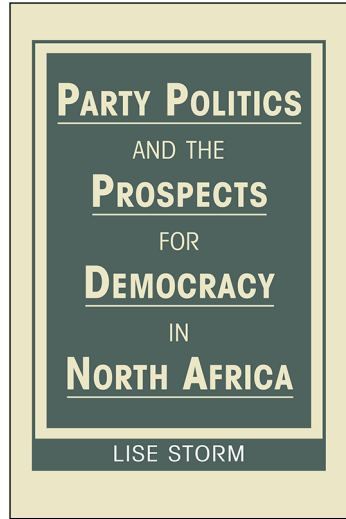


EXCERPTED FROM

Party Politics and the
Prospects for Democracy
in North Africa

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ISBN: 978-1-58826-958-4 hc



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This excerpt was downloaded from the
Lynne Rienner Publishers website
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1

Introduction

This is a book about the Arab world: the Maghreb, to be precise. It is about dynamics of domestic politics and the prospects for democracy in Algeria, Morocco, and Tunisia—three countries bound together by history and geographic location, yet with very different political experiences.

This is also a book about the Arab Spring, of course. How can one talk about politics and democracy in the present day and age, particularly with reference to the Arab world, without discussing the events of the Arab Spring? One of the three cases at the center of my analysis, Tunisia, was the country in which the Arab Spring erupted in late 2010, before it subsequently spread across the region. Although this book is largely about the Arab Spring, it is important to underline that it was not written because of it.

As I shall seek to make clear in the pages that follow, the book is one result of my desire to understand how politics is conducted at the national level in the Maghreb. More specifically, I wanted to understand how the political elite bargains amongst itself, and which parameters frame this process of bargaining, which could potentially lead to democracy.

The Arab Spring

The term *democracy* had rarely been used very optimistically in a Middle Eastern context prior to the Arab Spring. Then, suddenly, as the protests spread from Tunisia to Egypt, Morocco, Libya, and farther to the east, people across the globe found themselves querying whether we were watching yet another “spring,” that is, a spring in the sense of the “protests of 1968” or the popular momentum that brought down a number of authoritarian

regimes in Eastern and Southern Europe in the mid-1970s and the late 1980s and subsequently introduced democracy in a number of these states. Were we about to witness a democratic Middle East, an Arab world ruled by popularly elected governments, with freedom of expression, assembly, and association protected and respected? The expectations were extremely high, whether in the Arab world or abroad. Taking into account the authoritarian character of the incumbent regimes, the rather loosely coordinated nature of the Arab Spring protests, and the lack of explicit commitment from many of the more established political parties early on in the process, the optimism attached to these events as a force for long-term, significant political change was, in hindsight, perhaps a little naïve.

The protests in Tunisia were the most effective, largely because they were not anticipated and also because they were difficult to quell due to their intensity and web-based origins. Few, if any, whether inside Tunisia or abroad, had expected Mohamed Bouazizi's desperate protest to spark large-scale popular demonstrations that would sweep the country and eventually oust a president who had been firmly in power since the late 1980s. There is no doubt that had these protests been anticipated, they would have been quelled much earlier on, and with much more vigor, using the usual mechanisms of regime control: patronage, most likely in the form of higher salaries, bonuses, and food subsidies, as well as the promise of the creation of more jobs for the rapidly growing number of unemployed, particularly among the youth. Zine El Abidine Ben Ali and his vast entourage did not realize the significance of the protests until it was too late, however. With the demonstrations being largely coordinated via the Internet (primarily through Facebook and Twitter), and spread by word of mouth, they were all the more difficult to stop. There were no headquarters that could be ransacked and closed down, and there was no leader who could be silenced: the headquarters were everywhere in cyberspace, and anyone willing to initiate or spread the word of an upcoming demonstration was effectively a leader. The authorities simply had no way to stop the wave of protests once it had begun, namely, because it did not take the form of a movement and there were no structures to be attacked. The protesters were a force due to their sheer size, their shared objective, and their commitment to turn out in force on a daily basis.

As we all know, the Tunisian protesters succeeded in toppling the incumbent regime, as Ben Ali left the country and took up exile in Saudi Arabia when the demonstrations spun out of control and it had become clear that nothing but his exit would appease the angry masses. In the excitement over the breakdown of Ben Ali's regime and the subsequent competitive legislative elections—the first free and fair of their kind in the postindependence era—most Tunisians and international observers forgot to query the nature and democratic potential of the new regime, that is, apart from questioning the compatibility of Islam and democracy. In other words, while plenty of

time was afforded the discussion of whether the new cabinet, headed and dominated by the Islamist Ennahda, was truly committed to a secular, democratic Tunisia, few people inquired about the status of the fundamental democratic building blocks, most notably the character of the political parties, the nature of the party system, and the structure of the political system. Had these truly changed in the wake of the Jasmine Revolution? And to what extent had they changed? Moreover, what did these developments—or lack of developments—indicate about the prospects for democracy in Tunisia? These fundamental questions, which have hardly surfaced in the discussion of the implications of the Jasmine Revolution, are consequently the core focus of this book.

The questions pertaining to the character of the political parties, the nature of the party system, and the structure of the political system are not only relevant in the Tunisian setting, but also with regard to the situations in Algeria and Morocco, although their experiences of the Arab Spring differ significantly from each other as well as from the Tunisian experience. In Algeria, it is quite evident that nothing much happened, regardless of whether compared to the events in Tunisia or Morocco. Although demonstrations did take place in various Algerian towns and cities, most notably in the Bab el-Oued and Badjarrah neighborhoods of Algiers as well as the Kabylia region, these were much more modest in size, and they did not have the same clear goal as the demonstrations did in neighboring Tunisia. In fact, in Algeria, the Arab Spring protests appeared to be nothing more than an escalation of the social protests taking place on a daily basis across the country prior to 2010, the objectives of the protesters remaining local rather than national in orientation, and varying significantly from one city to another.¹ Consequently, due to their lack of a clear, shared objective, the Algerian protesters did not constitute much of a threat to the incumbent regime.

Just as in Algeria, the protests in Morocco were much more muted vis-à-vis those in Tunisia, not only in terms of size, but also with regard to the fierceness of the demands put forward, as well as their degree of coherence. That said, in Morocco the protests were arguably more coherent than in Algeria as there was an actual protest movement, the *Mouvement du 20 Février*. Yet, while the different components of the movement came together in a call for political reforms, no agreement had been reached on the way forward for the country (i.e., on the contents of such reforms), a reality that significantly weakened the cause of the demonstrators. Moreover, because the Moroccan protests were coordinated, they were relatively easy for the regime to neutralize as there were clear lines of command to target, not only via repressive measures, but also by means of patronage.

With regard to the demands issued, the Moroccan experience was somewhere in the middle between the Algerian and Tunisian ones. Although the emphasis in Morocco was on more than social reforms, there

were no strong pleas for regime change in the sense of overthrowing the head of state and instituting a parliamentary democracy in which the king would continue to rule, but not govern. While there was some criticism of the monarchy, very few people seriously questioned Mohammed VI's ability to govern, or his stabilizing effect on the country. Rather, the focus was on the country's politicians, who were accused of being inefficient and corrupt, more interested in amassing personal wealth than in representing the will of the people. In other words, those at the center of the storm were the secondary elite of politicians—those whose removal would not fundamentally alter the nature of how politics was conducted in the country.

There are, of course, a number of reasons why the Arab Spring protests in Algeria and Morocco were much more low key, and therefore also had much less of a political impact, than in Tunisia. One of them is undoubtedly the fact that they were anticipated by the incumbent regimes, who realized that the Tunisian protests were bound to spill over as Ben Ali's regime became seriously threatened and eventually fell. After all, the grievances of the Tunisian protesters were shared by the citizenry of Algeria and Morocco, which also had authoritarian regimes in place, and whose governments had been largely unsuccessful in their response to the economic crisis faced by all three countries (and most other countries across the globe).² Given the reality that the Arab Spring protests in Algeria and Morocco were anticipated, it was much easier for the incumbent regimes to respond to them by, for example, prohibiting demonstrations, limiting access to the Internet, and introducing food and fuel subsidies.

In addition to the reality that they were anticipated, the Algerian and Moroccan protests were shaped by further factors—factors that also formed the Tunisian experience. The argument put forward in this book is that the incumbent regime's ability to successfully respond to the protests, the political strength of the demonstrators, and, therefore, the prospects for democracy were all largely determined by three factors: the structure of the political system, the nature of the party system, and the character of the political parties. The presence (or absence) of opposition parties, the willingness of these to act as vehicles for democracy, and the extent to which the parties and other key actors, such as the army, were co-opted by the incumbent regime affected not only how the Arab Spring unfolded in each country but also the potential for democratic transition and consolidation.

The Elitist View of Political Change

Few people, whether academics, analysts, or simply members of the general population in the Arab world, had anticipated the advent of the Arab Spring. This was not because no civil society existed in the region, but

rather because several of the Arab countries, together with many other non-democratic regimes, appeared to be going nowhere. They were, in Carothers's (2002: 9) words "neither dictatorial nor clearly headed toward democracy. They have entered a political gray zone." After years of tentative political openings, which did not bring the Arab countries much closer to democracy, most people had simply become resigned to the fact that the "middle ground between full-fledged democracy and outright dictatorship is actually the most common political condition today of countries in the developing world and the postcommunist world. It is not an exceptional category to be defined only in terms of its not being one thing or the other; it is a state of normality for many societies, for better or worse" (Carothers 2002: 18). People had, in short, lost their illusions.

Transitology

From an academic perspective, with the rise and subsequent supremacy of the so-called transitology school, there had long been agreement that although civil society is important, significant political change—regime change—tends to be negotiated at the elite level, usually via one or more pacts, and in rare cases, as the result of a revolution (O'Donnell and Schmitter 1986; Przeworski 1992; Schmitter 2010: 23). Although pacts are not strictly speaking necessary for a transition to democracy to take place, they are usually an important part of nonviolent regime change (O'Donnell and Schmitter 1986: 37; Przeworski 1992: 108).

According to the transitologists, it is possible to divide the regime and the opposition into two groups (see Figure 1.1), which can each be divided into two subgroups: the hard-liners, comprising those actors within both the regime and the opposition who are unwilling to compromise (the former group is usually referred to as *hard-liners*, while the hard-liners within the opposition are usually classified as *radicals*); and the soft-liners, a category comprising those willing to negotiate, regardless of whether within the regime (referred to as *reformers*) or within the opposition (the so-called *moderates*) (Przeworski 1992: 117).

Hence, for negotiated regime change via pacts to be possible, two sets of key actors must be present: within the regime, there must be reformers,

Figure 1.1 Hard-Liners and Soft-Liners

	Regime	Opposition
Hard-Liners	Hard-liners	Radicals
Soft-Liners	Reformers	Moderates

Sources: O'Donnell and Schmitter (1986); Przeworski (1992).

who are willing to negotiate with the political opposition, and likewise, within the opposition, there must be moderates willing to negotiate with the reformers. Without both reformers and moderates on the ground, pacts are not possible; there have to be people willing to bargain on both sides of the fence (Przeworski 1992: 111). In the words of Guillermo O'Donnell and Philippe Schmitter (1986: 19), "we assert that there is no transition whose beginning is not the consequence—direct or indirect—of important divisions within the authoritarian regime itself, principally along the fluctuating cleavage between hard-liners and soft-liners."

At the time of the Arab Spring, it appeared that there were plenty of hard-liners within the regimes, while reformers were more difficult to identify in both the Tunisian and Algerian cases. As the analysis in this book demonstrates, given the extremely repressive nature of these two regimes, and the long reign of both Ben Ali and Bouteflika, most members of the political elite had made the decision to support the regime in exchange for patronage. Not all key figures could be classified as hard-liners, though. Some opposition did exist, not only in the more pluralistic Morocco, but also in Algeria and Tunisia. However, the complex system of control, repression, and patronage used in both the latter cases had resulted in a situation where there was no room for moderate opposition figures. Disregarding the legal "opposition," which had in effect been co-opted by the regimes, the genuine opposition was not only clandestine, but also radical, arguing for the overthrow of the regimes of Ben Ali and Bouteflika, rather than their reform.³ Consequently, when the Arab Spring erupted in Tunisia in late 2010, it was impossible to identify both reformers and moderates, the two groups necessary for pact-making. Hence, the most viable scenarios for the future of the Maghrebi states appeared to be either the persistence of status quo or, indeed, the revolutionary path. Given the frequency of revolutions and the age of these regimes, most observers were in agreement that status quo was the most likely scenario. That was until that fateful day in December 2010, when Mohamed Bouazizi set himself on fire and sowed the seeds of the popular uprisings that came to be known as the Arab Spring as they spread across the region.

Political Parties and Party Systems

Although a wealth of knowledge exists on the topic of political parties and party systems in Europe and North America, in particular, but also in other parts of the world, scholars have spent precious little time studying the political parties and party systems of the Arab world. Given that there is virtually unanimous agreement that political parties are indispensable for democracy, and that "no democratization process can afford to do without parties" (Schmitter 2010: 23), this reality seems a great shame.⁴ Further-

more, taking into account the preoccupation with the state of democracy in the Arab world since the beginning of the so-called third wave of democratization following the end of the Cold War, this seems not only a great shame, but also rather puzzling. Scholars have been concerned with the lack of democracy in the Arab world, as well as with the very slow advances in a democratic direction, yet, one of the cornerstones of democracy, and supposedly also the democratization process, has been left largely untouched.

Consequently, when it comes to the Arab world, what we are left with is a great number of studies on the status of democracy, which vary in size and level of theoretical abstraction, but which all share the trait that they rarely focus on political parties, and when they do, the approach is far from consistent from one case to another, making comparison difficult. To mention a few of the monographs on the topic of the state of democracy in the Arab world, there is Pratt's *Democracy and Authoritarianism in the Arab World* (2006), which focuses on civil society, and there is Sadiki's (2011) survey of elections entitled *Rethinking Arab Democratization: Elections Without Democracy*—both analyses that touch upon political parties, but not in any greater detail. Then there are the edited collections from various authors, such as *Arab Elites: Negotiating the Politics of Change* (Perthes 2004), which—as the title suggests—focuses on constellations of power and elite change; *Debating Arab Authoritarianism: Dynamics and Durability in Nondemocratic Regimes*, a collection of essays on mechanisms of regime survival (Schlumberger 2007); *Getting to Pluralism: Political Actors in the Arab World*, a study of key political actors from the perspective of democracy promoters (Ottaway 2009); and *Authoritarianism in the Middle East: Regimes and Resistance*, which charts the main actors and the mechanisms of regime survival across a number of cases (Pripstein Posusney and Penner Angrist 2005).⁵ What all of these analyses share, apart from an emphasis on the issue of democracy in the Arab world, is a minimal focus on political parties.

There are, of course, exceptions to this rule, most notably Michele Penner Angrist's study of *Party Building in the Modern Middle East* (2007), and Lawson and Ibrahim's edited collection *Political Parties and Democracy: The Arab World* (2010), both of which have parties firmly at the forefront. Penner Angrist's (2007) is a beautifully written, theoretically complex, comparative study of how party system characteristics shaped the regime-formation process in the immediate postindependence period in the Arab world, with the analysis centering on the case of Turkey in particular, while the other cases—Tunisia, Yemen, Algeria, Iran, Iraq, Jordan, Syria, and Egypt—serve as points of comparison, albeit to varying degrees. With its emphasis on the formation of the postindependence regimes, the study effectively limits its focus to the 1950s and 1960s, hence offering no analy-

sis of the contemporary situation in these countries, which differs considerably from fifty or sixty years ago, particularly in light of the Arab Spring.

In contrast to the study by Penner Angrist (2007), the analyses presented in Lawson and Ibrahim (2010) and Catusse and Karam (2010) focus very much on the present day, that is, the state of affairs in the region just prior to the Arab Spring. Beginning with Lawson and Ibrahim (2010), there is no denying that this is a very impressive feat, as the study, together with the other four volumes, covers the party systems of no less than forty-five countries across five continents. However, because the editors emphasized local empirical knowledge when selecting the contributors, the result is a study that provides data on eight Middle Eastern and North African countries (Egypt, Lebanon, Mauritania, Morocco, Tunisia, Algeria, Israel, and Turkey), with a chapter dedicated to a detailed analysis of each of the cases, as well as more comparative introductory and concluding chapters. And although the authors address the same set of questions, most notably the relationship between parties and democracy in their particular country, the theoretical framework varies from case to case, as does the methodological approach and the degree of referencing, which in some chapters is rather sparse. Hence, Lawson and Ibrahim's study (2010) comes across as more of a survey than a coherent academic analysis of party systems and democracy in the Arab world. With regard to Catusse and Karam (2010), the study is much more coherent, focusing on a more manageable six cases (Algeria, Bahrain, Iraq, Lebanon, Morocco, and Yemen). The book, although an edited volume, is theoretically coherent and emphasizes not only the value of a theory-based approach rooted in the classical party studies literature, but also the importance of contributing to this body of work by adding to our theoretical understanding of Arab parties and, therefore, political parties in general.

Finally, it is worth mentioning the edited volume from Lust-Okar and Zerhouni (2008), which takes on a similar format to that of Lawson and Ibrahim (2010). The contributors to Lust-Okar and Zerhouni (2008) each provide a comprehensive case study of avenues of political participation in a given Middle Eastern or North African country (the cases covered being Iran, Jordan, Egypt, Gaza, Bahrain, Morocco, and Tunisia), and while the volume comes across as more theoretically grounded than Lawson and Ibrahim's (2010), coherence suffers as the approach taken in each chapter varies considerably, with some emphasizing trade unions, and others civic organizations or political parties. There is no doubt that it is difficult to establish a shared theoretical framework and maintain a consistent methodological approach in an edited volume that includes in excess of five contributors, as is the case with both Lust-Okar and Zerhouni (2008) and Lawson and Ibrahim (2010). Consequently, it would be nice to see the publication of monographs that tackle the issues of parties, party systems, and

democracy in a number of cases, albeit not necessarily in a very overt comparative analysis, but certainly in a detailed and systematic manner.

The Maghreb

With regard to the Maghreb, and referring only to material published in English, three studies in particular stand out, namely, Willis (2002a, 2002b) on the Maghrebi parties, Penner Angrist (1999), and Hostrup Haugbølle and Cavatorta (2011) on the Tunisian parties. Willis's (2002a, 2002b) study of the Maghrebi parties is particularly pertinent in that it provides a comparative analysis of the parties and party systems of Algeria, Morocco, and Tunisia.⁶ Sadly, Willis (2002a, 2002b) adheres to the line of thinking that contends that the political parties and party systems of the Maghreb are profoundly different from those found elsewhere. Hence, his analysis is rich with local detail, but does not assist the reader who wishes to make comparison to cases outside of the region as references to material on party theory are largely missing. In other words, Willis's study constitutes an excellent introduction to the parties and party systems of the Maghreb from a so-called area studies perspective.⁷

Even less theoretical than Willis (2002a, 2002b) are Penner Angrist (1999) and Hostrup Haugbølle and Cavatorta (2011). The former provides an elegantly written account of Tunisian party politics following Ben Ali's coup in 1987, detailing how the opposition forces have failed to act as representatives of the people, primarily due to the character of the country's political system, but also as a consequence of the power struggles within the party leaderships. Sticking with the opposition theme, Hostrup Haugbølle and Cavatorta (2011) demonstrate, some ten years later, how discord and weakness remain the order of the day, although attempts were made to unify the opposition prior to the Jasmine Revolution, most notably in the *Rencontre Démocratique* and the *18 Octobre Collectif*.

Taking the above observations into consideration, one of the chief objectives of this book is to contribute to filling the void in our knowledge of political parties and party systems in the Arab world. And, given how little we know, the hope is that scholars specializing in political parties and party systems will benefit as much as the area studies specialists. This latter point is quite important if one is to understand the style of the book and how it is structured. By seeking to appeal to both party specialists and those who work on the Arab world, quite a significant amount of political theory stemming from the academic literature on political parties and party system institutionalization has been applied, yet, apart from in Chapter 2, which sets out the theoretical framework, keen efforts have been made to ensure that the study does not come across as too rigid and formulaic—something that would send most area studies specialists running in the other direction. In

short, I have attempted a middle way, and I hope I have been successful enough that both groups have not been alienated in the process, but rather brought together.

Case Selection: Why the Maghreb?

So, why the Maghreb? Why Algeria, Morocco, and Tunisia, rather than the combination of three other cases? Why not all of North Africa, which is in turmoil at the moment? The answer to this question is quite simple: I have a background in the study of North African politics, the countries, their people, and the way the political elites operate fascinates me. I have written extensively about Morocco in particular, but that has not stopped my curiosity—there is always more to learn. What has especially intrigued me over the years, and what has undoubtedly captivated other Maghreb specialists before me, is how the countries differ, despite relatively similar colonial experiences and close geographic proximity.⁸ Questions began popping into my head, such as how come Algeria and Tunisia were so heavily authoritarian, while Morocco was more relaxed, albeit still undemocratic? Why was the party system in Morocco so large, while the Algerian and Tunisian party systems were both effectively one-party systems until at least the early 1990s? How come a democratization process, although slow, appeared to be under way in Morocco, but not in Algeria and Tunisia? With nobody able to provide a satisfactory answer to these questions—and others like them—my research began.

The study is not, in other words, structured around a random selection of cases with a view to gain the best possible understanding of how the constellation of party systems, as well as the character of the relevant political parties, impact on the prospects for democracy. Rather, the objective is to gain the best possible understanding of how the constellation of party systems, as well as the character of the relevant political parties, impact on the prospects for democracy *in the Maghreb*.⁹ In short, I wish to know more about both, because both areas are severely understudied. As already mentioned above, we know hardly anything about political parties and party systems in the Arab world, and precious little about the Maghrebi parties and party systems, even if one includes the large body of work that exists on the region in the French language, as well as recent work in Spanish, such as, for example, the collection edited by Parejo (2010).¹⁰ Moreover, we also know very little about how political parties impact on the democratization process in general, as discussed in greater detail in Chapter 2.

Going back to the choice of region, it was not only my background in North African studies that was decisive in my choice of cases. Another factor was, of course, the issue of comparison. From the beginning I was quite

adamant that I wanted to make use of both the “most similar systems design” and “most dissimilar systems design” methods, as I wanted to compare both similarities and differences.¹¹ In short, how come two presidential systems, Algeria and Tunisia, were so similar and yet so different? How come, at times, Algeria and Morocco, a presidential regime and a monarchy, compared better than Algeria and Tunisia? More specifically, I wanted to explore how presidentialism shaped the party systems of Algeria and Tunisia, and how monarchical rule shaped the Moroccan party system, as the party systems were so very different in size.¹²

I also wanted to examine whether a presidential system meant that the prospects for democracy were bleaker, which they appeared to be in both Algeria and Tunisia at the time, and why that, indeed, was the case. Given the comparatively much larger size of the Moroccan party system prior to the Arab Spring, as well as the slow growth of the Algerian party system (and to some extent the Tunisian one too), a further topic I wanted to scrutinize was if the size of the party system seemed to play a role in the prospects for democracy. Could it be that Algeria and Tunisia were slowly beginning to democratize, and that the tentative expansion of their party systems was a sign of this?

Outline of the Book

In the sections above, I have raised rather a lot of questions, and there are even more appearing throughout the book. I have done my utmost to answer them all, to the best of my abilities, but as I always tell my students, political science is qualified guesswork. And while I may be a specialist in North African politics, sometimes I get it slightly wrong, or simply completely wrong, as when a student asked me in October 2010, “Why is Tunisia not included as one of the cases in the course on debating democracy and authoritarianism in North Africa?” a question to which I, a firm believer in the ideas of the transitology school, replied, “Because it is so boring. Nothing ever happens. It is solidly authoritarian, has been so for decades, and the prospects of it changing any time soon are rather minute.” I am delighted that my assessment of the situation, which I shared with many other political scientists, was utterly inaccurate.

This book is structured by country, rather than by theme, which I could have done. However, the idea is to provide the reader with the necessary theoretical framework in Chapter 2, before moving on to three sets of country-specific chapters, beginning with two on Morocco, then two on Tunisia, and, finally, two on Algeria. By structuring the book like this, the reader gets the opportunity to become fully immersed in the experiences of one particular country, before moving on to another, which I found of higher importance

than a more comparative perspective. The objective here is for the reader to gain a comprehensive understanding of the parties, the party systems, and the political environment shaping these over the *longue durée*, for it is my opinion that without a detailed knowledge of the past, it is impossible to make a correct assessment of the present and valid estimates regarding the future.¹³ How is one to assess the prospects for democracy in the Maghrebi countries in the wake of the Arab Spring, without having gained a comprehensive understanding of the development of their party systems, the major parties within these, and how the political elites operate? Factors such as, for example, the circumstances during which the political parties were formed, the longevity of the key dynamics of the political system, and the pace with which change has occurred in the past, are all important. Without a profound knowledge of such issues, one can only provide a superficial analysis, and that is, of course, not the aim.

That said, should anyone wish to read the book according to themes—that is, in a more comparative manner—Chapters 3, 5, and 7 focus on the evolution of the party systems and the character of the so-called relevant political parties prior to the Arab Spring. Chapters 4, 6, and 8 center on the post-Arab Spring setting, and the extent of the political changes that occurred as a consequence. Chapter 9 provides the comparative conclusion and perspectives, discussing the prospects for democracy in the Maghreb in the wake of the Arab Spring. Naturally, the analysis centers on the issue of how the prospects for democracy are tied to change within the parties and the party systems over the years, and the extent to which the political environment has shaped the room available for maneuvering. Among the main issues debated are whether new, relevant political parties appear to be emerging; whether the old parties seem to be transforming into genuine parties; and if it is possible to foster durable democracy in the event that new parties do not see the light of day, and the old parties remain personalistic outfits concerned with amassing patronage rather than carrying out the representative and procedural functions traditionally associated with political parties (as discussed in Chapter 2).

Notes

1. Some protesters demanded gas and water connections, others wanted increased investment in the Kabylia region, and then there were those calling for the creation of more jobs and a lowering of food prices, those demanding the right to criticize the state for the atrocities committed during the civil war, and so on.

2. Please note that the profound economic challenges faced by the Maghrebi regimes had already appeared before the global economic crisis took hold. The problems (such as graduate unemployment and rapidly rising food prices) were, in other words, very deep-rooted, but were further exacerbated by the global economic crisis.

3. In short, if one defines the legal “opposition” as moderates within the opposition, then the reformers were missing within the regime. If one, on the other hand, defines the legal “opposition” as reformers within the regime, given their co-opted status, then no moderates were left among the opposition. In other words, no matter how one approaches the situation, there is no arguing with the fact that the necessary groups for negotiating pacts were simply not present.

4. For a longer discussion of parties and democracy, please refer to Chapter 2.

5. See also Carothers (2006) *Confronting the Weakest Link: Aiding Political Parties in New Democracies*, which was written with democracy promoters in mind, or Elbadawi and Makdisi’s (2010) *Democracy in the Arab World: Explaining the Deficit*, which analyzes the topic from an oil/developmental angle. Not much space is afforded political parties in the latter, while Carothers (2006) views parties as crucial actors when seeking to promote democracy.

6. It is worth noting that Michael Willis has recently published a beautifully written comparative study on politics and power in the Maghreb. However, although the analysis addresses political actors, themes, and issues, the approach taken is a narrative historical one. See Willis (2012).

7. Isabelle Werenfels (2007) has written an excellent study of Algerian politics, and while political parties are treated in the analysis, the emphasis is on elite structures in general.

8. Hence the exclusion of Egypt.

9. Libya prohibited political parties during most of the reign of Muammar Qaddafi.

10. Among the French works are Camau and Geisser (2003), Chouikha (2004), the special double issue of the *Revue des Mondes Musulmans et de la Méditerranée* 111–112 (2006), Mohsen-Finan and Zeghal (2006), and Chouikha and Gobe (2009).

11. For more on system design, refer to Landman (2008), for example.

12. For more on the merits and perils of presidentialism versus parliamentarism, see the famous article by Linz (1994). See also Cheibub (2006).

13. Please bear in mind that this does not, by any means, imply that I believe in path dependency.