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CONTENTS / *İÇİNDEKİLER*

Ortadoğu Etütleri brings together six articles and a book review in this issue.

The issue starts with two articles that analyse the role of women in two Middle Eastern countries -Saudi Arabia and the Islamic Republic of Iran. In her article, Alejandra Galindo Marines looks at the activism of women in Saudi Arabia and despite being limited how it has been evolving since the 1990s and how it is affected by the developments of the 'Arab Spring'. The author argues that the two demands -the right to vote and the right to drive- is increasingly being advocated by the Saudi women after the Arab Spring and identification through gender lines is becoming more underlined independent of the social and geographical divisions in the society. Marzieh Kouhi Esfehani looks at the women's movement in Iran in a historical perspective and problematizes patriarchy and male-interpreted Islamic jurisprudence as two issues that are impediments to women's emancipation and rights. Claiming that through education women is challenging the dominant interpretation of Islamic jurisprudence in the country and trying to find ways to fulfil their rights, the author finishes with a pessimistic note arguing that as long as patriarchy persists, there is a long way to go for women to achieve and enjoy their rights.

The third article by Maria Syed looks at the fourth generation of revolution theories, especially the work of Jack A. Goldstone in order to understand the causes of revolution in Tunisia and Egypt. Syed argues that the earlier literature on revolutions which emphasize the importance of the international context is not enough to understand the developments in the Middle East and takes Goldstone's perspectivewhich argues for the relevance of the international environment only in case of a favourable domestic context. The author analyses the domestic conditions of Tunisia and Egypt in terms of the performance of states by focusing on the goals, the level of unity among elites and opposition elites joining the popular groups for protests.Looking at the domestic conditions in both countries in details, the author concludes that a revolution was inevitable in both countries.

Dara Conduit in her article questions the arguments that Hizballah has become a moderate party within the democratic structure of Lebanon. The author, by taking Schwedler's idea that democratic institutions are not enough for moderation of radical groups and a broader analysis taking into account political opportunity structures, internal group structure and theboundaries of justifiable action is needed, argues that claims of moderation for Hizballah were problematic much before the Syrian Uprising began. The author underlines that Hizballah's moderate behaviour between 1992 and 2008 was possible when threat to Hizballah's survival was minimal. When conditions that threaten its survival emerged from 2008 onwards, intensifying with the Syrian Uprising, its moderation was reversed.

Looking at the center-periphery relations in Syria until 1970, the fifth article by Nuri Salık takes Shils's model and presents the evolution of state-society relations and the fierce struggle for power. Problematizing the approach that looks at center and periphery as monoliths, the author analyses the inter-central and inter-peripheral rivalries to understand the dynamics of the power struggle. Yet, this approach is also in need of being supported by a class analysis according to the author. At a time when a heated debate on the Syrian Uprising and its sectarian character is continuing, this article is a good read to understand the background of the conflict - historical rivalries and controversies between Sunni groups and religious minorities – and to witness the continuities from the earlier decades.

The last article of this issue looks at Turkish-Iranian energy relations. Serhan Ünal and Eyüp Ersoy argue that there is an important potential to further Turkish-Iranian relations – that of the energy relations. By looking at the primacy of geopoliticsin bilateral relations,the primacy of energy in bilateral economic relations,and the primacyof natural gas in bilateral energy relations the authors see that these three asymmetries can serve to bring the two countries to a closer cooperation and can help them broaden their cooperation in political issuesof common concern as well.

Zeynep Sütalan has reviewed the latest book of Marc Lynch -*The Arab Uprising: The Unfinished Revolutions of the New Middle East*- for this issue.

Özlem Tür

Saudi Women under the Context of the Arab Spring

*Alejandra Galindo MARINES**

Abstract

The main goal of this article is to show how Saudi women frame their activism in recent times. Taking into consideration a view on how Saudi women is portrayed as homogenised and single person, this article analyse the moments of making public their demands and how women employ certain tactics to advance their petitions, but also to become visualised and heard. Although there is a small group of women who are taking part in actual demonstrations, the growing identification on gender lines is taking place, above social divisions and geographical distances. In order to understand how this is taking place, it is conceived here that women actions should be seen under an optic of continuity, starting from early nineties and passing through different stages until the present. In fact, the context of the Arab Spring just served as another impulse to re-invigorate their demands. In contrast to past actions, the activism of women focused on two issues which are analysed: the right to vote and the right to drive. Through their actions, women subvert the image of a "Saudi woman" attached to them, invoking its symbols as means to change the homogenised and idealised women. Here we present how women issue is included in the public debate and how through the crisis of legitimacy experienced by the state, under the context of the "Arab Spring" women take advantage of those moments to demand for change. Due the activism of some Saudi women who by their own actions, public exposure, the use of media, organisation of actions to become political candidates or to demand the right to drive, changes are happening. Meanwhile, despite the polemic caused in the society, the government has to balance between the reformist and traditional elements of the society.

Keywords: Saudi Arabia, Saudi women, women's rights, citizenship

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Alejandra Galindo Marines, Saudi Women under the Context of the Arab Spring,
Ortadoğu Etütleri, Volume 5, No 2, January 2014, pp.9-29.

Arap Baharı Bağlamında Suudi Kadını

Özet
Bu makalenin temel amacı Suudlu kadınların son zamanlardaki aktivizmlerini nasıl dile getirdiklerini göstermektir. Suudlu kadınların homojenize ve tek birey olarak nasıl tasvir edildiği görüşü göz önünde bulundurularak, bu makale zaman dilimlerini ve kadınların hem kendi taleplerini dile getirmek hem de görünür ve duyulur olmak için nasıl belirli taktikleri uyguladıklarını analiz etti. Küçük bir kadın grubunun asıl gösterilere katılmalarına rağmen, artan cinsiyet hatlarının tanımı sosyal ayrım ve coğrafi mesafenin üzerinde gerçekleşmektedir. Bunun nasıl gerçekleştiğini anlamak için, kadınların eylemlerine doksanların başından başlayıp günümüze kadar geçen farklı evrelerde süreklilik perspektifinden incelenmelidir. Aslında, Arap Baharının bağlamı, kendi taleplerini hareketi geçirmek için ayrı bir motivasyon sağlamıştır. Geçmiş eylemlerin aksine, kadınların aktivizmi incelendiğinde iki konu üzerinde duruldu: Oy hakkı ve araba kullanma hakkı. Kendi eylemleri aracılığıyla, kadınlar onlara yapışan "Suudlu kadın" imajını yıkarak, homojenize ve idealize kadın imajını değiştirmek için bir araç olarak onun sembolleri kullanılıyor. Bu çalışmada, kadın meselelerinin nasıl kamusal tartışmaya dahil edildiğini ve "Arap Baharı" bağlamında devletin yaşadığı meşruiyet krizi ile kadınların o anlardan yararlanarak nasıl değişim için taleplerde bulunduklarını takdim ediyoruz. Bazı Suudlu kadınların kendi inisiyatifleri sonucunda gerçekleştirdikleri kamu ifşası, medyayı kullanma, siyasi aday olmak veya araba sürme hakkını talep etmek gibi eylemleri neticesinde bazı değişiklikler gerçekleşiyor. Bu arada, toplumda polemiğe neden olmasına rağmen hükümetin yenilikçiler ve toplumun geleneksel unsurları arasında dengeyi sağlaması gerekmektedir.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Suudi Arabistan, Suudlu Kadınlar, kadın hakları, vatandaşlık

النساء السعوديات فى ظلال الربيع العربى

ملخص
الهدف الرئيسي من هذه المقالة هواستعراض كيفية تُعبير النساء السعوديات عن نشاطهن السياسي والإجتماعي فى الآونة الأخيرة .أخذين فى الإعتبار وجهة النظر التي تدور حول كيفية تصويرهن على أنهن نمطيات ومنعزلات. حيث تناولت هذه المقالة بالتحليل مراحل تطور ذلك، وكيف اتبع النساء سبل معينة للتعجيل بمطالبهن ، و أيضاً كى يصير لهن حضوراً وصوتاً مسموعاً.
فعلى الرغم من أن هناك جماعة صغيرة من النساء التي شاركت فى الحراك الفعلي، فإن التعريف المتنامى على أساس الذكورة والأنوثة «الجندر» قد أصبح واقعا ملموساً ، متجاوزا الإنقسامات الإجتماعية والفضاءات الجغرافية. ومن هذا المنطلق فعلينا ان نعترف بهذا الحراك النسائي علي انه حدثا مستمراً ، بدء مع بداية التسعينيات ومرً بمراحل مختلفة حتى الوقت الحاضر.
فى الحقيقة، فإن سياق الربيع العربى قد ساعد تحديداً علي إنعاش مطالب تلك السيدات.، كما ان النشاط السياسى والإجتماعى للنساء ارتكز على مسألتين محل للتحليل فى هذه الدراسة : الاولي الحق فى التصويت،و الثانية الحق فى قيادة السيارة، حيث قمن من خلال نشاطاتهن بتحطيم الصورة الذهنية الملتصقة ب «المرأة السعودية» ،وذلك من خلال الاستفادة من دلالات هذه الصورة كوسيلة لتغيير النساء النمطيات الباديات فى صورة مثالية. نستعرض هنا:كيف تم تضمين قضايا النساء فى النقاش العام ، وكيف حصلت النساء على مكاسب تلك التطورات للمطالبة بالتغيير من خلال تجربة أزمة الشرعية التى خاضتها الدولة فى ظلال «الربيع العربى». حيث أحدث حراك بعض النساء السعوديات من خلال نشاطاتهن ، ومكاشفاتهن للرأى العام ،واستخدامهن للإعلام ،وتوزيع المهام فيما بينهن ما بين ترشح بعضهن فى ميدان السياسة ومطالبة البعض الآخر بحق النساء فى قيادة السيارة ، والذي أحدث تغييرات على الأرض الواقع. فى غضون ذلك، على الرغم من الجدل العنيف الذى أحدثه هذا الحراك السياسي داخل المجتمع السعودى، فانه جعل الحكومة تضطر للموازنة ما بين عنصرى التيار الإصلاحى والتيار الثوري داخل المجتمع.

كلمات مفتاحية:المملكة العربية السعودية ،النساء السعوديات،حقوق المرأة،المواطنة.

Introduction

In the case of Saudi Arabia we saw some demonstrations that were under the context of the Arab Spring, but as in other cases across the Middle East, the demands and the articulation of different dissident groups precedes that context. The Kingdom since the nineties has been subject to a process of "frozen liberalization", attempting to deter the criticism and demands of diverse groups of the society. However in contrast with other protests in the Arab region, the demands are not calling for the King's deposition. For instance, the presence of young men in front of the Ministry of Education and Labour demanding jobs since 2010, or the presence of women at the main prisons demanding the release of political prisoners, among other acts, show that more public and mobilized social actors are in Saudi Arabia.

The forty seven women that participated in the public demonstration for the right to drive in 1990 were the notorious ignition that initiated a debate on women's role. Since then diverse groups of women were formed autonomously with different aims and from different positions towards the role of women and the dynamics of society. For these reasons, a second moment came when women participated in the moment of debate and elaboration of petitions for the King during 2003-2004, the so called, Riyadh spring. These two moments have to be analyzed through the optic of a continuum. Without the defiance of women for the right to drive in 1990, it wouldn't have been possible to understand the formation of a core group who led the women's petition and activity in the Riyadh spring. In the same way, the third, during the Arab spring time wouldn't have been envisioned without the perseverance of women and the effects of the activities of the second moment. If the government has not resolved the demands that appeared since the early years of the millennium, it was not coincidence that with the appearance of movements around the region demanding change, the Saudis, both men and women, took advantage to raise some demands for reform.

This paper aims to elucidate on the nature of renewed women's activism under the context of Arab Spring. First we have to notice that from the nineties until now the amount of women joining the diverse demands to change their role have increased, and with this

little by little they have managed to be part of the national debates, as well as men activists increasingly acknowledged them in their demands. In contrast to men, women have been able through their gender identification to cross social and regional boundaries that divide Saudi society. During this period women become more assertive claiming their rights. Second, the state is a site of struggle, where the King is balancing in terms of reformist and traditional elements, which are evident in terms of implementation or discussion on new policies. In terms of discursive practices, the state and women keep an ongoing relationship, although asymmetrical, the moments when the legitimacy of the regime is challenged, the so called state signification crisis,[1] women use that moment to advance their demands. When there is coincidence in the frame of the women's demands and official state rhetoric, women have more chances to advance their demands.[2]

The first part of this article will provide a general view on how women's role is formulated and recreated in Saudi society. Secondly, the discussion on the context previous to the Arab Spring will follow, which will allow an insight into some of the changes and strategies of both the state and society to deal with the rising demands. The third part will analyse women's tactics during the context of the Arab spring in two circumscribed issues: the right to participate in elections and the right to drive, as well as the reactions of other actors. The last part will present some reflections on the features of Saudi women's activism.

The Role of Saudi Woman

In the Kingdom, the role of religion is paramount in the construction of a national identity, and at the same time constitutes the main source of legitimacy for the royal family and the government. In the Saudi state, the practice of a good Muslim is equal to a good citizen in the state and society. Therefore, the daily practices are framed under religious regulations, which are reinforced by the state policies and constitute the parameters to organize and define social life.

1 S. Rajeswari, *The Scandal of the State: Women, Law and Citizenship in Postcolonial India,* (Durham/London: Duke University Press, 2003), p. 25.

2 J. Viterna and K. Fallon, "Democratization, Women's Movements, and Gender-Equitable States: A Framework for Comparison", *American Sociological Review*, Vol.73, 2008, p.671.

The state in order to show its commitment towards Islam integrated the *ulama* as part of the governmental structure.[3] Although in practice the religious and political realms are separated, the *ulama* exercise a predominant role in legitimating government policies, and at the same time, the government has used the religious credential of the official *ulama* to contra rest the questioning to its internal and external legitimacy since the late seventies. Inside this interdependent relationship, the area that remained under tight control by the *ulama*, is related to women's issues.

The modernization followed by the state since the commercial exploitation of oil during the seventies has paved the way to a consolidation of traditional forms of authority known as post traditional, where authority is trapped between new forms of government (government professionalization, the strategies for the administration of economy) and traditional values and practices.[4] These two forms of government contribute to legitimize the authority of the government. In this regard, the King is considered as the patriarch and leader of the tribes who are in Saudi territory. The way citizenship is organized follows the same patriarchal principles which the state follows, since there is a kinship contract, where the first identity is referred to the family and after to the state.[5] But to the nature of the political system and authority, more than a sense of citizenship that prevails is a notion of a subject.[6]

Following the traditional and modern aspects of the authority of the Saudi monarchy, women are considered as markers to designate inside and outside borders,[7] as is the case in other developing societies. The figure of nation is identified with "the women", therefore it is transformed into a symbol of morality, by which borders are designated and the identity as mother of the nation and transmitter of the traditions is ascribed to women.[8] Their exemplary behavior

3 T. Niblock, *Saudi Arabia: Power, Legitimacy and Survival*, (London: Routledge, 2006).

4 J. Peterson, *The emergence of post-traditional Oman*, Durham Middle East Papers, No. 78, (Durham: Institute for Middle Eastern and Islamic Studies, University of Durham, 2005), p. 5.

5 S. Joseph, "Gendering Citizenship in the Middle East" in Suad Joseph (ed.), *Gender and Citizenship and the Middle East,* (New York, Syracuse University, 2000). pp. 149-150.

6 S. Altorki, "The Concept and practice of Citizenship in Saudi Arabia" in S. Joseph (ed.), *Gender and Citizenship and the Middle East*, (New York, Syracuse University, 2000), p. 224.

7 Z. Einsenstein, *Hatreds:Racialisedand Sexualised Conflicts in the 21 Century*, (New York and London: Routledge, 1996) pp. 53-54.

8 Ibid.

denotes the society's behavior at both levels, internal and external. At internal level, women represent the families' honor, women is the reproducer of different ethnical groups and the main transmitter of values and behavior attached to each of the social groups. The boundaries among different social groups are maintained by women who are not allowed to marry men who do not belong to her group, maintaining the separated identities of the groups, among them sedentary groups (also known as *bidun*- without roots), people from tribal origin, the Shiites, and the Sunnites, among others.

From a social and religious point of view, women are present in a notoriously high number of religious opinions (*fatawas*), where the traditional women's role circumscribed to the family or private space are reiterated. Its passage towards the public space is marked by the use of *abaya* and *niqab*, as well as the authorization of the legal guardian (*mahram*). The avoidance of gender mixing (*ikthilat*)) is also subject of religious opinion, as the notorious Mufti Ibn Baz expressed once on the permissibility of women working outside the family space: it is obligatory to avoid the mixing of sexes, since it "leads to evil and lewdness and destruction of societies".[9]

The observance of these principles is paramount to the good name of the families. Although the legal guardian is a figure contained in the religious scriptures, its recreation is a product of the social practices by Saudi society. In order for women to obtain their school registration, admission to hospital, surgical interventions, the administration of her money, assets and business, permission to travel inside and outside the country, authorization to process the identity card,[10] they need the legal guardian's approval. As one Saudi woman refers to this situation, "the only issue where we -women- do not need permission from men is to die."

The educational system also reinforces those values and practices contributing to reproduce gender differences. The philosophy of Saudi education buttresses the gender division and endorses the

9 A. Al-Musnad (ed.), *Islamic Fatawa Regarding Women,* (Riyadh: Darussalam, 1996), p.316. An analysis on how this principle and gender relations are taught in the Kingdom see: E. Doumato, "Education in Saudi Arabia: Gender, Jobs and the Price of Religion" in M. Pripstein and E. Doumato (eds.), *Women and Globalization in the Arab World*, (Boulder and Londonr: Lynne Rienner, 2003), pp. 244-248.

10 Women's individual identity card was approved in 2002, but in practice governmental and private agencies do not accept the use of these cards unless accompanied by a letter from their male guardian.

view of women as having a "special nature" that is different to men and therefore needs a special type of suitable education.[11] Since the beginning of women's education in the seventies, the alternatives for women were few, mainly as teachers, administrative jobs and nursing and, with some exceptions, with both legal guardian and governmental approval, medicine. The statistics on women's education show us the increasing number of them attaining higher education. In the academic year 1977/78 females attending university at the bachelor level numbered 5,658 students, representing 18 percent of the total enrolment.[12] In the year 1989/1990, females increased notably to 53,030 students, representing 47 percent of the total enrolment.[13] Nowadays the percentage continues to grow, as well as the number of female graduates. Since the eighties, the use of technology, closed circuit TV helped female students to receive education from male teachers and increased the number of women pursuing higher education, but at the same time endorsed the traditional norms that preserve the isolation and invisibility of women.[14]

The areas of work also reproduce the traditional norms and constrain the alternatives for educated women to work. The segregation policy is socially and economical costly, since only a small percentage of women with higher education, 19.18 of the total force of work is female,[15] but nonetheless women suffered from a high rate of unemployment compared to men. As the state and most of the private sector's building are thought to be for men, both state and private sector have to invest to accommodate to the norms of segregation. On the other hand, also despite the regulations to exercise their activities, there is a small number of business women. Their focus is mainly in the feminine industry such as cosmetics, textiles and services for women.

As can be appreciated from these social arrangements, both government and *ulama* sustain a recreation on women as homoge-

11 F. Al Bakr, "Women's Education and Employment in Saudi Arabia: Struggle for Survival", *Mimeo*, 2006, p.7.

12 Minister of Higher Education, *Statistics of Higher Education 1977/78*, (Riyadh: Minister of Higher Education, 1980).

13 Minister of Higher Education, *Statistics of Higher Education 1989/90*, (Riyadh: Minister of Higher Education, 1991), p.8

14 H. Al Fassi, "Saudi Women: Modernization and Change" in J. Seznec, M. Kirk, *Industrialization in the Gulf: a Socioeconomic Revolution*,(London: Routledge, 2010), p.159

15 Central Department of Statistics and Information, "Saudi Labour 15 years and over", Development Indicators, http://www.cdsi.gov.sa/english/index.php?option=com_docman&task=cat_view&gid=85&Itemid=162, (accessed 2 January 2014).

nized and in the singular. Women reproduce the social order upon which the Saudi state and society rest. Women veiled and separated provided a unifying symbol of Islamic piety, when co-opted by the monarchy it becomes an ideal of Muslim women, and at the same time, a national identity symbol.[16] However Islam not only is an element for the legitimacy of the monarchy, but it can also serve as a source for questioning the order sustained and recreated by the Saudi state.

The context previous to the Arab Spring

The debate on women towards the second half of the new millennium was present in Saudi society spurred by the use of electronic media that allow some groups of the society to vent its thoughts and postures, to circulate petitions for different issues locally and internationally. Saudi people who use the internet represent the 49 percent of total Saudi population.[17] Women, through different fronts continued to raise their voices, like the activist Wajeha Huwaider who circulated an international petition to ask the King for the right to drive in 2007, even during the summer of 2009, she attempted to cross to Bahrain without her legal guardian's permission, as an act of protest.[18] The increasing number of articles dealing with women's issues in Saudi newspapers is an indication of how women's role is being included in the public debate. This debate is also accompanied by government measures that seek to implement some of the promises since the dialogue on women in 2004 and when King Abdullah took power.[19] The new regulations on work, the opening of new private universities and the study of some majors forbidden for women in some of these new universities, the opening of work for women in several government ministries are not yet fully implemented. To illustrate this, the opening of the King Abdullah Universi-

16 E. Doumato, "Gender, Monarchy and National Identity in Saudi Arabia", *British Journal of Middle Eastern Studies*, Vol. 9, No.1, 1992, p.45.

17 Internet World Statistics Saudi Arabia, (2012). http://www.internetworldstats.com/stats5.htm, (accesed 9 April, 2012).

18 She is a notorious activist who in the past also carried out a public individual protest asking the King, after a year of his accession in 2005, about his promise to give women their rights.

19 The dialogue is product of the women's petition. The celebration of the dialogue by itself, inside Saudi context where there was a long silence on women issue was significant. Among the results of this dialogue were the provision of more jobs for women, the revision of the family law, the creation family courts the expansion of section for women, the allowance of women to litigate, the revision of law on work for women, the revision of women's education, among others. See: A. Galindo, "La negociación con el estado saudita: las tácticas de las mujeres sauditas", *Liminar*, Vol. 6, No. 2, 2008, pp.31-51.

ty for Science and Technology (KAUST) where there is coeducation in 2009 raised concern among traditional elements. Since the core of official *ulama* and the religious police (*mutawa*) roles is the observance of segregation of sexes, the university opening triggered another debate among different sectors both from government, well known religious figures and some social sectors, including women.

The debate centred on the permissibility or not to mingle showing a marked division between the "liberals" and "conservatives", but also the margin of manoeuvrability by the government and at least its attempt to continue in a reformist line. The then recently chosen member of the Council of the Ulama, Saad al Shithri, in a TV program pointed out "that mixing is a great sin and a great evil" and that studies in these universities should be looked at by the religious establishment.[20] Shitri's declarations expressed the opinion of the conservative and traditional sectors, even the official *ulama*, but in the Saudi context public writing or speech on controversial matters is avoided, as is criticizing government policies. The liberals, through different articles and declarations used the debate opened by Shitri's declarations to underline how those conservative views impair progress. It is worth noticing that even inside the official religious *ulama*, there were non-traditional views like Sheikh Ghamidi, the head of the Hay'a (religious police) at Mecca who expressed the mixing of sexes was a practice not alien to Islam, showing how through weak *ahaadiths* there is a widespread idea against mixing.[21]

Amid this debate some women reacted favouring a rather traditional position. Women from a traditional stance also elaborated a petition to the King in 2009, praising him for his role in protecting Islam and adopting a middle posture (*wastattiyya*) to enforce Islam. They asked the King to act against those persons, intellectuals, who were asking for the removal of the figure of the legal guardian, since according to them, that figure represented their identity as Muslim women. They considered those attempts to fight against wom-

20 Saudi Jeans blog, "So Much for Free thinking", (October 5, 2009), http://saudijeans.org/2009/10/page/2/

21 M. Mufdali, "Ikhtilat mustalah jadid wa-adilla al-shar'iyya turaddu bi-quwa 'ala min yaharramuhu," [the mixing of men and women is a new term and the legal evidence strongly forbid it], *Okaz*, 9 December 2009. http://www.okaz.com.sa/new/Issues/20091209/Con20091209319589.htm

en's discrimination and the mingling of sexes as Western ideas.[22] This petition collected more than 5,400 signatures in its first two months.[23]

This debate shows several trends: first that the debate on issues related to the role of women continued provoking reactions from different actors from the government, liberals, intellectuals and religious figures, but also showed the continuous balancing act between the government pro-reform stance and the religious and traditional groups. As Meijer argues, there is an ideological power vacuum left, after the death of the Mufti Ibn Baz and Uthaimin, that leaves the room open for popular and official religious sheiks to launch a campaign against reforms, and at the same time it allows us to see that both religious institutions and government are also divided between conservative, moderate and liberal groups.[24]

Nonetheless the measures taken by the government always remain in a test according to the reaction of the society; the government could decide that it could sustain and widen the measure, but always taking time to implement them. There have been elections with women as candidates for the chambers of commerce in Damam and Jeddah but not in other areas of the country. The policy established since 2006 that lingerie shops will be managed by women, met strong oppositions from official *ulama* and also provoked public debate, and only in 2012, this policy was implemented. The reforms and changes on Saudi women presented until here give us an idea that the advances are in certain areas, places and in certain moments.

Women's Activism during the Arab Spring

In comparison to the two previous occasions (1990-1991 and 2003-2004) when some groups demanded changes from the government, the petitions in this context included demands to improve women's traditional roles, addressing specific issues and not simply enunciations as the previous petitions. Women's demands and

22 *Wali amri idara bi amri*. http://www.waluamree.com/ (accesed 30 October 2012) . During the 2013, this site was without access.

23 K. Zoepef, "Talk of Women's Rights Divides Saudi Arabia", *New York Times*, May 31, 2010. http://www.nytimes.com/2010/06/01/world/middleeast/01iht-saudi.html?pagewanted=all&_r=0

24 R. Meijer, "Reform in Saudi Arabia; The Gender Segregation Debate", *Middle East Policy*, Vol. 17, No.4, 2010, pp. 93-94.

activities in contrast with the previous period[25] were focused on two issues: the right to vote and the right to drive.[26] These two rights encapsulate core aspects that hinder women's inclusion and participation in Saudi society. These rights have great implication for the social segregation system and touch the basis of the legal guardian figure that is at the centre of the debate.

Three petitions for reform appeared on the internet: "Towards a State of Rights and Institutions", Saudi youth petition[27] and Saudi Reform. These petitions coincided in demanding a division of power, the inclusion of society for the decision making process, the respect for human rights, including women and the celebration of elections for the three levels of government. The third petition contains specific points on the character of reforms, among them the accountability of public authorities and the demands for visible measures to develop a constitutional monarchy, echoing past demands from the early nineties and 2003-2004. Also relevant in this petition is their clear emphasis on the respect for human rights, freedom of expression and association, and specially its demands for rights and resources for women, asking for the removal of the legal guardian figure.[28] From the women's side, a declaration appeared in the internet called women's revolution.[29] This declaration presented core demands to give women full status as citizens, eliminating the legal figure of male guardian, and promoted laws that enforce the rights of women according to the international conventions already signed by the Saudi government. This page counts as its followers mainly those aged between 24 to 34 years and was the initiative of professional women below 30.

25 In the past women were a bargaining card between the conservative and reformist petitioners, who in order to present a joint petition left the issue of women. At that moment women from across the kingdom elaborated their own petition. Among their demands were: the end of the guardian legal figure, the expansion of areas for education and work, participation in decision-making process at both sectors public and private supported by laws, the reservation of some seats for women at the Consultative Council, the codification of family law and development of family law among other demands. Al-Fassi, Hatoon, "Ma'a nihaiat alam.. Mada turiddu al mar'a al saudiyya" [towards the end of the year... ¿What Saudi women wishes?], in *Iqtisadiyya*, 3 January 2006. http:www.aleqt.com/article.php?do=show&id=737, (accesed, 20 September 2006).

26 It is calculated that working women can spend up to 2/3 of their salaries on hiring a taxi or chauffeur.

27 This petition demands youth inclusion in public policies and participation in decision making, as well as the adaptation of the official Islam to contemporary needs.

28 Saudi Reform, 23 February 2011, Hassantalk Blog, (accessed, 22 October 2012).

29 Saudi Women Revolution, Statement, Facebook page, https://www.facebook.com/pages/Saudi-Women-Revolution/188278964539309. (accesed20 October, 2012),

The government facing the call to public demonstrations reacted through the presence of security in the major cities, and an official warning by the Ministry of the Interior of the use of force against demonstrators. The Council of Ulama issued a *fatwa* condemning the demonstrations, printing their opinion in leaflets to distribute amongst the population.[30] In their *fatwa* the religious statement sided with the government and condemned those considered as deviant Muslims and therefore bad citizens.

Nonetheless in the context of tight security, a group of 60 women, consisting of women who in the past tried to become candidates in the elections and new participants formed a group to demand the right to vote and be voted. From the experience gained in the past, they launched a campaign call *al Baladi* (My Country) and used the internet to spread its campaign through a website with a discussion forum, facebook page and twitter,[31] in early January 2011. In their website they put a series of documents that show women their rights as citizens according to Islam and international conventions. Also they programmed a series of workshops, seminars and presentations, where they trained women on the importance of voting and the aspects related to the organization of an electoral campaign. These women elaborated a statement for their campaign where they established the need to integrate women in political participation, indicating their readiness to take part in the elections and their strength in different areas of specialization that could also bring progress to the nation, but also identifying themselves in their roles as mothers more connected with the needs of the family and society. "Our goals parallel the orientations that the Custodian of the Two Holy Mosques has adopted *vis-á-vis* supporting Saudi women's participation in public affairs as well as those of senior government officials towards empowering women in society".[32]

This initiative was accompanied by moves from some *Shura* members who tried to discuss women's participation in order to have an official favourable statement on women's participation. Despite the efforts from both women and men, the electoral authority declared that women would not participate in the elections. The excuse once

30 I. Alawi, Saudi Arabia's Anti Protest Fatwa is Transparent", *The Guardian*, 1 April 2011. http://www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/belief/2011/apr/01/saudi-arabia-anti-protest-fatwa,

31 In the Arabic site the visitors number is 154, 238 up to March 2013.

32 Nahnu, Al Baladi, "Al Baladi" website. 2011. http://baladi-sa.net/, (accessed 20 April 2012).

more, as in the 2004 elections, was that there was a lack of preparation to be ready for women's participation. The women of the *al Baladi* campaign elaborated another letter to the King expressing their frustration with the electoral authority's refusal. They offered themselves to act as consultants and partakers in the preparations for elections to allow women's participation.[33]
Once the registration came into process, some groups of women who showed up in the centres for registration of candidates in the main cities of Riyadh, Jeddah, Mecca and Dammam, attempted to register as candidates. Those acts were covered by the local and international press. One woman, Samar Badawi in Jeddah presented a legal recourse against the refusal of electoral authorities to register her as a candidate, citing the electoral law of the country, the international convention against women's discrimination which the Saudi Kingdom has ratified as well as the Arab convention on women's rights also ratified by the government, which all contradict the practice of the elections.[34] Later her legal recourse was declined by the authorities.

It wasn't until the decree of King Abdullah, announced in September 25 of that year, that women would be voting in the coming elections and could be full members of the Shura council, since until then it had only 12 women who acted as advisers, but only in matters related to women's issues. What is important to emphasize here is that this movement shows the unity of women in most country's regions towards the achievement of this goal, in the campaign.

Some of these women from the *al Baladi* campaign also supported the movement of women to drive. This issue had been present for more than twenty years.[35] This time a woman call Manal Sharif from Eastern province set up a website where she invited women to join her to drive as a way to demand the right to drive on June 17. She put a video on YouTube about her driving a car and discussing the problems women faced because of the ban to drive. She was detained for four hours and some days later she was taken into jail for ten days. Her news immediately caused support and anger of the human rights activists and once again put the case in the spotlight.

33 Al Baladi, Letter to the King, 3 April 2011, Al Baladi website, http://baladi-sa.net/, (accessed 20 April 2012).

34 Saudi Gazette. "Aspiring Women Voter Takes Ministry to Court", *Saudi Gazette*, 29 April 2011. http://www.saudigazette.com.sa/index.cfm?method=home.regcon&contentid=20110429994422, (accessed, 20 March 2013).

35 On the account on women driving first public protest see: E. Doumato, pp.29-39.

She had to pledge to the King to renounce to her invitation in April, but still the event took place. Numerous twitter and Facebook accounts started to appear in support of Manal's initiative. Finally on June 17, the day that was set up by Manal to demonstrate, some 50-60 women in the main cities of the country took to the roads and through twitter and YouTube videos expressed how they felt. For some, it was a dream driving a car for ten minutes or less and they felt empowered to fight for their right by driving a car.[36] Although the amount of women was not significant, it was again a topic of debate in domestic and international fronts. Most of these women did not experience any reaction from the police, but there were some cases where women faced detentions; one of them was a woman in Jeddah who went to prison and sentenced to 10 lashes since June 2011.[37] This sentence was only removed after the King pardoned her, days after his announcements on allowing women to vote for next elections.

A movement called 'my right to dignity' started to appear on the internet in June 2011, supporting women's rights to drive a car. According to some sources, in the beginning this campaign had around seven thousand followers, mainly women.[38] Through this movement women have been able to coordinate the campaigns calling women to drive and to follow up the cases of women put in jail because they took the cars. Through their twitter and Facebook accounts, they demonstrate the activities of women protesting for their right to drive. They announced the lawsuit of three women activists against the authorities of traffic since there is no legal law that forbids them to exercise their right.

It is interesting to note how women in their statement discuss the right to drive based on the Islamic scriptures that some religious authorities in other Muslim countries used to allow women to drive: God did not distinguish between male and female, when he said in the Holy Quran: "And (He has created) horses, mules and donkeys, for you to ride and as an adornment. And He creates (other)

36 Lali Sandiumenage blog, June 7, 2011. http://blogs.lavanguardia.com/guerreros-del-teclado/author/lalisandiumenge/, (accessed 10 November 2012).

37 It is interesting to note that her trial was based on the old fatwa of Mufti ibn Baz forbidding women to drive. S. Jones, Saudi Woman Driver Saved from Lasing by King Abdullah", *The Guardian*, 28 September 2011. http://www.theguardian.com/world/2011/sep/29/saudi-woman-lashing-king-abdullah, (accessed, 18 March 2013).

38 Also a group to demand women to stay home appeared on the internet gathering the support of seven thousand persons, mainly men. A. Shaheen, "Women Driving Campaign Sparks Debate", *Gulf News*, 20 June 2011. http://gulfnews.com/news/gulf/saudi-arabia/women-driving-campaign-sparks-debate-in-saudi-arabia-1.824115, (accessed, 25 March 2013).

things of which you have no knowledge". This is the text that many Islamic scholars depend on to legalize driving, but the state and the religious establishment has ignored God's decree of equality and decided to take the opinion of jurisprudential evidence as legitimately stronger and more important than God's own words to justify discriminating against women and preventing them from the right to acquiring a license permit to drive.[39]
This statement also points that through invoking religion and a sense of nationalism these women are able to subvert the meaning attached to the ban on women driving.

Conclusions

If in the past, when women defied the state openly to ask for the right to drive in a context of the invasion of Kuwait, women became the scapegoats of the critical domestic and international situation for the government and society. Then in the second time during the years of the Riyadh spring, women for the first time elaborated their petition and attempted to participate in the first municipal elections, although did not obtain the right to vote, they reopened the debate on women's role and its importance for the national agenda.

Under the context of the Saudi Spring and united in a continuum of changes in terms of airing demands and having more public spaces to present their opinions and debate about women rights, they have become more assertive claiming their rights, being heard and visualized through different means of communication (writing in the newspapers, being part of television interviews, the use of electronic means). Thanks to the experience and exposure gained, women were more confident taking advantages of loopholes in the laws – especially when their demands from authorities to register as candidates or to be given a licence to drive was not met.

Despite the limitations and the array of criticism that the debate on women stirs up from society, and in contrast to the previous occasions, women's demands for rights is not circumscribed to a small group of women. Nonetheless, thanks to the effort of those women, nowadays we can witness the participation of more women from different ages, including a younger generation that are taking part

39 womentodrive, 11th statement, August 31, 2012, http://www.ipetitions.com/petition/women2drive-17jun2012. (accessed 20 March 2013).

in the activities and demands for their rights. Women continued to campaign for their right to drive, despite all difficulties and past experiences. This trend shows us that women are identifying themselves in their status as women in Saudi society with each other, beyond the differences in social status, ethnicity and class. In this regard they represent a more cohesive group than male activists. Also it is worth noting how men recognized the importance of women's rights, as it was analysed previously, not only in their inclusion on petitions, but also in supporting women's demands and actions in the Shura, in public debates and in their activities.

If there is a growing identification on women activism based on gender identification, still the activities show us that the women movement, in comparison to other parts of the Middle East is in an initial phase. Women's demands are circumscribed to two issues, either avoiding a backlash or as a tactic to advance their demands in a less confrontational way, rather than arguing for equality for women.

Often asking for reforms on women's issues is associated with corruption, Western and un-Islamic ideas. But women in their campaigns have shown to society how Saudi they are by calling their campaign "my country", and at the same time, how knowledgeable they are in terms of religion and law. Of course their ability to express their agency and to present alternative views to traditional notions associated with their role does not go along easy with the traditionalist views, but they are able to face those criticisms with the same elements contained in those. Taking upon the symbols of nationalism and progress conflates women's demand along the lines of the official discourses. Identifying their roles as mothers whose main concern is the welfare of the community allows them to present their own construction of political participation.

Responses of the government are trapped on the issue of legitimacy, women can be considered as a negotiating card for the government to reinforce their legitimacy both at internal and external realms. The government of King Abdullah has positioned itself as championing the defence on women rights, a position that appeals to some sectors of domestic audiences to sustain the image of reformist government, and at the same time, to ameliorate the so called pressure from abroad to "open up" the political system. In this perspective it is worth to mention the inclusion of 30 women as full members at the beginning of 2013. The bottom line despite

the official rhetoric is the response of the society, but particularly those groups that challenge their legitimacy, the traditionalist and radicals. It seems that King Abdullah's administration, despite its reformist attempts, has to balance between the reformist groups and traditional elements of the society, according to the stakes involved in each context.

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Iranian Women: One Step Forward, Two Steps Back

*Marzieh Kouhi ESFAHANI**

Abstract

Through a summarized historical review; this paper is studying Iranian Women's century long struggle to improve their status in the society and achieve some basic rights such as education and suffrage. The paper demonstrates how the patriarchal system cemented with the male interpretation of Islamic jurisprudence has created strong foundations based on which women have been deserted of many rights for decades. This foundation has resisted change and exhausted positive efforts when progressive statesmen tried to provide women with some developments. Exactly for this reason the Islamic Revolution turned the clock back on women's rights and acted regressively against limited advantages that women had gained in previous decades. Despite frequent draw backs; Iranian women have continued with their struggle for improving their social and legal status. In this struggle, education has proven to be their most effective mean, as it has provided opportunities and strategies for social and political participation, giving the women the voice of reason to argue for their demands and moreover has given them the ability and skills to interpret the Islamic jurisprudence and hence find avenues through which women can be provided with greater rights and privileges. This in term has empowered them to have constructive dialogues and debates on women related issues with jurisconsults and legislators and urge them to review the legal system with a more favorable approach towards women's rights and status. However, so long as the social patriarchal system is intact, any progress would be slow and faced with great challenges.

Keywords: Iranian Women, Islamic Jurisprudence, Patriarchal system, Education, Women's status, Women's rights

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İran Kadını: Bir Adım İleri, İki Adım Geri

Özet
Özetlenmiş bir tarihsel inceleme yoluyla, bu çalışma toplumdaki statülerini geliştirmek ve eğitim ve oy hakkı gibi bazı temel hakları elde etmek için İran kadınının verdiği yüzyıldan uzun mücadelesini inceliyor. Makale, İslam hukukunun erkek yorumlanması ile sağlamlaşmış ataerkil sistemin nasıl kadınların yıllardır birçok haktan mahrum bırakıldığına dayalı güçlü temeller yarattığını göstermektedir. Bu sistem değişime direndi ve yenilikçi devlet adamlarının kadınlar için bazı gelişmeler sağlamaya çalıştıkları zaman olumlu çabaları tükenmiş oldu. Tam olarak bu nedenle İslam Devrimi kadın hakları üzerinde saati geri döndürdü ve kadınlar önceki yıllarda kazanmış oldukları sınırlı avantajlara karşı regresif davrandılar. Sık sık geri gitmelere rağmen, İranlı kadınlar sosyal ve hukuki statülerinin iyileştirilmesi için verdikleri mücadeleye devam etmişlerdir. Bu mücadelede eğitimin onların en etkili ifade etme yolu olduğu kanıtlanmıştır; eğitim sosyal ve siyasal katılım için fırsatlar ve stratejiler sağlandığı gibi kadınlara kendi isteklerini dile getirebilme ve tartışabilmeleri için güç verdi. Dahası, onlara İslam hukukunu yorumlayabilmeleri için yetenek ve beceri verdi ve böylece kadınlar daha fazla hak ve ayrıcalıkların sağlandığı yollar buldular. Bu, kadınları hukukçular ve milletvekilleri ile ilgili konularda ve meselelerde yapıcı diyalog ve tartışmalar için güçlendirdi ve kadınları kadın hakları ve statüsüne karşı daha olumlu yaklaşılması için hukuk sistemini gözden geçirmeleri için teşvik etti. Fakat, sosyal ataerkil sistem yerinde durduğu müddetçe, herhangi bir ilerleme yavaş olacaktır ve büyük zorluklarla karşı karşıya kalacaktır.

Anahtar Kelimeler: İranlı Kadınlar, İslami Hukuk, Ataerkil sistem, Eğitim, Kadınların Statüsü, Kadın Hakları

المرأة الإيرانية: خطوة إلى الأمام وخطوتان إلى الوراء

ملخص

تحاول هذه الدراسة، من خلال مراجعة تاريخية مختصرة، دراسة نضال المرأة الطويل على مدار المائة عام الماضية فى سبيل تحسين أوضاعها فى المجتمع واكتساب بعض الحقوق الأساسية مثل الحق فى التعليم والحق فى الإقتراع. حيث تستعرض هذه الورقة كيف فتح النظام البطريركي «ولاية الفقيه» الطريق لما يسمي بالتأويل الذكوري للفقه الإسلامى استُحدثت بموجبه مؤسسات تم تكريسها لإهمال العديد من حقوق النساء لعقود طويلة.

حيث عملت هذه المؤسسات على مقاومة التغيير واستنزاف الجهود الإيجابية التى قام بها بعض رجال الدين التحرريين عندما حاولوا دعم النساء ببعض الإصلاحات. و لهذا السبب حركت الثورة الإسلامية عقارب الساعة إلى الوراء بصورة ملحوظه وذلك من اجل الدفاع عن حقوق المرأة،وتصرفت برجعية فى مواجهة الامتيازات المحدودة التى اكتسبتها النساء خلال العقود السابقة. وعلى الرغم من الا ضطهادات المتكررة، فقد استمرت النساء الإيرانيات فى كفاحهن فى سبيل تحسين أوضاعهن الإجتماعية والقانونية. وقد نبتت ثمرة هذا الكفاح فى مجال التعليم بصورة اكثر فعالية. فمن خلاله أتيحت الفرص ووضعت الإستراتيجيات للمشاركة السياسية والإجتماعية، مانحاً النساء صوت العقل الذى مكنهن من التعبير عن مطالبهن ، بل وأعطاهن فوق كل ذلك القدرات والمهارات لتأويل الفقه الإسلامي .ومن هنا فقد وجدن السبل التى من خلالها يمكن الحصول على حقوق وامتيازات أكبر. وهذا بدوره قد مكنهن من إجراء حوارات هيكلية (تأسيسية) ومناظرات حول قضايا النساء ذات الصلة مع الفقهاء والمشرعين. وارائهم بشأن مراجعة نهج النظام التشريعي ليكون أكثر إيجابية تجاه حقوق وأوضاع المرأة. وعلى أية حال ، فطالماً كان النظام الإجتماعي البطريركي «ولاية الفقيه» مستمراً على وضعه ، فإن أي تقدم سيكون بطيئاً وسيواجهه الكثير من التحديات.

الكلمات المفتاحية :النساء الإيرانيات، الفقه الإسلامى، النظام البطريركي، التعليم، أوضاع النساء، حقوق النساء.

Introduction

For more than a century, Iranian women have been trying to improve their status in the Iranian patriarchal system. This system with added strength from male interpretation of Islamic jurisprudence has grown such strong roots deep in the society's fiber that Iranian women have had to face serious challenges for some of the most basic rights such as access to education or the right to choose the manner of their attire. This paper will demonstrate that influential elites have managed to build a solid barricade from the combination of the above two factors -patriarchal system and Islamic jurisprudence- through which they can seriously challenge or reverse any developments pursued by women or intended by the governments for women, particularly if the governments are either not strong or determined enough. The paper will argue that in the absence of firm belief in equal rights, what progressive politicians were able to provide for women has been more of a lip service than actual tangible improvements. Their approach towards women's role in the society has been more prudential (even instrumental) than out of a deep seated belief which can persuade them to challenge the system (patriarchy cemented with male interpretation of Islamic jurisprudence). Through the review of Iranian women's struggle for their rights, the paper will also argue that as long as the above system remains intact; any progress can prove to be short lived and reversible.

Setting the Context

While scholars like Kaveh Farrokh provide archeological and historical evidence about the role and authority that Iranian women have had in ancient times,[1] one cannot provide a similar image at the end of 19th and start of the 20th century. Women's place was only in their guardians' house (father, husband) and the only education they would receive was basic religious studies (Quran and Sharia rules) in *maktabs.* Even that limited and basic education was mostly for the middle/upper class girls and not everybody. While 'home' was considered their place and sanctuary, women did not exactly feel secure in their own home within the sacred space of the family. Girls could be forced into arranged marriages at a very young

1 K. Farrokh, *The Persian Lioness: Iranian Women in History*. http://www.kavehfarrokh.com/iranica/the-women-of-persia/the-persian-lioness-iranian-women-in-history/ (accessed 10 October 2013)

age. Those married; could be divorced by the husband's unilateral decision or had to put up with the husband's polygamy as it was a normal practice of those days. Women were generally perceived as inferiors. The perception was not only from political and legal point, as it had its roots in the culture and society. As Mohammadi explains; "these structural inequalities have their roots in essentialist philosophy and theology, despotism, authoritarian political culture, tribal and patriarchal social system, a special mode of (Asian) agricultural production based on hard work of digging aqua ducts in underground irrigation system (*qanat*) by primitive tools and Islamic shari'ah. These factors have interwoven together."[2]

Historical Review

Constitutional Revolution (1905-1907)

The first sparks of change in women's social mood came within the context of 1906 Constitutional Revolution. The atmosphere of change had encouraged people to look for improvements. Increased contact with Europe was an eye opener for educated people and drew their attention to repressive condition of women in the country, and encouraged them to look for solutions to change the situation.[3] While Taj Saltaneh, Naser al-Din Shah's daughter, and Bibi Khanoum Fatema Astarabadi criticized the plight of women in their writings and made efforts towards improvements; famous constitutionalists like Mirza Melkom Khan and Mirza Fath Ali Akhundzadeh "wrote about women's right to education and the evils of polygamy and seclusion."[4]

Organized participation of women in the Tobacco protests followed by the events which resulted in the Constitutional Revolution of 1905–1911, demonstrated Iranian women's potential for organizing and participating in collective actions of social or political nature. This in turn encouraged more enlightened women to "use the momentum provided by the revolution as a venue for bringing women's causes into the open."[5]

2 M. Mohammadi, "Iranian Women and the Civil Rights Movement in Iran: Feminism Interacted", *Journal of International Women's Studies,* Vol. 9, No.1, November 2007, pp.1-21.

3 A. Mahdi, "The Iranian Women's Movement: A Century Long Struggle", *The Muslim World,*. Vol.94, 2004, pp:427-448.

4 Ibid.

5 Ibid, p.428.

While women were exceptionally not banned from participating in demonstrations and other activities relevant to Constitutional Revolution; when the revolution succeeded, its religious leaders preferred to overlook the important role women played towards this victory. Women's role in building human shield for the clergies who had taken sanctuary in holy places were completely ignored and forgotten together with the social maturity they demonstrated during the revolution. Along with minors, criminals and mentally ills; women were denied sufferage by the electoral law.[6] They were told "their education and training should be restricted to raising children, home economics and preserving the honor of the family."[7] From the view point of leaders such as Shaykh Fazlullah Nuri and Seyyed Ali Shushtari, schooling for girls was detrimental to women's status and against religious principles. These *ulama* conveniently forgot that the prophet Muhammad has declared it a compulsory duty for every Muslim man and woman to search for knowledge from birth till death. Women were sent back home with no obvious improvements in their status.

Nevertheless, education remained a top agenda for activists. Initially in 1907 the first girl's primary school was founded by Bibi Khatoon Astarabadi, in her own residence. In a short time considerable number of girls' school was established in various large cities and gradually the issue lost its stigma. In 1918 the first Teacher Education College for girls was founded in Tehran.[8] Moreover, "despite lack of interest in women's concerns on the part of parliament, women did remain involved in national politics, particularly opposing the intervention of both British and Russian forces who had joined the Shah in trying to close the parliament. They also continued raising funds to set up the first Iranian National Bank in order to free Iran's economy and government from the stranglehold of British influence."[9] In 1912, William Murgan Shuster, the American Treasurer General of Persia wrote "Persian women since 1907 have become almost at a bound the most progressive, not to say radical, in the world. That this statement upsets the ideas of centuries makes no difference... Having themselves suffered from a double

6 R. Noshiravani, *Iranian Women in the Era of Modernisation: a Chronology,* (Foundation for Iranian Studies, 2009). http://www.fisiran.org/en/women/milestones/pre-revolution (accessed 5 October 2013)

7 Ibid.

8 Ibid.

9 H. Hoodfar, *The Women's Movement in Iran: Women at the Crossroad of Secularization and Islamization,* (The Women's Movement Series, 1999), p.113.

form of oppression, political and social... they broke through some of the most sacred customs which for centuries past have bound their sex in the land of Persia."[10]

Reza Shah Pahlavi (1925–1941)

An authoritarian leader keen on modernizing his country; Reza shah (1924-1941) took steps in improving women's status while trying to channel their demands into welfare and social dimensions, and away from politics. His emphasis on women's education as a facilitator for modernization of the society resulted in the increased number of girls' school and employment of educated women as teachers. Moreover, from 1928 he provided financial support for women to study abroad.[11] In 1931, the government introduced a number of changes in the marriage and divorce laws. Marriage was placed under civil rather than religious jurisdiction.[12] In 1935, a bill was passed in the parliament (*Majles)* that gave women the right to ask for divorce under certain conditions. The bill set the minimum marriage age for girls at 15 and for boys at 18. The registration of marriage became compulsory, and that in turn reduced *mutah* or temporary marriage practiced by the Shia. Since it could not be legally registered, "it was socially ostracized and become less prevalent."[13] This legislation, according to Amin, proved to be far more important than any other changes introduced by Reza Shah's government in later periods.[14] As Cronin argues, if it wasn't for Reza Shah's determined efforts, "the *ulama* would have not voluntarily acquiesced in, but have frustrated any attempts to extend women's rights and opportunities."[15] Fortunately for women, Reza Shah felt strong enough to face *ulama*'s opposition and challenge the resistance of traditional approach towards women to some degree.

Nonetheless, to leave his patriarchic hallmark on the country's modernization process; Reza Shah decided to impose modernization of the nation's attire. Following a 1928 parliamentary bill on

10 A. Mostashari, *One Hundred Years of Women's Movements in Iran,* (MIT Iranian Studies Group). isgmit.org/projectsstorage/WomenStudies/WomenMovementsInIran.ppt (accessed 20 March 2013).

11 R. Noshiravani, *Iranian Women in the Era of Modernisation*.

12 S. Cronin, *The Making of Modern Iran: State and Society under Riza Shah, 1921-1941,* (London: Taylor & Francis, 2003)

13 Ibid, p.193

14 As quoted by Mahdi, "The Iranian Women's Movement", p.430.

15 S. Cronin, *The Making of Modern Iran,* p.197.

public Servants attire, in 1936 the traditional women's *hijab* were outlawed (de-veiling). The new dress code was brutally enforced by the police. Ironically, the de-veiling law was in a way counter-productive to Reza Shah's efforts for modernizing women. Since female students of Tehran University were the first group of women to be obliged by this; religious leaders were provided by an evidence to prove that education is corruptive for women. Also, many women specially from middle and lower classes of the society, living in more traditional environments had to relinquish all their social activities even as simple as doing their own shopping as they could not go out without *hijab*. "The de-veiling law and its harsh enforcement not only failed to liberate women of these classes, but sequestered them and forced them to rely on their husbands, sons, and male relatives for public tasks which they normally carried out themselves."[16]

Mohammad Reza Shah Pahlavi (1941-1978)

While the enforcement of de-veiling was relaxed after the forced abdication of Reza Shah in favor of his son Mohamad Reza, it still remained legal; leaving veiled women excluded from public sector employment. From 1951, women's calls for equal political and economic rights was renewed, but got nowhere as the young Shah was trying to avoid confrontation with the *ulama*. However, after the 1953 coup and repression of various opposition groups, Mohammad Reza Pahlavi was feeling much stronger for undertaking further modernization of the country despite the opposition. Therefore, in 1963 as part of his White Revolution women were given the right to vote and be voted for the parliament seats. "30 years after the recognition of Turkish women's right to vote and participate in parliamentary politics, yet it met with considerable opposition from the Iranian clergy, including Ayatollah Khomeini himself, who viewed this as the complete corruption of Muslim morals."[17]

"In 1967, the parliament passed the Family Planning Act (revised in 1975) that gave women rights in dissolving the marriage and circumscribed the unilateral rights of men to dissolve marriage."[18] The Act set more constraints for polygamy; raised the age for girls

16 H. Hoodfar, *The Women's Movement in Iran,* p.15

17 Ibid, p.19,

18 A. Osanloo, *The Politics of Women's Rights in Iran,* (Princeton University Press, 2009)

marriage to 18, put divorce under the authority of family courts and created safeguards against male vagary in divorce.[19] Following the 1975 revision, the family law gave women custody rights and eased the abortion law. Parallel to developments in the legal status of women, "the state continued to increase the number of women in executive positions, enhance their opportunities in the public arena, and appoint women as judges ….. In the same year, women's affairs gained ministerial status and a woman was appointed to the position."[20]

Post Islamic Revolution Era

The Islamic revolution of 1978-9, once again witnessed the pervasive participation of Iranian women from all walks of life in the political developments of the country. Women from different backgrounds and ideologies took to the streets alongside men, looking for an end to dictatorship. In March 1979, the first post revolution election was held, through which 98.8% of the participants voted in favor of an 'Islamic Republic'. While the high turnout of the public and their positive vote demonstrated their interest in having a republic in which Islamic rules and moralities were observed; further developments proved that what many people had in mind was not the same interpretation of Islam that the religious leaders of the revolution had. It also proved that even the leaders who later became the country's statesmen were not homogenous in their vision of an Islamic government and the sort of rules which would be applied. "Women's status" is a stark example of this reality. In a statement responding to enquiries regarding women's status in an Islamic state; Ayatullah Khomeini explained "the Islamic regime would restore dignity and real social worth to women. He emphasized that Islam has never been against women's freedom."[21] While the statement sounded positive, it was ambiguous enough to leave room for later interpretations and adjustments.

As the Islamic Republic stabilized, it turned out that women were once again only reserve players in a male dominated game. Now that the revolution was over, based on the conviction that women are naturally unwise and unequal, new legislations were enforced

19 Paydar as quoted by Mahdi, "The Iranian Women's Movement", p.433

20 Mahdi, "The Iranian Women's Movement", p.433

21 Nobari as quoted by Hoodfar, *The Women's Movement in Iran,* p.23.

upon which women were excluded from many legal rights, while "equally subject to the harsh treatment of the current laws of retribution - *qassas*."[22] Discrimination against women was and still is institutionalized through constitution, government policies and state ideology. "For instance, Article 19 of the constitution states: *The people of Iran regardless of ethnic and tribal origin enjoy equal rights. Color, race, language, and the like will not be cause for privilege*. Note that while discrimination on the basis of ethnicity and race is prohibited, neither religion nor sex is mentioned."[23]

Shortly after the victory of the revolution, women were excluded from military and judiciary jobs and "female students were barred from the School of Law."[24] Despite early promises of religious statesmen and despite all oppositions and criticisms, in June 1980, the Islamic dress code (*hijab*) was imposed on women which was applied even on minorities. Many women, who resisted *hijab* or other revolutionary principles, were dismissed from their jobs.

Developments affecting women's status happened faster and were more extreme in the judiciary arena. Just two weeks after the official establishment of the Islamic Republic in March 1979; Pahlavi's Family Protection Law was annulled and the illegal practice of temporary marriage became legal. Also the legal age of maturity was lowered for girls to nine and for boys to 14, and the rule was enshrined in the constitution. This was interpreted to mean that girls could be given in marriage at the age of nine, the legal age at which they are punishable as adults for any criminal offense".[25] Despite protests by some middle class and more educated women "the unbelievably discriminatory laws were passed with ease. Among other things, the value of women's lives legally became half that of men ….. and a notoriously misogynistic orthodox Muslim family law was introduced."[26] The new law "gave men an absolute right to divorce their wives without having to produce any justification. Child custody laws were also changed in favor of men: after divorce,

22 H. Afshar, *Women, State and Ideology: Studies from Africa and Asia,* (N.Y.: State University of New York Press, 1987).

23 N. Tohidi, "Iran" in Kelly, S. & Breslin, J. (eds.), *Women's Rights in the Middle East and North Africa: Progress amid Resistance, (*Freedom House, 2010), p.124

24 H. Afshar, *Women, State and Ideology,*p.42

25 Kar and Hoodfar as quoted by Hoodfar, *The Women's Movement in Iran*, p. 23

26 H. Hoodfar & Sadeghi, F., "Against All Odds: The Women's Movement in the Islamic Republic of Iran" in *Development*, Vol. 52, No. 2, 2009, pp, 215–223.

women are entitled to keep their boys only up to the age of two and girls until seven".[27] The changes in Family Law could indirectly limit women's social and political activity. It does not matter how high is a woman's rank in the politics or society, she does not feel safe if her husband can unilaterally divorce and take her children away. This would clearly provide a strong leverage for men to control their wives according to their wishes.

Based on Iranian interpretation of jurisprudence; "If a man murders a woman he cannot be punished unless her relatives pay a *dyeh* (blood money) to the murderer (*Qassas* law 18.6.61, article 6). Furthermore, a father who murders his children is 'excused' from punishment provided he pays *dyeh* to heirs (*Qassas* law, article 16); but no specific *dyeh* is stipulated for children. Mothers, however, do not benefit from this right to life and death of their offspring".[28] Despite claims of the legal system being based on *Sharia,* one can find many cases of contradiction with clear instructions of Quran. For example "Women's evidence is not accepted by Iranian courts, unless accompanied by that of a man. Women, who, nevertheless, insist on giving evidence without male corroboration, are liable to punishment for slander (Qassas law, article 92)…….. This refusal to accept women's evidence is a contradictory interpretation of the clear Qoranic statement which accepts women's evidence, but equates that of two women with the words of one man".[29]

The picture is not that gloomy in all areas though. Unlike many traditional clergies and in contrast to some of his own old views; once in power, Ayatollah Khomeini encouraged Islamist women's political and social activities and criticized the opposition of the traditionalists. "The leader of the Revolution considered such participation of women crucial and on many occasions he praised and nominated them 'the lion-hearted ones whose great efforts saved Islam from the captivity of the foreigners [and] who alongside men secured the victory of Islam'. He also endorsed women's political rights as a religious duty: *Women have the right to intervene in politics. It is their duty…..Islam is a political religion. In Islam, everything, even prayer, is political*".[30] Some argue that the reason for Ayatollah Khomeini's

27 Mahdi, "The Iranian Women's Movement", p.434

28 H. Afshar, *Women, State and Ideology,* p.42.

29 Ibid

30 H. Moinifar, "Participation of Women in Iran's Polity", *GEMC Journal,* No.4, 2013, p.30.

change of heart regarding women's suffrage was the positive role they could play in favor of his Islamic politics.

Women's education was particularly encouraged, to such degree that even old women took on themselves to learn basic literacy. This was in fact the golden master key which more than a decade later women started to use for opening the locks that the patriarchic system has imposed on their life. In addition to state's encouragement of women's education; a more indirect effect of the revolution and establishment of an Islamic Republic was the fact that when the society, including schools and universities became 'Islamic', a great majority of more traditional and religious families who would have not let their daughters to attend school or university in fear of corruption and losing their faith; were relieved of their worries and trusted the state to provide a suitable environment for their daughter's education. Consequently female literacy rate increased from 35% in the 1976, to 52% by 1986 despite all the challenges that the country was facing following the revolution and the imposed war with Iraq. "Today, Iranian girls between the ages of 15 and 24 enjoy near universal literacy".[31] Women's level of education has also improved considerably. "For example, the female enrollment rate for primary education institutions is actually higher than it is for males. Women also graduate from their primary education programs at the same rate as their male counterparts".[32] Since late 1990's women constitute more than 60% of university entrants. "Based on official statistics about 65% of accepted students at the universities were female compared to 35% male in fall 2010".[33] Over the time, this has in turn resulted in increased employment of women. According to the British historian, Michael Axworthy ; "one-third of doctors, 60 percent of civil servants, and 80 percent of teachers in Iran are women".[34] More than three decades after the revolution women's status has improved gradually but considerably in many areas. This was mainly due to the work of all women and men from different walks of life who challenged the system and made efforts for improvements. Education became an important vehicle in this context.

31 F. Samanian, "The Slow Rise of Iranian Women", The Diplomat, 22 September 2013. Retrieved on 09.10.2013 from: http://thediplomat.com/2013/09/22/the-slow-rise-of-irans-women/ (accessed 9 October 2013)

32 Ibid

33 Moinifar, "Participation of Women in Iran's Polity" , p.25

34 As quoted by Moinifar, "Participation of Women in Iran's Polity".

End of War and the Construction Era (1988-1997)

Most of the above mentioned positive developments happened after the end of Iran-Iraq war. For 8 years, all of the state's resources were focused on war and it was not possible to pay appropriate attention to women's demands and problems. "Indeed, during the war, the government was devoid of specific economic, social, and cultural policies on women, to the extent that women had no place in the First (Development) Plan, implemented during the war".[35] Yet, verbal privileges were bestowed on them as mothers and wives who devotionally sent their sons and husbands to war and provided support for men in front.

The 1988 end of war which was used by political elites as justification for all shortcomings, brought about the era of reconstruction. A significant development in this era was emphasis on the importance of "proficiency"; where as in the immediate aftermath of the revolution commitment to Islamic and revolutionary principles was the prime factor for anybody to get appointed for a job. The appointee's level of proficiency was not of so much importance as his/her adherence to revolutionary ideals. During the construction era; realizing the need for their proficiency, many female specialists who were dismissed due to their opposition to revolutionary principles (i.e. *hijab*) were let back to their posts.

The number of female MPs in the fourth round of parliament assembled in the construction era was doubled compared to the previous three rounds. "In addition to their numerical increase, they were also more educated than their predecessors; some were active as professionals prior to their election."[36] Nevertheless, they were mostly passive and lacked confidence in pursuing bills which could help improving women's condition in the male dominated Iranian parliament, so much that next term female candidates criticized them openly and promised their constituency that they would take a more proactive approach towards women's issues. These candidates who were often highly educated and vocal, represented "a new generation of Islamist women technocrats whose ongoing interaction with the Islamist state and an emerging civil society has led them to perceive politics as a potent and necessary activity to-

35 A. Kian, *Women and Politics in Post-Islamist Iran: the Gender Conscious Drive to Change*, 1999. http://www.wluml.org/node/323 (accessed 10 October 2013)

36 Ibid

wards the acquisition of women's rights."[37] The end of the war also diluted the securitized atmosphere which had overwhelmed the society, preventing serious debates and criticisms on the basis that it would be abused by the enemy or affect the morale of men in the front line. Publication of several new magazines, newspapers etc. provided the opportunity for more informed debates on various issues including those related to women.

Due to lack of women's representatives in high ranking government positions, the Office of Women's Affairs, an offshoot of the presidential bureau was established in 1992 with the mission to detect problems and shortcomings and to propose solutions to ameliorate women's status and their economic, social, cultural and political role. This was followed by the 1998 establishment of the Social and Cultural Council of Women to promote women's economic and social activity under the auspices of the High Council of Cultural Revolution, chaired by President Rafsanjani. Most scholars, who have studied Iranian women's post revolution movement and conditions agree that the tiny plant of Iranian women's movement accelerated its growth during the reconstruction era, and flourished during the reform era. According to statistics, the number of female managers in public services increased by 63% from 1989 to 2004.[38]

Reform Era (1997-2005)

The reform era started with the presidency of Hujatol Islam Khatami who took the office in 1997, on the platform of highly popular vote particularly by women and youth. "In this sense the 1997 election marked the political coming of age of Iranian women."[39] His government was the first since the revolution to include female members as well. The Head of Environmental Protection Department with the rank of vice- president and the Head of the Center for Women's Participation in the rank of president's advisor, were the two taboo-breaking administration members.

An interesting trend in the reform era was the development of new concepts and definitions in various areas such as *Dialogue Among Civilizations* in the arena of international relations. This trend was the result of increased interaction between intellectuals and policy makers. As a result of such interactions the definition of the *'ideal*

37 Ibid

38 Moinifar, "Participation of Women in Iran's Polity", p.30.

39 H. Hoodfar & Sadeghi, F., "Against All Odds: The Women's Movement in the Islamic Republic of Iran".

woman' was evolved from the minimalist picture drawn by conservatives, which is much closer to a housemaid to a maximalist image portrayed by reformists. According to this image "the ideal female citizen of Iran is one who successfully responds to the demands of a traditional, Islamizing society while preparing herself for the exigencies of modernization and the commands of a revolutionary society. The *new Muslim woman* is, therefore, one who abides by the forces of tradition by assuming her role and responsibilities as wife and mother, acting as the "pivot" of the home and agent of stability in the family. Meanwhile, she is expected to be a responsible member of the society, involved in socio-political affairs."[40]

Khatami's support for the development of civil society paved the way for the expansion and further activation of numerous nongovernmental organizations, including those which focused on women or issues related to them. "The number of registered women's NGOs rose from 67 in 1997 to 480 in 2005".[41] Establishment of *city and local councils* was another strategy undertaken by Khatami's administration to enhance the role of civil society in the running of the country. This provided women with another opportunity to increase their political presence in the society. "In 2005, 11% of all elected city council representatives were women."[42] The social environment became more relaxed, providing opportunity for open debates and discussions of women's problems through different media; from published books and journals, to conferences, various art platforms such as film, theatre and paintings.

Through these media, state policies towards women were questioned as "patriarchy in Islamic clothing."[43] Since the male interpretation of Islamic sources were used (or rather abused) to strip women of their most basic rights; religious female activists who had by then specialized in religious studies as well as their own field of proficiency, managed to inform the public of a rather different view of Islam towards women based on authentic religious sources such as Quran and Hadith. Through this strategy they override the monopoly of interpretation from male jurisprudents, and managed

40 G. Mehran, "The Female Educational Experience in Iran: A Paradox of Tradition and Modernity" in *Middle Eastern women on the Move: Openings for and the Constraints on Women's Political Participation in the Middle East.* (2001), pp:69-75.

41 Z. Mir Hosseini, "Is Time on Iranian Women Protesters' Side?", *MERIP Report*, 2006. http://www.merip.org/mero/mero061606 (accessed 11 October 2013).

42 Moinifar, "Participation of Women in Iran's Polity", p.30.

43 Hoodfar as quoted by Mahdi, "The Iranian Women's Movement", p. 440.

to convince more open minded legislators and authorities to review previous legislations concerning women and submit bills for improving women's status. "Women, working in different arenas and with varied voices and tactics, cleverly used the conflict between various political factions within the clerical establishment to their advantage by pitting one set of religious interpretation of texts against the other, one faction of *ulama* against the other, and lay intellectuals against the clerics. They questioned prevailing gender segregation, unequal division of labor, widespread domestic violence, and the organizational and exploitative biases within the Iranian Islamic family."[44] Nevertheless, efforts in improving the legal status of women did not bear much fruit. "The reformist-dominated Sixth Majles (2000-2004) passed many bills in women's favor, though most -- including the proposal to ratify the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW) -- were rejected by the Guardian Council, the unelected clerical body constitutionally empowered to veto legislation for adherence to *Islamic* principles."[45]

In the cold atmosphere of frustration, came the 2003 Nobel Peace Prize awarded to the female Iranian lawyer Shirin Ebadi, the famous women's and children's activist which demonstrated the highest international recognition of Iranian women's movement was reinvigorating not only for all women activists; but also for the whole Iranian civil society which had become exhausted by systematic challenges and pressures.

Destruction Era (2005-2013)

With the election of Mahmud Ahmadinejad in June 2005, the hard liners returned to power once again. Prior to that, they had already won the 7th round of parliament elections. With their return to power, "women generally fared poorly on several fronts. The momentum for change built up over the previous 16 years virtually evaporated."[46] However, an important fact that should be kept in mind is that by the end of Ahmadinejad's two terms presidency, the country is in ruins from every important aspect. Due to mismanagement, widespread corruptions, and increased sanctions the economy is on the verge of collapse. According to the newly appointed president,

44 Mahdi, "The Iranian Women's Movement, pp. 440-441.

45 Mir Hosseini, "Is Time on Iranian Women Protesters' Side?".

46 H. Esfandiari, "The Women's Movement" in Wright, R (ed.) *The Iran Primer: Power, Politics, and U.S. Policy,* (United States Institute of Peace Press, 2010).

the treasury is empty with the savings swept away.[47] As a result of a confrontational approach in its international affairs during Ahmadinejad's administration; Iran has become more isolated than ever since the end of war with Iraq. The situation in other areas is not better, if not worse. Therefore, calling this period as 'destruction era' does not seem unfair, nor hyperbole considering the disastrous outcome of his eight years governance and the reversal of many considerable developments achieved in the post revolution era, in this period. Issues related to women have not been an exception in the whole trend of developments in the country.

Initially either to appease women by portraying a female friendly image of his administration, or to disguise his excessive discriminatory approach towards women, or may be with other political goals in mind, Ahmadinejad issued a directive to let female fans enter the stadiums for football matches; a directive which was attacked by clergies and vetoed by conservative elements of the state. However, it was not long before his government showed its true color. *Zanan*, the famous feminist magazine was closed down. The number of women city and local councilors dropped dramatically, and so did the number of women MP's.[48] In his election campaign, Ahmadinejad had not made any promises considering women's rights and his promise of spreading social justice never came close to reality even if it was meant for women as well as men. However, he had emphasized that women's *hijab* would not be an issue of scrutiny. Nevertheless, just a few months into his government, the police crackdown on women with attires deemed inappropriate by the government started. For several years women have been stopped by the police, getting warnings or being penalized for not observing appropriate dress code. Furthermore, "the Presidential Office for Women became the *Presidential Office for Women and Family*, changing the name and goals of the only governmental institution devoted to female issues." Adding the word 'Family' was an indication of new direction of the office and the government's view of women's role in the society, "downplaying female participation in the workplace and even in politics."[49]

47 President Rohani's Tehran University speech for students, 15 October 2013.

48 Ibid

49 A. Akbari, "Prospect for Reform? the Iranian Elections; the Women's Movement: an Emerging Power" in Kitchen, Nicholas (ed.), *IDEAS reports - strategic updates*, (London: London School of Economics and Political Science, 2009)

As the rate of female university entrants reached 65% compared to that of 35% for men, new restrictions have been applied on the courses which could be studied by female students and their choice of universities since 2006, apparently to curtail the negative consequences of gender imbalance in education. Moreover, the new "Family Protection Act" which the Ahmedinejad government submitted to the parliament in 2008, would have taken away the limited legal protections that women had as it would have provided greater freedom for men to commit polygamy or look for temporary marriage. However, the proposal was faced with such an uproar from women in all levels of the society, seculars as well as religious and with such serious criticism even from intellectual men; that was not passed by the parliament.

Following the 2009 controversial election and securitization of the country; women's movements were further hampered by systematic restrictions such as denying necessary permits to hold peaceful public demonstrations. Women's rights advocates were frequently charged with "endangering national security" and "contributing to the enemy's propaganda against the regime." The authorities have pointed to real or supposed foreign funding as evidence that civic groups are involved in a U.S.-led plan for "regime change."[50]

The only development which seemed positive for women was the fact that for the first time after the revolution, a woman was appointed as the government's minister. However, the appointment was cleverly designed to keep conflicting sides happy. While trying to send a positive signal to those who were pushing for promotion of women's status in the society; the appointee had a history of conservative approach towards women related issues. Dr. Dastjerdi, the female Minister of Health, had supported bills which stripped women of their rights to get divorced, have custody of their children after divorce, or have an abortion when she was a member of parliament. Nevertheless, following her serious criticisms of the government for the allocation of budgets for medicine imports; she was released from service by Ahmadinejad.

In 2012, a new bill was passed in the parliament upon which travel restrictions were imposed on single women under the age of 40. The new passport law "required single women up to the age of

50 Tohidi, "Iran".

40 to obtain official permission from their father or male guardian before they could acquire foreign travel documents".[51] Married women are already obliged to have their husband's official consent for travelling abroad. The bill was viewed as yet another attack on women's basic rights and triggered serious opposition from women and women's rights activists. Eventually in Feb 2013 the head of parliament's Women and Family Committee, announced the cancellation of the controversial bill.

The Era of Prudence & Hope (2013-Present)

Following his much celebrated victory in June, Rohani took the office in August 2013 and introduced his government of 'prudence and hope' under extremely difficult domestic and international circumstances, which was partly described in the above section. In his campaign, he had spoken against gender discrimination "and said women and men should enjoy the same rights and opportunities" and had "promised to establish a Women's Affairs Ministry."[52]

In July 2013 in a meeting with two representatives of then the president elect, "a group of prominent Iranian women's rights activists and intellectuals have outlined some of their main demands….. To improve the circumstances of women, they said, Rohani should take a number of steps, including ending the country's "security atmosphere," removing restrictions on women's public life, and eliminating censorship on women's issues."[53] While the absence of any female minister in his cabinet disappointed some activists, out of eleven deputies the president has, three are women. Just a few months into Rohani's administration; like other parts of the society, Iranian women seem to be aware that under present dire international and economic circumstances of the country, there are more crucial issues at stake and any improvements in their status, will need time and patience as well as perseverance on their part.

51 "Proposed Bill To Limit Iranian Women's Travel Reportedly Canceled", *Radio Free Europe,* http://www.rferl.org/content/iran-bill-restrict-women-travel/24910177.html (accessed 17 October 2013).

52 G. Esfandiari, "Women's Rights Activists Tell Rohani What They Want*", Radio Free Europe*,http://www.rferl.org/content/iran-rohani-women-demands/25045159.html (accessed 17 October 2013).

53 Ibid

Conclusion

Like a small river which patiently yet steadily opens its way among the solid rocks, Iranian women have tried for more than a century to improve their status and find the place they deserve in the Iranian's male dominated patriarchal society. In this path neither the ignorance of revolutionaries nor the repressions of authoritarian regimes have managed to marginalize their active social and political presence. They have carried on their efforts despite all disappointments, challenges and dangers.

Through review of Iranian women's history of struggle for their rights the paper demonstrated that since 'equal rights' has not been institutionalized on the Iranian mindset to a degree that can seriously challenge the discriminatory principles based on patriarchic system, most governments have had an instrumental approach towards women; facilitating their cause when it suited them and forgetting their basic rights when it did not.

This in term leaves room for the argument that no matter what type of government is running the country, so long as the patriarchal structure remains intact acquiring equal rights will be a long battle if not a distant dream in which, each step forward is challenged by the agencies of the patriarchal system. Without fundamental developments in such system, any progress can be reversed by change of governments and circumstances (i.e. Post revolution developments and destruction era changes). Therefore the most logical long term strategy to guarantee women's rights is to change the underlying patriarchal system of the society through various means including education, raising awareness and internalizing values which help to overcome this system in the upbringing of new generations.

Such change could not of course happen overnight, but it can be accelerated by various means. Among these means and even of most importance is 'education'. As demonstrated in this paper, the increased rate and level of education provided Iranian women with further opportunities for social and political participation. Although still relatively limited; but some even managed to get to high ranking managerial and influential positions both in public and private sectors which consequently gave them the opportunity to call and push for further change. On the other hand, through education religious women activists were able to review and interpret

religious teachings based on scholarly methods and consequently pose serious questions to male interpretations of Islamic teachings. Through this practice they provided legislators with alternative legal options. Though in many cases legislator's effort for introducing legal amendments more favorable to women has been futile in the face of rejections by the conservative men only 'Guardian Council' (i.e. during reform era); approved cases has given hope for further efforts.

New generations of Iranian women with higher levels of education and socio-political involvement, cannot comply with the subordinate status that the patriarchic system expects them to. Moreover, new debates on religious teachings have raised their awareness regarding various laws which are supposedly *shariah* based. This has enabled them to question the authenticity of these laws and challenge legislators for further reviews.

As Massialas has argued, when the system is not congenial with the education or other social agencies, it has to change or it will collapse.[54] As the present Iranian socio-political system based on the combination of patriarchy and male interpreted jurisprudence is becoming increasingly uncongenial to new generations, particularly of women; change is the only option left for survival, and women have become agents of many changes in this system.

54 B. Massialas, "Education and Political Development", *Comparative Education Review*, Vol. 21, No. 2/3, The State of the Art, Jun. - Oct.1977, pp. 274-295.

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Exploring the Causes of Revolutions in Tunisia and Egypt

*Maria SYED**

Abstract
The theory put forth by fourth generation of revolutionary theorists is followed in this article to understand the causes of revolutions in Tunisia and Egypt in 2011. The study looks into the internal factors and external factors that led to the revolutions. It finds out that the cause was not one but a complex mix of various factors that had been simmering for too long under the rule of authoritarian regimes; they were neither purely economic nor political or social in character. The study tested the fourth generation of revolutionary theory. The findings show that the conceptual framework of the theory is applicable and fully explains the causes of revolutions in Tunisia and Egypt.

Keywords: Tunisia, Egypt, Revolution, Authoritarian regimes

Tunus ve Mısır'daki Devrimlerin Nedenlerini Keşfetmek

Özet
Bu makalede devrimci teorisyenlerin dördüncü kuşağı tarafından geliştirilen teori, 2011 yılında Tunus ve Mısır'da devrimlerin nedenlerini anlamak için kullanılmıştır. Çalışma devrimlere yol açan iç faktörler ve dış etkenlere bakar. Çalışma sebebin bir değil fakat birden fazla karmaşık faktörün bir araya gelmesinden oluştuğu sonucuna varır. Bu faktörler çok uzun süre otoriter rejimlerin egemenliği altında oluşmuştur ve bunlar ne salt siyasi ne salt sosyal içerikli faktörlerdir. Çalışma, devrimci teorinin dördüncü neslini test etmektedir. Bulgular, teorinin kavramsal çerçevesinin uygulanabilir ve Tunus ve

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Mısır'daki devrimlerin nedenlerinin tamamıyla açıklayabilir nitelikte olduğunu göstermektedir.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Tunus, Mısır, Devrim, Otoriter Rejimler.

استكشاف أسباب اندلاع ثورتى تونس ومصر

ملخص

تتبنى هذه المقالة النظرية المطروحة بواسطة الجيل الرابع من مُنظِرى الثورات لفهم أسباب اندلاع الثورة فى كل من تونس ،ومصر فى العام ٢٠١١. حيث تقوم الدراسة بالنظر الي العوامل الداخلية والخارجية التى أدت إلى قيام هاتين الثورتين. و التي اتضح من خلالها أن ما حدث لم يكن ناجماً عن سبب واحد، بل مزيج معقد من العوامل المختلفة والتى أخذت تنضج ببطيء على مدار أمدٍ طويلٍ جدا تحت حكم الأنظمة الإستبدادية. حيث لم تكن أسبابا اقتصادية أو سياسية أو اجتماعية فقط. قامت الدراسة باختبار فرضيات الجيل الرابع للنظرية الثورية .حيث توضح نتائج الدراسة إلى أن الإطار المفاهيمى لهذه النظرية ملائماً ويفسر بصورة جيدة أسباب قيام الثورة فى كل من تونس ومصر.

كلمات مفتاحية: تونس،مصر ، ثورة ، نظرية، أسباب، استبدادى، أنظمة حكم، شعب.

Introduction

The twenty-three year long rule of Tunisia's authoritarian leader President Zine al-Abidine Ben Ali came to an end when on January 14, 2011, he fled the country. The success-story of Tunisia sparked region-wide uprisings. The next country that saw successful ouster of dictator was Egypt where President Husni Mubarak had ruled for thirty years. Their long rule has been mired with hardships for the people. The cause was not one but a complex mix of various factors that had been simmering for too long. They were neither purely economic nor political or social in character. The study is different from the literature produced so far on the subject as it takes into account a theoretical framework in explaining the causes. The study explores the causes of revolutions in light of the fourth generation of revolutionary theory. The aim of the study is to assess the relevance of fourth generation of revolutionary theory in explaining the causes of revolution; whether it holds true in explaining the new revolutions. The study analyses internal and international contexts for bringing a revolution.

Conceptual Framework

Jack A. Goldstone stands out among the fourth generation of revolutionary theorists. Other theorists include John Walton, John Foran, Farideh Farhi, Michael Taylor, and James Scott. Having propounded the classification of revolutionary theorists into four generations, Goldstone specifies why the fourth generation was advanced from earlier theories. The revolutions witnessed after the 1980's beginning with Iranian revolution could not be explained with the previous theoretical frameworks. Nevertheless, he believes in incorporating the strengths of previous three generations. It is pertinent that Goldstone's theoretical propositions are outlined here. The details will be discussed under the relevant headings so as to avoid repetition.

The fourth generation of revolutionary theorists explicates that international environment is significant in spreading the ideologies. Ideas transcend boundaries. The world has seen many waves of revolutions where international influences did not only trigger the revolution but also its eventual outcome.[1] International intervention also influences revolutions. There have been many instances

1 J. Goldstone, "Toward a Fourth Generation of Revolutionary Theory", *Annual Review of Political Science* Vol. 4, June 2001, p.145.

where outside powers have intervened militarily and diplomatically to shape the revolutions. Sometimes the revolutions have been invoked by lack or withdrawal of support for the regime and absence of outside intervention.[2]

Goldstone believes that international environment will be relevant to revolution only if the internal conditions are favourable. There are many things that need to be focused while exploring the internal conditions of the state that are favourable for a revolution. These are: performance of states vis-à-vis goals set by themselves and according to expectations of the elites and popular groups and the availability of resources to fulfill these goals; the level of unity among elites;opposition elites joining the popular groups for protests.

International Context

The international context is important for a revolution to succeed. The international powers can refuse to support the government. Another way international powers can influence is by restricting the government to use force against the revolutionary forces.[3] The support international powers provide to the authoritarian regimes is critical for the survival of the regimes.

For long the West had been keen of democratizing the Arab world. The West hoped that with globalization and increase in communication and cultural exchanges, democracy would come to the region. After the third wave of democratization particularly after the revolutions in East Europe, the hope for spreading of democracy in the region was renewed. In 2003 the global democratic movement particularly in Greater Middle East saw a new impetus. President George W. Bush launched his freedom agenda for the Middle East region insisting on regime change, people's rights and freedoms. The invasion of Iraq was based on pretext of democratizing the region. Hence, many believe that these revolutions could not have come without the support of West. Mass protests and uprisings were the chosen tools for removing the despots by the West.

Considering that the West, particularly the United States, was aligned with the most entrenched despots in the Arab world; should the rhetoric of democratization of the Arab region be taken seri-

2 Ibid.

3 J. Goldstone, "Understanding the Revolutions of 2011", *Foreign Affairs*,Vol. 90, No. 3, May/June 2011, p. 8.

ously? For decades, the US has backed these repressive regimes. They favoured status quo over freedom lest instability arises in the region. Egyptian support for the US was critical for so many reasons – Arab-Israeli peace and Iran's nuclear program etc. These tyrannical rulers were also needed for keeping the Islamist forces at bay. Mubarak was considered indispensable despite the fact that Egyptian people despised him.[4] The West could never have wished to overthrow them. The Tunisian regime made a good impression to the West of its economic miracle, democratic gradualism and secularism. Ironically, this earned high praise from the US and EU. This impression helped the Tunisian regime in earning international legitimacy and strengthened Ben Ali's authoritarian rule.[5]

Was the international context permissive of uprisings? The answer to this question is still being debated. Tariq Ramadan's account is one such narrative, a very obscure one. Ramadan however insists that to out rightly reject western support to these uprisings would be wrong.[6] The international support can be divided into two sections: one at the regime level from one government to another; and the other at the societal level, between the people or civil society members.

At the societal level, the active support of West has come in the form of logistical support for resistance groups, their training and exerting indirect pressure on the regimes. The social media savvy activists received training from American NGOs. The training was largely imparted between 2006 and 2008 and focused on inculcating democratic values, non-violent methods of confrontation with the regimes through symbols and slogans, influencing mass psychology and use of social media. Some of the most famous American corporations such as Google, Twitter and Yahoo were providing trainings and disseminating information so as to actively help the activists. Center for Applied Non-violent Action and Strategies (CANVAS), a training centre established in Serbia, has trained many people from the Middle East and North Africa region.[7]

4 A. Boukhars, "The Arab Revolutions for Dignity", *American Foreign Policy Interests: The Journal of the National Committee on American Foreign Policy*,Vol. 33, No. 2, March 2011, pp. 62-64.

5 F. Cavatorta and R. H. Haugbolle, "The End of Authoritarian Rule and the Mythology of Tunisia under Ben Ali", *Mediterranean Politics*,Vol. 17, No. 2, 2012, p. 182.

6 T. Ramadan, *The Arab Awakening Islam and the New Middle East*, (London: Penguin Books, 2012), p. 5.

7 Ibid., pp. 6-9.

On the other hand, the revolutionaries insist that revolutions were shaped by local factors. Hadi ben Abbas, Minister of State for Foreign Affairs of Tunisia asserts that "the revolution is indigenous and spontaneous". There was no foreign hand; and no strings were pulled by foreign powers.[8]

The revolutions originatedin Tunisia. The Egyptian revolution took inspiration from Tunisian success. Tunisian revolution proved to be 'Arab Gdansk'.[9] The breakdown of the notion of invincibility of the regime was broken down and helped the Egyptians to overcome their fears. From Egypt, the domino effect hit the entire Arab region and even beyond to Spain and the US – Indignados and Occupy Wall Street protest movements respectively. The citizens in the Arab World quickly imitated and took to the streets showing open hostility to the authoritarian regimes and demanding change. The reason Egypt became such an inspiration was due to its geostrategic importance in the region, the most populated Arab country and a major Arab nation. The events in Egypt also got a much better coverage than the Tunisian revolution due to lack of journalists and correspondents and reliance on citizen journalism in the latter.

The Western decision to continue or withdraw their support to the authoritarian regimes came at the last minute and with much reluctance. The international powers did not stand by the regimes of Mubarak and Ben Ali. As both autocrats found themselves standing alone, deserted by their international friends. Tunisia was an important testing ground for the international powers to weigh support of Ben Ali against other options.[10]

The decision to withdraw support of the autocrats was not that easy and came out after a lot of debate and divisions amongst the policy makers in the West. In the US two schools of thoughts existed with regard to this. One considered Mubarak as an indispensable ally in the region and a bulwark against the Islamist threat. Israel openly declared Mubarak as its best friend and wanted continuation of policies vis-à-vis Mubarak. The other group was in favour of Mubarak stepping down. It believed that the US would benefit from

8 Talk on "Tunisia and the Arab Spring" by Hadi ben Abbas, Minister of State for Foreign Affairs of Tunisia, at Institute of Strategic Studies Islamabad, September 20, 2012.

9 Gdansk was where the Polish Solidarity Movement began and from where the chain of falling of communist regimes in Eastern Europe began.

10 E. Stein, "Revolution or Coup? Egypt's Fraught Transition", *Survival: Global Politics and Strategy*,Vol. 54, No. 4, August 2012, p. 49.

a friendly regime in Egypt that is supported by the people.[11] But the final decision came in favour of the people as President Barack Obama stated that the US wanted to stand at the right side of the history. The withdrawal of the US support for Mubarak was critical in downfall of the regime. Had the US and Western countries continued to support the regimes and intervened, the revolutions would have turned messy and may not have succeeded. The withdrawal of the US support for Mubarak was significant in the downfall of the regime.

Internal Conditions

The ripeness of internal condition, as noted above, depends upon a number of factors: performance of state; level of unity among elites; and opposition elites joining the popular groups for protests. The internal conditions of the state are much more critical than the external environment. They are analyzed in detail below:

Performance of State

According to Goldstone, states may run into trouble if they are unable to meet the desired goals either because the goals are too ambitious or because of decline in state resources. The reduction in state resources can be attributed to many reasons: reduced revenue generation; failure to adjust revenue to inflation and growing population; excess borrowing by state; corruption draining funds for constructive purposes; change in prices of key commodities affecting economic growth and state revenues.[12]

Writing recently, Goldstone adds stability of state is linked to two aspects – effectiveness and legitimacy.[13] Effectiveness entails that state is carrying out state function i.e., providing security, promoting economic growth, delivering social services etc. Legitimacy on the other hand refers to whether Despite being ineffective, states may gain elite support if they are considered "just", according to prevalent social norms, by the elites and population. If the states are ineffective but they may gain elite support if they are considered just. The states that are unjust will not be challenged as long

11 Ibid., p. 50.

12 Goldstone, "Toward a Fourth Generation of Revolutionary Theory", pp. 147-148.

13 J. Goldstone, "Pathways to State Failure", *Conflict Management and Peace Science*,Vol. 25, No. 4, September 2008, p. 285.

as they are perceived effective in carrying out its goals. States that either possess effectiveness or legitimacy are unstable and will fail after circumstances become favourable. States that have lost both effectiveness and legitimacy will be failed. The states may survive as long as it is perceived too strong.[14]

Legitimacy

The legitimacy crisis in Tunisia and Egypt was generated by a number of factors – authoritarian regimes, repression, state predation and growing alienation of the people. The legitimacy of the regimes in Tunisia and Egypt was very low.[15] Both regimes suffered from a pervasive legitimacy crisis: the decades-long authoritarian rule; politics solely dominated by ruling parties; abusive powers of the security forces; corruption and inequalities.

"A government can said to be legitimate not only when it derives its authority and powers from the people, but when it is also accountable to them in all aspects, including the effective protection of lives and properties, respect for the rule of law, as well as the human security needs of the people."[16] Any government who does not meet these requirements does not have a broad support base.

a. Authoritarianism

The Tunisian and Egyptian revolutions were the result of political legitimacy crisis. The one-man shows run by the autocracies and the possible father-to-son transfer of power only added to the resentment of these regimes by the people.

In Tunisia, when Ben Ali took power he made false promises of taking political reforms, ensuring law and order, and enhancing public liberties. He also made a bargain with the people that he would gradually make liberal reforms if the people did not try to destabilize the regime. A change in leadership gave hope to people. As he succeeded in securing his rule, he adopted dictatorial policies and stringent crackdowns on opposition.[17]

14 Goldstone, "Toward a Fourth Generation of Revolutionary Theory", p. 148.

15 J. S. Omotola, "Legitimacy Crisis and 'Popular Uprisings' in North Africa", *Strategic Analysis*,Vol. 36, No. 5, September 2012, p. 714.

16 Ibid.

17 Cavatorta and Haugbolle, "The End of Authoritarian Rule and the Mythology of Ben Ali",

Since coming into power in 1987, Ben Ali had won five presidential elections, and the last one in 2009 with almost ninety percent of the vote. He also eliminated the clause that forbid rule for three terms through a referendum. The ruling party -- the Democratic Constitutional Assembly (RCD) -- and his deputies were strictly under Presidential control. The activities of opposition parties were also under strict surveillance, their expression curtailed and their independence from the regime highly skeptical. They just played the role of 'loyal opposition'.[18]

In Egypt, the two pillars of authoritarian resilience were National Democratic Party (NDP) and the People's Assembly. The NDP was to ensure harmony among the supporters of the regime. NDP was made up of political and economic elites, as well as neoliberal businessmen and academics. These elites ran for elections as they knew that entry to People's Assembly meant access to state resources. There were seven elections held in the Mubarak's era that brought the ruling party repeatedly to the parliament. [19] The elections that were held in 2010 in Egypt saw a voter turnout of twenty-five percent. This low turnout was indicative of Egyptians' lack of faith in the political process. The elections were highly rigged and played a part in augmenting opposition to the regime.[20]

Civil society organizations were state-managed in Egypt. Some of the prominent civil society leaders were co-opted to have a client relationship with them. The strategy of the regime was to promote as many civil society organizations as possible so that there are thousands of them fighting each other for funds rather than a few strong organizations that could threaten the regime. The regime prohibited foreign funding for these organizations. The state monitored their activities and legal status.[21]

In Tunisia, the civil society organizations were prohibited to indulge into political activities. The civil society organizations came under

pp. 187-188.

18 Ibid.

19 T. Masoud, "The Road to (and from) Liberation Square", *Journal Of Democracy*,Vol. 22, No. 3, July 2011,p. 22.

20 Ibid., p. 24.

21 B. Zguric, "Challenges for democracy in countries affected by the 'Arab Spring'", *Islam and Christian-Muslim Relations*, Vol 23, No. 4, September 2012,p. 429.

the Ministry of Interior; had to get registered with it and seek its approval for public assemblies. Intimidation and harassment of families of human rights activists was commonplace.

Both authoritarian leaders considered themselves above law; above any political system, party organizations, military establishments or any other institution. "These regimes were exhilarated, even intoxicated by their own 'cult of personality'".[22] The legitimacy of the authoritarian rulers was widely questioned. There was a strong desire for 'just' rule; the people yearned for political and civil rights and wanted accountability of the regime. The rubber-stamp legislatures carrying out executive orders frustrated the people.

b. Repression

The rule of these authoritarian regimes was made possible through a large security and intelligence structure. Ben Ali depended on his RCD party; a Ministry of Communication that suppressed any voices of dissent; and security services that bypassed the army and kept the opposition forces at bay. Ben Ali put in place a large and strong security structure.[23] Tunisia's police was as large as of France. Even amongst the authoritarian regimes of the MENA region, the Ben Ali regime was exceptionally repressive. Any kind of opposition by the civil society, foreign or Arab press and even internet was banned. Tunisia was considered as one of the most dangerous places for journalists and also "most hostile Arab regime to internet freedom'.[24]

The regimes in Tunisia and in Egypt successfully instilled fear amongst the public. The regime was considered vital for holding the society and nation together; and in absence of regime the society would fall to sectarianism and communal strife. Secondly, the regimes made sure that each citizen was under surveillance and any word uttered against the regime could reach them. Thus, citizens avoided talking about regime to each other and remained aloof. Lastly, the regimes portrayed themselves as indispensable against the Zionist and Western threat. Allegedly, the Arab identity and honour was at stake that needed a strong repressive government for

22 F. Khusrokhavar, *The New Arab Revolutions that shook the World* (Boulder: Paradigm, 2012), p. 36.

23 Tunisia's security structure: Military force personnel 35,000; Security forces 130,000; Presidential guard 8,000; the National Guard, 20,000. The security structure also comprised of political police, tourism police, and university police. P. J. Schraeder and H. Redissi, "Ben Ali's Fall", *Journal of Democracy,* Vol. 22, No. 3, July 2011, p. 6.

24 Khusrokhavar, *The New Arab Revolutions that shook the World,* p. 33.

its defense. These fears deeply entrenched in citizens provided the much needed mechanism of repression to the regimes.

Borna Zguric explains how this coercive mechanism operated. Through promoting patrimonial structure i.e., employing relatives and loyalists on significant posts the coercive mechanism worked smoothly. The regimes had imposed emergency that helped legalize use of force and coercive apparatus. In Egypt, the state of emergency lasted from 1967 to 2011.[25]

As part of economic modernization, the regimes promoted internet and telecommunications. Yet, the regimes were well-aware of its implications and kept a close track of developments there. They closed down internet for any length of time whenever they wanted and arrested bloggers. The lack of political freedom – right to express, protest, and fair parliamentary elections – alienated the people.

c. State Predation

The economic miseries of the people were accentuated by endemic corruption of the regime. In Tunisia, the corruption of the regime grew incessantly. The ruling family, including the extended family of hundred and forty people, was involved in corruption. As revealed by wikileaks, half of the businessmen were related to Ben Ali and his family. This network was referred as 'the family' in Tunisia.[26] Tunisians were particularly weary of Ben Ali's second wife, her family and her lavish spendings. She and her siblings controlled a major chunk of business in Tunisia and owned as many as 180 companies.[27]

The predatory behavior of Ben Ali and his clan, exploiting political contacts and security structure badly destroyed the economy and traditional business class. The mismanagement of the privatization scheme, giving import licenses on selective basis and general predation by Ben Ali clan in numerous sectors of the economy created resentment against the regime.
Corruption in Egypt was so brazen that it had become deeply en-

25 Zguric, "Challenges for democracy in countries affected by the 'Arab Spring'", p. 422.

26 L. Anderson, "Demystifying the Arab Spring", *Foreign Affairs*,Vol 90, No. 3, May,/June 2011 http://www.foreignaffairs.com/articles/67693/lisa-anderson/demystifying-the-arab-spring (accessed April 7, 2013)

27 Schraeder and Redissi, "Ben Ali's Fall", p. 9.

trenched in the structure creating a wide imbalance in the society and also undermining the economy. Corruption had become institutionalized; contracts for tourism and construction were allotted on favouritism to large asset holders. As much as 95 percent of the population was unable to be part of the growing economy.[28] The discontentment among the people was aggravated by sight of a certain group having access to a better life. The wealth of certain elites only added to the frustration of masses.

d. Dignity

Abuse and violence suffered at the hands of security forces made the people feel powerless. This feeling of alienation and powerlessness resulted in calls for 'dignity' and 'pride'.[29] "Political repression and social and economic inequality was not enough to trigger a revolution. Tunisians wanted more", it was dignity. For this reason, the Tunisians prefer to call their revolution as 'Dignity Revolution'.[30]

The dictators in Tunisia and Egypt openly showed contempt for public and did not care how public felt for their arbitrary rule. They failed to recognize that the new generation was not ready to continue with subservience. They yearned to live a dignified life, a life free of fears. Educated and connected to the world through communication networks – this youth was well-aware of their rights and was not as quiescent as their parents to the autocrats' rule. "Dignity and freedom … are the values that ordinary citizens hold dear".[31]

The dignity was also craved for at the international level. The alliance between the West and the regimes in the Arab world was widely questioned by the Arab masses in the aftermath of 9/11 and Iraq War. The outcome of war in Iraq and the lingering Israel-Palestine issue and policies of the US and West generated anti-Western feelings and opposition to the alliance. The people demanded foreign policy depictive of national aspirations particularly independence from the West.[32]

28 B. MacQueen, "The Political Economy of Transition in Egypt", *Ortadoğu Etütleri,*Vol. 4, No. 1, July 2012, p. 18.

29 T. Behr and M. Aaltola, "The Arab Uprising Causes, Prospects and Implication", *FIIA Briefing Paper* 76, March 2011, www.fiia.fi/assets/publications/bp76.pdf (accessed April 11, 2013)

30 Talk on "Tunisia and the Arab Spring" by Hadi ben Abbas.

31 M. Pace and F. Cavatorta, "The Arab Uprisings in Theoretical Perspective – An Introduction", *Mediterranean Politics*,Vol. 17, No. 2, July 2012,p. 132.

32 R. Aliboni, 'The International Dimension of the Arab Spring', *The International Spectator:*

The Egyptian protestors complained about loss of pride at the international level. The Egyptians had taken pride as a leader of Arab world under Jamal Abdul Nasser. Under Mubarak Egypt toed American line and had no independent foreign policy of its own. Economic and security ties with Israel were also increasingly questioned by the Egyptians who considered these shameful. Hence "reclaiming Egypt's lost dignity in the international arena" was also a motive for Egyptians.[33]

Effectiveness

Goldstone bleives states may run into trouble if they are unable to meet the desired goals either because the goals are too ambitious or because of decline in state resources. The reduction in state resources can be attributed to many reasons: fall in revenues; failure to adjust revenue with inflation and growing population; excess borrowing by state; corruption draining funds for constructive purposes; change in prices of key commodities affecting economic growth and state revenues.[34] Tunisia and Egypt had grave socioeconomic problems that contributed towards revolution.

The socialist wave of the 1960's in the Arab world resulted in comprehensive economic and political reforms. These reforms made the state a sole provider of welfare services and economic opportunities in return for people giving up their political rights. However a number of factors, predominantly decreasing oil prices, corruption and growing population, curtailed state's ability to provide welfare services. This shook foundations of the 'democratic bargain'.[35]

The economic growth of these two countries was satisfactory. Egypt and Tunisia were particularly appreciated by the international institutions such as IMF and World Bank for their neo-liberal policies and achievements.[36] The economic performance of Tunisia under Ben Ali's entire rule was not that poor. During the late 1990's there was sufficient macro-economic growth at 5.6 percent. The growth rate dropped to 3.7 percent in 2010. The neo-liberal economic poli-

Italian Journal of International Affairs, Vol 46, No. 4, January 2012, pp. 6-8.

33 Behr and Aaltola, "The Arab Uprising Causes, Prospects and Implications".

34 Goldstone, "Toward a Fourth Generation of Revolutionary Theory", pp. 147- 148.

35 H. Khashan, "The Eclipse of Arab Authoritarianism and the Challenge of Popular Sovereignty", *Third World Quarterly,* Vol. 33, No. 5, June 2012, pp. 920-921.

36 M. Altunisik, "Understanding Arab Uprisings-1", *ORSAM Foreign Policy Analysis* http://www.orsam.org.tr/en/showArticle.aspx?ID=1955 (accessed April 20, 2013)

cies invited Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) in the country. Improvements in infrastructure made Tunisia a tourist destination. The revenue earned was significantly diverted towards literacy drive; literacy rate increased manifold to 78 percent in 2008, also for women.[37] These figures are contested by some.

Extensive economic reforms were undertaken by the Mubarak regime during 2004 and 2008. FDI was welcomed in tourism sector and medium-scale industries. The reforms failed to bring meaningful results due to lack of transparency in the reform process. Due to insufficient job creation and rising inflation, the neoliberal economic reforms did not ease out people's difficulties. The global economic crisis resulted in sharp decline in demand for manufactured and agricultural goods from Egypt. The decline in revenues and increasing pressure from international financial institutions led to cut down in food subsidies. The food inflation triggered a sharp rise in general inflation.

The impact of reforms was miscalculated by the regimes; such as impact on the society – income disparity, weakening or strengthening of certain social groups, and participation or alienation from political process. The people had more expectations from the regimes. They expected a higher standard of living and political freedom.

The economic miracle would have been true for global investors or trade partners but for Tunisians it made no difference. Extreme regional disparity existed with central-west Tunisia having a poverty level of 30 percent. The development projects were never launched and social services were almost non-existent in certain areas such as Gafsa and Sidi Bouzidi where protests began. This was while the coastal regions and the northeast areas where tourism and industries was concentrated were affluent. In Tunisia, the poorer and under-developed parts of south and the center were the first to mobilize and as the movement advanced, it was joined by the developed parts.

A large youth population with high level of education facing just as high level of unemployment was a major factor for rebellion by the youth in Tunisia.[38] Unemployment level for youth was 30percent in

37 Cavatorta and Haugbolle, "The End of Authoritarian Rule and the Mythology of Ben Ali", p. 184.

38 M. Syed, "Prospects of Arab Spring in Pakistan", *IPRI Journal*,Vol. XII, No. 2, Summer

2009 and for university graduates it was 45 percent.[39] The university graduates were not accommodated by the economy as tourism required low-skill manpower. This naturally frustrated the youth with high expectations. General unemployment level was at 14 percent. Between 2008 and 2010, economic conditions became stringent for people in Tunisia. Remittances from Tunisians dropped considerably due to austerity measures in Europe. Food inflation was high, as much as 36 per cent of the house budget was spent on basic food.[40]

In Egypt too, socioeconomic miseries of the people were mounting. Inflation was high, wages were sluggish, more than 40 percent Egyptians lived below $2 per day. Cost of living was also high. Economic liberalization reforms resulted in labour strikes particularly in 2010. Continued reduction of subsidies on essential goods led to protests by the middle class. The currency had been devaluing for a long time. As a result prices of imported goods increased such as basic food items. The UN Food Agency announced in February 2011 that world food prices have hit an all time high record. Due to the high world food prices the food prices in the Arab world also rose. The MENA region imports 20-25 per cent of its total food consumption. Egyptians consumed as much as 40 percent of their income on food.[41] The income disparity also increased over the years. Egypt became the 90th country in the world for income disparity.[42]

These economic difficulties – such as high unemployment levels, poor governance, and poor socioeconomic development – compelled the people to stand up against the regimes. However, Dr. Omneia Helmy, at Egyptian Center for Economic Studies, believes, "this is not only a bread riot. This is about justice, democracy, equality, political freedom."[43]

The Arab revolutions were driven by a desire for economic, so-

2012, p. 155.

39 Cavatorta and Haugbolle, "The End of Authoritarian Rule and the Mythology of Ben Ali", p. 185.

40 Schraeder and Redissi, "Ben Ali's Fall', pp. 7- 8.

41 "Bread and Protests: the return of high food prices", *IISS Strategic Comments,* Vol. 17, No. 2, p. 1.

42 MacQueen, "The Political Economy of Transition in Egypt", p. 18.

43 "Bread and Protests: the return of high food prices", p. 1.

cial, and legal justice. As the regimes enriched themselves and the elites, the masses became more miserable. The contrast of the masses to the elite became stark over time as economic opportunities decreased for the former. The high level of income disparity and lack of opportunities made a lot of difference to the Tunisian and Egyptian people. A large middle and lower middle class saw no window of opportunity for fulfilling their dreams.

The yearning for justice by the people had resulted in show of resistance earlier too in form of protests and demonstrations. Protests and demonstrations were carried out for quite a long time in both these countries. Altunışık believes that Egypt had seen highest level of mobilization. Protests were carried out in Tunisia too prior to the revolution.[44] From 1998 to 2004, Egypt alone saw 1000 incidents of strikes and labour sit-ins. In 2004, there were 250 episodes of protests took place. The momentum of protests accelerated even further after 2005 elections and Kifaya movement.[45]

The Anti-Terrorism Law introduced by the Tunisian regime in 2003 strengthened the iron hand of the regime. Some of the opposition forces launched a hunger strike against this law. Leftists, liberalists and Islamists parties came together and formed a political alliance opposing this law. The movement is called as 18 October Movement for Rights and Freedoms. Opposing Ben Ali's political party RCD, the alliance made four major demands: legalization of all political parties; release of political prisoners; freedom of media; and general amnesty. But the regime did not fulfill these demands.[46]

In 2008, Tunisia's intelligence-based police Mukhabarat turned down a resistance in town of Redeyef, in governorate of Gafsa, southwest Tunisia. After two decades of job cuts by a state-owned company, 350 political hirings with links to Ben Ali and his regime were made. The poverty-ridden area with few jobs exploded with riots. The regime responded ruthlessly and quelled the riots. The notable feature of this incident was that the whole town protested. Fresh graduates who were unemployed staged a sit-in in front of trade union's office – *Union Generale Tunisienne du Travail* (UGTT). They were joined by low-salaried workers, widowed women and

44 Altunisik, "Understanding Arab Uprisings-1".

45 Zguric, "Challenges for democracy in countries affected by the 'Arab Spring'", p. 422.

46 Khusrokhavar, *The New Arab Revolutions that shook the World,* p. 31.

other poor people joined gradually along with their families. The movement lasted for six months; due to lack of leadership and prominent activist figures the authorities were unable to suppress it immediately. The Gafsa movement set a new pattern of protests – new actors acting in a loosely-concerted action.

Lessons learned by the social activists in Gafsa were applied [later on] in the Jasmine Revolution: a leaderless social movement, spontaneous riots, a leading role played by the "jobless graduates," strong backing by young people (high school students among others). This type of social activism was integrated into the Jasmine Revolution two years later. The Jasmine Revolution undoubtedly had an improvised character.[47]

Famous for its unofficial name '*Kifaya*', Enough, was established in 2004 in Egypt. Kifaya was formed in opposition to the re-election of Mubarak and his nomination of Gamal, his son, as his successor. This organization set the tone for resistance against Mubarak. Public criticism of Mubarak which was hitherto a hush-hush affair was initiated by Kifaya. It also succeeded in bringing together various opposition groups together. The founder of April 6th Youth Movement, Ahmed Maher was a member of Kifaya in 2005.

Next came the April 6th Movement founded by web-based activists. The April 6th movement was formed in reaction to a brutal crackdown of security forces on the workers that went on strike in *Mahalla al-Kubra*. Initially textile workers were involved in riots against the regime; later on they were joined by the youth. This resistance was an intricate combination of social media and street protests.

All these movements demonstrated that resistance against the regimes existed and the people resented the regimes. However, earlier the resistance was scattered; they were local upheavals. They had never reached the strength as they did in 2011. The regimes were able to quell the previous movements through a little concession and a lot of repression. But this time, the regimes were unable to suppress the voice of the people.

47 Ibid.

Level of Unity among Elites

Goldstone believes that the relationship among state, elites and popular groups – peasants, workers and ethnic, regional or religious minorities – is critical for bringing revolutions. Elites can be both ruling elites and opposition elites. Financially and militarily strong states that also enjoy the backing of elites are immune to resistance of popular groups. If the fissures in elite unity are becoming visible, there are chances that unity of elites will crumble.

George Joffe explains how the regimes were able to gain compliance of opposition elites through restricted political liberalization in Egypt and Tunisia. This political liberalization was designed in such a way that it could not challenge the regime. For this reason he terms them as 'liberalized autocracies'.[48] He quotes Daniel Brumberg who states, "in Arab World, a set of interdependent institutional, economic, ideological, social, and geostrategic factors has created an adaptable ecology of repression, control and partial openness."[49] The regimes had reasons for creating alliance with the elites.

The opposition groups were accommodating to the regimes as they also benefitted from the tolerance showed by the regimes towards them. Various political parties, civil society organizations and individuals were given restricted freedoms conditioned to subservience of the regime. Threat of repression was always there in case of noncompliance. In Tunisia, the regime outlawed political expression that went outside the ambit of freedom granted by the regime. Opposition elites, on their part, had interest in continuation of their power no matter how much circumscribed it was.

These elites comprised of state institutions such as Egyptian army that could secure Mubarak regime. The Mubarak and Ben Ali regimes also made alliances with the private sector. However, due to attempts of appropriation by the ruling family, the private sector became disgruntled of the Tunisian regime. The central administration of UGTT in Tunisia was also under the wings of the regime. The Tunisian regime also earned support of traditional conservative allies in rural nobility and urban merchant class. These allies and elites ensured security of the regime against any potential disobedience.

48 G. Joffe, "The Arab Spring in North Africa: origins and prospects", *The Journal of North African Studies*,Vol. 16, No. 4, December 2011, p. 511.

49 Ibid., 512.

Both Mubarak and Ben Ali tried to create an Islamic threat and brought secular opposition groups under regime's fold. There was convergence of interests of the regimes and the elites on fear of Islamists, instability and chaos if the regimes destabilized. However, as the level of repression grew, regimes became more isolated and sidelined the opposition completely. The Islamists meanwhile approached the opposition and made a rapprochement with them.[50] This Islamists-secular alliance was earlier seen during the Kifaya in Egypt in 2005 and in 18-October Organization in Tunisia in 2005.

Hosni Mubarak's health has been deteriorating for quite some time and gave rise to speculations. He was most likely to be succeeded by his second son Gamal, an international banker. Gamal was neither liked by the masses nor the military. The prospects of Mubarak's succession raised the possibility of political change in Egypt; Egyptians knew they had to avail this window of opportunity. Military was against replacing Mubarak with Gamal. They speculated that the new Egyptian leader would come from a political background in contrast to the military credentials of the past many Egyptian leaders. They were particularly not fond of Gamal succeeding Mubarak. The decision of the military to desert the regime was shaped by "the urge for continued preeminence".[51] The Egyptian military was not happy to see the rise of NDP in the political sphere and the simultaneous decline of military's influence.

Opposition Elites Joining the Popular Group for Protests

According to Goldstone, the difficulty of state is compounded by the reluctance of the elites to support the regime. The elites may not support either because they are themselves going through financial crunch or that they perceive that states are too weak and needy. They may also have resentment against the state for keeping them out of power.

Military

Revolution cannot succeed without the support or acquiescence of military. The Sultanistic leaderships in Tunisia and Egypt needed the support of its security apparatus all the more because of con-

50 A. El-Affendi, "Constituting liberty, Healing the Nation : revolutionary identity creation in the Arab World's delayed 1989", *Third World Quarterly*, Vol. 32,No.7, September 2011, pp. 1263- 1264.

51 Masoud, "The Road to (and from) Liberation Square", pp. 22- 23.

stant threat to them. In both these countries, the army sided with the revolutionaries and deserted the regimes. The Egyptian military decision to refuse to stand by the regime was much significant and duly hailed.

In Tunisia, army had always been deliberately excluded from politics even under three-decade long rule of Habib Bourguiba. Ben Ali followed his predecessor's policy and kept the military out of politics. Army was scarcely funded. Its sole task was defense of the border. The army had also been highly professional and never interfered in political and economic affairs. Simultaneously, the regime had given more power to other security agencies under the Interior Ministry. They were much larger in number, abundantly funded and given much more powers than the army. Therefore, army had no interest in the survival of the regime. So when the regime was unable to suppress the protestors, General Rachid Ammar was asked to deploy the troops which he refused and placed troops between the protestors and the security agencies. This act proved decisive and resulted in Ben Ali's ouster.

The role of Egyptian army was not that positive in the beginning, although eventually, they backed the revolutionaries. For the first two and a half weeks, the military weighed its options. But the military neither fired on the protestors nor stopped them from occupying the Tahrir Square. When the level of violence inflicted by the regime intensified, the army joined hands with the revolutionaries. On February 10th, the Supreme Council of Armed Forces (SCAF) assumed the control of Egypt and convinced Mubarak to resign.
The Egyptian army was not like its Tunisian counterpart; it had stakes in the survival of the regime. The military was part of the support base of the regime. It was involved in many economic ventures and earned profit from these businesses. It also enjoyed higher salaries. The Field Marshal Mohamed Hussein Tantawi headed the SCAF, Ministry of Defense and Ministry of Military Production. The annual aid military received from the US made quite a hefty amount – three billion dollars.

The decision to back the protestors came for various reasons. Firstly, the military did not want Mubarak's son to succeed. The growing rise of Gamal Mubarak and his cliques' agenda posed a threat to military's economic interests though they had largely been spared by the privatization drive. Secondly, the army also resented the

growing clout of other security agencies. Thirdly, the army was concerned about the security of the people and did not want to harm them. Lastly, the army did not want its legitimacy to be challenged by the people.

Political Elites

The ruling National Democratic Party (NDP) in Egypt came crumbling down as soon as the protests began, the party members, amongst them the heavily mandated ones too, deserted. The party's executive committee resigned within ten days of beginning of protests.[52]

In Tunisia, the junior members of RCD party at the grass-root level participated in the demonstrations not only against the regime but also against the leadership of the party. At first, the protestors in Tunisia wanted the removal of the President and his family. The RCD which was actually the backbone of the regime was overlooked. On seeing this, the RCD party tried to distance itself from the president and its associates in order to preserve its own power and let the president suffer the wrath of the people. Later on, the people took notice of RCD holding on to the power and turned against RCD. There were protests made against the RCD. On February 6, 2011, RCD was dissolved through a court ruling.[53]
Thus, once the protests and demonstrations broke out, the regimes were deserted by their compatriots. The elites knew that the regime's time was up and their continued alliance with the regimes would be a mistake. They realized that the center of power had shifted to the people. Without the support of these elites, the regimes were weakened and could not continue their rule.

Conclusion

International and national factors were both significant for the Tunisian and Egyptian revolutions. Goldstone's assertion on a favourable international context was reaffirmed. However, initially the international powers were unwilling to go against their allies – Mubarak and Ben Ali. It was only when the international powers realized the strength and resolve of the people that they withdrew their sup-

52 Ibid.

53 Joffe, "The Arab Spring in North Africa: origins and prospects", p. 519.

port for the regimes. Nevertheless, the last-minute, reluctant international support extended to the revolutionaries was important in facilitating the revolutions.

In line with Goldstone's theory, the internal conditionswere ripe for revolution: poor performance of the regime; disunity of the elites; and opposition elites joining the masses in protests.The variety of demands made through slogans highlighted the fact that the causes were neither purely economic nor political in character. There was a convergence of factors. In Egypt slogans varied from 'bread', to 'freedom' and 'human dignity'. The regimes lacked legitimacy. The political structure that is parliaments were a façade with no real powers. The people had no part in decision-making. Repression was rife. Mistreatment meted out at hands of police and security forces added to the insult of the people.

Ben Ali regime had united the nation in opposition by assaulting the dignity of people. The story in Egypt was similar. With the passage of time, the repression had reached new heights coupled with rampant corruption. This added to the woes of the public that was in economic distress and found no ventilation for their frustrations through political process or media. The poor performance of the regimes has resulted in loss of effectiveness and legitimacy of the regimes.

There have been earlier instances of show of resistances against the regimes. The resentment had been piling up for decades but the scale of resistance and opposition only reached the desired level, or the tipping point, just then and hence the revolutions came.

The relationship among masses and regimes is critical but at the same time, elite disunity was also a reason for revolution. In Tunisia, it was the growing disenchantment of the private business class with 'the family'; while in Egypt, the army increasingly felt sidelined by the growing power and influence of the NDP.

Given these multiple internal factors, diminishing legitimacy and effectiveness of the state and people's growing frustration with the regime; and inter-elite disunity, a revolution was inevitable. It was a tinderbox ready to explode. It just needed a spark that was provided by a lone person – Bouazizi. The desertion of the regimes by the militaries proved a decisive factor once the protests began. Conse-

quently, within a few weeks of the onset of protests and demonstrations the regimes fell.

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Hizballah in Syria: The Limits of the Democracy/Moderation Paradigm

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Abstract
Hizballah is a popular case study for those seeking to understand democratic transformations in radical groups, although there has never been consensus on whether Hizballah has genuinely transformed. Although Hizballah appeared committed to parliamentary politics between 1992 and 2008, the group's behaviour in the lead up to the 2008 Doha Agreement and its intervention in Syria in 2013 suggest that democracy has failed to fully 'tame' Hizballah. This article applies Schwedler's model of democratic moderation to Hizballah, showing that there was evidence of a number of limitations in Hizballah's transition long before 2008.

Keywords: Hizballah, Hezbollah, Islamism, Islam and Democracy, Lebanon, Syrian Conflict, Doha Agreement, Syria, Democratisation

Suriye'de Hizbullah: Demokrasinin Sınırları/Ilımlılaştırma Paradigma

Özet
Hizbullah'ın gerçekten dönüştüğü konusunda bir fikir birliği olmamasına rağmen, radikal gruplarda demokratik dönüşümleri anlamak isteyenler için Hizbullah sıklıkla başvurulan bir vaka çalışmasıdır. Hizbullah 1992 ve 2008 yılları arasında parlamenter siyasete bağlı bir görüntü sergilemesine rağmen, 2008 Doha Anlaşması'na giden süreçte ve 2013'de Suriye müdahalesindeki davranışı göstermektedir ki demokrasi Hizbullah'ı uysallaştırmakta başarısız olmuştur. Bu makale Schwedler'in demokratik ılımlılık modelini Hizbullah'a uygular ve 2008'den çok önce Hizbullah'ın dönüşümünün sınırlarını

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ortaya koyan bir dizi kanıt olduğunu gösterir.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Hizbullah, İslam, İslam ve Demokrasi, Lübnan, Suriye Sorunu, Doha Anlaşması, Suriye, Demokratikleşme

حزب الله فى سوريا:حدود الديمقراطية/نموذج الإعتدال

ملخص

يعد حزب الله بمثابة حالة دراسية رائجة فى أوساط الباحثين الساعين لفهم التحولات الديمقراطية داخل الجماعات الراديكالية، فعلي الرغم من أنه لم يكن هناك إجماع أبداً حول مسألة تدل علي إن كان حزب الله قد مر بتحول حقيقى وفعلى ام لا. وعلى الرغم من ان حزب الله قد بدى ملتزماً بالسياسة البرلمانية ما بين العامين ١٩٩٢ و٢٠٠٨ ، فإن سلوك جماعة حزب الله فى الفترة الاخيرة تجاه اتفاقية الدوحة ،وتدخلها فى سوريا فى عام ٢٠١٣ يظهر أن الديمقراطية التي اتبعها حزب الله فى «كبح جماح»قد فشلت .

تطبق هذه الدراسة نموذج «شويلدر» للإعتدال على حالة حزب الله، مبرزة أن هناك ثمة شواهد تدل على وجود عدد من القيود ادت الي تحويل مسيرة حزب الله سابقة عام ٢٠٠٨ بوقت طويل.

كلمات مفتاحية: حزب الله ، الإسلام السياسى، الإسلام والديمقراطية، لبنان، الصراع السورى، اتفاقية الدوحة، سوريا، الدمقرطة.

Introduction

Hizballah has participated in elections in Lebanon since 1992, making it a popular case study for those seeking to understand democratic transformations in radical groups. Emerging as a militant group during Lebanon's civil war, Hizballah has engaged in democracy since the establishment of Lebanon's fragile peace. However, the sincerity of Hizballah's transition has frequently been questioned, with Ezani and Kramer arguing that Hizballah merely uses Lebanon's democratic system to further its own non-democratic, Islamist and violent agenda.[1] Norton and Palmer-Harik are more circumspect, pointing to a fundamental change in the group since its democratic engagement.[2] Indeed, Hizballah had appeared committed to parliamentary politics, having consistently acted in a responsible and rational manner in the Lebanese political arena up until 2008. However, the group's behaviour in the lead up to the Doha Agreement in 2008 and its intervention in Syria in 2013 may provide a fatal challenge to the moderation argument, suggesting that democracy has failed to fully 'tame' Hizballah. Now that the group has demonstrated a renewed proclivity for violence in the pursuit of its own survival, we can see that it never fully submitted itself to democratic practice.

This article will ask whether previous conclusions about Hizballah's transformation have been invalidated by the group's behaviour in 2008 and its involvement the Syrian uprising. It is important to acknowledge that Hizballah did - at least for a period - appear to have been transformed. Earlier analyses of the group have been narrative-based and rarely use democratic transition frameworks. In contrast, this article will assess Hizballah's transition against Schwedler's criteria for democratic moderation, to provide an explanation for why the group, although ostensibly moderated, has reverted to violence.[3] It will be shown that there were a number of limitations of Hizballah's transition long before 2008. This ensured

1 E. Ezani, "Hezbollah's strategy of "walking on the edge": Between political game and political violence", *Studies Conflict and Terrorism*, Vol. 35 No.11, 2012.; M. Kramer, "Hizbullah: The Calculus of Jihad" in M. Marty & R. Appleby (eds.), *Fundamentalisms and the State,* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1991).

2 A. Norton, "Hizballah: From Radicalism to Pragmatism*?", Middle East Policy*, Vol. 5No. 12, 1998. ; J. Harik, *Hezbollah: The changing face of terrorism*, (New York, IB Tauris, 2005).

3 J. Schwedler, *Faith in moderation: Islamist parties in Jordan and Yemen*, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006).

that it was only a matter of time before Hizballah's earlier more-violent character resurfaced, which is now being seen in the Syrian conflict.

Perspectives on Radicalism and Democratic Participation

The relationship between Islamists and democracy has been heavily debated over the past two decades, with a particular focus on whether democracy is able to "moderate" radical groups. Huntington suggests that the very act of participation invokes a "democratic bargain," whereby radical groups reject violence and recognise the key institutions of state in exchange for a slice of political power.[4] Meanwhile, Blondel and Ottaway argue that groups operating in democracies are forced to appeal to as broad a constituency as possible in an effort to gain the maximum parliamentary power, inevitably leading groups to advocate "middle ground" policies.[5] Kirchheimer agrees that policies are often watered-down to avoid alienating voters and maximise electoral rewards.[6] In contrast, Snow et al argue that the mechanisms of moderation begin post-democratic engagement, once players in a democratic system learn the "rules of the game" and submit themselves to regular electoral cycles.[7] Karakatsanis builds on this argument, arguing that strategic failures also prompt groups to make tactical improvements, while memories of past-hardships can create a greater urgency inside groups to remedy issues within the confines of democracy.[8]

This article will use Schwedler's model of democratic moderation to assess the factors that have promoted and constrained Hizballah's democratic transition. Schwedler's observations of the Islamic Action Front in Jordan and Islah in Yemen add considerable nuance to the field of literature, as she argued that democratic institutions alone are not enough to constrain radical behaviour. Instead, she

4 S. Huntington, *The Third Wave: Democratization in the late-Twentieth Century,* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1991).

5 J. Blondel, *Political parties: a genuine case for discontent?,* (London: Wildwood House, 1978); M. Ottoway. "Islamists and democracy: Keep the faith", *The New Republic,* 6 June 2005.

6 O. Kirchheimer, "Transformation of Party Systems" in J. Lapalombara & M. Weiner (eds.), *Political Parties and Political Development*, (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1966).

7 D. Snow, E. Rochford, S. Worden & R Benford, "Frame Alignment Processes, Micromobilization, and Movement Participation", *American Sociological Review*, Vol. 51 No. 4, 1986.

8 N. Karakatsanis "Political Learning as a Catalyst of Moderation: Lessons from Democratic Consolidation in Greece", *Democratization*, Vol. 15 No. 2, 2008.

put forward a three-factor process-based model, arguing that that "political opportunity structures", "internal group structure" and the "boundaries of justifiable action" are the key determinants of a democracy's ability to prompt genuine change within a group.[9] According to Schwedler, a state's Political Opportunity Structures are important because they inform the cost/benefit analysis that groups undertake when considering democratic engagement. Some political systems offer more incentives than others to encourage demilitarisation. Schwedler also considers Internal Group Structure to be a crucial indicator of a group's proclivity to moderation, as groups with greater levels of internal democracy are likely to undergo leadership changes and hold pluralistic debates, helping them morph to reflect the external democratic environment. Finally, the Boundaries of Justifiable Action are also critical, as they provide the margins within which a group can credibly change its political goals. Groups with rigid anti-system goals may find it difficult to justify participation without compromising their support base.[10] Schwedler argues that the interaction between these two structural factors and single ideational factor gives a key indication of a group's potential for moderation.

Schwedler's contribution to the democracy/moderation debate is important because it offers a theoretical model from which democratic environments and transitions can be assessed, which is unique for a field largely dominated by case-specific models and narratives. This article will analyse Hizballah's transition through the prism of Political Opportunity Structures, Internal Group Structures and the Boundaries of Justifiable Action to garner a fuller understanding of the group's transition.

Hizballah's transition to democratic participation

Hizballah emerged soon after the 1982 Israeli invasion of Lebanon with backing from Iran and Syria, and quickly became popular among Lebanon's Shi'a. Hizballah was renowned for its use of violence against Israeli, international and communal targets, including its involvement in the kidnapping of foreigners in Lebanon during

9 J. Schwedler, *Faith in moderation: Islamist parties in Jordan and Yemen*, p. 24.

10 Ibid.

the late 1980s.[11] In 1985, the group released its manifesto, calling for Lebanon to become an Islamic state based on the *velayat e-faqih* model popularised in Iran during the 1979 revolution.[12] Hizballah's methods and ideology gained popular support amongst the Shi'a community as a movement that sought to remedy their status as Lebanon's underclass.

The Lebanese civil war ended in 1989 with the signing of the Ta'if Accords.[13] The Accords marked a watershed in Lebanese history, restructuring the political system, disarming militias, and signalling the establishment of a fragile peace.[14] This had major ramifications for Hizballah, whose charter for an Islamic state was no longer sustainable, and required it to find another avenue through which to garner popular support.[15] In addition, Hizballah's international-backers, Iran and Syria, favoured Hizballah's acquiescence to democracy, particularly as Syria was guaranteed its own role in post-war Lebanon with the Accords acknowledging Syria's "special relationship" with Lebanon.[16] As a result, democratic participation appeared to be the best way for Hizballah to secure ongoing relevance. Hizballah therefore nominated candidates for the 1992 elections, winning all eight seats it contested. Its allies elected on the joint-Hizballah electoral list captured a further four seats, making the Hizballah bloc the largest in the Lebanese Parliament.

Political Opportunity Structures

The Ta'if Accords offered Hizballah a number of 'carrots' and deterrents that determined its participation in Lebanon's formal political

11 M. Ranstorp, *Hizb 'Allah in Lebanon: The politics of the Western Hostage Crisis*, (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1997).

12 Hizballah committed itself to *Velayat e-faqih* in its open letter of 1985, available in: J. Alagha, *Hizbullah's documents: From the 1985 Open Letter to the 2009 Manifesto*, (Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press, 2011), p. 40.

13 A. Norton, *Hezbollah: A Short History*, (New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 2007).

14 J. Sankari, *Fadlallah : the making of a radical Shi'ite leader*, (London: Saqi, 2005).

15 A. Hamzeh, *In the Path of Hizbullah*, (New York: Syracuse University Press, 2004).

16 "The Taif Agreement," United Nations. http://www.un.int/wcm/webdav/site/lebanon/shared/documents/Constitution/The%20Taif%20Agreement%20%28English%20Version%29%20.pdf (Accessed 30 June 2013).p. 8. ; According to Shanahan, the new Iranian President Rafsanjani held a meeting with Hizballah's leaders in Tehran in 1989 to articulate Iran's desire to re-integrate with the US and distance itself from its militias. See: R. Shanahan, *Radical Islamist groups in the modern age: A case study of Hizbullah*, (Canberra: Strategic and Defence Studies Institute, 2003). ; Sankari notes Iran and Syria's joint support of Hizballah's participation in the Lebanese parliamentary system. See: J. Sankari, *Fadlallah: the making of a radical Shi'ite leader*.

system. According to Schwedler, 'the very structure of state institutions renders certain forms of political organization and contestation more effective than others.'[17] As mentioned above, Hizballah very much appeared to have embraced the incentives, becoming an integral part of the Lebanese parliamentary process from the outset.

The Accords made minor adjustments to the Lebanese political system and committed Lebanon's political elite to gradually abolishing the Confessional System, a compromise sufficient for Hizballah members to support participation in the democratic process. The Confessional System had been in place since the 1930s, and allocated political posts and parliamentary seats to Lebanon's main religious groups according to long-outdated proportional quotas. In return for participation, Hizballah could access the resources of parliament to remedy the Shi'a's plight, while working politically to improve their proportional allocation. Moreover, participation enabled Hizballah to maintain its resistance against Israel, as specified in the Ta'if Accords.[18] In return, it would be forced to moderate its ideological outlook (to maximise its chances of being elected), recognise the institutions of the state, and pour time and resources into maintaining public offices, formulating platforms and campaigning in elections. These factors could all be considered distractions from Hizballah's core aims.

Once inside the Lebanese electoral system, however, there were a number of factors providing both constraints and opportunities for moderation. The Lebanese electoral system has in-built features that promote policy moderation. Having been designed with Lebanon's fractious religious divides in mind, Lebanon's list-based electoral system requires candidates and parties to form cross-religious coalitions to be elected.[19] The system is intended to promote inter-religious coordination and deter parties from pursuing policies that negatively impact other groups. Radical and anti-status quo can-

17 J. Schwedler, *Faith in moderation: Islamist parties in Jordan and Yemen*, p. 79.

18 This can be found in Section 3 of the Ta'if Agreement, available at: "The Taif Agreement," United Nations. http://www.un.int/wcm/webdav/site/lebanon/shared/documents/Constitution/The%20Taif%20Agreement%20%28English%20Version%29%20.pdf (Accessed 30 June 2013). p. 8.

19 A. Lijphart, "Constitutional Design for Divided Societies", *Journal of Democracy,* Vol. 15 No. 2, 2004.

didates often find it impossible to be elected.[20] Indeed, Hizballah formed coalitions with Lebanese political groups of all stripes, leading to a further attenuation of its formerly-radical policies.[21] Hizballah has run joint electoral tickets with groups seemingly antithetical to its own beliefs, including the Lebanese Forces, Syrian Ba'thists, Communists and the Syrian Social Nationalists.[22] Although Horowitz criticises this political system as not encouraging the development of long-lasting coalitions, it does force groups to work together, even if temporarily, to become elected and to achieve policy objectives.[23] Additionally, Hizballah has enjoyed a longstanding and productive coalition with the Christian Free Patriotic Movement, which is a further example of Hizballah's willingness to form working relationships with those of alternate political views. This coalition was formalised in a memorandum of understanding signed by both parties in 2006.[24]

Although Hizballah had initially refused to join Lebanon's Cabinet because it did not want to legitimise the Confessional System (which was also reflected in the makeup of the Cabinet), it has participated in government since 2005. Hizballah's embedding in government shows its political evolution. In modifying its earlier position on boycotting government, Hizballah demonstrated increasing pragmatism, a clear outcome of its political engagement. Hizballah has also demonstrated an ability to compromise with other political players. During the 2013 electoral reform debate, Hizballah backed the Orthodox Gathering proposal that was put up by the Orthodox Christian communities. Although the proposal did not represent any improvement of the political position of the Shi'a, it was backed by the parliamentary committee on electoral reform and Hizballah

20 International Crisis Group, "Lebanon: Managing the gathering storm," 5 December 2006. http://www.cggl.org/publicdocs/Lebanon_Managing_the_Gathering_%20Storm.pdf (Accessed 30 June 2011).

21 M. Chartouni-Dubarry, "Hizballah: from militia to political party" in R. Hollis & N. Shehadi (eds.), *Lebanon on Hold: Implications for Middle East Peace,* (London: Royal Institute of International Affairs, 1996).

22 J. Harik, *Hezbollah: The changing face of terrorism*.

23 D. Horowitz, "Constitutional Design: proposals versus processes," Paper presented at the conference 'Constitutional Design 2000: Institutional Design, Conflict Management, and Democracy in the Late Twentieth Century,' Kellogg Institute, University of Notre Dame, December 1999.

24 J. Alagha, *Hizbullah's documents: From the 1985 Open Letter to the 2009 Manifesto*, p. 105.

acknowledged that it allayed many of the concerns of Lebanon's minority Christian sects.[25]

According to Schwedler, the absence of a single ruling party in Lebanon is another incentive that encourages inclusion. In Jordan, the fact that no ruling party existed (the Monarchy does not formally engage in the political sphere) enabled the Islamic Action Front to explore cooperative alliances with a broad range of groups, promoting policy moderation.[26] This is a stark contrast to the experience of Islamist groups in Yemen and Mubarak's Egypt, who had to run in elections against the ruling party, with the full awareness that the ruling party would win.[27] In such scenarios, opposition groups are forced to form close relationships with the ruling party to guarantee their own access to power, diluting the potential moderating-influence of a genuine parliamentary system. However, in Lebanon the absence of a ruling party or undemocratic institutional power-broker has enabled Hizballah to cultivate coalitions with all parties and criticise government policy as it saw fit, without fear of institutional retribution or being banned from elections. However, it has also meant that Lebanon does not have a strong powerbroker than can 'police' political behaviour and enforce serious punishment, a reality that became very clear in 2008.

Many believed that Hizballah had completely transformed.[28] Advocates of this argument point to Sheikh al-Tufayli's 'Revolt of the Hungry' in 1997, a civil disobedience campaign in the Beqaa Valley that attempted to undermine Hizballah's social service credentials.[29] Hizballah's response demonstrated its maturity as a political actor. When al-Tufayli and his supporters occupied a Hizballah seminary in Ba'albek, Hizballah asked the Lebanese army to intervene.[30] It is hard to overstate the significance of Hizballah's decision to not use its far-superior military forces to resolve the issue; instead it gave a nod of legitimacy to Lebanon's military as the guardians of peace

25 H. Lakkis, "Christian parties, Hezbollah and Amal firm on Orthodox plan", *The Daily Star*, 25 February 2013.http://www.dailystar.com.lb/Opinion/Commentary/2013/Feb-25/207794-christian-parties-hezbollah-and-amal-firm-on-orthodox-plan.ashx (Accessed 30 June 2013)

26 J. Schwedler, *Faith in moderation: Islamist parties in Jordan and Yemen*, p. 179.

27 Ibid. p. 195.

28 A. Norton, *Hizballah of Lebanon: Extremist Ideals vs. Mundane Politics*, (New York: Council on Foreign Relations, 1999), p. 35.

29 A. Saad-Ghorayeb, *Hizbu'llah: Politics and Religion*, (London: Pluto Press, 2002).

30 Ibid.

in Lebanon. In this, Hizballah indicated its internal 'democratic bargain,' whereby access to the resources and power of parliament were of greater value than its need to enforce internal discipline violently.

Despite these achievements, there are also a number of disincentives to moderation inherent in the Lebanese political system. However, Wickham suggests that even a limited democratic system can prompt change amongst radical groups, so partial democratisation can sometimes be enough.[31] The Lebanese confessional system is unique, as discussed above, but given that Lebanon's Shi'a are only permitted 27 seats (just over 21 percent) in the 128-seat parliament, the Lebanese electoral system is highly inequitable for members of the sect. The Shi'a are thought to make up between 40 and 55 percent of the Lebanese population, ensuring that they are considerably underrepresented in parliament.[32] This formed a major obstacle to Shi'a political groups fully reaping the benefits of democratic behaviour. This political disparity is widened further by inequitable electoral boundaries that force Muslim representatives to be elected by a much larger number of voters than their Christian counterparts. According to Democracy Reporting International, this means that 'Muslim votes count less than Christian votes.'[33] With this in mind, Wittes considers the absence of full democracy to be a major barrier to a group's likelihood of moderation.[34] However, while these disincentives were not sufficient to completely deter Hizballah from participating, they were likely a barrier to its complete assimilation. As a result, it must be asked whether Hizballah's inability to fully succeed within the system played a role in the lead-up to 2008, as it likely provided a limitation on what the group was willing to sacrifice as part of the "democratic bargain" given that it knew it would never fully enjoy the benefits of participation.

31 C. Wickham, "The Path to Moderation: Strategy and Learning in the Formation of Egypt's Wasat Party", *Comparative Politics*, Vol. 36 No. 2, 2004.

32 There is much debate about the size of the Shi'a in Lebanon today. Norton estimates that they make up 40 percent of the population. See: N. Conan, "Who is Hezbollah," NPR: Talk of the Nation, 19 July 2006, http://www.npr.org/templates/story/story.php?storyId=5568093 (Accessed 1March 2008). ; Joseph Alagha however, suggests that the Shi'a make up 55 percent of the population. See: J. Alagha, *The Shifts in Hizbullah's Ideology: Religious Ideology, Political Ideology and Political Program*, (Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press, 2006), p. 26.

33 Democracy Reporting International, *Lebanon : Assessment of the Electoral Framework : Election Law of 2008*, (Berlin/Beirut: Democracy Reporting International, 2008).p. 7.

34 T. Wittes, "Islamist parties: Three kinds of movements", *Journal of Democracy*, Vol. 19 No. 3, 2008.

A further obstacle to democratisation existed by way of Syria, whose ongoing role in Lebanon made it a "King Maker" in Lebanese politics.[35] Syria wanted to keep Hizballah on a tight leash, constraining its electoral success by forcing it to forge coalitions with Amal (its Shi'a rival), splitting the Shi'a representation in parliament and curbing Hizballah's potential mandate.[36] In 1996, Hizballah announced that it would field independent candidates to run on electoral lists in the country's south. However, after an emergency meeting in Damascus, Hizballah retracted its decision and announced that it would run on a shared ticket with Amal, curtailing its electoral potential.[37] Although Syria's influence on the electoral system is less pronounced since the 2005 withdrawal, it is clear that Syria acted as an obstacle to Hizballah, at least in its early days of democratisation.

While Wickham noted that political systems do not need to be completely democratic to spur moderation, it became clear that there was a sharp limit to Hizballah's democratic commitment once the survival of its military wing was drawn into questionin 2008. The crisis began when the Lebanese government shut down Hizballah's private security and communications infrastructure and sacked the Hizballah-linked security chief at Beirut Airport, a move that threatened Hizballah's intelligence capabilities and military operations.[38] Since the Lebanese institutional system could not seriously enforce political norms, Hizballah faced no 'sticks' to discourage it from taking this political battle outside of the parliament. As a result, Hizballah sent gunmen into Beirut. Street fighting between rival militias followed, leaving 11 dead, and representing the worst outbreak of violence since the civil war. It prompted some observers to predict the imminent return of full-scale civil war to Lebanon.[39] Although peace was quickly restored through the Doha Agreement, the incident provided an early indicator of the limits of Hizballah's compliance to democratic norms. In this experience, Hizballah clearly demonstrated that it did not respect the will of the Lebanese government, even though it had been an integral part of the system for

35 R. Shanahan, *The Shi'a of Lebanon: Clans, Parties and Clerics*, (London: I.B. Tauris, 2005).

36 Ibid.

37 A. Samii, "A stable structure on shifting sands: assessing the Hizbullah-Iran-Syria realtionship", *Middle East Journal,*Vol. 62. No. 1.p. 42, 2007.

38 A. Statton & E. Stewart, "Violence escalates between Sunni and Shia in Beirut," *The Guardian*, 9 May 2008.

39 H. Macleod, "Lebanese declaration threatens civil war", *The Observer*, 11 May 2008.

16 years. Through its actions, Hizballah also implied the ongoing centrality of its military wing to the group's identity. The 2008 crisis therefore showed that the group's temperate behaviour and track record of democratic achievement between 1992 and 2008 could quickly be forgotten once its military wing was at stake.

As a result, while Hizballah participated fully in the democratic process after 1992 and was willing to make minor compromises to its own goals in the name of political practicalities, it is clear that there were very significant limitations on what Hizballah was willing to sacrifice. The meagre political incentives that the system offered were not sufficient for it to compromise its military wing. While Schwedler notes that even limited democratic openings can still prompt moderation, the confessional structure of Lebanon's political system meant that Hizballah could not seriously influence government policy, even with its substantial constituency.[40] In robbing Lebanese political actors of the agency associated with a genuine democratic mandate, the Lebanese political system discouraged moderation in Hizballah, and ensured that the pattern of peaceful political participation would only be sustained for as long as Hizballah's military wing was allowed to coexist. In this way, 2008 provided an important test for the group, because it was the first time that the survival of its military wing was seriously at stake. The fact that the "veto" power that Hizballah attained as part of the Doha Agreement (which gave the parliamentary opposition the ability to veto government policies) was a factor in resolving the political impasse, suggests Hizballah's frustration with the democratic barriers it faces.[41] However, 'Political Opportunity Structures' are not the only aspect of Schwedler's criteria that Hizballah has failed to meet; in fact, Hizballah's Internal Group Structures have been the key reason that Hizballah continues to consider its military wing so important.

Internal Group Structures

Hizballah underwent structural change in the lead up to its political participation to make the group more capable of negotiating Lebanon's political environment. However, the group remains a hierarchical organisation with limited internal democracy, which is a further barrier to moderation.

40 J. Schwedler, *Faith in moderation: Islamist parties in Jordan and Yemen*.

41 "Hezbollah leader demands veto power", *The Associated Press*, 1 April 2008.

There are some elements of transparency and openness in Hizballah. Like many political players in Lebanon, the group maintains public headquarters, a media office and numerous hospitals, health clinics and schools.[42] Indeed, Hizballah has a very public face, which it promotes via its television network, radio station and print materials.[43] Hizballah has demonstrated an interest in disseminating first-hand information to its constituents, as evidenced by the publication of a nearly-300 page account of the group's history, policies and goals by Deputy Secretary-General, Naim Qassem.[44] Hizballah can also call upon its constituents to participate in mass protests at little notice, as seen in 2005 in the period surrounding the assassination of Rafik Hariri.[45] As a result, there is little doubt that Hizballah is a broad-based, popular movement. There is also a level of democracy in the group's inner workings. The group's top *Shura Council* is elected every 2-3 years, and is responsible for the day-to-day running of all aspects of organisation. It was the *Shura Council* that initially approved Hizballah's democratic engagement through an internal ballot that was won by 10 votes to two.[46] The Council also elects Hizballah's Secretary General to three years terms. Membership of the *Shura Council* usually includes one non-religious member. Internal democracy has led to some internal change, including in 2004, when Hizballah appointed its first female, Rima Fakhry, to its 18-member politburo. According to Alagha, this change took place following a heated internal debate.[47] Wafa' Hutayat has since become the first female Deputy of the group's Central Information Office.[48]

Despite this appearance of openness, Hizballah retains a "hierarchical pyramid structure."[49] Much of the group's internal activity remains shrouded in secrecy, which it justifies as necessary to protect its military strategy. Hizballah's political activities are undertaken by a new wing that is subordinate to the *Shura Council*. This dif-

42 J. Gleis & B. Berti, *Hezbollah and Hamas: A comparative study*, (Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 2013).

43 J. Harik, "Between Islam and the system: Sources and implications of popular support for Lebanon's Hizballah", *Journal of Conflict Resolution*, Vol. 40 No. 1, 1996.

44 N. Qassem, *Hizbullah: The story from within*, (London: Saqi, 2006).

45 H. Fattah, "Hezbollah leads huge pro-Syrian protest in central Beirut", *The New York Times*, 8 March 2005.

46 A. Norton, *Hezbollah: A Short History*.

47 J. Alagha, *Hizbullah's documents: From the 1985 Open Letter to the 2009 Manifesto*, p. 27.

48 Ibid.

49 N. Qassem, *Hizbullah: The story from within*, p. 60.

fers from other Islamist groups that have engaged in democracy, such as the Muslim Brotherhood in Jordan, which established the Islamic Action Front as an autonomous political entity to carry out the group's political agenda. The Islamic Action Front holds regular elections where its top leaders change regularly.[50]

In contrast to the Islamic Action Front, Hizballah's *Shura Council* controls both the political and military wings of the group from the top-down.[51] This means that the body that makes decisions about the group's political platform also determines the group's military strategy. As a result, the group's military wing has remained inextricably tied to Hizballah's political activities. Furthermore, despite the semblance of internal democracy, the *Shura Council*'s membership has barely changed since the civil war. In fact, most of the group's civil war leaders remain on the Council.[52] Hizballah's Secretary General, Hassan Nasrallah, has been the Secretary General of Hizballah since 1992, and was re-elected for life in 2001.[53]

Nasrallah and the *Shura Council*'s authority is absolute, ensuring that disagreements are almost never made public, with the exception of al-Tufayli's frequent criticism of the group. The will of the *Shura Council* has been consistently implemented, without exception. In 2004, al-Tufayli accused Nasrallah of having "total hegemony and tyrannical control" over the group.[54] The *Shura Council* is also responsible for selecting parliamentary candidates.[55] Although candidates have included laymen, academics and business figures, the range of the candidates may reflect the strategic considerations of Hizballah's leaders, rather than the diversity of Hizballah's body politic. Although it is not unusual for a political party's senior leadership to choose electoral candidates (even in the western world), it has further inhibited Hizballah's political evolution.

There have been minor adjustments to the membership of the *Shura,* including the election of Hizballah parliamentarian Mohammed

50 J. Schwedler, *Faith in moderation: Islamist parties in Jordan and Yemen.*

51 J. Gleis & B. Berti, *Hezbollah and Hamas: A comparative study*.

52 E. Azani, "Hezbollah – a global terrorist organization – situational report as of September 2006," Submission to the US House Committee on International Relations – Subcommittee on International Terrorism and Nonproliferation, 28 September 2006.

53 J. Alagha, *Hizbullah's documents: From the 1985 Open Letter to the 2009 Manifesto*.

54 Cited in: J. Alagha. *Hizbullah's documents: From the 1985 Open Letter to the 2009 Manifesto*.p. 26.

55 J. Herrick, "Nonstate actors: A comparative analysis of change and development within Hamas and Hezbollah."

Ra'd, to the Council. While Alagha suggests that this was a major adjustment because it accorded Hizballah's "parliamentary work a great status," it did not lead to a tangible change in the group's prioritisation of its military wing. In fact, Hizballah's two major divergences from democracy in 2008 and 2013 took place during the period that Ra'd was on the Council. The absence of leadership change also means that Hizballah has not experienced the level of generational change that one might expect for a group involved in the Lebanese political arena for more than 20 years.[56] This has ensured that Hizballah's military wing -which was its main asset during the 1980s- has remained a fundamental part of the group's identity.

It is important to note however, that while Hizballah might not stack up as a 'democratic' organisation in the western sense, its hierarchical organisational structure and lack of transparency is unexceptional in Lebanon. In fact, Hizballah's broad base and group decision-making processes stand in stark contrast to the fiefdoms that characterise most political parties in Lebanon. However, while it is beyond the scope of this article to speculate on the democratic sincerity of Lebanon's other political groups, Schwedler has identified intra-party democracy as a key indicator of a group's propensity for moderation, ensuring that Hizballah's lack of internal democracy is relevant to this case study, even if it is the norm for all political parties in Lebanon.

Hizballah's failure to democratise internally represents another indicator of the limitations of its democratic engagement. Schwedler notes that the "potential for ideological moderation … hinges in part on the manner in which party leaders reach decisions on contentious issues and the extent to which those positions are honoured."[57] Although this formalised command structure was of great benefit to Hizballah initially because it enabled it to undertake a rapid transformation, it quickly became a barrier to the group's democratic evolution.[58] The absence of leadership change and grassroots succession over a twenty year period has meant that the relevance of the group's military wing has not been reassessed, and remains an extension of its political aims. As a result, in 2008 and during

56 E. Azani, "Hezbollah – a global terrorist organization – situational report as of September 2006."

57 J. Schwedler, *Faith in moderation: Islamist parties in Jordan and Yemen*, p.96.

58 M. Devore, "Exploring the Iran-Hezbollah relationship: A case study of how state sponsorship affects terrorist group decision-making", *Perspectives on Terrorism*, Vol. 6 No. 4-5, 2012.

the Syrian uprising, Hizballahquickly reverted to its survival *modus operandi*, subordinating the Lebanese political environment and its constituents in the name of its own military integrity. If there was a younger generation of leaders in charge of Hizballah, the response may have been entirely different, or at least less extreme.

The Boundaries of Justifiable Action

Hizballah's flexible ideology is a major strength for the organisation, as it enabled the group to easily reconcile its goals with the Lebanese democratic system, and thereby justify participation. Schwedler considers this to be a key feature of a group's proclivity to moderation, because it signals the boundaries within which a group will act.[59] Hizballah's democratic engagement was therefore presented as compatible with its existing "Islamic" ideology and was successfully sold to its constituents.[60] It was further legitimised by the eminent Lebanese Shi'a cleric, Sheikh Fadlallah, who told his followers that "change does not happen only through revolution… it could be achieved by penetrating democratic institutions to promote Islamic ideals."[61] Ali Khamene'i, Hizballah's Supreme Guide, also sanctioned the engagement. The movement did not find it difficult to introduce democratic ideas to its platform, as Lebanon's history meant that the discourse of democracy was familiar to the Lebanese populace. The desire for peace, the popularity of the Ta'if Agreement and the reinstatement of the electoral system gave further impetus to the credibility of its transition. As a result, Hizballah's ideological transformation from anti-system militia to parliamentary party was relatively seamless.

Hizballah also dropped its ambitions for an Islamic State, acknowledging that Lebanon's mixed religious demographics render the ideal unworkable.[62] Although this was a major change, Norton observes that it really had no choice, suggesting that "the game of politics may erode ideals, but the vast majority of Hizballah's followers want to be in the game."[63] In place of an Islamic state objective,

59 J. Schwedler, *Faith in moderation: Islamist parties in Jordan and Yemen*.

60 J. Harik, *Hezbollah: The changing face of terrorism*.

61 Cited in D. Phillips, *From Bullets to Ballots: Violent Muslim movements in transition*, (New Brunswick: Transaction Publishers, 2009), p. 45.

62 A. Saouli, "Lebanon's Hizbullah: The quest for survival", *World Affairs*, Vol. 166 No. 2, 2003.

63 A. Norton, *Hizballah of Lebanon: Extremist Ideals vs. Mundane Politics*, p. 35.

Hizballah moved to prioritise the Islamic ideals of social justice and equality. Hizballah re-framed its *jihad*, citing its involvement in parliament as an example of non-violent struggle. Its parliamentarians advanced the 'Islamic' cause by drawing attention to the injustice faced by Muslims in Lebanon and worked to improve their lot.[64] Hizballah became an advocate of communal harmony and peace, with Nasrallah's claim that,

A pillar of our movement is the need to respect others, whether Muslim or non-Muslim, and to forge relations with them on a Koranic, moral basis. As Imam Ali said, "There are two kinds of people; either a brother in religion or a peer in morality – either a brother in Islam or an equal in humanity."[65]

In pursuit of this goal, Hizballah leaders attended Islamic-Christian dialogue meetings and met with key Christian leaders in order to assuage their concerns about the group's political goals. Hizballah members then held 'get to know us' sessions in their own homes, where members of the wider public met the movement's partisans to be convinced that Hizballah did not seek to undermine the political order.[66] Hizballah's 2009 political platform clarifies that Hizballah's animosity is directed towards Israel, rather than to Jewish people as a whole. It also differentiates between the US government and its citizens, a nuance not made in the group's 1985 manifesto or by other Islamists such as al Qaeda.[67]

Hizballah's ideological transformation has been consistently reflected in the group's role in parliament. Its new platform was evident in every policy that Hizballah put forward or supported. Hizballah became characterised by a commitment to accountability and transparency, as well as its vehement criticism of the entrenched corruption in Lebanon, making it a lone voice among Lebanon's political elite.[68] It is difficult to overstate how unusual this is in Lebanon. Indeed, Ranstorp believes that Hizballah has distinguished itself from its competitors by framing itself as a "moral force" that protects and defends the less well-off and interrogates the otherwise off-limits

64 J. Harik, *Hezbollah: The changing face of terrorism*.

65 Cited in Ibid, p. 78.

66 Ibid. p. 74.

67 Cited in A. Samii, "A stable structure on shifting sands: assessing the Hizbullah-Iran-Syria realtionship", pp. 36-7.

68 A. Norton, *Hezbollah: A Short History*.

Lebanese elite for their excesses.[69] Hizballah is the only party in Lebanon purported to be untainted by political corruption.[70] High-ranking Lebanese officials from across the political spectrum have acknowledged Hizballah's responsible conduct in Parliament.[71] This behaviour has remained consistent for more than 20 years, drawing into question suggestions that Hizballah is a mere wolf in sheep's clothing.[72]

Although Hizballah refused to participate in government until 2005, it formed a "loyal opposition." However, this opposition to government was not blanket; it took a constructive approach, addressing each policy on its merits and offering support or criticism accordingly.[73] Remaining vehement opponents of confessionalism, Hizballah was highly critical of the late-Prime Minister Rafiq Hariri's reconstruction projects, which it saw as profit oriented and not aimed at benefiting Lebanon's poor.[74] It heavily criticised the channelling of development budgets and projects into constituencies loyal to Lebanon's governing elite, and Hizballah initiated a vote of no confidence in the Hariri government in 1992 and 1995 on corruption grounds.

Hizballah also used its own social service networks to further its image as an advocate of social justice and genuine representative of the poor.[75] It opened high-quality hospitals, usually located in Shi'a areas, but also used by Christians (although there are reports of non-Shi'a citizens being turned away).[76] It also operates schools, pharmacies and public assistance programs, including food distribution and loan centres. It is estimated that between 1988 and 1991, Hizballah repaired 1,000 homes that had been damaged by Israel.[77] Hizballah's social service provision has garnered it public

69 M. Ranstorp, *Hizb'Allah in Lebanon: The politics of the Western Hostage Crisis*, p. 116.

70 L. Deeb, "Hizballah: A primer," *Middle East Report Online*, 31 July 2006.

71 A. Norton, "Hizballah: From Radicalism to Pragmatism?"

72 For an example of this argument, see E. Ezani, "Hezbollah's strategy of "walking on the edge": Between political game and political violence."

73 A. Saad-Ghorayeb, *Hizbu'llah: Politics and Religion*.

74 A. Hamzeh, "Lebanon's Hizbullah: From Islamic revolution to parliamentary accommodation", *Third World Quarterly,* Vol. 14 No. 2, 1993.

75 F. El Khazen, "Political parties in postwar Lebanon: Parties in search of partisans", *The Middle East Journal*, Vol. 57 No. 4, 2003.

76 A. Norton, "Hizballah: From Radicalism to Pragmatism?"

77 M. Ranstorp, "The Strategy and Tactics of Hizballah's 'Lebanonisation Process'", *Mediterranean Politics*, Vol. 3 No. 1, 1998.

respect and support over the years, providing many Lebanese what the state could or would not.[78]

Hizballah's ideological flexibility ensured that justifying behaviour in Lebanon's electoral system was not difficult. Backed by powerhouses in Lebanon such as Fadlallah, Hizballah was able to very quickly convince its constituents -and indeed members of the wider population- that it represented a genuine partner of peace in Lebanon, whose engagement in democracy was consistent with its ideological stand. This change was reflected throughout Hizballah's behaviour in parliament and its policies, suggesting it met Schwedler's criteria as having wide boundaries of justifiable behaviour.

Schwedler considers the boundaries within which a group can justify participation to be an important feature in the promotion of moderation, however, it is clear that this is a two-way relationship. The boundaries set by constituents are also important because in democracies, the limits of acceptable political behaviour that are defined by voters do not have to align with traditional democratic expectations. This is a particularly important nuance for the Hizballah case, as Hizballah has been able to retain support for its military wing because the appetite for independent resistance against Israel remains strong amongst its constituents. The Ta'if-legitimised "resistance" to Israel received token support from the Lebanese political elite and was backed by members of the Lebanese population who were sympathetic to those living under occupation in southern Lebanon. This support is particularly strong amongst Hizballah's direct Shi'a constituents, giving Hizballah a quasi-democratic mandate to continue its resistance.[79] Although there is some opposition within Lebanon, low political will and Hizballah's unwavering commitment to its military wing has ensured that disarmament remains unlikely.[80] Further, Hizballah has been able to frame its resistance as consistent with its political platform, framing its *jihad* against Israel as a moral cause where the Lebanese population needed to stand up against the "repressive" Israeli military incursions on southern Lebanon.

Hizballah's use of violence appeared to be tempered by its participation in democracy, albeit temporarily. While Hizballah acted

78 G. Trendle, "The grass roots of success", *The Middle East*, 1 February 1993.

79 J. Harik, *Hezbollah: The changing face of terrorism*.

80 "Lebanon rivals agree crisis deal", *BBC News*, 21 May 2008, http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/7411835.stm (acessed 5 July 2013).

aggressively to defend its support base in the 1980s, in the 1990s, Hizballah demonstrated accountability to its constituents, even in its violence against Israel. Hizballah therefore closely gauged constituents' expectations, only attacking military targets considered legitimate in the eyes of the Lebanese and avoiding acts that risked Israeli retaliation.[81] This engagement with its constituents meant that Hizballah worked hard to avoid unnecessary civilian casualties, or damage to the fragile Lebanese economy which had begun to recover from the civil war. It is clear that Hizballah carefully considered its use of violence to ensure that it did not unnerve its supporters at the polls.[82] As a result, Hizballah used its weapons in relatively limited capacity and only sporadically after 1992. It suspended attacks in election years with the exception of 1996.[83] Until 2008, there was little evidence that Hizballah would act overtly against the interests of the Lebanese. As such, Noe observed that Hizballah's use of violence was always "placed squarely within the confines of political costs and benefits for the movement."[84] This saw Hizballah participate in prisoner-exchanges and even formalise rules of engagement with Israel that committed both sides to attacking only military targets.[85] Although there were times when Hizballah miscalculated or overplayed its hand, including in 1996 and 2006, as a rule, this pattern led to remarkably stable relations between Hizballah and Israel. There were also serious violations by both sides at times, although a pattern of proportionate "an eye for an eye" violations became the conflict's norm. For example, when the IDF destroyed a Syrian radar in the Lebanon Valley, Hizballah retaliated in kind, destroying an Israeli radar.[86]

Hizballah's international operations were scaled-back significantly after 1992, and also followed this 'tit for tat' pattern, largely targeting Israeli interests. For example, in an apparent response to the Israeli assassination of then-Hizballah Secretary-General 'Abbas al-Musawi, Hizballah bombed the Israeli Embassy and a Jewish

81 J. Gunning, "Hizballah and the logic of political participation" in M. Heiberg, B. O'Leary & J. Tirman (eds.), *Terror, insurgency and the state: Ending protracted conflicts*, (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2007).

82 Ibid.

83 A. Mannes, M. Michael, A. Pate, A. Slive, V. Subrahamian & J. Wilkenfeld, *Stochastic Opponent Modeling Agents: A Case Study with Hizbullah*, (College Park: University of Maryland, 2008)

84 N. Noe, *The relationship between Hizbullah & the United States in light of the current situation in the Middle East*, (Cambridge: University of Cambridge, 2006). p. 12.

85 A. Norton, *Hizballah of Lebanon: Extremist Ideals vs. Mundane Politics*.

86 D. Sobelman, *New rules of the game*, (Tel Aviv: Jaffee Center for Strategic Studies, 2004).

Community Centre in Buenos Aires in 1992 and 1994, resulting in significant deaths and casualties.[87] A number of other international incidents in the 1990s have been attributed to Hizballah, but were not claimed and never credibly confirmed.[88] In an isolated case more recently, Hizballah was also linked to planned bombings of Israeli targets in Bangkok in early 2012, in possible retaliation for the suspected Israeli-assassination of Hizballah's intelligence chief, Imad Mughniyeh.[89]

While Hizballah's military wing appears to have been restrained, the group demonstrated in 2008 and 2013 that it would use this capacity in the name of self-preservation. Evidently, the exceptionally wide boundaries of acceptable action are a serious limitation of the group's propensity to moderate and the Lebanese system gave the group little incentive to disarm and cull its military wing. Therefore, it had a greater range of options than other political parties, because it could fall back on its military wing when it did not get its way. It also enabled Hizballah to retain a highly trained army with resources and skills superior to the Lebanese state, ensuring that the government had had no ability to enforce its decisions. As long as Hizballah retained this latent capacity, there was always going to be the temptation to use it when their survival is at stake. This posed a major limitation of Hizballah's democratic engagement.

Foreign Patrons

In addition to Schwedler's model, Hizballah's foreign patrons, Iran and Syria, have provided a further barrier to moderation. Although their relationship with Hizballah has led to both constraint and provocation, these links are the root of the inevitability of the Syrian intervention. Syria and Iran are still considered key supporters of Hizballah, with one Syrian analyst saying "if Iran is Hizballah's oxygen tank, Syria would be the air hose."[90] Both parties are fundamental to Hizballah's ability to obtain military materials.

87 C. BrafmanKittner, "The role of safe havens in Islamist terrorism", *Terrorism and Political Violence*, Vol. 19 No. 3, 2007.

88 S. Hajjar, *Hizballah: Terrorism, national liberation or menace?*, (Carlisle: Strategic Studies Institute, 2002).

89 "Thailand arrests Hezbollah suspect after US Bangkok alert", *BBC News Asia*, 13 January 2012, http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-asia-16543447 (accessed 5 July 2013).

90 Cited in R. Roumani, "Syria's last trump card", *Bitter Lemons*, Vol. 36 No. 2, 2004, http://www.bitterlemons-international.org/inside.php?id=232 (accessed 4 February 2014)

Iran remains a key financial contributor to Hizballah, which, according to Levitt's testimony to the US Senate, may be worth between $100 and $200 million per year.[91] Critically, Iran provides Hizballah with its weapons, making it a fundamental partner in the viability of Hizballah's military wing. Surprisingly, it has been known to prod Hizballah into militant or peaceful actions from time to time, with only limited success.[92]

Hizballah's relationship with Syria has more plainly demonstrated the danger posed by the group's commitment to its sponsors in recent years. Blanford considers Hizballah to be one of Syria's "few, if not the only, potent bargaining chips to put pressure on the Jewish state to return the strategic plateau" (the Golan).[93] As a result, a close relationship endured, although Gambill and Abdelnour suggest is akin to a "loveless marriage".[94] Syria's major influence over Hizballah has been its role in transferring weapons between Iran and Hizballah via Damascus.[95] A senior Israeli military official suggested that the relationship works along the lines of, "Iran pays, Syria smuggles and Hezbollah receives", demonstrating the importance of Syria in Hizballah's supply chain.[96] As a result, Syria has had a more hands-on influence than Iran, and at times this led Hizballah to actions seemingly inconsistent with the group's normal parliamentary character, including its involvement in the assassination of the former-Lebanese Prime Minister, Rafik Hariri, in 2005.[97] Indeed, Hizballah's international relationships made sure that even in the periods of Hizballah's deepest commitment to the Lebanese democratic system, it would still have one eye on the wider regional situation.

91 M. Levitt, "Testimony to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs: Hezbollah: Financing terror through criminal enterprise", Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs, United States Senate, 25 May 2005, http://www.washingtoninstitute.org/html/pdf/hezbollah-testimony-05252005.pdf p. 3.

92 D. Sobelman, "Hizbollah after the Syrian withdrawal", *Strategic Assessment*, Vol. 8 No. 1, 2005.

93 N. Blanford, "Irritating Israel," *Bitter Lemons,* Vol. 36, 2004, http://www.bitterlemons-international.org/inside.php?id=233 (accessed 30 June 2008)

94 G. Gambill & Z. Abdelnour, "Hezbollah: Between Tehran and Damascus", *Middle East Intelligence Bulletin*, Vol. 4 No. 2, 2002.

95 Ibid.

96 Cited in A. Harel & A. Issacharoff, "Iran pays, Syria smuggles, and Hezbollah receives", *Haaretz*, 14 October 2009.

97 N. Blanford, "Did Hezbollah kill Hariri?", *Foreign Policy*, 1 April 2010, http://www.foreignpolicy.com/articles/2010/04/01/did_hezbollah_kill_hariri (accessed 2 September 2013).

The Syrian Conflict

Reports in early 2012 that the bodies of Hizballah fighters were being repatriated back to Lebanon provided the first evidence that Hizballah was supporting the Assad regime's crackdown on the Syrian uprising.[98] At that time, small numbers of Hizballah cadres were purportedly fighting alongside Assad's forces across Syria.[99] However, the situation escalated in May 2013 when Western intelligence sources reported that up to 7,000 Hizballah troops had crossed the border into Syria.[100] This was later confirmed by Nasrallah, who told his supporters that "if Syria falls into the hands of America, Israel and the takfiris, the people of our region will enter a dark period…If we do not go there to fight them…they will come here."[101] Hizballah fighters proved vital in Assad's hard-won victory in June 2013 in Qusair, a smuggling town on Syrian border. The victory turned the tide in Syria, at least temporarily, enabling the re-capture of a number of strategic northern Syrian villages and towns that had fallen to the opposition, re-securing Assad's supply routes. Hizballah has since been observed in other battles alongside Syrian troops in Lebanon, including the intense fighting in Homs.[102]

Confirmation of Hizballah's involvement in Syria caused a backlash from rival groups in Lebanon, with Hizballah's supporters violently targeted.[103] Consequently, the EU listed Hizballah's military wing as a terrorist organisation, a step the EU had resisted in the face of US

98 O. Ward, "Syria: How Hezbollah became a game-changer", *The Star*, 23 July 2013, http://www.thestar.com/news/world/2013/07/23/syria_how_hezbollah_became_a_gamechanger.html (accessed 11th August 2013).; "More Hezbollah fighters killed in Syria buried in Lebanon",*Ya Libnan*, 8 April 2013, http://www.yalibnan.com/2013/04/08/more-hezbollah-fighters-killed-in-syria-to-be-buried-in-lebanon/ (accessed 11 August 2013).

99 N. Blanford, "Accusations mount of Hezbollah fighting in Syria", *Christian Science Monitor*, 15 October 2012, http://www.csmonitor.com/World/Middle-East/2012/1015/Accusations-mount-of-Hezbollah-fighting-in-Syria (accessed 11 August 2013).

100 "Syria: Hezbollah triumphs, but loses veterans", UPI, 30 May 2013, http://www.upi.com/Top_News/Special/2013/05/30/Syria-Hezbollah-triumphs-but-loses-veterans/UPI-98951369939886/ (accessed 5 July 2013).

101 Cited in L. Morris, "Hezbollah chief defends group's involvement in Syrian war",*The Washington Post*, 26 May 2013.

102 "Reports: Syrian Troops, Hezbollah consolidate gains in Homs", *VOA News*, 28 July 2013, http://www.voanews.com/content/report-says-syrian-troops-hezbollah-consolidate-gains-in-homs/1711770.html (accessed 11 August 2013).

103 B. Mroue& Z. Karam, "Explosion rocks Hezbollah stronghold in Beirut as Syria's war spills into Lebanon",*The Globe and Mail,* 9 July 2013. ; D. Kraiche& R. Al-Fakih, "Ambush targets Hezbollah convoy", *The Daily Star*, 17 July 2013, http://www.dailystar.com.lb/News/Politics/2013/Jul-17/223970-ambush-targets-hezbollah-convoy.ashx#axzz2ZNfHqULK (accessed 11 August 2013).

pressure for many years prior.[104] The US Deputy Secretary of State William Burns predicted that it is only a matter of time before the Syrian conflict spreads to Lebanon.[105]

Hizballah's involvement in Syria would have almost certainly abhorred its constituents, who had long expressed their concern about the potential return of war to Lebanon. Lebanon has been widely viewed as a potential spill-over point for the Syrian uprising because of its similar religious demographics, already-tense communal atmosphere and weak national army.[106] While previously Hizballah had sought to operate closely within its constituents' expectations of security and stability, Hizballah deemed its involvement in Syria as a necessary move to back its ally in the ailing Assad regime. Indeed, Hizballah would be considerably isolated and weakened in the absence of the Assad regime, signalling that now that Hizballah's own survival was on the line, constituent safety became secondary. As such, the Syrian uprising represented a major sidestep for Hizballah from its prior operations within the Lebanon/Israel politico-security arena, although it was not entirely surprising considering the events of 2008. In this way, Hizballah's involvement in the Syrian uprising needs to be understood as more than just Hizballah intervening in conflict in a neighbouring country. It represents the group's decision to galvanise its Syrian backer, whatever the cost to the Lebanese Shi'a.

Schwedler's three factors directly influenced Hizballah's decision to engage in Syria, with the interaction between the three severely limiting the group's allegiance to the Lebanese system. The political opportunities offered by the Lebanese state were no longer compelling in the face of the near-certain death of the military wing that has remained central to the group's identity. The system's built-in structural failure to fully integrate Hizballah as a political player has been a major barrier in this regard. Further, Hizballah's military wing endured due to the absence of leadership change and the closed internal organisational structure. This has meant that Hizballah's

104 J. Kanter & J. Rodoren, "European Union Adds Military Wing of Hezbollah to List of Terrorist Organizations",*The New York Times*, 23 July 2013, http://www.nytimes.com/2013/07/23/world/middleeast/european-union-adds-hezbollah-wing-to-terror-list.html?pagewanted=all (accessed 11 August 2013).

105 "U.S. diplomat blasts Hezbollah over role in Syria war",*CBS News*, 1 July 2013, http://www.cbsnews.com/8301-202_162-57591762/u.s-diplomat-blasts-hezbollah-over-role-in-syria-war/ (accessed 11 August 2013).

106 R. Sherlock, "Clashes in Lebanon as Syria conflict spills over", *The Telegraph,* 24 June 2013.

military and political ambitions remained intimately linked, ensuring that Hizballah failed to substantially shift its civil war priorities and mentality, even though Lebanon has enjoyed more than twenty years of internal peace. Finally, Hizballah's continued constituent support and wide boundaries of justifiable behaviour gave it little incentive to demilitarise over the years and preserved a capacity to respond in Syria when the crisis arose. Indeed, Hizballah has never had to seriously engage in discussions about its disarmament. In sustaining this latent capability, the group would always face the temptation to fall back on its weapons if circumstances demanded it.

In short, the weakening of its sponsor in Syria tested Hizballah's underlying priorities and has ultimately revealed Hizballah's level of commitment to democratic values. For the second time since 1992, survival became key and quickly elevated Hizballah's priorities outside its parliamentary paradigm to a position where its democratic support was no longer its primary concern.

Conclusion

Hizballah appeared to have undergone a major transformation after engaging in Lebanon's electoral system. Between 1992 and 2008, it largely downplayed violence in favour of competitive parliamentary politics. Hizballah seemed closely attuned to its constituents and cautious to maintain the support base that guarantees its survival. Further, in its participation in government after years of boycott, Hizballah demonstrated political development. Democracy moderated Hizballah's use of violence and the conflict with Israel became contained. Rarely targeting civilians, Hizballah submitted to a highly regulated conflict with Israel that could be managed with political will on both sides.[107] In this way, Hizballah appeared to undergo a moderation process, supporting observations by many commentators that the group had changed.[108]

Schwedler's model identified a number of warning signs in Hizballah's behaviour after 1992 that suggested it had not fully submitted itself to democratic norms, ensuring that an intervention on behalf

107 N. Blanford, "Israel scrables aircraft as Lebanon hears news", *The Times*, 5 November 2004.

108 J. Harik, "Between Islam and the system: Sources and implications of popular support for Lebanon's Hizballah" ; A. Norton, *Hezbollah: A Short History*.

of one of its patrons - in the name of its own survival - was always a possibility. Lebanon's political system had provided a number of opportunities and constraints for Hizballah's engagement, but in the end was a barrier to Hizballah gaining a parliamentary mandate that accurately reflected its level of support. This provided the incentive for Hizballah to step outside the system when seriously threatened by a government whose decisions it had little chance of influencing. In short, the Lebanese political system did not offer sufficient incentive for Hizballah to disband its military wing.

Secondly, Hizballah's internal party structure is far from democratic. It is rigid and unchanging and a new generation of leaders has not emerged. Instead, Hizballah's original leaders continue to make decisions for the group, ensuring that civil war thinking and strategies have remained standard practice. The failure to put distance between Hizballah's military and political wings has ensured that the group's military capacity remained central to the group's identity and conception of its own political aims. The *Shura* Council's decision to utilise civil war-era methods in Syria in 2013 at a time of comparative peace in Lebanon, points to this fatal consequences of generational and institutional change in Hizballah.

Thirdly, although Hizballah underwent an ideological transformation where its goals were aligned to the Lebanese political system and justifiable to its citizens, Hizballah's constituents' continued acceptance of violence gave Hizballah little incentive to disarm. Moreover, the tacit agreement of the Lebanese state and the population provided the militia with a modicum of democratic sanction, leaving Hizballah with a latent violent capacity if it was under threat. In this way, it had more options than regular political parties, who have no choice but to fight for their interests within democratic norms. Therefore, while Hizballah's ideological foundation fulfilled Schwedler's criteria for wide boundaries of justifiable action, it was the willingness of Hizballah's constituents to accept undemocratic behaviourthat ultimately undermined its commitment to democracy. It is therefore no surprise that in 2008 Hizballah used its militia against the Lebanese state and in 2013 it used the militia to influence wider regional events, demonstrating that it never genuinely surrendered to democratic rules, and always viewed its weapons as part of its political playbook.

Finally, Hizballah's external patrons provided the critical impetus to

its decision to become involved in Syria. The potential for Hizballah to lose its supply chain if the Assad regime collapsed provided the ultimate test of the group's commitment to Lebanon. Hizballah's ongoing relationship with its two patrons therefore gave it obligations and independence beyond the Lebanese political arena, ensuring that it always kept one eye on regional events, as they too directly influenced the group's likelihood of survival.

The Syrian war has convincingly demonstrated the limits of Hizballah's democratic transformation, as explained through Schwedler's analysis. The existential threat to Hizballah forced it to act outside the democratic framework where it had seated itself since the end of the civil war. In this way, Hizballah's largely moderated behaviour between 1992 and 2008 became irrelevant because it had taken place in an environment where Hizballah was not seriously threatened. Now that the group has faced existential challenge, it has clearly demonstrated that its military capabilities remain its number one priority, proving the fatal limitation of its so-called transformation.

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Rethinking State-Society Relations in Syria until 1970: What Does the Center-Periphery Model Tell Us?

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Abstract

This study aims to analyze, in a historical perspective, the state-society relations in Syria within the framework of the center-periphery model introduced by Edward Shils. The article argues that Shils's model is a useful approach to understand the state-society relations in Syria during the Ottoman, mandate and independence periods. In the article, Shils's concept of the center both as a culture and institution, and concept of the periphery are reevaluated in a dynamic way. In this regard, it is observed that there are changes and tensions not only between the center and the periphery but also among different groups within the center and the periphery throughout the period examined in the article. The article also suggests that the center-periphery model should be supplemented with class analysis in order to understand politics of Syria from independence in 1946 to Hafez al-Assad's Corrective Revolution in 1970.

Keywords: Syria, Syrian Politics, the Ottoman Empire, Center-Periphery Model, State-Society Relations

1970'e Kadar Suriye'de Devlet-Toplum İlişkilerini Yeniden Düşünmek: Merkez-Çevre Modeli Bize Ne Söyler?

Özet

Bu çalışma, Edward Shils tarafından başlatılan merkez-çevre modeli çerçevesinde, tarihsel bir perspektiften, Suriye'de devlet-toplum ilişkilerini incelemeyi hedeflemektedir. Makale, Suriye'de devlet-toplum ilişkilerini Osmanlı, manda ve bağımsızlık sonrası dönemlerde anlamak için Shils'in modelinin kullanışlı bir yaklaşım olduğunu savunmaktadır. Makalede, Shils'in kültür ve kurum olarak merkez

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kavramı ve çevre kavramı dinamik bir biçimde yeniden değerlendirilmiştir. Bu açıdan, makalede incelenen dönem boyunca sadece merkez ve çevre arasında değil, merkez ve çevre içerisindeki farklı gruplar arasında da gerilimler ve değişimler gözlemlenmiştir. Makale ayrıca Suriye'nin 1946'daki bağımsızlığından 1970'te Hafız Esad'ın Düzeltici Devrimi'ne kadar Suriye politikasının anlaşılması için merkez-çevre modelinin sınıf analiziyle desteklenmesi gerektiğini tavsiye etmektedir.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Suriye, Suriye Siyaseti, Osmanlı Devleti, Merkez-Çevre Modeli, Devlet-Toplum İlişkileri

اعادة التفكير فى علاقة الدولة والمجتمع فى سوريا حتى عام ١٩٧٠: ماذا يخبرنا نموذج المركز والهامش؟

ملخص

تهدف هذه الدراسة إلى التحليل، من منظور تاريخي، لعلاقة الدولة والمجتمع فى سوريا ، من خلال

استخدام الإطار النظري لنموذج المركز والأطراف لصاحبه "إدوارد شيلس".

تبرهن هذه الدراسة على أن نموذج "شيلس" مفيدا لفهم علاقة الدولة والمجتمع فى سوريا أثناء الحقبة العثمانية والإحتلال الفرنسي ومرحلة الإستقلال.

فى هذه الدراسة يعاد تقييم كل من مفهوم المركز ،سواء بوصفه ثقافة أو بوصفه مؤسسة، ومفهوم الأطراف ،بطريقة ديناميكية وفقاً لنموذج "شيلس" . ويلاحظ فى هذا الصدد وجود تغييرات وتوترات ليس فقط بين المركز والأطراف، ولكن أيضا بين جماعات مختلفة داخل نطاق المركز والأطراف على مدار الفترة الزمنية التي تعتبر موضع للإختبار فى هذه الدراسة.

توصي الدراسة أيضاً بأهمية أن يُلحق بها تحليل طبقى للوصول إلى فهم السياسة السورية منذ مرحلة الاستقلال فى عام ١٩٤٦ حتي ثورة التصحيح بقيادة حافظ الأسد فى عام ١٩٧٠.

كلمات مفتاحية: سوريا ، السياسة السورية، الإمبراطورية العثمانية، نموذج المركز والأطراف ،علاقة الدولة والمجتمع.

Introduction

Center-periphery model, which was introduced by American sociologist Edward Shils, is an analytical tool to understand the state-society relations. The main aim of this article is to apply the model to the case of Syria in a historical perspective. The article does not take Shils's center-periphery model as a frozen theoretical framework but it will try to grasp vertical and horizontal changes and tensions within the center and the periphery from Ottoman Syria to the independent state of Syria. In the article, a special attention will be paid to the historical formation and transformation of the center and the periphery in Ottoman Syria, which directly affected the state-society relations in the mandate and independence periods.

In the article, the central value system of the Syrian society (cultural dimension of the center) will be defined as Islam during the Ottoman Empire. However, in opposition to Shils's understanding, the central value system of the society will not be considered as unchanging. In this sense, it will be explained that the Islamic central value system of the society amalgamated with Arab nationalism during the mandate and independence periods. Besides, the center-periphery relations in post-independent Syria will be analyzed in terms of class relations. It will be pointed out that the struggle for power to control the state (institutional dimension of the center) among civilian and military Sunni factions coming from different classes after independence led to the ascendance of heterodox minority groups and reconfiguration of the center-periphery relations. Within the context of the Arab Spring, the center-periphery model provides us with deep insights about the historical roots of the confrontation between Sunni and heterodox minority communities of the Syrian society.

Theoretical Perspective: The Center-Periphery Model

According to Edward Shils, each society has a center. Shils explains that center is not a spatially located phenomenon and centrality has nothing to do with geography or geometry. Center is basically a central zone in the structure of society. He points out two dimensions of the concept of center. The first is the cultural dimension which he considers as the sphere or order of symbols, values and beliefs which govern the society. This realm is composed of what the people in the society believe sacredly and it mainly refers to

religion even if a society was a secular one. The second is the institutional dimension of the center, which is defined as phenomenon of the realm of action. The institutional dimension is built upon the central cultural values and beliefs of the society. In Shils's conceptualization, the institutional dimension of center basically refers to the state and the authority. He says that ''the center consists of those institutions (and roles) which exercise authority-whether it be economic, governmental, political, military and of those which create and diffuse cultural symbols -religious, literary, etc.- through churches, schools, publishing houses, etc.''[1] According to Shils, these two kinds of centrality -cultural and institutional- are interrelated and support each other. The appreciation of the central value system of the society through the use of some symbols by the authority directly contributes to its legitimatization.[2]

Even though each society has both cultural and institutional center, society is not a unitary system. Groups who are away from the central value system in terms of institutional domain and exercise of authority are classified as ''periphery''. If the central institutional system is not comprehensive and there is a lack of participation to the institutional domain, the central value system becomes more detached from other parts of the society. If the central institutional system becomes more comprehensive, the tension between the center and the periphery reduces. As we clearly understand from his approach to the center and the periphery, Shils considers center as a dynamic force and periphery as a passive receiver of the center.[3] In this article, the periphery is not considered as a passive bearer of the center. On the contrary, it is evaluated as a dynamic force which has power to influence and replace the institutional center in Syria.

Şerif Mardin[4] and Metin Heper[5] have applied Shils's center-periphery model to modern Ottoman and Turkish politics. Even though

1 Edward Shils, *Center and Periphery, Essays in Macrosociology* (Chicago: Chicago University Press, 1975), p. 39.

2 ibid., p. 3-10.

3 ibid., p. 12-13. For an assessment of Shils's center-periphery model, see Joel S. Migdal, *State in Society, Studying How States and Societies Transform and Constitute One Another* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2001), p. 43-47.

4 Şerif Mardin, "Center-Periphery Relations: A Key to Turkish Politics?", *Daedalus*, Vol. 102, No. 1, Post-Traditional Societies, Winter 1973.

5 Metin Heper, "Center and Periphery in the Ottoman Empire: With Special Reference to the Nineteenth Century", *International Political Science Review*, Vol. 1, No. 1, 1980.

both Mardin's cultural and Heper's institutional approaches mention the heterogeneity of the periphery, they do not clarify what they mean by this heterogeneity. At this point, Levent Gönenç introduces two concepts to analyze heterogeneous nature of the periphery: the first is the close periphery and the second is the remote periphery in relation with the center. If some peripheral groups have close relations with the institutional domain of the center (the state) and its values, these groups can be described as ''close periphery'' of the society. If some peripheral groups clash with the central value system of the state, pursue their own value system and want to change it, these groups are named as ''remote periphery''.[6] By depending upon the Shils's framework, the present article will benefit from the concepts of the close and the remote periphery in order to understand the state-society relations in Syria.

Center-Periphery Relations in Ottoman Syria: the State, the *Ayan*s and the Others

From Shils's perspective, the basis of the central value system of the Ottoman society can be defined as Islam.[7] The cultural dimension of the center directly reflected in the institutional sphere of the center (the state) represented by the Ottoman dynasty. The sultans always used ''symbols'' of the Islamic central value system in order to legitimize themselves in the eyes of their flock. To illustrate, they used the title of caliph and assumed the role of protecting Islam against the Christian world.[8] When the Ottomans conquered the Syrian territories in 1516, they utilized similar Sunni-Islamic symbols in order to legitimize the state in the eyes of the Syrian people.[9]

According to Mardin, one of the dimensions of cleavage between center and periphery in the Ottoman Empire was the power of the pre-Ottoman nobility (powerful families) and the existence of religious heterodoxy in the provinces. The state aimed to prevent the outbreak of rebellions in the periphery through a decentralized sys-

6 Levent Gönenç, "2000'li Yıllarda Merkez-Çevre İlişkilerini Yeniden Düşünmek", *Toplum ve Bilim*, Vol. 105, 2006, p. 132-133.

7 ibid., p. 133.

8 For detailed information about the legitimization symbols and practices of the Ottoman sultans, see Colin Imber, *Osmanlı İmparatorluğu, 1300-1650 İktidarın Yapısı* (İstanbul: İstanbul Bilgi Üniversitesi Yayınları, 2006), p. 148-163.

9 Bruce Masters, "Ottoman Policies toward Syria in the 17th and 18th Centuries" in Thomas Philipp, *The Syrian Land in the 18th and 19th Century: The Common and the Specific in the Historical Experience,* (Stuttgart: Steiner, 1992), p. 15-16.

tem, which paved the way for the emergence of a loosely related world between center and periphery.[10] Similarly, Sultan Selim established a loose Ottoman rule in Greater Syrian territories[11] (today's Syria, Lebanon, Jordan, Israel and occupied territories of Palestine) after the conquest. He accepted the status quo established by the Mamluks in the city centers as well as in the mountainous areas and deserts, where local chiefs were confirmed as ruling elites.[12] The first clash between the center and the periphery broke out with the death of Sultan Selim in 1520, since Syria was hotbed of pre-Ottoman nobility and religious heterodoxy. Janbirdi al-Gazzali, who was the governor of Damascus and representative of the pre-Ottoman nobility, rebelled against the Ottomans and wanted to seize all Syrian provinces. After the suppression of Janbirdi's rebellion by the Ottoman army, the Ottoman administration (including *timar*) was imposed on the Syrian provinces.[13]

In the Ottoman Empire, the application and maintenance of the land tenure system (*timar*) was the most significant aspect of the state's control over the periphery. Mardin says that the state's control over the land system, in which lands were owned by the sultan himself, was one of the dividing lines between the center and the periphery.[14] Similar to Mardin, Heper also explains the state's tight control over the land system as a significant institutional aspect of the center-periphery relations.[15] On the other hand, starting with the second half of the 16th century, the Ottoman Empire began to experience a transformation period due to some internal and international challenges, which led to decentralization of the Empire.[16] The decentralization process was characterized by the transformation of the land tenure system from *timar* (fief) to *iltizam* (tax-farming) and then *mâlikane* (lifetime tax-farming), and the emergence of new local forces, including pasha and vizier households, the *ulema* and

10 Mardin, "Center-Periphery Relations: A Key to Turkish Politics?", p. 170-172.

11 The Ottomans divided Greater Syrian territories into four provinces: Damascus, Aleppo, Tripoli and Sidon. See Masters, "Ottoman Policies toward Syria in the 17th and 18th Centuries", p. 11-15.

12 Zeine N. Zeine, *Arab-Turkish Relations and the Emergence of Arab Nationalism* (Westport, Connecticut: Greenwood Press, 1981), p. 11-12.

13 Jane Hathaway, *Arab Lands under Ottoman Rule, 1516-1800* (London: Pearson Longman, 2008), p. 52-53.

14 Mardin, "Center-Periphery Relations: A Key to Turkish Politics?", p. 173.

15 Heper, "Center and Periphery in the Ottoman Empire: With Special Reference to the Nineteenth Century", p. 83-85.

16 Hathaway, *Arab Lands under Ottoman Rule, 1516-1800,* p. 62.

the janissaries in the provinces against the central authority of the sultan. Syria was profoundly transformed by the decentralization process in which the *timar* order deteriorated and new local forces emerged across the region at the expense of the center during the 17th century. This development resulted in the outbreak of peripheral uprisings of Fakhr al-Din Ma'n II, Ali Pasha Janbulad and Abaza Hasan Pasha in Greater Syrian territories.[17]

In the 18th century, power balance between the center and the periphery obviously tilted towards the periphery. Ottoman sultans lost their central control in the provinces and the *ayan*s or local notables emerged as the most influential political actors in the provinces.[18] Similar to other parts of the Empire, the ongoing transformation of the state led to the strengthening of the urban Sunni notables of Syria (the *ayan*s and the *ulema*) as a peripheral force in the 18th century. Especially, the implementation of the *mâlikane* contributed to the rise of the urban notables. The *mâlikane* system created a mutual dependence between the center and the periphery and reduced the tension between them considerably. The Sublime Porte recognized the decentralized system and began to rule the provinces through the *ayan* households. In turn, the center granted the *ayan*s with the official posts and *mâlikanes*.[19] Albert Hourani conceptualized the collaboration between the center and the periphery in the 18th century as ''the politics of notables'', in which the notables were accepted by the state as the natural leaders of the provincial society, who can play intermediary political role between the government and the people within certain limits.[20] The local notables were not an alternative power center to the state and their main aim was to fill the power vacuum in the provinces and enrich themselves at the expense of both the state and the peasantry.[21] One of the best examples of the politics of notables in Syria was al-Azm family of

17 ibid., p. 64-72.

18 William L. Cleveland and Martin Bunton, *A History of the Modern Middle East,* 4th ed. (Boulder, Colorado: Westview Press, 2009), p. 58; Hathaway, *Arab Lands under Ottoman Rule, 1516-1800*, p. 79-81.

19 Donald Quataert, *The Ottoman Empire 1700-1922* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2005), p. 48-49.

20 Albert Hourani, "Ottoman Reform and the Politics of Notables", in Albert Hourani (ed.), *The Emergence of the Modern Middle East* (London: St. Anthony's College, Oxford, 1994), p. 40-45.

21 Heper, "Center and Periphery in the Ottoman Empire: With Special Reference to the Nineteenth Century", p. 88.

Damascus who ruled in different parts of Syria in collaboration with the center during the 18th century.[22]

The politics of notables was a watershed in the relationship between the center and the periphery in Syria. In Gönenç's conceptualization, the alliance between the state and the Sunni local notables (the *ayans* and the *ulema*) made these notables ''the close periphery'' of the Syrian society.[23] Naturally, heterodox minorities (the Alawites, the Druzes and the Ismailis) and non-Muslims were subordinated to ''the remote periphery'' status in the society since the 18th century. The urban Sunni elites were favored by the center as they were sharing the same beliefs and values (Sunni Islam) of the Empire, even though they were excluded from high culture of the Ottoman bureaucracy. The closeness between the urban notables of the society and the state accelerated the ''institutional cooperation'' between them despite an unofficial one. Unless the center intervened at the expense of the local notables, the close peripheral forces allied with the center and helped the sultan in the administration of the Syrian provinces.

The Ottoman Empire's dependence on the Sunni-Muslim community of Syria in economic and political domains forced other non-Sunni and non-Muslim sects to live within a Sunni dominated society.[24] We can claim that cultural differences between the Muslim heterodox groups and the state hampered institutional cooperation between the center and the remote periphery. In addition to this cultural difference, geographical and topological location of these heterodox groups saved them from the center's influence, which contributed to development of their social and tribal solidarity. The relationship between the Sunni majority of the Syrian society (the close periphery) and heterodox minority groups were not also good, since the Sunni landlords despised the Alawites and other sects as heretics and exploited them.[25] The Sunni-Muslim domina-

22 For detailed information about the rise of al-Azm family in Syria, see Abdul-Karim Rafeq, *The Province of Damascus, 1723-1783* (Beirut: Khayats, 1966).

23 Some of the urban Sunni notable families were al-Azm, al-Yusuf, al-Ajlani, al-Ghazzi and al-Kaylani families. For detailed information, see Philip S. Khoury, *Urban Notables and Arab Nationalism: The Politics of Damascus, 1860-1920* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1983).

24 John F. Devlin, *Syria: A Modern State in an Ancient Land* (Boulder, Colorado: Westview Press, 1983), p. 26.

25 Moshe Ma'oz, *Asad: Sphinx of Damascus: A Political Biography* (New York: Grove Weiden-

tion over the heterodox sects of the society was directly reflected in the socio-economic life and politics was shaped by the urban Sunni elites for a long time which created an obscure horizontal tension between the close and the remote peripheries of the society.

At the beginning of the 19th century, the center insisted on launching a series of centralization and modernization initiatives due to the decline in the power of the state vis-à-vis the periphery. Syrian territories were directly affected by the center's centralization and modernization measures, which created a vertical tension between the center and both the close and the remote peripheries of the society in the 19th century. The Ottomans aimed to reverse decentralization process in the Arab provinces and wanted to establish a direct contact with its population at the expense of the local notables especially by implementing the Land Code of 1858. Nevertheless, attempts at bringing central authority to the central cities such as Aleppo, Damascus, Tripoli and Jerusalem failed and resulted in the outbreak of many popular rebellions which ended with the expulsion or death of Turkish pashas.[26] The center could not neutralize the close periphery and acknowledged the power of urban Sunni notables in order to implement the reforms during the 19th century. Accordingly, the center relied on the urban Sunni notables in newly established governing bodies (*meclis*), which facilitated the close periphery's acquisition of authority in the Syrian provinces officially.

Moreover, the Ottoman control over mountainous areas of Syria and Palestine was very weak such as in Jabal Druze, Latakia, Jabal Nablus and the mountains around Jerusalem where local chiefs ruled independent of Istanbul during the course of the 19th century. This made the tension between the remote periphery and the center unavoidable. The Ottoman Empire launched military expeditions to the Jabal Nusayriya region and Jabal Druze region several times. Even though the Ottoman army succeeded in penetrating to the Alawite region, the Druze region fought successfully against the Ottoman army.[27] Despite small successes, the center could not establish a full-scale control over the remote periphery in the 19th century.

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feld, 1998), p. 2-3. Also see Nikolaos van Dam, *The Struggle for Power in Syria, Politics and Society under Asad and the Ba'th Party* (London: I.B. Tauris, 2011), p. 7-11 and Itamar Rabinovich, "The Compact Minorities and the Syrian State, 1918-45", *Journal of Contemporary History*, No. 4, 1979, p. 693-695.

26 Moshe Ma'oz, *Ottoman Reform in Syria and Palestine 1841-1860: The Impact of the Tanzimat on Politics and Society* (London: Oxford University Press, 1968), p. 6-10.

27 Ma'oz, *Asad: The Sphinx of Damascus: A Political Biography*, p. 3-4.

Another significant development of the 19th century was the state's efforts to build a new central value system for the society instead of Islamic values in order to prevent the dismantling of the state. The Ottoman Empire's attempt at creating a modern community based on the equal citizenship of Muslims and non-Muslims through *Tanzimat* and *Islahat* Decrees as well as imposing a new identity over the society (Ottomanism) deeply affected the Syrian society and created a horizontal tension within the periphery. When the center imposed new secular regulations in favor of non-Muslims (especially Christians) to appease the demands of the European powers, brutal inter-communal conflicts broke out in Syria such as the 1850 Aleppo events, the Nablus riots in 1856 and the massacres of the Christians in Lebanon and Damascus in 1860.[28] When the Christians and the Jews began to enjoy equality provided by the state publicly and replaced Muslims in the economic domain, they were attacked by the local notables, the *ulema* and the masses who considered their actions as a threat to the Islamic central value system of the society and their economic domination.

During the rule of Abdulhamid II, the urban Sunni notables such as al-Abid and al-Azm families realigned with the center since the state returned back to Islamist policies towards the Arab population.[29] Abdulhamid incorporated the urban Sunni notables into the state mechanism by employing them in the bureaucracy and in the provincial administrative posts, and by taking their sons into the modern schools in Istanbul.[30] Acquainted with modern political ideas in these schools, the sons of the local notables later formed the backbone of nationalist bureaucratic and military cadres of Syria during the mandate and post-independence periods.[31] This situation caused a polarization within the close periphery of the Syrian society which divided along with the first generation of traditional

28 Veysel Ayhan and Özlem Tür, *Lübnan: Savaş, Barış, Direniş ve Türkiye ile İlişkiler* (Bursa: Dora Yayıncılık, 2009), p. 39-44; Albert Hourani, *A History of the Arab Peoples* (Cambridge, Mass.: The Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 1991), p. 277-278.

29 Khoury, *Urban Notables and Arab Nationalism: The Politics of Damascus, 1860-1920,* p. 56.

30 Jens Hanssen, "Practices of Integration - Center-Periphery Relations in the Ottoman Empire" in Jens Hanssen, Thomas Philipp and Stefan Weber, *The Empire in the City: Arab Provincial Capitals in the Late Ottoman Empire*, (Beirut: Ergon Verlag Würzburg in Kommission, 2002),p. 70-73; Hasan Kayalı, *Arabs and Young Turks: Ottomanism, Arabism and Islamism in the Ottoman Empire, 1908-1918* (California: University of California Press, 1997), p. 35-36.

31 Albert Hourani, "The Ottoman Background of the Modern Middle East," in Albert Hourani (ed.), *The Emergence of the Modern Middle East* (London: St. Anthony's College, Oxford, 1994), p. 18.

urban Sunni elites and second generation nationalist urban Sunni elites.[32]

When Abdulhamid was dethroned by the Young Turk Revolution in 1908, the honeymoon between the state and the Arabs began to wither away. Even though there were good relations between the Committee of Union and Progress (CUP) and Syrian people at the beginning, the Arabs were disappointed by the Turkification and ruthless centralization policies of the new regime.[33] The tension between the new center (secular-nationalist military bureaucracy) and the members of the second-generation of nationalist urban Sunni notables of the close periphery was unavoidable. Therefore, Syria became the hub of nationalist and separatist activities during the First World War. Expectedly, after the demise of the Ottoman rule, the Arab nationalism became the dominant ideology among political groups in Syria.[34] The rise of Arab nationalism definitely transformed the central value system of the society and nationalism amalgamated with the pre-existing Islamic value system of the society during the mandate and post-independence periods.

Center-Periphery Relations under the French Mandate: 1920-1946

French mandate was imposed on Syria in 1920 and 400-year-old institutional center (the Ottoman Empire) was replaced by an imperialist power. French authorities were well aware of the horizontal tension between the close periphery (the Sunni elites) and the remote periphery (the Alawites, the Druzes, the Ismailis as well as other non-Muslim communities). They utilized divide and rule policy in line with sectarian lines by separating Syrian territories into four administrative units (states): Damascus, Aleppo, Alawite and Druze states. By doing so, France aimed to consolidate sub-state identities of the Syrian communities and prevented the strengthening of

32 Khoury, *Urban Notables and Arab Nationalism: The Politics of Damascus, 1860-1920*, p. 64-65; Mardin, "Center-Periphery Relations: A Key to Turkish Politics?", p. 176.

33 Heper, "Center and Periphery in the Ottoman Empire: With Special Reference to the Nineteenth Century", p. 89-96; Mardin, "Center-Periphery Relations: A Key to Turkish Politics?", p. 177-181. Also see Hasan Kayalı, *Arabs and Young Turks: Ottomanism, Arabism and Islamism in the Ottoman Empire, 1908-1918* (California: University of California Press, 1997).

34 Itamar Rabinovich, "Syria and the Syrian Land: The 19th Century Roots of 20th Century Developments", Thomas Philipp, "The Syrian Land in the 18th and 19th Century: The Common and the Specific in the Historical Experience" (Stuttgart: Steiner, 1992), p. 47.

Syrian national identity. Besides, France obviously favored Christian communities of Syria by expanding their autonomy, giving them right to be represented in official institutions. They also benefited from the French mandate in economic domain which contributed further to communal separation in Syria.[35]

Another factor that prevented the establishment of political community in Syria was the French policy of recruiting heterodox rural minorities (the remote periphery) into the army. France established Homs military academy in 1920 to train military officers to protect French interests in Levant. French authorities deliberately discouraged the Muslim population from joining the academy and the army, while encouraging the non-Sunni groups through military academy and *Troupes Spéciales du Levant*. Children of the rural lower classes or heterodox minorities, especially the Alawites, found the easiest way of upward social mobilization in the society.[36] The social composition of the military academy and *Troupes Spéciales* had long-lasting implications on Syrian politics after Syria's independence. The future army corps, with rural compact minority backgrounds, brought the army to the political scene and destructed the dominance of Sunni urban elites in Syrian politics after the Baathist coup of 1963.[37] By doing so, France paved the way for the remote periphery's entrance to the institutional domain of the center (the state/authority) via the army.

After the suppression of the Great Revolt in 1927[38], second generation urban Sunni elites established a new nationalist coalition, the National Bloc (*al-Qutla al-Wataniyya*) in 1928 to negotiate peace and independence with France. The leading figures of the Bloc were mainly well-educated members of the urban families, who had participated in nationalistic activities against the CUP before 1914.[39] The National Bloc developed a political strategy, called as honor-

35 Itamar Rabinovich, "The Compact Minorities and the Syrian State", p. 696-700; Ma'oz, *Asad: The Sphinx of Damascus: A Political Biography*, 8-12, also see Moshe Ma'oz, "Attempts at Creating Political Community in Syria", *Middle East Journal*, Vol. 26, No. 4, 1972, p. 396-397.

36 Amos Perlmutter, "From Obscurity to Rule: The Syrian Army and the Ba'th Party", *The Western Political Quarterly*, No. 4, 1969, p. 830.

37 Van Dam, *The Struggle for Power in Syria, Politics and Society under Asad and the Ba'th Party*, p. 26-27.

38 For detailed information about the Great Revolt see Philip S. Khoury, *Syria and the French Mandate: The Politics of Arab Nationalism, 1920-1945* (London: I.B. Tauris, 1987), p. 151-219.

39 ibid., p.251.

able cooperation, to maintain the balance between France and the Syrian people similar to the politics of notables.[40] The Bloc aimed to lead the Syrian society and force France to recognize their intermediary role between the society and France.[41] France accepted the role of the urban Sunni elites in leading the society until 1946 and in this regard prepared them for the institutional center for the aftermath of the mandate.

Between 1920 and 1946, while the Arab nationalist sentiments were growing within the Syrian society, the central value system of the society involved strong Islamic values. The existence of the Islamic values reflected in the Constitution of 1930 which affirmed the political superiority of Muslim community over other stratas of the Syrian society.[42] Besides, the Islamic and conservative political identity of the Syrian society was supplemented with the Arab nationalism under the leadership of the National Bloc. It can be argued that the French mandate authority (the center) between 1920 and 1946 established a dual relationship with the close and remote peripheries of the Syrian society. On the one hand, France negotiated the peace agreement with urban Sunni elites and allowed their domination over the land system, on the other, it showed the remote periphery the way of institutional domain of the center by recruiting them into the army.

Reconfiguration of Center-Periphery Relations amid Turbulent Political Environment: 1946-1970

It has to be admitted that Shils's center-periphery model and Gönenç's close and remote periphery conceptualizations blurred due to instability and political turmoil after independence. In this period, we see power struggle among different factions of civilian politicians and the army officers rather than the tension between the center and the periphery in Syrian politics. In this regard, the center-periphery model has to be supplemented with class analysis to analyze intra-central power struggle between 1946 and 1970. We can argue that ''the struggle for power'' among different factions can be defined as ''the struggle for the institutional center or the state'' within the framework of Shils's model. Intra-central conflict among

40 ibid., p. 539.

41 Philip S. Khoury, "Continuity and Change in Syrian Political Life: The Nineteenth and Twentieth Centuries", *The American Historical Review*, No. 5, 1991, p. 1389-1390.

42 Ma'oz, *Asad: The Sphinx of Damascus: A Political Biography*, p. 16-17.

urban Sunni groups and the Sunni army officers between 1946 and 1963 weakened the center and paved the way for the ascendance of the remote peripheral groups especially the Alawites in Syrian politics after the Baathist coup of 1963. The upward mobilization of the Alawites culminated in their complete dominance of the institutional center with the Corrective Revolution of Hafez al-Assad in 1970. With the rise of rural heterodox groups, we see reconfiguration of the center-periphery relations and the emergence of tension between the state and the society due to secularization policies of the new regime between 1963 and 1970.

When Syria gained independence in 1946, the central value system of the society was composed of both conservative and nationalistic elements. It can be claimed that Arab nationalism came to the fore due to the Syrian society's hunger for real independence after the retreat of imperialism. However, it would be a mistake to assume that Syrian society underwent an entire secularization process due to the rise of Arab nationalism. The cultural dimension of the center was represented in institutional center (the state) by the close peripheral groups (urban Sunni notables). The National Bloc of urban Sunni notables (the close periphery) dominated the institutional center since they had close relations with the state mechanism since the 19th century onwards. On the other hand, there were several factions within the National Bloc since its formation during the mandate rule. Immediately after the independence, the Bloc divided into two camps through the geographical lines of Damascus and Aleppo: the Damascus based National Party (*Hizb al-Watani*)[43] and the Aleppo based People's Party (*Hizb al-Shab*).[44]

The parties of the traditional urban classes were also controlling the economy of Syria which mainly depended on agriculture. The monopoly of urban elites on both economics and politics had begun to create a middle-class and rural opposition to them during the mandate period. After independence, the new opposition crystallized in the form of radical-secular parties such as the Syrian Social Nationalist Party (SSNP) of Antun Saadeh, the Baath Party of Michel al-Aflaq and Salah al-Din Bitar, and Youth Party of Akram al-Hawrani (which later transformed into the Arab Socialist Party)

43 Derek Hopwood, *Syria 1945-1986: Politics and Society*, 2nd ed. (London: Unwin Hyman, 1989), p. 31.

44 Andrew Rathmell, *Secret War in the Middle East: The Covert Struggle for Syria, 1949-61* (London: I.B. Tauris Publishers, 1995), p. 9.

against the traditional urban classes. The common point of these parties was their infiltration into the army ranks.[45] Nonetheless, it cannot be claimed that there were no Sunni groups in these radical parties. The challenge of the rising urban middle and rural classes, which were composed of Sunni and non-Sunni elements, against the traditional aristocratic parties blurred the line between the close and the remote peripheries after independence.

All of these parties aimed to create a new political identity for the Syrian society based on secularism and nationalism. The secular outlook of these parties, especially secular-nationalist and socialist program of the Baath Party, attracted the rural heterodox communities due to the traditional hostility between the Sunni (urban) and non-Sunni (rural) communities of Syria.[46] Especially, the Alawites considered the Baath doctrine as an autonomous sphere out of Islamic-nationalist ideology of the Sunni community. While there were profound changes in the society and in politics, the defeat of the Syrian armed forces against Israel in the Palestine battlefield in 1948 prepared the ground for the army's interference in politics through the first coup d'état of the Middle East under the leadership of General Husni al-Zaim on 30 March 1949. The coming of the army into the political scene can be explained as an intra-central conflict between the army and civilian politicians for the institutional domain of the center.

Conspiring army officers under Zaim were imbued with the nationalist-socialist ideas of Akram al-Hawrani, who became Defense Minister after the coup.[47] Even though the coup did not have any sectarian orientations, it was an important blow to the power and legitimacy of the traditional urban Sunni notables. Besides, the coup taught the rising middle and rural classes how to seize the power and influence Syrian politics.[48] Inspired by Mustafa Kemal Atatürk, Zaim planned to launch a series of secularization reforms in the country. According to Gordon Torrey ''the public (Syrian society)

45 For detailed information about these parties see, John F. Devlin, *The Ba'th Party: A History from its origins to 1966* (Standford, California: Hoover Institution Press, 1976).

46 For detailed information about the social obstacles to a normal growth of the Baath Party, see Van Dam, *The Struggle for Power in Syria, Politics and Society under Asad and the Ba'th Party*, p. 15-26.

47 Patrick Seale, *The Struggle for Syria: A Study of Post-War Arab Politics 1945-1958* (London: I.B. Tauris, 1986), p. 44-45.

48 Nabil M. Kaylani, "The Rise of the Syrian Ba'th, 1940-1958: Political Success, Party Failure", *International Journal of Middle East Studies*, No.1, 1972, p. 11-12.

was in a mood receptive to most changes, but not toward those which radically affected the fabric of its culture.''[49] What Torrey described as ''the fabric of the society's culture'' can be evaluated from Shils's perspective as the ''the central value system of the society (the cultural domain of the center)''. To illustrate, when Zaim wanted to prohibit the veil of women, he was resisted by the people and he retreated from his decision.[50] This shows the continuation of Islamic central value system of the Syrian society after the independence.

Zaim's despotic measures alienated not only the society but also most of his previous allies: Hawrani, the SSNP and the Baath Party. Finally, Zaim's foreign policy maneuvers led to his ouster by a bloody coup d'état under the leadership of Colonel Sami al-Hinnawi on 14 August 1949.[51] After the coup, one of the leading figures of the pro-Iraqi People's Party of Aleppo Hashim al-Atasi formed a government including Michel al-Aflaq as Minister of Education and Akram al-Hawrani as Minister of Agriculture.[52] The attendance of representatives of radical parties in the government along with the traditional urban Sunni elite explains how the struggle for the center was fought among different classes.

Political turmoil in the country resulted in the third coup of the same year under Adib al-Shishakli, who was a close friend of Hawrani, on 19 December 1949 against Hinnawi and pro-unionists civilian and army officers.[53] With this coup, pro-Saudi-Egyptian and anti-Iraqi civil politicians and military wing of the army dominated the institutional domain of the center. On the other hand, pro-Iraqi unionist politicians and the military faction were still powerful in Syrian politics and Shishakli could not neutralize the power of these groups in the parliament and in the army until his second coup d'état on 29 November 1951. While there was a fierce struggle for power among rival factions after the first coup of Shishakli, a new constitution was accepted on 5 September 1950. When proposed new constitution was declared, a fierce debate broke out between different groups in the parliament as to the relationship between the state and reli-

49 Gordon Torrey, *Syrian Politics and the Military, 1945–1958* (Columbus, OH: Ohio State University, 1964), p. 73-74.

50 ibid., p. 129.

51 ibid., p. 138.

52 Seale, *The Struggle for Syria: A Study of Post-War Arab Politics 1945-1958*, p. 76-77.

53 Torrey, *Syrian Politics and the Military, 1945–1958*, p. 161-163.

gion. After long debates, the following pieces were added to Article 3 of the Constitution: ''the religion of the president is Islam, Islamic jurisprudence is the main source of legislation, freedom of belief shall be maintained, and the personal laws of religious sects will be preserved and observed''. These articles were reflecting the view of a large proportion of the Syrian people.[54]

After his second coup in November 1951, Shishakli established a dictatorship in Syria and dominated the institutional domain of the center. He assumed monopoly of power and banned all political parties including the parties of his allies (the Baath and Hawrani). To fill the political vacuum in Syrian politics, he introduced his army-dominated party Arab Liberation Movement (ALM) in August 1952.[55] Similar to Zaim, Shishakli alienated all political groups, from the traditional parties of urban Sunni notables to the Baath Party, which prepared the way for his downfall with a bloodless military insurrection in February 1954. With the fall of Shishakli, the relentless struggle for power to dominate the institutional domain of the center reemerged among civilian and military factions coming from different classes. After 1954 elections, we see the rise of radical leftist parties and their struggle with the right-wing traditional parties of the old-guards (the NP and the PP) as well as their rivalry among themselves. These rivalries culminated in the ascendance of the leftist forces (the Baath Party and the Syrian Communist Party) in Syrian politics, which opened a new era in factionalist rivalry until the union with Gamal Abd-al Nasser's Egypt in early 1958.[56] It also has to be stressed that between 1954 and 1958, neither civilian nor military factions had sectarian aims in their struggle for power.

The fierce struggle for power between Syrian political groups finally resulted in the establishment of the United Arab Republic (UAR) between Syria and Egypt in 1958. During the union with Egypt between February 1958 and September 1961, the Syrian politics and the institutional center were dominated by the charismatic leadership of Nasser and his entourage. After the union, Nasser successfully neutralized all political actors in Syria: the army, the Syrian Communist Party, the Baath Party and the traditional parties (the

54 Radwan Ziadeh, *Power and Policy in Syria: Intelligence Services, Foreign Relations and Democracy in the Modern Middle East* (London: I. B. Tauris, 2011), p. 136.

55 Kamel S. Abu Jaber, *The Arab Ba'th Socialist Party: History, Ideology, and Organization* (Syracuse, New York: Syracuse University Press, 1966), p. 31.

56 See Seale, *The Struggle for Syria: A Study of Post-War Arab Politics 1945-1958*, p. 245-246 and Malik Mufti, *Sovereign Creations: Pan-Arabism and Political Order in Syria and Iraq* (New York: Cornell University Press: 1996), p. 82.

People's Party and the Nation's Party).[57] One of the most significant developments of the UAR was the establishment of the secret military organization by the Baathists coming from heterodox minority origins. The young military officers of the Baath, who were sent to Egypt after the formation of the UAR, were not happy with the UAR experiment and policies of veteran Baathist leaders, Aflaq and Bitar. For this reason, these young military officers mostly captains and majors coming from villages or rural towns and belonging to the heterodox sects, established a clandestine society or the Military Committee (*al-Lajna al-Askariya*) in 1959. The Committee consisted of five officers; there were three Alawites, Lieutenant Colonel Muhammad Umran, Major Salah Jadid, Captain Hafez al-Assad; and two Ismailis, Captain Abd al-Karim al-Jundi and Major Ahmad al-Mir.[58] The Military Committee became the dynamic force in Syrian politics after the 1963 coup and completely dominated the institutional domain of the center after the Salah Jadid's coup in 1966.

The unhappy UAR experience ended with the 28 September coup in 1961, which opened the era of secessionism between 1961 and 1963. After the coup, Syria was declared as an independent state. The secessionist period was marked by intense political instability and factionalism among the civilian politicians and the army. The leadership of the 1961 secessionist coup was composed of a coalition between the army (the Damascene officers) and traditional urban notables who suffered from Nasser's land reforms. However, the secessionist regime could not bring stability to Syria due to Nasser's propaganda campaign for reunification in the age of pan-Arabism and cleavages between the rival military and civilian camps of the new regime.[59] The secessionist regime ended with a coup d'état under the leadership of the Military Committee, the Nasserites and group of independent army officers on 8 March 1963.[60] After the coup, the power of the traditional Sunni urban notables disappeared and they were obviously subordinated to the peripheral status vis-à-vis the Alawites. The Baathist Military Committee monopolized power in the institutional center, which ushered in a new wave of power struggle among Baathist officers until Hafez al-Assad's Corrective Revolution in 1970.

57 Mufti, *Sovereign Creations: Pan-Arabism and Political Order in Syria and Iraq*, p. 122-125.

58 For social origins of the Military Committee, see Hanna Batatu, *Syria's Peasantry, the Descendants of Its Lesser Rural Notables, and Their Politics* (Princeton, New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1999), p. 144-155.

59 Itamar Rabinovich, *Syria under the Ba'th 1963-66: Army-Party Symbiosis* (Jerusalem: Israel University Press, 1972), p. 26.

60 Rabinovich, *Syria under the Ba'th 1963-66: Army-Party Symbiosis*, p. 43-47.

Why did the Alawites and other heterodox groups become dominant political force in the institutional center after 1963? As already mentioned above, since the French mandate the remote periphery of the Syrian society (heterodox minority groups) penetrated into the army ranks. During the course of 1950s and 1960s these officers did not directly engage in the factionalist game and rivalry in the Syrian army. While the rival Sunni senior military officers were purging each other after gaining the stronghold in the army, the upper army ranks began to be filled by these non-Sunni officers. This trend reached its climax between 1961 and 1963 when Sunni Damascene and non-Damascene officers were struggling to dominate the army. Their rivalry caused ongoing purges from important military posts which opened the way of non-Sunni officers. Especially after the March 1963 coup, members of the Military Committee called non-Sunni officers from their family, tribe and region to fill the positions left by the Sunni officers. Besides, a great number of Alawite, Druze and Ismaili officers were recruited for the army. After the abortive coup of Jasim al-Alwan on 18 July 1963, the Alawite Baathist officers found the opportunity to purge remaining Sunni officers from the army, which caused distrust among some components of the Sunni population against the military Baathists coming from heterodox origins as explained by Nikolaos Van Dam.[61]

While class relations were much more explanatory for evaluating Syrian politics until 1963, the center-periphery tension began to reshape Syrian politics after the 1963 coup.We witness again a struggle for power to take the control of the institutional domain of the center (the state) among the civilian and military members of the Baath Party between 1963 and 1970. After the March 1963 coup, the Military Committee under the leadership of Amin al-Hafiz, Muhammad Umran, Salah Jadid and Hafez al-Assad became the most significant political group in Syrian politics. Among them only Amin al-Hafiz was Sunni and other three officers were Alawites. While the Military Committee became the dominant political force in Syrian politics, veteran civilian Baathist leaders (Michel al-Aflaq and Salah al-Din Bitar) turned out to be puppets at the hands of military Baathists. After the 1963 coup, the first rivalry to control the institutional domain of the center emerged between Amin al-Hafiz

61 Van Dam, *The Struggle for Power in Syria, Politics and Society under Asad and the Ba'th Party*, p. 27-30. Also see Hanna Batatu, "Some Observations on the Social Roots of Syria's Ruling Military Group and the Causes for Its Dominance", *Middle East Journal*, Vol. 35, No. 3, 1981, p. 331-344.

and Muhammad Umran. Muhammad Umran's open Alawite sectarianism was challenged by Amin al-Hafiz, Salah Jadid and Hafez al-Assad together and he was forced to flee to abroad. Soon after Umran's expulsion from the country, the second cleavage among the Military Committee broke out between Salah Jadid (Chief of Staff) and President Amin al-Hafiz. In this rivalry, Hafez al-Assad as the Commander of the Syrian Air Force and some Druze officers supported Jadid who carried out a bloody coup against Amin al-Hafiz on 23 February 1966. After the successful coup of Jadid, traditional leadership of the Baath Party (Bitar and Aflaq) fled to abroad which transformed the Baath Party to the neo-Baath Party as conceptualized by Avraham Ben-Tzur.[62]

After the 1966 coup, there emerged another cleavage between Selim Hatum (Druze) and Salah Jadid (Alawite) to dominate the institutional domain of the center. Hatum had actively participated in the 1966 coup against Amin al-Hafez and began to organize his military organization recruited from the Druze community. His Druze-led move against Jadid was countered by the Alawites of the Military Committee, Salah Jadid and Hafez al-Assad. After his abortive coup attempt in August 1966, Hatum mocked the sectarian nature of the Baath regime as follows: ''the Baath Party's slogan one Arab nation with an eternal mission turned to one Alawite state with an eternal mission.''[63] After the Hatum event, a dozen of Druze officers were purged from the army, which made the Alawite community the strongest group within the army ranks. The last cleavage within the Military Committee broke out between two Alawites (Salah Jadid and Hafez al-Assad) who sought to control the institutional domain of the center. The final power struggle among the members of the Military Committee was won by Hafez al-Assad on 13 November 1970, which opened the era of Assad dynasty in Syrian history.[64]

Between 1963 and 1970, one of the remote peripheral groups, the Alawites, became the institutional center in Syria via the army for the first time in Syrian history. After 1963, we observe not only inter-

62 Avraham Ben-Tzur, "The Neo-Ba'th Party of Syria", *Journal of Contemporary History*, Vol. 3, No. 3, 1968, p. 161-181.

63 Daniel Pipes, "The Alawi Capture of Power in Syria", *Middle Eastern Studies*, Vol. 25, No. 4, 1989, p. 444.

64 For detailed information about the chaotic phase of Syrian history between 1963 and 1970, see Van Dam, *The Struggle for Power in Syria, Politics and Society under Asad and the Ba'th Party*, p. 34-74 and Ma'oz, *Asad: The Sphinx of Damascus: A Political Biography*, p. 31-40.

central clashes among the Baathists but also a tension between the new center and the periphery. The secular-nationalist outlook of the Baath Party and non-Sunni character of the leading army officers were regarded as a threat to one of the dimension of the central value system of the Syrian society (Islam). Liquidation of power of the Sunni notables in the institutional domain was another factor for mass Sunni grievances and opposition against the Baathist regime. While there was a fierce competition among rival military Baathist groups to seize the power in the center (the state), there emerged an uprising in Hama in April 1964 under the leadership of the Muslim Brotherhood, which was backed by the previous center (the traditional urban notables) and the *ulema*, who opposed the secular reforms of the Baathist officers to separate Islam from Arabism, and Islam from the state.[65]

In the spring of 1967, a similar event took place and groups composed of merchants, the *ulema* and others launched anti-regime protests in Damascus streets due to radical and uncompromising secularization projects of the neo-Baathist regime.[66] We can claim that the Syrian society continued to be a conservative society, though we cannot measure to what extent the society backed the uprisings of Hama and Damascus. But still, it can be argued that whether backed by the whole society or not, some people managed to derive political power from the central value system of the society. Undoubtedly, the consolidation of the new Alawite center under the leadership of Hafez al-Assad opened a new era in the state-society relations in Syrian history.

Conclusion

In conclusion, this article has showed that the center-periphery model of Shils can be applied to the Syrian case in order to analyze the state-society relations if it is reconsidered as a dynamic framework for analysis. In the article, the center has been explained in terms of both institutional domain (the state) and cultural domain (central value system of the society). The article has explained the transformation in the cultural domain of the center in Syria from Is-

65 Ziadeh, *Power and Policy in Syria: Intelligence Services, Foreign Relations and Democracy in the Modern Middle East*, p. 138-139; Ma'oz, *Asad: The Sphinx of Damascus: A Political Biography*, p. 150; Ma'oz, "Attempts at Creating Political Community in Syria", p. 402.

66 Raymond Hinnebusch, *Syria: Revolution from Above* (London and New York: Routledge, 2001), p. 50.

lam to amalgamation of Islam and Arab nationalism during the mandate and independence periods. Besides, Levent Gönenç's conceptualizations of the close and the remote periphery have been adopted to clarify the heterogeneity of the peripheral communities of the Syrian society.

In the article, not only the tension between the center and the periphery but also intra-central and intra-peripheral tensions have been explored during the period examined. The article also supplemented the center-periphery narrative with class analysis to understand the fierce struggle for power among different factions to dominate the institutional center from 1946 and 1963. After the Baathist coup of 1963, the heterodox minority groups, especially the Alawites, dominated the institutional center and Sunni groups were subordinated to peripheral status for the first time, which led to the alienation of some segments of the society from the Baathist regime. Finally, the article has analyzed intra-central clashes among Alawite Baathists as well as the tension between the new secular-socialist institutional center and the Sunni-Muslim periphery that represented the central value system of the society.

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Political Economy of Turkish-Iranian Relations: Three Asymmetries

Serhan ÜNAL & Eyüp ERSOY***

Abstract

Turkish-Iranian relations are in general regarded stable in the literature, and the causes of stability in bilateral relations are inadequately explained often by overemphasising the geopolitics of bilateral relations. Nonetheless, the geoeconomics of Turkish-Iranian relations is as significant as the geopolitics of the relations for both the current state of affairs in bilateral relations and their future. This article approaches Turkish-Iranian relations after 2002, when Justice and Development Party came to power in Turkey, from a different angle. Mainly from the geoeconomics perspective, it explores the implications of the energy relations for, in particular, bilateral economic relations between Turkey and Iran, and, in general, bilateral relations between the two states. It identifies three asymmetries in the relations as the primacy of geopolitics in bilateral relations, the primacy of energy in bilateral economic relations and the primacy of natural gas in bilateral energy relations. By moving from these asymmetries, the article concludes that energy relations may serve as a favourable starting point to broaden the scope of cooperation in Turkish-Iranian relations to include political issues of mutual concern.

Keywords: Turkey, Iran, Political Economy, Energy Trade

Türkiye-İran İlişkilerinin Politik Ekonomisi: Üç Asimetri

Özet

Türkiye-İran ilişkileri, literatürde genelde istikrarlı olarak değerlendirilmekte ve ikili ilişkilerdeki istikrarın sebepleri, çoğunlukla ikili

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ilişkilerin jeopolitiğinin aşırı vurgulanması ile yetersiz şekilde açıklanmaktadır. Yine de, Türkiye-İran ilişkilerinin jeoekonomisi, ikili ilişkilerin mevcut durumu ve geleceği için ilişkilerin jeopolitiği kadar önemlidir. Bu makale, Adalet ve Kalkınma Partisi'nin Türkiye'de iktidara geldiği 2002 yılından sonraki Türkiye-İran ilişkilerine farklı bir açıdan yaklaşmaktadır. Başlıca jeoekonomi perspektifinden olmak üzere, enerji ilişkilerinin, özelde Türkiye ve İran arasındaki ikili ekonomik ilişkilere, genelde iki devlet arasındaki ikili ilişkilere yansımalarını tetkik etmektedir. İlişkilerdeki üç asimetriyi, ikili ilişkilerde jeopolitiğin önceliği, ikili ekonomik ilişkilerde enerjinin önceliği ve ikili enerji ilişkilerinde doğalgazın önceliği olarak tespit etmektedir. Bu asitmerilerden hareketle, makale, enerji ilişkilerinin, müşterek siyasi meseleleri içerecek şekilde Türkiye-İran ilişkilerinde işbirliğinin kapsamını genişletmek için elverişli bir başlangıç noktası teşkil edebileceği sonucuna varmaktadır.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Türkiye, İran, Politik Ekonomi, Enerji Ticareti

الاقتصاد السياسي للعلاقات التركية الإيرانية: ثلاثة أبعاد لا تماثلية

ملخص

تعتبر العلاقات التركية الإيرانية في المجمل مستقرة نظريًا، وأسباب الاستقرار في العلاقات الثنائية عادة ما لا يتم تفسيرها بصورة مناسبة بالتركيز المفرط على الجوانب الجيوسياسية للعلاقات الثنائية، ولكن والأبعاد الجيواقتصادية للعلاقات التركية الإيرانية لا تقل أهمية عن الجوانب الجيوسياسية لتلك العلاقات بسبب كل من الأوضاع الجارية للعلاقات الثنائية، وبسبب مستقبلها أيضًا. وهذا المقال يعالج العلاقات التركية الإيرانية بعد ٢٠٠٢، عندما أتى حزب العدالة والتنمية إلى السلطة في تركيا، من زوايا مختلفة. فبصورة أساسية من الجوانب الجيواقتصادية فإن المقال يستعرض تداعيات علاقات الطاقة للعلاقات الثنائية بين البلدين. كما أنه يسلط الضوء على ثلاثة أبعاد لا تماثلية في العلاقة، مثل تفوق الجيوسياسي في العلاقات الثنائية، التفوق في الطاقة في العلاقات الاقتصادية الثنائية، والتفوق في مصادر الغاز الطبيعي في علاقات الطاقة الثنائية. وانطلاقا من تلك الأبعاد اللاتماثلية، فإن المقال يخلص إلى أن علاقات الطاقة يمكن أن تمثل نقطة بداية مناسبة لتوسيع نطاق التعاون في العلاقات التركية الإيرانية لتشمل قضايا سياسية ذات اهتمام مشترك.

كلمات مفتاحية: تركيا، إيران، اقتصاد سياسي، تجارة الطاقة.

Introduction

Turkey and Iran constituted a critical crossroad in Eurasia in the past and it is exactly the same today; their political, economic, and cultural interactions with each other and with other countries continue to shape political, economic, and cultural developments on southwestern part of Eurasia. The relations between Turkey and Iran have deep historical roots, which tell much about the nature of them. In addition to the traditional aspects of bilateral relations, new aspects and dimensions have emerged in the last years. This change springs from the changing needs of the countries parallel to developing technology and inputs of the modern economic activity, which most of the time require a fourth factor of production, energy, in addition to the other classical three, that is, land, labour, and capital.

In the literature, Turkish-Iranian relations are in general regarded stable, if not peaceful, and the causes of stability in bilateral relations are inadequately explained often by overemphasizing the geopolitics of bilateral relations. Nonetheless, the geoeconomics of Turkish-Iranian relations is as significant as the geopolitics of Turkish-Iranian relations for both the current state of affairs in bilateral relations and their future. This article approaches Turkish-Iranian relations after 2002, when Justice and Development Party (JDP) came to power in Turkey, from a different angle. Mainly from the perspective of geoeconomics, it explores the implications of bilateral energy relations for, in particular, bilateral economic relations between Turkey and Iran, and, in general, bilateral relations between the two states. It argues that political economy of Turkish-Iranian relations is characterized by three intertwined asymmetries. First, political relations between the two states have not developed at the same pace and level of economic relations, and contrary to the cooperative nature of economic relations, display features of structural regional competition. Second, economic relations between Turkey and Iran are dominated by relations in the energy area. Third, energy relations between the two states are, in turn, dominated by relations in the gas sector.

This article, first, outlines the general parameters of Turkish-Iranian relations, especially in the post-2002 period. Second, it discusses economic relations between Turkey and Iran in all spheres of economic activity specifically in trade and investment. Third, it analyses

in detail the energy dimension in bilateral economic relations, and examines the dynamics in the establishment and sustainment of energy relations between Turkey and Iran. Fourth, it discusses the implications of energy relations between Turkey and Iran for economic relations between the two states. It concludes that the energy dimension in Turkish-Iranian relations has gained prominence in bilateral economic relations, and there is a risk that the energy dimension would increasingly dominate economic relations between Turkey and Iran causing underdevelopment in other spheres of economic activity.

The First Asymmetry: Primacy of Geopolitics in Bilateral Relations

The general course of Turkish-Iranian relations is affected predominantly both by regional and global developments, and the relations of the two sides with the third countries. Nevertheless, for a clear analysis, and also for the purposes of this article, the general parameters of bilateral relations between Turkey and Iran can be classified under two categories as political and economic, excluding social. Political parameters that affect the course of bilateral relations not only consist of divergent positions of the parties in regional geopolitics simply, but also include ideological differences. Political parameters of bilateral relations cannot be analyzed by ignoring the influences of the past. During the classical ages, Ottoman and Safavid empires struggled for regional political and religious leadership until they gradually and necessarily accepted each other as equally respectable parts of the same Islamic civilization.[1] In this situation, Ottomans' Sunni and Safavid's Shiite social and ideological structures, which left ideological and social imprints on the relations, were influential as well. Besides, the very game of power politics was also played by both sides at regional levels, not entirely detached from the historical development of bilateral relations. Among the current components of the Turkish-Iranian relations, these effects can still be observed in the foreign policies of these actors. There are certain factors which are prone to push Ankara and Tehran to the edges of competition. Turkey's and Iran's different positions on a number of current issues such as Israel's role and even the existence within the region, introduction of Western-oriented military assets in the

1 John Calabrese, "Turkey and Iran: Limits of A Stable Relationship", *British Journal of Middle Eastern Studies*, Vol. 25, No. 1, 1998, p. 76.

region through Turkey's NATO (North Atlantic Treaty Organization) membership, Tehran's hesitations on Ankara's ambitious attitudes towards its 'near abroad' including some of the former Soviet republics, which form a great part of Iran's immediate neighbourhood in the Caucasus and the Central Asia, constitute severe obstacles to the further development of bilateral political relations. Turkey and Iran seem to come close to go into a 'proxy war', diplomatically at least, due to some recent developments like the intra-Iraq power struggle, the Arab Spring and the ongoing civil war in Syria. Particularly the Arab Spring seems to create new fields of rivalry between Turkey and Iran.[2] Not only the contentious issues originated in the Middle East, but also in the South Caucasus tend to undermine the relations. For example, Iran's pro-Armenian position on the problems between Azerbaijan and Armenia is an explicitly problematic issue. Iran's increasing support to Armenia in the form of commerce and energy stands as a reflection of the Turkish-Iranian rivalry in the South Caucasus.[3] Nonetheless, there are some areas for the parties for cooperation. Collaboration against the terrorist groups PKK (Kurdistan Workers' Party) and PJAK (Free Life Party of Kurdistan) provides Turkey and Iran with a meaningful basis for a rapprochement.[4] Suppression of these terrorist groups serves not only the security of each state separately but also strengthens regional stability and severely damages any kind of illegal trafficking.

In addition to the differences in the political realm, a significant level of ideological difference can be observed between Turkey and Iran. The most striking and explicit one is the different regime types of two states which shape their actions and affect foreign policy preferences. While Turkey has a secular state mechanism administered by a relatively conservative government, Iran has a religious state mechanism managed by a radically conservative government. On the one hand, the political culture of the former was constructed within the framework of Western secularism with a tough set of Turkish conservative state tradition and upon a strong heritage of the

2 Reza Solat and Hooshang Azizi, "Rivalry and Cooperation in the Iran-Turkey Relations in the Light of the Arab Spring," *Discourse: An Iranian Quarterly*, Vol. 13, No. 3-4, 2012, p. 119-143.

3 Lamiya Adilgızı, "Iran-Armenia Ties Strengthening to Counter Turkey-Azerbaijan Alliance", *Today's Zaman*, March 31, 2013, http://www.todayszaman.com/news-311218-iran-armenia-ties-strengthening-to-counter-turkey-azerbaijan-alliance.html.

4 Bulent Aras, Rabia Karakaya Polat, "From Conflict to Cooperation: Desecuritisation of Turkey's Relations with Syria and Iran", *Security Dialogue*, Vol. 39, No. 5, 1998, p. 506; Dexter Filkins, "The Shadow Commander", *The New Yorker*, September 30, 2013, http://www.newyorker.com/reporting/2013/09/30/130930fa_fact_filkins.

Ottoman Empire. On the other hand, that of the latter is, ostensibly at least, dependent on a tradition of statehood dated back to ancient Persia and revised through the Islamic Revolution in 1979, and was tailored in accordance with the real political needs of pragmatic Islamism. The difference between Ankara and Tehran is best observed in their attitudes towards Israel. The first approaches Tel Aviv cautiously, and yet open to stronger cooperation as long as Palestine is not oppressed and the rights of Palestinians are respected. Contrary to Ankara's generally moderate and reasonable policy, Tehran's foreign policy discourse apparently calls for the eradication of Israel from the map altogether.[5] During the pre-2002 period in Turkey, namely before the AKP governments, there was a much broader ideological difference between the secular-republican Turkish elite ruling the country and their Iranian counterparts. With the rise of a relatively conservative political elite in Turkey, religious (not sectarian) emphases of Iran in its foreign policy has become much less disturbing for Turkish decision makers.[6] Appreciation of Hassan Rouhani, who is the current president of the Islamic Republic of Iran, towards AKP (Adalet ve Kalkınma Partisi) is a good example for this.[7] Thus, a considerable ideational barrier before more cordial relations has disappeared. Despite all the divergent preferences of both states in terms of geopolitics, both actors are willing to capitalize on geoeconomics to grasp the possible benefits through rationalizing their positions.[8] Nonetheless, despite significant developments in bilateral economic relations, the primacy of geopolitics is still conspicuous in Turkish-Iranian relations. As an example, according to Kösebalaban, there is a "deep geopolitical rivalry" between Turkey and Iran, and "the most significant factor in Turkish foreign policy making vis-à-vis the Middle East is the emergence of Iran's regional hegemony."[9]

Economic parameters, however, are linked with the political course of the relations, and still are detached from them to a considerable extent. They are interrelated since Turkey and Iran are prone to use

5 Calabrese, "Turkey and Iran: Limits of A Stable Relationship", p. 77.

6 Aras and Polat, "From Conflict to Cooperation: Desecuritisation of Turkey's Relations with Syria and Iran", p. 495; Bayram Sinkaya, "Rationalization of Turkey-Iran Relations: Prospects and Limits", *Insight Turkey*, Vol. 14 , No. 2, 2012, p. 141.

7 Hassan Rouhani, "Religion and International Relations: Some General Reflections, with Particular Emphasis on the Experience of the Islamic Republic", *Iranian Review of Foreign Affairs,* Vol. 1, No. 1, Spring 2010, pp. 31-32.

8 Sinkaya, "Rationalization of Turkey-Iran Relations: Prospects and Limits", p. 138.

9 Hasan Kösebalaban, "Turkey and the New Middle East: Between Liberalism and Realism," *Perceptions*, Vol. 16, No. 3, 2011, p. 93-114.

mutual economic benefits as a facilitating dynamic for deepening their relations. The most recent example for this is the 1.200% increase in Turkish gold exports to Iran from 2011 to 2012.[10] The main reason for this increase was the desire of Turkey to strengthen bilateral economic relations, and the desire of Iran to circumvent the sanctions imposed on it unilaterally by the US and the EU, and thus to undermine the isolation of Iran by using gold instead of money transfers via the international banking system (see Figure 1). Similarly, regional economic conditions have induced Ankara and Tehran to approximate to each other economically. Turkey seeks to enjoy the economic benefits of its territorial proximity to Iran, which is as a natural gas and oil exporter without sizable outlets for its potentially immense gas exports. Nonetheless, neither party approaches to a cordial Turkish-Iranian political partnership. There are certain reasons underlying this refrainment, which are fundamentally associated with the political parameters of the relations. Turkey's and Iran's different positions on a number of current issues, particularly on regional transformations in the Middle East, constitute some obstacles for establishing more lasting relations in investment in the economic realm.[11] This constitutes the underlying rationale behind the cautious attitudes of the two states. They endeavour to minimize their possible losses in case of a crisis while maximizing their gains by maintaining and increasingly strengthening economic relations. Spectacular trade volume in opposition to poor direct investment flows between the two countries is a proof of this cautionary economic policy.

The Second Asymmetry: Primacy of Energy in Bilateral Economic Relations

Economic relations between Turkey and Iran reflect the enormous potential for further cooperation and prove the capability of parties to develop mutually beneficial economic relations rapidly as it has been the case since the advent of AKP in Turkey in 2002. Bilateral trade volume was only around $ 2.4 billion in 2002, which increased nine times in a decade and rose up to $ 22 billion in 2012.[12] In this situation, the above-mentioned competent economic structure of the two countries is an important factor. The remarkable develop-

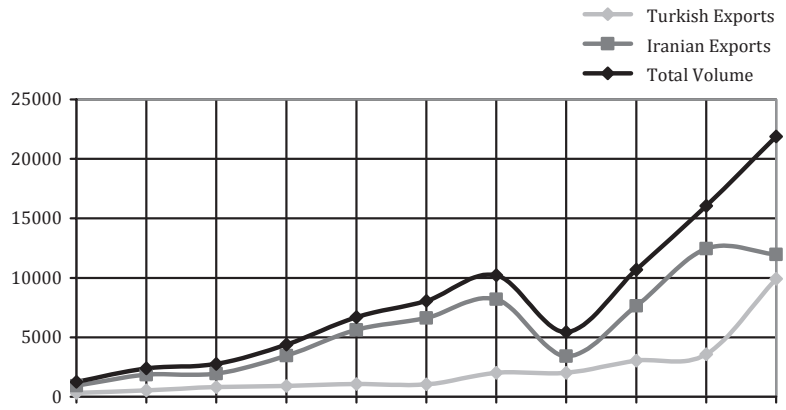
10 TMoE, "Iran Country Report 2012", 2013, p. 4.

11 Ali Omidi, "A Comparative Analysis of the Turkish and Iranian Foreign Policy towards the Arab Revolutions," *Discourse: An Iranian Quarterly*, Vol. 10, No. 3-4, 2012, p. 29-52.

12 TMoE, "Iran Country Report 2012", p. 3.

ment and considerable potential springs from Turkey's need for energy which Iran can provide, and Iran's need for industrial goods which Turkey can provide to a large extent. The bulk of Turkish exports to Iran consist of gold, especially for the last two years, steel, textiles, and industrial goods, while Iranian exports to Turkey mainly include natural gas, oil, coal, electricity, pistachios, and fertilizers.[13]

Figure 1. Turkish-Iranian Trade Volume (2002-2012, in million $US)



Source: TMoE

Nevertheless, there is a negative balance of trade to the disadvantage of Turkey. In 2011, Turkey's deficit in its trade with Iran climbed up to $9 billion, which later decreased to $2 billion in 2012.[14] These figures make Turkey as the third largest market for import and export for Iran, which is only sixth and third in Turkey's foreign trade respectively.[15]

13 TMoE, "İran İslam Cumhuriyeti'ne İlişkin Temel Bilgiler", http://www.ekonomi.gov.tr/upload/C74985FF-D8D3-8566-4520E92CB063EEF8/%C4%B0ran-son.pdf.

14 TMoE, "Iran Country Report 2012", p. 3.

15 Turkish Embassy in Tehran, January 2014, http://www.musavirlikler.gov.tr/index.cfm?dil=EN&ulke=IR.

Table 1. Turkey and Iran's Places in the Mutual Trade

	Turkey in Iran's Export:	**Turkey in Iran's Import:**
IRAN	*Third*	*Third*
	Iran in Turkey's Export:	**Iran in Turkey's Import:**
TURKEY	*Third*	*Sixth*

Source: TMoE

Apart from the merchandise trade, there are sizeable business opportunities for the Turkish companies in Iran, which have undertaken projects equal to $3.8 billion so far and almost half of which was undertaken in 2012.[16] Turkish construction companies have undertaken projects equal to $1.92 billion so far and the bulk of it consists of housing and infrastructure projects; the total amount was only $83.5 million until 2004.[17]

Although these figures and the pace of the development in bilateral economic relations display a promising relationship for the parties, a detailed analysis displays some serious shortcomings in Turkish-Iranian economic relations. One of the main reasons behind the rapid increase in trade volume has been the exploitation of the idle capacity, namely normalization of the relations, rather than the application of a new and innovative neighbourhood strategy. For example, Turkey ratified the Bilateral Agreement for the Promotion and Protection of Investments with Germany in 1962, with Argentina in 1995, with the Republic of Korea in 1994, and with Israel in 1999.[18] Yet, a similar agreement between Turkey and Iran waited for ratification for nine years until February 2, 2005.[19] In the same way, Turkish-Iranian Business Council could only be established in 2001.[20] Only after these developments, legal and institutional bases of bilateral economic relations could be strengthened. The essence of the AKP

16 TMoE, "İran İslam Cumhuriyeti Ülke Sunumu", http://www.musavirlikler.gov.tr/upload/IR/IRAN%20SUNUMU.ppt.

17 TMoE, "İran İslam Cumhuriyeti Müteahhitlik Hizmetleri Ülke Profili", http://www.musavirlikler.gov.tr/upload/IR/2012%20IRAN%20muteahhitlik%20hizmetleri%20raporu%20(paylasilir).pdf.

18 TMoE, "Turkiye'nin Taraf Oldugu Yatirimlarin Karsilikli Tesviki ve Korunmasi Anlasmalarinin Icerigi ve Islevleri", 2013, pp. 3-4.

19 Ibid., p.4; "Milletlerarası Andlaşma", *Resmi Gazete*, Şubat 2005, http://www.resmigazete.gov.tr/eskiler/2005/02/20050225-2.htm.

20 Turkish-Iranian Business Council, January 2014, http://en.deik.org.tr/Konsey/112/Turkish_Iranian.html.

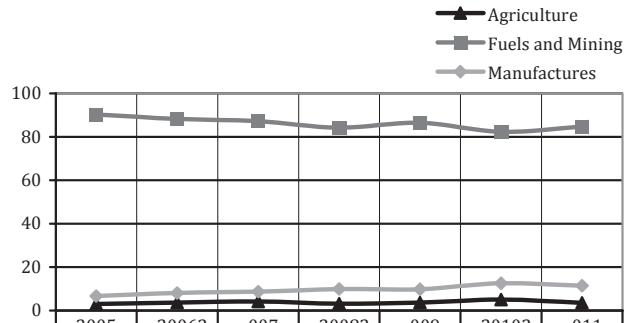
governments' success in Turkish-Iranian relations is hidden in their ability to take advantage of the idle capacity in the bilateral economic relations. Thanks to these steps, foreign direct investments of the Turkish nationals in Iran rose to $163 million between 2002 and 2013. In the same period, direct investments of the Iranian nationals in Turkey amounted to $101 million.[21] A Turkish company, Gübretaş, which bought the largest fertilizer factory in Iran in 2008, plans to make an additional $150 million investment in Iran in three years' time.[22] When these figures are compared with those in the previous paragraph, it can be said that permanent long-term engagements in Turkish-Iranian economic relations are overweighed by temporary short-term mutual gains. Ankara and Tehran tend to prefer focusing on easy-to-change areas such as commerce, but not on hard-to-change areas such as foreign direct investment. In this picture, the only lasting trade relationship between the two countries is the natural gas trade via pipelines, and the electricity trade via interconnection lines. In other words, energy relations seem to dominate the economic aspect of the relations between Turkey and Iran.

An important aspect of Turkey-Iran economic relations is energy trade which has the largest effect on the bilateral economic relations not only for its share in bilateral trade volume but also for its vital strategic importance for both actors. Turkey is an energy-thirsty country with its rapidly developing economy, which lacks ample indigenous energy resources to meet its domestic consumption. Although its eastern and southern neighbours enjoy having immense richness in natural resources, Turkey chronically suffers from energy scarcity in terms of fossil fuels. On the other hand, Iran has vast hydrocarbon resources despite insufficient refinement capabilities and a relatively weak industrial base. Thus, a severe need appears for Iran for capital and industrial products, and these economic necessities can be met in exchange of energy resources. In Iran's export structure, fuels, and mining products constitute the bulk of the volume.

21 TMoE, "İran İslam Cumhuriyeti Ülke Sunumu".

22 "Gübretaş'tan İran'a 150 milyon dolarlık yatırım", *Dünya*, January 5, 2012, http://www.dunya.com/gubretastan-irana-150-milyon-dolarlik-yatirim-142469h.htm.

Figure 2. Iran's Export Structure (2005-2011, in %)



	2005	20062	007	20082	009	20102	011
Agriculture	33	,6	4,13	,2	3,75		3,5
Fuels and Mining	90,3	88,38	7,3	84,28	6,5	82,4	84,7

Source: The Central Bank of The Islamic Republic of Iran (CBoI)

If the two countries' geographical proximity to each other and complementary economic structures are considered together, there is a favourable impetus to further economic cooperation not just particularly in the energy field. Energy relations between Turkey and Iran do not only mean natural gas pipelines. Bilateral energy relations can be summed up under three main categories: natural gas pipelines, oil trade, and electricity interconnection.

The Third Asymmetry: Primacy of Natural Gas in Bilateral Energy Relations

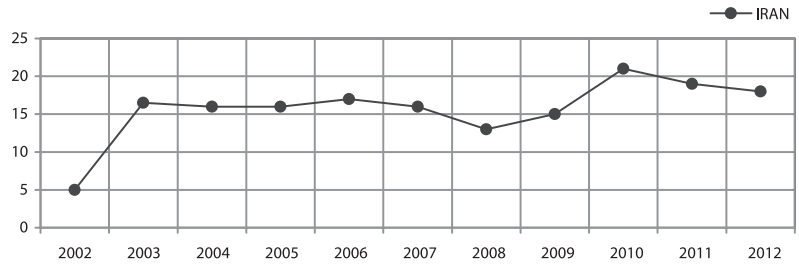
In terms of natural gas, relations between Ankara and Tehran are almost a perfect example of a positive-sum, win-win game. Turkey can only meet 1.7% of its annual consumption from its domestic production and accordingly Turkey is dependent upon foreign suppliers such as Iran.[23] Natural gas trade between the countries started with a treaty in 1996. In 2005, the amount Turkey imported was just above 4.2 bcm[24] but, in 2011, it shifted up to the nearly 8.2 bcm which accounts for 19% of the total natural gas supply to Turkey which is around 44 bcm.[25]

23 EPDK, "Doğal Gaz Piyasası Raporu 2011", 2012, p. 36.

24 EPDK, "Doğal Gaz Piyasası Raporu 2011", p. 32.

25 EPDK, "Doğal Gaz Piyasası Raporu 2011", p. 31.

Figure 3. Iran's Share in Turkey's Natural Gas Imports (2002-2012, in %)



Source: EPDK

Although significantly high volume of the gas trade and the relatively low transport costs are present, Iranian gas is the most expensive gas Turkey imports with its price around $500 per 1000 cubic meters; it is followed by the Russian gas which is said to be around $430.[26] Despite the fact that the very high costs of natural gas dependency both in economic and potentially in political terms presents a serious challenge, it is an imperative for Turkey to further natural gas trade with Iran due to a variety of reasons. Among them, economic and strategic necessities have the utmost priority. The first one, the economic necessity, is twofold. The first pillar is the share of natural gas in Turkish power generation sector. The current level of technology assigns a vital role to fossil fuels in electricity generation and the natural gas is an indispensable one. Modern economic activity and the life standard largely depend upon every kind of machines and systems using and consuming electricity. Therefore, today, electricity supply has already become the blood of the economy, and of the daily lives of population. Turkey's problem is its limited indigenous conventional resources available to the power generation sector. At this point, the only way for Turkey is to appeal to exogenous energy sources, and Iran stands as one of the most plausible options with its geographical proximity via a land connection, high natural gas production capacity, and strong desire to convert its natural resources into economic income. Iran has the second largest natural gas reserves in the world only after the Russian Federation and holds 15.7% of the proved global reserves

26 İsmail Altunsoy, "Rusya Doğalgaza yüzde 8 değil, yüzde 4 indirim yaptı", *Zaman*, March 30, 2013, http://www.zaman.com.tr/ekonomi_haber-inceleme-rusya-dogalgaza-yuzde-8-degil-yuzde-4-indirim-yapti_2071769.html.

as of 2011[27] and thus Iran is considered by Turkey as a long-term supplier. If Turkey were not in need of sustainable natural gas supplies for power generation, Turkey would not be interested in Iran's share in global reserves as much as it is interested today. However, natural gas has 44.7% share in Turkish electricity generation mix.[28] Thus, the structure of Turkey's power generation sector appears as one of the causes of Turkey's economic need for Iranian natural gas. Besides, when economic need is considered together with strategic necessity, to be examined later, Turkey-Iran natural gas trade assumes more importance for Turkey.

The second pillar of economic necessity is the extent of natural gas usage in every aspect of economy ranging from cement industry to domestic heating. 52% of the aggregate natural gas supply in Turkey is consumed by sectors other than the power sector, and in this, both industrial consumption and heating have equal shares of 26%.[29] These figures indicate the extent of natural gas usage in Turkey, and also imply a nightmare scenario for Turkey in a possible case of natural gas interruption. For example, the cement industry is one of the most energy-intensive sectors of the Turkish economy. The ratio of energy costs reach up to 60%[30] and even up to 70% in the sector's aggregate bills.[31] The energy-intensive nature of the sector pushes investors to increase energy efficiency of factories, and the public sector completely supports these steps in the cement sector by providing it with some financial options.[32] Nevertheless, Turkey's need for imported natural gas continues at an increasing rate, and the demand for Iranian gas grows proportionate to this need.

In terms of industrial need, Iranian gas has some advantages in comparison to other suppliers of Turkey with some of its technical qualifications. For example, Iranian natural gas has the sixth highest calorific value among the top ten natural gas producers with

27 EIA, "International Energy Outlook 2011", 2012, p. 64.

28 EPDK, "Elektrik Piyasa Raporu 2011", 2012, p. 13.

29 DEKTMK, "Enerji Raporu 2012", 2013, p. 76.

30 Republic of Turkey Ministry of Science, Industry and Technology, "Çimento Sektör Raporu – 2011/12", 2013, p. 12.

31 Turkish Cement Manufacturers' Association, Association, "Enerji ve Tabii Kaynaklar Bakanı Taner Yıldız: "Çimento Sektörünün Çalışmalarını Peşinen Destekliyoruz", June 2013, http://www.tcma.org.tr/index.php?page=icerikgoster&cntID=316.

32 Development Bank of Turkey, "Türkiye Kalkınma Bankasından Limak Çimentoya Kredi", January 2014, http://www.kalkinma.com.tr/tkb_limak_cimentoua_kredi.aspx.

its 39.356kJ/m^3 in 2011, while Russian natural gas, Russia being the main supplier of Turkey, has a calorific value around 38.232kJ/m^3.[33] Apart from the industrial need for Iranian natural gas, heating of houses and other building stocks becomes a sensitive topic in Turkey in almost every winter, as it is generally the case for the other natural gas importer countries. There are roughly 8 million domestic natural gas users, and these consume more than a quarter of the aggregate natural gas supply in Turkey.[34] Moreover, this number is expected to rise in the foreseeable future as the project for providing natural gas supply to all provinces of Turkey to be realized with the natural gas supply to 11 provinces and five districts in addition to the existing ones is underway.[35] Therefore, continuous supply of Iranian natural gas is of paramount importance for the Turkish life standard, and a possible interruption in the supply is certain to create adverse effects for Turkey by causing problems in power generation, industrial production, and even in heating. Nevertheless, there is not such a risk at the moment as both states, particularly the Iranian authorities, enjoy the rationalization of bilateral relations in the energy relations.[36]

As long as the natural gas trade between the countries is sustained on the basis of economic rationality, the relationship continues as a positive-sum one. On the other hand, in Turkey, almost every topic related with Iran is politicized to a certain degree today, predominantly due to the U.S.-led international sanctions. As international sanctions tighten Iran's energy export capabilities, Iran has started increasingly to sell its energy resources as ingredients of other products, such as cement. Thus, energy-related topics have the potential to incrementally evolve into a zero-sum type game. The more Iran subsidizes its economy by supplying cheap energy, the more Turkey loses its competitiveness and markets to Iran. For example, the cement market in regions around Turkey and Iran which has been controlled extensively by Turkish producers for years, has started to incline to the Iranian cement because of its cheaper price, and Turkish producers regard Iran's energy advantage as a danger for themselves.[37] Statistics do support the fears of Turkish pro-

33 IEA, "Key World Energy Statistics 2012", 2013 p. 60.

34 EPDK, "Doğal Gaz Piyasası Raporu 2011", 2012, p. 53.

35 EPDK, "Doğal Gaz Dağıtım Lisansı İhalaleri", December 2013, http://www2.epdk.org.tr/lisans/dogalgaz/lisansdatabase/ihale.asp.

36 Aras and Polat, "From Conflict to Cooperation: Desecuritisation of Turkey's Relations with Syria and Iran", p. 508.

37 Bulent Yoldaş, "Çimento ihracatında İran tehlikesi kapıda", *Sabah*, April 1, 2010, http://

ducers. For example, Turkey's cement export to Iraq is in decrease since 2009 in significant scales and more interestingly, even Turkey itself has started to import cement from Iran in growing amounts.[38] Therefore, Turkey's interest is in sustainment of the energy relations within the framework of de-politicization. Nonetheless, natural gas trade between the countries cannot completely be detached from strategic concerns.

The second necessity that induces Turkey to further its natural gas trade with Iran is of strategic nature. The essence of the strategic necessity is Turkey's need to diversify its gas imports. Net energy importer countries are in an energy dependent position upon foreign suppliers. Thus, because of the extent of energy usage in economy and daily life, uninterrupted energy flow gains prominence in foreign policy preferences and actions. The perception of energy supply as an issue of foreign policy paves the way for the securitization of energy issues.[39] Apart from maintaining the life standards of citizens, energy dependency may create a strategic weakness for countries in world politics[40]. For this reason, countries include natural gas, which is sold at higher prices in their energy mix in addition to cheaper supplies. The same logic is applicable to the Turkish tendency to increase gas imports from Iran. In 2005, the share of the largest supplier of Turkey, the Russian Federation, was around 62% while that of Iran was slightly below 12%; as of 2011, the share of the former decreased to 58% and Iran's share rose up to 19% and became the second largest supplier of Turkey.[41] This increase was not accidental. In other words, the strategic weakness of Ankara vis-a-vis Moscow forced it to seek for new gas suppliers, and since it was the closest supplier with the easiest transport route, Iran was the answer. Only by increasing the Iranian share, it has been possible for Turkey to alleviate its vulnerability to Russia at least to a certain degree.

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www.sabah.com.tr/Ekonomi/2010/05/01/cimento_ihracatinda_iran_tehlikesi_kapida; "Çimentocular İran'dan rahatsız", *Zaman*, July 6, 2013, http://www.zaman.com.tr/ekonomi_cimentocular-irandan-rahatsiz_2107866.html.

38 Republic of Ministry of Turkey Science, Industry and Technology, "Çimento Sektör Raporu – 2011/12", p. 12.

39 David G. Victor and Linda Yueh, "The New Energy Order Managing Insecurities in the Twenty-first Century", *Foreign Affairs*, Vol. 89, No. 1, 2010, pp. 61-73; D.Ülke Arıboğan and Mert Bilgin, "New Energy Order Politics Neopolitics: From Geopolitics to Energeo Politics", *Uluslararası İlişkiler*, Vol. 5, No. 20, Winter 2009, pp. 109-132.

40 Brenda Shaffer, *Energy Politics*, Philadelphia, University of Pennsylvania Press, 2009.

41 EPDK, "Doğal Gaz Piyasası Raporu 2011", pp. 31-32.

In terms of oil trade, the two countries have almost perfect relations. However due to the international political atmosphere created by the U.S.-led international community, this situation does not seem to continue the same. Turkey can only meet 11% of its consumption from indigenous sources, and the rest is imported from a number of countries both by pipelines and by tanker ships.[42] In general, there is an inverse relationship between Turkey's crude oil imports from Iran and Russia; when one increases the other decreases. In this perspective, the last three years are not an exception; the Iranian crude oil increases its share in Turkish oil imports at the expense of Russian crude oil. The shares of Iran and Russia can be seen below:

Table 2. Iranian and Russian Shares in Turkey's Oil Imports

Country	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012
Iran (%)	29	38	36	36	23	43	51	39
Russia (%)	31	29	40	33	41	20	12	11

Source: EPDK

Because there are no oil pipeline connections between Turkey and Iran, oil import to Turkey is done by tanker ships. There are no significant security risks in the Black Sea through which the Turkish-Russian oil trade is made. Contrary to this, Turkish-Iranian oil trade is subject to many security risks, such as possible instabilities in and around the Strait of Hormuz, although there are strong ties between Turkey and Iran thanks to the oil trade, international sanctions still damage the relations. The most explicit sign is the rapid fall of the Iranian share in the Turkish oil imports; it decreased more than 25% in one year from 2011 to 2012. The more sanctions are tightened, the more importers of the Iranian crude are to be asked to find new suppliers, and apparently Turkey will be one of them.[43] Nevertheless, Iran is the fourth largest oil producer with its 5.5% share in the global aggregate production as of 2012.[44] Therefore, it can be challenging for Turkey to find new options. Having considered this

42 EPDK, "Petrol Piyasası Raporu 2012", 2013, p. 14.

43 "US passes sanctions bill to hit Iran's oil exports", *Hurriyet Daily News*, August 2, 2013, http://www.hurriyetdailynews.com/Default.aspx?pageID=238&nid=51856.

44 EIA, "Key World Energy Statistics 2012", p. 11.

hardship and the 25% decrease in the Iranian share, an exemption was issued by the US Congress for Turkey on 3 December 2012.[45] Depending upon this exemption, Turkey can maintain the existing relations somehow in the foreseeable future.

On the other hand, Turkey has strong ambitions to become an energy hub by developing Ceyhan, which is already an important energy terminal on the shore of the Mediterranean. Currently, the total refinement capacity in Turkey is 28.1 million tones and the capacity usage ratio is 78.7%.[46] In addition to the existing capacity, 25 million tonnes of additional refinement capacity will be put in operation in five years' time.[47] When these constructions are completed, Turkey's need will almost double, and most probably, Turkey will have to import the Iranian crude in larger quantities even if the sanctions continue with more tightening. Fortunately, for both Turkey and Iran, sanctions may not continue as the same, thanks to the recent P5+1-Iran negotiations.[48] Furthermore, Turkey's plans to become an energy hub require this[49] and many expressions of the respective Turkish authorities give some clues on the realization of this scenario.[50] Iran, however, as an oil exporter with limited refinement capacity, is considerably dependent upon foreign supplies especially for gasoline needs.[51] Although Iran endeavours to increase its refinement capacity with upgrades and modernizations, positive development in the sector is curtailed by the sanctions. Though a weak possibility, Iran will have to meet its gasoline and diesel needs from Turkish refineries, when the construction of two new refineries in Turkey, one in Adana on the Mediterranean Sea and the other in İzmir on the Aegean Sea, is completed. Thus, bilateral trade volume would increase, and Turkey's disadvantageous position would change to a certain extent.

In terms of electricity trade, the extent of Turkish-Iranian relations is quite limited. However, even though it is far less insignificant in comparison to natural gas and oil trade for the moment, this situation is

45 Kenneth Katzman, "Iran Sanctions", Congressional Research Service, January 2014, p. 19.

46 EPDK, "Petrol Piyasası Raporu 2012", p. 13.

47 EPDK, "Petrol Piyasası Raporu 2012", p. 12.

48 "Obama defends Interim Nuclear deal", *BBC News*, November 25, 2013, http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-middle-east-25095673.

49 John Roberts, "Turkey As A Regional Energy Hub", *Insight Turkey*, Vol. 12, No. 2, 2010, p. 42.

50 "Turkey Not to End Iran Oil Imports: Erdogan", *Press TV*, May 18, 2013, http://www.presstv.ir/detail/2013/05/18/304146/turkey-not-halting-iran-oil-imports/.

51 EIA, "Iran Report", p. 11.

expected to change. Currently, there are two lines connecting Turkish and Iran networks, one has 400 kV and lying between Başköy in Turkey and Khoy in Iran and the other has 154 kV capacity and lying between Doğubeyazıt in Turkey and Bazargan in Iran; both lines are operational.[52] The first electricity import of Turkey from Iran started in 1996 with 54.6 GWh and it later decreased to 23.5 GWh in 2003, probably as a side effect of the economic crisis, which shook the Turkish economy in 2002.[53] Still, it has increased 50 times in an eight years' time and reached 1074.5 GWh in 2011. Turkish Electricity Transmission Company (TEIAŞ) plans to increase interconnection capabilities of Turkey with its neighbours both to enlarge electricity import/export capabilities of Turkey and to develop the Turkish infrastructure, which are necessary for making Turkey an energy bridge.[54] Although Iran is an electricity exporter country in the region, consumption peaks force Iran to import electricity from a number of countries including Armenia and Azerbaijan under a swap agreement.[55] On the other hand, Iran plans to add 5,000 MW installed capacity to its power generation sector annually which is expected to support Iran's general strategy to become an electricity supplier to the whole region as a supplement for its foreign policy objectives.[56]

Maintaining and intensifying the energy trade is not only Turkey's desired choice. Iran is also quite keen on converting its natural resources into economic power through its energy relations with Turkey. In terms of the geopolitics of energy, Turkey holds a central place, and serves as a natural bridge between energy-rich countries and energy-thirsty economies. Iran, as a member of the former group, has very limited options to transport its natural gas to importers in the West except through Turkey as a transit country, in addition to exporting its natural gas to the Turkish market.[57] Therefore, for Tehran, to establish and further energy relations with Turkey

52 TEIAŞ, "Mevcut Enterkonneksiyon Hatlarının Net Transfer Kapasiteleri Duyurusu", December 2013, http://www.teias.gov.tr/Dosyalar/NetTransferKapasiteleri.doc.

53 TEIAŞ, December 2013, http://www.teias.gov.tr/T%C3%BCrkiyeElektrik%C4%B0statistikleri/istatistik2011/uretim%20tuketim(22-45)/23.xls.

54 TEIAŞ, "Stratejik Plan 2011-2015", 2012, pp. 39-40.

55 EIA, "Iran Report", p. 21.

56 "Iran to double electricity export to Turkey by late May", *Press TV*, April 4, 2012, http://www.presstv.ir/detail/234603.html.

57 Mehmet Öğütçü, "Turkey and Changing Dynamics of World Energy: Towards Cleaner and Smarter Energy", *Insight Turkey*, Vol. 12, No. 3, 2010, p. 70.

almost become an obligation.[58] As a reflection of this reality, 90% of the total natural gas exports of Iran are to Turkey.[59] Moreover, this is an indispensable income source for the Iranian economy. The bulk of the Iranian exports, more than 84%, consist of fuels and mining products, that is, oil and gas.[60] While richness in natural gas is leverage for Iran's regional influence, it is also a strategic weakness for both the Iranian economy and its foreign policy. Accordingly, rectifying the two aforesaid asymmetries in bilateral economic relations, which are the primacy of natural gas in energy relations and the primacy of energy in economic relations, has the promise of bringing a more mutually beneficial and sustainable relationship in Turkish-Iranian economic relations.

Conclusion

To recapitulate, political economy of Turkish-Iranian Relations is characterized by three intertwined asymmetries. First, political relations between two states have not developed at the same pace and level of economic relations and, contrary to the cooperative nature of economic relations, display features of structural regional competition. Second, economic relations between Turkey and Iran are dominated by relations in the energy area. Third, energy relations between the two states are, in turn, dominated by relations in the gas sector. Nevertheless, in the political economy of Turkish-Iranian relations, an approach excluding the energy dimension is an incomplete one. Political and economic relations are highly affected by the intensity of the Turkish-Iranian energy relations. When the economic aspects of bilateral relations are considered, Turkish-Iranian relations evolve into a more resilient and promising character. A spectacular rise in bilateral trade volume is the proof of the capacity of the two countries to gain from good neighbourhood policies. On the other hand, due to ongoing chronic mistrust and unresolved disputes, both of the actors are prone to pay attention to short-term benefits rather than to more long-term benefits like reciprocal direct investments. Among the various constituents of the economic aspect of the relations, energy holds a privileged position as the bulk of the economic relationship consists of energy trade. This is another version of what is called as the 'resource curse' in

58 Gareth M. Winrow, "Turkey and East-West Gas Transportation Corridor", *Turkish Studies*, Vol. 5, No. 2, 2004, p. 30.

59 CBoI, "Iran Central Bank Annual Review Report 2011-2012", 2013, p. 4.

60 WTO, "Trade Profiles 2012", 2013, p. 86.

the literature, which causes underdevelopment in the other fields of the economic activity and damages the respective countries' capabilities to spread their economic engagements to fields other than energy. Thus, it can be concluded that since the energy trade between Turkey and Iran serves as a crucial asset with its enormous volume, the pragmatism of geoeconomics continues to overweigh the geopolitical concerns in Turkish-Iranian relationship. This could be a favourable starting point to broaden the scope of cooperation in Turkish-Iranian relations to include political issues of mutual concern.

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BOOK REVIEW

The Arab Uprising: The Unfinished Revolutions of The New Middle East

Marc Lynch, (Public Affairs, 2013), 273 p.

*Zeynep SÜTALAN**

Marc Lynch is associate professor of political science and international affairs and the director of the Institute of Middle East Studies at the Georgetown University. His new book on the *The Arab Uprising: The Unfinished Revolutions of The New Middle East* is a concise account of the events which unfolded in 2011 in the Middle East and generally referred as the 'Arab Spring'. As indicated in the title of the book, Lynch refrains from using the term 'Arab Spring' and prefers to call it 'Arab Uprising' instead since he thinks that the term 'Arab Spring' "does not do justice to the nature of the change" (p.9). He emphasizes what has been experienced by the Arab world from December 2010 to March 2011 was revolutionary, but not enough to be named as revolutions. The uprisings during that period have produced mixed results, but there is an ongoing process of structural change. In this vein, Lynch underlines the importance of the events for shaping the regional dynamics as he portrays the region as 'the New Middle East', but he cautions that no matter how revolutionary the developments under the Arab uprising may be, they are 'unfinished'. Then he ties the events of the Arab uprising and its implications on the US foreign policy in the Middle East with the argument that the region will not be the same after the uprisings driven by the 'new Arab public' so should be the US foreign policy. Lynch utilizes social media –twitter and blogs– as sources and cites his extensive experience in blogging since he, himself, is a blogger. His travels to the region during the uprisings constitute his other source of research. Furthermore, his close ties with the Obama administration provides insights based on inside information about the US approach to the events. Simultaneously, Lynch reflects points of view of a security adviser since he advised members of the Obama administration on the revolutions.

In addition to being an easy-readable narrative of the events of the Arab uprising, the book well situates the events in the historical context with a cause and effect relationship. Lynch approaches to the Arab uprising as a culmination of a long history of protests

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dating back to the 1950s. The single events like the death of Tunisian Muhammed Boazizi are the triggering events which sparked the historical social discontent against the authoritarian regimes in the region. He also reminds us that the social protests and political mobilization is not unprecendented in the history of the region. The exaggerated shock experienced all-over the world after the demonstrations in 2011 was the indication of how the history of the region is not known despite its popularity. As portrayed by Lynch, the region has witnessed several waves of activisim, starting from 1950s until 2011. In the 1950s, people poured into the streets with the call for Arab unity. The late 1970s and 1980s were swept by bread riots and anti-austerity protests. There were the defensive democratization efforts in the 1990s and the protests of 'Kefaya wave' in the 2000s. However, none of these waves proved successful as they were replaced by new forms of authoritarianism.

Lynch regards 2000s and the *Kefaya* movement as the "essential training ground for the mobilization that finally broke through in 2011" (p.64). The name of the movement stemmed from the slogan *Kefaya*, meaning 'Enough'. The activists were against the 'dynastic' succession from Husni Mubarak (father) to Gamal Mubarak (son). Later on, the movement became a source of inspiration for the young activists beyond Egypt. The protests were tolerable at the beginning by the regimes as long as they were against Israel during the *intifada* and against US in its invasion of Iraq. Yet, when they turned against the authoritarian regimes, they became a source of problem which required immediate measures to tackle. These protests paved the wave for the 2011 Arab uprising when the young activists began to spread their messages and get organized via social media.

One of the most debated aspects of the Arab uprisings have been the role of social media. The protests and the demonstrations were caused neither by Facebook nor Twitter. Nevertheless the means of communication, not only the social media, but also the TV broadcasts and talk shows, namely in *Al-Jazeera*, had a facilitating role. They helped people gather together. More importantly, they contributed to increasing awareness regionwide, if not worldwide. As claimed by Lynch, the means of communication has created a new Arab public sphere, which is more interconnected than before. In fact, the 'new Arab public sphere' is a concept that Lynch identified almost a decade ago in his book on *Voices of the New Arab*

Public.[1] Lynch points out that the new Arab public has been transformed with the satellite television in the 1990s and the social media in the 2000s. Yet, although the means of communication contributed to the change of the Arab public, he does not overrate their role. Nonetheless, he devotes a part of a chapter in his book to the hashtag protests with which he intends to demonstrate how a casual coordination device in the beginning turned into a "symbol of unification of diverse national struggles into a single campaign" (p.105). The shared narrative of the uprisings via the hashtags appealed to every Arab involved in the new Arab public.

Lynch also makes a contribution to the current debates on the 'New Arab Cold War' in describing the current regional politics. 'Arab Cold War' is a concept coined by Malcolm Kerr that he used for describing inter-Arab politics in the 1950s and 1960s. The main feature of the Arab Cold War (in 1950s and 1960s) was the polarization of Arab politics between the revolutionary republics and conservative monarchies. Arab solidarity under the ideology of Pan-Arabism was promoted both by the revolutionary republics and popular movements against Western intrusion and Israel. Following the 1956 Suez War, an Egypt-centric Pan-Arab system prevailed in the region. The revolutionary wave raised under the leadership of Nasser became the source of threat for the pro-Western conservative monarchies in the Gulf as well as Jordan and Saudi Arabia. Until the early 1970s, the region remained polarized between the radical revolutionary republics and the status quo monarchies. Within this historical framework, scholars argue that the power struggles, the ideological and identity conflicts as well as the proxy wars are present in today's Middle East, making it analogous to the pre-1967 regional order. The analogy of 'New Arab Cold War' in understanding and explaining current regional dynamics could be meaningful when it is based on the similarity that the conservative monarchies are trying to curb the wave of change in the regional system. On the other hand, reconsidering inter-Arab politics and the popular demonstrations within the framework of the Arab Cold War of the 1950s and 1960s is important in understanding the popular Arab uprisings and the regional dynamics today. The inter-Arab rivalry and the Arab public as its object led to more authoritarianism in the region in 1970s. In this vein, how the new inter-Arab rivalry and the new Arab public as

1 Marc Lynch, *Voices of the New Arab Public: Iraq, Al-Jazeera, And The Middle East Politics Today*, (New York: Columbia University Press, 2006).

an agent of change make up a new regional context is a significant question. After the Arab Cold War of 1950s and 1960s, the Arab states have increasingly become police states where there is corruption and rule by intelligence services. Although starting from the 1990s (Egypt witnessed it earlier), the states began to introduce economic liberalization and limited political openings with regime survival motives, these initiatives only enriched and empowered ruling elites and thus fuelled social discontent. In this context, Lynch points out the emergence of a new Arab public during and after the Arab uprisings. Lynch differentiates the new Arab public from that of 1950s and 1960s by claiming that during the 1950s, the Arab public was an object of mobilization whereas the new Arab public has emerged as an agent involved in power politics. (p.33).

Against this historical background, Lynch delves into the Arab uprisings which started in Tunisia in December 2010. He pays special attention to the events in Tunisia and Egypt since he regards them as the drivers of change unfolded throughout the region. In regard to the Tunisian revolution, Lynch notes that it "had posed little true challenge to Washington or to the region" (p.84). There was not massive international involvement in the Tunisian case, but soon outside actors would get involved when the protests spread to the other Arab countries of strategic importance to every regional and global player like Egypt, Jordan, Syria, Bahrain and Yemen. In the Egyptian case, he underlines that the US was the key external player in persuading Mubarak to step down and engaging in dialogues with the Egyptian army not to use force against the protestors. For him, what saved the revolution in Egypt was the army's positioning itself not to fire on the Egyptian people and the US had played a role in that. (pp.92-94).

In reference to the tidal wave created by the uprisings in Tunisia and Egypt, he addresses the reverberations of these events, via the narrative of the hashtag protests, in other Arab countries like Yemen, Algeria, Bahrain, Libya, Oman, Morocco, Iraq, Saudi Arabia, Palestine, Syria, Jordan and Lebanon. (pp.104-124). Then he illustrates the responses of the governments to the uprisings in Bahrain, Morocco, Jordan and Yemen. In Bahrain, the response of the government was the brutal crackdowns whereas in Jordan and Morocco regimes chose to initiate reforms to limit the powers of monarchy and give more powers to the elected governments. In Yemen, Lynch asserts, the revolution stalls due to the loss of momentum with the lack of unity among the opposition groups. (pp.131-159).

When it comes to the two battlefields of the Arab uprising, Libya and Syria, he lays out how the peaceful protests yielded to brutal force, violence and civil war, bringing in the discussions of outside intervention. He notes:

For the first time in the history of the modern Middle East, Arab regimes and peoples alike rejected the claim that state sovereignty should shield Arab leaders who commit atrocities against their own people. The appeal for international intervention in Libya, the GCC's initiative in Yemen, and even the Arab League's belated appeal for a cease-fire in Syria all appealed to a radically new norm that regimes would lose their legitimacy when they crossed a threshold of domestic violence. This was obviously partial- Bahrain, for instance, was not included in the new concern. And it was only unevenly enforced- condemnation did little to protect Syrian and Yemeni victims of state violence. (pp.163-164).

Despite criticizing its uneven enforcement, Lynch refers to the regional acceptance of the global norm of 'Responsibility to Protect' as an incredible change for the region. He is also aware that aside from the unprecedented international (including regional) support, what made the intervention in Libya possible is its being on the margins of the regional politics and of little core strategic interests. When Syria is concerned, its unique place in the regional politics with its fate touching "on both of the great cold wars of this period – the one between Iran and the Sunni Arab states, and the one between the Arab public and its rulers" (p.166) complicates the efforts to achieve regional consensus against Assad. Therefore, underlying the complexity of the Syrian case as a "full-scale civil war fuelled by regional proxy competition and increasingly open activity cadre of Al-Qaeda inspired fighters" (p.249), Lynch stresses several reasons why there had not been an outside intervention in Syria such as the lack of international agreement to an intervention and the lack of a unified official opposition movement in the country. In regard to the US stance towards Syria, Lynch thinks that US has done what it could do so far: "to offer moral and rhetorical support and help build regional consensus against Assad, and shepherd international sanctions through the United Nations" (p.167). He also adds that if there is anything good about the disastrous situation in Syria, it is the US non-involvement in an active military intervention.

In addition to analyzing the Arab uprising in detail in each case, Lynch also evaluates the US policy in the region. He criticizes the

neoconservative turn in the US foreign policy with the Bush administration since it led to an increasing anti-Americanism in the region. In line with the US norms and values of liberty and democracy, President Obama wanted to be seen on the right side of the history with supporting the protests against the authoritarian regimes. Although he seems to favor the Obama administration in its approach to the Arab Uprising in countries like Tunisia, Egypt and Libya, he underlines its failures in regard to the protests in Bahrain. US refusal to condemn direct Saudi military intervention in Bahrain ripped US of being consistent in its stance towards the uprising. In fact, it was not a mere revelation of inconsistency, but a blow to credibility of the US, though, not mentioned this way by the writer. Lynch goes on with a recommendation that US has to develop a new policy in regard to the changing dynamics in the region. Middle East, being reshaped by the Arab uprisings will be different from the past, and thus unfamiliar or unpredictable, and will be challenging for the US eventually. For the writer, what US should do is to embrace this region in the way it is changed by its people. In this respect, the new vision that US should develop, is to be based on "an approach to foreign policy that acknowledges other states and publics as equals and partners, not as objects or obstacles to overcome." (p.235). In addition, Lynch proposes US to "accept the limits of its ability to control the Middle East" (p.234) and abandon its imperial habits regarding the region.

With demand for more democracy and political participation, the Arab political sphere will be open to competition between different political actors. Among them, the Islamists may appear more powerful for several reasons, some of which will be that they are well-organized, more popular and well-funded. In this respect, Lynch recommends that US should develop better policies in dealing with the Islamists. He assesses that the US government is doing better in understanding the Islamists and the Islamist movements compared to the days after the 9/11. He appreciates the way Obama administration engaged with the Islamists regarding their democratic participation and advocating non-violence, particularly in the cases of Tunisia and Egypt. At the same time, he admits that there is an anti-Islamic populism in the US and states that "combating anti-Islamic trend at home has never been a more urgent national security priority" (p.234). Furthermore, he recommends that the US should rethink its relations with Israel and encourage it for returning back to the negotiation table with the Palestinians. He also states

that it is high time for the US to engage in real public diplomacy in the Middle East.

Consequently, the book is a good narrative of the ongoing Arab revolts and therefore, is recommended to anyone interested in what has happened in the region so far and is curious about what is there to come. The book provides a comprehensive analysis of the Arab uprisings in relation to the historical activism in the region, but it is not a sophisticated theoretical monograph. Hence, it can appeal both to the specialist and non-specialist audience. The final point that needs to be noted is that although Lynch tries to expose the mistakes done by the US during the uprisings, his praise for the Obama administration seems to prove him unconvincing, particularly about the US efforts to stop the civil war in Syria.

ORTADOĞU ETÜTLERİ

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Kitaplar

Norman Stone, *Kitabın Adı,* (London: Basic Books, 2007), s. 67.
Norman Stone (ed.), *Kitabın Adı* (London: Basic Books, 2007), s. 67-9.
Norman Stone ve Sergei Podbolotov, *Kitabın Adı* (London: Basic Books, 2005), s. 99.
Takip eden referanslar: Kırımlı, *Kitabın Adı, s.* 99.

Dergiler ve Makaleler

Norman Stone, "Makale Başlığı", Dergi Adı, *Cilt*. #, Sayı. # (Ay, Yıl), s. #.
Takip eden referanslar: Kırımlı, "Makale Adı", s. #.

Derleme Kitap Makaleleri
Norman Stone, "Makale Adı", Hakan Kırımlı, "Kitap Adı" (London: Crimea Publishing Co., 2000), s.100.

Resmi Belgeler
Meclis Zabıtları: TBMM Yayınları (Meclis Yayınları, 1988, V), *111*.

Tezler
E. Beytullah, "The Crimean Khans' relations with the Arab Amirs", yayınlanmamış doktora tezi, Bilkent University, 1999, Bölüm 5, s.44.

Tekrarlar
Dipnotlarda uygun yerlerde "ibid." ibaresi kullanılmalı, ancak bu ibare önceki bilginin birden fazla kaynağa dayandığı durumlarda kullanılmamalıdır.

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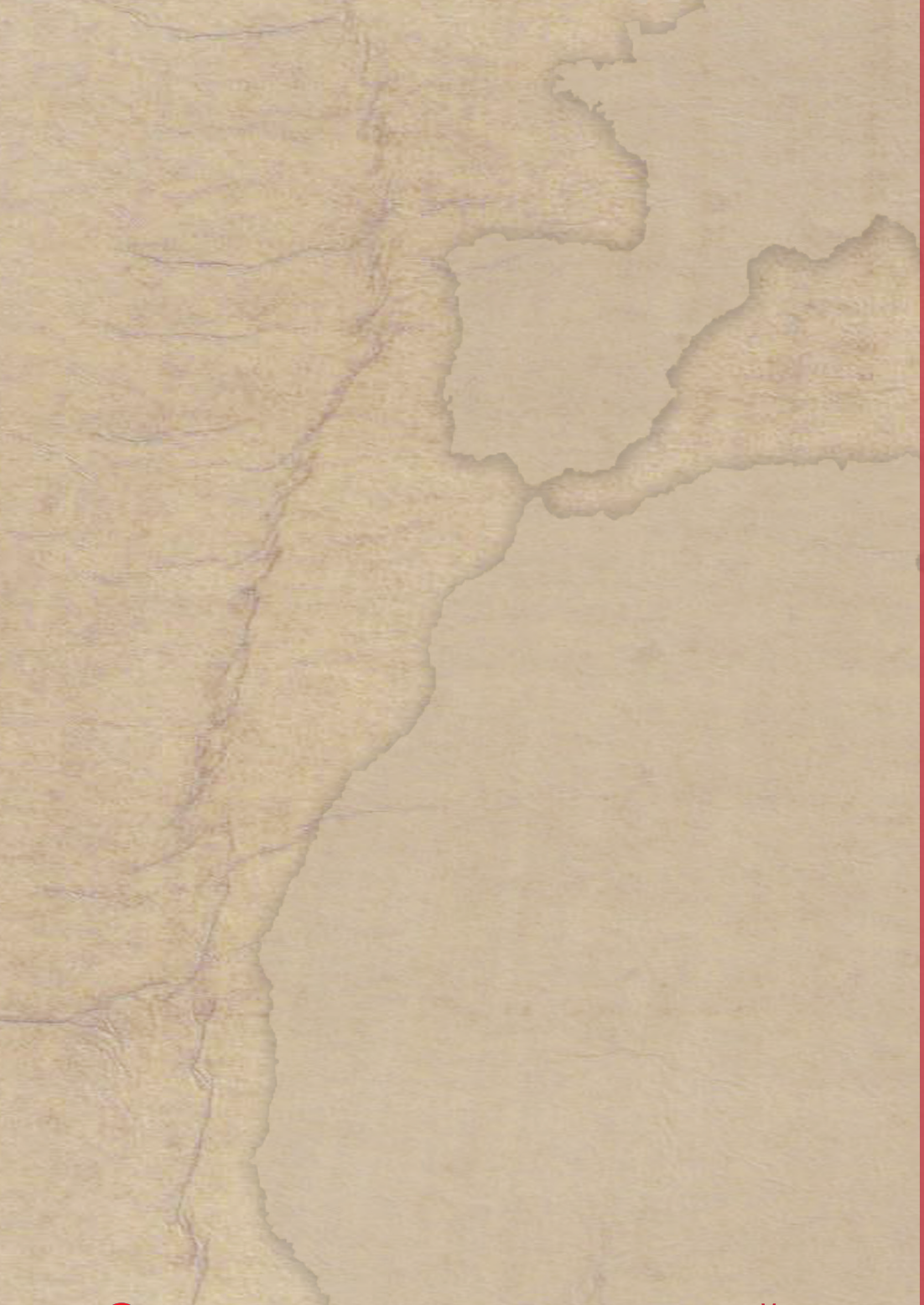

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