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**Assessing the Impact
of Regime Autonomy
on Islamist Resurgence**

by
Maïssa Mokhtar

**Thesis
submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements
for the degree of M.A. in Political Science**

**University of Ottawa
August 1995**



Maïssa Mokhtar, Ottawa, Canada, 1995



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UNIVERSITÉ D'OTTAWA
UNIVERSITY OF OTTAWA

*Dedicated to
the University of Ottawa*

In the month of dhu el-qi'da (March 1928) [...] three brothers came to see me [...] all three were impressed by my studies and the conferences I had been giving. "What path do we take to strengthen Islam and improve the Muslims," they said, "we despise this way of life, a life of humiliation and slavery; Arabs and Muslims in this country have no place, no dignity, and they are doing nothing to end their condition as laborers at the mercy of those foreigners [...] We want to put everything we have in the hands of God to free ourselves from this dependence, and you will be responsible in front of Him [...] What shall we call ourselves? an association, a club, a labour union?," one of them asked. "Nothing of the sort!," I answered [...] We are brothers in the service of Islam, thus, we are the Muslim Brothers.

*Hassan al-Banna
Founder
Muslim Brotherhood**

* Condensed from Olivier CARRÉ & Michel MICHAUD, Les Frères Musulmans, (Paris: Gaillimard, 1983) 11-12.
My translation from French, and my emphasis.

ABSTRACT

Why now? Why has Islamism become the dominant form of opposition in most Muslim countries since the 1970s? Western literature addressing this resurgence typically focuses on domestic socio-economic and political problems while barely acknowledging the role of international factors, e.g., military defeats and political dependence. Yet, the Islamist discourse is found to reverse the priorities: seemingly oblivious to domestic crises, it emphasizes first and foremost the need to achieve autonomy from the hegemonic West so as to restore a sense of dignity.

This study goes beyond the established list of plausible -- and often complementary -- explanations, to evaluate the relative weight of that one actor emphasized by the Islamists themselves, hence its working hypothesis: *the higher a regime's political autonomy from the West, the higher its ability to co-opt Islamist forces of opposition.*

On the basis of responses to questionnaires sent to Middle-East experts world-wide, we assessed the change in the ability of 16 Arab regimes to co-opt Islamist forces between 1989/90 and 1991/92. We then classified the regimes in question as either autonomous or non-autonomous from the West, according to their stated policies during the Gulf war/crisis in 1990/91. Comparing the two groups, we failed to discern two clearly distinct patterns of regime ability to co-opt Islamist forces... unless we drop three countries from our sample. The latter validation of our hypothesis is not only weak but should also be tempered by the collateral finding that the data we obtained on the dependent variable manifested unquestionable symptoms of low reliability.

In addition to suggesting the retesting of the same hypothesis using a different data-gathering technique, we recommend, as an avenue for future research, the exploration of the weight of cultural, rather than political, dependence in the current Islamist resurgence. Finally, we point to the crucial need to orient future research in this sub-field of Political Science towards achieving cumulative results.

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INTRODUCTION

Political science departments have to draw disciplinary lines somewhere, as in the line they draw between International Relations and Comparative Politics. This study is a contribution to the study of the dividing line itself: the line where foreign policy meets domestic politics. Conventional wisdom has it that such an interaction is greatest with so-called weak states. They are the states likelier to be on the more sensitive side of what Keohane & Nye have termed "complex inter-dependence", through their greater vulnerability to world market swings and global policy shifts.

A crucial case approach would suggest we test such a conventional thesis either through the least likely case (e.g., the United States) or through the most likely case (e.g., Yemen). A positive result in the first case (e.g., world events influence decisively U.S. Presidential elections, as was obviously the case with Jimmy Carter's defeat by Ronald Reagan) or a negative answer in the second instance (e.g. the Yemeni government showed no more nor less capability to co-opt the Islamist forces due to the political tornado that was Operation Desert Storm), either result then would shed doubt on this thesis.

This study will test the most likely case. Specifically, it tries to provide an answer to the following question: Does foreign policy influence a regime's ability to coopt Islamist forces? It will do so in a comparative way using a sample of sixteen Arab states.

Why select Islamism of all possible phenomena of domestic politics? First, because it happens to be an excellent example of where international and domestic politics meet. Many references have been made in the past few years to an imminent clash of civilizations involving the West and the Muslim world. Others have forthrightly called Islam the Green Peril that has replaced the Red Threat. Since most approaches tend to focus more on the impact of domestic Islamic revivals on the

international system¹, it seems appropriate to investigate the reverse relationship, i.e., the impact of international politics on Islamism.

Secondly, the choice of Islamism is aimed to challenge Francis Fukuyama's fashionable thesis that liberal democracy has won over the global consciousness. This work will illustrate the fact that Islamism's increasing appeal is precisely in proposing a counter-hegemonic ethos. Whether Islamism will succeed or not is beside the point; the point is that political science has only to gain by studying what "politics" means in places where History is still alive and well.

Thirdly, her proficiency in the Arabic language and her deeply rooted knowledge of the culture give this author a comparative advantage in the study of the Arab world. With Islamism being the dominant feature of the political scene in this part of the world, as in the larger Muslim world, it becomes the logical choice for a domestic politics phenomenon.

The fourth reason is entirely personal. Six years ago I took a major step: I emigrated to Canada in spite of the disapproval of some family members and a number of life-long friends in my country of origin, Egypt. I cannot pretend that the move was mainly economically motivated since I always managed to land relatively high-salaried professional jobs. Although I could never dream to buy a home one day, due to the housing crisis, and although prospering in Canada was not entirely unwished for, the motivation was mostly psychological. An increasing sense of alienation from mainstream Egyptian society was overtaking my existence: My increasing affinity with liberal values in the face of mounting social conservatism was one of the main sources of my feelings of alienation, and was strong enough to warrant the risks involved in starting all over somewhere else. This work then, besides aspiring to contribute to political science, is also a personal effort to come to terms with my

¹ See for example Adeed DAWISHA (ed.), *Islam in Foreign Policy*, (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1984). Covering Iran, Saudi Arabia, Pakistan, Libya, Egypt, Morocco, Nigeria, Iraq, Indonesia, and the Soviet Union, the contributors found such impact to be unimportant when observable at all.

own biculturalism. In spite of my intention to remain dispassionate in the upcoming pages, some readers may find this account of my personal experience useful in putting this work in perspective.

So far, these introductory remarks have alluded to Islamism as if it were a clear-cut phenomenon, as if the word univocally evoked a recognizable reality out there. As the first section will show, this is far from being the case: the linkage between politics and Islam is as difficult to label as it is to comprehend. So the first task of this study is to untangle the semantic quarrels involved in such a touchy subject. Only then can it proceed to review the literature that has strived to understand the reasons behind the current Islamist revival. (By current we mean the last generation or so).

The first chapter's main contention is that one ought to make two distinctions: the first between Western scholarship and the Islamists' own writings; the second between the Islamist discourse aimed at a Western audience and the one aimed at the Arab-Muslim audience. A recurrent theme in the latter has been the need to achieve political autonomy from the West, suggesting that foreign policy matters strike an important chord with the Islamists' constituents, hence our working hypothesis: *the higher a regime's political autonomy from Western influence, the higher its ability to co-opt its Islamist opposition.*

The second chapter fleshes out the apparatus designed to test such a hypothesis. It is divided into three parts. The first part details both the hypothesized cause (the concept of regime autonomy) and the effect under study (the concept of resurgence). The second part justifies the choice of the boundaries both in space (a sixteen country sample of Arab countries -- as opposed, for instance -- to non-Arab Muslim states) and in time (the choice of the Gulf crisis/war as the optimal event considering our purposes). The third part details the data processing involved once our two variables have been operationalized: the hypothesized cause -- regime autonomy vis-à-vis the West -- through a content analysis of each regime's policies during the Gulf crisis/war, and the effect under study -- the regime's ability to co-opt Islamist opposition -- through a questionnaire sent out to a panel of experts.

The third chapter lists the findings on four fronts: it provides a compilation of each state's level of autonomy vis-à-vis the West; it analyzes the experts' ratings of each regime's change in ability to co-opt its Islamist opposition (change during a period of two years covering the Gulf crisis/war); it searches for the -- presumably causal -- link between this author's binary rating (a regime is either rated low or high on the autonomy scale) and the experts' responses; finally, it highlights the unexpected findings our methodology has yielded.

A concluding chapter will draw together the four main findings and suggest three possible paths to future research. (Some unavoidable Arabic words are translated in the glossary annexed at the end).

CHAPTER 1

THE PUZZLE

1.1 THE LINKAGE BETWEEN POLITICS AND ISLAM²

In a rare display of agreement, Islamists and Orientalists alike never fail to remind us that “the Islamic experience is one in which all aspects are seen as directly affected by and subject to the message of the faith. [...] To use modern terminology, Islam is not just a religion, it is a total way of life³.” Or to use Arabic terminology, Islam is purported to be “*din*” (religion) and “*dunya*” (a code of everyday life) and “*dawla*” (a political program)⁴. Such an assumption (that Islam is inherently, intrinsically political) is just that: an assumption that some eminent scholars do not share⁵. That linkage, the study of which could occupy a lifetime, is not that obvious. Still, for the purposes of this thesis, the author will proceed as if both the Islamists and the Orientalists – not to mention the overwhelming majority of journalists – are justified in taking for granted the indissoluble ties between Islam and politics.

It should be noted that the driving motivation for the Islamists is straightforward: By arguing that Islam is self-contained, they dismiss the secularists’ call for democracy as heretical at least, and misguided at best: why consider, they rhetorically ask, an alien ideology, i.e. democracy, when God has provided His followers with guidelines for every worldly matter, including politics?

² For many ideas contained in this section, I am indebted to Amine TEHAMI, a PhD candidate at the Université de Montréal. Numerous discussions and access to two manuscripts of his (“Just How Political Islam Is? Evidence From Algeria”, paper presented at the annual meeting of the APSA, New York, September 1994 and soon to be published in John ENTELIS & Connie STADLER-NEWNAM (eds.) New Directions in Maghrebi Studies (Univ. of Florida Press); and “The Elusive Quest for Trans-National North African Islamism”, a paper presented at the annual meeting of the CPISA, Montreal, June 1995) have provided the basis for these ideas.

³ J. O. VOLL, Islam: Continuity and Change in the Modern World, (Boulder CO: Westview Press, 1982) 4.

⁴ See Yvonne Y. HADDAD, Byron HAINES and Ellison FINDLY (eds.), The Islamic Impact, (Syracuse, NY: Syracuse University Press, 1984) for a discussion on how the faith permeates most aspects of Muslim life such as politics, education and science, economics, law, women’s role, mysticism, art and music.

⁵ See Nazih AYUBI, Political Islam: Religion and Politics in the Arab World, (London: Routledge, 1990); especially chapter one, for a stimulating attempt at debunking the myth. See also Roger GARAUDY, Intégrismes, (Paris: Pierre Belfond, 1990; especially chapter 8 in which this famous French philosopher, former Communist Party theoretician and recent convert to Islam argues forcefully that the muslim holy book, the Qur’an, contains minimal guidelines for a polity, if at all.

As for Orientalists⁶, the reasons are numerous, the most salient of which might have to do with Islam's own intellectual output: a copious amount of jurisprudence. Since those Orientalists rely primarily on written sources, they tend to convey an a-historic reading of the works of jurists who were, most of the time, state employees, dependent upon their employers for livelihood and whose theorizing of the Islamic state was conducted when the Caliphate was actually declining. In other words, those texts were **prescriptive**, whereas most contemporary Islamists and many Orientalists treat them as if they were **descriptive** of a golden age. They assume that Islam shaped the theory and practice of the early Islamic state when in fact, as Nazih Ayubi argues forcefully, it was the state itself, shaped by economic and political forces, that appropriated Islam. In so doing, Islamists extract an idealized theory from its historical and political roots and promise to create a political order consistent with the theory⁷.

After all, as Roger Garaudy points out, not only does the famous word *Shari'a* happen to be mentioned but once in the whole *Qur'an*, and in a context that suggests "path" rather than "Law" but also, and more significantly, out of 6000 Qur'anic verses, only 80 contain some sort of prescription⁸, most of which pertain to morals or mundane matters (marriage, inheritance rights, etc...). When it comes down to purely political matters, the closest the *Qur'an* comes to a prescription is when it briefly alludes to the concept of *shura* (consultation):

whatever ye are given (here) is (but) the enjoyment of this Life: but that which is with Allah is better and more lasting: it is for those who believe and put their trust in their Lord,
Those who avoid the greater sins and indecencies and when they are angry even then forgive;
Those who respond to their Lord, and establish regular prayer; who (conduct) their affairs by mutual Consultation; who spend out of what we bestow on them for sustenance⁹.

⁶ One such Orientalist whose line of argument frequently parallels that of most Islamists is P. J. VATIKIOTIS whose study, *Islam and the State*, (London & New York: Croom Helm, 1987), stresses the antagonisms between Islam and the nation-state and delineates what the author considers to be obstacles to pluralist politics in Islam.

⁷ AYUBI, *Political Islam...*, especially chapter one. If Ayubi is right, then it means that one can circumvent the orientalist controversy - i.e. not care whether it is right or wrong to dissolve politics in Islam, since it is couched in spiritual terms - and still be able to search openly, in temporal matters, for explanations for the contemporary revival.

⁸ GARAUDY, *Intégrismes*, 120.

⁹ The *Qur'an*, *sura* #42, *ayas* #32-38.

Next comes the problem of labelling. Is such a mixture to be called Fundamentalism? Revivalism? Radicalism? Islamicism¹⁰ ? Islamism? Political Islam? Or is it the *intégrisme* favored by most French press releases? Neither the press nor, more embarrassingly, the academic experts, agree on how best to name that phenomenon where Islam intersects with politics. The French North Africanist, François Burgat, believes such malaise at labelling betrays our less than adequate understanding of a most complex phenomenon¹¹ . Maybe so; but it may also simply reflect the fact that such a loaded mixture (religion and politics) does not lend itself well to a positivist, aseptic study. "To name is to own" goes the popular saying; it is also to expose one's political biases. Even though the lack of consensus in the literature should not be surprising, and even less hampering, each writer ought openly to lay out his/her cards. So here are this author's:

The political Islam dealt with here is neither Islam per se, nor is it the transnational proselytizing of such well-known groups as *Jama'at al-Tabligh*. It differs from mere conservatism in two ways: (i) it has nothing to do with the conservative platform of the petro-monarchs -- especially the al-Saud family, which rests its authority on official Islam; (ii) nor is it to be confused with conservatism as understood in its Western sense: even though it sometimes sounds and looks like a classic call back to the good-ol'-times (witness the moral and dress codes for instance¹²), it still defends a revolutionary political platform and a somewhat progressive discourse as far as economic justice is concerned. Furthermore, it goes well beyond fundamentalism since it does not limit itself to moral issues, encompassing the social, the economic as well as the political spheres. Contrary to pan-

¹⁰ In an obvious though unstated effort to mark the distance from anything genuinely and religiously "Islamic" two influential American scholars, Charles E. BUTTERWORTH and William I. ZARTMAN, prefer the term Islamicism to Islamism. See their Preface to "Political Islam", The Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science, (vol. 524, Nov 1992) 9.

¹¹ François BURGAT, L'islamisme au Maghreb: La voix du Sud, (Paris: ed. Karthala, 1988), especially chapters 1 and 2.

¹² The frugal façade does not hide the copious use --and total mastery-- of modern technology. For example, Yvonne Haddad shows how "phenomenal growth in the publication and dissemination in many Islamic countries has played a key role in the increase in the number of people committed to an Islamist solution to the problems their countries face. Qur'ans and other religious texts, tracts and pamphlets, magazines and books on Islamic law and life are readily available in bookstores and sidewalk stalls". See her chapter, "The Revivalist Literature and the Literature on Revival: An Introduction", in HADDAD, Yvonne Yazbeck, John O. VOLL & John L. ESPOSITO (eds.), The Contemporary Islamic Revival: A Critical Survey and Bibliography, (New York: Greenwood Press, 1991) 10.

Arabism, with its implicit, and often quite explicit, call for the traditional *ummah* (i.e., the larger community of believers), political Islam, as understood here, does not automatically dismiss the instruments of modernity, and the nation-state foremost amongst them¹³. Moreover, it is not to be subsumed by the famous Muslim Brotherhood: if the early Egyptian Brothers undoubtedly provide a good part of its ideological framework, one should not overlook the input of the Iranian revolution, the Sudanese success story, the Pakistani (and more generally Asian sub-continent) theorizing, the Black Muslim experience, the Afghani struggle, ...etc.

The individuals – militants, activists, writers – involved with political Islam will be referred to as Islamists. They differ amongst themselves on two fundamental aspects. First, they differ as to the proper interpretation of Islam itself: some are true fundamentalists (relying on a literal reading of the Holy Book and the Prophet's authenticated sayings); others are traditionalists (relying on numerous additional sources relating the traditions of the Prophet and of his closest companions); yet others are reformists (allowing for human interpretations and updates) while some push those reforms so far that they are considered revolutionaries. Second, Islamists differ as to the proper political strategy to adopt: while some radicals behave in an obviously fanatical and fatally violent way, a number of their more moderate peers advocate peaceful and at times totally democratic means.

It is precisely the ignorance of such diversity that leads to the unease palpable in the wake of the Oklahoma City bombing at the end of April 1995. While no Islamist group can deny it shelters at least a fringe that stops at nothing to reach its goals, it would be a mistake to characterize the whole movement with the invariably uniform, disparaging comments that follow the real bombings (the World Trade Centre or the Paris subway) as well as the false alarms (Oklahoma City).

¹³ James P. PISCATORI, *Islam in a World of Nation-States*, (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1986) argues that the modern nation-state has become legitimate in Muslim public discourse, the concept of *ummah* notwithstanding. While modern Islamists emphasize the universalism of Islam and often denounce the divisiveness inherent to nationalism, many more consider that the nation-state provides the proper set of institutions to govern the Muslim community though some see this as an intermediate step toward forming a global Islamic order.

Arguably, any subject is worth studying, but two reasons converge to make the study of political Islam that much more compelling today: (i) all across the Arab/Muslim world, it constitutes the only basis upon which political opposition knows how to organize¹⁴; (ii) the once distant reality – Teheran, Beirut, Cairo, Algiers... – has become ever so entangled with Western politics¹⁵.

Ever since the early 1920's, with the birth of the Muslim Brotherhood in Egypt, but even more so since the Iranian Revolution in 1978, the subject of political Islam has generated fascination, and countless articles, monographs, conferences, etc., whether here in the West or in the Muslim world. It is this chapter's main contention that for this immense body of literature to be fruitfully digested, one must distinguish between (i) the writings produced by Western scholarship, even if particular scholars happen to be of Muslim origin; (ii) the writings produced by Islamists or Muslim scholars sympathetic/empathic to the Islamist cause specifically targeted at a Western audience; and (iii) the writings produced by Islamists or their more scholarly fans destined for a domestic audience.

Yet need we bother at all? Most people intuitively sense that the explanation lies for all to see in the socio-economic frustrations of the masses. This is not entirely false: misery has been a relatively constant companion for the human condition throughout history. Yet the Islamist resurgence is precisely that: an upsurge following a downturn that itself followed an upsurge in a cyclical fashion. In other words, it is necessary to review the scholars' more than merely intuitive analyses.

¹⁴ See Said Amir ARJOMAND (ed.), *From Nationalism to Revolutionary Islam*, (Albany, NY: State University of New York Press, 1985). A collection of conference papers whose general thesis is that nationalism is giving way to "revolutionary" Islam as the appropriate paradigm to use in understanding politics in selected Muslim countries, including Pakistan, Egypt, Algeria, Syria and Turkey.

¹⁵ For analyses portraying "The Green Peril" as the replacement for "The Red Threat", see Judith MILLER, "The Challenge of Radical Islam", in *Foreign Affairs*, (Spring 1993) 45. Vatikiotis, *Islam in a World of Nation-States...*:45, follows the same line of argument: "[...] in Islam, theoretically at least, the core myth underlying its Weltanschauung, its view and perception of the other, is rejectionist [...whereas in the West] accommodation of the other became possible [...] by the formulation and embodiment in law of such notions as citizenship and political tolerance". It should be added though (i) that the current US Administration has repeatedly stated that it does view Islam as the next "-ism"; (ii) also, that one can find a number of publications that contradict Miller & al. See for example, Martin KRAMER, *Political Islam*, Washington Papers no. 73, (Beverly Hills, CA and London: Sage Publications, 1980), in which the author disparages the idea that Muslim unity exists to the extent that a global Islamic order is imminent.

1.2 THE WESTERN PERSPECTIVE

Explanations of the Islamist phenomenon are abundant in Western scholarship and do not easily fall into clear-cut categories. While they are generally not incompatible, the differences among them lie mainly in the emphasis they put on certain dimensions. And since no classification will simultaneously do justice to the field-at-large and to each individual scholar, the best classification one can hope for is one which would generate the least complaints of misrepresentation. At first glance though, most Western writings fall more or less in two broad categories: those who look at Islam itself and those who consider the socio-historic context.

1.2.1 The Focus on Islam

The perspective focusing on Islam's characteristics underscores the continuity in the Islamic experience, which spans the gap between premodern and modern history¹⁶. The current revivalist wave is seen primarily as a religious phenomenon shaped by Muslim idiosyncracies¹⁷. Within this perspective, approaches may differ in their definition of evolutionary dynamics, but they share one common idea: "the Islamic past is crucial in shaping the Islamic present and future¹⁸." Writers adopting this perspective include H. Enayat, B. Lewis, M. Rodinson, and D. H. Khalid¹⁹.

In support of this perspective is the fact that the current revival is not the first, and, as Shireen Hunter points out, the existence of moral and religious motivations in Islamic revivals is undeniable. Also, there are specific characteristics of Islam that play an important role in its political vitality; for instance, the explicit fusion of religion and politics, and the fact that Islam is the main component of

¹⁶ VOLL, *Islam: Continuity and Change*..., 3.

¹⁷ Shireen T. HUNTER (ed.), *The Politics of Islamic Revivalism: Diversity and Unity*, (Washington, D.C.: Center for Strategic and International Studies, 1988) xiv.

¹⁸ VOLL, *Islam: Continuity and Change*..., 352.

¹⁹ VOLL, *Islam: Continuity and Change*..., 352-354. His references: (i) Hamid Enayat, "The Resurgence of Islam, 1: The Background," *History Today*, February 1980, p.16-20; (ii) Bernard LEWIS, "The Return of Islam," *Commentary*, January 1976, p.44-48; (iii) Maxime RODINSON, "Islam Resurgent?" *Gazelle Review of Literature on the Middle East*, no.6 (1979), 2; (iv) Detlev H. KHALID, "The Phenomenon of Re-Islamization," *Aussenpolitik* (English ed.) 29 (1978), 433.

the majority of Muslims' self-identity²⁰. In a recent work, Voll is even more specific; he has identified three themes that are shared by Muslim revivalists throughout the Islamic world both in the pre-modern and contemporary eras.

The first is *tajdid*, or the idea of renewal itself. Having failed at creating and maintaining a truly Islamic polity following the death of the Prophet Muhammad, Muslims have periodically called for a renewal "of the commitment to the fundamental principles of Islam and the related reconstruction of society in accord with the *Qur'an* and the Traditions of the Prophet²¹ ." All these efforts have relied invariably on a well-known Tradition of the Prophet that "God will send to His community at the head of each century those who will renew its faith for it²² ."

A second great theme of revival evokes the first part in the name of one of Egypt's Islamist organizations: *al-Takfir wa al-Hijra*. The concept of *takfir*, to quote Voll, "involves an act of judgement which identifies existing practices and faith of Muslims as not being in accord with "the original pure form" of Islam. Essentially, this involves the act of identifying a person, group, or institution as being "unbelieving" or *kafir*²³ ." Since such a judgment might be construed as an attempt to usurp the authority of God as Judge, it has been controversial in that it has distinguished the militant revivalists from more moderate Muslims.

²⁰ HUNTER, *The Politics of Islamic Revivalism...*, Introduction.

²¹ VOLL, "The Revivalist Heritage", in Haddad, Voll & Esposito (eds.), *The Contemporary Islamic Revival...*, 25.

²² Mawiana Abul 'A'la MAWDUDI (1903-1979), the South Asian activist, is the most quoted theoretician of *tajdid*, its history and its main figures. His seminal work is *A Short History of the Revivalist Movement in the Arab World of the Recent Past*, (Lahore: Islamic Publications, 1976). This relatively brief volume, available in multiple translations, has influenced the thought of contemporary activists from Egypt to Indonesia. In it Mawdudi makes a very careful distinction between *tajdid*, which he defines as opposition to existing conditions while reaffirming Islam, and innovation, which involves adopting new non-Islamic elements and is proscribed by most traditionalists. See also, Ahmad 'abd al-Rahim MUSTAPHA, *Harakat al-Tajdid al-Islami fi al-Alam al-'arabi al-Hadith*, (Cairo, 1971); Muhammad 'AMARA, *Tajdid al-Fikr al-Islami*, (Cairo, 1977).

²³ VOLL, in HADDAD, VOLL & ESPOSITO (eds.), *The Contemporary Islamic Revival...*, 25.

The third continuing theme of revival is *jihad*. This is a most equivocal concept that just might have as many meanings as there are writers who use it. More often than not, especially in the Western press, it is simply translated as a military « holy war ». But as Voll points out,

It is much broader than this, encompassing the whole range of special efforts to adhere to, affirm, and support the message of God. It includes, of course, military efforts to defend Islam, but it is also used to apply to other activities as well. [...] Medieval mystics spoke of the inner jihad of spiritual renewal while militants called people to arms. It is this complex heritage that modern renewalists utilize in their efforts to reaffirm the Islamic message in the contemporary world²⁴.

Of course, any call for an active jihad today is to be understood as a declaration that the ruler or the society is infidel.

However, as John Voll himself warns: emphasizing the Islamic component runs the risk of ignoring the unique features of each revival²⁵. Hunter also sheds light on the weaknesses of this perspective. She argues that Islam has not always been an active political force, despite the fact that its characteristics have always existed, and that other religions that do not share Islam's characteristics have -- historically and in recent times -- also become politicized²⁶. Moreover, this author adds, the pattern in the current revival challenges the notion that the revival is predominantly a religious phenomenon; today's sunni Islamists world-wide tend to be more in harmony with Iran, a *shia* state, than Saudi Arabia, a *sunni* state, despite the differences in religious beliefs and values, and the historical rivalry between the two sects.

²⁴ VOLL, in Haddad, Voll & Esposito (eds.), The Contemporary Islamic Revival..., 26.

²⁵ VOLL, Islam: Continuity and Change..., 352.

²⁶ HUNTER, The Politics of Islamic Revivalism..., Introduction.

1.2.2 The Focus on the Social Context

The bulk of Western scholarship adopts this second perspective, which stresses the importance of the existence of specific sets of economic, political, social, and cultural circumstances in triggering Islamic revivals. Within this group some focus attention primarily on conditions within the country, while others highlight the international events.

1.2.2.1 Failure at the Domestic Level:

This approach stresses the role of domestic conditions in Islamic resurgence; the current Islamic revival is explained primarily as the result of deteriorating domestic socio-economic and political conditions in Muslim societies. Many scholars view poverty, social injustice, and political repression at the domestic level as the main triggers of Islamism, though they differ in the emphasis they place on different triggers. At times, this approach can become a hodge-podge of numerous factors and crises: Hrair Dekmejian, for example, strives to combine both the characteristics of Islam (as seen earlier) and the social context. He argues that revivalist movements have appeared in times of crisis since the eighth century. In his view, the crises are generally multi-faceted, the current one including six dimensions: identity crisis, legitimacy crisis, misrule/coercion, economic crisis, military impotence and culture crisis²⁷.

The crisis theory succeeds in highlighting the continuity in Muslim historical experience. Dekmejian lists the revivalist movements that have taken place since the eighth century (ten including the current revival) and links each one to a crisis²⁸. However, Hunter argues against the crisis theory by underscoring the fact that, in contrast to the current revival, past Islamic revivalist movements were

²⁷ R. Hrair DEKMEJIAN, "Fundamentalist Islam: Theories, Typologies, and Trends," *Middle East Review*, XVII-4, (Summer 1985) 29. His better-known book: *Islam in Revolution: Fundamentalism in the Arab World*. (Syracuse, NY: Syracuse University Press, 1985) was commissioned by the Defense Intelligence Agency of the Department of Defense. This might explain why the tone is alarmist, the concern being primarily for U.S. global interests. His arguments are better fleshed out in his "Islamic Revival: Catalysts, Categories, and Consequences", HUNTER (ed.), *The Politics of Islamic Revivalism...*, 8-22.

²⁸ DEKMEJIAN, "Fundamentalist Islam:...", 29.

overpowered by other protest movements; nationalism, for instance²⁹. She adds that the successes achieved by the Arabs/Muslims in the 1970s (e.g. the oil boom, the perceived victory of 1973) contradict the crisis theory. Voll also warns that this approach risks ignoring many of the developments that have taken place within Islam in the modern era³⁰. Also, by incorporating a wide range of variables, the crisis theory fails to isolate the most relevant factors in the current revival.

Most other scholars in this vein pay attention to the peculiarities of each case at hand in trying to untangle the relative importance of the above mentioned variables. Some stress the failures of the political systems in Muslim countries. Tareq Ismael and Jacqueline Ismael, for instance, focus on the concept of political legitimacy in arguing that modern political institutions are judged to have failed, in the Islamists' view, to realize unity, while existing regimes have found it necessary to legitimate their rule officially via Islamic symbols, thereby generating confusion as to who is an authentic Muslim³¹. Ayubi, pursues that line of thought: "political Islam appears to be basically a response movement to regimes that are avowedly more modernist and secularising³²"; in other words, he points not so much to the failure of the regimes to provide goods and services as to their failure to mirror the values of the society. While others write more in terms of the effects of modernization on traditional societies. Three examples:

(i) Shireen Hunter -- who tends to stress domestic socio-economic conditions -- explains that traditional systems have disintegrated in Muslim societies and have not been replaced by new broadly based socio-political systems³³. She points out that authoritarian rule has made Islam "the only vehicle for articulating societal concerns and the only medium of opposition³⁴."

29 HUNTER, *The Politics of Islamic Revivalism...*, Introduction..

30 VOLL, *Islam: Continuity and Change...*, 350.

31 See Tareq ISMAEL & Jacqueline ISMAEL, *Government and Politics in Islam*. (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1985).

32 AYUBI, *Political Islam...*, 118-19.

33 HUNTER, *The Politics of Islamic Revivalism...*, xiv.

34 *Ibid.*, xiii.

(ii) Mary-Jane Deeb, who conducted a comparative study of Algeria, Tunisia, Libya, Lebanon and the Occupied Territories concludes:

The conditions [favouring a revival] include political stagnation and the weakening of central authority, economic stagnation leading to the decline in standards of living, deteriorating security conditions, pervasiveness of Western culture, and secular states and movements perceived as antagonistic to Islamic movements³⁵.

(iii) Yvonne Haddad, for her part, draws attention to the changing demographics with a particular focus on the movement of large numbers of rural people:

Bringing with them values clearly opposed to an urbanized, levantine, culture they have enthusiastically endorsed the elements of revivalist ideology that reaffirm the traditional values of Islam over against the so-called middle class Westerrized pseudo-Europeanized culture. At the same time the very growth in their numbers has forced many urban areas of the Middle East [...] to sustain a population far exceeding that for which they were designed and for which they have anything resembling adequate resources³⁶.

Such depiction of the revival as an expression of domestic socio-economic and political grievances respects the diversity that exists within the vast Muslim world. Different local conditions among Muslim societies contribute to the differences among the movements. However, this approach tends to (i) overplay economic conditions; and (ii) downplay the relevance of the dynamic international situation, and the place of the Muslim world in relation to the rest of the world.

First, in overplaying the economic conditions, this approach overlooks three aspects:

³⁵ Mary-Jane DEEB, "Militant Islam and the Politics of Redemption", The Annals..., 65.

³⁶ HADDAD, The Contemporary Islamic Revival..., 9-10.

(i) Who are the Islamists' supporters? While the bulk belong to the classes that have been deprived of their share from the rentier-states, it is also the case that most second-generation leaders and activists³⁷ happen to be well-educated (a large number having graduated from the best Western engineering schools), well travelled³⁸ and receiving the perks of modernity. In Egypt, for instance, the Muslim Brotherhood, which consists mainly of reputable professionals, has a larger support base than more radical groups consisting generally of unemployed graduates.

(ii) What is the Islamists' own discourse? As the upcoming section (1.2.3) will show, the deteriorating socio-economic conditions, while undeniable, just don't seem to rank high on the list of culprits. They are merely a symptom of a deeper ill, as expressed by this Tunisian activist:

la contradiction criante que le croyant ressent d'une façon aiguë entre l'image éclatante de l'Islam qui remplit son être et la réalité putride qui baigne dans la boue: déliquescence (morale); occidentalisation culturelle, injustice sociale, despotisme politique; allégeance non à Dieu, à son prophète et aux croyants, mais aux passions et aux intérêts, aux clans et aux forces internationales sataniques. En un mot, le musulman est étranger [...] ³⁹.

(iii) What are the Islamists' own actions? One frequently reads, in Western scholarship, references to the good Samaritan behavior of Islamists, i.e. how well they provide for the socio-economic needs (food, shelter, medical services, interest-free loans, business opportunities) at times (e.g. following natural disasters) or places (e.g. dangerous neighborhoods) where the government cannot or would not assume its responsibilities. Such actions are mentioned to back-up the socio-

³⁷ See DEKMEJIAN, *Islam in Revolution...*, for an insightful nuance between first-generation Islamist leaders, who have been gradually co-opted by their respective regimes, and the second-generation leaders, younger, frequently more radical, that have emerged precisely in response to the perceived mellowing of their elders.

³⁸ Such travels result from graduate studies scholarships, ironically awarded by the very regimes threatened today, as well as from political exile. As HADDAD, *The Contemporary Islamic Revival...*: 8, points out: "The expulsion of Muslim activists to Europe gave them the opportunity to learn more about European ideas and techniques, and helped encourage a literature in dialogue with the West, one that stresses the ideals of Islam and proposes Islamic solutions in opposition to those of western societies. It also afforded them the opportunity to meet activists from other parts of the world and realize the discrepancy between European ideals as proclaimed and European policies as actually practiced in colonial countries".

³⁹ In Mohamed HARBI, *L'islamisme dans tous ses états*, (Paris: Arcantère, 1991) 168-9.

economic crisis theory. Yet, it is equally plausible to read in such actions a response to a crisis that has much more to do with culture and value-systems. As Ezz-Eddine Choukri puts it:

Islamist groups have been active in providing social services to the population on non-economic bases. By appealing to the social and religious obligations of individuals, they could mount a whole network of societal interactions that is working outside the formal economy and polity⁴⁰.

In other words, if Islamists provide free – or nearly free – services, it is also in an attempt to de-commodify those same services, to circumscribe today's alienating social interactions in the "here" and "now" of pre-modern times, in a rejection of a rampant materialism. Put simply: it is as much, if not more, an effort to reappropriate the core values of a population that has imported the material goods of modernity but has failed to assimilate its concomitant philosophy, as it is a response to an admittedly acute socio-economic crisis.

Second, this approach downplays the relevance of world dynamics. This is precisely the problem addressed by the second approach:

1.2.2.2 Failure at the International Level:

This approach emphasizes the role of specific international events in triggering Islamic revivals. But the failure cuts both ways: (i) a first group of scholars draws our attention to the successive failures of Arab/Muslim states in world politics while (ii) the second group highlights the West's failure⁴¹ at pursuing its control of the Arab/Muslim world.

⁴⁰ Amine TEHAMI has drawn my attention to this argument developed by Ezz-Eddine CHOUCRI (also a PhD candidate at the Université de Montréal) in a manuscript presented at a York University Symposium, on 5 May 1995, titled: "Encounters of Civilizations or Global Structuring? The Concept of World Hegemony Revisited".

⁴¹ The expression is borrowed from John O. VOLL, "Islamic Renewal and the "Failure of the West" ", in Richard T. ANTOUN & Mary Elaine HEGLAND (eds.), Religious Resurgence, Contemporary Cases in Islam, Christianity, and Judaism, (Syracuse, NY: Syracuse University Press, 1987).

(i) This first group could yet again be sub-divided into two:

* A first sub-group analyzes the North-South conflict in traditional realist terms, i.e., emphasizing high politics. For example, the Arab-Israeli War of 1967 is often mentioned as the trigger of the current revival (which started in the 1970s). As Voll explains this viewpoint, the 1967 War represented a major defeat to Muslims world-wide, who consequently perceived a need for drastically transforming their societies⁴². Fouad Ajami, for instance, analyzes the ascendance of religion as a source of solace – as well as authenticity – after the defeat of June 1967⁴³.

The view that stresses the military defeat of 1967 is backed by the argument that the revival started in the 1970s. However, this argument can be countered by the fact that the 1970s were also the years of international successes, such as the oil boom and the perceived victory of 1973, for the Muslim/Arab world.

* A second sub-group perceives the North-South conflict along cultural lines. Ali Karaosmanoglu, for instance, argues that “the rise of Islamic fundamentalism in some countries is in reaction to the incorporation of Westernism into the values of Islam⁴⁴”. Emmanuel Sivan adds: “the Islamic revival -- while activist and militant -- is essentially defensive; a sort of holding operation against modernity. And though it has no doubt a sharp political edge, it is primarily a cultural phenomenon⁴⁵.” Others point to the Westernized elites as the main propagator of the “cultural cold war”:

⁴² VOLL, *Islam: Continuity and Change...*, 350.

⁴³ Fouad AJAMI, *The Arab Predicament: Arab Political Thought and Practice Since 1967*, (Cambridge: Cambridge Univ. Press, 1981).

⁴⁴ Ali L. KARAOSMANOGLU, “Islam and its Implications for the International System”, in HEPER & ISRAELI (eds.), *Islam & Politics in the Modern Middle East*, (London: Croom Helm, 1984) 103.

⁴⁵ Emmanuel SIVAN, *Radical Islam: Medieval Theology and Modern Politics*, (New Haven, London: Yale Univ. Press, 1985) 3.

Islamic revivalism is a response to the state's relegation of Islam to a subordinate social position and to the perceived inadequacy of secular-oriented models of development in addressing the problems of society. The Islamic movements, with their deeply-held convictions rooted in the cultural and historical matrix of Tunisia and Morocco, thus express political protest, challenge the legitimacy of the regime, and seek to reconstruct the religio-political base of society in response to the secular policies of the Westernized elite⁴⁶.

It should be noted that such Westernization is not an abstract phenomenon. One need only notice the intrusion of Western content in movies and television, news media, education systems, criminal and civil codes of law, clothing styles and many other aspects of contemporary Muslim culture. Whereas the intrusion took place primarily military in the first half of this century, it is now an issue of conflicting cultures. As the next section (1.3) will show, much of the modern Islamist discourse is "an attempt to come to terms with these more recent Western influences, and to establish Islam as the only viable alternative to what is increasingly described as a decadent and morally bankrupt Western society⁴⁷."

To summarize then, whether in realist terms or idealist ones, this first group of scholars draws our attention to the successive failures of the Arab/Muslim states in world politics.

(ii) The second group links specific international events to Islamism. However, it highlights the West's failure at pursuing its control of the Arab/Muslim world. In other words, it focuses on the "positive" events for the Arab/Muslim world as explanations for the rise in Islamism. This is a popular explanation amongst the writers who show sympathy, or at least empathy, for the Islamist cause. Some are subtly so: Burgat, for example, suggests the metaphor of a rocket that would, upon taking off, let go of three successive excess weights:

⁴⁶ E. A. SHAHIN, The Restitution of Islam: A Comparative Study of the Islamic Movements in Contemporary Tunisia and Morocco, PhD thesis, Johns Hopkins Univ., 1990, Dissertation Abstracts I-A 51/02, p. 615.

⁴⁷ HADDAD, The Contemporary Islamic Revival...: 9. See also John DONOHUE, "Islam and the Search for Identity in the Arab World" in John ESPOSITO (ed.), Voices of Resurgent Islam, New York, Oxford University Press, 1983, 48-61. Bassam TIBI, "The Iranian Revolution and the Arabs: The Quest for Islamic Identity and the Search for an Islamic System of Government" Arab Studies Quarterly, 8 (Winter 1986) 29-44. And Amnon NETZER, "Islam in Iran: Search for Identity." In Raphael ISRAELI (ed.), The Crescent in the East, Islam in Asia Minor, (London: Curzon Press, 1982) 5-22.

après avoir, à force d'indépendances, entrepris de disjoindre son avenir politique de celui de l'Occident, exprime ensuite à coup de nationalisations sa volonté de retrouver plus d'autonomie dans la gestion de ses ressources matérielles, ce sont les territoires idéologiques conquis par le Nord que le Sud a commencé à se réapproprier⁴⁸.

Daniel Pipes, who does not exactly display sympathy for the Islamist cause⁴⁹, argues nonetheless that the current revival is due to the international success of Muslim states during the oil-boom:

[... when] suddenly Muslims could stand up to their Christian nemesis. The long slide downward was stopped, as some Muslims again enjoyed the wealth and power that was their due as God's community. The oil boom marked a turning point in Muslim consciousness: more than anything else, it prepared the way for widespread Islamic political activity⁵⁰.

Others agree that this increase in Arab-Muslim influence, and the perceived victory of the Arab-Israeli War of 1973 have raised the Muslims' self-esteem and their hopes for the future⁵¹. It has also enabled Saudi Arabia to back up with hard cash its claim as protector of the Holy places of Islam. The monarchy has used the unexpected windfall to fund numerous Islamist causes and to defend against the encroachment of nationalist, socialist, and/or secularist ideologies in a wide range of Muslim countries, all deemed contrary to its interests.

This approach is the polar opposite of the previous one. However, both share the same indicator -- the fact that the current movement started in the 1970s. This weakens the validity of the indicator, hurting both arguments simultaneously. Also, why should an oil boom automatically reinforce one "-ism", i.e. Islamism, to the detriment of other "-isms". As Sa'ad Eddine Ibrahim put it, Islamism was then in competition with its "secular counterparts -- liberalism, socialism and nationalism --⁵²", the only difference being that, after the 1970s, it has garnered an impressive

⁴⁸ BURGAT, *L'Islamisme au Maghreb...*, 8.

⁴⁹ If one is to judge by his *In the Path of God: Islam and Political Power*, (New York: Basic Books, 1983).

⁵⁰ VOLL, *Islam: Continuity and Change...*, 351. He cites Daniel Pipes, "This World is Political!! The Islamic Revival of the Seventies," *Orbis* 24 (1980), 20.

⁵¹ HUNTER, *The Politics of Islamic Revivalism...*, xii.

⁵² IBRAHIM, "Egypt's Islamic Activism in the 1980s", *Third World Quarterly*, 10-2 (April 1988) 632. See also Hamid ENAYAT, *Modern Islamic Political Thought*, (Modern Middle East Series no.8., Austin, TX: University of Texas Press, 1982).

nationalism --⁵²", the only difference being that, after the 1970s, it has garnered an impressive portfolio of spectacular achievements: "[the Islamists have] ousted the hated pro-Western, pro-Zionist Shah. They shot down the pro-Western Sadat; and they forced the US Marines out of Lebanon. They are also bleeding Israel daily⁵³." Sa'ad Eddine Ibrahim, by the way, unlike many of his colleagues who seem to shun fieldwork, has managed to overcome many hurdles in order to meet activists in Egyptian prisons. He insists that one does not get the full picture until one immerses oneself in the Islamists' discourse.

Thus, two main questions need to be answered: (i) whether on balance it is a sense of success or failure that Muslims have been experiencing since the early 1970s, and (ii) whether Muslims derive this sense of success or failure primarily from domestic or international conditions. It is important at this point to examine the Islamists' discourse in order to find explicit and implicit statements with regard to these two questions.

1.3 THE ISLAMIST PERSPECTIVE...

A review of contemporary Islamists' writings shows that they attempt to support their arguments for the establishment of an Islamic state at two levels. The first is the spiritual, metaphysical level through which they remind Muslims of their moral obligation to follow the holy texts and the precedents set by revered Islamic historical figures. Although it is a powerful motivation, the imperative of moral obligation does not explain the timing factor: why would Muslims be reconsidering the way they relate to the legacy of Islam now, when its basic characteristics have remained unchanged for many centuries?

⁵² IBRAHIM, "Egypt's Islamic Activism in the 1980s", *Third World Quarterly*, 10-2 (April 1988) 632. See also Hamid ENAYAT, *Modern Islamic Political Thought*, (Modern Middle East Series no.8., Austin, TX: University of Texas Press, 1982), for a discussion of the major trends in twentieth-century Muslim political thought, particularly the Muslim responses to the "alien" ideologies of nationalism, democracy, and socialism.

⁵³ IBRAHIM, "Egypt's Islamic Activism ...", 657.

The second level is the temporal, social level. Islamists, as was also noted by Western scholars, have been active in providing social services free or at symbolic costs to the underprivileged in poorer Muslim countries – delivering what the state had promised but failed to deliver⁵⁴. However, their political platform pays marginal attention to economic concerns. Although they accuse incumbent regimes of serving the interests of a ruling elite⁵⁵, they themselves explicitly oppose the concept of democracy as conceived in the West, with its emphasis on Humankind as the source of law⁵⁶.

Beyond the specific themes, to which we shall soon turn our attention, the tone of the Islamists is conspicuous for two reasons. First, as Yvonne Haddad points out, it reveals an attempt to come to terms with Western influences and to “establish Islam as the only viable alternative to what is increasingly described as a decadent and morally bankrupt Western society⁵⁷.” The underlying theme of most Islamist discourse then, is the perception of a tension between Muslim culture and religion and the West⁵⁸.

Second, there are clear differences between the Islamist discourse aimed at Western audiences and the Islamist discourse directed to Muslims. While Islamist literature addressed to the West tends to be reproachful, Arabic discourse is considerably more indignant in tone. The issues that are stressed are also different: The foreign-language literature reflects a deep preoccupation with Islam’s image in the West. The main component of the literature addressed to constituencies, on the other hand, is the issue of political autonomy.

⁵⁴ Islamists are known to have provided free medical services, distributed photocopies of expensive textbooks to university students, and provided other kinds of social services such as street cleaning.

⁵⁵ Tawfik Mohamed el-SHAWI, “Istrategia Elmeya lel-Tayar al-Islami” (A Scientific Strategy for the Islamic Movement) in al-NAFISSI, Abdallah (ed.), *al-Haraka al-Islamiyya: Ro’ia Mustaqbaliyya. Awraq fi al-Naqd al-Zati* (The Islamic Movement: Prospects, Papers in Self-Critique), (Cairo: Madbouli Bookshop, 1989) 44.

⁵⁶ el-SHAWI, in al-NAFISSI, *al-Haraka al-Islamiyya...*, 54-56. Also Adnan SA’AD el-DIN, “Min Ossul al-’Amal al-Siyasi lil-Haraka al-Islamiyya al-Mo’asira.” (On the Principles of Political Work for the Contemporary Islamic Movement) in *ibid.*, 280-281. SA’AD EL-DIN, for instance, argues that *Shura* is superior to democracy because it is constrained by Islamic morals, while democracy allows for immorality.

⁵⁷ As HADDAD, *The Contemporary Islamic Revival...*, 9.

⁵⁸ *ibid.*, 11.

1.3.1 (...) when the audience is Western

An important source of Islamist literature is material written in or translated into a Western language, mainly English. Some of it is even the work of prominent Islamists living in the West; as soon as their work is published in the United States or Europe – usually by Islamic presses – it is rapidly circulated in Islamic countries. While a portion of such Western-language material is published by the Muslim diaspora in order to maintain the faith, the most important purpose of this literature⁵⁹ has been to present to the West the Islamist world-view. More often than not, it reads like a plea, calling upon the West to make an effort to understand Islamism and to portray it fairly. For instance, Ahmed Bin Yousef readily concedes that Islamist literature can at times be quite inflammatory but quickly points to how “ironic [it is] that when presidential candidates in the United States use inflammatory remarks in their debates, particularly regarding foreign policy, they are brushed aside by “experts” who deem such talk part of the political game⁶⁰.” Also, Islamists are interested almost as much – if not more – in monitoring the impact of their writings on non-Muslims as they are in propagating their message⁶¹ .

As far as content is concerned though, three themes stand out:

⁵⁹ See also John J. DONOHUE, and John L. ESPOSITO (eds.), *Islam in Transition: Muslim Perspectives*, (New York: Oxford University Press, 1982), for a section presenting writings by leading figures of the contemporary Islamic resurgence from Egypt, Pakistan, and Iran.

⁶⁰ Ahmed BIN YOUSEF, “Islamists and the West; from confrontation to Cooperation,” in Ahmed BIN YOUSEF and Ahmed ABULJOBAIN (eds.) *The Politics of Islamic Resurgence: Through Western Eyes*, (North Springfield: The United Association for Studies and Research Inc., 1992) 31.

⁶¹ The depiction of Islam by Western scholars is also of immense interest to Islamists (as well as to members of the conservative establishment, such as al-Azhar University). On the basis of their writings, Western authors are then classified either as munisif, or fair, in their scholarship about Islam, or as clearly prejudiced and judgemental. Such assessments of Western scholarship have produced a whole new body of Islamist literature.

(i) The idea of a contest

The foreign-language material very often presents arguments as if a contest between Islamic and Western philosophers were in progress, a tendency which Haddad attributes to the Islamists' perception of a conflict between their culture and the West's⁶². This literature habitually resembles a one-sided dialogue with the West⁶³. When two-sided dialogues take place, they are often treated as major events, and are widely publicized in the Muslim community (where, in the West, the same events ring a bell only to a minute minority). The taped television debate between evangelist Jimmy Swaggart and the charismatic Muslim Ahmad Deedat is a good example. In a brief reference to this event, Haddad provides valuable insight into the pertinence of the contest in the Muslim community:

Hundreds of thousands of copies of the taped television debate between evangelist Jimmy Swaggart and Ahmad Deedat, the Indian Muslim from South Africa on whether the Bible is the word of God are distributed throughout the Muslim world and to Muslim students attending Western universities. Muslims believe that the debate proved without a shadow of a doubt the superiority of the Qur'an as the revealed word of God, while exposing the Bible as an inferior document, tampered with by humans⁶⁴.

But such triumphalism is an exception, or rather it is confined to the spiritual level. Typically, the Islamists feel they have been shortchanged on the temporal level. Which leads us to the second theme.

(ii) The Chastising

Islamist literature addressed to the West frequently chastises the latter for its disparaging treatment of Muslims and their culture, and pleads with the West to take them seriously in their own right. It is frustrated with seeing its culture despised, its history ignored and its peoples ill-treated. Two

⁶² As HADDAD, The Contemporary Islamic Revival..., 11.

⁶³ Haddad captures well the one-sidedness of such a dialogue: "[...] in which Muslims may, in fact, be the only partners. That is to say, whether or not westerners are aware of the response and counter-response movement that many Muslims feel in relation to the West (and they generally are not), it is the case that many Muslims perceive Islam to be in dialogue not only with western ideas and writers but with western culture itself as viewed from the perspective of the media." Occasionally, the contest is played out as a one-sided dialogue between Islam and Christianity, in which the two religions are compared and contrasted, with Islam virtually meeting all challenges. As Haddad puts it: "The victory is theirs whether or not their opponents are even aware that the contest is underway". See HADDAD, The Contemporary Islamic Revival..., 11.

⁶⁴ Ibid., 11.

culprits are singled out here. First, the media are said to portray Muslims in a negative manner, and to highlight only the incidents associating Muslims with sabre-rattling, terrorist acts, hostage ordeals and suicide bombings⁶⁵. Furthermore, when a Muslim breaks the law, the media are said to focus on the creed rather than the deed. To a lesser extent, scholars are also chastised for pointing to Islam as the new foe to replace the Soviet Union.

The second culprit identified in Islamist literature is U.S. foreign policy, judging by the ferocious anger it elicits in the Islamist literature. This is mainly for two reasons: (i) its systematically pro-Zionist but frequently anti-Arab-nationalism policies; (ii) its double standard regarding Islamism. The United States supported, even used, Islamist forces against the Soviet Union in Afghanistan, but turned against it in Iran. Equally infuriating to the Islamists is the United States' silence when the Algerian authoritarian regime halted the democratic process as an Islamist victory was anticipated⁶⁶. This second issue has a direct bearing on the contest of values: Mentioning the West's double standard in Bosnia compared to Kuwait, Rachid Ghannouchi (the London-exiled leader of the banned Tunisian an-Nahda) explains why "the Muslim people [should] lose faith in Western values -- wanting instead to revive their own -- [...]"⁶⁷.

(iii) The need to reconcile

Islamists also strive for the West's approval. This is palpable in their discussions on terrorism and democracy, the two main issues they believe tarnish their image in the West. For instance, a

⁶⁵ For instance, Ahmad ABULJOBAIN refers to "a cover of *THE ECONOMIST* depicting a Muslim man clenching his Kalashnikov, standing in front of a mosque's dome. A *TIME* magazine cover cut out the human image, leaving only a minaret and an automatic machine-gun held in place by an anonymous arm", and to a *TIME INTERNATIONAL* article by James WALSH titled "The Sword of Islam", in which Walsh writes: "Terrorism, intolerance and revolution for export -the (Islamic) revival movements's three scourges ...". See Ahmad ABULJOBAIN, "The Western Pen: A Sword in Disguise?", in BIN YOUSEF & ABULJOBAIN (eds.), *The Politics of Islamic Resurgence...*, 8-9.

⁶⁶ AbuJobain (*Ibid.*, 13) asks rhetorically: "Where were the liberal, intellectual elites when Islamic thinkers were, and continue to be, executed for mere opposition, let alone denigration? Who rushes to the side of imams who are shuttled off to darkened cells after delivering a Friday sermon denouncing the regime's tyranny? Who listens to the Islamists when they deliberate on the necessity for tolerance?"

⁶⁷ Rachid GHANNOUCHI, "Islam and the West: Realities and Potentialities", in BIN YOUSEF & ABULJOBAIN (eds.), *The Politics of Islamic Resurgence...*, 50.

recurrent theme is the insistence that Islam per se is not anti-Western, and that terrorism is not sanctioned by Islam. As Bin Yousef states, "Islam, by definition, does not condone terrorism, because, as a faith, it propagates justice, forgiveness, peace, faith, tolerance and enlightenment⁶⁸." They ask the Western reader to view isolated incidents, such as suicide bombings against U.S. interests in the Middle-East within the context of conflicts between nations; i.e., as political issues, and having nothing to do with Islam. They conclude that their position vis-à-vis the West is adversarial only to the extent the West wants to dominate the Muslim peoples.

Regarding discussions on democracy, the emphasis in Islamist discourse addressed to the West differs from the one addressed to the constituencies. It is not within the scope of this work to delve into the on-going debate on the compatibility between Islam and democracy, but it is worth mentioning that the concept of democracy is treated in a more positive light when addressing the Western reader. Democracy is depicted, in an ambiguous manner, as compatible with Islam. For instance, the leader of Sudan's Islamic Front, Hassan al-Turabi describes what constitutes an Islamic government: "It is a government of the *sharia*. But, in a substantive sense, it is popular government since the sharia represents the conviction of the people and, therefore, their direct will⁶⁹." However, democracy is acceptable only if it is modified so as to obey religious dogma. Islamist writer, Muhammad 'Ammara, explains: "Democracy in the understanding of Islam and Islamists, gives power of the people on the condition that religious dogma is not discarded in favor of secular subjugation⁷⁰." Were democracy allowed to operate in the Muslim world, argues Ghannouchi, "Islam would unquestionably be the victor; particularly since no other ideology has the aptitude to compete with the progressive ideology embodied in the union between Islam and modernity⁷¹."

68 in BIN YOUSEF & ABULJOBAIN (eds.), *The Politics of Islamic Resurgence*..., 31.

69 Cited in *ibid.*, 33.

70 *ibid.*, 34.

71 *ibid.*, 48.

To summarize then, when Islamists address the West, they simultaneously (i) behave as if a world-wide civilizational contest is taking place -- a contest of which the Western "opponent" is barely aware --; (ii) chastize the West for unfairness in the competition, yet (iii) send signals that specify the conditions for a possible reconciliation.

1.3.2 (...) when the audience is Muslim

When Islamists write in their native language, which is most of the time, their main purpose is to offer an alternative ethos to a Muslim community subjugated by Western hegemony. Hence, it is pointedly targeted at those who are likelier to become the avant-garde of revivalism: the young urban students and professionals. Curiously, even though such segments of the population have had no direct contact with colonial rule, they nevertheless "seem to resonate with the fear of the specter of colonial hegemony and the Western threat to the righteous Muslim order that is ordained by God⁷²." The authors reflect the demographics of the movement's leaders: most are lawyers, businessmen, doctors, and engineers. Their work reflects both the societal decay and the history of Western domination, especially the arbitrarily drawn carving-up of Islamic territory into nation states as early as the First World War. Yvonne Haddad captures well the issue of survival in a whirlwind of hostile forces: "These range from the Judeo-Christian conspiracy against Islam and the communist threat to Muslim nations to a whole array of perpetrators of evil as well as deviant ideologies such as materialism, secularism, atheism, internationalism, Freudianism and existentialism⁷³."

Given both a decaying society and a hostile international environment, change is seen as imperative. Again here, the discourse mirrors the findings of Western scholarship, most notably the work of Voll; many writers tap into a long history of change, or revivalism. But since they compete with other ideologies, as was mentioned earlier, they must position their alternative as the most authentic kind of change possible and, in any case, the most conducive to autonomy from the West.

⁷² HADDAD, *The Contemporary Islamic Revival...*, 10.

⁷³ *Ibid.*, 6.

They must also exude, beyond their preoccupation with local conditions, a concern for the unity and the strengthening of the Islamic world as a whole so as to enable it to withstand imperialism.

At the heart of most misunderstandings are four issues that the West now accepts as transcendent truths but that Islamist discourse portrays as unwelcome instances of Western hegemony: government by the people; temporal sources of Law; individual rights; and gender equality. An adequate discussion of any of them is very much beyond the scope of this work. Suffice it to mention, for our purposes, that the role of women is a major and hotly debated issue wherever Islamists have adopted electoral strategies. When the ballots of half the electorate are at stake, as was briefly the case in Algeria, the moderate writers argue incessantly that by staying at home -- unless they work outside the home as teachers, social workers and medical personnel taking care of the female patients --, women are actually performing the greatest service of all for the community. It is they who have the noble task to inculcate -- through the education they provide their children -- the elements of the Islamic faith in the members of their family. As Haddad sums it up, while "It is for men to determine and direct Islamic society; it is for women to sustain, nurture, and propagate the faith. The future of religion in one sense thus lies in the hands of women⁷⁴."

The reason we focus here on Islamist discourse aimed at Muslims is because it is they who represent the actual and potential constituencies of Islamist groups in any country with a Muslim majority. So having outlined the profile of its writers, its audience, its ethos and its main themes, let us turn our attention to the reasons behind the Islamist movement's increasing appeal by identifying the ideas it seeks to capitalize on and the nature of the commodity it promises to deliver.

Upon reviewing a collection of articles by prominent contemporary Islamists that is banned by most Arab governments⁷⁵, it became evident that the main commodity they promise to deliver once

⁷⁴ HADDAD, *The Contemporary Islamic Revival...*, 12.

⁷⁵ al-NAFISSI (ed.), *al-Haraka al-Islamiyya...*; this copy was obtained from the Islamic Center of South California in Los Angeles.

they gain political power is self-respect to Muslims. Islamist writers and leaders seem to agree that the key to self-respect is the elimination of foreign, i.e. Western⁷⁶ influences, which are viewed as prevalent in Muslim societies, and the root cause of Islamic decline. According to them, the secular state is the West's vital instrument of domination⁷⁷.

This Westernization process has both a long history and at least two channels through which it reaches the Muslim psyche: capitalist imperialism (both cultural and economic) and political colonialism. For instance the Tunisian Islamist Salah el-din el-Jorchi writes that the West has imposed on the world a Centre-Periphery international system that aims at centralizing wealth and decision-making in the West. This is achieved via the global market and the removal of borders and obstacles faced by multinational corporations, the maintenance of the current military balance, and the Westernization of traditional cultures. While the West has succeeded in penetrating the societies of the periphery and in distorting their traditional foundations, the historical values of these societies have managed to survive. Indeed, it is these traditional cultural and religious values that provided the basis for resisting Western domination, during both direct and indirect phases of imperialism⁷⁸.

Farid Abd el-Khaleq, an Egyptian lawyer and Islamist who spent ten years in prison for his association with the Muslim Brotherhood in Egypt, describes Westernization as a trend that started in the Arab/Muslim world under European occupation, more precisely in the first half of the nineteenth century. This trend has championed secularism, which opposes immutable Islamic principles and seeks to separate religion and politics⁷⁹. According to 'Amara, imperialist forces promoted the

⁷⁶ The "West" includes capitalist as well as communist states. See *ibid.*, (introduction) 17.

⁷⁷ Muhammad EL-SHAWI, "*Istrategia Elmeya lel-Tayar al-Islami*" (A Scientific Strategy for the Islamic Movement), in al-Nafissi, *op. cit.*: 44, 49 and 52-57. Also Salah el-Din EL-JORCHI, "*Al-Harak al-Islamiyya: Mustaqbaluha Rahin al-Taghyiraat al-Jazriyya*", (The Islamist Movement: Its Future as a Hostage to Fundamental Reforms), in *ibid.*, 128. See also Abdallah ABU AZZA, "*Nahu Haraka Islameya Alaneya wa Selmeya*," (Towards a Public and Peaceful Islamic Movement) in al-NAFISSI (ed.), *op. cit.*, pp.194-195.

⁷⁸ EL-JORCHI, in *ibid.*, 124.

⁷⁹ Farid ABD EL-KHALEQ, "*Nahu Muraja'at al-Maqalat wal-Aliyat*", (Towards a Revision of Discourse and Instruments), in al-NAFISSI, *al-Haraka al-Islamiyya...*, 315.

Westernization of the Arab/Muslim world, thus “plundering its civilisation and contaminating the authentic soul of the Muslim⁸⁰.”

But just how does such imperialism/colonialism, two quite concrete phenomena, lead to Westernization, which is a relatively abstract process? Interestingly, the Islamist discourse here mirrors that of Western scholarship in pointing to the Centre of the Periphery as the agent of imperialism. Mohamed el-Shawi, former Head of the Department of Criminal Law at Cairo University (1959-76), is a lawyer and an Islamist writer. He explains that Third World societies, including the Muslim world, awoke to Western dominance resulting from the West's superiority in all of the following fields: military, political, economic, financial, industrial, and scientific and cultural development. Both the intellectuals and the masses in Third World countries reacted with a need to “catch up” with the West; thus, laying the grounds for the West to find “allies and agents ridden with an *inferiority complex*⁸¹.” The West then used these allies and agents in spreading to the population of developing countries the illusion that their failure to catch up with the West results from indigenous characteristics. It became imperative, therefore, for Third World societies to abandon their authenticity and to accept subordination and integration into the same European and American societies which exploit their resources and humiliate their population.

El-Shawi points out that Western imperialist forces succeeded in using indigenous leaders and thinkers as their agents in the fields of legislation, culture, and politics and government. These agents helped imperialist forces end the relative autonomy the Muslim World had enjoyed for centuries before the arrival of foreign invaders. It is their inferiority complex that is responsible for placing the Muslim peoples in a cycle of subordination to their “enemies”, and for the disowning by the Muslims of their authenticity⁸².

⁸⁰ Muhammad 'AMARA, “*Min Madhahir al-Khalal fi al-harakat al-Islamiyya al-Mu'assira*”, (On Symptoms of Dysfunction in Contemporary Islamist Movements), in *ibid.*, 333.

⁸¹ EL-SHAWI, in *ibid.*, 35. (Emphasis added).

⁸² EL-SHAWI, in in al-NAFISSI (ed.), *op. cit.*, pp.194-195. Ghannouchi follows a similar reasoning in a paper written for a London conference: “Following decades of colonial tyranny and cultural decline, the Muslim world displayed a vitality that had previously lain dormant, forcing a Western retreat. The West, however, withdrew only as a strategically prudent move.

One might object here that both imperialism and colonialism are artifacts of the distant past, especially considering the demographic profile of the Arab/Muslim world. El-Shawi argues that while present Muslim societies – with the exception of Palestine, Kashmir, and Eritrea – have overcome foreign military occupation, they have remained subject to foreign intellectual and cultural imperialism⁸³. One of the manifestations of intellectual imperialism, el-Shawi adds, is the fact that Muslim societies today continue to live under the imported concept of temporal state-made laws, rather than the *shari'a* (Islamic law). Prior to the downfall of the unified Islamic *ummah* (community) at the hands of foreign invaders, *shari'a* was the legislative authority in Muslim societies. Today, the modern nation-state system, a legacy of the colonial era, ensures that the legislative authority remains in the alien concept of temporal laws⁸⁴.

To understand why Muslim societies continue to live under alien concepts, it is important to look closely at the relationship between the West and modern Muslim states. In the post-colonial era, Western powers have maintained their grip on Muslims via their influence on Muslim rulers. El-Shawi explains that the ruling elite continues to propagate the poisonous notion that a return to authentic Islamic values would result in backwardness and stagnation. Such promoters of intellectual dependence on the West occupy positions of power and influence – which they gained thanks to the foreign influence brought about by a colonial past – and collaborate with the West in exploiting the resources of the Muslim nation for their personal gain⁸⁵.

The notion of assigning absolute legislative authority to the state plays a key role in reinforcing Western domination. In contrast to the immutable *shari'a*, the limitless authority of the state over the population combines with the fungibility of temporal laws, and the influence of the West on Muslim regimes to consolidate Western dominance⁸⁶.

83 El-SHAWI, in al-NAFĪSSI (ed.), *al-Haraka al-Islamiyya*..., 44.

84 *Ibid.*, 45.

85 *Ibid.*, 49-52.

86 *Ibid.*, 52.

Is there no way out then? Islamists contend that autonomy is attainable and urge Muslims to reject their subordinate position in the international system. The solution, according to them, is simple: rid Muslim societies of the inferiority complex, and revive the principles under which the Islamic civilization was strong and subordinate to none but God. The main principles behind the past glory of the Islamic *ummah* are summarized by el-Shawi:

- * the unity of the Islamic nation (*ummah*),
- * the sovereignty of *shari'a*,
- * the autonomy of *fiqh* (jurisprudence) from the state,
- * and the autonomy of the Muslim nation from foreign control and influence⁸⁷.

The same principles resemble in a striking fashion, and not coincidentally, the broad guidelines of most Islamist political platforms today. (Incidentally, the sole Quranic political reference, i.e., *shura*, seems to be overlooked).

1.4 PUZZLE AND HYPOTHESIS

Summarizing then, the puzzle addressed here – why is it that politics and Islam are mixing the way they are today in the Arab/Muslim world – was found to be imperfectly solved by turning to some sort of intuitive socio-economic determinism. Hence the need to review the scholarly literature. A first group of Western writings was found to focus on Islam's characteristics, thus underscoring the continuity in the revivalist experience but saying little else about the unique features of the contemporary revival. A second group, the vast majority, was found to focus on the specific economic, political, social, and cultural circumstances; one sub-group was found to pay more attention to conditions within the country, while the other highlighted the international events. Upon reviewing both subsets of arguments, two main questions were still in need of an answer:

⁸⁷ Al-NAFISSI (ed.), *al-Haraka al-Islamiyya*..., 38.

(i) whether on balance it was a sense of success or failure that Muslims have been experiencing since the early 1970s, and

(ii) whether Muslims derive this sense of success or failure primarily from domestic or from international conditions.

It was then argued that the answers were to be found in the Islamists' own discourse, specifically in that part of it that is couched in temporal rather than spiritual terms. The first striking feature was that economic concerns usually take the back seat to political concerns, the underlying theme being the perception of a tension between Muslim culture and religion and the West. Second, one is struck by the differences between the Islamist discourse aimed at Western audiences and the Islamist discourse aimed at Muslims. The first discourse assumes a world-wide civilizational contest of which the West seems barely aware, chastizing its intended audience for unfairness, and sending signals that a possible reconciliation is not unfeasible -- at least on the conceptual level. The second discourse, focusing on both societal decay and the long history of Western domination, aims, first and foremost, at offering a counter-hegemonic ethos to the Muslim community at-large, and urban youth in particular.

It was then argued that the above-mentioned answers were to be found in the second type of discourse, if only because it is the Muslim audience that represents the actual and potential constituencies of Islamist groups. A review of such literature showed that Muslims are experiencing a sense of decline, and that they tend to perceive such a decline within a global context, namely the imperialist/colonial legacy. Thus one would expect, all other things being equal, that in those countries where the harmony with Western interests -- whether real or merely perceived as such -- is higher, the regime would find itself dealing with a higher upsurge in revivalist activity.

Such a working hypothesis -- the higher a regime's autonomy⁸⁸, the higher its ability to co-opt its Islamist opposition⁸⁹ -- leaves open six questions:

- * How does one define and operationalize the independent variable: the concept of regime autonomy?
- * How does one do the same with the dependent variable: the ability to co-opt the Islamist opposition?
- * What sample of regimes does one select, and why?
- * What time-frame does one select, and why?
- * How does one go about studying the relationship between those variables inside the selected boundaries?
- * What expected findings would contradict the working hypothesis? The next chapter will provide the answers.

But first, what is the point of this research at all? What would a corroboration of our hypothesis achieve? Two things:

First, it would corroborate the conventional wisdom in the broader field of political science that the domestic policy of weaker states is highly sensitive to international currents. As such, this is not a spectacular contribution. But should our hypothesis prove wrong, this study would at least provide a challenge to such conventional wisdom since its negative conclusion springs from a most likely case.

⁸⁸ Which is equivalent to: the lower a regime's harmony of interests with those of the West, as will be elaborated in the upcoming chapter.

⁸⁹ Which is equivalent to: a weaker revivalist activity.

Second, it would lend credence to the Western scholarship that pays attention to international issues in assessing the sense of failure felt by the Arab-Muslim world. Again, this result is not spectacular. But should our hypothesis prove wrong, this might lead to a much more interesting conclusion: it would essentially mean that the numerous writers -- be they Western scholars or militant Islamists -- who identify the seemingly identical culprit -- i.e., Westernization -- do not agree on its meaning. Whereas some highlight the political dimension, others have other dimensions in mind: the culture, or more precisely the value-system.

CHAPTER 2

THE RESEARCH DESIGN

This chapter will specify both variables (hypothesized cause and the effect under study), the boundaries (in space and in time) and the methodology (the why, the what and the how), in that sequence.

2.1 THE VARIABLES

A disclaimer first: Admittedly inspired by the natural sciences, modern social science's epistemology rests on the triple assumption that an independent reality exists; that such reality can be fruitfully conveyed by breaking it down into well-articulated concepts; and that relationships between such concepts might be discovered through the testing of working hypotheses, and counter-hypotheses, against the above-postulated "reality". While the counter-hegemonic offensive of post-modernism is not totally uninteresting, far from it, this author still fails to see a cogent alternative as far as methodology is concerned -- aside from the refusal to admit any methodological guidelines. Consequently, this study upholds the modernist postulates.

2.1.1 The independent variable: Regime autonomy

The autonomy of a Muslim regime from the West can be defined as the absence of a tie of interest between it and that of Western regimes. Mirroring the Islamist discourse discussed above, that of al-Shawi for instance, such a conceptualization was borrowed from Johan Galtung's seminal 1971 article⁹⁰. Adopting a Centre-Periphery approach to describe relationships between nations, Galtung defined imperialism as "a system that splits up collectivities and relates some of the parts to each other in relations of harmony of interest, and other parts in relations of disharmony of interest, or conflict of interest⁹¹."

Conceiving of imperialism as a general structural relationship between two collectivities, particularly between nations, he distinguishes it from other types of dominance relationships: "It (imperialism) is a sophisticated type of dominance relation [...] basing itself on a *bridgehead* which the center of the Center nation establishes in the center of the Periphery nation, for the joint benefit of both⁹²." Imperialism is thus established with the tie of harmony of interest linking the centre of the Centre nation with the centre of the Periphery nation. Unless the dominance relationship is set up in this special way, it cannot be described as imperialist according to Galtung's definition. He stressed this distinction via a hypothetical situation where A militarily occupies B. While B's freedom of action may be seriously curtailed, he explained, the military occupation is not for that reason an imperialist relationship unless it is set up in the way described above⁹³.

Thus, if perfect imperialism means complete harmony of interest between the Centres, autonomy is the absence of a tie of harmony of interest between the centre of the Centre nation and the centre of the Periphery nation.

90 Johan GALTUNG, "A Structural Theory of Imperialism," Journal of Peace Research, (VIII-2, 1971) 81-118.

91 *Ibid.*, 81.

92 *Ibid.*, 81. (Emphasis added).

93 *Ibid.*, 81.

As of this writing, no comparative studies have been done on the level of autonomy of various regimes in the Middle-East. This being a difficult concept to measure, an important task in this work is the development of a scale to measure the relative level of autonomy of a regime. The most fruitful possibility appeared to be in the area of foreign policy, particularly in terms of the latter's harmony -- or lack thereof -- with Western interests.

It could be argued that the validity of this indicator is weakened by the fact that harmony/disharmony of foreign policies on a particular issue can be the result of factors other than the level of symmetry in a relationship between two states, most notably -- and quite simply -- the national interest. While this reservation is justifiable in a general context, the indicator is valid in the particular time-frame we selected: during the Gulf crisis (more on this choice in the upcoming section 2.2.2), a large majority of Arabs from different countries (except maybe and understandably the indigenous Kuwaitis) viewed the coalition as an instrument of Western domination rather than the product of the international community, and considered Iraqis as fellow Arabs/Muslims rather than a security threat. Siding with the coalition was thus widely perceived by the masses as unpatriotic and an indication of giving in to the wishes of Western powers.

This is in not surprising in light of the historical tendency of Arabs in the post-independence era, and even earlier, to interpret agreement with Western institutions, if not also international organizations, as evidence of Western domination. This skepticism has deep roots in history: Great Britain's unkept promise to solve the Palestinian issue if Arabs joined the British forces in combatting the Ottomans (a condition they met); the widely held belief that Israel was a state incubated in London and delivered with the active help of Washington; the persistent U.S. unconditional help to Israel, especially its systematic U.N. vetoing of any UN resolution favouring Arab interests in the Arab-Israeli conflict; all culminating, of course, with "Operation Desert Storm".

Even today, this tendency prevails and extends to non-political/military areas: for instance, the implementation of IMF measures by some Arab governments has been perceived by a large portion of the population as subservience to Western wishes. Thus, even if harmony in policies were the result of objectively converging interests, the Arab masses would still perceive it as an indication of compliance. And since it is the perceived rather than the actual autonomy that shapes the masses' reaction, the level of harmony/disharmony with Western policies was deemed a valid indicator of regime autonomy in this particular case.

2.1.2 The dependent variable: The concept of resurgence

The ability to coopt Islamist forces is defined here as the ability of the regime to secure its position vis-à-vis the Islamist threat. It is a well-known fact that since the late 1960's the popularity of Islamic political ideology has been steadily on the rise in countries with a Muslim. This has created increasing tension with the respective states who, from the Islamist viewpoint, are not sufficiently Islamized. Whether Islamic principles inspire a constitution (e.g. Egypt) or even fully dictate it (e.g. Saudi Arabia), Muslim regimes have not been spared the Islamist critique that they are un-Islamic. As of this writing, the only exceptions are Iran and Sudan, where the Islamists did indeed gain power within the last two decades. Thus, for the Muslim world in general, it is safe to state that Islamism is the main force of opposition to incumbent regimes.

It is important to recall at this point that the Islamist movement is not a homogeneous entity. Within the same country, diverse groups exist. While all aim for further Islamization of the state, they may -- and frequently do -- differ in their specific conception of what constitutes an Islamic state. Currently, the divergence between them at this level is not producing much debate, the priority being the downfall of the common enemy, the un-Islamic state. More relevant to our discussion, however, is the choice of means to attain the same goal. While some groups advocate the use of the official

political process (e.g. the Muslim Brotherhoods in Jordan, Syria, Egypt), others have found the use of violence justifiable in the face of state repression (Algeria's *Groupe Islamique Armé*, *Hamas* in the Occupied Territories, *al-jama'a al-Islamiyya* in Egypt). This is not to exclude the possibility of existing ties between the two categories⁹⁴.

In general, state policies towards Islamist opposition have vacillated between repression and concession on a number of issues. In a sign of recognition of the strength of the Islamist opposition, many states have made concessions, mainly on socio-cultural issues, in an effort to appease their opponents. This has usually taken the form of modifying family laws (marriage, divorce) and other laws (the sale of alcohol) along the lines of an Islamist agenda. By the same token, the same regimes have refused to let a tamper-free electoral process determine the locus of power. At times, Islamist parties were banned altogether, which is as much a sign of the opposition's strength as it is of the regime's own sense of insecurity.

So far, Muslim states have been incapable of securing their position with regard to the Islamist threat to their existence, and their measures have been mostly *ad hoc* in response to specific crises. While the more violent groups have been habitually countered with the assistance of armed security forces, contending with the more popular moderate factions has been less consistent. For instance, moderate political parties have been allowed to participate in the official political process on an on-and-off basis. One day an Islamist is a member of parliament, the next he is in prison. The same applies to the Islamist press.

In countries where an Islamist ascent to power has not materialized in this current revival period, i.e., the great majority of Muslim countries, a dialectic exists between the forces of Islamist

⁹⁴ Ghassan SALAMÉ, in *Foreign Affairs*, (Spring 1993): 27. The extremists invariably assist the moderates in winning a majority of seats in professional union elections. Also, it is their combined pressures that force the government to islamize some policies. The distinction between them, Salamé points out, is becoming less clear, and some governments, like Egypt, are cracking down on moderates as well.

opposition and the incumbent regime. Needless to say, it is a dynamic situation in which the state is able to coopt these forces more effectively in some periods than in others. While the popularity of Islamist ideology is on a steady rise, it does experience ebbs and flows. Violent acts by radical groups, especially those resulting in “innocent” victims, have invariably hurt the movement’s popularity. It is mainly for this reason that leaders of moderate groups denounce such acts and hurry to distance the “true” Islamist ideology from them. Moreover, the fact that the regimes have remained in power and have prevented the Islamists from taking it, albeit in a fragile balance, points to the fact that the state is still an adversary to be reckoned with.

The relationship between the Islamist forces and the regime, then, is in a state of tension. The security of a regime’s position with regard to its Islamist forces is thus a measure of that regime’s ability to coopt these forces. But it remains difficult to measure, and at this writing, we remain unaware of comparative studies on this subject. The upcoming section 2.3.1 will elaborate as to why a questionnaire sent out to experts, mostly scholars, was deemed the best available alternative.

2.2 THE BOUNDARIES

So far, this study has alluded, somewhat evasively, to the Arab-Muslim world. But what are precisely the states that are meant? And what is the time frame for analyzing the foreign policy behaviour of those states?

2.2.1 A sixteen-country sample

The sample selected consists of sixteen countries with a significant Muslim majority: Algeria, Bahrain, Egypt, Iraq, Jordan, Kuwait, Lebanon, Libya, Morocco, Saudi Arabia, Sudan, Syria, Tunisia, United Arab Emirates (UAE), the West Bank and Gaza, and Yemen. The focus was on Arab countries for three main reasons.

First, the Muslim world comprises such a large number of societies that this study could not have covered the entire Muslim world without sacrificing depth and rigour. Within each Muslim culture, there are nuances that outsiders cannot detect from translated material. Since the author of this thesis is from an Arab cultural background and is proficient in the Arabic language, she is in a good position to bring out the nuances in the Arab psyche.

Secondly, the Arab world constitutes an important bulk of the Muslim world, contributing considerably to the current revival. By examining the dynamics of the revival within an Arab context, the pre-eminence of a specific model within this large group would provide valuable insight into the current movement in general. Admittedly, looking at Islamist movements in non-Arab countries such as Iran, Turkey, Pakistan and Malaysia is of significant importance towards the development of a comprehensive theory on Islamism. However, since it is beyond the scope of this work, it is left for future comparative studies interested in the similarities and differences between Arab and non-Arab Islamism.

Thirdly, the diversity within the Arab world serves to put the hypothesis to a rigorous test, and by the same token increases our potential to discern the most relevant factors⁹⁵. Although the population in these countries is predominantly Muslim, and the spoken language is Arabic, variables such as the system of government, the level of modernization, historical conditions, and the level of wealth make these countries a diverse group. If the hypothesis is confirmed in monarchies as in republics, in rich as in poor countries, and in traditional societies as in less traditional ones, then there will be high confidence in the results.

⁹⁵ This strategy for confirming a theoretical statement is referred to as the "Most Different Systems" design. See Adam PRZEWORSKI & Henry TEUNE, *The logic of Comparative Social Inquiry*. (New York: Wiley, 1970), 34-39.

2.2.2 The Gulf crisis/war

Because of data constraints, the study is limited to a two-year period for which data are available for all the units of analysis, and for the measurement of indicators for both the dependent and independent variables. The period selected covers one year preceding and one year following the onset of the Gulf war (i.e., two years). We selected this time-period for three reasons.

First, this event has a high potential to highlight the level of harmony/disharmony between a regime's policy and Western interests, the indicator we are using to measure the independent variable: regime autonomy. Given the international nature and the magnitude of the event, we believe that state policies on this issue most likely overshadowed other state policies of the time, and that its weight was considerable as far as popular perception of regime autonomy was concerned⁹⁶.

Secondly, the selection of this time-period lends itself well to the adoption of a comparative approach. The Gulf crisis is a historical event that involved in one way or another all Arab countries, if not the entire international community, and led regimes throughout the Arab world to adopt various stances. Data were therefore available for all the sixteen countries examined.

Thirdly, this crisis provides a classic instance in which it is no analytical oversimplification to treat the West as the seamless homogenous monolith that is portrayed in most Islamist discourses. By the same token, it provides us with all the attributes of a crucial case: if our hypothesis does not hold in this instance when the so-called West is so obviously united in a confrontational stance, it is unlikely to hold in more routine settings when the Western powers behave in less a concerted manner towards the Arab/Muslim world.

⁹⁶ Bassam TIBI describes the Gulf Crisis as "perhaps the most epochal regional development of the past decades" in "The Gulf Crisis and the Fragmentation of the Middle East: The Policies of Egypt, Syria and Jordan" in the Cairo Papers, (XIV-1, Spring 1991), 73.

The mere chronology of events bears out this view. Almost as soon as Iraq invaded Kuwait on 2 August 1990, the UN Security Council met upon the demand of Kuwait and the United States, and passed resolution 660 calling for the immediate and unconditional withdrawal of Iraq. On the same day, Britain, France and the United States rushed to freeze all Iraqi and Kuwaiti assets. Germany and Japan followed suit the very next day. It then took a mere two days for the American Secretary of State and the Soviet Foreign Minister to issue a joint declaration suspending arms delivery to Iraq. Forty-eight hours later, i.e., on 6 August, the UN Security Council passed resolution 661 declaring a commercial, financial, and military boycott of Iraq.

The ensuing events are well known: On 7 August President Bush ordered an immediate airlift of American troops to Saudi Arabia, declaring in a nationally televised address the following day that the U.S. intends to behave in a manner commensurate with its planetary responsibilities, "no matter what the costs entailed⁹⁷."

In response to Iraq's annexation of Kuwait on 8 August, the UN Security Council passed resolution 662 on 9 August declaring the annexation null and void. Nevertheless, Iraq closed Western embassies in Kuwait and promptly sent their staffs to Baghdad. Within a few days, it became clear that Western contract workers and visitors would not be allowed to leave occupied Kuwait and Iraq (this was explicitly announced on 18 August).

Saddam Hussein laid down the first terms of his withdrawal on 12 August, talking in terms of linkage with the Palestinian issue: Iraq would withdraw from Kuwait if Israel withdrew from the Occupied Territories. This linkage was categorically rejected by the United States and Israel, and under the leadership of the United States, the international community followed suit in rejecting the linking of any other issue to Iraq's withdrawal from Kuwait⁹⁸.

⁹⁷ Bassma KODMANI-DARWISH and May CHARTOUNI-DUBARRY, *Golfe et Moyen Orient: les conflits*, (Paris: Institut français des relations internationales, 1991) 40.

⁹⁸ *Cairo Papers*..., 2.

On 25 August the UN Security Council adopted resolution no. 665 allowing the United States and other countries "to use such measures commensurate to the specific circumstances as may be necessary" to halt and search ships in order to enforce the UN embargo against Iraq⁹⁹. This measure was enforced by Western navies¹⁰⁰. On 4 September US Secretary of State James Baker defined the new security structure for the region, whereby a certain US presence would be maintained with significant Arab participation. Presidents Bush and Gorbachev then issued another joint statement from Helsinki on 9 September condemning Iraq (the Soviet Union, however, made it clear that it would not participate in a military campaign against Iraq).

On 29 September, the 5 permanent members of the Security Council (Britain, China, France, Soviet Union, the United States) rejected a draft resolution presented by Cuba, Yemen, Malaysia, and Colombia proposing a mission by the UN Secretary General to Baghdad, and calling for the parties involved to show restraint¹⁰¹. In the five months between the invasion and the beginning of the Gulf War in January 1991, 500,000 troops from the United States spearheaded a multinational coalition of forces in Saudi Arabia¹⁰². Members of this coalition included forces from Saudi Arabia, Kuwait, Egypt, Syria, Morocco, Britain, France, and Canada. They were backed by non-military support from the EC countries, Japan, and the states of the then-Warsaw pact.

Under pressure from the United States, the UN Security Council passed resolution 678 on 29 November 1990, authorizing member states cooperating with Kuwait to use force against Iraq if it had not withdrawn from Kuwait by 15 January 1991¹⁰³. Aside from freeing the hostages by December 1990, Saddam Hussein remained adamant. On a visit to his troops on the Kuwaiti front on 15 January 1991, he boldly declared "Kuwait belongs to the past¹⁰⁴."

⁹⁹ *Current History*, XC-558 (October 1990), 348.

¹⁰⁰ *Cairo Papers*... 1.

¹⁰¹ *Monde arabe: Maghreb-Machrek*, no. 130 (October, November, December 1990), 124.

¹⁰² Peter SLUGLETT & Marion FAROUK-SLUGLETT, *The Times Guide to the Middle East: the Arab World and its Neighbours* (London: Times Books, 1993) 104.

¹⁰³ *Ibid.*, 105.

¹⁰⁴ KODMANI-DARWISH & CHARTOUNI-DUBARRY, *Golfe et Moyen Orient*... 46.

On 17 January 1991 the coalition first bombarded Iraq, which then retaliated by launching Scud missiles at targets in Israel and Saudi Arabia. In a speech on 21 February Saddam Hussein vowed that he would not give in. Following five weeks of bombardment and the launching of a ground offensive on 23 February, much of the Iraqi army was destroyed by 27 February. On 28 February the Iraqi mission at the United Nations announced its unconditional acceptance of UN resolutions.

2.3 THE METHODOLOGY

This section justifies the use of a questionnaire, details its contents (the wording and the addressees), and finally examines the data processing involved once the responses were in.

2.3.1 Why the Questionnaire?

What are the alternatives for measuring the dependent variable? The adoption of a single indicator to be used for all the units of analysis is unfeasible; some indicators applicable or valid in one Arab country may not be in another. For instance, the number and size of pro-Islamist demonstrations is very much a function of state policies towards dissent and opposition. In spite of all Arab regimes being unquestionably on the heavy-handed side, there are non-negligible differences in state policies towards freedom of expression. Thus, an important challenge in this work is the development of a research design that permitted the measurement of the dependent variable.

While there is no shortage of experts on the Middle-East, most have made their contribution via in-depth case studies on specific countries. It thus becomes justifiable, given objective conditions regarding the availability of data, to seek to obtain the data from a panel of experts. The use of a panel of experts is a "rapid and efficient way to cream the tops of the heads of a group of knowledgeable people¹⁰⁵."

¹⁰⁵ Norman C. DALKLEY, Studies in the Quality of Life: Delphi and Decision-Making, (Santa Monica: The Rand Corporation, 1972) 21.

2.3.2 What Questionnaire?

We sent a questionnaire to forty-eight (48) Middle-East experts, most of whom are Western-educated scholars. We also approached two Islamist thinkers and one Canadian government official. A large number of these scholars were chosen on the basis of their world-wide reputation as experts on the Middle-East in the disciplines of political science, sociology, or history. The names of less-known scholars were obtained by reviewing the MESA (Middle East Studies Association) roster, which contains the names of members classified by region and field of interest, and during a MESA conference which took place in Phoenix in November 1994. The emphasis was on selecting social scientists specializing in at least one of the countries under study. The names of a small number of Canadian scholars were referred by Prof. John Sigler from Carleton University in Canada. Some Ph.D. candidates were selected from the *MESA* roster according to the same criteria mentioned above, others by word of mouth from professors. We also sought the input of two Egyptian Islamist thinkers residing in the United States, who could be safely described as members of the Muslim Brotherhood (one of the least violent groups on the spectrum). One of them is a relatively well-known author who has contributed to the banned collection of al-Nafissi. In addition to the above, we contacted a CSIS official with the recommendation and assistance of Prof. Sigler.

The questionnaire itself consists of two main sections. In the first section, the respondent is asked to rate the strength of the Islamist movement in the 16 countries in two time-periods: in the one year preceding the onset of the Gulf crisis, and the year following the onset. The questions are formulated along the lines of Osgood's Semantic Differential¹⁰⁶. The Semantic Differential is a seven-point rating scale. It is used to measure the "respondent's reaction to some object or concept in terms of rating on bipolar scales defined with contrasting adjectives at each end¹⁰⁷"; for instance:

¹⁰⁶ C.E. OSGOOD, G.J. SUCI & P.H. TANNENBAUM, The Measurement of Meaning, (Urbana, Ill.: University of Illinois Press, 1957) 36-38, 82-84. I am indebted here to Prof. Lawrence ALSCHULER, Department of Political Science, University of Ottawa, for having brought to my attention this technique.

¹⁰⁷ David & Chava NACHMIAS, Research Methods in the Social Sciences, (3rd ed., New York: St-Martin's Press, 1987) 263.

	3.very	2.fairly	1.slightly	0.neither	1.slightly	2.fairly	3.very	
good	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	bad

Positions 1-3 measure the intensities in either directions, with 1 being the slightest reaction, 3 the most intense, and 0 representing a neutral position. Respondents are asked to check the point on the scale that corresponds to their judgment about the object or concept being rated.

On the basis of Semantic Differential, we formulate the question aimed at measuring the ability of a particular regime to co-opt Islamist forces as follows:

ABILITY OF REGIME TO COOPT ISLAMIST FORCES							
period	WEAK			neither or don't know	STRONG		
	very	fairly	slightly		slightly	fairly	very
P1	--	--	--	--	--	--	--
P2	--	--	--	--	--	--	--

...where "P1" denotes the period of one year preceding the Gulf crisis/war and "P2" the period of the same length following it.

In the second section, the respondent is asked to rate his/her familiarity with the topic of Political Islam in each of the sixteen countries. First, we define the positions on a four-point scale we borrowed from B.E. Novak and S. Glouberman¹⁰⁸ :

¹⁰⁸ B.E. NOVAK and S. GLOUBERMAN, Human Settlement in the Canadian North: A Delphi Survey (Montreal, URBANorth inc., 1976), section 2.

2.3 The methodology: What questionnaire?

Expert	Great familiarity with this topic. Specialist on this topic. Central involvement in major projects concerned with this topic.
Very familiar	Very familiar with this topic. Devote part of one's time to it. Familiar with work done on this topic.
Familiar	Familiar with this topic. Keep reasonably well informed on it through reading and conversation.
Not familiar	Not familiar with this topic. Have only a general background knowledge of it.

We then formulate the self-rating question as follows:

	expert	very familiar	familiar	not familiar
Country-X	--	--	--	--

Following the two main sections, we ask the respondent:

- To choose between a "Yes" and "No" response to whether he/she wished to receive a summary of the findings.
- To choose between a "Yes" and "No" response to whether he/she wished to be mentioned as a resource expert participating in this project.
- To choose between a "Yes" and "No" response to whether he/she wished some /all of his/her ratings to be identified with his or her name.

The following four pages constitute a copy of the package we sent out:

Maissa Mokhtar
Address
Tel. (---) --- - ---

Date, 1994

Professor X
University Y

Dear Professor X:

I am conducting research on Political Islam in the contemporary Arab world, and am writing to you to solicit your contribution as an expert in the field.

My research is designed to test a hypothesis regarding the factors influencing the strength of Islamist forces in Arab countries. This research constitutes the basis of my Master's thesis in Political Science at the University of Ottawa, Canada.

I am sending the attached questionnaire to a number of renowned experts with the hope that they complete and return it. I cannot stress sufficiently the importance of your feedback to this questionnaire - which consists of 45 ratings that you are requested to answer at a fairly high speed. Please do not omit any rating.

I would like to assure you, Professor _____, that your name will not be identified with your responses in any of my research reports because the ratings of all respondents will be aggregated. However, if you would like to be cited as an expert in the research report, please indicate so.

I strongly urge you to contribute to this study by filling out the questionnaire promptly --it requires a mere 5 minutes-- and slipping it into the pre-addressed envelope. I will be pleased to send you a summary of the findings if you are interested.

Thank you in advance for your contribution, and I wish you continued success in your projects.

Hoping we will meet at MESA '94,

Maissa Mokhtar
Graduate Student
Department of Political Science
University of Ottawa

INSTRUCTIONS

The purpose of this questionnaire is to obtain the judgment of various Middle-East experts on the ability of regimes in 16 Arab countries to co-opt Islamist forces in the periods immediately preceding and immediately following the onset of the Gulf Crisis in 1990.

Each expert is also asked to rate his or her familiarity with each of the 16 countries covered by this questionnaire.

Please do not omit any rating.

Note on anonymity:

Ratings of all participants will be aggregated. Your ratings will not be identified with your name, unless you indicate otherwise.

ABILITY OF REGIME* TO CO-OPT ISLAMICIST FORCES

	WEAK			neither or	STRONG		
	very	fairly	slightly	don't know	slightly	fairly	very
Algeria [P1]**							
Algeria [P2]							
Bahrain [P1]							
Bahrain [P2]							
Egypt [P1]							
Egypt [P2]							
Iraq [P1]							
Iraq [P2]							
Jordan [P1]							
Jordan [P2]							
Kuwait [P1]							
Kuwait [P2]							
Lebanon [P1]							
Lebanon [P2]							
Lybia [P1]							
Lybia [P2]							
Morocco [P1]							
Morocco [P2]							
Saudi Arabia [P1]							
Saudi Arabia [P2]							
Sudan [P1]							
Sudan [P2]							
Syria [P1]							
Syria [P2]							
Tunisia [P1]							
Tunisia [P2]							
UAE [P1]							
UAE [P2]							
West Bank, Gaza [P1]							
West Bank, Gaza [P2]							
Yemen [P1]							
Yemen [P2]							

* In case of West Bank and Gaza: P.L.O.

** P.1 refers to the 12 months PRECEDING the onset of the Gulf crisis in 1990

P.2 refers to the 12 months FOLLOWING the onset of the Gulf crisis in 1990

Please rate your familiarity with the topic of Political Islam in the following countries according to the following scale:

- * EXPERT: Great familiarity with this topic. Specialist on this topic. Central involvement in major projects concerned with this topic.
- * VERY FAMILIAR: Very familiar with this topic. Devote part of one's time to it. Familiar with work done on this topic.
- * FAMILIAR: Familiar with this topic. Keep reasonably well informed on it through reading and conversation.
- * NOT FAMILIAR: Not familiar with topic. Have a general background knowledge on it.

	expert	very familiar	familiar	not familiar
Algeria				
Bahrain				
Egypt				
Iraq				
Jordan				
Kuwait				
Lebanon				
Lybia				
Morocco				
Saudi Arabia				
Sudan				
Syria				
Tunisia				
UAE				
West Bank, Gaza				
Yemen				

I would like to receive a summary of the findings: _____ Yes _____ No

I would like to be mentioned as a resource expert participating in this project: _____ Yes _____ No

I would like to have some of/all my ratings be identified with my name: _____ Yes _____ No

If some, please specify which: _____

In November 1994, forty-eight (48) questionnaires were sent out, each accompanied by a cover letter and a self-addressed envelope for the reply – so as to promote a high response rate. The cover letter (see above) urges the candidate to respond by stressing the importance of his/her contribution to this study.

By July 1995, twenty-five (25) replies were obtained. A second mailing was then launched to experts whose contribution was considered valuable, and who had not yet replied. This package is identical to the first mailing, except for the cover letter which refers to the first mailing, while continuing to stress the importance of the respondent's reply. Finally, by August 1995, we had a total of twenty-nine (29) replies.

2.3.3 The Data Processing

The statistical logic here is straightforward: we need to compare two sets of data; the set of autonomous regimes with the set of non-autonomous regimes. Three scenarios are then possible:

(i) the two sets are similar, which would mean that political autonomy is an irrelevant causal variable;

(ii) the two sets are dissimilar, but in a way diametrically opposed to our hypothesized relationship, which would suggest that political autonomy is a relevant causal variable but that it produces an effect opposite to what our review of the literature had led us to expect;

(iii) the two sets are dissimilar in the way we had expected.

The question then becomes: how are we to operationalize the variables in order to be able both to isolate the two groups (the autonomous and the non-autonomous), then to compare them?

As far as regime autonomy is concerned, we chose to conduct a basic content analysis of each regime's stated policies during the Gulf crisis/war. But first, we need to review the chronology of the Gulf crisis/war in order to identify a position that we could describe as "Western" and against which the official position of the Arab regimes could be assessed. The chronology of the crisis was obtained from various Western secondary sources that focused either on raw data or on analyses pertaining to the Gulf crisis. By comparing and contrasting the data made available by these sources, we note a high degree of consistency among them, and thereby find it safe to confirm their reliability.

The fact that the official positions published by Western media during the crisis were not denied by the regimes in question during or after the crisis also supports the reliability of factual data obtained in the West. In addition, given that the event is very recent, the vivid recollections of Middle-East observers ensure that records of such pertinent data have remained highly reliable. Moreover, the major sources we used enjoy a high degree of respectability among Western scholars¹⁰⁹.

The Gulf crisis rapidly developed from a regional crisis into an international crisis¹¹⁰. In spite of repeated but isolated attempts by some Arab leaders to reach a solution, within one week after the invasion, the Arab Summit in Cairo was voting on a call to US troops to defend the Gulf. Twelve of twenty-one members of the Arab League approved the sending of troops, thereby transferring the Kuwait Portfolio to the United Nations and undermining any hope of an Arab solution.

It is not within the scope of this work to analyze the motives behind the massive involvement of Western states in this crisis. It is undeniable, however, that the internationalization of the crisis and the involvement of Western states was, to say the least, favoured by the United States. As Kodmani-Darwish points out, the role of the United States was of primary importance in the creation and

¹⁰⁹ Monde arabe, Maghreb-Machrek (revue de la documentation française), no. 130, 131 & 132, October 1990-June 1991; Current History, vol. 90 & vol. 91, October 1990-October 1991. Brigitte STERN, (ed.), Guerre du Golfe: le dossier d'une crise internationale 1990-1992 (Paris: La documentation française, 1993). Bassma KODMANI-DARWISH & May CHARTOUNI-DUBARRY, Golfe et Moyen Orient:...

¹¹⁰ KODMANI-DARWISH & CHARTOUNI-DUBARRY, op. cit., 49.

2.3.3 The data processing

maintenance of a multinational coalition whose lowest common denominator was some hazy U.N. legality¹¹¹.

Although Western states differed in the magnitude of their involvement, and in the firmness of initial declarations, a consensus could be discerned early in the crisis with regard to a unified stance. It is safe to summarize the Western position as one in favour of the UN resolutions mentioned above, and as supportive of the US-led military coalition in Saudi Arabia. In addition, it is one which rejects any attempted linkage with the Palestinian issue.

By examining state policies related to the Gulf crisis, it is possible to rank the extent to which a regime's stance was harmonious with Western interests as follows:

HIGH	Supported the deployment of non-Arab troops on Arab soil. Supported Arab participation in US-led multinational coalition. Implemented economic sanctions against Iraq. Supported the blockade. Rejected linkage with the Palestinian question.
LOW	Defied UN resolutions, condemned the deployment of non-Arab troops on Arab soil. Opposed Arab participation in the US-led multinational coalition. Insisted on an Arab solution, which essentially meant the maintenance of the new <i>status quo</i> ¹¹² . Circumvented the embargo. Supported linkage with the Palestinian question.

¹¹¹ KODMANI-DARWISH & CHARTOUNI-DUBARRY, *Golfe et Moyen Orient*..., 105.

¹¹² TIBI, "The Gulf Crisis..." in the *Cairo Papers*..., 76. As an alternative to international crisis management, the Arab Solution consisted of "the request that foreign troops withdraw from the region in order to allow the Arabs to come to terms among themselves and by themselves... the solution's import was that Iraqi troops would remain in Kuwait", p. 74.

2.3.3 The data processing

In order for a state to be ranked at a given end of this scale, it is necessary that its stated policies match at least two of the ranking's conditions. A good measure of those conditions' relevance is that most states' policies – with the notable exception of Libya's – happen to match one set or the other in their entirety. Moreover, the ranking of a regime's official position on this scale is based on an evaluation of publicly known actions as well as statements made by government leaders. To sum up then, it is relatively uncomplicated to divide our sample into two well-defined groups.

Before we can compare the average change in the dependent variable for the two groups of regimes, we need to measure the change for each individual regime. To accomplish the latter, there are an infinite number of possibilities. We propose (i) two different ways to code expertise as well as (ii) three different ways to code the changes in the dependent variable.

(i) The self-ratings are assigned numerical value according to two different coding procedures:

* EXPERTISE A: follows a straight incremental pattern:

Self-Rating	Value
Expert	3
Very Familiar	2
Familiar	1
Not Familiar	0

* whereas EXPERTISE B gives comparatively more weight to the input of "experts" while discarding that of the "familiar" and the "not familiar":

Self-Rating	Value
Expert	4
Very Familiar	1
Familiar	0
Not Familiar	0

(ii) The three different ways to code the changes in the dependent variable are:

* **METHOD #1**, in which the change of a given regime's ability to co-opt its Islamist opposition (both in magnitude -- i.e. a small vs. a big change -- as well as in direction -- i.e. an increased vs. a decreased ability --) between Period One (P1) and Period Two (P2) is expressed in numerical values as a measure of the shift in terms of columns in our questionnaire:

From P1 to P2	Value	Interpretation
X columns down the scale	-X	decrease in ability to co-opt
Same column	0	no change
X columns up the scale	+X	increase in ability to co-opt

... where X = 1, 2, 3, 4, 5 or 6.

* **METHOD #2** is similar except in that it assumes that a "big change" is too ambiguous a notion to be rated according to a fine scale (e.g., -6, -5, ..., 0, ..., 5, 6); hence it breaks down the shifts in columns into 3 categories:

- no shift = 0
- one column = 1, and
- 2 columns and more = 2

* **METHOD #3** involves an even less refined coding method (insofar as it loses part of the statistical information) for the change in the ability of a regime to co-opt Islamist forces. In this method, the change in the latter is expressed in terms of shift in *sign* between P1 and P2; recalling our scale...

ABILITY OF REGIME TO COOPT ISLAMIST FORCES							
period	WEAK			neither or don't know	STRONG		
	very	fairly	slightly		slightly	fairly	very
P1	--	--	--	--	--	--	--
P2	--	--	--	--	--	--	--

... the coding is as follows:

From P1 to P2	Value	Interpretation
strong ----> weak	-1	decrease in ability to co-opt
changes in weakness or changes in strength or no change at all	0	no change
weak ----> strong	+1	increase in ability to co-opt

Hence, the 2 (expertise codings) x 3 (change codings) = 6 selected coding procedures:

	EXPERTISE A (0, 1, 2, 3)	EXPERTISE B (0, 0, 1, 4)
METHOD #1 CHANGE = # OF COLUMNS	coding #1	coding #2
METHOD #2 CHANGE = 0, 1 OR 2	coding #3	coding #4
METHOD #3 CHANGE = Δ IN SIGN	coding #5	coding #6

Table I- The coding procedures for the dependent variable

Two questions then arise:

First: why so many procedures? Because there are no right or wrong way to translate qualitative findings into numerical values. There are only ways more compelling than others, which is precisely why we plan to test the sensitivity of the findings to variations in coding.

Second: what is the relationship between the coding of expertise (whether A or B) and the measure of each regime's change in ability to co-opt its Islamist forces (whether according the methods 1, 2 or 3)? The first serves to "weigh" the second, so to speak. For clarity, let us assume the

following scenario: four experts, E1, E2, E3 and E4 respond on country A. Suppose an equal level of expertise (say, very familiar, i.e., 2, using EXPERTISE A, for instance); suppose also two experts (E1 and E2) observe an increase equivalent to $R=+2$ while the other two (E3 and E4) observe the opposite, i.e., -2 . In that case, the average is straightforward: it is zero. But suppose, more realistically, that the self-expertise appraisal is not identical; suppose that $E1=E2=1$ but $E3=E4=3$. Intuitively then, we sense that the average is above zero since the $+2$ responses weigh heavier than the -2 responses... hence the notion of weighted average. The arithmetic here is thus

$$\frac{(R1 \times E1) + (R2 \times E2) + (R3 \times E3) + (R4 \times E4)}{(E1 + E2 + E3 + E4)} = \frac{(-2 \times 1) + (-2 \times 1) + (+2 \times 3) + (+2 \times 3)}{(1 + 1 + 3 + 3)} = \frac{8}{8} = +1$$

...where R1, for instance, is the response by expert E1.

Now that we are equipped both to

- * code each regime high or low on the autonomy scale
- * and measure (by six different procedures) its ability to co-opt its Islamist forces,

we are in a position to compute the aggregate average for the autonomous and non-autonomous groups. Again, at this point, there are two possible calculations:

(i) A **raw aggregate**: which is a straightforward average, regardless of the cumulative level of expertise for each country. Although each participant is expected to rate each country, the total level of self-appraisal is expected to vary from one country to another. The raw aggregate would not adequately reflect these variations.

(ii) A **weighted aggregate**: Such aggregate value would reflect more accurately the variations in the level of expertise associated with the various regimes.

This second procedure is superior in that it shields us from possible contaminants; for instance, a flat rating (close to zero... which might reflect "don't know" more than "no change"¹¹³) for a particularly under-researched country (say Bahrain) might unduly drive up the average for its group.

The final step entails comparing the aggregate averages¹¹⁴ (both raw and weighted) for the two groups. If our hypothesis holds, we would expect the average response for the group rated "low" on the autonomy scale to be:

* at worst, lower than that of the group rated "high", no matter what the sign.

* at best, negative while that of the group rated "high" is higher than zero.

Should both averages be similar, then our hypothesis would be invalidated.

¹¹³ Note that METHOD #3 helps to reduce the ambiguity between "don't know" and "no change" since it highlights the shifts from side of the spectrum to the other.

¹¹⁴ I am indebted here to Prof. Jamal CHAOUKI, who teaches "Data Analysis" at the Department of Chemical Engineering, École Polytechnique, Université de Montréal. Through discussions, he clarified a number of the methodological issues involved in our statistical analysis.

CHAPTER 3

THE FINDINGS

The purpose of this chapter is three-fold: First, it aims to code each country in our sample either as “low” or “high”, depending on its policies during the Gulf crisis/war; second, to process the experts’ responses as to the dependent variable; third to search for the linkage -- if there is one -- between the latter and the former.

3.1 AUTONOMY OF THE REGIMES

Following are the results of our content analysis of each regime’s stated policies during the Gulf crisis/war assessed against the position we defined above as “Western”:

i. Algeria: Not only did it condemn the invasion, the embargo and the blockade against Iraq, but it also proclaimed itself against sending troops to Saudi Arabia in the Arab Summit in Cairo on 10 August, 1990, against any kind of foreign intervention. It also condemned the freezing of Iraqi and Kuwaiti assets abroad, which the Algerian Minister of External affairs Sid Ahmed Ghazali described as the “hold-up of the millennium” on the part of Western banks¹¹⁵. Algeria contested the decisions reached at the Arab Summit, which exposed, in its view, “the complicity of certain Arab regimes with

¹¹⁵ See the chronology of the crisis published in Maghreb-Machrek ..., no.130: 128.

3.1 The Findings: Level of regime autonomy

the Western powers¹¹⁶.” Chadli Benjedid supported Saddam Hussein’s attempt at linking the Palestinian issue with the Gulf crisis: A letter from the Ministry of External Affairs to the Secretary General of the United Nations on 13 September, 1990 demanded the application of UN resolutions on Palestine and the occupied territories as on Kuwait¹¹⁷ . In a meeting with French President François Mitterrand on 22 December, 1990, Algerian President Chadli Bendjedid stated that a concrete signal on the Palestinian question would constitute a decisive step in the resolution of the Gulf crisis¹¹⁸ . Algeria also gave moral support to Iraq when the extent of the United States’ determination to force it to withdraw from Kuwait became clear¹¹⁹ . During the war *per se*, Algeria sent one of the very few television news crews that managed to beam out of Iraq an alternative to CNN’s coverage.

Consequently Algeria is unequivocally coded “low” on the harmony scale.

ii. Bahrain; As early as 30 August, 1990 Bahrain’s Minister of External Affairs declared Bahrain in favour of military action to liberate Kuwait if the embargo fails¹²⁰ . Not only did it then support sending troops to Saudi Arabia, but it also joined in the coalition. It repeatedly made clear its support of an Arab-American joint military venture in Saudi Arabia. Bahrain also made military sites available to the multinational forces. On 7 October, the Crown Prince declared “the invasion of Kuwait amounts to a declaration of war on all of us¹²¹ .”

Consequently Bahrain is unequivocally coded “high” on the harmony scale.

iii. Egypt had to tread delicately between its pro-Iraqi public opinion and its pro-U.S. foreign policy. It nonetheless openly supported sending troops to Saudi Arabia. It further supported the Arab-American joint military venture in Saudi Arabia. On 11 August, Egyptian troops joined the arriving

116 Maghreb-Machrek ..., no.130: 128.

117 Ibid., 128.

118 KODMANI-DARWISH & CHARTOUNI-DUBARRY, Golfe et Moyen Orient..., 44.

119 SLUGLETT & FAROUK-SLUGLETT, The Times Guide..., 105.

120 Maghreb-Machrek ..., no. 130: 130.

121 Maghreb-Machrek ..., no. 131: 60.

3.1 The Findings: Level of regime autonomy

American forces. On 11 October, Hosni Mubarak rejected the linkage with the Palestinian question on the basis that such linkage would impede the resolution of both problems¹²². On 1 November, the Egyptian President even recognized Israel's right to retaliate in case it was attacked by Iraq.

Consequently Egypt is unequivocally coded "high" on the harmony scale.

iv. Iraq's policies were obviously in total disharmony with those of the West. Iraq always insisted on an "Arab solution", a formula used only to maintain the new *status quo*. It remained defiant of UN resolutions. On 10 December, the Iraqi Minister of Information reiterated that Iraq would not "yield a single inch" in its newly acquired 19th province¹²³. On 25 December, the Iraqi Armed Forces described their objective as: "cause the maximum damage and casualties amongst enemy ranks¹²⁴." Even at the onset of the war, the Iraqi National council called on 22 January on all Arabs and Muslims to: "wage war against the assets of Americans, Zionists and their allies¹²⁵." On 28 January, the Iraqi Prime Minister sent a message to Third World Ministers of Foreign Affairs, urging them to rise in rebellion against the "imperialist" coalition¹²⁶. On 14-15 February, communiqués by the Minister of Defense and by the Military Command announced that the Iraqi army was ready to wage the "mother of all battles" and that the allied forces would face "surprises¹²⁷." On 25 February, the Ba'th Party (the party in power) called on the Arab people to rebel against "traitor regimes¹²⁸."

Consequently Iraq is unequivocally coded "low" on the harmony scale.

v. Jordan voted against the Arab League's resolution of 3 August condemning Iraq and demanding immediate withdrawal. The argument of King Hussein was that "no purpose is served by

122 Maghreb-Machrek ..., no. 131: 61.

123 ibid., 95.

124 ibid., 96.

125 Maghreb-Machrek ..., no. 132: 71.

126 ibid., 72.

127 ibid., 72.

128 ibid., 73.

pushing Iraq into a corner¹²⁹.” Nonetheless, Jordan did not recognize Iraq’s annexation of Kuwait. Although Jordan pledged to uphold UN sanctions against Iraq, it circumvented them¹³⁰. King Hussein accused the United States of acting in an “explosive manner”, adding that “the foreign powers aim to regain control of this Arab land and those who live on it¹³¹.” From the onset, King Hussein insisted on an “Arab solution”, meaning the new *status quo*. On 25 September, he went on CNN, demanding the immediate withdrawal of foreign troops from the Arab peninsula¹³². On 3 October, Queen Nour of Jordan announced that Jordan continued to import Iraqi oil, but on 2 November Jordan declared its willingness to respect the embargo¹³³. On the crucial issue of the linkage, Jordan supported the Iraqi policy of linking the Gulf crisis with the Palestinian dispute: On 13 November, King Hussein denounced the two-tiered international justice that insists of the compliance of Iraq with UN resolutions yet overlooks Israel’s dismissal of that same institution’s resolutions¹³⁴. Less than a week before the actual war, on 13 January, the Minister of Religious Affairs declared that Jordan would resist and struggle side-by-side with “Baghdad, Fatah and victory¹³⁵.” On 18 January, the Jordanian Parliament called on Arab nations to fight the “invaders” and to strike at US interests¹³⁶. On 6 February, King Hussein denounced the hegemony of Western powers, particularly the United States, and their will to destroy Iraq, adding that “the so-called allied forces intend to establish a regional world order even more dangerous than what followed the Sykes-Picot agreement¹³⁷.”

Consequently Jordan is unequivocally coded “low” on the harmony scale.

129 King Hussein quoted by Tony WALKER, “Saddam Divides and Rules”, Financial Times, (August 6, 1990).

130 TIBI, “The Gulf Crisis...” in the Cairo Papers..., 88.

131 Joseph TREASTER, “Jordan Denounces U.S. for Explosive Tactics”. New York Times, (August 14, 1990): A9.

132 Maghreb-Machrek ..., no. 130: 136.

133 Maghreb-Machrek ..., no. 131: 68.

134 Ibid., 69.

135 Maghreb-Machrek, no. 132, p. 76.

136 Ibid., 76.

137 Ibid., 76.

vi. Kuwait; The exiled regime supported the Arab-American joint military venture in Saudi Arabia. Moreover, it financed the U.S. troops. On 14 January, the eve of the expiry of the UN ultimatum, the Emir urged all Heads of State to firmly implement the will of the international community. After the onset of the war, the Emir thanked the coalition.

Consequently Kuwait is unequivocally coded “high” on the harmony scale.

vii. Lebanon; Very much tied to Syria, the Lebanese government supported the Arab-American joint military venture in Saudi Arabia, but little detailed information was available.

Consequently Lebanon is tentatively coded “high” on the harmony scale.

viii. Libya condemned the Iraqi invasion of Kuwait, but strongly rejected the deployment of foreign troops on Arab soil, i.e. the multinational coalition. It opposed the Arab-Western joint military venture, and advocated the replacement of foreign troops by Arab troops. On 8 October, President Qadhafi declared that the control of the Island of Bubayne and the oil field of Ruinailah (the disputed stretch of land between Iraq and Kuwait prior to invasion) be given to Iraq, and that Arab states must compensate Iraq for damages and interest if it withdrew. On 18 August, Libya threatened to withdraw from the UN if the UN Security Council did not condemn US presence in the Gulf. Gadhafi changed his mind and invited the Syrian and Egyptian Presidents to a two-day summit in Libya on 3 January, 1991. Libya also condemned Iraq’s taking of hostages. On 20 August, Libya even offered to supply troops to the coalition if the UN requested them, but it still condemned the embargo and the blockade against Iraq, and, on 2 September, refused to implement it as far as food and pharmaceuticals were concerned. Libya gave moral support to Iraq when the extent of the United States’ determination to force it to withdraw from Kuwait became clear¹³⁸.

Consequently Libya is tentatively coded “low” on the harmony scale.

¹³⁸ SLUGLETT & FAROUK-SLUGLETT, The Times Guide..., 105.

ix. Morocco supported the Arab-Western joint military venture. It even sent its troops on 14 August.

Consequently Morocco is unequivocally coded “high” on the harmony scale.

x. Saudi Arabia supported the coalition, participated with troops and financial contributions. It accepted deployment of non-Arab troops on its soil, and made military sites available to the multinational forces.

Consequently Saudi Arabia is unequivocally coded “high” on the harmony scale.

xi. Sudan; pro-Iraqi, it insisted on an “Arab solution” and was against any foreign (non-Arab) intervention. It voted against an Arab League resolution of 3 August, 1990 condemning the Iraqi invasion and demanding an immediate and unconditional withdrawal from Kuwait. In an interview on 9 October, General El-Bechir refused to condemn Iraq, and insisted on the withdrawal of the foreign troops¹³⁹. Sudan gave moral support to Iraq when the extent of the United States’ determination to force it to withdraw from Kuwait became clear¹⁴⁰.

Consequently Sudan is unequivocally coded “low” on the harmony scale.

xii. Syria supported the Arab-American military venture in Saudi Arabia. It sent troops on 14 August and upheld the absence of linkages between the Gulf crisis and other issues.

Consequently Syria is unequivocally coded “high” on the harmony scale.

¹³⁹ Maghreb-Machrek ..., no. 131: 83.

¹⁴⁰ SLUGLETT & FAROUK-SLUGLETT, The Times Guide..., 105.

xiii. Tunisia called for Iraqi withdrawal. Its President refused to participate in the Arab summit in Cairo and insisted on an “Arab solution” to the crisis. He was against the participation of foreign troops then gave moral support to Iraq when the extent of the United States’ determination to force it to withdraw from Kuwait became clear¹⁴¹. On 2 September, Tunis announced its willingness to send troops to replace foreign troops. On 11 September, the Tunisian Prime Minister confirmed that Tunisia will abide by UN resolutions.

On balance, Tunisia is coded “low” on the harmony scale.

xiv. United Arab Emirates supported the Western coalition and, on 27 August, made military sites available to the multinational forces. They also contributed financially to the US-led effort.

Consequently the Emirates are unequivocally coded “high” on the harmony scale.

xv. The PLO was pro-Iraqi and insisted on an “Arab solution”. It condemned the presence of US troops in the Gulf and voted against the Arab League resolution of 3 August 1990 condemning the invasion and demanding an immediate and unconditional withdrawal from Kuwait. On September 12, a PLO communiqué denounced the United States’ “aggressive position” in the Gulf¹⁴². On 1 December, the PLO condemned UN resolution 678. On 8 December, Yasser Arafat addressed the Palestinians and stated that Iraqi military power enhances the Arabs’ power¹⁴³. On 26 December, the personal representative of Yasser Arafat in Lebanon called on Palestinians to attack US interests anywhere in case of aggression against Iraq¹⁴⁴. Not surprisingly, the PLO supported the linkage with the Palestinian question. Its Chief of Security Services declared on 1 January: “fighting alongside Iraq is an honour [...] in defending Iraq, we are defending Palestine¹⁴⁵.” PLO Chairman Yasser Arafat

141 SLUGLETT & FAROUK-SLUGLETT, The Times Guide..., 105.

142 Maghreb-Machrek ..., no. 130: 145.

143 Maghreb-Machrek ..., no. 131: 82.

144 Ibid., 82.

145 Maghreb-Machrek ..., no. 132: 85.

declared on 2 January: “the Intifadha’s stones have become the Iraqi Scuds¹⁴⁶.” On 14 January, Arafat proclaimed the Palestinians’ “absolute solidarity” with Iraq against “the imperialist/Zionist aggression¹⁴⁷”, and on 28 January, called on Arab militant civil society to sabotage American plans aiming at controlling the region and its wealth, and to defend Iraq. The PLO leadership gave moral support to Iraq when the extent of the United States’ determination to force it to withdraw from Kuwait became clear¹⁴⁸.

Consequently the PLO is unequivocally coded “low” on the harmony scale.

xvi. Yemen, being pro-Iraqi, insisted on an “Arab solution”. It voted against the Arab League resolution of 3 August 1990 condemning the invasion and demanding an immediate and unconditional withdrawal from Kuwait. It abstained from UN Security Council resolutions 660, 661 and 662 and gave moral support to Iraq when the extent of the United States’ determination to force it to withdraw from Kuwait became clear¹⁴⁹. On 3 September Yemen declared that it would not respect the embargo on food and medicine. On 19 October, President Saleh declared Yemen’s commitment to all UN resolutions. It denounced the presence of foreign troops on the Arab peninsula. To a Kuwaiti delegation to Yemen on 17 December, President Saleh expressed his firm rejection of Iraqi occupation of Kuwait.

On balance, Yemen is coded “low” on the harmony scale.

¹⁴⁶ Maghreb-Machrek, no. 132, p. 76.

¹⁴⁷ Maghreb-Machrek, vol. 132 p. 85.

¹⁴⁸ SLUGLETT & FAROUK-SLUGLETT, op. cit., p.105.

¹⁴⁹ SLUGLETT & FAROUK-SLUGLETT, op. cit., p.105.

3.1 The Findings: Level of Regime Autonomy

Summarizing, then:

Regime	Harmony of Policies with West
Algeria	Low
Bahrain	High
Egypt	High
Iraq	Low
Jordan	Low
Kuwait	High
Lebanon	High
Libya	Low
Morocco	High
Saudi Arabia	High
Sudan	Low
Syria	High
Tunisia	Low
United Arab Emirates	High
PLO	Low
Yemen	Low

From the above, we deduce the degree of autonomy the masses perceived:

REGIME	HARMONY OF POLICIES WITH THE WEST	PERCEIVED LEVEL OF AUTONOMY FROM THE WEST
Algeria	Low	High
Bahrain	High	Low
Egypt	High	Low
Iraq	Low	High
Jordan	Low	High
Kuwait	High	Low
Lebanon	High	Low
Libya	Low	High
Morocco	High	Low
Saudi Arabia	High	Low
Sudan	Low	High
Syria	High	Low
Tunisia	Low	High
United Arab Emirates	High	Low
PLO	Low	High
Yemen	Low	High

Each regime is then attributed the following coding:

AUTONOMOUS REGIMES OR "HIGH"	NON-AUTONOMOUS REGIMES OR "LOW"
Algeria	Bahrain
Iraq	Egypt
Jordan	Kuwait
Libya	Lebanon
Sudan	Morocco
Tunisia	Saudi Arabia
PLO	Syria
Yemen	U.A.E.

Table II- Classification of regimes according to level of autonomy

3.2 THE REGIMES' ABILITY TO CO-OPT ISLAMISTS

From the twenty-nine (29) responses we received, we used only twenty-three (23) for our calculations. In the initial phases of the research we sent out questionnaires to as many Middle-East experts as possible, not knowing the response rate we were to obtain. Having received answers from a relatively large number of well-known experts, we could afford being selective by limiting our use of Western academic sources to the most well-known experts. This was done to enhance the reliability of the results. In so doing, we excluded the answers of 3 professors who were later found to be relatively less known in the field, as well as the answers of 3 Ph.D. candidates. The names of scholars who wished to be cited as participants in this project, and whose answers were selected, are: Profs. John Sigler, Obeid, Mary-Jane Deeb, Amazia Baram, J.O. Voll, J.P. Entelis, Ahmed Moussali, Rex Brynen, H.R. Dekmejian, Sheila Carapico, Sa'ad Eddine Ibrahim.

As for non-academic sources, we included the answers of the three sources we had solicited -- i.e., the two Islamists, and the C.S.I.S. officer. It seemed adequate to represent the non-academic perspective in this research. Of the three, only Dr. Maher Hathout wished to be cited as a participant: he is a senior advisor to the Muslim Public Affairs Council in Los Angeles, U.S.A.

In addition to answers to the questionnaire, we obtained a number of interesting comments from the respondents. One of them wished that the “Islamist forces” mentioned in the instructions were more carefully defined. He further noted that “changes from P1 to P2 in some cases have little to do with the Gulf War” thereby alerting us to the “*post hoc ergo propter hoc* fallacy”. Another respondent noted that Yemen, having united during our time-frame, “is not a good case”. A third respondent, who wished not to be cited, commented that this survey will reveal “more about the experts than about the countries or regimes!”. One professor of Political Science in Egypt returned an unanswered questionnaire with the comment that he objects to the treatment of Islamist forces as a homogeneous force. This author wrote back, explaining that this research acknowledges the different groups involved in the current movement and that our concern is primarily on the regime’s ability to secure its position vis-à-vis the Islamist opposition that is particular to each country. As of this writing, we have not received a reply from this expert.

The -- upcoming -- TableIII presents the cumulative results according to coding #1:

	EXPERTISE A (0, 1, 2, 3)	EXPERTISE B (0, 0, 1, 4)
METHOD #1 CHANGE = # OF COLUMNS	coding #1	coding #2
METHOD #2 CHANGE = 0, 1 OR 2	coding #3	coding #4
METHOD #3 CHANGE = Δ IN SIGN	coding #5	coding #6

Columns “1” through “23” represent the 23 experts selected; rows labeled country “X”/expertise list each expert’s self-rated level of expertise on that particular country while rows labeled country “X”/response list the expert’s ratings:

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	
Alg./exp.	2	2	3	1	1	2	2	1	3	2	3	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	2	1	1	1	3	
Alg./res.	0	0	-4	-2	-1	0	-2	-1	0	-1	-4	0	-4	0	-2	0	-1	-4	-3	2	1	0	-1	
Bah./exp.	1	2	1	0	0	1	1	0	0	1	1	1	1	0	1	0	1	2	0	0	1	1	3	
Bah./res.	0	0	1	0	0	-1	-1	0	0	-2	0	-2	0	0	-1	1	1	0	0	-1	3	0	-1	
Egy./exp.	2	3	2	3	2	2	3	1	2	3	3	2	2	1	2	2	1	1	1	2	2	2	3	
Egy./res.	-1	-3	-1	0	0	-1	-3	1	0	-2	0	0	-2	0	-3	1	1	-2	-4	-3	-2	-1	-1	
Iraq/exp.	3	0	2	1	2	1	1	1	1	2	1	2	1	1	2	1	1	1	0	1	2	1	3	
Iraq/res.	0	0	1	0	0	0	2	0	0	-1	0	0	0	0	-5	-1	0	0	0	-3	1	0	-2	
Jor./exp.	3	2	2	1	1	2	2	2	2	2	3	3	1	2	2	1	1	2	1	1	3	2	3	
Jor./res.	-1	0	0	0	0	-1	1	-1	-2	-3	0	1	1	0	-1	0	-5	0	-1	2	1	0	0	
Kuw./exp.	2	2	1	0	1	1	1	0	0	2	1	1	1	0	2	1	2	3	0	1	2	1	3	
Kuw./res.	0	-4	1	0	-1	-1	-3	0	0	2	0	-3	0	0	-1	2	0	0	0	0	-1	3	-1	
Leb./exp.	0	3	3	1	1	2	2	2	2	2	3	3	2	2	2	0	1	1	2	1	3	3	3	
Leb./res.	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	-2	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	3	0	4	0	0
Lib./exp.	0	2	3	0	1	1	3	0	0	1	1	1	1	0	1	1	1	0	1	0	1	0	3	
Lib./res.	0	-1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	-3	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	-1	
Mor./exp.	0	2	3	2	1	2	2	0	3	2	1	1	1	0	2	0	1	0	3	0	2	0	3	
Mor./res.	0	-2	0	0	0	-1	-1	0	-1	0	0	0	-3	0	-1	0	0	0	0	0	-1	0	0	
S. Ar./exp.	2	3	1	1	1	2	2	1	1	2	2	1	1	1	2	1	2	3	0	1	2	1	3	
S. Ar./res.	-1	-4	1	0	0	-4	-3	-1	0	1	-4	-3	-2	0	-2	-2	-4	-1	-3	-3	-1	-1	-1	
Sud./exp.	2	2	2	0	0	1	3	1	2	2	3	1	1	0	0	1	1	0	1	1	2	1	3	
Sud./res.	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	-1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	5	0	0	
Syr./exp.	3	3	2	1	1	1	2	2	1	0	3	2	3	2	2	1	1	1	1	1	3	1	3	
Syr./res.	0	-3	0	0	0	-2	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	
Tun./exp.	2	2	3	2	1	2	3	1	3	1	2	1	1	1	2	2	1	1	2	0	2	1	3	
Tun./res.	0	-4	1	0	0	-2	-2	0	-2	0	0	0	-1	0	0	1	-1	-2	-3	0	3	0	1	
UAE/exp.	0	2	1	0	0	1	1	0	0	0	1	1	1	0	1	1	1	2	0	0	2	1	3	
UAE/res.	0	-3	0	0	0	-2	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	-1	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	
PLO/exp.	2	2	3	3	2	2	1	2	0	2	3	3	2	3	2	1	1	1	1	1	3	3	3	
PLO/res.	0	-1	0	0	-3	-4	0	-3	0	-1	0	-2	-1	0	-1	-1	0	0	-3	-2	3	-1	-1	
Yem./exp.	0	2	1	2	0	1	2	1	1	1	2	1	1	0	1	1	1	1	1	1	3	3	1	3
Yem./res.	0	1	-2	0	0	-2	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	1	0	0	2	-1	0	-2	

Table III. Cumulative responses for the dependent variable and the experts' self-rating using coding #1.

3.2 The Findings: Regime ability to co-opt Islamists

Table IV, which follows, presents a comparison of the level of expertise by country, using two different coding methods for expertise (see section 2.3.3). The level of expertise is a direct measure of the reliability of the responses.

Based on EXPERTISE A

LOW	HIGH	LEVEL OF EXPERTISE
Egypt		47
	P.L.O.	46
	Jordan	44
Lebanon		44
Syria		40
	Tunisia	39
	Algeria	37
Saudi Arabia		36
Morocco		31
	Iraq	31
	Sudan	30
	Yemen	30
Kuwait		28
	Libya	22
Bahrain		19
U.A.E.		19

where the cumulative totals

for the group "low" = 264

for the group "high" = 279

Based on EXPERTISE B

LOW	HIGH	LEVEL OF EXPERTISE
	P.L.O.	40
Lebanon		37
Egypt		36
	Jordan	31
Syria		30
	Tunisia	25
Morocco		23
	Algeria	22
Saudi Arabia		20
	Sudan	18
	Yemen	16
	Iraq	14
Kuwait		14
	Libya	13
U.A.E.		7
Bahrain		6

where the cumulative totals

for the group "low" = 173

for the group "high" = 179

Table IV. A comparison of the level of expertise according to two coding procedures.

Table IV indicates that (i) the order is relatively unaffected by the type of expertise coding, and (ii) the two groups have comparable levels of expertise. Table V-a, which follows, presents a comparison of \bar{X} , the average magnitude of change in the ability of a regime to co-opt Islamist forces, according to coding #1:

\bar{X}	LOW	HIGH
+0.4		
	Lebanon	
+0.3		Sudan
+0.2		
+0.1		
0		Yemen
-0.1		
-0.2	Bahrain, Svria	
-0.3		Libya
-0.4	U.A.E. Kuwait	Jordan
-0.5		Iraq, Tunisia
-0.6	Morocco	
-0.7		
-0.8		P.L.O.
-0.9		
-1.0		
-1.1		
-1.2	Egypt	
-1.3		
-1.4		
-1.5		Algeria
-1.6		
-1.7		
-1.8	Saudi Arabia	

Table V-a. Changes in the dependent variable according to coding #1

As a first test, Table V-a does not support our hypothesis. Of course, one could argue away the deviant cases (e.g. Algeria) by focusing on the specifics of each case but the fact remains: this table fails to distinguish two patterns of regime ability.

Would it be any different if we were to use a different coding procedure? Table V-b, which follows, presents the changes in the dependent variable according to, respectively, coding #2, coding #3 and coding #4.

	EXPERTISE A (0 , 1 , 2 , 3)	EXPERTISE B (0 , 0 , 1 , 4)
METHOD #1 CHANGE = # OF COLUMNS	coding #1	coding #2
METHOD #2 CHANGE = 0, 1 OR 2	coding #3	coding #4
METHOD #3 CHANGE = Δ IN SIGN	coding #5	coding #6

3.2 The Findings: Regime ability to co-opt Islamists

\bar{X}	LOW	HIGH	LOW	HIGH	LOW	HIGH
+0.5	Lebanon					
-0.3		Sudan				
+0.2			Lebanon		Lebanon	
				Sudan		
+0.1						
0		Yemen		Yemen		Sudan Yemen
-0.1						
-0.2			Syria		Syria	
				Libya		
-0.3			Kuwait U.A.E. Bahrain	Iraq		Libya
		Jordan			U.A.E. Kuwait	
-0.4	Syria U.A.E.	Libya		Jordan Tunisia		Iraq Jordan
	Morocco	P.L.O.				
-0.5		Tunisia			Bahrain Morocco	Tunisia
			Morocco			
-0.6	Kuwait Bahrain					
				P.L.O.		P.L.O.
-0.7						
-0.8						
		Iraq				
-0.9			Egypt		Egypt	
				Algeria		
-1.0						
						Algeria
-1.1						
			Saudi Arabia		Saudi Arabia	
-1.2						
-1.3	Egypt					
-1.4						
-1.9		Algeria				
-2.0						
-2.1	Saudi Arabia					

Table V-b; Changes in the dependent variable according to codings #2, #3 and #4.

Table V-b does not seem to validate our hypothesis anymore than Table V-a did. But there are yet two other possibilities to explore, codings #5 and #6 (see section 2.3.2):

	EXPERTISE A (0, 1, 2, 3)	EXPERTISE B (0, 0, 1, 4)
METHOD #1 CHANGE = # OF COLUMNS	coding #1	coding #2
METHOD #2 CHANGE = 0, 1 OR 2	coding #3	coding #4
METHOD #3 CHANGE = Δ IN SIGN	coding #5	coding #6

Coding #5 yields:

		LEVEL OF AUTONOMY	
		LOW ($\bar{X}=...$)	HIGH ($\bar{X}=...$)
ABILITY TO CO-OPT ISLAMIST FORCES	decrease ($\bar{X} < 0$)	S. Arabia(-0.4), Egypt(-0.3), UAE(-0.2) Bahrain, Syria & Morocco (-0.1)	Algeria (-0.4) Tunisia & PLO (-0.2) Jordan, Iraq & Libya (-0.1)
	no change ($\bar{X} = 0$)	Kuwait	Yemen
	increase ($\bar{X} > 0$)	Lebanon (0.1)	Sudan (0.13)

Table VI-a. Average change in the dependent variable using coding #5

Where the dark areas indicate the cells forbidden by our hypothesis. The fact that they are heavily populated, not to mention the fact the level of changes in the group "low" is almost identical to that in the group "high", does not validate our hypothesis. Our last hope is coding #6:

		LEVEL OF AUTONOMY	
		LOW ($\bar{X}=...$)	HIGH ($\bar{X}=...$)
ABILITY TO CO-OPT ISLAMIST FORCES	decrease ($\bar{X} < 0$)	S. Arabia (-0.5), Egypt (-0.3) Syria & UAE (-0.1)	Algeria (-0.5), Tunisia (-0.3) PLO, Iraq & Libya (-0.1)
	no change ($\bar{X} = 0$)	Bahrain, Kuwait & Morocco	Yemen, Jordan
	increase ($\bar{X} > 0$)	Lebanon (0.1)	Sudan (0.1)

Table VI-b. Average change in the dependent variable using coding #6

Yet again, a qualitative analysis of Table VI-b does not lend anymore validity to our hypothesis than Table VI-a did. Let us now turn to a comparison of the aggregate average change for the two groups.

3.3 LOOKING FOR THE LINKAGE

Let us first define

\bar{L} = the average rating (by the panel of experts) for the group rated "low" (by this author).

\bar{H} = the average rating (by the same panel) for the group we rated "high".

Recalling section 2.3.3, three scenarios are logically possible:

$$\bar{L} < \bar{H}; \quad \bar{L} = \bar{H}; \quad \bar{L} > \bar{H};$$

The first one would confirm our hypothesis; the second one would invalidate the predictive power of "regime autonomy" as close to nil as far as the ability to coopt islamist forces is concerned; the third would confirm the predictive power of the independent variable but in a direction contrary to our hypothesis.

So, which scenario materialized? It depends on two things:

(i) The type of average (raw vs. weighted) one calculates inside a particular group. For the distinction, refer to section 2.3.3.

(ii) The type of coding selected; as mentioned at length in section 2.3.3, we tested six different combinations.

For all six possible combinations, the results are:

	\bar{L}	\bar{H}
coding #1	-0.58	-0.47
coding #2	-0.68	-0.52
coding #3	-0.45	-0.36
coding #4	-0.48	-0.40
coding #5	-0.13	-0.11
coding #6	-0.12	-0.11

Table VII-a. Aggregate *raw* average change in the dependent variable

It appears that no matter what type of coding, $\bar{L} \leq \bar{H}$ but not very much¹⁵⁰. However, if one were to calculate the weighted averages, the results then become:

	\bar{L}_w	\bar{H}_w
coding #1	-0.61	-0.63
coding #2	-0.64	-0.70
coding #3	-0.47	-0.48
coding #4	-0.47	-0.53
coding #5	-0.14	-0.14
coding #6	-0.13	-0.14

Table VII-b. Aggregate *weighted* average change in the dependent variable

Table VII-b yields the opposite result, i.e., $\bar{L}_w \geq \bar{H}_w$, albeit very slightly. One can safely conclude, therefore, that $\bar{L} = \bar{H}$, more or less, which means that knowing in advance the level of autonomy of a particular regime vis-à-vis the West does not tell us much about the ability of that regime to coopt Islamist forces. In other words, our hypothesis has not been supported. That is, variations in our independent variable do not seem to be correlated with variations in the dependent variable.

¹⁵⁰ Note that we are dealing here with values relative to zero: 0.5 is larger than 0.4 but -0.5 is smaller than -0.4.

Would it be any different if we were to modify the contents of our sample? Let us explore three possibilities:

Firstly, one could focus on the favorable cases: e.g. Saudi Arabia, Egypt, Yemen, Sudan. But then we would be confronted with two problems: First, how could we ascertain that these cases are not haphazardly favourable? Second – and assuming we produce a convincing enough evidence to quell the first objection, for instance through a minute analysis of the Islamist discourse during our time-frame – what is the purpose of a causal variable that is not even generalizable to a limited sub-set of Muslim countries: the Arab states.

Secondly, one could exclude cases displaying both no change at all and small changes (± 1) with the aim to check whether our hypothesis would hold in cases of significant change (± 2 or more) – the rationale being that maybe the experts wished to convey the notion that only the larger shifts are attributable to an event as spectacular as the Gulf war, in contrast to minor ones which are to be attributed to domestic determinants.

Admittedly, this introduces the use of this author's imagination. However, even if this rationale is debatable, an *ad hoc* explanation would still be required should our hypothesis be validated under this set of modifications. In practice, it requires that we code "0" the expertise self-appraisal in table I each time an expert rates a small change, or no change at all. Such a change yields the following results:

\bar{X}	LOW	HIGH
+5.0		Sudan
+4.5		
+3.0		
+2.5	Lebanon	
+2.0		
0		Yemen
	Bahrain	
-0.5	Kuwait	
-1.0		
-1.5		P.L.O.
		Tunisia
-2.0		Jordan
	Morocco	
-2.5	Egypt U.A.E.	Iraq
	Syria	
-3.0	Saudi Arabia	Libya
		Algeria
-3.5		

Table VIII. Average change in the dependent variable, using coding #1, after excluding (i) the small shifts, and (ii) no shift at all

Table VIII does not seem to improve on Tables V-a,b; indeed, calculations of raw averages yield $\bar{L} = -1.55$ & $\bar{H} = -1.13$ whereas $\bar{L}_w = -1.91$ & $\bar{H}_w = -2.32$. Since the relationship is reversed, then it means that the exclusion of small shifts (as well as no shifts at all) is not a proper means to validate *a posteriori* our hypothesis.

Thirdly, and recalling Tables V-a,b , it appears that three cases are particularly deviant: Algeria, Iraq, and Lebanon. We could submit, for each, a plausible justification for its omission from our initial sample.

* In the first case, i.e., Algeria, our time-frame coincides with domestic upheavals that seem to dwarf any impact the international scene -- through the Gulf war -- might have had on the relationship between the regime and the Islamist opposition: in 1991, the country was much more preoccupied with the upcoming elections, which were subsequently interrupted in January 1992 to prevent an expected Islamist landslide.

* In the second, i.e., Iraq, we are confronted with a case where the independent variable could not vary inside our scale, given that it was the target in its confrontation with the West; it is therefore erroneous to impute any Islamist upheaval -- or lack thereof -- to the foreign policy of the Iraqi regime.

* Thirdly, Lebanon is a regime where it is difficult to ascertain the existence of a foreign policy altogether, that is distinct from the Syrian regime; furthermore, it is regime that does not enjoy total sovereignty over its territory.

Assuming these are good enough justifications, then Tables V-a,b become:

\bar{X}	LOW	HIGH
+0.3		Sudan
+0.2		
+0.1		
0		Yemen
-0.1		
-0.2		
-0.3	Bahrain, Syria	Libya
-0.4	U.A.E. Kuwait	Jordan
-0.5		Tunisia
-0.6	Morocco	
-0.7		
-0.8		P.L.O.
-0.9		
-1.0		
-1.1		
-1.2	Egypt	
-1.7		
-1.8	Saudi Arabia	

Table VIII-a. Average change in the dependent variable, using coding #1, after excluding the deviant cases.

3.3 The Findings: Looking for the linkage

\bar{X}	LOW	HIGH	LOW	HIGH	LOW	HIGH
+0.3		Sudan				
+0.2				Sudan		
+0.1						
0		Yemen		Yemen		Sudan Yemen
-0.1						
-0.2			Syria		Syria	
-0.3				Libya		
		Jordan	Kuwait U.A.E. Bahrain			Libya
-0.4	Syria U.A.E.	Libya		Jordan Tunisia	U.A.E. Kuwait	Jordan
	Morocco	P.L.O.				
-0.5		Tunisia			Bahrain Morocco	Tunisia
			Morocco			
-0.6	Kuwait Bahrain			P.L.O.		P.L.O.
-0.7						
-0.8						
-0.9						
-1.0			Egypt		Egypt	
-1.1						
-1.2			Saudi Arabia		Saudi Arabia	
-1.3						
	Egypt					
-1.4						
-1.9						
-2.0						
-2.1	Saudi Arabia					

Table VIII-b; Average change in the dependent variable, using codings #2, #3 and #4, after excluding the deviant cases.

These two preceding tables look much more promising: indeed, a calculation of both raw and weighted averages supports our hypothesis:

For all six possible combinations, the results become

	\bar{L}	\bar{H}
coding #1	-0.63	-0.20
coding #2	-0.75	-0.18
coding #3	-0.48	-0.20
coding #4	-0.51	-0.22
coding #5	-0.15	-0.05
coding #6	-0.14	-0.04

Table IX-a. Aggregate *raw* average change in the dependent variable, after excluding the deviant cases

It appears that no matter what type of coding, $\bar{L} < \bar{H}$. Also the weighted averages yield:

	\bar{L}_w	\bar{H}_w
coding #1	-0.80	-0.42
coding #2	-0.94	-0.41
coding #3	-0.60	-0.40
coding #4	-0.62	-0.43
coding #5	-0.19	-0.10
coding #6	-0.20	-0.09

Table IX-b. Aggregate *weighted* average change in the dependent variable, after excluding the deviant cases

Tables IX-a,b yield the same result, i.e., $\bar{L} < \bar{H}$, even though both groups continue to display negative averages, which means that the ability to co-opt Islamist opposition is weakening across the board. So to the extent that it is justifiable to omit Algeria, Iraq and Lebanon from our sample, we can conclude that our hypothesis is validated, albeit weakly.

3.3 The Findings: Looking for the linkage

Amending our initial conclusion -- i.e., before the exploration of the three preceding modifications to our boundaries -- then, it appears that knowing in advance the level of autonomy of a particular regime vis-à-vis the West does not tell us much about the ability of that regime to coopt Islamist forces... unless that particular regime is sovereign, free of major domestic upheavals and/or enjoys genuine foreign policy choices. Under those conditions, our hypothesis holds at the aggregate level but is invalidated by numerous individual cases (e.g. Bahrain at -0.25 and Tunisia at -0.5).

The preceding paragraph is full of qualifiers because the conclusion relies heavily on the responses of our panel of experts. But before we discard our hypothesis (whether by changing it completely or by reformulating and/or re-operationalizing the variables), we should mention our second major finding: there is little consensus in the field on basic facts. Three examples, among many, from Table III:

- * While two self-rated "experts" on Algeria agree on a negative shift of -4, a third saw none;
- * While two self-rated "experts" on Tunisia agree on a medium negative shift of -2, a third assessed a small positive one (+1);
- * While two self-rated "experts" on Syria agree on no change at all, a third assessed a large negative shift of -3.

Of course, consensus may not be possible. However, we are not dealing with theoretical schools here and their differences in explanatory variables. We are dealing here with assessments of facts any careful observer should be able to make. There are two possible explanations: either the post-modernist challenge is warranted, or there is a "reality out there", only the expertise in this field has not matured. Dialogue is scarce; papers frequently argue past one another; cumulative results are elusive.

We prefer, humbly, to submit the second explanation and, with it, the recommendation that some sort of data bank be established. This is supported by the fact that with the exception of one respondent, all were interested in receiving a copy of the findings of this work. Moreover, and as was argued in our introductory remarks, the study of political Islam is not only intellectually stimulating, it is also of utmost strategic and political value. We already have numerous and powerful tools of analysis; what we need are equally powerful tools of data-gathering. This second finding directly affects the first one: the reliability of the data upon which our results are based is highly questionable. This should warn us against discarding hastily our hypothesis: it could have been validated through alternative data gathering procedures.

The third finding of this work is a confirmation of the widely-held belief that, Gulf war or not, the Islamist resurgence is on the rise across the board. This is very much in evidence in the data. With the exception of Lebanon and possibly Sudan, every other country has an average rating equal to or lower than zero.

The fourth and last major finding has to do with the crucial-case logic we attributed to our test. To the extent that it is our hypothesis that is flawed rather than our data-gathering technique, then it appears that our study lends no support to the thesis that weaker states' domestic policies are likelier to be sensitive to international events.

CHAPTER 4

CONCLUSION

Religion -- the realm of spirituality-- and politics -- the realm of social organization and governance -- have been linked to one another in varying degrees in human history. The popular expression "separation of church and state" only confirms the fact that defining the public sphere, the domain of politics, in a given period, often demands clarification on the role of religion within that sphere.

Up until the Renaissance, religion had been well entrenched in the public sphere of Christian societies in Europe. The social debates of that period, however, led to Europe's entrance into modernity, a hallmark of which is the separation of religion and politics. Unlike European political thought, Muslim political thought has not reworked the medieval interpretation of Islam. Indeed, a political movement calling for the abolition of the existing secular state has been gaining strength in the Muslim world since the 1970s. Today, this movement of political Islam, is the main force of opposition in these countries, and many would argue that the implementation of free elections would inevitably lead to the demise of the secular state in many Muslim countries.

Of course, this trend not only has a direct impact on how Muslim societies govern themselves, but also on the "New World Order". The nature of relations between the Muslim world and the West is to a large extent dependent on the future of political Islam and the policy options adopted by the West in response. So despite Fukuyama's argument to the contrary, one can safely say that Western political values, and more specifically liberal democracy, have not yet won the global consciousness.

A question that begs to be answered is: In what way will the establishment of an Islamic state affect the relationship between the Muslim world and the West? If one is to judge by the Iranian example, then confrontational would be an adequate description, and indeed, many references have been made in the past few years to an imminent clash of civilizations involving the West and the Muslim world; a number of Western analysts have even called Islam the Green Peril that has replaced the Red Threat. Probably influenced by this school, Western states have been supporting a large number of authoritarian regimes in the Arab/Muslim world in their struggle against an increasingly powerful political Islam.

However, the question of the relationship between the Islamic state and the West is much more complex and should not be described as confrontational across the board. The case of Saudi Arabia is most revealing of this complexity. While strictly adhering to the *shari'a*, the Saudi state has been habitually described as a Western ally. In addition, the Saudi state has been the target of harsh criticism from the so-called proponents of the abolition of the secular state. This points to the need to look beyond the question of secularism and to identify the core issues.

Judith Miller, who sees Islam as a threat to the West, started her article "The Challenge of Radical Islam" in Foreign Affairs by referring to the Islamic Arab Popular Conference held in Khartoum in April 1991 as an "Islamic star-studded event"¹⁵⁰." What is truly puzzling about this event, however, is the presence of Arab leftists and nationalists such as Georges Habash, the Christian head of the secular Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine as a prominent participant -- right next to Rachid al-Ghannouchi (leader of Tunisia's al-Nahda), Ibrahim Shoukri (leader of the Muslim Brotherhood of Egypt), Gulbuddin Hekmatyar (leader of Afghanistan's Hezb-i-Islami faction), Abassi Madani (one of the two leaders of Algeria's Islamic Salvation Front), and of course the host, Hassan al-Turabi (leader of Sudan's Islamic military government). The manifesto they approved may shed light on some of the core issues: Miller described it as "intended to demonstrate that "whatever the strength of America and the West" in the aftermath of the Gulf war, "God is greater"¹⁵¹."

Going back to the question of Western support to authoritarian regimes in their struggle with political Islam, one may suggest that the relationship of a Muslim state, whether secular or Islamic, with the West may be precisely another determinant of the resurgence in political Islam. Eating away at a pro-West regime's already shaky legitimacy, an image of affiliation to a foreign power is likely to weaken the position of those who rule.

Precisely, that is the suggestion this study has put forward: that foreign policy vis-à-vis the West should influence a regime's ability to coopt Islamist forces.

¹⁵⁰ Judith MILLER, "The Challenge of Radical Islam", 41.

¹⁵¹ ibid. p. 41.

Following an attempt to define political Islam (or Islamism), we drew attention to a number of distinctions that ought to be made in the literature: (i) between Western scholarship and the Islamists' own writings: (ii) between the Islamist discourse aimed at a Western audience and the one aimed at the Arab-Muslim audience.

A recurrent theme in the latter has been the need to achieve political autonomy from the West, suggesting that foreign policy matters strike an important chord with the Islamists's constituents. Hence we proceeded to test the hypothesis that *the higher a regime's political autonomy from Western influence, the higher its ability to co-opt its Islamist opposition.*

4.1 Major Findings

Our results disconfirm the above-mentioned hypothesis, which means that knowing in advance the level of autonomy of a particular regime vis-à-vis the West does not tell us much about the ability of that regime to coopt islamist forces ... unless that particular regime is sovereign (which was not the case of Lebanon), free of major domestic upheavals (thus disqualifying Algeria) and/or enjoys genuine foreign policy choices (excluding a country like Iraq under the Gulf crisis/war). When these conditions are met, our hypothesis is validated at the aggregate level but is disconfirmed by numerous individual cases. Our globally negative finding challenges the conventional wisdom in the broader field of political science that the domestic policy of weaker states is highly sensitive to international currents.

The invalidation of our hypothesis further takes issue with that part of Western scholarship that focuses on international issues in assessing the sense of failure felt by the Arab-Muslim world. It points to the possibility that writers -- be they Western scholars or militant Islamists -- who identify Westernization as the culprit, do not agree on its meaning. Whereas some may be thinking mostly of the political dimension, others may have other dimensions in mind: the culture, or more precisely the value-system. We have tested the political dimension; other dimensions should also be explored.

Our third major finding is that there is little consensus in the field on basic facts. While consensus may not be possible, we were not dealing with theoretical schools and their differences in explanatory variables: we were dealing with assessments of facts any careful observer should be able to make. Either the post-modernist challenge is warranted, or there *is* a "reality out there", but the expertise in this field has yet to mature. It is important that future dialogue aim specifically at achieving cumulative results.

The last, and only positive, finding of this work is a confirmation of the popular hunch that -- Gulf war or not -- the Islamist resurgence is on the rise across the board. This is very much in evidence in the data, with minor exceptions (that actually depend on the type of coding performed). However, if our data base is unreliable -- as we believe it to be -- then this hunch remains as such for the time being. It is important to remember that all four findings obtained in this study can only be considered highly tentative. As far as we know, this is the first attempt to quantify the level of autonomy and the ability of regimes to coopt Islamist forces.

4.2 Avenues for future research

While this study has tested the hypothesis on a relatively large sample of Arab countries, it would be a mistake to assume the automatic generalizability of the findings to the larger Muslim world. The Arab world does constitute a large and influential part of the Muslim community, yet the Islamist movement is not specific to Arab countries. In fact, it would be impossible to talk seriously about the current Islamist revival without mentioning a non-Arab country like Iran. This leads us to point to the need for future research in the area of comparing and contrasting the results we have obtained for the Arab world with those pertaining to other Muslim societies, be they Pakistani, Senegalese, or Uzbek. It is inevitable that the historic experience of different societies plays a significant role in shaping their present dynamic. The task of future research then would isolate the weight of Islam, as the basis of Muslim identity, in the equation of Political Islam, i.e. whether or not diverse historic experiences still produce relatively similar reactions.

As discussed in the previous chapter, we found a remarkable lack of consensus among the leading Middle-East experts on basic facts. This observation is deeply disturbing, and as a sign of fragmentation in the field sheds negative light on the reliability of our assessment of the dependent variable. This, in turn, places our findings on shaky grounds. Therefore, we point to the need to verify the same hypothesis using a different method of data collection. If empirical data are still lacking by the time this future task is undertaken, it may be useful to resort to the option of fieldwork. This may involve interviews with Islamists in different countries to obtain their assessments on the on-going power struggle between them and their respective states. While costly

and time-consuming, this option will surely provide valuable insights whether in confirming or disconfirming the results we obtained in this study.

As for the independent variable, we used harmony of foreign policy with the West as an indicator of autonomy. It may be interesting to explore other indicators and see whether they yield similar results. This leads us to question our utilization of the concept of Westernization. It is possible that our attention has been misplaced on the political aspect of the term, rather than being on the cultural level. The case of Saudi Arabia, however, lends forceful support to the importance of the political aspect. Known for its rigid conservatism in the cultural sphere, up-holding Islamic values in dress code and gender roles, Saudi Arabia is far from being the beacon of autonomy for Muslims. In contrast, socialist (i.e. entailing a relatively more modern and Western value-system) Syria has been perceived -- up until lately -- as enjoying much more autonomy from Western influences. Nevertheless, future studies with a focus on the cultural aspect of Westernization would undoubtedly sharpen our understanding of the Arab/Muslim world. Another issue regarding the independent variable is the choice of the time-frame. It is possible that the time-frame we have selected, i.e., the Gulf war/crisis is not a good example for measuring the level of autonomy from the West. One may argue that for Iraq's neighbours, the threat of Iraqi aggression outweighed the concern about association with the West, for the people as well as the governments. This may justify the use of other indicators, such as the adoption of Structural Adjustment Programs and austerity measures in compliance with the prescriptions of the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund, for future testing of the level of autonomy.

Regarding the lack of consensus found among reknowned experts, we recommend that some sort of data bank be established. This is supported by the fact that with the exception of one respondent, all were interested in receiving a copy of the findings of this work. Moreover, and as was argued in our introductory remarks, the study of political Islam is not only intellectually stimulating, it is also of utmost strategic and political value. We already have numerous and powerful tools of analysis; what we need are equally powerful tools of data-gathering.

A final note is a reminder that policy options adopted by the West in response to the resurgence in political Islam is a crucial determinant in the future relationship between the West and the Muslim world. How the interaction between the West and political Islam will ultimately be played out remains to be seen. While a rebirth in the rivalry between the Western and Islamic civilizations may become a reality, it is important to bear in mind that confrontation may well be the fruit of a self-fulfilling prophecy. At the very least, Western policies should aim at promoting dialogue and understanding. Besides, the competition may end up taking place in different universes; for instance, while the West is geared towards the accumulation of wealth, Islamic states are theoretically directed to achieving excellence in the moral domain. It is evident, in any case, that more research is needed in the area of fine-tuning the differences in the value-systems; this will contribute immensely to preventing conflicts fueled by cultural misunderstandings, and misinterpretations of intentions.

* * *

GLOSSARY

<i>aya</i> (pl. -t):	Sign or miracle; mostly used to refer to a verse of the Quran. Also part of the title given to a high-ranking Shii clergy, <i>ayatollah</i> or "sign of God".
<i>dawla</i> :	Polity; refers to affairs of state and governance.
<i>din</i> :	Religion.
<i>dunya</i> :	Litt. life; refers to worldly affairs.
<i>fiqh</i> :	Islamic jurisprudence.
<i>hadith</i> (pl. <i>ahadith</i>):	Narrative report of the Prophet Muhammad's sayings and actions.
<i>islam</i> :	Litt. submission (to God).
<i>jihad</i> :	Litt. to strive. Sometimes understood as armed defense of the faith, or holy war.
<i>kafir</i> :	Nonbeliever, infidel.
<i>nahda</i> :	Renaissance.
<i>shari'a</i> :	Litt. path; Islamic law.
<i>shura</i> :	Consultation.
<i>sura</i> : (pl. -t):	Chapter of the Qur'an, which contains 114 chapters, of unequal length.
<i>tajdid</i> :	Revival, renewal.
<i>ummah</i> :	Islamic community.

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