State of the art

Rentiers and autocrats, monarchs and democrats, state and society: the Middle East between globalization, human 'agency', and Europe

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Middle East politics and policy concerns

The key concerns—both policy-oriented and conceptual—in work on the politics of the Middle East since the late 1980s have been economic and political liberalization/democratization (or the absence thereof), and security, both domestic and international, along with the continued focus on the Arab–Israeli theatre. There has been an increasing recognition that these issues are strongly interrelated. 'Gulf security', for instance, has at its heart the interlinked components of domestic stability and perceived regional threats. The former raises questions of the sustainability of the rentier social contract, the nature of 'oil monarchies', the impact of 'Palestine' on regime legitimacy, and the Islamist political menus; the regional threat perception also turns on the themes of 'Palestine' and 'Islam', in addition to that of regional adventurism driven by domestic insecurities (as in the case of Iraq)—insecurities in turn generated at least in part by inadequate state and regime legitimacy. The Arab–Israeli theatre in itself, in addition to its regional implications, raises questions about the nature of Israeli democracy, as well as about the prospects for democratization in the mooted Palestinian state. Europe, the Arab world's neighbour, cannot avoid concerns over economic and political instability in the region spilling over into increased migration flows and possibly related political activity within Europe—apart from having substantial economic reasons for engagement with the region. These concerns in turn have become translated into a desire to see economic and political reform take place—although policies in both respects remain fraught with inconsistencies. And all of this is occurring against the background of 'globalization'—both in terms of the spread of the discourse of political liberalization and, of more immediate importance, the growing hold of liberal market economics and rules in the international political economy. Middle Eastern economies are being driven towards, at least, tentative measures of economic liberalization, both by internal economic weaknesses and by external pressures. In turn, this is resulting in pressures on the unwritten 'social contracts' and hence on the existing political dispensations.

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The new academic mood of the 1990s

With the end of the Cold War and some signs of (very limited) political and economic liberalization in the region, attempts were made to challenge the consensus reigning among social scientists not specializing in the region—as well as among many 'Orientalists'—that the Middle East was 'exceptional' and unlikely to develop democratic politics, due to cultural and historical factors as well as the political economy of rentierism. Increasingly, possibilities for economic as well as political development in the region were explored, by Western and Middle Eastern social scientists alike; pragmatic new versions of the previously ideological goal of regional integration were put forward; and new avenues were sought to resolve the Arab–Israeli conflict—all of this in the context of the changing international, and hence domestic, political economies. Some of this was directly policy-driven: the European Commission had already in 1991 commissioned a large study bringing these themes together, in which an international group of social scientists and practitioners concluded that a European policy in support of political reform, sub-regional economic integration, and involvement in resolving the Palestine conflict was both desirable and feasible. [1]

For a number of years, the Centre for Arab Unity Studies (Beirut), the Arab Thought Forum (Amman), and Cairo's Al-Ahram Centre for Political and Strategic Studies had already been bringing together thoughtful work by a number of Arab social scientists such as Saad Eddin Ibrahim, but it was not until the publication in 1994 of *Democracy without democrats?* under the direction of Ghassan Salamé, that a thorough conceptual re-examination of the theme of democratization in the Middle East was made available in English (with the benefit of bringing together French and Arab, as well as American, British, German and Italian new scholarly perspectives).[2] Meanwhile, two other collective projects, directed respectively by Niblock and Murphy,[3] and Harik and Sullivan,[4] had resulted in a long-overdue examination of the linkages between, as well as the nature of, economic and political liberalization in the region. These, like the Salamé volume, built on a marriage of conceptual and empirical investigation, bringing together social science theory and Middle East area expertise—a combination that had too often been lacking. Much work on the politics of the Middle East had either been empirical only, or ideological–normative, or 'Orientalist' in its assumptions and its absence of political (or even social) science background. On the other hand, most of the conceptual and comparative work on political transitions and democratization either ignored

[1] Published in a second edition as Gerd Nonneman, ed., *The Middle East and Europe: the search for stability and integration* (London: Federal Trust, 1993).

[2] Ghassan Salamé, ed., *Democracy without democrats? The renewal of politics in the Muslim world* (London: I. B. Tauris, 1994).

[3] Tim Niblock and Emma Murphy, eds, *Political and economic liberalisation in the Middle East* (London: British Academic Press, 1993).

[4] Ilya Harik and Dennis Sullivan, eds, *Privatization and liberalization in the Middle East* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1992).

the Middle East altogether or dismissed the region as an exceptional and hopeless case.[5]

This inadequate integration of theory and area expertise, where the Middle East is concerned, has also been in evidence in other aspects of politics and international relations—although here too the past decade has seen a modest renaissance.[6] Given these past lacunae, the 1999 volume *Area studies and social science: strategies for understanding Middle East politics*, edited by Mark Tessler, should become required reading for anyone teaching or conducting research on the subject: by picking up the lenses of the different social science disciplines relevant to studying any region, and viewing the Middle East through them, the contributors succeed in demonstrating that attempts to understand the region without bringing area specialization and social science together must in many respects fail.[7] The quest for social science theory, by the same token, has much to learn from specialist work on the Middle East.

Civil society, Islam and democratization

The most recent writing on the theme of liberalization and democratization in the region also draws on a number of other key works from the 1990s focusing on the themes of civil society and political Islam. On the former, Norton's comprehensive two-volume project on *Civil society in the Middle East*[8] demolished the myth that the region was uniquely lacking in such a category, while examining the varieties and variations within it. On the role of Islam, and its compatibility or otherwise with concepts of democracy and human rights, a number of works had succeeded in establishing that, in terms of political implications, there are many Islams; that there is nothing in the faith that is intrinsically incompatible with democracy—or political participation more

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[5] Both the seminal work edited by Guillermo O'Donnell, Philippe Schmitter and Laurence Whitehead, *Transitions from authoritarian rule: prospects for democracy* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1986), and the 4-volume set edited by Larry Diamond, Juan Linz and Seymour Martin Lipset, *Democracy in developing countries* (Boulder, CO: Lynne Rienner, 1988), exclude the Islamic Middle East—the latter explicitly so. Samuel Huntington, among political scientists, and Bernard Lewis, among Orientalist historians, are perhaps the best-known sceptics about the region's chances of democratization. Particularly egregious examples of 'orientalist' negative stereotyping are the work of Daniel Pipes—for instance, *In the path of God: Islam and political power* (New York: Basic Books, 1983)—and David Pryce-Jones, *The closed circle: an interpretation of the Arabs* (New York: Harper & Row, 1989). One comparative work that did include Middle Eastern case-studies (admittedly also showing up the limitations in political liberalization in the cases studied) is Gerd Nonneman, ed., *Political and economic liberalization: dynamics and linkages in comparative perspective* (Boulder, CO: Lynne Rienner, 1996).

[6] Apart from the authors included in the volumes already mentioned, exponents of this renaissance included, among others, Lisa Anderson, Nazih Ayubi, Simon Bromley, Kiren Aziz Chaudhry, Giacomo Luciani, Alan Richards and John Waterbury (politics and political economy); Anoushiravan Ehteshami, Fred Halliday, Raymond Hinnebusch and Bahgat Korany (international relations); and Michael Gilsenan and Sami Zubaida (sociology).

[7] Mark Tessler, ed., *Area studies and social science: strategies for understanding Middle East politics* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1999).

[8] Augustus Richard Norton, ed., *Civil society in the Middle East*, vols 1 & 2 (Leiden: Brill, 1994 & 1995). An excellent if brief summary has been made available in Jill Schwedler, ed., *Civil society in the Middle East: a primer* (Boulder, CO: Lynne Rienner, 1995).

broadly; and that there are both authoritarian and pluralist strands in past and present Islamic socio-political and legal theory as well as practice. Key contributions were those of Krämer,[9] Ayubi,[10] Esposito and Piscatori.[11] These questions were integral also to Salamé's *Democracy without democrats?* volume, and were methodically explored in the first part of an equally seminal project coordinated by Brynen, Korany and Noble, *Political liberalization and democratization in the Arab world*. The first volume, *Theoretical perspectives*, published in 1995, was followed in 1998 by a volume of case-studies which picked up the basic potential explanatory variables identified in the first volume: political culture; political economy; civil society; and international context.[12] Both in the theoretical and the empirical investigations, diverging views remained over the relative importance of these factors and over their precise nature, but I would argue that it is nevertheless possible to discern, in this and the other works referred to already, an implicit consensus on a number of points.

(1) Significant political changes did indeed take place in the 1990s, but the results have been disappointing relative to the expectations at the start of the decade;

(2) The discourse of democracy and pluralism have nonetheless become widespread, although Arab political scientists and commentators have been making a clear distinction between *dimuqratiyya* and *ta'addudiya* (which can mean anything from multipartyism to pluralism)—concluding that while the latter has become more prevalent, the former is still some considerable way off;

(3) In terms of explanations, political culture is seen as playing a role, though not an overwhelming one; crucially, however, it is shown that there is not in fact any such thing as an overarching Arab–Islamic political culture, and that political behaviour and attitudes are to a large extent adaptive to social settings and shaped by political context;[13]

(4) An especially pertinent illustration of this is seen in Islamist politics: 'the self-described Islamist character of a movement tells us nothing useful about its behaviour unless placed in the appropriate political and social context';[14]

(5) Different types of impulses towards liberalization can be identified—from mass pressures (caused by changes in the implicit 'social contract' driven by

[9] Gudrun Krämer, 'Islamist notions of democracy', in Joel Beinin and Joe Stork, eds, *Political Islam* (London: I. B. Tauris, 1997), pp. 71–82.
[10] Nazih Ayubi, *Political Islam* (London: Routledge, 1991).
[11] For instance John Esposito and James Piscatori, 'Democratization and Islam', in *The Middle East Journal* 45: 3 (summer 1992), pp. 427–40.
[12] Rex Brynen, Bahgat Korany and Paul Noble, eds, *Political liberalization and democratization in the Arab world. Volume 1: Theoretical experiences* (Boulder, CO: Lynne Rienner, 1995); Bahgat Korany, Rex Brynen and Paul Noble, eds, *Political liberalization and democratization in the Arab world. Volume 2: Comparative experiences* (Boulder, CO: Lynne Rienner: 1998).
[13] Ibid., pp. 269–71.
[14] Ibid., p. 271—based in large measure on the work of Krämer (especially her 'Islam and pluralism', in Brynen, Korany and Noble, vol. 1, pp. 113–28) along with other case-studies.

state failure, financial crisis, and the effects of globalization–induced economic reform); to external pressures; and, third, voluntary limited reform from above. The last type, while related to the same pressures, has been most in evidence, with regimes taking pre-emptive action to maintain a constituency or create new ones. In addition, special circumstances are also recognized as occasional driving forces, as in the case of Lebanon or Yemen;

(6) The limitations to liberalization so visible in much of the Middle East are explained in terms of two main structural factors. The first lies in the dynamics of rentierism. In the ideal–type rentier state, the state has a large degree of autonomy from society by virtue of external revenue; it delivers 'goods' to the population, demanding little in return except acquiescence. Yet the limits to rentierism were beginning to be recognized already in the 1990s, including by one of the concept's most prominent advocates, Luciani[15]: on the one hand, state resources were declining relative to demands; on the other, it appeared that other factors could cut across the presumed 'no taxation, no representation' implication of the rentier dynamic. The second type of structural explanation contradicts the optimistic assumption found in some strands of democratization studies, that with economic liberalization comes an expansion of the bourgeoisie, which in turn becomes an increasingly significant pressure group for political liberalization. Work by Hinnebusch and others showed that in many cases, the kind of bourgeoisie that was being created did not in fact have an interest in any political opening up beyond that which safeguarded its own economic position and influence: the bourgeoisie was arguably being created by the state, and developed in alliance with it. Liberalization in this context could at best be 'decompression': genuine democratization would threaten the interests both of the regime and of the bourgeoisie.[16] By the same token, the argument goes, the interests of this type of 'bourgeoisie' make it less rather than more likely that full-scale economic liberalization will be pursued: domestic freedom to exploit opportunities is welcomed, as is ability to import—but the threat of real international competition that would result from lifting protection is not.[17]

The most recent work builds on these findings and debates, both through refining the conceptual thinking, and through adding detailed empirical investigations. For the purposes of this article, it seems worth drawing attention in particular to seven, often interlinking, aspects of these contributions.

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[15] Giacomo Luciani, 'Resources, revenues and authoritarianism in the Arab world: beyond the rentier state?', in Brynen, Korany and Noble, vol. 1, pp. 211–28. For his and some others' earlier work on rentier states in the Middle East, see Luciani, ed., *The Arab state* (London: Routledge, 1990).

[16] See e.g. Raymond Hinnebusch, 'Democratization in the Middle East: the evidence from the Syrian case', in Nonneman, *Political and economic liberalization*, pp. 153–68; and Hinnebusch, 'Calculated decompression as a substitute for democratization', in Korany, Brynen and Noble, vol. 2, pp. 223–40.

[17] See Niblock and Murphy, op. cit; and Nonneman, ed., *Political and economic liberalization*.

Structural factors and political economy

The argument on the relevance of structural factors that may allow or inhibit political reform has been developed further. Hinnebusch takes up the question of whether modernization—in all its aspects—brings about political development. He makes a strong case that while it 'does increase the propensity and capacity of the population to participate', and while 'political culture does not immunise Middle Easterners to this universal tendency, if the objective conditions are not right, this attitudinal change is not enough to make for democratization'. Whether or not these conditions are right, he argues, is determined by the political economy and in particular the balance between the state and social forces. Contrary to *political liberalization*, which depends on an alliance of the state with the bourgeoisie, an alliance between the bourgeoisie and the population at large is needed for *democratization* to succeed. In the current political economy of most Middle Eastern states, Hinnebusch argues, changing 'requisites of capital accumulation have forced *authoritarian-populist* states to adopt *post-populist* strategies'—including some liberalization—which may indeed widen the space for civil society, but, he concludes, the new alliance which emerges 'initially leads to a less equal distribution of real influence'. There is 'no necessary positive relation, then, between political liberalization and democratization'. Indeed, contrary to the West, where demands for redistribution came in the context of economic growth, the situation in many late developers is different: 'in scenarios where the demands of citizenship are likely to outrun those of primitive capital accumulation, the former is likely to be sharply constrained until, and if, the latter is accomplished'.[18] Ironically, one possible implication of this argument (probably not Hinnebusch's intention) is that those states which do have sufficient resources available in other forms—*in casu* the oil monarchies—could theoretically have more leeway to allow democratization to proceed. (This would add to other arguments reviewed below, which together paint a more sophisticated picture of monarchical Middle Eastern systems than has until recently been the case.)

Murphy takes this further, putting forth a two-fold argument (not least on the basis of an extensive and thorough study of Tunisia, a country case too long neglected in the literature).[19] On the one hand, internal economic weaknesses combine with the pressure of the international political economy to undercut the regime's existing tools to build legitimacy. Two key tasks in which the state was seen as performing deficiently—and which in its 'corporatist populist' incarnation were central to the state–society bargain—are the role of provider,

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[18] Raymond Hinnebusch, 'Liberalization without democratization in "post-populist" authoritarian states', in Nils Butenschon, Uri Davis and Manuel Hassasian, eds, *Citizenship and the state in the Middle East* (Syracuse, NY: Syracuse University Press, 2000), pp. 123–45: pp. 124–5, pp. 144–5.

[19] Emma C. Murphy, *Economic and political change in Tunisia: from Bourguiba to Ben Ali* (Basingstoke: Macmillan, 1999). Also her 'Legitimacy and economic reform in the Arab world', in Sven Behrendt and Christian-Peter Hahnelt, eds, *Bound to cooperate—Europe and the Middle East* (Gütersloh: Bertelsmann Foundation Publishers, 2000), pp. 311–41.

and that of defending the 'Arab cause'. The falling away of these erstwhile pillars of legitimacy, combined with the painful effects of economic liberalization, explains the need for an adaptive strategy. This may include tactical, limited political reform and/or an attempt to target help on the poorest and/or a strategy where the ruler is differentiated from the regime, with the ruler appearing to stay outside the fray as much as possible. (Again this latter element is reminiscent of some monarchies' success in achieving just that—not least in Morocco and Jordan.) At the same time, however, the corporatist structures in society and politics upon which the system relied are directly affected by economic liberalization: the latter 'reinforces horizontal stratification at the expense of the vertically stratified interest group articulation which provides the political structures of corporatism'. This again forces the regime to look for adaptive strategies including limited political liberalization. Yet such initial liberalizing strategies

become unstuck when the state is forced to choose between its own survival and the emerging popular political demands…State efforts to achieve a balance between limited political openings for its potential allies in economic reform…and its desire to prevent challenges to its own supremacy…result in a disarticulated form of corporatism that cannot be sustained indefinitely.[20]

This conclusion does, in a negative sense, hold out the inevitability, if not the promise, of political change. Other recent work has added a number of positive reasons to believe that structural factors may not necessarily hold back change forever; this work focuses on the varying forms and roles of civil society, and the role of 'agency', in effecting gradual change. In-depth case-studies form the empirical backbone of much of this.

Civil society

The discussion on civil society in the Middle East has finessed two continuing debates. The first concerns the old question about the chances of civil society developing and leading to democratization; the second, in part underpinning the first, centres on what, in fact, *is* civil society. In a thoroughly researched and forcefully written study, benefiting from years of close observation of Yemen's political, social and economic scene, Carapico takes on the still prevalent stereotype that there is something inherent in Arab/Islamic culture that prevents the emergence of a viable civil society.[21] She demonstrates through the Yemeni case—considered too 'primitive' and 'primordial' even by many Arab social scientists to warrant any hopes at all—that a varied and varying civil society is indeed very much alive. Much of the contrary perception among

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[20] Murphy, *Economic and political change in Tunisia*, p. 8.
[21] Sheila Carapico, *Civil society in Yemen: the political economy of activism in modern Arabia* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998).

Middle East specialists, of course, is due to the peculiarly restricted interpretation of the term which often predominates: 'civil society' is equated with modern, legal, formal activity or organization, aiming at the whole polity—as contrasted with the primordialism, parochialism and tradition which are seen as diametrically opposed to these ideals. As Carapico shows in the first chapter, this restricted interpretation is peculiar to students (Arab as well as Western) of the Middle East: among Africanists, for instance, these limitations do not appear to constrict the view. She finds that 'mechanisms rooted in Yemeni culture as well as forms imported from abroad are put to various uses in struggles to improve both welfare and freedom'.[22] Periods of relative opening up, allowing civil society to expand and strengthen, stand out in North, South, and united Yemen. Even though, as Hinnebusch and Murphy would expect, in all three cases civic activity contracted again in the face of repression, 'each period of repression yielded a new regime needful of civic state-building efforts to fortify itself'.[23] Carapico explains this at least in part by the lack of material resources to which the state has access, either from outside backers or from domestic sources—an argument that appears to contradict Hinnebusch's analysis. Yet equally important is the intrinsic vitality of Yemen's civil society, which 'quickly fills any space ceded to it by the state'.[24] Indeed, the state, even when trying to extend its grip, often appears to have little option but to try to co-opt institutions rooted in the civic sphere into its own state-building project; even if this (probably temporarily) reduces their autonomy, the process nevertheless ends up affecting the nature of the state and the polity. Precedents of civic activity become entrenched and are repeated, under persistent pressure from civil society. Yet some specificity is acknowledged: 'Unlike post-colonial states that come with a governmental apparatus, post-revolutionary states that come to power on a wave of popular enthusiasm, or some third-world governments with great-power support, Yemen has to construct a state.'[25] In these circumstances, suggests Carapico, the state-building project is unlikely to succeed without a degree of consent from the governed.

Tétreault's *Stories of democracy*,[26] a rich and detailed study of civil society and politics in Kuwait, shows that a state much richer in resources, and a monarchy to boot, strongly inserted into the international political economy as a supplier of energy to the First World, can also feature very significant space for civil society to develop. Even though structural factors are recognized (following the earlier work of Crystal, for instance), Tétreault stresses the importance of 'agency': 'the capacity of human beings to act, speak, convince and mobilize one another to do something together',[27] as feeding into the expansion of

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[22] Ibid., p. 2.
[23] Ibid., p. 17.
[24] Ibid., p. 207.
[25] Ibid., p. 199.
[26] Mary Ann Tétreault, *Stories of democracy: politics and society in contemporary Kuwait* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2000).
[27] Ibid., p. 7.

'political space' (here she draws in part on Hannah Arendt's description of 'space of appearance'): 'geographic and metaphoric locations within which it is possible for people to invent new identities, relationships and institutions'. The empirical detail she provides lends strong support to the contention that such political space is created by the divergence between state interests and the interests of other groups and institutions; state interests, while not independent of such other interests, nevertheless do not coincide fully. A number of protected spaces give forms of democratic politics a chance to emerge. While the home and the mosque are seen as limited in this sense, their partial role in mobilizing political resources is nevertheless recognized. So is the peculiarly Kuwaiti institution of the *diwaniyya*—a regular gathering of men at the homes of prominent individuals to meet socially and discuss public issues—which became so important in the democracy movement in the emirate in 1989 and 1990. The role of Islamist groups—often seen as incompatible with the secular version of civil society—is viewed instead by Tétreault as similar to the attack of Puritanism (itself hardly 'democratic') on the absolutist state in Europe: 'Puritan believers put themselves in opposition to powerful states…by demanding access to the public sphere of politics and the right to engage with others in defining a moral order that would be authoritatively enforced by the state.'[28] This does, of course, clash with the demands of other groups such as the merchant class (long the main counter-force to Al-Sabah rule). Indeed, there are several different ideologies and strategies for democratization, each group using its own 'myths', 'stories', about the meanings of 'Kuwait', tradition, 'democracy' and 'citizenship' (for the latter, see below). This debate is still continuing in Kuwait, but that it is happening at all should erode the blanket pessimism about the chances for civil society and democratization in the Middle East.

Kuwait, of course, is special in three other ways: it is a city-state—in some ways not dissimilar to the ancient model—a monarchy, and wealthy. The impact of smallness on political climate had already been identified by Springborg and Salamé, among others: small societies invite political participation, and their rulers can hardly suppress the intrinsic plurality by reference to some great regional leadership vision.[29] Wealth, while giving Kuwait's rulers significant autonomy and power, also gave people economic resources, which could be combined with the other available social and international resources to give them an extensive ability to carve out spheres of autonomy.[30] Monarchies, finally, arguably find it easier than other authoritarian systems to adopt adaptive strategies without risking overthrow—a theme I return to below.

Yet pessimistic voices remain very much in evidence—even if such pessimism appears to be most pronounced in the case of large 'republican' states such

[28] Ibid., p. 20.

[29] Patricia Springborg, 'Politics, primordialism and Orientalism', *American Political Science Review* 80: 1 (March 1986), pp. 185–211; Ghassan Salamé, 'Small is pluralistic', in Salamé, ed., *Democracy without democrats*, pp. 84–111.

[30] Tétreault, op. cit., p. 184.

as Egypt, Syria and Iraq. Kazziha, for instance, highlights the nature of political consciousness in the Arab world where, he argues, it derives mainly from the education system and from mass communication and the media. Unlike in the West, the prevalent education systems in the Middle East 'did not provide a breeding ground for the growth of democracy'[31], instead creating a political consciousness which features combinations of submissiveness, narrowness and dogmatism. As for mass communications and media—and especially television, the most important medium—these are state-controlled, and access to satellite television is limited. It is worth qualifying this gloomy view at least at the margins: to name just one exception, Qatar's Al-Jazeera satellite television station has broken through these traditions, and as a consequence has become one of the favourite sources of information in the Arab world (even if avoiding criticism of Qatar's own ruler), however much regional regimes at times fulminate against it.

Elections and legislative politics

Elections in the Middle East have usually been regarded as window-dressing. Yet evolving evidence is bringing alternative views. Ehteshami points out the sharp increase in such elections in the region in the decade since 1989, and that a good number of them have had significant effects—not least in Iran, Algeria, Turkey and Israel. One could of course retort that Algeria's were cancelled, and that Turkey and especially Israel are atypical. On the other hand, one could add the further examples of Kuwait, Qatar, Yemen and Lebanon. Ehteshami himself argues that while regimes largely try to manipulate elections, there may be roots here for 'possible future twists in the relationship between state and civil society, as mediated by the electoral process'.[32] This is a theme developed at length, and with extensive empirical case study research, in *Legislative politics in the Arab world*, by Baaklini, Denoeux and Springborg.[33] Of those countries studied, they show that Egypt is the only one in which the legislature played a less important role at the end of the 1990s than in the 1980s or even 1970s. (It should be noted that they do not include Tunisia, where, Murphy and others make clear, authoritarianism has also eclipsed legislative politics.[34]) There has been, they argue, a gradual but steady shift in political transformation from ideological to procedural concerns; as a consequence, 'the key political debates in Arab countries have been…over the rules that govern political competition'.[35]

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[31] Walid Kazziha, 'Political consciousness and the crisis of political liberalisation in the Arab world', in Behrendt and Hahnelt, eds, op. cit., pp. 342–58: p. 355.

[32] Anoushiravan Ehteshami, 'Power sharing and elections in the Middle East', in Behrendt and Hahnelt, eds, op. cit., pp. 359–75: p. 373.

[33] Abdo Baaklini, Guilain Denoeux and Robert Springborg, *Legislative politics in the Arab world: the resurgence of democratic institutions* (Boulder, CO: Lynne Rienner, 1999).

[34] Murphy, *Economic and political change in Tunisia*; Paul Magnarella, ed., *Middle East and North Africa: governance, democratization, human rights* (Aldershot, Hants: Ashgate, 2000).

[35] Baaklini et al., p. 5.

These rules regulate access to the legislature, influence within it, the legislature's substantive role in policy debate, and the delimitation of its prerogatives relative to the executive branch. Arab parliaments, the authors argue,

> are beginning to take on characteristics reminiscent of the parliaments of Britain and other European countries in the early stages of [their] democratization process. It may well be that these historical precedents, which were gradualist and incremental, are more appropriate than the examples of contemporary Eastern Europe, where change was spawned by the collapse of an empire.[36]

In the Arab world, this evolution, the study argues, is taking place through three stages of negotiated transition: the 'Pact' (*al-mithaq*) between rulers and other groups; the 'National Dialogue' (*al-hiwar*); and the assertion of legislative authority. None have quite made it to a completed third stage, some have not even reached the first, and at times reversals are possible (as would be expected by the structuralist arguments of Murphy, Hinnebusch, Kazziha and others). Yet it is possible, as these authors (and Ehteshami, as above) do, to view these parliaments and elections as increasingly adding to civil society's tools and changing the flavour of politics. Indeed, Baaklini et al. argue that even where the executive attempts to control them, parliaments often contribute to the process of transition. It is possible to rebut the optimistic conclusions attached to this by questioning to what extent these changes go below the surface, and indeed by considering the case of the 'legislature' in Iraq. Yet at the same time, the results of the parliamentary elections in Egypt in November 2000, in which the opposition showed surprisingly good results after the judiciary was able to insist on overseeing the process, do perhaps indicate that a combination of civil society strength and institutional development can in the end make a difference by pushing out the limits of regimes' intended 'reform from above'.

Islam, democracy and human rights

The question over the compatibility of Islam, or Islamist politics, with such progression towards a more democratic dispensation, has been further elaborated in work since 1998. Two excellent reviews of the arguments, by Roberson[37] and Dorraj[38] show yet again that there is indeed nothing in 'Islam' as such that would prevent such an evolution. An illuminating case-study concerns one of the parties most associated with 'Islamic radicalism': Hizbullah of Lebanon. Norton shows that Hizbullah's political platform is pragmatic as much as 'radical', and that its evolution, as well as fluctuating support for it, can only be understood in its socio-political context.[39] A similar case could be made for Hamas in

[36] Ibid., p. 45.
[37] Barbara Roberson, 'Islam and Europe: an enigma or a myth?', in B. Roberson, ed., *The Middle East and Europe: the power deficit* (London: Routledge, 1998), pp. 104–29.
[38] Manochehr Dorraj, 'Islam, governance and democracy', in Magnarella, ed., op. cit., pp. 11–36.
[39] Augustus Richard Norton, *Hizballah of Lebanon: extremist ideals vs. mundane politics* (New York: Council on Foreign Relations, 1999).

Palestine. The most impressive new work, however, is on a different but related issue: the relationship of 'Islam' to 'human rights'. Dalacoura's *Islam, liberalism and human rights* argues that interpretations of Islamic approaches to the idea and practice of human rights should be seen not from the perspective of sacred 'texts' so much as in the socio-political contexts in which various current interpretations have arisen, in particular in the context of the Middle Eastern nation-state as it developed during the twentieth century. In this sense, she picks up where the earlier work of Mayer left off. Mayer focused on sacred texts and a variety of writings by Muslim reformers and legal and political commentators, concluding that, while a range of different interpretations have been put forward, it is the conservative ones, often clashing with the Western conception of human rights as expressed in the UDHR, that have predominated.[40] Dalacoura demonstrates through a number of case-studies of countries and groups, that the explanation for this predominance must be sought not in any 'fundamentals' such as the Qur'an, but in the socio-political context in which these groups found themselves, and within which they had to develop their social and political programmes.[41] This, of course, mirrors exactly what has already been said about *political* 'Islam'.

Citizenship: case-studies of Palestine and the Gulf states

Many of these themes come together in the varying principles and experiences of 'citizenship' in the Middle East. The most important new contributions on citizenship, in the wider context of state–society relations and of the state-building and nation-building imperatives that retain force in much of the Middle East, come in the form of Tétreault's *Stories of democracy*, and the collective volume edited by Butenschon, Davis and Hassassian, *Citizenship and state in the Middle East*. The latter, large, volume is really two-in-one: a set of conceptual and comparative studies on the one hand; and a second part that looks exclusively at the ideals and practice on citizenship in Israel and the Occupied Territories. As Butenschon points out, in the debates on, and search for, 'the good society', too often the question of who this society is meant to include has been overlooked. Questions raised in this volume are therefore not simply about the nature of citizenship but also about how the 'demos' is constituted. Indeed, 'citizenship is a scarce public good that is distributed by the state, a source of collective identity and an instrument of political control…It is the right to have rights.'[42] The questions of who is a citizen and what this citizenship means are intimately related. The examples of Israel and Kuwait illustrate this perhaps most clearly.

Kook shows that, even though Arab Israelis are legally citizens, there is a tension between the universalist and particularist elements of the Israeli state,

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[40] Ann Elizabeth Mayer, *Islam and human rights* (Boulder, CO: Westview, 1991).
[41] Katerina Dalacoura, *Islam, liberalism and human rights* (London: I. B. Tauris, 1998).
[42] Nils Butenschon, 'State, power and citizenship', in Butenschon et al., eds, op. cit., pp. 3–27: p. 5.

which renders the distribution of rights unequal in favour of the Jewish citizens. Ultimately, she argues, neither a 'collective' nor an 'individual' citizenship strategy brings the Arab Israelis genuine inclusion in Israeli society.[43] Palestinian exclusion in Israel is documented in considerable detail by Rosenhek and Shalev in the same volume. Its origins lie in the very nature of the Zionist state-building exercise: contrary to Western experiences, the development of the Israeli welfare state is 'linked to the pattern of Jewish colonization and the evolution of the Arab–Jewish conflict'.[44] Given the events of October and November 2000 in Palestine, one of this study's conclusions gains in interest. Indeed, Israeli Palestinians have, amid all the limitations imposed, nevertheless continued to extract gradual concessions from the state. At the same time, 'the control system that kept the Arabs in Israel quiescent for so long proved to be unsustainable over the long run'—in part because the price of co-opting Arab leaders kept rising, in part because Arab politicians became more adept at using the channels of the Israeli political system.[45] In the dying months of 2000, of course, the crisis sparked in the Occupied Territories brought an end to quiescence also in more forceful ways.

The most recent study documenting Israel's behaviour as an imperial power in its immediate environment is Masalha's *Imperial Israel and the Palestinians*.[46] Yet apart from this international aspect, Israel's relationship to the West Bank and Gaza, and to the Palestinian Authority under Arafat, has also had a major effect on the civil society and democratization questions within the Occupied Territories—including most interestingly since the Oslo agreements of 1993. The ways in which this continues to be the case are analysed in the extensive chapters by Milton-Edwards, Hassassian, and Parker, in the second part of the volume by Butenschon et al.[47] Hassassian rightly points out that one of the consequences of the peace process—only intensified as the latter began to falter—has been the frequent translation of the demand for a 'crack-down on terrorism' by the Palestinian Authority into 'abuse [of] the human and civil rights of the population to service a personal interest and ingratiate a stronger enemy'. Arafat, he points out, has been struggling to please Israel, the US, and his own constituency all at once; writing well before the eruption of the most recent troubles, he concludes: 'it is unlikely that this situation can sustain itself

[43] Rebecca Kook, 'Citizenship and its discontents: Palestinians in Israel', in Butenschon et al., eds, pp. 263–87: p. 267. The distinction between collective and individual strategies reflects the different ways rights are viewed as relating to citizenship. One approach sees citizenship as the best means to confer equal rights on all individuals *vis-à-vis* the state; an alternative view (represented at the academic level by Will Kymlicka, for instance) stresses the importance of group rights.

[44] Zeev Rosenhek and Michael Shalev, 'Palestinian citizenship in Israel', in Butenschon et al., eds, op. cit., pp. 288–315: p. 295.

[45] Ibid., p. 315.

[46] Nur Masalha, *Imperial Israel and the Palestinians: the politics of expansion* (London: Pluto Press, 2000).

[47] Manuel Hassassian, 'Palestinian political culture, civil society and the conception of citizenship' (pp. 246–62); Beverley Milton-Edwards, 'Internal security under the Palestinian National Authority' (pp. 338–67); and Christopher Parker, 'Palestinian National Authority: toward a permanent status' (pp. 368–400)—all in Butenschon et al., eds, op. cit.

for much longer'.[48] This is confirmed in the sophisticated and detailed study by Parker, who highlights the irony that 'the framers of the [Oslo] agreement have called for democracy but have separated it from popular empowerment'. People, he points out, become citizens not by electing a president (*ra'ees*): 'They become citizens when they discover and appropriate the power to throw out a *ra'ees*.'[49] The lack of development on this score, is directly, albeit not solely, linked to the context of the peace process as pursued since 1993. Yet a genuinely stable (as opposed to merely repressed) Palestinian 'space' is in the long run essential to a lasting Palestinian–Israeli peace. The current model, relying both on repression and on a large external input, Parker argues, 'is inherently unstable'.[50] The events since October 2000 bear him out.

Quite different lessons can be drawn from work by Longva,[51] along with Tétreault's book, on civil society in the Gulf states (and especially Kuwait). As Longva puts it, 'citizenship is not an abstract institution that comes with a string of…rights and…responsibilities attached to it; rather, it is a relationship between…individual and state, complexly mediated by ideas of authority, legitimacy and allegiance…[T]hese are cultural constructs subject to social circumstances and historical variations.' In the case of Kuwait, both she and Tétreault lay bare not only the difference between the European and the Kuwaiti conceptualizations of citizenship, but also 'the complexities and variations…[in] the way the different groups in Kuwaiti society understand the concept'.[52] For instance, while urban Kuwaitis (*hadhar*) 'experience citizenship in the context of modernity, with its emphasis on equality and autonomy'[53] and relate it to the territory they inhabit, the *badu* (those viewed as of recent pastoralist descent) or tribes 'understand nationality and citizenship in the sense of *taba'iyya*, which can be translated as the "following" of, or "allegiance" to, a leader'. It is not surprising, then, that the Al-Sabah (and with them several other regimes in societies where a strong tribal/traditionalist element survives) have preferred this latter model to shore up both their own legitimacy and the nation-building exercise. The various conceptualizations and 'stories' thus become the stuff of political competition between rulers and ruled, and among the ruled themselves, over the nature of the state, the 'nation', and the rules that govern its politics. Both studies also show that the sequence familiar since Marshall's classic series of lectures on citizenship in Western Europe—civil rights followed by political rights, then social rights[54]—has been reversed: in Kuwait, social rights came first with the establishment of the modern state; civil rights are not quite yet at

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[48] Hassassian, op. cit., pp. 261–2.
[49] Parker, op. cit., p. 397.
[50] Ibid., p. 399.
[51] Anh Nga Longva, 'Citizenship in the Gulf states: conceptualization and practice', in Butenschon et al., eds, op. cit., pp. 179–97.
[52] Ibid., pp. 179–80; and see Tétreault, op. cit., p. 31 and passim.
[53] Tétreault, op. cit., p. 47.
[54] T. H. Marshall, 'Citizenship and social class', in *Citizenship and social class and other essays* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1950), pp. 1–85.

secularist European levels; and the prospect of comprehensive political rights only recently became more likely.[55]

Monarchies

This work on Kuwait is just one illustration of another very recent trend in the literature: a renewed focus on the phenomenon of Middle Eastern monarchies. In these polities, the general themes discussed above take particular but varying forms. Two other new volumes look at the comparative experiences of Middle Eastern monarchies and their relative strengths and weaknesses, attempting to develop explanations. The volume edited by Kostiner[56] offers a good range of case-studies, but the outstanding contributions are those by Anderson and Krämer.

Anderson[57] continues her earlier work on the subject by exploring 'the utility of monarchy in the process of state-formation and its unusual suppleness in the face of the project of nation-building'. The theoretical political science interest here lies in the fact that 'the study of this relatively uncommon regime type reveals the important intervening role that regime type in general may play in mediating between the…processes of state-formation and nation-building'.[58] Indeed, while the development of nationalism has usually been seen as determined by economic and technological determinants such as industrialization and the development of printing and the media, this connection does not quite hold in the Middle East. Hence, Anderson argues, 'other influences on the contours and trajectory of identity politics'—including regime type—should be studied. She observes, moreover, that monarchy

may also be far better adapted than we have suspected to the complex cosmopolitan world in which diverse communities interact through international finance and trade, labor migration, and global communications. Certainly in the absence of an egalitarian, populist world culture, monarchs can avail themselves of useful experience in balancing varied international and domestic constituencies to draw resources from beyond their putative borders.[59]

Krämer undertakes a comparative study of political Islam in Arab monarchies.[60] She demonstrates that Islamism in these polities (and elsewhere) is less a revolt against modernity than 'a revolt against specific ills and "deviations"—social, cultural, and political—that are identified with modernity as experienced in Middle Eastern societies'.[61] It is clear from the evidence that the precise targets

[55] Longva., op. cit., p. 184.
[56] Joseph Kostiner, ed., *Middle East monarchies: the challenge of modernity* (Boulder, CO: Lynne Rienner, 2000).
[57] Lisa Anderson, 'Dynasts and nationalists: why Middle Eastern monarchies survive', in Kostiner, ed., op. cit., pp. 53–69.
[58] Ibid., p 56.
[59] Ibid., pp. 66–7.
[60] Gudrun Krämer, 'Good counsel to the King: the Islamist opposition in Saudi Arabia, Jordan and Morocco', in Kostiner, ed., op. cit., pp. 257–87.
[61] Ibid., p. 279.

of criticism vary from country to country—even if general themes are recognizable. But even if the very concept of 'monarchy' is sometimes taken as such a target by a few groups, Krämer definitively dispatches the idea still hawked by some[62] that Islam is somehow intrinsically opposed to monarchical rule. At the same time, she points out that the monarchies surveyed (Saudi Arabia, Jordan, Morocco) have not much in common apart from the fact that they are monarchies. Indeed, in Islamist opposition too, 'monarchy is not really the issue…it is not so much the form of government that matters but its ethico–legal foundation and its function'.[63] In other words, it does not matter what the head of state is called, as long as he fulfils his duties as a Muslim ruler.

Herb's *All in the family*[64] is a genuine original. In essence, he makes the case that the key explanatory variable for the survival of those monarchies that did, is that they established 'dynastic rule'—as opposed to merely monarchic rule: they occupied key positions in the state apparatus and remained a coherent ruling group, in part by distribution of benefits among the members, such as compensating those who lose out on the top position(s). The argument is supported by compelling case-studies—including of those monarchies that failed: in Egypt, Libya, Iraq, Iran and Afghanistan. The alternative explanation of 'rentierism' is dismissed. The case is not watertight, or at least not quite complete as an explanation: the Jordanian and Moroccan examples do not fit comfortably (they are largely 'non-dynastic'), and the effect of rentier wealth in the Gulf states is dismissed too easily. The impact of actual regime policy choices, also, is underplayed in this account. Yet no examination of Middle Eastern monarchies can henceforth afford to ignore Herb's contribution (not least because of his comparative examination of intra-dynastic politics).[65]

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[62] Including by the same volume's editor, who asserts: 'monarchical principles were applied without official Islamic legitimacy…The title *malik* (king) was regarded as non-Islamic and therefore unlawful and corrupt' (although he does point out that 'throughout all of Islamic history, Muslim rulers practised…two fundamentals of monarchic rule: individual-absolutist and dynastic-hereditary'). Joseph Kostiner, 'Introduction', in Kostiner, ed., op. cit., pp. 1–12. For corroboration he refers to the chapter by Bernard Lewis, although the latter is not in fact quite so emphatic (Bernard Lewis, 'Monarchy in the Middle East', in Kostiner, ed., op. cit., pp. 15–22).

[63] Krämer, 'Good counsel to the King', op. cit., pp. 279–80.

[64] Michael Herb, *All in the family: absolutism, revolution and democracy in the Middle Eastern monarchies* (Albany, NY: State University of New York Press, 1999).

[65] In the context of the discussion of monarchies and change, it is worth drawing attention to three interesting new publications on Saudi Arabia. Nawaf Obaid, *The oil kingdom at 100* (Washington: The Washington Institute for Near East Policy, 2000), shows that in 1999 and 2000, the kingdom's policy-making system (*in casu* in the oil sector) has been growing more professional. An interesting range of views and analyses on the country is offered in Roberto Aliboni and Daniela Pioppi, eds, *Arabia Saudita Cent'anni: cooperazione, sicurezza, identità* (Rome: Franco Angelli, 2000, for the Istituto Affari Internazionali). And an original study of the attitudes of Saudi youth is by Mai Yamani, *Changed identities: the challenge of the new generation in Saudi Arabia* (London: Royal Institute of International Affairs, 2000). A fourth publication, Sean McKnight et al., eds, *Gulf security: opportunities and challenges for the new generation* (London: Royal United Services Institute, 2000 [Whitehall Papers no. 51]), is mainly concerned with regional security, although it also contains an outline argument by the writer about the need for political adaptation: 'Security and inclusion: regime responses to domestic challenges in the Gulf' (pp. 107–15).

Europe and the Middle East, and the challenge of economic liberalization

Underlying much of the anxiety of regimes and outsiders about socio-political upheaval, and at the same time driving some of the tentative moves towards change, is economic 'globalization' and the corollary need for economic liberalization. The latter is also at the heart of Europe's Mediterranean policy, in the Euro-Mediterranean Partnership Initiative (EMPI). Yet, as a batch of recent publications on 'Europe and the Middle East'[66] shows, the consequences of liberalization if it happens are far from clear. There is an emerging consensus among many of the economists and political economists brought together in these works, that the liberalization measures now being urged on the 'southern Mediterranean' countries, are likely to bring hardship: 'it may not be possible to fully offset any decline in existing manufacturing production and employment by attracting new investment', as one economist puts it.[67] Trade diversion may become larger than trade creation, and because tariffs still vary so widely within the region, additional 'shifting' effects would be added to this.[68] Moreover, EMPI is shown in any case not to be a consistent application of the Washington Consensus principles for the developing world—both because geographically selective trade liberalization may introduce welfare-reducing distortions, and because EMPI goes against the key assumption that resources will be moved into agriculture.[69] Indeed, a recurring complaint from the southern 'partners' and from analysts in these volumes, is precisely that agriculture has been virtually excluded from EMPI, in order to protect Europe's own.

Nor is it at all certain that the envisaged economic liberalization will in fact happen anytime soon—not least because of those fears. The clearest recent statement on this is a forcefully written article by Schlumberger, who highlights 'a structural contradiction between Arab rent-dependent economies and the most fundamental preconditions of market systems'[70]: in such economies, he argues, rational gains–maximizing behaviour does not imply successful competition in an open market so much as competition for the establishment of personalist ties (tying in with the surrounding society, where rent-seeking behaviour has become endemic). Efficiency, in this context, means something quite different from the meaning assumed in economic theory. EU policy-makers, he suggests, have ignored this, thus virtually dooming their political ambitions for EMPI to failure.

[66] George Joffé, ed., *Perspectives on development: the Euro-Mediterranean partnership* (London: Frank Cass, 1999).

[67] Diana Hunt, 'Development economics, the Washington Consensus, and the European–Mediterranean Partnership Initiative', in ibid., pp. 16–38: p. 17. This is a useful review of the 'Washington Consensus' and critiques of it, along with a careful examination of the case of the southern Mediterranean countries.

[68] See especially the chapter by Alfred Tovias, 'Regionalisation and the Mediterranean' in ibid., pp. 75–88, as well as the contributions from Jon Marks, Grahame Thompson and Bernard Hoekman.

[69] See e.g. Hunt, op. cit, p. 30.

[70] Oliver Schlumberger, 'Arab political economy and the European Union's Mediterranean policy: what prospects for development?', *New Political Economy* 5: 2, 2000, pp. 247–68: p. 250.

There is a strong political corollary, then, to the economic liberalization aspect of EMPI—but not in the direction the EU's vision would have it, at least not in the short to medium term. On the one hand, unwillingness to lose political control means regimes are likely to limit economic liberalization; on the other, when they do find themselves obliged to adopt measures to open up the economy, they are likely to introduce some political decompression but then gradually reintroduce repressive measures in order to cope with the socio-political reverberations.[71] Murphy suggests there is a chance that 'a state which can make economic liberalization work sufficiently speedily to supply a general increase in living standards to offset negative side effects, may be able to contain opposition within a competitive political system without facing real challenges to itself'.[72] Since Middle Eastern states remain largely stuck in the rentier and/or statist political economy of the past, and the political culture that this has engendered, and since in any case EMPI as currently conceived is unlikely to produce the desired effects, that scenario does not seem an early prospect.

Security was undoubtedly the central concern for Europe's policy-makers in developing their Mediterranean policy: stabilize Middle Eastern economies and polities in order to avoid 'spill-over' effects for Europe, and establish a regional security arrangement or at the very least an understanding. For the former goal, economic and political reform were judged to be necessary. Economic reform, however, seems unlikely to proceed as hoped, and the EU has not been willing to put the political aspect at the heart of its approach (except in a declaratory way). Given that, moreover, the regional aspects of security intertwine both with domestic politics and with the festering Palestine problem (where the EU has been unwilling to do much more than making funds available), it seems inevitable that a regional security dialogue can do little more than scratch the surface. One of the new volumes on the subject, edited by Brauch, Marquina and Biad,[73] seems to reflect this partial blindness in European policy. The book focuses on the technical detail and jargon of what kinds of Confidence Building Measures (CBMs) and security dialogues have been attempted and would be desirable. It pays little attention to the very real problems in the politics and political economy of the region that, along with the Palestine problem, lie at the root of the difficulties causing insecurity. Ironically but inevitably, the editors and several contributors end up suggesting, implicitly if not explicitly, that little has been achieved; nor is there much that is new and possibly effective in the proposals put forward. Tellingly, it is two Arab contributors who draw attention to this vacuum, pointing out also the suspicion with which many on the southern side of the partnership see EMPI.[74] One of them sums up the reason

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[71] See Murphy, 'Legitimacy and economic reform', op. cit.; the detailed case-study of Tunisia in Murphy, *Economic and political change in Tunisia*, op. cit.; Azzam Mahjoub, 'Social feasibility and the costs of the free trade zone', in Joffé, ed., op. cit., pp. 121–9.

[72] Murphy, *Economic and political change in Tunisia*, op. cit., p. 40.

[73] Hans Brauch, Antonio Marquina and Abdulwahab Biad, eds, *Euro-Mediterranean partnership for the 21st century* (Basingstoke: Macmillan, 2000).

[74] Abdulwahab Biad, 'The debate on CBMs in the Southern Mediterranean', in ibid., pp. 115–28; and Bechir Chourou, 'Security partnership and democratization', in ibid., pp. 163–88.

why at the moment a genuine dialogue cannot take place: 'the North lacks credibility, the South lacks legitimacy'.[75]

By contrast, the three volumes edited, respectively, by Roberson,[76] Behrendt and Hahnelt,[77] and Joffé,[78] do address all the key issues head-on, from domestic Middle East politics to the domestic and international political economy questions involved, from the Palestine question to the differences in US and European attitudes, and from the difficulties of Arab (and Middle Eastern) regional integration, to the lack of unity and appropriate decision-making structures in the EU itself [79]—without neglecting the regional security question either. Some of the contributions to these volumes have been referred to earlier, and the space is lacking here to do justice to the rest, but for policy-makers and academic analysts alike, they are both accessible and thoroughly recommended reading.[80]

Conclusion

In conclusion, a combination of political-economic and related political-culture factors, added to by the Arab–Israeli conflict, continues to hamper political and economic development in the Middle East. European policy as currently conceived is not likely to make much of a dent in this. Yet at the same time, the research conducted over the past decade shows that the picture need not be wholly bleak. Globalization in both economics and information does change the world in which Middle Eastern regimes are having to function, while at the same time offering civil society new tools. Even European initiatives such as EMPI may, especially if amended (not least by including agriculture!), add both to such pressures and tools. Middle Eastern societies do, to varying extents, possess the necessary 'spaces' and traditions for human 'agency' to escape the constraints of domestic and international 'structures' and evolve new political cultures—including democratic ones. This can be facilitated by the existence of institutions, such as legislatures and judiciaries, which were initially established or controlled by regimes but may acquire a volition of their own and/or be used as yet more such tools for civil society. There is nothing in 'Islam' that should run counter to such possibilities. And monarchies might yet be among the most successful in coping with such change. None of this, however, is likely to happen swiftly or without at least some instances of upheaval.

[75] Chourou, op. cit., p. 187.
[76] Roberson, *The Middle East and Europe*, op. cit.—a superb collection of articles.
[77] Behrendt and Hahnelt, *Bound to cooperate*, op. cit.—containing parts on security structures; the peace process; EU and US foreign policy and policy-making; and on 'Transformation and legitimacy'.
[78] Joffé, ed., *Perspectives on development*, op. cit.—which, as the title indicates, focuses mainly on the economic and developmental questions and possibilities associated with EMPI, while strongly bringing out the related political dynamics.
[79] On the latter, see a particularly incisive contribution by Jörg Monar, 'Institutional constraints on the EU's Middle East and North Africa policy', in Behrendt and Hahnelt, op. cit., pp. 209–43: a must-read case-study in foreign policy analysis.
[80] An extensive review of the four volumes mentioned here is forthcoming in *Mediterranean Politics* 6:2 (summer 2001).

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