

ORIENT

Deutsche Zeitschrift für Politik, Wirtschaft und Kultur des Orients
German Journal for Politics, Economics and Culture of the Middle East

Herausgegeben vom Deutschen Orient-Institut in Berlin

gegründet vom Nah- und Mittelost-Verein

Focus: Transformation Processes in the Arab world



Professor Madawi Al-Rasheed

Saudi Arabia:
Women in an authoritarian state

Dr. Youcef Bouandel and Dr. Larbi Sadiki

The 'Arab Spring' in the Maghreb:
Lessons and Prospects

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Democracy & Political Islam

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Fighting and martyrdom in Islamic tradition and its use
by modern jihadist groups

Deutsche Orient-Stiftung/German Orient-Foundation
-Deutsches Orient-Institut/German Orient-Institute-

gegründet / founded by NUMOV 1960

III / 2013
54. Jahrgang

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Editorial

Dear readers of **ORIENT**,

Since early 2011, the protests and rebellions in Tunisia and Egypt have initiated in many countries of the Arab world radical changes and transformation processes. Starting with the fall of Ben Ali's authoritarian regime in Tunisia, the 'Arab Uprisings' had impacts on almost all societies in North Africa and the Middle East. The predominance of authoritarian rule has been overcome or at least challenged. The future outcome of these popular uprisings remains yet to be seen, however, the dynamic change of political systems as well as the struggle for new developments with regards to religion, economy and gender relations are affecting huge parts of Arab societies. On the one hand, Salafi religious groups and Islamist movements such as the Muslim Brotherhood have become influential powers in politics and are dominating the political-religious discourse to a large extent. Often described as ultraconservative forces which are seeking to reverse a secularisation and modernisation process, these forces cannot be underestimated within the political landscape of the transition process. On the other hand, several social groups, mostly well educated young urban elites are focusing on gender relations, modernisation and democratisation. In a nutshell, the Arab world is heterogeneous and full of diverse social, political and religious movements. The contributions of the present issue of **ORIENT** will analyse this multidimensional diversity to show the numerous religious and social developments which the region has been facing in recent years.

In this regard, **Madawi Al-Rasheed** focuses on Saudi Arabia, which is often perceived as "a solid rock in a stormy sea". However, as Al-Rasheed points out, Saudi women demand more equality and put the authoritarian state and the traditional gender segregation under pressure. From an optimistic point of view, **Yucef Bouandel** and **Larbi Sadiki** are dealing with the different effects that the so-called 'Arab Spring' have had on the three Maghreb countries Algeria, Tunisia and Morocco. **Rachid Quaiassa** sheds light on the Islamists in Algeria. In their article, **Francesco Cavatorta** and **Fabio Merone** examine the emergence of Tunisian Salafism. **Richard Gauvain** seeks to explain why Egyptian Salafism has been widely neglected by the academic research up to this day. Using a quasi-deconstructionist approach, **Larbi Sadiki** analyses political Islamism and democracy. **Michael Rohschürmann's** contribution explains how Jihadists make use of Islamic tradition and provides a detailed insight into the Jihadist concepts of martyrdom and fighting.

I hope that this issue can clarify some of the often misinterpreted and controversial social, political and economic developments within the Near and Middle East and gives the readers a better understanding of the transformation and transition processes which are currently taking place in the region.

With my best wishes



Dr. Gunter Mulack
Director of the German Orient-Institute

Content

Abstracts	4
ARTICLES	
Professor Madawi Al-Rasheed Saudi Arabia: Women in an authoritarian state.....	6
Dr. Youcef Bouandel and Dr. Larbi Sadiki The 'Arab Spring' in the Maghreb: Lessons and Prospects	12
Professor Dr. Rachid Ouaiassa The Islamist parties in power: The Algerian experience	25
Francesco Cavatorta and Fabio Merone Tunisian Salafism between institutional politics, <i>dawa</i> and jihadism.....	30
Dr. Richard Gauvain Egyptian Salafism as a Problematic for Islamic and Middle Eastern Studies	35
Dr. Larbi Sadiki Beyond Foundationalism: Democracy & Political Islam	47
Dr. Michael Rohschürmann Fighting and martyrdom in Islamic tradition and its use by modern jihadist groups.....	60
REVIEWS	
Cengiz Günay Geschichte der Türkei: Von den Anfängen der Moderne bis heute	69
Tobias Lang Die Drusen in Libanon und Israel. Geschichte, Konflikte und Loyalitäten einer religiösen Gemeinschaft in zwei Staaten.....	73
Larbi Sadiki Rethinking Arab Democratization: Elections Without Democracy	75
Marc Lynch The Arab Uprising. The Unfinished Revolutions of the New Middle East	78
Asef Bayat Leben als Politik: Wie ganz normale Leute den Nahen Osten verändern	82
Christoph Marcinkowski: Shi'ite Identities: Community and Culture in Changing Social Contexts	86
Hans Jansen: Muhammad – Eine Biographie	89
New Publications	93
Events	95
Authors	96
Board / Board of Trustees	98
Imprint	99

Abstracts

Professor Madawi Al-Rasheed

Saudi Arabia: Women in an authoritarian state

So far Saudi Arabia has not witnessed the same level of mobilisation that swept the Arab world since 2011. However, this article argues that Saudi women have intensified their demands for gender equality and joined men in calling for denied rights. From campaigns to lift the ban on driving to supporting the cause of political prisoners, they are beginning to question the conditions of exclusion imposed on them by an authoritarian state. This has intensified the state's willingness to co-opt women and grant them limited representation. The state is now forced to reach out to women in order to appear less masculine. In this changed context, the king has shifted the legitimacy of the ruling family to a new level, seeking to feminise the authoritarian masculine state.

Dr. Youcef Bouandel and Dr. Larbi Sadiki

The 'Arab Spring' in the Maghreb: Lessons and Prospects

How is the 'Arab Spring' translated in terms of 'reform' in Algeria, Morocco and Tunisia? This is the key question this article attempts to address. The three Maghrebi countries have adapted to the 'Arab Spring' using different approaches. In practice, the form of democratization that has resulted from coming to terms with varies both in substance and long-term effects. This makes the task of classifying 'Arab Spring' reforms both more difficult, but necessary. Elections or constitution-making, usually taken to be hallmarks of democratisation, do not necessarily mean the 'Arab Spring' is fully embraced. In being so, this is particularly applicable to Tunisia, the birthplace of the 'Arab Spring'. In Morocco elections and constitutional amendments are used as tools of 'containment' – a middle road, neither totally for nor against the 'Arab Spring'. And yet in Algeria, there is a totally different approach, mostly hostile to the 'Arab Spring'.

Professor Dr. Rachid Ouaiassa

The Islamist parties in power: The Algerian experience

One of the results of the 'Arab Spring' is the rise of moderate Islamists being elected into government in many Arab states. This success story has not been repeated in Algeria. On the contrary, the past election for the country's national assembly on 10 May 2012 resulted in significant losses for the moderate Islamist parties like the MSP (Movement of the Society for Peace) which had been part of the ruling coalition since 1996.

Dr. Francesco Cavatorta and Fabio Merone

Tunisian Salafism between institutional politics, *dawa* and jihadism

The article examines the emergence of Tunisian Salafism in the aftermath of the fall of the Ben Ali regime and analyses its impact on the on-going process of democratization. Building on primary sources and original field work, the article looks at the challenge that Salafism represents for a successful outcome of the Tunisian transition to democracy, while arguing that its internal complexity and differences should also be highlighted. The Tunisian transition is a unique laboratory of political dynamics in the Arab world and the way in which Salafism interacts with other political and social actors influences both its ideological tenets and strategies.

Dr. Richard Gauvain

Egyptian Salafism as Problematic for Islamic and Middle Eastern Studies

The phenomenon of "global Salafism," as distinct from "Islamism," or "Political Islam," was only recognized by Western scholars comparatively recently. Over the last ten years,

these scholars have laid the foundations for the study of Salafism as a cohesive ideological movement with members from across the Muslim world. It is now understood that, despite the wide range of political and theological views contained within these, a shared understanding of Muslim history, methodological approaches, and preferred classical scholars characterizes most, if not all Salafi environments, regardless of their geographical locations. Ethnographically detailed, historically sensitive studies on Salafism have now been carried out in several countries.

Strangely, despite the strong Salafi presence in Egypt's post-'Arab Spring' political landscape, Egypt is not one of these. At a time when the need to understand the workings of Salafism, in both local and transnational guises, seems increasingly urgent, this article pauses to ask why this process of reflection has taken so long to develop. Several concrete reasons for Western scholarship's apparent myopia in the context of Salafism, both general and specific to Egypt, are here identified. The article concludes by drawing attention to some of the potential benefits of incorporating Salafi ideas and figures into contemporary Western Middle Eastern Studies curriculae and research programs.

Dr. Larbi Sadiki

Beyond Foundationalism: Democracy & Political Islam

The analysis attempts to a twofold line of inquiry. Firstly, it briefly seeks to navigate the vast terrain of political Islam, using a quasi deconstructionist approach. This is vital for a firmer grasp of a semantically and discursively complex field stamped by Orientalist constructions. However, in the post-9/11 moment, 'East' and 'West' seem more than ever before to view each other through prisms of hubris and mutual exclusion.

The discourse on Islamists and democracy must be situated within this context. Secondly the essay tries to assess hidden discourses of renewal from within the abode of Islam. Specifically, it examines Islamist thought and practice of democracy, with special reference to political parties in Arab Spring countries. This exercise aims to display examples of the new dynamism and diversity within political Islam in relation to democracy. The aim is to contextualize Islamism within existing discourses. Only thus can a firm grasp be obtained of the polemics and the shifts surrounding and happening within political Islam, especially post-9/11.

Dr. Michael Rohschürmann

Fighting and martyrdom in Islamic tradition and its use by modern jihadist groups

This essay will take into account how Jihadist groups make use of Islamic tradition and theology and will argue that Jihadism does not exploit, corrupt or misuse Islam, but that it is a specific interpretation of religion like other phenomena in Islamic history – especially the early Islamic history. In their argumentations they ignore certain aspects of Islamic history and tradition but this is true for all Islamic communities of commemoration. Using the theory of cultural memory allows us to understand that the selection of figures of commemoration must necessarily be shaped by the present, based on the social context. This implies that there is no authentic or true memory or faith.

Both are shaped and reshaped by the historical situation of the believers and the way these believers see themselves. Refuting some common arguments this essay will also argue that no influences of Shiite concepts of martyrdom but similar political and social situations have to be seen as the base of the modern Sunni Jihadist concept of fighting and martyrdom. Neither Shia nor Sunni martyrologies have digressed themselves from the discourses of the prophetic community, which provides both with role models for passive suffering, as well as for an active search of martyrdom.

Professor Madawi Al-Rasheed

Saudi Arabia:

Women in an authoritarian state

The so-called 'Arab Spring' of 2011 succeeded in removing four Arab presidents: in Tunisia, Egypt, Yemen and Libya. In the first two cases, young, electronically connected men and women kept the crowds in large cities chanting *al-Sha'b yurid isqat al-nitham* ('the people want the overthrow of the regime'). This leaderless movement spread across the Arab world, from Egypt and Tunisia to Libya, Syria, Yemen, Kuwait, Oman, Bahrain and most recently Iraq. In the Arabian Peninsula, dormant Oman, volatile Yemen, vibrant Kuwait, and divided Bahrain witnessed similar protest, in which women of different political and religious persuasions participated across the region. They joined crowds, chanted slogans, and composed inflammatory poetry in support of dignity, equality and the freedom from need and political oppression. They voiced no specific gender demands, but their participation reflected a large female engagement with national issues. Middle-class Western-educated women, heavily veiled Islamist activists, feminists, and working-class mothers assembled in public squares and demanded the overthrow of dictatorships or the reform of regimes.

The Saudi regime felt nervous as a result of this tide of historical change sweeping neighbouring countries. It offered refuge to Tunisian president Zein al-Abdin bin Ali and supported Egypt's Hosni Mubarak until the last minute. Within the Arabian Peninsula, it fearfully watched the Yemeni and Bahraini revolutions close to home. In Bahrain, 14th February 2011 marked the beginning of a mass protest movement calling for serious political change. With Bahrain's Shia majority closely connected to the Saudi Eastern Province population, Bahrain was simply too close to be left to pursue its own destiny and aspirations for real democracy and inclusive politics. The Saudi state immediately dispatched a military force under the umbrella of the Gulf Cooperation Council

(GCC) to suppress the protest movement and help the Sunni Al-Khalifa ruling family to regain power, sweeping protestors from Manama's Pearl Square and instigating mass arrest of protesters and activists. Saudi Arabia could not tolerate political change that may have led to the overthrow of a neighbouring monarchy with close kinship ties to the Saudi ruling family. Bahraini women were active in the protest, leading women's marches, addressing crowds denouncing the regime, providing logistical support, and caring for injured protestors in the streets and hospitals of Bahrain. As women were integral to the Bahrain protest movement, they too became victims. Ayat al-Qurmazi, a young teacher who composed inflammatory poetry denouncing the Bahraini king, delivering the message to gathered protestors, was put in prison for violating a taboo and tarnishing the reputation of Bahrain's ruler.¹ Daughters of imprisoned and exiled activists and human right defenders from the Khawaja, Rajab and Shihabi families, all with a long history of activism, continued the struggle as they took to the streets. The protestors were removed from the centre of Manama and retreated to their own villages as they had done in the past. A veneer of calm was quickly established without either the ruling family or the protestors achieving a final victory. The saga of Bahrain is far from resolved, with sporadic protests continuing to erupt daily. The Bahraini pro-democracy movement's denunciation of the Saudi intervention found echoes among the Saudi Shia population, only 16 kilometres across King Fahd's causeway. Saudi Shia women participated in marches, calling for the release of political prisoners.

In Oman, the Saudis kept their distance while offering financial support and solidarity to the Omani ruling dynasty. In Yemen, the uprising remains difficult to contain, with Saudi Arabia trying to push

¹ 'Bahrain: From a New Awakening to a Divided Nation', *The Independent*, 3 August 2011.

for a settlement without great success. Heavily veiled young Yemeni women denounced Saudi interventions as meddling in their nation's affairs. Amidst clashes and bloodshed, the youth of the Arab world felt empowered and determined not to let a generation of older politicians or outside powers sabotage their own mobilisation or impose negotiated settlements that only remove the head of the state, without changing the entrenched regimes of oppression, as in Yemen.

It is this sense of empowerment that led many Saudi women to mobilise, both in the virtual world and on the ground. By March 2011 the Saudi Shia were staging minor protests in Shia-dominated towns such as Qatif, Seyhat, and Awamiyya. Saudi Shiites supported their co-religionists in Bahrain and denounced the violent suppression of the Bahraini pro-democracy movement. Most importantly, they turned their attention to their own grievances against the Saudi regime. The minor demonstrations in March and April 2011 highlighted the plight of Shia political prisoners, some of whom had been in jail for several years. Saudi Shia women became active in evening marches, referred to as Zaynabiyat processions – named after Zaynab, the Prophet's granddaughter and the sister of Hasan and Hussein – in which heavily veiled women marched surrounded by their children in the streets at night, carrying candles. Activists publicised these regular evening marches on *YouTube*, with local and international media channels allowed only limited access to the protestors. Heavy censorship and control over international media operating in Saudi Arabia ensured that such protests were not widely reported.

The problem of political prisoners proved to be a strong mobilising force, at least among relatives of prisoners. In Riyadh, women staged marches towards the Ministry of Interior, asking for the release of their fathers, sons, and husbands, who had been in jail for years without trial. Encouraged by the spectacle of protests across Arab capitals and the mobilisation of newly established independent but not

officially recognised Saudi human rights organisations, women took the opportunity to draw attention to arbitrary detention, torture and abuse of basic human rights. As the regime tightened its grip over activists, many men found themselves in prison, thus leaving women without guardians or breadwinners. It was not uncommon for several men from one family to be rounded up by the regime's security services for expressing political opinions or simply blogging. While official Saudi human rights organisations remained silent on the plight of political prisoners, the Committee for Civil and Political Rights, an unofficial activist organisation, took the lead in publicising individual cases and encouraged relatives of the prisoners to protest and sign petitions demanding the release of prisoners. Female relatives of prisoners lined the streets in front of the Ministry of Interior, carrying signs denouncing arbitrary detention. Several women protestors were held for questioning, after which they were released. Women protesters and their supporters posted video clips of these minor demonstrations on *YouTube*, the most important of which took place in Buraydah between January and April 2013.

In response to the 'Arab Spring', the government announced that the delayed municipal elections, which had been due to take place in 2009, would instead be held in September 2011. To the disappointment of many women, the government insisted that once again women would be excluded from either voting or standing as candidates in this round of minor elections. Many women had hoped that fear of the domino effect of the Arab Spring would prompt the government to introduce more inclusive policies and allow them to participate fully in the elections. They resorted to electronic campaigns: several pages were set up on *Facebook* and *YouTube*, calling on the government to allow women their right to participate in the elections. A small minority of women gathered at the gates of municipality offices and engaged in heated arguments with civil servants, who turned them back

Professor Madawi Al-Rasheed

with apologetic statements. Women activists voiced their anger and reminded officials of King Abdullah's promises to empower women and increase their participation in Saudi society and economy.

The mobilisation of women for elections relied on individual initiatives, carried out by a handful of outspoken women, who staged minor, symbolic protests, whose images found their way to the virtual world. The small number of defiant women who took part in these protests was determined to register their anger and disappointment with a regime that is still far from responding to their demands. The municipal elections themselves were beginning to be seen as increasingly insignificant in the light of the revolutionary spirit that was sweeping the Arab world. The propaganda and enthusiasm that surrounded the 2005 municipal elections could not be reproduced in 2011. Many bloggers and activists announced that they would not register to vote and encouraged others to boycott these insignificant elections given that they excluded half of the population. The government announcement of the election date took place at a time when Arabs in other countries had gone a long way on the path to toppling their own authoritarian regimes. Many Saudi activists saw the limited municipal elections as window-dressing that failed even to include women.

On 25th September 2011, the day of the second municipal elections, King Abdullah announced that women would be appointed to the Consultative Council and would participate in the 2015 municipal elections. Notwithstanding the limitations of the appointed Consultative Council and the half-elected municipalities, many women across Saudi Arabia welcomed the decision as a first step towards increasing their future political participation. Other voices lamented the fact that this decision will only benefit a small minority of women, while the majority continue to

lack civil and political rights. Those who doubted whether the appointment of women to the Consultative Council would improve women's participation cited judge Abd al-Majid al-Luhaidan's decision to subject Shaima Justaniya in Jeddah to ten lashes because she defied the ban on driving.² The king's decision to empower women by appointment and enfranchisement clashed with the reality on the ground. The judicial institutions, appointed by the king, were able to cast a shadow on the political leadership's vision of piecemeal reforms, as the institutions of the state remain patriarchal and dismissive of women's role in society. The contradiction between the king's alleged reforms and the conservatism of the judiciary can only enhance the progressive role of the former and the reactionary position of the latter, thus confirming the state as more enlightened than its many constituencies. The Saudi state is eager to highlight these images in the imagination of its subjects and the international community. When thirty women took their seats in the appointed Consultative Council in 2013, a minor protest by conservative religious scholars simply demonstrated that the Saudi leadership is much more advanced than the religious constituency that it sponsors and supports. The 'women's question', however, remains hostage to this duality and the grand political agenda of the state.³ The Saudi leadership enforces the duality between a progressive leadership and a backward conservative society, thus projecting itself as the only enlightened alternative when it comes to gender equality.

Unemployment among women teachers has become a hot issue since Abdullah became king in 2005. Teachers who had been working for years in adult education centres within programmes for the eradication of illiteracy among women demanded an end to precarious employment contracts. Groups of women

² 'Ten Lashes for a Woman Driver in Jeddah and Arrest of Another in Riyadh', *al-Quds al-Arabi*, 28 September 2011, available at <http://www.alquds.co.uk/index.asp?fname=today\27z492.htm&arc=data\2011\09\09-27\27z492.htm>; 'Saudi Woman to be Lashed for Defying Ban on Driving', *The Guardian*, 28 September 2011, available at <http://www.guardian.co.uk/world/2011/sep/28/saudi-woman-lashed-defying-driving-ban>.

³ Full details of women's mobilization are in Madawi Al-Rasheed *A Most Masculine State: Gender, Politics and Religion in Saudi Arabia*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2013.

appeared at educational administrative centres in the main cities and provincial towns asking for official permanent contracts, as did new graduates seeking employment. Teachers raised signs on which they wrote slogans praising the king and asking officials to implement his policies regarding women's employment. They accused state employees of delaying the king's reforms. They paid homage to the king and put all the blame on minor officials in the civil service. What was initially planned as a mobilisation to demand the right to employment became an occasion to celebrate the king and his promises. Officials prevented women from entering government offices and calmed them down with more promises. Such spectacles of mobilisation create a schism between an enlightened king and a stagnant bureaucracy, with the blame always put on the latter, thus absolving the political leadership of responsibility for any delay or shortcomings. The image of the king as a great reformer tends to be reinforced in the minds of participants and observers of this quasi-mobilisation spectacle. Women protesters appeal to the king as the father of the nation, whose will is simply not finding echoes among his civil servants.

These minor women's protests spread to universities as school leavers found that they were not offered places to study at local universities. Crowds of young girls attacked registration centres and destroyed locked doors. Security guards, often expatriate Asian workers, watched in amazement, unable to stop them. Others used protest to challenge their results in school and university examinations. Echoing the slogans of the Arab Spring, they chanted *al-Sha'ab yurid isqat al-mudira* ('the people demand the fall of the headmistress').

While the 'Arab Spring' seems for the moment to have bypassed Saudi Arabia, it has no doubt left a strong impression, breaking decades of inertia among women. They are no longer satisfied with electronic campaigns. In fact, some of them get together to march to places

where they think solutions can be sought. In this atmosphere of frequent minor protest and peaceful assemblies, the old ban on women driving became the focus of yet another campaign; the first took place in 1990 when professional women staged a driving demonstration in Riyadh. It started again in April 2011 as a *Facebook* page, gathering both Saudi and non-Saudi supporters. Manal al-Sharif, a young mother and computer specialist working in the Saudi oil company in the Eastern Province, led the campaign and designated 17th June 2011 as the day when women in all Saudi cities should stage a driving demonstration. Together with Wajiha al-Howeider, a veteran feminist activist, Manal decided to test the ban and drive a car in Khobar before 17th June. She was accompanied by her brother and al-Howeider. After driving in Khobar for almost an hour, Manal returned safely to her house. She was later detained for questioning and remained in custody for over a week. It transpired that her campaign was more of fensive than the act of driving, from the point of view of the authorities. She was released after she pledged to stop the internet campaign. She was banned from giving interviews to the media. On 17th June, the designated day for the driving demonstration, only thirty or forty women drove their cars in the streets of Riyadh and Jeddah. Security forces did not take the incidents seriously; many women escaped arrest, with only a handful ending up in police stations. The electronic campaign failed to encourage a large number of women to defy the ban and drive their cars. What was most interesting was the counter-campaign, also on *Facebook*, in which men threatened to harm women and beat up those seen behind the wheel on the designated day. Once again the driving campaign split Saudi society, dominating discussion in the public sphere throughout May 2011 and masking more serious issues related to general political reform as well as more specific demands to end arbitrary detention, corruption and unemployment, and provide welfare benefits and housing. Those who opposed lifting the ban on driving assumed that

Professor Madawi Al-Rasheed

they had won the battle against those who are determined to corrupt society, especially women. Officials reiterated that women are banned from driving according to Saudi law. An early generation of women activists who participated in the 1990 driving demonstration in Riyadh expressed their amazement that twenty years later driving remains a hot topic while the rest of the Arab world has moved swiftly into a higher level of political protest. At the time of writing, Saudi women remain banned from driving. However, a selected group of elite women, closely allied with the regime, have now been appointed to the Consultative Council, while the majority of women wait for their participation in municipal elections in 2015 for the first time.

Saudi women were inspired by the images of protest and mobilisation that accompanied the 'Arab Spring'. While the state needs the loyalty of women at this critical moment, women themselves hope to extract more rights under the patronage of the state and the pressures of the on-going 'Arab Spring'. However, gender issues will remain divisive in Saudi society, as they have always been. Real emancipation and equality for women may not be possible without serious movement towards participatory government in which both men and women gain the right to represent themselves and become active in formulating policy. In the short term this may in fact have negative consequences on women as more conservative forces assert their own visions. But in the long term Saudi Arabia cannot continue to exclude women if the country needs their labour. In the past, oil wealth has contributed to excluding women, although it has created some opportunities. The real change will come only when the economy cannot function without them. Today more than ten million foreign workers continue to work in Saudi Arabia. One day the new generation of educated and skilled women will have to replace foreign labour. Only then are women likely to become a powerful pressure group that cannot simply remain a token of the authoritarian state's commitment to either

religious nationalism or modernity. Their real empowerment will become a goal pursued for its own sake rather than for the sake of changing state political agendas.

Weaving the story of Saudi women's exclusion together with religion and politics opens new avenues for contextualising and interpreting why authoritarian states such as Saudi Arabia champion women's causes. While in the past Saudi religious nationalism, namely the fusion of the Wahhabi religious tradition with politics, dictated the position of women and insisted on their seclusion, today the state promotes women's empowerment. The cost of superficially empowering women remains low compared with the high cost of losing international legitimacy, encouraging internal political dissent, and, eventually, revolution. Women's empowerment under King Abdullah coincided with the advent of many new challenges, both internal and external, to the Saudi state. Terrorism, strained relations with the United States – the guarantor of the security of the regime – rising unemployment, an agitated youth bulge, and more recently a changed Arab world where friendly dictators may appear a thing of the past are but a few of the real threats facing the ageing Saudi leadership. And, through both real and virtual mobilisation, women themselves are challenging the state to act on their many grievances. International human rights reports continue to embarrass Saudi Arabia in the global community, not to mention sensational stories about women flogged for driving or victims of rape stoned while their attackers go unpunished. The state can no longer hide behind the rhetoric of Islamic specificity, as many women themselves are aware that neither Islam nor traditional tribal values explain their persistent marginalisation.

In this changed context, the king has shifted the legitimacy of the ruling family to a new level, seeking to feminise the authoritarian masculine state. From the point of view of the state, women are needed as a group in order to fight politi-

cal dissent (by men) and appease the West. The state is playing on women's aspirations and co-opting their mobilisation to achieve new local and external legitimacy. Faced with new mobilisation around several campaigns, from driving to employment rights, as discussed above, it has pre-empted the outcome by patronising women and channelling their activism towards state-controlled objectives. This culminated in promising women the right to vote and to be appointed to state institutions, all announced during the 'Arab Spring'.

Moreover, women's causes do not directly challenge authoritarian rule. When the state decided that its religious nationalism had become a burden on state security and survival, it immediately championed women's causes as a means to defeat those Islamists who challenge it using both peaceful and violent means. It reached out to new liberal and democratic political constituencies, consisting of both men and women who have emerged in the country over the last decade. In this respect, the authoritarian state kills two birds with one woman. It contrasts itself with the radical backward and conservative elements in society while appealing to dissenting liberal voices. As such, the Saudi state has been compelled to champion women's causes to achieve its local and international objectives. Since 2005 King Abdullah has joined past rulers in the Arab and Muslim world in becoming a gender reformer, seeking new legitimacy through the women's question. The king's old age and marginality within the royal circles of power also prompted him to seek new loyal subjects who had been marginalised in the past. Women have proved to be receptive.

If the authoritarian state benefits from championing women's causes, why do women ally themselves with authoritarian patriarchal structures to achieve more rights and visibility while others invite the

state to maintain the status quo? Saudi women have not been able to gain the consensus of their society for their emancipation. In fact, some women resist the idea and seek greater restrictions on what they consider to be threatening their own interest as women. Given such lack of consensus, weak groups, such as liberal women, seek state intervention and protection to avoid reprisals from society. This is compounded by the fact that women are denied the right to organise themselves into an autonomous pressure group. In fact, Saudi Arabia remains one of the countries where civil society is curtailed by a legal system that does not leave great space for non-governmental organisations to operate outside state control. Even women's charities are heavily controlled by the state through extensive princely patronage networks. Saudi women of all persuasions look for the state to increase its policing of men, restrain their excesses and force them to fulfil their obligations and responsibilities towards women. In such a political context, Saudi women are left with limited choices. An authoritarian state proved to be willing to endorse some of their demands, increase their visibility and free them from the many restrictions that they are subjected to. The power of the state and its wealth have proved too good to resist.

The Saudi state is now compelled to espouse its own feminisation. It is not possible to maintain a purely masculine state, continuing to ignore feminine voices. By championing women's causes, the authoritarian Saudi state may in the short term have succeeded in containing an imminent women's revolution. But in the long term Saudi women, like other women in the world, will no doubt try to move beyond state-sponsored feminism and achieve their dream of becoming full citizens. The journey may be long and arduous, but it has certainly started. The voices of the many Saudi women represent light at the end of the tunnel.

Dr. Youcef Bouandel and Dr. Larbi Sadiki
**The 'Arab Spring' in the Maghreb:
 Lessons and Prospects**

I. Introduction

This article looks at the 'Arab Spring' in North Africa. The 'Arab Spring' will be discussed in some detail in Algeria, Tunisia and Morocco respectively. The analysis concludes with an overall assessment of the reforms in these countries, the lessons that can be learnt and the prospects for the region. It can be said that three distinct 'stories' of the 'Arab Spring' have unfolded. This article seeks to tell these stories, especially in terms of the specificity of the reform paths followed in each country.

Since December 2010, the start of the 'Arab Spring', the Maghrebi countries, Algeria, Tunisia and Morocco, have experienced, to varying degrees, some developments that were unthinkable before. The events of Tunisia are certainly the most far reaching, whereas both Morocco and Algeria were compelled to embark on a series of reforms as precautionary measures to pre-empt any potential uprising – the Tunisian, Libyan, Egyptian and/or Yemeni style. It must be stated, however, that such a scenario was never a serious challenge to both Algerian and Moroccan regimes. Despite the similarities between the three countries – authoritarian regimes, corruption, acute economic and social problems – it is indeed the differences that explain the outcomes of the paths that these events had taken place.

In Morocco, there is a general consensus among the population at large on the systemic 'holy trinity' of God, King and Country. The King is referred to as the 'Commander of the Faithful' because of the claim that he is a direct descendent of the Prophet of Islam gives him a quasi-religious legitimacy, that his counterparts in the Maghreb lack. Hence, the King still occupies a distinctive position within the Moroccan political system, and any dis-

sent or questioning of the King's authority is by implication a rejection of Islam and can be considered as treason. The monarchy, which has continued to rule in Morocco for nearly four centuries, is perceived to be a unifying factor for all Moroccans. Hence, unlike their counterparts in the 'Arab Spring' countries, demonstrators in Morocco – as well as those in Jordan for that matter – never called for regime change. In Algeria, one of, if not the richest country in North Africa, the regime is perceived to be more open and 'democratic' by comparison. This has brought the regime a level of legitimacy both inside and outside the country. This perception is the result of the democratization process that was started in the late 1980s. Furthermore, the Algerian political system, referred to locally as *le pouvoir*, can best be described as an 'octopus', having tentacles within the entire system. The head of this *pouvoir* is not really known, and the military is one of the strongest pillars of this regime, since the regime itself is hard to define. Calls to bring it down only timidly murmured in Algeria seemed to be unrealistic. Furthermore, Algerians were traumatized by the atrocities of the civil war in the 1990s and have since then cherished nothing more than social peace. To this day, demonstrations are still feared to lead to violence – something that Algerians have had more than their fair share of.

The Tunisian system, by comparison, lacked any popular legitimacy. President Bin Ali removed former president Bourguiba in a palace coup in November 1987 and has ruled the country with an iron fist ever since. The system and the rife corruption within it were closely linked with Bin Ali, his wife and their respective families and close entourage. However, the popular uprising and the ousting of Bin Ali in January 2011 have produced a dynamic of seismic magnitude, reaching well beyond the tiny Maghreb country's

borders. Political reform within the Tunisian context goes beyond the usual 'patchwork' that marked democratisation prior to the Arab Spring.

II. Algeria's 'Arab Spring': Weathering the Storm

Algeria is the only country in the Arab world that had made significant steps towards ending its authoritarian regime. It did so more than two decades before the 'Arab Spring'. To date, Algeria has not only avoided the violence that characterised 'Arab Spring' countries by introducing new reforms but also provided valuable lessons for the post-'Arab Spring' governments, who can learn from the Algerian experience.

II.1 Contextualising Algeria's 'Arab Spring'

Despite the general consensus that the 'Arab Spring', which marked the quest for democracy in the countries of the Middle East and North Africa (MENA), was launched in Tunisia, Algerians beg to differ. Algerians argue that the first attempt to break away from authoritarianism in the MENA region took place in their country in the late 1980s. According to Dillman, "Algeria to date is the only Arab or Muslim country that has significantly democratized its political system and the only country within an oil-based economy that has abandoned its authoritarianism." (1992:31) Indeed, such was the optimism about Algeria's transition to democracy, that Quandt concluded that it would "not be surprising if Algeria reach[e]d the goal of accountable, representative government in advance of many others in the region". (1998:164).

In the mid-1980s, Algeria shared many characteristics with pre-revolution Tunisia: an acute economic and social crisis coupled with high levels of corruption and the near absence of civil rights and political liberties. Algerians were subjected to *el-hogra* ('the absence of dignity') on a regular basis. On the surface, this sparked the popular uprising in October 1988, sim-

ilar to the one in Tunisia following Boua'zizi's immolation, which led to the beginning of a process of democratization (Boukhobza, 1991). The similarities with Tunisia and indeed with other MENA countries end here. In Algeria, the October riots were not a spontaneous reaction and a 'revolution' to topple the status quo. In an interview with Youcef Bouandel, Abdelhamid Brahimi, Algeria's former Prime Minister (1984-88), he confirmed that the riots should be seen as a struggle of factions within the highest echelons of the regime. There was a marked division between the reformist and conservative wings of the former ruling party, the National Liberation Front (FLN). It was the reformist wing, associated with former President Chadli Bendjedid (1979-1992), that orchestrated these riots to force the liberalization program.¹ Consequently, the authorities embarked on a distribution of roles as some of the conservative elements, perceived to be unpopular and responsible for some of Algeria's problems, were side-lined and new figures brought in. Therefore, a process of liberalisation began in earnest as a series of reforms aimed at opening the political system were introduced: a new constitution was adopted, political parties were legalised, independently-owned newspapers were published, organisations of civil society mushroomed and multiparty elections were held (Bouandel, 2003; Tahi, 1994; Roberts, 1992). It is precisely these developments that led to such optimistic views about the future of Algeria's democracy.

However, it would be a mistake to assume that the reforms were intended for the establishment of a democratic government. The liberalisation process came, as stated above, at a time of severe economic and social crisis in Algeria, and the system's legitimacy was questioned. The reforms served to broaden the system's "support (and) enhance its legitimacy" (Kramer, 2001, 202) and to silence its critics. These reforms, however, soon spired out of the authorities' control and led to the emergence of a radical party, the Islamic Salvation Front (FIS), which

¹ Bouandel's interview with Abdelhamid Brahim, London 2 December 1998.

seriously threatened the survival of the regime.

The success of the FIS in the first round of the legislative elections in December 1991 marked the end of the transition to democracy in Algeria (Bouandel, 1993/4). The prospect, and indeed the perceived threat, of an Islamic government were followed closely not only by the Algerian military but also by Western and particularly the French government. Hence, a decision was taken to bring the electoral process to an abrupt halt in January 1992, at which point the military nullified the results, declared a state of emergency and banned the FIS.

This military intervention led to unprecedented levels of violence, which lasted for almost a decade and claimed the lives of about 200,000 people. Nevertheless, whilst the violence was going on, the Algerian authorities did embark on a program of reforms, with the plural legislative and presidential elections taking place on a regular basis since 1997 for the former and 1995 for the latter. By the turn of the century, the violence that ripped the country apart had been overcome, and the majority of the so-called 'terrorists' were either eliminated or benefitted from the newly-introduced amnesty laws (Bouandel, 2010). Hence, Algerians not only claim that they are about two decades ahead of the rest of the Arab world in the quest for democracy, but also that 'Arab Spring' countries can learn from their experience in order to ensure a smoother and more peaceful transition to democracy.

II.2 Algeria and the 'Arab Spring' – the Exception?

Given Algeria's numerous strikes and the demonstrations that have been taking place in the country over the last few years, coupled with acute economic and social problems, as well as the unprecedented levels of corruption, the country was the perfect candidate to follow Tunisia's example. The prospect of a Tunisian-style uprising was greatly en-

hanced following the riots of early January 2011 (Layachi, 2011). However, a combination of factors ensured that such a scenario did not take place. Firstly, Algerians believe that their political system is much more democratic than those in the rest of the Arab world. Secondly, Algerians are traumatised by their experiences in the 1990s and associate an uprising with a recurrence of violence, especially given what was happening in Libya from February 2011. Thirdly, unlike the 'Arab Spring' countries, the system in Algeria is neither personally identified with the president nor with a particular political party. The system in Algeria, also known as *le pouvoir*, has traditionally consisted of the military, the bureaucracy and members from the former ruling single party, the FLN. Recently, powerful money men, *les nouveaux riches*, have been added. The regime itself is difficult to define, and bringing it down is an even more difficult exercise. Finally, the deployment of security services against demonstrators and/or the use of financial incentives to appease popular discontent – given the country's over 200 billion USD in reserves – have been the hallmark of the Algerian regime. To date, these factors and tactics have been successful in preventing a Tunisian- or Libyan-style uprising and provided the authorities with yet another chance to pave the way for the establishment of a working democratic system.

II.3 'Arab Spring' the Algerian Way: Reforms and Inertia

With more than two decades of experience, the Algerian authorities seem to have mastered the art of political survival. They do this with rare skill, which even most of their political opponents would find it difficult to argue against. The several reform processes introduced since 1988 have had two things in common: on the one hand, they introduced a facade democracy in order to increase the regime's legitimacy at home and abroad, whilst on the other hand insuring that the status quo remains and the interests of the ruling elite are never threatened. These reforms, usually incremental and

cosmetic, just mirror the popular discontent and aim to silence any critics. It is with this strategy that the Algerian authorities were able to avoid the radical changes that have been taking place in many of the 'Arab Spring' countries.

Given what was happening in neighbouring countries to the East and the internal calls for the further opening up of the political space, the Algerian authorities introduced a series of incremental steps in order to appease and silence critics and to gain popularity both at home and abroad. Hence, on February 24th, 2011, president Bouteflika announced that the state of emergency, which had been declared two decades earlier, would be lifted. This act seemed to have satisfied the demands of many segments of society and was seen as a significant step upon which further gains could be made. Two months later, in April 2011, the President announced that a series of reforms would be introduced. A commission headed by the President of the upper chamber in Parliament was established to conduct a series of consultations about the proposed changes. These consultations resulted in the adopting of a series of new laws. As a result, a law on the mass media was passed and led to the emergence of private-owned TV stations. Consequently, private-owned TV stations, such as *Ennahar TV* and *Echourouk TV*, started broadcasting. Furthermore, the laws that regulate political activity – parties and associations – were amended and resulted in over 20 political parties gaining formal recognition. The emergence of these political parties served only to further divide an already weak and fragmented political opposition. Hence, several of these parties are no longer anything more than tools in the hands of the regime to gain more popularity. The reforms of the electoral law introduced a female quota in the different elected assemblies.

On paper, these reforms suggest that the Algerian authorities were able to open up the political space further, but in reality these steps served only a double pur-

pose. Firstly, they showed the *pouvoir's* ability to absorb discontent and pre-empt any dissent. Secondly, the government increased its legitimacy domestically and in particular abroad. These reforms, however, did not address some of the most important aspects of the Algerian political system and did not resolve the stalemate that Algerian politics have been experiencing since reform began in 1988. The amendment of the constitution, a crucial component for any process of reforms, defining the nature of the political system and the rules of the game, was left to the new parliament, which would be elected in May 2012.

II.4 The May 2012 Legislative Elections: Maintaining the Status Quo

Several issues dominated the campaign for this election: most importantly that a high voter turnout would prevent the anarchy of the 'Arab spring' in the country. The Algerian regime claimed that the election was vital for the present and the future of the country and compared it to turning points in Algeria's modern history such as November 1954 (the beginning of the war of independence) and July 1962 (the referendum for independence). Its importance resides in the fact that the new parliament will amend the constitution, paving the way for a second republic.

Three major observations can be made from the results of the election. The first is that Algeria is the leading country in the Arab world in terms of female representation; roughly one-third of the membership in the National Assembly is female. The second is that, unlike post-'Arab Spring' elections, the Islamists in Algeria failed to make any significant gains and have seen their share of the seats fall. Thirdly, the number of parties represented in the National Assembly has increased to almost thirty, as a result of the reforms undertaken the previous year. However, the results confirmed the status quo; parties that enjoyed the majority in the previous parliament kept their positions, albeit with more or less seats. Hence, the for-

mer ruling party, the FLN, gained most seats and almost won the majority despite in-fighting. The FLN was followed by the National Democratic Rally (RND) in second place and the newly created Islamic coalition, Alliance of Green Algeria, in third place.

III. Tunisia: Launching the 'Arab Spring'

December 2010 saw the beginning of what became known as the 'Arab Spring', and Tunisia was its launching place. A month later, in January 2011, the then president, Bin Ali, fled the country. The removal of Bin Ali, until then requiring a miracle in the eyes of many students of Middle East and North African politics, has become a reality. Tunisia has been perceived as one of the most stable countries in North Africa, which has, on paper, made significant steps forward in the economic and social fields. Consequently, the experience of Tunisia needs to be analysed very closely.

III.1 Contextualising Tunisia's 14th of January Revolution

On paper, Tunisia was the aspiring 'Asian Tiger' of the Maghreb and, with some verifiable statistical indices, looked economically healthy in the 1990s and up to the 14th of January 2011 Revolution. In practice, the government manipulated figures. As it turned out after the close scrutiny that followed the revolution, the socio-economic model taken for granted for so long by most scholars and policy-makers showed the country to be no more than a paper or 'clay' tiger (African Development Bank, 2012). During the final ten years of Bin Ali's rule, the annual growth averaged 4 to 4.5 per cent. For a non-hydrocarbon economy, this was taken to be proof of solid performance. The National Solidarity Fund (NSF), like other schemes created during Bin Ali's time in power, calls for a re-assessment. Though the statistics and data came from the regime and were partly massaged, some progress was certainly made through these schemes in terms of poverty alleviation (Sadiki, 2002, p. 136).

However, as confirmed by leading Tunisian economist Hussein Dimassi to Larbi Sadiki in February 2011 in Sousse, the hidden corruption related to the NSF, with millions a year of donated money misappropriated by Madame Leila Bin Ali and others administering over the fund.² Nonetheless, there is some evidence, adds Dimassi, who also works for the country's trade union movement, that the NSF has to allow for some poverty alleviation, with intervention in less than 2,000 so-called shadow zones.

Over ten years, an estimated 100,000 micro-credits were given, helping people with all kinds of small projects and businesses. Credit for this initiative goes to the Tunisian people. One-fifth of all Tunisians – that is the adult working population – have in some way or another contributed to these voluntary funds. Nevertheless, poverty alleviation and helping to improve life for the have-nots is not the same as job-creation. This is a point not to be missed when assessing development funds anywhere. The NSF fund improved the quality of poverty but did not go towards eradicating it. In addition, the funds were instrumental in keeping the have-nots in check through fairly successful distributive mechanisms. One may venture the idea that the NSF delayed the inevitable 'bread riots'.

Note that this kind of activism is in the case of Tunisia always triggered by protests over issues of bread and butter and bread riots always leads to demands for political freedoms. Mohamed Bou'azizi doused himself in petrol on the 17th of December 2010 not because he was hungry; rather, because he felt his sense of self-worth, freedom to change his situation and a dignified opportunity to self-actualise were not within his grasp as a result of state negligence to his plight and that of other youths in his situation, especially in the disadvantaged central and southern regions of Tunisia. This rings true of Tunisia as well as of other impoverished and populous Arab states, where there are millions of Bou'azizis.

² Sadiki's interview with Hussein Dimassi, 14 February 2011, Sousse, Tunisia.

Three observations must be made in relation to the NSF:

1. All statistics produced in the past may be overstated by the state since it was the only source of information on the fund's performance;
2. The NSF allowed the state a measure of control to alleviate poverty whilst inhibiting the rise of society-managed charities;
3. According to new information, released after the ousting of Bin Ali, the NSF was not free from the widespread corruption and embezzlement practiced by the former First Lady, Leila Bin Ali. More precise revelations of the severity of corruption involved are expected once the trials of the regime's henchmen and former high cadres begin after the July 2011 election.

On paper, Tunisia ranked first in Africa in terms of economic performance (World Bank, 2009). Under Bin Ali, the economy's capacity to train exceeded the capacity to employ. About 60,000 to 70,000 graduates are produced each year, a quarter of whom will see little or no employment. Thus, the numbers of those on the margins were swelling, and the government relied on the National Solidarity Fund and other mechanisms to placate the needy. There are problems with all indicators produced, all of which rank Tunisia favourably in comparison with other developing states. Generally, this led to the upholding of the 'myth' of a solid and dynamic economy.

III.2 From 'Moral Economy' to 'Immoral Distribution'

Bin Ali had created some wealth for Tunisia. But generally, whilst public expenditure largely maintained a distributive economy, namely investment into education, health and food subsidies, the state's rush to the 'Washington Consensus' of EU hand-outs and markets, the reliance on small and medium-sized businesses

and an emerging spare parts industrial sector, FDI, cheap tourism, and the sluggish textile industry, was bound to cause the economy to lose steam (Hibou, 2006). Unemployment rates of up to 40% in the marginalized regions are considerably higher than the national average of 14 to 16% mostly in the North and Sahel, the country's lush coastal regions. Marginalisation of the residents of phosphates basin towns, for example, led to tensions with the national company managing the phosphates sector. Intervention by Bin Ali temporarily calmed the situation, but how proceedings from phosphates and other sectors will be more equitably distributed remained to be seen. With 60% of the population under 25 years, the need to engage in sustainable economic development is urgently needed. For youth empowered by education to be marginalised by economic mal-distribution is the fodder of protest and social upheaval.

III.3 The 'Arab Spring's' First Election

Five issues dominated the political agenda in the prelude to the October 23, 2011 election. These issues – political, economic and social – led to the postponement of the polls on more than one occasion.

1. The interim president and government do not want to waste public money at a time when the country's coffers are nearly empty, and the cost of the election was estimated at the time at 40 million dinars (20 million Euros). Thus, pressure was put on the Electoral Commission to get it right as the poll's success was deemed to be vital for Tunisia's transition and the Arab Spring in general.
2. The Electoral Commission did bid for time to ensure first and foremost a full and accurate register of eligible voters, replacing the one from the days of Bin Ali, in time for election day. The pre-revolution register was designed whimsically and undemocratically by his Interior Ministry.

3. The Democratic Transition Commission worked hard in consortium with the Electoral Commission to ensure that an additional two-and-a-half million voters missing from the register were added. The intention was to maximise participation and representation, given the importance of the first election aimed at inaugurating a new democratic post-Bin Ali order.
4. As the date of the historic vote neared, the country was experiencing continuous agitation and social upheaval, typical of revolutionary transition, with workers' and labour protests happening on a daily basis. Thus, a great deal of hope was pinned on the election to put an end to demonstrations. The interim President (Fouad Mbazza) and the government, led by Beji Caid Essebsi, called for the ending of all strikes ahead of the polls, stressing that social peace was necessary for a democratic, orderly and fair election (Kirkpatrick, 2011).
5. Ahead of the polls, the country's economy was thought to have shrunk by up to 9 per cent, and the interim government was happy to blame this on strikes and protests' damaging effect on business confidence and overall performance.

Therefore, it was on the basis of wide debate and consensus that the interim government and the Electoral Commission delayed the poll, initially planned for July 24th, 2011, to October 23rd, 2011. All agreed, when promoting the idea, that what mattered most was electoral transparency not urgency. The historic moment and mission helped ease the political elite into acquiescence, including political parties such as the *Nahda* Party, which initially opposed the delay (Moshiri, 2011). For the task at hand of electing a Constituent Assembly tasked with drawing up a new constitution, a prerequisite for burying the ousted dictatorial regime, the postponing of the poll was deemed acceptable, especially given that newly created parties and newly-found free-

doms needed time to measure up to the challenge of political renewal. Here, secularists such as *Afek* ('Horizon'), *Al-Moubadarah* ('The Initiative') and others from the leftist *Ettakatol* to the Islamist *Nahda* agreed that the delay was for the best. The arduous behind-the-scenes negotiations by the Electoral Commission Chief, Kamel Jendoubi, paid off, and the relief at the delay was universal. Tunisia had confirmed a date for a proper debut with democratic transition: the Arab Spring's first multi-party election.

III.4 Tunisia's Election...

It is too early to fully critically assess Tunisia's transition following the 2011 election. Nonetheless, the poll itself went smoothly and the voter turnout was sufficient to lend credence to the first electoral test after the long-time dictatorship of Bin Ali. By any standards, the poll was a success – Larbi Sadiki was witness to the event in the Sousse branch of the Electoral Commission. The Carter Electoral monitoring team were impressed by not only the satisfactory levels of freedom and fairness but also by the degree of passion and interest shown by voters. Many of them waited for hours as long queues snaked out for more than 12 hours on the historic day. The figures said it all: a total of 11,686 candidates on 1,517 lists contested the 'Arab Spring' s' first election. Of these, 828 belonged to partisan lists, with 655 belonging to independents and only 34 to forming party coalitions. In the first election in post-Bin Ali Tunisia, one hundred political parties contested the election. The results (see Table 1) signalled the birth of proper multi-party politics in the country's first democratic election. Each governorate voted between four and ten representatives into the Constituent Assembly, divided between 33 constituencies.

It is not only the figures that matter here. Rather, it is the coalition-building spirit in which the poll was conducted and new political elites came to the fore. Specifically, following the 2011 election, the victorious party, the Islamist *Nahda*, led by

Rached Ghannouchi, stretched out its hand to political partners, showing the kind of good needed for confidence-building in a nascent democracy. Soon after the poll, a process of bargaining began, leading to an impressive partnership that was to become the mainstay of Tunisia's transitional framework. *Nahda*, as the party with most seats, emerged as a clear favourite to lead the executive branch of government: Hamadi Jebali, *Nahda's* Secretary-General, succeeded Essebsi as the country's new Prime Minister (PM). This was symbolically important: a for-

IV. Morocco's 'Monarchical Arab Spring'

For now, the 'Arab Spring' has not changed Morocco; rather, Morocco seems to have changed the 'Arab Spring'. This is one story in the advent of the 'Arab Spring' that calls for critical attention.

IV.1 Contextualising Morocco's 'Arab Spring'

There is historical pedigree that equips the monarchy in Morocco to adapt itself to the winds of change. It does this with

Political Party	Seats	Membership of Governing Coalition/Opposition
<i>Nahda</i> Party	90	Prime Minister (Hamadi Jebali)
Congress of the Republic Party	30	President (Moncef Marzouki)
Democratic Forum for Labour and Liberties (<i>Ettakatol</i>)	21	House Speaker (Mustafa bin Ja'far)
Popular Petition	19	Opposition
Progressive Democratic Party	17	Opposition
The Initiative	5	Opposition
<i>Afek Tounes</i>	5	Opposition
Democratic Modernist Pole	5	Opposition
Tunisian Workers' Communist Party	3	Opposition
Socialist Democrats' Movement	2	Opposition
Democratic Patriots' Movement	2	Opposition
Popular Movement	2	Opposition
Independents	9	Opposition
Minor Parties (8)	1 seat each	Opposition

merly long-time political prisoner had become PM. Another victim of the Bin Ali regime, the Republican Congress Party's leader, Moncef Marzouki, who had been residing in exile until the 14th of January 2011 Revolution, became President – with *Nahda's* blessing and after endorsement from the newly-elected Constituent Assembly.

With similar political astuteness and skill, *Nahda* approved Mustafa Ben Ja'afar, chief of the leftist *Ettakatol*, as House Speaker. A 'troika' was born and with it a modus operandi that, at least at the time of its inception, promised to advance partnership, compromise and confidence-building as key values in Tunisia's nascent democratic transition.

skill, proving the adage that the most intelligent species, in nature as in politics, are those that reinvent themselves, in response to the exigencies of time and space. Times have changed in the Arab Maghreb since the January 2011 Revolution in Tunisia, followed a month later by Egypt and then Libya. Morocco, by comparison, opted for a monarchical spring, stamping it with a touch of the *makhzan* (the monarchical centre) politics in which the young King, Mohamed VI, deftly practices. He has proved himself to be a political animal, well trained by his late father, Hassan II, who bequeathed the throne to his eldest son in 1999.

Almost invariably across the Arab region, the 'Arab Spring' imposed its own dy-

namism and rules on many of the existing polity. The qualified exception is Morocco, where, to an extent, King Mohamed VI was able to impose his own rules of political engagement in order to protect his throne from being tattered by an unstoppably infectious 'Arab Spring' (Cohen, 2012), which terminated rigidly authoritarian-bureaucratic states (e.g. Egypt and Tunisia) and claimed an underperforming oil-rich dynasty (e.g. Libya).

At least for now, he has succeeded in diverting the 'Arab Spring's' current away from the Sherifi monarchy. In doing so, the King has creatively refigured his state in a way that has made Morocco reap dividends from a carefully calibrated reform agenda, which simulated 'Arab Spring' revolutionary transformation and transition. There is one detail that stands out in the Moroccan version; the King executed his reforms without affecting the balance of power, or downsizing the *makhzen* political clout and control over the pace and substance of change (Catusse, 2011). He has executed this in two distinctive ways: Firstly, he instigated a 'quasi revolution' that redistributed roles within the traditional opposition. He promoted the opposition to government, and demoted the historical parties he partnered in steering the ship of the state to opposition.

Secondly, he redefined the rules of political engagement by upgrading legitimation of the monarchy before and after the 'Arab Spring,' thus 'padding' his rule in such a fashion that it can absorb the shocks of popular and global pressure for change.

IV.2 An 'Arab Spring' à la Marocaine

Partly, the 'Arab Spring' is defined by cascading change. Morocco simulates change in such a way that stay more or less the same. This is an art, the art of the possible which Moroccan Sherifi rulers have practised for centuries to reproduce their authority and stranglehold on the reins of power. Morocco's November 2011 parliamentary multi-party election illustrates this point. In a stunning political

turnaround and a sign of the winds of change blowing through North Africa, the moderate Islamist Justice and Development Party (JPD) scored a resounding victory. It was unprecedented in the country's 30-year history of largely cosmetic elections. The Islamists more than doubled their share of seats. They secured an additional 61 seats, bringing their new total to 107 from 46 in the 2007 polls. Two observations are in order relating to the 2011 election: Voter turnout was by at around 45%. Secondly, a quota system reserved 60 seats for females and 30 for males under the age of 30 to increase inclusiveness of youth.

This outcome is partly fortuitous given the dynamism of the JPD and its hard campaigning in the November 2011 election. Without a doubt, however, there is an element of contrivance. It is this contrivance that may be traced to the *makhzen*. The JPD was given an opportunity denied to the other Islamist party (the Justice and Charity Association, the party founded by the Charismatic Sufi leader, the late Abdessalam Yassine), which the King will not legalise within the current context, much less sanction its participation in the electoral process (Karam, 2011). It has the potential to upset the balance of power and may be ushering in the kind of 'revolutionary' change neither the *makhzen* nor a measurable segment of the loyal opposition would like to see precipitated at this historical juncture.

The operative term here is 'loyalty'. The King is highly educated and is an intelligent reader of the changing political landscapes around him. His political sense tells him that Islamists in power makes good political sense. They are buoyant everywhere. In Egypt and Tunisia they have shown themselves to command wide support and enjoy popular appeal. The King facilitated the ascent of his chosen Islamists as electoral victors, sparing him revolutionary upheaval. Yet the act simulates revolution, being new, and breaks with the political custom whereby the secular parties such as the *Istiqlal* ('Independence') are routinised as the

makhzen's loyal partners in running the government.

As can be seen from the party map below (Table 2), the 2011 election was the first since the July 2011 constitutional referendum (voter turnout was 75%), which was strongly endorsed by the public. Official figures say 'yes' voters formed nearly 98%. More importantly, the reforms assign the premiership to the party with the highest share of seats in the new bicameral parliament. In this instance, for the first time in Morocco's history, the Premier, in this case Abdelilah Benkirane, appoints government ministers and is empowered to dissolve parliament

Table 2: New Map of Morocco's Political Parties, 2007-2011 Election

Party	2011 results	2007 results
<i>Parti de la Justice et du Developpment</i> (JPD)	107	47
<i>Parti de l'Istiqlal</i> (Istiqlal Party)	60	52
<i>Rassemblement National des Indépendents</i> (Independents' National Rally)	52	41
<i>Parti Authenticité et Modernité</i> (Modernity & Authenticity)	47	Founded after 2007 by Fuad Ali al-Himma, friend and current security advisor to King Mohamed VI
<i>Union Socialistes des Forces Populaires</i> (Socialist Union of Popular Forces)	39	38
<i>Mouvement Populaire</i> (Popular Movement)	32	41
<i>Union Constitutionnelle</i> (Constitutional Rally)	23	27
<i>Parti du Progrès et du Socialisme</i> (Progress & Socialism Party)	18	17
<i>Parti Travailleiste</i> (Workers' Party)	4	5

* (For more details of election results, see Portail National du Maroc, 2011 and *Le gouvernement du Maroc*, 2007)

(Belkeziz, 2012). Both had been kingly prerogatives before the July referendum. Benkirane's party had a majority of seats which catapulted his party into the centre-stage but not into the know-how of governance. This is one reason why his shift from opposition to government necessitated coalition-building with powerful parties such as the Istiqlal Party, a loyalist-centrist party; the Popular Movement; and the Progress and Socialism Party. The Bloc for Democracy, consisting of eight parties, including two who partook in the governing coalition, has coalesced to ensure the opposition is dynamic in the new parliament, where the winning party

has wider powers than under administrations before the July 2011 referendum.

IV.3 Legitimation: Securing the 'Makhzen'

The newly-shaped party scene and government-opposition map in Morocco is informed by a modus operandi through which King Mohamed VI, as during his father's reign, defines the terms of the political game, demarcates its boundaries and red lines, and controls the pace and scope of reform. Mohamed VI, Commander of the Faithful in the tradition of the Sherifi Monarchy, claiming Prophetic lineage, remains regal in every sense of

the term. Islamists and non-Islamists, elected or non-elected, revolve around him as the fulcrum of power. And in religious matters, like in security and even the economy, the King, one of the richest men in Morocco, calls the shots. It is a game of concentric arenas of power: in theory the Premier runs the government, and to an extent he does, but he presides over cabinet and the country's Security Council following agendas scripted by the King.

This is one reason why the constitutional reforms are rejected by the February 20 protest movement, which boycotted the

July 2011 referendum (Maddy-Weitzman, 2012). Mohamed VI not only astutely knew how to swiftly respond, in his own terms, to the challenges posed to his reign by 'Arab Spring'. More importantly, he mostly anticipated them and had worked to reform his rule years before it erupted in the Maghrebi scene. The Equity and Reconciliation Commission (IER – *Instance Équité et Réconciliation*) sought to distance his rule from that of his father, courageously opening the sensitive files on torture and oppression under the rule of Hassan II. Similarly, the *mu-dawwanah*, another piece of legislation, equivalent to a Personal Status Code, was implemented in 2003 after initial Islamist opposition. It gives women protection against male abuses, including unilateral divorce. The newly-created office of female judges and religious guides is specific to Morocco.

IV.4. *Le Plus ça Change...*

Morocco under Mohamed VI is ahead of the learning curve. It has engineered its own version of the 'Arab Spring', keeping vociferous and centrifugal forces in check for now. The moral flame of peaceful protest for political equality and participative governance instigated by the February 20th protest movement has made the system appreciate the 'light' of reform – even if *makhzen*-managed. They have for the time being spared Morocco the kind of social unrest unfurling in Jordan, a monarchy that can do with borrowing a leaf from the Book of Mohamed VI.

However, the ceiling of reform in Morocco can never measure up to the high aspirations of the new protest movement, urban youth and other marginalised groups, eager for inclusiveness in polity, economy and society. Hundreds of those today either suffer actual or potential threat of coercion and detention. The judicial system is still complicit, working loyally for the *makhzen*, with or without the king's knowledge.

In a moment of crisis, Mohamed VI felt the pressure, if not the threat, of the 'Arab

Spring', scrambling fast to find new partners to widen his power base. Benkirane was willing to oblige a tactical king. Now that the protests have waned, and the protest movement is divided and weakened, the King seems to be reclaiming some of his old balance of power. In September 2012 he even by-passed Benkirane by deciding with the Ministers of the Interior and Finance on the arrest of 130 allegedly corrupt customs officers working at Tangier's port in a meeting attended by military and security chiefs. In essence, this renders the new laws passed in the constitutional July 2011 referendum null. Constitutionally, the King's instructions are amongst the Prime Minister's powers. Therefore, the persistence of the *makhzen's* control over politics presage difficulties in Morocco's carefully calibrated own version of the 'Arab Spring', in which some things have stayed the same.

V. *Conclusions*

The 'Arab Spring' changed the political landscape of some countries in the Middle East and North Africa beyond recognition. Tunisia, the country that saw the launch of the 'Arab Spring', witnessed the most changes in the Maghreb. By contrast, Algeria and Morocco saw modest and controlled changes. Change, it must be stressed, inevitably brings uncertainty. It is how this change is managed that determines what the reaction to the uncertainties is going to be. Tunisia had begun a process of a transition to democracy, but this process is, thus far, proving very difficult to negotiate. With the opening up of the political space, many political parties tried to capitalise on the newly found freedoms. One of these is the Islamic *Nahda* that won the legislative elections in the country. This victory, and particularly the direction that the country is taking, had put *Nahda* at loggerheads with secular opposition parties, especially in early 2013. These developments should be followed very closely, and *Nahda* should learn valuable lessons from Algeria's experience, if the country is not to be mired in violence. In Algeria, the authori-

ties have managed to weather the storm, but the country is still in a volatile situation and prone to an uprising. So far the authorities have had time on their hands, and the period after the 2014 presidential election will be significant for the future development and stability of the country.

Morocco given the central and unquestionable position of the King and the modest reforms undertaken since the beginning of the 'Arab Spring', seems to have worked out. These concessions, should, in theory, represent a platform upon which to build.

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Geschlechtergerechtigkeit durch Demokratisierung? Transformationen und Restaurationen von Genderverhältnissen in der islamischen Welt



Das Buch hinterfragt die These, dass Demokratisierungen in der islamischen Welt per se zu Geschlechtergerechtigkeit führen und zeigt, welche politischen, religiösen und kulturellen Faktoren bei Transformationen von Geschlechterordnungen bedeutsam werden. Die Autorinnen und Autoren widmen sich dabei Tunesien, Ägypten, dem Jemen, Iran, Indonesien, Kuwait, Saudi-Arabien, dem Irak, Afghanistan und Indien.

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Susanne Schröter (Hrsg.): *Geschlechtergerechtigkeit durch Demokratisierung? Transformationen und Restaurationen von Genderverhältnissen in der islamischen Welt*, Transcript, Bielefeld 2013, 324 S., ISBN: 978-3-8376-2173-0, 29,80 EUR

Professor Dr. Rachid Ouassa
**The Islamist parties in power:
 The Algerian experience**

I. Introduction

The success story of Islamists being elected into government in Tunisia, Egypt, Morocco and other Arab states has not been repeated in Algeria. On the contrary, the latest election for the national assembly on 10th May 2012 resulted in significant losses for the moderate Islamist parties, especially for the MSP (Movement of the Society for Peace) which had been part of the ruling coalition since 1996. The *Alliance de l'Algérie Verte* (Alliance of the Green Algeria), which the MSP formed with two smaller Islamist parties to enter the ballot, gained 47 seats – five less than the MSP alone had won in the previous elections in 2007.

This paper analyzes the experience of the MSP in government, the party's related crisis and its political discrediting. The chapter aims to provide an answer to the question why, in contrast to other Islamist parties in the region, the Algerian Islamist parties failed to profit from the political and social dynamics spurred by the 'Arab Spring'.

II. Rise and transformation of the Islamist parties

The rise of the Islamist movement in Algeria as well as its development into a political and social force to be reckoned with must be ascribed to the failure of a developmental strategy based on oil rents.

In the 1960s and 1970s, a broad middle class emerged as a result of the developmental path which Algeria followed. A public sector was a springboard for upward mobility, which was further supplemented by the possibility of being directly co-opted into the ranks of the state-class (*Staatsklasse*). One could gain access to the state apparatus by joining mass organizations, the party or the bureaucracy. With the help of oil rent, Algeria's state achieved considerable social progress:

jobs were created; purchasing power increased; consumer goods remained low through government subsidies; and universal health care and an education system ensuring the schooling and training of many young Algerians were established. All this boosted the population's living standards.

Yet, following the oil crisis of the mid-1980s, Algeria, like many rentier states, fell into debt and hence faced the difficulty of upholding its co-optation system. The crisis of the rentier state put an end to a strategy of wealth distribution upon which the Algerian government had until then relied heavily in order to safeguard the citizens' loyalty. As a result, there was a growing number of socially marginalized youth, and the middle class voiced demands for more economic freedom more insistently.

The Algerian state-class responded to the civil unrest of October 1988 with a reform of the Party Law. As a consequence, over 60 parties were founded, including some Islamist parties, such as the Islamic Salvation Front (FIS) and the Movement for the Society of Peace (MSP). In the first local elections, in June 1990, the FIS emerged the winner. In the first free parliamentary elections, in 1991, the FIS even managed to win about three million votes, i.e. 47% of the total vote, in the first ballot, filling 188 out of 430 parliamentary seats.

The abortion of the elections by the Algerian army and the forced dissolution of the FIS led to the beginning of a military confrontation between the Algerian military and parts of the dissolved FIS. The civil war cost more than 150,000 lives. It was only after the economic recovery of the Algerian government, which was due to credits from the West and the increase of oil prices, that the army gained a military victory over the Islamists. Even before the dissolution of the FIS, several

moderate Islamist parties had been created in Algeria as a counterweight to the FIS. In 1990, Mahfoud Nannah founded the MSP, a branch of the international Muslim Brotherhood (Hamladji 2000). The party has close ties with the AKP, the Turkish ruling party, which it regards as a model. The MSP aims to reform society on the basis of leading the active forces and the committed notable figures in society. Since 1996, the party has been the junior partner in the government coalition, won 69 seats in the national assembly and became the third largest political power in parliament in 1997. In 2002, it won only 38 seats in the national elections; in 2007 the party was back to 52 seats.

Furthermore, the MSP controls Algeria's largest student association (*Union Générale des Étudiants Libres*, UGEL) and one of the most powerful charity organisations (*Al-Irschad wal-Islah*). The party maintains good relations with the Algerian middle class, as the Algerian economist Tasadith Yacine has remarked:

"MSP embraces a middle class from the business world (tradesmen) but also the technocrats and scientific elite. Hamas' social base distinguishes itself diametrically from that of the FIS sphere of influence. Contrary to the FIS, which extols social justice, Hamas bases its strategy on order and thus respect for the 'prince'." (Yacine 1998)

In her analysis of the rise of the MSP, Noura Hamladji (2000) concluded that the party was fostered both by the military leadership – which was involved in a fierce conflict with the jihadi Islamist fractions – as well as the political leadership of Algeria. The members of the MSP belong to the generation of the crisis of the rentier state and therefore have no interest in conflict with the state and its security apparatus, but rather hope for better opportunities for upward social mobility. Therefore, they are also willing to come to terms with the ruling elite. The MSP members' capital is their good education;

they strive for social prestige and a good salary. They see their status and upward mobility as being linked to the fortification of government functions.

But after 14 years of participation in coalition governments as a junior partner, the prospects seem bleak for the MSP, as mentioned in the inaugural speech of the party leader Bouguerra Soltani at the Party Congress of 2013.¹ As a result of its long participation in the government, the party fragmented and lost many of its political leaders. In the government, the party played the role of the guardian of Islamic morality and enforced cosmetic laws in order to retain its credibility in the eyes of its constituency. For example, the broadcasting of 'Star Academy' on Algerian TV was abolished by presidential decree.² Such cosmetic legislative initiatives also include the interruption of the evening news on TV for the call to prayer (*adhan*) and the prohibition of wine imports to Algeria. Furthermore, the commitment of the MSP to democratic reforms remains somewhat limited, and like the ruling elite, the party is entangled in corruption affairs (Ouali 2010). In the government, the role of the MSP is reduced to a "gendarme of Islamic values".

The analysis of the economic program of the MSP and a survey of members of the party revealed that since its inclusion in government, it now calls less frequently for economic and political liberalization. After the MSP was co-opted into power, its members profited directly and indirectly from the distribution of rents, which lessened their appetite for economic reforms and the establishment of a market economy. The new rentiers opted for a careful economic opening (*infitah*) without abolishing the state's control over the economy – the same position was held by the ruling elite. The new rentiers were thus separated from the lower classes but tried to prove their continuing loyalty to them by allocating rents in the form of charity organizations and by creating a solidarity fund (stipulated in their electoral programme). This policy amounts to an attempt to *clientelize* the lower classes

¹ The author has participated in this congress, which took place in Algiers on May 1st-4th, 2013.

² This TV-show resembles 'American Idol' in the US, or the German show 'Deutschland sucht den Superstar'. It is broadcasted from Lebanon into the whole Arab world.

(Ouali 2010). The position of the MSP concerning the revolts in Kabylia in 2001³ and its support for a third presidential term for Bouteflika (despite the constitutional limitation to two terms in office) have been further evidence that the new middle classes in the party are more interested in getting access to rent allocation than in democracy and political liberalization. However, the co-optation of political groups is only possible in times of high rents when the state class is economically as well as politically strong and can co-opt a junior partner to increase its political legitimacy. In times of low rents – when the leeway for allocation is reduced and conflicts between different segments of the state class intensify (Ouaissa 2005) – it remains to be seen whether parties such as the MSP turn once again towards their former base among the marginalized segments of the society.

The failure of Islamist parties in Algeria can be explained through the recent Algerian experience with terrorism and instability. But I argue that the rentier nature of the regime and the economic origins of the rising middle class are also crucial to explain the non-success of Islamist parties in the government.

The participation of Islamist parties in the governments of rentier states leads to programmatic conflicts within the party and fosters the fragmentation of the Islamist spectrum. The Algerian MSP is a showcase example to illustrate this argument. The “participation dilemma” (Ouaissa 2008) that the party faces is due to two structural factors: first of all, the constituency and the supporters of Islamist parties are extremely heterogeneous because the party’s discourse allows for the mobilization of broad and diverse segments of society. The schism which has developed within the MSP after more than ten years in the ruling coalition demonstrates the heterogeneity of the middle classes that the party mobilized. Two different segments of the Algerian middle class can be identified: an opportunistic one that waived idealistic values in order to maintain their interests; and a

segment that insisted on the cohesion of the middle classes.

The chances of success for moderate Islamists depended not only on their capacity to achieve incorporation into the “ruling family” – the group of parties which support the president and the powers behind him – but also, crucially, the army with an officer corps, which behaves as an elitist order. Following their incorporation into the dominant coalition, the moderate Islamists now face the need to restructure the economy in order to achieve growth. In this endeavour, the positions of the moderate Islamists, shaped by notions of “moral economy”, prove insufficient.

Furthermore, the political behaviour of the middle classes is dependent on the rent-seeking strategies of the ruling state class. Due to a lack of capitalist structures which would allow the development of a market-oriented and politically emancipated middle class, the state’s strategies targeting the middle classes are directly reflected in the internal conflicts of the Islamist parties. Indeed, the possibilities for economic growth based on the market and profits earned under conditions of competition are limited in Algeria. The socialist attempt to restructure the Algerian economy via state planning in the period following Algeria’s independence in 1962 failed because of inefficiencies in translating actual achievements made in targeting investment spending into increases in productive capacity. Also, because of a reliance on sophisticated imported technology, the effects of economic development policies on employment were limited and, as a consequence, the transformation of the marginalized masses into regularly employed workers with social and political negotiating power remained equally limited. Only such a transformation would have led to an expansion of the domestic market. On the one hand, the transformation of the social and economic structure into a mass consumption society, on the basis of which accumulation and even the local production of technology could

³ The MSP urged the Gendarmerie to act more harshly against the demonstrators in the Kabylia.

have been launched, did not take place. On the other hand, the immense earnings derived from the export of hydrocarbons, oil and gas kept the exchange rate for the Algerian currency at levels where most (export oriented) industrial activities in Algeria were internationally uncompetitive. State spending and the increasing circulation of oil money triggered the emergence of a stratum of *nouveau riches*, which detractors and Western analysts described as 'bourgeoisie'.

The lack of dynamism in the local economy and of non-oil exports made these new middle classes dependent on the state. The quality and intensity of conflict between the two tendencies within these middle classes as well as their relations with the state class and other classes are largely determined by the amount of available rent. Rent allows the dominant state class to develop alliances with groups inside the discontented middle classes and to destroy the cohesion of this rival when the state class considers them to be dangerous. Here, rent is also used to give credibility to promises made by the state class to enlarge the potential number of beneficiaries. As long as this promise is fulfilled, the exhaustion of rent due to unproductive spending will neither lead to an intensified cohesion among the middle classes in their opposition to the state class nor the search for allies in other more disinherited classes.

When this promise is no longer credible, the rising middle classes tend to behave like a textbook bourgeoisie, at least in the political realm. In the Algerian case, however, in times of crisis, the availability of huge amounts of rent made the state class capable of, at least temporarily, buying off the resistance of the lower classes. The failure of the MSP is also exemplary for the failure of the Algerian middle classes to realize a 'bourgeois revolution' of political freedom and equality, and economic freedom. The party fragmented into several different factions instead of

creating alliances across different classes, as did the middle classes in industrialized Europe.

III. Conclusion and lessons from Algeria

Considering the large economic and social challenges faced by Arab countries, two scenarios can be envisaged for Algeria and beyond: on the one hand, the Islamic project could be realized with a combination of market-oriented measures and schemes designed to realize a greater degree of social justice by strengthening labour or, in other words, by industrializing (financial capitalization) Arab societies, especially in branches with comparative advantages. However, in order to become globally competitive and thus to imitate the Asian mode, a currency devaluation is crucial. In reference to economic policy, the problem of food security needs to be resolved in order to allow for a more productive deployment of rents. The fundamental changes in Arab societies and economies that come along with such an agenda require broad societal alliances beyond the Islamist spectrum. This creates a further dilemma for Islamist actors: their religious notion of politics risks becoming marginalized or rendered banal. Indeed, if such an agenda of development proves successful, the price would likely be a shift of the religious from the public into the private sphere and thus a decline of political Islam. Furthermore, social reforms and a devaluation of the currency will likely spur criticism, especially from the right wing of political Islam (Salafiya). An ensuing clash among Islamists would then become a possibility, the shadow of which already extends across Algerian society. On the other hand, an alliance between moderate and radical Islamist groups for the creation of a theocracy is not unlikely, and could lead to international isolation and broad social resistance. This scenario would, therefore, also be commandeered as a failure of moderate Islamism.

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DOI-Kurzanalysen
Ausgabe Juni 2013

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Dr. Francesco Cavatorta and Fabio Merone
**Tunisian Salafism between institutional politics,
dawa and jihadism**

I. Introduction

The Tunisian revolution opened up the political and social space to a significant number of actors operating both at the level of institutional politics – namely through political parties – and civil society activism. The liberalization of the political system encouraged the formation or the return to the scene of political parties with radically different ideological persuasions, including mainstream Islamists, social-democrats, liberal-nationalists and hard-core leftists with profound secular inclinations, while civil society activism has virtually exploded with the setting up of all sorts of non-governmental associations and lobby groups. Despite such ideological differences and a problematic history of co-operation during the authoritarian period,¹ a considerable degree of institutionalization has taken place, making Tunisia a reasonable success story so far in the wider context of the Arab Awakening.² In particular, the ruling alliance between the Islamist party *Ennahda* and the two centre-left parties provide a degree of stability to the country. However, there are numerous obstacles on the road to democratic consolidation, such as the deepening economic crisis, the increasing rift between the Islamist and secular sectors of society on issues related to individual rights and the political parties' inability to agree on a new constitutional text.³ A further significant obstacle is the rise of Salafism, which has monopolised the attention of political actors and observers because it is perceived as the most significant threat not only to democratic consolidation, but to regional security as well.⁴

In this article, we aim to examine the rise of Tunisian Salafism and how it has influenced and been influenced by the process of transition, keeping in mind that within Salafism itself different strands of thought and action exist.

II. Salafism in Tunisia

In its modern meaning Salafism refers to "conservative Sunni Muslims who seek to apply literalist interpretations of scripture based on the example set by the Prophet and his companions"⁵ and has become increasingly popular and visible in the aftermath of the Arab Awakening. What is also interesting about Salafism is that its current manifestations across the Arab world and beyond demonstrate the multiplicity of strategies that it has chosen in order to achieve its objectives, adapting to the different contexts within which it has been operating. Thus, we have an armed jihadi Salafism currently engaged in the Syrian civil war⁶, an educational bottom-up oriented scripturalist Salafism taking advantage of the opening up of society in Morocco⁷ and a politically-engaged Salafism attempting to achieve the implementation of sharia law and the creation of an Islamic state through the political process in Egypt.⁸ All this in many ways reflects the complexity and the divisions within Salafism that have existed for quite some time and that many analysts already pointed out. Broadly speaking, the way in which Salafist groups, parties and associations behave today across the region therefore confirms previous academic categorisations; a scripturalist apolitical Salafism with a focus on *dawa* and isolated from institutional politics, a ji-

¹ Francesco Cavatorta and Rikke Haugbølle Hostrup, 'Will the real Tunisian opposition please stand up?! Opposition coordination failures under authoritarian constraints', *British Journal of Middle Eastern Studies*, Vol. 38, No. 3, 2011, pp. 323-341.

² Alfred Stepan, 'Tunisia's transition and the twin tolerations', *Journal of Democracy*, Vol. 23, No. 2, 2012, pp. 89-103.

³ Frida Dahmani, 'Recherche Constitution Désespérément', *La Jeune Afrique*, no. 2734, 2-8 June 2013, pp. 44-47.

⁴ Peter Beaumont and Patrick Kingsley, 'Violent tide of Salafism threatens the Arab Spring', *The Observer*, February 10 2013. Available at: <http://www.guardian.co.uk/world/2013/feb/09/violent-salafists-threaten-arab-spring-democracies>.

⁵ International Crisis Group, 'Tentative Jihad: Syrian Fundamentalist Opposition', *Middle East Report* 131 (2012): 5.

⁶ Elizabeth O'Bagy, 'Jihad in Syria,' Institute for the Study of War, *Middle East Security Report* 6 (2012): 1-42.

⁷ Sanaa Karim, 'Party Politics for Morocco's Salafis,' *Sada*, October 2, 2012.

⁸ Stephane Lacroix, 'Sheikhs and Politicians: Inside the New Egyptian Salafism,' Brookings Institute, *Policy Briefing* June (2012): 1-12.

hadi Salafism with a focus on armed struggle for the creation of a genuine Islamic state and a political Salafism with an emphasis on electoral participation.

The rise of Salafism has characterised the post-Ben Ali period in Tunisia as well, although quite unexpectedly. Tunisia in fact was believed to be immune to such a phenomenon, which, according to mainstream accounts of Tunisian politics and society, had never manifested itself in the country. The assumption that this specific form of Sunni conservatism had not taken and would not take hold in Tunisia was part of the mythology of modernity, secularism, economic success and social peace that both the Ben Ali regime and many observers wished to propagate. Just like the other myths have been exploded by the Tunisian revolution, so has the one about the impenetrability of Tunisian society from Salafism.

There are two broad reasons that can account for the current emergence of Salafism as a powerful, if minoritarian social and political force in the country, with the ability to influence debates and discussions relating to a new vision for Tunisia.

First, and contrary to widely held beliefs that Salafism is nothing but an imported ideology and the product of Saudi meddling in North Africa, it should be highlighted that modern Salafist tendencies have existed in the country for quite some time. This can be seen for instance in the development of the party *Ennahda*, which in its original incarnation can be considered a proto-Salafist party that grew out of Salafism to embrace an ideology and a much more political programme. In addition, it should be highlighted that a small but committed group of members and activists continued on the road of Salafism when *Ennahda* made the strategic and ideological choice to support democracy with its corollary of elections and individual rights, moving therefore away from the creation of an Islamic state based on sharia law. This group went on to create a Salafist formation in the early 1980s.

More recently, a jihadi Salafism with international linkages also developed in Tunisia. The international environment with its pan-Arab causes such as Palestine and Iraq, in combination with the domestic repression of the Ben Ali regime against public, social and political expressions of religiosity led to the emergence of Salafi circles in Tunisia, with a number of young people involved. At the same time, young men who had left Tunisia to participate in the war in Iraq became prominent jihadis and began to entertain links with people back home. All this puts to rest the notion that Salafism was not part of the Tunisian political landscape prior to the Revolution.

Secondly, the attraction of Salafism, particularly among young people in disenfranchised neighbourhoods, can be explained through the nature of the transitional process, which still politically and materially excludes this particular cohort. While it would be a fallacy to argue that the revolution was the product of the 'activism' of one social group over all others, it is beyond doubt that the youth in disenfranchised neighbourhoods and towns were the main protagonists of the uprising in so far as they were the first out in the streets to protest and to engage in violent clashes with the police. The aftermath of the revolution has not lived up to the expectations of this cohort because the whole transitional process, possibly naturally, has taken on a middle class nature and is managed by an older generation of politicians. Part of the reasonable success of the transition to democracy so far resides precisely in the fact that old politicians who had been in opposition for decades, living either in exile or marginalised at home, have been able to work out their ideological differences to some extent and recognise the necessity of a pact between the Francophone/Francophile modernising sector of society and the more religiously conservative one imbued with Arab-Muslim identity concerns. This compromise is possible also because both sides represent largely the interests of the middle class. While all this suggests that the Tunisian transition will

likely lead to the instauration of a liberal-democratic system, there are potential pitfalls in so far as the vast majority of people in Tunisia are young, not middle class and not particularly involved or interested in institutional politics, as the low turnout at the first free and fair elections the country ever held, in October 2011, demonstrates. Thus, there is a risk of excluding vast swathes of the population from the arrangements that should provide Tunisia with a new political system that is democratic and representative of the whole of society. It is precisely here that Salafism becomes attractive for many young, disenfranchised people, and while not providing what can be called 'class consciousness', it offers a framework through which current political and social choices can be contested through revolutionary means and language, and the use of the easily understood symbolism and categories of religion. As Monica Marks aptly put it, "for young Salafis, many of whom feel unrepresented by *Ennahda*, economically disenfranchised, and increasingly shunted aside by the elitism of Tunisian party politics, the promise and purity of Islam remain immensely inspirational."⁹

III. Salafism in practice

As mentioned earlier, there are radically different ways in which Salafists engage politically and socially in the countries they are active in. In Tunisia, the Salafist phenomenon is also complex, and diverse manifestations of it exist, although the nature of the political process has led to the predominance of the more conflictual jihadi Salafism, which attracts the younger cohort because of its revolutionary radicalism and its promise of "transform[ing] the humiliated, the downtrodden, disgruntled young people, the discriminated migrant, or the politically repressed into a chosen sect (*al-firqa al-najiya*) that immediately gains access to the Truth."¹⁰ It is on jihadi Salafism that, since the fall of the regime, much of the debate has focused because of the genuine potential threat to the transition to democ-

racy. Thus, while there are small Salafist parties that have made the choice to participate in elections, and there are also Salafist associations that refrain from engaging in politics, preferring instead to proselytise through *dawa*, jihadi Salafism has become the spectre haunting Tunisia. It is beyond doubt that jihadi Salafism represents a very conservative interpretation of religious precepts and that it is committed to the implementation of sharia law towards the creation of an Islamic state. It is also true that it ideologically rejects liberal democracy as the best political system for Tunisia and advocates the use of violence to respond to perceived threats against Islam. Finally, Tunisian jihadi Salafism has been held responsible for a number of the violent incidents that have characterised Tunisian life since the fall of the regime, ranging from the street riots against films and exhibits deemed offensive to the prophet Mohammad to the attack on the US embassy in September 2012 and from the riots in Dour Hichem in October 2012 to the killing of two Tunisian soldiers in May 2013 in a mine explosion. If one adds the slogans and proclamations in favour of Ben Laden to the recruitment of fighters for the war in Syria against the regime of Bashar al-Assad, the picture of jihadi Salafism in Tunisia is problematic both in terms of the process of democratization and for regional security.

This picture is however only a partial one because the overwhelming focus of Tunisian politicians, the media and the international community on Salafist violence prevents a clearer understanding of the phenomenon. From a policy-making point of view, it follows that calls for unrestrained repression might backfire. All this has profound implications for the transition as a whole, which both influences and is influenced by the way in which jihadi Salafism acts and, at the same time, is engaged with by other political and social actors.

First and foremost, jihadi Salafism is not a monolith with a clear organisational struc-

⁹ Monica Marks, 'Who are Tunisia's Salafis?', *Foreign Policy*, The Middle East Channel, September 28, 2012. Available at: http://mideast.foreignpolicy.com/posts/2012/09/28/who_are_tunisia_s_salafis?wp_login_redirect=0.

¹⁰ Roel Meijer, 'Introduction' in *Global Salafism. Islam's New Religious Movement*, ed. Roel Meijer (London: Hurst and Company, 2009), 1-32.

ture and a readily identifiable leadership with a clear ideological framework and political programme. Far from it, jihadi Salafism is divided over the way in which it should develop, with some arguing in favour of creating such an organisational structure, others favourable instead to a much looser association with a clear hierarchical structure dominated by older, learned sheikhs and others still opposed to any form of organisation. When Tunisian politicians and international observers talk about Tunisian jihadi Salafism, they identify it with the group *Ansar a-Sharia*, founded officially in May 2012 and headed by Abu Ayadh, a veteran of the Iraq war and ex-convict of Ben Ali's prisons. This group has a rather clear organisational structure and operates as a 'civil society' association with clear political goals. It has a significant number of members – estimates range from 15,000 to 50,000 – and provides a framework through which many young people become socially engaged. However, the group is not exhaustive of jihadi Salafism. There are for instance older sheikhs who share the goals of *Ansar a-Sharia*, notably the full implementation of a conservative version of sharia law and the creation of an Islamic state, but are opposed to the creation of formal structures for both ideological and practical reasons. Ideologically, formal associations are perceived to be divisive of the ummah when in fact unity is the name of the game, and in a practical sense, they see *Ansar a-Sharia* as a problem for Salafism as a whole in so far as its activities and radicalism on the streets tend to invite state repression, which fundamentally undermines the opportunities for the expansion of Salafism itself. Thus, sheikhs such as Khatib al-Idrissi believe that a much looser structure headed by a council of sheikhs able to negotiate with the authorities and present a more 'educated' and less threatening face to the outside world is a preferable option.

This choice is largely rejected in jihadi circles where young people dominate and are reluctant to once again step aside to favour an older generation. This also has

implications on the ground, where a number of younger sheikhs operate outside of any organisational structure and lead the 'local' group, as they see fit, relying on ideological inputs from a number of different sources, both national and international. The virtual absence of clear organisational structures has an impact on the other actors in the system. On the one hand, it is unclear who speaks for jihadi Salafism, preventing the authorities for instance from finding a suitable partner with whom to engage and subsequently agree decisions. On the other hand, repressing Salafism becomes equally complex because it is unclear who should be repressed. If *Ansar a-Sharia* is the target of repression – it has been recently – because it has an organisation and a leadership that can be effectively targeted, it does not mean that jihadi Salafism as a whole will be hit.

The second point that should be made about Tunisian jihadi Salafism is that its relationship to violence is more problematic than the one appearing in media accounts and political circles. There is no doubting the violent nature of some of the activities of jihadi Salafists and the anti-democratic and illiberal content of many of their statements and political declarations. For instance, the idea that democratic mechanisms should only be utilised once sharia law has been effectively implemented nationwide sounds ludicrous and dangerous to the vast majority of interlocutors. Yet the call to arms that many were expecting to occur did not materialise. A fairer assessment of the past few years in Tunisia would suggest that violent incidents have been sporadic and are on a par with difficult transitions from authoritarianism that have taken place elsewhere. This is not to minimise their significance, but jihadi Salafism has for the most part rejected the idea that it is necessary to combat an illegitimate regime through armed violence. This is a very significant development for Tunisia and for Salafism in general. Contrary to expectations, the leaders of jihadi Salafism, including Ayadh and Idrissi, have consistently argued that Tunisia is a

land of *dawa* and not a land of jihad. In short, the ruling authorities have been granted a degree of legitimacy that jihadi Salafists had not bestowed on any Arab regime. By extension, ordinary Tunisians are legitimate members of the ummah – and not infidels to be fought through violence – because they have contributed to the fall of an unjust regime and therefore should not be targeted. This should not suggest that jihadi Salafism has come to terms with the liberal-democratic structures that the interim government is building nor that they subscribe to the idea of political and social pluralism nor that they have given up on the implementation of sharia law. However, it indicates that there has been an ideological development dictated by pragmatism. While not all jihadi Salafists buy into this, it is quite clear that the movement as a whole is benefiting from operating in a liberal system that might be ideologically reprehensible but permits them to proselytise and carry out their activities practically unhindered, allowing the movement to grow.

IV. Conclusion

The emergence, visible rise and public presence of Salafism in Tunisia should not be seen as a surprise. While representing a minority vision of society, the phenomenon in its modern interpretation has been present, if largely underground, in the country for at least four decades. Just as other ideological persuasions have re-emerged after the fall of Ben Ali, so has Salafism. Re-emergence should not suggest immutability in so far as the generation of older Salafists now active in political parties has little credibility among

the younger cohort of Salafists, who prefer social to political activism. This activism, while having a scripturalist component, largely coincides with jihadi Salafism, and while this might indicate a strong association between it and political violence, this has not necessarily been borne out in practice on a large scale in Tunisia. Despite violent and even shocking incidents such as the assassination of the prominent left-wing leader Chokri Belaid in February 2013, jihadi Salafism has not called for an all-out armed struggle against an illegitimate regime. While jihadi Salafism is ideologically opposed to liberal democracy and strives for an Islamic state where sharia law is implemented, it has come face to face with the benefits that such a liberal-democratic environment might provide.

As they come around to the idea that opting for *dawa* and educational activities might be a better long-term strategy, if they want to develop the movement further, they might have to implicitly accept the political and social pluralism of Tunisia. This is extremely important because the current experience of Tunisian jihadi Salafism is looked upon with great interest by Salafists across the Arab world. Leading Salafist sheikhs in fact participate in the debates that occur within jihadi Salafism and attempt to influence the direction of the movement. Tunisia constitutes a unique laboratory not only for democratic transitions in the Arab world, but also for jihadi Salafism and – in so far as the violent *derive* of al-Qaeda seems to be exhausted – the exploration of new avenues of activism become a necessity.

Dr. Richard Gauvain

Egyptian Salafism as a Problematic for Islamic and Middle Eastern Studies

I. Something old, something new...

Writing in June 2013, Egypt's Salafi "landscape" is both remarkably different and reassuringly similar to the landscape in which I carried out my fieldwork during 2006-2009. The main change, of course, is that Egyptian Salafism has become mainstream: individuals that, before the 'Arab Spring', had been well-known only in Egyptian Salafi circles now address the nation. Figures once prominent only within their own discrete spheres of influence, such as Yassir al-Burhami (Alexandria), Muhammad Hassan (Munafiyya), or Abu Ishaq al-Huwayni and Muhammad 'Abd al-Maqsud (Cairo), now advise Egypt's new Salafi political parties. And, of course, these parties themselves are new. Now, in addition to *al-Nour*, the political arm of Alexandria's 'Salafi Call' (*al-Da'wa al-Salafiyya*) and still the best organized of the Salafi parties, we find *al-Fadila*, *al-Asala*, *al-Watan*, and *al-Raya*. Most of the prominent Salafi politicians, as opposed to the scholars mentioned above, were relatively untested when, in 2011, they helped to form these parties. Hazem Abu Ismail, for instance, appeared from relative obscurity to discuss running for president (the discovery that his mother had been granted US citizenship

derailed his campaign). Forming *al-Raya* party earlier this year, like most Salafi politicians under the scrutiny of the media, Abu Ismail is a controversial figure.¹ Predictably, he is also the butt of numerous jokes by liberals and secularists.² Such mockery is also not new; however, with the likes of Anwar al-Balkimy – who fabricated a story of being mugged in order to hide the effects of plastic surgery – appearing on the scene, there is more ammunition than ever for the Salafis' many detractors.³

Since the 'Arab Spring' and the emergence of the *Nour* party in June 2011, considerable interest in Egyptian Salafism has been expressed by journalists, both Middle Eastern and Western. Academics have taken longer to comment.⁴ To date, discussions of Salafism in both forums have focused on the reasons for the Salafis' political success and the often fraught nature of their relationship with the ruling Muslim Brotherhood.⁵ As regards both lines of inquiry, analysts have needed to introduce Egypt's Salafi parties and figures to their audiences almost entirely from scratch. Aware that they are entering relatively uncharted waters, those wishing to discuss Egypt's Salafis often set the scene by retelling – in vary-

¹ In a recent pronouncement, Abu Ismail declares that protesting at the office of liberal parties and politicians has become an "urgent necessity": <http://www.english.ahram.org.eg/NewsContent/1/64/67529/Egypt/Politics-/Salafist-AbuIsmail-says-protesting-Egypt-liberal-.aspx>.

² Bassem Youssef, in particular, delights in satirizing him: <http://www.incendiaryimage.com/projects/bassem-youssef/attachment/hazem-salah-abu-ismail/>.

³ On this story, see: <http://www.english.al-akhbar.com/node/4876>.

⁴ Some of the stronger examples written by political analysts of the Salafi politicization process and its ramifications since the 'Arab Spring' include the following: Jonathan Brown, "Salafis and Sufis in Egypt," *Carnegie Paper*, Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, December 2011, at: http://www.carnegieendowment.org/files/salafis_sufis.pdf; Stéphane Lacroix, "Sheikhs and Politicians: Inside the New Egyptian Salafism," Brookings Doha Center, June 2012, at: <http://www.brookings.edu/~media/research/files/papers/2012/6/07%20egyptian%20salafism%20lacroix/stephane%20lacroix%20policy%20briefing%20english.pdf>; Daniel A. Boehmer and James P. Murphy, "The Politicization of the Egyptian *Salafiyya*: Principled Participation and Islamist Competition in the Post-Mubarak Era," *IMES Capstone Paper Series*, Institute for Middle East Studies at: <http://www.gwu.edu/~imes/assets/docs/Capstone%20Papers%202012/Boehmer,%20Murphy.pdf>; and William McCants, "The Lesser of Two Evils: The Salafi Turn to Party Politics in Egypt," *Middle East Memo* (2012), Brookings at: http://www.brookings.edu/~media/research/files/papers/2012/5/01%20salafi%20egypt%20mccants/0501_salafi_egypt_mccants.pdf; and Khalil al-Anani, "Pious Way to Politics: the Rise of Political Salafism in Post-Mubarak Egypt," *Digest of Middle East Studies*, vol. 22, 1 (2013), 57-73, at 58-62.

⁵ The same can also be said of many Egyptian sources. For an impressively thorough analysis of the reasons behind the Salafis' initial political gains, see Habiba Muhsin, *al-Salafiyyun fi Misr: Asbab al-sa'uda fi'l-intikhabat al-barlamaniyya* at: http://www.afaegypt.org/index.php?option=com_k2&view=item&id=342:%D8%A7%D9%84%D8%B3%D9%84%D9%81%D9%8A%D9%88%D9%86-%D9%81%D9%8A-%D9%85%D8%B5%D8%B1-%D8%A3%D8%B3%D8%A8%D8%A7%D8%A8-%D8%A7%D9%84%D8%B5%D8%B9%D9%88%D8%AF-%D9%81%D9%8A-%D8%A7%D9%84%D8%A7%D9%86%D8%AA%D8%AE%D8%A7%D8%A8%D8%A7%D8%AA-%D8%A7%D9%84%D8%A8%D8%B1%D9%84%D9%85%D8%A7%D9%86%D9%8A%D8%A9&Itemid=282.

ing degrees of detail – (what is by now) a standard narrative.⁶ According to this narrative, rather than tracing its roots back to Egypt's original proponents of Salafi-style reform (Jamal al-din al-Afghani [d. 1897] and Muhammad Abduh [d. 1905]), Egyptian Salafism emerged in two organizations, *al-Gam'iyya al-Shar'iyya*, founded by al-Subki in 1912, and *Ansar al-Sunna al-Muhammadiyya*, founded by Muhammad Hamid al-Fiqqi in 1926. Both organizations were traditionally apolitical.

Egyptian Salafism flowered, becoming somewhat more politicized, with the arrival of the Alexandrian movement *al-Da'wa al-Salafiyya* in the 1970s. Still more politically engaged was the so-called "Activist" branch of Salafism (*al-salafiyya al-harakiyya*), also emerging in the 1970s, which centred around figures like Dr. Sayyid al-'Arabi, Nash'at Ibrahim and the aforementioned Muhammad 'Abd al-Maqsud.⁷ Neither the Alexandrian nor the Activist variant of Salafism was as critical of the regime as the "Salafi jihadi" groups, such as *al-Gama'a al-Islamiyya*, *al-Jihad* and *Takfir wa'l-Hijra*, all operating between the 1970s-1990s, though the degree to which these groups may be described as Salafi is questioned.⁸ In opposition to the anti-regime figures and movements, in Egypt there was also a group of unequivocally pro-regime scholars, whose ideology is connected to the Saudi Arabian scholar Rabi' bin Hadi al-Madkhali.⁹ Not surprisingly, in the wake of the 'Arab Spring', this traditional pro-regime approach has lost much of its credibility. The last significant contributions to the pre-2011 Egyptian Salafi landscape came from often independent

television preachers – men like Abu Ishaq al-Huwayni, Muhammad Hassan, Muhammad Hussayn Ya'qub and others – whose influence on average Egyptians through their appearances on channels such as *al-Nas*, *al-Hikma*, *al-Rahma* and so forth may not be underestimated.¹⁰

There are some quibbles with this narrative.¹¹ Nevertheless, its basic tenets hold; it also makes good sense of the main fault lines that separate the recent political manifestations of Salafism. Indeed, notwithstanding the large number of small, unaffiliated Salafi groups that enter into demonstrations and occasionally cause trouble, the main contours of Egyptian Salafism are the same as before: Alexandrian Salafism is still a bloc, though it is now divided into *al-Nour*, *al-Watan*, and most recently *al-Raya*; while the Cairene Salafi Activist trend is also a bloc, though it too has splintered to form *al-Fadila* and *al-Asala*. Concomitantly, while not opposing political speech, the *Ansar al-Sunna* and *al-Gam'iyya al-Shar'iyya* groups, both of which discouraged formal pronouncements on matters of politics before the 'Arab Spring', have resisted forming political parties. Among the few recent academic discussions of Egyptian Salafism to push beyond merely retelling this narrative, Stephane Lacroix intelligently draws attention to the gap that is developing between Salafi scholars and Salafi career politicians.¹² Recalling Yasir al-Burhami's dressing down of Emad Abdel Ghaffour (the founder of *al-Nour*) when the latter expressed regret that his party had fielded no Christian candidates, Lacroix shows how scholars, like al-Burhami, are under less pressure

⁶ For a journalist's version of this narrative, see e.g. Amani Maged, "Salafism: the unknown quantity," *al-Ahram Weekly* (2011) at: <http://www.weekly.ahram.org.eg/2011/1047/eg40.htm>; for a more academic rendition of the same narrative, see al-Anani, 2013 at 58-62. For a superior example of reporting on Egypt's Salafi/MB relationships, see: <http://www.weekly.ahram.org.eg/News/502/32/Muslim%20Brothers%20and%20Salafis.aspx>.

⁷ The *Salafiyya al-Harakiyya* branch is often associated with the Cairene district of Shubra. Whether Shubra is more important to the trend than other districts in Cairo, where the same individuals also preached, is debatable, see Gauvain, *Salafi Ritual Purity: In the Presence of God* (New York: Routledge, 2013), 41.

⁸ Roel Meijer, for instance, describes the ideology of *al-Gama'a al-Islamiyya* as a form of "semi Salafism," see "Commanding Right and Forbidding Wrong as a Principle of Social Action," in Meijer (ed.), *Global Salafism* (London: Hurst & Company, 2009), 189-220, at 191.

⁹ In my experience, the label "Madkhali" was often used to describe any scholar perceived as sympathetic to the Mubarak regime, regardless of whether they had any direct connection to Rabi' al-Madkhali or his disciples, see Gauvain 2013: 37ff..

¹⁰ The nature and impact of these channels remain woefully understudied, but see Nathan Field and Ahmad Hamam, "Salafi Satellite TV in Egypt," *Arab Media & Society*, 8 (2009) at: <http://www.arabmediasociety.com/?article=712>.

¹¹ For instance, *al-Gam'iyya al-Shar'iyya* does not perceive itself as a Salafi movement at all; with the exception of al-Huwayni, most of the TV preachers belonged to the *Ansar al-Sunna* movement; and attitudes to politics varied widely within *Ansar al-Sunna* mosque environments (on this last point, see the discussion on 'Adl Sayyid's controversial work *al-Hakimiyya wa'l-siyasa al-shar'iyya* in Gauvain 2013: 41-3).

¹² Lacroix 2012: 6-7.

to make concessions than politicians, whose careers often depend upon their capacity to do so.¹³ Similarly, certain Salafi stances regarding women and non-Christians – fully supported though these are by classical legal texts – will need to be amended if the Salafis are going to make further political headway. While al-Nour's leadership seems prepared to adapt its approach, its scholars, the very people who render it Salafi, fiercely resist tampering with time-honored and sacred legal rulings. Anticipating the same tensions, and reminding us of the Iranian political example, Nathan Brown expects that "differences among Salafi scholars and leaders may soon be settled not by textual arguments as in the past, but by the ability to attract more votes of pious but hardly educated followers."¹⁴

II. Salafism as problematic for Islamic and Middle Eastern Studies?

Given how important Egypt is to the Middle East and how important Salafism is to many modern Egyptians, there has been considerable progress in understanding the complex phenomenon of Egyptian Salafism(s) since the 'Arab Spring.' Further advances in this subject are likely to arrive in the coming years. The remainder of the present article, however, is dedicated to exploring precisely why we knew so little about indigenous Egyptian Salafi movements *before* the 'Arab Spring.' As established, it is due to this lack of existing information that all analyses of Egyptian Salafism begin with the same, conspicuously brief historical overview. I shall argue that while the paucity of research into Salafism in general, and into Egyptian Salafism in particular, is regret-

table, it may also be explained logically. The crisis flagged up by the lack of interest in Salafism extends to several fields within Islamic and Middle Eastern Studies. In observing that Salafism is understudied, I am saying nothing new. All recent considerations of the topic, including my own, make the same point. To date, however, I have not found the reasons for the situation explored in any depth. This article does not exhaust the possibilities as to why Western academics have taken so long to include Salafism in their analyses; it does, however, provide a starting point for further reflection.¹⁵

III. Reasons for the general lack of interest in Salafism: a matter of (dis)taste

Convention dictates that I must also offer a definition of Salafism. Though there is an increasing tendency to define Salafism through the political ideas and allegiances espoused by individual Salafis in concrete political settings, the problems with defining Salafism in general through a political lens should be obvious: in contrast to the Muslim Brotherhood, this is rarely the way Salafis refer to themselves.¹⁶ Rather, *being* Salafi entails adopting certain stances towards others, championing certain authors, upholding certain key beliefs and performing certain ritual practices in ways that most other Muslims do not. In terms of the first, Salafis tend to be overtly hostile to Shi'is and Sufis (even declaring them to be non-believers, a process known as *takfir*), and to emphasise the importance of avoiding contact with non-Muslims (an attitude conforming to the classical doctrine of *al-wala' wa'l-bara'*).¹⁷ Modern Salafis agree, for the most part, on the scholars most worth reading: at the

¹³ Though, as Nathan Brown notes, al-Burhami compromised enormously by declaring that Salafis can even enter the political process. Previously, and famously, he had forbidden it. See Brown, "Islam and Politics in the New Egypt," *The Carnegie Papers* (2013), p. 10.

¹⁴ Brown 2013: 11.

¹⁵ The fact that Salafism is under-researched is acknowledged by many commentators on modern Salafism. See, for instance, the comments of both Roel Meijer ("Introduction") and Bernard Haykal ("On the Nature of Salafi Thought and Action") in Meijer (ed.), *Global Salafism* (London: Hurst & Company, 2009): "Research on Salafism has been very localised or very general in scope and was mostly related to radicalization," and tended to occur through "the prism of security studies" (Meijer, p. 2); "The term Salafi, and those it designates, remains ill-defined and often misunderstood in the literature on this movement, and in studies of Islamism more generally" (Haykal, p. 33).

¹⁶ Haykal speaks along the same lines when observing that, to date, the vast majority of the secondary literature dealing with Salafism "focuses entirely on its political aspects of the movement's different – and differing – groups, and in so doing misses, or even dismisses, its ideational, theological and legal underpinnings." Haykal, "On the Nature of Salafi Thought and Action," p. 34.

¹⁷ While the Muslim Brotherhood is building bridges with Iran, Salafis like Abu Ishaq al-Huwayni object on principle to doing so (<http://www1.youm7.com/News.asp?NewsID=1019971>). Similarly, the Salafis are still targeting Sufis for criticism, and in the early days after the revolution attacked Sufi preachers and their mosques (see J. Brown 2011: 7-8); whereas the Muslim Brotherhood is fighting bigger political battles.

top of the list we find the *hadith* specialists and legal pioneers, al-Shafi'i (d. 820) and Ibn Hanbal (d. 855), the great medieval reformist Ibn Taymiyya (d. 1328) and the latter's students, particularly Ibn Qayyim al-Jawziyya (d. 1350). Pre-modern *hadith*-based legal reformers, such as Muhammad 'Abd al-Wahhab (d. 1791), the Yemeni Sunni scholars al-San'ani (d. 1768) and his biographer Muhammad al-Shawkani (d. 1834), are also hugely important to modern Salafism's scholarly heritage.¹⁸ Uniting these scholars' approaches, as well as those of modern Salafi favourites, such as Nasr al-din al-Albani (d. 1999), 'Abd al-'Aziz ibn Baz (d. 1999), and Muhammad Ibn al-'Uthaymin, is a rejection of *taqlid* ('imitation') of the rulings preferred by one specific law school and a willingness to use *ijtihad* (one's 'independent legal reasoning') when the matter requires it. In addition to this emphasis on *ijtihad* and an all pervasive emphasis on returning to the example of *al-salaf al-salah* ('the pious ancestors'), the same authors tend to reject established Ash'ari doctrinal arguments. Finally, modern Salafis follow their scholars in specific, often peculiar readings of established Islamic rituals. A traditional *madhhabi* Muslim (i.e. one that practices *taqlid* by following the norms upheld by his/her law school) is likely to know that s/he is praying beside a Salafi through the technical aspects of the latter's ritual performances. When a modern Egyptian describes him/herself as "Salafi," an informed observer immediately takes on board the above (necessarily abbreviated) criteria. More politically conscious self-identifications – in terms of belonging to *al-Nour*, or *al-Fadila*, and so forth – are much more recent and probably less firmly embedded.

Salafism is so important to the modern Muslim world, and has been since at least the 1970s, that it ought to be discussed in English language introductions to Islam. The fact that modern Salafism has ancient scholarly roots ensures that its history can – I would say should – be studied as one aspect of the wider Sunni tradition. The Western historians best known for surveying Islam's "Great Tradition", whose introductory works continue to be assigned to students, were palpably not interested, however, in the scholarly tradition of Salafism. Superbly erudite introductory works on Islam by scholars such as Arent Jan Wensinck, Alfred Guillaume, Montgomery Watt, Marshall Hodgson, Fazlur Rahman and Bernard Lewis certainly mention Ibn Taymiyya and Muhammad 'Abd al-Wahhab, for instance, but rarely link their names to Salafism.¹⁹ Fascinated by the Sunnis' journey towards orthodoxy, thousands of pages were dedicated to the (overcoming of the) faith's many and varied early philosophical, theological and political sects and heresies. Shi'ism and Sufism were particular sources of interest – the more esoteric the branch, the more likely it was to receive scholarly interest.²⁰ Yet, the pioneers of Salafism remained within the fold of Sunnism and, in so doing, seem to have aroused less interest among the historians.

In describing Islam's path to orthodoxy, a destination usually associated with 'Abbasid Baghdad' great emphasis was placed on establishing the exact historical *origins* of Sunni intellectual and political institutions.²¹ This is particularly true within the legal field, where specialists such as Ignaz Goldziher and Joseph Schacht strove to unravel the mysteries through which the Sunni legal schools

¹⁸ These scholars' legacies to modern Salafism (especially those of Ibn Taymiyya) are too often considered solely in the context of jihad. Haykal provides the closest investigation into the ways through which a pre-modern scholar in his case al-Shawkani, came to influence modern Salafi realities. See B. Haykal, *Revival and Reform in Islam: The Legacy of Muhammad al-Shawkani* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003).

¹⁹ The link between Ibn Taymiyya and 'Abd al-Wahhab and the word "Salafism" was certainly known, even in the time of Wensinck (b.1882) and Guillaume (b. 1888), the earliest of the generalist scholars. Before Ibn Taymiyya was awarded the role of "father of radicalism/terrorism" by readers of Emmanuel Sivan (a title often, and less anachronistically, attributed to al-Mawdudi and/or Sayyid Qutb), he tended primarily to be described as an enemy to Sufism (an idea later corrected by George Makdisi), and/or merely as an oddball, see e.g. Hodgson, *The Venture of Islam, Vol. II* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1974), 470-2 and Donald Little's "Did Ibn Taymiyya have a screw loose?", *Studia Islamica* (41), 1975: 93–111. Henri Laoust's work on Ibn Taymiyya, however, which does cover his influence on the Wahhabis, remains remarkably insightful despite its age. For a tidy introduction, see e.g. H. Laoust "Ibn Taymiyya," in *Encyclopaedia of Islam, Second Edition* (2013).

²⁰ Thus, we find a wealth of material on (the excesses of) the Isma'ilis, and other esotericists and gnostics of early Islam. See e.g. the works of Henri Corbin and Wilfred Madelung.

²¹ The influence of literary methods first developed within Biblical studies is well known.

Egyptian Salafism as a Problematic for Islamic and Middle Eastern Studies

(*madhahib*) eventually came to define the sources and contents of the legal canon.²² One regrettable result of this approach was the implication that once the principles of legal reasoning were established (from al-Shafi'i onwards) and the four Sunni law schools took their rightful place, virtually all Sunni jurists, with one or two exceptions (notably Ibn Taymiyya), merely repeated the arguments of their illustrious predecessors: the gate of *ijtihad* had, after all, been closed. It was not until Wael Hallaq's groundbreaking work in the 1980s and onwards that Western legal scholars began to realize that, despite many jurists' contention to the contrary, the gates to *ijtihad* had never really closed.²³

No doubt depending upon the time and place, there have always been Sunni scholars who have resisted expressing their unqualified allegiance (*taqlid*) to the law schools and/or have rejected the absolute authority of the Sunni *hadith* collections (even the *hadith* collections of Muslim and al-Bukhari [*al-Sahihayn*]).²⁴ In an important study of the ways in which al-Bukhari and Muslim's *hadith* collections were canonized, Jonathan Brown observes that, historically, there was always "a great deal of leeway for the criticism of the canonical collections."²⁵ Indeed, well before al-Albani's attack on the historical verisimilitude of the *Sahihayn* – perceived by modern Salafi critics (Ramadan Said al-Buti, Hassan Ibn 'Ali Saqqaf, *et al*) as perhaps the worst in their long list of crimes – the Cairene Hanafi scholar, Ibn Abi Wafa' (d. 1373), was saying much the same things.²⁶ This alternative, "Salafi" history of Sunni scholarship – wherein not

all Sunni scholars perceive themselves as *madhhabi* and do not always regard the *Sahihayn* as beyond reproach, yet are nevertheless described as Sunni by most of their peers – has only recently started to be written.²⁷

Part of the reason that we do not have a stronger understanding of the various historical evolutions and numerous manifestations of Salafism may at least partially be attributed to scholarly squeamishness. In *The Cambridge History of Islam*, compiled in 1970, Fazlur Rahman provides a characteristically elegant analysis of Muslim revival and reform movements. He mentions Ibn Taymiyya, Ahmad Sirhindi, the Wahhabis, Shah Wali Allah of Delhi and the Sanusis, before moving on to al-Afghani, Sayyid Ahmad Khan, Muhammad 'Abduh, Muhammad Iqbal, Rashid Rida, Taha Husayn and, finally, Hasan al-Bana and the Muslim Brotherhood. For our interests, the through line here begins with Ibn Taymiyya, continues to the Wahhabis and on to Rashid Rida. For Rahman, however, this particular evolutionary trail is deadly. Indeed, the reader senses a palpable distaste when Rahman describes the Wahhabis as "violently militant" and their untiring emphasis on *ijtihad* as pointless, given that "they did practically everything in their power to discourage the actual tools of positive fresh thinking."²⁸ While Rahman was defensive of Islam's intellectual traditions, many scholars have been similarly defensive of its mystical ones. For these scholars, Salafism is not necessarily outside the pale of "true Islam," but is nevertheless hugely problematic for it.²⁹ Not surprisingly, more recent introductions to Islam

²² Their work has been carried on by Neil Coulson, Norman Calder, John Burton, Patricia Crone, Michael Cook, and many others.

²³ See e.g. Wael Hallaq, "Was the Gate of Ijtihad ever Closed?" *Journal of Middle Eastern Studies*, 16 (1983), 3-41.

²⁴ Indeed, the gate of *ijtihad* was never deemed closed by the Hanbalis and some Shafi'is, see e.g. Zubaida, *Law and Power in the Islamic World* (London: IB Tauris, 2005), 24-7. Ironically, this means that Ibn Taymiyya's frequent use of *ijtihad* was not revolutionary, but rather in keeping with the preferred attitude of his school.

²⁵ Jonathan Brown, *The Canonization of al-Bukhari and Muslim* (Leiden: Brill, 2007).

²⁶ Brown 2007: 303-4.

²⁷ At this point, it is worth noting that the Zahiris are also considered Sunnis. Once again, with the exception of Ignaz Goldziher's pioneering work, their ideas have not been sufficiently explored by Western academics. Ibn Hazm's work is influential on al-Albani and other modern Salafis, a point understood by their critics but not to my knowledge systematically developed. For one instance of Salafi borrowings from a Zahirī source (the *Muhalla* of Ibn Hazm) see Gauvain 2013:229-33.

²⁸ In *Islam*, Rahman compares the Wahhabis to the Kharijites. Thankfully, he notes, "the Catholic tradition of Islam opposed the Wahhabi methods as it had rejected the Kharijite methods much earlier." *Islam* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1966), 200. Precisely the same kind of distaste is apparent in the appraisal of modern Salafism by another "modern Mu'tazili," Khaled Abu el-Fadl. See chapters 3 and 4 of his *The Great Theft: Wrestling Islam from the Extremists* (New York: Harper One, 2005).

²⁹ Here we consider the contributions of scholars like Annemarie Schimmel, Seyyed Hossein Nasr, and William Chittick to modern Islamic Studies.

are more likely to mention at least some of the different ingredients of modern Salafism. To my knowledge, however, no contemporary introductory work contains any in-depth discussions of the subject.³⁰

Like Sufism, modern Salafism is a global phenomenon. While its global appeal has certainly spread through modern social media, it is a mistake to limit Salafism historically to specific settings: at least since the 1880s, Salafi-minded Muslims have been living in different countries.³¹ The transnational nature of modern Salafism is only now beginning to be appreciated, however. This particular aberration, in contrast to those identified with above, can be traced back to a key shift in attitudes within Western academic circles in the 1980s. Following Edward Said's devastating critique of (the political motivations underpinning) Orientalist scholarship, scholars in these circles began increasingly to place their emphasis on describing Muslim contexts as they are lived. Oriental/Islamic Studies was absorbed into Middle East Studies.³² In practical terms, this increasingly led scholars to engage in "area studies," wherein specialists forge their reputations in the studies of particular regions, cultures and languages. In that it resulted in a much greater level of interaction between anthropologists and scholars of the Middle East and Islam, this was a positive

development. Restricting ourselves to the case of Salafism, however, what this meant was that only those scholars working in countries where forms of Salafism were advocated produced any comment on it. To date, the most mature and ethnographically rich descriptions of Salafism have been carried out in Saudi Arabia because that is the dominant religious narrative in this country, as well as South Asia, where the *Ahl-e hadith* emerged in the 1870s.³³

IV. Egypt: the case of the missing Salafis

Another reason for the absence of interest in modern Salafism, in both introductory and more advanced works, is its complex relationship to political action. With this observation, we are now in a position to consider the specific case of (the missing) Salafis of Egypt. As noted above, Egyptian Salafism in its present form begins with the formation of *Ansar al-Sunna al-Muhammadiyah* which, for many years, operated in relative harmony with a series of political regimes.³⁴ In doing so, the same movement seems automatically to have been rendered far less interesting than Egypt's oppositional movements, and particularly the Jihadi groups and the Muslim Brotherhood. While there exists a vast number of exhaustively detailed analyses of these movements, there has been virtually

³⁰ Daniel Brown's discussion of "Twenty-First Century Wahhabism," in his excellent *A New Introduction to Islam* (Oxford: John Wiley & Sons, 2009), pp. 284-288, is, however, worth reading.

³¹ Thus, Jonathan Brown points to individuals living in Arabia; the Sokoto Caliphate in West Africa; the *ahl-e hadith* movement in India; the San'ani/Shawkani influenced groups in San'a; a Damascus based school under 'Abd al-Razzaq al-Baytar; and the Alusi family (Hanbali revivalists) in Baghdad. These movements upheld different attitudes to a range of issues, and particularly to Sufism (only the Wahhabis were unequivocally antagonistic). In all cases, however, these were "Salafi minded" individuals in that they questioned *taqlid*, or "the practice of following an existing *madhhab* without questioning its proofs," while simultaneously making a "direct consultation of Prophet *hadiths* the ultimate determinant in interpreting the message of the Qur'an" (Brown 2007: 308). They were also ardent supporters of Ibn Taymiyya.

³² This is particularly true in America, where a large number of departments came to be referred to as "Middle Eastern and Islamic Studies." To sum up the seismic shift in thinking that prompted this change, Charles Kurzman includes the following quote by Leonard Binder: "The orientalists have achieved immense works of scholarship, and their attainments stand like the monuments of the ancients (...) we are nearly all agreed now ([however]) that we wish to study Islamic civilization as related to the living society of the Middle East today." Binder qtd. in Kurzman, "Conclusion," *Islamic Activism* (ed.) Q. Wiktorowicz (Indiana: Indiana University Press, 2004), 291.

³³ On Saudi Arabia, see e.g. the works of Natalie deLong Bas, Madawi al-Rasheed, David Commins, and Stephane Lacroix. From a legal perspective, Frank Vogel's work on the Saudi Arabian legal system (though not concerned by the term "Salafism") is unsurpassed. Even in Saudi Arabia, however, there is much more than can be said. Lacroix begins his masterful exposition of contemporary Saudi society by lamenting the fact that "Saudi Arabia has remained a persistent blind spot in studies of Islamism" (2011: 1). For a magisterial survey of the origins of the *Ahl-e Hadith*, see the work of Barbara Metcalf; for a more recent consideration of their progress in Pakistan, see Mariam Abou Zahab, "Salafism in Pakistan: the Ahl-e Hadith Movement," in *Global Salafism* (ed. Meijer), 126-42.

³⁴ Even this statement is debatable. In 1969, the organization was merged with *al-Gam'iyya al-Shar'iyya* on the grounds that it had apparently become a breeding ground for revolutionary activities, see Gauvain, "Salafism in Modern Egypt: Panacea or Pest," *Political Theology*, 11 (2010), 802-25, 815.

nothing written on *Ansar al-Sunna* or the individual scholars (particularly the students of al-Albani) who have spread Salafism. In *Ansar al-Sunna's* case, this is lamentable given the probable influence of individuals from this movement on the critical developments that took place during the reconstruction of Saudi Arabian Salafism from the middle of the 20th century. In fact, the nature of the relationship between Arabia (then Saudi Arabia) and Egypt during the 20th century in concrete Salafi educational institutions has simply been ignored by commentators.³⁵

This observation brings us to the first main reason why Egypt's Salafis have tended to be ignored by Western scholars. Namely, we refer to the still very popular assumption – both within and without Egypt – that Egyptian Salafis merely replicate Saudi Wahhabi viewpoints on all matters. According to this view, Egyptian Salafism is Saudi, rather than Egyptian. Despite the fact that many Egyptian Salafis do consult the works of Saudi Arabian elites, and particularly those of heavyweights such as Ibn Baz and Ibn al-Uthaymin, this conviction is deeply problematic. The main indigenous Egyptian Salafi movement, *Ansar al-Sunna*, has its own pantheon of scholars; and as we have just noted, representatives of this organization argue for the influence of *Ansar al-Sunna* over 20th century Wahhabism, not vice versa.³⁶

Most commentators have been attracted to Egyptian Salafism when it becomes oppositional and may, therefore, be portrayed through the lens of jihad. There has indeed been some brilliant scholarship on modern Egyptian jihadi groups. Gilles Kepel, Oliver Roy, Johannes J.G. Jansen, Muhammad Hafez and others have written ethnographically sensitive and highly insightful political commen-

taries. As a general rule, however, these commentaries do not pay much attention to the individuals' religious claims to Salafism. Rather, they are primarily interested in exploring the Egyptian contributions to "Islamism" – a category in which Salafism may be granted a small role but from which it is usually excluded. After the assassination of Anwar Sadat in 1981, scholarly interest came to lie in the activities of the Jihadis and their theorists, such as al-Mawdudi and Sayyid Qutb, and in groups such as *al-Gama'a al-Islamiyya*, *al-Jihad*, *Takfir wa'l-Hijra* and *Tala'i' al-Fath*. The fact that jihad is a very important component in almost all modern Salafi discussions – even (and especially) those involving Madkhali quietists – those in Egypt proving no exception, has generally been ignored.³⁷

Since there have been several strong analyses of Egypt's formal legal apparatuses, we could have expected to find some mention of Salafi contributions to the increasingly relevant debate on Shari'a law. Here too, however, we find that almost all discussion has taken place within the framework of Islamism, where the potential of Muslims both to uphold and to exert opposition to the state through "conservative" religious strategies provides the main focus. Indeed, a range of sophisticated studies show how "conservative Islam in present-day Egypt spans government and opposition, official institutions and political parties, and is emboldened to embark upon extensive censorship of cultural products and attempts to moralize public life and space."³⁸ As we know, Salafis take pride in their legal scholarship; and Egyptian Salafi scholars both inside and outside the Azhar were involved in this process. In pre-'Arab Spring' settings, however, scholars merely lumped them together with other representatives of "Islamist" "conservative" thought.³⁹

³⁵ Though see below on Michael Farquhar's doctoral work, n. 63.

³⁶ A recent development on the same theme would see *Ansar al-Sunnai* funded (therefore, implicitly controlled) by Qatar and Kuwaiti donors, see e.g. Anna Lavizzari, "The Arab Spring and the Funding of Salafism in the MENA Region" at: <http://www.securityobserver.org/the-arab-spring-and-the-funding-of-salafism-in-the-mena-region/>. Pace the idea of Egyptian Salafism as the product of Saudi Arabia, see Gauvain, "Salafism in Modern Egypt: Panacea or Pest," *Political Theology*, 11 (2010), 802-25, 810ff.

³⁷ Cf. Gauvain 2013: 41 ff. and 160-72.

³⁸ Sami Zubeida 2005: 160. Zubeida refers to the work of Bernard Botiveau and Jakob Svokgaard Petersen. He could also have referred to those of Nathan Brown and Malika Zeghal.

³⁹ Though typically avoiding confrontation with the ruling regime, Egypt's Salafis have been willing to raise their voices when they have felt it was necessary. This was the case, for instance, during the Farag Foda apostasy case.

It is not surprising that the first political scientist to spend any length of time considering Salafism, as distinct from other forms of political or reformist Islam, chose to do so through the lens of social movement theory. At the turn of the 21st century, Quintan Wiktorowicz published a series of articles and books that explored various dimensions of what he described as Islamic activism as a peculiarly suitable candidate for the application of social movement theory.⁴⁰ Refreshingly, Wiktorowicz identified Salafism by name, rather than merely as one component within the wider Islamist movement. In a slightly later article, he also provided a typology by which to distinguish between three categories of Salafis: "jihadis," "politicos" and "purists."⁴¹ That this typology perhaps creates as many problems as it solves is less important than the fact that Wiktorowicz was willing to discuss Salafism as a broad, transnational movement held together by key ideological convictions and within a variety of contrasting political attitudes are found. Wiktorowicz's field research in the region (he also conducted research in the West) took place in Jordan, not in Egypt.

Scholars such as Diane Singerman, Janine Clark, Carrie Rosefsky Wickham, Salwa Ismail, Asef Bayat, and Roel Meijer among others have discussed Egyptian socio-political realities, and the webs of informal social networks sustained within these, from the perspective of social movement theory.⁴² Their work is invaluable

in allowing readers to understand the nature of these realities – thus rendering "radical Islam" rational⁴³ – but, once again, they rarely contribute directly to our understanding of Egyptian Salafism. The reason for this is not easily apparent as many of these scholars have clearly spent time in Salafi mosques, medical clinics, educational institutes and so on. Perhaps the problem lies in the nature of social movement theory itself, which, by definition, focuses on the techniques and strategies through which groups of non-state actors are able to unite so as to mobilise.⁴⁴ While shaykhs from *Ansar al-Sunna* often teach in mosques belonging to *al-Gam'iyya al-Shar'iyya*, Egypt's Salafis have tended to keep themselves apart for much of their history; while *da'wa* is an important part of their ministry, the nature of their engagement with average Egyptians has traditionally been scholarly and educational rather than through the patronage networks created by the Muslim Brotherhood.⁴⁵

The realities of modern Egyptian Salafism have not been entirely overlooked in the quest to describe Islamism. It is not difficult to find a distaste, similar to that expressed by modern intellectualist and/or Sufi guides to Islam, in certain anthropological works on "fundamentalist Islam";⁴⁶ there nevertheless exist several detailed, ethnographic discussions of modern Egyptian Salafi settings. The works of Charles Hirschkind and Saba Mahmood, in particular, display a refreshing empathy

⁴⁰ On his approach to social movement theory and Islamic activism, see Wiktorowicz's introduction to the collection of essays in *Islamic Activism, Social Movement Theory* (Indiana: Indiana University Press, 2004).

⁴¹ Wiktorowicz, "Anatomy of the Salafi Movement," *Studies in Conflict and Terrorism*, 29 (3), 2006, 207-239. Wiktorowicz himself has always been more interested in describing the workings of jihadi (i.e. "radical") Salafis.

⁴² In *Global Salafism*, Meijer does not approach Salafism from the perspective of social movement theory.

⁴³ A reference to an article by Wiktorowicz and Karl Kaltenthaler, "The Rationality of Radical Islam"

⁴⁴ Thus, for instance, Janine Clark shows how members of *al-Gam'iyya al-Shar'iyya* exploit existing social networks to host "medical centers as well as day care centers, orphanages, schools and libraries," *Islam, Charity and Activism* (Indiana: Indiana University Press, 2004), 51. Note that Clark mentions *Ansar al-Sunna* as collaborating in this enterprise. For a recent and skilful exploration of *al-Gam'iyya al-Shar'iyya*'s ongoing charity work, though without direct reference to social movement theory or, unfortunately, to *Ansar al-Sunna* and the Salafis, see Mohamed Fahmy Menza, *Patronage Politics in Egypt* (London: Routledge, 2013), 86-90.

⁴⁵ Despite Clark's mention (see n. 44 above) and their own claims, in terms of providing charity *Ansar al-Sunna* has nothing like the record of the Muslim Brotherhood or of *al-Gam'iyya al-Shar'iyya*. It also depends, to some degree, upon the financial patronage of non-Egyptians, particularly from Saudi Arabia and the Gulf. As to the question of whether social movement theory *can*, in different settings, be used in analyse Salafism, we note FW. Horst's ongoing work on German Salafi movements, see Horst, "Towards a Dynamic Analysis of Salafi Movements," *ICT* (2013), available at: <http://www.ictwps.com/index.cfm/working-papers/towards-a-dynamic-analysis-of-salafi-activism-conclusions-from-a-dissection-of-salafism-in-germany/>.

⁴⁶ Not surprisingly, this is especially true of works dealing with Islam and gender.

for ordinary Egyptians living within everyday Salafi settings.⁴⁷ From my perspective, Mahmood's work is particularly important because she focuses on ritual performance, an otherwise neglected aspect of the academic discussion on modern Salafism.⁴⁸ Indeed, as I have argued elsewhere, pre-'Arab Spring' Egyptian Salafism achieved a startling coherency – one certainly lacking in discussions over politics – within the ritual sphere.⁴⁹ Underpinning this situation was the awareness that, through their scholars' relentless efforts to weed out unreliable ritual practices, Salafis have become the unchallenged masters of this sphere.

Fashioned in response to a range of ritual theories, Mahmood's analysis contests what she perceives as the seductively misleading readings of ritual practices by the Symbolist school, according to which all ritual performance merely reflects an interior, usually hierarchical meaning. Drawing from the theories of Pierre Bourdieu and Talal Asad, Mahmood explores how her subjects – adherents of a single "Piety Movement" – strive to cultivate a sense of religio-moral identity *through* their ritual performances. While there are many merits to Mahmood's work, it complicates the study of Egyptian Salafism by creating a single, undifferentiated, pious monolith. Within this monolith, Muslim Sisters, Salafis and others rally together in opposition to those who, like the symbolists, perceive ritual performance as signifying (rather than constructing) meaning. In my experience, as I have said, much of the appeal of Salafism among ordinary Egyptians lies in its capacity to empower individuals through its marriage of triumphalist ideology and unusual attitudes to ritual performance. This marriage of ideology and ritual emphasis enables individuals to lay

claim to being 'the saved sect' (*al-firqa al-najiyya*), a status that they zealously guard.⁵⁰ Rather than havens for an undifferentiated piety movement united in its opposition to Western secular thought, Salafi mosque environments are often characterized by clashes over (what can appear quite petty) differences in ritual practice and theory. In recruiting the Salafis (and other members of the Piety Movement) to settle a theoretical debate on the nature of ritual performance, Mahmood's analysis overlooks several of the fundamental aspects of contemporary Salafi ritual practice.⁵¹

Let us recapitulate: Many of the most influential commentators on Islam during the 20th century neglected to include Salafism in their works. Instead, their aim was to clarify the evolutionary processes via which Sunni orthodoxy came into being. Schism and heresy were vitally important subjects to these authors. However, with a few exceptions, they do not seem to have entertained the idea that alternative expressions of Sunnism – which were not Ash'ari, or *madhhabi*, and were critical of the canonical *hadith* collection, and therefore were in sympathy with modern Salafism – existed, or at least existed in sufficient number and force to warrant writing about. Many of the most important generalist scholars in 20th century Islamic and Middle Eastern Studies circles, such as Fazlur Rahman, show a fundamental dislike of the subject matter. For Rahman, as well as for recent scholars such as Khaled Abou el-Fadl, Salafism's attacks on Islam's classical intellectualist and Sufi heritages betray the ignorance and barbarism of the individuals involved. For different reasons, the transnational nature of Salafism has also been ignored. Specifically, this is because of the shift to areas studies, which took

⁴⁷ See Saba Mahmood, *The Politics of Piety* (Oxford: Princeton University Press, 2005); and C. Hirschkind, *The Ethical Soundscape: Cassette Sermons and Islamic Counter-publics* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2006). In passing, we note that, long before Mahmood and Hirschkind's research, Patrick Gaffney wrote a deeply textured, Weberian-style analysis of preaching forms in a variety of Egyptian settings during the 1970s and 1980s. Salafism can be found within Gaffney's book, but, once again, it was not his focus. Re-reading Gaffney's book makes me aware of the changes that must have taken place between his field research days and my own. For one thing, his preachers never introduce the term Salafi into their sermons, while most of my interlocutors would self-identify as "Salafis" (though, admittedly, it was normally me who elicited this) and often used the words "*salaf al-salaf al-salah*" in their sermons.

⁴⁸ Commentators like Roy, Lacroix and Bonnefoy also show themselves sensitive to the ritual dimension of Salafism, but it is clearly not their main focus.

⁴⁹ This is one of the central themes of my book, *Salafi Ritual Purity*.

⁵⁰ It should be conceded that this experience is gained from pre-'Arab Spring' Salafi settings, matters have doubtless changed and ritual is less likely to be the all-consuming pursuit it once was.

⁵¹ For a more extensive critique of Mahmood's approach, see Gauvain 2013: 274, n. 57.

Dr. Richard Gauvain

place from the 1980 onwards and which has ensured that, until very recently, modern Salafism has been studied solely as the preserve of Saudi Arabia (and to a lesser extent the Indian subcontinent).

Turning to the modern day, Egypt and Iran have probably received the most sustained attention from Western political scientists and cultural anthropologists. The fact that its Salafi movements and scholars have remained all but undetected by these scholars until very recently, when they announced themselves to the world through the 'Arab Spring,' has been attributed to a number of congruent factors. First, before the 'Arab Spring,' Egyptian Salafism *in toto* was often dismissed as a purely Saudi Arabian import with no historical connection to Egypt.

Secondly, Egypt's Islamic movements have tended to be analysed in terms of their relationship with the state. From this perspective, the activities of, and personalities involved in, oppositional movements, particularly the country's Jihadi organizations and the Muslim Brotherhood, have proven more interesting than the generally non-confrontational Salafism endorsed by *Ansar al-Sunna* and in most other Egyptian Salafi environments. Thirdly, debates on legal and theological matters – major interests of modern Salafis – have also been reduced to the subject of Islamism (or conservatism). Fourthly, when political scientists have explored non-oppositional Salafi Egyptian settings, they have tended to employ social movement theory. Consciously aloof, the emphasis on scholasticism (as more important than the building of charitable networks) by individuals belonging to *Ansar al-Sunna* renders the application of this theory difficult. And fifthly, while *Ansar al-Sunna* has come to dominate Egyptian mosque education, the anthropologists who have studied Egyptian Salafi settings often tend to follow Mahmood in exploring the potentials of ritual performance in cultivating a sense of ethical identity. Egyptian Salafi groups – as distinct from the Brotherhood, *al-Gam'iyya al-Sha'riyya*,

Hizb al-Tahrir, and others – once again slip through the net.

V. (Egyptian) Salafism as *Zeitgeist*

I have gone some way towards exploring the reasons, both general and specific, as to why Egypt's Salafi scholars and movements were not the subject of more scholarly attention before the 'Arab Spring.' Given that Egyptian Salafis have forced themselves into the political arena – and now publicly disagree, both with the Muslim Brotherhood and among themselves, on matters of national interest – they can no longer be ignored. The Salafis' attempts to pursue legislation in full accordance with Shari'ah is bound to stoke interest within Western academic circles, especially as these attempts relate to the subjects of criminal punishments (*hudud*), attitudes to Israel, the sale of alcohol, tourism, the social and legal rights of women, Christians and non-Muslims, banking practices involving *riba'* and so forth.

The need to explore Salafism as something more than a knee-jerk reaction to Western practices and mores, however, is surely now understood. Further, while the majority of Western Islamicists, Middle Eastern Studies scholars and even anthropologists may still struggle to write empathetically on the subject, we note that Salafism, and particularly Egyptian Salafism, seems increasingly to invite inquiry using cross disciplinary methodologies and models. Thus, for instance, while numerous historians, anthropologists and political scientists engage with the potentials of viewing Islam as a "discursive" and "transnational" tradition, the specifically Salafi contribution to the faith's discursive and transnational nature is certainly worth exploring in light of what we are beginning to know about Salafism.⁵² Similarly, research into social media, and its range of applications, has yet to encompass Salafi forms of media, despite the movement's heavy reliance on it. There is also great potential to apply the burgeoning theoretical literatures on "authenticity" and "tradition" to the same subject material. It is

⁵² The point that Salafism may itself be viewed as a separate "discursive tradition" is made by Michael Farquhar. He does so on the grounds that, while individuals with very different political ideologies embrace the tradition, it shares "its own source texts, methodological principles, and norms of comportment."

Egyptian Salafism as a Problematic for Islamic and Middle Eastern Studies

hoped that such approaches will nuance, add substance to and ultimately take us beyond the increasingly strained model of political Islam/Islamism.⁵³

I would like to conclude this brief article with some commonsensical observations on a few possible avenues of research into Egyptian Salafism. Currently we lack historical details. This hampers our attempts to understand the recent developments within Egyptian Salafi circles, which, as I began by saying, combine much that is new, but a great deal that is also old.⁵⁴ Our understanding of the evolution of modern Egyptian Salafism is particularly sketchy. It makes sense, for instance, that Rashid Rida provides the link between the ideology of Muhammad 'Abduh and the much more conservative (for want of a better word) approach of Muhammad Hamid al-Fiqqi and the early *Ansar al-Sunna movement*, but we lack concrete information.⁵⁵ We know that al-Fiqqi, and his successors to the leader-

ship of *Ansar al-Sunna* 'Abd al-Razzaq al-'Affifi and 'Abd al-Rahman al-Wakil, as well as many other early important *Ansar al-Sunna* figures, traveled to Saudi Arabia and taught there;⁵⁶ but the degree to which they absorbed (and/or shaped) modern Wahhabi-Salafism is unknown. The interaction between the hugely influential *hadith* specialist Nasr al-Din al-Albani, who lived most of his life in Jordan but whose works dominate many Egyptian Salafi settings, and Egyptian Salafi institutions is similarly unknown.⁵⁷ If *Ansar al-Sunna* was historically apolitical, as most people seem to think, why was it compelled to merge with *al-Gam'iyya al-Shar'iyya* at the end of the 1960s, allegedly because of revolutionary ideas simmering within its circles? While it is often reported that the Alexandrian Salafi group which formed around Isma'il al-Muqaddim, Yasir al-Burhami and others clashed violently with the Muslim Brotherhood, what do we know about intra-Salafi relationships?⁵⁸ Such questions

⁵³ In particular, the juxtaposition of Salafism and folklore, a fellow competitor in the modern quest for "authenticity," interests me. Indeed, despite the Salafis' much publicised dislike of folklore (*funun sha'biyya*), Salafi settings are full of storytelling and myth-making. In rendering today's Salafis characters sufficiently akin to the true Salafis (i.e. *al-salaf al-salih*), past and present elide. One example here should prove the point: I was once told by the shaykh who was instructing me on basic ritual law about an inspiring event of which he had recently heard. Apparently, a young man making a mess of his ablutions had come to the attention of two of Egypt's current Salafi greats, Muhammad Hassan and Hussayn Ya'qub, while they were standing in the mosque together. Not wishing to embarrass him, the two shaykhs waited until he was finished before asking him to act as judge in their own "ablution contest." Bemused but greatly honoured, the young man watched these two great modern Salafis perform their ablutions time and again. He paid close attention and, ultimately, learned of his mistakes in the least painful way possible. Not only did I write this anecdote down, but I duly recorded it in the manuscript I was writing (Gauvain 2013: 312-3, n. 178). Only recently however, I found the same story, with a minor difference – in the original, it is an elderly man rather than a young boy – in Shi'i websites dedicated to extolling the noble character of Imam Hassan, the older brother of Hussayn! (see e.g. http://www1.ksm-net.org/index2.php?option=com_content&do_pdf=1&id=291). I can no longer make contact with the shaykh who told me the story; however, his friend, 'Abdullah, who also helped me greatly during my research phase, found the matter hilarious. It did not matter, according to 'Abdullah, who had staged a *wudu'* competition, or when it happened, the important thing is that I had taken on board the message, regarding the etiquette of ritual advice – anyway, the fact that the names, Hassan and Hussayn, remain the same in both stories lend it "a kind of truth" (*haqiqqa*). My point in including this story here is twofold: first, despite their reputation for textual rigour and careful selectivity with the sources, there are plenty of decidedly unsound traditions circulating working class modern Salafi settings; and, second, the early materials often lend themselves to this kind of mythologizing and can lead, ironically, to some very colourful and creative educational environments. For an interesting methodological approach to the relationship between authenticity and folklore, see e.g. Regina Bendix, *In Search of Authenticity* (London: University of Wisconsin, 1997). From a different perspective, I have also gone some way towards addressing the Egyptian Salafis' complex attitudes to the notion of "tradition" (*taqlid*), see Gauvain 2010; and 2013: 122-35. Pace Oliver Roy's argument that Salafism automatically rejects traditional modes of being, I have drawn attention to the Egyptian Salafis accommodation of tradition where and when necessary.

⁵⁴ It is common to find surprise expressed that Salafis, having been apolitical or anti-political, joined the political fray so quickly. In actual fact, this should not have surprised us: even in *Ansar al-Sunna* regulations, there was no ban on political involvement. And, among the Alexandrian and Cairene "activists", some degree of politicization was always present.

⁵⁵ Haykal, "On the Nature of Salafi Action," p. 46; Gauvain 2013: 284, n. 35.

⁵⁶ This is mentioned in Gauvain 2010: 812 ff.. Indeed, Michael Farquhar estimates that, in the early 1980s, over half the faculty members at the Islamic University in Madina – a hugely significant location when considering the construction of the modern Islamic Salafi curriculum (*manhaj*) – were Egyptian. Farquhar notes, not surprisingly, that these Egyptians belonged to the Muslim Brotherhood and *Ansar al-Sunna* movements. See M. Farquhar, "The Islamic University of Medina since 1961: the politics of religious mission and the making of a modern Salafi pedagogy" (2012),

⁵⁷ Al-Albani visited Egypt only sparingly. For his memories of one visit, see: <http://www.ahlalhdeth.com/vb/showthread.php?t=256132>. On a second visit, in 1960, he gave a lecture at 'Abdin, in which he roundly criticizes "the Wahhabis." This is available at: <http://www.4shared.com/file/75693629/8f9c2cdd/al-bani-1960.html?dirPwVerified=4f3514e1>.

⁵⁸ Here I am speaking not merely of relationships among *Ansar al-Sunna* and the Jihadis (regarding whom, thanks to Kepel, Jansen, and others, we know a great deal), but also of those within *Ansar al-Sunna* itself (see under the Hakimiyya debate, in Gauvain 2013:41 ff.); or between the Activists and/or the Alexandrian Salafi movements.

now require answers. Perhaps more worrying is the fact that we lack any clear sense of who Egypt's Salafis really are. It is true that certain individuals have come across the radar. In his survey of the tape-recorded sermons of some of Cairo's most charismatic preachers, Charles Hirschkind introduced us to Muhammad Hassan. In most media sources, however, Egypt's Salafis continue to be talked about *en masse* – an army of identical thinking and looking individuals (aggressive, backward, and more than likely to be protesting against democracy). Such treatment compares unfavourably with that accorded other prominent Egyptian religious groups and individuals. Consider, for instance, Raymond Baker's sensitive exploration of the "New Islamists" in his *Islam without Fear* or the collection of essays on Yusuf al-Qaradawi, edited by Jakob Skovgaard Petersen and Bettina Gräf, and entitled *Global Mufti*.

In stark contrast, there is almost no biographical information on Egypt's Salafi scholars available to readers in the English language to date. This may not be attributed solely to lofty academic sensibilities: far more problematic characters – Sayyid Qutb, 'Abd Allah Yusuf 'Azzam, Ibn Laden, and others – have been rewarded with infinitely more attention and, in the case of John Calvert's

work on Qutb, all but redeemed.⁵⁹ Egypt's Salafis, by contrast, are only now receiving any attention at all. It would be a pity to limit this solely to their recent political performances. After all, Muhammad 'Abd al-Maqsud's recent criticisms of Yasir al-Burhami – on the grounds that al-Burhami defends Ahmed Shafiq (both on paper and in his Friday sermon) and has attacked the Muslim Brotherhood – is surely best understood in light of the tensions between these men, and the movements they represent, that existed well before the 'Arab Spring.'⁶⁰

Writing the as yet unwritten history of Egyptian Salafism will take time, but it will doubtless happen. Speaking more generally, there are several reasons to be optimistic regarding the immediate future of research into the wider phenomenon of Salafism. With Meijer's volume of collected essays, several other significant contributions to the study of Salafism, sensitive to some of the key issues here identified, have also recently been published.⁶¹ Unfortunately, however, while I have come across a number of scholars interested in learning more about "new Egyptian Salafism" from the perspective of "security studies," I do not know of any in-depth historical research currently being carried out into Egyptian Salafi settings.⁶²

⁵⁹ For Calvert's balanced account of the evolution of Qutb's ideas, see his *Sayyid Qutb and the Origins of Radical Islamism* (Chichester: Columbia University Press, 2010).

⁶⁰ For 'Abd al-Maqsud's comments, see: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=sGtLoQlrKD8>. The only systematically presented biographical data on Egypt's Salafis that I have managed to find is provided by Brian Wight in an ambitious Master's degree submitted to the American University in Cairo in June 2012. See this author's "Legal Methodology of the Salafi Movement in Egypt," pages 37–45, available at: <http://www.dar.aucegypt.edu/handle/10526/3149?show=full>. Wright's decision to describe Egyptian Salafism as the product of local, economic and political developments is fully justified. However, in tying its evolution solely to key events in the 1970s and onwards, he omits all mention of *Ansar al-Sunna* (despite providing the biographies of *Ansar al-Sunna* preachers, such as Ahmad al-Naqib and others). He also leaves little room for the possibility that certain strands of Salafism – particularly those associated with al-Albani and al-Madkhali – are imported clearly from abroad.

⁶¹ See e.g. Laurent Bonnefoy, *Transnationalism and Religious Identity* (New York: Columbia University, 2012); and Terje Ostebo, *Localising Salafism: Religious Change among Oromo Muslims in Bale, Ethiopia* (Leiden: Brill, 2012).

⁶² Two projects, in which Egypt is one of several foci, do sound very interesting. Michael Farquhar is exploring the development of Wahhabi pedagogy from the middle of the twentieth century with a focus on Islamic University in Madina. Unlike previous studies on Wahhabism, however, he is interested in the "give and take", between Saudi educational establishments and the wider Salafi world regarding matters of pedagogy rather than Islamism and/or jihad. Farquhar is exploring the Egyptian contributions to modern Saudi Arabian Wahhabi Salafism in more concrete ways than anyone previously has done, while his findings regarding the nature of the Wahhabi curriculum, with its emphasis on Ibn Rushd's *Bidayat al-mujtahid* – a classical work of *ikhtilaf*, an edition of which was introduced into Saudi settings by the Egyptian *Ansar al-Sunna* scholar Ahmad Shakir – lend further support to the idea that modern Salafism now be considered as part of an alternate Sunni legal and theological history. The second project, still in early days, is being helmed by Itzhak Weismann. Its main focus is *da'wa* movements across the Muslim world, with Salafism and Egypt both being areas of concern. The project's potential, to my mind, lies in the shift away from discussing Salafism solely through the prism of jihad and (in contrast to) Islamism.

Dr. Larbi Sadiki
**Beyond Foundationalism:
 Democracy & Political Islam¹**

1. Concepts & Definitions: Caveats

The terms 'Islamism' and 'political Islam' are generally used interchangeably. They are used in preference to a number of other terms such as 'fundamentalism' and 'fundamentalist movements'. The terms are used here to denote a particular brand of thought and praxis aimed at 'Islamising' polity, economy and society. This process is referred to in Arabic as '*ta'see'*', which opposes the privatization of religion. 'Islamism' is not monolithic: the diversity and nuances within it must be accounted for. Islamists differ in terms of thought and praxis. Their political behaviour ranges from the most apolitical and peaceful (Tableegh) to the most extremist (al-Qaida). What is most noticeable about political Islam is the endeavour to undertake an inversion of the earlier 'dis-establishment' of Islam from the political realm. If dis-establishment refers to the separation of religion from politics, the inversion of 'dis-establishment' is generally about the blurring of the boundaries of the religious and the political. It can thus be said that the Western notion of 'rendering to God what's God's, and rendering to Caesar what is Caesar's' has no resonance in Islamist thought. Dis-establishment of religion was coterminous with the nation and state-building that followed either de-colonization in most of the Muslim World or the dissolution of the Ottoman Empire, when the Caliphate was abolished in the mid-1920s. '*Ijtihad*' refers

to the operationalization of the Islamic instrument to render a rational meaning to religious texts by the individual or believer. '*Shari'ah*' is associated with Islamic law. '*Jihad*' is spiritual struggle with non-violent connotations. Finally, '*ummah*' is the Islamic community that is bound by faith and whose membership is conferred upon adherents of Islam who uphold the notion of '*tawheed*' ('Unity of God').

The semantic and conceptual field is literally replete with attempts to understand 'political Islam', which some imprecisely refer to as 'fundamentalism', a misnomer that has receded in explanatory power and linguistic clarity. As Table 1 shows, scholars have all left their mark on the attempt to define 'political Islam'. The French school, through Roy and Kepel, suffers from a fetish for labels, often generalisations that all in some or another highlight the 'failing' nature of 'political Islam' and its extremist tendencies. What is positive in the various understandings is the dynamic and diverse nature of the phenomenon. What is negative is the presence of a derogatory residue in the term 'radical' and 'radicalism', perhaps left over from the days of communism. Radicals may want reform, but the bottom line is that they work against the centre of the establishment, deploy illegal and non-constitutional strategies, and even when they embrace democracy, they tend to fail or misuse it.

Table 1: Key Islamicists and Understandings of 'Fundamentalism'

Scholar	View of 'political Islam'	Critique/Evaluation
Eric Davis, 1984 ²	"Islamic radicalism": stresses revolutionary zeal	Not nuanced as if radical change is singular for all forces of political Islam, with stress put on 'militancy', i.e. negative

¹ Thanks are due to a few colleagues who read an early version of this article, namely, Jeremy Salt (Bilkent University, Turkey), and Hassan Belhassen, member of Nahdah Shura Council and a colleague at Qatar University, Doha. Similarly, thanks to Mohammed Moussa, a colleague from the University of Exeter for his feedback from beginning to end. I alone, however, accept responsibility for any lacunae or mistakes.

² Eric Davis, "Ideology, Social Class and Islamic Radicalism in Modern Egypt," in Said Amir Arjomand (ed.), *From Nationalism to Revolutionary Islam* (London: Macmillan, 1984), pp. 134-157.

Scholar	View of 'political Islam'	Critique/Evaluation
R. Hrair Dekmejian, 1985 ³	"Fundamentalism" used interchangeably with Arabic translation " <i>usuliyyah</i> "	Distinction between 'passive' and 'militant' strands, with stress on 'regenerative' capacity
Emmanuel Sivan, 1985 ⁴	"Fundamentalism" is a continuum with two poles: "conservative" and "extreme" radicals	Continuum idea is innovative and captures nuances but ignores overlap between 'conservative' and 'extreme' radicals
Olivier Roy, 1988 ⁵	"Fundamentalism" equated with "Islamism" as 'neo-fundamentalism': ever changing zealous and revolutionary forces	Dynamism and difference are stressed; tends towards negative labeling: 'neo-fundamentalism' is not any clearer than 'fundamentalism'
Ervand Abrahamian, 1989 ⁶	"Fundamentalism" is made up of both liberal and radical forces	Boxes 'political Islam' into neat groups of radicals: clerical, lay-religious and secular. 'Clerical populism' ignores historiography of Islam's learned scholars
Martin Marty & Scott Appleby, 1991 ⁷	"Fundamentalism" refers to anti-state politicization	Dilutes spiritual or religious ethos of political Islam
Graham Fuller and Ian Lesser, 1995 ⁸	"fundamentalism" denotes "mutual siege"	Lacks contextualization; use of 'siege': generalization and imprecise abstraction
Youssef Choueiri, 1997 ⁹	"Fundamentalism" denotes radicalized revivalism with totalitarian tendencies	'Ideologizes' political Islam in a fixed way; stresses sequential linearity
John Esposito, 1999 ¹⁰	"Fundamentalism" is dynamic; subject to increased 'radicalization': "revivalism" to "neo-revivalism" to extremism	Ignores parallel process of increased 'moderation', and the interplay between processes leading to extremism and moderation
Barry Rubin, 2002 ¹¹	"Fundamentalism" refers to oscillation between revolutionary militancy and outright terrorism	Apocalyptic view that leans towards a 'martial' view of all things Islamic
Gilles Kepel, 2002 ¹²	"Fundamentalism" <i>qua</i> 'jihad'-bent movement is dying: transition to 'post-Islamism'	Captures idea of dynamism; but Kepel's work is yet to be deconstructed properly for its generalization and Orientalism

³ R. Hrair Dekmejian, *Islam in Revolution: Fundamentalism in the Arab World* (Syracuse: Syracuse University Press, 1985), pp. 3-7.

⁴ Emmanuel Sivan, *Radical Islam: Medieval Theology and Modern Politics* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1985), pp. 49-51; 183-184.

⁵ Olivier Roy, "Has Islamism a Future in Afghanistan?" in William Maley, (ed.), *Fundamentalism Reborn? Afghanistan and the Taliban* (New York: New York University Press, 1998).

⁶ Ervand Abrahamian, *Radical Islam: The Iranian Mojahedin* (London: I. B. Tauris, 1989), pp. 40-49.

⁷ Martin E. Marty and R. Scott Appleby, "Foreword," in James Piscatori, (ed.), *Islamic Fundamentalisms and the Gulf Crisis* (Chicago: American Academy of Arts and Sciences, 1991), pp. xixiv.

⁸ Graham Fuller and Ian Lesser, *A Sense of Siege: The Geopolitics of Islam and the West* (Boulder: Westview, 1995).

⁹ Youssef Choueiri, *Islamic Fundamentalism* (Washington: Pinter, 1997), pp. xvi-64.

¹⁰ John L. Esposito, *The Islamic Threat: Myth or Reality?* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1999).

¹¹ Barry Rubin, *Islamic Fundamentalism in Egyptian Politics* (New York: Palgrave, 2002).

¹² Gilles Kepel, *Jihad: Trail of Political Islam* (London: I. B. Tauris, 2002); also, see by, Gilles Kepel, *Muslim Extremism in Egypt: The Prophet and Pharaoh* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1993).

Islamists practise 'revisionism', and this is something that continues to elude observers and scholars of Islamist movements and groups. I find Bayat's notion of 'post-Islamism'¹³ somewhat awkward. But more than any other concept, it captures the essence of what I call the 'constructivist' nature of political Islam. That is, it is an ever-changing phenomenon, an open-ended project. Emphasis must be placed on *open-endedness*. Islamists – peaceful and violent, anti-systemic or systemic – are forced by local and global dynamics to adjust thought and practice or risk extinction. Post-Islamism, as Bayat puts it, refers to "the birth, out of the Islamist experience, of a qualitatively different discourse and politics." He gives the example of how Islamists look for a synthesis of Islamic and Western ideas in democracy. Fundamentally, however, whilst violent groups, such as al-Qaida, tend to assume an exclusivist and singular view of religious 'truth', a majority of Islamists are renouncing such a practice. Again, Bayat has a point in observing that Islamists are increasingly tending to "acknowledge (...) ambiguity, multiplicity, inclusion, and compromise in principles and practice."¹⁴ This quest for crystallizing a 'centrist' position, in accordance with what is termed in Islamist parlance '*wasatiyyah*' (literally 'moderation'), can be noted in the less successful attempt by Egypt's Muslim Brotherhood to be legalized, to include Copts within its ranks, to form a political party, to field female candidates in the country's elections and to develop a dialogue with Western diplomats.

II. 'Islam' & 'islams'

The tragic events of 9/11 have re-opened the proverbial gates of *ijtihad* ('independent reasoning') everywhere in the world. This trend is mostly manifest in the rich panoply of religious discourse and counter-discourse in Muslim and non-Muslim countries. What is most specific about the return of *ijtihad* is the phenomenon of Islam as a shared terrain for all discourses, top-down and bottom-up. All claimants of *ijtihad* deploy Islam to legiti-

mate their thought and praxis, and delegitimise opponents. Discursively, a variety of 'islams' (with small 'i' to use Dale Eickelman's anthropology of Islam) is at play. Perhaps it is more correct to talk about a single Islam (with capital 'I') and diverse Muslim communities, rather than 'islams' (with small 'i'). Elsewhere in the Muslim world contestation is most fierce between claimants of some form of 'modern' (Muslim Brotherhood movements from Egypt to Tunisia), 'radical' (Salafi & Wahhabi), cultural-spiritual (Sufi brotherhoods) or missionary (Tableegh & Da'wah) brands of Islam against an 'Ataturkist'-type of socio-political modernization.

III. Contextualization of 'Political Islam'

The phenomenon of 'political Islam' must be read within specific contexts. This is vital for avoiding the pitfalls of generalization and reductionism – the flaws of Orientalists (Western discourses about the 'Orient') and Occidentalists (Eastern discourses of the 'Occident' or 'West' by the 'East'). Bassam Tibi, who has made a career of 'bashing' Islamists, reproduces reductionist and over-simplistic constructions of Islamism, representing it as monolithic, hell bent on rejecting modernity, and, overall, lacking democratic and pluralist credentials.¹⁵ Islam has thus far served as a legitimator of state-building along secular-nationalist lines (all former and current liberation movements prior to state-formation) or against the state (e.g. Somalia, Afghanistan, and Yemen) as well as a legitimator of political reform below the state. It must be pointed out that Islam is the shared ideological repository of political identity and value-assignment in most Muslim states, including self-professed secular states. In Egypt, Tunisia and Libya, where religion in the form of the Salafi puritanical creed provides a *raison d'être*, the state has coached religion into 'clientship'.

Yet in other states, religion was dis-established. But the state, despite declaratory policies in favour of secularization, activates Islamic idioms and metaphors for the purpose of shoring up support

¹³ Asef Bayat, "What is Post-Islamism?" in *ISIM Review*, 16 (Autumn 2005), p. 5.

¹⁴ Ibid.

¹⁵ Banam Tibi, *Islam and Islamism* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2012).

from the public at large and the religious voices and institutions in particular. Bourguiba was a staunch secularist. He was one who meddled in religion. He publicly advocated an image of Tunisia in which women were unveiled rather than veiled, and renounced the fasting of Ramadan (one of the five pillars of Islam). The brand of Islamism that emerged in this North African former French colony reflected the local context: staunchly anti-secular politics that sought to efface religious and cultural identity. It went further, and mostly via peaceful means, to argue the case for a place for religion in society, as is the case in the European Union, where separation of the sacred and the political does not significantly curtail religious freedom or worship. However, intermittent sagas regarding veiling, such as in France, force these very Islamists to re-evaluate what is called 'secular fundamentalism'. As in Tunisia, non-establishment forces of Islam advance a different vision of polity, society and economy, shaped by the dream of the partial emulation of the 'Medinan' city-state built by the Prophet Muhammad, by reference to legality, communal solidarity, mutual compassion, toleration and protection of difference.

In Egypt, the Muslim Brotherhood, older than the state and steadfast in its quest for an Islamist state, has contested the non-Islamic nature of the state from the time of King Farouk up to the present day. It has been involved with the state in processes of mutual inclusion and exclusion, which entailed the resort to violence during the 1950s and up to the 1970s. During Sadat's reign and before the peace treaty with Israel, the Brotherhood welcomed the margin of existence given to it by the late Sadat. It used him to rebuild its disorganized and weakened institutions and its demobilized and largely oppressed membership. He used the Brotherhood to counter leftist forces that questioned and threatened his power in the immediate post-Nasser years. He, too, turned to Islam's idioms to shore up his legitimacy and popularity; he bankrolled al-Azhar to invest in another

formidable ally, recruiting to his service a revered Islamic institution with a large bureaucracy and vital affective resources. His tax concessions to the resurgent forces of Islam led to the proliferation of private mosques, eventual hotbeds of anti-systemic religious forces, including his very assassins in October 1981.

The anti-systemic forces of political Islam that thrived under Sadat have today all but gone. The notorious *al-Jama'ah al-Islamiyyah* ('the Islamic Group') – along with Islamic Jihad, the *akfeer wa al-Higra* ('Excommunication and Emigration') – which up to the late 1990s fought the state and targeted state symbols, including tourism, as a Westernizing facet and activity – have gradually laid down their arms under a policy of *tawbah* ('repentance'). They have now been legalized and integrated into Egypt's 'Arab Spring'-type process of democratic reconstruction. Hundreds and thousands of activists who committed to the overthrow of the state in Mubarak's Egypt have been tamed. Moreover, many of their leaders have become 'defenders' of social peace, with the state benefiting a great deal from this unlikely source of favourable propaganda. Islamism is often incubated in local matrices, which must be understood. These matrices may 'condition' certain practices, both peaceful and violent. In Algeria, a unique case of a state and society that rose from the embers and the ravages of a brutal war of liberation, a quasi praxis of violence (in the name of a spurious notion of *jihad* given that Muslim killed Muslim) followed the cancellation of the second round of elections in early 1992, which would have confirmed the Front of Islamic Salvation's (FIS) parliamentary majority. The state chose violence – through a coup – and the Islamists followed suit. The rest was history. In neighbouring Tunisia, despite isolated incidents of violence in the late 1980s by the *Nahdah* Party with or without leadership endorsement, the Islamists tended to favour peaceful engagement – even emigration – over anti-state armed tactics. Tunisia is more or less the most stable Arab state, and part of the credit is

owed to the peaceful ways of its Islamists. In contrast to Algeria, Tunisia was largely spared the brutality the war of liberation in neighbouring Algeria. The question of why Islamists tend to be violent requires contextualization. Violence, extremism or intransigence are not givens that are invariably and indiscriminately 'cemented' to the forces of political Islam. They must not be treated as such. Accordingly, the linguistic field itself that is deployed by the security apparatuses that today engage with Islamism is in need of revision. Islamism and Islamists are socially, spatially and temporally constructed. There is no 'one Islamist size that fits all.' The American-led so-called 'war on terror' is itself not just a physical, logistical and material minefield. It is, above all else, a theoretical, paradigmatic and conceptual minefield. This concept smacks of generalization and reductionism. 'War' must be discriminating as well as guided by political and legal ethics and ends. As in the case of Saudi Arabia and, to a lesser extent, Egypt, 'war' of words, propaganda and even dialogue and reconciliation are vital resources. The Yemenis have adopted the Saudi model of involving the religious and tribal elders in 'taming' and bringing to corrective or constructive as opposed to punitive justice. The unfolding Pakistani miasma is a grim reminder of the excesses of the 'war against terror', especially by an indigenous state against its indigenous population – partly with outside weaponry and political agendas. Talking to 'terrorists', many would agree, is preferable to indiscriminately bombing civilian villages and cities to flush out a minority of extremists.

Terror warriors must first learn the art of disaggregation. The use, for instance, of the 'Taliban', shorthand for al-Qaida-affiliated Afghani, is an abstraction that ignores the political sociology of violence and resistance. The 'Taliban' are not detached from language, society, culture, local technology, mythology, religion and indigeneity. They survive because they are embraced by all of these, and because they, too, in return, have mastered the art of how to use these local re-

sources to their cause – whatever that is. The abstraction of 'terror' and 'terrorists' under some lame policy or practice that ignores the surrounding milieu and history will continue to harvest failure, more violence and counter-violence and the unnecessary deaths of civilians and soldiers, Afghani and non-Afghani. Demonization through abstraction has not worked. It will not work. In fact, both beget more demonization, abstraction and violence in reverse. For instance, the image of America today is one of a 'warring' hegemon, conducting war in two continents, and both are undertaken against forces that happen to be Muslim. This directly and indirectly helps fulfil the 'clash of civilizations' prophecy.

The bottom line is that the fallacy of 'one totalizing war', 'one totalizing terror' and 'one totalizing Islamism' cry for urgent rethinking. Once new thinking along with new 'wording' are sufficiently sensitized to the variability of contexts and the diversity of Islamists – as thought, practice, culture, geography, history and humanity – then more constructive and engaging 'worlding' and mapping of the terrain of 'Islamisms' and the global forces operating on them shall unfold. Only then shall intellectual, normative and conceptual and lexical worlds crystallize. It may be only then that 'pen-points' have a balancing role to 'gun-points' in the defence against the types of illegal religious and secular brutality and violence that demean humanity as a whole.

In this context, it must be pointed that just as armies, Muslim and non-Muslim, seem to be endlessly misguided by abstractions of violent Islamists, armies of scholars are scrambling for funds and grants in the quest of the holy grail of 'terrorism' or 'radicalization'. Academic careerism and short-sightedness is driving research agendas in pursuit of more abstraction of peoples, cultures, religions and regions. This in many cases takes place with limited language, knowledge of the local religion, terrain and history, and much less integrity in the choice of subjects of inquiry. Especially in relation to the post-

9/11 violence and wars, there has been an explosion of 'security studies' and interest in security, and prophets of 'radicalization' theories have proliferated. The language of 'Islam in crisis' obfuscates rather than demystifying. Rarely do we, Western or West-based scholars in particular, pause to ask questions about the moral cost of the so-called 'war against terror'.

IV. Between 'Political Islam' & 'Muslim Politics'

Eickelman and Piscatori view "Muslim politics" as involving "the competition and contest over both the interpretation of religious symbols and the control of the institutions that produce and sustain them." Consequently, 'Muslim Politics' is a sophisticated analysis of the ever-changing correlation between the sacred and the profane in the Muslim world. Piscatori and Eickelman advance the idea that the politics of language that embed the expression and organization of Muslim politics must be "deconstructed". The Muslim world has witnessed a process of "objectification of consciousness", a process leading to fundamental questions in the minds of large numbers of believers. This objectification has come about as a result of mass education and wider channels of communication in the Muslim World, rendering exegesis widespread, especially as religious authority has itself been subjected to fragmentation. The learned monopolies of the past are receding. Religious discourse is wide-open and open-ended. As they put it, the levelling of the playing field has led to an element of danger, owing to heightened contestation of the symbols and idioms of Islam. This contestation cultivates polycentricity, and this polycentricity, in return, spawns contestation. The two work in tandem, reifying a more plural community of inquisitive and active Muslims, who do not leave the question of religious decision to religious elites. The resulting diversity produces and enriches the interpretation and understanding of the Muslim experience in the modern and post-modern 'movement'. As if so-called 'sacred au-

thority' had lost its sanctity, sanctity of text is to be separated and differentiated from the sanctity of revelation and text. Context matters. Text is given meaning within temporal and spatial contexts. Meanings and symbols are deployed by radically different Muslim actors and agents for fundamentally different ends. Sacred authority has multiple uses. It has the potential to be used as the medium both for maintaining state power as well as challenging or winning it. Their processes of 'protest and bargaining' underscore the dynamics of the internal struggles within Muslim communities everywhere for control of production and application of religious symbols. Fragmentation of religious authority has both pluralized and opened discussion about how to be Muslim in accordance with time and space, and with the demands of both religious identity and modernity.

Thus 'Muslim Politics', aided by the dynamic of objectification of Muslim consciousness, have produced a transnational Islam. In this newly-carved space of globality and transnationalism, voiced Islam rivals traditional printed Islam. It is within this space that the travel of the sacred idioms, symbols and metaphors of 'islams' (as interpreted and experienced locally not globally) opens vistas for both affinity with and hostility to the norms of globalism, modernism and internationalism, and the norms underpinning them. How 'fundamentalism' is produced – by which metaphors and symbols, and in which temporal and spatial contexts – calls for the appreciation of the endeavour required to wed the ideals of pristine, puritanical and textual Islam with the challenges and pressures of the daily lived 'islams' from Bali to Cairo. In the midst of multiple 'islams' (as Eickelman and Piscatori use this term) there exists a horizontal trans-nationalism forming a loose universal Muslim consciousness. This produces what has been described by some observers as "an intercalation of civilizations in which debates become more at hand and more complex." This 'intercalation' of 'islams' and 'modernities' is misinterpreted with telling effect, feed-

ing the familiar bias and depiction of a global Islamic 'terror' threat to world peace and civilization. This, in turn, reproduces the implicit notion of more than one level of Muslim consciousness.

V. *The Godly-Sanctioned 'Good' – 'Maqasid'*

This discussion has inevitably brought many sympathizers as well as proponents in the Muslim world to its cause, prominent amongst them being Muhammad al-Awwa, Tariq Bishri and Fahmi Huweidi. They utilize many aspects of traditional Islamic discourse that serve the objective for an ethical vision of Islam in everyday politics, such as *maqasid al-Shari'ah*. The method of activism espoused by this trend is *dawah* ('preaching') permeating society with the objective of reform (*islah*) and renewal (*tajdid*) (al-Hudaibi). The principles of *ijtihad* ('intellectual reasoning') and *maslahah* ('public interest'), the vast juristic tradition and the ethical values of *adl* ('justice') and *shura* all provide Muslims intellectuals and scholars with a repertoire to construct a specifically Islamic discourse on democracy. A discourse has been constructed that is not only Islamic in inspiration but has also, in content, pushed forward an agenda that seeks to redress contemporary problems in the Muslim world. This agenda acknowledges the existence of minorities as fellow citizens of an Islamic polity (Bishri), where gender is not the prerequisite for leadership, and democratic participation is divinely sanctioned, premised on the principle of *shura* (the late Shaykh Muhammad al-Ghazali).

Juridico-rationalism: Khaled Abou El-Fadl

How do these three eminent Muslim scholars attempt to reconcile religion and the public sphere?

Khaled Abou El Fadl: The complex relationship that governs politics in Islam according to one proponent of the *rationalist* school of jurisprudence is undergirded by moral agency. Moral agency itself is to be

found within the actual interpretive protagonist. Agents and actors are part of a process whereby the fashioning of authoritative texts is viewed as an act of creative thinking, with natural reason (*Mu'tazilah*) guiding the interpreter as he or she delves within the Qur'an, the principal source of God's law (Qur'an-centric approach). Human agency and cognition are part of the interplay between the interpretation of Islam and its proof-texts i.e. the Qur'an and the *Hadith*; it is thus charged with engaging in the search for God's law as a moral agent capable of rationally discerning right and wrong – the moral value of an act.

"That is part of the sociology of human existence – that all of us achieve things within the limits of how far our consciousness and our hearts and minds have been able to absorb a particular time and a place. Within my context, I am going to try to preserve the sanctity of life."¹⁶

The text as a hermeneutical rule follows and is the object of interpretation by an agent whose ethos of morality is independent from the former (typical *Mu'tazilah* position). The rational, although separate from the text, is vital for the comprehension of divine will as encompassed in the *Shari'ah*. *Huquq al-'ibad* ('the rights of human beings') are in the main constituted by the Godly sanctions of Islam, *maqasid al-Shari'ah*: the right to life, the right to property, the right to one's reputation, the right to lineage and the right to intellect. The *huquq al-'ibad* are counterpoised to *huquq Allah* ('the rights of God'), whereby the former have the priority of fulfilment over the latter. Having mentioned this, it is now important to see who is entitled or, in other words, who is able to exact these rights as a legitimate political actor, and on what basis. The universality and particularity of Islam as well as its extra-territoriality and territoriality are issues that bring their focus upon human agency or social institutions as legitimate actors in the quest to fulfil the objectives of the *Shari'ah*. The universal nature of

¹⁶ Khaled Abou El Fadl, 'A Distinctly Islamic View of Human Rights: Does it exist and is it compatible with the Universal Declaration of Human Rights', edited by Shireen T. Hunter and Huma Malik, *Islam and Human Rights: Advancing a U.S. – Muslim Dialogue* (Washington D.C.: Centre for Strategic and International Studies, 2005), 33.

Dr. Larbi Sadiki

Islam disengages any possibility of the *fixing* or localising of its ethical imperatives or moral rules onto a single entity, whether a sole rite of Islamic jurisprudence or a state structure.

“If the duties of Shari’ah, figuratively speaking, accompany a Muslim wherever he/she may go, and if political boundaries are not the only means of discharging the obligations of the Shari’ah, this would seem to lend support to the conclusion that moral communities are more essential to the Islamic message than territorial boundaries. It is possible to comply with the Qur’anic command of living according to the dictates of Shari’ah without necessarily establishing a full-fledged state dedicated for that purpose. To avoid any misunderstandings, this statement does not mean that I am expressing opposition to the idea of a territorially bound state that enforces Shari’ah law, it only means that territorially bound states are the only possible mechanisms for the enforcement of Shari’ah. Shari’ah may be enforced individually and personally, as well as collectively and communally. This would include, but need not be limited to, enforcement through formally organized states.”¹⁷

VI. Islamists and Democracy

Two observations are in order. Firstly, Islamists are not going to vanish from the public spheres under construction in ‘Arab Spring’ countries (defined as those who have either experienced clear-cut ousters of former dictators, such as Egypt, Libya and Tunisia, or had major transformation resulting from popular uprisings, such as Morocco and Yemen). They are here to stay. They bring within the ‘Arab Spring’ context not only new intellectual artefacts, but also dynamics favouring inclusiveness of marginal forces, both Islamist and secular. Secondly, for the first time in postcolonial history it can be said that the scene is set for

political competition and an ideational contestation, which is not arbitrated by the authoritarian state. There are caveats – varying degrees of ‘deep state’ outlive the ousted establishments, namely in Egypt, where the armed forces remain powerful, and media and business elites favoured under the deposed regimes still exercise a degree of control and anti-Islamist bias. Nonetheless, a number of assumptions inform the enterprise here to understand Islamist thought and its practice of democracy. Islamist movements have subjected themselves to public vetting to confirm their credentials as formidable political actors in the Arab Middle East (AME). This must be contextualized within historically cumulative politics; the major Islamist political parties, in Egypt, Tunisia and Morocco have left, to varying degrees, their first political imprints on Arab politics through confrontation-cum-marginalization-cum-moderation processes. In all three countries, the leading Islamists, either sharing power and acting as major power-holders, have turned political wilderness and misfortune on the margins of power into learning opportunities – through which dogmas from the 1970s mostly disavouring the secular state, democratic politics, and peaceful *modus operandi* – have been recast into flexibly rethought Islamism that does not preclude a pragmatic approach to statecraft. They have displayed acumen in democratic capacity building, discursively and procedurally, and in the ability to craft rhetoric and re-calibrate practice to suit new pressures and demands for adjustment. Thus the resulting movements, political parties, leaders and messages have gained broader popular appeal and this structures within which organized politics expanded social bases and modernized both messages and the strategies for their delivery. In so doing, they aided smooth transition from the bullet to ballot, from the pulpit to parliament, and from the margin to the centre.

Note that it is difficult to pin down Islamists to a single conception of how to regulate the relationship of Islam and democracy. Methodologically, this is

¹⁷ Khaled Abou El Fadl, ‘The Unbounded Law of God and Territorial Boundaries’, edited by Allen Buchanan and Margaret Moore, *States, Nations, and Borders: the Ethics of Making Boundaries* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003), 222–3. [Emphasis added]

where the chief challenge lies for students of political Islam. Today there is an urgent need for the scholarly community to leap out of the 'Orientalist' or 'Occidental-ist' box in order to widen the horizon of how to re-evaluate the relationship. Islamists continuously change, yet the devices deployed and the analytical approaches and prisms used by scholars have not. In particular, the resulting binary knowledge smacks too much of anachronism to be able to capture the panoply of Islamist discourses on democracy. In the context of the 'Arab Spring', the discourse on how to understand the perennial question of how Islamists and democracy relate to each other calls for rethinking. The old standard characterizations are null. The emerging brands of 'civic Islamism' cannot be brushed aside by the prejudicial constructs of so-called 'radical' Islamism, al-Qaida and the like, or by the belligerence and anti-democratic movements of the 1970s and 1980s. For the first time, scholars have an opportunity to inquire into 'civic Islamism' without the backdrop of political drama in the AME (bombings, assassinations such as of Sadat, or 9/11).

The new political drama that has catapulted political Islam into the centre-stage derives from a civic moment in Arab history: dissidence, rebellion, and new social movements affirming rights to dignity and freedom. Islamists did not lead Arab revolutions such as those in Egypt and Tunisia. However, they have benefited from popular endorsement through free and fair elections. The emerging civic Islamism has diluted the yearning for the Prophetic city-state built nearly 1,400 years ago. It has, largely, shed its misogyny in favour of more gender-friendly thought and practice of politics, by no means imperfect but a step in the right direction. Islamists' anti-West rhetoric has ceded to more conciliatory speech. And secular politics and democracy have been embraced, to varying degrees, as inevitable terrains for sharing power with compatriots away from the strict ideology and unrealistic teleology that once premised the Islamic state and God's Law

as non-negotiable items in the Islamist itinerary of re-imagining community. The risk in any scholarly endeavour to understand Islamism, in general, is to continue to labour with immutable agendas, constructs and methodologies to unearth tentative findings about a continuously changing phenomenon. That would make for prosaic scholarship, unable to challenge its own assumptions and tools of analysis. And this is a venture that no single scholar, method or theory can firmly grasp within the temporal or spatial limits of a single Islamist experience. The name of the game may be longitudinal. There is no single 'Muslim Brotherhood' experience just as there is no single Hasan Al-Banna or Ghannouchi from whose 'words' scholars may cut up Islamist 'worlds'. The former spoke in favour of elections and work through formal institutions in the 1940s and yet at another phase in his political evolution opposed the order of the day in its entirety. Likewise, to understand Ghannouchi as a 'democrat', one has to explore political lineage in a long career where neither democracy nor the secular state had appeal. In either case, meaning and text cannot be divorced from context. This is where a great deal about contingency and indeterminacy is lost, often in favour of a simplistic 'profiling' of Islamism.

Moreover, both Islam and democracy are subject to continuous re-interpretation. The evolution of democracy, its globalization and widespread appeal, and its potential for adoption undermine the case for cementing its ideal and practice to fixed foundations. Democracy is, amongst other things, distinguishable for its tremendous ability to evolve, develop and change. Certainly, it has changed a great deal since the Greek *polis*. If democracy itself is congenial to change, it is then contradictory for foundationalists to keep on pressing the case for a fixed democracy. Democracy is no longer sacralized, at least not unconditionally. This is as much true of discourses of democracy by Western theorists and intellectuals as of non-Western theorists and intellectuals. Many of the deep-

rooted dogmas of democracy – secularism, capitalism, individualism and nationalism – are nowadays being questioned and challenged. The tendency of post-foundationalist and anti-foundationalist, by cultural relativists, discourses is to eschew grounding understandings and interpretations of democracy in Western foundations. That is to say, the dogmas that have for so long underpinned most readings of democracy. Finding a middle path between the fixity and essentialism of foundationalism and the fluidity and relativism of anti-foundationalism, and between the claims of universalism and of particularism, is most challenging for political theorists and practitioners. Certainly, it is no easy assignment for discourse formulators in many parts of the South, including the Arab world, where the urgency to emerge into the twenty-first century with revitalized political systems is most pressing.

As Gould puts it, foundationalism “take[s] human beings to have a fixed and innate essence” whereas anti-foundationalism “put[s] in question the possibility of any normative and critical standpoint.”¹⁸

The approach favoured here dissents from outright foundationalism and outright relativism. No credible view of or quest for democracy in the Arab world or anywhere else can be taken too seriously without some normative standpoint. However, a normative standpoint should not mean overlooking, for instance, cultural specificities. Whilst no democracy makes much sense without accepting freedom or rule of law, other democratic dogmas such as secularism must be rethought in societies where pervasive religiosity contradicts with the privatization of religion as in the West, where the “death of God” has no historically philosophical analogy; and where the onslaught of modernization has reified rather than displaced tradition.

Foundationalism refers to an ahistorical framework assuming certainty and incorrigibility in defining and justifying a “given,” a “logos,” an “essence” or a “basic premise.” This is particularly so when it comes to distinguishing, for instance, the ethical from the unethical, the rational from irrational and the true from false, or when it comes to establishing what constitutes knowledge and what does not.¹⁹ Foundationalism is derived from fifth century Greek thinking posited on the idea that beyond the historical, political, cultural and linguistic there is an essential principle which asserts an irreducible foundation for theory and practice. It emerged first in the platonic discourse in which Plato asserts that the world needs to be understood in a duality of forms – material and immaterial forms; unalterable objects of knowledge and alterable judgements about such objects.

As mentioned earlier, the current historical juncture is unique in that there is a coincidence of contestation and rethinking within both democracy and Islam. What is particularly interesting, in this respect, is not just the fact that both are being contested and rethought but that discourses from within democracy are also amongst those being engaged in rethinking Islam and vice versa. Many voices within Islam are rethinking democracy with a view to appropriating from it those fragments that can be identified as readily readable within tradition. Similarly, there are voices from within democratic discourses that are increasingly looking to the plight of Muslims living under authoritarian and Westernizing rule, and Western-led hegemony with sympathetic relativism. This presents an ideal moment for cross-fertilization, mutual understanding as well as self-reflection. In particular, the redefining of democracy in terms of antifoundationalist ethos presents the Arabo-Islamic setting, as it is argued below, with a unique

¹⁸ Gould, *Rethinking Democracy*, p.27.

¹⁹ One useful definition states that “foundationalist theories of knowledge have generally been taken to hold that if there is any knowledge at all, there is at least some knowledge with a special status. Generally such knowledge may be called foundational.” See Robert Audi, “Foundationalism and Epistemic Dependence,” *Journal of Philosophy* 77 (1980), p.612. Another definition proposes that “foundationalism is the view that there are epistemically privileged ‘basic propositions which confer justification upon all other empirical propositions which are justified for a person. The classical version of the theory maintains that these basic propositions are in an epistemic sense certain and are about what is given to a person through sensory experience.” See Timm Triplett, “Rorty’s Critique of Foundationalism,” *Philosophical Studies* 52 (1987), p.115.

opportunity to realize good government. The question, however, is whether the contesting and rethinking within Islam are sufficiently defoundationalizing to allow for a democratic breakthrough. Whilst still preliminary, it will be argued below that such contesting and rethinking provide a potentially coherent gestation that bode well for good government.

A shallow reading of Islam and of Islamic history would, in light of the above, lead to misconceptions that are bound to translate the future partnership of Islam and democracy in disjunctive rather than conjunctive terms. The library of ahistorical scholarship that reduces Islam to an essence of sorts or to a totalitarian order has never ceased to grow. But the pessimistic forecasting of a climate of Islamic inhospitality to democracy not only ignores history but also misreads democracy. Because democracy has always been narrowly defined with heavy emphasis on the procedural, Islam's democratic potential has largely been reduced to vague associations with *shura* ('consultation'), *ijma'* ('consensus'), or *bay'ah* ('oath of allegiance'). Both Orientalists and Occidentalists are guilty of this essentialism. All three intellectual artefacts, which are respectively translated into equivalents for parliamentary power-sharing arrangements, are a form of consensual order, and elections do not on their own do justice to correlating Islam with democracy. The vital test is whether consultative or electoral processes are closed or open. The more closed they are, the less likely they are able to help good government happen. Openness opposes fixity and singularity of power, both of which are synonymous with closure. It is a well-known fact that *shura* can be no more than an elite affair, an exclusive bastion of the learned scholars, and therefore not always demotic. Even autocrats engage in some form of consultation, albeit a limited and closed genre of it. Nor is its outcome always mindful of diversity. The artefact of *bay'ah* is only very partially convincing of Islam's compatibility with democracy. As a test of democratic rule, it can be no more convincing

than elections. Active electoralization throughout the Arab world represents no more than a procedural minimum. Therefore *shura*, *ijma'* or *bay'ah* have to be regarded as the procedural minimum of an Islam-informed government. Similarly, the debate about the democratic potential of a government informed by Islam must not be driven too much by issues of secularism and religion. Neither can be assumed to be more compatible with democratic rule. Both can be oppressive, mitigating the chances of democratic maturity. The obverse is as true. The litmus test is the extent to which difference is tolerated, singularity and fixity of power are opposed – and a fluid space of contingency allowing for the renewal and opening up new possibilities of being, doing and thinking – is permitted.

Accordingly, when inquiring into the complex problem of marrying democracy to Islam, questions must be asked about the fashion in which a creed strongly rooted in religious foundationalism can cope with de-foundationalization: whether Islam's oft-assumed organic nature tolerates multi-polarity; and what a defining of democracy as a place of absence mean for the future partnership of Islam and good government. By raising these questions and developing lines of inquiry along them, more than providing answers to them, the intention is to show that there exists some congruence between Islamic societies and the most treasured Western possession, democracy. It is no easy or simple task to correlate Islam with democracy. The idea is to explore and affirm the possibilities for such a correlation at an age in which Islam is in a state of flux. But what will become of those possibilities is an open-ended question.

Tentatively, initial responses from Islamists currently in power in Egypt and Tunisia call for healthy revisionism of how scholars represent the problem in the age of the 'Arab Spring'. The following is based on interviews conducted by the author in Tunis and Cairo.²⁰ Very briefly, there are three ideas that today define Islamist understanding of democracy.

²⁰ Interviews with Rachid Ghannouchi, *Nahdah* President, 2 August 2012, Tunis; and with five members from the youth of the Freedom and Justice Party, political arm of the Muslim Brotherhood, in Egypt, 15 June 2013, Cairo.

Firstly, the question of the primacy of Islam over democracy is paramount. Democracy is viewed as a system that can enhance the experience of justice, consultation, administration, power-sharing and 'public freedoms' in a Muslim society, as Ghannouchi calls it.²¹ All interviewees from the Muslim Brotherhood and Nahdah Party hold that the pursuit of democracy must not bypass or bend 'God's Book'. Democracy may be used to reform laws, introduce new laws to institutionalize good governance, transparency, legal oversight, etc. However, it cannot overwrite Islamic law. The rules about what is permitted (*halal*) and illicit (*haram*) are non-negotiable. This applies to a whole heap of issues that have exploded in many a Western polity such as the question of gay marriages and legalizing homosexuality. No Islamist would ever accept this. To do so would mean breaching God's law. This legal side must be grasped firmly for all those tackling the legal context within which debates about Islam's cohabitation with democracy are taking place.

Secondly, democracy is desirable as a 'good' that in its spirit does not contradict the quest for good governance in Islam. In this respect there is nothing that contemporary Islamists produce that differs from the ideas generated in the age of Arab liberal thought, namely the *Nahdah* fervour seen in Egypt, Tunisia and Syria. The democratic 'method' of engendering citizenship, 'liberty' and 'justice', as Tahtawi and Khayr Al-Din Al-Tunisi argued in the 19th century, does not contradict Islam.²² In fact, they went further by saying such a system was very compatible with Islam. Their imprint on the cross-pollination and cultural syncretism remains evident in the thinking of modern-day Muslim voices of reform, which con-

tinue to seek wed Islam to democracy. To an extent, they were enamoured with the European Enlightenment, as they wished for the 'percolation' of many of its values of equality, freedoms and good government to their respective countries.²³ One piece of rhetoric continuously repeated by Islamists in Tunisia and Egypt is that they aim for a successful democratization that would set up the first systems in the region which would be both Muslim in identity and democratic as a polity. Both, of course, remain framed by traditional contours and would never bestow upon man-made systems the legitimacy, much less 'sanctity', in the pursuit of justice, freedom or equality. Any conception of justice, freedom, or equality will always be subject to Islamic vetting, in that God's law is supreme as the law of the land. The friction, of course, which will result from this as both countries build the state's legal foundations and seek to deepen both Islamic values and democratic rule, will divide Islamists and secularists in the foreseeable future, especially in Egypt. What heightens the contest is the entry of Salafists into the political fray, adding pressure for Islamization – more so than for democratization.²⁴

Thirdly, there is partly an interpretive vocation that comes with the territory of wedding Islam to democracy. In such vocation, selective thinking is inevitable. Just as rationalist Muslims read in the Qur'an and the Prophet's Tradition democracy, equality, gender inclusiveness and consultation, more literalist Muslims seek integrity of God's law in its entirety, regardless of variability of time and space. In other words, Islamists' hermeneutics and practice of exegesis must be lauded for the effort invested since the 1920s, when the Muslim Brotherhood was founded, into the onerous

²¹ See Rachid Ghannouchi, *Al-Dimuqratiyyah wa Huquq Al-Insan fi al-Islam* ('Democracy and Human Rights in Islam') (Beirut: Al-Dar Al-Aabiyyah lil-Ulum Nashiroun, 2012), pp. 59-100.

²² Khayr al-Din al-Tunisi, trans. Leon Carl Brown, *The Surest Path: The Political Treatise of a Nineteenth Century Muslim Statesman* (Cambridge, Massachusetts: Harvard University Press, 1967), 105-156.

²³ Rifa'a Rafi al-Tahtawi, trans. Daniel L. Newman, *An Imam in Paris: Account of a Stay in France by an Egyptian Cleric, 1826-1831* (London: Saqi, 2004), pp. 301-345.

²⁴ For instance, see International Crisis Group, "Tunisia: Violence and the Salafi Challenge," <http://www.crisisgroup.org/en/publication-type/media-releases/2013/mena/tunisia-violence-and-the-salafi-challenge.aspx>, Access: 23/04/2013.

task of to gradually and persistently shifting position on the relationship with democracy. They have come a long way from complete dogmatism to impressive pragmatism: from rejection of the secular state complete to seeking membership within it, intact. Today, Islamists face a different test: as power-holders; one cannot know for how long and how successfully. Nonetheless, this adds to the pressure of stretching the gamut of exegetical creativity in order to engender a brand of citizenship that does not exclude, oppress and disenfranchise in the name of Islamism. Thus, as part and parcel of the new interpretive input by Islamists, the search for coalition-building is one means of ensuring power-sharing is the name of the game under Islamists. This is perhaps more evident, thus far, in Tunisia, following *Nahdah's* electoral victory in October 2011, than the Muslim Brotherhood in Egypt, where polarization is at its peak – and threatens to tear apart the whole system. Integral to this use of independent reasoning and selection of texts is the rise of a new breed of Islamist thinkers and scholars, who no longer view democracy as an antithesis. Today, the Islamist thesis continuously aims for a synthesis. In a recent lecture, the *Nahdah* leader, Ghanouchi, confirms ideas he has expressed in his interview:

“We could have formed our government by getting the support of independents but we chose to form a coalition that had the widest degree of support across the political spectrum. We believe that in transitional periods simple majority government isn't enough but we need a wide coalition to send a message that the country is for all and not just the majority. We believe that moderate

Islamists and moderate secularists can and should work together and that they both should find compromises to build consensus across the spectrum.”²⁵

VII. Conclusion

There are no fixed or universal ‘keys’ for reading the intellectual map of political Islam. Traversing the vast terrain of this phenomenon, across various and variable contexts of time and space, unearths diversity, contingency and fluidity. There is no ‘one fundamentalism fits all’ formula for generalizing about a complex current that is multi-vocal. What is certain about political Islam is that it is not about to retire from engaging modernity and all that it offers, positively and negatively. Likewise, modernity or those claiming to be its agents, is not to give up engaging with all matters Islamic, also positively and negatively. The manifestations of this ‘dialogue’, and mutual inclusiveness in relation to grappling with democracy, are today emerging in different geographies and at exciting times, in which struggles across multiple Arab terrains for dignity and freedom have opened up an arch of possibilities in which mutual inclusiveness and understanding is widening intellectual and political horizons, ‘East’ and ‘West’. The genealogy therefore of Islam and democracy can today be mapped out in shared spaces, not presuppositions and discursive constructs of endless ‘clashes’. In this regard, the emergence of the ‘Arab Spring’s’ ‘civic Islamism’, still incipient in political practice, presents scholars with inquisitive material and food for thought to verify empirically where the encounter of Islamism and democracy may lead newly democratizing Arab states.

²⁵ Rachid Ghannouchi, Lecture “Islam and Democracy,” 13 June 2013, Tunis.

Dr. Michael Rohschürmann

Fighting and martyrdom in Islamic tradition and its use by modern jihadist groups

“Two dates in recent history – the suicide bombing of french and american military installations in 1981 and the suicide attacks on the Twin Towers and the Pentagon in 2001 – have dramatically changed the history of martyrdom, raising once again the twofold question who qualifies as a martyr and what exactly is the role of religion in modern suicide bombings: Are they religious or secular acts.” (Baldwin-Smith, 2008, p 454)

I. Introduction

The number of suicide attacks has steadily risen since the beginning of the “war on terror”. Three times more attacks were recorded from March 2001 to November 2002 than the entire 1990s.¹ 86% of the 35 groups which committed suicide attacks have an Islamist background. The majority of the worldwide suicide attacks (81%) have been carried out by radical Islamist groups since 9/11.² The question up to whether there is a special connection between militant Islamism and suicide bombings, or if these attacks can be logically deduced from Islamic history or theology was discussed by scientists and in a even higher extent by dubious experts of several academic fields.

This essay will take into account how Jihadist groups make use of Islamic tradition and theology. Therefore the focus will be on the most important themes for Jihadists: fighting and dying in the fight. In current media, as well as in political speeches, there is a tendency to assume that Jihadists would misuse the Islamic religion for their political goals. Furthermore this essay will question the legitimacy – only in terms of theology – of the argumentation of these groups.

II. A globalized Islam?

Globalization did not leave the different Islamic cultures of commemoration³ and changed the fundamentals of their social and political environment leading to profound changes in the religious self-perception of these communities.⁴ Right now we are witnesses of a struggle between different Islamic cultures of commemoration about the correct and rightly guided interpretation of religious metaphors and traditions, making the current era of Islam one of the most interesting periods in history. The root of all evil – at least in the Islamist authors’ opinion – is seen in the fragmentation of the unified Islamic umma into different schools of law and even more in different religious sects. In order to overcome this historically-grown division the Islamist authors are willing to discard lots of Islamic theological and philosophical thinking, rooting their interpretation solely in Qur’an and Sunna. They are implicitly assuming that there would be no need of explanation or exegesis in Qur’an or Hadith literature and that these works are written in “clear Arabic” (Sura 26:195) which would be understood today as well as 1400 years ago.⁵ This recourse to the “Golden Age of Islam” allows them – as exemplified in most of their fatawat⁶ – to negate all historical fragmentations. Thus, the authors never become tired of repeating again and again the existence of a consensus regarding relevant legal issues (such as Jihad or martyrdom) among Islamic scholars – which of course does not exist for any of the mentioned questions.

The Internet, especially in the Islamic diaspora, shows a vast number of attempts to redesign an Islamic identity beyond the political and religious divisions of history, too. The parallelism of several Muslim mi-

¹ Schneiders 2006, p 19.

² Hoffmann 2007, p 211 and Moghadam 2008, p 64.

³ I refer to the concept of cultural memory by Jan and Aleida Assmann.

⁴ Keeping this in mind deceptive terminology like „stone age Islam“ or „medieval Islam“ have to be discarded. Life and environment of contemporary Muslims differs gravely from those of their fellow Muslims 200 years ago.

⁵ Breuer 2003, p 215.

⁶ Islamic legal opinions.

Fighting and martyrdom in Islamic tradition and its use by modern jihadist groups

nority cultures within non-Muslim majority cultures made it necessary to replace ethnic identity with religious identity. This forced the diaspora communities to ignore the differences which existed between their home cultures of commemoration in favour of Islamic commonalities, while highlighting the distinctions to the non-Muslim society they live in. For this reason the “Golden Age” became a very important anchor, especially for the Islamic diaspora.⁷

Global media creates a feeling of an omnipresence of religious beliefs, which leads to experiences of strangeness, waking the desire for religious security and a safeguard against religious diversification. Cook stated that the number of lawsuits for heresy and the media denunciation of other Islamic denominations, which are quite a new phenomena, is rooted here and steadily rising.⁸

At the end of the day all interpretations of Islam need to compete in the virtual market of religious beliefs, where the prominence of the Salafist discourse can be seen.⁹

This discourse creates a feeling of rooting itself in the original discourses of the prophetic community. Looking at these discourses from the view of the theory of cultural memory, it can be seen that the selection of figures of commemoration is shaped by the present, based on the social context. In reality these “original discourses” are recontextualisations and transformations of tradition.¹⁰

Nevertheless, the Salafist discourse benefits from the fact that all groups who call themselves Islamic refer to the same vast pool of shared figures of commemoration. This shared pool of traditions also contains the two aspects that shall be looked upon in this essay – fighting for God and martyrdom.

III. Jihadist use of the Islamic tradition

The strategy of suicide attacks as well the use of their martyrs for PR by Sunni radical Islamists led some researchers of Islam to the conception of Shiite views of martyrdom finding their way into radical Sunni thinking. These researchers often ignore that the first occurrence of suicide attacks in Islamic culture came with their use by secular political groups before the emerging Islamist and Jihadist groups adapted the strategy. Looking at the progress of this implementation of the new suicide attack strategy, it seemed not that easy at all for the religious groups. It took them a few years (after the first suicide attacks were committed by secular groups) to find a religiously acceptable justification. Lots of the worries of Islamic scholars needed to be dealt with. Justification was needed especially for the following three questions: Can the actual conflict be seen as Jihad? Who are the legitimate targets in this Jihad? Can a clear distinct line be made between Jihad and terrorism (What kinds of fighting against the enemy are allowed? How can the Qur’anic prohibition of suicide be understood in this context?)

All publications by Jihadist authors refer to already known theorems, and despite their own account, they do not seem to be willing to rely completely on Qur’an and Sunna. Instead they are constantly trying to find at least one historical authority that confirms their interpretation. The Jihad question highlights the importance of the assessment of the current situation. If the current conflict can be seen as a result of an invasion by an un-Islamic force – and therefore be seen as the never-ending struggle between good and evil – the given group can declare to wage a defensive Jihad. A defensive Jihad stands on a secure theological basement and can hardly be declared as un-Islamic by any given Islamic School of Law.

⁷ Ourghi 2008, p 157; Uslucan 2010, p 370 and Lohlker 2009b, p 70.

⁸ Cook 2005, p 139.

⁹ Berger 2010, p 32.

¹⁰ vgl. Lohlker 2009, S. 40 und Bohmann 2003, S. 328.

This is the background for Tantawi's declaration that the fight for Palestine is truly a Jihad and covered by the Qur'an.¹¹ Logically, the deaths in this fight have to be seen as martyrs.

Besides the question as to how the current fight is categorized, the issue of the legitimate enemies as well as the Rules of Engagement occupy central positions in the Jihadist discourse. Therefore Hamas, for example, argues: because of the general draft in Israel all Israelis have to be seen as legitimate targets as they are former, future or actual soldiers. Other authors argue that all the citizens of western nations are legitimate targets as they support the war machine of the enemy by paying taxes. Even Jihadist groups can not deal easily with their decision against whom to fight and how to do it. The Qur'anic boundaries for a legitimate fight are very tight – much tighter than historically seen in the Christian model of just fighting. Three main arguments of the discussion can be taken into focus: Firstly the argument of moral equivalence; secondly new techniques in warfare, which were not known in the times of the prophet; and finally legitimatizing verses from Qur'an and Sunna.

Moral equivalence deals with the right of self-defence against unjust occupation, suppression or the right to take revenge for injustices. This argument is based on leftist political theories and "Third Worldism" (f.e. Fanon, Ben Bella, Malley). It occurs, for example, in the al-Hadaf article by Shingenobu¹² and is also found in contemporary writings by western authors like Ted Honderich or Jürgen Todenhöfer.¹³

The second argument revolves around the development of modern technology, which is assumed to be the backbone of western dominance and which is to be used or at least countered to free Islamic societies from western oppression. The supporters of this point argue that Islamic

authorities did not know about explosives and therefore were not able to decide about suicide bombings – if they had known, so goes the argument, they would have surely approved it.¹⁴

A final set of arguments works with the tool of analogy. In one Hadith, for example, Muhammad had allowed the use of Manogels when the Muslims were attacking Muta. As Manogels cannot be targeted only on military targets, it can be seen as a weapon of mass destruction for this time, and by using the argument of analogy, they argue that Muhammad too would have allowed the use of modern weapons of mass destruction. In this special case, nobody refers to the fact that the Manogel Hadith is a product from Umayyad times, which was meant to legitimize the usage of Manogels when Umayyad troops conquered Mekka – which was by this time the seat of b. az-Zubairs caliphate – and even damaged the Kaaba with shots from their catapults.

Usage of Qur'anic quotations in jihadist publications mainly revolves around the battle rallies of the prophet or the verses in which God promises the believers victory and wealth (Qur'an 21:105; 24:55; 61:9). Regarding their independent actions, the Jihadist refers to the role model of the *ribat* fighters or the volunteer forces of the early Islamic conquests instead of the Kharijites, which traditional Islamic scholars use against them. Abdullah Azzam (1984) has already argued that the Mujahidin of the Futuh¹⁵ era were not able to get a personal command by Abu Bakr or Umar for every single battle.

Somehow the concept of modern Jihadists bears some similarities with the one of the historical *ribat*¹⁶ fighters: Reconquering or defending Islamic territory against infidel invaders was only one side of the coin. The fight itself became a transcendent path to personal salvations – especially at a time when different Islamic factions fought against each other¹⁷. In

¹¹ Tantawi 2002.

¹² Croiteru 2006, p 76.

¹³ Honderich 2004 and Todenhöfer 2008.

¹⁴ Ourghi 2010, p 102.

¹⁵ The Islamic expansion of the first 200 years.

¹⁶ A *ribat* was a fort that was meant to safeguard the Islamic territory.

¹⁷ The complete phase of the Umayyad empire was troubled by civil war.

this way, modern Jihadists refer to historic groups¹⁸, but, as argued earlier, the group to which the most similarities exist are the Kharijites.¹⁹

Nevertheless, all jihadist groups still remain part of the larger Islamic culture of commemoration. Juergensmeyer states correctly: the fact that they are on the fringes of Islamic political thought does not mean that they are excluded.²⁰ Current Jihadist groups – as well as most of the different groups of the *fitan* – have to be understood as attempts to find answers to the questions of their time. They share most of the beliefs and cultural paradigms of the mainstream culture they come from but are a special religious response to the social situation and therefore one possible expression of a deep conviction.

Therefore, similar political and social situations – not the influences of Shiite concepts of martyrdom – have to be seen as the base of the modern Sunni Jihadist concept of fighting and martyrdom. Ultimately there is no big difference between Shiite and Sunni concepts of Jihad and martyrdom. The difference is about how the sources are dealt with. Contrasts between Jihadists and the Muslim majority are not found in the concepts of Jihad and martyrdom, rather in their worldview and in the way they judge the current situation of Islam as well as the situation in their home countries.

IV. Martyrdom in global Islam

Martyrdom, understood as social drama, inherits the power of reshaping identities of collective actors in times of transition²¹ This, for example, was seen in the early Christian history. Erll's interpretation of mass media as a central source of cultural paradigms in the era of globalization is correct.²² Accordingly, lots of plays – for example, "Yasir and Summayya" by

Bakathir (1972) or "The noble prisoner Hubaib b. Adi" by Raif Ahmad (1974) about the early Islamic martyrs exist. Similarly lots of videos are available on the Internet which add moving pictures to known episodes of the Islamic collective memory. One good example is a short movie about Khalid b. al Walid and the Battle of Yarmouk, where the bravery of the early Muslim fighters and the piety of Khalid are shown.²³ The power that such videos still exert, is shown impressively by reading the commentaries. One user writes:

"Wish I could go back in time and fight with him".

It would be exaggerated to see these examples as expression of an obsession or a fascination for death. What can be seen is making use of the full range of dramaturgical potential of modern media, which was not available 50 years ago. It is obvious that the first evidence of this beginning media offensive is contained in the martyr posters which decorated whole streets in the Palestinian territories in Lebanon²⁴ in the 1980's and which lead Mahmoud Darwish to call Beirut a "poster factory"²⁵.

When collective mourning is staged on television and Internet and gains global proportions, it is ineluctable that cross-cultural standardizations take place.²⁶ Driven by television and movies, western metaphorical language is becoming more and more prominent in the medial presentation of today's martyrs, which can be seen in countless Jihad videos on the net.

As already stated above, it was Shiite groups who proceeded to find religious legitimisations for the tactic of suicide bombings. Theologically, Shiite and Sunni jurisprudence on martyrdom hardly differ from each other.²⁷ But, as Neuwirth²⁸ states correctly, martyrdom is deeper an-

¹⁸ Kippenberg 2008, p 165.

¹⁹ Rohschürmann 2012.

²⁰ Juergensmeyer 2004, p 305.

²¹ Szyska 2004, p 43.

²² Erll 2005, p 163.

²³ http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7DVFEHpu_38.

²⁴ Mejcher-Atassi, 2004, pp. 349 and Weigel, 2007, p 20.

²⁵ Darwish 1987, p 67.

²⁶ see Michaels 2005, p.8.

²⁷ Cook 2007, pp. 43f.

chored in the Shiite than in the Sunni collective memory. While Sunnism was historically more accustomed to success, Shiite scholars may have found it easier to justify an attack in which there was little or no chance of surviving. In doing that, they could fall back on a whole range of examples, such as the martyrdom of al-Husayn or the march of the Tawwabun²⁹, to illustrate the importance of self-sacrifice.

With this historical background in mind a number of authors argued for an adoption of Shiite Jihad discourses by radical Salafist groups, who moreover monopolized the Sunni jihad discourse.³⁰ In order to have a closer look at this theory we have to proceed chronologically. The first occurrence of the phenomenon of suicide attacks in an Islamic context can be traced back to the Lebanese civil war. It is correct that Shiite groups (Hezbollah and Amal) took over this tactic from secular groups, which were using them before. This kind of attack worked out (for the groups using them) quite successfully with regards to the media echo they were achieving. The religious groups were constrained to make use of this effective tactic as well but needed more time to figure out a religious legitimisation. As I see it, we should speak of knowledge transfer rather than role models in this case.

Apart from the prerogative (to declare a Jihad) of the Imam, the Shiite and Sunni concepts do not differ much; it's only that the history of Shiism has more role models who died passive or in a hopeless fight than Sunni history does. Pannewick points out that the paradigm of martyrdom has to be seen as a response to the collective experience of suffering, fear and utter confusion, which is meant to render experiences of despair and powerlessness meaningful, understandable and explainable.³¹ In Shiism, the return of the Mahdi marks the beginning of the fight for

freedom, while "almost no one from the (Sunni) political Islam refers to the Mahdi"³², even if this could motivate and mobilize supporters. One possible reason can be seen in the danger of looking too much like Shiism or the quietist potential of the Mahdi myth.³³

Hassan Nasrallah in particular is known for emphasising the rational aspects of suicide attacks and that it should never be an end in itself. Suicide attacks should only be executed if they were part of a larger military planning and aimed at weakening the enemy. In this argumentation the suicide is virtually marginalized to a kind of collateral damage – just a fighter who dies in attacking the enemy.³⁴

Emphasis on martyrdom and the blood symbolism in the Shiite metaphorical language does not necessarily lead to suicide bombings. This can be shown by the fact that the health organization of Hezbollah calls for blood donors in the name of the martyrs of Kerbala.³⁵ The organisation, which introduced suicide bombings into Islam, found a highly modern and civilian use for the same argument they had used to justify suicide attack. Figures of commemoration from the collective memory can be used to justify different means.

While Jihadists mainly act transnationally or at least have transnational ties, Shiite groups always act in a local context and have, because of their minority status within the Islamic world, no international links except to Iran. Also, all Jihadist groups are Sunni. Even more, they see themselves as the last true followers of the prophetic Sunna. The works of Abdullah Azzam in particular are of utmost importance to the development of the Sunni discourse on martyrs. The impact of his works – which were written to propagate the Afghan Jihad – is obvious given that they are republished in many languages

²⁸ Neuwirth 2007, p 57.

²⁹ „Penitents“: About 4,000 Shiites who staged a rebellion against Umayyad rule after al-Husayns death at Kerbela and were killed in the attempt.

³⁰ See Moghadam, 2007, p 125 and p 140.

³¹ Pannewick 2004, p 1.

³² Damir-Geilsdorf and Hendrich 2005, p 575.

³³ The quietist side of the Mahdi myth can bring the believers to political quietism. They just have to wait until the saviour returns and solves all their problems.

³⁴ see Alagha 2004, pp. 61, Croitoru, 2006, pp. 132-133 and Wicker 2006b, p 8.

³⁵ Erbel 2008, p 16.

again and again to this day, 20 years after the end of this conflict. The way in which he uses metaphorical language can be found in the representation of modern martyrs on the websites of radical Islamists and the transnational Jihadists. One of the topics where this influence is seen clearly is the description of dead bodies – the own martyrs and the dead enemies. The bodies of enemies are always depicted as “rotten” or “smelly” to mark the contrast between them and the martyrs of the mujahidin, which are pure and exude a musk fragrance.³⁶ The perception of foreign conquerors as “defilers” of Islamic territory has been common since the crusades.

A clear distinction can be made between the argumentation of Jihadist groups and the arguments for the use of suicide attacks by the Secretary-General of Hezbollah: Jihadists tend to depict themselves as unafraid of death and use a cult of death as well as martyrdom in their PR strategy to underline this.³⁷ No Islamic faith or denomination has a static concept of martyrdom. Islamic martyrology has to be seen as fluidum in which all beliefs influence each other – which can be clearly seen in the Lebanese example.

To put it in a nutshell, it can be stated that neither Shia nor Sunni martyrologies have digressed from the discourses of the prophetic community, which provides both with role models for passive suffering as well as for an active search of martyrdom. It is only the way these figures of commemoration are staged in the modern global mass media that has changed. The Islamic umma last broke up in the battle of the Camel 656, when two Muslim armies fought against each other for the first time. The concept of martyrdom nevertheless can be seen as an ecumenical figure of commemoration.

V. Conclusion or the question of legitimacy

I would argue that Jihadism does not exploit, corrupt or misuse Islam, but that this

phenomenon is merely a specific interpretation of religion whose predecessors can be found in Islamic history – when great social and political changes were at hand.³⁸ Modern Jihadism has little in common with the orthodox medieval concept of Jihad. Nevertheless this does not refute the previous statement. Both the orthodox doctrine of Jihad and how transnational Jihadism understands it derive from a common source, making use of it in different ways.³⁹ Jihadist groups root their justifications in a fund of religious ideologies that had no relevance to the majority of Muslims for a long time. Jihadist authors try to negate the special circumstances in which these ideologies were born by constructing a historical continuum as well as the (false) claim that in the major questions all scholars of Islam would agree. The fact that the activist, political side of Islam did not receive much attention for most of Islamic history does not mean it did not belong to the original faith.

In the prophetic community, faith and activism (even in the military sense) belonged together. Today's Jihad movements are as theologically legitimate as any other classical Islamic Jihad movements in history. All accusations of a misuse of religion, may they come from orthodox Islamic scholars or Jihadists, tend to ignore certain aspects of the Islamic tradition which do not fit into their argumentation.

Making use of the theory of cultural memory allows us to understand that the selection of figures of commemoration must necessarily be shaped by the present, based on the social context. This implies that there is no authentic or true memory or faith. Both are shaped and reshaped by the historical situation of the believers and the way these believers see themselves. The question as to whether modern Islamic phenomena such as Islamism or Jihadism are part of the Islamic umma has to be answered by each and every Muslim and cannot be answered academically.

³⁶ Lohlker 2009b and Cook 2005, p 156.

³⁷ Kepel 2006, p 83.

³⁸ Tibi 2004, p 38 and p 56 and Berger 2010, p 150.

³⁹ See Musharbash 2006, p 13 and Abou Taam 2008, p 4.

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Dr. Michael Rohschürmann

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Von den Anfängen der Moderne bis heute



Günay, Cengiz: *Geschichte der Türkei: Von den Anfängen der Moderne bis heute*, Böhlau Verlag, Wien, Köln und Weimar 2012, 400 S., ISBN 978-3-8252-3301-3

Günay skizziert in *Geschichte der Türkei* den über zweihundertjährigen türkischen Modernisierungsprozess und spannt dabei den „historischen Bogen vom Beginn des Aufeinandertreffens mit der westlichen Moderne bis heute.“ (S. 16) Die Darstellung der Geschichte der Türkei wird in vier Kapiteln entfaltet, in denen jeweils eine Periode der modernen türkischen Geschichte behandelt wird. Die erste Periode – nach Günays Periodisierung – umfasst die Zeit vom letzten Jahrzehnt des 18. Jahrhunderts, in dem die Modernisierungsbemühungen im Militärwesen ihren Ausgang nehmen und sich in der Bürokratie, im Schul- und Bildungswesen und Gesundheitsbereich bis zum Ende des Ersten Weltkrieges fortsetzen (Kap. 2). Die zweite Periode (Kap. 3) umfasst die Zeit vom Befreiungskrieg (1921-1922) bis zur Einführung des Mehrparteiensystems (1946). Die dritte Periode (Kap. 4) dauert bis zum Militärputsch vom 12. September 1980 und umfasst einen radikalen demographischen Wandel (Binnenmigration, Urbanisierung, Arbeitsmigration nach Europe und später auch in die arabischen Staaten) sowie Industrialisierungs- und Demokratisierungsbemühungen.

Die Jahre nach dem Militärputsch bis heute bezeichnet Günay zurecht als die Ära der „rechten Hegemonie“, d.h. des Durchbruchs der Marktwirtschaft und des Konservatismus. Weniger überzeugend ist Günay jedoch, wenn er den Staatsnationalismus der späten 1970er Jahre (*Türk-Islam Sentezi*, dt.,Türkisch-Islami-

sche Synthese’), in dem es zu einer Symbiose zwischen „türkischer“ Kultur und dem „Islam“ kam, als Ausgangspunkt der rechten Hegemonie interpretiert. Zutreffend ist jedoch Günays Hinweis, dass nach den Vorstellungen konservativer politischer Entscheidungsträger und säkularer Generäle „[k]onservative Werte wie Moral, Familie und Tradition (...) als ein Dämpfer für soziale Ungerechtigkeiten, die aus der Wirtschaftsliberalisierung hervorgegangen waren, wirken [sollten]“ (S. 372). Gleichwohl gilt es ergänzend einzuwenden, dass konservative Werte auch lange vor der *Türkisch-Islamischen Synthese* in der insbesondere ländlichen Bevölkerung tief verankert waren und „der Islam“ u.a. auch ein wirksames Mittel war um Protest zu artikulieren. Sofern ist es problematisch, die Verbreitung konservativer Werte als Ergebnis einer „top down“-Politik zu betrachten.

Den Begriff der Moderne bezieht Günay auf die Verbreitung des Kapitalismus in Europa im 18. und 19. Jahrhundert und auf die Integration weiterer Weltregionen in das kapitalistische Weltssystem im 19. und 20. Jahrhundert (Kolonialisierung, Imperialismus) und Bemühungen nicht-europäischer Staaten, den europäischen Entwicklungsstand zu erreichen (nachholende Entwicklung). In England und zum Teil auch in Frankreich ging der Kapitalismus aus gesellschaftlichen Prozessen hervor und politische Institutionen entwickelten sich im Laufe mehrerer Jahrzehnten in einem Kampf und Aushandlungsprozess zwischen gesellschaftlichen Schichten, Klassen und politischen Akteuren. Anders als in Westeuropa ging die Modernisierung in der Türkei von Staatselementen aus und politische Institutionen waren nicht das Ergebnis eines gesellschaftlichen und kulturellen Aushandlungsprozesses, sondern wurden aus dem Westen übernommen und – so lässt sich ergänzend zu Günay sagen – schöpferisch an die türkischen Verhältnisse angepasst. Osmanische Staatselemente, die eine „top-down“-Modernisierung forcierten, verstanden diese als ein existenzielles politisches und zivilisatorisches Reformprogramm (S. 12).

Reviews

Da die türkische Modernisierung mit der Inkorporation des *Osmanischen Reiches* in das kapitalistische Weltsystem einherging, kam es zu einem Aufeinandertreffen autochthoner Wirtschaftssysteme, traditioneller gesellschaftlicher Wirtschaftsweisen und politischer Strukturen mit der europäisch-kapitalistischen Moderne, woraus sich wiederum nachhaltige gesamtgesellschaftliche Spannungen und Konflikte entwickelten (S. 11).

Für zusätzlichen Zündstoff zwischen den Eliten und Volksmassen sorgte die sich „am Freihandel orientierende, offene und vom Wirtschaftsliberalismus geprägte Wirtschaftspolitik“, die das *Osmanische Reich* durch Handelserleichterungen, niedrige Tarife und Zölle weitgehend den „Interessen des westlichen Imperialismus“ öffnete. Insbesondere das Handelsabkommen mit Großbritannien (1839) „lieferte die auf traditionellen Herstellungsmethoden beruhende Wirtschaft schutzlos der Konkurrenz mit britischen Industriegütern aus“ (S. 72). Die Symptome dieser ökonomischen und soziokulturellen Begegnung, deren Folgen auch heute noch spürbar sind, fanden Ausdruck nicht nur im modernen politischen Denken der Türkei, sondern auch in der Literatur, Kunst und Volksdichtung.

Diese bilden auch den historischen Hintergrund für die gegenwärtigen antieuropäischen bzw. antiwestlichen Ressentiments in der türkischen Bevölkerung. Die türkische Modernisierung im 19. Jahrhundert war nicht nur ein Ergebnis von militärischen Niederlagen gegen europäische Mächte, sondern wurde durch diese auch begleitet. Die verheerende Niederlage im Krieg gegen das *Russische Zarenreich* (1877–78), enorme Gebietsverluste auf dem Balkan und der Verlust *Kretas* trotz „erfolgreicher militärischer Operation auf dem Verhandlungstisch“ stärkte das Gefühl unter den jungen Offizieren, den europäischen Machenschaften ausgeliefert zu sein.“ (S. 93)

In diese Periode fallen auch der Beginn der Säkularisierung sowie die Geburt des türkischen Nationalismus. Die Einführung

eines neuen Familienrechts verkörperte beispielsweise einen wichtigen Schritt zur Säkularisierung des Rechtssystems. Den türkischen Nationalismus beschreibt Günay als eine säkulare Bewegung, die zwangsläufig gegen das Konzept „Gemeinschaft alle Muslime“ (*umma*) und gegen die islamischen Gelehrten (*ulema*) gerichtet war. Der türkische Nationalismus unterscheidet sich von den meisten europäischen Nationalismen dadurch, stellt Günay in Anlehnung an Francois Georgeon fest, dass es „keine Unterstützung von Seiten eines Klerus oder einer Kirche erhielt, sondern sich gegen den Islam zu behaupten hatte.“ Auch habe die türkische Bauernschaft nicht die Rolle eines Wächters der Nation übernehmen können, weil sie starke Bindungen zum Islam und islamisch geprägten Traditionen unterhielt.

„Ebenso fehlte, im Gegensatz zu den meisten Beispielen in Europa, auch eine nationale Bourgeoisie, die eine entscheidende Rolle hätte spielen können. Vielmehr war es eine kleine Gruppe von Intellektuellen und Schriftstellern, die das Konzept einer türkischen Nation definierten und hochhielten.“ (S. 109)

Dies liefert nicht zuletzt die Erklärung für den Staatszentrismus und -mystizismus, die in der Türkei auch heute nicht überwunden sind.

Zentral für die zweite Periode ist die Gründung der *Türkischen Republik*, Nationsbildung und Forcierung säkularer Reformen. Günay weist auf die dem republikanischen Nationalismus implizite Dualität hin: Hervorhebung des Territorialprinzips einerseits, ethnische Ausrichtung (Bezug auf das Türkentum als tragendes Element der Nation) andererseits (S. 142). Als *differentia specifica* der kemalistischen Revolution verweist der Autor auf deren Desinteresse an einem sozialen und wirtschaftlichen Wandel, wodurch dieses sich von mexikanischen, russischen oder ägyptischen Revolutionen unterscheidet (S. 153). Zentrales An-

liegen der säkularen Reformen war es, die Religion aus dem öffentlich-staatlichen Bereich zurückzudrängen und die Religion zu einer Privatangelegenheit des Individuums zu erklären. Damit sollte ein öffentlicher Bereich geschaffen werden, „der von Rationalität und Sachlichkeit bestimmt und von irrationalen und religiösen Elementen befreit ist. Die Verbannung der Religion aus dem öffentlichen Bereich sollte gewährleisten, dass Religion nicht mehr einen politischen oder sozialen Machtfaktor darstellt, der die Grundprinzipien des Staates bestimmen kann.“ (S. 163)

Im Gegensatz zu Deutungen, die zwischen dem Osmanischen Reich und der *Türkischen Republik* einen politischen Bruch konstatieren, insistiert Günay auf die Kontinuität, zur deren Begründung er zwei Argumente anführt: Erstens, dass die kemalistische Kulturrevolution die Fortsetzung eines von den osmanischen Eliten betriebenen Modernisierungsprogrammes war, welches sich vor allem der Reform der staatlichen Institutionen und des Rechtssystems verschrieben hatte. Zweitens, dass die *Türkische Republik* nicht das Ergebnis einer Volksbewegung, sondern vielmehr „Bestandteil des Modernisierungsprojektes radikaler Reformer innerhalb der Eliten war“. Die Republik habe nicht nur die Tradition eines übermächtigen paternalistischen osmanischen Staates fortgesetzt, sondern diese zusätzlich verstärkt (S. 171). Eine neue Periode lässt Günay mit der Wiedereinführung des Mehrparteiensystems im Jahr 1946 beginnen, die mit dem Machtverlust der *CHP (Republikanische Volkspartei)* einherging, die 1950 schließlich von der *DP (Demokratische Partei)* abgelöst werden sollte. İnönüs Entscheidung, weitere Parteien zuzulassen, ging u.a. auf die internationale Konstellation nach dem *Zweiten Weltkrieg*, d.h. auf die Verschiebungen im Machtgleichgewicht auf der internationalen Ebene, sowie auf die Unzufriedenheit breiter Bevölkerungsteile mit der Wirtschaftspolitik zurück (S. 183). *DP* sei es u.a. deswegen gelungen, relativ schnell einen Machtwechsel herbeizuführen, weil

die *CHP* keinen politischen Rivalitäten ausgesetzt war und es deswegen versäumt hatte, „einen institutionalisierten Kontakt mit der Bevölkerung aufzubauen, Anhänger zu rekrutieren bzw. potenzielle Wähler zu gewinnen.“ Stattdessen habe sich die *CHP* auf die staatstragende Funktion der Partei verlassen und sich auf ihre „Erziehungsmission“ versteift (S. 181).

Der Übergang zum Mehrparteiensystem stand zugleich im Zeichen einer Liberalisierung des politischen Systems sowie einer strategischen Neuorientierung in der Außenpolitik mit dem Ziel, sich in den westlichen Block zur Absicherung vor einer militärischen Bedrohung durch die Sowjetunion zu integrieren (S. 183). Gleichwohl blieben auch nach dem Übergang zum Mehrparteiensystem – obwohl die Bürger als Wähler eine Aufwertung erfahren – die Meinungs-, Rede- und Versammlungsfreiheit „weitgehend eingeschränkt“ (S. 186). Günay verortet die *DP* trotz „antilaizistischer Tendenzen innerhalb der Partei“ – entgegen einer gängigen Lesart in der Türkei – in der Tradition des Kemalismus und Laizismus. Trotz einiger Modifikationen habe „die *DP* zu keinem Zeitpunkt beabsichtigt, den Laizismus abzuschaffen oder radikal einzuschränken.“ (S. 201)

Als weitere Kennzeichen für diese Periode werden Industrialisierung, Urbanisierung und wachsende Fragmentierung der Gesellschaft entlang politischer, sozialer, ethnischer und konfessioneller Bruchlinien hervorgehoben. Die Wirtschaftspolitik ab den 1960er Jahren bestand aus einer den Import substituierenden Industrialisierungspolitik, die durch hohe Zölle ein neues Unternehmertum förderte. Die Re-Integration der *Türkei* in den Weltkapitalismus erfolgte wegen der den Import substituierenden Wirtschaftspolitik aufgrund einer spezifischen internationalen Arbeitsteilung. Die industrielle Produktion war für den durch Zölle geschützten Binnenmarkt gesichert, jedoch gleichzeitig vom „Import von Produktionsmitteln aus den Industrieländern sowie von deren Nachfrage nach den eigenen traditionel-

Reviews

len Exporten abhängig“. Der Export traditioneller Güter war notwendig, um das industrielle Wachstum zu gewährleisten und den Import von Technologie, Produktionsmitteln und Rohstoffe zu finanzieren. Dies hatte zur Folge, dass der „Staat trotz einer Abkehr vom Etatismus weiterhin ein dominanter Akteur in der Wirtschaft“ blieb (S. 217).

Das fünfte Kapitel, das die vierte Periode behandelt, trägt die Überschrift „Der Sieg der Rechten: Marktwirtschaft und Konservatismus“. Mit den bereits vor dem Militärputsch gefassten Beschlüssen vom 24. Januar 1980 wurden die Abkehr vom Importsubstitutionssystem sowie Schritte zur Einführung einer neoliberalen Marktwirtschaft in die Wege geleitet und zahlreiche Import- und Exportbeschränkungen aufgehoben. Die Einführung einer liberalen Marktwirtschaft ging mit der Konstruktion einer neokonservativen Gesellschaftsordnung einher, in der Tradition und Religion eine Schlüsselrolle spielen sollten (S. 257). Flankiert wurde diese Entwicklung mit einem „Modell der türkischen Nation“, das sich an der Gemeinschaft der Muslime orientiert. Günay zitiert in diesem Zusammenhang Binnaz Toprak, die diesbezüglich von einer Symbiose aus Familie, Moschee und Kaserne sprach. Ferner wurde „die Republik durch einen konservativen Republikanismus mit dem Islam in Einklang gebracht.“ (S. 258) Die Grundlage der *AnaP* (*Mutterlandspartei*), die vom 1983 bis 1991 die Regierung stellte und mit ihrer pragmatischen Herangehensweise Menschen über soziale Schichten hinweg mobilisieren konnte, bildeten neoliberale Grundsätze. Unter der Führung von Turgut Özal habe jedoch *AnaP* nicht nur ein neues Gesellschaftsmodell eingeführt, sondern auch in gewisser Weise den Weg für die Islamisten geebnet. Die konservative Gesellschaftspolitik der *AnaP* habe die Integration der aufstrebenden islamistischen Intelligenzija in den politischen Diskurs und in das politische System ermöglicht. Dies hatte nicht nur die Erweiterung der Institutionen des Staates und der Marktwirtschaft durch ein konservativ-islamisches Element, sondern

auch den Wandel des Systems und des öffentlichen Diskurses zur Folge; „auch Islamisten und Traditionalisten durchliefen eine Veränderung“ (S. 287).

Den Aufstieg der Islamisten führt Günay auf zwei Ursachen zurück: Erstens auf den abrupten Übergang zu einer liberalen Marktwirtschaft und damit zusammenhängend auf die Etablierung einer Konsumgesellschaft, die in der Bevölkerung zuweilen das Gefühl eines moralischen Verfalls und einer ethischen Krise hervorrief. Zweitens entstand in den 1980er Jahren eine islamistische Intelligenzija, die sich, indem sie mehr Demokratie, mehr Menschenrechte und mehr persönliche Freiheiten forderte, einem demokratischen Diskurs, wie er von liberalen und linken Intellektuellen forciert wurde, anschloss. Günay interpretiert die islamistische Bewegung keineswegs als einheitlich oder gesteuert, sondern als eine Entwicklung, die von mehreren internen und externen Faktoren begünstigt wurde. Der *RP* (*Wohlfahrtspartei*) war es beispielsweise gelungen, sich als eine „soziale Protestbewegung“ zu etablieren, die sich gegen die Privilegien des Zentrums richtete (S. 290). Den erdrutschartigen Wahlsieg der *AKP* (*Partei für Gerechtigkeit und Entwicklung*) am 3. November 2002 deutet Günay als „Abrechnung mit dem System der 1990er Jahre“ (S. 325). Wenn auch die *AKP* „in Folge einer Wirtschaftskrise“ an die Macht gekommen war, waren die Zerstrittenheit der Zentrumsparteien und die Unterstützung großer Medienkonzerne, die die reformierte *AKP* als „eine Alternative“ sahen und als Gegenmittel zu den Islamisten betrachteten, von Bedeutung.

Günay interpretiert die politische Hegemonie der *AKP* nicht als einen Bruch in der Geschichte der Modernisierung und konstatiert, dass die Idee der Modernisierung und des Aufholens gegenüber dem Westen tief in der „Seele der Türkei“ verankert sei. Gleichwohl sei die Integration türkischer Ethno-Nationalisten und kurdisch-nationalistischer Gruppierungen in das Projekt der türkischen Moderne noch nicht abgeschlossen (S. 15).

„Trotz einer stärkeren Betonung der islamischen Identität der Türkei verließ die AKP nicht den Pfad der wirtschaftlichen und politischen Verwestlichung, der militärischen Westanbindung und der Annäherung an Europa.“ (S. 351)

Günay zufolge lassen sich die Politik und die Philosophie der AKP als einen Versuch darstellen, den islamischen Konservatismus mit den Prinzipien der liberalen Marktwirtschaft zu vereinen. Die AKP habe einen Entideologisierungprozess durchlaufen, in dessen Folge die islamistische Ideologie auf einen Wertekonservatismus reduziert sei, der mit einer liberalen Marktwirtschaft kompatibel ist (S. 373). Gleichwohl bemerkt Günay weiter, dass die AKP insbesondere seit „dem Stocken des EU-Beitrittsprozesses“ sich zunehmend von „einer reformierenden in eine konservative Kraft“ entwickelt habe, deren vornehmliches Ziel „die Konsolidierung der Macht“ zu sein scheint. Die AKP sei dazu übergegangen, bestehende Machtstrukturen personell umzubesetzen (S. 374). Ihr ist es gelungen, die Hegemonie der autoritären kemalistischen Institutionen nachhaltig zu brechen, weil sie nach der Machtübernahme die Wirtschaftsliberalisierung und den EU-Reformprozess fortgesetzt habe (S. 326). Analog zu Tony Blair deutet Günay die AKP als eine politische Kraft des Dritten Weges, der darin bestand, eine Antwort auf die Herausforderungen der neoliberalen Marktwirtschaft und der Globalisierung zu finden, ohne die islamische Tradition zu vernachlässigen (S. 335).

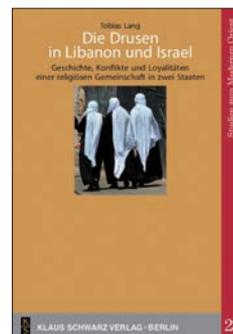
Günays Buch ist nicht frei von Fehlern und Ungenauigkeiten; wie etwa die Behauptung, dass „Sultan Abdülmecit I. durch einen Putsch durch die Konstitutionalisten abgesetzt wurde“ (S. 46, richtig: Sultan Abdülaziz) oder dass Erdogan wegen der Rezitation der Gedichte von Ziya Gökalp bestraft worden sei (S. 314, richtig: Ein Gedicht von Mehmet Akif Ersoy). Gleichwohl steht diesen geringen Mängeln ein verdienstvoller Beitrag nicht nur zum Verständnis des Ursprungs und

der Entwicklung der modernen Türkei, sondern auch aktueller politischer Konfliktlagen und kultureller Entwicklungen gegenüber. Die meisten der gegenwärtigen kulturellen Spannungen und politischen Auseinandersetzungen in der Türkei gehen auf die Modernisierung im 19. Jahrhundert zurück und sind daher ohne einen Einblick in die türkische Modernisierung nicht vollständig zu erschließen.

Dr. Yaşar Aydın

Tobias Lang

Die Drusen in Libanon und Israel. Geschichte, Konflikte und Loyalitäten einer religiösen Gemeinschaft in zwei Staaten



Lang, Tobias: Die Drusen in Libanon und Israel. Geschichte, Konflikte und Loyalitäten einer religiösen Gemeinschaft in zwei Staaten, Klaus Schwarz Verlag, Berlin 2013, 174 S., ISBN 978-3-87997-416-0

Die als Buch herausgegebene Diplomarbeit von Tobias Lang über die unterschiedliche politische Entwicklung der Drusen im Libanon und in Israel bringt eine ganze Reihe wichtiger Einblicke in die politischen Strategien der unterschiedlichen drusischen Gemeinschaften der beiden Staaten und behandelt damit ein Thema, das bisher nicht nur in der deutschsprachigen sondern auch in der internationalen Politikwissenschaft und Orientalistik eher stiefmütterlich behandelt wurde.

Dass das Buch lediglich auf einer Diplomarbeit beruht, erklärt das relativ knapp bemessene Literaturverzeichnis, das auf arabische und hebräische Quellen völlig verzichtet und somit im Wesentlichen auf westliche orientalistische und politikwissenschaftliche Literatur zurückgreifen muss. Abgesehen von deutsch- und englischsprachiger Literatur

Reviews

basiert die gesamte Arbeit auf lediglich vier Interviews und vier weiteren Auskunftspersonen. Angesichts der intensiven Beschäftigung mit der Person Walīd Ğumblats (bzw. Walīd Ğunbaluṭs, wie der Autor den Namen transliteriert), seines Vaters Kamāl und ihrer Rivalen, der Familie Arslān, ist es trotzdem erstaunlich, dass mit keinem dieser Akteure direkt ein Interview geführt wurde oder geführt werden konnte. Trotzdem legt der Autor eine bemerkenswerte Arbeit vor, die die wechselnden Interessenlagen unterschiedlicher drusischer Gemeinschaften in Israel und im Libanon unter die Lupe nimmt und dabei zu interessanten Ergebnissen kommt. Langs Analyse kann etwa die sehr unterschiedlichen Beziehungen verschiedener drusischer Gruppen unter israelischer Herrschaft ebenso erklären, wie die strategischen Entscheidungen verschiedener drusischer politischer Akteure in Israel. In der Differenzierung zwischen den Drusen am Karmel, in Galiläa und auf dem Golan sowie zwischen politischen Gruppierungen, die unterschiedliche Strategien für ihre Gemeinschaften unter israelischer Herrschaft anwendeten, liegt wohl die stärkste Seite dieses Buches.

Lang zeichnet überzeugend die Gründe für die politische Distanz zwischen den israelischen Drusen, die bereits seit 1948 unter israelischer Herrschaft leben, die israelische Staatsbürgerschaft besitzen, in der israelischen Armee dienen und oft sogar weit rechts stehende israelische Parteien wählen, und den Drusen auf dem 1967 besetzten Golan nach, die weiterhin ganz überwiegend an ihrer syrischen Staatsbürgerschaft festhalten und trotz der israelischen Annexion des Golan und dem Angebot der israelischen Staatsbürgerschaft, weiterhin jedwede Integration in den israelischen Staat ablehnen. Die Beziehungen zwischen den beiden drusischen Gemeinschaften unter israelischer Herrschaft werden als betont distanziert geschildert, „was sich besonders augenfällig darin ausdrückt, dass nur wenig untereinander geheiratet wird. Dieser Umstand sagt einiges über das schlechte Verhältnis der beiden Gemein-

schaften aus, wenn man die traditionelle Endogamie der Drusen und die geringe Größe beider Gemeinschaften in Betracht zieht. Auf politischer Ebene werden Kontakte mit drusisch-israelischen Vertretern weitgehend vermieden, ansonsten haben die Golan-Drusen ihre eigene religiöse und politische Führung.“ (S. 100)

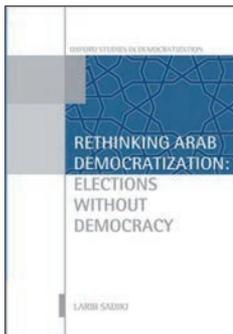
Weniger ausführlich als die Verwerfungen und Konflikte innerhalb der drusischen Minderheiten unter israelischer Herrschaft fallen die Analysen der drusischen Akteure im Libanon aus, die sich ausschließlich auf die Familien Ğumblat und Arslān und ihr Verhältnis zu Israel, Syrien und anderen libanesischen Akteuren beschränken. Dabei handelt es sich selbstverständlich um die mit Abstand wichtigsten politischen Akteure der libanesischen Drusen. Angesichts dessen, dass der Autor bei den israelischen Drusen allerdings auch politisch eher marginalisierte Strömungen, wie dem pro-kommunistischen Druze Initiative Committee (DIC) oder der arabisch-nationalistischen Liberal Arab Druze Convention, entsprechende Aufmerksamkeit schenkt, wäre es interessant gewesen, auch mehr über marginalisierte Strömungen der Drusen im Libanon zu erfahren, wie etwa das weitere Schicksal jener Drusen, die im Rahmen der Südlibanesischen Armee mit den Israelis kollaborierten. Besonders spannend wäre es gewesen, auch noch die Akteure der Drusen in Syrien und ihr Verhältnis zum syrischen Baath-Regime in die Analyse mit einzubeziehen.

Trotz dieser zu kurz gekommenen Aspekte bietet dieses Buch einen wichtigen Einblick in einen oft vernachlässigten Aspekt des Nahostkonflikts, nämlich dessen Auswirkungen auf transnationale Minderheiten in der Region und deren Verhalten als Akteure in diesem Konflikt. Die Schilderung der unterschiedlichen Ausgangsbedingungen der libanesischen und der palästinensischen/israelischen Drusen, die Formierung einer israelisch-drusischen Elite „erst durch die Zusammenarbeit einzelner Familien mit dem Staat Israel“ (S. 162) und ihr Agieren auf unter-

schiedlichen Seiten des Konfliktes im Zuge der israelischen Invasion des Libanon 1982 erzählt vieles über politische Überlebensstrategien von Minderheiten im israelisch-arabischen Konflikt.

Thomas Schmidinger

Larbi Sadiki
Rethinking Arab Democratization:
Elections Without Democracy



Sadiki, Larbi: Rethinking Arab Democratization: Elections Without Democracy, Oxford University Press, Oxford 2009, 324 pp., ISBN 978-0-199-69924-7

Just as democracy in the academic discourse is an essentially contested phenomenon, so has democratization, as the means by which democracy can be achieved, tended to be viewed as such. In his book, *Rethinking Arab Democratization: Elections Without Democracy*, which is part of the Oxford Studies of Democratization, Dr. Larbi Sadiki fills the void of critically assessing democratization in the Arab Middle East (abbrev. AME, p. xvii), challenging and doing away with the prevalent prisms of exceptionalism, foundationalism, essentialism/Orientalism and ahistoricity. As part of his greater research focus on democratization in the AME, Islamist notions of democracy and bottom-up and non-institutionalized discourses and struggles for democracy, in this book he analyzes electoralism, or what he also calls “electoral fetishism”, as an expression of the Arab World’s wrestling with democratization. While the paperback version of the book was issued for the first time in 2011, the hardcopy had already been published in 2009. Nevertheless, with regards to and partially due to the unfolding of the ‘Arab Spring,’ *Democratization: Elections Without Democracy* has gained momentum,

as it was one of the very few existing works that, opposed to mainstream academic literature, hinted at and explained potential political uprisings in the region prior to 2011.

Firstly, Dr. Sadiki tackles the notion of democracy in the AME, stressing the importance not to uncritically adopt Western patterns of thought, but to complete and enhance the concept with knowledge of regional scholars. In this wake, he also highlights the congruity between Islam’s concepts of consultation and consensus, and the basic democratic principles of participation and contestation. Moreover, he emphasizes the need for the Eurocentric paradigm of democratization to be fluid, flexible and sensitive to linguistics, historical and cultural factors in order to be relevant for the Arab context and therefore be substantiated with indigenous forms of explanation and interpretation. Drawing examples from the AME, Sadiki refutes Samuel Huntington’s thesis of top-down periodical elections as the ultimate indicator of democracy and instead refers to a whole set of hallmarks such as political and civil liberties; legality; constitutionalism; institution-building; alternation of power; separation of power; free, fair elections; multi-party system; rule of law; free media; civil society; and democratic acculturation in order to assess the existence and functionality of democracy. Focusing on bottom-up discourses of emerging civil society, vocalization through bread riots and the formation of public opinion through new technologies, Sadiki generally criticizes the institutionalized view of democratization as though elections and constitutions are the only building blocs of good government. He holds that:

“Such a discourse tends to misallocate its object of Arab democratization as it locates it in fragments of knowledge that are neither Arab nor do they speak to Arab particularities. This has rendered democratic transition in the AME cosmetic and installed, despite modest advances and gains.” (p.47)

Reviews

Chapter two and three of *Rethinking Arab Democratization: Elections Without Democracy* offer a historical outline of democratic trends and developments in the AME since the first elections were held in the Arab World under Khadive Isma'il of Egypt prior to the English invasion until 2008, which witnessed both vivid democratic practices in Lebanon and Kuwait on the one hand and issues of dynastical hereditary succession not just in traditional Arab monarchies, but in republics such as Syria, Egypt, Libya or Yemen, on the other. While avoiding the trap of generalization within the AME yet underlining similarities and correlations between the different regional countries, Sadiki urges mainstream academia to abstain from portraying the Arab World as immune to democratic transition and progress. He successfully demonstrates how different historical junctures set in motion Arab waves of democratization, which do not necessarily correspond with big milestones of democracy in the West (i.e. revolutions of the 1840s; political developments after the First World War; the post Second World War period and the 1980s with liberal rule spreading in Latin America and the democratization of the former East bloc after the fall of the Soviet Union).

In many Arab countries, such as Egypt, Syria, Lebanon and Tunisia, the creation of nation states and the independence from colonial powers sparked a second democratic movement, characterized by the establishment of parliamentary bodies and the formulations of constitutions. However, this was often no genuine local development, but one promoted by Western colonial powers so as to install confederate elites into power and guarantee their own mercantilist aims. Other democratic tendencies, namely the initial proliferation of regularly held elections, have become apparent since the mid-1970s. The Gulf monarchies were the last in line to follow that course, from the late 1990s and onward, not least because of intensified U.S. pressure to liberalize after the 9/11 attacks and the inception of the global War against terror.

The fourth chapter of the book provides a deliberation and an evaluation of U.S. initiatives to democratize the AME with the help of the Greater Middle East Initiative (GMEI) and the Broader Middle East Initiative (BMEI). Sadiki's main points of criticism thereof are that these initiatives fail to address key questions such as the Israel-Palestine conflict or to proscribe concrete democratization measures, e.g. empowering judiciaries or parliaments, or lifting restrictions of political parties. Besides, the language of these documents undoubtedly resonates Orientalism, dividing the world into a democratic, moderate and stable Western camp vs. the autocratic, extremist, violent Middle Eastern camp. However, Sadiki offers a balanced analysis in which he clearly puts his beliefs forward that the Middle East can learn from Western democratic examples, expertise and experience, but that this can not be a unidirectional flow of knowledge. This must be informed by culturally/religiously embedded, regional theory and ideas. On top of this, with regards to Lebanon and the Palestinian territories, he refers to U.S. foreign policy as democratization via intimidation. In light of U.S. meddling in Lebanese domestic and constitutional matters, renouncing Hamas' election victory in 2006 and leading to further political fragmentation, and , he rightfully questions the altruistic nature and credibility of the American democratization venture.

In Chapter 5 of *Rethinking Arab Democratization: Elections Without Democracy*, bread riots are discussed as democratic catalysts from below. Sadiki comprehensively illustrates how the often superficial and misleading promotion of economic and political liberalization caused the Arab societies' increasing frustration and disillusionment with their governments. He establishes the link between the concept of 'moral economy' in Western political thought and the primacy of social justice in Islamist discourses. Further, poverty is regarded as a danger to religiosity, civility and stability, offering a religiously motivated incentive for protest. Sadiki manages to depict the actual significance of

the bread riots that took place across the AME in the 1980s and 1990s as not merely economic, but political. Even though the starting points of the protests were marginalization and hunger, people then struggled against corruption, inequality and authoritarianism, demanding a more responsive government. As opposed to the mainstream discourse on conflict in the AME, Sadiki introduces a new thesis that political dispute offers possibilities for positive and democratic change. With regards to its long-term effects and worth, quoting international expert on political conflict, Harold Leonard Nieburg, he states:

“The threat of violence and its ‘occasional occurrence’ are essential elements in peaceful and social change. Among the democratization functions of violence is to instill dynamism into the structure and growth of law, the settlement of disputes, the process of accommodating interests and (...) [to] induce general respect for the verdict of the polls.” (p. 229)

While he acknowledges that in some cases bread riots lead to nothing but superficial political reforms, Sadiki nevertheless accentuates the pertinence of contention as opposed to consolidation for democratization and long term stability. Given the economic and political malaise of the Arab World due to advancing globalization and integration into the neo-liberal economy, which results in the need for foreign borrowing and austerity measures, Sadiki had already predicted the breakout of new ‘bread riots’ in 2009.

The last chapter pictures the satellite channel *Al-Jazeera*, its opinion polls and its online blogs as new platforms for democratic struggle. Looking at the great role new media has played in the Arab uprisings and also taking in recent literature, Sadiki previously recognized that those new forms of information help to shape public opinion and undermine state censorship as well as control of values and information. While the analysis clarifies

that *Al-Jazeera* and the public media alone do not create democracy, the value that can be ascribed to them is that they merge cross-territorial solidarities, provide more opportunities for democratic vocalism and activism, and contribute to the formation of an Arab public opinion. Clearly, for a new edition of the book, the role of *Al-Jazeera* would have to be revised given the development of the satellite channel after the outbreak of the Arab uprisings. With substantiated allegations of an increasingly biased political agenda and lack of independence, *Al-Jazeera* is about to gamble away its serious, influential and well-respected position.

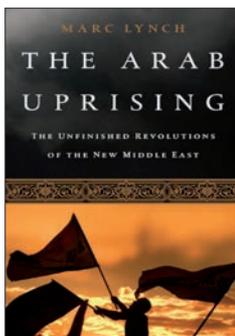
The book features a detailed and interesting discussion on the different kinds of dynamics that led to the widespread expansion of electoralism and the routinization of elections in the AME, e.g. economic vs. political liberalization or internal vs. external pressures to grant democratic freedoms. On the whole, Sadiki is very critical of this top-down implementation of electoralism, as it lacks actual representation, accountability and separation of powers and is neither committed to deeper contestation nor to more comprehensive inclusiveness. He, also, however, recognizes the possible benefits of democratic habituation as it partially allows for the vocalization of opposition to form and therefore holds the potential to open up political and civil society. Besides, he deems social media and increasingly political bread riots as crucial platforms for democratic empowerment. Sadiki sketches the limitations and contradictions for external democracy promotion. He emphasizes the paramount importance at fitting the discourse around state building, democracy and democratization with indigenous knowledge and to position them in their local and cultural background. By referring to specific case studies and giving numerous examples throughout his work, Sadiki has managed to avoid generalizing developments and phenomena in the AME. *Rethinking Arab Democratization: Elections Without Democracy*, excels through the in-depth analysis of the political dynamics in the

Reviews

Arab World, locating the AME in the broader discussion of democratic advancement and offering a new bottom-up paradigm for democratization. Therefore, contrary to mainstream literature, Sadiki's work did not just manage to 'foresee' future revolts from below, but create a work of reference that can put the recent Arab uprisings into their fitted socio-political context. The book is rich in complex and exciting insights and perspectives regarding democratization in the AME and simultaneously substantiated with established political theory. Hence, it is clearly too demanding to qualify as bedtime reading, but apart from being a valuable contribution to academia on the whole, it is absolutely worth reading for anyone who has an interest in democratization and the politics of the Arab Middle East or is curious to understand the works of the latest Arab revolutions.

Julia Legner

Marc Lynch
The Arab Uprising. The Unfinished Revolutions of the New Middle East



Lynch, Marc: *The Arab Uprising. The Unfinished Revolutions of the New Middle East*, PublicAffairs Books, New York 2012, pp. 278, ISBN 978-1-610-39084-2

The pictures of millions of peaceful protestors in Tunis and Cairo calling for change and the resignation of their corrupt, self-enriching leaders and the following – often violent – crack-down on these expressions of political participation not only took people in the Arab world, but also those all over the rest of the world, by surprise. The uprisings spread like a wildfire into almost all the countries in the region, thereby creating a sense of shared destiny. The coverage of the protests by regional television stations,

especially the Qatari station *Al-Jazeera*, and in social media, such as *Facebook*, *Twitter* and numerous blogs, created a unified narrative of protest and thereby unified the political space in the region. In his latest book, *The Arab Uprising*, Mark Lynch presents what he calls a “newArab public sphere” (p. 2) as a main variable that enabled and shaped the uprisings.

Marc Lynch works as director of the Institute for Middle East Studies at The George Washington University as director of the Project on Middle East Political Science (POMEPS) and is also editor for the Middle East Channel on ForeignPolicy.com. Being an active member of the blogging community himself, Marc Lynch's blog *Abu Aardvark* was integrated into the discussions and the discourse during the Arab uprisings and allowed him to make close connections to activists from the region. His work as Middle East policy advisor in Barack Obama's last presidential campaign furthermore gave him insight into the U.S. foreign policy concerning the region. In his book he combines his academic knowledge, his experience as part of the blogging sphere and his U.S. foreign policy background in an effort to create a coherent framework of structural and triggering causes, the course of events and resulting policy implications.

He defines his main argument, the new Arab public sphere as a newly empowered public, which feels connected through the shared grievances of their lives in authoritarian states with corrupt leaders and which uses transnational media to establish ties and share their experiences. New forms of media, such as social media platforms, often succeeded in bypassing the tight control of media channels by the state. These transnational connections created a sense of common identity and empowerment, which carries this new public sphere and united the popular protests in the region. The unified narrative of struggle and protest thereby helped to spread and keep the movements alive. According to Lynch, the Arab uprising would not have

taken the same course without the new Arab public sphere.

The structure of the book is reflective of Lynch's effort to give a comprehensive and at the same time understandable account of the first year of the uprising. Lynch uses the introduction and the first chapter to highlight important events and themes of the uprisings and to present his main argument, the concept of the new Arab public sphere. The next two chapters then provide the historical background for the reader to understand how and why the uprisings developed. While the third chapter concentrates on the "Arab Cold War", the wave of popular mobilization between the 1950s and 1970s, the fourth chapter sheds light on the more recent build-up for the uprising. By providing this historical background, Lynch also emphasizes that he perceives the events as a highpoint of a deeper transformation, which is embedded in the larger context of a generational change. The next chapter focuses on the first phase of the uprisings, the successful and relatively non-violent ousting of Tunisia's president, Ben Ali, and Mubarak in Egypt. Chapter 5 subsequently describes the spread of the uprisings into other countries in the region and gives short overviews of the course of events in different countries. After this account of the earlier part of the uprising, the following two chapters then turn their attention to the more problematic developments in the later stages. Chapter 7 highlights efforts of Arab regimes to contain and counter the movements that threatened their survival. The case of Bahrain, with its brutal crackdown on protesters with help from Saudi-GCC military forces and the descent of the situation into grim sectarian conflicts, are hereby examined as the prime examples for counterrevolution of authoritarian states in the region. The eighth chapter then sheds light on Libya and Syria and the topics of external intervention and civil war. This chapter also serves as a bridge to the last chapter, "America's Challenge", in which Lynch moves on to state policy implications for the U.S. resulting from the rise of a newly

empowered public and the changed nature of politics in the Middle East. In this final chapter, the author also assesses U.S. foreign policy decisions of the past and gives policy advice based on lessons from old mistakes as well as characteristics of Middle East policy. These include the increasing influence of Islamism within the protest movements and on the newly formed governments, and the changed regional power balance. The new afterword, which has been added to the latest edition in 2013, gives Lynch the chance to comment on some of the newer developments.

As mentioned above, Lynch roots his analysis of the first year of the Arab uprisings in the concept of a newly empowered Arab public sphere connected by a shared sense of destiny and formed by similar historical experiences and grievances. By describing the historical cases of popular mobilization in the region, Lynch poses the question of how the uprisings in 2011 are different to uprisings in the past. As points of reference he examines the wave of popular mobilization during the "Arab Cold War" and the Green Movement in Iran. All of these movements seemed promising at first, but none of them led to a lasting transition. On the contrary, most of them were characterized by a reconsolidation of an often even more repressive state authority. The question therefore is whether the influence of the new Arab public is strong enough to play a positive and lasting role in a transition towards democracy and thereby prevent authoritarian regimes from reconsolidating their grip on power.

The great importance Lynch attaches to the role of the new Arab public for the uprising becomes especially clear in Chapters 4 and 5. In describing the first outbreaks of the uprising in Tunisia and Egypt and subsequently the spread over almost the entire region, Lynch strongly emphasizes the role which the shared narrative of protest and the increasing sense of empowerment among the people played in keeping the movements alive. The framing of the protests as one

Reviews

single story by regional media, especially *Al-Jazeera* and in social media, is seen as an important factor that promoted the development of a shared narrative. The extensive coverage of the protests also created an environment in which traditional authoritarian methods of repression and cooptation did not – aside from a few exceptions – work like they used to. On the contrary – harsh and indiscriminate repression not only failed to deter protesters but triggered a violence-mobilization dynamic that infuriated formerly passive bystanders and thereby brought even more protestors onto the streets.

Following the first two successful cases of Egypt and Tunisia, which have seen relatively low levels of violence, the second phase of the uprising has been much less coherent and at the same time much more violent. This is partly due to what Lynch calls a “counterrevolution” of authoritarian regimes, which are willing to use extensive violence against protestors or take enormous amounts of money into their hands to quiet dissatisfied publics and nip protests in the bud. Some of the regimes, like Jordan and most prominently Bahrain, also successfully exploited existing social cleavages in their countries to prevent the development of a coherent protest movement. In general the second phase saw a slowing-down of events, including several protest movements that were contained through financial or minor political concessions or crushed with force, and furthermore included cases like Yemen, Libya and Syria, which developed into stalemates or – even worse – full-blown civil wars. Lynch emphasizes how Syria and Libya dramatically changed the narrative of the uprising with their descent into a cycle of violence between the regime and opposition movements. They also raised the question of direct external intervention, which marked a – at least temporary – shift in the regional perception of the “responsibility to protect” norm. In this turbulent second phase, it was not only the regimes’ fight for their survival that posed a threat to the uprising. The often praised role of the media coverage of the protests

started to raise questions about the media’s intentions and the role it played in shaping the uprising. In particular, the Qatari broadcaster *Al-Jazeera* came to be criticized as influenced by decisions of Qatari foreign policy and as enjoying too much power in framing specific protests. The most prominent example for that is Bahrain’s uprising, which has not been covered by *Al-Jazeera* because its Qatari owners decided to indirectly back their fellow GCC member in cracking down on the protests. Moreover, problems within the Arab public sphere arose that led to internal divisions in many cases. One highly problematic feature of the shared narrative of the protest movements that Lynch highlights is that its moral imperative only worked in one direction. Challenging even parts of the narrative was seen as betrayal of the revolutionary identity. Another major point of conflict within the public sphere is the question of who is going to receive revolutionary legitimacy after the first phase of protests. Members of the new Arab public sphere who were and still are active in the uprising seem to have a disproportionate share of influence when it comes to the question of representation, through their ability to set narratives and dominate the discourse.

Lynch predicts that the uprising will strongly affect the regional power balance by leading to a redistribution of traditional power positions of states. Once again he also points to the role of the new Arab public, which now defines the political arena, and whose aspirations have to be taken into consideration when looking at regional politics. Furthermore, the regional integration of the new Arab public will draw newly increased attention to regional issues, among these especially Palestine. This changed nature of politics in the region produces – according to Lynch – two losers in the game of power politics: Israel and Iran. The renewed pan-Arabic identity that the shared narrative of the uprising created is seen as a threat to Israel’s relations with several Arab states. These working relationships will prove more complicated in the future since the Palestine issue is deeply en-

trenched in the Arab identity and therefore has the potential to spark new instabilities. Iran, which had expected to benefit from the struggling and even breakdown of regimes hostile to its interests, is portrayed as the second loser in the new regional order. Lynch names two main reasons for this development: Iran's rigged elections in 2009 stand irreconcilably with the uprising's demands for democracy, which made the country highly unpopular amongst the Arab public. Khamenei's attempt to brand the protests as "Islamic Awakening" further infuriated the empowered masses that refused to have the ownership of their uprising taken away from them.

Lynch also takes a look at the role Islamism is likely going to play in the new regional politics. He remarks that violent Islamist movements, such as al-Qaeda, had not had popular mass support, and their concept of violent jihad had been undermined by the peaceful protest movements in Egypt and Tunisia. On the other hand, Lynch very well realizes that the near or complete breakdown of some of the security services in countries of the region made it easier for militant Islamists to carry out their activities. Turning attention to the Muslim Brotherhood and the Salafis, Lynch states that these players greatly profited from new possibilities to participate in the political system. Especially when it comes to elections and voter mobilization, their organizational capabilities put them in a privileged situation compared to the mostly unorganized and leaderless secular activist movements. Contrary to the mainstream media and several policy advisors, Lynch refuses to dramatize the potential risks of this participation, pointing out deep internal rifts between Islamist groups that weaken their influence and stating that their participation in the political system will move these groups into the mainstream of democratic political life.

As a conclusion to his book Lynch then draws policy implications for U.S. foreign policy from the experiences of the Arab uprising. While he gives a mostly positive

assessment of the way the Obama administration reacted to the Arab uprising – especially the fact that it did not try to claim author- or leadership of the uprising – Lynch also remarks that the U.S. foreign policy concerning the Middle East will always be shaped by two competing demands: On the one hand, this includes the moral imperative of siding with peaceful protest movements demanding democracy. On the other hand, the administration is bound to consider U.S. strategic interests in the region. Once again, the case of Bahrain can be seen as prime example for this dilemma. Lynch clearly states that the U.S. has to abandon its position as a status-quo power that prefers working with dictators out of strategic considerations in order to gain credibility on questions of democracy. Furthermore, the U.S. will have to take the rise of a new Arab public seriously and re-orient their foreign policy, taking into account the role of the newly empowered public and the pan-Arab integration of the regional sphere. Considering the reinforced regional issue of Palestine, this also means that the U.S. has to rethink its relationship with Israel in order to avoid a renewed intensification of the conflict. In conclusion, Lynch advises the U.S. to create a new foreign policy framework concerning the Middle East that takes into account the role of the new Arab public and moves away from a status-quo and a case-to-case strategy. He emphasizes the importance of siding with democratic aspirations of the new public, which also includes Islamist movements, without taking ownership of the public and political sphere and in general accepting the limits of its ability to control the Middle East.

Lynch manages in his book to give a comprehensive overview of the Arab uprisings that transformed the nature of politics in the Middle East and draws logical and clever conclusions for the future of regional politics and a reformed U.S. foreign policy. His book is an understandable guide to the uprisings that not only chronicles the first year of the uprising in different countries but also traces back the

Reviews

current events to historical experiences and structural preconditions. This characterizes the uprisings as a highpoint of a deeper generational change rooted in historical experiences of dissatisfaction, mobilization and repression. Lynch's analysis of events builds mainly on the concept of a newly empowered Arab public sphere that is regionally integrated, influenced by and connected to transnational media and social media and claims its right to participate and shape the political sphere. The book is structured and written in a coherent manner that clearly highlights the author's main arguments and shows his in-depth knowledge. A possible point of criticism is the hashtag structure the author uses in Chapter 5 to describe the course of events in several Arab countries. While Lynch's social media background and the influence of services like *Twitter* make this understandable, it disrupts the book's otherwise fluent style. A very positive feature of the book is that Lynch's pragmatic approach is neither overly optimistic about the chances for democracy in the region nor is he dramatizing possible risks. The book therefore presents the complex history, development and prospects of the Arab uprising in an understandable, yet clever and detailed way, which makes it valuable reading for people with little knowledge about the Middle East as well as more informed readers.

Veronika Ertl

Asef Bayat

Leben als Politik: Wie ganz normale Leute den Nahen Osten verändern



Bayat, Asef: Leben als Politik: Wie ganz normale Leute den Nahen Osten verändern, Assoziation a, Berlin 2012, 253 S., ISBN: 978-3-862-41417-8

Die arabischen Revolutionen 2011 haben auch die deutsche Nahostwissenschaft¹ überrascht, da kaum jemand das kollektive Aufbegehren gegen die Machthaber des Nahen Ostens zu diesem Zeitpunkt für möglich hielt. Sie überraschten ebenfalls ihre Protagonisten selbst, denn als sie das erste Mal auf die Straßen ihrer Metropolen strömten, verfolgten die wenigsten die Strategie, Machthaber zu stürzen und neue Ordnungen zu etablieren. Bei der Nahostwissenschaft hat seit den Umbrüchen eine gewisse Kehrtwende stattgefunden: Statt der Stabilität der autoritären Systeme stehen nun die Sollbruchstellen, statt der Selbsterhaltungsstrategien der Regime treten nun die Veränderungen in den Vordergrund, die eine solche Transformation ermöglicht hatten.

Die Analysen Asef Bayats der politischen Relevanz der ‚kleinen Leute‘ und ihrer alltäglichen Kämpfe, also einem großen Teil der Akteure der Revolution, versprechen diesbezüglich aufschlussreich zu sein. Ende 2012 erschien eine Sammlung seiner Schriften der letzten 13 Jahre unter dem Titel „Leben als Politik – wie ganz normale Menschen den Nahen Osten verändern“ auf deutsch. Im Wesentlichen ist das Buch eine Übersetzung und Überarbeitung seines 2009 in englischer Sprache erschienenen Buches „Life as Politics“. Für diese Ausgabe fügte Bayat eigens ein letztes Kapitel über die arabischen Revolutionen an.

Bayat ist derzeit Professor für Soziologie und Nah- und Mitteloststudien an der University of Illinois. Er wuchs in Iran auf und wurde in der vorrevolutionären Aufbruchsstimmung der 1970er Jahre politisch aktiv. Obwohl er sich von den Schriften des islamischen Theologen Ali Schariati inspirieren ließ, positionierte er sich bald säkular und engagierte sich in verschiedenen linken Gruppen. Nach seinem Studium in Großbritannien forschte und lehrte Bayat 16 Jahre an der American University in Kairo, wo er sich intensiv mit der Marginalisierung von Teilen der städtischen Bevölkerung auseinandersetzte.

¹ Hier beziehe ich mich vornehmlich auf den politikwissenschaftlichen Bereich der interdisziplinär geprägten Regionalstudien zum Nahen Osten

Bayats Fokus liegt wie der Titel des Buches auf den ‚kleinen‘ bzw. den ‚normalen Leuten‘ des Nahen Ostens und der Art und Weise, wie sie politisch relevanten Aktivismus betreiben. Bayat konzentriert sich vornehmlich auf die im Rahmen der allgemeinen Urbanisierung neu entstandene Schicht von landgeflüchteten Armen und Besitzlosen und ihrer alltäglichen Kämpfe. Weiterhin widmet er den muslimischen Frauen und der Jugend je ein Kapitel.

Bayats Ausgangspunkt sind die herkömmlichen Konzepte der sozialen Bewegungsforschung. Er konstatiert, diese könnten den Aktivismus im Nahen Osten nicht hinreichend erfassen, denn sie wurden für einen europäischen Kontext entwickelt und nicht ausreichend im Hinblick auf die besonderen Bedingungen des Nahen Ostens reflektiert. Bayats Suche nach einem Konzept, das den Aktivismus der kleinen Leute des Nahen Ostens adäquat abbildet, führt ihn über städtische Massenproteste, die Gewerkschaftsbewegung, Stadtteilaktivismus, islamistische Bewegungen bis hin zu Nichtregierungsorganisationen, die er allerdings alle nicht als maßgeblich prägende politische Aktionsform der ‚kleinen Leute‘ charakterisiert. Während er zwar all diesen Gruppen eine gewisse Relevanz in der Geschichte und Gegenwart der Gesellschaften des Nahen Ostens zuspricht, schlägt er vor, den Aktivismus der städtischen Armen mit dem eigens entwickelten Konzepten der „sozialen Nichtbewegung“ (S. 31) und des „stillen Vordringens“ („quiet encroachment“, S. 67) zu erfassen.

Die Merkmale von sozialen Nichtbewegungen sind eine geteilte Identität, die große Zahl ihrer Akteure, die Abwesenheit oder Irrelevanz einer politischen Führungsstruktur sowie eine Politik der Alltagspraxis. Bayat beschreibt soziale Nicht-Bewegungen demnach als „kollektive Handlungen von nichtkollektiven AkteurInnen“ (S. 31). Als AkteurInnen der sozialen Nichtbewegungen identifiziert Bayat die urbanen Armen, die muslimischen Frauen und die Jugend. Nach dem

Prinzip der sozialen Nichtbewegung entscheidet sich zum Beispiel ein beträchtlicher Teil iranischer Frauen entgegen der Gesetze, ihren Hijab so zu tragen, dass einige Zentimeter Haar zu sehen sind, oder sie verfolgen Karrieren in „Männerberufen“. In beiden dieser Fälle sind die Aktionen der muslimischen Frauen eng mit dem Alltag verwoben und die Akteurinnen treten in großer Zahl auf, ohne dass sie einer zentralen Führung folgen. Durch das kollektive Aufbegehren gegen die Moralpolizei und Sittengesetze Irans fechten muslimische Frauen wie andere soziale Nichtbewegungen fundamentale staatliche Vorrechte an, darunter „den Stellenwert von Ordnung, die Kontrolle des öffentlichen Raums, der öffentlichen und privaten Güter und die Relevanz von Modernität“ (S. 68).

Einen Grund für den weitverbreiteten Aktivismus in Form von sozialen Nichtbewegungen sieht Bayat im historisch bedingten autoritären und etatistischen Charakter der Regime des Nahen Ostens. Der Gesellschaftsvertrag zwischen den unteren und mittleren Schichten und dem Staat besagte jahrelang, dass der Staat das Lebensnotwendigste biete und im Gegenzug dafür Unterstützung und sozialen Frieden und die Loyalität der Bevölkerung einforderte. Dies untergrub die Bildung kollektiver Identitäten und ständiger politischer Mobilisierung, wie sie beispielsweise für den in Südamerika weit verbreiteten Stadtteilaktivismus signifikant ist.

Soziale Nichtbewegungen funktionieren nach der Logik des „stillen Vordringens des Alltäglichen“ (S. 67). Es beschreibt das facettenreiche, oft illegale, allmählich um sich greifende Vorrücken der städtischen Subalternen auf die privilegierten Eliten. Das stille Vordringen äußert sich zum Beispiel im Bauen ohne Baugenehmigung und der Ausbreitung informeller Siedlungen. Zwischen 1980 und 1992 wuchs so die Fläche Teherans gegen den Willen der Regierung von 200 auf 600 Quadratkilometer an. Weit über hundert meist informelle Gemeinden entstanden im Großraum Teheran. Auch im Raum

Reviews

Kairo entstanden mehr als 111 spontane Siedlungen mit über sechs Millionen Bewohnern, die illegal Landwirtschaft betreiben. 84% aller W ohneinheiten in Ägypten, die zwischen 1970 und 1981 entstanden, wurden informell eingerichtet. Die informelle Besiedlung ist weiterhin mit einem „vertikalen Vordringen“ (S. 119), also mit der illegalen Errichtung zusätzlicher Stockwerke auf vorhandene Häuser, verbunden, ebenso wie die Sicherung von städtischen Dienstleistungen wie Strom oder fließendes Wasser, ohne dafür zu bezahlen.

Die Nichtbewegungen erweisen sich dabei als besonders resistent gegenüber staatlicher Repression. Durch die Verankerung des Vordringens ins Alltagsleben, die große Anzahl der Protagonisten und durch die Abwesenheit einer Führerschaft wird staatlich-repressives Vorgehen erheblich erschwert und die Errungenschaften werden bald als normal aufgefasst. So entscheiden sich Staaten oft für integrative Optionen. Die städtischen Marginalisierten zwingen die Behörden dazu, städtische Versorgungsleistungen auf informelle Siedlungen auszuweiten, da sie sich diese sonst illegal aneignen. Selbst dort, wo Regierungen Menschen vertrieben und Häuser abgerissen haben, boten sie den Enteigneten alternative Straßenmärkte, Wohnungen und regulierte Taxidienste an.

Mit den Konzepten der sozialen Nichtbewegung und des stillen V ordningens gelingt es Bayat, die ständige Handlungsmacht marginalisierter Gruppen aufzuzeigen und dabei stark einschränkend wirkende Dichotomien von ‚aktiv‘/‚passiv‘ oder ‚individuell‘/‚kollektiv‘ zu umgehen. Durch eine Politik der Präsenz ist die städtische arme Bevölkerung trotz des Risikos staatlicher Repression in der Lage, Veränderungen in ihrem Leben, in der städtischen Struktur und der Sozialpolitik zu bewegen. Dafür bedarf es nicht unbedingt eines organisierten, nachhaltigen und institutionalisierten Aktivismus. Diese Erkenntnis erlaubte Bayat schon in den frühen 2000er Jahren eine Dauer-Mobilisierung der urbanen Armen und Mittel-

schichten zu diagnostizieren, die einen profunden Einfluss auf die arabischen Staaten hatte.

In welchem Verhältnis stehen jedoch die sozialen Nichtbewegungen und die kollektiv organisierten Widerstandspraktiken, die zum Sturz mehrerer Machthaber in der arabischen Welt führten? Obwohl Bayat keine direkte Verbindung zwischen den Massenerhebungen und den sozialen Nichtbewegungen zieht, legt er nahe, dass viele ihrer Aktiven sich an den Massenerhebungen beteiligten. Laut Bayat leben ca. 46% der Araber in Slums, und zwischen 40-50% der Araber sind in der informellen Ökonomie beschäftigt (S. 231). Viele dieser städtischen Armen waren schon vor den Revolutionen oft an individualisierten und stillen alltäglichen Kämpfen zur Durchsetzung ihrer Forderungen eingebunden. Diese Nichtbewegungen hielten ihre Akteure in ständiger Mobilisierung. Sobald sich eine günstige Gelegenheit ergibt, schließen sich die Akteure dieser Nichtbewegungen oft zusammen, um ihre Forderungen kollektiv durchzusetzen (S. 44). Ein weiteres Indiz dafür ist eine strategische Gemeinsamkeit der sozialen Nichtbewegungen und der Massenproteste, die zum Sturz mehrerer Regime führten. Die Aktivisten waren nicht formal organisiert, temporär und ohne bekannte Führungspersönlichkeiten und konnten dadurch weitestgehend vor Unterdrückung geschützt ihre Ziele verfolgen.

Bayats Einschätzung zu Folge sind die beiden Hauptmerkmale der arabischen Revolutionen ihre Prägung durch eine „postislamistische“ Subjektivität und ihr „revolutionärer“² Verlauf. Den Begriff „Postislamismus“ nutzt Bayat bereits in früheren Kapiteln, um die Situation von gläubigen Vertreterinnen der Frauenbewegung zu beschreiben, die anhand des Korans für Frauenrechte eintreten, oder von der Jugendbewegung, die danach trachtet, „Göttliches mit V ernügen“ zu verbinden, um die strikten Moralkodizes ihrer Gesellschaften zu umgehen. Der Postislamismus zielt laut Bayat auf eine Gesellschaft ab, in der Rechte und Reli-

² Bayat führt in diesem Wortspiel die Begriffe „Reform“ und „Revolution“ zusammen.

giosität, Glaube mit Freiheit, Islam mit Demokratie vereinbar sind. Bayat erwähnt jedoch auch, dass das Ausmaß, in dem sich die Postislamisten (die Muslimbrüder in Ägypten, *Ennahda* in Tunesien, die AKP in der Türkei) in der Praxis den demokratischen Werten verpflichtet fühlen, sehr variiert. Die Abwesenheit revolutionärer Ideologien während der arabischen Revolutionen, wie dem revolutionären Islamismus, dem Marxismus oder dem postkolonialen Nationalismus, ist laut Bayat einer der Hauptgründe für den refo-lutionären Verlauf der arabischen Revolutionen. Die Protestgruppen hatten 2011 zunächst keine revolutionären Ansichten, sondern strebten nach Reformen innerhalb des bestehenden Staats (mit Ausnahme von Libyen und Syrien). Im dynamischen Verlauf der Proteste entwickelte sich allerdings ein enormer revolutionärer Drang, der schnell dazu führte, sich unmittelbar politische Freiheiten zu erkämpfen. Es fehlte den Bewegungen jedoch meist an dauerhaften Organisationen, die es mit den Kräften der alten Regime oder den Muslimbrüdern aufnehmen konnten. Viele Schlüsselinstitutionen der alten Regime in Ägypten und Tunesien, darunter der Sicherheitsapparat, die Medien, Kulturorganisationen und Wirtschaftsverbände blieben deswegen bislang mehr oder weniger unangetastet. Die Revolutionen „besaßen eine enorme gesellschaftliche Macht, aber keine behördliche Autorität; sie erreichten eine bemerkenswerte Hegemonie, regierten aber nicht im eigentlichen Sinne“ (S. 244). Deswegen, so Bayat, könne man von Refo-lutionen sprechen, also von „Revolutionen, die nach Reformen innerhalb und mittels der Institutionen der bestehenden Staaten streben“ (S. 245). Refo-lutionen hätten laut Bayat den Vorteil, einen vergleichsweise stabilen Übergang zur neuen Ordnung zu gewährleisten, indem nicht kostspielig neue Institutionen aufgebaut und etabliert werden müssten. Andererseits drohe bei Refo-lutionen ständig die Gefahr der Konterrevolution, denn die Akteure des alten Regimes genossen weiterhin eine große institutionalisierte Macht. Ein Wandel im Sinne der revolu-

tionären Forderungen werde deswegen nur durch eine konstante Mobilisierung der Bevölkerung zu gewährleisten sein.

Im Kontrast zu den Revolutionen der letzten Jahrzehnte, die im Zeichen der drei hauptideologischen Strömungen Marxismus, postkolonialem Nationalismus und Islamismus standen, seien die Aufstände der späten 2000er Jahre postideologisch geprägt, so Bayat. Allen diesen revolutionären Ideologien gemein seien konkrete Pläne und Anstrengungen zur Machtergreifung – entweder durch die Herausbildung von Parallelinstitutionen oder durch die Übernahme der Staatsorgane.

„Revolution“ ist ein aufgeladener Begriff mit einer Vielzahl von Bedeutungen, die auch im Bezug auf die arabischen Revolutionen vielfältig genutzt werden und häufig Anlass zu Missverständnissen bieten. Von Joel Beinin³ wird er rein deskriptiv genutzt, um soziale politische und ökonomische Transformationen zu beschreiben, die mit sozialen Bewegungen, politischer Mobilisierung und Momenten des öffentlichen Aufbegehrens einhergehen. Sie laufen auf einen längeren Prozess der Rekonstruktion einer sozialpolitischen Ordnung hinaus, einschließlich des Austauschs der alten herrschenden Klasse mit neuen Kräften anderer sozialer Hintergründe und Interessen. In diesem Sinne fanden in Ägypten, Tunesien und Jemen noch keine Revolutionen statt. Die ‚Revolution‘ ist mittlerweile von Aktivisten zu einer Erinnerung geworden, die dem Einreißen der Mauer der Angst, den außergewöhnlichen kollektiven Anstrengungen zum Sturz der obersten Eliten, Rechnung trägt. Beide Herangehensweisen sind legitim und etabliert. Oft werden die verschiedenen Bedeutungskomponenten des Wortes allerdings miteinander vermischt oder verfälscht. Schnell kann deswegen der Eindruck entstehen, die ‚Revolution‘ beschränke sich auf die Wochen der massiven Proteste bis zum Sturz der obersten Machthaber, oder sie sei angesichts neuer autoritärer Tendenzen bereits ‚gescheitert‘.

³ Vgl. Beinin, Joel 2013: Was there a January 25 Revolution? URL: <http://www.jadaliyya.com/pages/index/9766/was-there-a-january-25-revolution> (abgerufen am 05.06.2013).

Reviews

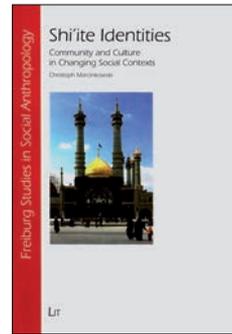
Bayat hat mit der ‚sozialen Nichtbewegung‘ und dem ‚stillen Vordringen‘ zwei Konzepte entwickelt, die ein beachtliches analytisches Potenzial bergen und deswegen zu Recht verbreitet angewandt werden. Das Konzept der Revolution birgt dieses Potential jedoch nicht. Es bleibt fraglich, ob die Herausstellung der Paradoxien zwischen reformistischen Zielen und revolutionärer Bewegung nicht unerheblich ist, angesichts der Frage, wie und in welcher Form die Ziele der Revolution noch verwirklicht werden können.

Bayat schreibt dabei mit einer großen Sensibilität für westliche populäre und wissenschaftliche Diskurse. Seine Konzepte sollten nicht als neutrale Wissenschaft verstanden werden, sondern auch als ein Plädoyer gegen orientalistische Bilder, wie dem nahöstlichen Exceptionalismus, der besagt, die ganze Welt verändere sich, während der Nahe Osten erstarrt scheint. Zwar sagte auch Bayat die arabischen Revolutionen nicht voraus, er zeichnet in seinem Buch allerdings das genaue Gegenteil statischer, unpolitischer und träger Gesellschaften.

Leider macht sich trotz einer schlüssigen Kapitelstruktur der Aufsatzcharakter des Buchs durchaus bemerkbar. Der Vorteil, dass jedes Kapitel für sich stehen könnte, bedeutet im Umkehrschluss Einbußen an kapitelübergreifender Systematik und tiefer gehender Analyse. Auch merkt man der deutschen Übersetzung ihre Unbeholfenheit angesichts Bayats Sprachinnovationsgeist an. Klingt „revolution“ auf deutsch nur etwas sperriger als auf englisch, verkennt das „Vordringen“ im Vergleich zu „encroachment“ die Dimension des invasiven Überschreitens von rechtlichen Grenzen. Darüber hinaus geht die Doppelbedeutung von „the ordinary“, also gewöhnlichen Alltagshandlungen und ‚einfachen Menschen‘ in Subjektposition verloren, wenn der Begriff schlicht mit dem „Alltäglichen“ übersetzt wird.

Tim Sontheimer

Christoph Marcinkowski:
Shi'ite Identities: Community and Culture
in Changing Social Contexts



Marcinkowski, Christoph:
Shi'ite Identities: Community and Culture in Changing Social Contexts, LIT Verlag, Münster 2011, 288 S., ISBN 978-3-64380-049-7

„Shi'ite Identities: Community and Culture in Changing Social Contexts“ nimmt das gestiegene Interesse an der Schia aufgrund seiner Präsenz in den Konfliktregionen des Nahen und Mittleren Ostens zum Anlass, über das neue Selbstbewusstsein schiitischer Muslime im Nahen Osten und Südostasien zu berichten.

Das Buch behandelt eine bunte Vielfalt von Aspekten zu schiitischer Geschichte, religiösen Praktiken und Identitätsfindung der Zwölferschiiten von den Anfängen bis heute. Was auf den ersten Blick jedoch nicht ganz ersichtlich ist: Es handelt sich hier um eine lose verbundene Sammlung von Aufsätzen, die im Wesentlichen bereits früher von Christoph Marcinkowski veröffentlicht wurden. Der Autor hat Iranistik, Islamwissenschaft und Politikwissenschaft an der Freien Universität studiert und zu *Mirzā Rafī'ā's Dastūr al-Mulūk* an der Islamischen Universität Malaysia in Kuala Lumpur promoviert. Marcinkowski behandelt seine einzelnen Themen in verständlichem und gut lesbarem Stil, setzt aber beim Leser das Basiswissen zum Islam und die Kenntnis historischer Zusammenhänge des Islam voraus, um den großen zeitlichen Sprüngen folgen zu können.

Der Titel des hier vorgestellten Buches lässt zunächst an die unterschiedlichen Richtungen innerhalb der Schia denken, im Buch wird hingegen fast ausschließlich die Zwölferschia behandelt. Auch der Klappentext suggeriert eine andere Zielführung. Diese schwankt zwischen

ethnologisch-sozialwissenschaftlichem Ansatz im Vorwort, politischer Analyse, historischem Abriss und einem Plädoyer für den interkonfessionellen Dialog. Dies ist der Tatsache geschuldet, dass es sich um unabhängig stehende Beiträge handelt, die nicht aufeinander aufbauen. Für sich genommen handelt es sich hier um interessante und wissenschaftlich fundierte Artikel. Beim Blick in die umfangreichen angeführten Quellen fällt allerdings auf, dass Marcinkowski nicht die neuste Literatur zitiert und die Texte offensichtlich bereits 2009 fertig gestellt wurden.

Das Buch ist in drei Teilbereiche aufgebaut, von denen sich der erste den theologisch religiösen Konzepten der Schiiten widmet. Hier erläutert der Autor den Begriff Schia in der frühen islamischen Geschichte und spannt streckenweise einen weiten Bogen in die Gegenwart.

Es steht vor allem die Frage nach den schiitischen Auffassungen zu politischer und religiöser Führung (arab. *immāma*) im Islam seit dem Ableben des Propheten Mohammeds sowie die daraus resultierenden Praktiken in der Religionsausübung im Mittelpunkt. Nach einem Abriss der Ideengeschichte schließt er, indem er den zwölfschiitischen Islam als in seiner Natur quietistisch, also der Einmischung in Politik abgeneigt, charakterisiert. Im Anschluss geht der Autor auf die theologischen und religiösen Diskurse zwischen sunnitischen und schiitischen Gelehrten ein und widmet dem Thema der Originalität des Korantextes ein Kapitel.

Namhafte sunnitische Gelehrte estzrnseit frühesten islamischer Zeit den Schiiten Koranfälschung, vor die ihrerseits mit umfangreichen Abhandlungen reagierten. Marcinkowski stellt hier die wichtigsten Autoren der sog. *Firaq*-Literatur vor und deckt Unstimmigkeiten und Missverständnisse auf. Er appelliert an die auch unter Muslimen oft fehlende Bereitschaft, die Ansichten des anderen zu respektieren und ernsthaft zu studieren. Nach seiner These stellt sich weniger die Frage, ob Sunniten oder Schiiten Recht

haben, sondern eher, wie Muslime mit unterschiedlichen Ansichten miteinander und untereinander umgehen. In Teil II und III wählt der Autor für seine Betrachtung zwei geografische Schwerpunkte; zum einen die Region, die er als „Muslim Heartlands“ bezeichnet und zum anderen die „Diaspora“, welcher er in Südostasien ansiedelt. Vor dem persönlichen Hintergrund des Autors, der mehr als zehn Jahre in Malaysia verbrachte, ist diese Einteilung nachvollziehbar und für den Leser ein interessanter Exkurs. Was jedoch außen vor gelassen wird, sind die schiitischen Gemeinden in Europa und im nordamerikanischen Raum.

Unter der Überschrift „Shi'ism in the Muslim Heartlands – Past and Present“ werden nun vier für sich stehende Kapitel vorgestellt. Marcinkowski beginnt mit einem Aufsatz über die Dynastie der Buyiden, welche schiitischen Glaubens waren und erstmals in der Geschichte der Schiiten eine Zeit der religiösen Freiheit ermöglichten, in der sich entscheidende Entwicklungen für die schiitische Identität in der Folgezeit vollzogen.

Die Förderung von schiitischer Gelehrsamkeit brachte bedeutsame Werke wie die Hadīth-Sammlungen von Ibn Bābawayah und Shaykh al-Ta'ifāh al-Tūsī hervor. Auch die Einführung einiger schiitischer Feier- und Trauertage, sowie die Gründung wichtiger schiitischer Lehranstalten fallen in diese Epoche. Marcinkowski schätzt die Bedeutung dieser Herrschaftsdynastie sehr hoch ein und meint zurecht, dass sie neben den Jahrhunderte später herrschenden Safawiden von wesentlicher Bedeutung für die Entstehung einer schiitischen Identität und dem „revival of national feeling“ in Iran gewesen sei.

Dieses „nationale“ Gefühl ist stark mit der vorislamischen iranischen Geschichte und dem Jahrtausende alten Konzept königlicher Herrschaft (pers. *pādeshāhī*) verknüpft, in deren Tradition die Buyiden wahrgenommen wurden. Der Herrschaftsbereich von Buyiden und Safawiden, welcher sich auf den alten

Reviews

iranischen Sprach- und Herrschaftsraum erstreckt, wird bei der Akzentuierung von Marcinkowski als das schiitische Kernland verstanden, während die Herrschaft der ismailitischen Fatimiden in Ägypten eher marginalisiert wird.

Diese Vernachlässigung hat mit seiner bewussten Fokussierung auf die Zwölferschia zu tun, die nur auf S. 28f. unterbrochen wird. Auf den historischen Rückblick folgt ein weiterer inhaltlicher Sprung in die Gegenwart. Der Artikel geht auf ein viel debattiertes Zitat des jordanischen Königs Abdullah im Jahr 2007 ein, in dem er vor dem „schiitischen Halbmond“ warnte, der von Iran über Irak nach Libanon und die Golfländer reiche und die Region destabilisieren könne.

Weiter wird auf die politischen Ambitionen der heutigen Islamischen Republik Irans eingegangen, und Marcinkowski ist der Ansicht, dass sich in der Identität der Iraner die religiöse Zugehörigkeit zur Zwölferschia mit dem Bewusstsein historischer imperialer Größe vermische, sich hingegen bei der Einflußnahme auf die schiitischen Gemeinden der Nachbarländer bzw. bei hegemonialen Bestrebungen eher iranischer Nationalismus widerspiegele.

Das darauf folgende Kapitel widmet sich der Zwölferschia im Irak, welches mit seinen religiösen Lehreinrichtungen und den Grabstätten wichtiger Imame eine besondere Bedeutung für schiitische Gläubige spielt. Hier gibt der Autor einen interessanten Einblick in die geschichtliche Entstehung und Struktur der schiitischen Seminare (arab. *hawzah ʿilmīyya*) und der Gelehrtenhierarchie. Marcinkowski stellt die hochrangigen Gelehrten vor, die derzeit als die wichtigsten „Quellen der Nachahmung“ (arab. *marjaʾ at-taqlīd*) für die Gläubigen gelten.

Teil III richtet nun den Fokus auf Südostasien. Marcinkowski gibt einen historischen Rückblick auf die schiitischen Gemeinden Südostasiens, deren Anfänge zum Teil bis in die Zeit der muslimischen Expansion im 7. Jh. zurück-

reichen. Er berichtet über interessante Aspekte, wie die Konversion der Cham, einer malaiischen Minderheit im heutigen Kambodscha und Vietnam, die zu den ersten Muslimen in der Region zählten und offenbar schiitischer Glaubensrichtung waren. Weitere Volksgruppen sowie die Entstehung schiitischer Zentren der Gelehrsamkeit werden thematisiert.

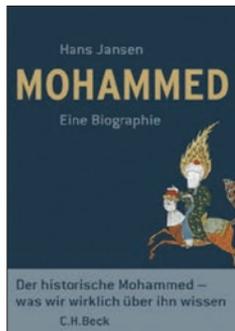
Das 8. Kapitel zielt auf das Phänomen in den 1980er und 1990er Jahren ab, in denen sich südostasiatische Muslime zur Zwölferschia bekehrten, was zu einem Erstarren der Schia in der Region führte. Der Autor schließt dabei auf den Einfluss der Islamischen Revolution in Iran. Im Wesentlichen gibt Teil III seine Arbeitspapiere aus den Jahren 2006-2007 wieder.

Das Buch endet auch ohne Zusammenfassung, stattdessen schließt sich ein Postscript in Form eines Aufsatzes über die christlich-muslimischen Beziehungen und der Ausblick auf einen katholisch-schiitischen Dialog an. Hier wird ohne erkennbare inhaltliche Verbindung zum übrigen Buch über die Regensburger Rede von Papst Benedikt VI. im September 2006 rekurriert, welche in der muslimischen Welt für Irritationen und lautstarke Proteste gesorgt hatte.

Marcinkowski beleuchtet die theologischen Diskurse zum interreligiösen Dialog, die trotz allem, so sein Resümee, hoffnungsvoll und positiv verlaufen. Dieser Exkurs bietet einen interessanten Seitenblick auf ein seltener behandeltes Thema zur Schia. Der Leser liest den Artikel jedoch mit gewisser Verwunderung. Er erklärt sich offenbar aus der damaligen Tätigkeit des Autors an der katholischen Universität Eichstätt-Ingolstadt, hat indes keinen Bezug zur übrigen Textauswahl. Was das Anliegen des Autors betrifft, dass der schiitische Islam nicht als monolithischer Block, sondern in seiner Differenziertheit und Vielfalt wahrgenommen werden soll, so ist dies durchaus gelungen.

Claudia Nejati

Hans Jansen:
Muhammad – Eine Biographie



Jansen, Hans: Muhammad – Eine Biographie, C.H. Beck, München 2008, 491 pp., ISBN 978-3-406-56858-9

Just as with Jesus, Buddha or any other figure surrounded by religious reverence and spirituality, the historian of Islam finds himself facing a difficult task when it comes to the historical reconstruction of the life of the Prophet Muhammad. Unlike Muslims, who due to their creed believe by and large in the account of the life of the prophet as it has been transmitted to them by previous generations over the centuries, the historian is primarily interested in the historicity of events; it lies in the nature of his profession to evaluate sources and information against objective standards in search of historical truth.

This is problematic insofar as pretty much all the information that we have today on the Prophet goes back to Islamic sources which cannot, if one is interested in the historicity of things, be taken at face value. There are unfortunately no substantial sources on the person of Muhammad other than those produced by Muslims themselves. Although Mecca and Medina were relatively remotely situated at the time, the Arabian peninsula during the late antique period was nevertheless surrounded by a number of highly literate civilizations. However, we have not a single Syrian, Iraqi, Armenian, Greek, Ethiopian, Persian, Hebrew or Aramaic source that could give us any meaningful information on the person of Muhammad and his actions. This is question begging, since if the spread of Islam was indeed revolutionary and if it really had the far-reaching effects on the entire Near and Middle Eastern region that it is popularly portrayed, one would naturally

expect that at least some of the neighbouring peoples, many of whom were directly affected by the Arab Conquests, would have taken notice of the emergence of this new civilization. Surprisingly, this is not the case.

This is further complicated by the fact that we have practically no contemporary sources which go back to Muhammad's lifetime. Islamic historiography itself did not emerge until around 750 A.D. at around the time when the 'Abbasids became the rulers of the Islamic Empire. This means that there is a gap of at least 120 years from the point of the death of the Prophet until the first written accounts of his life were produced; plenty of time in which things were forgotten, facts omitted or modified and fiction created to suit the imagination and expectations of the new Muslim community. Back in the second half of the 19th century, Ignaz Goldzieher, one of the founding fathers of the discipline of Islamic studies, had already argued convincingly that the bulk of Islamic historiography is saturated with internal contradictions and inconsistencies. Goldzieher concluded that the literary sources which appeared from 750 A.D. onwards have to be seen as politically and religiously motivated literature which reflect the state of a religion and society which was on a quest for its own origins and roots. In other words, the whole bulk of Islamic historiography is anachronistic and can only serve partly, if at all, as proper historical source material.

In light of these difficulties, what is left for the historian to do? One way is to categorically discard the whole of early Islamic writing as historically untenable and to rely on external sources. This was the route taken by historians such as Patricia Crone and Michael Cook (*Hagarism*) in the 1970s. Unfortunately, this leaves the historian with hardly any playing ground since, as noted above, we have hardly any external sources reporting on the rise of Islam and Muhammad. The other alternative is to make do with what we have and work with the available source material, even if this is nowhere near perfect.

Reviews

Out of the two options, the latter, though far from being satisfactory, is undoubtedly the more useful if one is serious about making progress. There are several methods which can and have been applied; one method is to regard the information transmitted by the early Muslims as generally valid but to omit sections which contain elements of the supernatural (miracles) or which are blatantly impossible. This will bring us closer to historical reality, yet it will still not do. There are still plenty of internal inconsistencies and contradictions contained within the *hadith* literature, which begs the question as to which one is true; also, as Goldzieher has argued, with the emergence of Sunna/Shia sectarianism, coinciding roughly with the appearance of Islamic historiography, that we are also faced with the problem of propaganda and partisanship.

The aforementioned points are just some of the basic problems faced by secular biographers of Muhammad. Religious figures in general exert a high level of fascination amongst believers and non-believers, but in the case of Muhammad one can say that the fascination is even greater. This has partly to do with the fact that our knowledge of Arabia during the late antique period is nowhere near as good as what we know, for example, about the historical context of the Middle East 2,000 years ago when Jesus was active in Palestine. We simply (still) do not have sufficient information to construct a meaningful historical framework for the 7th century Arabian Peninsula which can help us to evaluate the source material. Over the last decades the progress made within the discipline of Islamic studies has shown that some of the very basic assumptions which we have about Arabia during the lifetime of the Prophet rest on very little historic evidence. Amongst the first to point this out was the Danish scholar Patricia Crone with her influential book *Meccan Trade and the Rise of Islam*, which disproves the commonly held assumption that 7th century Mecca was on its way to become the new mercantile and trade centre of the Arab penin-

sular and was therefore undergoing dramatic economic and societal changes, which in turn made it susceptible to religious and social change under the guidance of a charismatic figure. Crone shows that it was a single verse from the Qur'an which gave birth to the idea that Mecca was a vibrant mercantile hub. In reality, however, there is no real evidence to sustain this assumption, and there are plausible arguments which even speak for the opposite. We find ourselves in front of one of the biggest unresolved puzzles of human history – how did a world religion which counts around 1.53 billion followers today emerge in a region of the world which we know practically nothing about and which remained nearly unnoticed until the very point at which Islam entered the stage of world history?

Amongst the numerous publications which have appeared on the topic of early Islam and the life of Muhammad over the last years, the Dutchman Hans Jansen's biography of the Prophet, which in its German edition carries the straightforward title "Mohammed – Eine Biographie" (Muhammad – A Biography), can be considered a valuable addition to Dutch/German literature on the topic. Jansen's book is a highly readable work which is accessible to both students and the general reader. The book is authored by an expert who has probably read most of that which has ever been published on the topic in the Arabic and European languages.

For his work, Jansen, who is professor emeritus at Utrecht University and who has previously also taught in Leiden and Cairo, primarily relies on the *Sirat Rusul Allah*, the first biography of the prophet, written by the 8th century chronicler Ibn Ishaq (d. 767/8), which has served as the sourcebook *par excellence* for all subsequent Muslim and Western biographers of the Prophet. Notable secular biographers of the last century such as Frants Buhl, Montgomery Watt and Maxime Rondinson have all based their work and scholarship on the *Sirat* by Ibn Ishaq. Indeed, one can safely say that almost everything that we know about the Prophet goes

back to the account composed by Ibn Ishaq.

This in turn indicates many of the problems which have already been addressed. Writing from a distance of 150 years, it is very likely that Ibn Ishaq, like any other Muslim writing at the same time, is guilty of creating a vita of the prophet which fitted perfectly into the imagination and world view created by him and his fellow believers of the time, but one which had only little to do with historical reality.

As Jansen argues throughout his book, one of the main problems of Ibn Ishaq's account is not so much that it is badly or incomprehensively written but rather that it reads too well to be historically true. Simple examples are the dates and chronology given in the *Sirat*: Jansen remarks on how symmetrically the life of the Prophet is staged. Muhammad famously spent ten years as a preacher in Mecca followed by ten years as a statesman in Medina. His birth year is commonly believed to be 570 AD; we do not have any evidence other than Ibn Ishaq's word for it, but the year would suit the taste of the Muslim audience rather well. If Muhammad was indeed born in the year 570AD, exactly forty years would have elapsed before he received his first revelation, in 610 AD, which is the year that Ibn Ishaq gives as the date on which Muhammad received his first revelation. Apart from being another multiple of ten, the number forty also happens to be a trope in Arabic denoting "many, a lot" (forty thieves, forty hadiths etc). This would confirm that Muhammad was a man of forty/many years when he received his first revelation, which fits into the traditional projection of Muhammad being a man of advanced age when he began his prophetic career. The numerical symmetry is striking; it would be unfair to immediately dismiss it as impossible, yet, as Hansen points out, it remains highly unlikely.

Moreover, we are also told by Ibn Ishaq that Muhammad was born in the "year of

the elephant". He refers to verse one of Sura 105 of the Qur'an, the Sura of the Elephant (*Surat al-Fil*) and explains that the meaning of this verse is linked to the birth of Muhammad. According to Ibn Ishaq's commentary, in the year in which Muhammad was born, an Ethiopian king named Abraha entered the Yemen with his army and was marching northwards towards Mecca. Amongst his army was a war elephant after which the verse is named. When the army arrived at Mecca and was about to attack the city, Allah himself intervened and brought the army to a standstill. After all, Mecca was the place where his Messenger was going to be born, and it could therefore not fall into the hands of foreign invaders. It is through this story that the year 570 has become associated with the "year of the elephant".

However, as Jansen points out again, it is highly unlikely that the year of the elephant is indeed the year 570. As he explains, in the case of the Ethiopian episode there are actually external sources and pieces of archaeological evidence which strongly suggest that the year of the elephant should be dated twenty years earlier to the year 552. If this was actually the case, and if Muhammad was born in 552 and not in 570, what is one to make of the rest of Ibn Ishaq's account?

However, Jansen's strongest argument against the chronology of the *Sirat* relates to a peculiarity contained within its dating system. Here it is important to explain that Ibn Ishaq employs a very meticulous dating system which accounts for every single month in the Prophet's life from the moment when he received his first revelation in 610 up until his death in 632. Thus, the *Sirat* documents every month of Muhammad's prophetic career in great detail and fills them with anecdotes and stories about what he is said to have done during every month.

Jansen notes that up until 629/30 it was customary to add leap months every three lunar years to keep it in sync with three solar years (a lunar year contains

Reviews

eleven years less than a solar year – hence a leap month every three lunar years would make up for the days lost). In 629/630 Muhammad officially abolished the leap month when he revealed in Sura 9:36 that the number of months with Allah is twelve. If Ibn Ishaq was indeed a historian in the true sense of the word he would have considered these calendrical changes in the chronology of the *Sirat* by adding a leap month every three years until his narration reached the years 629/30. This, however, is not the case. As Jansen correctly observes, from 610 until 629/30, that is a time span of 22 years, one would expect seven or eight leap months to be added. If one turns to the *Sirat*, however, not once in the pre-629/30 part of Ibn Ishaq's narration is a single leap month mentioned. Instead, 22 ordinary lunar years fill the entire chronological sequence from 610 until 632.

This is indeed a serious problem. As previously mentioned, the *Sirat* is a work of meticulous detail which tells us something about the Prophet for every month from 610 to 632. However, since it does not mention a single leap month, it does not account for at least seven/eight months of the Prophet's life. Could it simply be that nothing worth mentioning occurred on the leap months and that Ibn Ishaq therefore decided to omit them? This is highly unlikely. As Jansen argues, the most probable explanation for this problem is that Ibn Ishaq, as already noted, was writing at a time when people had forgotten that leap months had once existed. Although the omitted leap months would only account for about 2.8% for the period concerned, the implications this carries for Ibn Ishaq as a genuine historian are grave. It shows and confirms what Goldzieher had already discovered more than a century ago, namely that the so-called Muslim history writing from the 8th century cannot really be considered as reliable material documenting historical truth. Jansen concludes that Ibn Ishaq, whose systematic and careful chronology might have initially led us to believe that he was writing history in the proper sense, is more of a Gospel than a historian, whose primary

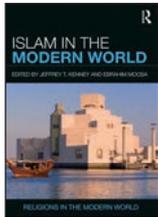
aim was not to record history but to offer a neat and flawless account of the Prophet's life which would have pleased his audience.

The issue of chronology as discussed above gives a flavour of Jansen's book, throughout which he enumerates and discusses a number of other issues related to the *Sirat*, such as literary conventions and stories ascribed to the Prophet which most probably contain only some historical reality.

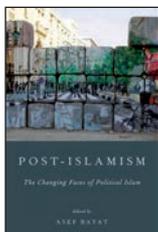
What Jansen's book offers is essentially a highly readable version of the traditional Muslim narrative which recounts all of the stages of the Prophet's life from his birth and childhood to his time as a prophet, statesman and conqueror, and finally to his death. Jansen mentions all the stories which Ibn Ishaq attributes to the Prophet and takes care to mention some of the more mundane anecdotes as well. Alongside the biographical account, Jansen provides the reader with a running commentary on all the points which scholars have found intriguing. The brilliance of Jansen's book lies in the ability of its author to explain complex issues and problems, such as those outlined, in a clear and succinct fashion. It becomes clear from page one that this is a book written by a man who has devoted his entire scholarly life studying the subject, who also happens to write in beautiful prose and often entertains his reader by adding humorous remarks.

Throughout his book, Jansen does not shrink from addressing controversial issues and adding critical comments to a topic which in itself already hits a raw nerve and might offend the religious sensibilities of many believers. His critics have considered it an insensitive work. However, his work, such as any other writings of its kind, certainly addresses the need for a better understanding of this highly important period in history, which had such huge ramifications yet still remains so little understood.

Jan Deeg



Kenney, Jeffrey T., Moosa, Ebrahim (eds.): Islam in the Modern World, Routledge July 2013, 462 pp., ISBN: 978-0-415-78086-5: This comprehensive introduction explores the landscape of contemporary Islam. It treats some of the following point: overview of the developments, events, people and movements that have defined Islam in the three majority-Muslim regions; traces the connections between traditional Islamic institutions and concerns, and their modern manifestations and transformations; investigates new themes and trends that are shaping the modern Muslim experience such as gender, fundamentalism, the media and secularisation; offers case studies of Muslims and Islam in dynamic interaction with different societies. *Islam in the Modern World* includes illustrations, summaries, discussion points and suggestions for further reading that will aid understanding and revision. It serves as a good general introduction to contemporary Islam for students, scholars and lay people alike.

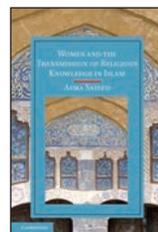


Bayat, Asef (ed.): Post-Islamism: The Changing Faces of Political Islam, Oxford University Press July 2013, 368 pp., ISBN: 978-0-19-976606-2: At least since the Islamic revolution of 1979 in Iran, political Islam or Islamism has been the focus of attention among scholars, policymakers, and the general public. Much has been said about Islamism as a political and moral/ethical trend, but scant attention is paid to its ongoing development. There is now a growing acknowledgment within the scholarly and policy communities that Islamism is in the throes of transformation, but little is known about the nature and direction of these changes. The essays of *Post-Islamism* bring together young and established scholars and activists from different parts of the Muslim World and the West to discuss their research on the changing discourses and practices of Islamist

movements and Islamic states largely in the Muslim majority countries. The changes in these movements can be termed 'post-Islamism,' defined both as a condition and a project characterized by the fusion of religiosity and rights, faith and freedom, Islam and liberty. Post-Islamism emphasizes rights rather than merely obligation, plurality instead of singular authoritative voice, historicity rather than fixed scriptures, and the future instead of the past.



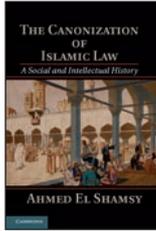
Bunton, Martin: The Palestinian-Israeli Conflict: A Very Short Introduction, Oxford University Press July 2013, 144 pp., ISBN: 978-0-19-960393-0: The conflict between Palestine and Israel is one of the most highly publicized and bitter struggles in history. Martin Bunton clearly explains the history of the problem, reducing it to its very essence – a modern territorial contest between two nations and one geographical territory. Each section covers a twenty-year span, to highlight the historical complexity of the conflict throughout successive decades. Each chapter starts with an examination of the relationships among people and events that marked particular years as historical moments in the evolution of the conflict, including the 1897 Basle Congress; the 1917 Balfour Declaration and British occupation of Palestine; and the 1947 UN Partition Plan and the war for Palestine.



Sayeed, Asma: Women and the Transmission of Religious Knowledge in Islam, Cambridge University Press August 2013, 234 pp., ISBN: 978-1-107-03158-6: Asma Sayeed's book explores the history of women as religious scholars from the first decades of Islam through the early Ottoman period. Focusing on women's engagement with hadith, this book analyzes dramatic chronological patterns in women's hadith participation in terms of developments in Muslim social, intellec-

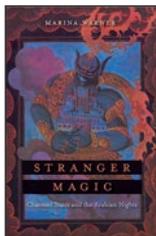
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tual and legal history. It challenges two opposing views: that Muslim women have been historically marginalized in religious education, and alternately that they have been consistently empowered thanks to early role models such as Aisha bint Abi Bakr, the wife of the Prophet Muhammad. This book is a must-read for those interested in the history of Muslim women as well as



El Shamsy, Ahmed: *The Canonization of Early Islamic Law. A Social and Intellectual History*, Cambridge University Press August 2013, 264 pp., ISBN: 978-1-107-04148-6: The

Canonization of Islamic Law tells the story of the birth of classical Islamic law in the eighth and ninth centuries. It shows how an oral normative tradition embedded in communal practice was transformed into a systematic legal science defined by hermeneutic analysis of a clearly demarcated scriptural canon.



Warner, Marina: *Stranger Magic – Charmed States and the Arabian Nights*, Harvard University Press September 2013, 560 pp., ISBN: 978-0-674-72585-0: *Stranger Magic* examines

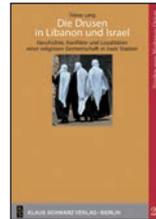
the tales of the Arabian Nights, their profound impact on the West, and the progressive exoticization of magic since the eighteenth century, when the first European translations appeared.



Neudeck, Rupert: *Es gibt ein Leben nach Assad. Syrisches Tagebuch*, C.H. Beck August 2013, 176 S., ISBN: 978-3-406-65444-2: Rupert Neudeck leistet mit seinen "Grünhelmen" seit Sommer 2012 im Norden

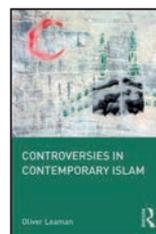
Syriens humanitäre Hilfe. Seit dieser Zeit hat er ein Tagebuch geführt, das ins Innere des syrischen Bürgerkriegs führt. Die "Grünhelme" bemühen sich, in der Gegend um die Stadt Azaz wenigstens Krankenhäuser und Schulen funktions-

fähig zu halten. In seinem Tagebuch hat Rupert Neudeck seine Erlebnisse und Beobachtungen festgehalten und zeigt, wie ein Bürgerkrieg die Gesellschaft und ihre Menschen verändert. Das Buch führt aber auch nach Deutschland, schildert Neudecks Versuche, weitere humanitäre Hilfe für das Land zu ermöglichen.



Lang, Tobias: *Die Drusen in Libanon und Israel. Geschichte, Konflikte und Loyalitäten einer religiösen Gemeinschaft in zwei Staaten*, Klaus Schwarz Verlag 2013, 174 S., ISBN:

978-3-879-97416-0: Die Drusen, eine Religionsgemeinschaft, die sich im 1. Jahrhundert n. Chr. vom schiitisch-ismailitischen Islam abgespalten hatte, siedelten bevorzugt in den gebirgigen, unwegsamen Regionen der historischen Region Großsyrien. Heute leben sie überwiegend in Syrien, Libanon und Israel. Die drusischen Gemeinschaften in Israel und im Libanon haben eine höchst unterschiedliche Entwicklung erfahren: In Israel leisten Drusen – im Gegensatz zu Christen und Muslimen – obligatorisch Militärdienst. Im Libanon hingegen war die stärkste drusische Partei während des Libanesischen Bürgerkrieges zeitweise eng mit den Palästinensern verbündet. Womit ist die gegensätzliche Entwicklung beider Gemeinschaften zu erklären?



Leaman, Oliver: *Controversies in Contemporary Islam*, Routledge September 2013, 272 pp., ISBN: 978-0-415-67613-7: This book helps to deepen our understanding of the varieties

of contemporary Islam and the issues that are of most concern to Muslims today. Oliver Leaman explores some of the controversies and arguments that exist within Islam and between Islam and other religions. Areas covered include: Qur'anic interpretation, gender, finance, education, and nationalism. Examples are taken from a variety of different contexts and illustrate the diversity of approaches to Islam that exists today.

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Conference

Regional vis-à-vis Global Discourses: Contemporary Art from the Middle East

Date: 5-6 July 2013

Location: SOAS, London

There have been limited attempts to theorise unresolved questions about definitions and regional/local forms of logic in the contemporary global art discourses. Therefore addressing these deficiencies is now timely when we see the growing interest in the different levels of the market and exhibitions and gradually in academia, in particular in departments of art history and cultural studies in European and North American universities. The conference will examine the state and future of contemporary Middle Eastern art history within this context. It will discuss the themes by attending to the development of modern and contemporary art from the Middle East in an extended historical and global perspective.

For further information please see: <http://www.soas.ac.uk/lmei/events/05jul2013-regional-vis--vis-global-discourses-contemporary-art-from-the-middle-east.html>

International Conference on Religious Studies (ICRS 2013)

Date: 15-16 July 2013

Location: Colombo, Sri Lanka

The main focus of the conference is the academic study of religion itself: its theories, its methods and above all its engagement in scientific, political and cultural strategies and conflicts. ICRS 2013 is the premier forum in South Asia for the presentation of new trends, advances and research results in the fields of Religious Studies. It will bring together leading academics, scientists and researchers from around the world.

For further information see: <http://www.futureevents.org/religious-studies/>

Conference

International Conference on Islam and Democracy

Date: 22-23 August, 2013

Location: Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia

The XXXIV. International Conference on Islam and Democracy aims to bring together leading academic scientists, researchers and scholars to exchange and share their experiences and research results about all aspects of Islam and Democracy, and discuss the practical challenges encountered and the solutions adopted.

For further information see: <http://www.waset.org/conferences/2013/kualalumpur/icid/>

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ORIENT III / 2013 54. Jahrgang / volume 54

**Deutsche Zeitschrift für Politik, Wirtschaft
 und Kultur des Orients**
**German Journal for Politics, Economics and
 Culture of the Middle East**

Publication frequency:
 every three months / alle drei Monate

Publisher:
Deutsches Orient-Institut
 (Deutsche Orient-Stiftung)

Jägerstraße 63 d, D-10117 Berlin
 Tel.: +49 (0)30 - 206410-21
 Fax: +49 (0)30 - 206410-29
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Printed by:

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We need energy to power our future and Wintershall is working hard to find and develop new oil and gas deposits all over the world. We have both state-of-the-art technology and strong partners at our disposal as well as unrivalled regional and technical expertise particularly in Europe, North Africa, South America, Russia and the Caspian Sea region. We are also expanding our activities in the Middle East. As the largest German-based producer of crude oil and natural gas, we are helping to secure the energy supply, both now and in the future.

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