Theories of Authoritarianism in the Middle East and North Africa

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Abstract

The Middle East started to modernize in the 1950s. Western scholars expected the Middle East to democratize as well. Large parts of Africa and Asia had both modernized and democratized. It seemed only logical to assume that the Middle East would democratize as well. However, the Middle East never really did democratize. The authoritarian regimes of the Middle East proved to be resilient to political change. Various theories were developed to explain the sustenance of Arab authoritarianism. An overview of the historical development of the various theories has not been written until now. It is the purpose of this study to give such an overview and offer an analysis of the various theories. The research question is therefore: How has the debate regarding authoritarian resilience in the Middle East and North Africa (MENA) developed over the years? The research question will be answered using the historical method. This study finds that the debate has developed from theories espousing cultural / religious explanations to the rentier state theory and at last turned into the authoritarian resilience theory. The different theories find that the legitimacy of a regime is the key to the sustenance of its authoritarianism. Over time, Middle Eastern regimes used different strategies to gain legitimacy and keep it. The various theories describe these different strategies and show how Middle Eastern authoritarianism could be sustained for so long.

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Introduction

In 1950 Balgat, a small village in Turkey, eight kilometers from Ankara, was a sleepy grey town where nothing happened. There was no direct road to Ankara. The indirect route took about two hours, but few people ever took it. The whole town had just one radio, owned by the chief. Most of the men worked on the land. They wore woolen clothes and few people ventured beyond the town's borders. Nor did anyone ever dream or think of leaving Balgat. Only the grocer could imagine living someplace else. The shepherd, on the other hand, threatened to kill himself if he ever had to move (Lerner 1958, 19-42).

Four years later, the town had irrevocably changed. Everybody had a radio. People wore modern outfits and neckties. There was a direct road from Balgat to Ankara, with a regular bus line. Balgat had even become a part of greater Ankara and the chief had consequently lost his position of power. Most of the land had been sold or rented and men worked in Ankara as factory workers. Balgat had ceased to be a traditional society and was on its way to become a modern society (Lerner 1958, 19-42).

This was not just a modern society, but a modern one based on the Western example. For the West had become very powerful in the nineteenth and twentieth century with the onset of the industrial revolution. Its technologies were more advanced than anything offered by other cultures. Its armies were more powerful and conquered large swaths of the known world. Its economies became the envy of the world. Western society turned from being rural and agrarian to being urban and industrial in less than a century. The process describing this societal change is called modernization, meaning not only a change in society but also in people. The result was a society very different from its traditional, agrarian roots. A modern society is characterized by technological innovation, specialized forms of labor, full-scale bureaucracies, universal education, mass political participation, an increase in state power and economic growth. Modern people were characterized by their belief in science over religion or tradition, their confidence in their own opinions and their ambitions and desires. They regarded the new as better than the old, the exotic or foreign as more interesting than the known and embraced a variety in lifestyles, environments and situations. According to the modernization theorists modern man not only longed for change, he acquired the capacity to adapt to the changing environment. Where traditional man remained steadfast in his allegiance to the proven and the known, modern man sought new

ventures and situations (Rustow 1967, 3-5; Mcgrath & Martin 2012, 5; Pipes 1981, 99; Lerner 1958, 43-52; Rogan 2009, 96-99).

The success of the West made other countries emulate it. However, the question was what to emulate precisely? Pipes argues that modernization is about becoming rich and powerful. Economic growth and innovation are the hallmarks of modernization. Besides an example of economic growth and innovation, the West also offered a "modern" Western culture. It developed modern fashions, music, and thought with regard to democracy, rationalization and secularization. These forms of Western culture were all part of Western society, but not necessary for acquiring economic growth and innovation. However, emulating the West by introducing "modern" innovations, did not always work smoothly. Especially the copying of Western culture led to friction, as secularism clashed with the central position of religion in MENA (Middle East and North Africa). To Pipes, the copying of Western culture is not required for successful modernization. A country can be ruled by a religious dictator and still modernize. However, not all modernization theorists agree with Pipes. They find that democracy and modernization are linked. Lerner, for example, finds that democracy is the 'cherry on the pie of modernization' (Pipes 1981, 105-107).

The debate on modernization, democratization, and MENA started in the 1950s. Early scholars discussed how MENA would modernize as well as democratize. They believed that like other authoritarian countries MENA would democratize as well. However, MENA did not fulfill these expectations. Democracy was popular but almost all MENA states remained authoritarian, with few exceptions, such as Turkey, which implemented a parliamentary system. Iran, is another exception as its political system is a mixture of a theocracy and a democracy. Moreover, Iran's political system has been completely changed by the revolution in 1979. Consequently, Iran and Turkey will be left out when discussing the enduring authoritarianism in MENA. All other MENA countries can be considered Arab, for they share both the Arab language and the Arab culture. These Arab MENA countries are, except for Tunisia, authoritarian to this day (note: when referring to MENA countries, I refer to the Arab countries excluding Turkey and Iran). The challenge is to explain this enduring Arab authoritarianism.

Over the years, many different theories have been developed to explain the lack of political change. Some theorists attribute the persistence of the authoritarian MENA regimes to Middle Eastern culture and Islam. Others blame the failed political liberalization and economic reforms in the 1990s. Again, others argue that authoritarianism persists because regimes use extensive repression to silence their opponents. A fourth group argues that the cause of enduring authoritarianism lies in the weakness of

civil societies in MENA. Finally, alternative theories focus mostly on the effect of inclusion by means of patronage of specific social groups on the government's authoritarian nature (Jebnoun, 2004).

The theories focusing on the persistent character of authoritarianism can be grouped together to form a new theory called 'authoritarian resilience theory'. The authoritarian resilience theory focuses on explaining how authoritarian MENA regimes have managed to remain in power and ward off all the different challenges that civil society, social movements, technological innovation, and foreign pressure posed (Jebnoun, 2004).

Over the years, as the various MENA regimes maintained their power, authoritarian resilience theorists grew increasingly confident. Their vision on MENA governments was that these governments were impossible to topple. MENA would therefore remain under the yoke of authoritarian regimes for a long time. Heydemann for example, argued in 2007 that: "The unmaking of authoritarianism, in the Arab world, if it occurs at all, will follow a different course [from that of Latin America]. It will probably be less dramatic, more ambiguous, and slower" (Heydemann 2007, 35). The Arab Spring, however, proved them wrong. The Arab regimes were confronted with protests and cries for democratization. Most regimes managed to withstand the protests, some came crashing down. Whatever happened, authoritarian resilience theorists experienced a serious setback: they had not foreseen the Arab Spring.

This brings me to the purpose of my thesis. I would like to offer an overview of the debate on the authoritarian resilience theory, its inception and how it dealt with the Arab Spring. In order to do so, I will take a step back and first discuss modernization theory, which in the 1950s linked modernization to democratization. I will continue my analysis with the different explanations that arose to explain the persistence of authoritarian rule after the 1950s, when the expectations of democratization in MENA failed to materialize. I will demonstrate how all these theories came together in the authoritarian resilience theory and end with the confrontation of the Arab Spring. The relevance of the thesis lies in the fact that currently there is no analysis of the background of the authoritarian resilience theory. Moreover, an overview of the major theories explaining the survival of the Arab authoritarianism is also lacking. This is surprising because these theories have affected the Western understanding of MENA and have influenced both European and US policy toward MENA region, for example, by investing in civil society. My main research question therefore is: How has the debate regarding authoritarian resilience in MENA developed over the years?

This research question will be split in three sub-questions: (1) How does modernization theory explain the relationship between modernization and democratization? 2) how has the persistence of authoritarian rule in MENA been explained by the major theories preceding the authoritarian resilience theory? 3) how has the persistence of authoritarian rule in MENA been explained by the authoritarian resilience theory? The first sub-question will be addressed in chapter 1, the second will be addressed in chapters 2-4, while the third sub-question will be addressed in chapters 5 and 6. In the conclusion I will round up the preceding chapters and answer the research question.

I will discuss these questions by using the historical method. A large part of the thesis will be devoted to the academic debate that led to the authoritarian resilience theory. I will discuss books and articles by scholars, whose theories have been influential in authoritarian resilience theory, and authoritarian resilience theorists.

Chapter 1

Modernization theory

In this chapter, I will address the development of the modernization theory over the years. To this end, I will discuss the views of various authors on how modernization is achieved, its effects on society and politics and its role in MENA. I will also give some background information necessary for understanding modernization in MENA.

The two main inventors of the modernization theory are Daniel Lerner and Martin Lipset. Both regarded Western society as modern and democratic and a universal example to other societies, such as MENA. In MENA, countries were modernizing but had not yet achieved full modernization in the 1950s. In the 1950s, MENA society was in general rural, mostly illiterate, 'non-participatory' and 'unchanging'. Lerner and Lipset believed that traditions and beliefs kept it from transforming itself and that most of its population did not desire change. Ordinary people had no influence on politics, nor were they supposed to have opinions on politics. The West in the 1950s, on the other hand, was continually changing, industrially, in urban development, in literacy and in participatory politics. Its population had well-considered opinions and played a role in politics, and were willing to transform themselves and their society (Lerner 1958, 19-21).

Lerner and Lipset on the participatory society

For Lerner and Lipset, modernization and democratization are intimately linked. Lerner understands modernization to consist of three phases. The first stage is that of urbanization, which is the result of industrialization and the migration of people, looking for work, from the rural areas to cities (Lerner 1958, 19-21, 50 - 61). The second stage is that of literacy. As a result of urbanization and industrialization the population of cities grows, creating a need for impersonal forms of communication. The people are required to read and write for they must be able to read impersonal forms of communication such as notifications, road signs, newspapers and to work on advanced industrial processes that require literacy. Once they are literate, they are capable of both consuming and producing mass media. The third stage consists of media participation. Mass media show people new

things to desire, new roles to play and different aspects of human life. They also create empathy "the capacity to see oneself in the other fellow's situation" (Lerner 1958, 50). These new roles and things together with the notion of empathy allow people to imagine themselves in these new roles. By doing this, people develop opinions on how these roles should be fulfilled. Then they start to act on their desires and on their opinions, for example, by expressing their opinions on politics in the form of protests. Thus, Lerner finds that modern and participatory (democratic) society develops because of mass media and an attitude of empathy. This eventually leads to a full-fledged democracy, the crown of the participation society, where people fully participate in society and politics (Lerner 1958, 49-51, 60 – 62, 64).

Unlike Lerner, Lipset regarded psychological attitudes and the mass media as not very relevant for the development of a modern, participatory society. Instead he regarded economic growth and development to be the decisive factors. The relationship, suggested by Lerner, between urbanization, literacy, media and the emergence of participant society could be ascribed to the uplifting of the poor, and the transition from an agrarian to an industrial society, which he called modernization. To the poor, urbanization, industrialization and economic development means becoming middle class and gaining a higher income, greater economic security and improved education. This will allow them to develop long-term perspectives and more gradualist and complex views of politics suitable to democracy. Education is especially an important precondition for democracy as it expands one's horizons. Also, a higher education is correlated with an increase in belief in democratic values and support of democratic practices. Thus, economic development is a key to democracy, as part of the poor will be uplifted and turned into a middle class, which is inclined to support democracy (Lipset 1959, 75 – 86).

This idea of economic development and uplifting of the poor classes into a middle class is the central theme of Lipset's essay. A society with a high level of inequality, a large percentage of poor and a small elite government will usually become either an oligarchy (where the elite rules) or a tyranny (where a dictator popular with the masses rules) (Lipset 1959, 75, 83, 86).

Additionally, Lipset also connects the wealth of a society to the presence of 'civil society', defined as the total of non-governmental associations (NGO's) created by citizens which represent their interests. He assumes that when people are wealthier and better educated they are likely to group together in NGO's or professional associations. These associations are a necessary part of democracy for they form a

countervailing power against the state or any other major political power; are both source and disseminator of new ideas, especially oppositional ideas, help increase people's interest in politics, and train people in the skills required for politics (Lipset 1959, 84).

Nevertheless, even when civil society, economic development and high educational standards are in place, the stability of a government and its road to democracy are not assured. It also depends on *legitimacy*, which "involves the capacity of a political system to engender and maintain the belief that existing political institutions are the most appropriate or proper ones for the society". Groups or organizations that are part of a society will regard this society's political system as legitimate or illegitimate depending on the extent to which their primary values correspond to the values of the prevailing system (Lipset 1959, 86-87).

Crises of legitimacy occur usually when the political system changes and the values of important groups and organizations are not recognized in the new system, or if new important groups emerge that do not fit into the system (Lipset 1959, 87-91). In case of MENA, a crisis of legitimacy occurred in Iran, when in 1979 it became an Islamic republic, communists did not feel represented by the overly religious government and clashed with the new regime. On the other hand, many Iranian religious scholars had felt alienated from the monarchy and strongly identified with the new Islamic republic (Axworthy, 2013).

Lerner and Lipset were not without critics. Rustow criticized them for regarding the modern participatory society as the result of cultural/economic and social factors such as empathy and economic growth. He feels that they neglected the influence of the political system/power holders on these factors. He also argues that both Lerner and Lipset were wrong in constructing a linear path to democracy as represented by the three phases of modernization upheld by Lerner. Rustow finds the notion of a linear or step-wise democratization track to be unrealistic. Instead, countries can remain or even become authoritarian while modernizing. They can regress or take a different development route. This critique will be discussed when we come to discussing Huntington elsewhere in this chapter (Rustow 1967, 8, 143-146, 227).

Rustow (1967) also criticized Lipset's theory for not being able to conclude whether economic development or education are the main factors leading to democracy, or whether a democracy leads to economic and educational development. Not satisfied with simply criticizing others, Rustow developed his own theory of modernization and democratization. He split the process of modernization from that of democratization. In Rustow's view these are two separate processes, unlike the views posed by

Lerner and Lipset. He regards modernization as a process entailing the development of man into a technological and rational being, while democratization is about creating an egalitarian society where every man/woman has equal rights in determining the political process. Modernization is a precondition for democratization, but democratization is not a necessary outcome of modernization. He adds another precondition to both processes: both can only occur in a nation-state, the nation-state combines a sufficient and similar number of people for proper industrialization and centralization, essential features of modernization. Rustow finds there are three conditions underlying the successful modernization of a group of people in a nation state.

First is the identity condition, according to which a group must recognize who is part of its community and it must agree on its common territory. A shared sense of identity allows for predictable behavior, complementary interests and mutual trust--- a recipe for nationality. Second is the authority condition, according to which the group should be willing to accept a significant amount of authority from the government, for a government needs power to fulfill citizens' demands for public services. Third is the equality condition, according to which the group should be able to participate in its common affairs on an equal basis, for without equality and participation there cannot be a proper industrialized, modern nation-state. Equality and participation are necessary conditions for innovation and the foundation of modernization, as they enhance cooperation between people and improve group performance. The more equality and participation in a nation-state, the better the group cohesion, or in case of a nation-state the cohesion of the population, for modernization depends on communication and innovation (Rustow 1967, 29-31, 35-36, 144).

These three conditions are interdependent. Authority can be accepted when there is a shared identity among the citizens, as happens when they share a 'common' cultural and linguistic unity. On the other hand, a certain amount of authority is required to create a shared identity between citizens. A national language, for instance, must be imposed by the state. The same applies to authority and equality, when lower classes without access to the government demand political participation, it requires a strong government to accept these demands and enforce the required changes. A lack of equality exposes a regime to a challenge of its authority. These can, however, not be developed simultaneously. Usually instilling respect for authority comes first, acquiring a shared identity second, and introducing an egalitarian political system last (Rustow 1967, 122-127). Introducing an egalitarian political system is part of democratization. Rustow divides the process of democratization in three parts: 1) A preparatory phase, where a serious, entrenched conflict between two parties is started; 2) a decisional phase, where

the conflict, and its idea of diversity, is institutionalized and united in the form of democracy; 3) a habituational phase, where the nation learns to live with democracy and sticks to it (Rustow 1970, 350-351).

Modernization in MENA

At first sight MENA modernized along the lines of Lerner's and Lipset's theories between the 1950s and the 1970s. People flocked to the cities, literacy rates increased tremendously, the amount of school going children approaching 100 percent in some countries, newspapers became somewhat popular, radios and television later on became very popular and exposed the Arabs to new ideas and promoted greater participation in society. Furthermore, the average annual Arab GDP growth was around 6 per cent between 1958 and 1965 (Moghadam 2010, 19; Yousef 2004, 96-97; Koren 2012, 219, 224, 227; Ridolfo 2012, 235; Rubin, 240-241, 244-245)

However, Lerner's and Lipset's expectations for the development of a politically participatory society were not fulfilled, despite the Arab people's desire for democracy. MENA regimes were authoritarian and only paid lip service to civil and political rights such as the freedom of expression and the right to vote and establish political parties. The seemingly successful modernization accompanying the rise of authoritarian regimes seemed to confirm Rustow's division between modernization and democratization. However, the seemingly successful modernization did not lead the authoritarian Arab regimes to become beacons of stability, as MENA suffered 36 (successful and attempted) coup d'états between 1936 and 1966. Political assassinations and governmental repression were common. As a result, Arab politics was both volatile and autocratic (Hudson 1977, 2-4).

Hudson, legitimacy and the nation-state

Michael Hudson continued the debate on the authoritarian nature of MENA regimes in his influential book *Arab Politics*. He argues that the lack of legitimacy causes the unrest in MENA. nation states (1977, 2-4). His research aims at understanding the reasons for this lack of legitimacy. Following Rustow, he finds that the Arab states had not successfully fulfilled the different preconditions of creating a viable nation-state, namely forming a common identity, imposing respect for authority and introducing a large

measure of equality between citizens. The failure to pass these phases successfully limited the modern character of the Arab states. It especially limits the participatory society, which like Lerner and Lipset, Hudson regards as an essential part of the modernization process. The lack of a participatory society in MENA causes the lack of legitimacy.

In his book, Hudson is the first to give an elaborate analysis of the reasons for the failure of the Arab states to modernize successfully. Hudson focuses on the role of Arab culture in this process. He describes how many MENA countries had long been part of the Ottoman Empire and how after its fall MENA was split in many different nation-states. Most of these, except for Turkey and Iran, were Arab. Hudson regards this shared identity of Arabness as an important cultural explanation for the modernization failure. The notion of "Arabness" contains both an ethnic and a religious dimension. The ethnic dimension consists of the Arab language and culture. The religious dimension is Islam as Arab culture is predominantly Islamic. According to Hudson, Islam has pervaded Arab society. It is taught extensively in schools, and Islamic charities and rituals such as prayer and the Friday prayer constitute core elements of society. Islam creates a form of brotherhood before God. Islam created a complete social system in which all are invited to submit to God and become equal followers of God, adherents to an Islamic ethical system, awaiting God's rewards and punishments (Hudson 1977, 2-4, 38-55).

Yet, the fall of the Ottoman Empire allowed for the fracture of the ethnic dimension as the Ottoman Empire was split MENA to emerge, splitting the region into 18 different nation-states. The cohesion of the ethnic Arab identity was now undermined by the borders of the different states. Some of the citizens of most of these states considered themselves Arab, but of a Syrian or Jordan kind. Others still longed for the abolition of the different nation-states and the creation of a united Arab country. Again, others considered themselves foremost Muslims or tribal members rather than citizens of a nation state. As a result, one of the core preconditions of modernization---a common identity---was difficult to achieve. In addition, modernization had undermined the idea of equality which was so central to Arabism and Islam. Economic modernization had made some rich, others poor, and the increased awareness of social inequality threatened to destroy the Islamic notion of brotherhood and solidarity. Lastly, the presence and integration of minority communities, such as the Kurds and the Shi'is, was and remains difficult in the newly established Arab nation-states. Thus, Hudson argues that common identity is undermined by national diversity, social inequality, and ethnic diversity (Hudson 1977, 55-59, 128).

The role of the second precondition for modernization—authority--- is even more complex in Arab countries. Almost all Arab regimes have encountered challenges to their authority. In line with his culturalist approach Hudson regards the clash between traditional and modern forms of authority as an important element. It is therefore important to take a look at his analysis of this clash. According to Hudson, traditional Arab MENA authority has four dimensions: 1) patriarchal; 2) consultative; 3) Islamic and; 4) feudal (Hudson 1977, 83-84).

The patriarchal dimension of authority derives from the importance of kinship based on the family and the clan. The importance of kinship is expressed in the Arab saying: "I and my brother against my cousin; I and my cousin against the outsider". The authoritarian father or leader is a central figure who demands obedience from his family and followers who lack power of initiative and agency (Hudson 1977, 84-88). Consultation goes back to the Arab tribal political traditions which require that a new leader is approved by the male members of his tribe. The leader is accountable to his fellow tribesmen and he is obliged to consult his fellow tribesmen before taking major decisions. Consultation, however is not democratic in the modern sense. It is not based on equal participation. Patriarchs of influential families are more important than those of less influential families, and age and gender play a role as well. Nevertheless, consultation limits unlimited authority (Hudson 1977, 88-91). The Islamic dimension determines the relations between rulers and their subjects. Islam does not recognize the difference between church and state and prescribes rules for political rule. Paradoxically, according to Hudson, Islam allows for both absolute rule in case of the caliphs and sultans, with the caliph above the common people, as well as equality between people. Furthermore, Islam allows religious leaders and organizations to play an influential role in the political system (Hudson 1977, 91-99). As the last factor in influencing the transition from traditional to modern society, Hudson regards feudalism as important. The important difference with Europe is that in MENA landholders only loaned their land from the Ottoman Sultan and were therefore not particularly interested in developing it economically. With the onset of the modern era, rich landowners expanded their activities to trade and industry but their power at the same time hampered their development. Moreover, rural poverty became a tremendous drain on the resources of the Arab economies because it led to huge divisions in wealth and underdevelopment of the population (Hudson 1977, 99-103).

Hudson contrasts these traditional forms of authority with the modern form of authority in democracy, and modern political ideologies such as liberalism and socialism. Modern political notions of identity and

authority are embraced by large sections of the population, who long for democracy and freedom. Yet, in MENA, no effective structure exists to represent the will of the people or in fact to ascertain the will of the people. The arrival of these structures is encumbered by the traditional forms of identity and authority. Local and kinship forms of identity are at odds with the modern notion of nationalism and the formation of a unified people. Patriarchal, Islamic and feudal forms of authority are at odds with modern authority based on 'the will of the people'. In the traditional forms of authority and identity people are not equal, their worth or influence depends on factors as age, sex and tribe. For Hudson lack of political, social, and economic equality and the limitations of political representation, are the main impediments to achieving legitimacy for Arab countries (Hudson 1977, 4, 103-106).

Essentially, the legitimacy issue is caused by the desire of the people for democracy and freedom and the lack of institutions that allow the prospering of democracy and freedom. Arab authoritarian regimes are unwilling to allow political participation and freedom as it could pose a threat to their political power. In the absence of actual political participation, the will of the people remains unknown and modern forms of authority where the people are consulted have not emerged. On the contrary, according to Hudson, traditional authority is still dominant in the Arab world and the struggle between these two systems is ongoing. As a result, the Arab world is stuck midway in between two incompatible systems of authority, one traditional and one modern, both delegitimizing the other. Moreover, the lack of reform has created political cynicism and disappointment among the Arab people (Hudson 1977, 4, 103-106).

Hudson points out another contradiction in Arab politics. While on the one hand Arab authoritarian leaders themselves express the need for political participation in their endeavor to appear modern, they do not implement the necessary reforms to enhance political participation. One of the problems of implementing these is that the rulers are unwilling to dismantle the mechanisms that support their power. The constant fear of others gaining power causes the authoritarian leaders to limit the room for opposition and political participation. This in turn, creates civil unrest and instability, leading to more repression. According to Hudson it is very difficult to break this vicious circle. Democratic political structures can only be created with the greatest difficulty in instable environments. Therefore, Arab society finds itself in a conundrum between political participation, political structures, instability that is not easily solvable (Hudson 1977, 395).

Modernization and the role of social forces

Huntington agrees with Hudson on the nature of this conundrum. Yet, Huntington takes the debate on the transition from tradition to modernity to a new level, although he does not address MENA directly. Huntington and Hudson both recognize that modernization and new concepts and practices of authority and society clash with traditional practices of authority and legitimacy. They both agree that modernization changes people's demands and expectations of their government. Huntington also agrees with Lerner and Lipset that modernization leads to an increase in political awareness and the creation of opinions. He differs from them, however, on the effects of this increase. Huntington argues that an increase in political awareness may be dangerous, as it leads to disorder and political instability, when it is not accompanied by an increase in political structures, defined as institutionalization, i.e. the development of political institutions such as parliaments and associations, which channel political participation. To satisfy the needs and requirements of modernization these appropriate political structures are necessary. However, changes in consciousness and demands for participation undermine traditional political authority, legitimacy, and political institutions and complicate the process of building new institutions and political associations. Thus, in Huntington's opinion disorder and instability are caused by differences in the speed of development between political awareness and political institutions (Huntington 1968, 1-5).

In order to develop successfully and adjust to modernity, traditional political institutions must change in two ways. First, the bureaucratic system should be able to introduce reforms, i.e. using state institutions to promote both social and economic development in education, communication, infrastructure, the secularization of public life, and the rationalization of relations of authority. To achieve this, a strong central government is required. Second, the political system must be able to incorporate new social groups created during the modernization process, such as urban (factory) workers, who want to participate in the political system. If these demands are not met, the system may succumb to civil strife. Reform can lead to a democracy with a multi-party parliamentary system (Huntington 1966, 766-769).

Successful participation of new social groups in the political system depends on the receptivity of both the old power elite and political institutions which must be able to absorb and accommodate new social groups outside the power structure. The elite must be flexible and be willing to adjust their values and claims. In exchange, new social groups must participate and compromise as well, to gain power. Thus, Huntington finds that system receptivity is based on group adaptability and compromising. This is not an

easy process. Traditional power elites, in MENA, such as the *ulema* (religious scholars) or king, are often unwilling to compromise and share power (Huntington 1966, 767-769).

Creating new political institutions requires far reaching reforms, which are usually legitimized by the authority of the ruler. In case of MENA, often a monarch. Traditionally, the monarch's authority is based on traditional institutions such as the monarchy itself and kinship in general. Thus, far reaching reforms depend on the sustenance of these institutions because without them the ruler's authority is gone as is the legitimacy of his reforms. Yet, modernization threatens these same institutions by producing popular demand for political influence. Huntington believed that if the monarchy is to survive the process of modernization it must develop modern participatory political institutions which can accommodate new social groups. Eventually the monarch will be forced to introduce a multi-party system with elections and become a constitutional monarchy. Only in this way can the monarchy acquire legitimacy in a modernizing society. The monarch, however, is often not very eager to hand in political power. This creates a difficult situation as the development of political institutions is crucial, because they are necessary for the incorporation of social groups (Huntington 1968, 166-169; Hudson 1977, 395).

The monarch's own lust for power, however, is not the only impediment to the creation of modern political structures. As modernization in consciousness goes faster than the institutional adaptation it can lead to civil unrest, which in turn hampers reform. Even if the monarch might want to assimilate the social forces and allow for political participation the practical difficulties to create viable and strong political institutions are enormous. Moreover, in the face of strong opposition, the monarch will be afraid of losing his power. In such circumstances he will apply repression, thus creating an alienated and anti-systemic opposition. The result is an impasse. The government has to muddle through and unrest remains (Hudson 1977, 162, 395; Huntington 1968, 5). Examples of such an impasse in the modernization process are Morocco under King Hassan II (1961-1991) and Jordan under King Hussein (1952-1999). Huntington expected these monarchies to disappear in the modernization process.

thirty years later we know that this scenario did not (yet) unfold. Although the monarchies of Iraq and Egypt succumbed to military coups d'états in 1952 and 1958, most Arab monarchies that existed at the time of Huntington's writings still exist. Moreover, the military regimes that replaced the monarchies were also confronted with the challenge of creating new institutions. Like the monarchies, they also neglected to build such institutions (Hudson 1977, 165, 395).

In conclusion, we can state that Lipset and Lerner were proven right in that modernization creates new volatile and dangerous political opinions that oppose traditional structures. During the process of modernization Arabs did start to demand political participation but their demands were not met. Regarding the issue of identity and authority Arab states were able to modernize in part. Even though the lack of modern political institutions had caused a lack of legitimacy and thereby disappointment, coup d'états, assassinations and repression, this partly successful modernization did not lead to the expected revolt of the population to bring about modern participatory institutions. Until the late 1970s, when Hudson wrote his book, Arab populations remained subdued in their calls for change and the power of the authoritarian regimes went unchallenged for a long time.

Forms of legitimacy in MENA

The key to understanding the Arab population's subdued demands for democracy lies in the concept of legitimacy. Hudson finds that it is also the reason why the Arab populations have not revolted. Literature mentions six types of legitimacy: personal, ideological, structural, religious, traditional and material. Personal legitimacy refers to a strongman leader whom people support for his charismatic qualities. These were present in a leader such as the Egyptian president Nasser whose personal magnetism and charisma created legitimacy for the system. Yet, even leaders without strong charisma can have legitimacy due to the historical-cultural importance of leadership, such as the Moroccan monarchy (Hudson 1977, 2-4, 18-26; Schlumberger 2010, 239).

Ideological legitimacy is about creating a shared worldview, mostly based on Western ideologies. An ideology offers explanations for how the world came to be, why it is as it is and how it should be. It offers a dream and a purpose to its adherents. In a society ruptured by modernization where poverty and inequality have increased, nationalism, socialism and the demand for social justice are important ideological constructs that have a strong legitimation. People embrace the ideology that shares their values and promises to lift them up (Hudson 1977, 20-22).

However, Hudson points out that these two forms of legitimation still do not solve the problems MENA encountered during the process of modernization. Both personal and ideological legitimacy are short-lived because they are dependent on people and ideas rather than institutions. A more enduring form of legitimacy, which is often lacking in MENA and causes the popular disappointment and political

instability, is the third form of legitimacy mentioned: structural legitimacy. This applies to the whole political system and depends on its political structures. Hudson argues that "to the extent that they are seen to constitute the framework within which 'accepted procedures' are carried out, they bestow legal legitimacy upon the system" (Hudson 1977, 22). In pre-modern political regimes they were, for example, the office of caliph or sultan, or the bureaucracies of pre-modern Arab empires. The main driver of structural legitimacy is institutionalization, which brings people to believe in the validity of the political structures and norms and therefore support the political system (Hudson 1977, 22-24).

Schlumberger argues that religious legitimacy plays an important role in most MENA countries. The conspicuous cases are Iran (The Islamic Republic of Iran), Saudi Arabia, as "Guardian of the two holy places," and Morocco and Jordan, both monarchies claiming descent of the prophet Muhammad. In these cases, the people support their regimes because the regimes represent their religious values and convictions (Schlumberger 2010, 240-242).

Traditional legitimacy based on tribal and sheikhly patronage is especially present in the Gulf region. The Gulf rulers claim to be descendants of a specific clan and a line of former kings, and are therefore particularly qualified to rule. The legitimacy of most Arab monarchies is based on both religious and traditional forms of legitimacy (Schlumberger 2010, 242-243).

Material legitimacy is often also part of a MENA state, as the state distributes wealth and in return receives the loyalty of its citizens. MENA states were endowed with significant portions of wealth, mainly due to oil, that enabled them to buy off their citizens (Schlumberger 2010, 245-246). This so-called "ruling bargain" or "authoritarian bargain" will be discussed in more detail in Chapter 3.

Thus, the lack of structural legitimacy due to the lack of modern political institutions caused political instability in the Arab countries. However, the other forms of legitimacy limited the unrest and stability due to satisfying the Arab populations and keeping them from revolting.

History of legitimacy in MENA

As legitimacy plays such an important role in the debate on the nature of MENA politics, the persistence of authoritarianism and the transition from traditionalism to modernity, we shall take a closer look at its history. The difference between monarchies and republics is important, with monarchies having, generally, more legitimacy. Hrair Dekmejian has developed specific ideas on the character of legitimacy

of Arab regimes. In the 1950s and 1960s, after the colonial period, Arab states were free to rule themselves. The Arab republics such as Egypt, Iraq, Algeria, Libya, Tunisia and Syria were based on a mix of ideological and personal legitimacy. Nasserism in Egypt is a good example this mixture. The legitimacy of Nasser's regime was based on the charisma of President Nasser, Arab socialism and Pan-Arabism. The regimes of Iraq and Syria derived their legitimacy mainly from Ba'athism, a combination of socialism and nationalism, ideology with strong authoritarian streaks. They also used Pan-Arabism to legitimize themselves (Dekmejian 1980, 4-6).

However, none of these ideologies managed to gain structural legitimacy. While they did create a feeling of unity among their followers, they failed to produce strong institutions. Moreover, Pan-Arabism was discredited after the defeat in the Arab battles against Israel. Especially the battle against Israel in 1967, celebrated at first as a Pan-Arab effort, then resulting in total failure, led to feelings of disappointment, inferiority and the collapse of Arab governments' ideological legitimacy. The socialism that promised economic development and social justice was undone by rampant corruption, inequality, incompetence and a huge population growth. The dream of Nasserism died with the death of Nasser in 1970. The Baathism of Iraq and Syria meanwhile lived on, but floundered as it failed to bring about social justice and prosperity (Hudson 1977, 23-24; Dekmejian 1980, 4-7). Thus, the ideological legitimacy of the Arab Republics showed itself to be hollow and disappeared or weakened over time.

But not only the republics lost (part of) their legitimacy. Schlumberger points out that the Arab monarchies based their rule on a mix of traditional and religious legitimacy. Although their forms of legitimacy lasted longer than those of the republics, they encountered their own problems as the opposition mobilized their followers around more egalitarian interpretations of Islam, thereby attacking both the religious and the traditional legitimacy of the monarchies (Schlumberger 2010, 240-242).

Finally, all Arab states used the distribution of welfare as a means to gain legitimacy. Buoyed by the rents they received from oil and other sources, they bought their people's loyalty in the form of free education, health care, subsidies on gas and basic necessities. The Arab monarchies lacked a distinctive ideological dimension and based their legitimacy primarily on a combination of Islam and distributing welfare to their subjects. The great disadvantage of this form of legitimacy is that it dependent on the flux in global oil prices. When the prices go up and the state is able to distribute more benefits legitimacy goes up as well. This was the case in the 1970s. When the oil prices decline, as happened after 1985, the state's legitimacy declined as well. Most Arab states were then forced to adapt to popular demands and liberalize their economies, but they did not implement full democracies as their

citizens wanted. The states only went as far as necessary in order to avoid revolts (Berman 2003, 259-260; Norton 1995 Vol 1, 3-6; Sivan 1998, 9-10).

For the Arab republics legitimacy really became an issue in the 1970s after the defeat in the Six Days War with Israel. While the republics could evade the issue of political participation during the heyday of Arab socialism and egalitarian development, this became increasingly more difficult after the defeat and loss of ideological legitimacy. Countries with oil deposits, mainly the monarchies, received some respite from turmoil, due to their material legitimacy, until the oil prices declined in the 1980s. Nevertheless, even then authoritarianism persisted. This was of course not as expected by modernization theorists such as Lerner and Lipset, who had expected fundamental changes to take place in society due to economic and social changes and higher expectations in MENA since the 1950s. They thought that economic development via cultural and social changes, such as higher education levels, economic security and occupational specialization, would lead to democratization. The question re-appeared: why did the different Arab states not become democratic or at least move in the direction of a participation society even when the required social and cultural changes had happened? (Lipset 1959, 75-86; Dekmejian 1980, 4-7; Sadiki 2000, 71, 82, 84-85, 88-89; Malik 2017, 3-4; Hinnebusch 1981, 462-463; Volpi 2003, 42; Kramer 2002)

I will discuss the three main theories that have preceded the authoritarian resilience theory in answering this question in the next chapter. They all explain the lack of political change and the persistence of authoritarian rule in MENA. The Islamic culture theory discusses the relationship between Islam, authoritarian rule and limited political participation. The rentier state theory focuses on the concept of a 'rentier state' and discusses the relationship between external rents, material legitimacy and the lack of political participation in more detail. The civil society theory describes the relationship between the presence of civil society, authoritarian rule and political participation.

Chapter 2

Islam and authoritarianism

In this chapter, I will discuss the first prominent theory to explain why MENA remained authoritarian. When democracy did not arise in MENA, various researchers blamed Islam and Islamic culture for this. I will give an overview of the main researchers and their views on how Islam and Islamic culture have shaped the sustenance of Arab authoritarianism.

Islam is a significant factor in everyday life in MENA countries. It affects culture, society and politics, as it constitutes one of the most important factors of identity. Lewis claims a Lebanese Muslim will feel closer to an Iraqi Muslim than to a Lebanese Christian. The Muslims share the same-worldview. It is not nationality that forms the core of the Muslim's allegiance, but the religio-political community of Muslims or *umma.* Moreover, the rules and traditions of Islam give structure to the lives of Muslims (Lewis, 1976)

This central importance of Islam in the lives of Muslims in MENA is for some academics the main reason for the mainstay of authoritarian rule. Herb, for example, pointedly refers to the effect of region and Muslim share of the population on the presence of authoritarian rule (Herb 2005, 310). He claims that the more Muslims there are in a population, the more likely the government will be authoritarian. Others, such as Donald Smith (1970, 269), agree and find the reason for this relationship to lie in Islam. Smith argues that the authoritarian streak present in Islam and its central ideas of absolute revealed truth and absolute rules (in the form of the Islamic law*,* also known as the *sharia)* has tended to teach people to forgo their own individuality and critical thinking and instead has made them embrace blind obedience and unquestioning faith. This faith has predisposed Islamic societies to accept a strong authoritarian government. Smith also mentions the presence of egalitarian values in Islam, where all Muslims are equal brothers in faith. These might potentially lead to strong support for a participatory political system. However, the values have eroded over time and are no longer as strongly felt as the authoritarian values. Consequently, the political culture has been dominated by authoritarian rather than egalitarian values. (Smith 1970, 269-270). This would explain why Arabs would not be inclined to strive towards a participatory society as has been the case with Europeans and other parts, of the world

Muslim values and political participation

Apart from Smith, several other authors have described the effect of Islam on the political participation of Muslims, such as Bernard Lewis, Roger Savory and Daniel Pipes. Savory, like Smith looks for the explanation for authoritarian rule in Islam. They all regard the *sharia*, of central importance to Muslims and the main reason for the persisting authoritarianism. Savoy believes that according to Islam an Islamic government's purpose is to simply execute the *sharia* Islamic law, which is fixed and immutable and therefore not adaptable to the demands of modernization. The *sharia* did not expect people to be political participants by choosing a government or have influence on the legislation, unlike in modern Europe. The *sharia* is God given and unalterable, in stark contrast to European legislation that is man-made and as such open to human influence. The legitimacy of an Islamic government does not therefore depend on popular participation. Lewis relates how when the concept of democracy was first introduced to the Ottoman Empire, the word 'citizen' was a newly introduced concept. The Ottoman caliph had 'subjects' but no citizens with civil and political rights (Lewis 1988, 61-63).

Lewis argues that the mainstream interpretation of the sharia does not recognize the right to rebellion. Whatever the circumstances of a ruler's ascension to power, he must always be accepted by the population whose obedience is almost absolute (Lewis, 1988, 100-103). A Muslim subject was thus not supposed to have an opinion, let alone actively influence government; he was simply to be ruled as passive subject. This may have caused the development of the authoritarian streak in Islam.

Sharia & democracy

Savory continues the discussion on the authoritarian character of the *sharia*. He discusses the constitution of Pakistan, written in 1951 after the partition of British India. Pakistan wished to become an Islamic state. Thirty-three religious scholars declared two primary principles to be underlying an Islamic state:

1) Ultimate sovereignty over all nature and all law shall be affirmed in Allah, the Lord of the Universe alone;
2) The Law of the land shall be based on the Quran and the Sunnah (red: traditional social and legal custom of the Muslim community), and no law shall be passed nor any administrative order issued in contravention of the Quran and the Sunnah.

The implementation of these two principles show that the concept of an Islamic state is clearly incompatible with democracy. The sovereignty of the people, central to a democracy, is replaced by the sovereignty of God. An Islamic state upholds the *sharia*, the law of God. Savory essentially argues that a true participation society is out of reach for a true Islamic government as its people are necessarily limited in the extent to which they may influence their legislation (Savory 1989, 823-824).

Daniel Pipes, has an approach that differs from Lewis, Smith and Savory. Where Smith finds that Muslims should not be interested in politics, as politics are a matter for the caliph or president, Pipes argues that a Muslim should live in accordance with *sharia*. Therefore, a Muslim should be interested in making sure the government adheres to the *sharia*. Hence, every Muslim should be interested in politics (Pipes 1981, 36-46). However, in practice the *sharia* was too cumbersome and difficult to wholly implement. Its implementation remained the ideal of Muslims, but in practice rulers and their governments did whatever they wanted. Muslim subjects responded in two ways to this practice. Some adhered to the legalistic choice and rebelled against their rulers. Most were unwilling to rebel and instead accepted the status quo. Yet, the rift between what the government should do and what it did caused many Muslims to withdraw from political life e.g. working in the government or armed forces, in order to not be confronted with transgressing the *sharia*. By this a wide gap between rulers and ruled developed. Consequently, subjects were not loyal to their rulers, to them Muslim rulers were close to interchangeable. Thus, where the *sharia* was to form a bridge between Islam and government it instead caused a division between government and people. This division became commonplace in the whole MENA (Pipes 1981, 58-61). Thus, Pipes finds the lack of political participation in MENA to be due to the poor implementation of the *sharia* by the rulers and the resulting withdrawal from public life by pious Muslims.

Islam, modernization & westernization

Pipes does not believe that the s*haria* itself is at odds with the participant society. He finds the opinions of Smith and Savory, who blame Islam and the *sharia* for the lack of political participation, to be nonsense. Pipes argues that the *sharia* is not in conflict with modernization. Modernization is not the problem. Instead, he argues, with support from Lewis, the problem lies in the clash between the cultures of the West and MENA, partially rooted in history. He distinguishes modernization, which he simply regards as technological progress and innovation that fuel economic growth, from

Westernization, the culture and its ideologies and practices, for example, equality of the sexes and democracy. However, in practice, they come as a package deal. Pipes finds western ideals, such as democracy, liberalism and capitalism to be compatible with the *sharia*, secularism less so. However, equality of the sexes, equality of unbelievers, and others do clash with Islamic culture (Pipes 1981, 191-192, 281-282).

The Islamicate
Pipes distinguishes Islam, the religion with its doctrines, from the *Islamicate* or Islamic culture that is prevalent in MENA. He describes the Islamicate as shared forms of art, such as the geometric forms of Arab script, but also other aspects of life, for example, MENA family life. This includes the separation between men and women, cousin marriages, the focus on male honor and female chastity. Nevertheless, Islamic culture is not just about similarities in political life, art and family life but also justice, literature and education are part of the Islamicate present in MENA countries. These similarities are not specifically prescribed by Islam, and are therefore not Islamic, but they are inspired by Islam and shared amongst Islamic countries. Thus, Islamicate refers to these cultural and social similarities in MENA society. (Pipes 1981, 90).

Pipes finds that the Islamicate developed in a period of great success for the Islamic world (750-1258). Muslim armies had conquered vast tracts of land. They had fought and defeated many different civilizations and brought Islam to all the conquered nations. These early successes created expectations for the eventual conquest of an unimaginably large empire, while losses were only temporary setbacks on the road to a Muslim victory. Their successes kept them from familiarizing themselves with other customs and religions, as they perceived Islam to be superior. Furthermore, successes made them conclude that Allah blessed the Muslims. He had given them the truth, in the form of the *sharia*, and he blessed those who followed it. Admittedly, they did not follow the *sharia* perfectly but they tried and that was apparently good enough for Allah. Thus, the Islamicate developed as an insulated culture. Muslims especially looked down on the Europeans, who fiercely resisted Islam and its armies, had a reputation for barbarism and were considered a backwards people (Pipes 1981, 74-81).

Their contempt for European things did the Muslims a great disservice when the Europeans surpassed them, in the 19th century, in military prowess, scientific knowledge and wealth. The Europeans' superiority became painfully obvious when Napoleon easily conquered Egypt in 1798. The military prowess of the West was admired and ought to be emulated, but resistance to non-military Western ideas was high in MENA, for accepting Western ideas felt as a humiliation. Moreover, the modern ideas

of the West, such as nationalism clashed with the feeling of the shared identity between Muslims across MENA. Democracy did not land because of the distance between ruler and ruled and the withdrawal of political life by most Muslims. Other Western ideas as equality of the sexes etc. clashed with ideas and practices of the Islamicate. The clash between the Western culture and the Islamicate prevented MENA from modernizing fully, because Western culture and modernization remained limited in their appeal to the Muslim populations in MENA. This also limited the demand for democracy in MENA. Instead, MENA remained stuck being partial modernization and Westernization and the Islamicate, with the Islamicate seemingly being the humiliated, weaker one, not in the least because of its lost wars against Israel, the death of Pan-Arabism, Nasserism and socialism and the strength of the West (Pipes 1981, 187-191,192-199, 281-285).

The Islamicate and modernization

Yet, the rejection is not complete. Despite the Islamic resurgence, Esposito finds that Western culture had some influence in MENA. This became apparent in the late 1970s and 1980s as populations of MENA protested to demand democratization, as predicted by Lipset and Lerner, despite the culture clash (Sadiki 2000, 71, 82, 84-85, 88-89) (Malik 2017, 3-5) (Hinnebusch 1981, 462-463) (Volpi 2003, 42) (Kramer 2002). The protesters, however, demanded a version of democratization other than the Western one. The resurgence of Islam, as discussed by Pipes, results in the Islamization of Western ideas. Western concepts are either translated to Islamic concepts from the past or edited, to be in line with Islamic culture and doctrine (Esposito 1997, 193-197, 202). The result will likely be an Islamic democracy with an influential role for the *sharia*. This reflects a limited democracy, compared to Western standards. Savory and others discussed the sovereignty of God's law, this still holds in an Islamic democracy, where popular sovereignty is limited by the law of God, along the lines of Pakistan's case as discussed by Savory (1989, 823-824).

Conclusion

Thus, the opinions of experts on the relationship between Islam and authoritarianism differ significantly from one another. Nevertheless, it does not seem that Islam poses an obstacle to democracy as people demanded democratic change, protested for change even but MENA regimes managed to withstand the pressure. The claims offered in this chapter regarding the presumed negative effect of Islam and the Islamicate on popular participation do not this explain the demand for democratization in MENA. Nor do

they explain how MENA regimes could withstand these demands. Consequently, the Islamic / cultural explanation for the lack of democratization is unsatisfying as it fails to elucidate these issues. Even though people want an Islamized form of democracy, this is notably different from acquiescing with authoritarian regimes. The lack of democratization in MENA is more convincingly explained by the rentier state theory, which will be discussed in the next chapter.

Chapter 3

Sustaining Authoritarianism: Rentier State theory

In this chapter, I will discuss the rentier state theory, which explains Arab authoritarianism not from a cultural but rather an economic / political argument. It is one of the most prominent theories aiming to explain the sustenance of Arab authoritarianism. I will give an overview of the theory, its main ideas and its effects.

The rentier state theory argues that MENA states have remained authoritarian, because they received large amounts of 'rents', which are "rentals (money) paid by foreign individuals, concerns or governments to individuals, concerns or governments in a given country" (Mahdavy 1980, 428). These rents enabled the governments to prevent citizens from demanding change, even though they may want it, by co-opting or buying their citizens' loyalty and acquiescence.

Rents in MENA

MENA governments all gained rents from the 1950s until the oil crisis of 1973. The rents increased significantly from 1973 on, as the oil prices abruptly rose, until they severely declined in the 1980s. Rising again at the end of the 1990s until 2013 (Laabas & Bouhouche 2011, 214; Malik 2017, 4-5). Some, for example, Saudi Arabia, Iraq, Libya, Kuwait and Qatar received rents from oil sales. Others, such as Egypt received financial aid from the United States and / or the Soviet Union. These two countries were engaged in the cold war and both sought allies. MENA was especially important because of its oil reserves and 'loyal' MENA countries were therefore financially well rewarded. Other forms of rents were present as well, for example, the fees for ships passing through the Suez Canal in Egypt or remittances from Yemenis working in other countries. Some countries did, however, have none of these rents. Jordan, Syria and Morocco, were financially less healthy than the others. They were therefore more at risk of succumbing to popular pressure for democracy or revolution. To prevent this from happening, as it would to region wide unrest, they received financial support from oil-rich Arab countries (Schlumberger 2010, 244-245)

As such, all MENA countries received external rents of some kind. Due to the significant amount of rents received by MENA governments, they were described as 'rentier states', which are "those countries that receive on a regular basis substantial amounts of external rent" (Mahdavy 1980, 428). A country can be considered a rentier state, when a large portion of its GDP comes from external rents.

The rentier state theory claims that there is a relationship between governments receiving external rents and authoritarian rule. It proposes two mechanisms, which underlie the relationship between rents and authoritarian rule. The rentier mechanism and the repression mechanism. The rentier mechanism consists of three different effects, namely: (1) taxation effect; (2) spending effect; (3) group formation effect (Ross 2001, 332-335).

Taxation
The rentier mechanism starts with the accumulation of rents. These rents, gathered from oil, financial aid, remittances and other sources flow directly to the governments. The governments thus do not depend on taxation for their finances. This makes the 'rentier state' different from a 'production state'. In a 'production state', governments receive their income from taxing the incomes of its citizens. Thus, in a 'production state' citizens pay for their state. In exchange for their payments, citizens demand both political accountability and influence on the decisions of their state. Essentially, they demand democratization of their state (Bates 1991, 24-25; Luciani 1987, 73).

In a rentier state, citizens do not have to pay for the services they receive from the state. As a result, citizens refrain from demanding (much) political influence and accountability. The government is independent from its citizens, as it does not depend on taxes. Thus, the modernizing Arab states were different from those in Europe in that they did not need their citizens' financial support in order to thrive. Consequently, the demand for political influence was smaller in comparison to that in the 'production states' of Europe. This phenomenon is called the taxation effect (Luciani 1987, 73-74; Ross 2001, 332).

Spending effect
Rather than taxing their citizens, rentier states distribute money amongst their citizens to gain their loyalty, which is called the spending effect. They do so by creating jobs and enhancing the income, privileges and investment money of their citizens. It also develops all sorts of welfare programs; ranging from education to health and food subsidies. This distribution of money causes people to become dependent on the state. However, often the state does not have enough money to guarantee these benefits to all its citizens as oil prices fluctuate and rents do so accordingly. Instead it produces a system

of social stratification. The state hands out money and benefits based on social class and patronage networks (Katouzian 1981, 245-246; Okruhlik 1999, 297).

Patronage networks are a modern reflection of the old patriarchal dimension, as discussed by Hudson, of Arab society. Patriarchy is based on a relationship between the father and his children, as such it an unequal relationship between a superior and an inferior. This pattern is repeated in patronage networks, where there is a patron (superior) and one, or more, client(s) (inferior). The client performs tasks for the patron in exchange for rewards. There are many different patronage networks in Arab society, which together take the form of a pyramid. This pyramid is called a patrimonial structure (Bank & Richter 2010, 2-3).

The patrimonial structure is an essential part of Arab rentier states. It forms the link between rents and loyalty of officials. The king or president, who forms the top of the pyramid, uses the rents to distribute money and goods among key officials. The officials, on their turn, reward lower placed officials with money and goods. In this way, the clients depend on the patron for their financial wellbeing. In this structure, officials are both client and patron. Clients depend on their patron, as lower placed officials depend on higher placed officials. As such, everyone depends on the king or president for his financial wellbeing. The king is therefore granted the loyalty of his clients by handing out wealth and influence (Bank & Richter 2010, 2-3).

In addition to distributing the rents among key officials, rents are distributed among social groups based on their importance for the regime. The main beneficiaries are people involved in the key sectors of military, bureaucracy, business and organized religion. In short, the professional and educated class. They make up the majority of the *clientele* of the state, for they are all members of various important social groups and potential challengers to state power. Second in line, to benefit from the state, is the urban population, whom the state tries to keep quiescent. Its members expect the state to provide employment, minimum wage, food and health subsidies and a chance to join the clientele. Lastly, there are the peasants from the countryside. They cannot expect much from the state, as they are with too many and politically too weak to offer any kind of threat or pressure to the state. Instead, they flock to the cities to join the urban population, where they may benefit more benefit from the state (Katouzian 1981, 246; Okruhlik 1999, 297).

However, the rentier state only distributes rents to loyal citizens. Loyal citizens are those that support the current government. This disinclines many citizens from seeking political influence or political

change, as they risk their (potential) rewards by opposing the government. The spending effect essentially captures an authoritarian bargain between the government and the citizens, where the government delivers welfare and the people will not demand political change. In this way, the rentier state creates material legitimacy for itself (Luciani 1987, 73-77; Katouzian 1987, 549-54; Ross 2001, 332-334).

<u>Group Formation</u>
The spending effect is closely tied to the group formation effect, as the strategy of co-opting citizens by means of distributing rents was also applied to the social groups that together form civil society. Civil society is essential in the creation of a democracy, but limited in the rentier states. The rents allowed Arab governments to weaken these social groups and their threat to Arab authoritarianism. They achieved this in two ways. First, they organized many programs on social issues, healthcare, and housing to fulfill a society's need that otherwise was or would have been fulfilled by social groups. Thus, limiting the appeal of the groups to citizens. Second, the rents allow the state to extend patronage networks to social groups and co-opt them by spending lavishly to gain their loyalty or by spending to co-opt key movements or persons within the social groups and thus fragment these social groups. In this way, civil society is weakened by the government, which prevents people from grouping together in organizations and possibly forming a threat to the authoritarian government (Lipset 1959, 84; Ross 2001, 334; Bellin 1995, 121-122; Crystal 1995, 260).

Thus, the rents allow rentier states to circumvent Huntington's dire prediction for monarchies. Huntington predicted that, during the modernization process, social groups would demand influence and the authoritarian rulers of MENA would consequently have to share power. This would effectively end the absolute monarchies of the Middle East. However, rents allow rentier states to co-opt social groups and prevent them from mobilizing. As such the rentier state essentially depends on material legitimacy and the willingness of people and social forces to compromise their claims and values in exchange for material benefits.

<u>Repression</u>
The repression mechanism is based on controlling the population by force. In addition to spending money to keep citizens quiet, authoritarian regimes use repression to deal with those citizens who refuse to be quiet. Authoritarian regimes use violence to silence calls for political change. They use police forces, intelligence and the military to detain, fight and stop protesters from demanding change. Rents allow them to spend significant amounts of money on police forces, intelligence and the military

to have the necessary equipment and personnel to repress any political challenges. The Shah of Iran, for example, spent 30% of his annual budget, between 1973 and 1978, on the military. The Shah also spent significant amounts of money on creating a notorious security agency (the SAVAK) that pursued, tortured and killed sympathizers of political opposition parties, for example, of the communist party Tudeh. The preference for controlling became clear in the manner the Shah dealt with the press, which where muzzled, and the elections, which were rigged, in the 1970s. In this way, rents were used for suppressing those citizens who refuse to be loyal and demand change instead (Axworthy 2007, 245-251; Ross 2001, 335; Looney 1987, 110).

Hence, the rents gained by MENA countries prevented their citizens, who wanted democracy, from demanding it. The rents allowed MENA governments to enter an authoritarian bargain with their citizens. Citizens were financially rewarded for not demanding political change and violently punished for demanding political change.

Conclusion

Thus, the rentier state theory explains how rents may cause the political immobility and acquiescence of citizens and social groups. It explains how rentier states enter authoritarian bargains with their citizens, in which citizens are politically acquiescent in exchange for material wealth. Social groups are also co-opted by means of material wealth. By doing so, the authoritarian states gain material legitimacy and prevent the arrival of a more democratic society as predicted by Lipset and Lerner. However, the rentier state theory only explains the sustenance of Arab authoritarianism in times when rents flow smoothly. The rents flowed smoothly until the 1980s, when oil prices and remittances slumped, but Arab authoritarianism continued. The explanation for the continuing Arab authoritarianism is not offered by the rentier state theory, but instead by the civil society theory, which will be discussed in the next chapter.

Chapter 4

Sustaining Authoritarianism: Civil society

In this chapter, I will discuss the civil society theory. I will give an overview of the fall of rents in MENA, its effect on democratization and the rise of the civil society theory. Civil societies appeared throughout most of MENA as the fall in rents brought liberalization about in most MENA countries. This seemed promising for the development of democracy because the presence of civil society is considered necessary for the development of a democracy.

Civil society

The political immobility and acquiescence in MENA rentier states proved to be only temporary. In the 1980s, the world economy suffered a downturn and oil prices, foreign aid and remittances dropped significantly. The Arab states' rents were diminished accordingly, especially of those that did not have significant amounts of oil, such as Egypt and Jordan. In response to the diminished rents, the states withdrew from society and no longer provided encompassing economic security, jobs, healthcare and education. The withdrawal of the state from society left people's needs regarding housing, food, culture and education unmet. Many cultural, social, professional and religious associations rose to fill the gap, for example, human rights movements, women's movements and businessmen's movements (Ibrahim 1995, 39-41; Norton 1993, 209-214; Berman 2003, 259-260; Norton 1995 Vol, 3-6; Sivan 1998, 9-10) (Malik 2017, 4-5).

These social groups, or associations, form the core of civil society. Civil society is based on the art of associating and is necessary for the development of a democracy. People group together with others voluntarily to share their political, economic, philosophic, social or religious interests to achieve a certain goal, for example, supporting women's rights. By forming associations people learn to stand up for their interests in groups, learn tolerance for different political and social convictions, become familiar with the norms of democracy, learn new ideas, and create institutions that can resist authoritarian power. The presence of different sorts of associations in a civil society is directly linked to the notion of norms in a democracy. In a civil society, associations may be opposed to one another as they may unite men with

opposite interests or views, for example, religious movements and women's movements. The tolerance civil society teaches is necessary to co-exist in a democracy. Moreover, the associations of a civil society form a buffer between the state and the individual (Lipset 1959, 84; Al-Sayyid 1995, 272; Norton 1995 Vol 1, 11-12).

Associations should have some autonomy from the state in order to represent the interests of their members. The state's self-limitation usually takes the form of respecting freedom of expression and a free judiciary. Mubarak's government, in the 1980s, for example, was willing to respect decisions of the judiciary as much as possible. This prevented associations from being obstructed by haphazard rulings of an authoritarian government and allowed them to grow (Crystal 1995, 280-287).

The ascendance of social groups, no longer co-opted by rents, therefore caused scholars to predict the imminent arrival of democracy in MENA. This belief was strengthened by observing how the diminished capabilities of the states led citizens to demand more political participation. This disproved the idea of Islam as pro-authoritarian religion and proving Lerner and Lipset right with regard to the effects of modernization on demand for democracy. The Arab states had to adapt to the wishes of their citizens, as they were pressured by the West and the diminished rents led to a decline in material legitimacy and co-optation of the population. In response, the Arab states aimed to build structural legitimacy, by creating political structures that enabled people to participate (Norton 1996 Vol 2, 13-14; Harrigan et al., 2005).

Consequently, most MENA governments, except for Saudi Arabia, liberalized to a certain extent. They liberalized economically, resulting in limited taxes and reduced restrictions on private economic activities. They also liberalized politically in that they allowed a certain degree of freedom of expression, freedom for organizations to associate and the introduction of political parties. However, these parties did not gain much power and elections remained limited (Hinnebusch 1997, 316-319; Norton 1993, 205-206; Norton 1996 Vol 2, 13-15).

When given leeway, associations can become politically important as well as socially or culturally. As they grow and draw more members, they gain influence as a group. They can use this influence by lobbying or protesting to make themselves heard. The 19th century Frenchman de Tocqueville argues that associations become guardians against tyranny as they can become powerful enough to voice dissent, and not be destroyed instantly, against political incumbents. If there is no civil society, then no powerful sound of dissent can be produced and tyranny reigns supreme. If associations are, to some

extent, free from the state, they can voice their dissent and affect public opinion as to change the behavior of the majority (Tocqueville 213-218, retrieved from http://seas3.elte.hu/coursematerial/LojkoMiklos/Alexis-de-Tocqueville-Democracy-in-America.pdf).

Thus, civil society can limit authoritarian rule and form a step up to ensuring democratic governance. The rise of civil society therefore increased the prospects for democratization in MENA.

The limits of civil society

However, civil society scholars were proved wrong in their expectations. MENA regimes did not yield to civil society and democracy. Instead they accommodated civil society, co-opted it, manipulated it, controlled it and rejected democracy. The cause for the rise of civil society were the poor economic conditions that undermined the legitimacy and political stability of the governments. To regain stability, the states then liberalized. It was thus a decision from the political leaders rather than from the citizens. The extent of liberalization was therefore limited to the bare minimum that would allow for political stability without the regime losing power (Wiktorowicz 2000, 43-47).

The regimes used their power to maintain control over society. For example, in Jordan, which allowed the development of civil society in the late 1980s, all associations were required to register themselves with the government. Founding members had to report their personal data, the association's regulations for membership and overall structure. Members had to be pre-approved. Goals and activities of an association had to be clearly delineated and reported to the government. Activities of the associations were limited to a specific field of interest. A cultural association was only allowed to participate in cultural activities, a charity only in charitable activities etc. Moreover, every association had to file a report yearly, containing information on their finances, membership, meetings and correspondence. The government was also allowed to inspect every association's financial dealings. Associations that attempted to evade government regulation were in violation of a law, that stipulated citizens were required to have permission for meetings where political affairs are discussed. Violation led to repressive measures or closure (Wiktorowicz 2000, 48-56).

In this way, the reach and influence of civil society was kept in check by the government. Moreover, civil society's ability to mobilize people was also limited by the measures of the government. This way of dealing with civil society was not unique as most other Arab states had similar laws (Wiktorowicz 2000,

43, 57-58). The Arab regimes allowed civil society to grow and thereby allowed the unleashed forces of modernization to assimilate. However, civil society was also co-opted by being regulated extensively and intrusively. This limited the influence of civil society and prevented it from bringing about democracy. The regimes gained some structural legitimacy by seemingly allowing some form of political participation while their political power was not threatened by the social groups.

The Islamization of (civil) society

However, Arab states did not succeed in checking the influence of all associations. Islamic associations became more influential, especially as their religious character largely prevented them from being subjected to the regulations and the persecution that hampered secular associations. This lack of regulation and persecution also allowed Islamist charities to take care of education, healthcare, housing and social services better than the non-Islamic associations. In this way, the Islamic associations could fill the gap that had been created by the withdrawal from society, of the governments, to the disappointment of their citizens. Arab states had lost wars, their ideologies had not brought any glory or direction to their citizens and now they also failed to provide jobs and social services. The notion of the secular, nationalist state such as Egypt, Algeria and Syria that cared for its people seemed nothing but a mirage, a failed dream. Islamic associations pointed to a better solution, namely a return to Islam (Berman 2003, 263-265).

They rejected the concept of a nation-state, its institutions and democracy as un-Islamic. Instead they proposed an Islamic state based on the Quran and *sharia* (Haqqani & Fradkin 2008, 13, 16-17). The services they rendered were different from those of the government in two ways. First, the social services performed by the Islamist charities were done better than anything done by the government, as they were less marred by corruption, bureaucracy and inefficiency. As a result, Islamist organizations became communal and cultural focal points in Egyptian society while government legitimacy was damaged. Second, Islamist social services implicitly, or explicitly mentioned Islam as the solution (Berman 2003, 260-261)

It was not only in their own charity organizations that Islamist organizations propagated their views. They also became successfully involved in student associations, and professional societies. In the early 1990s, the Muslim Brotherhood (largest of Egyptian Islamist organizations) had gained power in all sorts of professional associations, by means of free elections. In all these associations, they propagated their

societal views. They did so in subtle or less subtle ways, for example, students with little money to spend on clothes were given clothes by Islamist organizations. However, the clothes were always proper Islamic clothes (Berman 2003, 260-261; Kifner, 1986).

Their successes in civil society made these Islamist organizations grow significantly, not only in Egypt but elsewhere in MENA as well, becoming increasingly more popular and enabling them to develop the skills of their leaders and members. All this enabled Islamist organizations to challenge the government for societal influence. It also made it difficult for the government to attack them. Instead, during the 1980s, the government aimed to co-opt moderate Islamist organizations, reject extremist ones and improve its own religious legitimacy. It did so by becoming more Islamic itself and giving moderate Islamists access to state resources, such as the media. Islamists came to govern important governmental institutions according to Islamist ideas. This resulted in a growing Islamization of society. Observance of Islamic norms and values ballooned, and as a result alcohol consumption dropped by a significant amount. Many new mosques were built. The number of religious broadcasts in the media grew significantly. Self-censorship in the media of non-Islamic broadcasts grew significantly as well. The judiciary accepted the *sharia* as ruling principle for the community and changed its rulings accordingly, resulting in the branding of secular intellectuals as heretics (Berman 2003, 260-266).

The Islamization of society did not occur solely in Egypt, but throughout MENA. Ironically, the growth of civil society in MENA, which was expected to lead to an increasingly democratic MENA, led to the rise of ideas opposed to democracy. Ideas contrary to what Lerner, Lipset and de Tocqueville had expected (Berman 2003, 257-258). Whereas Lipset and Huntington had expected the rise of civil society to lead to a more democratic state, authoritarian leaders budging under the political influence of social groups, the result was quite different. The lack of political change was due to the strict regulations of the Arab regimes that prevented civil society from purposefully associating together to form countervailing powers against the state and limited their overall influence. Essentially, the co-optation of the social forces in the Arab countries that we know from the rentier state theory, had simply changed form. Social forces were now co-opted in a political environment, but they were co-opted nevertheless. In this way, structural legitimacy was only partially realized as people were not allowed to fully participate politically. On the other hand, civil society was neutralized by being taken over by the Islamist movement.

Despite the lack of political change achieved by civil society, it did manage to bring forth extensive societal and cultural change antithetical to democracy. The Islamists, who because of the limits on non-

Islamist civil societies, profited most from the onset of civil society, propagated an Islamic nation rather than a modern democratic nation.

Conclusion

The rise of civil society in MENA did not lead to democracy, because MENA regimes co-opted and repressed civil society. In this way, regimes gained some structural legitimacy by allowing associations, but maintained their power and influence. This shows that the relationship between civil society and democracy is not one of cause and effect. Instead, the presence of civil society in an authoritarian country is a necessary rather than a sufficient condition for democracy. Yet, the structural legitimacy gained by allowing civil society was too limited to be sufficient for regimes to limit dissent and retain power. Hence, MENA regimes used several other strategies as well. These strategies are discussed in the next chapter, on authoritarian resilience theory.

Chapter 5

Authoritarian resilience theory

In this chapter, I will discuss how the authoritarian resilience theory was developed to explain the continuing Arab authoritarianism, that had dumbfounded the preceding theories. I will do so by giving an overview of MENA situation after the 1990s and the ideas of the authoritarian resilience theory.

MENA after the 1990s

The period of liberalization, after the fall of the Soviet Union, that accompanied the rise of civil society in MENA was part of a worldwide wave of democratization, which raised expectations for the onset of democratization in MENA. These expectations, however, as already discussed, fell short. The decline of the rentier state and the introduction of civil society both failed to bring about a true participation society. They brought some economic and political liberalization, but this was limited and in some cases followed by political deliberalization instead. Furthermore, democratization in MENA was even more limited than the liberalization as the most democratic measures taken were limited elections, in some countries. The ruling party always assured a victory for itself. There was one exception to this, namely Algeria, which held free elections in 1989 and 1990. In these elections, the Islamist party won, which caused the government to cancel the elections and become embroiled in a civil war (Berman 2003, 264; Brumberg 2002, 56-57).

The example of Algeria shows that the prominent Islamists movements, which seemingly opposed democracy did participate in democratic elections. This was part of a larger phenomenon, where many of them moderated their viewpoints towards democracy. They accepted the procedures of a democracy and participated in limited elections, wherever they were allowed. For example, The Egyptian the Muslim Brotherhood, for example, announced in 2005 that it respected the quality of Muslims and non-Muslims, free elections and the values inherent to a democracy. However, at the same time, the Brotherhood also announced that non-Muslims and women would not be allowed to stand for public office. They still strove towards a true Islamic society, based on the *sharia*, and therefore antithetical to a true participation society. Their love for democracy and its essential idea of equality so cherished by

Hudson and Rustow apparently conflicted. The question of how they would ever combine their ideals of a *sharia* society with their new-found love for democracy would be answered when they would attain political power (Pevna 2014, 1-6).

MENA regimes were of course planning not to find out about that question as they planned to remain in power themselves forever. To this end, they limited their democracies. With free elections, the Islamists would win for certain (Brumberg 2002, 57). Thus, the democratic promises that brought fruit all over the world, evaded MENA.

Authoritarian resilience theory

In order to explain this ongoing authoritarian rule, Albrecht & Schlumberger coined the term authoritarian resilience. Its basis is the understanding that the sustenance of an authoritarian regime depends on the regime's legitimacy and ability to repress its population. Authoritarian resilience is an umbrella term, containing multiple theories, to explain this sustenance of authoritarian regimes in MENA. As such, it contains bits and pieces of the various theories presented in previous chapters (Albrecht & Schlumberger 2004, 368)

However, it does not contain anything on the role of Arab culture in sustaining authoritarian rule as Albrecht and Schlumberger explicitly reject any role for Islam or the Islamicate. They find that these cultural factors are impossible to replicate and falsify and therefore cannot be scrutinized in a scientific way. Moreover, the calls for democracy and democratic values in MENA show that the Arab culture is not opposed to the idea of democracy (Albrecht & Schlumberger, 2004, 372, 387).

On the other hand, statistical evidence shown by Steven Fish shows that a culture, where subordination of women is rife, may be one of domination and dependency and therefore authoritarian rather than democratic. Fish argues that the Islamicate due to its culturally accepted role of subordination of women in society, is in absence of cultural change likely to stay authoritarian. Furthermore, separation of the sexes and a lack of female voices in politics may remove unique types of social interactions and voices in society. Those social relations and voices would be influential in eliciting political change (Fisch 2002, 5, 29-33). However, these social relations and voices are difficult to reproduce scientifically and therefore will not be discussed in this chapter's debate on authoritarian resilience theory. Furthermore,

calls for a democracy are expressed in Arab states and the authoritarian effect of the Islamicate and Islam may therefore be overstated.

Legitimacy issues & repression

Instead, we will now focus on the strategies of states in coping with challenges of social, economic, political and geostrategic nature. These challenges, for example the decline of oil prices, resulted in the demise of the great ideologies and the decline in material legitimacy and as a result have left MENA countries with legitimacy issues and therefore sustenance issues. Since repression levels in MENA have remained stable and MENA states have still shown to be durable they must have developed strategies to gain extra legitimacy (Albrecht & Schlumberger 2004, 372-373).

However, there is some discussion on the effect of repression on the sustenance of authoritarian rule in MENA. Albrecht and Schlumberger regard repression (372-373) as not very relevant for the sustenance of authoritarianism, whereas Bellin and Brownlee find that repression is very much at the core of the sustenance of MENA regimes. Brownlee argues that repression is the most important strategy to counter possible revolutions. Only state violence can prevent revolutionaries from toppling the government. MENA armies are, on average, poorly institutionalized as an inevitable result of the subpar institutionalization process that accompanied the modernization process, as predicted by Huntington. Rather than being an independent institution bound to the rule of law, MENA armies tend to be (beacons of) patronage networks. Army and security personnel are often appointed by the president and his regime and dependent on the ruler for their (financial) wellbeing. Despite the economic hardships suffered by some of the Arab regimes, the military has to remain co-opted preferably by material legitimacy as they are the bulwark that defends the regime against demonstrations or uprisings. A loyal army is essential for regime survival in case of legitimacy issues that might develop in coup d'états or revolutions (Albrecht & Schlumberger 2004, 372-373; Bellin 2005, 26-34, 36-38; Brownlee 2005, 46-58).

A main capability of MENA repression, that, according to Bellin, has enabled the regimes to maintain power is the limitlessness of it. In comparison to most other authoritarian regimes, MENA regimes are brutal in their repression. Bellin blames this mostly on the lack of pressure from Western regimes, who seemingly manage to evade hard discussions about human rights and coercion with MENA regimes. Furthermore, the size of MENA armies and security forces are very large compared to the size of their economies due the rents that governments receive. The armies and security forces are consequently

quite capable of extensive forms of coercion on the population, which is necessary for dealing with large demonstrations and revolutions. Therefore, both Bellin and Brownlee argue that repression is a vital aspect of MENA regime sustenance (Bellin 2005, 31-33, 37; Brownlee 2005,57-60). An aspect that is somewhat overlooked in the argument by Schlumberger.

Nevertheless, repression is only part of the story. A larger part of the story is formed by regime strategies to gain 'extra legitimacy' as a means to avoid revolutions. Brumberg argues that these strategies are part of a repeated cycle of liberalization and deliberalization. Countries adapt to different challenges by either liberalizing or deliberalizing depending on the circumstances. These circumstances are essential, because the states must keep a precarious balance between legitimacy, by giving in to their populations call for a political participation and thus liberalizing, and maintaining political power and curbing the opposition by deliberalizing (Brumberg 2002, 56-57).

For example, the Egyptian regime liberalized in response to the poor economic situation in the 1980s, but deliberalized in the 1990s due to three reasons. First, a conflict of the state with armed Islamist troops. Second, the lack of economic prosperity achieved by economic reforms leading to protests threatening the state's authority. Third, the necessity of further economic reforms required Mubarak's party to be dominant in parliament, which in view of the economic and political climate was not a certain result in case of relatively free elections. In order to achieve political dominance, the opposition's voice had to be muted. This was achieved by restricting both the opposition and press and changing voting procedures (Kienle 1998, 219-229).

Arab autocracies
Egypt is with Algeria, Morocco, Jordan, Lebanon and Kuwait an example of a liberalized autocracy, characterized by a combination of repression, control and partial openness resulting in a mixture of guided pluralism, controlled elections and selective repression. The extent of repression and openness differs and depends on the circumstances. As such, a liberalized autocracy does not fit in any model of democratization, nor in the expectations of the modernization thinkers, as it is not the crown jewel of the participation society. It stands on its own as a political structure. It is unlike a true autocracy, such as Saudi Arabia, in which there is no political liberalization whatsoever (Brumberg 2002, 56-57).

Total autocracies, such as Saudi-Arabia, repress or co-opt all social forces. These states have hardly been damaged by the economic crises, in case of Saudi Arabia due to its enormous amount of oil, and can therefore depend on external rents and as a result have not liberalized.. In these autocracies, the state has therefore not withdrawn from society and is capable of co-opting or repressing all social forces

present in the country. These states legitimize themselves by claiming to represent either by ideology (nationalism) or religious (the true Muslim nation) together with material legitimacy. They add force to their claims of legitimacy by maintaining large security agencies that are capable of severe repression. The problem of this method is the space it leaves for different Muslim claims on religious legitimacy, such as offered by the Islamists. As they prevent social forces from assimilating by severe repression, they create many enemies (Brumberg 2002, 58-61).

Liberalized autocracies such as Egypt, Jordan and Morocco have been damaged by the economic troubles of the 1980s, which caused their liberalization policies. As a result, and unlike total autocracies, they have granted public space to social forces with political, or ideological voices different from that of the state. The economic liberalizations have led to liberalized and thus relatively well-developed and competitive economies that allow different social forces and voices, such as workers and industrialists, to clamor for their economic interests. These other voices, Islamist or non-Islamist, are even allowed to institutionalize, such as the Muslim Brotherhood's charities. This assimilation of different social forces allows for competition between Islamists and non-Islamists (Brumberg 2002, 61-63).

This competition and assimilation of social forces is essential to the legitimacy and sustenance of the regimes of liberalized autocracies, as explained by Huntington. In order to remain in power, they have to curb the opposition's power by means of laws, regulation and competition. They pit different social forces against another, in order to gain as much power as possible and limit that of the opposition. Nevertheless, the opinions and presence of the opposition can be minimized but not ignored and this may result in consensus politics and power sharing between the authoritarian leader and different opposition groups, while assuring that the authoritarian leader has a final say on all state matters. Of the opposition groups, the Islamists have overall been most successful in influencing society and bargaining with the state. The state's bargains with Islamists have mostly resulted in the rise of illiberal Islamism and not liberal or secular Islam as discussed above. As a result, Islamists remain for both liberalized and total autocracies the main opponents (Brumberg 2002, 58-67).

In this way Brumberg finds that liberalization is the core component of recent changes in the political situation of MENA. He finds that liberalization has changed the political landscape of MENA. Yet, he does not describe any other changes in the political landscape of MENA.

Albrecht and Schlumberger argue that Brumberg and others' have focused exclusively on the importance of liberalization in the development of politics of MENA. Albrecht and Schlumberger find

that this exclusive focus, and its relationship to democratization, as a sort of pre-stage, has blinded Brumberger and others from observing the other political changes that have taken place. To Albrecht and Schlumberger, like Pipes, liberalization is an entirely different process from democratization. They regard it as a necessary cause for democratization but not a sufficient cause. Instead, Albrecht and Schlumberger find that beside liberalization other regime changes have occurred in MENA, albeit of a non-democratic nature, in order to regain legitimacy. These changes have improved the legitimacy of the regimes, by preventing social forces, the main threat of modernization as discussed by Huntington, from aggregating and threatening the power of the incumbent regime. Schlumberger discusses the most important ones, namely: (1) Elite change; (2) external influences; (3) 'Imitative' institution building; (4) Co-optation strategies (Albrecht & Schlumberger 2004, 371-376). I will briefly discuss these strategies here.

Elite change
Elites are the members of a country who influence the governmental agenda setting and decision making. From the 1960s till the 1990s these elites were mainly loyal bureaucratic and military leaders, recruited from the ruling party or military academies. In response to the changing economic and political environment, the elites that form the cadre of regime leadership have changed. The old guard has partially been replaced by business leaders and technocrats, who are loyal but also western-educated, belong to important families and are competent, and can therefore credibly and successfully lead the economic liberalization reforms. The old guard is, though somewhat diminished in importance, still important and part of the regime's support base. The support base of the regime has increased by adding new influential members, of formerly underrepresented social forces, to their elite group (Schlumberger & Albrecht 2004, 378-379). By doing so, the regimes co-opt social forces and assimilate them in a way that does not threaten their power. In this way, they manage the importance of assimilating social forces as discussed by Huntington but in a non-democratic manner.

Brownlee agrees on the importance of elites. He finds that elite allegiance is of the utmost importance for enduring regime stability. Elite allegiance is best assured by having the regime's power linked to a ruling party. It is imperative for these ruling parties to have the countries' elites, representing different support bases, on their side. The ruling party is to create a coalition between elites with different interests and social bases, who all support the regime. This is achieved by offering elites positions of power, to influence decision making and offering them and their social bases short- and or long-term benefits from agenda setting and decision making. This assures that all benefit from the coalition. The

party as institution is to assure that conflicts between elites are solved and everyone benefits, ensuring regime stability as shown by Egypt in the 1960s till the 2000s (Brownlee 2007, 1-15, 84-93, 214-222).

If elite cohesion is fractured and elites leave the ruling party, then regime stability is affected as there will be a struggle between the different elites, who represent different social bases. This results in a loss of social bases for the regime, as happened in Iran in the late 1980s. This struggle may even lead to democratization, as discussed by Rustow, who regarded a protracted struggle between different entrenched parties as the preparatory phase of democratization. In Iran's case these parties are the left and right wing Islamists. Elite fragmentation is a threat to authoritarian regimes, due to its inherent potential for democratization. Furthermore, the opposition will be strengthened by the arrival of elites to support them. If, together with a lack of elite cohesion, there is a strong opposition movement a revolution may take place (Brownlee 2007, 1-15, 100-110, 214-222).

It should be noted that despite the occurrence of elite fragmentation and opposition support in Iran, the regime has not fallen. Keshavarzian explains this regime stability, which seemingly opposes the importance of elite change, by the uniqueness of Iran. Iran's political system is characterized by parallel political institutions that overlap in functions and tasks and have separate elections. This ensures that elites can lose power in one institution but still remain in power in another institution. Therefore, it is close to impossible for one group of elites to grab all power. Furthermore, conservatives that support the current regime are in charge of institutions responsible for repression, via non-democratic means, which is still prevalent in Iran and sufficient to prevent the formation of a strong opposition. As such, even if leftist or reforming Iranians were to grab power democratically, they would not be able to force the conservatives from their non-democratic institutions and are thus prevented from an all-out regime change (Keshavarzian 2005, 74-87).

<u>External influences</u>
Western countries have put pressure on MENA countries to change, i.e. become more democratic and pay heed to human rights, be at peace with Israel, liberalize economically and achieve political stability in order to maintain oil supplies. MENA regimes successfully used these different interests to sustain themselves. For example, both Egypt and Jordan made peace with Israel and as a result they received financial donations from the West, which they used to ease the economic pressures of the 1980s and 1990s (Albrecht & Schlumberger 2004, 384-385).

Imitative institution building

Hudson and Huntington argued that a major problem for a modernizing nation is the creation of political institutions. In MENA, some formal political institutionalization had taken place, for example, the creation of parliaments in Libya and Egypt, in an attempt to create structural legitimacy. But, unlike in the West, these formal institutions lacked political power. In Libya, for example, despite the creation of a parliament, the political power was in the hands of Qaddafi and his sons. The liberalization trend of the 1990s did nothing to change this balance of political power. Many formal organizations were created, such as NGO's, professional associations and political parties but political power still rested with non-institutional actors or a ruling party whose authority was unquestioned. Nevertheless, the introduction of civil society eased Western pressure for reform and gave some much needed, but limited, structural legitimacy, to MENA regimes (Albrecht & Schlumberger 2004, 380-382).

Co-optation

Until the economic crisis in the 1980s the co-optation strategy of most MENA countries could be boiled down to buying off the opposition. Thereby gaining material legitimacy. During and afterwards the economic pressures on most of MENA regimes diminished their 'buying' power of the opposition forces. The liberalized autocracies changed their co-optation strategy from allocative to 'inclusionary'. This means that social forces and their claims had to be assimilated rather than bought off. Economic social forces were co-opted by means of including business leaders and other business men in the regime elite. Political forces, on the other hand, came to the fore with the liberalization of society, in the form of institutions such as NGO's, professional associations and political parties. As mentioned before, these were heavily restricted, political parties more than NGO's and associations, in their legal, financial and political dealings and as a result many mostly busied themselves with jockeying for governmental support and regime influence rather than making claims opposed to the regime. (Albrecht & Schlumberger 2004, 382-384). In this way, the regimes compensated for their lack of material legitimacy by gaining some structural legitimacy.

At the same time, the West was quite taken with the rise of civil society in MENA and as a result sponsored many NGO's. This money, together with the lack of finance and opportunities for opposition parties resulted in prominence of NGO's, especially advocacy NGO's that advocated specific interests, in public space. There were NGO's for human rights, women's rights, the environment and also traditional party interests. Political opposition parties were prevented from representing these interests, such as economic interests of workers and farmers. Sometimes, the NGO's were successful in limiting abuses by the regime or gaining worldwide attention for human rights issues in MENA. The very nature of the

NGO's limited their ability to bring about political change. Langohr blames the lack of political change on the small amount of social forces represented by the NGO's. NGO's were usually one issue organizations and since their money mainly came from either local or foreign governments, they lacked widespread support from the local people who regarded foreign backing as illegitimate and did not feel much represented by or invested in the advocacy NGO's. As such advocacy NGO's failed to bring forth any hope of democratization. Moreover, their attempts to change the system, were successful in angering the governments. The governments responded by curtailing the capabilities of advocacy NGO's (Langohr 2005, 194-195, 211-214).

Except for the foreign backed NGO's, most of these formal organizations were just another way for people to influence the regime and gain material benefits from it. Government members and economic or political elites even started their own NGO's in order to gain rents, measure the convictions of the population, and influence those same convictions. Thus, the political forces unleashed by liberalization were also co-opted in MENA. If political forces were not willing to compromise their claims and values in exchange for influence and material benefits, repression swiftly followed (Albrecht & Schlumberger 2004, 382-384). For example, the Moroccan king excluded some political groups from political participation as they did not agree with his position as king in the political system (Lust-Okar 2005, 148-150)

The degree of allowing political parties and co-optation differed per country. Saudi-Arabia, for example, never allowed elections or political parties. Other countries, such as, Jordan, were slow to introduce political parties, which were not allowed at all until 1984 and general elections were not held until 1989. In Morocco, on the other hand, parliament was already allowed in the 1970s and limited elections were held as well. Furthermore, these countries also differed in their attitude towards the opposition (Brumberg 2002, 56-57; Lust-Okar 2005, 148).

Lust-Okar argues how Morocco and Jordan, both described as liberalized autocracies by Brumberg encountered very different political situations after the economic crisis, due to their attitudes towards the political opposition. The economic crisis hit both countries hard and as economic woes continued, populations started to protest and demand reforms, it was Jordan which was hit hardest by protests. The regime stability of the Jordan king was under threat due to the strength of the opposition, exactly as discussed by Schlumberger. The Jordan king had prevented all opposition parties from having much political influence or roles in parliament, as such they were unified in their opposition towards the king and his lack of reforms. Therefore, all opposition parties mobilized their constituencies against the king

and his regime. In Morocco, on the other hand, the king had allowed some opposition parties positions in parliament while others, such as the Islamists, were excluded. When the economic crisis hit the Islamists and other excluded opposition parties went to protest but the included parties did not. The included opposition parties (mostly secularists and leftists), were afraid of losing their influence with the king by mobilizing their constituencies and helping their enemies, i.e. Islamists, in protesting against the regime, and did therefore not mobilize their constituencies (Lust-Okar 2005, 144-148).

This explains why the protests in Morocco were much milder and less threatening than those in Jordan. The severity of the protests in Jordan was such that the king had to acquiesce to some of the demands and reform to a much larger extent than his Moroccan colleague or use extensive repression to keep the protests in check. The Jordanian king faced a unified front of opposition parties. The Moroccan king, on the other hand, divided the opposition and thereby limited their capability of and interest in protesting. The argument here is quite similar to that of Brownlee, but exactly the opposite. That is, it is best for a regime to refrain from dividing the elites that support it, but it is imperative to divide the elites of the opposition. If not, then they will possibly form a unified front against the regime that may threaten regime stability (Lust-Okar 2005, 161-163).

Authoritarian resilience and upgrading

Yet, the Jordanian government recuperated in time and in exchange for concessions restored order. In this way, regimes learn from their mistakes. They also learn from each other. They all want to retain political power and improve economically. Consequently, they look around for successful strategies. They also look at non-MENA regimes; China, for example, has proven to be an inspiring example of how to retain political power and improve economically (Heydemann 2007, 2-3).

The regimes learn from each other how to deal with co-optation, repression, a limited participation society and still improve economically. They do this in the ways described by Schlumberger and others, for example, by changing their elite members. They have also learned and executed two other valuable strategies. First, the West has always been pushing for MENA to liberalize more, to become more democratic. At the same time, MENA was dependent on the West for its investments and trade. However, the West was not above using its investments as leverage for reforms. Since the liberalized MENA regimes were not eager to lose further political power because of reforms they actively went searching for more trading and investment partners, especially those who were less focused on

democratic reforms, such as China and Russia and the Arab oil monarchies. Thus, MENA regimes diversified their trading partners in order to be less dependent on the reform-prone West (Heydemann 2007, 23-25).

Second, they learned to control the communication technologies of the 21st century that allow people to come together virtually and possibly form a threat to the system. Many citizens in MENA had bought satellite dishes and internet use was on the rise. MENA regimes were divided about this. The internet and use of satellite dishes made the regimes that allowed it seem progressive, which the people liked, and better than their controlling predecessors. On the other hand, internet was dangerous to the regimes because it could mobilize people and it threatened the hold of the regimes over the media. The regimes went about to filter the internet, control its users and repress those who used it for means not appreciated by the government (Heydemann 2007, 18-23).

Authoritarian resilience and bargains

Thus, the regimes maintained their political power despite all the changes in their environment. The authoritarian resilience theory describes how liberalized authoritarian regimes have adapted to foreign and indigenous demands for political and economic reforms. They have adapted to their lack of economic wealth, material and ideological and traditional legitimacy   by offering their population limited influence instead. The material legitimacy, so important in the rentier authoritarian bargain, is thereby replaced by a sort of structural legitimacy as structures, based on western designs, such as parliaments, have been adapted to offer some form of political participation for the population. In these new structures, social forces have to play a role, otherwise the system is moot. The social forces may influence the system, to some extent, in exchange for respecting the power of the regimes.

This adaptation has led to an update of the 'authoritarian bargain' in the liberalized autocracies. The rule is: As long as you respect the regime's power, you may receive some material benefits and political influence, otherwise you will be repressed and deliberalization follows. The regimes that do not play along with this bargain, for example, the regime in Jordan after the economic crisis, suffer legitimacy issues and civil strife due to the poor assimilation of social forces that are not co-opted. Thus, regimes remain in power due to a combination of co-optation and repression as they did in the era of the rentier state. The only difference is that co-optation is now political as well as economical whereas it was only economical before. In this way, Huntington's social forces that are created by modernization are

assimilated, to some extent, as their political influence is limited rather than simply co-opted as in the rentier state.

Conclusion

Thus, fully authoritarian states used rentier state strategies to retain power. They depended mainly on material legitimacy and religious or traditional legitimacy. The other MENA regimes, who lacked the rents to remain completely authoritarian, used several other strategies to divide the opposition and retain power. They liberalized, in order to bring about economic growth and gain material legitimacy. They also built institutions, such as parliaments, to allow for some political participation and gain structural legitimacy. These strategies seemed to work well, as the regimes retained their power despite the significant decrease in rents. However, the Arab Spring showed that the regimes' power hold over society was more limited than expected.

Chapter 6

The Arab Spring and the authoritarian resilience theory

In this chapter, I will discuss the Arab Spring and its repercussions for the authoritarian resilience theory. I will do so by giving an overview of the Arab Spring, its causes and the criticism it raised of the authoritarian resilience theory.

The Arab Spring

Using the strategies described by the authoritarian resilience theory MENA regimes seemed impervious to democratic change. Not one had encountered regime change since the Iranian revolution in 1979 and that revolution seemed both far away and unrepeatable. Furthermore, the Iranian regime had changed but remained authoritarian. Democratization seemingly had no hold on MENA

It all changed in 2010. A poor Tunisian street vendor, angered and humiliated by the state authorities, with no other way out, set himself on fire on 17 December 2010. His death was the start of a series of protests against the Tunisian government. The Tunisian government underestimated the anger and frustration of the protesters. It used a combination of police repression and some minor reforms to placate the protesters. However, both measures failed to do so. The protests spread all over the country and increased in size. The Tunisian police could no longer control the protests and the government instead deployed the army to violently repress the protests. The army, however, sided with the protesters. Without army support, the Tunisian government crumbled and the Tunisian president resigned on 17 January 2011 ("The Arab Spring: A Year of Revolution", 2011; Brownlee et al. 2015, 2-4, 10-12).

The protests did not remain in Tunisia but spread all over MENA. They spread to Egypt, Syria, Bahrain, Libya, Jordan, Morocco, Yemen and Kuwait. Other countries, such as Saudi Arabia, and Algeria also encountered protests. Yet, the size of the protests in oil-rich countries was significantly smaller than those in non-oil rich countries, except for Libya. The Egyptian regime was the first to follow the route of the Tunisian regime. The Egyptian regime also lacked the willingness to significantly reform and eventually attempted to repress the protests. This failed because the army did not support the regime

and consequently the regime crumbled. Others, such as Jordan and Morocco retained their structural legitimacy by announcing democratic reforms, thereby placating the protesters and restoring the peace. Again others, such as Libya, Syria, Bahrain and Yemen refused to reform, and instead used their armies to repress the protests. However, unlike in Tunisia and Egypt there was (some) army support for repression in Libya, Syria and Yemen. Some parts of the army, however, supported the cause of the protesters. The divided loyalty of the army turned all three countries into battlefields for civil wars. Only in Bahrain did the government retain the complete support of the army and successfully crush the protests (Barany 2011, 30-37; Brownlee et al. 2015, 2-4, 10-12).

Most of the countries rocked by protests were liberalized autocracies, the oil-poor republics. The ones that were not had either encountered a recent civil war, in case of Algeria, Lebanon and Iraq, and/or were oil-rich in case of Algeria and Iraq. The few monarchies that encountered significant protests were also oil-poor. Jordan and Morocco encountered large but not excessive protests, because they reformed in time. Only the Bahraini monarchy was oil-poor and unwilling to reform and was therefore hard-hit. The other monarchies and Algeria announced subsidy programs, salary increases and other payments as soon as large protests broke out in Tunisia. Qatar, for example, handed out money to every family. Saudi Arabia, announced a 100 billion subsidy program. In this way, the oil-rich countries used rentier state strategies aimed at increasing material legitimacy to placate the protesters, whereas the monarchies that lacked the material legitimacy had to reform or repress in order not to crumble (Yom & Gause III 2012, 79, 80-84; Brownlee et al. 2015, 51-55, 60-61; Byun & Hollander 2014, 27, 31).

Understanding the Arab Spring

The Arab Spring was a shock to both the Arab regimes and the authoritarian resilience theory. Both had overestimated the strength of the regimes. Heydemann, who in 2007 had declared the Arab states to be stronger than ever had also mentioned that their policies led to economic inequality and youth who were disillusioned with the political system of co-optation, repression and a lack of political change. Heydemann thought these could become problems in the future (Heydemann 2007, VII, 27). The future had only arrived sooner and the states were weaker than he expected.

In hindsight, the structural problems underlying the Arab Spring seem obvious. The economic liberalization policies had led to impressive amounts of economic growth. Unfortunately, the ordinary population did not much benefit from the liberalization. It was mainly rich businessmen who profited

from the liberalization policies by buying state industries and creating artificial monopolies. They were allowed to do so by corrupt state officials who were responsible for the liberalization. Thus, the economic growth only worsened economic inequality in the Arab states. The regimes' material legitimacy that depended on improving the economic situation of their citizens decreased accordingly (Heydarian, 2011; Lynch, 2011; Aarts et al. 2011, 98).

Furthermore, improved healthcare led to a population boom, which meant that the ordinary population's profits from the liberalization policies had to be divided among more persons. Moreover, the economic growth did not decrease unemployment figures, which remained stable over this period. The increase in population and the stability of the unemployment figure caused the number of unemployed people, especially, youths to increase between the 1990s and 2010s. Both youths and elderly people wanted jobs and change. Youth unemployment was especially important because it prevents youths from gaining social standing by having a job. It also negatively affected their chances of marriage, since dowries are expensive and so is renting or buying a house. Thus, it affected the youths' chances to develop themselves, as they remained with their parents and without prospects. Consequently, youths became frustrated with the status quo. This was especially dangerous, because youths are the most likely group to protest and demand social and political change. Youths form the age group that have the least to lose by protesting and are most easily swept up by ideas of betterment. This became obvious during the Arab Spring, were youths were at the forefront of the protests (Perthes, 2012; Korotayev & Zinkina 2011, 163-168; Mulderig 2013 ,5, 13-17 19-22; Goldstone 2002, 11-12). Thus, the period of 1990-2010 resulted in marginal economic improvements for the Arab people, as mainly the rich benefited from the liberalization measures.

Additionally, as predicted by Heydemann (2007, 27), the population got disappointed with the lack of influence they had in their liberalized systems. Elections proved to be empty shells and significant reforms were hard to come by. For example, in 2010, Egypt's ruling party went from a 75 % majority to a 90% majority. This result was so obviously rigged that the belief in the value of the political structures, and structural legitimacy, diminished (Aarts 2011, 27-29, 48).

Thus, the Arab states did not keep their end of the updated authoritarian bargain. They lost legitimacy, both material and structural. As a result, the people revolted. They demanded better economic prospects and more political influence. As such, Lerner, Lipset and Hudson were ultimately proven right, modernization does lead people to have political opinions and demanding a participation society. The people acted on their demands in in unexpected ways, not via traditional civil society or political

structures, that were controlled by the government, but simply as individuals that all came together to express their shared convictions. The people came together thanks to new media, such as whatsapp, but they came individually. There was no 'higher' organization to organize the protests (Aarts 2011, 41-43, 46).

Criticism of the authoritarian resilience theory

After the Arab Spring, the authoritarian resilience theory received severe criticism for not predicting the protests and overestimating the strength of the Arab governments. The weakness of the theory was its exclusive focus on understanding the status quo. The theory attempted to describe the ways in which authoritarian regimes maintained power. The regimes had maintained power for so long that an end to their power was considered very unlikely. The theory's focus was on understanding this status quo, implicitly expecting the status quo to remain. By doing so, authoritarian resilience theory failed to understand and describe the underlying societal changes that were to upset the status quo (Volpi 2013, 971-972; Gause, 2012).

The authoritarian resilience theory explains how Arab regimes control civil society, the elites and other institutionalized forms of society. In this way, the regimes prevented any organized, institutionalized opposition to arise and prevented the reckoning of social forces and modernization predicted by Huntington. Consequently, the regimes were perceived as resilient. However, the unexpected effect of the control of institutionalized protest was that people rather than not protest at all chose non-institutional ways to protest. The protests of the Arab Spring were not organized, nor did they arise from institutional actors, such as opposition parties. Instead, people protested as individuals, using their social networks to get family, friends and acquaintances to join the protests (Bayat 2013, 588-590). By doing so, the social forces that Huntington had described still came to fore. The dissatisfaction of the social forces, the youths, unemployed and disenfranchised that would normally have taken the form of organized and institutionalized protests, now had no option other than non-institutionalized, individual protests. Volpi agrees that the success of the authoritarianism of the Arab regimes in preventing the opposition from organizing has, in some cases, also led to its downfall. Both the regimes and the authoritarian resilience theory focused exclusively on controlling the institutionalized space. Moreover, both neglected the processes going on in the non-institutionalized space. Both had simply assumed that economic growth would lead to increased material legitimacy. Whereas, in practice the economic inequality and continuing poverty led to increased frustration and a lack of material legitimacy.

Moreover, the capabilities that helped regimes to control institutionalized space, such as co-opting elites, were not as applicable to the un-institutionalized space, as the protests were not led by elites. Thus, when the regimes encountered the protests their tried and tested methods of control did not work very effectively and the protests could grow very large in some countries. Other countries, such as Saudi Arabia, used large subsidies to prevent people from protesting. In Morocco, the king announced reforms before the protests became too large. Other regimes who did not act, but instead depended on the tried and tested methods eventually had to or attempted to use military repression to subdue the protests (Volpi 2013, 971-973, 980, 983-985; Brownlee et al 2015, 68-69, 73-75, 82-83, 88-90, 92-94).

This brings us to the importance of militaries in the Arab Spring. Schlumberger and the authoritarian resilience theory do not attach much weight to the role of militaries in sustaining authoritarianism. Yet, during the Arab Spring the militaries proved to be very important. The armies that were most institutionalized, and least dependent on patronage, namely those of Egypt and Tunisia, were disloyal to their regimes. On the other hand, armies that functioned as patronage networks remained loyal, for example, in Bahrain, Syria and Libya. In Bahrain the army remained loyal, or in case of Syria and Libya partially loyal. Their loyal armies allowed the regimes to try and retain power by violently repressing the protesters. This succeeded in case of Bahrain, and somewhat in Syria and Libya, where the protests turned into civil wars. They turned into civil wars because some groups of soldiers defected to fight against the regime. Whereas, in Egypt and Tunisia the regimes attempted to use the army to repress their populations, but the armies refused. Without support of the army and the threat of repression gone both regimes crumbled (Barany 2011, 30-37; Brownlee et al. 2015, 68-69, 73-75, 82-83, 88-90, 92-94). Army loyalty to the regime is therefore essential in sustaining authoritarianism when encountering protests.

Thus, the authoritarian resilience theory had not expected the Arab Spring, because it had focused on understanding the status quo of political power and the effectiveness of MENA regimes in controlling institutionalized space. By doing so, they neglected both the simmering dissatisfaction and changes in society, but also the importance of non-institutionalized space.

However, the protests of the Arab Spring did not result in lasting political change in MENA. It was only Tunisia that became more democratic. Egypt became authoritarian again, after a brief flirt with democracy. Syria and Libya entered into civil wars. Jordan and Morocco reformed somewhat, but their kings remain very powerful. All other MENA countries did not meaningfully change. They used money, small reforms, other authoritarian resilience strategies and (mild) repression to gain some material and

structural legitimacy and contain the protests. In this way, the dissatisfaction and demand for a participation society was temporarily repressed, but not solved. Hence, MENA regimes and societies are forced to continue muddling through, as put succinctly by Hudson. Nevertheless, the strategies of the authoritarian resilience theory proved effective for most MENA countries. Moreover, only one MENA regime (Tunisia) effectively became less authoritarian. The other MENA regimes proved to be as resilient as the theory had expected.

Conclusion

Thus, the Arab Spring proved the right of Lerner and Lipset, as the people demanded democratization of MENA society. The regimes had failed to provide economic growth, and financial wellbeing for their populations, whose economic situation declined. In this way, the regimes failed to keep their end of the upgraded authoritarian bargain and lost material and structural legitimacy. As a result, the MENA populations did not keep their part of the authoritarian bargain either and demanded economic improvements and political influence. They did so by amassing and protesting in non-institutionalized space, rather than the government controlled institutionalized space.

The Arab Spring came as a complete surprise to authoritarian resilience theorists. They had so focused on understanding and describing the role of the government in controlling institutionalized space that they overlooked the lack of governmental control in non-institutionalized space. By doing so, authoritarian resilience theory could not predict the actions of non-institutionalized actors. The essential role of the army in repressing and turning protests into civil wars had also been overlooked by authoritarian resilience theorists. Nevertheless, the strategies of governments to remain in control, described by authoritarian resilience theory, stayed successful during the Arab Spring. Most MENA states did therefore not encounter much (political) change from the Arab Spring. Both the authoritarian resilience theory and MENA regimes have shown to be as resilient as ever.

Chapter 7

Conclusion

Now I will answer the research question of this thesis: "How has the debate regarding authoritarian resilience in MENA developed over the years?".

After the fall of the Ottoman Empire, MENA (in this paper Turkey and Iran are not considered) was divided in different nation-states with central, authoritarian governments. MENA was behind in development of technology and society compared to the West and wanted to catch up. Modernization requires a strong central government in order to be pushed through, and it requires an authoritarian leader to be effective. However, at the end of the modernization process the authoritarian leader must make way. The process of modernization brings forth industrialization, economic wealth, literacy, media and it makes people have opinions on politics and actively want to participate in politics. Modernization also creates social forces. Both individual people and social forces want to influence a regime. An authoritarian leader stands in the way of this participatory drive and therefore must eventually make way or risk a conflict with the people. As such, Western scholars expected authoritarian regimes to eventually be replaced by participatory regimes

This did not happen. In MENA, most people wanted a participation society. Not necessarily a copy of the Western participation society, rather something more Islamic, but they did not want an authoritarian regime. However, despite the people wanting political change, the authoritarian regimes did not make way. Some authoritarian leaders made way, only to be replaced by other authoritarian leaders. Western researchers were amazed by the lack of political change in MENA and sought explanations for the sustenance of the authoritarian regimes.

The first theory to explain the lack of political change focused on MENA culture and Islam. Western scholars thought that the Arab people acquiesced because of their religion. They saw Islam as an anti-democratic, authoritarian religion that made people not question their leaders and obedient. Others saw the implementation of the *sharia* as the problem. In their view, the *sharia*'s very nature was at odds with democracy. It regulated the entire life of a Muslim and of the Islamic state. An Islamic state needed no legislative government because there was the *sharia*. There was a need for an executive government,

in the form of a caliph, or another un-elected official, who only had to execute the *sharia*. The people simply had a law which they needed to obey, and as a result never could or had to influence their government. Therefore, people withdrew from politics. Other scholars viewed that the poor execution of the *sharia* in Islamic states caused the withdrawal of Muslim from politics. They found that Muslims could either participate politically and thereby accept that their holy law was compromised or refuse to deal with politics and retain their holy law. Many chose the latter option. However, the cultural/ religious explanation for MENA authoritarianism was eventually proven wrong as the people were heard calling loudly for democracy and reforms from the 1980s on.

After having rejected the cultural / religious explanation, another explanation was sought. The rentier state offered an economic / societal explanation for the lack of political change. It found that people in MENA did want participation, but did not demand political change (at least until the 1980s). The reason for this is that MENA regimes gained material legitimacy by spending rents they received. Almost all MENA states received large incomes from rents, unlike their counterparts in the West, who would receive income from taxation. The Western people demanded political influence in exchange for their taxes. But since MENA governments barely taxed, the calls for political influence were relatively silent in MENA region. Moreover, the rents enabled MENA regimes to distribute money amongst their people, who received free healthcare, free education and various social programs. In this way, MENA regimes gained material legitimacy. However, the regimes would only provide these benefits as long as the people remained silent with respect to politics. Those people who did not remain silent were harshly repressed by the national security forces. The rents also allowed MENA regimes to build large security forces that could be used for repression. Thus, in the rentier state the leaders and the people entered an authoritarian bargain that exchanged wealth for political participation. This prevented the democratization of society as predicted by Lipset and Lerner.

MENA regimes also gained other forms of legitimacy. The Arab republics focused on gaining ideological legitimacy by espousing ideologies such as nationalism, Pan-Arabism, Nasserism and socialism (Baath). Or in the case of the monarchies, tradition, because it had always been that way and for that reason considered to be good. These other forms of legitimacy did, however, not all last. Only traditional legitimacy lasted over time. The religious legitimacy of the monarchies was challenged by other religious groups. The ideological legitimacy of the Arab republic did not withstand economic downturns, the lost war against Israel and deaths of charismatic leaders such as Nasser.

The material legitimacy of the regimes lasted until the 1980s when the rents declined significantly, due to economic troubles and crashing oil prices. The spending of MENA regimes decreased accordingly and they could no longer afford to keep to their end of the bargain. As a result, and expected by the modernization theorists, the people demanded political influence. The governments, who were also under pressure from the West to become a bit more democratic, relented and liberalized both economically and politically. By this they attempted to build structural legitimacy rather than material legitimacy. The regimes now offered limited elections and allowed people to group together and form civil societies that, according to Western theory, would influence MENA regimes and (eventually) bring about democratic change. The civil societies in MENA did, however, no such thing. MENA regimes devised rules and laws to keep the societies in check. Thus, the people were allowed some role on the political field and some influence on the regimes but the regimes maintained their political power.

The onset of civil societies was also the introduction of an updated authoritarian bargain. Due to the economic difficulties of most of MENA regimes the old bargain was no longer possible. The new bargain promised people some wealth and some influence, in exchange for respecting the regime's power. The regimes built Western like institutions, such as parliaments and associations in order to make their societies seem democratic. In practice, these institutions were mainly for show. Groups other than the ruling party were very limited in their abilities to influence the regime. Elections were rigged and parties such as the Islamists were in some countries excluded and forbidden from participating. Some influential groups that had arisen in MENA, such as business men, were incorporated in the government in order to make them loyal to the regime. Once such a group would be represented in the government, it would be loyal. NGO's were allowed, but were influenced by the regimes which provided money and regulations that limited the influence and appeal of the NGO's. In other cases, NGO's were financed by Western countries and were often seen as foreign institutions and hence not very effective.

These measures, and others aimed at co-optation of people and social forces, were taken to ensure the political power MENA regimes. The theory of authoritarian resilience that described the measures of these regimes, seemed to have understood the state of the Arab regimes very well. These regimes were strong, their hold over the people was strong, and would not easily be threatened by anything. However, there were some shortcomings in the dealings of the authoritarian Arab states, such as the lack of political influence of the people, that made the people cynical with regard to participating in the system.

Then the Arab Spring happened and the authoritarian resilience theorists seemed out of touch with their declarations of the strength of the Arab regimes. They had so focused on the longevity of Arab states and their control of institutionalized space that they had overlooked the societal changes that happened among the Arab people, who had barely benefited from the updated authoritarian bargain. The people had not prospered because of corruption and economic inequality. There was widespread unemployment and their promised political influence was in practice close to none. Essentially, the created structural legitimacy of the Arab regimes proved too small, because the limited liberalization and democratization reforms had not created enough structural legitimacy, and the material legitimacy had decreased too much by then. In response, the people revolted and demanded real political influence, political change and democracy. The people did not revolt in the institutionalized space of associations and parties that the Arab regimes controlled so well. Instead, people revolted as individuals, who invited their acquaintances, friends and family to protest.

Their revolt was unexpected by both the Arab regimes and the authoritarian resilience theory. Moreover, the un-institutionalized nature of the Arab Spring made it difficult for regimes to respond adequately. Their strategies to retain power were well suited to controlling associations, elites and parties but not masses of individuals. Consequently, protests could grow large and bring down some regimes. The Tunisian and Egyptian regime changed political colors without as much as a whiff. Others, such as the Syrian and Libyan regime entered into civil wars in order to remain in power. All other regimes retained power with a combination of co-optation, repression and promises of reforms. The Egyptian regime returned to its former authoritarian nature within a year. Syria is still mired in a civil war and Libya has become a free haven for warlords and bandits. Only Tunisia has become significantly more democratic. Thus, the authoritarian leaders of the Arab regimes have weathered the storm quite well. Their states still have political power and their measures of maintaining that power have proved effective. The regimes can sustain their authoritarian rule after all and Arab authoritarianism once more defies expectations. Although the authoritarian resilience theory has attributed too little influence to the role of armies in sustaining Arab authoritarianism and overlooked the societal change in the Arab countries underlying the revolution, most of the Arab regimes have proven resilient by means of co-optation, reform and repression. These mechanisms have been described by the authoritarian resilience theory. As such both Arab authoritarianism and authoritarian resilience theory show their lasting appeal.

Nevertheless, the authoritarian resilience should also focus on understanding the non-institutionalized parts of MENA societies. The theory's lack of understanding of the non-institutionalized space led it to

overestimating the resilience of the Arab regimes. The control of the regimes over institutionalized space is so strong that future revolts are not likely to arise from there. However, the effect of the strategies and measures of Arab regimes on individual Arab people is not studied by the authoritarian resilience theory. This is a weakness because future protests are likely to arrive from agglomerations of individuals, who are not bound together by (institutionalized) associations. Thus, the authoritarian resilience theory should explore and describe the decision process of the individual Arab people who protested.

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