



Enduring Authoritarianism: Middle East Lessons for Comparative Theory

Author(s): Marsha Pripstein Posusney

Source: *Comparative Politics*, Vol. 36, No. 2 (Jan., 2004), pp. 127-138

Published by: Ph.D. Program in Political Science of the City University of New York

Stable URL: <http://www.jstor.org/stable/4150139>

Accessed: 29/03/2010 16:22

Your use of the JSTOR archive indicates your acceptance of JSTOR's Terms and Conditions of Use, available at <http://www.jstor.org/page/info/about/policies/terms.jsp>. JSTOR's Terms and Conditions of Use provides, in part, that unless you have obtained prior permission, you may not download an entire issue of a journal or multiple copies of articles, and you may use content in the JSTOR archive only for your personal, non-commercial use.

Please contact the publisher regarding any further use of this work. Publisher contact information may be obtained at <http://www.jstor.org/action/showPublisher?publisherCode=phd>.

Each copy of any part of a JSTOR transmission must contain the same copyright notice that appears on the screen or printed page of such transmission.

JSTOR is a not-for-profit service that helps scholars, researchers, and students discover, use, and build upon a wide range of content in a trusted digital archive. We use information technology and tools to increase productivity and facilitate new forms of scholarship. For more information about JSTOR, please contact support@jstor.org.



Ph.D. Program in Political Science of the City University of New York is collaborating with JSTOR to digitize, preserve and extend access to *Comparative Politics*.

<http://www.jstor.org>

Enduring Authoritarianism

Middle East Lessons for Comparative Theory

Marsha Pripstein Posusney

During the 1950s and 1960s the countries that comprise the Middle East were very much a part of the scholarly study of developing countries.¹ Egypt, Syria, and Iraq were typical case studies in the debates on the causes and consequences of military coups that then dominated the field.² Middle East cases also figured prominently in studies of modernization.³ With Egyptian leader Gamal 'Abd al-Nasir's participation in founding the Non-Aligned Movement and then the Algerian revolution of 1962, the region's Arab countries were also included in early studies of nationalism and postcolonial state building.⁴

Beginning in the 1980s, however, and increasingly evident since the 1990s, scholarly work on the Middle East has been marginalized within the study of developing countries and, even more, in the broader field of comparative politics.⁵ This marginalization is associated with the third wave of democratization that began, among developing countries, in Latin America in the 1970s and spread to other Third World regions and, in the 1990s, to eastern Europe. The Middle East, however, was not caught in the wave; only in Turkey and Lebanon was authoritarianism followed by contested elections that, despite constraints, resulted in a circulation of elites.⁶ Elsewhere in the region, political liberalizations begun in a number of countries have stalled, if not been reversed; no authoritarian executive has been removed from office through competitive elections. Thus, as comparativists increasingly developed theories linking the democratizing developing countries with their postsocialist counterparts, Middle East scholars were left out.⁷ Middle Eastern cases are almost completely absent from the most important works on political transitions,⁸ including those that explicitly focus on the developing world.⁹

Similarly, and despite the implementation of IMF and World Bank structural adjustment programs in numerous, especially oil-poor, countries of the region, economic liberalization in the Middle East has not gone as far as in many other regions, and Middle Eastern cases have been largely omitted from studies of the politics of economic reform.¹⁰ While Middle Eastern specialists have worked on these issues, their articles have tended to be published only in journals that specialize on the Middle East, and their books appear to be largely unknown except among other Middle East scholars.¹¹

This special issue is the outgrowth of a series of workshops entitled "Bringing the Middle East Back In...to the Study of Political and Economic Reform."¹² Its organizers, along with the other authors featured here, share a belief that comparativists should value more highly the study of politics in authoritarian countries, which today still encompass nearly half of the world's population. In addition, the development of knowledge is inhibited when studies of economic and political transitions focus only on successful cases. By selecting on the dependent variable, scholars can not be certain of the explanatory power of the independent variables they investigate.¹³ This last point is especially salient in the study of political reform, since numerous countries once hailed as democratizers in studies of transitions, such as Peru, Ecuador, and Thailand, are now assigned more equivocal labels.¹⁴

The articles in this issue focus in particular on the "democracy lag" in the Middle East.¹⁵ They include single country case studies, small-n comparisons, and sweeping regional overviews, but all are distinguished by their application of broad comparative theory to Middle Eastern cases. By bringing the Middle East back in to the study of political reform and transitions, the authors demonstrate that the inclusion of contrasting cases can contribute richly to theoretical explanations of both the factors that encourage democratization and the resiliency of many authoritarian regimes.

The Study of Stubborn Authoritarianism

Arguments on democratization can generally be divided into two categories: those that focus on the necessary economic, cultural, or institutional prerequisites for transitions from authoritarianism, and those that see democratization as a contingent choice of regime and opposition actors that can occur in a variety of socioeconomic and cultural conditions.¹⁶ The articles in this issue advance important propositions that fall within both schools of thought. However, their common thread and arguably most important contribution are to highlight the importance of various institutional arrangements for choices made by political activists and elites that serve to perpetuate authoritarian rule. Thus, they contribute significantly in bridging the gap between these two camps.

Prerequisites of Democratization? Many studies purporting to explain the "democracy gap" in the Middle East have fallen into the prerequisite category. Within this category, cultural analyses have vied with economic-structural arguments. The authors here in some cases reject and in some ways amplify and elaborate on these prior approaches. They also identify new structural variables, in particular emphasizing heretofore neglected political-institutional factors.

The prevailing cultural theory for the persistence of authoritarianism in the

Middle East, often labeled, following the influential work of Edward Said, “orientalist,” posits an intrinsic incompatibility between democratic values and the Islamic religion that dominates the region.¹⁷ Early versions of this argument attributed this immiscibility to the conflation of political and spiritual leadership in the early days of the Arab/Islamic empire, purportedly precluding an acceptance by Muslims of secular political authority and subordinating civil society to the state. In what Sadowski labeled as a contradictory, “neo-orientalist” approach, however, Islam is said to foster weak states that can never achieve the concentration of power necessary for its subsequent dispersion.¹⁸

The Iranian revolution and the spread of Islamist movements seeking, some by violent means, to capture political power and impose Islamic law (*shari'a*) have lent popular credence to orientalist arguments. However, Carrie Rosefsky Wickham notes the possibility of political Islamic groups' moderating their long-term platforms in a direction that embraces certain democratic values, though not necessarily a secular framework based on a separation of religion and state. She traces the development of the *Wasat* (or middle) movement in Egypt, a group of middle generation former members of that country's Muslim Brotherhood (*Ikhwan*). In the mid 1990s the *Wasati* Islamists split from the *Ikhwan* in an effort to establish a separate political party whose platform “appropriated ideas such as pluralism, citizenship rights, and the empowerment of civil society and attempted to incorporate them within an Islamic political framework.” Comparing this shift to the moderation of radical leftist parties in Europe during the nineteenth and twentieth centuries and in Latin America during the 1970s and 1980s, Wickham attributes it both to strategic adaptation and to the political learning driven by the experience the aspirant party's founders gained as *Ikhwanis* in leading student organizations and later professional syndicates. Her work suggests that the institutional configurations of authoritarian regimes create openings for different types of participation and that these openings in turn have different effects on Islamist goals and behavior.

Eva Bellin forthrightly repudiates orientalist approaches. Questioning the prerequisites approach more broadly, she notes with regard to religion that “other world cultures, notably Catholicism and Confucianism, have at different times been accused of incompatibility with democracy.” Nevertheless, “these endowments have not prevented countries in Latin America, southern Europe, or East Asia from embracing transition.” Instead of focusing on the absence of cultural or other prerequisites for democratic initiatives, Bellin emphasizes the presence of institutional and conjunctural factors that foster robust authoritarian regimes, in particular by strengthening their coercive apparatuses. The remaining articles likewise look to noncultural factors to explain the endurance of authoritarianism in the Middle East.

An alternative explanation, sometimes advanced explicitly as a challenge to the cultural arguments, focuses on the particular nature of Middle Eastern economies. Many countries in the region, particularly those in or adjacent to the Arabian penin-

sula, derive a substantial income from hydrocarbon exports; their poorer neighbors are linked to the oil economy through their reliance on labor migration and resulting remittances, direct aid from the Gulf countries, and/or transit-associated earnings.¹⁹ The rentier state theory argues that this access to a nonproductive source of income makes Middle Eastern regimes less reliant on extraction of wealth from their populations to finance the state. If opposition to arbitrary taxation was the engine behind democratization in the West, then the lack of an onerous tax burden on Middle Eastern populations can account for the presumed failure of citizens of these countries to seek greater participation in government.²⁰

This argument has been challenged by John Waterbury, who finds that extraction policies in the region do not differ substantially from those in other developing areas.²¹ Nevertheless, the empirical evidence in support of some rentier state effect is compelling. While prior to the 1980s the region was characterized overwhelmingly by single party states and party-less monarchies, a number of countries has in the past two decades experienced a pluralizing trend.²² Today contested, albeit to various degrees controlled, elections are held in Iran, Turkey, Bahrain, Kuwait, Yemen, Lebanon, Jordan, Egypt, Algeria, Tunisia, Morocco, and (when permitted by Israel) the Palestinian Authority.²³ This list includes almost all of the region's oil-poor countries.²⁴ But, with the exception of Kuwait, whose political opening can be linked to unusual international pressures after the first Gulf War, it excludes all of the wealthiest hydrocarbon exporters.²⁵ This pattern strongly suggests some causal link between rentier income and political pluralization, even if democratization is neither the intended nor ultimate outcome.²⁶

Ellen Lust-Okar's article examines aspects of the relationship between economic crisis and political reform movements in two of these pluralizing monarchies, Jordan and Morocco. Her work presupposes that economic crisis will generate opposition activity and that oppositional elites will exploit popular economic discontent to seek political advantage. How sustained such movements will be, however, will be a function of the "political environments" created by the incumbent ruler. In particular, mobilization will be more sustained when opposition parties are uniformly either given access to or denied opportunities for formal political participation — an "undivided environment" — as opposed to when the opposition is divided between those who are formally recognized and excluded movements. Lust-Okar's approach implicitly suggests that the absence of political reform movements in the region may be attributable to the absence of economic crisis.

Why mobilizations linked to economic crises did not produce more extensive political reforms in either of Lust-Okar's cases or in the other oil-poor, pluralized countries remains an area for further research. Bellin points to relatively low levels of political mobilization as a factor contributing to the cohesion of the state's coercive apparatus. She draws on studies of the rentier state, however, to explain, not the

absence of mobilization, but rather the ability of authoritarian elites to finance their repressive regimes. Fiscal health is essential in rewarding the personnel of the state's coercive apparatus, and the Middle East is distinguished by the comparatively high proportion of government expenditures devoted to security forces. Her fiscal health variable thus does not speak to why some states in the region have expanded opportunities for partisan competition while others have not. However, because stable funding of the coercive apparatus appears to characterize even those states that have faced severe foreign exchange shortages and implemented economic reforms, it can help explain why the political openings in the region have not gone further.

The Importance of Institutions In "The End of the Transition Paradigm," Thomas Carothers calls for renewed attention to the role played by political institutions in reforming authoritarian countries.²⁷ The articles in this issue oblige by demonstrating how political structures can help or hinder the initiation of pluralist politics. Institutions are also invoked to explain why such political openings in the Middle East have not evolved into genuine transitions. Several authors particularly spotlight the importance of political parties and the rules that govern elections in the pluralized countries. The structures of civil society/state and military/state relations are also highlighted.

Implicitly using a historical-institutionalist approach, Michele Penner Angrist seeks to explain why competitive party politics appear to have taken firmer root in Turkey than elsewhere in the region, as well as to account for variations in the forms of authoritarianism. She argues that the demise or departure of imperial power is a critical juncture at which "the nature of the indigenous party system significantly affected the types of political regimes that emerged." In countries with a single dominant party at the time of independence, one party states developed. "Single, preponderant parties did not render authoritarianism inevitable," she argues, "but enabled nondemocratically inclined elites quickly and effectively to build authoritarian regimes because they faced no rival actors and [because single parties] are effective political tools." Where there were multiple parties, two other aspects of party systems come into play: the degree of polarization and, in an important new variable Angrist introduces, mobilizational asymmetry. Bridging over to the contingency school, Angrist sees these factors as affecting the strategic calculations of elites toward the likely outcome of partisan electoral competition.

Angrist's party system variables point to the importance of the rules governing electoral competition.²⁸ Electoral institutions also figure in Wickham's and Lust-Okar's analyses, and both, from different angles, find that the presence of limited contestation has the effect of moderating some challengers to the incumbent regime. Lust-Okar sees the divided environment—where some parties are granted limited opportunities to participate in elections while others are excluded—as producing

moderation among the included parties, who fear that an alliance with excluded groups could force the regime to punish the moderates by further constricting their avenues for participation. Similarly, in tracing the strategic thinking of the *Wasati* Islamists, Wickham sees the opportunities for formal partisan participation as an inducement to the *Wasati* Islamists to become moderate.²⁹ Thus, she shows how the divided environment Lusk-Okar describes can have a moderating effect on excluded groups.³⁰

Parties—in this case the weakness of opposition parties in the multiparty Arab countries—also figure prominently in the article by Vickie Langohr. Noting that many of the recent studies of transitions highlight the role of civil society organizations in mobilizing dissent against repressive regimes, she observes that the Arab political openings witnessed the same proliferation of human rights, women's, environmental, and other advocacy groups as in Latin America, eastern Europe, and other democratizing regions. Practitioners and aid officials singled out these groups as the most propitious to steer democratization forward. But while studies of civil society have tended to assign nongovernmental organizations and parties different roles in the democratization process, assuming that they draw on different reservoirs of support, Langohr proposes that both be seen as part of a larger "topography of opposition" in which opposition activists choose the organizational form that seems to present the best opportunity for effective political expression.

Nonruling parties in multiparty Arab countries have been weak vehicles for opposition because of government repression, severe financial constraints, and a marked tendency for excluded elites to run, where possible, as independents, rather than join parties. Nongovernmental organizations, by contrast, have faced more permissive organizing environments and have been able to attract significant funding from foreign donors, helping them to become the key vehicles of opposition in the multiparty Arab countries. But the choice to oppose these regimes through nongovernmental organizations rather than parties has negative ramifications for Arab democratization, as their single issue focus and dependence on foreign funding render them unable to mobilize and maintain widespread support. Thus, following Carothers, Langohr argues that "it is time for scholarly and policy analysis of democratization in the region to focus less on the role of nongovernmental organizations and more on the importance of developing viable political parties."³¹

A lack of democracy within the oppositional associations also contributed to their defeat. This lack of democracy is a challenge to studies that posit nongovernmental organizations as training grounds for the tolerance and civility needed to sustain partisan democratic practices. However, their single issue focus (as encouraged by donors) may have inhibited this development, and other types of organizations may be better able to play such a role. As Wickham shows, the activities of the Muslim Brotherhood in Egypt within student organizations and professional syndicates—

that is, functional rather than promotional groups—contributed to their political learning of greater tolerance for diverse points of view.

Finally, Bellin emphasizes the structure of relations between incumbent rulers and the military. She draws a contrast between an institutionalized military, in which entry and promotion standards are rational, and a military based on primordial ties to executive authority. In the former, in which the military also has a greater sense of national purpose, officers are more likely to reject roles in government or as the guarantors of internal security. In most countries in the Middle East, however, patrimonial militaries are the norm.

The Role of Human Agency Human agency occupies pride of place in the transitions paradigm of many recent studies of democratization. Inspired by the early article by Dankwart A. Rustow, contingency approaches stress that democracy will emerge when incumbent authoritarians, as well as challengers who may themselves have antidemocratic leanings, come to see the uncertainty associated with free and fair electoral competition as the best option among other alternatives. Thus, the contingency school emphasizes the strategic choices made by political elites, a category understood to include not only incumbent rulers but also opposition activists.³²

Each of the authors in this issue incorporates an agency perspective in her analysis. For Bellin, the crucial actors are incumbent rulers and the security personnel. She observes that the robustness of authoritarianism requires not only the regime's capacity but also its will to repress opposition and posits several factors affecting that propensity. Where the ruling regime came to power through a coup (as in Egypt, Syria, Iraq, Algeria, and, at times, Turkey), military institutionalization influences officers' calculations about the potential risks of a return to the barracks. High levels of institutionalization foster the development of softliners who believe that the military's effectiveness and cohesion are compromised by holding the reins of power. But under patrimonialism (which can characterize monarchies as well as military regimes) officers have reason to fear that their positions would be jeopardized by political reforms.

Incumbent leaders and their security elites also make calculations about the potential costs of suppressing dissident movements. Here is where, Bellin argues, the region's relatively low levels of political mobilization come into play. When large throngs do not protest in the streets, the political costs of repressing dissent are lower. It is significant in this regard that the final stages of the Iranian revolution were bloodless; when millions were marching against the shah, the army refused to fire on them.

For Angrist, party systems form the backdrop to the choices made by opposition elites and incumbents in those countries that had two or more viable parties at independence. Sharp differences in the platforms of political parties discourage democratization because they increase the costs to elites of an electoral loss to a rival party.

But even with relatively low levels of political polarization, mobilizational asymmetry can impede the opening or expansion of an electoral arena because elites of the weaker parties will feel they are not facing a level playing field. Thus, Angrist argues that, despite the presence of partisan contestation in numerous countries in the region as they emerged from the colonial era, competitive politics survived (albeit with occasional setbacks) only in Turkey because it enjoyed a uniquely favorable party system that facilitated elite willingness to risk losses at the ballot box.

The remaining articles focus on the strategic calculations of political activists in opposition to the incumbent regime. Lust-Okar, like Angrist, spotlights decisions made by party leaders, but, while presuming the existence of multiple parties with an array of ideological platforms, she models party leaders' choices as more constrained, since the power to expand or constrict partisan competition rests solely with ruling executives not subject to popular recall. In this environment, she holds that opposition elites will be more likely to mobilize jointly for political reform when they are all uniformly either granted or denied access to limited legislative participation; in a divided political environment the included parties will forfeit the potential mobilizational gains of coalitions with excluded groups, fearing that they will be punished by the regime with exclusion themselves.

Langohr and Wickham also spotlight the strategies of opposition activists, but their emphasis is on associational groups. Wickham attributed the greater willingness of the *Wasat* party activists to accept pluralist politics in part to strategic choices, given the partial exclusion of the Muslim Brotherhood from partisan competition and the mobilizational and representational advantages it confers. For Langohr, political entrepreneurs must choose whether to concentrate their energies on parties or nongovernmental organizations. In both Tunisia and Egypt activists turned to nongovernmental organizations partly as a response to donor initiatives, but also because of numerous weaknesses associated with the existing opposition parties. For different reasons, independent Palestinian forces also channeled their talents into civic associations. In all three cases, these choices contributed to competition of multiple nongovernmental organizations, while impeding the internal reforms in opposition parties necessary to transform them into viable contenders for political power.

Finally, it is important to note international factors. Foreign donor funds and the encouragement of nongovernmental organizations by international agencies convinced by civil society theory that they are the critical agents of democratization in authoritarian societies play a key role in shaping activists' choices in Langohr's analysis. Bellin, citing several different western strategic concerns, posits continued international support for existing regimes as one of the four advantages that Middle East authoritarian rulers enjoy relative to their present and former counterparts elsewhere. What have been labeled "strategic rents," in the form of foreign military aid, also contribute to the fiscal health of some countries' security apparatuses.

Conclusions

Taken together, these articles leave little cause for optimism that authoritarian regimes in the Middle East will begin transitions to democracy in the near future. Their incumbent executives enjoy a number of advantages compared to their former counterparts elsewhere in the world, including loyal and well-funded security agencies and, for most (including during the late 1970s and 1980s Saddam Hussein's Iraq), the benefits of western support. At the same time, the institutions serving regime challengers are weak. Opposition parties are highly constrained and typically nondemocratic themselves; promotional groups are fragmented and structurally ill-suited to mount broad campaigns for political reform; and professional associations, even if they serve as incubators for tolerance and pluralist values, are underdeveloped throughout the region. Thus, strong popular mobilizations against incumbent rulers are infrequent and readily suppressed.

The study of resilient authoritarianism is normatively imperative for a discipline that has largely turned its back on this region and on other stubbornly nondemocratic countries. The articles in this issue demonstrate that the study of authoritarianism can be both empirically rich and theoretically fruitful. Several useful directions for future comparative work are indicated here. Others can and must emerge.

NOTES

I would like to thank Lisa Anderson and the contributors for helpful comments on earlier drafts. All the contributors would also like to thank Jill Crystal for evaluating the entire issue and the reviewers for their comments and suggestions on each manuscript.

1. The Middle East is generally understood, geographically, to include both northern Africa and southwest Asia. Although some scholarly works, drawing on the old British concept of the Near East, set the western border at Egypt, it is today more commonly considered to extend from Mauritania in the west to Iran in the east and from Turkey (thereby also incorporating that country's European territory) in the north to Sudan and Yemen in the south.

2. See, for example, Eliezer Be'eri, *Army Officers in Arab Politics and Society* (New York: Praeger, 1970); Samuel Huntington, *Political Order in Changing Societies* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1968).

3. The seminal work is Daniel Lerner, *The Passing of Traditional Society* (New York: Free Press, 1958).

4. See especially Karl Deutsch, *Nationalism and Its Alternatives* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1969); Karl Deutsch and William Foltz, *Nation Building* (New York: Atherton, 1963).

5. In terms of faculty positions, see Larry Diamond, "What Political Science Owes the World," *PS Online* (March 2002). On scholarly publications, see Ian Lustick, "The Quality of Theory and the Comparative Disadvantage of Area Studies," *Middle East Studies Association Bulletin*, 34 (2000), 192; Andrian Prentice Hull, "Comparative Political Science: An Inventory and Assessment since the 1980s," *PS: Political Science and Politics*, 32 (March 1999). For some statistics regarding conference presentations see Marsha Pripstein Posusney, "From Economic Policies to Public Perceptions: Theirs and Ours, and Its Implications for the Discipline," *Items and Issues*, 4 (2003, forthcoming).

6. Israel, with a political and economic trajectory unique to the region, never went through an authoritarian era and is the only Middle Eastern country that can be considered a consolidated democracy, in so far as the institutionalization of competitive elections and the rights and freedoms of its citizens are concerned.

7. A related factor has been the domination of the political science discipline in recent decades by practitioners of rational choice and large-n quantitative methodologies. As noted by Geddes, such approaches have been employed especially fruitfully in the American and European contexts to study processes—such as popular voting behavior, electoral outcomes, and legislative decision making—that were largely irrelevant to the developing areas during their authoritarian episodes. With the advance of the third wave, scholars working on recently democratized countries now have a greater incentive to learn these techniques but also enjoy a greater ability to engage in dialogue with colleagues accustomed to analyzing advanced democracies. See Barbara Geddes, “The Great Transformation in the Study of Politics in Developing Countries,” in Ira Katznelson and Helen V. Milner, eds., *Political Science: The State of the Discipline* (New York: W. W. Norton, 2002), pp. 343–46. Within the political science discipline, a movement known as Perestroika has argued forcefully that greater recognition must be accorded to practitioners of qualitative methodologies. See Rogers Smith, “Putting the Substance Back into Political Science,” *Chronicle of Higher Education*, Apr. 5, 2002; Kristen Monroe, ed., *Perestroika* (manuscript in preparation); Ian Shapiro, “Problems, Methods, and Theories in the Study of Politics, or: What’s Wrong with Political Science and What to Do about It,” *Political Theory*, 30 (August 2002), 588–611; David Collier, “Building a Disciplined, Rigorous Center in Comparative Politics,” *APSA Comparative Politics Section Newsletter* (Summer 1999); Greg Kasza, “Perestroika: For an Ecumenical Science of Politics,” *PS: Political Science and Politics* (September 2001), 597–99.

8. The list includes but is not limited to Guillermo O’Donnell and Philippe Schmitter, *Transitions from Authoritarian Rule: Tentative Conclusions about Uncertain Democracies* (Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1986); Guillermo O’Donnell, Philippe Schmitter, and Laurence Whitehead, eds., *Transitions from Authoritarian Rule: Comparative Perspectives* (Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1986); Juan Linz and Alfred Stepan, *Problems of Democratic Transition and Consolidation* (Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1996).

9. For example, Larry Diamond, Juan Linz, and Seymour Martin Lipset, eds., *Politics in Developing Countries: Comparing Experiences with Democracy* (Boulder: Lynne Rienner, 1990); H. E. Chehabi and Juan Linz, eds., *Sultanistic Regimes* (Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1998). For a related critique, see Jason Brownlee, “Low Tide after the Third Wave: Exploring Politics under Authoritarianism,” *Comparative Politics*, 34 (July 2002), 477–98.

10. See Larry Diamond and Marc E. Plattner, eds., *Economic Reform and Democracy* (Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1995); Stephan Haggard and Robert R. Kaufman, *The Political Economy of Democratic Transitions* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1995); John Williamson, ed., *The Political Economy of Policy Reform* (Washington, D. C.: Institute for International Economics, 1994).

11. For example, Iliya Harik and Denis J. Sullivan, eds., *Privatization and Liberalization in the Middle East* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1992); Henri Barkey, ed., *The Politics of Economic Reform in the Middle East* (New York: St. Martin’s Press, 1992).

12. The workshops were held at Brown University and Yale University, respectively, in the spring and winter of 2001 and were funded by the Watson Institute for International Studies at Brown, the Yale Center for Globalization Studies, the Leitner Program in Political Economy, and the Kempf Fund at the Yale Center for International and Area Studies. Barbara Geddes, Lisa Anderson, Nelson Kasfir, Michael Hudson, Robert Kaufman, Bahgat Korany, and James Mahoney contributed generously to the discussion at one or both workshops. Augustus Richard Norton, Paul Salem, Steven Heydemann, Gregory White, James Scott, Meredith Weiss, Pierre Landry, Vickie Murillo, and Jose Cheibub commented on individual papers. Christopher Alexander, Bruce Rutherford, and Bryan Daves, in addition to the authors in this issue, presented papers. We are grateful to these institutions for funding and to those individuals for participating in the workshops.

13. See Gary King, Robert O. Keohane, and Sidney Verba, *Designing Social Inquiry: Scientific Inference in Qualitative Research* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1994), pp. 128–49.

14. See especially Larry Diamond, “Thinking about Hybrid Regimes,” *Journal of Democracy*, 13 (April 2002), 21–35; Thomas Carothers, “The End of the Transition Paradigm,” *Journal of Democracy*, 13 (January, 2002), 5–21; Steven Levitsky and Lucan A. Way, “Elections without Democracy: The Rise of Competitive Authoritarianism,” *Journal of Democracy*, 13 (April 2002), 51–65.

15. For reasons of space and thematic coherency, the workshops’ papers on economic reform politics can not be included.

16. For excellent overviews, see Lisa Anderson, ed., *Transitions to Democracy* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1999), which originated as a special issue of *Comparative Politics*, 29 (April 1997); Carothers, pp. 5–21; Peter Burnell, “Arrivals and Departures: A Preliminary Classification of Democratic Failures and Their Explanation,” *Commonwealth and Comparative Politics*, 36 (November 1998), 1–29.

17. For the Arab societies that predominate in the region, a related set of cultural arguments posits a patriarchal and tribal mentality as an impediment to the development of pluralist values. See Hisham Sharabi, *Neopatriarchy: A Theory of Distorted Change in Arab Society* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1988), and the critique of this perspective by Lisa Anderson, “Democracy in the Arab World: A Critique of the Political Culture Approach,” in Rex Brynen, Bahgat Korany, and Paul Noble, eds., *Political Liberalization and Democratization in the Arab World* (Boulder: Lynne Rienner, 1995), pp. 77–92.

18. Yahya Sadowski, “The New Orientalism and the Democracy Debate,” *Middle East Report*, 183 (July–August 1993), 14–21, 40.

19. Tourist revenues, important particularly to Egypt and some North African countries, are another form of rent.

20. The seminal work is Hazem Beblawi and Giacomo Luciano, eds., *The Rentier State* (London: Croom Helm, 1987). See also Anderson, “Democracy in the Arab World”; Lisa Anderson, “Prospects for Liberalism in North Africa: Identities and Interests in Preindustrial Welfare States,” in John P. Entelis, ed., *Islam, Democracy and the State in North Africa* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1997), pp. 127–40.

21. John Waterbury, “From Social Contracts to Extraction Contracts: The Political Economy of Authoritarianism and Democracy,” in Entelis, ed., pp. 141–76; John Waterbury, “Democracy without Democrats? The Potential for Political Liberalization in the Middle East,” in Ghassan Salame, ed., *Democracy without Democrats? The Renewal of Politics in the Muslim World* (London: I. B. Taurus, 1994), pp. 23–47.

22. When referring to the moves toward expanded contestation in these countries, I use the terms “pluralizing” and “pluralization” as intentional substitutes for either liberalization or democratization. To apply “democratization” to the multiparty experiments described here implies an end-point that does not appear to be the intent of their initiators and may not be realized even as an unintentional consequence of these policies. “Political Liberalization” captures the initial easing of repression associated with these openings, but it is noteworthy that multipartyism can coincide with the maintenance of notably illiberal policies toward gender, ethnic, and/or religious freedoms, as, for example, in Iran.

23. Carothers, “The End of the Transition Paradigm,” includes most of these countries in his “gray area” category, no longer authoritarian but not yet, and not necessarily in any stage of transition to, democracy. It is the consensus of the authors here that the authoritarian label still applies to them and that developing a useful subclassification scheme remains an important challenge for comparative analysis of the Middle East. Brownlee groups them all under the “neopatrimonial” rubric, but this term negates the significance of the difference between countries that remain hereditary monarchies (Kuwait, Bahrain, Jordan, and Morocco) and those whose chief executive is subject to some mechanism of popular approval. See Jason Brownlee, “...And Yet They Persist: Explaining Survival and Transition in Neopatrimonial Regimes,” *Studies in Comparative International Development*, 37 (Fall 2002), 35–63. Angrist’s article in

this issue and other works by some of the authors here attach importance to this distinction. Ellen Lust-Okar and Amaney Jamal, "Rulers and Rules: Reassessing Electoral Laws and Political Liberalization in the Middle East," *Comparative Political Studies* (April 2002); Marsha Pripstein Posusney, "Multi-Party Elections in the Arab World: Institutional Engineering and Oppositional Strategies," *Studies in Comparative International Development*, 36 (Winter 2002), 34–62.

24. Syria and Sudan are exceptions.

25. Significantly, Bahrain's turn to contested legislative elections occurred only after the country's oil resources dried up. Algeria exports large quantities of natural gas, but its export earnings must be spread over a population significantly larger than that of the Arab Gulf countries. It encountered balance of payments difficulties and implemented structural adjustment policies during the 1980s. Iran likewise combines oil wealth with one of the region's largest populations. In addition, its oil export capacity and economy overall were severely damaged by the eight-year Iran-Iraq war in the 1980s. Contestation, within Islamic parameters, was expanded after the war's end.

26. On the link between economic crisis and pluralization in some of these countries, see Anderson, "Prospects for Liberalism in North Africa"; Daniel Brumberg, "Authoritarian Legacies and Reform Strategies in the Arab World," in Brynen, Korany, and Noble, eds., pp. 229–60. New quantitative evidence that oil resources pose a hindrance to democratic development can be found in Michael L. Ross, "Does Oil Hinder Democracy?," *World Politics*, 53 (2001), 325–61. But see Michael Herb, "No Representation without Taxation? Rents, Development, and Democracy," *Comparative Politics* (forthcoming).

27. Carothers, pp. 8, 16. This is part of his call for a return to greater emphasis on the prerequisites for democratization. Here I put institutional arguments under a separate heading because the contributors to this issue, except for Angrist, do not explicitly employ them in prerequisite arguments; Bellin argues forcefully against the prerequisites approach.

28. See also Posusney, "Multi-Party Elections in the Arab World"; Lust-Okar and Jamal, "Rulers and Rules."

29. The Muslim Brotherhood, though its members have sometimes been permitted to contest elections as independent candidates or in party coalitions, are legally excluded from party formation in Egypt.

30. Readers should note, however, that the term "moderation" has a different meaning in these two articles. Wickham uses it to address changes in the ultimate political agendas of the actors she analyzes. For Lust-Okar, however, moderation refers to the demands that an opposition group is raising in a given tactical situation, but the long-term goals of the group are understood to be unchanging.

31. Carothers, pp. 5–21.

32. Ibid; Anderson, ed., *Transitions to Democracy*.