 2011 CNCD demonstrations. When asked why, the leader of one group of youth declared to this author: "Those *tchi-tchi* (privileged classes) didn't help us in January, why should we help them now?"

In part, recent public opinion surveys and scholarly analysis got it right: Algerians seem to have lost confidence in their state institutions, are wary of political parties, and do not believe civic groups are an effective formation by which basic citizen needs can be articulated to the government. However, this does not equal political apathy. Protests are plenty and occur daily. Algerians protest more than anywhere else in the Arab world, and have been for many years. A cursory glimpse into inner protest dynamics gives lens into variation of local grievances. Where basic articulation mechanisms (e.g. political parties and civic associations) appear broken, and where trust is at all-time lows, nationwide—let alone citywide demonstrations—

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[85] *Liberté*, March 23, 2009.

[86] *Tout sur l'Algérie*. "Hamel explique comment la police a géré les émeutes et les troubles de 2011," January 6, 2012.

are difficult to coordinate. These highly localized fields of demonstration and rioting are reminiscent of what Mohammed Hachemaoui has elsewhere referred to as ”tribalism without tribes:” a clear local logic to responding to shared economic and political grievances exists despite the absence of clearly identified articulation groups (e.g. political parties and civil society.)[87]

The number of Algerian riots has been on the rise for half a decade. Lacking credible intermediaries to express and act on their demands for better services and social justice, citizens take to the streets. Despite the location, rioter demands invariably fit into a basket: access to water, electricity, gas, better housing, or subsidized foodstuffs. The government's reaction, though tailored to specific claims, is structurally uniform: anti-riot police intervene with little to no bloodshed and ten to twenty youth are arrested and tried. In tandem, neighborhood representatives negotiate with local or regional authorities, which acquiesce to local demands; then the rioting ends.

From that perspective, pundits and analysts who claim the Algeria has been able to avoid the Arab Spring because of its oil reserves are partially correct. The government has the ability and will to distribute its hydrocarbon wealth to avoid mass uprising. Indeed, on February 22, the cabinet passed a series of laws that expanded youth access to credit, increased foodstuffs subsidizes, and expanded the current social housing program. However, the ability to payout does not equate stability and silence. Riots, as General Hamel's January 2012 report acknowledge, have not diminished. Rather, they have increased in both number and distribution, and are clearly following an established logic. Functionally, riots allow citizens to let off steam. They too give the government a mechanism by which it can quickly identify and offset localized grievances. In this light, riots permit a negotiation space with the regime in the absence of legitimate regional or national-level interlocutors and institutions. Hence, to view Algerian riots as apolitical is at least partially incorrect. While sporadic, the localized claims of rioters aggregate into a relatively small bundle of nationally held grievances. The micro-logic of how to address nationally held grievances (e.g. youths of different neighborhoods in the same city calculating whether they will support riots in neighboring quarters) indicates an awareness of a system of politics, a "politics of riots."

The question, then, is not whether there are widespread grievances that might provoke a nation-wide uprising, nor is it whether and when this might occur. Unless otherwise addressed, local uprising in response to shared nation-wide economic and political grievances are unlikely to abate. Should widespread demonstrations push the current political system to the breaking point, localized logics to national grievances will continue until they are addressed. The positive flip, however, is that the grievances expressed in Algeria's riots are clearly identifiable, presenting a possible starting point for a road map to reform for both incumbent reformers and the opposition.

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[87] Referring to Algeria, phrase is taken from: Mohammed Hachemaoui, *A l'ombre de l'autoritarians. Ethnographie politique de l'Algérie contemporaine* (Paris: Karthala, 2012). The phrase was initially coined by Jean Pierre Chrétien. See: Jean Pierre Chrétien,"Hutu et Tutsi au Rwanda et au Burundi," in *Au Coeur de l'Éthnie: Éthnies, Tribalisme et État en Afrique* ,ed. J. L. Anselle and E. Mbokolo (Paris: Éditions la Découverte, 1985).

Islamist Failure to Capture the Arab Spring[88]

The so-called "Arab Spring" is tinged Green. Hitherto banned Islamist movements won post-revolutionary elections in Egypt and Tunisia, while the "palace Islamist" Party for Democracy and Justice, surged to an electoral victory in Morocco, winning a plurality of seats and leading the current coalition government. Following the region-wide trend, many predicted a "Green Tsunami" in Algeria in the May 10, 2012 National Assembly elections. Surely, Islamist victories in Egypt, Morocco, and Tunisia had emboldened Algeria's Islamists parties, just as it was taken as a given that the Arab Spring had expanded the size of the Islamist electorate. Other things equal, shouldn't Algerians want to emulate Ennahda-led Tunisians transitioning to democracy? A proliferation of Islamist parties in the buildup to the elections seemed to show a new interest in political Islam. In addition to the "Green Alliance" formed by Bouguerra Soltani's Movement for Society of Peace (MSP), and small Islamist parties al-Islah and Ennahda, which collectively held 60 seats in the outgoing parliament, the 2012 campaign was marked by the entry of Abdallah Djaballah's Front for Justice and Development (FJD) and Abdelmadjid's Front for Change (FC).

The Western media and local Islamists assumed a strong showing. Indeed on the morning of the elections, the Reuters office in Algiers published an article titled "Islamists poised for strong showing in Algeria vote," going as far as to predict an Islamist head of government.[89] Shortly after the polls closed, MSP leader Bouguerra Soltani, boisterously announced: "We emerge victorious. Despite certain irregularities, the 'Green Alliance' has created a political force."[90] The same evening, Green Alliance campaign manager announced the coalition had won 98 to 100 seats, just short of rivaling the incumbent National Liberation Front (FLN). The Islamists, it had seemed, had won their bet.

However, the results of the May 10, 2012 Algerian legislative elections ran against Islamist expectations and conventional wisdom, possibly with region-wide ramifications. Again, Algeria bucked a region-wide trend: Islamist victory at the ballot box. Islamists won neither a majority nor did they come close to winning a plurality of seats in the new parliament. The Green Alliance only won 49 seats—eleven fewer than the three parties collectively held in 2007 legislature. Indeed, Soltani's much touted alliance captured four fewer seats than the MSP had going into the election. The combined Islamist bloc only gained a seat in the 2012 parliament. In fact, the five-party Islamist bloc won 61 seats in the new parliament, one more than in 2007, but with an overall loss of close to three percent of the total parliamentary share. What happened?

While in the evening of May 10, 2012, the Algerian press and many political parties cried

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[88] Parts of this section are based on: Robert P. Parks, "Arab Uprisings and the Algerian Elections: Ghosts from the Past?" *Jadaliyya.com*, April 10, 2012, http://www.jadaliyya.com/pages/index/4979/arab-uprisings-and-the-algerian-elections_ghosts-f) and Robert P. Parks, "Algeria's 10 May 2012 Elections: Preliminary Analysis," *Jadaliyya.com*, May 14, 2012, http://www.jadaliyya.com/pages/index/5517/algerias-10-may-2012-elections_preliminary-analysis.

[89] *Reuters*, "Islamists poised for strong showing in Algeria vote," May 10, 2012, http://af.reuters.com/article/algeriaNews/idAFL5E8GAJEU20120510?pageNumber=4&virtualBrandChannel=0.

[90] *El Watan*,"Rejetant les résultats annoncés par le minister de l'Intérieur: L'Alliance verte revendique 98 à 100 sièges," May 12, 2012, http://www.elwatan.com/actualite/l-alliance-verte-revendique-98-a-100-sieges-12-05-2012-170302_109.php.

foul, the European Union's Electoral Observation Mission declared the elections "satisfactory."[91]

A number of factors impinged on an Islamist tsunami on May 10, 2012. Unlike Egypt and Tunisia, Algeria's political Islamist movement has been legal since the 1989 political opening.[92] Since 1995, the regime has adopted a policy of measured political Islamist inclusion and limited but symbolic (and lucrative) power sharing. The strategy has divided the movement into multiple, increasingly moderated Islamist parties that seek the same, shrinking electorate. Their routine participation in local, legislative, and presidential elections has sapped the movement's mystique, if not made citizens cynical of their ambitions. Algerian citizens have the same skepticism of Islamist parties as they have for the secularists. Summing this, the European Union's Electoral Observation Mission's final report noted: "Effectively, the 'Dark Decade' of the 1990s has profoundly marked Algerians, whereas a party like the Movement for Society of Peace (MSP) has participated in government for seventeen years now."[93]

Multiplication and banalization of Islamist political parties

While many scholars continue to focus on the FIS when exploring Algerian political Islam, the Islamist political field is quite diverse. In addition to the now banned FIS, Mahfouz Nahnah's MSP and Abdallah Djaballah's Islamic Renaissance Movement (Ennahda) participated in the annulled 1991 legislative elections. Hardly straw men, the leaders of both parties had a long history of Islamist activism that pre-dated the foundation of the FIS in 1989, and their historic legitimacy translated into the 1991 polls. MSP and Ennahda siphoned a combined 500,000 votes from the Islamist bloc the FIS claimed to represent.[94] MSP and a series of parties led by Djaballah (see below) have consistently participated in presidential and legislative contests since.

Until the elections, MSP was widely, though perhaps erroneously, viewed as Algeria's pro-regime Islamist party. It has competed in all elections since 1991. Historic MSP leader Mahfouz Nahnah won 25 percent of the vote in the 1995 presidential elections. In 1997, he led his party to second-place in parliamentary elections, and accepted ministerial posts within the National Democratic Rally (RND) government. Despite holding ministerial seats in a pro-regime coalition government, the administration blocked Nahnah's 1999 presidential bid. The party suffered a significant setback in 2002, when Djaballah's new party, al-Islah (see below) displaced it as Algeria's number one Islamist group in parliament. Former minister[95] and MSP Vice President Bouguerra Soltani took the reins of the party following Nahnah's death in 2003. MSP joined the FLN and RND-led Presidential Alliance, supporting Bouteflika's second mandate a year later. MSP displaced rival al-Islah in the 2007 elections following that

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[91] European Union, *Mission d'Observation Électorale de l'Union Européenne: Élections legislatives – Algérie 2012* (2012), http://www.eueom.eu/files/pressreleases/english/Declaration_preliminaire_12_05_FR.pdf.

[92] Except the FIS, which was banned in 1992.

[93] European Union, 2012, *Mission d'observation électorale: rapport final*: 2 (2012), http://www.eueom.eu/files/pressreleases/english/rapport_final_05_08_2012_FR.pdf.

[94] The FIS received 3.2 million votes in the first round.

[95] Minister of Small Business, 1997-1999; Minister of Labor and Social Affairs, 1999-2001.

party's implosion and supported President Bouteflika's third mandate in 2009.

As both a member of the Muslim Brotherhood's international organization and long-standing seats in Algeria's ruling coalition, MSP has developed an impressive party infrastructure that effectively link party militants to both state bureaucracy and "green" business community, in many ways replicating the FLN and RND. Resources from both are used to maintain and to generate new support, as well as to finance its electoral campaigns. Beneath the appearance of maintaining if not developing a well-oiled machine, Soltani's leadership of the party has faced serious challenges, underscoring ongoing and yet unresolved leadership questions asked in the wake of the 2002 defeat and transfer of authority following Nahnah's untimely death. Elected party leader in 2003, Soltani's attempts to consolidate power since have been contested by rivals, who continue to see him as a peer from the Nahnah days rather than a leader. While criticisms have been multiform, invariably they are tied to Soltani's "autocratic style" and the impact membership in the Presidential Alliance has on the independence and probity of the party.

These tensions escalated at the 2008 Party Congress, when the former Industry Minister (1997-2002) and MSP Vice-President, Abdelmadjid Menasra, challenged Soltani's leadership. In a last-hour reconciliation, Menasra withdrew his leadership bid in exchange for Soltani's resignation as Minister of State without a portfolio: a post emblematic of proximity to power. Though Soltani promised to distance the party from the regime, the MSP nevertheless supported President Bouteflika's April 2009 re-election bid. Less than a week after the Constitutional Council ratified the president's third mandate, Menasra and sixteen of the party's 51 legislators,[96] and a handful of Senators thousands of militants broke ranks with the party. While the degree to which Menasra's departure has siphoned MSP militant support was unclear before the May 10, 2012 elections, his bloc was solicited to ally with the FLN in a number of regions during the 2009 Senatorial elections—alliances in contradiction with the Presidential Alliance, and which underscored support in the local and regional assemblies.[97] In late February 2012, the Ministry of Interior accredited Menasra's new political party, the Front for Change (FC).

Unlike the MSP under Nahnah and Soltani, Abdallah Djaballah has steadfastly remained in the opposition. While this unwavering position has earned him the respect of grassroots militants, it has been a major source of contention with party cadres in Djaballah's two political parties (Ennahda, 1990-1998; al-Islah, 1999-2007), costing him the leadership of both. Shortly after the 1997 elections, Ennahda cadres usurped Djaballah's leadership, in hopes to gain ministerial posts in the government. He founded al-Islah two years later, bringing the majority of party militants with him. Al-Islah won the second most votes and third most seats in the 2002 polls, catapulting the party to the head of the Algerian opposition, and wrestling all but one seat from his former party.[98] Whereas MSP joined the Presidential

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[96] *Le Temps d'Algérie*, "Le divorce consommé," April 16, 2009.

[97] In Algeria, two-thirds of Senate seats are elected by municipal and regional councilors; the President directly nominates the other third.

[98] Under Djaballah's leadership, an-Nahda won 915,446 votes and 34 seats in the 1997 legislative elections. That support evaporated in 2002 to a mere 48,132 votes and one parliamentary seat, while Djaballah's new party, al-Islah, won 705,319 votes and 43 seats.

Alliance in support of Bouteflika's 2004 presidential campaign, Djaballah organized regular press conferences with rival presidential candidates Ali Benflis (FLN) and Saïd Sadi (Rally for Culture and Democracy) to denounce administrative irregularities. Repeating the Ennahda debacle, Djaballah suffered a second leadership crisis just before the 2007 parliamentary polls. Again, he quit the party, taking rank and file with him. Lacking Djaballah's leadership and prestige, the party lost all but three seats.[99] While he sat out the 2009 Presidential election, Djaballah returned to the political arena in 2012, heading the newly accredited Front for Justice and Development (FJD).

MSP's continued presence in the government or the series of corruption scandals[100] in which it has recently been embroiled, did not benefit Menasra and his newly accredited FC in anticipation of the May 10, 2012 legislative elections. As noted above, MSP's links to government and the "green" business community, as well as an embedded party apparatus, gave Soltani an organizational advantage over both upstart Menasra and Djaballah, whose new parties remain in formation. To parry criticisms from rival Islamists, in January 2012, MSP announced its departure from the Presidential Alliance with much fanfare, though it has kept its ministerial portfolios. And in March, Soltani announced a "Green Alliance" with Islamist parties Ennahda and al-Islah. Though hardly functional—combined the two parties received only eight seats in the 2007 elections—the alliance nevertheless gave Soltani a symbolic boost with much media coverage. More importantly, the MSP-led alliance pulled the carpet out from under FC's feet: Menasra had long championed an Islamist alliance, whereas Djaballah has consistently argued that an alliance among Algeria's Islamists is neither desirable nor possible. Approaching the elections, Menasra pandered to the former FIS, winning the support of a former high-ranking member of its Majlis Shura, Sheikh Hachemi Sahnoun. The impact of Sheikh Sahnoun's support was limited, however. Menasra's Spring 2012 threat to boycott the elections, less than two months after receiving party accreditation, indicated the organizational capacity limits of just another ego-driven party.

Growing Dissatisfaction with Algeria's Islamists

Even before the elections, a growing disaffection with political Islamists seemed evident in the steady decline in share of the Islamist bloc in Algeria's National Assembly over the last decade and a half. Collectively, the Islamist bloc captured 27 percent of parliamentary seats in 1997, dropped to 21 percent in 2002, and fell to 16 percent in 2007. Though it bucks a region-wide trend of Islamist on the rise, the 13 percent of parliamentary seats reserved for the Islamist bloc in 2012 squarely fits into the opposite Algerian trend.

As explained above, Algeria's Islamists are known entities. Djaballah, Menasra, and Soltani have participated in Algerian politics since the 1991 elections. In twenty years, Djaballah has founded three different Islamist parties (and been ejected from two). The MSP has held ministerial portfolios since 1997. It created the Presidential Coalition with the FLN

[99] In 2007, al-Islah lost more than half a million votes, winning 144,800 ballots.

[100] In October 2009, a Swiss court indicted Soltani on torture charges that the plaintiff later dropped. A month later, a major scandal broke inside the MSP controlled Ministry of Transports, allegedly linking ministry cadres and party businessmen to a nebulous web of Chinese entrepreneurs and international arms dealer Pierre Falcone.

and RND in 2004, quitting only five months ahead of the elections, while cynically holding onto its ministries. And it has been recently involved in several high-profile corruption scandals. Menasra's attempts at recreating political virginity have come to naught: Algerians remember him as MSP Minister of Industry from 1997-2002. In short, far from sharing the popular mystique, the Muslim Brothers, had over the electorate in Egypt or Tunisia, Algeria's Islamist parties are widely viewed as stakeholders in the system.[101]

Inclusion in the Algerian political system has resulted in a proliferation of Islamist parties, each seeking to capture the existing Islamist electorate, while pushing the boundaries of that electorate outward. Divergent political strategies and strong personalities among parties have divided the movement, hindering its capacity to work in any meaningful way as a unified bloc. Inclusion too seems to have moderated Algerian political Islam. Working in a governmental coalition has its advantages and disadvantages, attested by the continued leadership struggles Soltani and Djaballah have faced, while refusing to accept the system comes at great cost. Banned for twenty years now, FIS support in the electorate has slowly eroded. Former activists and sympathizers alike have either demobilized or migrated to alternative Islamist parties that offer real advantages. In 2012, the leadership of none of these parties, moreover, is likely to support a lift on the FIS ban.

Finally, the *sine qua non* condition for Algeria's political Islamist to have made significant gains in the 2012 parliament was an expanded, post-Arab Uprising "green" electorate. With a stagnant Islamist electorate, the "Green Alliance," FJD, FC, and recently accredited micro-parties running neo-Islamist platforms cannibalize each other, effectively cancelling out gains as individual parties or a bloc at the expense of the larger FLN and RND. The Islamist electorate neither grew nor necessarily stagnated. Rather, it appears to have shrunk over the last decade. In a 2004 survey, 39 percent of Algerians indicated their preference for an Islamic Democracy.[102] According to the 2011 Arab Barometer Survey, that percentage had dropped to little more than 18 percent in April-May 2011, when the survey was administered—nearly half a year before Islamist victories in Egypt, Morocco, and Tunisia.

Algeria and the Arab Uprisings

While Algeria has bucked regional trends, it is hardly an exception. In many ways, Algerian politics, however messy and sometimes violent, are now being mirrored elsewhere, and possibly anticipate future political dynamic in the post-Arab Spring era.

Indeed, there has been a proliferation of *protesta* and riots in postBen Ali Tunisia and post-Mubarak Egypt. While citizens were temporarily able to come together to chase their bully dictators from power, many now believe their revolutions have been confiscated by newly accredited opposition parties and civic groups squabbling over the transition process or seeking new sources of international donor rent.[103] Unwilling to be new captives to national

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[101] In Oran, the beard is often sarcastically referred to as a 'commercial register.'

[102] Mark Tessler and Eleanor Gao,"Gauging Arab Support for Democracy," *Journal of Democracy* 16, no. 3 (2005): 91.

[103] See: Clement M. Henry and Robert Springborg, *Globalization and the Politics of Development in the Middle East*, 2nd ed. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010)

elites serving their own interests, villagers and urban poor in Gafsa, Sidi Bouzid, Port Said, and Alexandria are increasingly voicing their opinion, sometimes in violent ways. The impetus for the Arab Spring, as Steve Heydemann noted in the conference on which in this volume is based, after all, remains a profound sense of erosion to social justice. Transition from authoritarianism does not guarantee increased civic awareness, associative robustness, or political wisdom.

Similarly, while Islamist parties have gained momentum in Egypt, Morocco, and Tunisia, they were recently beaten at the polls in Libya. Perhaps Libyans, who lived under the austere conditions of Qadhafi's "Green Book", saw little new in the political platforms of Islamists, who focus publicly on socio-cultural issues. Political Islamists in Egypt, Morocco, and Tunisia are now being tested. Should they be unable to address the aspirations of their own citizens—finding solutions to basic demands—they too may find themselves in the shoes of Algeria's Islamists: part of the problem, and hardly the solution.

The Plurality of Politics in Post-Revolutionary Iran[104]

Arang Keshavarzian, New York University

The Persian Puzzle, Eternal Iran, and *Hidden Iran*: these are three among the cavalcade of trade books that publishers have trotted out to explain Iran to general audiences as we mark the passage of 30 years since the Islamic Revolution. The starting point, as these titles show, is that the Islamic Republic is an enigma. And so it remains when the reader puts down these books: the authors discuss post-revolutionary Iranian politics as if they are too complex to be understood by non-experts and without specific knowledge of the personalities and motivations of the Islamic Republic's leadership. Iran is *sui generis*, an ancient, proud civilization fraught with contradictions and tensions inscrutable to those unschooled in the Persian politesse called *ta'arrof* or the wily bargaining of the bazaar. Add the volatile element of Shiite Islam to the mix—embodied in turbans and veils that cover and "hide"—and you've got a "puzzle" indeed.

Presenting Iran this way makes current events in the country very difficult to understand. At the first sign of political change, the typical reaction from such authors is that Iran's contradictions are being resolved—in favor of secularism, liberalism and progress, or Islam, dictatorship and tradition, as circumstances seem to warrant. Thus, Mahmoud Ahmadinejad's election victory in 2005 was imagined as a retrenchment of authoritarian Islam despite his economic populist message and the fact that he is the Islamic Republic's first lay president. When Iranian voters took to the streets in response to the 2009 election fraud, many of the same pundits claimed that a fresh revolution would overthrow the Islamic Republic, though the leaders, organizers and sympathizers of the protesters included pillars of the regime.

Most analysis of post-revolutionary Iran is state-centered and frames its politics as being an essential, even existential, struggle between political Islam, and liberal democracy. Ideology and the state are highly important, but to focus exclusively on these entities is to miss the crucial explanatory factors, namely: (a) the fragmented nature of the state patterns regime dynamics, (b) the multi-stranded mode of state-society relations, and (c) how society has been transformed by the post-revolutionary order.

One the one hand, the institutions of the Islamic Republic—and especially the structure of the regime—engenders elite conflict and fragmentation, while including mechanisms that until recently were more or less able to manage conflict and dissent, on the other. The hybrid republican-Khomeinist regime weaves together genuinely participatory institutions and unaccountable bodies, all (at least nominally) under the office of the Leader. This reading of Iran's elections, elite consensus building, and populism and patronage, is a rejoinder to both those who see political Islam and democracy as incompatible and those who call Iran a

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[104] See: Arang Keshavarzian, "Contestation without Democracy: Elite Fragmentation in Iran," in *Authoritarianism in the Middle East: Regimes and Resistance*, Marsha Pripstein Posusney and Michelle Penner Angrist, eds., (Boulder: Lynne Rienner Publishers, 2005), 63-88; "Iran," in *Politics and Society in the Contemporary Middle East*, ed. Michele Penner Angrist (Boulder: Lynne Rienner Publishers, 2010), 229-259; and *The New Politics of Post Revolutionary Iran*, a working book project co-authored with Kaveh Ehsani, Norma Moruzzi, and Chris Toensing.

democracy without qualification.

Second, while this configuration of institutions, rules, and organizations is essential for deciphering elite dynamics, it does not operate in isolation from society. In part because of the revolutionary origins of the regime and the participatory practices enshrined in the regime, a wide array of social categories, including war veterans, student activists, women's organizations, welfare practitioners, and *bazaari* merchants, are recipients of patronage, social bases for factions, and independent interests groups that have established, albeit fluid, relations with particular state institutions and elite factions. These social forces are active participants in historical processes, and not merely passive recipients of the will and strategic interactions of rulers or competing elite factions. Thus, power is something that is exercised and employed through social networks (i.e. it is never fully controlled or monopolized) and at times can be wielded by the seemingly powerless against "the political center."

The final related point is that the dynamic myriad of relations between state and society is what has transformed Iranian society in the last three decades in profound ways. Relations between the urban and rural, Tehran and the provinces, private and state-owned economic sectors, men and women, parents and children, and social economic classes have all shifted and evolved because of the intended and unintended state policies and negotiations by organized social groups and everyday practices. Some of these outcomes have helped entrench authoritarianism and heightened identity and cultural politics, but others have also nurtured the underlying political issue of the relentless claims to citizenship by numerous social classes and groups, with varying levels of access to and representation in the state.

Hence, Iran's revolution was a social revolution. As a result of these ongoing processes, Iranian society has witnessed the emergence of new relations of power, new geographies, new institutions, new social relations and new relations of gender. Thus, the current popular movement in Iran is not a counter-revolution, but a continuation of the social revolution of 1979, which seeks to hold that epochal event to its full promise.

Part 4
Varieties of Political Islam

The Evolution of Islamist Movements
Fawaz Gerges, The London School of Economics and Political Science

Islamic Capital and Democratic Deepening
Ji-Hyang Jang, The Asan Institute for Policy Studies

Is the Turkish Model relevant for the Middle East?
Kemal Kirişci, Boğaziçi University

The Evolution of Islamist Movements[105]

Fawaz Gerges, London School of Economics and Political Science

This paper will briefly make some general points regarding the evolution of Islamist movements over the past eighty years. It is a cliché to say that Islamist movements have evolved a great deal. If there is one particular point we have learned since the establishment of the first 20th century Islamist movement, is that this continuity is important in trying to understand what has happened within Islamist movements over the last eighty years.

Although the body and membership of the Islamist movement has expanded considerably in the last eight years, it's fair to say that there is a paucity of theorists, a lack of a well-delineated ideological framework, and a vacuum of ideas and programs. In an interesting way, most of the theorizing within the Islamist movement has been within the militant Islamist family as opposed to the mainstream Islamist family. For instance, Hassan al-Banna, the founder of the Muslim Brotherhood in 1928, was no theorist. He gave sermons. He really left behind no ideological narrative. Similarly, the leading theorists of the Islamist movements, starting with people such as Maududi and Sayyid Qutb between 1955 and 1966, and the children of Sayyid Qutb, starting with Muhammad abd-al-Salam Faraj, Ayman al-Zawahiri, and Abdullah Azzam also left behind no such narrative.

It is worth briefly noting why there have been no major theorists among Islamists. I think there are some reasons that explain the tensions and the contradictions among Islamists and within the movements. If there is one point to stress today, it is the dark legacy of the prison years between 1954 and the early 1970s. The confrontation between the Arab nationalist movement and the Islamist movement starting in 1954 has left deep scars on the Islamist movement, broadly defined. The fact that the Islamist movement was basically functioning underground, as opposed to aboveground, left a dark, bitter legacy during these years. They were basically banned in most countries—within Tunisia and Egypt. I think it's this legacy that explains the fundamental fault lines that exist between Islamist movements, in particular in the Arab world. The fault lines are between the mainstream Islamist and the radical Islamist movements.

This context leads to two propositions. First, the bulk of the Islamist movement has basically renounced violence since the late 1960s, and accepted the rules of the political game. It's fair to say that the jihadist project, as it relates to the near enemy and the far enemy, has reached both a conceptual and operational deadlock. For now, the jihadist project is dead not only because it suffered a catastrophic defeat both in the Arab world and as it relates to the Global War on Terror, but more important than the military setbacks, the jihadist project has suffered from a massive crisis of legitimacy. It has an inability to build a viable social base.

The reason why the jihadists lost the battle is because they failed to convince a critical segment of the Arab and Muslim public opinion that they really had anything to offer. No one has articulated this particular dilemma better than Ayman al-Zawahiri in his book, *Knights*

[105] This paper is a revised transcription of Fawaz Gerges' presentation at the 2011 Asan Middle East Conference.

under the Prophet's Banner. Al-Zawahiri noted that the jihadists had lost the war against the enemy because they did not convince enough Muslims that they had something to offer. He articulates why targeting the far enemy will bring more fortune. We know now that Muslims did not jump on the bandwagon of "far enemy" jihadism. Both militarily and in terms of legitimacy, the project has reached a conceptual deadlock. There is nowhere to go from here.

The second consequence has been for mainstream Islamists. During the last 15-20 years in Tunisia, Egypt, Indonesia, and Jordan, most Islamists have been lobbying to join the political process. The truth is that it is not Islamists who have shied away from entering politics, but Arab governments that have used a variety of methods to prevent them from joining the political process. This is not just about joining the political process. Most mainstream Islamists have matured a great deal and they have shown sophistication, and a willingness to ally with secular, nationalist, and leftist forces. The word maturity describes to a great extent what has been happening within the mainstream Islamist movement. It applies to most groups, including the Muslim Brotherhood in Jordan, and, I would also argue, Hamas and Hezbollah as Shi'a-based political organizations.

We all witnessed the conduct of the Muslim Brotherhood in Egypt during the protests. The fact is they tried to keep their distance and not take ownership of the uprising. This was a conscious decision on the part of the Islamists to show that they are not a threat and to avoid antagonizing their rivals and outside powers; they want to put to rest some of the fears and suspicions that exist. In this particular sense, the top leaders of the Islamist movements have reiterated their willingness to join alliances with political forces. Also, to its credit, the Muslim Brotherhood in Egypt has made it clear that they are not in a hurry to gain or exercise power. They are aware of the Algerian model; that is, if you go for broke, you risk antagonizing the military and provoking a response.

A number of examples illustrate how the Islamists have changed over time. For instance, there are major generational differences within the movement today. The 1970 generation is a different political beast than the old guard; the Sayyid Qutb old guard versus the generation of Abdel Moneim Aboul Fotouh and Essam Al Eryan and many others. Many of these young Muslim Brothers have similar sensibilities to young Egyptians, in the sense that they are pursuing a more nationalist than religious project. In the case of Abdel Moneim Aboul Fotouh, one of the most important figures within the Muslim Brotherhood, and many others of the 1970 generation realized that the old guard was outdated, with many of its internal dynamics functioning undemocratically.

Nevertheless, though the movement has come a long way, there are still some structural challenges facing even the mainstream Islamist movement, as opposed to the Turkish Islamists. The first is that Arab Islamists subordinate the political to the moral. They have not been able to overcome the moralizing tendency, which is still quite alarming, because politics is all about interests. It is not about deciding the nature of God, or discussing moral norms and values. These don't enhance economic livelihoods or inform us about the quality of institutions and the nature of the political system. Arab Islamists have not moved forward when it comes to taking politics seriously, although they understand the political game.

The yardstick by which we measure the ability and willingness of the Islamists to play by the rules of the game is whether they take the interests of their constituencies into account.

Most of the Christian fundamentalist parties in the last 100 years evolved because they were forced to take into account the interests of certain constituencies: the labor movement, the bourgeoisie, student constituencies, and so forth. In this sense, there is no yardstick by which to evaluate and assess how far these Islamists have come. Are they willing to take into account the various interests that exist in society: professionals, labor unions, and females? This is a very important question.

Another major structural challenge is that these groups offer no major political, social, or economic programs. People are often asked to take their word for granted without knowing what their intentions are. They are beginning to conceptualize ideas about governments and civil society, but they have a long way to go before they will have the capacity to govern their societies. Also, Islamist movements have a long way to go when it comes to questions of citizenship and rights—in particular for minorities and women. It is not enough to say you accept the rules of the political game when you don't allow women to be judges or become president.

Another major deficiency is that when one talks to Islamists, they say that they accept civics based on an Islamic foundation, but there is no such thing as a secular state. The word secular is poisonous to most Islamists. There are no terms for this. They have words for a secular liberal democratic state. There is no concrete conceptual idea to evaluate the Islamist project. These structural deficiencies and challenges are real and serious. The Islamist movements have come a long way, but we know they have not come as far as their Turkish counterparts.

The final point is that engagement and participation in the political process will have a tremendous impact on the brain of the Islamist movement. The more they become engaged in the political process, the more the world will engage the Islamists. We are beginning to see some signs of that in terms of the US and other Western powers. Engagement not only serves the interest of the political transition in Arab societies, but it also helps Islamists develop their conceptual points when it comes to institutions and governance.

Islamic Capital and Democratic Deepening

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Introduction

In the wake of the attacks of September 11, policymakers have been struggling to understand what might lead radical Islamist movements to moderate their views. In a similar vein, the recent electoral success of moderate Islamists in Tunisia and Egypt has received a great deal of attention and raised a timely question regarding the issue. In this respect, the transition of political Islam into a mainstream party in Turkey and Egypt since the late 1990s has thus attracted significant policy and scholarly interest. The remarkable soft landing of Turkey's Justice and Development Party (Adalet ve Kalkınma Partisi, AKP) has illustrated that previously rigid fundamentalists were ready to compromise their political programs. As Fawaz Gerges suggests, the Egyptian Muslim Brotherhood (MB) may be evolving in a similar direction. Turkey's pro-Islamic AKP is particularly remarkable, because the party articulated pragmatic policies and was swept to victory in the 2002, 2007, and 2011 general elections, and formed a third consecutive single party government.

This study seeks to understand why pro-Islamic parties, which have traditionally been thought of as an obstacle to democracy in the region, might adopt a moderate posture and incorporate themselves into a secular constitutional system. This question is of the utmost importance to the policy world concerned with Islamic extremist organizations, such as Hamas in Gaza and Hezbollah in Lebanon, which have heavily relied on militant anti-Western rhetoric, operated outside the law, and espoused violence to attain political power.

This paper argues that indigenous Islamic capitalists have played a determinant role in curbing the radical excesses of political Islam and promoting Muslim democracy in Turkey and Egypt. The rationale is that where Islamic financial institutions and firms are developed and securely functioning, Islamic capitalists seeking to maximize business interests tend to prefer moderate politicians over confrontational Islamists. Most importantly, this study tackles the often-biased work produced by journalists and publicists highlighting Islamic capital's role in financing terrorism and the contentious accusations about ties between Islamic financiers and politicians. It also breaks from international factor-driven analyses which emphasize the role of US state building policy in the Middle East and North Africa while neglecting domestic power configurations.

Namely, this work applies a counter-Marxian interpretation of Western development trajectory to the current Islamic world. In doing so, it implies that the challenge of radical Islamism and terrorism is ultimately a political contest that cannot be solved by external military means or transnational market forces. Rather, domestic Islamic commerce or "green capital" may be conducive to Muslim democracy. Islamic capitalist development is likely to shift the balance of power within Islamist movements since it weakens the power of radical Islamists and strengthens moderate and liberal factions. Yet, Islamic capitalists do not necessarily mean individuals from conservative royal families heavily dependent on lucrative rents in oil rich rentier monarchies. Instead, they are distinctive social forces with class commitment derived from the interactions of industrial relations and the transformation of the

social structure. Accordingly, the level of Islamic capitalist development depends on different power asymmetries, institutional arrangements, and resource allocation. In this regard, this study engages in the debate of social classes as central players in the path of political and economic development in the era of globalization. One of the ways we can deal with the underlying problem of radical Islamism and terrorism is by letting domestic Islamic capitalists grow up and realize the incentives for economic interests and prosperity.

Analyzing Pro-Islamic Party Institutionalization

Muslim moderates have grown remarkably since the late 1990s. For instance, Turkey's AKP, a successor to the fundamentalist Welfare Party (WP), has rejected anti-Western attitudes and emphasized globalization. The party, now cited as a model of a democratic Muslim party, won a landslide victory in the 2002 elections and formed a single party government that has lasted for a decade. Egypt's MB, commonly referred to as the root of the 20th century's radical Islamism, has started to address a transformation toward a commitment to democratic principles, including peaceful and regular power alternation, pluralism, and citizenship rights.

In fact, most of the largest, best organized, and significant societal groups in the Middle East and North Africa are the Islamist opposition movements who seek to promote the role of Islam in political, social, and economic life. In the majority of cases, Islamist groups have occupied part of the political space as important counter-movements or sources of opposition to authoritarian-secularist regimes. Despite some variation, most modern Islamic movements have responded to the impact of Western influence in two different ways: rejecting modernization and westernization or embracing the first and rejecting the second. Radical Islamists use militant rhetoric with hostile attitudes toward the West, which perceive the relationship with the pro-Western incumbent regime as a zero-sum game while reformist Muslim responses to the external challenges are synthesizing rejection.[106]. Not surprisingly, political Islamists in the liberal reformist wing are quite popular in their countries. Occasional polls have shown that popular support toward Muslim moderates has increased. For instance, Tayyip Recep Erdogan, the leader of the AKP, was ranked the most admired world leader in a 2010 poll of Arabs.[107] This popularity went up especially after the Arab Spring.

Since Erdogan took office, Turkey's AKP government, with its overwhelming parliamentary majority, has pushed through wide-reaching reforms, including the first overhaul of the Turkish penal code in its 78-year history, greater civilian control of the military, the initiation of Kurdish language broadcasting, and a decrease in the severest forms of torture. The AKP government has also pursued neoliberal economic policies, generally maintained a pro-Western stance, and enhanced Turkey's international reputation by initiating popular reforms long ignored by previous governments. Subsequently, in 2004 the country's notorious inflation fell to below 10 percent for the first time in 28 years.

Similarly, the liberal strand of political Islam in Egypt has experienced something of a

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[106] Clement M. Henry and Robert Sprinborg, *Globalization and the Politics of Development in the Middle East* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010); and Samuel P. Huntington, *The Third Wave: Democratization in the Late Twentieth Century* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1991).

[107] Bobby Ghosh, "Erdogan's Moment," *Times*, November 28, 2011.

renaissance since the late 1990s after decades of marginalization. Many of the MB's dynamic younger leaders have begun to incorporate the ideas of representative democracy within an Islamic Shari'a law structure and abandoned the radical goal of permitting violence for political ends. Focusing more on domestic social issues rather than economic or foreign policy, the platform of the MB has transformed in the direction of supporting greater social and political rights for women and Coptic Christians. Some senior MB leaders have also at least stated rhetorical support for pluralism, tolerance, and human rights in their official statements. After all, the MB's new political party, the Freedom and Justice Party (FJP), earned more than 45 percent of the parliamentary seats last December. The party won a sweeping majority in Egypt's first free and fair election since the Arab Spring ousted the 30 year-long dictatorship of Hosni Mubarak.

Some of the MB's high profile young leaders have also broken away to form a new Islamic party, al-Wasat. They emphasize the need for a serious reassessment of the historical Shari'a law and have affirmed the principle of popular sovereignty as the legitimate basis of state power and backed equal rights for non-Muslim minorities. Interestingly, the pro-Islamic Wasat party, which still seeks to build a Shari'a-based state, especially emphasizes the need for a critical revision of Shari'a via the full use of *ijtihad*, or independent reasoning. While the MB remains vague about the exercising of rights based upon Shari'a law, the Wasat party argues that women are equal to men in all spheres of social life and affirms the public right of women to serve in the highest positions of authority, such as judges and head of state.[108] Yet, this party gained only about two percent of votes with nine parliamentary members in the elections of December 2010.

In contrast to the significant institutionalization of Turkey's AKP and Egypt's MB and the recent rise of Tunisia's moderate Ennahda party, Hamas, and Hezbollah retain more radical images in less stable polities and have at times aligned themselves with the Islamic Republic of Iran. Also, the most significant Islamist opposition groups in Kuwait and Yemen have practiced electoral and parliamentary politics for years, but still remain committed to undemocratic agendas relying on rigid and ultra-conservative Shari'a rulings and principles. Furthermore, many radical Islamists have gained followers not only among repressed Saudis and Afghanis but also among Muslims in Western democracies in Europe lending itself to a non-monolithic identity.

Does the Color of Money Matter? Theoretical Debates on the Logic of Islamic Capitalism

In explaining the various features of pro-Islamic party institutionalization, most explanations have followed one of two paths: international or domestic. International factor-based studies have focused on the role of US state building efforts, either relying on military power in a "war on terror" or establishing local democratic agencies. On the other hand, most domestic factor-driven works have emphasized the role of indigenous Islamic capitalists, either financing terrorism or curbing political Islam.

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[108] Carrie Rrosefsky Wickham, "The Path to Moderation: Strategy and Learning in the Formation of Egpyt's Wasat Party," *Comparative Politics* 36, no. 2 (2004).

First, the US government has engaged in nation-building exercises in the Middle East and North Africa since World War II. The US state-building strategy is based on building democratic and secure states that are believed to be the best antidote to the threat of radical Islamism and terrorism. However, this strategy has not been successful. The external pressures by the US that would provide an opportunity for states to embrace liberalism and open a route for a transition in the target society have not worked out for most developing countries in general and the Middle East and North Africa in particular. Historically, Germany and Japan are the only successful cases of the US state building project. Yet, an independent variable in the transformation and reconstruction of German and Japanese society may not have been America's efforts but rather the pre-existing bureaucratic and parliamentary institutions, such as a robust history of national sovereignty, long experience with pluralism, and a strong military in the two countries.[109]

Furthermore, although the central purpose of US Middle East policy after September 11 was the democratic transformation of the region, the policy for the past several decades had been to support the many autocratic regimes in the region, such as those in Saudi Arabia, Egypt, Tunisia, and Jordan. The policy process has never been involved with peeling off ordinary Muslim citizens from sympathy toward the radical Islamist movement and weakening the support bases of terrorist forces. People in the region watched as the United States took a tough action against Iran and Syria while failing to push crony autocrats hard enough.[110] Seemingly, the degrees of US support for democracy in the region varies on a country by country basis. The United States promotes democracy, but only up to a point.

Besides, the region and the rest of the world have strongly reacted to the overt use of American military power in the process of its war on terror. However, its use of hard power is also another contrast to the US sponsorship of the Mujahedeen in Afghanistan during the 1980s, which consequently only empowered Islamist militants. The irony is that fatal attacks by fundamentalists, which included anti-tourist attacks in Egypt in the mid-1990s, the bombing of the World Trade Center in New York in 1993, the Khobar Attack on the US Marine barracks in Saudi Arabia in 1996, and the bombings of the American embassies in Nairobi and Dar es-Salam in 1998, were aimed at the terrorists' former patrons.[111]

Rather than supporting democratic agencies in target societies and mitigating the influence of Islamic extremists via military operations, the US Middle East policy instead allowed the autocrats to utilize liberalization policy as a form of system maintenance. The top down liberalization process led by the dictators was limited, controlled, selective, and superficial, and was the type of formalistic liberalization resorted to for the sake of appearances.[112] In fact, authoritarian rulers tolerated or even promoted political liberalization in the belief that by opening up certain spaces for individual and group action, they could relieve various

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[109] Jason Brownlee, "Can American Nation-Build," *World Politics* 50, no. 2 (2007); Francis Fukuyama, *State-Building: Governance and World Order in the 21st Century* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press).

[110] Marina Ottaway and Thomas Carothers, "Think Again: Middle East Democracy," *Foreign Policy* 83, no. 6 (2004).

[111] Ibrahim Warde, *Islamic Finance in the Global Economy* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2000)

[112] Daniel Brumberg and Larry Diamon, "Introduction," in *Islam and Democracy in the Middle East*, ed. Larry Diamond, Marc Plattner, and Daniel Brumberg (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2003)

pressures and obtain needed information and support without altering the structure of authority, that is, without becoming accountable to the citizenry for their actions or subjecting their claim to rule to fair and competitive elections. Indeed, most states in the region characterized by a strong coercive apparatus, a lack of legitimacy, and an inefficient administration, are hard but weak. Colonial legacies, the lack of a hegemonic class, and the primacy of the state in social formation, in addition to inconsistent dual US policies, have been crucial in shaping the brittle, exclusionary features of the regimes in the region.[113]

Therefore, the rise of political Islam can be interpreted as reflecting the limitations of modern states in overcoming the problems of poverty and inequality which have become increasingly acute due to the fiscal limits on the redistributive capacities in the globalization process. The Islamist movements view adjustment reforms to be another imperialist plot and denounce the resulting consumerism as Western and decadent. The tyrannical regimes backed by the US government are definitely no more democratic than the radical Islamists. They respond with security crackdowns and tougher regimentation measures, and even push moderates into a more radical position. The movements, in turn, often mobilize many disenfranchised young people who have not benefited from open-door policies to join in protests against incompetent pro-Western regimes.[114]

In contrast to the often problematic nature of US Middle East policy, the European Union (EU) has tried to pursue a somewhat different approach to the region. For instance, the EU has expressed concerns over the heavy influence of the Turkish military on civilian affairs in the early 2000s. The EU was strongly critical of the closure of Turkey's pro-Islamic party in 2001, calling it a setback for Turkish democracy and Turkey's bid for EU membership. As a matter of fact, the moderate political Islamists' enthusiastic support for EU membership is quite in contrast with the recent hesitations of the secular Kemalists. One of the new characteristics of the Turkish military since the late 1990s was its willingness to employ anti-Western rhetoric, and to accuse its opponents of being European tools. The secularist military has been strongly opposed to the growing pressure from the EU for the protection of human rights, the need for civilian control in politics, and the resolution of the Kurdish problem. Ironically enough, the westernized secularist elite have started to accuse the EU of being intrusive, and supportive of internal enemies of the state: the Kurds and Islamists.

Except for the indirect role of an external actor to constrain the secular military from exercising coercive power, international factors do not seem to play a key role in institutionalizing political Islamists. Instead, a domestic factor-driven analysis provides a more direct and dynamic independent variable in explaining the causal relations. It has often been claimed that the main purpose of Islamic capitalism or "green capitalism" is to finance radical fundamentalists and terrorists. Islamic capitalists who are repressed and regulated by the authoritarian state push political Islamists in a more radical, anti-system, and anti-Western direction. Thus, Islamic capitalists collaborate with revitalized fundamentalist movements in

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[113] Lisa Anderson, "The State in the Middle east and North Africa," *Comparative Politics* 20 (1987); Nazih Ayubi, *Over-Stating the Arab State: Politics and Society in the Middle East* (London: Tauris, 1995); and Roger Owen, *State, Power and Politics in the Making of the Modern Middle East* (London: Routledge, 2004).

[114] Ji-Hyang Jang, "Islamic Fundamentalism," in *International Encyclopedia of the Social Sciences*, ed. William A. Darity, Jr., Vol. 3, 2nd ed. (Detroit: Macmillan Reference).

order to modify the power balance and to gain effective control of the government for their private business interests. In doing so, they provide political Islamists economic muscle that increases Islamist zeal to expand into other spheres in society and invokes religious sentiments to carve a larger space for themselves vis-à-vis the bigger, secular capitalist cronies. That is, Islamic entrepreneurs want to mobilize financial capital to ravage the patronage networks of incumbent rulers and the rigid bureaucracy.

In fact, the journalistic literature on Islam has conflated a series of events to suggest that Islamic capitalists were instrumental in promoting fundamentalist forces. According to the simple syllogism, while the Iranian and Syrian government continue to back international terrorism, sub-state actors in other countries in the region increasingly finance militant Islamic groups from al-Qa'ida to Hamas through a network of Islamic charitable organizations, banking systems, companies, and the personal wealth of individual militant Islamists. Terrorism in the Middle East and North Africa is financed by an array of states, groups, fronts, individuals, banks, businesses, criminal enterprises, and nominally humanitarian organizations.[115] It was reported that Al Shamal Islamic Bank, Tadamon Islamic Bank, and Faisal Islamic Bank, all in Sudan, and Al Baraka Group in Somalia were accused of their connection with bin Laden right after September 11, although the directors of the banks denied any such connections.[116] Most of all, it was also stated that the synchronized attacks of September 11 highlighted the critical role of financial support networks in the operations of international terrorist organizations.

Slightly differently, another literature also claims that the new moderate Islamists are wolves in lambs' skins, covering their anti-democratic intentions behind a democratic front. According to this analysis, Turkey's AKP leaders, heavily sponsored by fanatic Islamic capitalists, have only blurred the distinction between business and politics and never been in a genuinely moderate position. Similarly, Egypt's MB members are not ideologically flexible and routinely pretend to compromise on ideals in order to pursue organizational ends.[117]

However, while radical and militant Islamists might have been attracted to Islamic banks and firms for religious reasons and organizational interests, there is nothing inherent in the Islamic economic model that facilitates the movement of illicit funds. Virtually all Islamic financial institutions are in business to make money for their shareholders and customers. While charity is a prominent requirement of Islamic religious faith, Islamic finance is not a charitable or politically motivated undertaking. Islamic banks operate in a highly competitive environment and cannot afford to adopt Islam's rigid charitable doctrines.[118] Profits are important because account holders and clients must be satisfied. In fact, Islamic banking is part of an international system, which sets it apart from the other rejectionist facets of Islamism.

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[115] Matthew Levitt, *Targetting Terror: US Policy Toward Middle Eastern State Sponsors and Terrorist Organizations, Post September 11* (Washington DC: Washington Institute for Near East Policy, 2002)

[116] "French bank freezes assets of Sudanese bank with alleged links to bin Laden," *The Associated Press*, October 1, 2001.

[117] Daniel Pipes, *Militant Islam Reaches America* (New York: W.W. Norton & Company, 2002); and Michael Rubin, "Green Money, Islamist Politics in Turkey," *The Middle East Quarterly* 12, no. 1 (2005).

[118] Elias Kazarian, *Islamic Versus Traditional Banking: Financial Innovation* (Boulder: Westview Press, 1993).

Accordingly, there is no compelling reason for Islamic capitalists to provoke radical behavior by political Islamists, which is not conducive to their wealth generation and interest maximization. Namely, Islamic capital is like capital in general in this regard. The bourgeoisie is culturally conservative, religiously observant, economically connected with the world market, and politically averse to unnecessary risk. Thus, it seems plausible that Islamic financial and business groups have been constantly seeking to find common ground for cooperation with the incumbent governments and commercial institutions in order to secure their business interests and avoid political confrontations.

Furthermore, Islamic capitalists are less fearful of the social uprisings that Islamist movements have been leading than state-dependent capitalists, given the common experiences of persecution and discrimination against the Islamic community under secular authoritarian regimes. Thus, Islamic capitalists who develop a strong sense of unity in the communitarian networks of Islamic society are more enthusiastic about liberalism and pluralism than state-sponsored crony capitalists. In doing so, such social forces genuinely independent of state patronage are likely to champion democratization since their interests locate them at odds with the incumbent dictatorial regime.[119] Consequently, Islamic capitalists, pursuing the status quo within the system and also possessing a democratic class commitment, try to empower the moderate wing and stabilize relationships between the moderate Islamists and the incumbent regime.

Economic Theories of Islamic Banking and Firms vs. Political Theories of Oil Rich Rentier States

Ideologically, both liberalism and the Islamic economic model share a common opposition to socialism and the command economy. Islamic capitalists, including Islamic bankers, traditional merchants, and small businessmen who are committed to religious beliefs have not been favored by secularist state-controlled industrialization and protectionism. They often prefer to reduce state scope through lower tariffs, privatization, subsidy cuts, and deregulation. The conservative capitalists also ask for the liberalization of inflows of foreign direct investment and secure property rights. In fact, the recent globalization process has often witnessed an alliance between Islamic capitalists and competitive liberals. Islamic liberals commonly highlight Islam's emphasis on property rights and the glorification of commercial profit to advocate laissez-faire economic policies.

Islamic banking is a modern transnational phenomenon making economic practices in the contemporary Muslim world conform to Islamic norms. The first transnational Islamic financial institutions, the Islamic Development Bank, and the Islamic Bank of Dubai, were founded in 1975. The pioneers of the first wave lost their near monopoly on Islamic finance as Islamic banking grew more diverse and pragmatic in the 1980s. The house of Islamic funds, Dar al Maal al Islami, was established in Geneva in 1981 as an investment house, employing professional bankers of many nationalities and catering for a wide spread of Muslim depositors. On the other hand, Dallah Al Baraka Islamic Investment Group, founded

[119] Eva Bellin, *Stalled Democracy: Capital, Labor, and the Paradox of State-Sponsored Development* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2002).

in 1982, was the first Islamic bank to be given authorization by the Bank of England to act as a licensed deposit taker and has offices in London and Birmingham. It also operates joint banking in a number of Muslim countries including Bahrain, Turkey, and Malaysia, but does not operate any branches in Saudi Arabia.[120]

After many transnational Islamic banks launched their businesses in various countries, they became more localized and embedded in their respective country's distinctive industrial structure and business environments. Given this tradition of localization and joint ventures, the banking operations of direct investment, long-term funds, and fund allocation are significantly different in various countries although the initial funds of transnational Islamic financial institutions came from oil rich countries.

The most fundamental characteristic in Islamic economics is the prohibition of interest or an unjustified increase in wealth. To avoid interest, Islamic banking replaces interest with profit and loss sharing (PLS). Depositors, lenders, and investors receive not a fixed return but a predetermined share of any income generated in the borrower's business transactions. They also share in any losses, and the banks, in turn, do not charge interest to the borrowers[121] Given that this economic logic is quite similar to today's stock or equity market competition, the PLS logic requires a high level of transparency in the market, and a high degree of credibility between business partners.

Generally, the average profit-sharing earned by the depositors of Islamic banks has been more or less identical to the interest rates of conventional banks. More specifically, long-term lending mudaraba and musharaka contracts are known as distinctively Islamic financial instruments through which Islamic banks act as an intermediary and offer the funds to a third party for investment purposes.[122] On the other hand, short term financing requires less transparency and credibility in the market, but generates less revenue than mudaraba and musharaka.

Such Islamic bankers are seen as a mobile bourgeoisie supporting the free market and globalization and opposing arbitrary state power. They prefer dense relations with Islamic community members including politicians who can offer reliable information about prospective customers in order to reduce the transaction costs of applying PLS logic. Therefore, they also favor opening their branches where the support of the Islamic party is strong in order to seek out the deposit bases and to establish close ties with the local politicians.

The banking sector in general controls international and local finance capital through its ability to allocate credit independently of government to various industrial sectors. Strong and independent bankers thus often lend their structural power to pro-reform coalitions and motivate liberal politicians in order to enforce neo-liberal reforms and structural adjustment packages. In the region, empowered Islamic bankers may reinforce political pluralism by supporting more liberal and moderate Islamists committed to a small state and free market.

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[120] John R. Presley and Rodney Wilson, *Banking in the Arab Gulf* (Hampshire: Macmillan, 1991).
[121] Timur Kuran, *The Long Divergence: How Islamic Law Held Back the Middle East* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2010).
[122] Clement M. Henry, "Financial Performances of Islamic *versus* Conventional Banks," in *The Politics of Islamic Finance*, ed. Clement H. Henry and Rodney Wilson (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2004).

Previously, during the era of import substitution, states tended to favor their secularist, state-sponsored competitors over Islamic firms in the manufacturing and service sectors. Without choices, small and medium sized Islamic companies were clustered in the export-oriented sector. Eventually, in Turkey at least, the religiously conservative entrepreneurs in the export sector became the winners of globalization while the state was the biggest loser, failing to control the flow of domestic capital. Thus the export-oriented Muslim businessmen expanded their businesses and sought to reduce the scope and activity of the state in the market and society. For example, Turkey's Anatolian tigers, who had hardly received any investment and subsidies from the secularist state and were based in conservative cities, began to grow fast in the early 1990s and became the symbol of "made in themselves." They are often referred to as entrepreneurs with an "Islamic work ethic" and "Islamic Calvinists." Islamic firms just like their Islamist counterparts in banking have thus played a crucial role in institutionalizing political Islamists. These entrepreneurs encouraged the emergence of reconciliatory reformists by pushing the political Islamists in a more liberal direction.

This productive capitalist class positioned in domestic banking, manufacturing, and the service sector is distinctively different from the rich individuals in oil exporting monarchies. The royal family members are not the capitalists possessing class commitment and structural power that we have discussed so far. The prince-cum-rich businessman relying on the great availability of oil resources instead supports authoritarian rentier regimes and sometimes extreme jihadists. Rentier monarchies that earn an overwhelming proportion of their income from oil and gas exports rely on distributive mechanisms to assert authority. The oil revenues are also used for lavish purchases of modern armaments and the royal family's luxury consumption. In fact, those monarchies support a fierce apparatus to repress any opposition social forces.[123]

Yet the royal family businessmen are also known to promote Islamic educational programs world-wide in order to preserve the legitimacy of their regimes. Clearly, Islam is not a unified phenomenon. The rulers of rentier monarchies often use it to support their regimes since Islam is a powerful symbol of legitimacy and seen as a universal good. However, they never allow any other forms of Islamic institutions connected outside. Only the official Islam patronized and permitted by the ruling monarchs is available inside each country.

Consequently, conservative monarchies, and particularly Saudi Arabia, do not allow transnational Islamic banking operations within their country. For instance, although Dar al Maal al-Islami is controlled by Prince Mohammed al-Faisal al-Saud, the second son of the late King Faisal, the group does not operate a commercial bank in Saudi Arabia. Also, the Al Baraka Group, controlled by a Saudi citizen Saleh Kamel with mostly Saudi capital, does not operate a bank in his home country.

In addition, the monarchies, to the extent that they invest in local industry, tend to engage in capital intensive projects related to the petroleum industry that employ only a small percentage of the domestic labor force. In doing so, they reduce the number of would-be social class actors in both labor and capitalist forces, which in turn reduces their influence

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[123] Theda Skocpol, *Social Revolutions in the Modern World* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1994).

and demobilizes social classes. Moreover, cushioned by oil, they have delayed their structural adjustment and market reforms. As a result, these monarchies are often left with atypically robust patriarchal norms, laws, institutions, and social forces.[124] Oil produces disruptive, rich, and loyal family members and hinders genuine capitalist development and the creation of an independent Islamic business class.

Indeed, different types of domestic capital can have different effects on power configurations. When capitalist development is not the result of industrialization and the manufacturing sector growth that produces indigenous industrial actors, it cannot bring about changes in institutional arrangements. Oil revenues in conservative monarchies instead discourage industrialization, distort social class development, and finally create unruly and unpredictable individuals, such as the rich and fanatic Osama bin Laden.

Thus, Islamic banking and firms in Turkey, as the region's most democratic Muslim country, have enjoyed a more open and business-friendly environment than those in Egypt, which until the fall of Mubarak had a more bullying and less accountable regime than Turkey. Still, as others in this book have observed, there has been more private sector development in Egypt, including Islamic capitalism, than in the more closed bunker states, such as Algeria, Libya, Syria, and Yemen. In Turkey, differentiated from most once-colonized Arab countries which often gave rise to subsequent undemocratic regimes, a multiparty system and relatively autonomous oligopolies existed before the rise of Islamic capitalists. By contrast, in other countries of the region, capital remained fragmented and pluralism was relatively underdeveloped. In short, Turkish Islamic capitalists had more opportunities to expand within the system than their counterparts in other Muslim countries. However, the recent moderation in the ideological positions claimed by the leaders of Egypt's Islamic movement indicates that the institutionalization of a pro-Islamic party can occur in the absence of strong experience with a multiparty system, political pluralism, and industrialization.

Conclusion: Giving Islamist Movements a Chance in the post-Arab Spring Muslim World

The growth of the Islamic business community is the important factor contributing to the political mainstreaming and institutionalizing of pro-Islamic parties. Most importantly, this study calls into question the often-sensationalist portrayals of Islamic capital as a source for financing Muslim extremism and tries to provide a more nuanced explanation based on an economic interpretation of Islamic capitalism. Also, it clearly argues that rich conservative royal family members in oil exporting monarchies are not the Islamic capitalists with a class commitment and structural power. The proposition highlights the role of Islamic capitalists as democrats who could discipline political Islamists not fully culturally and economically integrated into the system and finally improve social order.

Furthermore, this study finds the external factor-oriented approach wanting. As a matter of fact, international pressure is generally filtered through domestic actors who possess their own complicated agendas not solely determined by US or EU state building efforts either operating in the war against terrorism or establishing local democratic agencies. Turkish

[124] Michael Ross, "Oil, Islam, and Women," *American Political Science Review* 102, no. 2 (2008).

capitalist development, however, offers some important insights for the post-Arab Spring Middle East and North Africa. Similar phenomena may be at work in Egypt and Tunisia, resulting—as in Turkey—in the incorporation of pro-Islamic parties into an emergent democracy. However, the underlying social and economic conditions should be interpreted only as indicators of likelihood, not as deterministic fate.

Is the Turkish Model relevant for the Middle East?

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Introduction

Republican Turks have long liked being talked about as a model for reform in other countries. At school pupils are taught how Atatürk's Turkey constituted an example for liberation and transformation of the colonized world into independent states. The *Economist* in December 1991 had announced Turkey as the "Star of Islam" and model for the newly emerging Muslim ex-Soviet republics.[125] Turkey unhesitatingly offered itself as an ağabey (big brother) for these republics with little success. At the end of the decade, the then Minister of Foreign Affairs, Ismail Cem, envisaged Turkey as a model "combining Islamic traditions with democratic institutions, human rights, secular law and gender equality" for its neighborhood.[126]

In the context of the "Arab Awakening," a similar enthusiasm exists too. The Prime Minister of Turkey, Recep Tayyip Erdogan, seems keen to influence the course of reform in the Arab world and during his visit to Egypt, Libya, and Tunisia in September 2011 he offered Turkey's experience for reconciling a secular state (laik devlet) and Islam. The Turkish public thinks along similar lines too. In a public opinion survey on Turkish foreign policy perceptions 72, 80, and 82 percent of the respondents believed that Turkey could be a model respectively in the political, economic, and cultural sense of the word for the Middle East.[127]

However, this enthusiasm is not restricted to Turks. Hardly a day goes by without media commentaries from prominent columnists or politicians in the West dwelling into Turkey's "model" qualities. Similarly, prominent Arab personalities ranging from Tariq Ramadan, the grandson of Hassan al-Banna, the founder of the Muslim Brotherhood, and Rashid Ghannouchi, the leader of the Islamist Ennahda party in Tunisia, to Muhammed Hussain Tantawi, the post-Mubarak leader of Egypt, have all also talked about Turkey as a model for reform in the Arab world.[128]

In this paper, I would like to offer a couple of observations about the ongoing debate concerning Turkey's relevance as a model for the Middle East, contest the term "model," and instead argue that Turkey's relevance for the Arab Awakening stems primarily from its "demonstrative effect" with both its positive and less positive aspects. I conclude by advocating that Turkey, at the governmental as well as civil society level, should play a more active role in shaping reform in the Middle East. Especially, Turkish civil society should highlight and discuss with their counterparts in the Arab world not just the strengths but also

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[125] *The Economist*, "Star of Islam: A Survey of Turkey," December 14, 1991.

[126] I. Cem, Türkiye, Avrupa, Avrasya [Turkey, Europe, and Eurasia] (İstanbul: Bilgi Üniversitesi Yayınları, 2004), 64.

[127] M. Akgün et al, *Türkiye'de Dış Politika Algısı* (Istanbul: TESEV Yayınları, 2011), 23.

[128] *Zaman* (internet version), "Tunuslu lider Gannuşi Zaman'a konuştu" February 23, 2011; T. Ramadan, "Democratic Turkey is the Template for Egypt's Muslimbrotherhood," *Huffington Post*, February 8, 2011; and S. Cook, "Istanbul on the Nile: Why the Turkish Model of Military Rule is Wrong for Egypt," *Foreign Affairs*, August 1, 2011.

the weaknesses and problems of the Turkish "model." However, this should be done with the recognition that, at the end of the day, it is the Arab world that will need to develop their own models best suited for the peculiarities of each country experiencing the Arab Awakening.

Observations

There is a lively and fascinating ongoing debate among academics, columnists, and policy makers on the relevance of the Turkish model for the Arab Awakening.[129] They range from those who argue that Turkey's experience is unique and that the centrality of secularism to Turkey's political development basically makes Turkey irrelevant to the Arab Awakening[130] to those who see Turkey's experience under the rule of the Justice and Development Party (AKP) as a great potential model.[131] Hence, the debate involves a discussion of "which" Turkey constitutes a model. Turkish experience in incorporating Islam into democratic politics receives particular attention in the West. Joschka Fischer, for example, advocates Turkey as a model for the Arab world because it is an "Islamo democratique" country rather than simply a "democratique" one.[132]

Such arguments in turn ruffle feathers among secular Turks. There was, for example, the occasion when the then Turkish Chief of the General Staff, General Hilmi Ozkok, bitterly criticized US Secretary of State Colin Powell for having remarked that "there will be an Islamic Republic of Iraq just like other Islamic republics such as Turkey and Pakistan."[133] Ozkok emphasized the difference between being a Muslim country as opposed to the idea of Turkey being an Islamic state and added that presenting Turkey as a model for Middle Eastern countries could jeopardize Turkey's secular vocation. These concerns continue today and "despite almost ten years in power AKP has not been able to lay to rest fears about its religious agenda."[134] The debate over the role of religion in Turkey continues to polarize the country.[135]

Furthermore, Arab views seem quite varied and nuanced with respect to the "pluses" as well as "disadvantages" of the Turkish model. Sadik al-Azm, for example, noted some time ago how Arabs of all political inclinations, ranging from Arab socialists to Islamists, are debating among themselves Turkey's experience and what it means for them.[136] However, Arab commentary on Turkey's relevance is far from homogenous. Just as there are those who rain praise on Turkey there are also those who point out the weaknesses in Turkey's

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[129] A telling example is in The Doha Debates, "Turkey is a bad model for the new Arab states", January 12, 2011: where two Turkish and two Arab participants debated the motion together with the audience.
[130] N. Stone, "The Spring won't breed any more Turkeys," *The Times*, April 5, 2011.
[131] M. Shafiq, "Turkey's Justice and Development Party through Arab eyes" *Insight Turkey* 11, no. 1 (2009): 33-41; A. Dede, "The Arab Uprisings: Debating the 'Turkish Model'," *Insight Turkey* 13, no. 2 (2011): 23-32; and B. Keneş, "Turkey's role in the Arab Spring," September 18, 2011.
[132] J. Fischer, "Géopolitique du Printems arabe," *Le Temps*, September 30, 2011.
[133] *Radikal*, "Powell'dan gaf: Türkiye Islam cumhuriyeti," April 2, 2004.
[134] S. Ülgen, "From Inspiration to Aspiration: Turkey in the New Middle East," *The Carnegie Papers* (December 2011): 29.
[135] For a discussion of polarization in Turkey along religious-secular lines see: S. Atasoy, "The Turkish Example: A Model for Change in the Middle East," *Middle East Policy* 18, no. 3 (Fall 2011).
[136] S. Al-Azm, "Islam and Secular Humanism," in *Islam and Secularism* (Antwerpen: The Dialogue Series No. 2, Universitair Centrum Saint-Ignatius, 2005).

democracy ranging from an inability to solve the Kurdish problem to the limits on the freedom of the media and expression.[137] Furthermore, Erdogan's remarks on secularism also seem to have provoked controversy from Muslim Brotherhood circles to liberal and secular Arab ones.[138] Hence, at best, it seems the relevance of the Turkish model is "contestable."[139]

The term "model" is also problematic in itself as it is a somewhat presumptuous term that suggests "perfection" and a hierarchical hegemonic relationship with the target country. Arab commentators who highlight Turkey's weaknesses are correct in the sense that Turkey has a lot of work to do to get its proverbial house in order. As much as Turkey's EU driven reforms have been impressive there is a general recognition that the quality of Turkish democracy has suffered considerably in recent years. Actually, the most recent European Commission progress report on Turkey highlights a series of problems ranging from violations of the freedom of expression to questions about the functioning and independence of the judiciary. It also takes a critical view of the detention of journalists.[140] Actually, the executive director of the Committee to Protect Journalists in a letter to the Minister of Justice noted that Turkey had become "the world's leading jailer of journalists, with almost twice as many journalists in detention as countries such as China and Iran."[141]

Hence, it is not surprising that currently Turkey, after Russia, is the country with the largest number of complaints filed with the European Court of Human Rights.[142] Additionally, there are also growing concerns about the quality of Turkish democracy as there is the growing belief that the Turkish prime minister is becoming increasingly authoritarian and beginning to resemble Vladimir Putin.[143] It is not surprising that *Time* magazine concludes its lead article, "Erdogan's Way," by noting that critics of the prime minister fear that he will turn Turkey "into another Russia."[144] In January 2011, the leader of the opposition, Kemal Kilicdaroglu, was indicted for having likened Turkey—where journalists are being held in custody awaiting trial—to a "concentration camp." In response to the indictment he argued that Turkey's democracy had become a thinly veiled dictatorship.[145]

Another problematic aspect of the term "model" is that it does not allow much room for the idea that there may be some learning for Turkey that could be done from the Arab Awakening. Reform in Turkey has traditionally been a top-down process as much as civil society has

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[137] These weaknesses were energetically brought about by the speakers in support of the motion during the aforementioned Doha Debates as well as by the audience.

[138] Reported in: M. Salah, "The Arabs are Welcoming Erdoğan and Searching for Muhannad," *Al-Hayat*, September 19, 2011. See also: P. Zalewski, "Egypt Turkish democratic model loses favour," *The National*, December 8, 2011.

[139] H. Mneimneh, "Transformations in the Arab world: Elements for an Assessment" *GMF Policy Brief* (October 2011).

[140] *European Commission*, "Turkey-2011 Progress Report," (Brussels: October 2011).

[141] Sadullah Ergin, "Journalists held without due process in Turkey," *Committee to Protect Journalists*, July 25, 2011, http://www.cpj.org/2011/07/cpj-concerned-about-secret-arrests-in-turkey.php (accessed November 2, 2011).

[142] *Sabah*, "Türkiye AIHM müdavimi," July 21, 2011.

[143] For references to similarities and the prime minister's authoritarian ways see, for example: *Taraf*, "Ahmet Altan, "Başlıyor," April 1, 2011; Aslı Aydıntaşbaş, "Gül ve Erdoğan nasıl yer değistirir?" *Milliyet*, September 26, 2011; and Kadri Gürsel, " Seçimli otokratik rejim yolundayız," September 13, 2009.

[144] B. Gosh, "Erdogan's Way," *Time* (November 28, 2011), 31.

[145] *Radikal*, "Fezlekeye rest: Dokunulmazlığım kaldırılsın," January 11, 2012.

gained some influence in shaping reform in Turkey over the course of the last decade. In that sense, Turkey clearly has a lot to learn from the Arab Awakening that has primarily been a grassroots movement forcing change at the top. In this context, it is interesting to note that activists of the Arab Awakening, especially in Cairo, did not seek assistance from Ankara but instead developed contacts with civil society from Belgrade to learn about non-violent protest.

Lastly, the "hegemonic" nature of the term "model" not surprisingly has provoked some reactions including accusations of "neo-Ottomanism," the idea that the Turkish government is primarily driven by selfish national interest and a desire to reconstitute a sphere of interest coinciding with the geography of the Ottoman Empire. A striking example of such a reaction was captured by an Arab journalist who reacted very critically to the Turkish Minister of Foreign Affairs Ahmet Davutoglu's remark during a *Washington Post* interview raising the question: "Why shouldn't Turkey rebuild its leadership in former Ottoman lands in the Balkans, Middle East and Central Asia?"[146] The journalist counseled him "not to make a mistake."[147] While Turkish officials often insist that they do not have a "neo-Ottoman" agenda, they fail to recognize Arab perceptions and sensitivities about the Ottoman past. An Ottoman historian from Harvard University, Cemal Kafadar, notes that such a failure does indeed lead the people of the region to talk about Turkey having an imperial agenda even if this may not actually be the case.[148]

Turkey's Demonstrative Effect

Rather than talk about Turkey as a "model" it may be more helpful to speak of Turkey's "demonstrative effect." Such an approach would attribute less passivity to the Arab world, greater room for choice and debate precisely at a time when there is a quest for benchmarks in times of massive change. It is only then that, for example, Erdogan's remarks about "secularism" may become constructive in terms of the debate it engenders in the Arab world without acquiring a hegemonic appearance. The argument here is that what attracts the attention of the Arab world to Turkey is not necessarily Turkey's "model" quality but the "demonstrative effect" that Turkey's economic and political development has engendered in the course of the last two decades.[149] It is this "effect" that seems to be attracting attention to Turkey and is a function of a number of developments that have made Turkey much more visible to the Arab and neighboring world.

One such development involves the Turkish economy. For a long time, the Turkish economy was a closed and import substitution oriented economy dominated by a small elite closely allied with the state. It was after the liberalization of the Turkish market and transformation of the economy into an export oriented one that Turkey became increasingly

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[146] J. Diehl, "The Turkish 9/11," *The Washington Post*, December 6, 2010.

[147] M. Nureddin, "Davutoğlu, lütfen hata yapma" *Radikal*, December 15, 2010. Originally published in *Şark* (Qatar), December 12, 2011.

[148] Interview with Cemal Kafadar, Ezgi Başaran, "Türkiye'nin emperyal bir projesi olduğu konuşuluyor," *Radikal*, January 2, 2012.

[149] For a detailed analysis of the idea of "demonstrative effect" see: K. Kirişci, "Turkey's 'demonstrative effect' and the transformation of the Middle East," *Insight Turkey* 13, no. 2 (2011): 33-55. For similar arguments see also Atasoy, "The Turkish Example" and Ülgen, "From Inspiration to Aspiration."

integrated with the global economy. As can be seen from Table I, foreign trade came to constitute 42 percent of Turkey's GDP in 2008 compared to nine percent in 1975. One important consequence of this economic transformation was the increase in Turkey's per capita income from about $1,300 (current) in 1985 to $2,773 in 1995, and finally almost $11,000 in 2008. This was also the period during which share of the agricultural sector in Turkey's gross domestic product fell from about 30 percent in the 1960s, employing 77 percent of Turkish labor, to 15 and 35 percent, respectively, by the early part of the new century.[150] In contrast, the manufacturing sector grew significantly together with the services sector especially in banking, communication, health, and tourism.

Table I – Foreign trade and the Turkish economy between 1975 and 2008 ($ billion)

TURKEY	1975	1985	1995	2005	2008
Export	1,4	7,9	21,6	73,5	132
Import	4,7	11,3	35,7	116,8	201,9
Total Trade	6,1	19,3	57,3	190,2	333,9
GDP	64,5	67,5	244,9	484	794,2
GDP (per capita)	1.564	1.316	2.773	6.801	10.745
GDP (ranking)	17th	25th	24th	17th	17th
Foreign Trade (% of GDP)***	9	29	23	39	42
*in USD billion					
**Rankings for 1975 and 1985 need to interpreted cautiously because of large number of missing data for both years					
***Based on the data from World Bank's World Development Indicators.					

These changes also coincided with a period when Turkey's foreign trade grew from less than $20 billion in 1985 to more than $330 billion in 2008 (Table I). Much more significantly, in terms of "demonstrative effect," Turkey's trade with its immediate neighbors increased from about $4 billion in 1991 to almost $83 billion in 2008. This is an increase from 11.5 to almost 25 percent of Turkey's overall trade (Table II). Furthermore, Turkey's involvement in its neighborhood has not been solely in trade**.** Turkish enterprises have also been investing in the neighborhood and directly contributing to employment and growth in the region.[151] This has led to an expansion in Turkey's economic integration with its neighborhood, including the Arab world, lending greater visibility to Turkey's successful economic transformation.

[150] Y. Kepenek and N. Yentürk, Türkiye Ekonomisi (Istanbul: Remzi Kitapevi, 2009), p. 377.
[151] For a detailed analysis of Turkey's economic integration with its neighborhood see K. Kirişci, "The Transformation of Turkish Foreign Policy: The Rise of the Trading State," New Perspectives on Turkey, No. 40 (2009), pp. 29-57.

Table II – Foreign trade relations between Turkey and its neighbors 1991 and 2008 ($ millions)

TURKEY	1991				2008				% of Change
	Export	Import	Total	% of Total	Export	Import	Total	% of Total	1991-2008
Greece	144	77	221	0,64%	2.430	1.151	3.581	1,07%	1520%
Bulgaria	76	140	216	0,62%	2.152	1.840	3.992	1,20%	1748%
Romania	105	199	304	0,88%	3.987	3.548	7.535	2,26%	2379%
Ukraine	-	-	-	-	2.188	6.106	8.294	2,48%	-
Russia	611	1.097	1.708	4,93%	6.483	31.364	37.847	11,33%	2116%
Georgia	-	-	-	-	1.667	928	2.595	0,78%	-
Azerbaijan	-	-	-	-	998	525	1.523	0,46%	-
Armenia	-	-	-	-	0	1	1	0,00%	-
Iran	487	91	578	1,67%	2.030	8.200	10.230	3,06%	1670%
Iraq	122	492	614	1,77%	3.917	1.321	5.238	1,57%	753%
Syria	264	67	331	0,96%	1.115	639	1.754	0,53%	430%
Neighborhood TOTAL	1.809	2.163	3.972	11,47%	26.967	55.623	82.590	24,73%	1979%
Lebanon	90	7	97	0,28%	665	179	844	0,25%	770%
Jordan	158	30	188	0,54%	461	25	486	0,15%	159%
GCC + Yemen	650	2.220	2.870	8,29%	12.722	4.361	17.083	5,11%	495%
N. Africa	524	432	956	2,76%	4.424	4.324	8.748	2,62%	815%
Egypt	169	48	217	0,63%	1.426	943	2.369	0,71%	992%
Sudan	20	4	24	0,07%	234	9	243	0,07%	913%
Arab World TOTAL**	1.997	3.300	5.297	15,29%	24.964	11.801	36.765	11,01%	594%
Israel	79	78	157	0,45%	1.935	1.448	3.383	1,01%	2055%
EU	7.348	9.896	17.244	49,78%	63.390	74.802	138.192	41,38%	701%
Sub Saharan Africa	117	269	386	1,11%	3.212	2.503	5.715	1,71%	1381%
GRAND TOTAL	13.593	21.047	34.640	100,00%	132.027	201.964	333.991	100,00%	864%

in millions US dollar

*Source: TUIK

**Arab World Total contains Iraq, Syria, Lebanon, Jordan, Egypt, Sudan, N.Africa countries (Algeria, Libya, Tunisia, Morocco), GCC (Bahreyn, Qatar, Kuwait, S.Arabia, U.A.E, Oman), Yemen.

Another development that has supported Turkey's "demonstrative effect" in the Arab world is Turkey's "new" foreign policy. During the Cold War, Turkey's relations with its neighborhood were limited and problematic. The 1990s saw economic relations and the movement of people between Turkey and the ex-Soviet world expand. Yet, Turkish foreign policy during this period remained locked in an intense conflict with a host of neighbors ranging from Armenia, Cyprus, and Greece to Iran, Iraq and Syria. This had earned Turkey the reputation of a "post-Cold War warrior."[152] This situation began to change by the late 1990s, paving the way to a rapprochement first with Greece and then Syria. However, the real breakthrough did not come until the arrival of the Justice and Development Party (AKP) to

[152] D. Jung, "Turkey and the Arab World: Historical Narratives and New Political Realities," *Mediterranean Politics*, 10, no. 1 (2004), 12.

power and the "zero problems policy" associated with the current Minister of Foreign Affairs, Ahmet Davutoglu.

This policy saw Turkey's relations with its neighborhood improve and expand, and was accompanied by a growing interest to seek solutions to the problems of Turkey's neighborhood from the Balkans to the Middle East. The "zero problems policy" has engendered considerable Turkish involvement in regional issues ranging from efforts to mediate between Arabs/Palestinians and Israelis, between Sunnis and Shi'a in Iraq, Afghanistan and Pakistan, Bosnia and Serbia, Iran and the West, and resolving bi-lateral conflicts such as with Cyprus and relations with Armenia. These efforts, especially by Davutoğlu, led the *Economist* to conclude that Turkey had become a "great mediator" of conflicts in its neighborhood.[153] Even if these mediation efforts have not always been very successful it has nevertheless helped to change Turkey's image in the world, not to mention in the eyes of the Arab world. Actually, the "zero problems with neighbors" policy opened the way for Turkey "to give support to and receive support from the Arab Spring in such a legitimate and natural way."[154]

An additional aspect of Turkey's "new" foreign policy, especially with respect to the Middle East, has been the close relations that the government has developed with Hamas and the Muslim Brotherhood in Egypt accompanied by the bitter criticism it has directed towards Israel in the last few years.[155] These developments have triggered a major debate on whether Turkey has been shifting its axis away from the West and towards the Middle East. In contrast, these developments have made Erdogan particularly popular among the so called "Arab Street," strengthening Turkey's "demonstrative effect." The "street" very much attributes Erdogan's policies in this regard to a more democratic and independent Turkey in contrast to a Turkey where the military, closely allied to the US, once enjoyed greater influence.[156] Many have attributed the "rock star" style reception that Erdogan received in Cairo during his visit to the region in September 2011 to the popularity he enjoys with this "street."[157] This popularity was also confirmed by the 2011 Arab Public Opinion Poll that identified Erdogan as the most admired world leader.[158]

Finally, in the context of Turkey's "new" foreign policy, Davutoglu's recent energetic efforts to promote a stable and prosperous neighborhood through encouraging greater economic integration between Turkey and the Arab world need to be highlighted.[159] In July

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[153] "Turkish foreign policy: The great mediator" *The Economist*, August 19, 2010.
[154] T. Özhan, "The Arab Spring and Turkey: The Camp David Order vs. the New Middle East" *Insight Turkey*, 13, no. 4, 2011, 63.
[155] T. Oğuzlu, "Middle Easternization of Turkey's Foreign Policy," *Turkish Studies*, 9, no. 1 (2008); Ş. Kardaş, "Turkey: Redrawing the Middle East Map or Building Sandcastles?," *Middle East Policy*, 17, no. 1 (2010): 115-136.
[156] S. Atasoy, "The Turkish Example:". For a broader discussion of how AKP is received in the Arab world, see M. Shafiq, "Turkey's Justice and Development Party through Arab Eyes," *Insight Turkey*, 11, no. 1 (2009): 33-41.
[157] R. Abouzeid, "Why Turkey's Erdogan is greeted like a Rock Star in Egypt" *Time World*, September 13, 2011.
[158] "The 2011 Arab Public Opinion Poll," *The Brookings Institution*, November 21, 2011, http://www.brookings.edu/reports/2011/1121_arab_public_opinion_telhami.aspx.
[159] A. Davutoğlu, "Turkey's Zero-Problems Foreign Policy" *Foreign Policy*, May 20, 2010.

2010 he led the effort for the establishment of a "Close Neighbors Economic and Trade Association Council" with Jordan, Lebanon, and Syria. The Council aims to establish a free trade area within five years based on the recognition that "free trade agreements contribute to the expansion of world trade, to greater international stability, and in particular, to the development of closer relations among our peoples,"[160] though Only time will tell whether the Council will achieve its objectives. Actually, Turkey has signed free trade agreements with all the European Mediterranean Policy (EMP) countries with the exception of Algeria.[161] These steps are clearly in line with Davutoglu's ambitious vision of an integration project leading to the free movement of goods and people from the city of Kars to the Atlantic, and from Sinop to the Gulf of Aden.[162] Such a bold project that has already a tangible element to it in the form of freer movement of people has resonated well with the Arab public.

[160] Joint Declaration on Establishing Close Neighbors Economic and Trade Association Council for a Free Trade Area between Jordan, Lebanon, Syria and Turkey, July 31, 2010.
[161] S. Kekeç, "Türkiye'nin Avrupa-Akdeniz Ortakları ile Serbest Ticaret Anlaşmaları," *Ortadoğu Analiz* 2, no. 24 (2011): 85-93, 91.
[162] "Yeni Bir Ortadoğu Doğuyor," *Milliyet*, June 10, 2010, http://www.milliyet.com.tr/yeni-bir-ortadogu-doguyor-/ekonomi/sondakika/10.06.2010/1249276/default.htm.

Table III – Movement of people into Turkey from the Middle East and other regions between 1995 and 2010

TURKEY	1995		2002		2008		2010		% of Change 1995-2010	% of Change 2008-2010
	Total	% of Total	Total	% of Total	Total	% of Total	Total	% of Total		
Iraq	15.363	0,23%	15.758	0,12%	250.130	0,95%	280.328	0,98%	1725%	12%
Syria	111.613	1,65%	126.428	0,95%	406.935	1,55%	899.494	3,14%	706%	121%
Lebanon	26.831	0,40%	31.298	0,24%	53.948	0,20%	134.554	0,47%	401%	149%
Jordan	25.770	0,38%	33.127	0,25%	74.340	0,28%	96.562	0,34%	275%	30%
GCC + Yemen*	42.862	0,63%	45.828	0,35%	121.214	0,46%	169.865	0,59%	296%	40%
N.Africa**	89.914	1,33%	135.296	1,02%	194.546	0,74%	244.173	0,85%	172%	26%
Egypt	18.237	0,27%	21.583	0,16%	57.994	0,22%	61.560	0,22%	238%	6%
Sudan	1.536	0,02%	2.212	0,02%	8.987	0,03%	6.634	0,02%	332%	-26%
TOTAL	**332.126**	**4,91%**	**411.530**	**3,11%**	**1.168.094**	**4,44%**	**1.893.170**	**6,61%**	470%	62%
Iran	349.655	5,17%	432.281	3,26%	1.134.965	4,31%	1.885.097	6,58%	439%	66%
Israel	261.012	3,86%	270.262	2,04%	558.183	2,12%	109.559	0,38%	-58%	-80%
Former Soviet Block Neighbors***	1.487.162	21,99%	2.542.160	19,19%	6.807.875	25,85%	7.228.477	25,25%	386%	6%
EU****	3.182.641	47,06%	7.708.214	58,18%	14.871.907	56,47%	14.747.142	51,51%	363%	-1%
Others	1.151.896	17,03%	1.885.941	14,24%	3.507.402	13,32%	4.564.507	15,94%	296%	30%
TOTAL	**6.762.956**	**100%**	**13.248.176**	**100%**	**26.336.677**	**100%**	**28.632.204**	**100%**	323%	9%

*Bahrain, Kuwait, Qatar, S.Arabia, Oman, U.A.E, Yemen

** Morocco, Algeria, Tunisia, Libya

***Bulgaria, Romania, Russia, Moldova, Ukraine, Azerbaijan, Armenia, Georgia.

****EU-15 in 1995 and 2002; EU-27 in 2008 and 2010. Data is not available for Malta and Cyprus.

Source: T.C. Emniyet Genel Müdürlüğü

A more liberal visa policy has been an especially striking characteristic of Turkey's neighborhood policy. However, this is a policy that has been extended to parts of the Arab Middle East only recently. The number of entries by nationals of Arab countries increased from about 322,000 in 1991 to almost 1.9 million in 2010 (Table III). This constitutes only 6.6 percent of all entries into Turkey compared to entries from the EU and the former Soviet bloc, respectively constituting 56 percent and almost 26 percent of all entries. The big difference between entries from the Arab world and the rest of Turkey's neighborhood was primarily a function of the fact that former Soviet bloc nationals, Europeans, Iranians, and Israelis have entered Turkey visa free or with sticker visas easily obtained at entry points since a long time ago. This situation is fast changing. In a major and dramatic break from past practice, the AKP began to liberalize visa requirements for most Arab countries too.

Visas for Moroccan and Tunisian nationals were lifted in 2007 and for Jordanian, Lebanese, and Syrian nationals late in 2009. It is yet difficult to substantiate the net impact of visa liberalization. However, Table III shows that the increase of entries from the Arab world with 62 percent on average was much higher than the total overall increase of 9 percent for all countries between 2008 and 2010. Just as a more liberal visa policy played a central role in the expansion of trade with Turkey's northern neighborhood, it would be reasonable to expect a similar expansion in trade with Arab Middle Eastern countries following the liberalization of visas. Actually, even if the Arab Awakening has adversely affected Turkey's trade with

Libya and Syria, trade with Egypt and Tunisia increased by 31 and 10 percent while trade with the Arab world at large increased by 17 percent between the first ten months of 2010 and 2011.[163]

Lastly, there is also a growing recognition on the part of government officials that the adoption of a liberal visa policy will allow people to travel to Turkey freely and, as one official put it, "see Turkey for themselves and take back with them whatever they wish from their experience with Turkish democracy and economy."[164] Interestingly, this point was corroborated by a Syrian journalist and longtime resident of Turkey, during the early stages of the uprising in Tunisia. He argued that Tunisians of all political convictions follow and are informed of developments in Turkey. This is the case, he argued, because tens of thousands of unemployed Tunisian university graduates travel to Turkey for suitcase trade enabling them to become familiar with political debates in Turkey and extract lessons for Tunisia.[165] The government is particularly conscious of the advantages of a visa-free policy and has so far refrained from introducing visas to Syrian nationals in spite of the instability in Syria, deteriorating relations with the Syrian regime and an influx of refugees from Syria.[166]

Furthermore, one other way in which travel offers a channel for a "demonstrative effect" is the use by some Western non-governmental organizations of Istanbul as a venue for meetings that gather activists from neighboring regions. This is partly done for logistical reasons; Turkey has a liberal visa policy and Istanbul is easily accessible from most countries of the region. However, a more important and pertinent factor is that such meetings can be held much more freely without fear of government surveillance or repression. These meetings also become occasions for visitors from the region to get to experience a lively and critical debate among Turkish participants over its domestic problems. Civil society and democracy activists have noted that these experiences are examples of the demonstrative effects that Turkey has to offer.[167]

Another development constituting a source of Turkey's "demonstrative effect" is Turkish democracy and the presentation of its democratization to the Arab world as a "work in progress." Turkey's democratization process has been a long journey that started right after World War Two and was interrupted on a number of occasions by military interventions. However, the quality of Turkish democracy increased considerably after the EU declared Turkey a candidate country for membership, triggering a process of reform to be able to start accession negotiations. An important proportion of these reforms were achieved during the reign of AKP and Erdogan. This also coincided with a period when the influence of the military establishment in politics and society, with its infamously rigid understanding of secularism, was considerably softened. This opened greater public space for religion in Turkey while moderating the influence of traditional Islamism and strengthening the quality

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[163] Statistics calculated from www.tuik.gov.tr.
[164] Interview with a high ranking official at the Prime Minister's Office, October 2009.
[165] Hüsnü Mahalli, "Gerçek Devrim," *HaberVakti*, January 18, 2011.
[166] Telephone interview with a member of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, November 25, 2011.
[167] Interviews with representatives of European Stability Initiative, Hollings Center and the Henrich Böll Foundation. For similar observations, see also I. Kalın, "Debating Turkey in the Middle East: The Dawn of a New Geopolitical Imagination," *Insight Turkey*, 11, no. 1 (2009).

of democracy from below.[168]

Actually, the party leadership insisted on maintaining a distance from political Islam and many members of the AKP shied away from being labeled as "Islamists" or even "moderate Islamists."[169]Instead they have tended to define themselves simply as "conservatives." In turn, many outsiders have actually labeled them as "Muslim democrats."[170] It is this particular experience of marrying Islam with democracy and secularism that is possibly the most important factor that has engendered the image of Turkey as a "model" for the Arab world both in Western as well as Arab circles. This would also account for why Erdogan would have been able to make his remarks about secularism in Egypt and Tunisia in September 2011.

Obviously, Turkish democracy is far from being perfect and the setbacks with respect to some of the reforms have already been mentioned. However, these imperfections in an ironic way become an advantage in relation to reform in the Arab and broader Muslim world. Actually, it is possible to argue that the most potent "demonstrative effect" may be that Turkish democracy is itself a "work in progress." This closes the otherwise large gap and also hierarchical relationship that inevitably forms between well-established democracies and countries that are aspiring to reform. The fact that Turkey is still struggling with consolidating and deepening its democracy enables the Turkish side to relate to their partners much more easily and also vice versa. Turkey acting as a venue for gathering activists from the region becomes critical as they both get firsthand experience from their Turkish counterparts and they see the "work in progress" for themselves.

An interesting outcome of the Arab Awakening on the Turkish government and the ruling AKP is the decision to break away from past practice of maintaining a distance from the domestic politics of countries in the region. Traditionally, Turkish foreign policy has preferred to adhere to the principles of non-interference in the domestic affairs and respect for the national sovereignty of third countries.[171] This can also partly explain the initial hesitation to take a clear stand against the regime of Muammar Qadhafi in Libya and Basher al-Assad in Syria. However, in due course this hesitation was overcome and the government developed close relations and cooperation with the opposition in both Libya and Syria. More interestingly, AKP as a political party has developed contacts with Islamic movements ranging from the Justice and Development Party in Morocco, to Ennahda in Tunisia as well as Hamas and the Muslim Brotherhood in Egypt. Indeed, this is a new experience for Turkey and can be likened to an "association effect" resulting from the popularity of Erdogan and AKP, engendering a desire on the part of some Arab politicians to associate themselves with the prime minister and his political movement.[172]

This "work in progress" characteristic of Turkish democracy may also explain why when

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[168] S. Atasoy, "The Turkish Example," 92-94.
[169] H. Yavuz, *Secularism and Muslim Democracy in Turkey*, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2009), 1-4.
[170] V. Nasr, "The Rise of Muslim Democracy" *Journal of Democracy*, 16, no. 2 (2005): 13-27.
[171] K. Kirişci, "Democracy diffusion: the Turkish experience" in Linden, Ronald, et. al, eds., *Turkey and Its Neighbors: Foreign Relations in Transition* (Lynne Rienner, 2011), 145-171.
[172] S. Ülgen, "From Inspiration to Aspiration: Turkey in the New Middle East" Carnegie Endowment for International Peace (December 2011) 17.

then-Minister of Foreign Affairs Abdullah Gul addressed a meeting of the Organization of the Islamic Conference (OIC) meeting in late May 2003, he received a standing ovation. Gul, in his speech took a very critical view of the state of democracy in the Muslim world. He stressed the need for Muslim countries to pay greater attention to human rights and women's rights as well as to greater transparency in governance. However, his speech was very much framed from the perspective of being part of the membership and "one of them" that needs to improve. This was made clear when he noted that "we should first put our house in order."[173]

During his visit to Iran in February 2011 and against the background of the uprisings in the Arab world, Gul made references to this speech in an effort to highlight the need in the Muslim world to respond to public demands. The emphasis on "we" is critical here in relating to an audience that is meant to be a target of democracy diffusion. Additionally, when Gul's speeches are studied closely it is possible to recognize the preference for using a discourse that resonates with his audience. He comfortably employs a detailed language of democracy when addressing a Western compared to an audience from countries lacking a democratic experience. In the latter case, the emphasis is put on concepts such as "good governance," "improving political participation" and "transparency." It is this ability to resonate with target audiences that is probably the another important aspect of Turkey's "demonstrative effect." A Turkish official noted that when Western countries become engaged in democratic assistance with some of Turkey's neighbors they "sort of put a project down on the table like a brick and say here it is if you will implement it you will become democratic." He then added how this approach usually leaves the receiving parties staring at the "brick" in an utter state of puzzlement. In contrast, in the case of Turkey, a sense of "we are in it together" develops.[174]

One other interesting channel through which Turkey's "work in progress" democracy gets transmitted is Turkey's higher education sector that is receiving an increasing number of students from its neighborhood. Turkey has a vibrant higher education sector that is attracting a growing number of university students from around the region. The government also runs a scholarship program that has been incorporated into the functions of the Turkish International Cooperation and Development Agency (TIKA). In 2009 there were more than 7,000 foreign students studying on scholarship programs. A high ranking governmental official argued that this was a unique practice in Turkey's neighborhood and added that, in time, these students begin to want to see their country to become like Turkey.[175] Most of the students actually come from countries that lack democratic traditions such as Central Asian countries. Although the government does not run this program with an overt objective of democracy promotion, it recognizes the program's "demonstrative effect" as it gives students the possibility to observe Turkey as an open society first hand, with its strengths and

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[173] A. Gül, *Horizons of Turkish Foreign Policy in the New Century* (Ankara, TC Dışişleri Bakanlığı Yayını, 2007), 528.

[174] Interview with a diplomat at the Turkish embassy in Washington DC, September 2009. Similar observations were also made by an AKP member of parliament familiar with issues of democratic assistance, August 2009 and a high ranking official from the Office of the Prime Minister, October 2009. Both remarks were made during interviews held in Ankara.

[175] Interview with high ranking official from the Prime Minister's Office, October 2009.

weaknesses.[176]

One final development concerns Turkish television series. Turkish soap operas have become big business, generating an export income of more than $60 million in 2011 and attracting a growing audience in Turkey's neighborhood.[177] These TV series are increasingly recognized as having an important "demonstrative effect" in the Arab world. They are seen as a bridge between the Arab world and a Western way of life, as depicted in a Muslim but democratic, liberal and secular Turkey.[178] The fact that these series are particularly popular among, for example, Saudi women, must indeed have a demonstrative effect. A survey of Saudi women, above the age of 15, held in March 2009 showed that more than 71 percent of respondents said that they enjoyed Turkish TV series. These programs depict Turkish women as having a much more liberal and freer way of life than women do in Saudi Arabia. It is then the visa free travel that gives the Arab world the possibility to come and see what is depicted in these movies and TV series in Turkey for themselves. As noted earlier on, the number of arrivals to Turkey from the Arab world increased considerably from 2008 to 2010 and many attribute at least some of the increase to the impact of Turkish TV series. The influence of these TV series is noted by *Time* magazine as a weapon that is "worth a hundred battleships."[179]

Policy Implications

How closely should Turkey be involved in the Arab Awakening and the transformation of the Arab world? Traditionally, Turkey, both at the governmental and civil society level, has shied from any involvement that resembles democracy promotion and diffusion.[180] Both have remained strongly attached to the principles of "respect to national sovereignty" as well as "non-intervention in domestic affairs." This partly explains the Turkish government's slow response to the uprisings especially in Libya and Syria. However, in the course of the last few months the government has become more actively involved in efforts to support reform in the Arab world and "reluctantly embraced the democratic wave."[181] This was also accompanied in August 2011 by a final rupture with the Syrian regime over the latter's reluctance to reform and the introduction of sanctions. These developments are actually in line with an informal policy of democracy promotion by default implemented by some government agencies such as the Turkish International Cooperation and Development Agency (TIKA) and parts of civil society.

Turkey clearly lacks the institutional structure and resources associated with the democracy promotion policies of the United States and the European Union. This may actually have been

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[176] Ibid.
[177] *Radikal*, December 11, 2011.
[178] Y. Al Sharif and S. Saha, "Turkey's European Membership: The Arab Perspective, Notes from the Arab Media," in *Reflections of EU-Turkey Relations in the Muslim World (*Istanbul: Open Society Foundation, 2009), 25.
[179] Gosh, "Erdogan's Way," 30.
[180] K. Kirişci, "Democracy diffusion: the Turkish experience" in Linden, Ronald, ed., *Turkey and Its Neighbors: Foreign Relations in Transition* (Lyne Rienner, 2011).
[181] S. Kardaş, "Turkey and the Arab Spring: Coming to Terms with Democracy Promotion" *GMF Policy Brief*, October 2011: 2.

an advantage in the past given the negative image with which democracy promotion had become associated with. However, with the Arab Awakening, the context and meaning of democracy promotion has been dramatically transformed and this may well be the right moment for Turkey to approach the issue of democracy promotion much more systematically. However, it will be extremely important that such a policy not be driven by a "we are the model" attitude. In all fairness, Erdogan and his entourage are conscious of this and recently they have preferred to talk of Turkey as an "inspiration" or an "example" rather than a model. Nevertheless, the image that Turkey wants to be a model remains very much in place. As one of the speakers, Hassan Mneimneh, in favor of the Doha Debates motion that "Turkey is a bad model for the new Arab states" noted offering Turkey as pre-packaged model for the Arab Awakening was not a constructive and realistic idea. He added the need to recognize that each country involved in the Arab Awakening will have to find its own model rather than simply emulate the Turkish one, or, for that matter, any other model.

Where Turkey could be of best help might be to share its own experience in building a democracy while recognizing that all is not perfect in Turkey and that reform is a long and arduous journey. Nevertheless, the Turkish government might indeed be able to help and assist, for example, in training officials for the organization of national elections. After all, Turkey has run 16 national and 12 local elections between 1950 and 2011 that have generally been recognized as fair and free. There are many other areas that can be identified and there are actually programs that are already being run to train diplomats, police officers, and bureaucrats serving in various ministries of Egypt, Libya and Tunisia.[182] However, it will be especially important for Turkish civil society to explain the problems and weaknesses of Turkish democracy and discuss with their Arab counterparts how to avoid the pitfalls associated with reforms in the area of the judiciary, separation of powers, individual rights, freedom of expression and so on. Such debates would make a substantive contribution to the Arab Awakening as well as to Turkey's own democratization too. Actually, Turkey's most valuable contribution rather than emanating from the many accomplishments associated with Turkey's "demonstrative effect" might actually originate from an effort to learn "from its mistakes."[183]

Lastly, the EU has played a critical role in improving Turkey's democracy. There is a general recognition that the deterioration in EU-Turkish relations has adversely affected Turkey's domestic reform process. It will be critical for Turkey to reinvigorate its relations with the EU and inject life into its accession process. This will be critical for at least three reasons. Firstly, public opinion surveys of the Arab world run by TESEV, a Turkish think tank, demonstrate that 64 and 57 percent of respondents in 2009 and 2010 thought that Turkey's membership to the EU would positively influence Turkey's role in the Middle East.[184] Secondly, better relations with the EU would not only help improve Turkey's democracy but also enable better cooperation between Turkey and the EU to emerge with respect to assisting

[182] Email communication in January 2012 with a high level official working for the Prmie Minister's Office.
[183] N. Tocci, ed., *Turkey and the Arab Spring: Implications for Turkish Foreign Policy from a Transatlantic Perspective* (GMF Mediterranean Paper Series, 2011), 5.
[184] M. Akgün et al., *Ortadoğu'da Türkiye Algısı 2010* (Istanbul: TESEV Yayınları, February 2011), 14.

democratic transformation in the Arab world subsequent to the Arab Awakening. Thirdly, and possibly most importantly, reviving Turkey's relations with the EU will reinforce Turkey's "demonstrative effect" economically as well as politically.

Part 5
Protracted Violence in Syria and Libya

Libya after the Civil War: The Legacy of the Past and Economic Reconstruction

Diederik Vandewalle, Dartmouth College

Syria, the Arab Uprisings, and the Political Economy of Authoritarian Resilience

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Libya after the Civil War: The Legacy of the Past and Economic Reconstruction

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Introduction

Even while the country's civil war was still raging in 2011, members of Libya's Transitional National Council in Benghazi realized that the challenges to reconstructing the country in the aftermath of a 42-year long period that was aimed at destroying both the structures of a modern state and of a collective identity, would be enormous. They understood very clearly that this reconstruction would involve, among many other difficult tasks, the creation of modern state institutions, the consolidation of the "monopoly of violence" by a central government, the process of legitimizing whatever new political structures emerge, infusing the rule of law, creating democratic institutions and a sense of citizenship, providing for law and order within an accountable and transparent political system, and creating some sort of mechanism for national reconciliation and for transitional justice. Finally, but crucially, they also knew that Libya would need to rebuild its national economy in such a fashion that it could not once again become the kind of patronage system that for so long kept the Qadhafi government in power and, simultaneously, made most Libyan citizens bystanders if not outsiders of the political and economic life of their own country.

At the beginning of 2012, Libya is starting to face some of the lingering realities in the wake of the demise of the former regime. Some of the optimism and unity of the early days of the civil war are not surprisingly yielding to more clear-eyed appreciations of the challenges facing the country. At the same time, the political, economic, social and cultural destruction wrought by the Qadhafi regime during 42 years of dictatorship are emerging as more problematic than many observers expected, and the long-term impact of the civil war itself is still largely unknown.

In this chapter, I have, as a shortcut to explain the complex reconstruction efforts Libya faces, labeled the country's future challenges as essentially those of state-building and nation-building. State-building entails constructing those political, economic, and social institutions that regulate the interaction between citizens and those in charge of the state. I focus in particular on one crucial aspect of state-building in the country: the economic reconstruction of the country. Although state-building normally entails enormous difficulties—as this paper will make clear, particularly so in Libya—that are addressed across relatively long periods of time, nation-building is even more fraught with danger: it entails endowing the institutions of the state with a sense of legitimacy among local citizens, helping to create a consensus and instill a sense of identity among a state's citizens. How long such a transitional period lasts will of course depend on many factors and, as I argue in this paper, represents a process that in many ways never ends. It is with these caveats in mind that we need to think of the new Libya.

The Old Libya: Legacies of the Past[185]

Both state-building (and economic reconstruction as part of this process) and nation-building are the simultaneous difficulties that the new Libya will need to engage upon in the months and years ahead. In trying to discern the difficulties Libya faces in addressing these challenges, it is perhaps instructive to take a brief historical look back at how Libya has emerged—or rather, failed to emerge—as a modern state and nation. At the end of the Qadhafi-era, Libya was left with the essential questions that have dogged the country since its creation as an independent state in 1951: the creation of an institutionalized state and the incorporation of the country's citizens into a meaningful nation.

When the uprising started in February 2011, the "Libya" of the independent United Kingdom of Libya and then the Jamahiriyya had existed for barely six decades. During that time, Libya had been changed beyond recognition—from a desert-strewn backwater to a modern oil economy with intricate links to the international economy. A tribal, impoverished, and barely self-sustaining society had endured the Sanusi monarchy with its confused sense of what political community it represented, and then four decades of the *diktats* of a revolutionary regime that seemed determined to destroy whatever institutions could create any sense of political community.

Until the discovery of oil in 1959 the country had seemed destined to retain those social and economic features it had possessed since time immemorial. Very few Libyans at the time it seemed—except for some small clusters of urban elites—had a real interest in the United Kingdom of Libya as a political community. This was partly due to the colonial legacy, partly to the fact that the comforting and familiar sense of kinship and local—or at best regional—political allegiance could be maintained during the first few years of the monarchy but, importantly, also to the fact that there were few economic prospects for the country that could spark interest and struggles for economic goods that would make the construction of a national community worthwhile.

This changed, literally almost overnight, when oil started coursing through the veins of a barely existing economy that could suddenly produce great riches. Oil riches also sparked, however, a level of social and economic differentiation the country had never witnessed before—and created economic interests that made it worthwhile integrating a country for. Unfortunately for Libya, during the remainder of the monarchy and during the years since, these interests were never nurtured and exploited for the purpose of creating a truly national community. Oil revenues allowed Idris al-Sanusi, and then Mu'ammar al-Qadhafi, to create and maintain social contracts with their subjects that relied overwhelmingly on distributive largesse rather than on perfecting the state.

All of this remains partly to blame for the low sense of political community Libya faces even today—so visible in the aftermath of the civil war with its proliferation of militias—a phenomenon the new Libya will need to keep in mind. Oil revenues alone, however, are not to blame for this. Those who were in charge of the country carry an equal burden of guilt. Both rulers of Libya—in different styles and by different means, but both conveying the same

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[185] Much of this section borrows from the Epilogue in my second edition of *A History of Modern Libya* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2011).

meaning—consistently projected a sense of community for their citizens in various combinations below or above the level of the state and in lieu of the state: kinship, family, tribe, Islam, Arab nationalism, and African unity.

Under both systems of government—laissez faire or activist—Libyan citizens remained largely bystanders. Whatever new government in Libya emerges will need to find ways to do away with this debilitating sense of powerlessness that marked both the Kingdom and the Qadhafi-period: both rulers lamented the impact of oil on their societies and on its traditional values, but both failed to understand how their policies—or lack thereof—created those outcomes.

Ever since 1969, Qadhafi had pursued a policy of statelessness that, at least in theory, put all power in the hands of the people. But, ironically, as statelessness was pursued, virtually all political and economic activity within the country came under state control. Oil exporters like Libya are particularly vulnerable to this kind of development, and the impact of oil-led development can be institutionally disastrous for the long-term development of the country. As opposed to non-oil economies where over time the state develops and fine tunes a set of regulatory, extractive, and distributive mechanisms to calibrate the interactions between the state and local society, in Libya this evolutionary process of state and institution building was curtailed and abandoned—and celebrated in the Green Book, with its emphasis on statelessness.

As a result, in Libya, the questions that are at the heart of every modern political system were less pressing to the monarchy and then the Qadhafi government: how revenues are gathered, what compromises the ruler must make with his subjects to obtain their support, which institutional capabilities the state needs to develop this task, and how those institutional arrangements reflect the interests of both ruled and ruler. The challenge to the state, particularly during the Qadhafi period, was not to extract wealth but to spend it. Economic growth could, for prolonged periods, simply be "bought" by increasing the sale of the revenue-gathering resource. Distributive policies become the most common method to meet social contracts, to stimulate domestic economic sectors, and to keep citizens voiceless—a very powerful dynamic fueled by oil revenues that, unaccountably, were used by Qadhafi to keep the political system balanced.

State institutions under Qadhafi became intricate channels for economic largesse and distributive purposes, while their regulatory and legal capacities—already weak by the initial state-building processes described above—tended to remain inefficient and underdeveloped. The lack of economic data in Libya, the occasional physical destruction of state bureaucratic offices and records, and the state's sporadic and ineffective direct intervention in issues ranging from employment, to price setting, to property rights issues were all signs of regulatory weakness.

In effect, the country's relative stability until the uprising in 2011 was, more than anything, due to the fact that Libya had not yet been forced to flex its institutional capacity for economic activity beyond distribution. The country had become a prime example of the by now familiar litany of the "too much state, too little state" phenomenon: pervasiveness and lingering control by those in charge of the state that has not translated into efficiency, capability, capacity, or participation. Under such circumstances, social stratification inside

Libya resulted overwhelmingly from the distributive and spending patterns of the state, forcing the Qadhafi government to assiduously promote its clients.

Much of this maneuvering, as we have come to realize, particularly as the civil war raged on, was concealed by the way in which the country's revenues were carefully shielded from public scrutiny; much of it would not be revealed until the 2011 uprising had ended. Decisions concerning economic policies, distribution, and investments were traditionally kept to the purview of small coalitions rather than assigned to the market. Not surprisingly, this distributive largesse was augmented with reliance on informal mechanisms linked to history, religion, or culture. The enormous bifurcation between formal and informal politics remained a pronounced feature of Libya's political life until the 2011 uprising started—expressed in the supremacy of the so-called revolutionary instruments of rule in the country.

These enduring legacies of the Qadhafi period will continue to cast long shadows once the civil war ends. It is clear that Qadhafi's idea of statelessness and its expression through the Popular Committee and Congress system as a guideline for Libya is finished. In the wake of Qadhafi's removal, the economic, social, and political challenges the country will face will be enormous. With virtually all modern state institutions having been eviscerated or neglected by the Qadhafi government, Libya will confront a simultaneous need to (1) restructure its economy away from excessive reliance on the state and on hydrocarbon revenues; and (2) to come up with a political formula acceptable to a number of different players that have sometimes been antagonistic but that were held together artificially by the authoritarian policies of the Qadhafi government.

In light of the many opportunities that will exist for the different Libyans in the country's provinces to pursue their individuals interests at the expense of whatever new Libya emerges, the country's future will look somewhat clouded. Despite its rhetoric of internationalism, pan-Arabism, and pan-Africanism, Qadhafi's revolution was a powerful nationalist one, but one that, ironically, did not allow for the creation of a modern Libyan nation or state. It was also a revolution pursued in part in antagonism to the West. It is not yet clear how much of that ideology will survive, even though it is clear that Libyans will undoubtedly want to jettison most of it.

However, and worth keeping in mind, some of what Qadhafi once stood for—his suspicions of the West, his wish to renew Arab grandeur, his initial quest for dignity and self-determination—will continue to resonate within the Libyan political imagination as a new Libya is constructed. The combination of economic reality, generational turnover, and reintegration into the global economy and community once more will dramatically change Libya's political and economic life, and some form of coherent vision will be needed that equally resonates among its citizens.

Challenges for the New Libya

Qadhafi's self-styled, exclusionary revolution has ended. The process of creating a new sense of identity, consensus, and community out of its ashes started with the uprising of February 2011 and has been passed on to the National Transitional Council and its successors. The good news for Libya's new leaders is that the country, from a state-building viewpoint, represents a *tabula rasa*. As such they can introduce new "rules of the game" without unduly

worrying about the legitimacy of those who want to oppose them. The bad news, however, is that both state-building and nation-building are arduous, long-term processes (almost organic in nature in terms of nation-building) that create many opportunities for "spoilers" to enter the picture. This is particularly the case under the "gold rush" scenario Libya is starting to face once more as massive revenues—from unblocked assets as well as from growing hydrocarbon sales—enter its economy, creating all kinds of opportunities for patronage and for avoiding national rules and regulations.

Although the civil war temporarily hid these possibilities, it is clear from the current jockeying between militias and the TNC that the battles over influence and patronage have already started to re-emerge. And while both the Stabilization Team in Dubai under Dr. Jehani and the TNC "in exile" in Benghazi did formidable work in trying to create some of the embryonic institutions of a future new Libyan state; the fact is that state-building remains a precarious enterprise so far in Libya. Part of the difficulty is that the TNC, and the current Cabinet, by their very nature remain partly unrepresentative and unelected.

The most serious obstacle to creating a new state in Libya remains, of course, the fact that those representing it still do not possess the "monopoly of violence" necessary to impose central control. The proliferation and stranglehold of some of the militias, reluctant to give up power until, they argue, the nature of the central government is clear to them is an indication of the lingering dispersal of power in Libya. The fact that the militias routinely ignored central commands to leave Tripoli or to give up their weapons only accentuate this lack of central authority. The fact that both the Minister of Defense and the Minister of the Interior—two of the country's most central institutions for ensuring the implementation of unity—represent powerful militias from Zintan and Misrata only add to the sense of powerlessness (and some would argue power brokering) of the central authorities.

As in all post-civil war situations, Libya's current decision makers face a familiar set of problems: too many tasks that need to be addressed simultaneously, without the luxury of staggering needed reforms, leading to the creation of dissatisfied groups that can obstruct further progress; a commitment to a process of elections and progress on democratic values without the necessary institutions to make them meaningful within the complexities of the current situation; the need for reconciliation and human rights that proves highly divisive in light of the long years of the previous dictatorship. In Libya there is added to this the dilemma of opting for a centralized or more federal formula—each of which has important ramifications for the creation of national institutions and identity.

Above all, however, in light of the nature of its economy, and faced with the way in which economic resources were used for regime maintenance during the Qadhafi years, the most crucial aspect of Libya's efforts at state-building will be its economic strategy in the years and decades ahead. As an oil exporter, the country has encountered a number of structural problems identical to those found in most other countries that rely on massive and often unregulated inflows of capital.[186] These were exacerbated by the peculiar policies of the

[186] Among these are regulatory deficiencies, pervasive rent-seeking, incoherent and low levels of economic regulation, a dualistic economy, incoherent economic policies, state dominance of the economy, extensive patronage and intermediation, high regime autonomy, and fragmentation of society. For a greater discussion of

Qadhafi government where "management" of resources and regime survival closely coincided. One of the additional outcomes of economic management under both the monarchy and since 1969 is that the state became the overwhelming economic actor in the local economy, but also was viewed as the provider of jobs, subsidies, and entitlements that many Libyans have come to take for granted. For many Libyans the state was a provider in the past. Many expect it to continue to be such a provider. Highly inefficient state enterprises (that employ a large number of Libyans) will need to be kept on the books until new jobs can be created—a challenge the TNC recognized early on.

Economic Reform in Libya Prior to the Civil War

How difficult it will be to re-orient Libya's economy from the patronage-driven, highly inefficient economy it remained in 2011 can be readily judged by the lack of success in reforming the country's economy during the decade leading up to the uprising (2003-2011). The attempt at reform was led by Saif al-Islam al-Qadhafi, the son of the Leader and the head of a reformist movement that argued for change. At the time, Libya found itself at a particularly important fork in the road. On the one hand, it could pursue the type of state-led market reform—as in neighboring Tunisia or Egypt—that had maintained highly authoritarian states and that relied on cooperation between the state and a number of business coalitions. Alternatively, Libya could pursue economic liberalization and reform in earnest while moving away from the patronage-driven and patrimonial system of the past.

In January 2002 already, the country had announced its intention to open up its economy further and to attract foreign capital to the country. For that purpose, it unified its exchange rate, pegging the Libyan dinar to the IMF's Special Drawing Rights, in effect devaluing the country's official exchange rate by more than half as part of a strategy toward unification of the country's multi-tier (official, commercial, black-market) foreign exchange system. The devaluation was also meant to increase the competitiveness of Libyan firms and to help attract foreign investment into the country. That same month, Libya cut its customs duty rate by 50 percent on most imports, hoping to offset the effects of its currency devaluation.

In March 2003, the General People's Congress adopted legislation meant to augur in the country's third attempt at liberalization and reform. It included an authorization to privatize a large number of the country's state-owned economic enterprises. In June, Qadhafi admitted that the country's public sector had failed and should be abolished, and called for the privatization of the country's oil sector. Shukri Muhammad Ghanem, known as a proponent of liberalization and privatization became Prime Minister. Ghanem, a technocrat who had been brought back to Libya after a period working at OPEC, clearly saw his task as removing, as much as possible, the inefficiencies that the state-controlled economy had created in the previous decades. Determined to implement his reforms, but aware of the enormous resistance this would generate within the country's patronage-driven system, he slowly set about trying to build up a technocratic team around himself.

The Energy Ministry was restored and Abdallah Badri—a technocrat with long experience

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these so-called "rentier" characteristics in Libya, see: "Libya Since Independence: Oil and State-building," 187.

in the oil sector—was appointed to head the Libyan National Oil Company (LNOC) in order, in part, to negotiate the return of the Oasis Group (Marathon Oil, ConocoPhillips, and Amerada Hess) to their Waha and Zueitina concessions, a move that was meant to send reassuring signals to other US oil companies.

After decades of avoiding the advice of international financial institutions, the country also accepted its obligations under Article VIII of the IMF's Articles of Agreement and in October 2003 released the details of the IMF's first Article IV consultations which called for, among other issues, wide structural reforms, improved macroeconomic management, and the removal of trade barriers and price subsidies. The IMF report in part informed the deliberation and adoption of a number of the economic directives taken up by the General People's Congress in March 2004. That same month, Prime Minister Ghanem published a list of 360 state-owned companies that would either be privatized or liquidated.

Over two decades of sanctions, the combination of the country's economic legacy of an inefficiently state-run economy, together with economic and political hardships engendered by those sanctions, had increased internal pressures from a burgeoning younger population with scant possibilities of meaningful employment. Libya's unemployment rate in 2003 was estimated at 30 percent and in 2004, according to Prime Minister Ghanem, 862,000 Libyans still depended on the state for their livelihood.[187] Libya needed outside investment and expertise for new oil and natural gas exploration and for restoring or updating some of the oil industry's industrial and oil infrastructure, which the LNOC readily admitted was outdated.

Libya's objectives under the economic reforms were clearly spelled out by Prime Minister Ghanem:

> The strategies and initiatives that we are taking … [are] trying [to create] a new and comprehensive architecture for the national economy … [which includes] a lot of incentives to foreign investors, such as tax exemptions in the first few years, a major cut in corporate taxes, establishing a free zone in Misurata [Misrata] and opening the capital of public companies for foreign investors … [and] to cut down mismanagement and corruption and of course bureaucracy.[188]

The practical measures in support of the new strategy were adopted by the General People's Congress at its March 2004 annual meeting. In addition to the 360 companies singled out by Ghanem for privatization, the new measures also included extensive banking sector reform and the introduction of private banks. The proposals also encompassed tax reform, the creation of a stock exchange, newly relaxed rules for foreign companies investing in Libya, and a plan to promote the country's almost non-existent tourist sector.

The technical language of the IMF report at the time summarized the challenges Libya would face as it embarked upon Ghanem's reforms:

> The key challenge facing the authorities in the medium and long-term is to achieve sustainable high rates of economic growth to generate employment opportunities for a

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[187] Interview with Shukri Ghanem, 16 January 2005.
[188] Dirk Vandewalle, *A History of Modern Libya* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2011), 187.

> rapidly growing labour force. The authorities agreed that this goal would not be achievable without a drastic reduction in the dominant role of the public sector ... Unemployment, which may be as high as 30 percent, remains one of Libya's greatest problems, with the bloated state sector unable to accommodate the many new job-seekers produced by the fast growing population. Until private sector reform starts delivering tangible results, the problem—compounded by Muammar Qaddafi's 1997 move to open Libya's border to 2 million African immigrants—is only likely to worsen.[189]

The IMF urged the Libyan authorities to move toward greater budget transparency and to cast the country's budget within a coordinated medium-term framework that would take into account the non-renewable nature of Libya's hydrocarbon resources. Although the new reforms asked for greater diversification of Libya's economy, the hydrocarbon sector would once more be called upon to provide the necessary revenues. By 2003, only one quarter of the country's territory had been seriously explored for oil and, except for one patch along Libya's western coastal area, only one area for offshore drilling. Both the Libyan government and international oil companies expected that the country's proven reserves of 30 billion barrels could easily be raised to 130 billion barrels, clearly making Libya one of the top three investment destinations worldwide for oil companies.

Libya in 2003 was exporting roughly 1.5 million barrels per day, significantly less than its 1970 production. The LNOC now wanted to increase production to 3 million barrels per day—the equivalent of its 1970 production—but admitted that Libya needed roughly $30 billion of FDI to do so, $10 billion alone by 2010.[190] In addition, plans were developed to extensively explore the country's enormous natural gas deposits—increasing production for export to 40-50 billion cubic meters per year within ten years—and to update the country's Liquefied Natural Gas (LNG) infrastructure which was limited to one liquefaction plant at Marsa al-Burayqa. In order to encourage investment in the hydrocarbon sector, Libya carefully designed a new set of Exploration and Production Sharing Agreements (EPSA IV) that, judging by the enthusiasm with which international oil companies flocked to Tripoli, proved once more the attractiveness of Libyan oil.

The awarding of the EPSA concessions in January 2005 revealed Libya's priorities. Eleven of the fifteen oil exploration licenses went to US companies, including Occidental, Amerada Hess, and ChevronTexaco. Clearly, one of Libya's priorities was to have United States firms closely involved once more in the country's oil industry, even if doing so seemingly came at the expense of the European companies—particularly French-owned Total—that had supported the country during the sanctions period.

That same month, at the Davos World Economic Forum, Saif al-Islam al-Qadhafi announced a vast reform program for the Libyan economy, announcing that "the old times are finished and Libya is ready to move onto a new stage of modernization… [which] will be conducted in a well-organized manner that ensures new ownership and ownership by the

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[189] Ibid.

[190] The most recent statement by Shukri Ghanem can be found in Ivo Bozon and Giorgio Bresciani, "The outlook for Libya's oil sector: An interview with the chairman of the National Oil Corporation," *McKinsey & Company*, November 2010. Shukri defected from the regime in May 2011.

people of Libya, not just a small class of oligarchs like Russia or Egypt." He added that Libya had recruited some world experts to help in the effort, and conceded that "[t]here may be some reaction against them in Libya, but they are the best."[191] Following Saif al-Islam's announcement, the publication of the *National Economic Strategy: An Assessment of the Competitiveness of the Libyan Arab Jamahiriyya* by the Monitor Group was meant as an overall blueprint for future Libyan development.[192]

The Monitor report provided the first country-wide external review of Libya's economy since the revolution. It not only summarized the purely economic challenges of the country, but also alluded to the non-economic considerations—lack of a positive environment, of trust, of lack of incentives, of regime security concerns—that had kept the Libyan economy in a state-dominated straightjacket.[193] It proposed "A Vision for Libya 2019" that would make the country a regional leader in development. It suggested a number of areas, dominated by the country's energy sector, which could lead to diversification, employment opportunities, and growth: tourism, agriculture, construction, and transit-trade—and of clustering economic activities within those sectors for greater efficiency. And it reiterated that Libya showed all the economic and social pathologies of a distributive state: low productivity, neglect of sectors outside the energy revenue-producing sector, obstacles to private entrepreneurship, a non-transparent business environment, weak legal statutes, "bad" bureaucracies, the inefficient use of the banking sector, the neglect of FDI, a host of governance and regulatory weaknesses and, as a result of the latter, the omnipresent patterns of patronage and informal transactions.

The report recommended the establishment of an Economic Development Board, gingerly suggesting that one of the key challenges in Libya centered around "defining the role of government in facilitating wealth creation" in a fashion that goes to the heart of the argument this paper makes about its possible reconstruction:

> The *New Economic Strategy* Project aims to move Libya from a distributive economy with under-developed institutions to a unique mixed economy model that balances market mechanisms with the values [of the Green Book]... The government has a major role to play: creating political and legal stability, an efficient basic infrastructure and strengthening both the macroeconomic and microeconomic environment for private enterprise to prosper. This will be a critical issue in the Jamahiriya, where state, legal, and regulatory institutions traditionally have been weak.[194]

And it pointed at precisely the nexus between patronage and state resources that add to the difficulty of reform in distributive states like Libya:

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[191] Saif al-Islam al-Qadhafi, quoted in *The Daily Star*, January 29, 2005.

[192] Monitor Group, *National Economic Strategy: An Assessment of the Competitiveness of the Libyan Arab Jamahiriyya* (The General Planning Council of Libya, 2006).

[193] "The focus of Libya's top leadership has been on securing the country — in which it has been successful — and not so much on creating a positive business environment, which must be the next priority," *National Economic Strategy*: 1.

[194] *National Economic Strategy*: 12.

> [...] there is typically resistance to change from those who benefit from the distribution of revenues from natural resources such as oil, import licenses and other government-granted privileges. On the other hand, those in government may also be wary of economic reform, knowing it will create new power centers in civil society which do not depend on government patronage.[195]

In the years following the Davos speech by Saif al-Islam and the publication of the Monitor report, the Libyan government embarked on an ambitious set of initiatives to reform the country's economy by reducing the public sector, adjusting employment patterns, promoting diversification, and creating greater transparency and regulatory mechanisms. Salaries for government employees and those working in state-owned companies, after being frozen for decades, were raised substantially. Several major companies, including banks and the country's mobile phone sector, had been selected for privatization. Many of the onerous requirements for business visitors were eased, and custom tariffs on a whole range of goods and commodities reduced or abolished. Local technocrats investigated the possibilities for increasing the efficiency and attractiveness of free economic zones along the coast. Domestic fuel prices were allowed to rise, and traditional subsidies for water and electricity were reduced.

As suggested by the *National Economic Strategy* (NES) plan, the Economic Development Board was established in early 2007, headed by Mahmoud Jibril, a respected technocrat who would during the uprising in 2011 become one of the movement's leaders. The NES was meant to coordinate, speed up and oversee the different privatization and liberalization initiatives. As always in the past the oil and gas sector had been the recipient of the most prudent, independent advice, further indicating the privileged position it enjoyed in the country's economy.

But the resistance the proposed reforms generated proved enormous.[196] The removal of Shukri Ghanem in March 2006 marked the beginning of a marked slowdown of the reforms. Despite Saif al-Islam's privileged position, his position was also steadily undermined by the revolutionaries in the government. Although Ghanem's successor, Baghdadi al-Mahmoudi, remained in principle committed to the reforms, it was clear that continued support for the reforms had become problematic.[197] This was perhaps not so surprising. Ghanem and Saif al-Islam's ideas entailed a substantial upgrading of the state's ability to regulate in order to, down the road, augur in a more de-regulated economy. It was clear from unfolding events during the period that many of the regime's most powerful economic clients preferred to retain the old structures.[198]

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[195] Ibid., 12-13.

[196] The most public instance of the infighting between "reformers" and "revolutionaires" opposed to the reforms came at the meeting of the General People's Congress in January 2005 in Sirte where PM Ghanem obliquely argued for a more predictable political system of governance so that economic reforms could move forward. See my book *A History of Modern Libya*, 189-192.

[197] See the comments of Mahmoud Jibril and Matuq Matug (Secretary of the General People's Committee for Manpower, Employment and Training) made in November 2008, in "Al-Qadhafi and the Reform "Vision Thing."

[198] In his speech before the GPC, Ghanem had implicitly called for a constitution for Libya, something the "revolutionaries" argued was not necessary.

As I noted at the time, the most essential questions regarding the long-term feasibility of real reform had not changed:

> How far can these reforms take place in a political system where extensive patronage has been part and parcel of political survival for so long? How does a state where unchecked leadership has been such a dominant feature of politics respond and adapt to a slow process of more effective bureaucratization that inevitably accompanies real economic liberalization, and that would inexorably reshape the interaction between the Libyan state and its citizens? To what extent can the groups of would-be reformers freely articulate and push through their agenda in a system where the ultimate authority resides with Qadhafi?... Fundamentally ... the two essential questions Libya faces in its latest attempt at reform—neither of which is inherently easier than the other—is whether to create viable institutions beyond the coercive and distributive ones that can then guide the economic reforms, or whether to reform and adapt existing institutions to reduce powerful coalitional and patronage systems?[199]

The 2003-2011 period clearly and unambiguously provided answers to those questions. And, as always, the government's own pronouncements on the country's economic strategy, reflecting political and security considerations at the expense of economic ones, proved unhelpful. Qadhafi continued to show a strong personal suspicion of the new economic plans. Where the NES had urged diversification into health, tourism, construction, and other non-oil projects, he derided the presence of foreigners in the country, arguing that they drained Libya of its resources. This was followed soon afterwards by a barrage of speeches in which Qadhafi took his own citizens to task for their dependence on oil revenues, expatriate labor, and on massive imports.

Qadhafi then urged Libyans to start manufacturing the goods they needed, seemingly oblivious to what his own policies—or lack thereof—had meant for the productive capacities of Libya in all economic sectors. In March 2008, he argued for dissolving the country's cabinet because it had failed to distribute the country's revenues adequately to Libyan citizens.[200] He then re-introduced one of his favorite solutions to Libya's economic problems: distribute oil money directly to all Libyans.[201] Finally, in a move that augured badly for the new economic approach, he had several businessmen arrested on the grounds that they had violated the principles of the Green Book's people's socialism.

While it was also clear that these pronouncements of Qadhafi were unlikely to derail the larger initiatives the country had embarked upon, they reinforced the uncertainty that had long prevailed in Libya and that made individuals suspicious of becoming entrepreneurs. As a result, they further slowed down the needed changes in the five areas identified in the NES

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[199] "The Institutional Restraints of Reform in Libya: From *Jamahiriyya* to Constitutional Republic?" Paper presented at the Oxford Libya Conference, Pembroke College, September 25-27, 2009.

[200] Libyan television on November 11, 2008 aired a program in which senior government officials disagreed with Qadhafi on his proposals to disburse oil income directly to the Libyan people. Central Bank Governor Farhat BenGadara in particular warned that it would lead to "undisciplined consumption, spark inflation, precipitate devaluation of the dinar, create a balance of payments deficit and cause a decline in real income." Cited in "Al-Qadhafi and the Reform "Vision Thing," WikiLeaks telegram from US Embassy, Novebmer 18, 2008, published in *The Telegraph*, January 31, 2011.

[201] *Reuters*, "Gaddafi says cabinet fails to enrich Libya, must go," March 2, 2008.

plan within the non-hydrocarbon sectors. In many ways, the differing pronouncements of the Libyan leader and of Saif al-Islam on Libyan economic reforms were good indicators of the larger, more structural obstacles at hand.

Despite this inevitable slowdown, Libya's economy continued to show slow and incremental improvements toward greater efficiency in its regulatory capacities. By the end of 2010 the country had, at least in principle, made some progress in creating the statutes necessary to implement some of the reforms, leading to the adoption of a series of major laws governing economic life that were adopted after 2003.[202]

By 2010, a further plethora of stipulations regarding commercial law, customs law, income tax law, stock market law, labor law, communications law, land registry law, and laws regulating the activities of the Libyan Investment Authority had been adopted. The IMF's 2010 Article IV Consultation's preliminary conclusions that year reflected both the positive side of these developments, but once more underscored the persisting lack of reliable data, the continued over-reliance on hydrocarbon revenues, and it hinted at the broader governance issues that persisted.[203]

In sum, the 2003-2011 period had carried some contradictory messages that clearly demonstrated the political pressures to which the reforms were subjected. There is little doubt that compared to its previous attempts at economic reform, Libya had made progress, and that slowly pockets of greater efficiency, of more consistent regulatory practices, and of adherence to international norms were emerging. The diversification and privatization of the economy, however, lagged far behind. There was little evidence that either the Export Promotion Center or the Privatization and Investment Board had produced noticeable results. Furthermore, the country's institutional and legal frameworks remained highly opaque and the business environment remained, in most instances, unpredictable.

As always, Qadhafi's ideological proclivities had continued to play havoc with the implementation of the planned reforms, particularly since there were no formal (and only weak informal) mechanisms to reduce their impact. The climate of uncertainty and ineffectiveness that had somewhat diminished but never disappeared kept hampering progress. The overall coordination of the economy remained weak, decision-making remained fragmented, and there were clear signs that the power of intermediaries and brokers—now including the sons of Qadhafi—had, if anything, increased. The result was that the economic reforms had remained to some extent non-institutionalized—their primary supporter, Saif al-Islam al-Qadhafi, had no official standing, and his plans did not carry the imprimatur of the country's existing political structure. Finally, in some of the main areas the NES had identified as priority areas—human capital, education, and unemployment—very little

[202] For greater details, see my article "Reconstructing the Libyan Economy in a Post-Civil War Situation," *African Development Bank*, September 2011.

[203] International Monetary Fund, "The Socialist People's Libyan Arab Jamahiriya—2010 Article IV Consultation, Preliminary Conclusions of the Mission" (Washington: International Monetary Fund, October 2010).

progress had been made.[204]

The Challenges of Economic Reconstruction after the Civil War

In the aftermath of the civil war, it was clear that under the Transitional National Council (TNC) and its successors, a number of important corrections, and indeed possibly a wholesale rethinking, of the future of Libya's economy was now possible—a task the TNC, but particularly the Stabilization Team in Dubai, engaged upon with enthusiasm and dedication. The more important point to make, however, is that the replacement of the Qadhafi regime will not obliterate the debilitating patterns of patronage political management has made possible since 1969, deus ex machine. Only a restructuring of political and economic institutions can achieve that goal, and undoubtedly many individuals in Libya will want to maintain at least part of the old structures to preserve their own patronage and power.

As in many countries where the state has played an overwhelming role, in Libya the state's challenge in a post-Qadhafi economy will be to provide enough regulatory energy to eventually reduce its own role for the benefit of private initiatives. Since the central and uncontrolled inflows of oil revenues have been at the heart of what fueled the patronage and the survival of the Qadhafi regime for so long, the management of these revenues and the checks and balances of budgetary oversight and control will be the most critical element for Libya's economic reforms. Undoubtedly, as current debates in Libya show, there will be disputes over what kind of institutional expression this should assume—whether in a federal or a unitary system—but the ability to prevent "leakage" will be crucial in preventing "defection" from taking place.

What the attempted economic reforms in Libya after 1987, in the 1990s, and to a lesser extent after 2003 made clear is that without state support for the creation of the larger institutional settings within which economies "moving toward market" operate, those reforms are bound to fail or will be highly inadequate and inefficient. The new Libya therefore will need to provide sufficient guarantees on a number of issues in order to escape the patterns of the past: beyond the hard constraints of macroeconomic stability, a sufficiently clear system of property rights and contract enforcement for individuals and companies alike, mechanisms to avoid anti-competitive behavior, ways to promote trust and cooperation in a society where it has been lacking for over four decades, and social and political institutions that can mitigate social conflict.

The bottom line is that particularly in a country as traumatized as Libya, incentives alone will not work in preventing coordination failures. In Libya, institutions that can prevent coordination failures—rule of law, a high-quality judiciary, independent labor or social groups, any type of social partnerships—have been conspicuously absent during the Qadhafi years. Beyond these larger regulatory and institutional issues remain the practical realities that need to be addressed. The first concerns labor. Formal employment in Libya consists of 43,000 people in the oil sector, but 840,000 in public services. The energy sector contributes

[204] See also African Development Bank, "African Economic Outlook 2010 - Libya Country Note" (2010) and an earlier report by the National Democratic Institute for International Affairs, "The Libyan Political System and Prospects for Reform: A Report from NDI's 2006 Delegation" (April 2006).

60 percent of Libya's GDP but employs only 3 percent of the formal workforce. Public services, including healthcare and education employ 51 percent of the formal workforce, but only contribute 9 percent to GDP. The country's informal economy provides as much as 30-40 percent of the official GDP while formal employment is marred by ”welfare employment”—one third of the country’s 200,000 primary school teachers and 30,000 nurses on government payrolls are inactive, but enjoy monthly salaries. At the same time, there is massive over-employment, estimated at 30-40 percent in the banking sector, hotels, banks, and utility companies.

The hard constraints of macroeconomic stability, efficient and transparent budgets and sovereign wealth fund management will be a critical, early component of Libya's economic recovery. Particularly in light of disclosures of poor management and a lack of checks and balances regarding the country's budgets and its Sovereign Wealth Fund assets in the past, better and more transparent management will not only improve economic performance, but will also provide a measure of trust needed for broader reforms. In light of the country's history, Libyans will be skeptical of prolonged international presences—whether for humanitarian, economic reconstruction, or aid purposes. This will undoubtedly necessitate the creation of a legal and constitutional framework that makes economic development and equity possible to all Libyan participants.

Despite this, as the Stabilization Team in Dubai during the civil war and the TNC now acknowledge, much international expertise is needed to help develop a detailed, rigorous economic recovery plan that Libyans themselves can manage as early as possible. International help will also be needed to help prevent the realignment of the economic strategies of the different parties currently engaged in the conflict. Civil wars tend to realign local societies and local economies, and unless forcefully resisted, tend to perpetuate pre-civil war cleavages. The longer the current chaos—the lack of “monopoly of power”—persists, the more likely it is that the informal networks of economic power in the country will persist. This applies not only to whatever members of the Qadhafi regime persist in a post-civil war situation, but also to those rebels and militias who may not find a place in whatever new, formal structures emerge.

As the TNC has also realized, a crucial question will focus on the recruitment and retention of competent personnel and bureaucrats from the pre-civil war period, and to help break the traditional patterns of patronage through greater transparency and rule of law. This is particularly important since, even as some of the old regime's personnel and bureaucrats are replaced, many of its economic modus operandi will tend to persist. This hints once more at the strong structural characteristics of rentier states like Libya, where both the functions of the state and the expectations citizens have of that providential state, become part and parcel of a patronage system both old personnel and new personnel find attractive to maintain stability.

Finally, international expertise will be most useful when it provides frameworks for mediating and settling disputes related to new development strategies for Libya. Sustained economic reform and reconstruction in economic systems where extensive patronage and very high levels of intermediation by the state have marked earlier development strategies requires enormous consistent energy and political commitment that more often than not

recalibrates the economic and political fates of those who were instrumental in controlling the original strategy.

The New Libya: Opportunities for the Future

It is clear that if Libya's current attempt at constructing a new state is subject to enormous challenges and difficulties, its attempts at nation-building—legitimating those new state institutions and creating a sense of national identity—remain equally, if not more problematic. The legacy of the Qadhafi regime, which consistently tried to obliterate any sense of national identity, will continue to represent a heavy burden. Libya contains many different visions of what the country's political community should look like in the future. Perhaps nowhere was this splintering of whatever embryonic national vision the TNC represented during the civil war more visible than in the aftermath of the assassination of Abdel Fatah Younes. Clearly a number of fault lines emerged that until now have only been partially addressed. These fault lines that indicate how loyalties—tribe, family, religion, and region—remain pitched below the national level and make the pursuit of a national vision and strategy to deal with current difficulties problematic.

While Libya presents peculiar difficulties in terms of state- and nation-building, many of which can be explained by its unique resource base, its singular history, and the idiosyncrasies of the Qadhafi regime, its current challenges are common to many post-civil war situations the world has witnessed these last decades. The traditional question is to ask oneself whether Libya, almost a year after its civil war began and two months after the death of Qadhafi, represents a glass half full or a glass half empty.

The answer, of course, is that it is both. Perhaps a more meaningful question—in light of how this paper has pointed out the joint challenges of state- and nation-building as being crucial to the country's future—is to ask what decisions and developments in the country would indicate that the glass is getting fuller or emptier. It is a difficult question to answer, for the kind of political, social, and economic reconstruction Libya is now engaged in will take years, if not decades, to accomplish. Nevertheless, the appearance or creation of certain elements of the complex process of state- and nation-building in the months and years ahead—signposts along the road—would give an intelligent indication of where the country may be heading.

The glass will be fuller:

- If the state manages to establish its monopoly of violence at the expense of the militias.
- If economic development proceeds equitably, without the emergence of the kind of patronage patterns that marked the Qadhafi period.
- If institutions to provide for economic accountability can be established to meet the challenges of the Gold Rush effect: where individuals and groups are allowed to "defect"—grab what one can—rather than cooperate; and to prevent the use of state assets for personal patronage.
- If reconciliation can take place in ways that are both equitable and fair, both to those who served the Qadhafi regime and those who opposed it.
- If Libyans can agree on a common political community that encompasses different

groups willing to give up particularistic interests and pursuits.
- If Libyans come to share a sense of equity and equality.
- If political leadership emerges that clearly transcends particularistic interests.

The glass will be emptier:
- If the Gold Rush effect proceeds unmediated.
- If economic oversight and accountability and transparency of national accounts is lacking.
- If the elections simply become an exercise in "electoralism," and a true political formula between the country's regions cannot be created.

It is clear once more from these broad sets of markers how complex and difficult Libya's path will be, and how indispensable responsible leadership, the development of a common vision, and long-term conscientious institution-building will be to the country's future. While most of these were deliberately ignored during the Qadhafi period, there is no reason to think that under the current circumstances Libya cannot make substantial headway in avoiding this shadow of the past.

Syria, the Arab Uprisings, and the Political Economy of Authoritarian Resilience

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Introduction

This paper examines the causes of the Arab uprisings with emphasis on the Syrian case, particularly in terms of political-economic elements that seems to escape most analysis of causes. We usually receive a steady explanatory diet with either generic "economic" arguments about poverty or unemployment, or with arguments about intolerance of decades of authoritarian rule. Little attention is given to the interaction between political and economic variables, and even less attention is given to the particularities of every case and their political-economic trajectories. In the Syrian case, these facile and essentially inadequate arguments often take the form of the old and tired "sectarianism" or "sectarian rule" argument, where the Alawi minority is pitted against the Sunni majority. Even more sophisticated arguments that recognize the inadequacy of the "sectarianism" narrative fail to indicate that at least half of Syrian society is itself comprised of minorities. Finally, in the Syrian case in particular, the question of Syria's regional role and "resistance to imperialism" credentials is introduced by some to blur or mar the anti-authoritarianism protests in favor of regional and international issues that may or may not impinge on the very raison d'être of the uprisings.

All of the above—the generic political, economic, and communal arguments, or the "resistance" factor—often form an amorphous explanatory lens through which the battle on the ground is interpreted. In most narratives, we end up focusing on symptoms rather than tangible causes that drive the confrontation. It is true that regional and international interference clouds the domestic setting and often alters the "conflict," but such factors should be integrated into the analysis to reveal the complexity of the Syrian case, and should not simply *replace* or hijack the essential narrative of causes for the uprising.

Definitions

I shall start by positing some remarks about the recent events in the region. I use the word "events" deliberately to underscore the multitude of problematic and misleading ways in which the protests have been characterized, interpreted, connected, and written off by observers. Are these revolutions, or as Asef Bayat called them, "ReFolutions?"[205] Or are they uprisings and revolts? Could they simply be recurring demonstrations? How do we discern exactly what they are? I shall discuss the caveats first then examine the relationship between the political and economic elite as a variable that has received short shrift in the analysis of the uprisings' causes. The two discussions are connected by virtue of the fact that we are not actually experiencing real "revolutions" in the classic sense of the word.

Most of us casually refer to these events by using one or another of these words. And though the boundary between some of them is not always clear, some of these designations,

[205] Asef Bayat, "Paradoxes of Arab Refo-lutions," March 3, 2011, *Jadaliyya,* http://www.jadaliyya.com/pages/index/786/paradoxes-of-arab-refo-lutions.

namely "revolution" and "demonstration," are hardly reconcilable. We are not exactly sure what is transpiring across the region. What we do know is that what we are witnessing, even in the cases of Tunisia and Egypt, is not a revolution, neither is it complete regime change. What we have in cases where the head or symbol of the regime resigned or departed, is a *project* for regime change that might or might not produce the results desired by the protesters. But that should not be a cause for pessimism. A cursory review of the history of revolutions and political change might actually advise optimism, despite all seen and unforeseen hurdles. Specifically, in most cases that experienced upheaval, we are witnessing a resumption of politics of sorts, of more genuine levels of participation and contestation, but often with major counterrevolutionary currents in places like Egypt, if one may use the term "revolution" here.

Furthermore, after a year of uprisings, we must note that we are no longer talking about spontaneous protests by a discontented and oppressed public and jittery responses by established regimes. We have entered the realm of strategic decision-making on both counts, one that includes regional and international inputs that have complicated the situation and given leverage to incumbent regimes as the forces of counter-revolution are beginning to prevail in some cases or in some instances.

Thus, I shall treat this apparent confusion on definitions not by trying to find the right or correct characterization, but by bypassing, or suspending, this task to emphasize the basic heterogeneity of the cases involved. Egypt is not Tunisia, and both are not Libya. All three are removed from Yemen, Bahrain, and Syria. We also witnessed tremors in Jordan, Morocco, and Algeria that have emanated from yet another set of circumstances which, clearly, have not sufficed to maintain a strong protest momentum.

The running theme across these cases, however, is that they are Arab countries that are experiencing high levels of mass mobilization on a scale hitherto unseen in the Arab part of the Middle East, at least not in unison and certainly not since the struggles for independence from colonial rule and shortly afterwards. We also have witnessed a strong affinity among these publics for each other's experience across Arab countries, so much so that a domino-like effect was at hand for some time. This signals the persistent, even if amorphous, cultural and political (if not economic) dimensions that bind many Arabs in a systemic way—though we should not make too much of this affinity as it remains at the level of triggers and signaling, not cooperation and collaboration.

Beyond that, the commonality dwindles, and in some cases, stops. It is more productive to focus instead on the significant differences among these polities, in terms of social structure, ethnic, regional, social, and sectarian diversity. Most importantly, we must pay attention to the different political economies—as will be discussed below—that obtain as well as the cumulative effects of economic development and change, even across similarly structured political economies. Even such causes, however, are not singularly responsible for the outbreak of protests.

All this is to say that we should take pause when discussing the recent events, and avoid considering the regional protests as a singular unit of analysis. It is also important to recognize the similarities between what we are witnessing in the region and what many other countries are experiencing, not only in the developing world. At some level, there is a

populist/popular rejection of neoliberal policies, in their global or local garbs.

Missing Explanatory Elements: Effects of the Nexus of Power

Instead of surveying the gamut of factors and claims about the causes of the uprisings, I shall begin by examining one factor that has both been given often scant attention and simultaneously been a part—at least—of the extant problems in each of the countries that experienced revolts and turbulence. Namely, I am referring to the growing relationship in the past few decades between the political and economic elite in the countries undergoing mass uprisings. This nexus of power pervades most global political economies but produces deleterious effects to the extent that the context allows. In many Arab countries, it is associated with the protracted process related to the unraveling of the state-centered economy there. I must caution in the same breath against the emphasis on such factors as singular causes for the uprisings.

I will discuss some broad outcomes related to the impact of this phenomenon. This is a difficult task because it is not easy to disentangle the gamut of existing political, social, and economic ills that one observes in the region and attribute some of them neatly to the phenomenon at hand. To be sure, there are so many sources of polarization, poverty, repression, and, ultimately revolt, that some analysts are finding it convenient to go back to the residual category of the cultural black box to explain everything horrible in the region (some have never left in the first place). It is possible, however, to highlight some problematic areas that have been exacerbated by the new elitism, and the modes of coping, resistance, governance, and living that it engendered. Systematic research is required to do rigorous process-tracing, but some of the direct and not-so-direct effects are inescapably evident, especially when one considers the new forms of collaboration between repressive political elites and (often) happily unaccountable business actors.

On the face of it, we can preliminarily divide the impact of this nexus of power into at least two categories, both of which directly or indirectly affected the outcomes we have been witnessing this spring. Politically, the new nexus of power between the political and economic elite seems to have buttressed authoritarian rule over the past decades (depending on the case), whether or not other factors contributed to this outcome. This is not simply a function of "support" for the status quo by these elites, for this is the norm nearly everywhere. It is also a form of legitimation of the status quo because the corollary of this nexus involves various forms of "liberalization" or state retreat: this includes a "budding," "growing," or seemingly "vibrant" civil society that may be considered a sign of political "opening;" a "freer" economic environment in which the state gives up its monopoly over some sectors of the economy; and a large "private" sector that purportedly grows at the expense of the state-run "public" sector, giving way to a broader dispersion of resources with economically democratizing effects. Though these outcomes are pleasing to some external actors (including that amorphous conception, "the international community"), they are not felt in a positive manner by the overwhelming majority of the population, who must fend for themselves as public provisions, jobs, and welfare dwindle.

The apparent social effects of the new elitism and the policies they engender are even deeper, and were all too clear before January 2011. It is not too challenging to demonstrate

that the policies supported by this new nexus of power are responsible for unduly removing or destroying various forms of social safety nets (e.g. welfare, subsidies, job provisions) that kept populations afloat or barely above water for decades. If these provisions are not removed altogether then either their quality has deteriorated significantly (e.g., health, education) or rations have shrunk (e.g., bread, flower, sugar). Such drastic changes are contributing to two dangerously related phenomena: firstly, increasing poverty (including absolute poverty) and thus social polarization, whereby societies are increasingly losing their middle classes; and secondly, economic exclusion from the "market," a phenomenon contributing to a dramatic increase of the informal sector, or those who are functioning, and living, almost completely outside the market. The populations affected by these policies have been written about numerous times in various publications, from Diane Singerman's work on the informal sector in Egypt to Asef Bayat's work on "quiet encroachment" in the same country.[206] More recently, we saw such groups protest side by side with lower-middle and middle class Egyptians throughout Egypt—not just in Cairo.

There continues to be support in the direction of reducing such provisions in the name of one thing or another even after the Egyptian revolution (e.g. trickle-down economics, tight state budgets, private sector alternative, importance of self-reliance and ending "dependence" on the state). All these rationales must be carefully examined, for most of them emanate less from a demonstrable conviction and intent to guarantee alternatives and more from the sheer desire and ability to deprioritize long-term collective interests and mass provisions. There are *alternative approaches and models* that are simply not being given the space they deserve, largely because they involve redistribution.[207]

The incremental—and not so incremental—goring of workers' and labor interests in the private *and* public sectors is another outcome that can be easily traceable to policies and political decisions associated with the new elitism. The shifting of effective alliances from labor to business in various Arab regimes was part and parcel of the unraveling of state-centered economies. Rights, rules, and regulations increasingly favored business at the expense of labor as time went by, starting in the 1970s (officially or unofficially). Trade/peasant unions and labor organizations in countries like Egypt and Syria were co-opted around that time by corporatist authoritarian systems of representation, but continued to enjoy some privileges. Therefore, it is true that the political elite started this process of shifting alliances and privileging capital long before business actors became prominent, but the sort of change that took place in recent years has a different character. Earlier, such stripping of labor rights was considered a function of problematic authoritarian arbitrariness, something that is frowned upon socially and viewed as a departure from a social (developmental) contract of sorts. More recently, and before the wave of protests and revolts, the incremental stripping away of labor rights was carried out in the name of "investment" and "growth."

The ideological context in times gone by was one of a socialist-nationalist coloring that

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[206] Diane Singerman and Paul Amar., eds., *Cairo Cosmopolitan: Politics, Culture and Urban Space in the New Globalized Middle East*, (American University in Cairo Press, 2006).

[207] Bassam Haddad and Ziad Abu-Rish, "How Do You Finance Social Justice in Egypt? Jadaliyya Interview With Journalist Wael Gamal," *Jadaliyya*, June 10, 2011, http://www.jadaliyya.com/pages/index/1820/how-do-you-finance-social-justice-in-egypt-jadaliy.

provided a basis for judgment and norms. Hence, social polarization, poverty, and developmental exclusion were considered "wrong" and unacceptable. Today, such disturbing effects have become the new norm, a means to a "better" future, a legitimate station along the way to prosperity and efficiency. All such designations were short-circuited by the uprisings, but it is too early to sound the death-knell for growth formulas that are zero-sum in character.

Perhaps most significantly were the developmental implications of a new elitism that vehemently emphasized urban development (at the expense of the neglected countryside and its modes of production) and non-productive economic activity, characterized primarily by consumption. The increase in shares of the tourism and service sectors at the expense of manufacturing and agricultural production (associated with land re-reform laws and other regulations) produced different kinds of needs in society. For instance, there is significantly less need for skilled labor, and the educational systems and institutions that would be required to train skilled labor.

Whatever is arising in terms of the "new economy" and information technology fields lags far behind other countries, is too small and too underdeveloped to substitute for losses in other sectors, and is certainly not competitive internationally. Employment of hundreds of thousands of yearly new entrants into the job market will continue to suffer accordingly if public policy continues to be colonized as it has been by the new elitism in the context of authoritarian governance or post-revolution reform.

The much heralded private sector is nearly everywhere in the region only picking up "shares" of fixed capital formation from the embattled and bloated public sector, but is nowhere near compensating for job losses, let alone accommodating new job-seekers. The revolts of spring 2011 are not unrelated to the failure of the "private-sector-led" alternative to state-centered economies. Neither model served people or sustainable growth. Hence the need for a more imaginative approach that involves an optimal division of labor between the private and public sector as well as the proper distribution of emphasis across sectors (i.e., industry, trade, tourism, service, information technology, agriculture) and regions (i.e., rural, urban).

The often-neglected elements in some circles are the combination of measures that fall under the rubric of trickle-down economics (private sector investment, foreign direct investment, new market institutions, new rules and regulations, the rule of law, etc.). It is true that it is wrong to place the causes of the revolutions and protests squarely on these economic variables, which is not the point of this intervention. Simply, one cannot understand the depth, breadth, and magnitude, of the revolts without reference to the effects of these policies, and their agents.

The problem of development is not simply about rules and markets and will not be resolved as such. Whatever else is at work, the most egregious problems stem from various and continuing forms of political *and* economic disempowerment and denial of self-determination at the individual and collective levels. Most of these problems were/are being exacerbated by a new nexus of power that is as unrelenting as it is/was unchallenged (depending on the case). This new elitism was not the only source of these problems, but a guarantee that they will fester if alternative agencies and institutions do not develop.

Compounding Effects of the New Nexus of Power

The new nexus of power in and of itself is not sufficient to bring about sustained protests. It was only the constellation of various factors that brought an end to the seemingly impenetrable wall of fear. These factors are by no means restricted to structure: politics and strategy, as well as subjective calculations ultimately played a significant role to tip the balance in favor of the unthinkable: public protest in Syria.

Namely, in addition to the economic deterioration brought about by the nexus of power in Syria, we can identify two major factors: the independent effect of authoritarian rule and demonstration effect. Deep economic deterioration, elite capture of public policy, and authoritarian rule proceeded without the existence of meaningful avenues for redress. This created a pressure cooker effect for many years (more or less, depending on the case at hand), leading to a sense of despair across broad sectors of the population, affecting not just people's livelihood and desire for political "freedom" (these societies always wanted more political freedom). What took the situation to a deeper level is that this combination also struck deeply at people's dignity. I will argue that this event (when one's dignity is affected) was not sufficient to spur mass mobilization in some countries, notably Syria. What tilted the calculus of individuals and groups in Syria in terms of going to the streets is the feeling that, *now*, after Tunisia and Egypt, could actually do something about it.

So, the structural political/economic factors existed, the injury to one's dignity existed, but such factors required some strategic principle or agency for them to spur mass uprisings. Here I'm reminded of Eva Bellin's question of why people were willing to risk their lives and continue to risk their lives: it is precisely because of the deep injuries incurred, and for a long period of time, and now in the presence of hope for a way out. In that sense, I do see that this comports with a rational actor model if you adjust preferences. But I'll stop here with that language lest I sound like a real political scientist.

Ultimately, this somewhat crude narrative manifested itself in various ways across the countries that experienced upheaval (Tunisia, Egypt, Libya, Yemen, Bahrain), and certainly in Syria. However, some countries were less ripe for such uprisings in the sense that the discontent as well as the tools/factors available did not allow for critical mass or immediately effective/terminal challenge to the status quo. Syria, and Yemen to a lesser extent, are cases in point. Ripe here means that the injuries discussed and the possibility of a better alternative had not yet reached deep into the core of all major segments or regions of the country. Hence, the relative quiet one witnesses in Damascus and Aleppo.

The Stalemate: Why is the Regime Resilient?

At the moment, we are witnessing in Syria an intractable situation where a stalemate between regime and opposition is at hand. This current stalemate is not necessarily enduring. Rather, the fact that the battle has been viewed and constructed as a zero-sum game from the very beginning has increased the stakes tremendously for all parties involved, notably the regime. It is propitious to start with a brief examination of the players involved, or a map of actors.

The map of actors

The map of actors in the Syrian case is complex, but has been captured best by those analysts

who reside in Syria and have been involved, and knowledgeable in the intricacies and nuances of the political landscape there. One of these writers is Hassan Abbas who divides the actors in a lucid manner in "The Dynamics of the Uprising in Syria":[208]

1. The regime.
2. Elements engaged in ground confrontations inside Syria, of which one can distinguish four main constituents:
    (a) A repressive apparatus that implements the security solution and practices violence with all means available. It includes the army (particularly the Third and Fourth Divisions), security forces, and paramilitary groups referred to as *shabiha*.
    (b) Groups in the repressive apparatus who attempt to undermine its cohesion and impede its violent practices, including groups of dissident army officers and soldiers.
    (c) Nonviolent forces who participate in the uprising and confronting the violence being practiced against them with legendary courage and forbearance, including crowds taking part in demonstrations and protests.
    (d) Elements, and sometimes groups, within nonviolent crowds who engage in violence and are trying to drag protestors into violence.
3. Social "incubators" who nourish these elements and provide them with material and moral support.

The importance of this breakdown is that it categorizes the elements involved but does not absolve any of them from critical inquiry, including the protesters. Hence, his indication that there are social "incubators" who support even the protesters. The implication is that there are external sources of support that do not always reflect the same basic interest of all protesters, at least not for the same reasons. The breakdown acknowledges the peaceful and democratist nature of much of the opposition, especially the one that emerged early on, but also points to the increasingly militarized elements that are confronting the regime, especially after summer 2011. This situation creates a complex terrain that allows the regime to manipulate the conflict by portraying it as a foreign-funded armed insurrection that aims at destabilizing Syria based on foreign interest. Though this might only in part be true, it certainly glosses over the decades of tyranny and the structural factors that caused the uprising in the first place. It is such confusion, deliberate or unintended, that drives a wedge between analysts and participants (Syrian citizens themselves), in addition to other arguments about favoring stability over chaos, one that motivates many Syrians who remain on the sidelines. The bottom line in this regard, as suggested at the outset, is that such analysis of the complexity to

[208] Hassan Abbas, "The Dynamics of the Uprising in Syria," *Jadaliyya*, October 19, 2011, http://www.jadaliyya.com/pages/index/2906/the-dynamics-of-the-uprising-in-syria.

the Syrian case should not rob protesters of their legitimate claims regarding the authoritarian and corrupt nature of the existing regime. Part of this complexity will be dealt with below in the section on Syria's regional role.

Social, structural and institutional factors

There are social, structural, strategic, and institutional factors that created a complex terrain for the uprisings in Syria, one that ultimately favored the state in the short to medium run. Summarized briefly in an unfavorable juxtaposition for the protestors, one comparatively observes in Syria a higher coherence at the top (i.e. regime level) and heterogeneity within society.

Coherence has its roots in the simple logic of "all or nothing" that pervades the top echelons of the Syrian regime and their immediate network, nearly all of whom believe that the regime is a single and indivisible ship that sinks or floats. The heterogeneity of society on the other hand has lent itself to decades of manipulation (not only by the regime) in which plurality was turned into a form of strategic divisiveness within Syrian society. The heterogeneity is mostly a function of the existence of several sects: Sunnis, Alawis, Shi', Druze, Ismailis, and at least two Christian sects: Greek Orthodox and Catholics/Maronites. The only ethno-national identity other than Arab is the Kurdish one, representing 6-8 percent of the population at best.

Thus, the major divisions or political struggles do not revolve around ethno-national identity or a simplistic Sunni-Alawi divide. Even those that revolve around religious or sectarian identity are intertwined with class and regional identities, giving credence to the argument that the identities that are considered the basis for social and political mobilization are often composite identities, and cannot be reduced always to a single dimension. What we are left with, however, is the difficulty of joint action within society at high levels as a result of the combination of decades of authoritarian rule and social heterogeneity.

This divisiveness manifested itself in a robust version of the lesser evil argument among most minorities who prefer the status quo. The implications of this seemingly zero-sum game have been playing themselves out on the streets and in the actual regime policy of crushing the protests, while the sizeable and strategically silent/passive segment of Syrian society has given unintended credence to the regime.

However, with time, the calculation of those on the sidelines is changing: the fear of the unknown compared to the "stability" of the status quo is now yielding different and less reassuring formulas. As the year draws to a close, most Syrians, even die-hard supporters of the regime itself, not just of the "stable" status quo, are witnessing the ever-expanding areas of instability and, by connection, the regime's ability to guarantee stability in the long run. Clearly, this new calculation is subject to empirical developments. However, there now are parts of the country in Idlib, Dar`a, and other north-eastern parts that are completely outside the influence or authority of the regime. It is as though the regime has written them off in favor of amassing its forces in troubled metropolitan areas (e.g. Homs) and in the two largest cities that continue to enjoy a modicum of normalcy, Damascus, and Aleppo.

The regional dimension

But the complex Syrian terrain also has a regional, and perhaps international, dimension that is related to Syria's role on three intertwined but analytically distinct levels: (1) as a regional player belonging to a small but effective axis along with Iran; (2) as an enabler of resistance to various forms of external encroachment and military occupation; and (3) as an ally of powerful and far away state actors (i.e. Russia, China) whose interests are less in Syria itself and more in a leverage formula in which Syria might play an important role.

The combination of the domestic and regional/international settings has made the fall of the Syrian regime much more than simply "the fall of the Syrian regime." Thus, as a result, the forces/actors that might come to the aid of the Syrian regime—locally, regionally, and globally—are many, and not all of them are supportive of the regime's actions—they are supportive largely of its political position.

This regional role, and particularly the "resistance" element, creates fierce debates among the left in some parts of the Arab world, notably the Levant. The debate centers on whether Syria's "resistance" credentials and the regional/international forces amassed against that function (i.e. of resistance to imperialism and Israeli occupation) should lead one to absolve the regime of its domestic brutality. Most of this debate is political and polemical, but it is of crucial importance in explaining the reasons why the Syrian case is more complex and, more tangibly, why the Syrian regime enjoys more support locally and regionally than those that fell before it—even if this support is for the role it plays not for the merits of the regime in and of itself.

Concluding Scenarios

Syria's complexities deserve careful and historically informed treatment, as they will not be captured by the simplistic conventional approaches to the uprisings in the region that pit dictator against democrats (and this complexity surely exists in all cases to some degree). A discussion of future scenarios is always dangerous, but I would like to point out that a breaking point is not too far in Syria. We are likely to see that the first half of 2012 will produce a decisive formula. Whether this formula will be lasting is difficult to predict as there will be various new realities with which to contend. In any case, there are a few basic scenarios that might unfold.

One scenario involves a regional deal. This is not likely at this point as the Syrian regime itself remains too confident about its ability to contain the situation, or at least to remain in power. However, it is likely that this might be the case a few months down the road as various kind of pressures are applied, including military, logistical, and, mainly, economic.

The foreign military intervention scenario also remains unlikely in the short run as it is not in anyone's interest—local, regional, or international. Barring some unforeseen development that would necessitate intervention of sorts, this option remains off the table, even by the admission of European powers and the United States. Israel remains curiously cautious about regime change in Syria, a notable fact.

Finally, a third scenario carries some credence pending mounting financial difficulties. Such difficulties, when they reach structural levels that must be addressed, might spur internal debate within the Syrian regime in the coming 4-6 months. Under the pressure of such tangible factors, we are likely to see the formation of more delineated camps within the

regime elite. Compounded by other logistical, regional, and confrontational factors (as the opposition becomes more powerful militarily), this might lead to opening a door for real and consequential compromise so long as the regime's hand is not forced.

Ultimately, knowing the Syrian regime's trajectory and legacy, this scenario is also not likely unless the danger is imminent and real, and not subject to interpretation by regime strongmen. The unspoken scenario is some unexpected local or regional event (perhaps a military regional confrontation or an escalation of bombing within the capital) that will put to rest all possible analysis and create new coordinates for making judgments. Until then, all eyes are on Syria.

Part 6
Dilemmas of the United States and Israel

US Middle East Policy and the "Arab Spring"

Michael Hudson, Middle East Institute, National University of Singapore

The Obama Administration's Middle East Policy: Changing Priorities

Uzi Rabi, Moshe Dayan Center for African and Middle Eastern Studies

US Middle East Policy and the "Arab Spring"[209]

Michael C. Hudson, Middle East Institute, National University of Singapore

The so-called "Arab Spring" has accentuated the longstanding structural contradictions in US Middle East policy. It has created strains in US relations with Saudi Arabia, thus affecting a fundamental US interest in Middle East oil. It has exposed the paralysis in US policy on the Palestine question owing to the new influence of popular opinion on Arab governments combined with the intransigence of a right-wing Israeli government that continues to effectively dominate American policy through its influence on the US Congress and American public opinion. Meanwhile, despite recent US successes in the "war on terrorism," aggressive American military tactics have deepened public hostility toward the US in Arab and Muslim opinion.

Even though American officials, including the President and Secretary of State, have sought to position the US on "the right side of history" as ordinary citizens challenge authoritarian regimes, this is proving to be a difficult task. US policy on Palestine, especially, but also the longstanding relationship with Saudi Arabia, which rightly fears the Arab Spring, and the collateral damage inflicted in the attacks on Islamist extremist movements impede the Obama Administration's goal of riding the seeming democratic wave across the Arab world.

Obama and the Uprisings

With the election of Barack Obama in 2008 many hoped that the neo-conservatives who had dominated the presidency of George W. Bush, especially in his first term, were a spent force and that there was now an opportunity to restore sobriety and balance to America's Middle East policies. The war in Iraq, the war in Afghanistan, and the war on terrorism had greatly diminished America's standing in the region. Obama signaled that he would end the Iraq war, close the Guantanamo prison camp, revive the moribund Palestinian-Israeli diplomacy and reach out to the Muslim world.

Yet it soon became clear that the new President was much more in the mold of his predecessor than many had expected. To be sure, the withdrawal from Iraq proceeded, but Obama actually deepened US military involvement in Afghanistan as a prelude to an eventual slow withdrawal there. The Guantanamo camp remained open and Bush's "war on global terror" was accelerated, notably through unmanned aerial strikes against suspected Islamist terrorists. And after initially calling for an end to Israeli settlement construction, the President was cowed by Prime Minister Netanyahu and the powerful Israel lobby into abandoning a vigorous, balanced approach to solving the Palestine issue. Rebuffed in an initial opening toward the Iranian leadership, Obama reverted to the pressure tactics of his predecessor, yet when the Iranian masses erupted in protests against the clerical regime he remained passive. Had the President not been consumed by the deep financial crisis that exploded just as he

[209] I would like to acknowledge the research assistance of Rana Khoury. Part of this paper draws on my chapter on U.S. Middle East policy in Louise Fawcett, ed., *International Relations of the Middle East*, ed. 3 (Oxford University Press, 2013).

assumed office perhaps he would have had more time to deal more effectively with the Middle East, but in any event he found himself unable to surmount the tough realities of this region.

Then, at the end of 2010, came the first of the Arab uprisings. There is no denying the "epidemic effect" of this phenomenon and the commonalities of mass protest that toppled dictators in Tunisia, Egypt, Libya, and Yemen; challenged regimes in Bahrain and Syria, and panicked rulers in neighboring states to co-opt or preempt upheavals in their own countries. But two years on it was clear that the affected countries have different trajectories. Could the Obama administration fashion a broadly consistent position on the challenges to Arab authoritarianism while taking into account the particularities of each case?

On the rhetorical level President Obama and Secretary of State Hillary Clinton asserted the classical American *idealist* stance: in principle, Washington supports transitions to democracy. On the *realist* level, however, prudence was the watchword. Having initially hesitated to abandon authoritarian allies in Tunisia and Egypt, the Administration calculated that qualified support for the oppositions was the intelligent position to take. In Libya, despite the "brother leader" Muammar al-Qadhafi's earlier abandonment of his military nuclear ambitions, there was no love lost; but the question was how much support to give an opposition movement that initially seemed destined to be liquidated by the dictator. Not wanting to plunge unilaterally into yet another military adventure, Obama elected to "lead from behind," a NATO-led coalition which used a Security Council resolution calling for humanitarian protection of protesters to destroy the regime and its military forces. In chaotic Yemen, the Administration was torn between the regime of President Ali Abdullah Saleh—a willing and compliant ally in the war on al-Qa'ida terrorism—and a disaffected populace where the opposition included elements considered neither democratic nor pro-American.

Again, "leading from behind" seemed the most prudent course—in this case behind the multilateral efforts of the Arab Gulf Cooperation Council countries. But in Bahrain the Obama Administration faced a dilemma. Nobody could doubt the massive popular antipathy to the regime of King Hamad bin Issa al-Khalifa and the brutal reaction of his security forces to the protests. But here Obama punted. Under strong pressure from the rulers of Saudi Arabia, who chose to see the Bahrain uprising as a Shi'a-Iranian plot, the Administration criticized the Bahrain rulers for their bad behavior but issued only pro forma protest against the Saudi intervention to try and crush the protests. Oil and strategic interests trumped democratic principles.

It was the Syrian uprising, however, that proved to be the biggest challenge. Initially, President Bashar al-Assad's regime delusionally claimed that it would be immune from the Arab Spring because of its apparent fidelity to the Arab cause in Palestine. As it became obvious that the popular discontent was widespread and deeply rooted, Bashar al-Assad's ill-advised response was to administer a "shock and awe" dose of brutality in hopes of nipping the uprising in the bud, perhaps following the example of his father in the notorious crackdown in the city of Hama in 1982 in which at least 10,000 people were killed.

Remarkably, however, the protests continued and deepened to the point where the conflict became militarized. Syria was plunged into a civil war in which both the regime and the opposition attracted outside military assistance. For the Obama Administration, Syria was

seen both as a golden opportunity and a trap. Rarely were principle and interest more closely aligned. On the one hand there was the prospect of bringing down a brutal dictatorship, giving democracy a chance, and delivering a body blow to the Iran's regional influence while strengthening the security of Israel, Saudi Arabia and other friendly Sunni regimes. On the other hand the Assad regime was politically cohesive at the elite level and possessed of formidable military and security assets, while the opposition, initially at least, appeared under-armed and deeply divided. Moreover, Washington was concerned about its potential Islamist character and the possibility of al-Qa'ida finding sanctuary in a post-Assad regime—which would hardly bode well for Israeli or American interests. Obama's advisors did not want to see America drawn into problematic new military engagements in Syria or Iran, especially since there was little support for a multilateral approach along the lines of NATO's Libyan campaign. UN mediation was proving ineffectual. Moreover, Russia and China had blocked UN Security Council resolutions opening the way for military intervention. As of mid-2012, Washington was confining itself to bellicose rhetoric against Assad and substantial logistical, diplomatic and intelligence support for the opposition while encouraging regime defections and an exit strategy for Assad.

Squaring the Circle

How can Washington reconcile its fundamental interests and at the same time support the aspirations of the Arab peoples for better governance? Rightly or wrongly, America's three cardinal interests in the Middle East are protection of oil and gas resources, protection of Israel, and protection against transnational Islamist extremism. The last of these has in effect replaced the earlier goal of protecting the region against Soviet communism. To put it bluntly, the Arab Spring has complicated America's pursuit of these three goals. The leading oil states are "counter-revolutionary" in their stance toward the Arab uprisings. Israel, which might have applauded the stirrings of democracy among its adversary states, instead finds its security situation jeopardized, and America's unwavering support drains US "soft power" across the region. And while many analysts declared that the Arab uprisings were a defeat for al-Qa'ida and its offspring, it is far too early to conclude that "moderate" Islamism and democracy will carry the day. In fact, in the short run at least, grim economic, social and political conditions may actually provide new openings for extremism.

Given America's heavy dependence on imported oil (notwithstanding recent developments in shale oil extraction), US policymakers, one might surmise, must be looking at the Arab uprisings with concern. For decades, friendly Arab regimes have provided a certain assurance regarding the availability of oil to the global market and the US of sufficient supplies at reasonable prices. But the protest movement has toppled three of them and continues to threaten others. Tunisia lacked oil but served as a trigger for protests elsewhere; Egypt was a relatively small exporter of oil and gas but the Mubarak regime exerted a stabilizing effect on the larger region and was the lynchpin (along with Saudi Arabia) of America's security architecture for the region.

Libya, a major exporter, had been welcomed back like a prodigal son into international society after forsaking its nuclear program in 2003. The seven month long rebellion cut off Libya's exports. That was the "bad news"; however Saudi Arabia and Qatar made up the

shortfall. The "good news" was that American and European oil companies would be welcomed back into the post-Qadhafi Libya. Indeed, some on the left saw the US and NATO operation in support of the rebels as a "grab" for Libyan oil.

But the more serious oil ramifications took place in Bahrain. This tiny kingdom had little oil, but its location was strategic. The prospect of one of the Gulf Cooperation dynasties collapsing in the face of popular protest galvanized Saudi Arabia to intervene militarily to prop up the al-Khalifa monarchy just over the causeway from Saudi Arabia's oil fields. The Saudi rulers also deployed their huge oil revenues to dampen any protest spillover. Washington and Riyadh both feared that Iran would take advantage of the unstable situation. Bahrain revealed the inconsistencies in American policy toward the "Arab Spring"—uprisings in North Africa could be supported, but not in the Gulf "oil patch."

The US position on the Palestinian-Israeli conflict presents another glaring inconsistency for an administration that had repeatedly signaled that it wanted to get on "the right side of history" in the Middle East by supporting popular protest movements. Notwithstanding the centrality of Palestine in Arab and Muslim opinion, the Obama administration proved to be as fully subservient to Israel's right-wing government as had previous US administrations. Having insisted on managing the misnamed "peace process" that began with the Oslo agreement in 1993, the US found itself in the fall of 2011 desperately trying to avoid having to veto the Palestinian Authority's bid for full UN membership, but it did so nonetheless. America found itself once again vilified in Arab public opinion as the Palestinians turned to the international community, and Israel found itself increasingly isolated; dealing with a less friendly new regime in Egypt and losing the support of Turkey. How could the US claim to be supporting the "Arab Spring" when it continued to block Palestinian aspirations?

With the killing of Osama bin Laden by US special forces in Pakistan in 2011 President Obama could perhaps fairly claim to have finally won the "war on terrorism" initiated by President George W. Bush after the September 11, 2001 attacks. Indeed, it appeared that al-Qa'ida and the transnational Islamist radical movement had suffered a severe blow. Not only were the Americans and their allies decimating the leadership and cadres, albeit at a heavy cost, but also the "Arab Spring" had appeared out of nowhere, mobilizing the masses far more effectively than al-Qa'ida ever had, and articulating political demands that conspicuously did not prioritize Islamist ideology.

Yet Washington—with its massive counterterrorism infrastructure—has been quick to insist that the battle is far from over. And Washington might be right. One apprehension is that the new regimes emerging in North Africa might be taken over by Islamist parties which, although they now preach moderation, could take on an extremist (and anti-Western, anti-American) character. Another apprehension is that the sheer messiness of the ongoing uprisings was creating chaos and anarchy in places like Yemen, which could provide sanctuary for Islamist extremist networks to regroup. Yet another and well-founded apprehension is that the inevitable "collateral damage" inflicted in civilians by "drones" (notably in Pakistan, Afghanistan, and Yemen) will continue to fuel anti-American sentiment and provide incentives for further terrorism. And finally there is the apprehension that the stagnation, paralysis and tension in the Palestinian/Arab-Israeli conflict zone will continue to feed anti-American hostility and thus create new security problems for the US.

One could identify at least three points of view about Obama's handling of the Arab Spring. From the left, there were those who faulted the Administration for not being consistently on "the right side of history." They pointed to the initial reluctance to abandon Ben Ali in Tunisia and Mubarak in Egypt, foot-dragging in Yemen (because of Washington's close anti-terrorism cooperation with Ali Abdullah Saleh), pusillanimity in Bahrain (where Saudi pressure and US military relations trumped supporting the protesters), and timidity in Libya and Syria. From the right, there was anger at insufficient support for traditional allies in Tunisia, Egypt, and Bahrain and alarm about the possible rise of anti-American Islamism in the guise of the "Arab Spring." But from the relatively non-partisan "realist center" there were some commentators who registered approval of Obama's "nimble" Middle East policies, citing his nuanced approach to the complexities of the Arab Spring and other regional issues.[210] These commentators would reject the charge that Obama lacked a consistent policy, pointing instead to the need for a pragmatic approach to countries with quite diverse trajectories. Swallowing its ingrained apprehensions about political Islam, Washington supportively engaged the new governments in Tunisia and Egypt, kept its fingers crossed about Yemen, but remained decidedly cautious (apart from rhetoric) over Bahrain and, especially, Syria.

While many Middle East specialists have hoped that the Arab Spring would provide an opportunity for the United States to "get on the right side of history" and thus improve its relations throughout the Middle East, it has been hard for Washington to act consistently and to qualify its idealism in light of certain fixed positions, especially over Palestine and Israel, that have contributed to the decline of the US in the Middle East.

[210] See, for example, F. Gregory Gause, III and Ian S. Lustick, "America and the Regional Powers in a Transforming Middle East," *Middle East Policy* (Summer 2012), http://mepc.org/journal/middle-east-policy-archives/america-and-regional-powers-transforming-middle-east).

The Obama Administration's Middle East Policy: Changing Priorities

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Introduction

The United States' interests in the Middle East are contradictory, causing its policy toward the region to appear confusing both to outside observers and to local actors. On the one hand, the US seeks to promote democracy, and bolster and strengthen regimes that support secular, Western-style law and order. On the other hand, the US has vital national security interests in the Middle East such as ensuring a stable supply of oil to fuel the world's economy, and preventing the recruiting and training of terrorists who may attack US assets and citizens at home and abroad. In most cases its allies in such endeavors are not beacons of democratic rule. This illustrates an important trend in US Middle East policy: when there is a conflict between US interests and its democratic ideals, interests usually win out, providing short-term benefits but long-term difficulties.

For instance, the United States justified the 2003 Iraq invasion as a means to defeat Saddam Hussein and eliminate weapons of mass destruction, though many observers thought that first and foremost, the invasion was to secure oil and then to install democracy. In 1953, the American Central Intelligence Agency and British Secret Intelligence Service supported the removal of the popular Iranian Prime Minister Mohammed Mossadeq and worked to reinstate the Shah after his removal. The long-term results of the American-British disruption of the Iranian local political process may have paved the way for Ayatollah Khomeini and the foundation of the Islamic Republic in 1979.[212]

In the Middle East, acting under a banner of democracy does not always yield results that are in US interests; in fact, many such policies have backfired. Moreover, if the intervening player is first and foremost acting out of its own interests, there is no guarantee that the outcome will necessarily benefit all local parties involved. US interests and ideals can be significantly divergent, which results in an inconsistent US Middle East policy.

It appears that the Obama administration has not pursued a coherent strategy with regard to Middle Eastern diplomatic policy. This can be illustrated by four cases: (1) conflicting messages regarding Palestinian-Israeli relations, e.g. Obama's Cairo speech and the administration's response to the Palestinian Authority's bid for U.N. recognition, (2) the US's claim to "liquidate terrorism" by killing Bin Laden, (3) inconsistent responses to the Arab Spring uprisings, and (4) the US decision to withdraw forces from Iraq despite its regional implications.

Israel and the Palestinians

In his Cairo speech in June 2009, Obama presented himself as the herald of a new era of relations between the superpower and the region by advocating an "even-handed" Middle

[211] The author would like to thank Joyce van de Bildt and Ben Silsbee for their assistance in compiling research material and editing.

[212] See also: Stephen Kinzer, *All the Shah's men: An American coup and the roots of Middle East Terror* (Hoboken, New Jersey: John Wiley and Sons, Inc., 2008)

East policy. He emphasized that while Israel is a valuable regional ally, his administration would be balanced in its efforts to reach out to the Muslim world. While Obama demanded that Hamas "put an end to violence, recognize past agreements" and "recognize Israel's right to exist,"[213] he also emphasized that Israel must acknowledge Palestine's right to exist, and censured Israel regarding its settlements, stating: "The United States does not accept the legitimacy of continued Israeli settlements. This construction violates previous agreements and undermines efforts to achieve peace."[214]

However, the Palestinian U.N. bid for statehood in September 2011 forced the Americans' hand to defend Israel, in contrast to the spirit of the Cairo speech. This was an embarrassment for the US In an article in the *New York Times*, former Saudi intelligence official, Prince Turki al-Faisal, warned that the US would lose the "little credibility it has in the Arab world"[215] if it went through with a veto, even threatening to pursue policies "at odds with those of the United States, including opposing the government of Prime Minister Nuri al-Maliki in Iraq and refusing to open an embassy there."[216] The Americans did not want to stand alone with Israel against the world, but the veto was, ultimately, a non-negotiable issue for them. In the eyes of the Arab and Muslim world, by announcing that it would veto this Palestinian proposal in the Security Council, the US exposed its true stance on the Israeli-Palestinian conflict—unflinching support for Israel. On top of that, Palestine's admission into UNESCO caused the US to temporarily withdraw its funding from the organization (22 million dollars and 70 percent of the UNESCO budget), again opening the US to international criticism.[217]

For the Palestinians and their supporters, the U.N. episode decisively put an end to any illusions about Obama and his administration, holding him in even lower regard than previous, unpopular American presidents. The grudge against Obama was that while he *promised* something different, he has only delivered more of the same, returning to what one Palestinian analyst called the "discourse of the past."[218] One of the consequences of the U.N. development is that it reaffirms for the Palestinians that the US is not a neutral mediator in the Arab-Israeli dispute. It proved to the Palestinians that the longstanding US-Israeli axis is still valid, in spite of all the promises that came from Washington during the Obama presidency.

As for the wider region, the perception of the US as the enabler of Israeli policies contributes significantly to low US prestige and approval ratings in the Middle East. The results in a survey of July 2011 demonstrated that since the Cairo speech, favorable ratings of

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[213] Barack Hussein Obama, "Remarks by the President on a New Beginning," Cairo University, Cairo, Egypt (June 4, 2009), http://www.whitehouse.gov/the-press-office/remarks-president-cairo-university-6-04-09

[214] Ibid.

[215] Turki al-Faisal, "Veto a State, Lose an Ally," *The New York Times*, September 11, 2012, http://www.nytimes.com/2011/09/12/opinion/veto-a-state-lose-an-ally.html?_r=1.

[216] Ibid.

[217] Stephen Hill, "Palestine Vote: America the Loser as It Withdraws Funding from UNESCO," *The Conversation*, November 4, 2011, http://theconversation.edu.au/palestine-vote-america-the-loser-as-it-withdraws-funding-from-unesco-4152.

[218] "Palestinian Analyst Sa'id Erekat, Former Spokesman of U.N. Delegation to Iraq, Says Palestinians 'Disappointed' by President Obama's Speech to U.N. General Assembly," interview on *Al-Arabiya TV* (21 September 2011) http://www.memri.org/report/en/0/0/0/0/0/0/5670.htm.

the United States had fallen by nine percent or more in Morocco, Egypt, Jordan, Saudi Arabia, and the United Arab Emirates (UAE). In Egypt in particular, approval ratings had plunged as much as 30 percent.[219] As the most important reason for this significant decrease in popularity, the report cited the US failure to meet expectations raised by Obama's election and the pledges he made in Cairo. Respondents expressed disappointment with Obama's failure to engage the Muslim world, and his mishandling of the Palestinian issue.[220] These were exactly the issues of which the US had declared it would greatly invest in.

The Assassination of Osama Bin Laden

The May 2011 assassination of Osama Bin Laden was widely celebrated. To al-Qa'ida, Bin Laden was a messianic figure, a source for inspiration, and the glue that held the organization together. It is questionable, however, to what extent his death dealt a real blow to al-Qa'ida's ideological movement. Despite the assassination of its leader, al-Qa'ida's *raison d'être* is still highly resilient. Its denunciation of the Western world is a reflection of their broader, ongoing disappointment and frustration with the political and social situation in the Middle East and beyond—and with their powerlessness to change that situation.

Al-Qai'da has long seen the multi-state system of the Middle East as a byproduct of western colonialism and part of a western conspiracy to dominate the Middle East, beginning with a British-French conspiracy culminating in the Sykes-Picot agreement of 1916. The basic diagnosis of al-Qai'da is that Western powers employed divide-and-rule tactics to turn the Islamic world into a group of nation-states modeled on Western ideas of statehood. The kings and presidents of Arab states who were installed by the West were put there for their receptivity to Western interests and demands.

Thus, al-Qa'ida considers many rulers of Middle Eastern states as "western agents."[221] Hence, in order to tackle the remote enemy of the West, al-Qa'ida first seeks to topple the Western proxies in their midst. Al-Qa'ida's tactics thus attempt to defeat "illegitimate" Middle Eastern leaders, such as the Saudis and the other monarchs, which will lead to the diminishing of Western influence in the region.

Al-Qa'ida is a concept, morphed into a movement which gets its inspiration from a worldview framed by the ongoing conflict between Islamic and Western civilizations. As long as the concept of a "clash of civilizations" is relevant, al-Qa'ida and all those who share its ideology will persist in their endeavors. Al-Qa'ida is as much a political and religious ideology as it is an active organization. It consists of activists who hold an eschatological view: they believe that time works in their favor in accordance with the concept of *Sabr Ta'arikhi*: historical patience[222]. The conviction that time is on their side leads them to believe

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[219] Jim Lobe, "US standing plunges across the Arab world," *Al* Jazeera, July 14, 2011, http://www.aljazeera.com/indepth/features/2011/07/2011714104413787827.html.

[220] Ibid.

[221] MEMRI Special Dispatch No. 4131, "New Releases from Al-Qaeda's Media Wing Al-Sahab Celebrating 10th Anniversary of 9/11: Al-Zawahiri in Audio Message: 'Arab Spring' Will Be 'American Winter;'" "Bin Laden in Previously Unreleased Video Message: Major U.S. Corporations Are the Real World Leaders," September 13, 2011.

[222] For further reading on the ideological usage of this term, refer to Barbara H. E. Zollner, *The Muslim*

that eventually they will prevail. Thus, although the killing of Osama Bin Laden did affect al-Qa'ida, the movement will remain relevant as long as the main essence of its rationale, the Western hegemony in the region, exists.

The Arab Spring

The events of the "Arab Spring" might have created the impression that the Middle East is on its way to democracy, and that movements such as al-Qa'ida will become less popular. The Arab Spring movements were rooted in the demand for jobs and a better standard of living, rather than ideological convictions. Moreover, in the Arab Spring, it was a burgeoning civil society acting as the agent of change, showing that rulers can be toppled without using the violent means that al-Qa'ida espouses.

Although encouraged by the outside world for its democratic features, it remains to be seen whether the Arab Spring will have a favorable outcome for the US and other Western players. In the aftermath of the revolutions, political developments are giving rise to the formation of Middle Eastern governments that will be less attracted by US influence and will not necessarily act in US interests. In other instances, the Arab Spring has provided radical, transnational movements such as al-Qa'ida with opportunities to further expand their influence.

First of all, the final consequences of the Arab Spring remain unknown. In the post-revolutionary phase, the most dogmatic or organized forces are coming to the fore in these states. Parties such as the Muslim Brotherhood or other Islamist organizations are the most adept and equipped to capitalize on the political turmoil rampant in these states. Such a trend can be witnessed in post-revolutionary Egypt. In the final stages of the elections to the Lower House of Parliament it is the Islamist parties, namely the Muslim Brotherhood's Freedom and Justice Party and the ultraconservative Al-Nur Party, that have emerged as the main victors of Egypt's parliamentary elections[223]. Also the ascendancy of the once banned Islamist Ennahda Party in Tunisia[224] and the Justice and Development Party in Morocco[225] proves that Islamists will play an influential role in their respective states. It seems that in both the Arab streets and the Arab parliaments, Islamist parties are in a much stronger position to advance their political agendas than they have ever been before.

This is the flip side of the promotion of democracy in the Arab states. In such

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Brotherhood: Hasan al-Hudaybi and Ideology (New York: Routledge, 2009), 129-146. The term is also being used by secularists: see for example Basim al-Tuwaysi, "Fi Intithat al-Wahi al-Siyasi," *Al-Ghad*, January 8, 2012.

[223] In the elections for the lower house of Egyptian parliament, The Freedom and Justice Party (FJP) representing Egypt's Muslim Brotherhood, won 47% of all seats. The Salafi al-Nur party came second with 24% of the votes. "Muslim Brotherhood tops Egyptian poll result", *Al Jazeera*, January 22, 2012, http://www.aljazeera.com/news/middleeast/2012/01/201212112595858026 4.html.

[224] As final election results were announced in Tunisia on November 14, 2011, it turned out that the Islamist party Al-Nahda had won 89 of the 217 seats in Parliament and henceforth was declared the winner of the post-Arab Spring elections. "Final Tunisian election results announced", *Al Jazeera*, November 14, 2011, http://www.aljazeera.com/news/africa/2011/11/201111141714209071 68.html.

[225] The Moroccan Islamist Justice and Development Party won the majority of the seats in Moroccan parliamentary elections of November, 2011. The PJD took 107 out of 395 seats, giving it the right to lead a government. "Islamist PJD party wins Moroccan poll", *BBC News*, November 27, 2011, http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-africa-15902703.

circumstances, the US will have to either learn to engage Islamist movements or risk diminishing its influence in the region. If the US aspires to maintain its resilience in a changing Middle East, it will have to apply a new *modus operandi*. As relations and diplomatic agreements with Arab countries become much more complex, the US might have to work through secret channels of communication, instead of pursuing an overt policy.

Now that the Muslim Brotherhood has obtained democratic legitimacy in Egypt, the US can no longer work against it, but should learn how to work *with* such movements. Therefore, the US must develop a more sophisticated strategy, using a plethora of tools of engagement. For example, on January 1, 2012, the deputy leader of the Muslim Brotherhood, Rashid al-Bayyumi, declared there was no guarantee that Egypt's peace treaty with Israel would be preserved, stating that the organization would not recognize Israel under any circumstances.[226] Subsequent statements by other Muslim Brotherhood leaders expressed a different attitude towards Israel. Yet, in order to ensure the preservation of the peace treaty between Egypt and Israel, the US may decide to condition its financial assistance to Egypt—but such a deal would be a tacit agreement. This is an example of what should be expected from US policy in the changing Middle East. In order to be successful in this policy, it is imperative that the US knows how to act in a diversified political landscape, in Egypt in particular.

A negative side effect of the Arab Spring is the continuing instability in the countries affected by the revolutions. Economically, instability in the Gulf's oil-producing states affects energy markets. Indeed, the Arab Spring has driven up oil prices over the past months.[227] Moreover, the upheavals have provided opportunities for Islamic extremists to gain ground. Entities such as al-Qa'ida, and the Islamic Republic of Iran, have interpreted the instability and toppling of dictators "installed by the West" as something in line with their own vision for the Middle East's future. At the same time, as countries descend into chaos and the central government is weakened, opportunities arise for radical movements to establish themselves and fill the vacuum, as is exemplified by the situation in Yemen. States such as Afghanistan, Iraq and Somalia[228]—where the ethno-religious complexities threaten to crush the state—have become an attractive area of activity for al-Qa'ida. Yemen is seen as a newcomer to the "failed states club."[229]

A series of challenges continue to face Yemen at the beginning of the 21st century. A faltering economy, a complicated constellation of relations between the state and the tribes, the ascendance of radical Islamic movements, a Shi'ite rebellion in the north, and a secessionist movement in the south all threaten the stability of the united state of Yemen and

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[226] Ahmed Raahim, "Ikhwān Misr yarfadun al-I'itirāf bi-Isra-il," *Dar Al-Hayat*, January 1, 2012, http://www.daralhayat.com/internationalarticle/345591.

[227] Javier Blas, "Arab Spring drives up Middle East break-even oil price," *Financial Times*, November 2, 2011,) http://www.ft.com/cms/s/0/713b9568-0527-11e1-b8f4-00144feabdc0.html#axzz1j9TUM9GZ.

[228] Chen Kercher, "Same Agenda, Different Results: The UN Interventions in Cambodia and Somalia after the Cold War," in *International Intervention in Local Conflicts*, Uzi Rabi, ed. (London: I.B. Tauris Publishers, 2012), 20-33; and Martin Weinbaum, "Lost Faith, Forfeited Trust: Afghan Responses to post-9/11 International Intervention in State-Building and Insurgency," in *International Intervention in Local Conflicts*, 222-240.

[229] The discussion on Yemen as a failed state above is extracted from Uzi Rabi, *Yemen: The Anatomy of a Failed State*, (Lynne Rienner Press) (forthcoming).

pose fundamental questions regarding the state's ability to survive. Seen as a failed state in the making, radical movements such as al-Qa'ida view Yemen as an area ripe for its activities. For many of the Afghani veterans,[230] Yemen has become a hub for rejuvenating their influence after setbacks suffered in Iraq and other parts of the region.

In line with its program, which strives to undermine nation states, especially among societies that are divided along tribal, ethnic or territorial characteristics, al-Qa'ida views a dismembered Yemen as a tool to strengthen its presence and its logistical system. The strengthened presence of al-Qa'ida on the Arabian Peninsula has encouraged Saudi Arabia to foster an assertive policy that supports Ali Abdullah Saleh and strives to uproot al-Qa'ida's presence in the region. The chief editor of the Saudi paper, *al-Sharq al-Awsat*, Tariq al-Humayd, explained, "Today, support of Yemen's leadership became a necessity and is not just a bargaining chip or an issue that could be neglected or postponed. The danger is much graver than what some of people think and the worst-case scenario could happen. If and when it happens, it would influence not only Yemen and Saudi Arabia, but the whole region."[231]

No-man's-lands can become a safe haven for extremist movements like al-Qa'ida. The Arab Spring catalyzes such processes and is used by al-Qa'ida in that regard. The US should formulate a coherent strategy in order to deal with failed states in the making. At the same time, the US should learn how to deal with a new Middle Eastern reality wherein Islamist governments are coming to power through democratic means.

The US Withdrawal from Iraq

In the aftermath of the US troop withdrawal, the future of Iraq remains highly uncertain. Several significant forces are threatening its stability, some of which are direct or indirect consequences of US policy. Iraq faces heightened sectarian tensions, threats to the unitary state and difficulties in the centralization of power, and Kurdish-Arab tensions over international gas and oil contracts and disputed territories.

Since the 2010 elections, Iraq has been plagued by political stasis. This is partially a result of US pressure on Prime Minister Nuri al-Maliki to forge a broad coalition that represents all sectarian forces that would improve his ability to govern. Nevertheless, Maliki has grown increasingly authoritarian, trying to curtail his opponents' political activities and pushing through further de-Baathification measures.[232] The political deadlock and Maliki's authoritarianism have exacerbated sectarian tensions. At the same time, the state's security apparatus—including its various federal, military, and local police forces—suffers from internal sectarian fractionalization.[233] Those who benefit from this polarization are different armed groups, who have appeared publicly in the provinces of Mosul, Anbar, and

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[230] Richard Spencer, "Al-Qaeda veterans are flooding into Yemen"' *Telegraph*, January 10, 2010, http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/worldnews/middleeast/yemen/6962969/Al-Qaeda-veterans-are-flooding-into-Yemen.html.

[231] Tareq al-Humayd, "al-Yaman . . . Shukran lil-Qa'ida!" *as-Sharq al-Awsat*, May 14, 2009.

[232] "Iraq risks slipping into authoritarianism," *Reuters*, January 22, 2012, http://ca.reuters.com/article/topNews/idCATRE80L0BV20120122.

[233] "Makhāwif min 'awdat al-jama'at al-musallaha...," *Ankawa*, December 29, 2011, http://www.ankawa.com/forum/index.php?topic=551578.

Diyala.[234]

The Americans have willingly opted for a change in the political equation in Iraq by supporting a Shi'ite Prime Minister. As a result, the Sunni minority, which has historically ruled Iraq, was marginalized. No wonder, that immediately after the US withdrawal, sectarian tensions have led to the escalation of violence. Iraq is still not a unified nation, or even less so than it was before the US invasion. After eight and half years of American troops, Iraqi politics is still guided by primordial identities, Sunni-Shi'a rivalry and Kurdish-Arab tensions.

Towards the end of 2011, a number of Iraqi provinces voiced demands for more autonomy from the government. These are largely Sunni Arab provinces that seek to distance themselves from Iraq's Shiite leaders. The provinces calling for autonomy complained of rampant corruption, the failure to implement and invest in infrastructure and reconstruction projects in the periphery, and general 'sidelining.'[235] These calls are threatening to partition Iraq and upend the unitary state.

In addition, sectarian violence also continues to threaten the viability of the central government. Sectarian tensions led to violence during the last months of American presence in Iraq and have increased after their withdrawal. The latest bombings in Baghdad and its surroundings are nearly all directed at Shi'ite areas. In January 2012, more than fifty Shi'ite pilgrims were killed by a deadly bomb blast near the city of Basra.[236]

Increasing Arab-Kurdish tensions are another byproduct of the US withdrawal. Arab-Kurdish tensions are at a high because of the failure to reach an agreement that regulates jurisdiction of new oil and gas contracts. In early 2012, the Kurdish Regional Government (KRG) illegally exported 75,000 barrels of oil per day. In December 2011, Exxon Mobil announced a new contract with the KRG for exploration, heightening the crisis between the KRG and Baghdad, later causing Exxon Mobil to withdraw the offer.[237] In addition to the problem of dividing oil wealth, there are major issues concerning disputed territories and the reversal of Saddam's Arabization policies. A violent standoff occurred between the Kurdish guerilla fighters, the *Peshmerga*, and Iraqi forces when Americans handed over a base in Kirkuk to the Iraqi army.[238] This is another example of how foreign involvement can intensify existing tensions between different ethnicities in a conflict-ridden country such as Iraq.

Iran has interpreted the US withdrawal from Iraq as a green light for expanding its sphere of influence in the Middle East. This has led to intensified Sunni-Shi'a tensions in the region and exacerbated fears among the Arab Gulf States, particularly Saudi Arabia, that Iran will

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[234] Ibid.
[235] Dahr Jamail, "Iraq: A country in shambles", *Al* Jazeera, January 9, 2012, http://www.aljazeera.com/indepth/features/2012/01/20121411519385348.html.
[236] Nabil Al-Jurani, "Iraq bombing kills at least 53 pilgrims," *TIME*, January 14, 2012, http://www.time.com/time/world/article/0,8599,2104503,00.html.
[237] Sinan Salaheddin, "Exxon Mobil deal hikes tension in northern Iraq," *The Associated Press*, December 28, 2011.
[238] Sam Dagher, "Standoff at U.S. Airbase in Iraq," *The Wall Street Journal*, November 18, 2011, http://online.wsj.com/article/SB10001424052970204517204577044441272427070.html

use Iraq as a platform to expand its regional influence.[239] The Saudis have accused the Americans of abandoning Iraq to Iranian hegemony. Therefore, the Unites States finalized a $30 billion arms deal with the Saudis in December 2011, in an attempt to appease and boost mutual relations with the kingdom, and to bolster security in the Gulf in light of Iranian regional ambitions.[240]

Perceptions of the US in the Region

Current Middle Eastern perceptions of the US are a stark contrast to the perception of the superpower in the region during the immediate aftermath of the 1991 Gulf War. In 1991 the US was seen as a military juggernaut that built a coalition of regional partners that easily defeated Saddam and protected the sovereignty of an Arab state. Although this perception faded somewhat in the aftermath of Saddam's revenge against the Kurds and Shi'a, the perception of the United States' strength remained. In the aftermath of the US invasions of Iraq and Afghanistan, the perception of the US military's indomitable strength has been eroded. The absence of weapons of mass destruction in Iraq, the number of Iraqi casualties during the US occupation, and the US's inability to reconstruct Iraq has hurt American prestige and its integrity. Approval ratings of President Barack Obama have fallen to just five percent in Egypt and ten percent in Jordan.[241]

The Arab Spring has also dealt a blow to the perception of the US as superpower in the region. For the younger Arab populations in particular, "US association with discredited regimes has often been construed as support for corruption and the misuse of power."[242] Moreover, after witnessing how the US dealt with long-term allies such as former Egyptian President Hosni Mubarak and Tunisian President Zine el-Abidine Ben Ali, US allies in the Gulf feel that the US may be a less reliable ally than they once believed. These rulers followed a formula of investing in relations with protective external powers such as the US, expecting that this would make them better able to deal with internal threats.

Yet, this strategy proved to be a failure. New governments will rule according to a totally different formula, keeping an ear to the street and engaging in populist politics. They will be very cautious about not being branded as agents of the West. Moreover, the US withdrawal from Iraq and the weakness of Egypt may have created the impression among the region's surviving monarchies that they must take steps independent of US military power to strengthen their own military position, and that they must restore the balance of power between themselves and the Iranian-led axis (Iran-Lebanon-Syria). This will create a complex picture for the US with regard to diplomacy and security.

The current outlook from Washington is not particularly encouraging. Iranian influence is

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[239] Yoel Guzansky and Gallia Lindenstrauss, "Mission unaccomplished," *Jerusalem Post*, January 22, 2012, http://www.jpost.com/Opinion/Op-EdContributors/Article.aspx?id=254695.

[240] Joby Warrick and Jason Ukman, "U.S. touts Saudi Arabia fighter jet deal as a foreign policy, security and economy boon,"*The Washington Post*, December 30, 2011, http://www.washingtonpost.com/world/national-security/massive-us-saudi-arms-deal-seen-as-a-foreign-policy-security-and-economic-boon/2011/12/29/gIQATNWQPP_story.html.

[241] Alan Keiswetter, ed., "The Arab Spring: Implications for US Policy and Interests,"*Middle East Institute* (November 2011): 15.

[242] Ibid

growing throughout the Persian Gulf and beyond, especially following the withdrawal of US forces from Iraq. Egypt's commitment to its peace treaty with Israel is uncertain. Syria is increasingly sliding into total chaos. Jordan's stability is in question. Pakistan, a Muslim country with more than one hundred nuclear warheads, is confronting an uncertain future, and its strategic partnership with the US has significantly deteriorated over the last few years. Moreover, ahead of the American troop withdrawal, violence in Iraq started to rise, with more targeted assassinations of—or assassination attempts on—higher profile religious and political figures.

One could wonder whether the Obama administration has a Middle East policy strategy at all. Critics accuse his administration's policy approach of being reactive rather than proactive. Those who believe in Obama's policy in the Middle East highlight the alleged success of his "leading from behind" approach in Libya, where the US offered more verbal support than on-the-ground leadership. But how effective would this "leading from behind" policy be while the "Arab Spring" potentially devolves into the "Islamic winter"?

From this question a number of other queries arise: Is the US aptly using its influence to shape events in the states in transition, such as Tunisia and Egypt? And what is the US strategy toward failed states like Yemen and Libya, two countries clearly on the brink of political catastrophe, and Syria, which may further degenerate into a failed state? What is the US strategy for containing Iran and preventing it from establishing its influence beyond its borders in places like Yemen, Iraq and the Gulf? What can be done to prevent a nuclear Iran? In light of the Arab Spring and the deterioration of Shi'a-Sunni tensions and Arab-Persian ties, how does the United States need to realign its policy and who will its future allies be?

Just as states such as Iran need to be checked, traditional allies of the US should be encouraged. The overthrow of Hosni Mubarak and Zine el-Abidine Ben Ali did not constitute a loss in the annals of democracy, but under Mubarak, Egypt was a pillar of stability and a reliable—if not always a warm—partner to the US Until now, US diplomatic policy in the Middle East has been based on the notion that supporting autocratic rulers who were willing to guarantee US interests and stability was a necessary evil. But the US should know that the Mubaraks, Qadhafis and Ben Alis are not coming back. That era is gone. The period of supporting autocrats as long as they guaranteed stability has ended. Yet promoting democracy in the region could empower political actors with an Islamist agenda, which we already saw in the 2006 Palestinian elections in which Hamas won the majority of the vote, and recently in the Egyptian elections. The US will need to engage with these political movements in order to remain resilient in a changing Middle East.

A new political reality in the Middle East demands a new American approach. The US must promote the idea that stability should be linked to the legitimacy of a government rather than to the degree of its repressiveness. At the same time, it is imperative that the US approaches the democratization of the various Middle Eastern countries with caution, and on a case-by-case basis.

Epilogue: Democratic Transitions in the Arab World

Clement Henry, Jang Ji-Hyang, and Peter Lee

This book has sought to identify some of the factors that have thus far shaped this multi-faceted phenomenon that is popularly called the "Arab Spring." While outlining the unique circumstances and diverse trajectories that each of the uprisings has taken, the book's contributors have also sought to highlight common elements and processes that connect these events together. In particular, four key variables appear to have been critical to determining the relative success or failure of individual uprisings: (1) the strength of state traditions; (2) the level of institutional experience with pluralism; (3) oil rents; and (4) the configurations of political patronage. In this vein, this epilogue offers insights that allow us to begin to appreciate where the uprisings have come from in each country and tentatively predict how these processes are likely to develop into the near future.

Connecting the Dots

No one expected that the death of one man—a vegetable vendor in a marginal little Tunisian town—would forever change the Arab world. Decades of corruption, repression, and hopelessness were spectacularly shattered as millions of people across the Middle East and North Africa rose up to challenge the entrenched status quo. No one recognized how brittle authoritarian control had become in places such as Tunisia, Egypt, Libya, or Yemen. The swift exit of Tunisia's Zine Ben Ali and Egypt's Hosni Mubarak raised hopes that a region-wide democratic transformation had been set in motion. Indeed, the uprisings are testament to the quintessential truth that unexpected yet dramatic change is possible wherever repression and persecution deny people their dignity.

At the same time, the initial hope that the uprisings would precipitate a wholesale break with the legacies of the past has largely proven premature. Behind the shared images of mass uprisings, notably of angry youth demanding dignity in public spaces ranging from Tahrir Square, Cairo, to Pearl Square, Manama, there were significant differences in the fields of political contestation. As many of the contributors to this book point out, despite protests occurring in nearly every country in the region, there were only serious, lasting mass protests in six countries (Tunisia, Egypt, Yemen, Libya, Bahrain, and Syria). And of these, only Tunisia and Egypt's protests succeeded in removing their rulers relatively quickly.

Meanwhile, Yemen's transition appears to have become stuck in political paralysis. Libya descended into a violent civil war that left tens of thousands dead before NATO intervention backed by Gulf oil money finally helped the rebels overthrow Muammar Qadhafi. In contrast, Saudi intervention in Bahrain ensured that the ruling monarchy remains unlikely to contemplate meaningful reforms anytime soon. In Syria, Bashar al-Assad has made it abundantly clear that he intends to fight to the bitter end in a bloody, sectarian conflict that appears far from over.

Elsewhere across the region, regimes have resorted to a range of tactics in response to the protests. Some, such as Jordan and Morocco, have offered de-jure constitutional reforms while replacing unpopular administrations to appease their populations. Meanwhile, the oil-

rich Gulf monarchies have tried to buy their way out of the protests with cash incentives and increased spending on public projects and massive social welfare. Yet, regardless of the method, meaningful democratic transitions have largely stalled in much of the region to the east of Suez. Indeed, much of the region appears to remain a long way from achieving real democratic change.

Tunisia: First Mover Success

As the first of the Arab uprisings, Tunisia continues to be the most likely candidate to become a qualified democracy. Its internal dynamics and structures were conducive to a peaceful and relatively smooth transition in the wake of Ben Ali's departure. The strength of Tunisia's state institutions coupled with a strong sense of national identity meant that nearly all of its citizens had a powerful commitment to the transition process while facing less resistance from the old order. For instance, Eva Bellin's analysis correctly predicted that the neutrality and strength of Tunisia's military, civil service, and judiciary would help it avoid the sort of institutional paralysis that has afflicted its neighbors. Furthermore, the long history of negotiation and consensus-building between the country's diverse opposition groups, especially between the Islamist Ennahda party and secularists, meant that once elections were held, political cooperation already had an established foundation to develop on.

Similarly, Clement Henry's study of the role of the private sector and banking systems in the region illuminates why Tunisia's domestic economic structure facilitated the uprising. His contention has been borne out that the bully states of Tunisia and Egypt—strong states with diversified banking systems and high credit allocation to the private sector that enables a vibrant civil society—were capable of resisting regime pressure. In particular, the fact that corrupt patronage networks were highly centralized among Ben Ali and a small coterie of his inner circle meant that their removal was a relatively easy process compared to other states where vested economic interests and corrupt networks were often more deeply embedded in the system.

The fact that the vast majority of Tunisians had no connection to Ben Ali's corrupt patronage system further allowed a wide variety of civil society actors to emerge during the uprisings, and not simply a small oppressed minority. Mohamed Kerrou's detailing of some of these influential new social groups, including cyber-activists, unemployed graduates, unions, and lawyers, highlights both the changing nature of political contestation and the changing nature of political demands. These groups have demonstrated that they are not simply self-interested actors, but rather that they are seeking to foster a new form of politics and social engagement in Tunisia. Their transnational focus, refusal to organize into hierarchical organizations, as well as their emphasis on collaboration and cooperation continue to have a powerful impact as Tunisian's prepare a new Constituent Assembly in October 2012.

Accounting for these trends, the primary focus of the newly elected Ennahda party has been to work with a broad coalition of Islamists and secularists to promote economic growth and particularly job growth across the country. Ennahda's popularity has nonetheless been based on the fulfillment of tangible socio-economic improvements, and not strictly a religious appeal. Thus, even as the more fundamentalist strains of political Islam, led by the Salafists,

seem set on pushing for more conservative laws, Ennahda's broader appeal should help mitigate any sudden shifts towards hard-line policies. While dissatisfaction with Ennahda is growing, especially in the peripheral, neglected regions of the country that launched the January 14 Revolution, Tunisia's transition remains on schedule. The Constituent Assembly completed with a new draft constitution for public viewing in August 2012 pending agreement on dates for a referendum and new elections. Tunisia's relative success represents something of an exception vis-à-vis the rest of the region.

Egypt: the Brothers and the Soldiers

On the surface, Egypt benefitted from many of the same structural dynamics that made Tunisia's uprising so successful. Indeed, it actually took less time for Mubarak to leave office than it took Ben Ali. The Egyptian military's key role in protecting the protestors in Tahrir Square and the moderate position of the Muslim Brotherhood early on were cause for great optimism. Nevertheless, over the past year, Egypt's revolution became lost in a complex web of civil-military tensions. Mohamed Morsi, the Brotherhood's second-choice candidate, finally defeated Ahmed Shafiq, a former prime minister and air force commander, in the June 2012 presidential elections, but the choice between these two finalists left the country's revolutionary forces divided and frustrated. The long, drawn-out process revealed new alignments in Egyptian politics—an entrenched military represented by the Supreme Council of the Armed Forces (SCAF), unable or unwilling to relinquish influence over the state's key institutions, pitted against a resurgent Muslim Brotherhood that had not initially supported the January 25 Revolution. It nonetheless managed for a time to gain popular control of both the parliament and the presidency only to have the former dissolved and the latter constitutionally constrained.

This cleavage continues to have enormous implications for the future of Egypt. As Bellin notes, "Without some promise of amnesty, the military is hardly provided with sufficient incentive to cede power." The Egyptian military's extensive involvement in the private sector—where it is thought to control over anywhere from five or ten to forty percent of the economy[243]—ensures that it is unlikely to voluntarily relinquish its involvement in the country's domestic affairs any time soon. In this context, President Morsi's announcement of Field Marshal Mohamed Tantawi's retirement on August 12, 2012 caught many observers by surprise. As the defense minister and the chairman of the SCAF, Tantawi had been responsible to managing the handover of power to the new president whilst preserving key military interests. Indeed, only time will tell whether his retirement was a risky presidential putsch or part of a bigger arrangement between a rejuvenated military and the new administration. Morsi's self-proclaimed assumption of legislative and executive powers also remains in constitutional limbo.

The Egyptian public also remains suspicious of the Brotherhood's ultimate motives and whether it has truly moved beyond its history as a radical counter-regime organization bent on implementing an exclusivist political-religious system. Despite such fears, however, the

[243] The data for any rigorous assessment are unavailable, leading to wild exaggerations.

Brotherhood has succeeded in convincing many people that it is better placed to represent their interests than the remnants of the old regime. Arguably, as Fawaz Gerges suggests in this book, this has been a deliberate strategy. By seeking to appear cooperative and inclusive, the Brotherhood has been trying to avoid the Algerian example, whereby "if you go for broke, you risk antagonizing the military and provoking a response."

Successfully navigating civil-military relations is thus likely to remain the principle challenge facing Egyptian politics in the near future. In fact, there exists a strong possibility that the Brotherhood will become increasingly moderate as it incorporates itself into the mainstream political process in Egypt. As we have seen in Turkey, the responsibilities and compromises that are required to govern a country often have a strong moderating influence on Islamist parties. Kemal Kirisci's discussion of the "Turkish model" and President Tayyip Recep Erdogan's Justice and Development Party (AKP) suggests that it will continue to attract interest among the region's Islamist parties, particularly owing to the "association effect" stemming from the immense personal popularity of Erdogan.

The rise of the Egyptian Brotherhood will also necessitate attracting a wider base of supportive domestic actors and sponsors. Jang Ji-Hyang's analysis of the role of Islamic capital will have major implications for what kind of political system the Brotherhood and other Islamist parties will operate in. As Islamic capital is further developed it will increase the likelihood that Islamist politicians will become more moderate, institutionalized, and, eventually, more democratic. Admittedly, unlike their Turkish counterparts, Egyptian Islamic finance is less export-oriented and thus less dependent on economic liberalization and democratic deepening. For instance, the leader of the Egyptian Muslim Brotherhood, Khairat al-Shater, has focused more on domestic retail sales services as a source of funding over the export focus of Turkey's Islamists. Nevertheless, much of the Brotherhood's patronage networks are dependent on business ties that will have a direct interest in ensuring political stability and stable economic growth in the coming years.

Possibly, too, the new president will outgrow his Brotherhood origins. A California (USC) trained electrical engineer by profession, Morsi is the most educated head of state ever to rule Egypt. As he becomes a statesman he may balance the predominantly Islamist forces in civilian government and parliament with a more professionalized armed forces. For all of its problems, Egypt continues to move slowly towards democratic, non-military rule.

The Bunker States: Finding Hope in the Madness

More than anywhere else, the Arab uprisings have most profoundly affected the "bunker states." As Henry describes them, these were weak states (however vicious) lacking a substantive civil society and where "there are no principals capable of representing critical constituencies other than primary groups of family, clan, tribe, sect, or clientele." And, as Linz and Stepan observe, "Without a state, no modern democracy is possible."[244] The book's discussion of Libya and Syria in particular—the states that experienced a near-total breakdown of the state and nation in the midst of violent civil conflict—offers prescient

[244] Juan J. Linz and Alfred Stepan, *Problems of Democratic Transition and Consolidation* (Johns Hopkins University Press, 1996), 17.

insights into understanding what made these cases so bloody and what it will take to make real progress in the future.

On Libya, Diederik Vandewalle's checklist for assessing progress in the post-Qadhafi transition period makes for a cautiously optimistic forecast.[245] Certainly, the country continues to struggle with the legacies of the civil war. The widespread proliferation of arms during the civil war and the refusal of some militias to disarm remains cause for concern. However, many of Vandewalle's criteria have been slowly, but surely, showing signs of improvement. For instance, the country's first free parliamentary elections in July saw the election of the liberal National Forces Alliance led by Mahmoud Jibril. More importantly, the Transitional National Council (TNC)—the opposition movement which had governed Libya since the fall of Qadhafi in 2011—handed over power to the newly-elected General National Congress in July, which subsequently elected Mohammed El Megarif, a leading anti-Qadhafi figure, as interim president.

Similarly, forecasts for Libya's economy suggest that the recovery from the civil war has been far better than previously thought. For example, the country's all-important oil sector, which accounts for over 95 percent of its total export earnings, has rapidly returned to pre-civil war export levels.[246] But as Vandewalle makes clear in his discussion, the central challenge of state-building in Libya will not be an easy task. Despite the important gains made in the past year, the historical absence of political traditions, independent institutions, and limited public involvement in politics mean that Libya will not be out of the woods for some time to come.

Syria

The uprising that will define 2012 and that has emerged as the pivotal case for determining the future of the Arab uprisings has been Syria. One of the main points that Bassam Haddad's chapter emphasizes is that there are a greater variety of cleavages in Syria than widely assumed, and that many of these socio-economic alignments have favored the Assad regime's survival. Indeed, until very recently, the major population centers of Aleppo and Damascus had remained largely stable despite widespread violence and conflict across much of the countryside. This "silent majority" of Syrians—and not only Alawis, but also many religious minorities and middle-class Sunnis—continued to back the regime long into the uprising, believing that the status quo, while not ideal, was preferable to the perceived anarchy and economic ruin that would follow a collapse of the regime and state.

Trying to discern how the conflict will end, it remains possible that the Free Syrian Army (FSA) and the opposition will eventually emerge victorious—most likely through some combination of the FSA capturing critical assets in Damascus and Aleppo, the defection of key elements of the Syrian military, and mounting external pressure. While an international intervention similar to Libya remains unlikely for the time being as the United States and its

[245] His criteria include: a monopoly on violence, equitable economic development, institutional accountability, political reconciliation, a common political community, a sense of equity, and a transparent political leadership.
[246] Organization of the Petroleum Exporting Countries, "Monthly Oil Market Report," August 2012:45-46, http://www.opec.org/opec_web/static_files_project/media/downloads/publications/MOMR_August_2012_.pdf (accessed 14 August, 2012).

allies face staunch Russian, Chinese, and Iranian opposition, outside support for the FSA could nevertheless succeed in removing Assad from power. Particularly over the past few months, Turkey, Saudi Arabia, and Qatar have dramatically accelerated their support for the rebels in the form of direct financing, covert arms supplies, and the provision of safe havens along key border areas.

But if the FSA were to emerge victorious, what should we expect to see in a new post-Assad Syria? As this book has tried to show, the bunker states share a number of features that have hampered their development vis-à-vis the rest of the region. Most importantly, the weakness of state institutions, the absence of a strong civil society, and a limited sense of national identity mean that many Syrians are likely to prioritize localized allegiances and bonds as the central authority crumbles. While the desire to avenge past crimes and start anew will be especially strong in a post-Assad Syria, a complete de-Baathification of the political system could be catastrophic. As in Iraq after 2003, it could encourage mobilization along sectarian lines, possibly leading to a territorial fragmentation of the country.

The Monarchies: Leading the Counter-Revolution

In contrast to Tunisia, Egypt, and the bunker states, the region's monarchies have all survived the political turbulence of the uprisings. The more progressive kingdoms of Morocco and Jordan implemented cabinet reshuffles while the conservative, oil-rich Gulf monarchies embarked on spending sprees backed by security crackdowns to end their uprisings. Indeed, these diverse responses have collectively shown that, as a political system, monarchies appear better-equipped to manage public dissent and protest than republican forms of government.

In particular, Morocco combines extensive experience with political pluralism and a relatively strong state based on a dynasty established in the seventeenth century and a modern administrative apparatus implanted by the French Protectorate in the first half of the twentieth century. The Gulf monarchies relied more on patronage and oil rents to weather the Arab Spring than on any skillful manipulation of a multi-party system.

In Morocco, King Mohammed VI moved quickly to enact political reforms in the early stages of the protests. A new constitution placed some limits to royal rule. Following the constitutional referendum of July 1 and legislative elections that took place on November 25, 2011 the king called upon the Islamist Party for Justice and Development (PJD) to form a new government. In addition, the regime dramatically increased public wages and implemented a number of food subsidies. However, the king's response has essentially been a repeat of the events of 1997, when his father, King Hassan II, engineered a similar political opening by giving the role of prime minister and some positions in the government to the opposition while reserving key ministries and leaving little lasting impact on democratic reforms.

While pushing for some reform, King Mohammed VI has retained control of the key levers of political control and essential security ministries. He has also sought to further align his North African monarchy with the geographically distant, but intimately friendly, Gulf monarchies. Growing cooperation and integration among the region's monarchies marks a turning point in how they are likely to respond to future threats to their reigns.

This evolving trend of monarchical cooperation and integration has also been clearly on

show in the tiny island kingdom of Bahrain, where protests by tens of thousands of people—virtually the entire adult population of the Shi'a majority—have so far proven futile. King Hamad, backed by the Peninsula Shield Force of the GCC, continues to suppress dissent. Saudi intervention in Bahrain was premised on two justifications: officially, that it was acting at the behest of the Bahraini government's request for support from the GCC to restore law and order; and, unofficially, that it was acting to counter suspected Iranian interference in Bahrain's domestic affairs, which it accuses of orchestrating the largely Shi'ite uprising.

The alarming use of force, including the regime's calculated and systematic use of tear gas against Shi'a civilian protestors in violation of human rights laws, suggests that the situation is rapidly deteriorating into a zero-sum showdown. The country's sectarian division—between a Sunni monarchy ruling over a well-educated, fairly prosperous, but overwhelming Shi'a majority—continues to present a fundamental challenge to the king's authority. In essence, the social pact of minority rule in exchange for economic prosperity has broken down in Bahrain.

In the rest of the GCC, what is becoming apparent is that the monarchies are starting to view the Arab uprisings as an opportunity to fundamentally alter the power dynamics of the region in their favor. Led by Saudi Arabia and Qatar—though, perhaps, for different reasons—the GCC states are coming to view the non-Gulf uprisings as an opportunity to exert their substantial influence to shape a more favorable regional environment. First in Libya, and now in Syria, the GCC is actively supporting Sunni forces by financially backing diverse rebel groups, supplying arms and munitions, and supporting international intervention proposals.

Outside Powers

While the domestic-level factors have been critical to each uprising, the international dimension to the uprisings will become more prominent over time. From Saudi Arabia to Turkey, Iran to Russia, international involvement will increasingly affect whether an uprising will be peaceful and swift or bloody and protracted. With this in mind, it is noteworthy that the world's preeminent superpower has actually played a very limited role during the Arab uprisings. As Michael Hudson and Uzi Rabi note, the US has largely been constrained by its traditional priorities of energy security interests, defending Israel, and stopping transnational Islamist extremism—three priorities that have put it at odds with the aspirations of Arab publics. Even now, the United States remains conflicted in its support of democratic reforms in Tunisia and Egypt while tacitly endorsing the status quo in the GCC states. Ultimately, the Obama administration has been stuck reacting to the regional transformations, rather than actively shaping them. It remains to be seen whether a re-elected Obama administration, free of the constraints of a first term presidency, can rise beyond the historical imperatives inherent in US Middle East policy and take charge in supporting the democratic aspirations of millions of citizens across the Arab world.

Final Thoughts

But "Leading from behind"—President Obama's approach to Libya—also reflects a larger transformation of the international environment. American hegemony in the Middle East is

waning quite independently of the "Arab Spring," and its tepid responses to the popular uprisings may be viewed as part of a managed downsizing of US global commitments. The transition to a more multipolar as well as more globalized world order also offers new opportunities for regional leadership. For instance Egypt, liberated from the shackles of Mubarak's American foreign policy, may regain its luster as a regional leader, offering President Morsi a new source of legitimacy as he seeks to broker a negotiated resolution of the Syrian conflict by including Iran as well as Turkey and Saudi Arabia in efforts to engage the Syrians in an inclusive arrangement. As Syria becomes "Lebanized" into regional and sectarian factions, it may be recalled that it was regional powers, Saudi Arabia and Syria, which finally resolved Lebanon's protracted 15 year conflict (1975-1990) six years after NATO forces departed. Stalemate in the Security Council may lend greater impetus to a regional initiative of the sort President Morsi has proposed and help Syria escape Lebanon's earlier fate. Whatever the outcome of this particular initiative, it illustrates the fact that there is no longer a power vacuum in the Middle East: great outside powers must tread lightly in the face of the newly mobilized public opinions of the region, especially at its epicenter, Egypt.

There remains, however, a disconnect between the brave and zealous revolutionaries who sparked the Arab Spring in Tunisia and Egypt and its principal beneficiaries, the Islamist parties winning subsequent free elections. Many revolutionaries and their sympathizers and followers, most of whom were not Islamist, consider that the latter hijacked their revolution. Many fear that resurgent Islamism, no longer contained by authoritarian regimes, will re-impose their own authoritarian versions rather than responsibly deepening democracy as in Turkey. In contrast to sustained upward trajectories of either radical or moderate Islamism, however, Algerian experience suggests that a downward spiral may be more likely. As Robert Parks has shown, Islamists have consistently won ever smaller percentages of the vote in legislative elections from 1997 to 2012, even as political participation also fell. Islamist parties in power perhaps fare worse than those opposed to repressive regimes where religion serves as a political refuge. Religiosity can always serve as a cover providing social respectability; but, once in power, Islamism had little to offer in Algeria. There are also some signs of growing resentment against Ennahda in Tunisia and the Muslim Brotherhood in Egypt. Both are viewed by many as overstepping their transitional mandates to hold on to power.

A key battleground is for control over the media. In both countries the incumbent Islamist regimes have made a far reaching series of appointments to manage the state and in some cases private media, and they are widely viewed as based on partisan rather than professional criteria. In Tunisia the commissions appointed in the early days of the revolution to guide the transition were disbanded. Among them, the National Commission to Reform Information and Communication issued a scathing final report documenting the excesses of the new regime and its refusal to implement recommendations and legislation to guarantee the

freedoms won by the January 14 Revolution.[247] In this key domain of civil liberties the Islamists appear to many liberals to be confiscating the revolution. Tunisia and Egypt both face continuing challenges to incorporate their revolutionaries in the new political orders. Elements of their respective former ruling parties otherwise remain available to restore "enduring authoritarianism."

As new parties keep forming and reforming in these two countries, political situations remain fluid. Tunisia, however, remains on track to complete a textbook transition to electoral democracy, and Egypt, despite following a less orthodox transition still in search of legitimate definition, also seems pointed to electoral democracy, albeit with a strong military counterweight. These two countries, at least, seem to be joining the mainstream of third wave democracies, however problematic they may be. Other neighbors may follow Tunisia's and Egypt's lead as the Arab world slowly loses its exceptionalism.

[247] Republic of Tunisia, "National Commission to Reform Information and Communication (INRIC), Final Report: Executive Summary," April 2012, http://www.inric.tn/fr/INRIC-Report-Eng-final.pdf. See also: IFEX Tunisia Monitoring Group,
Spring into Winter? Fragile achievements and exceptional challenges for Tunisian free expression defenders, July 2012, http://www.ifex.org/tunisia/2012/07/10/spring_intowinter/.

Appendix 1

2011 Asan Middle East Conference Proceedings
(Question and Answer sections)

2011 Asan Middle East Conference

Democracy and Development in the Middle East after the Arab Spring

Conference Proceedings

Date: November 4–5, 2011
Place: Auditorium (1F), The Asan Institute for Policy Studies

Session Titles
Session 1: Domestic Political Transition and Regional Power Configuration
Session 2: Oil, Rentier States, and Capitalist Development
Session 3: Social Networks and Civil Society
Session 4: Diversification of Political Islam: From AKP to al-Qai'da
Session 5: Oil, Israel-Palestine Conflict, and Terrorism: US Middle East Policy
Session 6: The Politics of Rogue States in Libya, Syria, and Iran

Speakers
1. Lisa Anderson, The American University in Cairo
2. Eva Bellin, Brandeis University
3. Fawaz Gerges, London School of Economics and Political Science
4. Bassam Haddad, George Mason University
5. Clement Henry, The American University in Cairo
6. Steven Heydemann, United States Institute of Peace
7. Michael Hudson, Middle East Institute, National University of Singapore
8. Jang Ji-Hyang, The Asan Institute for Policy Studies
9. Mohamed Kerrou, University of Tunis, El Manar
10. Arang Keshavarzian, New York University
11. Kemal Kirisci, Bogazici University, Turkey
12. Robert Parks, Centre d'Etudes Maghrebines en Algerie
13. Uzi Rabi, Moshe Dayan Center for Middle Eastern and African Studies
14. Diederik Vandewalle, Dartmouth College

Session I

Domestic Political Transition and Regional Power Configuration

Luis Mah, Korea Foundation

What is the importance of the European Union in these political transitions? The European Union has a very strong neighborhood policy and it is very important socially in terms of migration flows and economics as well. At the same time, it does not seem to have a unified role, as evidenced by the fact that Germany decided not to intervene alongside France and the United Kingdom in Libya. Similarly, France voted for Palestine to join UNESCO (United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization), while Germany voted against, and most European countries just abstained.

Eva Bellin

In much of the work exploring the causal mechanisms between outside influence and democratization on the domestic front, they talk about linkage and leverage. Having strong cultural and economic links seems to be the most powerful factor in leading countries to move towards democracy. That is probably more important than leverage and actually forcing countries into doing it. In the case of Tunisia, there are so many links that whether any particular country tries to strong-arm Tunisia in one direction or another is less important than the fact that there are so many cultural and trade links. For instance, Europe is a point of reference for how so many people live in Tunisia, in a way that's not really the case in Yemen or Saudi Arabia. I'd be curious to hear what other people have to say about what role great powers can play in democratization.

Hahm Chaibong

The Korean experience shows that while we clearly have massive linkages to the United States, every time there was any sense that it was even remotely related to the domestic political process, it had a very negative effect. If anything, the South Korean experience of democratization shows that foreign powers meddling, or even the idea that somehow you're linked with them, probably undermines your position and is really not much of a help.

Clement Henry

Another broader issue that has been brought up is that, concurrently, but for entirely different reasons, there are fundamental shifts that are going on among the outside great powers. It's different from the 'Concert of Europe' but we certainly now have more than one player, such as BRIC—Brazil, Russia, India, and China.

Fawas A. Gerges

The question is not whether foreign powers play a positive or negative role in helping democratization. When you do not have well-delineated institutions; when you have a major economic crisis; when you have regional, ideological, and tribal cleavages; the role of the international community becomes very pivotal. In the case of the United States, America's

relationship with the region, on the whole, has been negative. The consensus is that the United States has not really helped democratization, in fact, the opposite is true.

But, the reality is, without a third party, without a mediator role, the Libyans will not be able to put their house in order. The Yemenis will not be able to put their house in order. Some might say, "Let politics play its course" but what you might have is political upheaval escalating and intensifying into armed conflict, as most likely in Libya and now in Yemen and Syria.

Eva Bellin

Are you persuaded that is why intervention would make a difference? Could it really prevent a case like that from exploding?

Fawas A. Gerges

You need a critical role by the international community to mediate. Even the new Libyan leadership is now saying, "We need help to mitigate the conflict between Misrata and Tripoli, between Benghazi and Tripoli." Tribal differences and the transition to a more pluralistic society: that is what we are talking about. This is an institutional wasteland. The state itself, as a set of institutions, no longer exists. In the last fifty years, what we call 'the states' has really been replaced by family-based estates. This is a huge task and will take years. How do you transition from this deeply entrenched authoritarianism to a more coherent, rational form of institution? That is the task that faces these societies at this particular point.

Lisa Anderson

First of all, the international community does not actually exist. Somebody has to be the people wearing the blue helmets or whatever we mean by the international community. And the idea that somebody from the 'international community' can walk in and mediate in these situations seems like a stretch. We need get very concrete about what we think ought to happen. When we think about the international community, do we mean NATO (the North Atlantic Treaty Organization), the Arab League, or the United Nations? Who do we actually mean and how are they going to mediate between tribal and other groups in Libya? The rhetorical reference to the international community as opposed to the United States or France does not get us very far in figuring out what we would propose as policy.

Secondly, the character of the 'institutional wasteland' varies considerably. Some parts of the region have very fragile institutions, but it is quite varied. The really interesting problem is that, on the one hand, the psychology has changed. There is something fundamentally different in Egypt that was not there on January 15, in terms of how people view their role in society. They do not have to have been revolutionaries; they might have been the people who were defending their neighborhoods when the police disappeared. But there is something fundamentally different and it is region-wide.

On the other hand, it is still a region full of very deep, strong legacies of how things have been done in the past. Whether that is domestically—in the institutions and the power of the military—or whether it is the expectation that, "We cannot do it by ourselves; where is the international community? Who is going to help us? Where is the model? We need a leader."

That is not the people who have lost their fears and are thinking about things in a different way.

You have heard on this panel two very different approaches to the future. One of which is, "Things are really different. There is a new psychology; there is a sense of responsibility; and these are demands not just for rights, but for responsibilities." This is a set of people who want to be citizens, who do not want to be infantilized by their governments, but want to participate in their own governance. That is a really interesting thing. That is the new and inspirational part and why we all think that this has never happened before.

At the same time, there are these legacies of the institutions that exist now and their ways of doing things, the expectations of the international community, the security concerns and imperatives that make us much more conservative in how we analyze what is likely to happen.

Michael Hudson

There appear to be two streams of theory that have been challenged by these events: the 'persistence of authoritarianism' literature and the 'rentier state' literature. How much of that work now needs to be revised or how much of it, in fact, has stood the test of time?

On the international system and the degree to which the Middle East is penetrated by outside powers with certain strategic calculations, two different images appear to be presented on this. One was that the United States and its allies in the region are trying to 'put the brakes' on things. The international system is trying to maintain the status quo from slipping any further. But, at the same time, the region wants to take its affairs into its own hands, and that is another area that deserves further discussion.

Bassam Haddad

Is there a disconnect between the 'outside-in' and 'inside-out' perspective in discussing the Arab uprisings? When things like democracy are discussed, the fact is, democracy means many different things and those bundle of things are prioritized differently in different contexts. There seems to be a bit of a disconnect between talking about democracy in an abstract manner and actually seeing the debates within Syria, Yemen, Bahrain, Egypt, Tunisia—what people are really concerned with, what they wake up to every day, and what they struggle with at different levels. We spent decades pontificating about the Middle East, authoritarianism, democracy, political culture, possibilities for transition and so on without much knowledge about what was going on in these societies because we could not tell exactly what was going on and were instead subscribing to problematic approaches to democracy.

And secondly, another issue that also complicates matters is that Egyptian and Syrian democracy activists themselves are finally beginning to find out the full spectrum of people's demands because in the past they could not. People did not speak out, and did not really come into the public sphere in a powerful way and present exactly what was going on, especially in repressive regimes like Syria. So is a disconnect between this outside-in approach focusing on things like democracy or are we really on the right track in talking about these issues? And, if there is a disconnect, what we are missing in terms of this discourse?

Shin Chang-hoon, The Asan Institute for Policy Studies

The successful accomplishment of transitional justice will have a great ripple effect on the other authoritarian states that still exist. The concept of the 'international community' as a whole has often become a certain pretext for military intervention, but it also has the implication that the concept has a deterring effect on unilateral intervention because countries that prefer collective intervention try to find justification in the concept of 'international community' as a whole.

Given the description of the Libyan situation in terms of transitional justice, there must be a coordinated, non-military intervention by the international community—whether under the name of Responsibility to Protect (R2P)—in order to bring transitional justice to the Libyan public. But normally, when thinking about how to accomplish transitional justice, we think of the establishment of truth and reconciliation commissions as one of the tools. However, it appears that the international community should intervene in a peaceful way, given the deep tribal cleavages in Libya. So, which forum would be most preferable among the Arab League, or the Arab League plus European states bordering the Mediterranean Sea, or the United Nations, if Responsibility to Protect is acceptable?

Eva Bellin

What happens in Libya will shape what happens with other dictators. There is a problem with authoritarian learning where if some of these leaders are going to be treated so badly, it is going to make someone like Bashar al-Assad to hold on all the more fiercely for fear of ending up as Qadhafi did.

Stephen Heydemann

If you look at regions which experienced transitions defined by high levels of contagion, over time, increasing divergence appeared. The distinctive trajectories that states which set out on a similar pathway began to follow had fewer and fewer effects on those which had consolidated their movement along one direction or another. So Poland and Belarus co-exist, and we seem to have a variety of regime types in close proximity to one another. That should lead us to question the overall influence of experiences in one case on outcomes in another.

Lisa Anderson

What is happening in Egypt is 'politics.' It is a struggle about who gets organized, what kinds of things they support, who else they can convince to support those positions and so forth. There is a laudable resistance to trying to find 'the model' or trying to find 'the leader' who will tell us what to do. It is so much easier to say, "Are they going look like someone else? Is it going to be like Poland? Is it going to look like Turkey?" It is going to look like Egypt.

To be able to get into what the political debates are, and what will be the institutional consequences of certain outcomes, that is what we need to be doing. The activists are really arguing about whether this particular coalition is more likely to get parliamentary seats than that other particular coalition. That is politics. And the grand scheme of whether this is going to end up looking like Poland or Turkey is not that interesting if you are trying to put together a coalition to contest elections, and that is what we ought to be looking at.

Session II

Oil, Rentier States and Capitalist Development

Jang Ji-Hyang

In Korea, analysts often compare Syria, Libya, and Iran with North Korea in terms of nuclear programs, deterrence and security. Is it still fair to classify Syria, Libya and Iran with North Korea?

Clement Henry

There is no contrast in terms of the degree of repression exercised in the North compared to that in any of the states in the Middle East. In these regimes, the predominant theme is basically one of state weakness—inabilities to regiment people in any way. Yes, they are authoritarian, but they are not totalitarian. They cannot systematically enslave people. So the differences are really too great.

Lisa Anderson

There is a way to reconcile the question of how much these uprisings are really driven by economic issues. First, there is a generational experience in the region and globally that is characterized by a couple of common factors. This is a generation that, for whatever reasons, sees their prospects blocked. So whether they are university graduates who cannot find jobs, or people who say, "We have been promised that all of this growth would trickle down and it has not," there is a narrative that has developed around the blockage of prospects for people.

You can do a generational narrative now partly because of the new media and the capacity to communicate these interpretations. Then this narrative develops which is not just, "I want more money," but "I want a life." It is not so much about money. It's about prospects. That translates relatively easily into a political set of demands because then people start to say, "Why don't I have the prospects that I should have? What are the kinds of changes that would represent that?"

This generation of young people sees that they did not have whatever they thought their grandparents and their parents had. They do not see that for themselves. They do not see that expansion. They are beginning to think about why that is. It is about wanting political responsibility. It is about being able to have the job that permits you to get married and to be an adult. Therefore, it is hard to tell the political story without some sense of the underlying political economy. But the underlying political economy does not entirely explain why it is this turns into political protests. There needs to be that pivot point where you see blocked prospects as a way of saying, "Well, then I am going to take responsibility for fixing that, and the way I anticipate fixing that is through these protests and regime change."

Bassam Haddad

We should distinguish between the calculus that drives people to the streets and whether that will bring about fundamental change. We must analyze the protest movement, on the one hand, and the regime itself and its response strategies, separately. One protest movement with

a particular set of characteristics can bring down the Tunisian regime, but the same kind of protest movement in Syria will not because the regime is different in Syria, the regime response strategies are different, and the regional factors that support the Syrian regime are different and so on.

But there is also the strategic dimension. If we look at what has been happening in these countries for the past twenty-odd years, there is economic deterioration for the most part, growing gaps between haves and have-nots, and authoritarianism. Why did this not happen in the 1990s? Why did this happen at this moment? There is a false binary between political and economic factors and it is too limiting because having no access to representation or not doing well economically is not enough. These, in and of themselves, will not bring about change or protests. There is a strategic dimension and then there is the question of how long you persist in that condition. After a while, the strategic dimension becomes significant, because you know that if you go to the street, you are going to be accompanied by a lot more people in 2010, compared to 1996. So that plays a major role.

Also, for the past two decades, the coalitions that drove Egypt, Tunisia, and Syria have brought together the political and economic elite. Economic grievances are not just economic and public grievances are not just political. The grievances are mixed in ways that they are very complex. Without considering the economic factors, it is going to be difficult to fully grasp what is going on

Steven Heydemann

On the issue of timing, it is clearly critical. Why now and why not earlier? There are two potential answers. One has to do the relative experience of decline in spending on social provision and social welfare has to be understood in relation with respect to other countries in similar economic circumstances which reflected relatively high levels of spending on social provision and economic welfare. Even though the citizens of Arab countries were experiencing what they felt to be a significant decline in the role of the state in the provision of economic security, in a broader comparative sense, they were continuing to actually benefit at fairly high levels.

The second has to do with the strategies and tactics that regimes adopted, which I defined previously as “authoritarian upgrading” to respond to the kinds of challenges that they confronted from shifts in economic policy, political consequences of those shifts in ways that probably sustain their longevity, but only up to a point.

Luis Mah, Korea Foundation

Regarding your economic variables, what about migrant remittances? For instance, migration has long been an escape for younger generations of North Africans to go to Europe. But Europe has changed its migration policies, by cutting the number of entrants, while at the same time, the global financial crisis has been affecting remittances. To what extent could this drive these societies against the wall?

Clement Henry

This brings us back to the point about people with no prospects who therefore revolt. There

was another response to all this, which is, you burn your papers, get into a boat, and try to get to either Spain or Italy. That continues to be a problem. That particular self-immolation of one person in Tunisia sparked this whole business when that was certainly not the first self-immolation. Another response to this is not political, but to just to burn yourself in protest. And that had been happening in Tunisia and other countries, such as Algeria, for quite some time before December 17, 2010.

Session III

Social Networks and Civil Society

Lisa Anderson

Are the 20-year olds in Algeria and Tunisia distributed in the same way across the political spectrum as the 40-year olds and 60-year olds or are there distinct changes over the course of this cohort? Are they distributed across a religious-secular spectrum in Tunisia in the same way as their parents or are there any differences?

Robert Parks

It is hard to find a 20-year old in Algeria who is actively participating in politics. That in itself is pretty revealing. When you do get participation, you get the three extremes which follow the large breakdown of Algerian political parties. You get Berberist/Islamist, pro-Democrat—but there is not really a Democratic Party—or Nationalist. But it is really rare. If you go to a *kismet*, which are the local cells of the political parties, you never see young people. They are not involved. If youth were to vote, the majority would vote for an Islamist-leaning party simply because the other parties lack credibility in their view.

Mohamed Kerrou

The same applies for Tunisia. You see small groups of the younger generation participating but the majority do not. Some young people voted for Ennahda, the Islamist party, but we do not know exactly why. It is the same in Egypt and in all the Middle East.

Choi Ji-Won, Korea National Diplomatic Academy

Social networking services (SNS) have proven to be an effective and economical tool with which politicians, and particularly opposition leaders, can promote their ideas and win supporters. What was the role of opposition leaders in general for social change and how did they view SNS, which can not only provide citizens with a public sphere, but also give politicians the opportunity to enlarge their political activity?

Robert Parks

In Algeria, opposition leaders do not use new technology. They are all old. They all have websites but usually the websites do not function. Internet penetration rate in Algeria is only 14 percent, it's actually quite low. It is below Yemen, and possibly even Syria. People do use text messages as a way of getting people out when they organize for demonstrations. But, ultimately, the fact that it was the politicians who organized the demonstrations effectively demobilized any sort of desire to push the revolts into something more.

In February 2011, Algerian civil society groups and political parties decided to create this national coordination to lead weekly demonstrations on Saturdays. After the first week, political leaders demanded that they split into two different groups: a civil society group and a political party group. The civil society group never came back, but the political parties continued to organize demonstrations. But that trickled down from a maximum of 2,000

people showing up for demonstrations to something like 50 over a period of three months. So there really was this demobilization.

Similarly, in January, one of the former leaders of the FIS (*Front Islamique du Salut*, Islamic Salvation Front)—which was the Islamist group which won the first round of elections in 1991—Ali Belhadj, tried to transform the riots into a political protest in Bab El Oued which is what he did 23 years earlier. And he was actually stoned by the youth, and they chased him out yelling, "We are not our parents." So, in Algeria, politicians getting involved often tends to completely demobilize people.

Mohamed Kerrou

Last week in Tunisia, there were statistics made by young people on Facebook and they found that among 207 deputies elected for the new assembly, 104 have a Facebook account, which is around half. We have to relativize the role of Facebook and social networking services in constructing public opinion in the public sphere. They are primarily important when you already have other networks.

Han Byung Jin, Keimyung University

Observing the "Arab Spring", the possibility of an uprising in North Korea always comes to mind. Given that immigration policy affects the demographic composition in civil society, what kind of immigration policy did these governments maintain before the "Arab Spring" and who and what types of people left country?

Secondly, in the beginning what kinds of people decided to initiate the dangerous collective action of protesting when the possibility of victory was initially very slim? For North Korea, it would be very hard to have confidence in the beginning that collective action would be successful.

Robert Parks

Currently there are between four and five million Algerians living in France and there are close to 100,000 living in Canada. Both are large countries with large Algerian populations. Immigration policy with France has been difficult since the 1980s when they imposed a visa—if you are between 20 and 30, you cannot get a visa. It is virtually impossible to get a visa unless you are from a well-known, wealthy family. So there is clandestine immigration, as there is everywhere else in Europe.

On the question of who leaves, the phenomenon of *Haraga*—which actually means 'to burn', because you burn your identity paper and take a raft from Algeria and go to Italy or Spain—we are not just talking about unemployed youth. We are talking about a whole variety of society. There are cadres who have served in the state administration who virtually have a job for life, but who will take off. We don't really know what exactly is happening with the Haraga phenomenon, but it does not seem to be just economic. People are giving up on everything and they are just leaving.

On collective action, in Algeria, it is not dangerous to organize a protest. At most, people get hit with police clubs, but you do not spend time in jail. In the most recent riots, people were arrested and processed in jail and were released within 15-20 minutes.

Eva Bellin

When these protests started they were small and not so ambitious initially. The protest that began in Tunisia was at first just protesting the maltreatment of Mohamed Bouazizi and the unemployment in the south, and they gradually built up. The same thing in Egypt; it began against police brutality on Police Day. It began to build in part because in both countries there was this context of "impunity"—the protestors soon became aware that they were not going to be shot on and brutalized, the way that would be in North Korea. So more and more people could build and then it just started to cascade. That is a very different scenario from a place like North Korea which is more comparable with the situation in Syria. That is a place where it is hard to comprehend how people can continue to mobilize even in the face of danger. It doesn't follow a rational actor model.

Session IV

Diversification of Political Islam: From AKP to al-Qai'da

Lisa Anderson

A part of the reason why Turkey is often seen as a model is that Turkey sets itself up as a model. In lots of countries, part of their foreign policy is to be a model. Part of the reason why India is not a model is that it is not out there shopping itself as a model. However, Poland certainly is, Hungary is, Brazil is, Turkey is, and so forth. Some of them resonate more because of greater familiarities, say with Turkey than Brazil, and you can tell who is setting themselves up that way.

The flip side of this is whether Korea thought of itself as a model. There seems to be a profound lack of self-confidence exhibited in looking for models. In Egypt, Tunisia, Libya and so forth, there is a perception that somehow they are not able to do it by themselves. It seems to be an interesting reflection on the poverty of political experience. You just start it. It is just politics; and there is sort of an existential anxiety on the part of the recipients of that foreign policy. On the one hand, countries are pushing themselves as models, but, on the other, there is a susceptible audience. And that susceptibility seems to speak to something about the lack of experience and confidence among people that ordinary politics is okay. People will make mistakes, people will debate, politics is about conflict resolution—if you didn't have any conflict, you would not need politics at all.

Kemal Kirişci

It is not always a lack of confidence, but also the politics of legitimization. In the Tunisian Ennahda's case, Turkish Prime Minister Tayyip Erdogan and his Justice and Development Party are a useful tool to try to soften the fears that the public and Europe has vis-à-vis them. It also depends on who you ask and when you ask. If you were to ask Erdogan whether the European Union and its enlargement process was a model for Turkey, in 2003-04 he would have probably said, "Yes." But if you were to ask the same question after 2005-06, he would have said, "No." He would answer that, "We do not care about the Copenhagen criteria because we have the Ankara criteria." In those years, television programs were using Bulgaria as a model for Turkey in expanding cultural rights to the Kurds. That argument made a dent in Turkey in the eventual adoption of legislation that opened the way for cultural rights. However, lots of people have forgotten about it by now.

Michael Hudson

The story of the Turkish model is not yet over, partly, in terms of the extent to which Islam, in some form or another, is being integrated publicly into the Turkish mainstream political system. You hear lots of conspiratorial talk from different directions about the "deep state" and conspiracies and so on. The other thing is Ottoman nostalgia—which is quite noticeable in Lebanon and Syria these days—will only take you so far. Turkish soap operas will take you only so far. When Erdogan went to Egypt and Tunisia, it was not just the message that irritated some people; it was the fact that, "Here is the Ottoman Empire coming back again in

a manner in which it was not so much to be appreciated."

Next, is there a difference between an Islamic capitalist and a Muslim capitalist? For instance, in Saudi Arabia there are Muslim capitalists and Islamic capitalists who are thought by many intelligence agencies to be putting a lot of their excess profits into supporting radical movements.

Finally, the distinction between the moralistic models of al-Qaeda as opposed to a much more pragmatic interest-oriented approach among the so-called moderate Islamist parties, are they doing it because they think it is helpful for long-term business stability and profit-making or does it have something to do with religion with profit and morality? In that respect, is the game really over for this tendency that stresses the moral, abstract, and radical over the pragmatic approach?

Perhaps these Islamic capitalists in Saudi Arabia aren't still driven by some kind of moral concern. In the immediate aftermath of these upheavals, you are likely to have more short-term economic deprivation. So maybe those young men who were pushed to one side during the "war on terror," will not have a new fertile field for coming back in some form with these totally impractical, but deeply felt, moral claims against the confused order in the post-Qadhafi, post-Ben Ali, post-Mubarak era.

Leif-Eric Easley

It is very interesting how what the Turkish model means varies quite a bit depending on whether one is in Europe, the Middle East, or Turkey. From an American perspective, the Turkish model raises four points. First, there is a successful synthesis of an Islamic identity with democratization, economic development, integration with Europe, and constructive relations with Israel. But these last two points are increasingly under strain. To the extent that the last two points, especially the final point does not look so rosy in terms of the Turkish model. It seems to be, at least in part, the result of Turkish foreign policy that is trying to gain leadership in the Muslim world. There is probably tension among these different points of the Turkish model.

Uzi Rabi

First of all, would it be acceptable by all panelists that Islamists—as a general term—got the upper hand because they were hunted by the regimes in the 1970s and 80s. Basically, the fact that they were depicted as pariahs by those rulers, gives them a very good point of departure. The second is that even if you think that mainstream Islamists preach moderation, for the time being, there remains the possibility that when they are in charge, it is almost inherent in their perspectives to see their state and the region from an anti-Western and anti-Israeli stance. This is how they inherently see their environment, as long as we do not have a breakthrough in the Palestine-Israel conflict that could actually galvanize and give some momentum to change. This is what we need to think of. It is not just a question about how to contain the pressure and help them become legitimate political actors. There are some things that basically dictate the way they look at their environment.

Fawaz Gerges

First of all, the Islamist's views on Israel do not differ very much from their nationalist counterparts. The discourse of the nationalists, leftists, and even the liberals, are all rather similar. They are similar in the sense that, "As long as Israel misbehaves, as long as Israel colonizes Palestinian land and so forth, we need to rethink our foreign policy and our approach to Israel." Israel as a security concern is viewed as an enemy, as opposed to the Mubarak regime which saw Iran as seen as the enemy.

Secondly, it is surprising how many members of the Muslim Brotherhood have gone on record to say, "Look, even though we fully disagree with the terms of the Camp David Agreement, we also understand the constraints and the position of Egypt." And in particular with the 1970s generation—this debate has been doing on for the last twenty years—there is almost a relative consensus in Egypt that the Camp David Treaty as a stance must be reviewed again, as opposed to be being scrapped. At the end of the day, on the big question about radical Islamists, narratives, and ideology, one can easily imagine the scenario where if Libya, Yemen and Egypt—though Egypt is different with its institutions, checks and balances— descend into chaos, Islamic activists could use the question of Palestine in order to activate tens of thousands in Egypt and other parts of the Arab world.

When you look at the different shifts that had occurred within the militant Islamist project from the near-enemy to the far-enemy, there seems to be a consensus, even among former militants, that they have to rethink their entire tactics and ideology. But, yes, Israel will be at the heart of it. Islamists have matured a great deal because the debate has been taking place for the last twenty years on certain issues. This textualist obsession seems to really fetter the Islamist hands in particular when it comes to rights, responsibility, minorities, but not on the question of Israel. The question of Israel is an entirely a separation question.

Kemal Kirişci

It also depends a lot on which Americans you talk when it comes to these points. Surprisingly, some have said that the Obama Administration is quite happy with the way Erdogan is responding to some of the challenges coming from Israel, if only he could tone down on some of his rhetoric.

Session V

Oil, Israel-Palestine Conflict, and Terrorism: The U.S. Middle East Policy

Clement Henry

Convergent with the Arab Spring is a tectonic shift in world politics, where the region reflects this changing global balance. The era of American hegemony is perhaps not completely over, but there appears to be a reshuffling of international power relationships. If that is so, and if that is the sort of overlying global envelope in which these regional developments are occurring, what must Israel be thinking now? This apparently unbreakable U.S.-Israeli relationship may indeed be losing the value that, historically, it has been assumed to have. Does this mean that some in Israel are now looking toward better relations with other great powers, notably China?

Choi Yong-Chol, Seoul Jang-shin University

First, why is the protection of Israel so important for U.S. foreign policy? Is it because of the strong public support for Israel in the United States or does it have other economic and military interests at stake? Second, what are the prospects for the Israel-Egypt relationship and their peace treaty since the Arab Spring?

Kim Yong-Roh, London School of Economics

What are the most important factors for both the Israelis and the Palestinians in achieving peace? What needs to change between the two parties?

Michael Hudson

With respect to the Middle East, it is regrettable, from an American point of view, that the application of American hard power in the region has proved to be inconclusive and has therefore somewhat diminished its overall leverage, making it all the more important to try to maintain, or even strengthen, its soft power. Soft power is just another word for influence. We do not get enough respect, at least not like we used to, and that is a shame.

Second, to understand why Israel is so important to the United States, you have to ask an epistemological question. Which lens are you going to look at this problem through? This question demands a sociological look at the inner workings of American politics and power, because it is hard to see what the *realpolitik* interest of the United States is in protecting Israel at such a cost. There are, of course, arguments about Israel's utility as a strategic asset, but the real answer lies in looking at the arena of politics in the United States, and it is pretty clear that Israel is deeply valued in American public opinion. That goes beyond just the Jewish or Israeli lobby, and the very strong American evangelical Christian organizations that are also, in a sense, more Zionist than Zionists on this. It requires looking at the way in which the Israel lobby—and, with its minor flaws, John Mearsheimer and Stephen Walt's *The Israel Lobby and U.S. Foreign Policy* is the book to read on this subject—has managed to, in a sense, capture the U.S. Congress. It has a lot to do with the down and dirty politics of getting elected and so forth in the United States.

Uzi Rabi

On Israel-Egypt relations, Israel should understand that the era of Mubarak has gone. We know that the Supreme Council of the Armed Forces (SCAF) and the interim government led by Field Marshall Tantawi and others has something else in mind. They will not actually break diplomatic relations with Israel, because peace with Israel is a strategic asset for the Egyptians, but publicly, they may follow the Turkish model in terms of dealing with Israel. That is, you do not tilt toward Iran on the one hand, nor to the U.S. on the other, but stay in the middle and snipe at Israel when it is needed and possible. This makes sure that the 'Arab Street' knows that you are not a collaborator with Israel, and at the same time, maintain working relations with Israel behind the scenes. What Egypt is trying to do is renew its history as a dominant actor in the Middle East, at least in the Arab world, and as a go-between between Israel and the region. But, a lot has changed, of course.

Secondly, the most important factor that Israel and Palestine have to change to achieve a compromise is their mutual distrust. If you talk to the Israeli public, they do not trust the other side. If you try to sell them on the two-state solution, with the 1967 borders, many will say, "If I am going to agree to that deal, what guarantee can you give that Hamas will not get the upper hand and become the sole representative of Palestine? And if it is there, this whole agreement is worth nothing."

Mahmoud Abbas is willing to deal with the refugee problems; he is willing to deal with the Jerusalem problem. He is a tough negotiator, but he is clear that the solution must be the 1967 borders. Most Israelis would buy this notion, but there is distrust and a belief that we do not have any option which is being left for us. However, the Israeli government needs to foster a program through which the whole world will know what Israel could live with.

Michael Hudson

There are two issues that are really important: settlements and Jerusalem. The right of return, refugees—there is a way to do that, but settlements are really tough and Jerusalem is really tough.

Session VI

The Politics of Rogue States in Libya, Syria, and Iran

Mohamed Kerrou

First, in Iran, are the centers of power religious or political, or both? If the uprisings occurred again, would these political centers be removed or maintained? Second, in Syria, is the structure of power confessional, political, or economic? Finally, in Libya, who are the individuals who want to maintain the old structures of power?

Eva Bellin

Why did the 2009 protests in Iran not take off and what does it say about the enduring legitimacy of the regime? Also, where does the military fit into all of this? Second, what does the Libyan case mean for the literature on the persistence of authoritarianism? The rentier state literature explains why Saudi Arabia, Kuwait, and other wealthy states were able to evade the protests of the Arab Spring, but the rentier logic did not enable the Libyan regime to survive. But what does it say about the persistence of authoritarian literature?

Choi Yong-Chol, Seoul Jang-shin University

What has been the role of Islamist movements such as the Muslim Brotherhood in Syria and also in Libya?

Choi Ji-Won, Korea National Diplomatic Academy

During the Egyptian and Tunisian revolutions, the military was critical for regime change, but what about the role of the Iranian military, not only as a hierarchical institution, but also as a wall between the government and society?

Arang Keshavarzian

On the centers of power, the fact is that for much of the first three decades of the Islamic Republic, political power has consciously been very fractured and de-centered. In a sense, everyone has been trying for the last thirty years to find who has the "real power". After Khomeini, was it Rafsanjani, Khamenei, Ahmadinejad, or the Revolutionary Guard? One went after the after and very quickly, it was clear that the center of power was not that powerful.

Conceptually, we have to give up on that question and instead think of power as networked and fundamentally diffuse. It straddles all of the boundaries between state and society, military and civil society, and religion and polity. The mistake that Khamenei has made is that he has begun to centralize power in his office in the last five or so years. This is a recipe for disaster, and is slowly turning this fragmented, authoritarian system into something more personalistic and patrimonial—something more akin to the Shah's regime.

Second, why did the "Green Movement" fail? It is hard to predict revolutions and how different participants began to think about this movement as viable or not. It is clear that as the events of 2009 moved along, many Iranians did not think it was viable. This is due to two

factors. The first is that while there was a lot of discontent in among students, intellectuals, the working class, women and so forth, these movements were operating in parallel and there has not been the bridge-building that was going on in Tunisia and Egypt in the last four or five years. So a multi-class, poly-vocal movement did not emerge.

The second is that the demands were very minimalist. It was not a revolution, but rather a 'refulution', that is, a reformist orientation. In a sense, we have left the era of revolutions. There are no Leninists or old Islamists anymore. We are living in a post-Islamist world and there are not many revolutionaries anymore. We are in a new era, and maybe that is a criticism of the Occupy Wall Street movement, too. It is a kind of 'refulutionary' struggle and so it loses its meaning for a lot of people and undermines its viability.

Finally, on the issue of the military, there are 120,000 people in the Iranian Revolutionary Guard Corps (IRGC), so it is not that huge. No social category in Iran is unified so it hard to believe that the Revolutionary Guard Corps is unified. Within the IRGC there are different groups; there are the military groups such as the Quds force, and also business groups, almost like venture capitalists.

This leads to a larger point about sub-contracting. These contracts that the IRGC and its engineering arm have won in the last ten years are all broken down into sub-contracts. Often, they go to old Leftists who went to prison in the 1970s and 80s, but were engineers and they're the ones building roads which are ostensibly part of IRGC projects. You have to think about the IRGC projects in a diffuse way.

Bassam Haddad

On the structure of power in Syria, for the past four decades, most work has varied between talking about sectarian power, class power, and regional power. Sectarian power usually means the Alawite sect. This is a very problematic approach to examining power in Syria and is part of a particular tradition of scholarship in which solidarity is based on primordial associations, which is not the case in Syria. There is not an Alawite regime in Syria, but rather a regime dominated by Alawites or minorities. It does not serve the Alawite community exclusively. It is not class power, whether peasant or lower middle-class based, which is what a lot of people wanted to assert with respect to Egypt, Syria, and even Iraq at some level. It is not that for many reasons, particularly the manner in which Hafez Assad actually established a détente with the conservative forces in the 1970s and tried to build a business class in the image of the regime, which was not very successful. And it is not about regional power, that is, internal geography. It is not about rural versus urban only—it started out as such—but now it is a hybrid of many different things.

Instead, there is a classic statist structure of power in Syria based on limited alliances that come in the form of networks. On the one hand, there are state business networks, while on the other, there are various forms of mediation with other parts of society based on the state's distributive policies. However, this latter aspect has been in decline for the past twenty years which is precisely why we have what we have today, and precisely why it occurred in the places where it occurred and why it avoided the main cities. It is precisely because the state business networks and alliances in Syria focused on a different sector of society—which has its base in the metropolitan cities of Aleppo and Damascus, which have for the most part

avoided trouble—and neglected what was basically the mainstay of the regime, which was the countryside and peripheral cities such as Homs, Hasakah, and elsewhere.

In terms of raw power, the power in Syria has devolved from the party and the army in the 1960s and 70s to the security services, which continues to this day. The security services include the Special Forces and the very powerful Republican Guard, which is intensely committed to fighting for the regime. It is the locus of power today, surrounded by the strong men that people talk about in the news.

But there is also the question of the regime's nationalist credentials that led to its power. That is one factor that has brought a lot of nationalist forces, groups, and individuals—inside Syria, the region, and perhaps beyond—to the aid of Syria, at least rhetorically at this point. And that is not something to be discarded, even if we want to discount the exaggeration of this dimension. It has to do with resistance, and it has to do with Syria's position on the question of Israel in terms of what it has done to enable resistance among other groups.

We can also talk about economics and how the Syrian regime has tried to avoid any serious dealings with international financial institutions in contrast with other countries. They did not subordinate their local economies to these institutions. We have to look at this combination and take it seriously to avoid the exaggerations.

Finally, on Islamist movements, it must be noted that the Muslim Brotherhood in Syria is weaker than most observers think, but they are also stronger than what the regime thinks. So where exactly the truth lies is going to be extremely difficult to tell. Next year is going to be thirty years since the Brotherhood were decimated inside Syria and if you had said "Muslim Brotherhood" inside Syria before the uprisings, you would have been saying your last words.

We do not know what the extent of their power in Syria is, but it is clear that they are organized and more efficient outside Syria and they are very much a part of the Syrian National Council (SNC). They are one of the reasons why there are some schisms inside the SNC in terms of those who want external intervention or not. It remains much more powerful outside Syria, and it remains to be seen how much legitimacy they have inside the Islamist-leaning sectors inside Syria.

Diederik Vandewalle

On the old structures of power under Qadhafi, it was highly personalized. If you look at concentric circles around Qadhafi since 1969, they have hardly changed or diminished over time. It is also personalized in terms of physical power. Libya, for all intents and purposes, had no unified army, and a lot of these were militias and brigades that reported very directly, including the security apparatuses, to the regime. And, of course, all of this very carefully inter-mixed with patronage. It was really the mechanism by which Gaddafi was able to hold onto power in many ways. After 2003, that system tightened up even further.

On the persistence of authoritarianism, particularly in rentier states, the argument had always been made that the combination of elite loyalty together with the ability to use oppression and patronage guaranteed the survival of the regime. In Libya, it was quite interesting because we saw the defection of the elite quite early on.

On the Islamic movements in Libya, there were indications that some Islamists had been involved in Pakistan and Afghanistan and that they had infiltrated back into Libya. However,

they have not really been able to constitute a political base as such although a lot of people fear that if the Libyan Transition National Council cannot get its act together, then these movements will grow very rapidly. The big fear is also that Qatar has been supporting some of the more radical groups within Libya. Their interpretation of Islam is quite different from that which exists in Libya.

Lisa Anderson

Clearly, the psychology of the people in the region has changed. As responsibility for their future is being seized by the people of the region, this will be reflected in the decline in the role of outside powers. We and the people of the region are asking, "Who runs this country?" That will be one of the most interesting things to be asking over the course of the next several years. We are going to have to be more attentive to popular demands and aspirations, just as are the governments in the region and this is a good thing.

Appendix 2

Biographies

Editor Biographies

Clement Henry is the Chair of the Political Science Department at the American University in Cairo and Emeritus Professor the University of Texas at Austin. Dr. Henry previously taught at the University of California, both at Berkeley and Los Angeles, and at the University of Michigan, the Institut d'Etudes Politiques de Paris, and the American University in Beirut. In addition to the politics of international oil, Dr. Henry's research interests include Middle Eastern responses to globalization, banking systems in Islamic Mediterranean countries, Islamic banking, and the development of civil societies in the Arab world. He has spent over 12 years in Algiers, Beirut, Cairo and Rabat and has written, co-authored, or edited 11 books and numerous articles on the region, including *Globalization and the Politics of Development in the Middle East* (co-edited with Robert Springborg, 2001), *The Mediterranean Debt Crescent* (1996), *The Politics of Islamic Finance* (co-edited with Kate Gillespie, 2004), and O*il in the New World Order* (1995). He is currently working on a second edition of *Globalization and the Politics of Development in the Middle East* which presents a dialectical analysis of economic development strategies in the region. Dr. Henry received a M.B.A. from the University of Michigan and his Ph.D. in Political Science from Harvard University.

Jang Ji-Hyang is a Research Fellow and the Director of the Middle East and North Africa (MENA) Center at the Asan Institute for Policy Studies in Seoul, Korea. She also serves as a Policy Advisor on Middle East political and security issues to South Korea's Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade. Dr. Jang has previously taught comparative politics, Middle East politics, and the political economy of development at leading Korean universities including Seoul National University, Ewha Woman's University, and the Hankuk University of Foreign Studies. Her research primarily focuses on the relationship between democracy, capitalism, and globalization in the Middle East, North Africa, and the Muslim World using historical and rational choice institutionalism. Her most recent English publications include: "Calculations and Choices in Asymmetric Conflict: Incentivizing Ethnic and Religious Identity in Turkey," *The Korean Journal of Area Studies* (2012) "Weak State, Weak Civil Society: The Politics of State-Society Relations in the Arab World," *The Journal of International and Area Studies* (2009), and "Islamic Fundamentalism," *International Encyclopedia of the Social Sciences* (2008). She has also recently published a Korean translation of Fawaz Gerges', *Journey of the Jihadist: Inside Muslim Militancy* (Asan Institute 2011). Dr. Jang received a B.A. in Turkish Studies and an M.A. in Political Science from the Hankuk University of Foreign Studies and her Ph.D. in Political Science from the University of Texas at Austin.

Contributor Biographies

Lisa Anderson is the President of the American University in Cairo (AUC). A specialist on politics in the Middle East and North Africa, Dr. Anderson served as the University's Provost from 2008 to 2010. Prior to joining AUC in 2008, Dr. Anderson served as the James T. Shotwell Professor of International Relations at Columbia University and is the former Dean of the School of International and Public Affairs at Columbia. Before joining Columbia, she was Assistant Professor of Government and Social Studies at Harvard University. Dr. Anderson is the author of *Pursuing Truth, Exercising Power: Social Science and Public Policy in the Twenty-first Century* (2003), *The State and Social Transformation in Tunisia and Libya, 1830-1980* (1986), editor of *Transitions to Democracy* (1999) and co-editor of *The Origins of Arab Nationalism* (1991). She received a B.A. from Sarah Lawrence College, an M.A. in law and diplomacy from the Fletcher School at Tufts University, and her Ph.D. in Political science from Columbia University.

Eva Bellin is the Myra and Robert Kraft Professor of Arab Politics in the Department of Politics and the Crown Center for Middle East Studies at Brandeis University. She has been a Carnegie Scholar and a Princeton University Fellow and has served as an editor of the journal *Comparative Politics* since 2005. She previously taught at the Johns Hopkins School of Advanced International Studies, Harvard University, Hunter College and The Graduate Center of the City University of New York. Her research focuses on authoritarian persistence in the Middle East, the political economy of development, the evolution of civil society, and the politics of cultural change. Dr. Bellin is the author of *Stalled Democracy: Capital Labor and the Paradox of State-Sponsored Development* (2002) and most recently, "Reconsidering the Robustness of Authoritarianism: Lessons of the Arab Spring," *Comparative Politics* (2012). She received a B.A. from Harvard University and her Ph.D. from Princeton University.

Fawaz A. Gerges is a Professor of Middle Eastern Politics and International Relations at the London School of Economics and Political Science. He also holds the Emirates Chair of the Contemporary Middle East and is the Director of the Middle East Centre at LSE. He has taught at Oxford, Harvard, and Columbia, and was a research scholar at Princeton and is the Christian A. Johnson Chair in Middle Eastern Studies and International Affairs at Sarah Lawrence College, New York. His research focuses on the Middle East, US foreign policy, international relations, Al Qaeda, and relations between the world of Islam and the West. Dr. Gerges is the author of numerous books including *Journey of the Jihadist: Inside Muslim Militancy* (2007) and *The Far Enemy: Why Jihad Went Global* (2009). He received an M.Sc. from the London School of Economics and Political Science and his Ph.D. from Oxford University.

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Michael C. Hudson is the Director of the Middle East Institute and Professor of Political Science at the National University of Singapore and Professor Emeritus of International Relations and Arab Studies at Georgetown University. Previously, he was the Director of the Center for Contemporary Arab Studies and Professor of International Relations and Seif Ghobash Professor of Arab Studies in the Edmund A. Walsh School of Foreign Service at Georgetown University. His research interests include political liberalization, politics in divided societies, Lebanese politics, US Middle East policy, and Gulf security. Dr. Hudson has edited and contributed to numerous books, including M*iddle East Dilemma: The Politics and Economics of Arab Integration* (1999), *The Palestinians: New Directions* (1990), and *Alternative Approaches to the Arab-Israeli Conflict* (1984). He received a B.A. from Swarthmore College and an M.A. and Ph.D. in Political Science from Yale University.

Mohamed Kerrou is a Professor of Sociology at the University of Tunis, El Manar. His research focuses on relationships between individuals, religion, and the public space in the Maghreb. Taking a comparative perspective, his research focuses on the relationship between religion and politics in contemporary Islam.

Arang Keshavarzian is an Associate Professor of Middle Eastern and Islamic Studies and the Director of Undergraduate Studies at New York University. Previously, he was an Assistant Professor of Political Science at Concordia University. His research focuses on modern Iran as well as comparative politics of the Middle East with a focus on issues related to political economy, authoritarianism, and social movements. Dr. Keshavarzian is currently on the editorial board of the *International Journal of Middle East Studies* and was on the editorial committee of the Middle East Research and Information Project. His most recent book is *Bazaar and State in Iran: Politics of the Tehran Marketplace* (2007). He received his Ph.D. in Political Science from Princeton University.

Kemal Kirişci is a Professor in the Department of Political Science and International Relations at Boğaziçi University, Istanbul. He also holds the Jean Monnet Chair in European Integration and is also the Director of the Center for European Studies at the university. Dr. Kirişci has previously taught at universities in Great Britain, Switzerland, and the United States. His research interests include European integration, border management and immigration issues in the European Union, EU-Turkish relations, Turkish foreign policy,

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Peter Lee is a Program Officer in the Middle East and North Africa (MENA) Center at the Asan Institute for Policy Studies in Seoul, Korea. Mr. Lee's research interests focus on the role of middle powers in East Asian and Middle Eastern security affairs. He has most recently published "Oil Price Stability Expected Despite the Iranian Crisis," *Asan Issue Brief* (2012) and "The Curious Case of Post-Authoritarian Politics," *Asan Issue Brief* (2012) with Dr. Ji-Hyang Jang. Mr. Lee received a B.A. with Honours in Political Science and a Master of International Relations (MIR) from the University of Melbourne, Australia.

Robert P. Parks is the Director of the Centre d'Études Maghrébines en Algérie, the American Institute for Maghreb Studies' third overseas research center. His research has been published in *The Middle East Journal*, *The Arab Reform Bulletin*, and he contributed to *The Politics of Islamic Finance* (2004). He is the co-editor of a forthcoming volume on local-national relations in the Maghreb and is currently writing book on state building processes in Algeria and Tunisia, examined from the bottom-up. Dr. Parks' recent publications include "Algeria: Debate on Constitutional Reform," *Arab Reform Bulletin* (2006) and "An Unexpected mandate: The 8 April 2004 Algerian Presidential Elections," *Middle East Journal* (2005). Dr. Parks is also a co-editor of *Jadaliyya*'s Maghreb Page. He received his Ph.D. in Political Science from the University of Texas at Austin.

Uzi Rabi is the Director of the Moshe Dayan Center for Middle Eastern and African Studies and Chair of the Department of Middle Eastern and African History at Tel Aviv University. His fields of specialization include: the modern history of states and societies in the Persian Gulf; state building in the Middle East; oil and politics in the Middle East; Iranian-Arab relations; and Sunni-Shi'a tensions. Dr. Rabi is also an advisor to the Israeli Knesset (Parliament) on Middle East issues and is also the director of TAU's annual workshop for international scholars, hosting a ten-day seminar on the geopolitics of Israel and its neighbors. His most recent publication is the edited volume titled, *International Intervention in Local Conflicts: Management and Crisis Revolution Since the Cold War* (2010). His current book projects include: *Yemen: The Anatomy of a Failed State*, and *Iran, Israel and the Arabs: The Changing Face of the 21st Century Middle East*.

Diederik Vandewalle is an Associate Professor of Government and an Adjunct Associate Professor of Business Administration in the Tuck School of Business at Dartmouth College. Dr. Vandewalle has also been a Political Advisor to the United Nations Special Envoy in Libya, Ian Martin, and is widely considered to be one of the world's leading experts on Libya. He is the author of two internationally acclaimed books: *Libya Since Independence: Oil and State-Building* (1998) and *A History of Modern Libya* (2006). His work frequently appears in major international newspapers and journals including *Newsweek*, *The New York Times*,

Foreign Policy, and *Foreign Affairs* as well as news outlets such as Al Jazeera, *ABC*, *CBS*, and *BBC*. His research interests include Islamic finance; commodity booms, institutional development, and economic reform in the Arab Gulf states and North Africa; and sovereign wealth funds in Arab Gulf states. He has taught at Columbia University and Dartmouth College, and has been a visiting scholar at Harvard's Middle East Center. He received a B.A. from Southwest State University, and an M.I.A. and M.A. and his Ph.D. from Columbia University.