

Political Party Development in the Arab World

(Algeria, Bahrain, Iraq, Lebanon, Morocco, Yemen)

Final Report

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I- THE RESEARCH PROJECT

1- General overview:

The Lebanese Center for Policy Studies ([LCPS- Beirut](#)) funded by the International Development Research Centre ([IDRC-Canada](#)) launched in 2006 a research project on political parties in the Arab World. The project attempted to identify the nexus between political party development and political transformations in the Arab world, mainly with relation to the democratization process. Specifically, the project focused on the role of political parties, especially the newly emerging Islamic ones, on democratic transition and on informing policymakers as part of the political party reform agenda. We based our inquiries and reflections on empirical field experiences rather than on deductive models developed elsewhere. The research proposed concluding recommendations for the six countries in question: Algeria, Bahrain, Iraq, Lebanon, Morocco, and Yemen.

This project had two main objectives: first, to produce a critical database for political parties in the six Arab countries and to increase knowledge about political party development in the region. The second objective was to examine and analyze the role of party systems in the democratization of the political system i.e. the party would be considered as a democratization tool with emphasis on newly-emerging religious parties. Based on a comparative approach, the project aimed at providing information for policy debates centered on the improvement of democratic practices in the Arab world through political parties.

Our early findings indicated that Arab political parties needed to strengthen their internal structures and to allow for the participation of new political elites in order to assume the responsibilities of aggregating and representing public interests. Further studies, however, remain essential to understand the transformation process.

2- Research questions:

The project was initially designed with two main areas of interest in mind: 1) increase knowledge on political parties in the Arab World; and 2) examine and analyze the impact of political parties on the democratization of political systems in the Arab World.

A- Produce knowledge on the political parties.

A thorough literature review showed that few of the existing research deal with the party system and the political parties in the Arab World from a structural perspective. Nevertheless, those political parties are formally present as political organizations in the region for over a century. Despite the fact that we identified some studies that deal with the party system dating ten years ago, they unfortunately remained largely marginal in comparison with those undertaken – to mention briefly – in the sixties on national movements¹; in the sixties and seventies on Arabism²; since the eighties on Islamism³; and recently on the economic elites⁴, elections⁵ or on the associative structures⁶. Some

¹ Hanna Batatu, *The Old Social Classes and the Revolutionary Movements of Iraq* (Princeton: N.J. Princeton University Press, 1978); Hanna Batatu, *The Egyptian, Syrian and Iraqi Revolutions: Some Observations on their Underlying Causes and Social Characters, Inaugural lecture* (Washington D.C.: Georgetown University, 1984), et Jacques Berque, *Égypte: impérialisme et révolution* (Paris: Gallimard, 1967).

² Rashid Khalidi, *The Origins of Arab Nationalism* (New York: Columbia university. Press, 1999), et Olivier Carré, *Le nationalisme arabe* (Paris: Fayard, 1993).

³ Olivier Roy, *L'Échec de l'islam politique* (Paris: Seuil, 1992); Gilles Kepel et Richard Yann (dir.), *Intellectuels et militants de l'islam contemporain* (Paris: Seuil, 1990); Gilles Kepel, *Le prophète et le Pharaon* (Paris: Seuil, 1993), et François Burgat, *L'Islamisme au Maghreb. La voix du sud* (Paris: Payot, 1995).

⁴ Heydemann Steven (ed.), *Networks of Privilege: The Politics of Economic Reform in the Middle East* (New York; Palgrave-Mac Millan,2004).

monographs only reflect the interests of the scientific community rather than the interests of the policymaking sphere⁷. Additionally, few studies are concerned with political activism within the party structures⁸, and rather focus on using the term "the parties" (i.e. "the" party speaks and acts) as if they were hollow structures void of members and reduced to their leaders or to clans and personalized networks.

Currently some publications, recent meetings and research programs reveal a renewed interest in the party system. To name a few; the two volumes of the REMMM, the papers and publications of the LCPS, the research program of the Institute for Strategic Studies in Iraq, etc.

Kienle Eberhard (ed.), *Politics From Above, Politics From Below : the Middle East in the Age of Economic Reform* (London: Saqi, 2003); Catusse Myriam, *Le temps des entrepreneurs ? Politique et transformations du capitalisme au Maroc* (Paris : Maisonneuve et Larose, 2008) ; Gobe Eric, *Les hommes d'affaires égyptiens. Démocratisation et secteur privé dans l'Égypte de l'Infitah*(Paris : Karthala,1999).

⁵ Mounia Bennani-Chraïbi; Myriam Catusse et Jean-Claude Santucci, (dir.), *Scènes et coulisses des élections au Maroc: Les législatives de 2002* (Paris: Karthala, 2004).

⁶ Karam Karam, *Le mouvement civil au Liban. Revendications, protestations et mobilisations associatives dans l'après-guerre* (Paris: Karthala-IREMAM, 2006); Sarah Ben Néfissa, (dir.), *Pouvoirs et associations dans le monde arabe* (Paris: CNRS Éditions, 2002); Sheila Carapico, *Civil Society in Yemen: the Political Economy of Activism in Modern Arabia* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998), et Robert Bianchi, *Unruly Corporatism. Associational Life in the Twentieth-Century Egypt* (Oxford, New York: Oxford University Press, 1989).

⁷ Charara Waddah, *L'Etat Hezbollah: Liban société islamique*,(Beyrouth :Dar al-Nahar, 1996).

شرارة، وضاح، 1996، دولة "حزب الله": لبنان مجتمعاً إسلامياً، بيروت، دار النهار.

Tozy Mohammed., *Monarchie et islam politique au Maroc*,(Paris ; Presses de Sciences Po., 1999)

⁸ Favier Agnès, *Logiques de l'engagement et modes de contestation au Liban. Genèse d'une génération de militants dans les années 1960*,(Thèse de Doctorat, Institut d'Études Politiques d'Aix-en-Provence, 2004).

Therefore, the first objective of this project was to fill this lack of information or this sociological knowledge gap in the Arab World. Knowing that the party is only a political organizational form among others⁹, the lack of interest in this subject matter comes from the fact that political parties in the Arab World are not always considered as such by the analysts. For ones¹⁰, they are just imported institutions which are not definitely rooted in the society within which they emerge. For others who talk about "protopartis" to designate some party formation of the opposition in Tunisia, the developmental stage of numerous Arab parties remains unfinished¹¹. They consider them as one of the authoritarianism's elements, reproducing authoritarian and personalized behavior. Furthermore, they are too poorly organized to conquer power and not enough to lead to the emergence of civic conscience. Of course these distinctions allow the labeling of the "political party" category raised by Michel Offerlé.

Yet there is another explanation for the scarcity of the studies related to political parties. The political parties in the Arab countries would have been prevented or "denatured" by the authoritarianism of the political systems. On one hand, the single-party (monistic) and unanimous representation of the society- and of the State- carried by the national movements and by revolutionaries, has illegitimated all partisan representation (of a *part* of the society) of the political body. It did not authorize the institutionalization of the regulation forms of the political conflict. Thus, the "States' parties"¹² have eliminated all

⁹ Michel Offerlé, *Les partis politiques* (Paris: PUF (Que sais-je?, 1987), (4e édition 2002).

¹⁰ Bertrand Badie, «L'analyse des partis politiques en monde musulman, la crise des paradigmes universels,» in: Yves Meny, *Idéologies, partis politiques et espaces sociaux* (Paris: Presse de la fondation des sciences politiques, 1989).

¹¹ Maurice Duverger, *Les partis politiques* (Paris: Armand Colin, 1992), (1st édition: 1957), et Michel Camau & Geisser Vincent, *Le syndrome autoritaire: politique en Tunisie de Bourguiba à Ben Ali* (Paris: presses de science politique, 2003).

¹² Jean Leca et Jean-Claude Vatin, *L'Algérie politique. Institutions et régime* (Paris: presses de sciences politique, 1975).

form of competition. On the other hand, where multiparty systems have been developed, it was in the form of a "limited pluralism", the true exercise of power being located out of the partisanship's arena¹³.

We proposed two work tracks to fulfill this lack of studies. The first one consisted of creating a database that sheds the light on the theoretical and empirical statuses of the political parties in the six mentioned countries. This consists of setting up a literature review including the parties' case studies; the state of legislation; the financing of the parties; as well as their leaders' and militants' profiles, etc. As part of this track, special attention was given to the participation of political parties in the elections within their countries (Lebanon 2005, Iraq, Yemen and Bahrain 2006, Morocco 2007, etc.). The second track would try to produce a typology for the political parties in these Arab countries. This typology took into consideration both the historical evolution of the parties and the influence of the national political framework in which they developed.

These work tracks entailed a comparative method going beyond the simple collection of studies for each country. In fact, these countries were chosen because they represent particular dissimilar configurations regarding their party systems. We found for instance, a unique party system versus a multiparty one; a long history versus a recent short one; a republic state versus a monarchy; a national movement or not, etc. One of the challenges in the collective work resided in the comparison of these experiences. The comparison showed the importance of a typology highlighting the role played by those parties in the political changes in the region. Therefore, this comparison will certainly lead us back to

¹³ John Waterbury, *The Commander of the Faithful: the Moroccan Political Elite. A Study in Segmented Politics* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1970); Weidenfeld & Nicolson London and Michael Johnson, *Class and Clients in Beirut* (London: Ithaca Press, 1986), et Yves Schemel, *Sociologie du système politique libanais* (Grenoble: service de reproduction des thèses de l'université des sciences sociales de Grenoble, 1976).

the original question: are we still tackling the same issue? How to avoid talking of “parties not like the others”?¹⁴.

What matters here is to transcend the mundane differences between parties and their different experiences to add value to the issues facing those parties in their countries.

B- Examining and analyzing the role of the parties' organizations in the democratization of the political system.

Without jumping to conclusions, our starting hypothesis emphasizes that the political parties intervene in the process of political change. A large body of literature recognizes the central role they play in the democratization process¹⁵. In fact, political parties are organizations that have emerged in representative democracies. Strong empirical data and complex linkages corroborate the correlation between those two phenomena. If we agree on a “restrictive definition” of the parties¹⁶, we would say they are groups that have been organized in a competitive framework to win power, which indicates the existence of pluralism and of parliamentary and electoral competition at the same time. But how will

¹⁴ Guy Hermet; Alain Rouquié et Juan Linz, *Des élections pas comme les autres* (Paris: presse de la fondation nationale des sciences politiques, 1978).

¹⁵ Linz Juan and Stepan Alfred, *Problems of Democratic Transition and Consolidation: Southern Europe, South America and Post-Communist Europe*, (Baltimore, London: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1996); Myriam Aït-Aoudia et Jérôme Heurtaux, (dir.), «Partis politiques et changement de régime,» *Critique Internationale*, n° 30 (janvier-mars, 2006); Jérôme Heurtaux, «Une partisanisation controversée. Codification de la compétition politique et construction de la démocratie en Pologne (1989-2001),» (Thèse de doctorat de science politique, université Lille 2, 2005); Baduel Pierre Robert, «Les partis politiques dans la gouvernementalisation de l'Etat des pays arabes », *Les Partis politiques dans les pays arabes, Tome1, Le Machrek*, REMMM, 1996, n° 81-82.; Moncef Djaziri, «La problématique partisane dans les systèmes politiques du Maghreb: relance des études comparatives,» *Annuaire de l'Afrique du Nord*, vol.34 (1997), pp.423-449; Jean-Claude Santucci, «La place et le rôle des systèmes partisans dans les évolutions du champ politique,» in: Elizabeth Picard, (dir), *La politique dans le monde arabe* (Paris: Armand Colin, 2006), p. 149-170, et Jean-Claude Santucci, «Le multipartisme marocain entre les contraintes d'un «pluralisme contrôlé» et les dilemmes d'un 'pluripartisme autoritaire,» *Revue des mondes musulmans et méditerranéens*, n°111-112 (2006), pp. 63-117.

¹⁶ Offerlé, *Les partis politiques*.

we be able to raise this question in a context lacking representative democracies? In that case what is the use of the political parties¹⁷?

Furthermore, we examined the *internal structures* of political parties: To what extent they ensure renewal of the elites? What are the selection modalities of the elites? And also what type of organization these elites develop? What kind of political activism do they privilege? What kind of relations exists between the parties and the society on one hand, and between the parties and the public authorities on the other? We examined their capacity in politicizing cultural matters, but also in embedding national culture within their structures. What is the role played by heritage, clientelism and families within the parties? What are the parties' modalities of funding and control?

We proceeded then to tackle the role the parties play in democratizing the political system. Definitely the political parties in Arab countries are not the exclusive model of political competition, but are they dominant? Are they being monopolistic in the political competition and the electoral one? How do they organize the electoral campaigns? In what way do the parties intervene in the electoral law? Do they participate in debates and make others hear their opinions? To what extent are they able to represent the social cleavages (identical, religious, ideological, etc.) and the interests of the members of their societies¹⁸?

Both levels are combined and complementary. They allow us to elaborate on the institutionalization process of the political parties and their participation in making the

¹⁷ Céline Braun, «A quoi servent les partis tunisiens? Sens et contre-sens d'une 'libéralisation' politique,» *REMMM*, n° 111-112 (2006), p. 15-61.

¹⁸ Martin Lipset Seymour and Stein Rokkan, (ed.), *Party Systems and Voter Alignments* (New York, The Free Press, 1967), and Daniel-Louis Seiler, *Les partis politiques* (Paris: Armand Colin, 1993).

“law of politics”¹⁹. This leads us to question the emergence of the new political parties. Herein we could discuss two hypotheses. The first one considers the emergence of the new parties as a result of the voluntary or constrained openness of the systems. In other words, some latent parties become efficient after an increase of the political opportunities. The second hypothesis tackles the development of new social cleavages and new political identities. In that case, parties that represent social cleavages are politically dominant. Certainly, both hypotheses contribute together to the emergence of new parties.

The “democratizing” capacity of political parties was a central research question in our study. Thus one of the typology’s goals was to highlight the conversion or the innovation of parties’ character. We gave attention to the “innovative” character of some formations, as well as to their *renewing* effects- we can change or beautify an old party and give it a *new look*, as we can find some new non-innovator parties and vice versa.

3- Methodological approach

The research teams collected and classified the data depending on the themes and questions mentioned above. They adopted research methods based on literature review, field work, interviews, official party texts and documents and parties’ archives. The LCPS allowed team members to select the research methods that serve them better and correspond with the milieu they are working in. Hence, each team used the most appropriate method to gather the largest amount of information.

The objective was to come out with a critical description and evaluation, not just a list or résumé of materials that had already been published on political parties in the country under examination. The lists provided were a list of books, academic researches, and

¹⁹ Jérôme Heurtaux, «Une partisanisation controversée. Codification de la compétition politique et construction de la démocratie en Pologne (1989-2001),» (Thèse de doctorat de science politique, université Lille 2, 2005).

dissertations, PhD or Master Theses. The LCPS team would build on the project studies and results and on a broader bibliography and prepare an analytical chapter on political parties.

One of the major objectives proposed by LCPS at the beginning of the project was to develop a typology using a comparative methodology. In an analysis, presented in Ottawa, a first framework of comparison and typology was introduced. Nevertheless, the team developed this framework based on the results of the first phase, on the different existing typologies and on the results of the case studies written during the second phase of research.

The outcomes of the first phase were debated in a roundtable held in each country and included in the final report presented to LCPS.

At this stage, the LCPS proposed the open-ended interview as a principal tool of inquiry and the literature review as a secondary one and recommended that researchers avoid the technique of questionnaires. The LCPS advised team members to draw on previous academic studies on parties in order to examine more thoroughly the subject and to rely on official documents and parties' archives to get the biggest amount of information. The previous writings should constitute a helpful base for the teams' work on condition that information would be updated and team members should take into consideration the party's new trends, internally and externally.

The LCPS also encouraged team members to address directly people inside the party. In order to save time, some data may be also obtained from researchers or PhD candidates studying a given party, which would make access to information easier.

However, LCPS left to the teams the choice of the methodology they find most appropriate and most suitable for the field and for the milieu they are working in.

During the second research committee's meeting, many researchers suggested to rely on the interview and the questionnaires with party leaders and decision makers as a data

collection technique, along with a literature review of the previous writings on the party in question. Others recommended the open-ended interview as a tool of inquiry rather than the questionnaires. They explained that questionnaires need time whereas open-ended interviews are faster and provide a larger amount of information. It was argued that each case study should not exceed twenty-five pages and so questionnaires were not needed.

The teams in general also agreed on the literature review as an instrument of data collection. In addition to which, the teams also suggested relying on the press, speeches of political leaders and conferences held by party representatives, etc.

However, in the end the teams approved LCPS' suggestion that interviews and literature review be adopted as tools of inquiry as they save time and provide the largest amount of data.

The Bahraini team added the technique of peer review. They informed us that they sent a draft of the two case studies already completed (the National Democratic Action Society and Al Menbar Islamic Society) to a committee of specialized persons to review them and to take into consideration their propositions and remarks. The team contacted the following persons:

Dr. Abdul Hadi Khalaf (social scientist); Dr. Baquer Najjar (professor of social science at the university of Bahrain); Dr. Nader Kazem (editorial in chief of the *thaqafat* magazine in Bahrain); Ghassan Chehabi (journalist at *Al Waqt* newspaper); Saed Hamad (journalist at *Al Iyyam* newspaper); Abdullah Janahi (member of the National Democratic Action Society); and to the central committee of the National Democratic Action Society. The team explained that they wanted to take advantage of the experiences of the above-mentioned people before presenting the studies in the roundtable. The team also indicated that it is difficult to hold a sole roundtable for the three case studies and therefore proposed that each case study be reviewed by three persons who would add their

comments and remarks. The team would then take into account those remarks in the final drafts of the case studies.

The research teams selected three parties within each country of study. To be included among the parties were an Islamic party active in public life; a classical party (ideological, nationalist, secular ...) that has dominated the political scene currently or in previous decades; and the new divisions that reflect the changes or developments within each country.

The task for each team was to choose the parties and inform the LCPS. Regarding the selected parties within the sample being studied, the team was supposed to start off from existing literature and studies, and benefit from the presentation and analysis provided previously while carefully considering updating the information to keep up with the recent developments internally and externally within the parties, and ensure that the studies comply with the main research focus of the project.

4- Research plan

The research was divided into two phases which to facilitate comparison.

- I. Situational Analysis (to be provided at the end of the first phase of work):
 - 1) Literature survey
 - 2) Analysis of the judicial framework
 - 3) Collection and classification of the outputs in the six given countries:
 - to supply the website
 - to identify the criteria of the typology
 - 4) Discussion of these first outcomes will be held in roundtables in each of the six countries (with the cooperation of the political decision-makers, elected representatives and parties' representatives).

- II. Case studies (monographs) and comparative studies.

Without anticipating the results that were going to be discussed in groups, these case studies had three dimensions:

- 1) Analysis of the partisan organization.
- 2) Analysis of the activists and leaders profiles.
- 3) Analysis of the integration of the party into the party system.

Discussion of the case studies in roundtables held in each of the six countries.

The second phase was initiated with a focus on the main research question about the possible existing nexus between political party development in the Arab world and the political transformation along with the systemization process particularly the democratization. The teams examined the parties' internal dynamics and analyzed the impact that these dynamics have on the political system and on society in general. Based on a critical analysis approach, the researchers put under scrutiny the following:

- The party's internal structure and organization,
- The decision making process and the division of tasks,
- The current main programs and projects of the party,
- The opinions of party members and the impact of differences in opinions on divisions inside the party,
- The group of associations belonging to the party and the sources of financing,
- The sociological character of the members (age, number of women, participation of youth and the positions they fulfill inside the party).

The purpose of this inquiry was for the teams to analyze how these internal dynamics affect the reform process in general and the political scene, the systems' transformations and democratization in particular.

II- IMPLEMENTATION AND FINDINGS

1- Management of the project

In addition to the administrative management of the project, the LCPS followed-up with the teams on a regular basis, provided them with any assistance they required, reviewed and assessed their studies. In addition, the LCPS offered administrative assistance such as

when they were holding a roundtable. LCPS specified the research questions and methodology and ensured that they are respected. The center was responsible for the dissemination of the studies on the website and in books. We worked on preparing the comparative chapter in addition to the literature review and typology. Overall LCPS ensured quality of research, scientific review of the papers and studies, revision of research questions, analysis of research drafts and provision of feedback to researchers, in addition to the methodology of research.

As a preliminary plan, the LCPS proposed that the outputs of the first phase be published in a book, while the case studies be published in another one both in Arabic and later translated into English. However, after reviewing the studies, the team decided to postpone the publication of the first phase studies and wait until the case studies are ready. The studies of the first phase answered the research descriptively rather than analytically. The five studies submitted to LCPS, exceeded the required 25 pages to 100 pages each. Plus the quality of the research was disappointing and considered unpublishable. In fact, repetition of ideas, redundancy and long introductions as well as poor language characterized the 5 studies. The LCPS spent most of the time during that phase reviewing, correcting and editing the studies.

For instance, some studies devoted a big part to the chronological evolution of parties and to the judicial framework where, for instance, researchers named the laws related to the political parties and explained them in details rather than showing how these laws affect the role of the parties in the given society.

Moreover, the bibliographical list and the literature review were poor to some extent and were not presented in an academic way despite the fact that, the LCPS and during the first research committee's meeting, stressed the importance of evaluating the literature rather than just naming the books and academic works on the subject. Additionally, many of the lists presented by the researchers lacked important details like the name of the author or the year of publication or even the publisher, etc...

LCPS suggested during the second meeting that the researchers prepare a summary of the studies highlighting the role of the party in the system' transformation, and the role of

these parties in the democratization process. As a result, the judicial part and the literature review as chapters would be eliminated and replaced by a comparative analysis of these laws and literature. These chapters could be published as annexes to the studies. Hence, the team members and the LCPS team agreed that an analytical text of twenty five pages should be written.

It was decided that the first phase studies that were modified would be loaded on the website while the new analytical texts would be published in a book.

2- Challenges:

First phase:

The first phase determined the first steps of the project linking them to a precise timeline. Every step was thoroughly described as well as the following steps to be taken in the two years project. In this phase, the LCPS defined the scope of project, the research questions and devised the plan to carry out the research. The LCPS' team contacted the researchers, agreed on the scope and the nature of the investigation and the study, assigned each researcher with a specific topic, and signed the contracts with them. The principal challenge at this stage was to lay strong foundations for the project and identify ways to overcome the expected obstacles: the difficulty to meet the parties' members, the difficulty of access at the sources of parties' funding and the political difficulties caused by the project itself.

Second phase:

In the second research committee meeting, the team members expressed concerns regarding possible challenges they might face.

The Lebanese team was concerned about studying Hezbollah with its closed organizational structure. The team claimed that the party is not a classical one and consists of numerous interconnected organizations acting in variety of social and

economic fields. So, studying the party's organizational structure wouldn't account truly for the party's nature, scope of activities and role in the global political system. Besides, doing research in Lebanon on any party causes problems as party leaders and members do not accept the results as they are. As for the Free Patriotic Movement, the team complained from the scarcity of resources specifically academic studies explaining that all previous writings consist of journalistic articles and few interviews.

The Yemeni team explained that doing a survey on the internal structure of the party will generate a negative reaction and this will cause the researcher numerous problems. The Yemen Congregation for Reform (Hizb el Islah) for instance has many social organizations and hence the results they will get will be very superficial or erroneous. On the other hand if the researcher gets the information on his own, this will cause him trouble. They also indicated that the interviews with the leaders are a bit difficult due to the political situation.

The team members also stated that because many party members became somehow "traders" and since the majority of parties hide the source of money, examining the sources of financing can cause trouble and therefore cannot be studied in depth.

One of the difficulties encountered by the Bahraini team was in inviting the members of Al Menbar Islamic Society (the political organization of the Muslim Brotherhood) to the roundtable as the latter refused to talk or give any information regarding their association. The members also refused to deal with the mediators who gave the Bahraini team the required documents about the association.

The Algerian team faced the same problem with the National Rally for Democracy (RND) regarding interviewing the members and accessing documents. What's more the members interviewed insisted on staying anonymous. The researchers found it also difficult to interview members of the National Liberation Front (FLN).

While some of these were major difficulties with political implications, most team members, assisted by LCPS, found ways or alternatives to overcome them. In Lebanon, for example, the focus of the research on Hezbollah was changed to one dimension considered ‘safe’, namely Hezbollah schools’ network.

3- Strategy of Dissemination

In order to circulate the project’s findings on a wider level, LCPS proposed that each team holds a roundtable in their country (in addition to the roundtables of the second phase) after the final conference in Beirut, to discuss the major findings and results of the project with an audience of academics, media, press, political scientists, social scientists, policymakers and party activists.

The LCPS already sent notifications to a number of research centers introducing the project to them, and will send letters whenever there is a new outcome.

The LCPS also disseminated the project through visits to universities and research centers directly through conferences on the project (inside and outside Lebanon) or indirectly in conferences where a similar topic is discussed and where the LCPS team members introduced the project to the attendees.

- The website: www.appstudies.org

The website was launched and designed especially for political scientists, researchers and readers in need to learn more about political parties’ development in the Arab world. Moreover, it is a non-profit, non-partisan, non-ideological and non-political website; its only purpose is diffusing knowledge about the evolution of the Arab political parties. The website is permanently supplied by the most recent findings of the research teams; therefore, the entire updates are circulated and available for every visitor. Furthermore, we give the visitors the opportunity to publish their studies and writings related to political parties on this website. In addition, any organization, institution and research

center involved in a similar topic, can link its webpage through our website, thus offering a multiplicity of materials and references to the visitors. The website has been and continues to be monitored on a daily basis. It was updated whenever a new study was submitted and on various other occasions like when a new researcher joined the team or to introduce a new event or launch a new phase. The website is not designed for daily news and therefore daily updates are unnecessary.

Other dissemination tools include:

- The book of Arab Political Parties published by LCPS.
- A Book published by the Bahraini team about the political associations in Bahrain.
- A Book published by the Iraqi team about the political parties in Iraq (The Iraqi Institute of Strategic Studies).
- The case study of the socialist Yemenite party will be published by Fouad Salahi.
- A Book about political parties in Lebanon will be published by the Lebanese team at Dar Annahar edition.

4- Roundtables

According to the research methodology, each team organized two roundtables: one for the first phase and the second for the second phase of research. The roundtables had many objectives: to gather a wide public (researchers, academic and intellectual audience) so that there will be a dynamic discussion between the local audience and the researchers. The major aim was to include the opinions of the audience and to enrich the work by the debate.

First phase:

Bahrain: 28th April 2007: Newspaper Al Waqt.

The round table was organized in the offices of Al Waqt Newspaper the 28th

Iraq: 4th May 2007: Institute of Strategic Studies in Irbil.

Lebanon: 19th May 2007: Hotel Le Bristol – Hamra.

Morocco: 4th June 2007 – Marrakech.

Yemen: 11th April 2007: Hotel Sabaa – Sanaa.

Algeria: The round table wasn't held.

Second phase:

Bahrain: 14th July 2008 – Offices of Newspaper Al Wassat.

Iraq: the round table was replaced by peer reviews due to critical situation.

Lebanon: 16th July 2008 – Hotel Bristol – Beirut.

Morocco: 14th October 2008 – University Ayyad – Marrakech – Morocco.

Yemen: The round table wasn't hold.

Algeria: 30th June 2008 – Hotel Hilton Alger.

Each group conducted in its country the roundtable to discuss the results and the conclusions of the first phase. They invited members of political parties, researchers, elected officials, representatives of political parties, civil society activists and PhD students.

The roundtables were actually carried out in order to create an opportunity to introduce political parties in each country and bring to light research results. Research groups contacted the LCPS list of participants and ordered transcripts of the proceedings of the roundtable. Indeed, the roundtables held in the first and second phases have been successful despite the personal experience of each participant and the amendments and

changes that occurred to the project. The roundtable participants of the six countries emphasized the importance of this research project as a major achievement in research on political parties in the Arab world.

The Algerian roundtable was completed on June 30th. 2008 during which each paper was presented and followed by a discussion: the role of political parties in Algeria by Yahia Zoubir, the FLN (Front de Liberation National) by Mohammad Hennad, the role of Islamic parties by Amel Boubekeur and RND (the Democratic National Rally) by Louisa Dris-Aït Hamadouche.

The Bahraini group conducted its roundtable on July 14th. 2008 by bringing together a number of associations, political parties, researchers and policy analysts to draw on their experience in this field. The roundtable was conducted in the office of the daily newspaper Al Wassat. The researcher Mirza Abbas El Morshed prepared a paper on the experience of political parties in Bahrain and their contribution to political and other fields. The purpose of this roundtable was to present the experience of political parties and their influence in all aspects of political life in Bahrain. Morshed discussed his paper by introducing the issue of political parties, and discussing the three political associations in Bahrain: Al Wifaq Al Manbar Tribune and the Muslim Brotherhood.

The Lebanese team organized its roundtable on July 16th. 2008 at the Bristol Hotel in Beirut. The papers presented were: The Lebanese Communist Party Shawket Echtay, Hezbollah Ahmad Jaber and the Free Patriotic Movement by Fares Echtay. The presentations were followed by rich discussions after which team members presented their research results as well as difficulties encountered.

Members of the Moroccan team conducted their roundtable on October 14th. 2008 at Qadi Ayyad University' Law School. The papers presented which were followed by a debate included: the party of the coalition of Socialist Popular Forces by Aabouchi Hussein; the national gathering of liberals by Al Arabi Billa and the Justice and development party by Mohammed El Malki.

The Iraqi group faced serious security obstacles that prevented them from organizing the roundtable there.

Members of the Yemeni group delayed implementation of the panel for personal reasons.

The transcriptions of the round tables:

- Round table Bahrain – 28th April 2007.
- Round table Iraq - 4th May 2007.
- Round table Lebanon – 19th May 2007.
- Round table Morocco – 4th June 2007.
- Round table Algeria – 30th June 2008.
- Round table Bahrain – 14th July 2008.
- Round table Morocco – 14th October 2008.

5- Accomplishment of the project: the website and the book

A- The Website

The LCPS launched the website by sending a notification to its partners, scholars, and to a list of universities, consultants and journalists. We have received many congratulations messages and encouragement for the research which was considered an excellent move. The website continues to serve the media and a varied interested public. In order to acquire international exposure and launch the website globally, LCPS worked successfully on linking the website to **Intute**, a free social sciences online service with the mission of providing access to the very best web resources for education and research; it is created by a network of UK universities and partners. Specialists evaluated the website after we suggested it and approved including it in their catalogue. It can be found on the following link: <http://www.intute.ac.uk/socialsciences/cgi->

[bin/search.pl?term1=arab+political+parties+studies+&classnumber=All&limit=0&gateway=%25](#) In addition, the project team is currently working on linking the website to numerous other research institutes regionally and internationally.

The LCPS team checks the visitors' comments and messages on a regular basis. The comments come from people encouraging us or from people inquiring about a job opportunity. Others send studies to add them in the "more studies" section. In addition, the team verifies the website's statistical page. The statistics are provided by Google Analytics that was supplied by the web developer. The statistics show that the website is regularly visited on an average of fourteen persons per day. Visitors enter the website directly or through referring sites as the LCPS homepage, however, 83% of visitors enter the site through search engines like Yahoo and Google. Seventy-one percent of visitors are new, as for the visits, they come from 35 countries/territories in Americas, Europe, Africa, Asia and the Middle East.

Below is an example of a statistical report provided by Google Analytics on the number of visits for the period of April 22, 2008- May 22, 2008.

429 Visits

13.84 Visits / Day

As of April 2009, 648 visited the site. The bounce rate increased as well as the averages of minutes spent on the site.

Kindly check the last report on this link:

<https://www.google.com/analytics/settings/?&et=reset&hl=en-US>

B- The Book

Alongside the web site <http://www.appstudies.org/> which publishes studies online, the main final product of the project is the publication of a collective research book on Arab political parties entitled: *Returning to Political Parties? Partisan Logic and Political Transformations in the Arab World*. Edited by Myriam Catusse and Karam Karam and gathering political scientists from several countries. It is under lay-out in the time being

and is expected to be published by LCPS in Arabic and in English, in January 2010. It includes nine selected case studies, in Morocco, Algeria, Yemen, Lebanon, Bahrain and Iraq. Following is a short description of this publication:

Outside back cover:

Are Arab parties facing a predicament? Are they paying the price of repression and limited pluralism? Have they become obsolete to the benefit of other political groups and mobilization modes such as communities, tribes, “*asabiyyat*” or to the advantage of more modern forms such as non governmental organizations, associations and social movements? While some predicted “the end of parties” in the region as a result of authoritarian political systems, doesn’t the recent transition from the one party rule towards a fragile plural party system in many countries put again, party organizations in the spotlight? Most of the time, contemporary Arab parties have little mobilizing power. Yet some are crawling out of underground activity and trying their hands at the exercise of power after years of opposition. Others, and mainly on the Islamic arena, assert themselves as first hand mobilization structures, able in certain cases to compete with regimes in power.

The book addresses those research questions. Emphasizing new and unpublished data, based on field approach, the book’s diverse contributions tackle holistically party life in six countries that have adopted very different political pathways: Yemen, Bahrain, Lebanon, Morocco, Algeria and Iraq. All the studies approach the decline or the revival of the parties from a long term historical perspective mainly with regard to the history of political institutions in those six countries. The studies focus on the rules of party games, on the junction between “the right to politics” and “political rights”. They reveal the fine-tuning between ideological frameworks and political strategies. They raise questions about the renewal of elites, forms of militant action, the array of parties’ political activities particularly social ones. They examine the issue of identity construction and political solidarities in the framework of the nation state, or in contradiction with it. As a final point, the book inquires about how party life in those six countries accounts for political transformations: possible democratization of regimes, forms of domination that

are played out within those regimes, the emergence or the breakdown of leaderships and finally the rationale behind mobilization and collective action.

Chapters' presentation:

Reflecting the variable linkages between partisan development and the transformation of regimes in Morocco, Algeria, Lebanon, Iraq, Yemen and Bahrain, the chapters discuss therefore many facets of partisan life in political societies characterized by their limited pluralism and reputed alternatively as being either authoritarian or undergoing democratic transition. M. Catusse and K. Karam first chapter compares the ongoing trends of Arab partisan life. It questions the “crisis” of political parties, stressing long terms and short terms dynamics and pays attention to new forms of partisan militancy.

Then, L. Bonnefoy and M. Poirier's chapter on the difficult construction of an alternative project for the Yemeni Congregation for Reform, M. Hennadi's chapter on the Algerian FLN and H. A'boushi's chapter on the re-conversion of the Socialist Union of Popular Forces in Morocco, concern themselves primarily with the effects of mutations of the partisan game, the consequences of the transition from underground to legality, from opposition to cooptation, from state party to multi-party system. They pay attention to the institutional and legal framework in which partisan activity takes place and to the links between “the right to politics and political rights”.

Following chapters look into the life of the parties, the renewal of the elites and their modes of selection, on the preferred forms of militancy, on the internal party conflicts and on the variety of their activities, notably social. Thus, A. Mirza El-Murshed outlines the internal dynamics at the Islamic Association *al-Wefaq al-watanî* in Bahrain, paying particular attention to generational effects within this association in search of a partisan system. C. Le Thomas looks at the process of political socialization at work, in schools operated by the *Hizballah* movement in Lebanon. In Morocco, M. Bennani-Chraïbi examines the parliamentary “notabilization” of a “party of militants”, the Socialist Union

of Popular Forces, and M. Catusse and L. Zaki study the transformation of profiles and practices of the local representatives of the Justice and Development Party.

Finally, two last short chapters, that of F. Abdul-Jabbar on the Iraqi Communist Party and that of R. Tal'at Jawhar on the Turkmen Front in Iraq, bring to light some reflections on the reshaping of Iraqi partisan system, underlying the production of identity and political allegiance within the Nation State. They illustrate this double trend: the paradigm of a single party has, in the name of defending the integrity of the nation state, undoubtedly influenced the ordering of authoritarian and hegemonic regimes in the region. But the development of ethnic parties, communitarian and confessional parties and infra- or supra-state parties is also one of the recurring characteristics of regional political arenas.

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Authors' presentation

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