

Previous efforts to understand the creation of political institutions in newly democratizing states have largely ignored the importance of regime types in explaining institutional development. However, this article argues that the type of authoritarian regime in place at the onset of liberalization significantly influences the creation of electoral rules. Incumbent elites in formerly single-party regimes prefer electoral laws that concentrate legislative power in the hands of the dominant party, whereas monarchs prefer systems that allow representation to a wide range of parties. Consequently, the establishment of electoral institutions in monarchies and one-party states should differ. Examining the Middle East, this article finds that a distinct pattern of electoral institutions in monarchies and one-party states does indeed exist. Furthermore, these electoral institutions promote significant differences in legislative representation.

RULERS AND RULES

Reassessing the Influence of Regime Type on Electoral Law Formation

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The third wave of democratization has renewed our interest in understanding the causes of and prospects for democratic transitions. The new effort differs from earlier attempts to understand democratization, however. Influenced by the new institutionalism that has swept the discipline as a whole, scholars primarily examine the emergence of specific, formal institutions in the new states (e.g., parliamentary vs. presidential systems, electoral

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rules, etc.). They focus on how uncertainty, social cleavages, and other factors affect the bargaining of elites over, and the development of, democratic institutions (Bawn, 1993; Foweraker, 1998; Jones Luong, 2000; Remington & Smith, 1996). To a lesser extent, they also examine how new institutions affect the prospects for democracy (Blais & Dion, 1990; Lijphart, 1994; Widner, 1994). In general, however, there is a marked movement away from considering regimes to looking at individual institutions.

Although the new institutional studies of democratization benefit from greater precision, they have not seriously examined how regime type influences institutional formation. The literature in new institutionalism emphasizes the effect of variations in institutional choices on the distribution of power, particularly between parliamentary and presidential democracies, in new and established regimes (Eaton, 2000; Linz & Valenzuela, 1994; Mainwaring & Shugart, 1997; Stepan & Skach, 1993). It has also made distinctions across regimes regarding the likelihood of, and prospects for, political liberalization (see Bratton & van de Walle, 1997; Diamond, Plattner, Chu, & Tien, 1997; Geddes, 1999; Herb, 1999; Linz & Stepan, 1996; Snyder & Mahoney, 1999). Clearly, institutional differences across regimes shape incentive structures as well as identities and preferences of incumbents and political opponents, influencing the course of political liberalization. However, it follows that these regimes also affect the development of new institutions during liberalization. This influence of regime type on the formation of specific institutions has been largely overlooked in examining liberalization.

In this article, we argue that differences in authoritarian regimes affect the choice of new institutions during political liberalization. Specifically, incumbents' preferences over the distribution of domestic political power vary across different types of authoritarian regimes, and this results ultimately in the creation of different electoral rules. Liberalizing one-party states are likely to develop electoral rules that favor dominant political parties, whereas liberalizing monarchies support electoral systems that balance political power among competing forces. We examine this hypothesis with data and illustrations from cases in the Middle East.

This analysis of political liberalization in the Middle East helps extend our understanding of institutional development and democratization in several

at Rice University, which made this research possible. Any failures in interpreting the data or executing suggestions are, of course, ours. Please direct correspondence to Ellen Lust-Okar, Department of Political Science, Yale University, 124 Prospect Street, New Haven, CT 06511; telephone: (203) 432-5284; fax: (203) 432-6196; e-mail: ellen.lust-okar@yale.edu or to Amaney Ahmad Jamal, Department of Political Science, University of Michigan, Ann Arbor, MI 48109; telephone: (734) 434-4774; fax: (734) 434-7089; e-mail: amaneyps@umich.edu.

ways. Although political liberalization in the Middle East has proceeded less quickly and extensively than regime change in many other areas, we argue that it is the product of many of the same forces found there. Thus, lessons from the Middle East can inform us of how regime types may influence preference formation in states outside the region. In addition, the Middle East provides variation in regime types that postauthoritarian states in Latin America or post-Communist states in Eastern Europe and the former Soviet Union do not. Comparing monarchies with one-party states allows us to ask key questions about how regime types influence preferences over institutional rules.

Focusing on the institutional choices made in early stages of liberalization in Middle Eastern states sheds light not only on the institutional formation in the states at hand but also on the preferences with which elites enter negotiations in other states. Although the outcomes of negotiations may differ across other states, their preferences over institutional arrangements will be partly shaped by the logic of the existing regime. This work seeks to explain why this is the case.

Finally, this analysis extends the literature on political liberalization in the Middle East. The majority of work on the region has ignored the specific institutional arrangements emerging during political liberalization. The few works examining institutions have still ignored variation among their arrangements (Baaklini, Denoeux, & Springborg, 1999; Pripstein Posusney, 1998, 2000). This is unfortunate, for examining this variation yields important theoretical lessons about institutional development generally and a better understanding of liberalization in the Middle East specifically.

The article proceeds as follows: The first section argues that electoral institutions are still important components of, and potential catalysts for, political liberalization in the Middle East. The second section argues that electoral institutions are the outcomes of negotiations between opposition and incumbent elites. The third section shows that despite the similarities in the bargaining structure, there is considerable variation in electoral rules and their outcomes. This variation exists because the preferences of incumbent elites are different in monarchies and one-party states. The preferences associated with different regime types help explain variations both in electoral laws and in the distribution of representation in these states.

POLITICAL LIBERALIZATION IN THE MIDDLE EAST

We begin by clarifying the nature of political liberalization in the region as well as the role of electoral laws in this process. Although political liberaliza-

tion in the Middle East and North Africa was spurred by many of the same processes that led to democratic transformations in much of Eastern Europe, the former Soviet Union, Latin America, and Africa, it has not resulted in democratic transitions. Rather, incumbent elites have attempted to manipulate the process of political liberalization to maintain their positions. In many ways consistent with conventional definitions of political liberalization,¹ incumbents have allowed increased contestation. They allow political parties to mobilize, reduce censorship, hold elections, and allow legislative bodies to debate policies. Incumbents also permit civic organizations to organize, often to demand greater political change. In short, the Middle East political landscape is changing. Yet although citizens speak more often, more loudly, and more critically; and although they may vote for lower level representatives, they do not choose their heads of state. Most presidents and monarchs in these states continue to leave office “feet first,” with succession frequently passed to their sons. In short, the Middle East has seen political liberalization but not democratization.

In this case, do elections—and electoral rules—matter? In short, yes. We believe that elections in the Middle East and the rules governing them deserve attention for several reasons. First, they are important for masses and elites as well as for the international community. Voter turnout has officially ranged from 50% to 90% in the states where voting is no longer mandatory. Although this may overestimate participation, elections are well publicized, highly noticed, and contested events. Moreover, there is choice. Opposition candidates truly oppose proregime candidates, and they can fare better or worse in the elections depending on popular support. Elections and electoral results thus send clear signals to masses and elites about popular preferences as well as where the boundaries of acceptable political participation are set. Consequently, both domestic and international audiences attach great meaning to how cleanly elections are carried out and how well the opposition fares.

Indeed, examining the politics of elections in the Middle East is extremely important for understanding the struggle between incumbents and opponents over state power. Debates over elections—when they are held, who can participate, the electoral rules governing them—constitute one of the major points of contention among opposition elites and incumbents. In interviews in Morocco, Jordan, and Palestine, opposition elites discussed their discontent with current electoral procedures (based on author interviews with the following: Amaoui, 1995; Bouzoubaa, 1995; Chirat, 1995; El Merghadi,

1. The processes found in the Middle East are consistent with Bratton and van de Walle's (1997) definition of political liberalization as “a reform of a regime by the relaxation of government controls on the political activities of citizens” (p. 282).

1994; Farhan, 1998; Madanat, 1995; Muhanna, 1998).² They have the same discussions with domestic audiences in newspapers, at party meetings, and at conferences (e.g., Al-Urdun al-Jadid Research Center, 1995; "Interview With Munis al-Razzaz," 1994).³ Opponents also voice their discontent with electoral rules in formal channels. Jordanian opposition criticized the 1993 electoral law amendments in the House of Representatives. In Egypt, opposition has even taken its discontent with electoral rules to the Supreme Court, which overturned electoral laws after both the 1984 and 1987 elections. In short, legislatures and the question over electoral laws that affect access to the legislative branch are a major point of contention between incumbents and their opponents.

Negotiations over electoral laws are intense because the laws are important. A wealth of literature has demonstrated that electoral rules help to determine the number of parties and vote-receiving candidates that emerge in a political system (Cox, 1997; Duverger, 1954, 1986; Rae, 1967; Taagepera & Shugart, 1993), the extent to which electoral outcomes are representative of minority social groups or ideologies (Adams, 1996; Lijphart, 1990), and the stability of parliamentary cabinets (Lijphart, 1984). Even in limited liberalization, electoral rules are important. The mechanical results of electoral rules mean that these rules shape electoral outcomes and influence representation. This is important to incumbent and opposition elites alike. Incumbent elites want to maintain power, and although they can do so through the use of force or rigged elections, they prefer to do so through an apparently democratic process. Free and fair elections gain more international support and appease domestic constituencies far more than blatantly stuffed ballot boxes. Thus, incumbents care about instituting electoral rules that help them stay in power, even if the option of power through force is still available to them. Similarly, although opposition elites recognize that incumbent elites may corrupt the electoral process, they still work to obtain electoral rules that maximize their representation. They know that they may not gain power

2. Amaoui, Nubir (Secretary General of CDT, Member of USFP Central Committee), Interview, Casablanca, May 1995; Bouzoubaa, Dr. Abdelmajid (Adjoint Secretary General and Secretary of Information of CDT, Council Member of USFP), Interview, Rabat, Morocco, July 15, 1995; Chirat, M. (Member of UGTM Leadership and Istiqlal Political Bureau), Interview, Casablanca, Morocco, July 20, 1995; El Merghadi, Mohammad (USFP member), Interview, Fes, Morocco, May 16, 1994; Farhan, Dr. Ishak (Secretary General of Islamic Action Front), Interview, Amman, July 1998; Madanat, Issa (Founding Member of Jordanian Socialist Democratic and Jordanian Communist Parties) Interviews, Amman, Jordan, November 1995 and August 1998; Muhanna, Dr. Rabbah (Leading Member, PFLP), Interview, Gaza Strip, May 16, 1998.

3. "Interview with Munis al-Razzaz (General Secretary of Arab Democratic Party of Jordan)," *The Star*, January 13, 1994.

today, but the opportunity to participate, the hope that participation may alter the balance of power in the future, and the selective benefits often accompanying office provide them incentives to press for electoral rules that allow them access to power.

In newly liberalizing systems, like those of the Middle East, these outcomes may be even more important. As North (1990) noted, institutions put in place today alter the relative power of contenders and therefore may influence the creation of future institutions. Although informal institutions may clearly influence the outcomes of elections, formal rules are important. Electoral laws help determine the extent to which various opposition groups gain admittance to the system, altering the subsequent distributions of power; and they influence the extent to which incumbents may obtain favorable outcomes through apparently legitimate or illegitimate means, thereby enhancing their domestic and international support. Both factors should affect the prospects for stability and further liberalization (see, for example, Mainwaring & Scully, 1995; Power and Gasiorowski, 1997; Stepan & Skach, 1993).

CASES OF MANAGED LIBERALIZATION IN THE MIDDLE EAST: EXPOSING THE INFLUENCE OF REGIME TYPE ON INCUMBENT PREFERENCES

The states that we examine here—Algeria, Egypt, Jordan, Kuwait, Morocco, Palestine, and Tunisia⁴—are particularly useful cases for examining the influence of regime types on incumbent preferences over institutional formation. Like much of Latin America and Eastern Europe, these states all took steps toward liberalization in the past two decades. However, these have been cases of managed liberalization. Incumbents have strong domestic and international incentives to broaden political participation, but they do not expect to lose political control. Similarly, opposition is weak and divided. It wants to participate openly in politics, but it does not expect to “win” the political game.

Strong incumbents. Since the early 1980s, incumbents have increasingly turned to political liberalization to alleviate domestic and international problems. Political liberalization serves as a pressure valve against mounting

4. We do not include Yemen and Lebanon because the incumbent regimes in these states were not undertaking managed liberalization. In Yemen, the union of North and South Yemen led to very different dynamics than that of managed liberalization. In Lebanon, the situation is best described as a return to democracy at the end of the civil war, under the tutelage of Syria. Similarly, Turkey and Iran are not included in the study because they are not among the states undertaking liberalization in the past two decades.

opposition during economic crises. Liberalization can also weaken opposition by partially satisfying the masses' demand for increased participation and implicating opponents in the forthcoming, painful policies necessary to solve domestic problems. Difficult domestic economic policies, when implemented, can now be "blamed" on the legislature as well as state leaders. In addition, by bringing opposition into the competitive political process, incumbents can more accurately gauge opposition strength. Finally, liberalization can satisfy international constituencies, such as U.S. pressures for Kuwaiti liberalization after the Gulf War or international pressure for Palestinian elections (Ayubi, 1995; Barkey, 1992; Harik & Sullivan, 1992; Richards, 1995). Although these pressures give incumbents incentives to liberalize, they do not determine the form of new institutional rules.

Furthermore, despite these incentives, incumbents negotiate new rules from a position of strength. The military remains firmly behind the incumbent elite. The late Kings Hussein of Jordan and Hassan II of Morocco maintained strong, stable relations with their military. President Mubarak of Egypt and Tunisian President Bin Ali have well-cultivated military support. Even more clearly, Algeria's military stepped in to maintain the system when it appeared the incumbents would lose. Incumbents also have well-developed political organizations. In Egypt, Tunisia, Algeria, and Palestine, incumbents have the single most developed party organization behind them. Party networks, ideologies, and basic infrastructures are solidly in place. In the monarchies of Kuwait, Morocco, and Jordan, the kings control a large formal political structure and maintain an important informal network of supporters.

Incumbents are firmly in control of state resources and access to them. They control access to political offices and public sector jobs, which continue to make up the majority of employment. They also control the rules of the political game. The minister of interior determines which parties may or may not participate in the formal political system, how they can operate, whether they may have ties to international organizations, where they can receive their funding, and what ideologies they may or may not purport. Incumbents control access to the media and the ability to hold political rallies. Once candidates are elected, incumbents can choose to allow parliament to operate or to close the legislature. Nothing is guaranteed. Incumbent elites have allowed opponents to join the formal political game, but they can also revoke the privilege.

Weak political opponents. Political opponents are therefore weak, and they recognize this. For instance, opposition in Morocco continually worried about the king returning to the policies of the 1960s and early 1970s when they were not allowed to operate (based on author interviews with Amaoui,

1995; Bouzoubaa, 1995; Chirat, 1995; El Merghadi, 1994; Moudden, 1995).⁵ Examining Egypt, Denoeux (1993) concluded that

even under the relatively liberal climate of the Mubarak regime, election fraud, intimidation, and harassment of opposition parties and their members remain common practice. When all is said and done, opposition parties operate only by the goodwill and sufferance of the Mubarak government, and they remain very vulnerable to an always-possible state crackdown. (p. 95)

Opponents also lack organizational strength. Opposition parties have operated underground, and thus they have developed a hierarchical organization necessary for maintaining security.⁶ However, when they operate in the open, they are seen as undemocratic and find it difficult to mobilize popular opinion.⁷ In addition, party entry is easy in liberalizing systems, which fragments the opposition. New parties emerge quickly in liberalizing states because (a) other parties are also “new” and thus not guaranteed a large percentage of the vote; (b) past electoral records are new or of limited information in highly volatile systems; (c) voters are not strongly affiliated with parties, other than the ruling party; and (d) civil organizations and associations (civil society) are weak and do not concentrate support behind any particular parties (Shvetsova, 1998). Thus, after political parties were made legal, we saw more than 23 parties emerge in Jordan, 46 in Algeria, 19 in Morocco, and 13 in Egypt.

Finally, in the case of managed liberalization, incumbent elites foster the parties’ fragmentation. They weaken or repress some parties while strengthening their opponents through official or unofficial support. Incumbents can also offer parties participation in the government, which also tends to separate moderates from radicals. They can co-opt members or facilitate rumors of co-optation that promote distrust within parties and lead to their splintering. This fragmentation, both because it is easy for new parties to enter and because incumbents manipulate parties, weakens the opposition.

5. Moudden, Abdelhay (Professor of Political Science), Interview, Rabat, July 6, 1995. See note 2.

6. For a discussion of the mechanisms required for maintaining underground parties, see Chai (1993).

7. Evidence of the public’s lack of support in Jordan is found in Markaz al-Dirasat al-Istratijiyya (1998) and Anderson (1997). Evidence of low public support for the Palestinian parties, including Fatah, is found in Jordan Media and Communication Center polls. Discussions of nondemocratic practices within parties and how debates over responding to popular sentiment lead to party splits occurred in numerous interviews. See also Abdul-Shafi (1998) and Harik (1994).

Given the skewed balance of power between incumbents and opposition groups, electoral rules are largely determined from above.⁸ Strong incumbents shape electoral rules such that the rules bolster their power rather than undermine it. Interestingly, however, the strategies of monarchs and presidents are strikingly different. Monarchs prefer rules that disperse power to a limited number of competing groups, whereas presidents prefer laws that promote their political party. Managed liberalization gives us an extremely useful opportunity to understand how regime type influences elites' preferences over, and choices of, new institutions.

NEGOTIATING INSTITUTIONS IN MANAGED POLITICAL LIBERALIZATION

To examine the impact of regime type on preferences over the formation of new institutions, we must first recognize that the creation of electoral laws is an outcome of negotiations between political incumbents and opposition (Geddes, 1991; Knight, 1992; North, 1990; Przeworski, 1992). To simplify the situation, incumbent elites and opposition choose between a set of institutions that help fragment political power or consolidate power in the hands of the largest party or parties. Although negotiations are in reality complicated, drawn-out interactions between the two sides, we model the game as beginning with the incumbent elites' offer of new electoral rules. Incumbents offer either fragmenting or majoritarian rules, and opponents either accept or reject the offer. When both players agree to the same rules, new institutions are created. If opposition elites reject the incumbents' offer, the status quo remains.

We make two simple assumptions. First, incumbents and opponents both recognize that they are involved in the negotiations over new electoral rules, and they know the options available to both sets of players. This is true even in the Middle East, where institutional rules change frequently. Indeed, Bates (1990) argues that "the very impermanence of political institutions in developing areas underscores the degree to which these institutions are themselves chosen" (p. 34).

Second, both sides know their preferences over the electoral rules. This assumption may seem strong given the extensive debates over electoral insti-

8. Baaklini, Denoeux, and Springborg (1999, pp. 30-31) characterize Middle East transitions as "transitions from above" that (a) are initiated and led by the incumbent regime; (b) are characterized by slow, gradual changes toward democratization; (c) include broadening of freedoms of speech, press, association, and political participation; (d) are accompanied by a dialogue between the regime and opposition; (e) are those in which the authoritarian elite is determined to maintain power, not bring about democracy; and (f) are often met by internal and international skepticism.

tutions, but there are some common understandings about how rules work. Proportional representation and larger member districts tend to increase the number of effective parties and the possibility of minority representation, whereas majoritarian systems and single-member districts tend to limit the participation of smaller parties. Empirical support shows that elites understand these rules. In interviews and editorials, we find discussions—both before and after the fact—of the effect of different laws. Furthermore, elites hold firm preferences over electoral laws when they negotiate with each other.

Considering electoral design as the outcome of negotiations over institutions allows us to apply an important theoretical insight to the question at hand. The formation of new electoral institutions depends on the preferences and power of the actors involved, and more powerful players can force the creation of institutions that suit their preferences. For instance, Bates (1989) argues that “those institutions will be created that favor what have long been referred to as ‘special interests’ ” (p. 90; see also Knight, 1992). Similarly, Przeworski (1991) noted that when the distribution of power among actors is skewed and certain, incumbents create institutions that favor their interest.

This is the situation in these Middle Eastern cases. Strong incumbent elites with an incentive for limited political openings negotiate new rules with weak opponents. Political opponents threaten to boycott elections or promote political unrest to gain their preferred policies, but they generally prefer to gain some access to the political system rather than to return to stricter authoritarianism. Particularly at the early stages of liberalization, opponents are extremely limited in their ability to shape electoral laws. Thus, these electoral rules largely reflect the incumbents’ preferences.

NEGOTIATING ELECTORAL LAWS IN MONARCHIES AND ONE-PARTY STATES

Although the conditions for liberalization are the same across these states, the electoral rules vary considerably. Table 1 illustrates,⁹ for instance, that Egypt, Palestine, and Tunisia instituted high thresholds and used party lists. Morocco, Jordan, and Kuwait did not. In those states, district magnitudes have generally been smaller, and a simple plurality wins the seats. Furthermore, the data suggest that the most common explanations for institutional creation do not explain this variation in electoral laws. Given the small number of states and electoral laws that we are studying, we examine the data by looking at a series of bivariate tables and case histories. Although this method

9. Here we focus on the direct elections to lower houses because they are important national institutions and, in bicameral legislatures, the most likely to afford opposition parties representation.

Table 1
Examples of Recent Electoral Rules in the Middle East

Country and Year of Law	Number of Electoral Seats	Average District Magnitude ^a	Allocation Rule	Threshold (%)	Party List	Rules Shift Seats to Majority Party
Egypt						
1986	448	9.33	Proportional	8	Yes	Yes
1990	444	2	Absolute majority	~50	No	No
Jordan						
1986	80	4	Plurality	0	No	No
1993	80	4	Plurality	0	No	No
Morocco						
1990	333	1	Plurality	0	No	No
1996	325	1	Plurality	0	No	No
Algeria						
1997	380	7.75	Proportional	7	Yes	No
Tunisia						
1989	141	1	Plurality	0	Yes	No
1994	163	6.27	Proportional	5	Yes	Yes
Kuwait						
1995	50	2	Plurality	0	No	No
Palestine						
1995	88	5.5	Plurality	0	Yes	No

Note: Data are available from the authors.

a. Given the limited availability of data and difficulties with alternative measures, we code district magnitude using the average number of seats per district.

is not fully satisfactory in determining the external validity of the arguments we present, it yields strong internal validity and important evidence that regime type matters in institutional formation.

As Tables 2 and 3 demonstrate, the common notion that colonial history explains the formation of new institutions is not supported by these cases. We do not find any particular relationship between French or British control and electoral rules. Rather, Morocco, with single-member districts and plurality rule, looks very similar to Kuwait, with dual-member districts and plurality rule, even though Morocco was under French control and Kuwait was under British rule. Furthermore, although Algeria and Morocco were both under French rule, their electoral rules are very different.

Similarly, a state's social heterogeneity does not appear to explain the variation in electoral rules. Despite the insights of scholars that social conditions may affect the formation and effects of electoral rules (see, for example, Neto & Cox, 1997; Ordeshook & Shvetsova, 1994; Taagepera, 1999), Table 4 does not demonstrate a convincing relationship between the level of social heterogeneity in the state and the proportionality of electoral rules.¹⁰ For instance, Algeria with a 30% Berber population and Tunisia with a 5% Berber population adopted policies that were majoritarian. In short, states with similar cleavage structures have different electoral systems, whereas states with different cleavage structures have similar electoral systems.

Finally, the level of uncertainty in negotiations is not a convincing explanation of this variation. Some scholars have argued that uncertainty over the future strength of incumbents affects the formation of legislative and executive institutions (e.g., Frye, 1997; Jones Luong, 2000). However, the skewed power distribution in managed liberalization minimizes uncertainty. As Table 5 shows, outcomes of elections remain relatively stable across time, and Freedom House indicators suggest that the level of authoritarianism remains particularly high.¹¹ Furthermore, there is no reason to believe that the level of uncertainty varies significantly across these states, and yet we know that the electoral rules do.

10. As proponents of this argument recognize, this is a difficult hypothesis to test. On one hand, the types of cleavages that are salient (e.g., religion, ethnicity) vary across states. Although most scholars have nevertheless chosen a single characteristic to examine cross-nationally, we examine the most salient cleavage in the state. The second difficulty is that distribution of social cleavages does not necessarily reflect their salience. However, scholars generally consider the "natural" demographic tendency of states to adopt different electoral laws, and we adopt the same method.

11. Freedom House is a non-profit organization that monitors political and civil liberties around the world. For more information, see <http://www.freedomhouse.org/>.

Table 2
District Magnitudes and Decision Rules in States Formerly Under French and British Control

State and Year of Electoral Law	District Magnitude	Decision Rule
French control		
Morocco		
1977	1	Plurality
1983	1	Plurality
1990	1	Plurality
1996	1	Plurality
Algeria		
1991	1	Absolute majority, run-off
1993	1	Absolute majority, run-off
1997	7.75	Proportional
Tunisia		
1981	1	Plurality
1994	6.27	Plurality (144/163); proportional (19/163)
British control		
Jordan		
1986	4	Plurality
1993	4	Plurality
Kuwait		
1992	2	Plurality
1995	2	Plurality
Egypt		
1983	2.54	Proportional
1986	9.33	Proportional (400/448); plurality (48/448)
1990	2	Absolute majority, run-off
1995	2	Absolute majority, run-off
Palestine		
1995	5.5	Plurality

Note: Data and citations are available from the authors.

Table 3
Use of Laws Promoting Large Parties in States Formerly Under French and British Control

	Use Laws Promoting Large Parties (type of law)	Do Not Use Laws Promoting Large Parties
French control	Algeria (1, 2, 3) Tunisia (1,2,3)	Morocco
British control	Egypt (1, 2, 3) Palestine (2)	Jordan Kuwait

Note: Laws in place: 1 = threshold laws; 2 = party lists; 3 = rules shift seats to large party.

Table 4
Social Cleavages and Electoral Laws in the Middle East

Country and Year of Law	Social Cleavages	District Magnitude	Allocation Rules	Threshold (%)	Party List
Egypt	94% Muslim, 6% Coptic and other				
1983		2.54	Proportional	8	Yes
1986		9.33	Proportional/plurality	8	Yes
1990		2	Absolute majority, run-off	~50	Yes
1995		2	Absolute majority, run-off	~50	No
Palestine	5% Christian, 95% Muslim				
1995		5.5	Plurality	0	Yes
Tunisia	5% Berber, 95% Arab				
1981		1	Plurality	0	Yes
1994		6.27	Plurality/proportional	5	Yes
Kuwait	20% Shi'ite, 80% Sunni				
1992		2	Plurality	0	No
1995		2	Plurality	0	No
Algeria	30% Berber, 70% Arab				
1991		1	Absolute majority, run-off	~50	Yes
1993		1	Absolute majority, run-off	~50	Yes
1997		7.75	Proportional	7	Yes
Morocco	40% Berber, 60% Arab				
1977		1	Plurality	0	No
1983		1	Plurality	0	No
1990		1	Plurality	0	No
1996		1	Plurality	0	No
Jordan	40% Palestinian, 60% East-Bank Origin				
1986		4	Plurality	0	No
1993		4	Plurality	0	No

Table 5
Percentage of Seats Won by Progovernment Parties in Liberalizing Monarchies and One-Party States

	State and Election Year	Percentage of Seats Won by Progovernment Parties	Effective Number of Parties ^a
Monarchies			
	Kuwait 1992	30	NA
	Kuwait 1996	34	NA
	Jordan 1989	19	2.9/9.9 ^b
	Jordan 1993	68	2.2/12.9
	Jordan 1997	78	1.1/74.5
	Morocco 1977	53	2.8/2.8
	Morocco 1984	48	5.5
	Morocco 1993	46	7.9
	Morocco 1997	34	8.5
One-party states			
	Tunisia 1989	100	1
	Tunisia 1994	94	1.5
	Algeria 1991	— ^c	—
	Algeria 1997	58	4.2
	Palestine 1995	71	1.9
	Egypt 1976	82	NA
	Egypt 1979	90 ^d	1.2
	Egypt 1984	87	1.3
	Egypt 1987	79	1.6
	Egypt 1990	86	1.8/2.3
	Egypt 1995	94	1.7/1.8

Note: Data and complete cites are available from the authors. NA = cases in which political parties are not permitted.

a. Calculated according to Cox (1997).

b. Two calculations of the effective number of legislative parties (ENPS) are made in cases where independents gained seats. The first calculation includes all independents as a single party, and the second includes each independent as his or her own party. Of course, neither measure is fully satisfactory, and the level of political fragmentation in the system probably falls between these figures.

c. The National Liberation Front (FLN) had gained only 188 of 430 seats before the run-off elections were canceled.

d. This does not include 22 of 30 members from the Labor party who defected to the ruling National Democratic Party (NDP) after the elections.

THE LOGIC OF LIBERALIZATION IN MONARCHIES AND ONE-PARTY STATES

The key to understanding how regime types affect electoral institutions is to recognize that leaders in monarchies and authoritarian, one-party states have divergent preferences. Because the structure of political power is fundamen-

tally different in monarchies and one-party states, the incumbents' preferences over electoral institutions are strikingly different. Kings prefer electoral rules that will allow the representation of a wide range of forces while maintaining their role as chief arbitrator. Presidents, in contrast, prefer electoral rules that allow them to dominate the elections while providing a safety net in case their party weakens. These different preferences are based on and reflect the different challenges of political liberalization in monarchies and one-party states.

Opposition elites' preferences. Before considering incumbents, we should note that in managed liberalization, opposition groups have the same preferences regardless of regime type. Most opposition elites want to gain representation and access to power. However, they recognize that they are weak, and no individual party believes that it would win a contest with the incumbents. Consequently, they favor laws that promote representation of small parties.

Thus, opposition elites favor multimember districts and proportional representation. For instance, the Jordanian opposition, including communists, socialists, and Islamists, came out uniformly against the one-man, one-vote law in Jordan because it decreased the proportionality of the electoral system (see Ciriaci, 1996; "House Votes," 1997; "Party Opposition Criticizes," 1997).¹² Similarly, the Palestinian opposition objected to the first-past-the-post nature of the Palestinian electoral law. Andoni (1996) note, "There was . . . criticism mainly from opposition groups such as the PFLP and DFLP, that the system of popular vote (whereby the candidates with the most votes win) failed to ensure the representation of smaller parties" (p. 10). In Egypt, opposition also came out against the first-past-the-post political system until it was altered toward proportional representation in 1984.

Political opponents also oppose auxiliary laws that shift votes to the largest party. In Algeria, the Socialist Forces Front (FFS) argued that the runoff elections in the 1991 electoral law would result in a choice between "a police state and a fundamentalist one"; and in Egypt, opposition groups have voiced their discontent with the 8% national threshold. They also oppose party lists, which tend to favor large, national parties. Consequently, in Egypt, the opposition took a case to the Supreme Court to press for independents' ability to

12. The previous voting scheme allowed voters to cast ballots for as many candidates as there were seats in the multimember districts. The opposition argues that frequently one ballot was cast according to traditional, tribal loyalties and the second according to ideological preferences. Thus, removing the option of casting multiple votes led voters to choose their candidates according to tribal loyalties and patronage ties and weakened the prospects for less traditional, ideologically based candidates.

run, and in Tunisia both the leftist Democratic Socialist Movement (MDS) and the Islamist al-Nahda criticized the use of party lists.

Assumption 1: In both monarchies and one-party states, opposition elites prefer rules that favor small-party representation.

Monarchs' preferences. Monarchs want to retain power, and thus they promote electoral rules that will enhance their stability. In their case, this means that they prefer electoral rules that favor representation of competing political parties. However, they do not want the proliferation of new political parties. The unchecked expansion of parties, led by new actors, may make the management of competing centers of power too difficult. These preferences are based on the unique role of the monarchy in their political system.

Monarchs are political arbitrators and directors, not participants in popular politics. The monarch draws from several sources of political support: the legitimacy of the royal family and its inherited rule, a unique relationship with God (i.e., the Commander of the Faithful in Morocco, the Custodian of the Two Holy Mosques in Saudi Arabia, and the descendent of the Prophet Mohammed in Jordan), and historical legitimacy. Consequently, as Richards and Waterbury (1996) note, the monarch is not responsible to, nor dependent on, popular support to legitimize his rule. In Jordan and Morocco, members of the royal family do not run for parliament. In Kuwait, the al-Sabahs can neither vote nor run for seats in the National Assembly.

For the monarch, then, political division and competition in popular politics, not unity, is the basis of stability. Kings have no interest in creating a single contender who could vie with them for power. As Richards and Waterbury (1996) explain,

What the monarchs want is a plethora of interests, tribal, ethnic, professional, class-based, and partisan, whose competition for public patronage they can arbitrate. None of these elements can be allowed to become too powerful or wealthy, and the monarch will police and repress or entice and divide. (pp. 297-298)

Monarchs exacerbate divisions among various groups in the population, such as those between nationals and nonnationals in Kuwait, Jordanians of East Bank origin and Palestinians in Jordan, or the Berber and Arab split in Morocco. The palace also promotes divisions in parties to keep them weak and divided. This is true of potential opposition parties, such as the nationalists or Islamists, as well as parties that the monarchs initially promote to counterbalance opponents, such as Abdel Hamid Majali's Constitutional National Party (Hizb al-Watani al-Dustouri) in Jordan and the National Assembly of

Independents (RNI, or Rassemblement national des Indépendants) of Morocco (based on author interviews with Hourani, 1998; Najdat, 1998; Shuqayr, 1998).¹³

During controlled liberalization, then, monarchs remain above the fray of politics, but they need to promote their indispensability to the political system. As Brynen, Korany, and Noble (1995) conclude,

What is interesting about the monarchies is that they appear to be in a position to establish many of these rules and to thereby act simultaneously as both interested players and far-from-impartial umpires in the political reform process. (p. 276)

Monarchs thus begin political liberalization by reinforcing their supremacy. In our cases, opposition elites explicitly acknowledged the monarchs' legitimacy in the Jordanian National Charter (Mithaq al-Watani), the Moroccan Constitutional Reforms of 1972, and the Jiddah Compact that paved the way for Kuwait's political reform.

Kings continue liberalization by shaping a system in which they allow competing groups to play the political game and thus remain absolutely indispensable to the system. Monarchs want balanced, competing parliamentary blocks. Indeed, both the late King Hussein and the late King Hassan II stated their preferences to keep the number of parties manageable in both Jordan and Morocco ("King Hassan Addresses," 1996; author interview with U.S. political officer, 1995).¹⁴ Thus,

Assumption 2: Monarchs prefer electoral rules that divide political power across competing political parties and promote society's dependence on the monarch for arbitration and stability.

Presidents' preferences. Although presidents in one-party states also want to maintain power, their political conditions, and thus their preferences, are very different from those of the monarchs. Leaders in one-party states are forced to enter the new political game. Thus, they want electoral rules that favor their political party.

The legitimacy of presidents is intimately tied to popular politics. In the cases we examine here, presidents have gained their position through "inheritance" of national independence movements. They have relied on the development of state-led growth; a unified, nationalist vision; and a single political

13. Hourani, Hani (Director, Al-Urdun al-Jadid Research Center), Interview, Amman, Jordan, August 31, 1998; Najdat, Mohammad Awouda (Member of House of Representatives), Interview, Amman, August 1998; Shuqayr, Rashid, Amman, Jordan, Interview, July 1998.

14. U.S. Political Officer, U.S. Embassy in Amman, Jordan, Interview, December 1995.

party to promote their nationalist project. The National Liberation Front (FLN, or Front de Liberation Nationale) of Algeria, the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO) in Palestine, the Neo-Destour of Tunisia, and the various versions of Nasser's Egyptian parties all served to link the masses with the political system. Even where the parties become weakened over time, as they did in Algeria and to a lesser extent in Tunisia by the 1980s, the leader's legitimacy is derived in part from his linkage to the party. Because these leaders take part in participatory politics, liberalization requires either that they compete in elections (albeit as one who holds the reigns of power) or relinquish control. The liberalization process is thus more difficult for presidents, and it calls for different tactics.

In controlled liberalization, presidents and their parties are still the largest single political contenders in their states. Although they are unable to state so outright, they want to create a system that allows them to stay that way. Where parties have been weakened,¹⁵ presidents act in part to restore strength to their own political party. Hermassi (1994) notes with regard to Algeria and Tunisia,

In attempting party reform Ben Ali and Benjedid had three choices; to institute a radical restructuring so as to make the party more compatible with the new challenges it now faces; to move towards a multi-party system; to disengage the party from the state. To some extent all three alternatives have been attempted, with varying degrees of success. Much has been done in each country to restructure the party in terms of new people, new ideas and new organizations. Both the FLN and the RCD structures, from the local cells up, have been renewed. (p. 237)

They need to strengthen their own party internally, but they also need to weaken smaller contenders. In doing so, as Przeworski (1992) notes, moderate reformers need to appease or neutralize hard-liners' opposition to reforms. They can achieve this, in part, by providing institutional guarantees that the party will remain in power. Consequently,

Assumption 3: Presidents in one-party states prefer electoral laws that promote the majority party and serve to weaken and fragment opposition parties.

Indeed, the opposition also recognizes these as the presidents' preferences. For instance, Abbas Madani of Algeria's Islamic Salvation Front (FIS)

15. The crises that lead incumbents to attempt liberalization can weaken dominant parties. For example, as Chadli Ben Jedid attempted to implement a policy of economic reform (*infitah*), he encountered opposition from within the National Liberation Front (FLN). This slowed down the *infitah*, fanned the flames of struggle between the opposition and the regime, and also created difficulties as Ben Jedid turned toward political liberalization. Nevertheless, Ben Jedid could not escape his identification with the FLN as he sought political reform.

argued, "The government's only concern [is] to put obstacles in the way of parties" (*Middle East Economic Digest*, April 12, 1991, p. 9).

DIVERGENT ELECTORAL RULES: MONARCHIES AND ONE-PARTY STATES

When incumbent elites have considerable influence over the formation of electoral rules, we should expect to see different rules emerging in monarchies and one-party states. Specifically,

Hypothesis 1: Electoral rules in monarchies promote the division of political power among contending forces. Electoral rules in former one-party states promote a single large party and act against the representation of small political parties.

This hypothesis follows from our understanding of monarchs' and presidents' undertaking controlled liberalization. Recognizing that incumbents in these states hold the upper hand in negotiations over electoral rules, they should design laws that favor their interests. Given their different preferences, electoral institutions should differ between monarchies and one-party states. As shown in Tables 6 and 7, electoral rules in the Middle East suggest this is the case.

Monarchies create rules that allow the relatively balanced representation of competing political forces. This is accomplished through two mechanisms. First, there is an absence of threshold laws and laws that shift votes to majorities. There are also small district magnitudes and first-past-the-post systems. There are two reasons why first-past-the-post systems are useful in the monarchy. First, these systems promote the formation of blocs, which makes political management a simpler task for the king. The first-past-the-post system promotes the manageable alternation that King Hassan II and other monarchs hoping to balance competing political forces prefer. Second, this system makes the monarch indispensable. The first-past-the-post system can exclude contenders if the balance of power among competing forces is unconstrained. It affords divided representation, as we shall see, but only as long as a careful balance is maintained between various parties' strengths.

Because the king is responsible for such balance, this system promotes the monarch's power. Parties now look to the king to maintain a balance, and without him, their role in the system seems in jeopardy. Competing elites cannot expect a system of proportional representation to ensure their political strength. Rather, all count on the king to ensure their participation in government.

Table 6
District Magnitudes and Decision Rules in Monarchies and One-Party States

State and Year of Electoral Rule	District Magnitude	Decision Rule
Monarchies		
Morocco		
1977	1	Plurality
1983	1	Plurality
1990	1	Plurality
1996	1	Plurality
Jordan		
1986	4	Plurality
1993	4	Plurality
Kuwait		
1992	2	Plurality
1995	2	Plurality
One-party states		
Algeria		
1991	1	Absolute majority, run-off
1993	1	Absolute majority, run-off
1997	7.75	Proportional ^a
Egypt		
1983	2.54	Proportional
1986	9.33	Proportional/plurality
1990	2	Absolute majority, run-off
1995	2	Absolute majority, run-off
Tunisia		
1981 ^b	1	Plurality
1994	6.27	Plurality/proportional
Palestine		
1995	5.5	Plurality

a. Parties winning a simple majority take all district seats. Parties winning plurality take 51% of seats.

b. Laws "inherited" from previous system, changed between first legislative and municipal elections.

Indeed, a closer look at the cases confirms that this is true. In Kuwait, the government has used gerrymandering and support for proregime candidates to maintain a majority in the National Assembly. However, it has also created electoral laws that permit the election of opposition candidates, as long as a careful balance is maintained among political groups. The palace is ultimately responsible for that balance. Thus, the government has alternated its support for Bedouin, nationalist, and Islamist candidates in an attempt to balance the representation in the National Assembly and rein in the opposition.

Table 7
Use of Majority-Promoting Laws in Monarchies and One-Party States

	Use Majority-Promoting Laws (types used)	Do Not Use Majority- Promoting Laws
Monarchy		Morocco, Jordan, Kuwait
One-party state	Egypt (1, 2, 3), Algeria (1, 2, 3), Palestine (2), Tunisia (1, 2, 3)	

Note: Laws in place: 1 = threshold laws; 2 = party lists; 3 = rules shift remainder vote seats to large party.

Each group, well aware of the palace's power over elections, must turn to the Amir to maintain influence.

Similarly, in Morocco, the late King Hassan II maintained the government's ultimate control through gerrymandering, indirectly elected seats, and after 1996, the upper house. Direct elections, however, provided representation of opposition groups. As in Kuwait, for a balance among opposition groups to exist in a majoritarian system, the king had to actively step in to manipulate political parties. He did so, creating new parties and asking pro-government parties to move into the opposition as he saw fit. Again, this strengthened the king, who could make or break the parties' fortunes.

Finally, in Jordan, the late King Hussein manipulated party laws to fragment the opposition. Initially, Jordan had the most proportional system found in Middle Eastern monarchies. In the 1989 elections, Jordanians cast multiple votes in multiseat districts. Apparently, the government believed this system would provide a divided legislature and help maintain the tribal system (Mufti, 1999). Disappointed with the strong showing of Islamist candidates and concerned about ratifying a peace treaty with Israel, however, the regime sought to weaken the opposition. Consequently, the king decreed a one-man, one-vote system in 1993. This system, in which voters cast a single vote for their favored candidate in a multiseat constituency, weakened the opposition parties (Cox & Rosenbluth, 1994; Ramseyer & Rosenbluth, 1995). Although the Jordanian case initially appears to be an exception to the rule, we believe it demonstrates the extent to which incumbents facing extraordinary challenges (i.e., passing the peace treaty) can manipulate elections.

In one-party states, incumbent elites desire systems that promote a single political party and weaken smaller parties. Table 7 shows that presidents strengthen their party and appease internal opposition by using party lists,

placing high national thresholds, and instituting laws that shift seats to the majoritarian party. At the same time, they can both divide their opposition and partially appease it by instituting multimember districts. This reduces the ease of the opposition's forming electoral coalitions, and it also reduces opposition demands for a proportional system.

A closer look at the cases supports this logic. In Egypt, for example, President Sadat had instituted political liberalization with single-member districts. However, Mubarak responded to opposition calls for proportional representation by creating multimember districts in 1984. Voters cast ballots for party lists, and legislative seats were distributed proportionally to parties obtaining at least 8% of the national vote. These latter provisions—the use of party lists and the 8% threshold—promoted the government's National Democratic Party (NDP). Under pressure from opposition groups, the government amended the electoral law to allow one independent seat per district in 1987 and then finally to abandon party slates in 1990. In abandoning party slates, however, the government returned to the first-past-the-post elections in dual-member districts (of which one seat is reserved for traditionally pro-government farmers or workers). In other words, Mubarak's government has designed electoral laws that favor the NDP.

Similarly, Algeria's laws were intended to promote a single large party. As Algeria entered the 1990 elections, the FLN attempted to secure its hold on the government by instituting single-member districts with runoff elections gerrymandered in the government's favor. Following a boycott by the FIS, however, the government was forced to revise the electoral code, reversing the more blatant gerrymandering and rescheduling elections for December. Although FLN members did not unanimously support the electoral code,¹⁶ it was nevertheless expected to favor the FLN. Recent opinion polls and a lack of support for an FIS-led general strike gave credence to a growing view that the FIS had peaked as an electoral force in June 1990 and was now in decline (*Middle East Economic Digest*, June 21, 1991). Thus, the FLN elite believed they could win a runoff against the FIS.

The irony of the Algerian experiment is that the electoral revisions, intended to favor the government, enhanced the FIS's strength and eventually led to the downfall of the experiment. The FIS won 188 seats of the 231 determined in the first round of balloting, whereas the FFS won 25 and the FLN 16. Due to the electoral laws, the FIS had won 81% of the determined seats with

16. Sir Ahmed Ghazali, head of the new government, was among the most prominent National Liberation Front (FLN) "old guard" members opposed to the revisions. He went before television viewers arguing that FLN members were trying to undermine his government (*Middle East Economic Digest*, September 27, 1991).

only 47% of the popular vote (as opposed to 23% for the FLN). As the second round of elections approached, the Algerian military believed it had entered into a dangerous game and retook political control. Although Algeria's experiment failed, it conformed to our expectations. The government, believing it was the strongest contestant, designed electoral rules to support the dominant party.

By 1997, the Algerian regime reconsidered electoral design. The regime clearly recognized a need to allow greater inclusion of opposition while simultaneously excluding Islamist parties. It also needed to reconstitute the government party, creating the regime-sponsored National Democratic Rally (RND). Not surprisingly, it created a system much like that found in Egypt. New elections were called with multimember districts, party lists, and a threshold of 7%. This system ensures that the proregime party will maintain a strong hold on government, provides an important safety net for the regime, and pacifies the non-FIS opposition parties that demand a chance in the electoral game. The RND emerged from the 1997 elections having won only 33.6% of the votes but gaining 41% of the seats. In alliance with the FLN, the regime held 57% of the seats in the assembly. In short, the electoral laws conform to the expectations we have when incumbents in dominant-party states negotiate with moderately strong opposition.

Tunisia and Palestine show similar trends. In Tunisia, the electoral laws changed from single-seat, plurality districts to multimember districts with party lists and a 5% threshold. In Palestine, the elections were held with multimember districts and party lists.

POLITICAL REPRESENTATION IN THE MIDDLE EAST

A second hypothesis also emerges from this analysis. If incumbent elites manage liberalization successfully, the different electoral rules should yield very different patterns of participation in monarchies and one-party states. As discussed above, monarchs prefer a balanced legislature, in which both pro-government and opposition parties are represented. In contrast, presidents in one-party states prefer that the progovernment party dominate the legislature. Thus, the regimes should yield very different levels of representation for progovernment and opposition parties. Specifically,

Hypothesis 2: In legislatures in monarchies, opposition parties should be well represented. In legislatures of former one-party states, they should not.

The cases support this hypothesis. As Table 5 shows, opposition parties in monarchies hold a significant percentage of the seats in the legislature. The exception to this is Jordan, where pressures to accept the peace treaty with Israel stimulated King Hussein to pass some unusual electoral laws. This, coupled with the opposition's decision to boycott in 1997, dramatically reduced opposition representation in Jordan. In contrast to the monarchies, progovernment parties in the one-party states hold more than 70% of the legislative seats. Again, Algeria stands out as an outlier, largely because of the closure of the system in 1991. Furthermore, the effective number of political parties in these systems demonstrates that political power is more dispersed in monarchies than in the one-party states.

In general, monarchies and one-party states undertaking controlled liberalization create very different electoral laws because the challenge of liberalization is strikingly different for elites in these regimes. Monarchs create laws that reduce the ability of any one party to gain overwhelming political power while maintaining their role as arbitrator in a divided society. Lower district magnitudes and an absence of laws that shift power to large parties characterize these regimes. Presidents want to maintain power but fragment their opposition. Thus, they use party lists, institute high thresholds, and shift votes to majority parties to promote their power. They also implement multimember districts and dissuade coalition formation to weaken their opposition.

CONCLUSION

The cases in the Middle East suggest that the underlying logic of regimes implementing political liberalization will affect the types of electoral institutions created. In monarchies, electoral systems are more likely to promote the fragmentation of political power in the legislature. In one-party states, incumbents promote rules that maintain their monopoly on political control.

The analysis suggests, however, that manipulation of the electoral system extends beyond the simple choice between first-past-the-post electoral rules or proportional representation. By altering other factors (e.g., the criteria for candidate registration, thresholds for representation), incumbents attempt to shape electoral outcomes. The combination of both the formal rules and covert electoral manipulation yields very different electoral results in monarchies and one-party states. In monarchies, political power is dispersed by a fragmenting electoral system. In one-party states, power is concentrated in the hands of the ruling party.

The process of liberalization should, thus, differ significantly for monarchies and one-party states. We find every reason to agree with Brynen, Korany, and Noble (1995) that monarchies may have a smoother process of liberalization than one-party states. In the early stages of liberalization, both monarchs and opposition elites can benefit from electoral rules that disperse political power. When opposition elites become stronger or more unified, however, the monarch may attempt to thwart liberalization. In contrast, one-party states find the initial stages of political liberalization more difficult. A more contentious process exists in which incumbent elites want to promote majoritarian power, whereas opposition elites prefer to disperse political power. Although the struggle should be more difficult in one-party states, it is not clear that the result of liberalization is less democratic. Indeed, precisely because opposition elites and incumbents prefer very different outcomes, the contestation may lead to greater and greater regime concessions. However, it can lead to increased confrontation as well. Democratization and not merely liberalization may result when opponents have both the tenacity and stamina to continue to make demands.

Indeed, although this article demonstrates important differences in the preferences of monarchs and presidents over the institutional mechanisms of reform, we do not suggest that the trajectory of liberalization is deterministic. Several factors can alter the expectations for liberalization. Independent institutions acting as mediators between incumbents and opposition can affect the extent of political change. The judiciary in Egypt, for instance, has played an important role in moving electoral reform forward. The nature of political opposition groups may also be important. Where political opponents can coalesce, resulting in strong, unified blocks against the regime, the results of electoral reform and the regime's ability to control liberalization are severely threatened. To some extent, the social bases of these parties; their internal political structures; the emergence of strong, charismatic leaders; and strategic choices made within and outside the political system may significantly alter the course of liberalization. The emergence of the FIS in Algeria and the choice of the military to intervene and the international system to stand idly by as "democracy" was derailed illustrates this possibility. Although it is important to recognize the impact of regime type on incumbents' preferences over institutional rules, these preferences and resulting institutions only partly determine the nature of political transitions.

Determining the institutional choices made during the process of liberalization will also require reinserting uncertainty into the analysis of electoral formation. As noted previously, the cases in the former Soviet states and Eastern Europe differ from the Middle East because the playing field between incumbents and opponents is more level and liberalization is less

managed than in the region studied here. Thus, extending these results requires greater attention to the changing relative power of opposition and incumbent elites.

Finally, extending this analysis will require considering the importance of monarchies and one-party states more broadly. Bratton and van de Walle's (1997) regime types may provide a useful starting point. The narrow elite structure and personalistic power in Middle Eastern monarchies resembles the "military oligarchies" in Africa, whereas the one-party states in the Middle East resemble those of the plebiscitary and competitive one-party rulers. Our analysis supports the conclusions of Bratton and van de Walle that the preferences of incumbent elites over the process of liberalization may vary by regime type and need to be seriously considered. Our study suggests, furthermore, that the institutional structures created during liberalization should vary by regime type. It remains to be seen to what extent incumbent elites managing liberalization in African cases create electoral institutions similar to those found in the Middle Eastern cases.

In short, the analysis of the Middle East yields an important finding that has generally been overlooked in recent studies on institutional formation. Regime type matters. Not only does it matter for determining when liberalization begins; it has critical effects on the institutions that form and the likelihood of continued liberalization. To understand the politics of political liberalization and democratization in the Middle East as elsewhere, it is a variable that should not be ignored.

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