Why the failure of Democratization? Explaining 'Middle East Exceptionalism.'"

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Almost 30 years after the beginning of the Third Wave, and nearly 15 years after the fall of the USSR, the Middle East and North Africa remain extraordinarily resistant to democracy. The region stands alone as the only area outside of Western Europe not to see the emergence of any new, liberal democracies in the past three decades. More importantly, with the exception of Israel,[1] the region does not contain any liberal, democratic regimes.

The region's resistance to democratization is important for several reasons. First, the lack of democracy is highly politicized. Those intent on defending much of US foreign policy argue that the authoritarianism of the region demands strong-arm tactics. In contrast, others argue that it is precisely because of existing US foreign policy – aimed at securing the State of Israel and controlling the region's oil – that we see the persistence of authoritarianism in the region. Understanding the validity of these positions rests on understanding the reasons that MENA states have failed to democratize.

In addition, understanding why democracy has failed in the MENA helps elucidate important theoretical concerns. Political scientists have long been interested in determining the conditions for democracy, and understanding the absence of democracy in the MENA is, in effect, one step toward answering this question. In the MENA, as we shall see, incumbents were able to use the experiences with political Islam in the 1970s and the institutional structures created in this period to exacerbate splits between secularist and Islamist opponents. The level of fear between Islamists and secularists – often fostered by the state – made it difficult to sustain broad-based opposition coalitions. Thus, MENA states did not stay in power so much because the incumbent regimes were so strong, but rather they stayed in power because their opposition remained weak and fragmented. Incumbents not only managed to avoid important splits in the regime, but they also managed to exacerbate the splits between opposition groups.

The MENA cases yield important insights into factors affecting the likelihood of splits among regimes and their opposition. Much of the literature on the Third Wave of democratization suggests that splits between incumbents and in opposition groups are important in determining the likelihood of democratic consolidation. However, these studies have been largely silent on explaining when splits occur on both sides. Examining MENA cases in

[1] Israel is not only an exceptional state, but also exceptional in its democratic features. Although the author acknowledges the controversy surrounding Israel's democratic nature, it nevertheless contains many of the features of a liberal democracy. Similarly, while one can argue that Lebanon, Turkey and Iran contain many democratic features (i.e., elections), democratic governance is severely constrained in these states.

comparative perspective suggests that incumbents are able to use the historical experiences and create institutional structures that foster splits between their opponents.

The paper proceeds as follows. First, it demonstrates that although MENA states have not become democracies, it is not because the states have not been challenged. Indeed, since the 1970s, seven MENA states announced measures of liberalization; these states, however, did not see significant changes in civil and political liberties, yet alone consolidate democracy. The paper then finds that neither the prerequisites nor the contingency theories of democratization explain the persistence of authoritarianism in the region. Rather, as the third section demonstrates, what distinguishes the region are the struggles it experienced between secularists and political Islamists during the 1970s and the institutional structures that it maintained subsequently. Section four demonstrates how incumbents were then able to capitalize on these experiences, promoting divisions between secularists and Islamists and among each side. Incumbents were extremely proactive in manipulating the splits in the opposition. The final section explains why states facing pressures for democratization in other regions could not use these strategies.

How is the MENA Exceptional?

The MENA is not as unusual in its resistance to liberal democracy, or even to liberalization, as it is to the institutionalization of major political and civil liberties. The persistence of authoritarianism in the MENA – as noted above – has been well documented. Larry Diamond, for instance, presents clear evidence of this in Table 1; MENA is the only region with a single, liberal democracy in 2001, and this democracy, Israel, is an exceptional state in the region. Similarly, cross-national, empirical work has recognized the region's authoritarianism, either by including a regional "dummy" variable (e.g., Ross, 2001) or simply ignoring the region (Diamond, Linz and Lipset, 1988; Linz and Stepan, 1996; O'Donnell, Schmitter and Whitehead, 1987; Przeworski, 1991).

While the region is characterized by authoritarian regimes, the region is not as anomalous in the presence of authoritarianism as it may seem at first. A closer look across various regions demonstrates that the percentage of democratic regimes in MENA does not compare quite as poorly as is often assumed. While Western Europe, Latin America and many of the former Communist states are now democracies, Asia, Sub-Saharan Africa and the MENA still consist primarily of authoritarian states. These states, all of which gained independence from colonial

rule more recently and have shorter experiences in state building, have been less likely to develop liberal, democratic systems.

MENA is also not unique in the extent to which states initiate liberalization. True, there are a relatively large number of politically closed authoritarian regimes in the region that have not (or only very recently) instituted any liberalization. These include Bahrain, Oman, UAE, Qatar, Libya, and Saudi Arabia, where the presence of oil provides a powerful explanation for the resilience of authoritarianism.[2] Iraq and Syria, both of which have significant oil revenues, have also avoided liberalization. Their resilience is perhaps best explained by the combined effects of external military involvement and the strong state-military relations that emerged after particularly unstable periods in which the regimes came to power.

Yet, not all regimes have avoided liberalization. Since the beginning of the Third Wave, Algeria, Egypt, Jordan, Kuwait, Morocco, Tunisia and Turkey have all announced major reforms intended to strengthen popular participation in governance. Egypt led the way, announcing reforms in 1973 and renewing its commitment to reform after the assassination of Sadat. King Hassan II in Morocco likewise turned to liberalization after narrowly avoiding his demise in the early 1970s. Political parties were rehabilitated, and municipal and parliamentary elections held in 1976 and 1977, respectively. Similarly, Algeria, Jordan, Tunisia and Turkey revitalized their party systems and parliaments in the 1980s, and Kuwait renewed its experiment with liberalization after the 1991 Gulf War. In short, MENA – like the rest of the world – has seen its share of national pacts, political parties, elections, and other attributes of civil society, liberalization, and potential for democratization.

Rather, what is unique in the MENA – and what I think most scholars and policy analysts are referring to when they talk of MENA exceptionalism– is that there has been so little change in the very states that have announced the initiation of liberalization. As Table 3 demonstrates, from 1985-2000, African and Asian states saw considerable increases in the levels of civil and political liberties their citizens enjoy. More than a third of the African states and a fifth of the Asian countries gained at least two points toward political and civil liberties in the last 15 years. Such gains were absent in most of the Latin American and Western European countries, but only

[2] See Ross, 2001. The monarchies in this region have been aided by the generally small size of their states as well. Of MENA monarchies, those with large populations tended to fall through military coups unless – as in Saudi Arabia, Morocco and Iran – the ruling families were "home grown." This provides an interesting and important lesson for US foreign policy makers (assuming, of course, that they want to listen!) as they consider how to reconstruct Afghanistan and potentially Iraq.

because large proportions of these countries were already liberal democracies. In the MENA, however, this was not the case. Despite a plethora of agreements signed, parliaments opened, and otherwise outward signs of liberalization, no state made a significant, unretracted step toward freedoms as measured by the Freedom House Survey. Indeed, as Adrian Karatnycky (2002), President of Freedom House, noted, "The year 2001 saw modest gains in the strengthening and consolidation of democracy worldwide, but in predominantly Muslim countries—especially the Arab states—the status of freedom and democracy lags far behind the rest of the world." This has been coupled with a near absence of turnover in the top elites of 'liberalizing' states. In short, what is interesting about MENA is not the lack of democracy per se, but particularly that despite the initiation of liberalization in seven MENA states, civil and political liberties have remained limited and incumbent elites have remained in power.

How have these leaders managed to maintain such tight control over their states, in the face of such clear pressures for – and indeed promises of – democratization? Why have leaders in the region managed to use liberalization as a "strategy of rule," as so many have noted (Brumberg, 2002; Lucas, 2003), and to maintain a tight control over power?

The Limitations of Existing Explanations

Existing explanations of the persistence of authoritarianism in the region are not fully satisfactory. Full overviews of this literature exist elsewhere (Huntington, 1994; Bellin, 2001; Remmer, 1995), but it is useful to review how conventional theories of democratization address the puzzle of the MENA.

Preconditions of Democracy. In a tradition that dates back to the modernization literature, scholars have suggested that social, economic and cultural preconditions make democratization more likely. The notion has been that the existence of any single factor, and certainly the accumulation of unfavorable factors, makes it difficult for states to initiate and consolidate democracy. Yet, as we shall see, these factors do not explain "MENA exceptionalism."

Economic Conditions. Perhaps the most compelling explanation for the persistence of authoritarianism in the region is that oil – and mineral wealth, generally – makes democracy less likely (Crystal, 1990; Chaudhry, 1997; Beblawi and Luciani, 1987; Vandewalle, 1998). Michael Ross (2001) tested this argument most systematically; finding empirical evidence that a negative

relationship between oil wealth and democracy holds not only in the MENA, but in other regions as well.[3] However, Ross also finds that when oil, Islam and a dummy variable for the ME are included in the same analysis of democratization, the dummy variable for the ME remains highly significant.[4] Oil matters, but it does not fully explain the persistence of MENA authoritarianism. Furthermore, oil rents do not explain the persistence of authoritarianism in the oil-poor states in the MENA. Many of the non-rentier states are as wealthy as, or wealthier than, the states in Sub-Saharan Africa and parts of Asia. Yet, while states in the latter regions saw significant liberalization, oil-poor states in the MENA have seen less change.

Civil Society/Public Opinion. Other scholars have suggested that weak associational life or civil society in the MENA accounts for the failure of democratization in the region. The expectation drew largely from the work of Toqueville and, much more recently Robert Putnam, that independent, voluntary associations would help foster democratic attitudes and teach self-governance. A lack of voluntary associations and the persistence of strong clan, tribal and kinship ties, it was argued, could help explain the persistence of authoritarianism.

The argument, however, is weak on several grounds. First, a large amount of work on the region, most notably a project by Augustus Richard Norton (1995, 1996) that documented the level of civil society in many MENA states. Furthermore, as Saad Eddin Ibrahim and his co-authors (n.d.) found in the case of Egypt, civil society organizations are not a new phenomenon in the region. By 1952, Egypt counted more than 800 civil society organizations, including 8 political parties, 43 labor and professional unions, and 7 chambers of commerce. While one can debate the extent to which the "right kind" of civic organizations exist, whether they are independent from government and external forces, and how they mobilize their bases, it nevertheless appears that there are "enough" associations to foster democratic attitudes. However, as recent work on both the MENA and other regions has argued (Jamal, 2002; Bermeo, 2000; Levi, 1995; Tarrow, 1996), it is not clear that associations in non-democratic settings foster the same attitudes toward democratic governance and social capital that they do in democracies. It is likely not the absence of associations that is leading to non-democratic

[3] Contrary to Ross, Michael Herb presents evidence that oil does not "hinder democracy," but that oil wealth also does not promote democratic governance. See Herb, 2002.

[4] Ross, 2001. Indeed, Islam is not statistically significant, and the dummy variable for Mideast is nearly twice the size of the dummy variable for Sub-Saharan Africa. Table 4, p. 345.

governance, but rather the lack of democratic governance that leads to the failure of citizens to develop attitudes and trust necessary for democratic participation.

In addition, there is significant evidence that the attitudes of average citizens toward democracy in the MENA are not as different from other regions of the world as once believed. Although the construction of surveys are slightly different, and therefore, there are some problems with comparability, recent survey research in Asia, Europe, Latin America and Sub-Saharan Africa allows us to gauge attitudes toward democracy. As Table 3 shows, the percentage of the population that is favorable to democracy in the MENA ranges between 80% and 90%, a figure comparable to attitudes in other regions.

Cultural Context: Islam. Another 'best selling' explanation for the lack of democracy in the MENA is the presence of Islam. For instance, Samuel Huntington (1984: 208) argued that Islam was "not hospitable" to democracy. For Huntington, it was both the "consummatory character" of the doctrine and organization of Islam that would thwart democracy. "In Islam, for instance, no distinction exists between religion and politics or between the spiritual and the secular, and political participation was historically an alien concept."

This explanation is problematic in several respects. The approach assumes that Muslims see themselves as, first and foremost, Muslim. Their identification with their ethnic groups, regions, economic classes, etc. pale in comparison to their religious identity. It also assumes that there is a single, monolithic interpretation of Islam. Yet, in contrast, there exist various strains of Islam and, within these, there are strong debates over the role, both historically and in the contemporary context, of political participation. It is far from given that "political participation was historically an alien concept."

More importantly, there is little empirical evidence to support the claim that Islam impedes democracy. As noted above, Ross' data shows that when the Middle East, Subsaharan Africa and Islam are included together in an analysis explaining regime type, Islam is not statistically significant. Using different data, Tables 4 and 5 also demonstrate why Islam is not fully satisfactory in explaining MENA exceptionalism. None of the 29, non-Western and non-Island liberal democracies that existed in the world in 2001 had majority Muslim populations. However, even among the set of predominantly Muslim countries, MENA cases stand out as particularly likely to be closed authoritarian systems with few political rights. For instance, although nearly 49% of the non-MENA countries with majority Muslim populations had at least

competitive authoritarian regimes, only 29% of MENA countries did. Similarly, 50% of the non-MENA cases had freedom house indicators of at least 5 (Partly Free), while only 4, or 29%, of the MENA cases were this free. Furthermore, it does not appear that the percentage of Muslims in the population account for this difference. Niger, Mali, Senegal, Djibouti, and Indonesia have at least 90% Muslims, and yet they are electoral democracies or ambiguous regimes.

Moreover, Mark Tessler (2002) has found that the individuals' support for political Islam and levels of mosque involvement do not significantly influence their attitudes toward democracy. After examining results from a recent World Values Survey in Egypt, Jordan, Morocco and Algeria, he concludes:

> There is little evidence, at least at the individual level of analysis, to support the claims of those who assert that Islam and democracy are incompatible. The reason that democracy has not taken root in the Arab world must therefore lie elsewhere, perhaps in domestic economic structures, perhaps in relations with the international political and economic order, or perhaps in the determination of those in power to resist political change by whatever means are required. But while these and other possible explanations can be debated, what should be clear is that cultural explanations alleging that Islam discourages or even prevents the emergence of support for democracy are misguided, indeed misleading, and thus of little use in efforts to understand the factors shaping attitudes toward democracy in the Arab world.

Strategic Concerns: Oil, the Arab-Israeli Conflict, and International Support. A final structural explanation for the exceptionalism of the MENA is the existence of oil and the presence of Israel. There are several ways in which these factors matter. The first – that oil and other mineral rents provide important support for authoritarian regimes – has been addressed above. Some also argue that the presence of Israel, and the protracted Arab-Israeli conflict, has presented authoritarian leaders with the excuse to build large a military apparatus and maintain emergency rule. Perhaps more commonly, however, is heard the argument that the combination of oil and Israel in the region has made it profitable for the US and other western powers to exert continued influence over "authoritarian puppets." Thus, the US has consistently manipulated behind the scenes to maintain the support of ME rulers. Rather colorfully, Fadlallah echoes this argument:

> "In our opinion, the forces of International Arrogance, with the U.S. (represented by the Central Intelligence Agency and its sister organizations) at the helm, have pressed Arab rulers into service as watchdogs for their policies and interests in the Islamic world. Consequently, Muslims are repressed by other Muslims. The Egyptians are being beaten by the Egyptian regime, and the Algerians are beaten by the Algerian regime, so the United States does not have to dirty its hands." ("Islamic Unity," 1995: 62).

The argument that the US, and more broadly the West, is hell-bent on maintaining authoritarian leaders in the region is the most difficult argument to assess in this paper. Israel and oil are clearly two important strategic concerns for the US, and ones that – as the Gulf War of 1991 demonstrated – it is willing to defend. Indeed, the convergence of these factors in the region is useful for the US. It is also true that the US has been willing to defend anti-democratic actions (most notably, the military coup in Algeria) because it fears the emergence of radical, Islamic voices. For instance, Ambassador Edward Djerejian (1995: 1), who served as Assistant Secretary of State for Mideast Affairs in the early 1990s, argued that the US should promote "the principle of one person, one vote. However, [it did] not support one person, one vote, one time." Because it is can secure a large supplier of oil at the same time as it defends its alliance with Israel, we should not expect US interests in the region to diminish any time soon.

Yet, does this explain the persistence of authoritarianism? Because much of the support is said to be covert, it is difficult to assess the extent to which the US has intervened actively to support the region's leaders. There are good reasons to be skeptical about the extent to which the US is responsible for the demise of democracy in the region, however. If we look to other regions of the world, we find that the US has not prevented democratization in strategically important states. Although the US clearly has strategic interests in Latin America, for instance, it has been willing to promote (or at least not thwart) democratic reforms there. In addition, events in the MENA demonstrate that the US cannot control domestic policy completely. The failure to support the Shah of Iran and to maintain a quiescent alliance with Saddam Husayn suggests that the US does not fully determine the region's politics. In short, while the US may not actively promote democratization in the MENA (despite statements to the contrary), it is also not clear that it is solely responsible for the stalled liberalization in the region. At least part of the explanation should be sought in the domestic politics of these states.

It is also not clear that the militarization and propaganda accompanying the prolonged Arab-Israeli conflict has made it possible for incumbent regimes to maintain repressive policies. Incumbents have indeed used the language of the conflict to justify the strong militaries and emergency rule. Yet, it is not clear that their people are always – or even usually- convinced by this rhetoric. Furthermore, a look at Table 7 demonstrates that there is no clear relationship between the states that are most affected by and involved in the conflict and whether or not the state has initiated liberalization. For instance, although the frontline state of Syria has not announced major liberalization, those of Egypt and Jordan have. Similarly, it is difficult to see how the Arab-Israeli conflict helps to explain the stalled liberalization in states that are geographically and politically distanced from the conflict. Yet, Algeria, Morocco, Tunisia and Libya have seen as limited change in their civil and political liberties as states in the Levant and the Gulf.

In short, neither the absence of the traditional prerequisites or the presence of the Arab-Israeli conflict in the region fully explains the persistence of authoritarianism in the MENA. More recently, Eva Bellin (2002) has argued that no single factor needs to account for MENA authoritarianism, but rather that it is due to "a robust and politically tenacious coercive apparatus" that overcomes the opposition. This is likely correct. As noted previously, oil revenues and highly militarized regimes likely account for ability of some regimes to resist liberalization. At the same time, however, the strong coercive apparatus is not likely to explain the ability of regimes that were pushed toward liberalization to resist further change. If they were strong enough to resist the opposition, why did they initiate liberalization? While the factors she cites may help to explain the strength of regimes, they do not fully explain the relative weakness of political opponents.

Contingency Theories of Democratization.

More recent work on the third wave of democratization suggested that the answer could be found in understanding the existence of splits among the ruling coalition and opposition. has eschewed much of the prerequisites approach. Work in this tradition (e.g., O'Donnell, Schmitter, and Whitehead, 1986; Linz and Stepan, 1996) argued that splits within the ruling elite help to determine the existence of, and form of, political transitions. The relationships between radicals and moderates in the opposition have also helped to determine whether or not transitions occurred and the likelihood of democratic consolidation. More recently, scholars have begun to

argue that the relationship between moderate and radical opposition forces at the early stages of liberalization help to determine the likelihood that democratization succeeds. Where radical forces are too strong, the reform may be stalled (Haggard and Kaufman, 1995; Hamladj, 2002). These formulations are useful, but they do a poor job in determining when splits will occur, both among opposition and incumbent forces.

The literature gives a partial answer, drawing our attention to the importance of leadership in establishing the conditions for democratic consolidation. For instance, Juan Linz (1990: 162) has argued that, "leaders must convince people of the value of newly gained freedoms, of security from arbitrary power, and of the possibility to change governments peacefully, and at the same time they must convey to them the impossibility of overcoming in the short-run the dismal legacy of some non-democratic rulers and accumulated mistakes that have led or contributed to their present crisis." They are also critical in mobilizing their supporters. Much of social movement theory, which has risen in conjunction with the literature on the third wave, focuses on the importance of opposition leaders in creating networks, mobilizing resources, and framing their movement's concerns (e.g., Zald, Tilly, Adams, Schwedler, 2000; Wiktorowicz, forthcoming).

Yet, even these works tend to overlook the role that state elites play in exacerbating and manipulating the splits between opposition groups. As I have argued elsewhere (Lust-Okar, 2001; Lust-Okar, forthcoming) the role of state elites in influencing their opponents goes far beyond offering the carrots of co-optation or sticks of repression. Rather, incumbents influence the perceptions that opposition groups have of each other and their willingness to join in coalitions, challenging the state. Moreover, the relationships between incumbents and diverse oppositions, as well as incumbents' abilities to influence the relationships between political opponents are determined, in part, on historical experience and the institutional structures that have developed.[5]

This is particularly evident in the MENA, where incumbents have been able to exacerbate the splits between secularist and Islamist opposition. The historical experiences of the 1970s and the institutional structures that had been established by the 1980s created conditions that enabled incumbents to promote divisions between secularists and Islamists opposition. These splits

[5] For overviews of historical institutionalism, see Thelen (1999); Steinmo, Thelen and Longstreth (1992); Mahoney 2000); Hall and Taylor (1996).

weakened their opponents, making it difficult for them to push for greater democratization. In contrast, in predominantly Muslim states of Asia and Africa, the conditions for promoting divisions among the opposition were much weaker. In short, regimes in the region have not been able to resist democratization simply because they are strong, but because they are strong vis-à-vis the opposition. Their relative strength is not simply due to structural conditions, but to their own abilities to manipulate oppositions' beliefs. Thus, examining the MENA allows us to go extend the literature on transitions, determining when incumbents can promote the balanced, split between moderate and radical opposition.

As we shall see, then, the region's resistance to democracy does lie, in part, in the existence of Islam and Israel, but in very different ways than has often been suggested. It is not the inability of Muslims to embrace democracy that has led to stalled liberalization, and it is not the existence of Israel that has allowed incumbents to crush their opponents. Rather, the historical experiences of the region in the early 1970s created a legacy through which incumbents could divide their opponents. Thus, even as pressures for democratization mounted, and indeed even after the steps toward liberalization were announced, incumbents could drive a wedge between Islamist and secularist opposition, weakening these forces in their struggle against the regime.

To see how this was done, we first examine the relationships between state elites, secularism and political Islam during the 1970s. In the MENA, state elites -- who had generally come to power a decade earlier – tended either to monopolize political Islam or fully repress it. In addition, experiences in the 1970s, not only the Islamic Revolution in Iran, but also the experiences of Egypt and Syria, combined by the early 1980s to convince secular democrats that political Islam was a potentially dangerous force. In contrast, state elites in Asia and Africa often came into power in the 1970s, when the strength of secular socialism was beginning to wane. In contrast to their MENA counterparts, they often took a very different approach to Islam – incorporating Islam into the basis of the regime but not claiming a religiously based monopoly on religion.

Consequently, the dynamics between the state, secularist and Islamist opposition was very different by the 1990s. In the MENA, Islamists were the most legitimate and strongest opposition forces; they could capitalize both on the decline of the left and their previous isolation from rule. In Asia and Africa, where they had been given political space under the authoritarian

regime, Islamist opponents were not as formidable. In addition, MENA incumbents often invoked the Islamic threat rhetorically, and they also created institutional mechanisms that helped to divide their opposition forces. Authoritarian elites convinced many secularists that the potential success of Islamists represented a greater threat than the status quo. Consequently, in much of the MENA, secularist and Islamist opponents failed to form a coalition to press for democratization, and even initial movements toward liberalization were rather easily reversed. In Asia and Africa, such rhetoric was not as convincing. Thus, in other predominantly Muslim states, Islamists and secularists were able to come together, pressing for increased political and social rights.

Early Experiences with Political Islam: The 1970s

Throughout the Islamic world – both in the Middle East and elsewhere – Islam was increasingly politicized in the 1970s. The republicanism that had characterized the states in the 1950s and 1960s began to collapse under the cumulative impact of economic strife, social malaise and – in MENA in particular, the dramatic failure of Arab states against Israel in the 1967 war. The experience that ensued in the struggle between the new role of political Islam and the old post-colonial and republican states left a permanent mark on political elites.

Experiences in the MENA. In the MENA, the 1970s created a legacy of an "Islamist threat." Particularly in Egypt, Syria and Iran, Islamist and secular forces had attempted to cooperate. The forms of cooperation differed. The Egyptian regime sought to incorporate Islamist support into the regime, while simultaneously distancing more radical elements. In Syria and Iran, the cooperation between secularists and Islamists existed in the opposition. Yet, in each case, the resounding result was failed coexistence between Islamist and secular forces.

Sadat, after assuming the presidency following the death of Egyptian President Nasser on September 28, 1970, turned toward stronger ties with the Islamists in order to weaken the threat from leftist, socialist forces within the Arab Socialist Union. Having acted as a liaison with the Islamists during the Free Officer years, and considered the "Islamic conscience" of the Nasserists, Sadat was well poised to draw upon the support of Islamists forces (Schultz, 2001). He released Brotherhood members from jail, publicly recognized the al-Jama'a al-Islamiya ('Islamic Community') and attempted to forge an alliance between the socialist regime and Islamic moderates.

In both Syria and Iran, similar attempts at cooperation existed between Islamist and secularist opposition. In neither case did the regime allow political space for Islamists. In Syria, the fact that President Asad was not only building a socialist, secular regime but was from the Alawite minority (considered not truly Muslim by the Sunni majority) made emphasizing an Islamic nature of the regime difficult, if not impossible. Indeed, the regime attempted to exclude the condition that the president be Muslim from the 1973 Constitution, but after that met with domestic unrest, responded with a proclamation that Asad (i.e., Alawites) was Muslim. In Iran, the Shah was unwavering in his pro-Western, secular approach. Even in the face of mounting unrest by the mid-1970s, he attempted to revitalize his ruling party, but not to broaden his political base or incorporate Islamist forces.

Consequently, by the mid-1970s, secular and Islamist opposition forces mounted simultaneous, if not always joint, opposition to the regime. The Syrian opposition took the form of strikes and protests mounted by university students, professional associations and the Muslim Brotherhood. In Iran, forces ranging from communists to Islamists took to the streets, particularly after 1977.

The results were, of course, quite different. In Syria, the regime clamped down on opposition forces. It was able to use a combination of cooptation and repression against secular opponents. The existence of the National Progressive Front, which initially combined five political parties under Ba'athist leadership, and more liberal economic policies increased the regime's ability to co-opt secular leaders (and particularly the merchant classes), while the more resistant opponents were incarcerated (or worse.) In contrast, the secular, socialist basis of the regime made it much more difficult to incorporate Islamist forces, and faced with only repression the Muslim Brotherhood became increasingly violent. By the end of the 1970s, Islamists had turned to guerilla attacks and terrorism to promote civic discontent against Asad's regime. In turn, the regime became increasingly repressive, turning to spot checks and heightened surveillance to maintain its rule. It also managed to turn a considerable proportion of the population against the Islamists. Long before 1982 many secular opponents to the regime had come to see Islamist violence as equally repulsive.

In Iran, on the other hand, the leftists and Islamists succeeded in bringing down the regime. On January 3, 1979, the Shah had tried to split the National Front from the opposition. He appointed Shahpur Bakhtiar, the co-founder of Mosaddeq's National Party, as the head of a

new civilian government.[6] The attempted appeasement failed, however, and after more than two years of considerable unrest, the Shah left Tehran on January 16, 1979. Two weeks later, on February 1, 1979, the Ayatollah Khomeini returned to Tehran, appointing Mehdi Bazargan as the head of the Revolutionary Republic. Throughout the period, it was clear that the new republic had little room for secularists. Secularist opponents who had previously fought alongside Islamists now found themselves repressed, and the cooperation became a bitter experience.

Only three months after the Iranian revolution, in March 1979, Anwar Sadat was signing the Camp David Accords, which would consolidate Egypt's alliance with the US and its cold peace with Israel. Through careful political maneuvering, Sadat had cultivated the support of the Islamic establishment for the treaty. Authorities at al-Azhar University analyzed the process and endorsed it based upon Islamic law. The rector of the University, Abd al-Halim Mahmud, presented a declaration approving the draft treaties of Camp David, and on May 9, 1979 a committee of legal counselors at Al-Azhar approved the declaration.

Yet, while the establishment forces endorsed Sadat's policies, the Islamist and secularist forces on the streets were much less forgiving. Discontent in Egypt preceded the peace process with Israel, and, indeed, it may have contributed to the peace process. Economic crises and social discontent fostered by Infitah policies of the 1970s led to the mobilization of opposition forces by 1977. Radical Islamist groups, such as al-Takfir wa-l Hijra, emerged and demonstrated forcefully that there were strong, Islamist forces that rejected cooperating with a secular state, and indeed denounced more moderate Islamists who chose to work within the system. They developed clandestine groups on university campuses and among the poorest neighborhoods of the major cities (Cairo, Alexandria, Asyut and Minia.) They were not alone in their opposition; by 1980, Sadat had reacted to popular opposition to the peace treaty by jailing Egyptians of nearly every political persuasion. Yet, they were unique in the most spectacular demonstration of their opposition. On October 6, 1981, they assassinated Sadat at a military parade. Several factors had figured in the assassination: the highly politicized turn toward peace with Israel and relations with the US, the continued economic decline, the regime's attempt to co-opt the moderates, combined with perhaps the sheer luck that Islamists were the first of a wide variety of forces intent on bringing down the President to actually succeed. However idiosyncratic the circumstances, the fact remained that the regime's attempt to tame the Islamists had failed.

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[6] On heterogeneity of the opposition, see Shultz.

The examples of Syria, Iran and Egypt could be used to send a strong message. Iran and Syria represented the failure of secular and Islamist forces to work jointly in overthrowing repressive regimes. In Iran, the opposition had succeeded, but secularists soon found themselves at the receiving end of new repressive forces. In Syria, the opposition failed, and secularists found themselves targeted by Islamist terrorism. In Egypt, the lesson appeared that even when moderate Islamists would cooperate with a secular regime, more radical forces stood at the fringes, ready and capable of tearing it down.

These, of course, were not the only experiences with Islamists in the 1970s, but they were the most important lessons for the region. The civil war in Lebanon that began in 1975 was at least partly a war between Muslims and Christians and stimulated the development of Islamist forces; however, because Lebanon has a unique social composition compared to other states in the region and because the conflict existed primarily between Muslims and Christians, rather than secular and Islamic Muslims, it did not have a profound effect on the perception of an Islamic threat. Similarly, although Saudi Arabia faced an attempted Islamic overthrow in November 1979, and subsequent rebellions among Shi'i in the east, the case would not often be invoked as demonstrating the threat of political Islam. Nor would the experiences of the Islamic struggles in the Sudan and Afghanistan be called on as examples of Islamic threat, although it would later be recognized that Afghanistan provided an important training ground for Islamic forces. However, for secular democrats in the republican, secular states and the monarchies that faced demands for democratization in the late 1980s and early 1990s, it was the experiences of Syria, Egypt and Iran that resonated most strongly.

Experiences outside the MENA. Although political Islam also became increasingly salient in Muslim states outside the MENA as well, the experiences were less striking. In Africa, Islam appeared much less threatening. Although the Egyptian and Sudanese events existed on the African continent, it appeared much more of an "Arab" problem than an African one. In contrast, in states such as Senegal, Mali and Niger, Islamist forces remained weak. To the East, Islam became an increasingly important political force in Malaysia, Bangladesh and Pakistan. Yet, as we shall see, in each case the regime was able to accommodate Islamist forces without creating a radical opposition.

Malaysia. Achieving independence from Great Britain in 1957, Malaysia was left with a challenging situation. The non-Muslim, ethnic Chinese minority, comprising about one third of

the population, controlled the greatest share of economic assets. Muslim native Malays, called the Bumiputra, were a slight majority in the population but primarily lived in poorer, rural communities. The remaining 15% of the population were Indians, including some Muslims. By 1969, tensions between these ethnic groups culminated in riots and anti-Chinese violence.

Providing space for Islamic influence in the regime helped to stabilize the tenuous situation. The immediate agreement between ethnic groups allowed Malays priority in the public employment, influential government jobs and priority at the University. Nevertheless, while this benefited Malay elites, Malay youth were migrating to the cities with high hopes and few skills. As in Egypt, Islamic groups flourished among the urban poor, providing security and spiritual support. The Muslim Youth Movement of Malaysia (ABIM), founded in 1971, grew rapidly, while the more conservative Malaysian Islamic Party (PAS) continued to participate in Parliament but with much less popular support.

Although unrest periodically shook Malaysia in the 1970s, the regime was able to draw upon these Islamic groups to help legitimize and stabilize the regime. A ruling coalition dominated by a Malay party, the United Malay National Organization, formed, promising Islamization. UMNO carefully balanced policies that promoted Islamization for the Muslim population, proclaimed its adherence to secularism, and protected non-Muslim minorities from Islamization policies. It did so first with the support of Islamist groups (first PAS and then ABIM), and promoted by the continued growth of the Malaysian economy.

By the late 1980s, then, the experience of Malaysia contrasted dramatically with that of Egypt. The states' strategies had been quite similar; both had sought to incorporate Islamic groups into the regime and to promote Islamization. Yet, in Egypt the economic crisis and dramatic change in foreign policy had led to increased discontent across all spectrums of society, and the ultimate break between radical Islamists and Sadat. In Malaysia, a much more promising economic situation and less difficult foreign policy allowed the careful balance to remain. The regime faced difficulties and extremist Islamic opposition, but it had managed to control the opposition through a combination of repression and cooptation. Unlike Egypt, Malaysia suggested that secular and Islamist forces could co-exist successfully.

Pakistan. After the secession of Bangladesh in 1971, Pakistan went through a period of crisis that ended with the full incorporation of Islam in the Pakistani regime. Prime Minister Ali Bhutto, who had rallied the Islamic, socialist Pakistan People's Party, whose motto "Socialism,

Islam and Democracy" covered nearly all of the bases, to oppose the regime initially turned toward secular socialism. However, his program of nationalization and agrarian reform served only to provoke an Islamist opposition, the Pakistani National Alliance (PNA),[7] which called for an Islamic state and Shari' a law under the slogan, "Nizam-e-Mustafa" (Social Order of the Prophet.) In return, Bhutto turned by 1977 toward Islamization, replacing "Socialism" with "Egalitarianism of the Prophet," banning alcohol, nightclubs and horseracing, and announcing that he would be installing Shari'a law within six months. Continued violence between the PNA and PPP, as well as clearly rigged elections, had delegitimized Bhutto's government, however. In July 1977, General Zia overthrew the Prime Minister.

General Zia continued the Islamisation of Pakistan's regime. He officially proclaimed Islam the state ideology, examined all laws to assure consistency with the shari'a; introduced an Islamic penal code and reformed education and the economy to conform to Islam. At the same time, he took measures to break the PPP while maintaining the military's dominance over the system. Having secured capitalist forces and the predominant role of Islam, he gained support of Islamist intelligentsia as well as the merchant and middle classes. In short, although the early 1970s was tumultuous, the regime had carefully incorporated Islamic forces into a predominantly military system. Pakistan was not an example of secular-Islamic coexistence, but it was also not one of instability.

Bangladesh. Bangladesh's experience was very similar to Pakistan's. As in Pakistan, the early rule attempted to be secular. Under the rule of Sheik Mujib, who returned to Bangladesh to become the new prime minister in 1972, the regime took an extremely secular character. Indeed, secular forces were happy to see the repression of Islamists. Yet after the overthrow of Mujib in 1975 by Ziaur Rahman (known as Zia), the regime took a less repressive stance toward Islam. The period, however, was bloody – with frequent coups and countercoups lasting until General Ershad succeeded in taking power in 1982. In part because the largely secular forces were eliminated through coup attempts in the previous decade, he was able to incorporate even further the role of Islam into Bangladeshi politics.

Early experiences of political Islam in Asia were thus strikingly different than they were in the MENA. Although there were clearly struggles over the role of Islam in politics, the results were not as significant as they were in the MENA. By the early 1980s, this struggle had led to

[7] The PNA included the Jama'at-e-Islami (JI), the Jamiat-e-Ulema Pakistani (JUP).

very different outcomes in Egypt, Syria, and Iran. Yet, the lesson for secularists in all cases was that Islamist forces were unlikely partners for political reform. In Asia, this lesson was much less clear. Malaysian policies were increasingly Islamic, but non-Muslims were exempted from them. Pakistan and Bangaladesh as well saw incorporation of Islamic policies in military regimes. Although these states experienced intermittent upheavals and unrest, they were considerably less threatening to secularists than their MENA counterparts.

Institutional Responses to Political Islam: the 1980s

The regions thus differed in the states' experiences with political Islam, and by the early 1980s this had resulted in very different institutional structures. States responded to the rise of political Islam with four different strategies: Hegemonic, Islamic Inclusion; Non-Hegemonic, Islamic Inclusion; Islamic Exclusion; and a Neutralism. As shown in Table 7, the MENA cases were particularly likely to create Hegemonic Islamic Inclusion and Islamic Exclusion. In contrast, Asian and Sub-Saharan African cases were more frequently cases of non-Hegemonic Inclusion.

Hegemonic Islamic Inclusion exists when leaders claim Islam as a basis of the regime and exclude all other Islamic voices from political competition. Although monarchies are not identical in the ways in which they use Islam as a political base,[8] they were more likely to claim the sole rights to religious legitimacy. Thus, for instance, in Saudi Arabia the king was the "leader, the imam of the Saudi-Wahhabi community of believers and subordinate only to the Holy Law, the *shari'a*" (Kostiner and Teitelbaum, 2000: 131). Although the family sought to strengthen its position through close relations with the ulama, it did not provide independent political roles for the ulama,or other Islamic organizations. Similar relations existed in other Gulf states and in Morocco. In Morocco, however, it should be noted that although the King refused to allow the emergence of Islamist political parties in the 1980s, he allowed Islamic brotherhoods to maintain social space.

Non-Hegemonic, Islamic Inclusion, or what Daniel Brumberg has called "dissonance," exists when incumbents base part of the regime's legitimacy upon Islam while, at the same time, maintaining space for competing, Islamic forces. For instance, King Husayn based his legitimacy, in part, on his descendence from the prophet. At the same time, however he preserved a role for the Muslim Brotherhood, allowing them not only to remain an open

[8] See Gudrun Kramer (2000). As Michael Hudson noted, the three aspects of religious legitimacy are found in lineage, function and religious authority.

"charitable society" during the closed politics of 1957-1989, but also granting them cabinet positions. Similarly, Senegal granted Islamists a great deal of political space.

It is worth recognizing that even in cases of non-hegemonic inclusion, states curtailed Islamists following the events of the 1970s. For example, Islamic fundamentalists, and particularly the Jam'iyat al-Islah, were strong in the 1960s and early 1970s. An informal alliance, sanctioned by the regime, existed between Shi'a, tribal members, and the Islamic fundamentalists against leftist and liberal forces. In response to support in thwarting the leftists, the Shi'a and tribal members supported legislation aimed at building new mosques, applying shari'a in civil matters, and teaching religions in schools. In 1966, the regime had even allowed the fundamentalists to bulldoze the shrine of al-Khadr, a Wahhabi shrine deemed un-Islamic by fundamentalist forces. This alliance had started to crumble in 1976, however, leading the Sabah's to suspend parliament. When the Shi'a and fundamentalist forces demonstrated in Kuwait following the Iranian revolution, the government dissolved the Jam'iyat, recalled parliament, gerrymandered the electoral districts, and called new elections. Not surprisingly, the Shi'a, fundamentalists, and leftist-liberal forces did considerably less will in 1981 than they had in previous elections.[9] In short, although the nature of Islamic inclusion in Kuwait did not change after 1979, the level of cooperation and inclusion in the system was reduced.

Islamic Exclusion. In contrast, many of the revolutionary, dominant party states that had come to power in the 1950s and 1960s based their legitimacy on socialism and excluded Islamist forces. The Ba'athist regimes of Syria and Iraq and socialist FLN and Neo-Destour in Algeria and Tunisia illustrate this strategy. Even Egypt, however, which informally allowed the Muslim Brotherhood to have some degree of political space in the 1980s is excluded, by this definition, since the regime neither claims religious legitimacy nor formally allows the participation of alternative Islamic groups.

Neutral. Finally, there exist a small number of cases in which the regime does not base its claims to legitimacy on Islam, and at the same time create space for both secular and Islamist groups.

[9] Tribal deputies rose from 22 in 1975 to 27 in 1981. Note – this weakened Islamists in addition to the failure to allow political primaries, through which in 1985 the tribes held primaries but the left/liberal and fundamentalists did not. Shi'a representatives fell from 10 in 1975 to 5 in 1981. See Nicolas Gavrielides , 1987.

Although this paper does not claim to explain the different choices taken in the early 1980s, there are a few potential explanations for the variation. First, monarchies were more likely to use Islamic inclusion strategies than the revolutionary, one-party states. The extent to which Islam could be fully incorporated into the system varied, however. Morocco and Saudi Arabia, both of which had longer histories of rule and had emerged through internal, state formation, may have found it easier to claim exclusive rights over Islamic legitimacy than did Jordan and Kuwait, which were created through a state-formation process driven to a large extent by external forces (i.e., "artificially"). Revolutionary, one-party states, in contrast, were based on socialist frameworks. In large part, these regimes had emerged during the 1950s and 1960s, supported ideologically and in some cases financially by the emerging Soviet bloc. Thus, although these states could not fully ignore the importance of Islam (as the 1973 constitutional riots in Syria demonstrated), they nevertheless emphasized secular legitimacy and excluded Islamist forces.

States within Africa and Asia appear more likely to use strategies of non-hegemonic inclusion. This is perhaps because Islam, as an organized political force, was somewhat weaker in sub-Saharan Africa. Even states in which there were more than 50% Muslim populations had less developed, less centralized Islamic hierarchies than the MENA states. In addition, in many of these states Christianity and paganism served as strong, countervailing forces. In Asia, these factors were further influenced by the fact that it was almost a decade later – in the 1970s – that many of the dominant party states emerged. Unlike the socialist-oriented regime in the MENA, these new regimes recognized the strong force of Islam and were yet fluid enough to incorporate Islam into their political bases. Consequently, the regimes that had emerged in Bangladesh and Pakistan used Islam as a powerful political tool. Unlike the monarchies in the MENA, however, these newly established regimes could not claim a monopoly on Islamic legitimacy.

Leadership Strategies and Regional Lessons: The MENA

The early experiences of political Islam in the MENA, Asia and Africa created very different conditions for potential transitions. In the MENA, leaders were able to instill fear in their secular democratic opponents, claiming that Islamist forces would take advantage of political instability or democratic openings to push for a theocracy. This was possible because, with few exceptions, the states promising liberalization had systematically excluded Islamist competition from the legal political sphere. Secularists in the opposition as well as the regime

were unable to gauge the strength, demands and trustworthiness of Islamist forces. There were reasons, however, to believe Islamists were strong. Generally excluded from power, they had maintained legitimacy as a true opposition to the regime. Furthermore, as the Berlin wall fell and the Soviet Union disintegrated, Islam seemed – for some – the only viable political alternative. For many secular democrats, however, this was a harrowing thought; the specter of the experiences in Egypt, Syria and Iran hung heavily over the region. It would seem even more so by the mid-1990s, after these factors came together to create the Algerian civil war. In contrast, Islamist forces in African and Asian states appeared much less threatening. In many cases, they had been cooperating with the regime and allowed to mobilize openly. Although opponents in Asia and Africa were equally aware of the experiences of the MENA, these lessons seemed much more distant.[10]

Brandishing the Islamist Threat. By the late 1990s, the world appeared on the verge of substantial political change. A number of regimes had already experienced political and economic crises in the previous decades, and some had announced liberalization. The fall of the USSR and dramatic changes in Eastern Europe further increased the expectations for change.

However, the Islamic world generally differed from the other regions experiencing such change. For most regions, the decline of communist and leftist forces left only "one game in town." Democracy appeared to have defeated its rival ideology. Yet, in the MENA and the rest of the Islamic world, secular democrats faced a second rival: radical, political Islam. It was not a foregone conclusion that democratic forces would emerge in a new order.

Within the Islamic world, the relative strength of Islamic and democratic forces also varied. In the MENA, the prior experiences with Egypt, Iran and, to a lesser extent, Syria had demonstrated the potential force of political Islam. This gave political leaders in the MENA a powerful tool to use in preserving their regime: they strove to drive a wedge between Islamist and secular opponents. Although the rest of the world had witnessed these experiences as well, the fear of Islam did not resonate as strongly there as it did in the MENA.

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[10] I am not passing judgment on whether elites truly feared political Islam or created the perception of an Islamic threat for purely instrumental purposes. I am also not concerned with the accuracy of their opponents' perceptions. Rather, what I claim only that the recent history of the MENA – both in providing examples of violent and repressive Islamist forces and in creating few opportunities for Islamists and secularists to interact – thwarted liberalization in the region.

Before examining the incumbents' use of political Islam, it is important to recognize why the experiences of Egypt, Syria, and Iran resonated so strongly in the MENA. The emergence of the Ottoman Empire, which eventually spread from the Gulf to North Africa, lasting nearly 600 years, had created common identity among the people. The strength of Ottoman rule had varied across time and differed across regions, but it provided the basis for an identity spreading from the Gulf through North Africa. This identity was further strengthened – rather ironically – with the emergence of 'Abd al-Nasser.[11] Where pan-Arabism and post-Ottoman rule has provided a weaker link, Islam remains an important force. Thus, the experiences of Iran resonated strongly despite the fact that Iran is neither Arab nor was it part of the Ottoman Empire.

The fear of political Islam was also considerably stronger in the MENA than it was in Africa and Asia because Islamist forces had been largely excluded in the MENA. In monarchies, Islam was considered an important base of the regime; however, in most cases the monarchy also claimed to be the sole, legitimate representative. The one-party states, in contrast, sought to exclude Islam as a basis of the regime. Unlike similar regimes formed in Asia and Africa during the 1970s, these regimes had formed in the 1950s and 1960s, when secular socialism was a dominant ideology. Thus, unlike their Asian counterparts that sought to emphasize the Islamization of the regime, the forces of political Islam remained illegal. (The major exception, of course, was Sadat's ill-fated turn toward Islamist support.) Again, this strategy had contrasted sharply with the Asian cases in which military regimes relied upon Islam as a basis of support and yet, unlike monarchies, did not claim the monopoly on religious legitimacy.

These strategies had several implications. By the 1990s, it was difficult to ascertain the strength of political Islam in the MENA. It was, of course, impossible to determine the oppositions' strength through membership rolls, participation at rallies or other public events. It was also impossible to rely upon estimates or understanding of their strength nearly a decade earlier in estimating their current strength. The strong decline of the left in the international arena and the incumbent elites' identification with the left seemingly left one major political force – radical Islam, but the extent of its support was unclear.

[11] That Nasser comes to champion Arab nationalism is ironic because Egypt had long seen itself as unique in the Arab world. After the rise of Muhammed Ali, himself a non-Arab, Egypt was granted independence from the Ottoman Empire. Muhammed Ali's heirs would reign over the monarchy until 1952, when Nasser overthrew the last of his reigning descendents.

The exclusion of Islamists had also exacerbated the concern over Islamic radicalism. On the one hand, there is evidence that Islamists, and other movements, become more radical through repression. That Islamists with radical demands existed, and indeed had become stronger, was likely. Furthermore, excluded, radical opponents often use violent methods to demonstrate their strength. Fadlallah ("Interview," 2002: 83) argues: "Why is there terrorism in Egypt? Because, Egypt did not allow the Islamists, who constitute a broad social current, any freedom of political action. This was especially the case with the Muslim Brothers, who represent a moderate force. Had the government granted them a right to political action, as it did the Nasirists and the National Party, it would have been possible for them to counter [the radical movements.]" Finally, in any movement, leaders have a rhetoric in which they engage to mobilize their hard-line supporters, and they have rhetoric in which they engage the political establishment. Thus, where the level of knowledge about Islamic movements was low, secularists saw the rhetoric used to mobilize hard-line Islamists as representing the "true" intentions of Islamist movements.[12]

This led to distrust and fear, even among secular opposition elites. In most cases, the low level of communication between Islamist and secular forces led secularists to question the extent to which Islamists would commit to democracy. This was not as much the case in Jordan, where secularists and Islamists participated in the political system. However, in much of the MENA, the low level of communication between secularists and Islamists exacerbated the fear of political Islam. True, even in states where Islamists were formally excluded from the political system, there was some "backdoor" communication between these forces. However, even in these cases, secularists raised two questions: to what extent were Islamists committed to their professed respect for democracy? And, to what extent were the moderate Islamists, with whom they communicated, representative of the dominant and strongest Islamist forces?

Incumbents took advantage of this fear, contrasting the threat of a radical Islamic regime against the security of the status quo. They did so outright – referring to the Iranian revolution and then the fear of an Algerian experience. They also did so by casting doubt on the more moderate Islamist forces. For example, the Egyptian government would refer to the Muslim Brotherhood as the moderate cover of radical Islamists. International forces also exacerbated

[12] It should be noted, this is not significantly different than the dynamics that exist between Israeli and Palestinian forces.

these trends. The concern – which sometimes reached a feverish pitch in regards to the Middle East – was the radical Islamists would destroy hopes of democracy and stability in the MENA.[13]

The result was that exclusion, and the concern over radical Islam, only further weakened the opposition forces. The fear of radical Islam drove a wedge between Islamist and secular, democratic forces. Where the state had constructed formal institutional barriers, allowing secular opponents to participate in the formal system while excluding Islamists, this barrier was even higher. Coalitions between secular and Islamist forces were difficult to form and sustain.

The division between secularist and Islamist forces also stimulated splits among secularists and Islamists. Debates among secularists often led to splits among the elites and weakening the movements. Secularist opponents often vehemently disagreed about the potential threat of working with Islamist forces, as well as the threat from destabilizing the system. Similarly, although it appears to a lesser extent, Islamists were divided among those who sought to cooperate with secularists and seek inclusion into the system and those who eschewed this strategy.

These dynamics led to the extraordinary weakness of opposition forces in the MENA. Islamists were often forced to operate on the fringes of the system. Although they gained strength throughout the 1990s, the repression served to inhibit their ability to demand political reform. Secularists were more frequently included, but the fear of political Islam led them to accept the status quo. This was particularly true after the Algerian crisis of 1991 and during the ensuing civil war. As one Moroccan intellectual explained, "We look to Algeria and Iran and know that we are much better off" (Interview, 1995). Similarly, an Egyptian secularist argued in regards to the 1992 Algerian coup, "when faced by a choice between FIS's Ali Belhadj and General Khaled Nezzar, I chose the general" (Brumberg, 2002b: 111).

Experiences Outside the MENA

Although democratization did not proceed unencumbered in Asia and Africa, a brief look at these experiences demonstrates that the lack of fear between Islamist and secularist forces was a major force facilitating liberalization. In Asia, where regimes had claimed Islam as a basis of

[13] This, of course, had a significant impact on US response toward Algeria. See John Voll, "Sultans, Saints and Presidents: The Islamic Community and States in North Africa," Islam, Democracy and the State in North Africa,, 1-16.

the regime, political Islam was neither an unknown force nor the only viable opposition to the incumbent regime. Consequently, for example, in Bangladesh after the fall of Ershad, the Islamist party did in fact worse than the secular opposition. In Asia, similarly, radical political Islam had not become a major force. Thus, although Islamist and secularist parties both competed in the Senegalese elections, Islamist forces were not considered a threat. Islamists were well-known forces – with the same political disadvantages and blemished records as their secularist counterparts. The regime could not use the threat of Islamists to drive a wedge between its opponents, and the opposition pressed for continued political change.

Conclusion: Prospects for the MENA

Does this mean, then, that the failure of democratization is inevitable in the MENA? There are several reasons to believe that the answer to this question is "no." First, although relationships have been rocky and fraught with setbacks, there has been continued and growing communication between Islamists and secularists in the MENA states. This has helped to foster, and been fostered by, the inclusion of moderate Islamist parties in the political system of such states as Morocco and Egypt. As the communication between these parties continues to grow, they are likely to join in concert to press for greater democratization. Furthermore, if current obituaries of radical Islamist movements are correct (i.e., Roy, Kepel), Islam will become an increasingly less compelling force (at least in domestic politics). This too may help to press democratization, not because the Islamists are resistant to democracy but because the fear of wall between Islamists and secularists is breaking down. In another decade, the bogeyman of radical Islam is unlikely to be a strong force. Then, regimes will have to turn to new strategies if they are to remain in power.

Table 1: Number and Percentage of Regimes, by Region: 2001.[14]

Region (total number of countries in region)	Liberal Democracy Number (% in Region)	Electoral Democracy	Ambiguous Regimes	Competitive Electoral Authoritarian	Hegemonic Electoral Authoritarian	Politically Closed Authoritarian
W. Democracies (28)	28 (100))	0	0	0	0	0
Postcommunist States (27)	11 (40.7)	3 (11.1)	4 (14.8)	3 (11.1)	5 (18.5)	1 (3.7)
Latin America and Caribbean (33)[15]	17/9 (51.5/27.3)	10 (30.3)	3 (9)	2 (6)	0 (0)	1 (3)
Asia (25)	3 (12)	7 (28)	1 (4)	2 (8)	4 (16)	8 (32)
Pacific Islands[16] (12)	8/0 (66/0)	2 (16.7)	2 (16.7)	0 (0)	0 (0)	0 (0)
Subsaharan Africa (48)	5 (10.4)	9 (18.8)	6 (12.5)	11 (22.9)	10 (20.8)	7 (14.6)
MENA (19)	1 (5.3)	0 (0)	1 (5.3)	3 (15.9)	6 (31.6)	8 (42.1)

Table 2: Change in Political and Civil Liberties (1985-2000)

Region	Move Toward Freedom (+2 pts, > 2 years)[17] Number of Countries (% of Countries in Region)	Move Away From Freedom (-2 pts, > 2 years) Number of Countries (% of Countries in Region)	Movement and Retreat (+ and – 2 pts, > 2 years.) Number of Countries (% of Countries in Region)	Not Free and No Considerable Change (< +/-2 pts, > 2 years Number of Countries (% of Countries in Region)	Less Free[18] and No considerable Change (< +/-2 pts, > 2 years) Number of Countries (% of Countries in Region)	Liberal[19] and No Considerable Change (< +/-2 pts, > 2 years) Number of Countries (% of Countries in Region)
Western Democracies						27 (100%)
Postcommunist States	11 (40.7)	1 (3.7)	1 (3.7)	8 (29.6)	4 (14.8)	2 (7.4)
Latin America and Caribbean	4 (14.8)	4 (14.8)	2 (7.4)	2 (7.4)	4 (14.8)	17 (63)
Asia	5 (20.8)	3 (12.5)	4 (16.7)	8 (33.3)	3 (12.5)	1 (4.2)
Pacific Islands	1 (12.5)		1 (12.5)			6 (75)

[14] Adapted from Larry Diamond, Classification of Regimes at the End of 2001.
[15] Includes 8 Island states – alternative % are given in which the islands are excluded.
[16] Includes 8 islands- alternative numbers given in which the islands are excluded.
[17] Represents a change in at least 2 points for one indicator, while the second indicator moves in the same direction or remains stable.
[18] FH > 2
[19] FH < 2

Africa (Sub-Sahara)	18 (36.7)	1 (2.0)	12 (24.5)	15 (30.6)	2 (4.1)	1 (2.0)
Middle East/North Africa		2 (10.5)	3 (15.8)	12 (63.2)	1 (5.3)	1 (5.3)

Table 4: Regime Types Classifications at End of 2001 of Countries with Majority Muslim Populations

Liberal Democracy	Electoral Democracy	Ambiguous Regime	Competitive Authoritarian	Hegemonic Electoral Authoritarian	Politically Closed Authoritarian
	Albania (75) Bangladesh (85) Mali (90) Niger (91) Senegal (95)	Djibouti (94) Indonesia*(95) Nigeria (75) Sierra Leone (65) Tanzania (65) ***Turkey (99.8)***	Cameroon*(55) Cent. African. Republic* (55) Cote d'Ivoire (60) Ethiopia (65) The Gambia (90) Guinea-Bissau (70) ***Iran* (99)*** ***Lebanon (70)*** Malaysia* (52) ***Yemen* (99)***	***Algeria* (99)*** Azerbaijan (93.4) Burkina Faso (50) Chad (85) Comoros (86) ***Egypt (94)*** Guinea (95) ***Jordan* (95)*** Kazakhstan (51) Kyrgyzstan*(76) Maldives (100) Mauritania (100) ***Morocco* (99)*** Pakistan (97) Tajikistan (85) ***Tunisia (98)*** Uzbekistan (88)	Afghanistan (100) ***Bahrain* (100)*** Brunei* (63) Eritrea (80) ***Iraq* (97)*** ***Kuwait* (89)*** ***Libya* (100)*** ***Oman* (100)*** ***Qatar* (100)*** ***Saudi Arabia* (100)*** Somalia (100) **Sudan (85)** ***Syria* (90)*** Turkmenistan (87) ***UAE* (96)***

Note: * represents states which are either oil or mineral reliant, as measured by the value of nonfuel mineral exports divided by GDP. MENA states are marked in bold, italics; Percentage of Population Muslim is placed in parentheses.

Source: Regime Classification from Larry Diamond, Table 2; Percentage Population Muslim from Muslim Education Trust organization and CIA Factbook, compiled by Islamic Web (available at http://islamicweb.com/begin/population.htm); Oil and mineral reliance is based on World Bank figures, cited in Michael Ross, "Does Oil Hinder Democracy?")

Table 5: Regime Types Classifications at End of 2001 of Countries with Majority Muslim Populations

FH 2,3	FH 3-4	FH 4-5	FH 5,6	FH 6,6	FH 6,7
Mali (2,3)	Albania (3,4) Bangladesh (3,4) Niger (4,4) Senegal (3,4) Indonesia*(3,4)	Djibouti (4,5) Nigeria (4,5) Sierra Leone (4,5) Tanzania (4,4) ***Turkey (4,5)*** C. Af Rep (4,5) Cote d'Ivoire (5,4) The Gambia (5,5) Guinea-Bissau (4,5)	Ethiopia (5,6) ***Lebanon (6,5)*** ***Algeria* (5,6)*** Azerbaijan (6,5) Chad (6,5) Comoros (6,4) Guinea (6,5) Kazakhstan (6,5) Krygyzstan*(6,5) Pakistan (6,5) ***Tunisia (6,5)***	Cameroon*(6,6) ***Iran* (6,6)*** ***Yemen* (6,6)*** ***Egypt (6,6)*** Tajikistan (6,6) ***Qatar* (6,6)***	Uzbekistan (7,6) Afghanistan (NA) Brunei* (7,5) Eritrea (7,6) ***Iraq* (7,7)*** ***Libya* (7,7)*** ***Saudi Arabia* (7,7)*** Somalia (6,7)

		Malaysia* (5,5) Burkina Faso (4,4) ***Jordan* (5,5)*** Mauritania (5,5) ***Morocco* (5,5)*** ***Kuwait* (4,5)***	***Bahrain* (6,5*** ***Oman* (6,5))*** ***UAE* (6, 5)***		Sudan (7,7) ***Syria* (7,7)*** Turkmenistan (7,7)

Table 7. MENA Involvement in Conflict

Country	Years involved in Internal Conflict (Number of Separate Rivals)	Years Involved in Interstate Conflict	Years Involved in Conflict with Israel	Frontline State?
Egypt	1992-1998 (4) 6 years	1948-49 (vs. Israel); 1951-52 (vs UK); 1956 (vs. Israel, France and UK); 1967, 1969-1970, 1973 (vs. Israel)	7 years	Yes
Iran	1946, 1966-68, 1979-80, 1981, 1982, 1983-88, 1990, 1991-1993, 2001. (5)	1974, 1980-1988 (vs. Iraq)	0 years	No
Iraq	1958, 1959, 1961-1970, 1973-1993 (6)	1948-49 (vs. Israel); 1974, 1980-1988 (vs. Iraq); 1990-1991 (vs. Kuwait);	2 years	No
Jordan	1970-1971[20]	1948-49 (vs. Israel), 1967 (vs. Israel)	3 years	Yes
Kuwait		1948-49 (vs. Israel); 1990-1991 (vs. Iraq)	2 years	No
Oman	1957 (1)	1972-1975 (vs. S. Yemen)		No
Saudi Arabia	1979 (1,1)			No
Syria	1966, 1979-1981, 1982 (2)	1948-49, 1967, 1973 (vs. Israel); 1975-1990 (involvement in Lebanon, vs. Israel through 1984?)	14 years	Yes
Turkey	1984-2001 (2)			No
Yemen[21]	1948, 1962-1964, 1965-1970, 1972, 1978-1979, 1980-1982, 1986 (4)	1964-1967 (S. Yemen vs. UK); 1972-1975 (S. Yemen vs. Oman)		No

[20] Not included in initial data set.
[21] Data is pooled for North and South Yemen prior to reunification.

Algeria	1992-2001 (5)	1963 (vs. Morocco)		No
Morocco	1971 (1)	1953-56 (vs. France), 1957-58 (vs. Spain), 1975-89 (Mauritania)		No
Tunisia	1980 (1)	*1953-1956 (vs. France)*, 1961 (vs, France)		No

Table 3: Popular Support for Democracy

Country, Year (FH in 2001)	Attitude toward Democracy Index[22]	Democracy is always best, even when things don't work[23]	Democracy Always Preferable	Sometimes Authoritarianism is Preferable	It Doesn't Matter to People Like Me
Asia					
Taiwan, 1988 (1,2)			54	12	17
Korea, 1999			55	30	15
(2,2) 1998			54	31	15
1997			69	20	11
1996			65	17	10
Europe					
Spain, 1995			79	9	8
(1,1) 1992			78	9	7
1985			70	10	9
Portugal, 1992			83	9	4
(1,1) 1985			61	9	7
Greece, 1992			91	4	3
(1,1) 1985			87	5	6
Latin America					
Latin America Average					
2000			60	17	17
1996			61	17	17
Costa Rica, 2000			83	7	
(1,2) 1996			80	6	
Uruguay, 2000			84	9	6
(1,1) 1996			80	9	8
Argentina, 2000			71	16	11
(2,3) 1996			71	15	11
Chile, 2000			57	19	22
(2,2) 1996			54	19	23
Brazil, 2000			39	24	28
(3,3) 1996			50	24	21
Paraguay, 2000			48	39	13
(4,3) 1996			59	26	13
Venezuela, 2000			61	24	10
(3,5) 1996			62	19	13
Colombia, 2000			50	23	20
(4,4) 1996			60	20	18
Sub Saharan Africa					
Botswana, 2000 (2,2)		65	82		

[22] This is an additive index compiled from WVS questions: Having a democratic government in this country is (very good, fairly good, bad) and "

[23] This question is used in African survey only.

Zimbabwe, 2000 (6,6)		74	71		
Zambia, 2000 (5,4)		54	74		
Malawi, 2000 (4,3)		59	66		
Lesotho, 2000 (4,4)		34	39		
Namibia, 2000 (2,3)		43	58		
Middle East and North Africa					
Egypt, 2000-1 Very Favorable Favorable Somewhat Favorable Not Favorable	 52.1 45.7 1.6 .6				
Morocco, 2001 Very Favorable Favorable Somewhat Favorable Not Favorable	 71.6 24.0 2.7 1.7				
Algeria, 200X Very Favorable Favorable Somewhat Favorable Not Favorable	 41.4 47.3 5.6 5.7				
Jordan, 2001 Very Favorable Favorable Somewhat Favorable Not Favorable	 28.6 61.0 7.9 2.5				

Source: Compiled from Latinobarometro and Afrobarometer data by Larry Diamond, "How people view democracy: Findings from public opinion surveys in four regions," Paper presented to Stanford Seminar on Democratization, January 11, 2001 (available at XXX). Tables 5, 9. Middle East data compiled from World Value Surveys by Mark Tessler, "Do Islamic orientations influence attitudes toward democracy in the Arab world? Evidence from Egypt, Jordan, Morocco and Algeria." Unpublished manuscript available at http://www.worldvaluessurvey.org/library/index.html.

Table 7: Examples of State Strategies Toward Political Islam, the 1980s.

Hegemonic Islamic Inclusion	Non-Hegemonic Islamic Inclusion	Islamic Exclusion	Neutral
Morocco[24] Saudi Oman Qatar UAE Bahrain	Bangladesh Senegal? Malaysia Jordan Kuwait Iran (?)	Algeria Tunisia Iraq Syria Egypt Mali Albania	Lebanon

[24] Morocco was hegemonic in relation to the specific political space and role accorded Islamists. Islamic parties were illegal in the 1980s. However, a range of brotherhoods, etc. are given the opportunity to mobilize.

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