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Survival and Containment Strategies of Arab Regimes:

The Cases of Egypt and Morocco

استراتيجيات الانظمة العربية للبقاء في السلطة ولاحتواء خصومها المحليين : حالتا

مصر والمغرب

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Date of thesis defense: August, 3rd, 2009

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This Thesis was submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the Masters Degree in Human Rights and Democracy from the Faculty of Graduate Studies at Birzeit University, Palestine.

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To my wife and children

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X. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This study aims at explaining the durability of Arab authoritarian regimes and their ability to resist the third wave of democratic transformation that hit the world since the last quarter of the twentieth century. It urges that the main reason behind the successes of low efficient unpopular regimes to survive is the successful strategies they use to consolidate their reign and to manipulate their political rivals. To do so, this study explores the internal political developments in the Arab World since early 1990s in a quest to decide their intentionality and authenticity. Though the external role has always been a key factor affecting internal Arab developments, this study is dedicated to regime-opposition interactive relation and its dynamics. Further, two case studies are presented (Egypt and Morocco). The two cases are particularly interesting for they represent two major countries in the Arab World with diverse political societies and a long history of regime-opposition interaction. Such diversity serves as an incubator of dissent both within political elite and political opposition. Both Egypt and Morocco are considered as examples of "liberalized autocracies" that provide interesting models of regime-opposition relationship. Still, the case studies provide two contrasting political types (monarchy vs. republic). This provides rich data to compare and contrast the strategies each of the two regimes use. The study uses the comparative approach as a tool of research.

The major conclusions of the study can be summed up as follows:

- The Arab World has witnessed an active political arena since 1990s; top-down political reforms and liberalization attempts were introduced. However, such openings were restricted, interrupted, and didn't approach democratization. They intended to consolidate rather than transform authoritarian regimes.
- Arab regimes seized the wide constitutional authorities they enjoy and the weakness of the opposition groups to introduce successful strategies that enable them to completely dominate the domestic political arena.
- The Islamists groups are the most serious potential threat to authoritarian regimes. They are very popular, well structured, and less corrupted. Nonetheless, most of these groups have chosen to restrict their electoral successes and not to challenge the regimes in order to avoid oppression (Egypt) or to enjoy the privileges of co-optation (Morocco).
- Arab political situation is special but not exceptional. Arab Exceptionalism as well as Islamic Exceptionalism didn't prove evident.
- The international factor failed to prove vital to democratic transformation in the Arab World. The prominent policy makers in the international community prefer pro-west stable, though authoritarian, regimes to the uncertain outcome of a democratic process.

- Regimes' strategies might differ from one case to another because of circumstantial conditions or because of polities' genre (monarchy vs. republic). Still they, most of the time, proved successful.

ملخص باللغة العربية:

تهدف هذه الدراسة لسبر غور لغز ديمومة الانظمة السياسية العربية وهيمنتها على الساحة السياسية الداخلية وتوضيح قدرتها على مقاومة الموجة الثالثة من التحول الديمقراطية التي اجتاحت العالم منذ الربع الاخير من القرن الماضي.

ترتكز الدراسة على الفرضية القائلة ان السبب الرئيس لنجاح انظمة قليلة الكفاءة وغير محبوبة من شعوبها هو الاستراتيجيات الناجحة التي تطبقها لتثبيت حكمها وللتلاعب بخصومها السياسيين، ولاثبات ذلك تحاول الدراسة استكشاف وتحليل التطورات السياسية الداخلية منذ بداية العقد الاخير من القرن العشرين وذلك في محاولة لاستكشاف غاياتها ومدى جديتها، وبالرغم من العامل الخارجي كان على الدوام ذو اثر كبير على التطورات الداخلية في العالم العربي الا ان هذه الدراسة تركز على علاقة النظام بالمعارضة وارهاصات هذه العلاقة. كذلك تقدم الدراسة حالتين دراسيتين وهما "مصر والمغرب"، وتعتبر الحالتان مفيدتان جدا لغرض البحث العلمي لانهما تمثلان اثنتان من الدول المركزية في العالم العربي تتميزان بمجتمعات سياسية متنوعة وبتاريخ حافل من العمل السياسي وعلاقة جدلية مثيرة ما بين الانظمة والمعارضة. ومع ذلك فان مصر والمغرب تمثلان نظامين سياسيين مختلفين، فالاولى جمهورية والثانية مملكة. ان كل المعطيات السالفة تنبأ بوجود بيئة خصبة للدراسة وبالخصوص لمقارنة الاستراتيجيات التي يتبعها كل من النظامين.

تستخدم الدراسة المنهج المقارن كأداة البحث الاساسية.

النتائج الرئيسة للدراسة: يمكن تلخيص النتائج الرئيسة للدراسة في النقاط الاتية:

- شهد العالم العربي حراكا سياسيا نشطا منذ بداية تسعينيات القرن الماضي وبالاخص محاولات اللبرلة التي أتت من قمة الهرم السياسي العربي، لكن هذا الانفتاح السياسي كان مقيدا ومتقطعا ولم يقترب من مفهوم الدمقرطة الحقيقي، وعلى النقيض هدف هذا الحراك اساسا لتدعيم الانظمة السلطوية وليس الى دمقرطتها.

- استغلت الانظمة العربية الصلاحيات الدستورية الواسعة التي تتمتع بها بالاضافة الى ضعف المعارضة الرسمية لتطبيق استرتيجيات ناجحة مكنتها من الهيمنة على المسرح السياسي الداخلي.

- تعتبر الجماعات والاحزاب الاسلامية التهديد الحقيقي المحتمل للانظمة الحاكمة في العالم العربي فهي ذات جماهيرية عالية واكثر تنظيما واقل فسادا من غيرها من جماعات المعارضة الاخرى وهذا ما يفسر نجاحاتها الانتخابية في السنوات الاخيرة. وبالرغم من هذه المعطيات فقد اختارت هذه الجماعات ان لا تواجه الانظمة السلطوية بشكل مباشر وان تقيد نجاحاتها الانتخابية وذلك اما لتجنب بطش الانظمة بها كما في الحالة المصرية او لتحافظ على المزايا الممنوحة لها مقابل احتوائها كما في الحالة المغربية.

- تعتبر الحالة السياسية العربية فريدة وذات خصوصية عالية ولكنها ليست استثنائية، وفي هذا السياق لم تثبت ادعاءات الاستثنائية الاسلامية اوالاستثنائية العربية انها ذات مصداقية.

- ان اثر العامل الخارجي في عملية التحول الديقراطي في العالم العربي هو اثر ضئيل ولا يعول عليه حيث بينت التطورات السياسية المعاصرة في العالم العربي ان مراكز صنع القرار المركزية في العالم الغربي تفضل انظمة سلطوية موالية لها على النتائج غير المضمونة التي قد تتمخض عنها عملية ديمقراطية حقيقية.

- قد تختلف استراتيجيات الانظمة العربية من حالة لاخرى وذلك لاختلاف الظروف الموضوعية او لتباين اشكال النظام السياسي الرسمي (ملكي، جمهوري)، ومع ذلك فقد اثبتت هذه الاستراتيجيات نجاعتها في المحصلة النهائية.

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1. OVERVIEW

Democracy, as we know it today, is a controversial phenomenon. It may be a word familiar to most, but it is a concept still misunderstood or misused particularly in times of crises. There seems to be a great confusion of what democracy means. In spite of the fact that at least in some parts of the world one can hear it from the media every day, still it could mean totally different things in different places and circumstances. Morocco's King Mohamed VI said that "each country has to have its own specific features of democracy" (Brumberg 2002: 64). The confusion becomes even more evident when new concepts such as democratization, modernization, liberalization, democratic transition, and democratic transformation are used. This confusion might not be caused by ignorance, but is rather due to deliberate manipulation of terminology and using it out of context.

When can we argue that democratic transformation has happened or is ongoing? Many researchers have contributed to this argument. Multi-party elections, held at regular intervals, tell an important part of the story about democratization. They are among the most explicit indicators of whether, or not, a country is heading along the authoritarian-democratic pathway and may influence authoritarian leaders to bend to popular will or to introduce incremental political reforms (Goldsmith 2007). Nonetheless, other researchers do not read too much into elections, because elections obviously connote

different things in different national settings. Schlumberger (2007: 15) argues that elections, in an authoritarian context, are not designed to promote democracy through fair contestation. "Rather, they can be seen as the mechanism through which opposition forces are incorporated into the formal political game. Thus opposition forces can participate to a limited degree, even in an authoritarian context, but they are not allowed to question the rules of the game that govern their participation". This discussion about the authenticity and intentionality of the regimes' political openings shall be discussed thoroughly in chapter two of this study.

Joni Assi (2006: 82) explains that democratic transformation goes through three phases:

- Political opening or liberalization, in this phase incumbents are divided into doves and eagles.
- The collapse of the previous regime followed by the adoption of a new constitution and agreeing on elections.
- Consolidating democracy, this phase aims at strengthening democracy and making it the only game in town.

According to those phases, some would argue that democratic transformation hasn't even started in the Arab World, others might challenge this by pointing that Arab countries have indeed started political openings and liberalization attempts, therefore, they are in phase one. Both arguments have a point, yet both can be contested as chapter two of this study shall discuss.

The process of democratization may also be carried out by the governing elite themselves, as has often happened in South America, (see Karl and Schmitter 1991) and indeed, one will find authoritarian leaders that claim they intend to create the conditions for democracy. This is called top-down openings that its authentic aim is usually a hidden agenda by incumbents. This type of political development is relevant to the Arab region, as chapter two of this study shall show.

In the same context, another debate appears of whether democratization is a contagious phenomenon. The Arab Example provides a preliminary negative answer; despite the various waves of democratic transformation that hit different areas of the world (East Europe, Latin America, some parts of Africa) since the beginning of the twentieth century, the Middle East remains one of the regions of highest concentration of authoritarian regimes. Though Arab regimes do not fit under the same category of political systems, there is a consensus among researchers (i.e. Schlumberger 2007: 7, Brumberg 2002: 58, Yassin 2008) and specialized institutions to classify them as non-democratic regimes (see the 2008 Freedom House[1] ranking of world countries in annex two). Still, significant differences do exist between Arab polities, as there are clearly diverse cases as Egypt and Saudi Arabia, Oman and Syria, or Tunisia and Bahrain confirm (Schlumberger 2007: 7). Nonetheless, only few Arab regimes have

[1] Freedom House is a United States-based international non-governmental organization that conducts research and advocacy on democracy, political freedom and human rights. It publishes an annual assessment of the perceived degree of democratic freedoms in each country, which is used in political science research, http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Freedom_House

some guided democratic or liberal characteristics. The two case study countries of this study "Egypt and Morocco" are believed to fit under the third subcategory (Brumberg 2005: 5).

The last two decades witnessed an active political arena in the Arab World. Since the early nineties of last century, there had been lots of mobility and significant political developments in most Arab countries. These developments were not one sided; there were times of political liberalization, but they were most of the time, followed by longer times of de-liberalization and assertion of authoritarianism[2].

Statistics showed that the number of political parties, civil society institutions have increased rapidly in many Arab countries[3]. Elections became regular in countries like Egypt, Morocco, and Jordan and were introduced, for the first time, in other countries particularly the Gulf States. There has been a notable improvement regarding speech and liberal freedoms. These developments came as a direct and indirect result of different clusters of reasons. Some of which are attributed to political, social, and economic internal developments; others are caused by regional and international factors. Most importantly, they are related to the incumbents' needs and necessities. The economic and political underperformances of

[2] See Kienle 2001, The Grand Delusion, Democracy and Economic Reform in Egypt

[3] See Albrecht's comments on the establishment of thousands of civil society associations and NGOs in Egypt during the 1990s (Holger Albrecht 2007: 75),and Ottaway and Dunne Carnegie Paper " "King's Dilemma" in the Arab World: Promise and Threat of Managed Reform ", (2007: 18) referring to the same subject

regimes lead the ruling elites to crises. Such situations can be managed either by oppression or by liberalization (Fuertig 2007: ix). Since Arab incumbents have a long history of oppression, they tend to try the other option which implies some reforms and a considerable extent of freedom.

However, significant political power remains utterly in the firm grip of regimes, simply, as many might argue, because these reforms are introduced by incumbents to consolidate authoritarian systems rather than to encourage real transition to democracy. Yet, in the complicated world of politics things are not that simple. Although liberalization in the context of authoritarian rule is intended to avoid democratization, it may trigger exactly this outcome. In fact, two competing academic camps regarding internal development in the Arab World have emerged (Fuertig 2007: iix). On the first hand, some optimist scholars like Schmitter (2001) and Ibrahim, (1994) argue that the winds of change have finally arrived in the Middle East and that Arab authoritarian regimes can't avoid basic changes. They built their optimism on Latin American countries' experiences of democratic transformation which were based on pacts among political rivals and mainly initiated by the ruling elites (Karl and Schmitter 1991). This school of thinking was dominant in 1990s and is known as the transformation theory school. On the other hand, others like Brumberg (2002, 2005), Hawthorne (2004), Schlumberger (2007) are convinced that we are witnessing just another round of democratic rhetoric lacking any element of real change. They built their argument on empirical evidences about the

absence of any real democratic transformation in the Arab World. This school of thinking came in the late 1990s and in the early twenty first century.

Any attempt to solve this complicated dispute is very difficult on the theoretical level. Yet, whether democratic change is coming in the Middle East or not is an empirical rather than a philosophical question. Consequently, the study shall tend to base its methodology on empirical evidences describing and analyzing what have really happened rather than on preaching on what should have happened or should happen in a quest to answer its major questions: What stands for the successes of Arab regimes to maintain power? And what strategies they actually use to do so?

The debate of whether Arab countries, or at least some of them, have actually launched reforms is only preliminary; most of them have. To what extent these reforms are authentic and meaningful is a debatable issue. Therefore, another angle of research that this study seeks is to answer from different perspectives and levels, whether the proclaimed reforms are rhetorical or real, and, even more importantly, whether they lean towards the promotion of democratization or targeting exactly the opposite.

From a different, but related, level of research, this study shall seek to explain the durability of Arab regimes and their ability to remain the upper hand when it comes to the political game. Based on theoretical inputs, democratization theories, particularly transformation theory, assumed that the Arab region should have democratized in a certain

period of time prior to the twenty-first century (Schmitter 2001: 94). Taking into consideration the following factors, it seems that, at least, tangible authentic political openings would be inevitable:

- Regimes' legitimacy crises and lack of popular support (Fuertig 2007: 30)
- Deteriorating economic conditions and standard of living in most of the Arab countries (Fuertig 2007: 30).
- Globalization and new world system with all of its promises of democracy and freedom (Ottaway and Dunne 2007: 17).
- Newly emerged political opposition parties and civil society institutions that could be added to the existing ones. In many Arab countries there are different ideological opposition parties (Islamist, Secular, and Leftist) (Heydemann 2007: 37).

Those domestic and external factors among others, gave the impression that the wind of genuine and revolutionary changes in the region would be inevitable. However, this simply didn't happen, at least not at the level the optimists hoped, and consequently, Arab regimes remained in power and continued to control the political game (Hawthorne 2004: 4).

This rather odd situation created a new debate of post democratization theories that would contest the old premises "Albrecht and Schlumberger 2004; Bellin 2004; Heydemann 2002; Kassem 2004a; Kienle 2004; Schlumberger 2000a". Most of these studies tried to explain both the successes of Arab regimes to

maintain power and the absence of any real democratic transformation. What was nearly common was the emphasis of those scholars on the unique and special situation of the region in regard to its sociopolitical nature (Albrecht 2007: 59).

A very important debate in this context would be to explain this phenomenon that characterizes the Arab political arena to the extent that some scholars called it "Arab Exceptionalism" (Bishara 2008). Some researchers gave the credit to the success of the strategies used by Arab regimes to control oppositions (Lust-Okar 2007). Others blamed the opposition movements, accusing them to be of a patrimonial and authoritarian nature (Ottaway and Dunne 2007, Albrecht 2007). A third more general but more comprehensive opinion comes from scholars like Azmi Bishara (2008) and Brumberg (2002) arguing that there is no one reason for the Arab exceptionalism, but rather a combination of different local, regional, and international reasons.

It is quite difficult to analyze the political situation in the Arab world in isolation of the external factor and its impact on internal developments. Generally speaking, the dominant external forces I refer to are usually, but not always, Western forces led by the USA aiming to preserve their economic and political interests in the Arab region. Thus they seem to be interested in fostering the reign of friendly regimes that would be able to face anti-Western threats whether domestic, regional or international more than fostering authentic democratic transformation which could lead to uncertain consequences (Fuertig 2007: 12).

Therefore, the international role is central in understanding the endurance of Arab authoritarianism particularly in the post-Cold War era. In the context of economic crisis and political liberalization, external support from foreign powers do strengthen the capacity of regime incumbents to maintain tight control over the democratic reform process, foreclosing the possibility of opposition victories in their struggles to capture larger slices of state power and hence ensuring continuity in the authoritarian systems.

The record of Western democracy promotion in developing regions has proven reluctant at best. The West proved to use obvious double standards, refusing to advocate democracy or exert any real pressure on friendly Arab regimes as they did with unfriendly ones, for instance, the American successive administrations often demanded full-fledged democratic reforms for foes like Syria and Libya, but it practically ignored authoritarian practices in friendly allies like Morocco, Saudi Arabia, and Egypt.

However, and by the early 1990s, economic crises and public unrest in many Arab states made it necessary for the West to demand Arab incumbents to introduce some liberal openings. At the same time compelled Arab rulers to loosen tight restrictions on political rights, often resulting in the return of elected legislative bodies, a renaissance of civil society, and new tolerance for societal pluralism. Therefore, this study starts from the assumption that the early 1990s has actually witnessed intensive political mobility in the Arab World affected by the Western pressure; however, this study suspects the authenticity and intentionality of these developments.

Recognizing the importance of the external factor, this study dedicates its main argument to analyze the relationship between Arab incumbents and their internal political rivals. The main reason behind this is that the methodology of this study is based on understanding the dynamics controlling incumbents-opposition problematic interaction in a quest to figure out how rather than why Arab regimes managed to survive and control internal political stage. The role of the external factor is an important topic that could be addressed in a separate study.

1.2 MAIN QUESTION AND STUDY LIMITATIONS

This study shall emphasize on Arab internal developments to try to explain how Arab regimes managed to stay in power, and shall consequently focus on the political developments that took place in the Arab contemporary political life, and on regime-opposition relationship. Due to time and research limitations, the study shall be limited to two case studies (Egypt, Morocco), shall cover the period between 1990 and 2008 and shall pay little attention to the affects of the external factor on domestic political transformation. The choice of the early nineties was not an arbitrary one. This period witnessed important domestic and external events. On the Arab domestic level, some drastic changes in the incumbent-opposition relationship have taken place; the Egyptian example of the regime-Muslim Brotherhood more hostile relationship since early 1990s. Albrecht (2007: 68) argues that since the early 1990s the Egyptian regime has

"revoked the honeymoon period in its relationship with the Muslim Brotherhood and has since taken a no-compromise stance because the Muslim Brotherhood has become the strongest autonomous political force in Egypt by far". In the same vein is the adoption of the Moroccan regime of a path of top-down reform in the early 1990s. King Hassan II started the process during the last years of his long reign, and his son Mohammed VI continued it after ascending to the throne in 1999 (Ottaway and Riley 2006: 3). In the international arena, the period witnessed the end of the Cold War era, the collapse of the communist bloc, the alleged triumph of the Western values, and consequently the acceleration of the democratic fever that hit different parts of the world. Those internal, regional and external developments, among others, make early 1990s a convenient starting point for this study.

1.3 METHODOLOGY

The study shall use the comparative approach to answer the major question: How did the Arab regimes (Egypt, Morocco) manage to stay in power and what are the strategies they use to manipulate their opponents?

To achieve that, the study shall work on two tracks which shall be the main chapters of the study:

- Follow and analyze political reforms and liberalization attempts in the case study countries after 1990 to conclude

whether they are genuine attempts towards democratization, cosmetics attempts, regimes' survival strategies, or attempts to consolidate authoritarian regimes.

- Analyze the strategies that the Egyptian and Moroccan regimes used to manipulate opposition parties in general and Islamist in particular which vary from inclusion to exclusion and what comes in between. Compare and contrast the strategies of the two regimes, focusing on similarities and contrasts among them, and evaluating the efficiency of these strategies.

1.4 HYPOTHESES OF THE STUDY

The study shall be based on the following hypotheses, as derived from the literature reviewed:

[redacted]

The durability of the Arab authoritarian regimes is attributed to the successful strategies they use to dominate domestic political arena and to manipulate their political rivals.

[redacted]

- There are no significant genuine political openings in the Arab World; the recent political developments are merely temporary attempts aiming to assert authoritarianism.

- Though Arab regimes used and continue to use different strategies and tactics to manipulate their political rivals, they all succeeded to maintain the regimes' upper hand.
- The prominent policy makers in the international community prefer pro-west stable, though authoritarian, regimes to the uncertain outcome of a democratic process.
- Islamists popularity and successes are part of their problem, so they tend to self-restrict their electoral successes.
- Polities' political genre plays a significant role in the strategic choices of the regimes; it's easier for kings in monarchies than presidents in republics to introduce reforms and liberal gestures and maintain their firm grip on the political arena.
- The Arab Exceptionalism, which is a combination of various political, social, cultural, religious, and economic factors, is the real impediment of any real democratic transition in the Arab World.

1.5 QUESTIONS OF THE STUDY

The study shall also try to answer the following questions :

- Are political reforms and liberalization attempts necessary for the survival of regimes?
- Why can't opposition groups in the Arab World join forces and mobilize together against the authoritarian Arab regimes?

- When do Arab regimes resort to repression? And against who?
- What are the factors that decide the type of relationship between regime and opposition parties, is it the ideology or the popularity of these parties?
- What stands for the durability of unpopular low efficient Arab regimes?

1.6 STRUCTURE OF THE STUDY

The study shall be divided into three chapters in addition to an introduction and a conclusion. *The introduction* shall provide an overview of the Arab political arena in an attempt to shed light on the contemporary political life in the Arab World. This structural flow shall highlight the main issues and debates that the study attempts to target. The introduction shall explain the limitations of the study hence political development in the Arab World is a very broad topic. Consequently, the study shall be timely limited to cover the period between 1990 and 2007 and shall also be limited to two case studies (Egypt and Morocco). Less emphasis shall be on the role of the external factor and on theoretical approaches explaining the Arab status quo i.e. "modernization, cultural, or rentier state approaches".

In *chapter one*, the study shall review some literature relevant to the theme of the study. There is an extremely rich literature about political developments in the Middle East in general and the Arab World in particular. Contributions discussing the seriousness and the

intention of recent political openings and liberalization attempts, the durability of the Arab regimes, the strategies they use to perpetuate, and the characteristics of the Arab political life that stand for its unique resistance to democratization shall be reviewed. The major findings of this theoretical part shall be subject to more in depth analyses in chapters two and three.

In *chapter two*, and based on the major concluding points from chapter one, namely the active Arab political arena in the last two decades, deeper discussion is intended. Most scholars and researchers agree on the non-democratic nature of all Arab regimes, at least according to Western criteria dominant in the field of social science, particularly democratization. Nonetheless, they disagree about both the intentionality and the authenticity of recent political developments. Some scholars such as Schmitter (2001) and Ibrahim (1994) view political openings in the Arab World as positive developments in the right direction of authoritarian-democracy pathway. Others like Ottaway and Dunne (2007) see them as modernization attempts introduced by reform minded leaders. More pessimistic vision represented by researchers like Lust-Okar (2007) and Albrecht (2007) would see such developments as temporarily survival strategies by authoritarian rulers or at the best as cosmetics attempts aiming to make authoritarian regimes look nicer in the international arena. Relevant to this argument, Beck (2007) argues that those internal social and political developments could, deliberately or by default, lean towards genuine reforms, whilst Schlumberger (2007) and Brumberg (2005) represent those who

think they intend exactly the opposite; assertion of authoritarianism and avoiding any real democratic transition. Accordingly, this chapter shall tackle the hypothesis that says

- There are no significant genuine political openings in the Arab World; the recent political developments are merely temporary attempts aiming to assert authoritarianism.

And shall answer the question:

- Are political reforms and liberalization attempts necessary for the survival of regimes?

Chapter three shall focus on the two case studies; Egypt and Morocco. Incumbents-opposition relationship shall be the point of emphasis in this regard. Strategies used by both regimes to manipulate political opponents shall be discussed thoroughly.

This chapter shall tackle the following hypotheses:

- Though Arab regimes used and continue to use different strategies and tactics to manipulate opposition, they all succeeded to maintain the regimes' upper hand.

- The prominent policy makers in the international community prefer pro-west stable, though authoritarian, regimes to the uncertain outcome of a democratic process.

And shall answer the following questions:

- Why can't opposition groups in the Arab World join forces and mobilize together against the authoritarian Arab regimes?

- When do Arab regimes resort to repression? And against who?
- What are the factors that decide the type of relationship between regime and opposition parties, is it the ideology or the popularity of these parties?

The conclusion of this study shall summarize the main findings of the study and shall compare and contrast the strategies used by the Egyptian and Moroccan regimes to manipulate their political rivals. It shall also attempt to conclude whether there is an Arab Exceptionalism in regard to democratic transition, or if it is only an illusionary concept invented by researchers unable to explain the Arab political present situation or predict its future? Therefore, this chapter shall tackle the hypotheses that claim:

- The Arab exceptionalism, which is a combination of various political, social, cultural, religious, and economic factors, is the real impediment of any real democratic transition in the Arab World".
- Islamists popularity and successes are part of their problem, so they tend to self-restrict their electoral successes
- Polities' political genre plays a significant role in the strategic choices of the regimes; it's easier for kings in monarchies than presidents in republics to introduce reforms and liberal gestures and maintain their firm grip on the political arena.

And shall answer the question:

- What stands for the durability of unpopular low efficient Arab regimes?

2. CHAPTER ONE: THEORETICAL PART

2.1 INTRODUCTION

There is a rich literature about recent political developments in the Arab World covering the issue from different angles. Based on those contributions, this study shall develop its main arguments. Consequently, in this chapter, I shall try to review some attempts of Arab and international scholars that are very useful in helping to understand the issues and debates addressed by this study. I shall also try to highlight the areas of agreements and disagreements amongst those scholars regarding the issues directly relevant to this study. The major findings of this theoretical part shall be the bases of a more in depth discussion of chapters two and three.

2.2 LITERATURE REVIEW

In *Ghassan Salame's* "Democracy without Democrats, The Renewal of Politics in the Muslim World" (1994), Salame and other contributors discuss many debatable issues related to democracy in the Middle East, clarify core issues, and offer readers a diverse collection of different perspectives. The book provides a rich literature about democracy or the lack of it in the Arab World. However, some scholars criticized the structure of the book arguing that it contains contributions uneven in quality, and lacks the coherence and sustained attention to a defined problem that are

more likely to be found in works by a single author (Heydemann[4]). Schlumberger (2007) also criticized Salame's contribution, saying that it focused on answering "Why the Middle East is not democratic?" a question proved not being of great use. For Schlumberger, it's better to focus on how Arab regimes managed to stay in power. Schlumberger's approach is more dominant nowadays; still we have to remember that his contribution was in 2007 while Salame's was in 1994.

Salame talks about pacts between ruling elites and significant sectors of the civil society pointing out that, whether explicit or implicit, pacts proved to be important in the Arab World. Their absence might be fatal "Algerian case"; however, they are no guarantee to the success of experimentation (Salame 1994: 3). Unlike scholars like Azmi Bishara (2007), Salame thinks that democracy is reachable without democrats. He points out that democracy shouldn't be judged or defined by the identity of those who make it happen, but by the efficiency of the phases of transition. Therefore, democrats may not exist at all or at least not in great numbers and still democracy can be used as an instrument of civil peace that would gradually produce its own defenders (Salame 1994: 3).

Salame criticizes the culturalist approach which claims that Islam, as a religion and a culture, is the real cause of the absence of democracy in the Middle East. In this position, he meets with other scholars like

[4] Steven Heydemann 1996: Is the Middle East Different? (Review of: Ghassan Salamah ed., Democracy Without Democrats? The Renewal of Politics in the Muslim World) - Journal of Democracy 7:2, 171-175

Bishara (2007) and Schlumberger (2007). Salame argues that history shows that no religion or culture are by nature anti-democracy, he uses some historical examples to prove his point like the French revolution or the democratic transition in East Europe. Still, he points out that some Arab regimes use Islam as a pretext to justify authoritarianism.

Salame (1994: 19) further argues that the present and future of the Middle East, in its widest sense of several hundred millions of people, don't suggest one course of Islamization, democratization, or anything else to be dominant. On the contrary, political developments in the Arab World might follow different political paths in the years to come. However, he stresses that the external factors are of great relevance and importance to the domestic developments in the Middle East. The rise of the Islamists is a result of both internal factors particularly the failure and corruption of secular Arab regimes and external ones, namely the collapse of the Soviet Union and the end of the Cold War (ibid: 18). "To the Islamists the fall of the Kremlin was translated to the fall and marginalization of their local ideological rivals whom the USSR more or less inspired or sustained" (ibid: 18).

Fuertig (2007: iix) explains that the project of democratizing autocratic regimes in the Middle East was not a result of the attacks of September, 11, 2001. Instead he argues that these attempts came in the aftermath of the Cold War era, which was characterized by

many as the triumph of the Western values. However, the following decades, proved that Middle Eastern regimes have managed to adapt to the new world system and figured out that in the final analysis the West preferred stability and the containment of Islamic militancy to the uncertainty caused by democratic experiments.

Fuertig (2007: ix) agrees with the vast majority of Middle Eastern researchers that the Arab World in particular and the Middle East in general have indeed been resistant to democratic invasion that overcame other non-democratic regions such as South America and East Europe. He tries to explain this fact using some theoretical assumptions such as the cultural "Islam" or the economic "rentier economy" impediments. He concludes that both approaches suffer serious shortages; however, the rentier state approach is more applicable to the Arab case.

Fuertig states that the reformist trends have indeed invaded most Arab countries in the last two decades. Therefore the question for him is the how sincere these reforms are? Are they of strategic or of tactical nature? And most importantly do they intend to promote democratization or rather foster the authoritarian regimes? (ibid: iv).

Martin Beck (2007: x)[5] one of the contributors of this book refers to the main players of the political game in the Arab World in an attempt to answer the previous questions. Beck argues that since

[5] Beck's contribution comes in a separate chapter of Fuertig's book: The Arab Authoritarian Regime between Reform and Persistence (2007)

both the ruling elites and the main oppositional groups are not democratic in the Middle East, it is difficult to imagine where democratization might come from! Yet, Beck continues that the promotion of democracy under such circumstances could be possible by default. That is to expect that cosmetic liberalization attempts of Arabic regimes to avoid democratization could unleash out of control political developments that might result what regimes tried so hard to avoid; democratization (ibid: x).

In his chapter about Egypt, Fuertig (2007: xi) himself tries to contribute to answering the main question of the book about the authenticity of Arab reforms. He uses Robert Dahl's seven criteria for democratic society (elected representatives, free elections, the universal right to vote and stand for election, plus the freedom of opinion, information, and association) as an instrument to measure the level of political reform in Egypt since 2001. One might criticize the comprehensiveness and validity of Dahl's criteria, still this is the most valid definition available so far and therefore it is relevant for serving the purposes of this study. Fuertig concludes that the transformation process in Egypt is not a preliminary stage of the real transition to democracy, but an astonishingly successful attempt to avoid it.

In the same vein, *Mattes* (2007: 92)[6] wrote about reforms in Morocco under Mohammad VI, which he refers to as "adaptation

6 Mattes' contribution comes in a separate chapter of Fuertig's book: The Arab Authoritarian Regime between Reform and Persistence (2007

attempts". He explains that these reforms have included both the sectors of religion and security since 2004. Mattes stresses that these reforms were real modernization and liberalization efforts by the King that were faced by resistance from conservative old fashioned minded hardliners in both the religious and security establishments. Yet again those attempts, though important, actually aim at the preservation of political stability.

Brumberg (2002: 56) argues that over the past two decades, the Middle East has witnessed a constant movement away from and then back toward authoritarianism. This dynamic began with tactical political openings whose goal was to sustain rather than to transform autocracies. He adds that liberalized autocracy has proven far more durable than once imagined. This is due to what he called "a trademark mixture of guided pluralism, controlled elections, and selective repression".

In countries like Egypt, Jordan, Morocco, Algeria, and Kuwait this mixture is not just a survival strategy adopted by authoritarian regimes, but rather a type of political system whose institutions, rules, and logic defy any linear model of democratization (ibid: 57). To endure, liberalized Arab autocracies must implicitly or explicitly allow some opposition forces certain kinds of social, political, or ideological power (ibid: 58). This tactic might become, by default, the norm characterizing those autocracies' political life.

Brumberg (2002: 57) meets in with other scholars, such as Azmi Bishara (2007) about the complexities of the Arab political arena and the combination of different factors that characterize it. He explains that in the Arab world, "a set of interdependent institutional, economic, ideological, social, and geostrategic factors has created an adaptable ecology of repression, control, and partial openness.

For Brumberg, Arab regimes are categorized in the area between complete and partial autocracies. The exact type of political regime is usually decided by the ruler's ability to balance between demands required by political openings and securing the regimes stability by controlling the political game. The more successful the ruler is the more liberalization he will offer. In the words of Brumberg (2002: 58) "States that promote competitive or dissonant politics will tend to feel surer that Islamist ambitions can be limited and so will be more willing to consider accommodating opposition, while states that promote hegemonic or harmonic politics will tend to invite more radical "counter hegemonic" Islamist opposition movements whose presence increases the expected cost of political liberalization". So, in Brumberg's opinion, pluralism under the current Arab political culture is good for the regime. The outcome of this pluralism is dissonance amongst regime political opponents rather than useful diversity that leads to more political openings. However, once there is a real threat from political opponents especially Islamists, all liberal gestures will be withdrawn and the state shall regain the old form of complete autocracy that would use any means necessary to

regain total control. Therefore, the goal of these political openings is to sustain rather than to transform autocracies.

Brumberg then explains the survival strategies of the Arab regimes saying that partial autocracies like Egypt, Morocco, Jordan allow a kind of competition not only between Islamists and non Islamists, but among Islamist parties as well. The rulers of these countries have not tried to impose a single vision of political community. Instead, they have put a certain symbolic distance between the state and society in ways that leave room for competitive or dissonant politics (ibid: 61). In this sense, Brumberg thinks that, from incumbents' perspective, "dissonance is good, simply because rulers of liberalized autocracies strive to pit one group against another in ways that maximize the rulers' room for maneuver and restrict the oppositions' capacity to work together" (ibid: 61).

The more such a competition takes place, the safer the rulers are. This partial opening caused the rise of Islamists. He refers to this as an ironic outcome which reminds us that while liberalized autocracies can achieve a measure of stability, over time their very survival exacts greater and greater costs (57). This side effect of the game is acceptable as long as the regime is not threatened. Otherwise drastic changes might take place since the main keys of the game have always been in the hands of the rulers. Therefore, new laws especially in regards of elections, economic sanctions, exclusion of certain political powers are all weapons that could come out of the regime drawer whenever necessary.

Another important debate that Brumberg raises is the absence of an active Arab political society. Autocratic Arab rulers know that their survival strategies are designed to prevent the emergence of any effective political society. "They guarantee freedom of speech, but not freedom after speech. By themselves, civil society organizations can't make up for the lack of a functioning political society, meaning an autonomous realm of self-regulating political parties that have the constitutional authority to represent organized constituencies in parliaments" (ibid: 64).

Brumberg concludes with a rather pessimist vision foreseeing a de-liberalization wave on the horizon. He believes that there are four major reasons leading to this pessimism:

- First, there is a sharp decline in external rents, resulting in less incentive for incumbents to please the West.
- Second, there is the growing influence of mainstream Islamism, i.e. more danger for regimes.
- Third, the failure of the Palestinian-Israeli peace process causing the rise of extremists in the region.
- Finally, the US led "war on terrorism" that requires the support or good will of many Arab leaders reveals that the US is more interested in dominating the area rather than in democratizing it.

However, things are not totally gloomy, in some Arab countries, especially in monarchies; there are signs of political openings.

Brumberg thinks that democratic gradualism could be the hope for a real positive political opening in the Arab World. Such a gradualism should include the creation of effective political parties, representative parliaments, and the rule of law and should also be accompanied by international support.

Schlumberger (2007: 2) [7] starts his arguments stating that there are some recent signs of positive changes still ongoing in the Middle East. He attributes these changes to three phenomena that have long been absent from the Middle Eastern scene and have reappeared. These factors seem to signal the strong winds of change that are blowing throughout the Arab world:

- Internal political protest.
- Political reform.
- More visible pressure for political reform exerted by external players.

Together, these phenomena are giving rise to high expectations of thoroughgoing political reforms, including the transition of Arab polities to more participatory systems of governance. Based on these developments, Schlumberger argues that for most of the 1990s both Arab and international scholars tended to assume, in light of political

3The book is entitled "Debating Arab Authoritarianism: Dynamics and Durability of Nondemocratic Regimes" and was edited by Schlumberger, 2007. The book includes a number of articles of different scholars about issues relevant to democratic transformation in the Arab World.

liberalization, that the famous "third wave (Huntington 1991) of democratization had already begun to reach the shores of the Arab world" (ibid: 4). He quotes scholars in favor of this optimism (Ibrahim 1994; Schmitter 2001).

However, Schlumberger contrasts the premises of the optimist literature of the 1990s, by pointing out that it stands in sharp contrast to the empirical reality of what is now routinely addressed as the "Arab world's democracy deficit or governance gap". Again he quotes studies and reports proving this pessimist analysis (Richards 2005; UNDP 2002, 2005; World Bank 2003) (ibid: 5). He adds that as the 1990s came to a close, many scholars realized that political liberalization in the Arab world is easily reversible and has in fact often been followed by "de-liberalization" (ibid: 6).

Based on these, rather convincing yet contradictory arguments, and because things in the Middle East region in general and in the Arab countries in particular are easily changing, Schlumberger argues that scholars shouldn't focus on reasons why the Arab World is not democratic "as Salame, 1994 did"; they should rather ask how these regimes managed to stay in power (ibid: 6). Therefore he and other contributors to his book focus on what has actually happened and is still ongoing in the Arab World rather than what is suppose to happen. They focus on elements that they consider central to an understanding of the working mechanisms and functional logic of non-democracies as they prevail in the Arab World. The contributors explore how Arab regimes manage to remain in power despite transformation experiences in different parts of the world and

despite internal developments of different aspects while at the same time looking at how such changes shape political dynamics (ibid: 7).

The contributors also agree about the state of affairs insofar as they view current forms of political rule in Arab countries as unmistakably authoritarian. Thus, in examining ongoing political dynamics, they do not speak of processes of democratic transition (ibid: 7).

Therefore, Schlumberger and his colleagues try to answer two questions:

- What accounts for the durability of Nondemocratic rule in Arab countries?
- What are the dynamics that characterize political developments in Arab polities and how can they be grasped analytically?

Schlumberger rejects the theories of oppression and the Islamist exceptionalism[8], instead he introduces four clusters of topics that might be taken as possible independent variables, and each theme forms one part of the book. These clusters are (ibid: 10-13):

- State-society relations and political opposition.
- The features of the political regimes themselves.
- The economic context of Arab authoritarianism.

[8]The theory of oppression goes back to "Bellin, 2004"and argued that the high repressive capacities of Arab states account for their longevity whereas the theory of Islamist Exceptionalism claims that Islam as a religion, or some specific aspect of Islamic World or Arab culture, is incompatible with democracy and thus responsible for preventing the emergence of democracy in the Muslim world (Schlumberger 2007: 7)

- The international arena.

Ellen Lust-Okar (2007: 39) [9] argues (based on the assumptions of Gandhi and Przeworski 2001) that Arab regimes realized the fact that authoritarian regimes with parliamentary institutions tend to have a longer life span than authoritarian regimes that lack these institutions and they are also less likely to experience internal disturbances. Yet, her argument is not merely focused on the existence or absence of institutions that govern participation in authoritarian regimes. Rather she focuses on a more fundamental distinction that lies in the extent to which opposition groups are given equal opportunity to participate in the formal political sphere. She examines how incumbents' choices of institutions over participation in the formal political sphere affect both the dynamics of opposition to mobilize against the regime and the informal mechanisms that incumbents use to strengthen or weaken various opposition groups in order to maintain complete control of the political game (ibid: 39).

Therefore, in their quest to assert their rule, some Arab incumbents shifted their strategies in dealing with opposition parties in regard to structures of contestation[10]. They moved from a political system that

[9] This article was published in the book edited by Oliver Schlumberger, 2007entitled: "Arab Authoritarianism: Debating the Dynamics and Durability of Nondemocratic Regimes".

[10] Structures of contestation govern whether opponents can participate in the formal political sphere (Lust-Okar 2008: 54).

is characterized by either including or excluding opposition groups uniformly "undivided structure of contestation" to another political system that include some opposition groups while excluding others "divided structure of contestation" (ibid: 40).

Lust-Okar then elaborates on the gains incumbents achieved because of this tactical shift explaining that it caused the fragmentation of opposition forces and consequently it became easier for incumbents to maintain the upper hand. She explains that structures of contestation affect both opposition groups' incentives to mobilize and the costs of mobilization.

In a divided structure of contestation it is less costly for included opposition to mobilize alone than in conjunction with excluded elites. Legal opponents don't want to violate the games role by mobilizing with excluded oppositions, "for then they might risk being excluded from the system, giving up limited abilities to affect policies, and, perhaps more important, losing social and economic benefits that participation affords them" (ibid: 41). In contrast, illegal opposition groups prefer to mobilize at the same time as included opponents. Mobilizing with legal opposition facilitates the coordination of mobilization and makes it more difficult for incumbents to isolate illegal opponents and punish them severely (ibid: 41). Therefore, the incentives of mobilization and the structure of contestation are totally different between legal and illegal oppositions, and this creates a new status quo in which the joint mobility of oppositions is highly costly, at least for legal opposition, so it is unlikely to happen. The result of this new reality is less opposition mobility and more

fragmentation, needless to say that the biggest winner here is the ruling incumbents.

Based on the existing type of structure of contestation, incumbents choose between two major strategies:

- Fragmenting and moderating political opposition groups in order to create a more balanced set of forces with moderate but different political demands.
- Strengthening ideologically radical opposition groups to create a threat to moderate opposition groups.

Lust-Okar then differentiates between different tactics within divided structure of contestation, explaining that in Morocco King Hassan II attempted to weaken his political rivals, particularly the moderates, by ensuring that radical excluded opposition opposed to the regime remained on the fringes. The existence of radical opponents in a divided structure of contestation can make moderates less willing to mobilize because of the high price they might pay. "The irony for radical opposition elites is that strengthening their movements, which stridently oppose the regime, actually shores up the very regime they oppose" (ibid: 50). While in Jordan and Egypt, the ruling elite attempted to strengthen their political system by fostering moderate opponents with opposing policy preferences. Thus regime elites attempted to create a system in which opponents preferred the status quo to the potential success of their rivals. This situation provides the ruling incumbents of more room to maneuver and restrict the opposition ability to mobilize (ibid: 53).

Finally Lust-Okar agrees with Brumberg that the choices of incumbents are sometimes risky; when incumbents attempt to maintain political stability by strengthening radical opponents, they risk fostering radical anti-government forces that can challenge them independently. However, she argues that risk-taking is part of the game; "politics is not, after all, a deterministic process" (ibid: 58).

Holger Albrecht (2007: 59) [11], takes a different angel of analysis than Ellen Lust-Okar. He believes that the successes of the Arab incumbents are due to their ability to use opposition as an authoritarian regimes' pillar. He focuses his argument on the opposition forces in the Arab World, particularly in Egypt emphasizing that these forces have actually failed to leave any real impact on the traditional incumbents' control of the political game. These opposition forces are used as a cosmetic tool that contribute in the regimes' endurance.

Albrecht chooses Egypt as a case study to prove his point, for he considers Egypt a particularly fruitful case for such an inquiry because political opposition there has emerged from various social and political backgrounds and has persisted for roughly thirty years (ibid: 60). Furthermore, Egypt is considered as a prime example of a liberalized autocracy. Yet, Albrecht limits his inquiry to recent developments; before and during the election year of 2005.

[11] This article was published in the book edited by Oliver Schlumberger, 2007entitled: "Arab Authoritarianism: Debating the Dynamics and Durability of Nondemocratic Regimes".

This period witnessed an intensive protest against Mubarak's regime, including both legal opposition (political parties and social organizations) and illegal opposition, namely Muslim Brotherhood. These disturbances were accompanied by the call of several opposition groups and judges to boycott the scheduled elections and referenda posed a serious threat to the regime's quest for legitimacy. This rather irregular threat for the regime, in addition to the Muslim Brotherhood's excellent performance in the parliamentary elections "winning 88 out of 444 parliamentary seats", created a dangerous situation of political crisis. Increasingly vulnerable to change, Egyptian authoritarian regime had the choice to trigger one of two distinct outcomes: "fundamental change or regime adaptation and authoritarian re-equilibration. Recent developments in Egypt suggest that it falls more into the second category" (ibid: 63).

The regime offered uncharacteristic concessions. In late 2004 the authorities legalized two new parties in less than a month: the Free Social Constitutional Party (FSCP) and the Hizb al-Ghad (Tomorrow Party). Another incumbents' concession was in April 2005, when the regime announced it would amend the constitution for the first time since 1980. In the center of the changes is Article 76, which governs presidential elections. The amended article stated that in the 2005 election every member of a legal party's board could run for president. In the next presidential elections in 2011, candidates from various political parties that secure 5 percent in both the parliament and the Shura Council (the Upper House) would be eligible to contend (ibid: 65).

These concessions by the regime, as concluded by Albrecht were not signs of weakness; they were rather part of a strategy to maintain a security valve for times of a profound legitimacy crisis. This has become clearer when the regime varied its reaction against opposition protests from soft repression in the case of elite unpopular secular opposition, to massive repression in the case of more popular Muslim Brotherhood. In both cases, incumbents were able to restore the initiative. This reveals one of the regime's more common and successful containment strategies; the "scare-and-promise tactic", or the politics of the "carrot and the stick" (ibid: 71). Another not less important conclusion would be the kind of regime reactions related to the popularity of the opposition. Both Kifaya and the Muslim Brotherhood use the same tactic to protest, public street protest, however, it was the latter's ability to recruit massive protests that made the regime use more brutal immediate means to restore calm.

Marina Ottaway and Michele Dunne (2007: 2+3)[12] distinguish between modernization and democratization. They explain that contemporary political developments in the Arab World are merely modernization attempts introduced by relatively reform minded leaders for the sake of legitimizing regimes rather than starting a democratization process. Indeed, most regimes that talk of political

[12] The article is entitled Incumbent Regimes and the "King's Dilemma" in the Arab World: Promise and Threat of Managed Reform and was published in Carnegie Papers in December, 2007

reform are in reality avoiding it. Because reform has been introduced mostly from the top, the goal has not been democratization but rather modernization, both as a genuine attempt to improve the quality and efficiency of governance and as a cosmetic device to make the system looks better and thus be more acceptable domestically and internationally (ibid: 3).

Reform-minded leaders in Arab states initiate reforms, driven neither by pressure coming from below, nor by outside pressure. Rather such reforms are accurately timed and measured to meet incumbents' interests. This has allowed most regimes to introduce as much or as little reform as they want, preserving their power even as they try to give their countries at least a veneer of political openness (ibid: 2).Yet, those leaders face what is called "The King's Dilemma"; globalization and better public access to information are prompting calls for modernization. Yet history shows that even limited reforms introduced from the top often increase, rather than decrease, bottom-up demand for more radical change.

To contend with this threat, Arab regimes are attempting to control the process of change through managed reforms; the introduction of formal, institutional reforms without the transfer of real power "Egypt and Bahrain", substantive improvements in citizens' rights without institutional reform "Morocco"; or the limited participation of legitimate opposition groups "Yemen and Algeria". In Arab countries over the past decade, the division between hard liners and soft liners has been linked to the transition of power from one generation to another (ibid: 16) and not over the transition of

authoritarian regimes to a democratic one. It is even economic and social not political reforms that lie in the core of this division.

In other words, the two researchers criticize reforms under control from the top, for such reforms are introduced when and where it is suitable for the regime. The researchers agree with Albrecht in the assumption about the non-democratic nature of Arab opposition groups accusing them of being authoritarian in nature. They even explain that incumbents reformists are sometimes more liberal than opposition leaders. In this regard, the writers argue that women would not have obtained the vote in Kuwait for example, nor would personal status laws in Morocco have been revised, if rulers hadn't indeed impose those reforms on some Islamist opposition groups (ibid: 18).

Azmi Bishara (2008) examines the present situation of democracy in the Arab World and the potential democratic transformation in the Arab political arena. Unlike Salame (1994), Bishara (2008) thinks that it's almost impossible to establish a real democratic system in the Arab World without real devoted democrats that might lead the process. He also emphasizes that there is no “Islamic Exceptionalism” concerning democratic transformation because some Islamic countries like Turkey or Malaysia have managed to establish relatively democratic political systems. He rather believes that there is an “Arab Exceptionalism”. This specialty of the Arab case is caused by the complexities of the Arab World, particularly the lack of

political solutions to the Arab national case namely the right of self determination. Bishara emphases that the existing tribal political system, political culture, and rentier economy are not by themselves the real causes of the absence of democratic transformation, but they all, in addition to other issues like the Arab national case and outside pressure, could cause the "Arab Exceptionalism" and this is, in his argument, the essence of the "Arab Case" (ibid: 9).

Bishara explains how the economic characteristics of the rentier states play an important role in preventing any real democratic transition in the Arab World. Such states depend on income from external rent generated from selling a major product such as oil as a raw material or from income from strategic services trade. Rentier states are usually characterized by a big public sector and low percentage of tax collecting (ibid: 78). In such states, individuals of the elite classes become the states' clientele, depending totally on the states to earn their living and not the other way around. Their interests are therefore directly linked with the interests of particular states. The state for those individuals is a combination of a tribal authority and an investment company. In such a situation an active civil society is unlikely to develop and issues like liberalization and democratization are of minor importance.

Bishara thinks that reforms, particularly political ones, are vital and urgent and could be the light in the end of the authoritarian tunnel. However, he warns from combining reforms and foreign intervention in the Arab internal affairs (ibid: 10), pointing out that democracy can't be brought to the region on the board of American war ships.

Still, Bishara reminds his readers, that limited reforms-waves witnessed Arab history since the Ottoman period came as a reaction to external rather than domestic developments (ibid: 61). The danger here as seen by Bishara is the link between Democracy and the "imperialist" West. Such a link is what some non-democratic groups try to use as a pretext to reject any democratization attempt.

Finally, Bishara (2008) agrees with Daniel Brumberg (2002) in differentiating between Arab and European experiences in regard to their democratic experiences. He explains that European experiences developed gradually and subjectively and differ totally from the contemporary Arab situation. Therefore, imitating the European democratic transformation style will not be a successful experience, simply because the Arab present is not the European past.

2.3 LITERATURE REVIEW SUMMARY

From this brief literature review, both areas of agreements and of disagreements amongst scholars emerge as follow:

- Most scholars think that the early 1990s, namely the end of the Cold War era, is the period most significant to the political development in the Arab World.

- They also agree that the 1990s were a decade of optimism and great expectation of genuine change in the quest for more participatory regimes in the region. The years of the new millennium, in contrast, were years of empirical disappointments that made it necessary to revise the optimistic premises of the previous decade.
- Another area of agreement is the consensus amongst researchers about the non-democratic nature of Arab regimes. Taking into account differences between governing political systems in Arab countries, some scholars prefer to classify them under slightly different categories and subcategories, like Yassin who suggests three subcategories of Arab regimes or Brumberg who thinks Arab regimes are categorized in the area between complete and partial autocracies.
- Most scholars reject the culturalist approach which claims that Islam, as a religion and a culture, is incompatible with democracy and thus responsible for preventing the emergence of democracy in the Muslim world. Some prefer to talk about "Arab Exceptionalism", either explicitly "Bishara" or implicitly referring to it as "a set of interdependent institutional, economic, ideological, social, and geostrategic factors that has created an adaptable ecology of repression, control, and partial openness" (Brumberg).

- Talking about the regime-opposition relationship, researchers agree that different Arab incumbents have the upper hand, yet they think that this is a dangerous game by regimes that could result in unexpected outcomes (Albrecht 2007, Lust Okar 2007, Ottaway and Dunne 2007).

- There have been major methodological differences between the approach applied by Salame and others (1994) and Schlumberger and contributors (2007). Salame's contribution seeks to answer the major question of "Why the Middle East is not democratic?", whereas Schlumberger thinks this is rather a demagogical quest. He rather seeks to answer two questions:

    1. What accounts for the durability of Nondemocratic rule in Arab countries?

    2. What are the dynamics that characterize political developments in Arab polities and how can they be grasped analytically?

- Salame thinks that democracy is reachable without democrats; similar to his opinion is Martin Beck's argument about achieving democracy by default, though the main players, both incumbents and oppositions, are non democrats. Contrary to this is the argument by Azmi Bishara who thinks that it is

almost impossible to achieve democracy without real democrats.

- Talking about the relation between Arab regimes and opposition forces, Salame (1994) talks about the importance of pacts, either implicit or explicit, whereas Lust-Okar (2007) talks about implicit understandings, and Albrecht (2007), finally, thinks that opposition is actually used as a pillar of authoritarian regimes.

- Few talk about the importance of external pressure that caused real changes "Ottaway and Dunne (2007), Salame (1994) ", whilst the majority believe that the West prefers stability and the containment of Islamic militancy to uncertainty caused by democratic experiments "Fuertig (2007), Brumberg (2002), Bishara (2008)"

- The future of democracy in the Arab World is an area of dispute amongst contributors. Salame (1994) thinks no future path will be dominant, Beck (2007) thinks that democracy could be reachable by default. Other less optimistic authors, who outnumber their rivals, have a different vision of the future of the region. Brumberg mentions four reasons to justify his pessimistic future vision, whereas, Schlumberger (2007) talks about "Future Arab world's democracy deficit or governance gap". Fuertig (2007) argues that two optimistic and pessimistic academic camps are competing concerning the latest developments and the future of the Arab World.

- The vast majority of Middle Eastern researchers believe that the Arab World, in particular, and the Middle East, in general, has indeed been persistent to avoid democratic invasion that had hit other non-democratic regions in the world. Yet they agree that the Arab political arena has indeed been an active one since 1990s. Most agree that political reforms and liberalization attempts have characterized the decade. However, the debatable issue for scholars is how profound these reforms are? And whether they lean towards the promotion of democratization or rather towards the assertion of authoritarianism?

- Many researchers think that though Arab regimes use different tactics and strategies to assert their domination over their political rivals, they are extremely successful in doing so. However, this success has a major side effect; the rise of popular, potentially dangerous Islamist opponents.

The last two points are directly relevant to the theme of this study; therefore they need further discussion with examples supporting different stands and opinions. They will be discussed more thoroughly in chapters two and three respectively.

3. CHAPTER TWO: POLITICAL OPENINGS IN THE ARAB WORLD SINCE 1990 BETWEEN THEORETICAL OPTIMISM AND EMPIRICAL DISAPPOINTMENT

3.1 INTRODUCTION

Long dominated by authoritarian regimes, the Arab World has recently experienced and is still experiencing a variety of factors both internal and external that impose the challenge of change. Significant degrees of political developments have occurred already in countries like Egypt, Lebanon, Jordan, and Morocco, although the extent of such developments would indicate that eventual democratization is far from being evident. After years of much discussion and little action, several Arab regimes seem to be taking steps toward political reform. The question here is: How significant are these changes?

This chapter focuses on the major factors shaping political developments in the Arab context, as well as the role played by particular political groups. It aims at examining both the authenticity and the intentionality of those reform attempts, taking into account that they were mainly top-down decisions. Therefore, two different lines of arguments will be discussed and analyzed. The first represents an optimistic argument based on theoretical assumptions defending the validity of recent political openings in the Arab World since 1990, whereas the second represents a more critical empirical argument suspecting the seriousness of those political openings, emphasizing their facade nature.

3.2 OPTIMISTIC ARGUMENT

Defenders of this vision argue that recent changes in the Arab political stage are a progress that can't be ignored. Some even suggest that the wind of change have finally blown to an area long resistant to democratization. Egyptian sociologist Saad Eddin Ibrahim argues that the prospects for liberal democracy in the region have never been so bright (Ibrahim 1994: 27). The comparativist scholar Philippe Schmitter thinks of Arab countries as emergent democracies. Schmitter, in fact, answered his own question of whether it was “safe for transitologists and consolidologists to travel to the Middle East and North Africa” by asserting explicitly and positively that political dynamics in Arab countries should be interpreted according to the democratization paradigm that has recently gained credibility in East Europe and Latin America (Schmitter 2001: 94).

Based on theoretical analysis, particularly comparative politics, scholars like Schmitter (2001), O'Donnell and Schmitter (1986) and Karl and Schmitter (1991) explore the possibilities of Arab authoritarian regimes' transition and concluded with optimism. Their opinions are actually the bases of an academic school known as "Transformation Theory". They argue that political openings could be the outcome of severe internal disputes and that democratization could be reached by default. This rather optimistic argument is mainly based on theoretical assumptions which came out from their comparative studies. Yet other more recent scholars try to build on the theoretical assumptions and use empirical evidences of political

changes in the Arab World to support their argument. Ottaway and Dunne (2007) and Mattes (2007) think of political openings in the Arab World, particularly after 1990, as reform attempts, taking the shape of modernization measures, others like Eva Wegener (20007 and Kaye et al, (2008), view them as liberalization attempts. Of course the way these developments are seen affects the explanation of why they are introduced.

Philippe Schmitter (2001), O'Donnell and Schmitter (1986) among others explore the possibilities of authoritarian regimes' transition to democracy. They tend to use rather a comparative approach to link and integrate universal experiences, particularly in Western Europe, Latin America and Middle East. Their major assumption is best represented by Schmitter (2001: 76) arguing that democratic transition in one part of the world is analogous to events or processes that happened or is happening elsewhere and should be treated as part of the third wave of democratization that began in 1974.

Schmitter argues that there are no prerequisites to democratic transition though there are some factors that favor the democratic transition and become essential to the democratic consolidation such as "non-violence, greater equality of income, a dynamic and liberal business class, a civic culture and lots of democratically-minded individuals" (ibid: 74). From the other hand Schmitter thinks that

there are no cultural or religious impediments to the democratic transition "The particularity of any one region's cultural, historical or institutional matrix-if it is relevant to understanding the outcome of regime change-should emerge from systematic comparison, rather than be used as an excuse for not using it" (ibid: 76+77). Those who thought of the "Iberian[13]" political culture in both Southern Europe and Latin America as opposed to democracy were proven wrong by empirical evidences. The same is probably applicable for those who view the Islamic political culture as hostile to democracy (ibid: 85).

To Schmitter many autocracies in the Arab World, except those who have a monarchy or tribal government, do not differ substantially in kind from the authoritarian regimes that have governed Southern Europe and Latin America and have already transformed to democracies (ibid: 82+83). So, there is nothing to prevent Arab regimes to reach the same territories. Furthermore, most Arab governments have taken serious measures of marketization and privatization that one can expect of capitalist society. "Therefore, they should not priori have any difficulty in producing the sort of politics of self-interest and self-organization that has come to characterize modern democracy (ibid: 84).

[13] "The argument was that Iberians shared a religion and a culture marked by hierarchical views of authority and organic/corporatist views of society. The main reason that underpinned this argument was the lack of individualism, deemed to be an indispensable foundation for democracy" (O'Donnell 2007: 1)

Schmitter even suggests that few transitions have already begun in the Middle East and North Africa, (Egypt, Jordan, Kuwait, Morocco and Tunisia) following what he and Terry Karl (1991) called "transition by imposition" "in which the impetus for change comes within the fragmented ranks of ancien regime" (ibid: 86). Beck (2007: v) builds on O'Donnell's and Schmitter's concept of "transition by imposition" to introduce his version of "democracy by default". Beck argues that in their attempts to assert their rule, authoritarian regimes introduce cosmetic reforms and fragmented liberalization gestures to co-opt domestic opposition and silence international criticism. However, this could mountain rather than release the pressure on incumbents to introduce more reforms and to share power and would encourage more and more reluctant opposition and civil society forces to demand more authentic role in the policy making. Therefore, incumbents will find themselves obliged to go further than they planned and will consequently offer more serious political openings that would result in what they've tried to avoid; democratization.

Relevant to this, O'Donnell and Schmitter (1986: 50) refer to the resurrection of civil society as an important indicator for the democratic transition. They argue that liberalization precedes democratization. The initial response to liberalization attempts is usually a spontaneous mobilization of civil society institutions to press for further reforms which will lead or even force elite incumbents to go much further than they initially intended. Here they meet with Ottaway and Dunne (2007) who suggest the same idea

when they talked about the "King's Dilemma" arguing that history shows that even limited reforms introduced from the top often increase, rather than decrease, bottom-up demand for more radical change. Therefore, from a theoretical perspective, and according to this school there is no impediments (cultural, religious, political or economic) that would prevent democratic transformation in most, if not all, Arab countries.

Other more recent scholars like Heydeman (2007), Beck (2007), and Kaye et al (2008) are less enthusiastic about the overall outcome of recent political changes in the Arab World, but speak positively of them, assuming their long run validity to the region. However, they talk about liberalization and political reforms and not about democratization.

It is crucial in the context of the last two decades of Arab political openings to draw a clear distinction between liberalization and democratization. They differ both in the extent of the measures taken and in their intention. Democratization process involves liberalization developments but not necessary the other way around. Democratization implies profound changes which involve the highest hierarchy of the political system whereas liberalization could imply or even intend the opposite outcome. Daniel Brumberg (2005: iii) refers to this arguing that "the central distinction between political liberalization and democratization is particularly important. Political

liberalization is not a phase in an inevitable transition to democracy in the Arab world, but rather a hybrid system that blends liberalization and autocracy". Fuertig, (2007: 19) also elaborates in the same sequence saying that “if a process of democratization takes place in an authoritarian regime, it necessarily results in a surplus of political and/or individual freedom. In other words, democratization implies liberalization. Yet, the reverse relationship is not valid: What distinguishes liberalization from democratization in a given political system is that the former process is still controllable by the ruling authoritarian elite whereas the latter is not”.

It is worth mentioning that either democratization and liberalization attempts or both of them require an extent of reforms, particularly political, which might differ from one case to another. However and generally speaking, since the beginning of the twenty first century, particularly in the aftermath of September, 11, 2001 attacks, the word reform became regular in the Arab World both within the political arena and in the media. The echo of the word reached what seemed to be distant areas like the Gulf States. The recent political reforms in the Arab World became a trend which has inspired optimistic predictions that the region is finally responding to the global trend toward democracy. Ottaway and Dunne, (2007: 6) argue that reform minded leaders are serious in their attempts to introduce reforms; they are even willing to force them over reluctant opposition. Brumberg, (2005: 5) explains that top-down nature of this process is by no means unique to the Arab world. On the contrary, “regime-initiated liberalizations have been a common

feature of regime transitions in many parts of the globe". Eva Wegener (2007 :91) explains that in the last two decades many rulers in the Middle East and North Africa have tried to cope with decreasing resources and increasing contestation through political liberalization measures such as a more liberal media landscape, enhanced civil rights, constitutional reforms, and multiparty elections.

Before we proceed, what is the nature of the reforms we talk about? What is indeed meant by political reforms?

I shall use three approaches that define the term and describe its components.

First, the liberal democratic perspective, which defines political reform as "the process needed to establish secular, Western-style democratic republics or genuine constitutional Monarchies" (Hawthorne, 2004: 9). Such perspective is usually advocated by secular and human rights activists because it focuses on social liberties and restricts incumbents constitutionally.

Second, moderate Islamists perspective, which is indeed an important camp within the Islamist movement. Moderate Islamists echo some of the liberals' core reform demands, such as free elections, term limits, and empowered elected institutions. But they are adamant that political reform must accord with Islamic law and customs (ibid: 10).

Third, modernization approach perspective, advocated by many Arab regimes and their supporters in the government-linked intelligentsia

and the private sector. Generally speaking, the modernization agenda features good governance reforms such as improving the judiciary system, decreasing bureaucratic procedures, and fighting corruption (ibid: 10). This perspective implies more social and performance reforms, yet the political aspect to some extent is inevitable.

What is relevant to the study's context is that such reforms suggest serious strategic social, economic and most importantly political changes attempting wider and more serious partnership in the process of decision making, political participation and the foundation of a more effective less corrupted political institution.

Political reforms may function as prerequisites for political liberalization. Relevant to this context is the amendment to Article 76 of the Egyptian Constitution in 2005. The amended article stated that in the 2005 election every member of a legal party's board could run for president, and that was actually the case in the last presidential elections in 2005. Further, in the next presidential elections in 2011, candidates from political parties that secure 5 percent in both the parliament and the Shura Council (the Upper House) would be eligible (Albrecht, 2007: 65). This amendment which relates to election of the President of the Republic has played an important role in the emergence of a number of political movements. The birth of the "Kifaya" movement, for example, was inspired, if not a direct result, of this significant political opening (ibid: 65). "Kifaya" movement rose because of an outlet indicating democratic progress in Egypt. Such a movement raised an outcry against the continued state of political stagnation and lack of progress in Egypt. The

amendment was accompanied with other liberal gestures from the regime such as the legislation of new political parties in 2004; the Free Social Constitutional Party (FSCP) and the Hizb al-Ghad (Tomorrow Party) in addition to providing more space to freedom of speech. Such measures lead to a rapid increase in the number of civil society institutions. This active political sphere raises the expectations about the authenticity of the recent developments and their intentionality. Even a scholar like Daniel Brumberg, who usually suspects the intentions of political gestures offered by Arab incumbents, thinks that it would be a mistake to see liberalized autocracy as merely a regime survival tactic. Instead, he argues "it is an integrated system whose internal rules and logic not only serve the interests of rulers, but also those of many (but not all) mainstream opposition elites" (2005: 5).

In Morocco, significant improvements in free speech, women's rights, and economic reforms have taken place in the last two decades. This has inevitably caused a wider political participation including, what most Arab regimes excluded, "Islamists". Though the king's power remains unaffected, many scholars locate Morocco in the front row of progressive Arab states (Brumberg 2005: 3). Some actually refer to the Moroccan model as win-win situation. Eva Wegener, (2007: 77)[14] represents this opinion when she refers to the successful Moroccan case of the inclusion of the Movement of Unity and Reform, or rather

[14] Those comments came on an article entitled "Islamists inclusion and regime persistence: The Moroccan win-win situation" which was published in the book edited by Oliver Schlumberger, 2007entitled: "Arab Authoritarianism: Debating the Dynamics and Durability of Nondemocratic Regimes

the Party for Justice and Development (PJD)[15]. She explains that this example is a classic case of successful inclusion. The regime has not banned the party, nor has the party challenged the regime openly by denouncing its practices or resorting to electoral boycott. The Moroccan case, therefore, shows that the inclusion of the Islamist opposition can benefit both the regime and the Islamists, at least for a certain period of time. It also shows that Islamists value the benefits of inclusion very highly and that legality and less repression are strong incentives to moderate and integrate them (ibid: 89).

Morocco has also taken serious steps to improve its human rights record. In 2004 the Equity and Reconciliation Commission was formed. This commission's mandate is to produce a public report on state repression from 1956 to 1999 and to compensate the families of Moroccans who disappeared during these years (Hawthorne 2004: 13). Further, in January 2004 the parliament approved a major revision of the personal status code that significantly expanded women's rights (ibid: 12).

Reforms in the sectors of religion, justice, and security as well as reforms concerning political participation have also taken place in Morocco. Reform in the religious sector started in the spring of 2004 with the restructuring of the Ministry for Habous and Islamic Affairs (Fuertig 2007: 12). Those reforms aimed to overcome resistance

[15]The PJD emerged from the movement of Unity and Reform (MUR) which was linked to the Islamic Youth Association that was banned in 1976. Its followers regrouped in the Islamic Group founded in 1981 and adopted a reformist agenda. Though the palace rejected the group's plea for legalization of a political party in 1989 and 1992, it tolerated their integration into the party of MPCD which was renamed as PJD in 1998 (Wegener 2007: 92).

from religious institutions to the king's social liberties introduced in the personal status code. Whereas, in the sensitive security sector significant changes started for the first time in spring 2005. The King broke with a more than forty-years-old tradition and nominated a civilian to head the Moroccan intelligence services (ibid: 12). Such reforms targeted good governance and transparency. In this sense reforms are taking the shape of institutional modernization. Ottaway and Dunne, (2007: 2) explain that recent political changes in the Arab World are rather modernization attempts carried out by relatively reform minded leaders. They were perfectly timed and measured from the top, though their purpose was not democratization, still they serve both as genuine attempts to improve the quality and efficiency of governance and as a device to make the system look better and thus becomes more acceptable domestically and internationally.

Elsewhere in the Arab World more liberalization and political reforms were introduced. Following September, 2001, Bahrain and Qatar, have implemented reforms that seek to change the overall structure of the political system (Hawthorne 2007: 11). Algeria, Jordan, Morocco, and Yemen have revised their electoral laws and upgraded their electoral administration to make voter registration, balloting, vote counting, and the announcement of results more efficient and transparent (ibid: 11).

Reforms have indeed positively affected various actors of the political sphere. Civil society has become a major player; its institutions have greatly increased their number and influence. Steve Heydeman,

(2007: 37)[16] states that the last decade has seen extraordinary growth among civil society groups in the Middle East even as opportunities for political participation remain highly limited. Brumberg, (2005: v) explains this argument saying "This mix of control and openness has not only benefited ruling elites, but oppositions as well. It gives them room to let off steam, to criticize regimes, and occasionally to affect public policy".

However, this is rather a dangerous game, at least from regimes' perspective. Why then at all do authoritarian regimes sometimes introduce openings measures? Of course they are aware that such a policy potentially threatens their own privileges. Indeed, it's their accurate knowledge not ignorance of the political map within their states that leads them to adopt a moderate rational policy of introducing reforms and openings. Fuertig, (2007: 30) sums up why Arab incumbents tend to be pragmatic in this regard in two main reasons:

First, incumbent's limited efficiency both in the economic as well as the political spheres which consequently, expose authoritarian elites to severe crisis. According to Fuertig, authoritarian regimes are rarely capable of maintaining an efficient market economy because the free allocation of production factors implies that strong social

[16] Those comments came on an article entitled "Social Pacts and the persistence of Authoritarianism in the Middle East " which was published in the book edited by Oliver Schlumberger, 2007entitled: "Arab Authoritarianism: Debating the Dynamics and Durability of Nondemocratic Regimes

groups develop who are capable of challenging the authoritarian structures of the political system.

Secondly, in authoritarian systems, contrary to democracies, participation rights and legal ways of contributing to policy alterations are limited. Some political groups are included and thus privileged by regime, while others are not. The latter group consequently will have a genuine interest in replacing the ruling elite. Therefore, it is the regimes' interest in the first place to extend the political arena to include almost all to ensure their acceptance of the political game's rules. In this sense, Fuertig meets with Brumberg who thinks that, from incumbents' perspective, "dissonance is good, simply because rulers of liberalized autocracies strive to pit one group against another in ways that maximize the rulers' room for maneuver and restrict the oppositions' capacity to work together" (2002: 61). Still Arab regimes differ in their tactics of including or excluding some opposition groups, Moroccan incumbents, for instance tend to include Islamists in political life, whereas Egyptian incumbents prefer to exclude them (this issue will be a subject of a more in depth discussion in chapter three).

Nonetheless, if the intention of regimes' elites is not genuine democratization and the opposition would accept this status quo as long as they enjoy privileges offered by authoritarian regimes, one would assume that both the regimes and opposition forces are not democratic in nature (this topic will be subject for further discussion in chapter three). If that is so the spontaneous question would be:

How can a process of democratization or at least a genuine political opening are triggered in a system without democrats?

Both from the rationalist point of view and from empirical experiences in other parts of the world, liberalization policies are most likely events proceeding democratization processes but not necessarily causing them. As has been argued previously in this study, liberalization may unintentionally result in democratization and that democratization in authoritarian regimes does imply liberalization (Fuertig 2007: 19). Brumberg argues that liberalization in this sense has not only benefited ruling elites, but oppositions as well (2005: v). Fuertig suggests that "in According to the rationalist approach, liberalization policies may strengthen counter-elites up to a degree that they are in the position to challenge the privileged position of the ruling class. Alternatively, constructivism says that liberalization processes might also strengthen those who truly (start to) believe in democratic values, whether in civil society or the state bureaucracy" (2007: 29). Therefore this gradual process of political opening, though slow and limited, is in the right direction of both creating more democratic institutions and tools, as well as changing the mentality and political traditions. Those developments are leaning towards the creation of a more participatory type of political society in the Arab World. Assuming that this will actually happen, other intellectuals and reform minded elites from the regime as well as from the opposition may start to press ahead with this program because they tend to believe in the superiority of the underlying values of liberalism and democracy. In other words, what have

started as a guided opening by non-democratic players to serve their own interests might end gradually and by default as a genuine political development if not real democratic transition? Kaye et al, (2008: 39) explains that some analysts argue that even limited political reforms can still have significant and long-lasting effects. They refer to Schwedler in her study of Jordan and Yemen, where she finds that even though non-democratic regimes are still in place, reforms have led to the restructuring of public political space in a way that is promoting pluralist practices.

3.3 EMPIRICAL DISAPPOINTMENT

The other, least to say, less optimistic camp suspect the seriousness of the political changes derived by the governing elite which actually characterized the recent developments in the Arab political arena. Whether considering them as political reforms, cosmetic attempts to legalize regimes, or survival strategies, such changes are seen as anything but actual democratizing change. This debate was defended by empirical evidences, particularly in the late years of 1990s and early years of the twenty-first century, rather than theoretical assumptions. The lack of any significant changes in the Arab World, as well as the ranking of the Freedom House (see annex two of the 2008 Freedom House ranking of world countries) is among the indicators to prove the fake nature of the recent political openings in the Arab World. More specific arguments shall be introduced respectively to support the overall assumption of this school of

thinking; the recent openings in the Arab World are nothing but façade measures that aim to assert authoritarian rule rather than transforming it.

To start with, defenders of this school argue that the majority of the political openings were timed and introduced by none but the authoritarian incumbents themselves who have long repressed their own people. They are not introducing reforms because of domestic pressure or as a sign of good intention but rather because they are eager to demonstrate to the international community that their regimes are not as retrograde as it is often portrayed to be (Hawthorne, 2004: 16). The incumbents' control of the timing and nature of the political openings might be attributed, at least partially, to what distinguishes the Arab political society of the failure or unwillingness of civil society groups and political parties to take advantage of opportunities to press for genuine democratization as opposed to regime managed liberalization.

Hawthorne (2007: 14) explains that Arab liberals, who are issuing the most pointed and extensive demands for democratic reform, are still weak and isolated. They are even sometimes considered as less patriotic by the masses in their countries because of their strong link with Western institutions and because of the Western style of reforms they advocate. This is similar to Azmi Bishara's (2007: 10) position when he warns of the link between reforms and the West

saying that such a link will deprive reformists of any popular support. This in addition to what Hawthorne (2007: 15) describes as insufficient external pressure on incumbents to adopt a profound reform agenda, particularly after the incidents of September, 11, 2001, have indeed served incumbents interests. This leaves Arab authoritarian regimes in total control of the reform agenda, at least for now. As a result, they introduce measures that they believe will benefit their image in the outside world and may buy them time domestically. In the same vein, Ottaway and Dunne (2007: 6), criticized under control reforms from the top, for such reforms are introduced when and where it is suitable for the regime. They believe that such openings are indeed modernization attempts aiming to assert authoritarianisms not transforming them.

3.3.2.1 IMPACTS NOT FELT IN THE FORESEEABLE FUTURE

The time frame is a very useful indicator in attempting to judge whether developments are profound or cosmetics. It is true that democratization is a long process, and that democratic consolidation takes decades at best. But in judging the significance of specific steps taken by governments or opposition groups to facilitate democratization, it is necessary to use a shorter time frame (Ottaway and Choucair-Vizoso, 2008: 9-10). Therefore, in examining steps taken by Arab incumbents, if they are truly serious, we can expect a short term impact. Ottaway argues that reforms which are not likely to have impact within five years shouldn't be considered significant

(ibid: 10). Significance is a relative concept which could be interpreted differently, yet one would assume that a significant change should have serious consequences on the distribution of power if not in a political paradigm shift. Consequently, the vast majority of steps taken in the Arab political stage don't reflect such significance. Even more serious steps like the amendment of Article 76 of the Egyptian Constitution in 2005 concerning presidential elections in 2011 is not considered as a significant change taken it's time frame "six years", that if we assume no regression from the regime's side will take place until 2011. In fact, as we shall see in chapter three, the Egyptian regime has taken measures to undermine the amendment and minimize the chances of its rivals, particularly the Islamists, to benefit from it.

3.3.2.2 TEMPORARY MEASURES

This takes us to the second important point concerning time. Arab reforms proved to be anything but persistent. Empirical evidences from the recent Arab history proved that positive political developments are usually followed by negative steps by regimes. Fuertig, (2007: 12) refers to this saying "there were times of political liberalization, but they, were most of the time, followed by longer times of de-liberalization and assertion of authoritarianism". Brumberg (2005:4) agrees with this diagnose, saying "Like all semi-authoritarian political systems, those in the Middle East rely on a complex system of opening and closing, loosening and tightening, whose vague contours are designed to keep opposition forces off

balance". In the same vein, Schlumberger (2007: 6) states that as the 1990s came to a close, many scholars realized that political liberalization in the Arab world is easily reversible and has in fact often been followed by de-liberalization.

Fuertig, 2007 adds a different angel to demonstrate the façade nature of political reforms in the Arab World using Egypt as a model to prove his point. He examines political developments in Egypt since 2001, especially elections and constitutional amendments. He uses Roberts Dahl's seven criteria (elected representatives, free elections, the universal right to vote and stand for election, plus the freedom of opinion, information, and association) as an instrument to examine both the degree of seriousness of the incumbents' measures and their intention. The work of the party tribunal, the way of nominating candidates, the limits of independent monitoring, and the privileges of the ruling party were examined, and culminated in an analysis of the 2005 Presidential and Parliamentary elections. Fuertig (2007: xi) argues that the Egyptian regime resorts to "populism and sloganism and sets the limits of political reform there where its survival is at stake". He concludes that "the transformation process in Egypt is not a preliminary stage of the real transition to democracy, but an astonishingly successful attempt to avoid it" (ibid: xi).

Furthermore, it is the essence and the effect of certain procedures that draw the line between real and rhetoric changes. Pluralism and

elections are extremely important. Yet, many regimes have mastered tactics and regulations to turn elections into comics. Thus, although elections are regular in many Arab countries, "they are still characterized by the concentration of power in the hands of an executive-a king, a ruling family, a religious establishment, a strong president" (Ottaway and Choucair-Vizoso, 2008: 11). In the same sequence, Fuller, (2004: 5) examines the political sphere in the Arab World. He believes that the elements of the democratic game are found in many Arab countries; elections, pluralism, parliaments are regular. Contestation, to a certain level and extent, is there. He adds that some Arab states are moving in encouraging directions, including Jordan, Kuwait, Morocco, and Yemen. The problem for him, however, is that in no Arab country except Lebanon are heads of state and government (presidents, prime ministers) chosen by honest popular elections[17]. "Nearly all Arab states now possess pro forma parliaments, but few of them wield any significant power or are able to overturn decisions by an unelected executive. Genuine political parties in the Arab world are generally either absent from the political scene or else severely constrained by the state. In nearly all Arab countries, "ruling parties" dominate the scene and only permit token representation of selected other parties as long as they do not seriously challenge the existing order" (ibid: 5).

[17]The Lebanese exception is now contested. The selection rather than the election of the current Lebanese president "Michael Suleiman" was a subject of power balance and political pacts among political and sectarian rivals rather than a public well

Quite a number of researchers view Arab political developments as regimes' survival strategies. Supporters of this view point believe that Arab authoritarian regimes are indeed very successful when it comes not only to endurance, but also to manipulate political rivals. Schlumberger's (2007) contribution is very useful in this regard. The contributors of his book discuss the political sphere in the Arab World thoroughly. They focus on the regimes' successful dynamics and strategies to co-opt and manipulate political rivals. Schlumberger sums up the main findings of the book saying that they lead strongly to the conclusion that "for the foreseeable future democratization remains off the agenda in any Arab country. Domestic political protests, international pressure for more liberal governance, and reform-oriented regimes are notwithstanding" (ibid: 14). He elaborates that the cases studied in this book, including Egypt and Morocco, indicate that while the degree of political dynamism remains high, it is moving in the direction of an adaptation to changed circumstances and maybe even toward consolidation of authoritarian rule rather than in the direction of systemic genuine transition, not to mention democratization (ibid: 14).

Kaye et al, (2008: xviii) are even more extreme. They criticize the nature of reforms in the Arab World, arguing that they suffer serious shortages "exclusionary political systems, intolerance, and sectarian, tribal, and ethnic divisions". They even go further in suspecting the relevance of political reforms in the Arab World to the context democratization. They argue that the limited and often controlled

nature of political openings has led some analysts to question whether generic democracy theories outlining a staged and largely linear transition from authoritarianism to democracy apply to regions such as the Middle East. Democratization, or even serious Liberalization measures are not only represented by elections, they include other political and social openings of the political system to allow more popular participation, civil liberties, and human rights that are protected by law (ibid: 5). Therefore, recent political openings in the Arab World are none but a common regime survival strategy aiming to offset economic or other societal pressures (ibid: 5).

Still other scholars argue that political developments within the Arab arena are not merely regimes' survival strategies or cosmetics attempts at reform. They are rather accurately calculated measures aiming to abort any future prospect of profound democratic shift. Brumberg's concept of "liberalized autocracy" represents this perspective. For him many Arab states, including my two case studies: Egypt and Morocco fit under this category. "Liberalized autocracy is a system of rule that allows for a measure of political openness and competition in the electoral, party, and press arenas, while ultimately ensuring that power rests in the hands of ruling regimes" (Brumberg, 2005: v). In Brumberg's view, liberalized autocracy is not just "the trademark mixture of guided pluralism, controlled elections, and selective repression but rather a type of

political system whose institutions, rules, and logic defy any linear model of democratization" (2002: 56). Regimes' are able to control the political game through control of elections, political parties, and civil society institutions. This dominance creates a safety valve that gives opposition forces means to release steam while enhancing the capacities of regimes to divide the opposition, and to gather useful information on the nature and scope of their opponents. To prove his point, Brumberg refers to the late Egyptian president Anwar al-Sadat who said "democracy is a safety valve so I know what my enemies are doing" (2005: 4).

The very success of liberalized autocracy can make a transition to democracy difficult rather than open the door to a transition. “State managed liberalization in the Arab world tends to close this door, or at least block its way” (ibid: 9). That is because they can do so and there is no reason for them to act otherwise. The status quo is satisfactory both to incumbents and oppositions. Incumbents enjoy stability and control of the political game. “Opposition elites also enjoy considerable privileges. Although these elites often complain about the limits placed by the state on democratic expression, the din of their criticism often masks a rough consensus regarding the preferability of liberalized autocracy over the black hole of full or rapid democratization” (ibid: 5).

The accumulative result is democratic deficit of the Arab World. "Year after year, the region has come up short, not only by comparison to the industrialized West but, more importantly, by comparison to other Third World states that have significant Muslims pluralities (such as India) or majorities, such as Indonesia" (ibid: 3). Brumberg refers to Freedom House ranking (2003) of Arab countries in term of political system typology to prove their autocratic nature. All Arab regimes were considered either as full or partial autocracies (see Freedom House of Arab Countries 2003 in annex one)

2008 Freedom House ranking of 167 countries of the world uses five category indices, are then averaged to find the democracy index for a given country. Then, the democracy index, rounded to one decimal, decides the classification of the country:

1. Full democracies—scores of 8-10.
2. Flawed democracies—scores of 6 to 7.9.
3. Hybrid regimes—scores of 4 to 5.9.
4. Authoritarian regimes—scores below

Most Arab countries have scored less than 4 points, and are consequently considered as authoritarian regimes[18] (see the 2008 Freedom House ranking of world countries in annex two). Therefore, the vast majority of Arab countries are among 51 world authoritarian countries. And most Arab citizens, living in Arab countries, are

[18] Palestinian Authority, Lebanon and Iraq respectively scored above 4 points, and are consequently considered as hybrid regimes

among 34.9% of world population living under authoritarian rule (see democracy index by regime type in annex three).

Regardless of the controversial methodology and criteria used by Freedom House to rank regimes and their relevance of the Arab political nature and tradition, and regardless of the arguments suspecting the neutrality of this institution, rankings can be, at least, seen as indicators to the current authoritarian nature of Arab regimes.

3.4 CONCLUSION

To conclude, this chapter shows that the last two decades actually witnessed an active political arena in most of the Arab countries, of course with quantitive and qualitive differences between one country and another. This has raised positive expectations that Arab countries are finally witnessing a genuine political change. Optimism of a more liberal participatory political society characterized the 1990s. However, this enthusiasm began to fade, for empirical evidences started to prove otherwise. The first decade of the twenty first century showed that Arab authoritarian regimes have managed to adapt to domestic and external pressure. And the façade nature of top-down measures became more vivid and authoritarianism became even more asserted. I think the latter argument is more evident and has proven to be more accurate. It is built on and proved by empirical evidences rather than theoretical assumptions. No Arab regime has actually transformed to a democratic one. It became increasingly

clear that the recent political openings in the Arab World are not of genuine nature if we are taking about democratization as a final objective. Arab states are increasingly falling further behind others in the world in terms of living standards, the level of rights, and the level of democracy. Arab incumbents have successfully managed to use rhetoric and temporary political openings to consolidate their authoritarian regimes. What stands for these successes of incumbents to control the rules of the game and manipulate their political rivals is the subject of chapter three.

4. CHAPTER THREE: TWO CASE STUDIES

4.1 INTRODUCTION

Despite the active political arena that characterized the Arab World since the early 1990s, the outcome was assertion of authoritarian regimes rather than destabilizing them. Democratization was replaced by fragmented measures of reforms, mostly cosmetics. Regimes managed to neutralize protagonists of genuine change by using a multilayered response that included repression, rhetoric reforms, liberalization gestures, cooptation, and fragmentation of opposition. This combination of strategies used by incumbents proved to be of great success. It has worked efficiently to assert authoritarianism and strengthen regimes' resilience to genuine democratization attempts. This chapter shall discuss and analyze *how* rather than *why* Arab regimes' succeed to survive and assert their rule. Incumbents'-oppositions' interactive relationship shall be the core topic, particularly Arab regimes' strategies and tactics to manipulate political rivals that stand for their survival. To do this two case studies shall be introduced, analyzed, compared and contrasted; Egypt and Morocco. Regimes-opposition relationship in both countries shall be the topic of emphasis.

4.2 DEFINITION OF KEY WORDS

In this context, I shall use Albrecht's (2005) definition of both regime and opposition and Al-Sayyid (1995) definition of civil society. For Albrecht (2005: 379) Regime refers to incumbents of government

positions with their different representative bodies. Whereas opposition can be defined as "a political institution with decisive organizational capacities whose interactions with regime are of competitive nature, yet based on a minimum degree of mutual acceptance" (ibid: 379). This broad definition of opposition still excludes resistant movements that don't recognize the regime and are willing to use whatever means, including violence, to challenge it. Regime-resistance movements' relationship will receive a minor attention in this study. Another important factor in this context is the civil society and its representatives. Al-Sayyid (1995: 271) defines civil society as follows: "in addition to presence of associations catering to the varied interests of citizens in their social activities, civil society also entails state respect for reasonable measure of societal autonomy, and the acceptance of intellectual and political dissension as a legitimate right- so long as it is bound by peaceful methods of individual and collective action".

4.3 WHY EGYPT AND MOROCCO?

Egypt and Morocco are particularly interesting cases to be studied. For one hand, both cases represent big influential counties in the Arab World that possess diverse political arenas. Egypt is the "core" of the Arab World while Morocco best represents the Arab Maghreb

(Fuertig 2007: X). Both countries have a wide variety of political parties both secular and Islamists and have a long history of regime-opposition interaction. Such diversity serves as an incubator of dissent both within political elite and political opposition. Albrecht (2005: 380) argues that political elite and opposition in some Arab countries, particularly Egypt, are heterogeneous rather than homogeneous. Brumberg (2005: 2) considers both Egypt and Morocco as examples of "liberalized autocracies" that provide interesting models of regime-opposition relationship, he even consider Morocco as “one of the few countries in the Arab World where the risks of a full blown democratization strategy might be worth taking" (ibid: 2). Still, regimes in both countries are known of their authoritarian nature[19] . Over the years incumbents in both countries proved ready to use a variety of means from co-optation to repression whenever necessary. On the other hand, Egypt and Morocco provide contrasting models of both their political system and of incumbents-opposition, particularly Islamists, relationship. Egypt is a republic with a presidential multi-party system whereas Morocco is a monarchy with a multi-party system. Moroccan kings can wear both a political and a religious hat. The Moroccan king is the "commanders of faithful" who can challenge Islamists of the status of religious representation. This significant regime difference affects regime-opposition, particularly Islamists relationship. Moroccan regime's milestone in regard with its relation with Islamists is based

[19] See Freedom House 2008 ranking of both countries in annex two. Egypt and Morocco occupy 119 and 120 positions and scored 3.98 and 3.88 respectively, and thus both categorized as authoritarian regimes.

on inclusion whereas Egyptian regime's is based on exclusion, at least officially. To sum up, diverse political arenas as well as regimes' similarities and contrasts stand for the choice of Egypt and Morocco to serve as the study's cases.

4.4 EGYPT

[redacted]

Compared with other Arab countries, Egypt has a long history of political participation, yet marked with episodes of expansion or regression. Since the 80s of the nineteenth century, rulers in Egypt had established a number of consultative assemblies and judiciary whose members were appointed or elected indirectly (Ottaway and Choucair-Vizoso 2008: 18). In recent times, political opposition there has emerged from various social and political backgrounds and has persisted for roughly thirty years (Albrecht 2007: 60). According to the Egyptian constitution, Egypt has a multi-party system; however, in practice the National Democratic Party “NDP” is the long-time ruling party and is dominant in the Egyptian political arena. Most opposition parties are allowed to participate in the political life, but actually have no real chance of gaining power. Albrecht (2005: 383) argues that Egyptian system is "non-competitive multi-party system" that evolved from the political openings of late Egyptian president Anwar Al Sadat during the 1970s and the breakup of the former one party system; Arab Socialist Union "ASU". By the end of 2008, there were 24 licensed political parties in Egypt, three more awaiting

licensed and another two illegal political movements; Society of the Muslim Brotherhood and Communist Party of Egypt. Finally, Kefaya Movement has almost disappeared despite the attention that accompanied its evolvement and development. (For the full list of Egyptian political parties see annex four).

Albrecht (2005:380-388) distinguishes four different appearances of contention to describe political controversies in Egypt:

- *Political dissent* refers to an overarching category that include two subcategories:
    1. Factions of the Government, namely state institutions like the ministries, the bureaucracy, the military, and the dominant National Democratic Party "NDP"[20].
    2. Integrated Dissent refers to "institutions that have been incorporated as pillars of the state" (ibid: 381). Examples of integrated dissent are Al-Azhar and the Judiciary.

- *Tolerated Opposition* represented by political groups outside the government; both political parties and NGO's that are supposed to be the political rival of the government but have instead "adapted comfortably to clientelist authoritarian structures" (ibid: 384).
- *Anti-systemic Opposition* comprises of groups that play by the rules of the political system and yet questions its core principles. They seek to change the regime but don't resort to

[20] In 1978, the National Democratic Party was created and has been the dominant governing party since then (Albrecht 2005: 383).

violent means. Two groups fall into this category; popular Islamists and Individual elite "troublemakers" (ibid: 385).

- *Militant Domestic Resistance* refers to underground radical Islamists groups that tried to change Egyptian regime through violent means. Mubarak's regime; however, waged a fierce war on these militant groups during the 1990s and managed to destroy their military capacities (ibid: 388). Jama'a Islamia and Jihad best represent these groups.

The previous categories of political controversies in Egypt are useful particularly in avoiding the overgeneralization of dividing the political arena merely between regime and opposition. It shows that dissent applies within the two major categories and that both the regime and the opposition are rather heterogeneous than homogeneous. For one hand, political dissonance applies to the relationship between factions of the government and integrated dissent. Ideological struggle between secularism, represented by liberal figures within the ruling elite, and theocracy, represented by Al-Azhar the oldest institution of Islamic teaching, jurisdiction, and censorship (ibid: 381). Removal of books from the shelves and articles from newspapers and magazines, violent attacks on liberal intellectuals such as Faraj Fuda, Najeeb Mahfuz, and Nasr Hamid Abu Zaid are all believed to be initiated from or approved by Al-Azhar (ibid: 382). The censorship and control over mosques are among the

duties of Al-Azhar which directly overlap with the formal responsibilities of the Ministries of Information and Religious Affairs "Awqaf". Polarization is not only between factions of the government and integrated dissent, but also within them. Ministries, NDP, the bureaucracy, and the military compete among themselves over power and financial resources (ibid: 380).

Is this polarization in the incumbents' camp a sign of weakness? Are things slipping out of incumbents' hands? The answer is negative; diversity or even dissonance within the ruling camp can still strengthen the mighty decision makers. Statistics don't lie; since 1976 until 2005 "the multipartyism" during Sadat's, 1970-1981, and Mubarak's, 1981-now, eight parliamentary elections have taken place during which the NDP managed to maintain a supermajority "a two-thirds majority" (Brownlee 2007: 4). This phenomenal success is due to a number of features characterizing the political map in Egypt such as the electoral system that exclude the popular Islamists, the mighty state with its large bureaucracy and a powerful security apparatus, and the fragmented opposition representatives. Still the organization and nature of the NDP play a decisive role in its own success. NDP is a non-ideological structure, willing to accommodate any political or social force. It doesn't adopt particular ideological ideas but instead focuses on maintaining political control. Therefore, there is room for various ideological representatives to compete within the party. Even candidates elected as independents after competing successfully against NDP candidates can still end up joining the party seeking more influential role (Kodmani 2005: 4)

Moreover, in 2006, President Mubarak had begun his elected fifth six-year term in office, whereas the second place finisher "Ayman Noor" was serving a five-year prison sentence (Brownlee 2007: 2). Mubarak managed to take advantage of the polarization within his allies to create groups of losers and winners, majorities and minorities all of which compete to get closer to the decision making top elite. This situation has indeed asserted the dominant position of Mubarak. Albrecht (2007: 77) best describes this saying "Although the Egyptian political elite is far from homogeneous, its specific patrimonial organization allows the ruler to instrumentalize the elite's fragmentation for his own purposes, pitting individual factions against each other and thereby securing an equilibrium of power". To sum up, the incumbents' camp is a diverse heterogeneous yet a dominant and a well structured one, at least at the top of the hierarchy.

From the other hand, dissonance is even more visible in the opposition camp. There are deep ideological and intellectual differences between Islamist and secularist opposition forces over a host of social and political issues, which have generated a great deal of mistrust. The contention between Islamist and secular trends in Egypt is rooted, at least according to secularists' claims, in doubts about the commitment of the former, particularly the Muslim Brotherhood, to democratic values and principles. The Brotherhood's credibility continues to suffer due to claims that it offers no real national project that can respond to the needs and aspirations of Egyptians. Secularists assert that the MB serves an agenda that goes

beyond national aspirations by seeking to establish an Islamic state that rules society by the sensibilities of Islamic jurists rather than by the rule of law. This study; however, suggests that the contention between secular and Islamists opposition and within them is mainly due to electoral calculations rather than ideological disputes as this chapter shall try to prove.

The Islamist camp, although easily identifiable to observers of Egypt's domestic scene, contains a great deal of diversity. The successes and expansion of the Islamist movements are the same reasons causing their diversication, if not fragmentation (Fuller 2004:11). As shown by Albrecht (2005), religious main institutions and groups fit within three different categories. Al-Azhar is an institution of integrated dissent, Muslim Brotherhood is considered as Anti-systemic opposition, and Islamists militant groups as Jihad and Jama'a Islamiya represent the militant domestic resistant groups. The regime deal quiet differently with each category in order to fragment and control them. Regime's tactics here spread along the area of co-option and harsh repression and what comes in between. Al-Azhar enjoys an influential status as a religious legitimacy enhanced by the regime itself in a quest to guarantee Al-Azhar's support to regime's campaigns against other Islamist groups and to lend support to legislations aiming to contain other more poplar Islamists namely the MB (Albrecht 2005: 382). Despite being officially banned, the MB maintains its position as a moderate group and has been extremely careful not to provoke the regime. The MB avoids any direct contact or connection with more radical militant

Islamists groups to avoid being exposed to harsh repression (ibid: 386). Finally, the militant Islamists groups are left alone in an unequal military confrontation with the regime. The regime has not only won the battle, but managed to even further divide the militant groups. In 1997 Jama'a Islamiya, launched a ceasefire initiative and denounce violence while Jihad became more internally divided about whether to resume violence or join the Jama'a's initiative (ibid: 388).

Of equal importance, secular remains a highly contested term. What is often described as the secularist camp consists of diverse groups of nationalist, socialist and liberal trends that differ on numerous issues, despite a shared adversarial relationship. Ottaway and Hamzawy (2007: 7+8) argue that secular opposition parties in Egypt are divided across the ideological spectrum into liberal and leftist groups and organizations. Despite their big numbers, over 20 secular parties competed in 2005 parliamentary election, secular parties proved to be weak insignificant political entities. Secular parties have not made a large investment in building up their organizations, to reach out ordinary voters. Therefore, in 2005 parliamentary elections, only four out of twenty secular parties competing managed to guarantee representation in the parliament. Together, they won 5 percent of the seats while the candidates of the Muslim Brotherhood managed to claim almost 20 percent of the seats, emerging as the strongest opposition bloc even though the organization is officially banned and hundreds of its members are in jail (ibid: 8). The electoral failure of secular parties in Egypt indicates their weak structure and unpopularity. Ottaway and Hamzawy (2007: 9) add to

this argument saying that the "decaying structures and aging leadership also undermine secular parties". While Islamists have strategies for reaching out to the masses through social services, the mosques, and good, old fashioned political organized work (ibid: 11), the secular parties remain to be elite-based with power struggles and personal disputes between and within them (Albrecht 2005: 384). Such a situation has created small fragmented secular parties that lack popular support, internal democratic structures, and lack financial support unable to form alliances or challenge the authoritarian regime. Contrary to this, they either become politically marginalized or co-opted by the same regime they are supposed to challenge. Furthermore, to enjoy minor authority, secular parties have to compete between themselves and support the regime's repressive measures against the Islamists. In other words, they become an instrument in the hands of the regime that provides an umbrella to cover authoritarian incumbents both domestically and internationally. The ruling incumbents have successfully seized the weakness of their political opponents and built their strategies accordingly. In this sense, Brumberg (2002:61) summarizes this fact in his own words arguing that, from incumbents' perspective, "dissonance is good, simply because rulers of liberalized autocracies strive to pit one group against another in ways that maximize the rulers' room for maneuver and restrict the oppositions' capacity to work together".

Taking into consideration that dissonance among and within different political controversies in Egypt has actually helped the top elite incumbents to assert their control over political life, the spontaneous question would be: what stands for political dissonance in Egypt, particularly, among opposition parties?

Preserving privileges given to certain political groups and avoiding repression for others is part of the answer. According to Lust-Okar (2007 40) Egyptian regime under Mubarak uses "a divided structure of contestation" granting moderate secular opponents greater political space, drawing them closer to the regime. Islamist parties remained banned. Although they were sometimes permitted to participate in the Egyptian political life, they were formally excluded. Such an atmosphere has indeed foster further fragmentation among opposition groups. From one hand, it is less costly for included opposition to mobilize alone than in conjunction with excluded elites. In the other hand, it is less costly for excluded opposition to mobilize in conjunction with legal opponents than challenging the regime independently (ibid 40+41). Therefore, opposition groups have different reasons to mobilize or not mobilize together. Each individual and group faces an extraordinarily difficult choice. Given the Egyptian political map the main struggle is between the regime and the Islamists, seculars need to consider taking sides. If they fear an Islamist takeover would lead to an even less free society, they might side with the government against the Islamists. The fact that the regime would reward them for doing so will further divide them from the Islamists and will foster their relatively westernized, secular

worldview compared with the average Egyptians. As a result, opposition forces rarely mange to join forces to challenge the regime. Rather secular parties, for example, do not really compete for power with the ruling party. They compete among themselves, and with Islamists, particularly Muslim Brothers over the leftovers to achieve a small margin of representation in parliament and local councils (Ottaway and Hamzawy 2007: 7). The growing popularity and electoral successes of the Islamists, most notably in 2005 parliamentary elections, along with failure of secular parties to achieve any electoral successes have shifted the latter's strategy towards competing with the former, rather than with the regime, over the leftovers. Secular parties become more fragmented and start even to challenge one another. The secular parties' performance in Egypt's presidential elections in 2005 was a clear evidence of their weakness. Al-Tajamu' and the Arab Nasserite Party boycotted the elections, but al-Wafd and al-Ghad fielded candidates. Nu'man Juma'a (al-Wafd) and Ayman Nour (al-Ghad) together managed to get less than 15 percent of the electorate to vote for them. President Mubarak, in power since 1981, had no trouble getting reelected and had begun his successive fifth six-year term in office (ibid: 8). The fragmentation of opposition groups and their fierce competition over electoral leftovers support the claim of this study that it is electoral calculations rather than ideological disputes that hinder the opposition groups to join forces against authoritarian regime.

Meanwhile, the regime maintain the same strategy of providing managed political openings that provide room for the regime to implement its strategy of keeping a balanced relationship with all opposition groups. In this sense, no group has ever been totally marginalized, even the excluded Muslim Brotherhood. By playing by the incumbents' rules, the MB can participate in the parliamentary and municipal elections through independents and can avoid harsh repression.

Moreover, managed liberalization and reform gestures can also help to enhance the regime's legitimacy and to protect it from public criticism. Key elements of political liberalization, namely the protection of human rights and the rule of law, are particularly important in boosting the legitimacy of the regime as public opinion polls in Egypt indicates (Kaye et al 2008: 50+51). A dominant strong-structured ruling party (NDP), fragmented weak secular party, and under pressure excluded Islamists is an ideal formula that can maintain the delicate balance between having a multiparty system that provides internal legitimacy and silence external criticism, from one hand and maintaining the regime's political control on the other. In the same vein, Brownlee (2007: 206) argues that the presence and nature of the NDP in Egypt has made it unnecessary for Egyptian elite to search for political pacts or to protest against the regime because they remained confident that their long term influence rests within the party. He adds that parties can be a double-edged instrument that could, in the Egyptian case, restrain factionalism, prevent the chaos that would result from the partyless system, maintain autocratic

coalitions, and diffuse the pressure which could prompt new coalitions able to lead a genuine democratic process (ibid: 219). The fact that not all opposition parties can join coalition with incumbents, leave them as the alternative anti-regime forces. Still, civil society sphere can provide them space. Brownlee (2007: 218) argues that civil society is not always the "midwife for democratic change". Instead of focusing their efforts on issues like civic education and institutionalization, civil society activists "might consider ways of enlisting elites to publicly commit to leveling the field between regimists and opposition figures". In other words, incumbents' dominance of the political arena through strong ruling party that employs successful tactics to keep the opposition forces weak and divided have not only managed to provide the regime with a safety valve, but have also turn political parties to an instrument to facilitate the consolidation of a non-democratic regime (ibid: 218).

Conferences, rhetoric, promises, fixed elections, are all efforts often successful in fooling the Western media, human rights institutions, and governments, or at least they give them an excuse not to take action or criticize the Egyptian regime openly. This fact is more evident when analyzing the Western policy makers' reaction towards the lack of democracy in the Arab World in general, particularly in countries like Egypt and Morocco. The establishment of any democracy is necessarily preceded by a process of democratization, the short-term costs and uncertainness of such a process may discourage the West from promoting democratization, or to be more precise, may discourage policy makers in the West from exerting real

pressure on authoritarian regimes to lean towards democratization. In the same context, Fuertig (2007: 12) says "at the beginning of the 21st century Middle Eastern political elite's act under an externally cast "veil of uncertainness" that covers the true expectations of the West regarding Middle Eastern reforms". As argued above, the Egyptian regime has done his part to satisfy the West. It has introduced political openings, pluralism, regular elections among other political reforms. All of which were managed perfectly so as not to threaten the regime, yet were enough for the West to live with.

Nonetheless, even perfectly timed and measured managed political openings have a cost. The rise of the popularity of the Islamisits and their electoral successes were direct results of elections. This side effect of the regime's successful strategy is tolerable as long as it is within the limits and since no real threat is directed to the ruling incumbents. Otherwise, the stick is there to replace the carrot.

Punishing political opponents is the most obvious way of silencing the democratic and liberal forces. It should be emphasized, however, that this is only one tool in the regimes' drawer, and in most cases not the first choice. Taken alone, it would be far less effective than a broader strategy composed of a wide range of instruments. Still, this old fashioned tool proved effective when used economically and efficiently. It should be remembered that for every one person punished, many more are intimidated to stop, decrease, or redirect

their activism to avoid suffering a similar fate. In Egypt, repression has been an instrument used when the regime sense a serious threat. Though the examples are many, I shall here refer to two different examples that indicate when and against whom would the regime resort to harsh repression. The first was the military crackdown of Islamists militants in the nineties while the second was the arrests of MB activists in the aftermath of the movement's electoral successes in 2005.

The early 1990s witnessed an increase in the level of domestic violence; violent attacks on liberal intellectuals such as Faraj Fuda, and Nasr Hamid Abu Zaid, confrontation between the regime and extreme Islamist militant groups, namely Jihad and Jama'a Islamiya, were all alarming signs. The Egyptian regime came into a conclusion that Islamists militants are serious in their attempts to change the regime using any means available. Therefore the state forces waged a fierce war on Islamists militants in the early 1990s resulting in about 1300 casualties in both sides. The regime won the war and the militants leaders were executed or imprisoned. In 1997, Jama'a Islamiya declared a ceasefire initiative and denounces violent (Albrecht 2005: 388).

The second example goes back to 2005. This period witnessed an intensive protest against Mubarak's regime, including both legal opposition, political parties and social organizations, and illegal opposition, namely Muslim Brotherhood. These disturbances were accompanied by the call of several opposition groups and judges to boycott the scheduled elections and referenda posed a serious threat

to the regime's quest for legitimacy(Albrecht 2007: 63). Secular groups, particularly Kifaya, and Islamists, namely MB focused their criticism on the government and on sensitive issues as his possible intention of having his own son Jamal as successor. This rather irregular threat for the regime, in addition to the Muslim Brotherhood's excellent performance in the parliamentary elections "winning 88 out of 444 parliamentary seats", created a dangerous situation of political crisis (ibid: 63).

The regime offered some concessions like the legalization of new parties and the amendment of article 76 concerning the prudential elections. However, the main response was repression of various degrees. This has become clearer when the regime varied its reaction against opposition protests from soft repression in the case of elite unpopular secular opposition, to massive repression in the case of more popular Muslim Brotherhood. In both cases, incumbents were able to restore the initiative (ibid: 71). Another not less important conclusion would be the kind of regime reactions related to the popularity of the opposition. Both Kifaya and the Muslim Brotherhood use the same tactic to protest; street protest, however, it was the latter's ability to recruit massive protests that made the regime use more brutal immediate means to restore calm. More than 1,000 Islamists were detained between March and December 2006, many of them during protests related to the emergency laws or the independence of the judiciary. The regime also froze the bank accounts of the organization. Arrests continued in 2007 and early 2008 (Kaye et al 2007: 37).

Kifaya was treated harshly by the regime only in early 2006 when the movement joined forces with MB and criticized Mubarak and his son Jamal publicly. Afterwards, the movement was on decline that reached its peak with a December 2006 demonstration attracting only 100 people. Therefore, it was "softly repressed" as Albrecht (2007: 79) describes it. Schlumberger (2007: 15) argues that there are two factors that decide whether Arab regimes allow opposition groups to participate or simply repress them:

- The perceived threat that any particular group might pose to the regime, depending on the popularity rather than on its ideology
- The formal and informal institutional arrangements of the wider political sphere as designed by the regime

The two above examples lead to us to conclude that the Egyptian regime tendency to resort to violent repression increases in the following cases:

- Major opposition parties join forces and mobilize together, i.e. MB and Kifaya.
- The president and his kens are publicly criticized over substantial issues.
- The movements leading mass protests are popular domestically and can recruit mass protests.
- The movements leading protest are not popular internationally.

Over the years, the ruling NPD used its control of legistelative institutions, particularly the parliament, to ratify constitutional and electoral amendments that would prevent any serious attempt for change (Herzallah and Hamzawy 2008: 4). The amended articles are numerous; therefore, I shall revise the most recent and most significant ones, particularly after 2006. The 2003-2005 period has witnessed unprecedented political openings including the country's first ever multi-candidate presidential elections, tolerating the political participation of the MB, among other openings (ibid: 3). Though Mubarak had no trouble winning the 2005 presidential elections (Brownlee 2007: 2), the results of relatively fair parliamentary elections was a different story. The new People's Assembly included 88 members of the MB, occupying approximately 20 percent of the total seats, despite the regime's attempts to interfere especially in the third day of the elections, after the preliminary results of the first two days showed that the MB was winning a significant number of seats (Kaye et al 2007: 35). Regime's measures included arresting opposition candidates and blocking opposition supporters from reaching the polls, sometimes violently. The result was a very low voter turnout; only 26 percent of eligible voters participated in the election; 74 percent of Egyptians did not vote (ibid: 35+36). After the results of the 2005 poll, the ruling the NDP postponed municipal elections scheduled for spring 2006 and extended the state of emergency for two years. This delay was significant not only because it suggested a fear of the MB growing popularity, but also because legal changes to the presidential election

process "amendment of article 76" included requirements for an independent candidate to collect a specific number of signatures from Egyptian officeholders. If the MB were to take control of these councils, it would be in a strong position to run a candidate for the presidency in 2011(ibid 37).

The amendment of article 88 of the constitution in 2007 is in the same vein. The amendment replaced judicial oversight of the elections by that of an appointed supreme supervisory committee. The amendment of article 5 banned the establishment and the pursuit of political activity of political parties with religious agenda or framework (Herzallah and Hamzawy 2008: 4). Such amendments would of course prevent the MB from establishing a legally recognized party.

The pressure has mounted on MB with the parliament ratified the amendments of no less than 34 articles of the constitution in 2007 causing a major blow to political reforms (ibid: 4). The amendment of article 62 further restricts the Brotherhood's scope of political participation by marginalizing independent candidates. The amendment targeted a change in the electoral system from a candidate-centered system to a mixed one that depends mostly on party lists, leaving only a small margin for independent seats shutting the final outlet for the MB to compete (Brown et al 2007: 7). The regime's effort to market the amendment to article 62 as a democratic step aimed at empowering political parties and raising voter turnout, has limited credibility when we consider regulations aiming to prevent the establishment of new parties; therefore

hindering the possibility of political alliances, particularly between secular parties and MB. Contrary to that, the amended article 62 serves the regime's purpose of fragmenting opposition forces. The liberal al-Wafd and al-Ghad, the leftist at-Tagammu and Arab Nasserite-Egypt's most significant legal opposition parties-could not secure more than a combined 5 percent of the seats in the People's Assembly in the 2005 elections. Taking into account the fact that less than 5 percent of Egyptian citizens are organized in political parties and that most of the registered voters vote for independents in elections, raises doubts about the potential for widening popular participation under a party list electoral system (Ibid: 7).

In other words, restricting MB's ability to maneuver and make alliances with weak unpopular secular legal opposition, leaves the latter only one choice; seeking alliance with the NDP, and marginalizes the former. Therefore, it was not surprising when the MB decided, at the last minute, to boycott the local elections of April, 2008 (ibid: 1). Therefore, it becomes clear that the Egyptian regime's measures during 2006-2008 indicates that the regime seems to have abandoned the option of introducing reforms and political openings to defuse socio-economic tensions during 2003-2005 period. Ottaway and Choucair-Vizoso (2008: 17) elaborate in the same vein, arguing that the political opening in Egypt that started in 2004 and reversed since 2006 is actually part of Egypt history of "start-and-stop liberalization".

To conclude this point, The Egyptian regime has shown an extraordinary ability to renovate and develop its instruments of authoritarian rule. The strategy to fabricate facades of political plurality through precise engineering of a legislative and legal environment in which, for example, there can be presidential, parliamentary and municipal elections in which opposition can participate, but without a real opportunity to authentically compete for power. Amending constitutional articles and electoral law has been an effective instrument to do so.

4.5 MOROCCO

[redacted]

4.5.1.1 OVERVIEW

Since independence in 1956, Morocco has had a multi-party system with a diversity of political parties leaning from left to center (Ottaway and Riley 2006: 12). Morocco's political system is a constitutional hereditary monarchy with an electoral system that makes it difficult for one party to gain power alone; therefore, parties have to work with each other to form coalition governments. In accordance with the constitution, the monarch, who must be male, is the head of state. He appoints the prime minister and the other other four main government ministers. He has the power to order the review of legislative measures and to dissolve parliament (Bonnal, 2008).

During his 38-year reign, Hassan II's introduced an elected chamber to the Parliament and endorsed multi-party politics. The same political system was preserved during King Mohammed VI's reign since the death of his father in July 1999. The Moroccan political system allows the government to function along with a bicameral Parliament whose lower house consists of 325 members in "Majlis An-Nuwab", the Chamber of Representatives, elected by popular vote for five-year terms; and the 270-seat Chamber of Advisors in the upper house, whose members are chosen for 9-year terms from professional associations, trade unions, and elected local councils (Moroccan American trade website, 2009).

4.5.1.2 POLITICAL PARTIES

There are more than thirty registered parties in Morocco, almost all of them secular, (Ottaway and Riley 2006: 12). Moroccan political parties range in ideology from the far-left to Islamists. Islamists are represented by the Justice and Development Party (PJD). According to (nationmaster website, 2008), political parties in Morocco fall into three categories: major, medium, and minor. The major four parties are:

- Independence Party (Istiqlal)
- National Rally of Independents (NRI)
- Justice and Development Party (PJD)
- Socialist Union of Popular Forces (USFP)

(For the full list of political parties in Morocco see annex five).

The most important among secular parties are still those that emerged before or at the time of independence: the Istiqlal and the USFP (Ottaway and Riley 2006: 12). The Istiqlal still has historical legitimacy as the most prominent party in Morocco. The party that is considered secular nowadays was founded by a religious scholar who rooted the idea of independence in the country's Muslim identity. The USFP also has historical legitimacy as Morocco's militant socialist opposition inherited from the time when leftist ideologies were very dominant in the Arab political sphere (ibid: 12).

In comparison to secular parties, Islamist parties and organizations are more recent, less fragmented, and more ideological. Until the recent formation of two new small parties, there was only one Islamist party, the PJD. In addition, to a minor religious movement affiliated with the PJD "Al Tawhid wal Islah", and the larger, more militant, though nonviolent, and vocally antimonarchist "Al Adl wal Ihsan". Finally, the jihadist groups which are not participating in the Moroccan political life and seek to change the regime through violence. Though were involved with the Casablanca attacks in May 2003, these groups do not appear to be strong enough to bring down the regime (ibid 13). Therefore, the only influential Islamist party remains the Justice and Development Party (PJD). The party emerged from the movement of Unity and Reform (MUR) which was linked to the Islamic Youth Association banned in 1976. Its followers regrouped in the Islamic Group founded in 1981 and adopted a reformist agenda. Though the palace rejected the group's plea for

legalization of a political party in 1989 and 1992, it tolerated their integration into the party of MPCD "Mouvement Populaire Constitutionnel et Démocratique" which was renamed as PJD in 1998 (Wegener 2007: 78).

4.5.1.3 THE KING

Lastly, there is the king. Legitimized by religious and historical foundations as Amir al-Mu'minin, Commander of the Faithful, the king is the country's supreme religious and political authority, helped by an extensive system of patronage that operates as his informal bureaucracy (Kaye et al 2008: 146). The king's religious and political status helps him remain in an unreachable position that allows him not only to control political life, but also to be in step with Islamists in regard of religious representation (ibid: 154).

Characterized by stability since independence in 1956 until 1980s, it was only during the early 1990s when Morocco embarked on a path of top-down reform. King Hassan II started the process during the last years of his long reign, and his son Mohammed VI continued it after ascending to the throne in 1999 (Ottaway and Riley 2006: 3). Economic crises characterized by massive poverty and high

unemployment percentage[21] along with political paralysis with ineffective political parties, widespread human rights abuses, and corruption were the main reasons for the change (Kaye et al 2008: 143+144). Bad image of the monarchy in international arena because of the issue of Western Sahara was an extra driving force for political openings. Morocco has been accused of hindering the holding of referenda in the Sahara that would allow local inhabitants to determine their status; to be a part of Morocco or to be an independent entity. Furthermore, human rights observers accuse Morocco of abuses against Saharawi and their advocates. Abuses include detains, torture, and denied access to legal processes (ibid 147+148).

Food riots and protests in early 1990s were a "warning shot across the bow" for King Hassan II (ibid 144). Protests were both about bad economic situation and a criticism of regime poor governance. As a result, King Hassan II adopted a series of liberalizing reforms to calm down the angry masses and to gain popular support. Reforms included amendment of constitutional articles in 1992 and 1996 to enhance the role of civil society and promote party participation (ibid: 144). Other reforming measures gave greater protections for human rights and tolerated more representation of the Islamists in parliament and government. The process reached its peak in 1998

21 Morocco's unemployment rate is between 20 and 30 percent. In 2003, the country earned what officials considered a discouraging Human Development Index score of 126, well below Algeria, which was rated 107. (United Nations Human Development Program, 2004b, 2006).

when King Hassan II invited oppositionist forces to form a coalition government (ibid: 144).

After the ascending of Mohammed VI to the throne in 1999, the liberalizing measures have accelerated and continued throughout the 2000s. One of the first initiatives the young King has taken was the creation of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission "IER", a human rights organization intended to address the sensitive issues disappearances, torture and murder under Hassan II (Kaye et al 2008: 144). In the social aspects, some reforms were introduced. In January 2004 the parliament approved a major revision of the personal status code significantly expanding women's rights in issues like marriage and divorce, child custody, and inheritance that decrease traditional discrimination against women (Hawthorne 2004 : 12). Another major initiative to tackle the issue of economic underachievement was the launching of a national initiative for human development in 2005, officially called the Human Development Initiative "INDH" (Kaye et al 2008: 145). Further changes were introduced and others are expected to be introduced to cope up with the current momentum.

Nevertheless, those political openings, though encouraging, are basically launched to regain the incumbent's lost popularity and are still limited to certain specific areas; thus, unlikely to show a great impact in the wider scope of democratization. The role of political parties and other civil society actors is still limited and their relationship with the King and even the government is far from being balanced. Ottaway and Riley (2006: 3) argue that recent openings

"appear to be driven by a quest for modernization, not for popular participation and government accountability". Kaye et al (2008: 145+146) agree with this diagnosis arguing that Moroccan top-down reforms are carefully managed by the state, with the aim of maintaining regime's political control and traditional power structures. In their own words "liberal initiatives have not transformed Morocco into a democracy". None of those measures impose limits on the King's power; therefore, he hasn't shown any willingness to share his power, not to mention transition to a true constitutional monarchy (Ottaway and Riley 2006: 3). In addition, the King ultimately has the last word; approve all legislation, make political appointments, dissolve parliament, and declare states of emergency (Kaye et al 2008: 146). Moreover, Moroccan constitution gives nonelected bodies such as the government, the royal court, and the constitutional council the power to block laws that they find controversial (Hamzawy 2008: 4). All of these impediments are indeed safeguards to ensure that the king's reforms don't cede too much power to the opposition. In short, Moroccan political openings, particularly under Mohammed VI, was limited to areas like the human rights situation, women's rights, modernization and fights corruption, but not to open the way to genuine political participation that pave the way to a real democratic transition.

Though already managed and limited, Moroccan liberalization project has been further undermined by new "antiterrorism"

legislation passed in the wake of the May 16, 2003, attacks[22] (ibid: 148). The new laws, approved by parliament just a few days after the bombings, gave the government greater authority to defend national security. As a result, many, particularly Islamists, were arrested, and harassed. Security forces arrested 2,100 Islamists on charges of terrorism, with most being subjected to trials described as unfair and unconstitutional. The legislation also enabled the regime to impose further restrictions on civil society activists and institutions (ibid: 148).

The promises of the young King of a free more participatory political life started to fade. King Mohammed started to use the same types of controls as his father. In response to 2003 attacks, the monarch put mosques under the direct control of the government, a religious body was also established to monitor textbooks guides (ibid: 154). In the same vein, new legislations were issued to concentrate the government with more power and to increase censorship of the press. "Since 2003, a number of journalists have been fired, fined, or officially charged with various offenses" (ibid: 158).

The state's security apparatus acting under the control of the ministry of the interior remains very strong and is guaranteed authority to act freely against political opponents of the regime. This fact has never changed whether the incumbents are using the carrot

[22]Four violent attacks occurred in Casablanca in the spring and summer of 2003, including two thwarted incidents. Around the same time, several armed cells were discovered in Fez and Meknes. Jewish landmarks and sites were also targeted. (Kaye et al 2008: 150).

or the stick. Idriss Al-Basri headed the ministry of the interior from 1979 to 1999 and was viewed as the most powerful man in Morocco after the king (Hamzawy 2008: 5). Of course one wouldn't assume that the authority of the ministry of the interior would be restricted after 2003 attacks. In fact the stick becomes more evident, particularly against more dangerous and more popular opponents; Islamists. In February 2008, for example, authorities banned an opposition Islamist party known as al-Badil al-Hadari "Civilizational Alternative". "Approximately 32 individuals were arrested, including al-Badil's Secretary General Mustapha Al-Mutasim and his deputy Muhammad Al-Amin, in addition to a journalist, a leftist politician, a PJD official, and others" (ibid: 6). It is worth mentioning that security apparatus act more aggressively and freely whenever the monarchy is subjected to any kind of criticism. Arresting and prosecuting of Moroccan journalists is the immediate regular response, a prime example of this was forcing Al-Jazeera network's Morocco bureau to stop broadcasting its Maghreb News Program from Rabat, and putting its chief on trial after the News Network referred to contacts between the late King Hassan II and the Israeli intelligence agency "Mossad" (ibid: 6).

Morocco's democracy involves a large amount of co-optation in which the palace manipulates political parties by offering them a share in power. The Moroccan experience in this regard shows that ideology is not the determining factor in whether or not certain

opposition groups are allowed or denied access to the domestic political arena. It is rather their positions towards critical issues, at least from the incumbent's perspective, that decide their interactive relations with the monarchy. Lust-Okar (2005: 78) summarizes regime's critical issues in:

- The legitimacy of the monarchy
- Morocco's right to the Sahara
- The King's religious legitimacy

The popularity of the opposition parties and their readiness to abide by the incumbent's rules are also important factors to decide regime-opposition relationship. Lust-Okar (2005: 78) argues that Moroccan regime prefers to include moderate groups to radical groups. A good example here would be the late 1990s banning of conservative Islamist party al-'Adl wa-l-Ihsan (also known as the Justice and Charity party). The party is known as Morocco's largest hard-line Islamist party, expressing vocal critics of the government. At the same time, the monarchy legalized the moderate Islamist PJD. Lust-Okar adds that the regime also prefers weak radical groups to more popular ones within the same category. An example to prove her view was the legalization of the PPS, a reconstituted version of the outlawed Communist Party, and continuing to ban the more radical and popular Movement of March 23 (ibid: 78). However, the most significant example in this regard is the regime-Justice and Development Party "PJD" relationship.

The party that win 9 out of 325 seats in the 1997 elections, 42 in 2002, and 46 in 2007 has become very prominent in the Moroccan political process (Hamzawy 2008: 1). The PJD represents Islamists who have adopted peaceful participation in politics as their only strategic option. The major characteristic of the party is its willingness to play by the rules of the political game imposed by the monarchy. The party is highly regarded for its transparency, discipline, and lack of corruption (ibid: 2). Since its establishment in 1997, the PJD has adopted a moderate line reflected as much in spirit as in form. It has never questioned the religious and political legitimacy of the King and accepted the Monarchy's political system. As a result, The PJD has become the country's most significant tolerated opposition force (Kaye et al: 2008: 146). Further, the PJD separated religious and political activities, as Hamzawy (2008: 2) says "PJD succeeded in formulating a functional separation between Islamist da'wa (proselytizing) activities and politics, thereby transforming themselves into pure political organizations guided by an Islamist frame of reference and run by professional politicians, leaving da'wa to the broad social movements that gave birth to them".

Avoiding regime's repression is one reason for the PJD moderation. This study; however, argues that the main reason is rather the successful strategy of the regime to co-opt the party. The king has permitted the political participation of the PJD. This appears to have strengthened the moderates among PJD members. In exchange for the PJD acceptance of the Moroccan constitution, pluralism, and the

role of the king as "Amir al-Mu'minin", the palace offered the party legalization and inclusion in political life (Kaye et al 2008: 155). Since then, the PJD's interaction with the regime reflects a clear preference for compromise over confrontation. Wegener (2007: 89) describes the PJD-regime relationship as win-win relation, saying "The Moroccan case, therefore, shows that the inclusion of the Islamist opposition can benefit both the regime and the Islamists, at least for a certain period of time". From one hand, the PJD has not only avoided repression, but has also been able to mobilize relatively freely gaining more popularity and achieving more electoral successes. The PJD became the third largest party represented in parliament after the 2002 elections (Hawthorne 2004 : 12) and the second in the after math of 2007 elections (Hamzawy 2008: 18). Approximately 47 percent of Moroccans said they would support the PJD in the 2007 election (Kaye et al 2008: 155). In fact the PJD won only 14 percent of the popular vote in 2007 elections. Low voters' turnout "37 percent", self restrictions to major electoral success, and the nature of the Moroccan electoral system "as shall be discussed later" might be the reasons for this relative underachievement. The monarchy, for its part, benefits from this arrangement as well. By co-opting moderate Islamist opposition, the King enters into partnership with a very popular opponent that allows him to assert his religious status, to moderate this potential strong rival, and to further fragment opposition parties.

The PJD's behavior since 1997 demonstrates how highly the party values the benefits of inclusion and how far they would go to prove

moderate. One indicator of this was the party's acceptance of the principle, set by the regime, of nominating candidates for a limited number of constituencies. In fact, the percentage of constituencies open to the PJD in 2003 was reduced to an extent that the party could have won a maximum of 18 percent of the seats (Wegener 2007: 83). The most important reason for this deliberate self-limitation to success was the fear of being too successful in the elections, the thing that could provoke the incumbents and arise fear among secular parties and the authorities of an Islamist takeover of power (ibid: 80). Another indicator was the party's decision in 1998 to support the government, although it was led by Abdel-Rahman Youssoufi, the leader of the left "USFP" (ibid: 80). After May 16, 2003 attacks, the PJD's pragmatism became even more evident. Following the attacks, immediate measures were taken by the regime; "approximately 1,100 suspects were arrested, and the courts sentenced more than 50 people to lifelong prison terms and another 16 to death" (ibid: 82). The PJD's vice secretary general himself declared the approval of the antiterrorist law though the PJD had strongly criticized the draft bill of the law presented in February 2003 because it violates human rights (ibid: 82). Furthermore, the amendments to the personal status code proposed by the king in October 2003 came close to the original draft, which the Islamists had then denounced as an attempt to undermine public morale. Given the new circumstances, the PJD supported the code and announced its support for the accompanying media campaign called for by the king (ibid: 82). To conclude this part, both the palace and the PJD seem to be happy with their

relationship since it proves beneficial to both sides at least on the short run.

Morocco is a constitutional monarchy where power is theoretically shared by the monarch, the government, and a bicameral parliament[23]. In reality, however, most power is concentrated in the hands of the monarch. The current Moroccan constitution, which was adopted by referendum in 1992 and amended in 1996, gives executive powers to a government that emanates from Parliament and is approved by the king. While the bicameral parliament initiates legislation, the king must agree before any law takes effect. The Moroccan institutional order has serious problems that impede democratic progress. Article 19 of the Moroccan constitution proclaims the king to be the “supreme representative of the nation” (Hamzawy 2008: 4). He can dissolve Parliament by decree and call for new elections, and propose his own legislation for popular approval by means of referendum. The monarch signs and ratifies international treaties, can declare a state of emergency, and can rule by decree. He also appoints the prime minister and his cabinet after

[23] The Moroccan electorate in 1996 ratified a new constitution that, among other things, replaced a unicameral parliament with a bicameral body. Moroccan citizens directly elect members to the lower house of the new parliament "325 members". At the same time, members of the upper house are elected via regional assemblies and professional organizations "270 members" (Ottaway and Riley 2006: 6).

legislative elections (ibid: 4). Moreover, the 1996 constitution specified that the king could not only veto bills approved by parliament but also amend them without resubmitting them to the parliaments, in other words, he could issue laws without consulting parliament (Ottaway and Riley 2006 :6).

This rather unmatched authority creates an unbalanced distribution of power between the monarch and other political players, particularly the executive branch, parliament, and political parties. Of course such a situation will not create a competitive political arena and consequently will not favor a genuine democratic process. (Hamzawy 2008: 19) argues that "the two central impediments to democratic transition in Morocco-the concentration of power in royal hands and the absence of credible checks and balances". Ottaway and Riley (2006: 9) explain that the 1996 constitutional amendments which created a bicameral parliament has indeed weaken rather than strengthen the parliament by increasing the number of members indirectly elected by regional assemblies and professional organizations usually loyal to the monarchy. Under the unicameral system, only one-third of the parliament was elected indirectly, but now the entire upper house, or 45 percent of the bicameral parliament, is elected in this way. In addition, the electoral system, which is based on proportional representation, consistently produces a fragmented parliament whose influence is easily undermined by the king. The major outcomes of these structural and constitutional deficiencies have been minimal parliamentary credibility and weak political parties (Hamzawy 2008: 19). As a result, public and

intellectual dissatisfaction became more evident. One indicator of this silent dissatisfaction was the decreasing overall turnout for the 2007 election 37 percent, down from a similarly disappointing 52 percent in 2002 (Kaye et al 2008: 155).

Weak Moroccan parliament and political parties has always been a corner stone to the regime's stability and the monarch powerful position. King Hassan II and his successor king Muhammad VI have skillfully used political parties against one another as they competed for patronage and power. Because of this fragmentation and manipulation, the parties were not able to attract a wide base of support. Consequently, party activity was confined to a small minority of the population. Furthermore, the monarch has never tried to change the informal system of personal, clientelistic networks on which the regime has always relied on to survive and to assert power (Ottaway and Riley 2006: 10). Therefore, parties were more busy with internal personal rivalries and competing among themselves to be closer to the political peak. As a result, authoritarian incumbents in Morocco maintain a comfortable loyal majority in parliament (Hamzawy 2008: 15), which prevents any genuine attempts to transform the country to a real constitutional rather than executive monarchy or to create balance among the major players within the political arena (Ottaway and Riley 2006: 10). This fact became more evident when traditional secular parties hinder rather than foster constitutional amendments that would enhance the role of political parties in 2007 because they were more concerned with defending their position against the Islamists in the 2007 elections

than with defending a democratization agenda (ibid: 10). Secular parties in Morocco known as weak-structured and fragmented are unwilling to mobilize against the regime, still would seize any chance to criticize the Islamists, particularly the popular PJD. This antagonism was clear in 2003 when a group of secular and leftist parties “USFP, Independence Party, the People’s Movement Party, the National Rally of Independents, and the Party of Progress" led an anti-PJD media campaign following the Casablanca attacks. They all signed an "antiterrorism declaration" condemning all forms of radicalism (Hamzawy 2008: 14). This hostility is not actually attributed to the fear for national security, but it is actually explained by the sudden emergence of the PJD as a dominant force in the Moroccan political scene at the expense of many of these traditional forces. Saad Eddin Al Othmani, leader of the PJD said during an interview in 2005[24] "Following the events of May 2003, many in the political class showed its leftist inclinations by trying to exploit the opportunity to discredit the PJD, accusing it of having a hand in terrorism. We know this accusation arose because the Party is a new political actor that quickly became one of the five largest parties in Moroccan politics. Other parties wanted to maintain their monopoly and engaged in partisan games geared to exclude the PJD".

Whatever the reasons behind the hostility of the Moroccan parties, it can only abort any potential of joint efforts to put the monarch under

24An interview with Saad Eddin Al Othmani, leader of Morocco's Party of Justice and Development "PJD" conducted by Amr Hamzawy in December, 2005

real pressure to share power and to create a more balanced and a more participatory political life. Lust-Okar (2005: 22) argues that there are three factors that determine when opposition elite are willing to mobilize the masses to press for a political change:

- The relationship between opposition groups and the state
- The relationship between competing opposition groups
- State elites' ability to manipulate these relations

Applying the three factors to the Moroccan case, it is unlikely then that we would soon witness any profound mobility against a skilful well-fortified monarch.

5. CONCLUSION

5.1 OVERVIEW

Since the early 1990's many Arab states, for example Egypt and Morocco, have experimented political activism ranging from citizen rights, reforms, modernized economic structures, and liberalization. Yet, this activism always stops well short of substantial democratization; therefore, it is rather a distraction to the main cause. Arab incumbents, through different sets of strategies, ensure regime's survival and abort any possibility of change through elections. They have shown an extraordinary ability to renovate and develop their instruments of authoritarian rule. In general, regimes are able to defeat the demands for reform by using a number of classical techniques and new adaptations. Despite moments of public activism and the relative rise in demand for democracy in many Arab countries in recent years, ruling elites have not lost their grip on public affairs and have proven, in the final analysis, that they alone control the direction and substance of policy.

5.2 MISSING ELEMENTS

The path to Arab genuine democracy continues to be long and problematic. A close look at the contemporary Arab political scene reveals that there is more than one essential missing element, when compared with more successful experiences of political transformation elsewhere "e.g. Eastern Europe and South America". To prove this, I shall refer to two facts that characterize the Arab

political arena and reveal its non-democratic nature. To start with, the Arab political arena is far from being balanced since Arab incumbents' have fortified themselves with various power and control instruments, particularly, financial resources, security apparatus, and constitutional super authority. As shown in chapter three of this study, the authority of president Mubarak of Egypt and king Muhammad VI of Morocco has not even been contested not to mention threatened.

The emergence of democratic opposition movements with broad constituencies that can contest authoritarian power and force concessions is another missing basic element. Although the party system is fundamentally established since both countries adopt multi-party systems, incumbent elites' strong hold over the legislative and the executive branches leaves political parties with merely a cosmetic role. Once again the two cases of this study suggested that opposition forces are busy in side battles among themselves rather than fulfilling the very bases of their existence; challenging authoritarian regimes and reflecting public opinion.

5.3 DEMOCRACY DEFICIT

An obvious indicator of the democracy status in the Arab World is clearly reflected by the fact that of the 81 nations classified by Freedom House ranking in 2008 as full or flawed democracies, not one is Arab (see annex two). The repeated low ranking of Arab countries over the years, among other related facts, urge many

researchers such as Brumberg, (2005: 2) and Schlumberger, (2007: 5) to argue that the Arab World suffers from what they call "democracy gap or deficit". Others like Azmi Bishara (2008: 9) goes farer when he talks about an “Arab Exceptionalism” in regard of potential democratic transformation. Though Arab democracy deficit is undeniable and might be attributed to different sets of reasons and facts, Exceptionalism continues to be a vague broad concept. Schlumberger (2007: 13) thinks that the reason behind the endurance of Arab authoritarian rule is a multitude of interacting variables, yet he tries to avoid the temptation of calling it Exceptionalism because it is very hard to be sure about the exact number of such variables, about their relative weigh, or about the laws governing the ways in which the variables interact with one another. Moreover, Empirical experiences of democratic transitions in East Europe and Latin America have shown that every case is special in one way or another but not exceptional. Similarly, comparative transformation theories were proven irrelevant to the Arab situation because they ignored its uniqueness. Therefore, from the perspective of this study, the situation of Arab democracy is special but not exceptional.

5.4 SUCCESSFUL STRATEGIES

The basic argument of this study was to attribute regimes' successes to the effective strategies they use. Many researchers, i.e. Holger Albrecht (2007: 59), argue that opposition parties in the Arab World

are structurally weak and lack enough motive, ability, and popularity to mobilize masses. This study agrees with this diagnosis; however, attributed it to regimes' manipulation of opposition forces that leaves them weak and fragmented. Motivated by the desire to assert their authorities, ruling elites resort to additional strategies on top of their customary reliance on security agencies in their attempts to regulate society and repress opposition.

The first is the constitutional super authority that Arab regimes enjoy. Regime's monopoly over political life in Egypt and Morocco guarantees incumbents' ruling elites the comfortable majority in the legistelative bodies that enables them to pass constitutional amendments without any serious consideration of the views of opposition parties or of the public preferences. In turn, the opposition, particularly the liberal and leftist parties, is too vulnerable and divided to mount a serious challenge to incumbents' authoritarian ruling style. Contrary to that they are dependent on the regime to ensure their survival and to face the threat they are posed to by the Islamists. Thus, they have no choice but to accept amendments that aim to further concentrate power in the hand of the regime on the expense of opposition parties including none but themselves. This was evident during the constitutional amendments in Egypt 2007 and in Morocco 2003 as chapter three shows.

The second strategy is to fabricate facades of political plurality that are empty of substance and efficacy. The purpose is to contain domestic mass dissatisfaction, simultaneously, to project a more favorable image to Western allies pressing, at least in words, for

democratization and respect for human rights in the Arab world. This strategy of managed, top-down liberalization proves extremely effective in both Egypt and Morocco. Brumberg (2005: 9) argues that "The very success of liberalized autocracy can make a transition to democracy difficult rather than open the door to a transition". Further, such openings, though limited, are easily reversed whenever regimes sense any threat of any kind. The prime examples the two study cases provide, were reform regression in Egypt after the electoral successes of the MB in 2005 and the similar situation in Morocco after the security threat following Casablanca attacks in 2003.

The third major strategy is fragmenting and dividing opposition forces by forging organic alliances with included opposition whilst excluding others. In so doing, the effect is usually to forestall the development of real democratic alliances similar to that which occurred elsewhere in the world in early phases of democratic transition; the emergence of independent middle class for whom the rule of law, the regular rotation of power, and political participation became major priorities. What is particularly interesting in this regard would be the different technique the Egyptian and the Moroccan regimes used to moderate Islamists oppositions.

Since early 1990s, Egyptian regime mounted its pressure on Islamist forces; particularly the grass rooted Muslim Brotherhood, to deny them legal political participation. Has always been threatened by the regime's stick and the hostility of less popular secular opposition parties, the MB was allowed minimal political participation. MB

leaders have always complained from two major restrictions imposed by the regime to undermine the movement. The first consists of security pressure through periodic arrests and harassment, whereas the second uses a host of legal measures to block the political atmosphere that allowed the movement to score impressive gains in recent years particularly, the 2007 constitutional amendments (Brown and Hamzawy, 2008: 10+11). Among 34 amendments, the amended article 5 banned the establishment and the pursuit of political activity of political parties with religious agenda or framework (Herzallah and Hamzawy 2008: 4). Such amendments would of course prevent the MB from establishing a legally recognized party. Nonetheless, the MB maintained its moderate line over the years and has never violated the roles of the game. The Brotherhood formally renounced violence in the 1970s and has publicly committed itself to many of the foundational components of democracy, including alternation of power, popular sovereignty, and protection of minority rights. Albrecht (2007: 68) argues that the moderate reaction of the MB to its formal exclusion from the political realm is surprising. In his own words, Albrecht says "Surprisingly, however, the Brothers' exclusion from formal politics has not triggered their radicalization or any attempts to challenge the incumbents by force so far. Rather, the Islamists have, by and large, played by the rules of the regime's game". Though technically banned, the MB has run candidates as independents or as part of electoral coalitions with both secularist and Islamist parties. It has also won elections for student unions and trade syndicates and gained significant power as the main opposition force during various

parliamentary elections, particularly in 2005. Whether such moderation, as articulated in the MB electoral programs and other documents, reflect a strategic choice or merely a temporary tactic is, though an important debate is out of the scope of this study. What is relevant here is the sufficiency and efficiency of Egyptians regime's measures to moderate the MB and minimize its electoral successes.

The Moroccan monarch-PJD relationship provides completely a different example. Though indirectly, the PJD was allowed political participation since its establishment in 1997. Kaye et al (2008: 146) argue that the PJD has become the country's most significant tolerated opposition force. In turn, the PJD has never questioned the religious and political legitimacy of the King and accepted the Monarchy's political system. The party is well entrenched in the Moroccan political process, participating in all parliamentary and local elections since its establishment. In an interview[25], Saad Eddin Al Othmani, leader of PJD explains the moderate nature of the party saying "We would compare it to Christian Democratic parties in Europe that base their platforms upon the principles of Christian faith although their platforms may be civil in nature... It is the same with the PJD, which is a civil, Moroccan nationalist political party. It simply comes from an Islamic point of view, which is shared by the Moroccan people; we cannot envision a party that does otherwise".

[25] An interview with Saad Eddin Al Othmani, leader of Morocco's Party of Justice and Development "PJD" conducted by Amr Hamzawy in December, 2005

Whether outlawing and excluding Islamists, as in the case of the MB in Egypt, or co-opting and including them, as in the case of the PJD in Morocco, Egyptian and Moroccan regimes managed to contain their most dangerous rivals, the Islamists. Both the MB and the PJD has not only seized any chance to prove moderate and to show their acceptance of the political system in their countries, but have gone far beyond that to self-impose restrictions on their electoral participation and successes. Theoretically, Islamists like other opposition parties, want to gain the greatest number of seats possible in an assembly. However, anticipations of regimes' reactions along with the record of contemporary Arab history offer sobering advice to the MB and the PJD. The domestic and international negative intolerant reactions to the electoral victories of the Islamic Salvation Front in Algeria in 1991 and the Hamas victory in Palestine in 2006, among other relevant examples, cautions the two movements to keep their electoral aspirations modest and to not strive to sweep the polls. Having gone so far just to avoid repression, in the case of the MB, and to maintain the position of co-opted tolerated party, in the case of the PJD, serves to assert this study's main argument; the successful strategies, though sometimes different, used by Arab incumbents to manipulate their political rivals. This also proves that, the international community in general and the policy makers in particular, prefer stable friendly though authoritarian regimes in the region to anti-west groups though elected democratically. In the final analysis of this study's context, this leads us to conclude that it would be naïve to expect a decisive international role in the course of

promoting democracy in the Arab World. Preserving interests is prior to enhancing democracy with uncertain consequences.

5.5 INCLUSION VS. EXCLUSION

The shaky empirical ground of the two alternatives of inclusion and exclusion of the opposition movements in general and the Islamist ones in particular has made the issue anything but conclusive. Some Arab contemporary literature suggests that it is the repressive exclusion, not political inclusion, of Islamist groups that consistently produces radicalism and violence in liberalizing authoritarian regimes. The Algerian domestic violence in the 90s of the last century consolidates this assumption. Yet, the political inclusion of Hamas movement in the 2006 Palestinian parliamentary elections has resulted in similar domestic violence to the Algerian example. From the other hand, the area's recent history provides more successful experiences in regard of incumbents-Islamists interaction whether via inclusion or exclusion. The Jordanian, Moroccan, Egyptian experiences among others are useful examples in this regard. Therefore the debate will continue to be controversial and inconclusive. Lust-Okar's (2007: 39) contribution in this regard might be very useful in understanding the complexity of the issue. She urges that it's neither total inclusion nor total exclusion that lead to the successes of the Arab regimes domestically. She explains that in their quest to assert their rule, some Arab incumbents shifted their strategies in dealing with opposition parties in regard of structure of contestation. They moved from a political system that is

characterized by either including or excluding opposition groups uniformly "undivided structure of contestation" to another political system that include some opposition groups while excluding others "divided structure of contestation" (ibid: 40).

From this study's perspective, Egyptian and Moroccan experiences with Islamists, though have similar successful immediate results through using divided structure of contestation, are far from being identical. True that we could easily conclude that Egypt and Morocco are classic examples of stable authoritarianism. The regimes control much of the media, dominate political life, and suppress their opponents with a vast array of legal and extra-legal tools. They also carefully monitor and manipulate civil society groups and political parties. It is also easily concluded that the major threat of both regimes would come from the more popular and organized Islamist groups. So far both the Egyptian and Moroccan regimes have managed to moderate the influential grass-rooted portions within the Islamisits and marginalized the radical minority. Still, the major difference between the two experiences is the strategic choices of both regimes in regard to their interaction with Islamists and the potential long-run durability of the stable current consequences of the undeclared understandings. Egyptian regime bases its relationship with the MB on exclusion, repression, and occasional use of the carrot. The motive of the MB moderation is mainly avoiding repression and complete ban. Given the current power balance, the MB has no other choice but to live under the regime's continuous pressure. However, the movement has never been an ally to the

regime nor has it been linked with it. This has gained the MB more popularity and credibility as its rising electoral indicator shows. The MB has not offered any ideological concessions and has maintained its position as representative of Islamists and has not integrated in the state system. The MB has no strategic interests in the regime resilience, therefore, it is not expected that the MB would ever support the regime if it is not forced to. As a result, the stability of the Egyptian regime depends completely on its strength and ability to control its rivals, particularly the Islamists. The moment the regime is weakened would probably be its countdown to fall.

From the other hand, the Moroccan regime bases its relationship with the PJD on inclusion, moderation, interests' integration and occasional use of the stick. This formula has come up with more fruitful consequences from the regime's perspective. The PJD is struggling to redefine a sustainable and practical balance between the pragmatic demands of participation and those dictated by the Islamist frame of reference, from one hand and those of enjoying the position of tolerated co-opted party and the popular support they enjoy as an alternative to an authoritarian regime, from the other. Ideologically, the PJD is torn between their faith that the law regulating the bonds between the state, society and the individual must be founded upon Islamic Sharia law and the concept of a civil government whereby laws are formulated on the basis of majority vote in a legistelative bodies created by unfair constitutional rules dominated by the regime. Furthermore, to maintain the privileges it enjoys, the PJD had to give up the significant role of Islamic

representation to the king by acknowledging his position as "Amir Al Mu'minin-the Commander of the Faithful". This has not only plunged the PJD into exhaustive internal debates about the movement's priorities with the costly consequence of losing its sense of strategic orientation, but has also caused the PJD to start losing popular support. Many researchers has actually attributed the PJD's under achievements in the 2007 elections to the movement's lost identity (Hamzawy 2008: 15) and to the low overall turnout "37 percent" resulting from mass dissatisfaction and lost trust in the competing parties (Kaye et al 2008: 155). If such indicators prove valid, then we can conclude that the PJD has lost or is losing its most important weapons to, at least theoretically, has any chance to challenge the monarch which is popular support and Islamic representation. Without this it is improbably that the PJD would have the capability or the motive to challenge the regime in the foreseeable future.

To sum up this significant difference between the strategies used by the Egyptian and Moroccan regimes in dealing with Islamists and their consequences, this study argued that inclusion has proven more successful than exclusion, particularly in the long run. Albrecht (2007: 63) sums up this debate as follows "Islamists must make concessions to the regime to avoid repression, but simultaneously they must not fundamentally alienate their supporters... the more the Islamists are willing to compromise on their ideology (i.e., to subject it to the regime's logic) and the less they manage to balance their insider position with the discourse of an outsider, the more inclusion works as a means for stabilizing the authoritarian status quo".

5.6 REGIME TYPE AND STRATEGIC CHOICES

One last relevant debate within this framework would be the significance of the regime type to its strategic choices and their potential chances to succeed. Is there any correlation between typology of the regimes and their chances to introduce political openings necessary for stabilizing the regime, yet maintain their upper hand and total control of the political game? Egypt and Morocco provide interestingly contrasting models in this regard. Many scholars (Albrecht 2007:77; Lust-Okar and Jamal 2002: 351–356) believe that the direct threat posed by a successful Islamist party is potentially smaller for monarchs than for presidents. This might explain why the Moroccan monarchy has chosen to include moderate Islamists in the political system whereas Egypt's presidential system has chosen otherwise.

In Morocco, the king is the country's supreme religious and political authority, this status helps him remain in step with Islamists in regard of religious representation (Kaye et al 2008: 154). This means that the king has the power to marginalize Islamists if they are perceived as a threat. Resting on his unmatched power and authority that the monarchy system offers him, the king is confident that not even Islamists opposition can threaten his position. Therefore, the space of maneuvering is large; the monarch can introduce reforms, makes alliance from a wide array of choices, or simply repress his opponents. Of course inclusion and political participation of almost all players of the political arena is the choice that would please everybody domestically and internationally, so it is the monarch first

choice as long as it proves safe. In Egypt, and despite the strong position of President Mubarak, the political game seems to be more risky in comparison with Morocco. The presidential system of the country makes it possible, at least theoretically, to change the president, unlike the case of the Moroccan monarch". Mubarak enjoys political power but not religious legality. Brumberg (2002: 55) sums up this saying "Arab monarchs have more institutional and symbolic room to improvise reforms than do Arab presidents, who are invariably trapped by ruling parties and their constituencies".

Moreover, Islamists in Egypt, particularly the MB, have preserved their identity and have not compromise on their ideological believes. Therefore, the regime does not risk offering any chance to the popular Islamists to gain more power. Contrary to this, the regime slams any window of opportunity in their face by continuing to outlaw them and further restrict their aspirations. As a result the type of the regime is an important factor to decide regimes' strategic choices and interaction with political rivals.

To conclude, this study tried to examine the current statues of Arab democracy through analyzing recent political developments in the Arab World particularly in Egypt and Morocco during the period between 1990 and 2008. The study based its arguments on empirical evidences of what has actually happened and the consequences built on that. The role of external interventions in consolidating Arab authoritarian regimes and the analysis of lack of democracy in Arab states are important relevant topics to this study's debate, yet the main argument of the study was to explain *how* rather than *why* Arab

regimes managed to persist. Chapter two of this study showed that recent reforms in the Arab World tackled social and economic issues that contributed, in one way or another, to modernize Arab political institutions and enhance their efficiency. However, asserting authoritarian regimes rather than transforming them was the target and eventual outcome and façade distracting measures were the essence of the reform trend. Chapter three analyzed the strategies used by Egyptian and Moroccan regimes in their quest for durability. In short, the regimes' strategies worked efficiently to turn back the democratic challenge. Regimes' strategies might vary from one case to another, one might prove more successful than another as shown previously, still they all proved successful, at least on the short run. In the long run things might turn out differently, but it is going to be a very long run indeed.

The presence of Arab democracy is not promising, Arabs masses feel frustrated today; prompted by the absence, or at best the slow pace, of authentic democratic reforms, stagnant economies and political instability. Nonetheless, stagnation cannot continue forever; experiences from different parts of the world suggest that there is a march of history and democracy must reach Arab societies at some stage. Denying an inevitable process to transcend makes no sense. Still, to give democracy a chance to blossom, Arab intellectuals and democrats need to take the initiative. Counting on international intervention is equally wishful as counting on incumbents' top-down gestures. Cultivating diversity within Arab societies is an urgent priority and all forces should be ready to mobilize and build alliances

needed to defeat the resilience of authoritarianism. Islamist groups enjoy far more popular support and can pressure governments by organizing mass protests. Arab secular groups are believed to be more devoted to democratic values. As a result, an alliance between democrats and Islamists might offer an effective mean to challenge state power. The road will be bumpy, and will not be paved by Arab regimes' refusing to ease their societies into a slow process that can absorb the contradictions inherent in democratization. It's important to remember, though, that expecting the seeds of democracy to blossom overnight is a simplistic assumption at best, and a dangerous one at worst. Force-feeding democracy will lead not to reform but to radicalization as the Iraqi case shows. A wiser approach would be to respect the ability of Arab societies to take matters into their own hands. Democracy, after all, is not a mould to import from a successful model; it is rather a strategic national choice that needs painful concessions and joint efforts of the domestic political society to make it happen.

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7. ANNEXES

7.1 ANNEX ONE: FREEDOM HOUSE RANKING 2003

Algeria 6, 5 Not Free Partial Autocracy

Bahrain 5, 5 Partly Free (6, 5 2002) Partial Autocracy

Egypt 6, 6 Not Free Partial Autocracy

Iran 6, 6 Not Free Towards Full Autocracy?

Iraq 7, 7 Not Free Collapsed Full Autocracy

Jordan 6, 5 Partly Free (5, 5 2002) Partial Autocracy

Kuwait 4, 5 Partly Free Partial Autocracy

Lebanon 6, 5 Not Free Partial Autocracy

Libya 7, 7 Not Free Full Autocracy

Morocco 5, 5 Partly Free Partial Autocracy

Oman 6, 5 Not Free Partial Autocracy

Qatar 6, 6 Not Free Partial Autocracy

Saudi Arabia 7, 7 Not Free Full Autocracy

Syria 7, 7 Not Free Full Autocracy

Tunisia 7, 7 Not Free Full Autocracy

Turkey 3, 4 Partly Free Illiberal Democracy

United Arab Emirates 6, 5 Not Free Full Autocracy

Yemen 6, 5 Not Free (6, 6 2002) Partial Autocracy

Note: Best rating is 1, worst rating is 7.

7.2 ANNEX TWO: FREEDOM HOUSE 2008 RANKING

No.	Location	Index	Category
1	Sweden	9.88	Full democracy
2	Norway	9.68	Full democracy
3	Iceland	9.65	Full democracy
4	Netherlands	9.53	Full democracy
5	Denmark	9.52	Full democracy
6	Finland	9.25	Full democracy
7	New Zealand	9.19	Full democracy
8	Switzerland	9.15	Full democracy
9	Luxembourg	9.10	Full democracy
10	Australia	9.09	Full democracy
11	Canada	9.07	Full democracy
12	Ireland	9.01	Full democracy
13	Germany	8.82	Full democracy
14	Austria	8.49	Full democracy
15	Spain	8.45	Full democracy
16	Malta	8.39	Full democracy

17	Japan	8.25	Full democracy
18	United States	8.22	Full democracy
19	Czech Republic	8.19	Full democracy
20	Belgium	8.16	Full democracy
21	United Kingdom	8.15	Full democracy
22	Greece	8.13	Full democracy
23	Uruguay	8.08	Full democracy
24	France	8.07	Full democracy
25	Portugal	8.05	Full democracy
26	Mauritius	8.04	Full democracy
27	Costa Rica	8.04	Full democracy
28	South Korea	8.01	Full democracy
29	Italy	7.98	Full democracy
30	Slovenia	7.96	Full democracy
31	South Africa	7.91	Flawed democracy
32	Chile	7.89	Flawed democracy
33	Taiwan	7.82	Flawed democracy
34	Cape Verde	7.81	Flawed democracy
35	India	7.80	Flawed democracy

36	Cyprus	7.70	Flawed democracy
37	Estonia	7.68	Flawed democracy
38	Israel	7.48	Flawed democracy
39	Botswana	7.47	Flawed democracy
40	Hungary	7.44	Flawed democracy
41	Brazil	7.38	Flawed democracy
42	Lithuania	7.36	Flawed democracy
43	Panama	7.35	Flawed democracy
44	Slovakia	7.33	Flawed democracy
45	Poland	7.30	Flawed democracy
46	Latvia	7.23	Flawed democracy
47	Timor-Leste	7.22	Flawed democracy
48	Trinidad and Tobago	7.21	Flawed democracy
49	Jamaica	7.21	Flawed democracy
50	Romania	7.06	Flawed democracy
51	Croatia	7.04	Flawed democracy
52	Bulgaria	7.02	Flawed democracy
53	Ukraine	6.94	Flawed democracy
54	Thailand	6.81	Flawed democracy

55	Mexico	6.78	Flawed democracy
56	Argentina	6.63	Flawed democracy
57	Sri Lanka	6.61	Flawed democracy
58	Mongolia	6.60	Flawed democracy
59	Suriname	6.58	Flawed democracy
60	Colombia	6.54	Flawed democracy
61	Papua New Guinea	6.54	Flawed democracy
62	Moldova	6.50	Flawed democracy
63	Serbia	6.49	Flawed democracy
64	Namibia	6.48	Flawed democracy
65	Montenegro	6.43	Flawed democracy
66	Paraguay	6.40	Flawed democracy
67	El Salvador	6.40	Flawed democracy
68	Malaysia	6.36	Flawed democracy
69	Indonesia	6.34	Flawed democracy
70	Peru	6.31	Flawed democracy
71	Lesotho	6.29	Flawed democracy
72	Republic of Macedonia	6.21	Flawed democracy
73	Dominican Republic	6.20	Flawed democracy

74	Honduras	6.18	Flawed democracy
75	Bolivia	6.15	Flawed democracy
76	Guyana	6.12	Flawed democracy
77	Philippines	6.12	Flawed democracy
78	Nicaragua	6.07	Flawed democracy
79	Guatemala	6.07	Flawed democracy
80	Benin	6.06	Flawed democracy
81	Albania	5.91	Hybrid regime
82	Singapore	5.89	Hybrid regime
83	Mali	5.87	Hybrid regime
84	Hong Kong	5.85	Hybrid regime
85	Palestinian Authority	5.83	Hybrid regime
86	Bosnia and Herzegovina	5.70	Hybrid regime
87	Turkey	5.69	Hybrid regime
88	Ecuador	5.64	Hybrid regime
89	Lebanon	5.62	Hybrid regime
90	Madagascar	5.57	Hybrid regime
91	Bangladesh	5.52	Hybrid regime
92	Mozambique	5.49	Hybrid regime

93	Senegal	5.37	Hybrid regime
94	Ghana	5.35	Hybrid regime
95	Venezuela	5.34	Hybrid regime
96	Tanzania	5.28	Hybrid regime
97	Zambia	5.25	Hybrid regime
98	Liberia	5.25	Hybrid regime
99	Malawi	5.13	Hybrid regime
100	Fiji	5.11	Hybrid regime
101	Uganda	5.03	Hybrid regime
102	Cambodia	4.87	Hybrid regime
103	Kenya	4.79	Hybrid regime
104	Georgia	4.62	Hybrid regime
105	Ethiopia	4.52	Hybrid regime
106	Burundi	4.51	Hybrid regime
107	Russia	4.48	Hybrid regime
108	Pakistan	4.46	Hybrid regime
109	Bhutan	4.30	Hybrid regime
110	Haiti	4.19	Hybrid regime
111	Gambia	4.19	Hybrid regime

112	Sierra Leone	4.11	Hybrid regime
113	Armenia	4.09	Hybrid regime
114	Kyrgyzstan	4.05	Hybrid regime
115	Nepal	4.05	Hybrid regime
116	Iraq	4.00	Hybrid regime
117	Jordan	3.93	Authoritarian regimes
118	Mauritania	3.91	Authoritarian regimes
119	*Egypt*	*3.89*	*Authoritarian regimes*
120	*Morocco*	*3.88*	*Authoritarian regimes*
121	Rwanda	3.71	Authoritarian regimes
122	Burkina Faso	3.60	Authoritarian regimes
123	Comoros	3.58	Authoritarian regimes
124	Nigeria	3.53	Authoritarian regimes
125	Cuba	3.52	Authoritarian regimes
126	Cameroon	3.46	Authoritarian regimes
127	Kazakhstan	3.45	Authoritarian regimes
128	Niger	3.41	Authoritarian regimes
129	Kuwait	3.39	Authoritarian regimes
130	Bahrain	3.38	Authoritarian regimes

131	Angola	3.35	Authoritarian regimes
132	Belarus	3.34	Authoritarian regimes
133	Algeria	3.32	Authoritarian regimes
134	Côte d'Ivoire	3.27	Authoritarian regimes
135	Azerbaijan	3.19	Authoritarian regimes
136	China	3.04	Authoritarian regimes
137	Swaziland	3.04	Authoritarian regimes
138	Afghanistan	3.02	Authoritarian regimes
139	Gabon	3.00	Authoritarian regimes
140	Oman	2.98	Authoritarian regimes
141	Tunisia	2.96	Authoritarian regimes
142	Yemen	2.95	Authoritarian regimes
143	Congo	2.94	Authoritarian regimes
144	Qatar	2.92	Authoritarian regimes
145	Iran	2.83	Authoritarian regimes
146	Sudan	2.81	Authoritarian regimes
147	United Arab Emirates	2.60	Authoritarian regimes
148	Zimbabwe	2.53	Authoritarian regimes
149	Vietnam	2.53	Authoritarian regimes

150	Tajikistan	2.45	Authoritarian regimes
151	Togo	2.43	Authoritarian regimes
152	Djibouti	2.37	Authoritarian regimes
153	Eritrea	2.31	Authoritarian regimes
154	Republic of the Congo	2.28	Authoritarian regimes
155	Equatorial Guinea	2.19	Authoritarian regimes
156	Syria	2.18	Authoritarian regimes
157	Laos	2.10	Authoritarian regimes
158	Guinea	2.09	Authoritarian regimes
159	Libya	2.00	Authoritarian regimes
160	Guinea-Bissau	1.99	Authoritarian regimes
161	Saudi Arabia	1.90	Authoritarian regimes
162	Central African Republic	1.86	Authoritarian regimes
163	Myanmar	1.77	Authoritarian regimes
164	Uzbekistan	1.74	Authoritarian regimes
165	Turkmenistan	1.72	Authoritarian regimes
166	Chad	1.52	Authoritarian regimes
167	North Korea	0.86	Authoritarian regimes

* ----- Arab country

*----- *Study Cases*

7.3 ANNEX THREE: DEMOCRACY INDEX BY REGIME TYPE

The following table constitutes the number of countries in each category according to 2008 survey.

Regime Type	Countries	% of countries	% of world population
Full democracies	30	18.0	14.4
Flawed democracies	50	29.9	35.5
Hybrid regimes	36	21.6	15.2
Authoritarian regimes	51	30.5	34.9

7.4 ANNEX FOUR: POLITICAL PARTIES IN EGYPT

There are 24 Political parties in Egypt now :

- Egyptian Arab Socialist Party (*Hizb Misr al-arabi al-ishtaraki*), founded 7-7-1977.
- Liberal Party (*Hizb al-Ahrar*) ,founded 7-7-1977.
- Progressive National Unionist Party (*Hizb al Tagammo' al Watani al Taqadommi al Wahdwawi') - Leftist party, founded 7-7-1977.*
- New Wafd Party (*Hizb al-Wafd-al-Gadid*),founded 4-2-1978.
- National Democratic Party ('Al'Hizb Al Watani Al Democrati'), founded 1-10-1978.
- The Socialist Labour Party (Labour Party), founded 11-12-1978 - Suspended.
- Umma Party (*Hizb al-Umma*) ,founded 26-5-1983.
- The Democratic Unionist Party (*Hizb al-Itahadi al-Democrati*),founded 14-4-1990.
- Egyptian Greens,founded 14-4-1990.
- Misr El-Fatah (Young Egypt) Party,founded 14-4-1990.
- The People's Democratic Party (PDP),founded 15-3-1992 - Currently frozen.
- Arab Democratic Nasserist Party or Nasserist Party,founded 19-4-1992.
- The Social Justice Party ,founded 6-6-1993.
- Solidarity Party (*Hizb Al Takaful*),founded 5-2-1995.
- National Conciliation Party (*Hizb al-Wifak*),founded 2-3-2000.
- Egypt 2000 Party,founded 7-4-2001.
- Democratic Generation (El-Geel) Party,founded 9-2-2002.
- Tomorrow Party (*Hizb al-Ghad*),founded 27-10-2004.
- Constitutional Party (*al-Hizb al-distouri*),founded 24-11-2004.
- Egypt Youth Party,founded 2-7-2005.
- Democratic Peace Party,founded 2-7-2005.
- Conservative Party,founded 12-3-2006.

- Free republican Party ,founded 4-7-2006.
- Democratic Front Party (*Hizb al-Gabha al-Democrati*),founded 24-5-2007.

Awaiting license

- Dignity Party (*Hizb al-Karama*) - a Nasserist offshoot led by journalist and MP Hamdeen Sabahi[1]. Isn't granted full-license yet.
- Liberal Egyptian Party (*el Hizb el Masri el Liberali*), formerly *Mother Egypt Party* (*Hizb Masr el-Omm*) - a secular, Egyptian nationalist party.
- Center Party (*Hizb Al-Wasat*)- a Muslim Brotherhood offshoot with moderate tendencies, led by Abul-Ela Madi.

Other political parties

- Society of the Muslim Brotherhood (*Jama'at al-ikhwan al-muslimin*)
- Communist Party of Egypt (*al-hezb al-sheo'ey al-masry*)
- Kefaya Movement

7.5 ANNEX FIVE: A LIST OF POLITICAL PARTIES IN MOROCCO:

Major

Independence Party
National Rally of Independents
Justice and Development Party
Socialist Union of Popular Forces

Medium

Alliance of Liberties
Constitutional Union
Democratic Union
Front of Democratic Forces
National Democratic Party
National Popular Movement
Party of Progress and Socialism
Popular Movement

Minor

Al Ahd
Citizens' Forces
Democratic and Social Movement
Environment and Development Party
Moroccan Liberal Party
National Congress Party Ittihada
Party of the Unified Socialist Left
Reform and Development Party
Socialist Democratic Party