

Who Votes for Islamists? Unpacking Islamist Party Identification in the Middle East and North Africa

Ferdinand Eibl, Middle East Centre, London School of Economics and Political Science

Dörthe Engelcke, Lichtenberg-Kolleg, Institute for Advanced Study, University of Göttingen

Abstract

Post-2011 elections in the Arab World have seen voters flow to and ebb away from Islamist parties, to the extent that the profile of Islamist core voters seems blurred. Existing literature does not sufficiently answer the question of who votes for Islamists either, as it is dominated by single case studies, plagued by a confusion of Islamists movements and parties, activists and voters, and preoccupied with the question of whether Islamists can be democrats. Developing an innovative typology of Islamist voters, this article is the first to map out the spectrum of Islamist core supporters in a larger cross-national study of countries. Based on data from ten Arab countries surveyed in the third wave of the Arab Barometer (2012-2014), our findings challenge the myth that Islamist voters are driven by socioeconomic concerns. Instead, our study emphasizes the importance of religious ideology, conservatism, and nationalism to explain identification with Islamist parties.

1 Introduction

There have been two main contending views on the “true” strength of Islamist parties and the depth of support among their electorate. The prevailing opinion is that, no longer confined to the opposition, Islamists would take the polls by storm (e.g., Brown, 2012; Dağı, 2008). A minority argues that the strength of Islamists has been exaggerated and that they would perform worse in free and fair elections (e.g., Kurzman & Naqvi, 2010). The Arab Spring, many hoped, would help settle this question. And while initial electoral victories, such as in Egypt, made some predict “the age” of political Islam (Beaumont, 2011), Islamists performed poorly in Libya and lost the second post-transition election to a secular competitor in Tunisia. With post-2011 electoral outcomes being inconclusive and a great number of voters fluctuating to and away from Islamist parties, we are left with the question of who the Islamist *core* supporters really are. In this article, we set out to answer this question.

Despite a vast body of literature about political Islam, relatively little is known about the voter base of Islamist parties. Focusing predominantly on party strategies in the context of elections (e.g., Masoud, 2014; Ocakli, 2015; Yildirim & Lancaster, 2015), the literature has thus far failed to produce solid cross-national evidence on the core constituencies of Islamist parties. More specifically, our critique of the literature is fourfold.

Methodologically, previous studies have been developed from ethnographic, historical, or qualitative material, with little to generalize on (see, for instance, Brown, 2012; Clark, 2004; Esposito, 1998; Ismail, 2006; Mitchell, 1970; Roy, 1994; Schwedler, 2006; Wegner, 2012). More recent studies have employed constituency-level data with the associated problems of ecological fallacy (Al-Ississ & Atallah, 2014; Pellicer & Wegner, 2012). And studies of Islamist party identification employing survey data have been single case studies or confined to a few cases and therefore do not capture the voting behavior across a larger group of countries (e.g., Garcia-Rivero & Kotzé, 2007; Masoud, 2014).

Conceptually, most studies have focused on Islamist organizations rather than Islamist political parties. More specifically, they have focused on activists within movements rather than voters (Al-Awadi, 2004; Davis, 1984; Ibrahim, 1980; Kandil, 2015; Ketchley & Biggs, 2015; Waltz, 2014). However, the socioeconomic background of activists is likely to be different from the profile of voters of Islamist parties. Activists are not identical with sympathizers and supporters, and movements and parties are distinct entities (Munson, 1986, p. 272; Pellicer & Wegner, 2012).

Thematically, the literature has been rather fixated on the question of whether or not Islamists support democracy (Bassam Tibi, 2008; Garcia-Rivero & Kotzé, 2007; Masoud, 2008; Robinson, 1997; Tessler, 2002), rather than analyzing identification with Islamist parties. Alternatively, previous studies have focused on support for political Islam (e.g., Tessler, 2010, 2015), which arguably only captures one dimension of Islamist support; and finally, part of the literature has been developed with a specific focus on Islamist extremism (Gambetta & Hertog, 2009; Ibrahim, 1980; Munson, 1986), yet it would be erroneous to assume a perfect match between radical Islamists and the supporters of Islamist parties.

Theoretically, the literature has over-emphasized socioeconomic explanations that have associated supporters of Islamist parties with the “urban poor” (Anderson, 1997; Ayubi, 1991; Kepel, 2002; Munson, 1986; Torelli, Merone, & Cavatorta, 2012; Willis, 2012, p. 157; Yavuz, 2009), or more recently a “new Islamist bourgeoisie” (Beinin 2005; Demiralp 2009; Delibas 2015; Sadowski 2006; Gülalp 2001). This has been at the expense of other explanations, such as religious ideology or nationalism.

By correcting these shortcomings, this article is the first to map out the spectrum of Islamist core supporters in a larger cross-national study of countries. Using data from ten countries surveyed in the third wave of the Arab Barometer (ABIII, 2014), our case selection maximizes variation across political regimes (democracy vs. autocracy) and the status of

Islamist parties in them (opposition vs. government) in the historical “homeland” of Islamism, the Middle East and North Africa (MENA). This allows us to hold regional factors constant while having enough respondents identifying with Islamist parties to conduct a cross-national analysis. In addition, the vast majority of surveys was not collected in the context of imminent elections, which facilitates our aim of identifying core voters.

Substantively, this article defies the myth that support for Islamist parties is predominantly driven by material considerations. Identifying an ideological and social conservative group of core voters, we argue that it is predominantly ideational and not material considerations that drive the Islamist vote. Moreover, this study is also the first to demonstrate that Islamism can tap into a considerable reservoir of nationalist voters if the circumstances are propitious. Finally, despite much writing about the rise of an Islamist entrepreneurial class (Balkir, 2007; Delibas, 2015; Kalin, 2013; Sezer Bazoğlu, 2002), we find no evidence for the petit bourgeois voter type across our cases.

The article is structured as follows. In the following two sections, we derive ideal types of Islamist voters based on an extensive survey of the literature, and put these voter types to empirical scrutiny using ABIII data. We then discuss our results, draw conclusions, and outline the wider implications of our findings.

2 Voter Types in the Literature

The literature on Islamism has produced two important approaches to explain individuals’ support for Islamist parties. The first, top-down approach emphasizes the organizational capacity and electoral strategy of Islamist parties to explain their performance at the ballot box (Akarca, 2013; Cammett & Luong, 2014; Catusse & Zaki, 2009; Clark, 2004; Gunter & Yavuz, 2007; Kurzman & Naqvi, 2010; Masoud, 2014; Ocakli, 2015; Robbins & Tessler, 2011; Schwedler, 2006; Yildirim & Lancaster, 2015). The second, bottom-up approach

focuses on supporters' ideological, attitudinal, and socioeconomic profiles to explain support for Islamist parties (e.g., Çarkoğlu, 2008; Garcia-Rivero & Kotzé, 2007; Tessler, 2015). Whilst we acknowledge the contribution of the former, we will concentrate in this study on the latter part of the literature as we try to map out the profile of Islamist core voters independent of the specific electoral context and the specific electoral strategy of Islamist parties.

Considering bottom-up approaches more specifically, there are two broad strands in the literature. The more dominant strand draws on materialist, sociological explanations and assumes that voters support Islamism due to their socioeconomic position and background. The other strand draws on ideational, ideological explanations and claims that individuals vote for Islamist parties because their attitudes are matched by the specific ideology proposed by Islamists. Deriving ideal-typical voter profiles from the literature, we identify five main types of Islamist voters. Following Max Weber (2005), we view these ideal types as a heuristic tool to enhance our understanding of empirical reality, rather than an exact reflection of that reality. Conceptually, our typology builds on and critically expands the three types of Islamist voters developed by Pellicer and Wegner (2012). While all of their voter types rely on socioeconomic motivations, we propose an ideal-typical categorization of voters that strikes a balance between ideational and materialist approaches. More specifically, three of our types draw on ideological motives: “the ideologue,” “the social conservative,” and “the nationalist.” The other two are based on socioeconomic explanations. We label those “the deprived” and “the petit bourgeois” The following describes the different types which will then be empirically tested across countries.

The Ideologue

For the ideologue, the origin of the Middle East's socioeconomic malaise and the perceived demise of the region lies in the departure from an authentically Islamic way of life. She believes that other countries have been able to surpass the region in terms of socioeconomic development because people have abandoned their faith and adopted secular ideologies like nationalism and socialism. She regards these ideologies as Western and thereby not authentic and foreign to Islam (Ismail, 2006, p. 42). Due to their lack of fit for Muslim societies, these ideologies have subsequently failed to produce sustainable political and economic development (Roy, 1994, p. 52).

The apparent weakness of Muslim society is thereby perceived as the result of a religious crisis by the ideologue. The political and socioeconomic challenges of Muslim society can therefore only be addressed by implementing religious law (*sharia*) and by returning to a true version of Islam which is expected to bring prosperity and power, and restore former glory (Esposito, 1999, pp. 131–32; see also one of the leading Islamist thinkers Qutb, 2006, p. 120). Islamic law is thereby not only understood as a mere legal code, but a total way of life (Qutb, 2006, p. 120).

In the eyes of the ideologue, only when Islamic law is implemented can one speak of a truly Muslim society. Sayyid Qutb, one of the leading ideologues of the Muslim Brotherhood explains: “There is only one place on earth which can be called the home of Islam (*Dar al-Islam*), and it is that place where the Islamic state is established and the Shari‘ah is the authority and Allah’s limits are observed” (Qutb, 2006, p. 131). For the ideologue, the implementation of sharia law is therefore of central importance for the overall reform of Muslim society. The ideologue is also in favor of appointing pious people and religious authorities to the government who can bring existing and pass new laws in accordance with sharia law (Çarkoğlu, 2008, p. 332; Garcia-Rivero & Kotzé, 2007, p. 622).

The ideologue votes Islamist because she hopes that Islamists, once in power, will implement their ideology and establish a political system based on Islamic sharia. Such a system would then help reform society and bring about prosperity and a new Islamic “golden age.”

The Nationalist

Deeply aware of the region’s colonial past, the nationalist’s greatest concern is foreign domination. She feels a lack of self-determination due to continuous foreign interference in Arab affairs. In particular, the nationalist is opposed to Western political, military, cultural and economic encroachment which she sees as tools of imperialism (Ibrahim, 1980, pp. 445–46). In extremis, the West is seen as an occupying force that has not only taken control of Muslim lands in the past but also actively undermines Muslim culture and values in order to subjugate Arab society in an effort that can best be described as “cultural imperialism” (Mitchell, 1970, p. 229). The nationalist subscribes to a narrative of confrontation with the West and a struggle for self-determination. The U.S., in particular, are viewed with great mistrust, and their repeated interference in Middle East affairs and backing of Israel sparks antipathy and disdain.

Furthermore, the nationalist is aware that Islam functioned as an important tool of mobilization during the anti-colonial struggle and helped to bring about nationalist movements (Esposito, 1999, p. 60). The nationalist voter might have been a supporter of liberal nationalism during the struggle for independence, but since she thinks that secular nationalism has failed to produce full self-determination in the post-independence era, she believes that nationalism with an Islamic slant is viewed as best equipped to restore Arab autonomy. The staunch resistance of Islamist parties to Western interference and their insistence of authenticity is particularly appealing to the nationalist. Reflecting her political

attitudes, the nationalist exhibits a strong aversion to foreign interference and a critical stance vis-à-vis the U.S., approaching anti-Americanism.

The nationalist votes Islamist because she hopes that an Islamist-led government would curb foreign influence and interference in Arab affairs to restore a state of self-determination (Ayubi, 1991, p. 158). She is also likely to expect an Islamist-led government to privilege Muslim Arab citizens over non-Muslim and non-Arab citizens.

The Social Conservative

Like the ideologue and the nationalist, the conservative votes Islamist for ideological reasons. The conservative voter is pious and conservative about societal, in particular gender-related, issues. She is likely to prefer women to stay at home to dedicate themselves to child rearing and their husbands (Eickelman & Piscatori, 1996). Islamists' call to preserve the unique character of the Muslim family therefore resonates with her (Pahwa, 2013). If she does support women working outside the home, which might be due to financial considerations, she is likely to make women's employment subject to conditions. According to her, a woman's occupation should not interfere with her domestic duties and her choice of employment should be limited to "respectable professions", which are in line with what are essentially "female qualities" like nurturing and educating (nurses, pharmacists, and teachers). In times of economic crisis when jobs are scarce the conservative voter would want women to step down and not compete with men over the same jobs in order not to threaten men's core role as providers.

The conservative sees the family as the cornerstone of society that needs to be protected. According to her, this can be achieved by enforcing a strict division of gender roles within the family and preventing sexual relationships outside of marriage which are perceived as illegitimate and a threat to the appropriate moral order. In the word of Sayyid Qutb, this

moral order is threatened in case “free sexual relationship and illegitimate children become the basis of a society and if the relationship between man and women is based on lust, passion and impulse, and the division of work is not based on family responsibility and natural gifts; if women’s role is merely to be attractive, sexy and flirtatious, and if the woman is freed from her basic responsibility of bringing up children” (Qutb, 2006, pp. 110–11)

However, the conservative is likely to be in favor of educating women to the highest level since this allows women to fulfill one of their core functions: educated mothers raise educated Muslim children (Ibrahim, 1980, p. 431). Social conservative women, in particular, subscribe to a vision of men as providers. As a result, political Islam is regarded as a guarantee of greater financial security for women and thus deemed economically beneficial to them (Blaydes & Linzer, 2008). Many women are thus expected to be found among the conservative voters.¹

The social conservative voter supports Islamist parties because she hopes that Islamists would implement a conservative gender order in line with her pious life style and her views of a moral society.

The Deprived

The deprived voter is driven by socioeconomic motivations. The degree of her economic grievance can vary considerably ranging from the lack of a stable income as in the case of the urban poor to the absence of public services in the case of inhabitants of neglected regions. That said, what all deprived voters have in common is a deep sense of social exclusion and economic frustration.

¹ Many studies note the support of women for Islamist ideology and women’s active participation in Islamist organizations and movements. See, for example, Mahmood (2005) and Waltz (2014, p. 655).

Regarding socioeconomic characteristics, this voter type has no formal or low levels of education.² Education can thus not function as a tool of upward mobility for her. She is often unemployed or engaged in unstable daily labor jobs. The occurrence of this voter type is partly the result of failed development, rapid urbanization, and the inability of the state to create sufficient employment opportunities. In terms of income, the deprived can be found at the lower end of the income spectrum and, in urban environments, belong to the “urban poor”, the lumpenproletariat, who migrated to the cities since the 1960s where they occupy the shantytowns around large urban centers (Eickelman & Piscatori, 1996, p. 110; Kepel, 2002, p. 66).³ In rural areas, we find them among the impoverished peasantry and agricultural workers, in particular in areas that have been neglected by successive governments. This, in turn, fuels a sense of marginalization and the feeling of being treated unequally compared to other citizens.

Based on her profile, the deprived voter is likely to support Islamism due to Islamists’ oft-noted welfare effort and their rhetoric of social justice (*adl*) (for an example, see Hasan, 1971). It has often been emphasized that Islamists provide services and operate wide charity networks that consist of schools, health clinics, and other welfare organizations (Benthall & Bellion-Jourdan, 2003; Wickham, 2002). Islamists often run these welfare programs because similar state-run programs are absent or insufficient (Eickelman & Piscatori, 1996, p. 117; Wickham, 2002, p. 104). They thereby fill a gap left open by MENA regimes (Wiktorowicz, 2004, p. 11). In Algeria, for instance, the Islamist Islamic Salvation Front (FIS) provided services in the shantytowns which were largely ignored by the state. When an earthquake hit Algiers in 1989, it was the FIS rather than the state that organized the relief effort (Eickelman & Piscatori, 1996, p. 116). The voter-party relationship is thus

² This voter type comes closest to what Pellicer and Wegner (2012) refer to as the “clientelist voter.”

³ Eickelman and Piscatori (1996, p. 111) argue that Islamists are most successful in the urban areas, but also give the example of the rural peasantry being attracted to Islamist groups in upper Egypt at the beginning of the 1990s.

clientelistic in nature and the beneficiaries of these services are expected to reward Islamists by casting their ballots in their favor (Hamzeh, 2001).⁴ In turn, deprived voters hope that an Islamist-led government will initiate redistributive policies that improve her own socioeconomic status. Moreover, they expect Islamists to put an end to their marginalization and social exclusion, and restore a sense of justice which makes them feel an equal member of society.

The Petit Bourgeois

The petit bourgeois represents the entrepreneurial constituency of Islamist parties. Running a small shop, a handicraft, or merchant business, the petit bourgeois is less economically distressed because her small business allows her to live relatively well. Her economic situation and educational background make her belong to the lower middle class of (traditional) occupations (Sadowski, 2006, p. 223; Yavuz, 1997, p. 72). However, she is excluded from political decision-making and lacks connections to the politically powerful which hampers her ability to grow and expand her business (Kepel, 2002, p. 67). Big industrialists are a threat to her and successive waves of state-led industrialization and partial liberalization spawning crony capitalism have made her wary of state intervention in the economy. She thus supports genuine economic liberalization (Demiralp, 2009).

The petit bourgeois voter has often been depicted by the secondary literature as particularly pious and conservative. This could indicate that she votes Islamist for ideological reasons and that she might have overlap with the conservative voter. However, we stress the social position of this voter and her economic intentions. She might have “strong Islamic roots” but she primarily votes Islamist because she is critical of the privileged position of the

⁴ Cammett and Luong (2014) critically remark that little hard data exists about the extent and quality of Islamists’ welfare efforts which makes it difficult to prove that Islamists do indeed have an electoral advantage due to their provision of social services. Moreover, Clark (2004, p. 4) demonstrates for Egypt, Yemen, and Jordan that these welfare networks are in fact run “for and by the middle class” rather than benefitting the poor and most needy.

state elite from which she feels excluded. A good example is the Islamic Republic of Iran where the so-called Bazaaris have historically formed a key constituency of the Islamist regime.⁵ This group felt threatened by the developmental economic policies of the state which, amongst others, excluded them from easy access to credit and was tailored on state-owned businesses; they also feared the encroachment of the modern sector of the economy on their territory in the form of competing machine-made goods and new distributive networks of supermarkets and chain stores. With their class status being under threat, they resented the tremendous gains made by politically connected industrialists. Turkey is another good example where the petit bourgeois supports an Islamist party, in this case, the Turkish Justice and Development Party (AKP). Here, economic growth has produced a new middle class of business people and entrepreneurs that “challenges the long existing privileges of the older Kemalist middle class that largely consists of bureaucrats” (Gunter & Yavuz, 2007, p. 295).

Economic interests thus determine this voter’s choice. Due to her socioeconomic profile, the petit bourgeois voter is likely to emphasize self-responsibility since she is herself “self-made” and could only to a very limited extent or not at all rely on the state for support. Lacking access to prompt permits or non-corrupt local administrators has taught her to be self-sufficient. This voter is thus likely to have no preference for redistribution, but rather hopes for an elite change that improves her access to business opportunities.

3 Empirical Analysis

The Data and their Context

A key element of our research design is the selection of cases from a wide range of regime types, with Islamists in government and in opposition, and the use of survey data that is not

⁵ The largest number of people killed during the Islamic revolution (189 out of a total death toll of 646) came from the artisans and shopkeepers (Arjomand, 1986, p. 402).

collected specifically in the run-up to major elections. If data collection occurs either in a context where Islamist parties are the sole legitimate opposition or an election is imminent, it is likely that our analysis would capture a considerable number of swing and protest voters, rather than core supporters. To what extent, then, does our data meet these criteria?

In all but three countries, the surveys were conducted in a non-electoral context, that is, either significantly before or after an election (see Table 1). Only in three cases (Egypt, Libya, and the Palestinian territories) were the data collected in the run-up to an election. However, in none of these contexts were Islamists seen as the only legitimate opposition in the face of authoritarianism. The logic of the Islamist voter as a protest voter thus does not apply. In Egypt, the data were collected just one month before the May 2012 presidential elections. However, the presidential elections were not the first elections in the country's political transition. Islamists had already successfully contested elections in 2011/2012 and held a strong majority in parliament. In Libya, the data were collected in March and April 2014. Elections for the constitutional assembly took place in June 2014. Yet, again, Islamists had already contested elections previously (in 2012) and had performed relatively poorly. In Palestine, the situation is considerably more complex. In Gaza, where support for Hamas is the strongest, no elections have been held since 2006. The 2012 elections were only held in the West Bank, in which Hamas did not run.

Regarding regime types, our sample runs the whole gamut of political regimes: from dominant party autocracies, such as Algeria or Sudan, to monarchies with elected legislatures, such as Morocco, to regimes in transition, such as Libya, Egypt, and Tunisia. In almost all of these regimes, Islamists participated to some extent in government or were the major ruling party. This means that they could not capitalize on the status as sole legitimate opposition to garner support. Sudan is the only country in which Islamists were not represented in government at the time of data collection. Yet, again, the logic of Islamists as

the only legitimate opposition to authoritarian rule does not apply since the regime of President Omar al-Bashir came to power by military coup in 1989 in which it was supported by Sudan’s chief Islamist ideologue Hassan al-Tourabi’s Islamist National Islamic Front (NIF) (Burr, J. Millard; Collins, 2003, pp. 1–2). Islamists have thus been part of the authoritarian regime and cannot be seen as historical opposition to it.

Granted, there are other circumstantial factors that might have boosted or diminished the popularity of Islamist parties at the time of the survey and, as a result, affected respondents’ party identification. However, we would argue that these factors should be mitigated by the fact that we look at a cross-section of countries, so that recurrent patterns are unlikely to be primarily driven by political circumstances.

Table 1: Political Contexts at the Time of Data Collection

Country	Timing	Regime Type	Islamist participation in government
Algeria	March, April 2013 Last elections: legislative (May 2012), municipal (November 2012) Upcoming elections: presidential (April 2014)	Electoral authoritarian with dominant regime party	Yes (some also in opposition)
Egypt	March, April 2012 Last elections: legislative (November 2011 – January 2012)	Regime in transition	Yes

	Upcoming elections: presidential (May 2012)		
Iraq	June 2013	Hybrid/semi- authoritarian regime	Yes
	Last elections: provincial (April 2013)		
	Upcoming elections: legislative (April 2014)		
Lebanon	July 2013	Consociational democracy	Yes
	Last elections: legislative (June 2009)		
	Upcoming elections: legislative (June 2014, postponed)		
Morocco	April, June 2013; March 2014	Electoral authoritarian with ruling monarch	Yes
	Last elections: legislative (November 2011)		
	Upcoming elections: None		
Libya	March, April 2014	Transitional	Yes
	Last elections: constitutional assembly (February 2014)		
	Upcoming: legislative (June 2014)		
Palestinian Territories (West	December 2012	Semi-authoritarian	Yes
	Last elections: local (October,		

Bank, Gaza)	November 2012, West Bank only).		
	Upcoming: none.		
Sudan	April, May 2013	Authoritarian	No
	Last elections: general (April 2010).		
	Upcoming: None.		
Tunisia	February 2013	Regime in transition	Yes
	Last elections: constituent assembly (October 2011).		
	Upcoming elections: None.		
Yemen	November, December 2013	Semi-authoritarian	Yes
	Last elections: presidential (February 2012).		
	Upcoming: None.		

Note: Past and upcoming elections that were scheduled for longer than one year before or after the date of data collection are not listed.

Variables

Our dependent variable of interest is party preference for Islamist parties. The relevant item in the ABIII asks respondents to name the party which is closest to representing their political, social, and economic aspirations.⁶ For our purposes, we transform the data into a binary measure indicating whether an individual identified with an Islamist party, with

⁶ We only include countries in which at least 15 percent of all respondents identify with any existing party. This, in effect, excludes Jordan and Kuwait from the analysis.

Islamist parties being classified based on secondary literature. If several Islamist parties are named in the same country, we either aggregate the information into one indicator if the relative share of each party is comparable, or run two separate analyses, one on the aggregate indicator and another one on the largest Islamist party.⁷ “Don't know”, “refused” or “none” were coded as missing. Table 2 summarizes the included parties for each country.

Table 2: Included Islamist Parties by Country

Country	Islamist party
Tunisia	Ennahda
Algeria	Movement of Society for Peace (Hamas), Ennahda (MN), Rally for Algeria's Hope (TAJ)
Egypt	<i>Freedom and Justice Party (FJP)</i> , Al-Wasat, al-Nour
Morocco	Justice and Development Party (PJD)
Yemen	Al-Islah
Palestine	<i>The Islamic Resistance Movement (Hamas)</i> , Islamic Jihad, independent Islamic candidates
Iraq	<i>Al-Dawa</i> , Al-Ahrar Bloc (Sadarist movement), Virtue Party, Islamic Supreme Council of Iraq, Iraqi Hizbullah
Lebanon	<i>Hezbollah</i> , Islamic Group
Sudan	Popular Congress Party, National Umma Party, Umma Party (Reform and Renewal), Ansar al-Sunna Muhammadiyah, Islamic Movement
Libya	Justice and Construction Party

Note: Largest Islamist party in italics.

Our independent variables seek to capture the different dimensions of the voter profiles outline above.⁸ To measure the ideologue, we include *Sharia*, which indicates on a 4-point

⁷ In the case of Iraq, we only considered Shia Islamist parties given the state of ethno-religious polarization. We refrained from analyzing Sunni Islamist parties separately, as only five respondents identified with a Sunni Islamist party (Iraqi Islamic Party).

⁸ Summary statistics of all variables are provided in the Online Appendix (OA).

scale whether respondents deem it necessary that the government and parliament should enact laws in accordance with Islamic law.

To capture the voter profile of the social conservative, we include the variables *Pray* and *Womenswork*. Measuring degrees of individual piety on a five-point scale, the variable *Pray* has become the standard measure of piety for studies in Muslim-majority countries (see, for example, Tessler, 2002, 2010). To capture gender-specific orientations, we add the variable *Womenswork* which measures respondents' agreement with the following sentence "A married woman can work outside the home" on a 4-point scale. We consider this item a good measure of a conservative understanding of gender roles and, in particular, of gender conservatism with regard to women's responsibility in the family.

Our nationalist voter is measured by two variables. *Interference* captures respondents' aversion vis-à-vis foreign interference in national affairs. Specifically, the variable measures respondents' agreement with the statement "Foreign interference is an obstacle to reform in your country" on a 4-point scale. In addition, we include the binary variable *Anti-American* measuring whether people think that Americans are good people despite negative U.S. foreign policy. Adding this specific anti-US dimension of nationalist attitudes is important given the widespread aversion to political and economic dependence upon the U.S. (Blaydes & Linzer, 2012; Jamal, 2012).

To capture our deprived voter, we add four variables to our model that measure degrees of deprivation and exclusion. Placing each respondent in one of six income percentiles, *Income* captures financial capacity relative to the income distribution in the country. *Education* measures the highest qualification attained on a 5-point scale, ranging from "no formal education" to "degree-level". *Marginalized* captures a more general feeling of marginalization and exclusion by asking respondents to what extent they feel they are treated equally compared to other citizens. To better capture the socioeconomic motives of the

deprived voter type, we also add a 10-point scale measure of redistributive preferences (*Redistribution*), asking individuals whether they prefer higher taxes in order to spend more on the poor.

To capture the profile of our petit bourgeois voter type, we include a dummy variable called *Tradbusiness* indicating whether an individual runs a small-sized business (less than 10 employees), grocery store, or is a craftsperson. In addition, we rely on the *Redistribution* variable described above.

Finally, we include a number of standard control variables for which we do not have specific theoretical expectations. *Rural* indicates whether the respondent lives in a rural setting.⁹ *Female* is a dummy variable taking the value of 1 for women. *Age* measures respondents' age in years. Wherever appropriate, we included a dummy indicator for *Christian* (Egypt, Lebanon) or *Shia* (Iraq).¹⁰

Empirical Strategy

The empirical analysis of our data faces two major challenges. The first challenge is missing values. As it is well-known from OECD contexts, there are various reasons for individuals not to reveal their party preference (e.g., Berinsky, 1999; Reeves, 1997). This non-response issue is exacerbated in (post-)authoritarian political contexts in which stable patterns of party identification have not (yet) been established and/or individuals' experience with authoritarian regimes has made them wary of revealing their true party preferences. This is reflected in the relatively high number of missing values for party preferences in our sample, ranging from 35 percent in Palestine to 84 percent in Egypt.¹¹ Moreover, the issue of

⁹ In the case of Palestine, the variable distinguishes between cities, villages, and refugee camps,

¹⁰ Unfortunately, the ABIII does not contain any information on Muslim denominations in Lebanon.

¹¹ The percent of missing values for our dependent variable is as follows: Tunisia (51%), Algeria (63%), Egypt (84%), Libya (73%), Morocco (79%), Yemen (45%), Palestine (35%), Iraq (63%), Lebanon (53%), Sudan (61%).

missingness is compounded when missing observations in other variables lead to listwise deletion and the waste of useful information.

To address this issue, we follow best practice in quantitative analysis and impute missing values using multiple imputation (Honaker & King, 2010; G. King, Honaker, Joseph, & Scheve, 2001). In essence, this technique relies on the available information to impute the missing values, using a wider range of variables than the actual regression model.¹² Importantly, multiple imputation does not “invent” new data as the correlation pattern and distributive properties of the observed data remain intact; it simply fills in missing values such that one can use the available observed information in the data. Given that multiple complete datasets are imputed, uncertainty in the predictive model is reflected in the standard errors of the regression model.¹³ The alternative, listwise deletion, has been shown to lead to severe bias and is statistically almost always inferior to multiple imputation (G. King et al., 2001, p. 51).

The second analytical challenge is how to derive reasonable estimates for the different voter types. We address this challenge by devising ideal-typical voter types using the variables included in our dataset and calculating the predicted probabilities for these types based on our model estimates (for a methodologically similar approach, see Bukodi, Erikson, & Goldthorpe, 2014). To be precise, we calculate the change in the predicted probability when moving from the type in its low manifestation to its high manifestation – as it were, from the anti-type to the ideal-type. Let us look at each voter type in turn as summarized in Table 3.

Regarding the ideologue voter type, we focus on the variable *Sharia* which measures respondents’ support for legislation based on Islamic law. More specifically, we calculate the change in the probability of identifying with an Islamist party as an individual changes her

¹² A list of all variables included in the prediction model is available in the OA.

¹³ We impute 20 datasets per country using the R package Amelia II.

attitudes from a secular person to someone who is clearly in favor of implementing Sharia-based legislation, all else being equal. If this attitudinal change is associated with a higher likelihood of supporting an Islamist party, we would take this as an indication for our ideological voter type.

As for our second voter type, the nationalist, we simulate the expected change in the probability of Islamist party identification as individuals change their attitudes from being neutral towards the US and unconcerned about foreign interference, to anti-American and seriously concerned about the effect of foreign interference. If this change is associated with a significant increase in the likelihood of identifying with an Islamist party, this would indicate the relevance of the nationalist voter type.

Similarly, we use changes in individual piety and attitudes towards gender roles to assess the relevance of the social conservative voter type. Specifically, we calculate the difference in the predicted probabilities between an individual with average religious practice and gender-liberal attitudes, and a very pious person with gender-conservative attitudes. Unlike before, we do not use the anti-type in the case of the variable *Pray*, simply because there are hardly any respondents in the survey who state that they never pray (*Pray*=5). Using the median seemed a more realistic assumption.

Moving to our socioeconomic voter types, we use changes in four variables to assess the relevance of the deprived voter type. In essence, we compare the difference in the likelihood of Islamist party identification between two types of individuals: a rather well-off individual with clearly right-wing redistributive preferences and a post-secondary degree who feels being treated fully equally compared to other citizens; and an individual in the lowest income bracket with preferences for higher redistributive taxes and only primary education who clearly feels treated unequally. If the change from such an upper middle class to a deprived

person is associated with a higher identification with Islamists, we would take this to mean that parties tap into the deprived voter spectrum.

Finally, for the petit bourgeois voter type we compare the likelihood of Islamist party identification between two types of individuals: an employee with median income and average redistributive preferences – which are just left of the center in our sample – and a self-employed entrepreneur with noticeable right-wing preferences for taxation and an income level just above the median. Based on our discussion of this voter type, we find it more informative to contrast the petit bourgeois entrepreneur with an average employee, as the petit bourgeois’ key motivation to identify with an Islamist party stems from her status as an entrepreneur without sufficient connections and access to resources, rather than from the difference between “the haves” and “the have-nots” as in the case of the deprived voter type.

Table 3: Derivation of Islamist Voter Types

Variables	Low	High	Variables	Low	High
	<i>The Ideologue</i>			<i>The Deprived</i>	
Sharia	4	1	Redistribution	1	7
			Marginalized	4	1
	<i>The Nationalist</i>		Income	2	5
Anti-American	0	1	Education	5	2
Interference	4	1			
	<i>The Petit Bourgeois</i>				
	<i>The Social Conservative</i>		Redistribution	mean	3
Pray	median	1	Tradbusiness	0	1
Womenswork	1	4	Income	median	2

Note: All variables not relevant for a specific type are held at their median or mean.

We anticipate two main critiques to our approach which we would like to address upfront. First, it could be that the proposed voter types do not exist independent of each other. In other words, if the variables used to capture the dimensions of different voter types are

highly collinear, our exercise would be flawed as our model would calculate probabilities for voter types which are empirically not easily distinguishable. For instance, it could be that individuals with a strong support for Sharia-based legislation nearly universally hold gender-conservative attitudes. As this example shows, however, the reality is more complex as nearly one third of the core Sharia supporters hold more liberal gender attitudes. Looking at the general pattern across our variables, we actually do not find strong patterns of multicollinearity between our explanatory variables and are thus confident that our model is able to capture distinct voter types.¹⁴

Second, one could argue that rather than focusing on combinations of variables we should assess the impact of variables individually to see which factors are driving the results. This could be particularly relevant if a particular variable in the chosen set is primarily driving the results, which would be obscured by our focus on types.¹⁵ While this is true in principle, we would argue that our approach of voter types is more closely aligned with the established literature on Islamist parties. In fact, the literature has thus far produced few hypotheses about specific individual-level characteristics, but rather talked about, mostly socioeconomically defined, groups, such as a “the urban poor” or a “pious bourgeoisie”, which like our approach subsumes a number of characteristics into one type.¹⁶ Given that, we are relatively eclectic as to which variable is the driving factor behind a type, and we would also acknowledge that this might vary from country to country. For example, whether it is low levels of education or low levels of income associated with Islamist party identification, we would take both as an indication for a deprived voter type. Likewise, whether it is anti-Americanism or objection to foreign interference that makes individuals more likely to

¹⁴ A vif test for multicollinearity yields very weak scores for all our variables, which points to little multicollinearity in our data. The test is presented in the OA.

¹⁵ Please note that if variables have significant effects of opposite sign, the aggregate effect is likely to be insignificant.

¹⁶ A notable exception is the ideologically motivated voter type, which accordingly only relies on one key indicator, that is, support for Sharia-based legislation.

identify with Islamist parties, the key insight is that Islamists tap into a nationalist voter spectrum. Thus, in the absence of fine-grained enough theory about individual characteristics, we hold that thinking about variables in terms of conglomerating types is heuristically superior and more suitable for cross-country comparison.

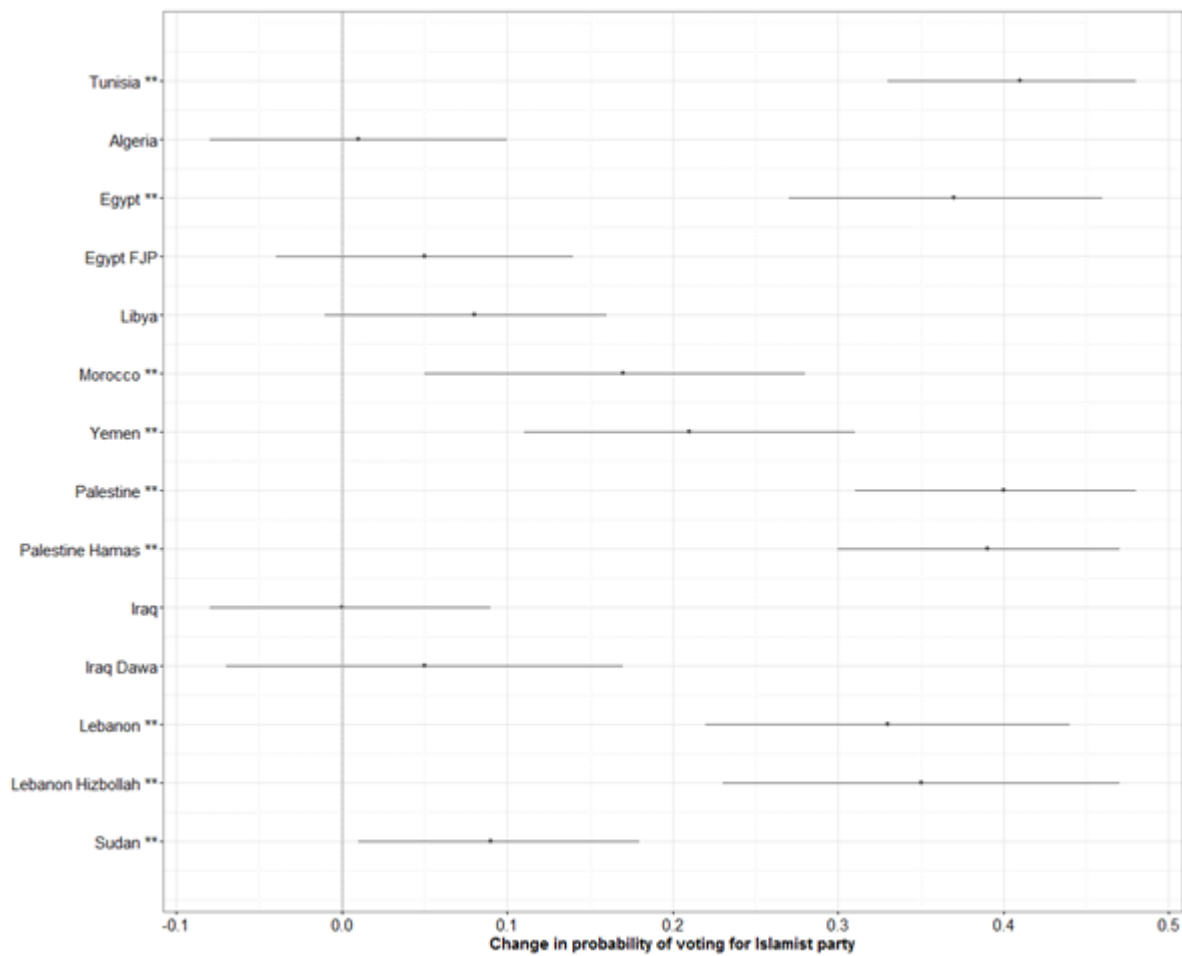
Findings

Having described our variables and analytic approach, we now turn to our main findings. To make our results more accessible, we present them in terms of coefficient plots for each voter type. The plots represent the average prediction from our 20 multiply imputed datasets.¹⁷ The regression output upon which these plots are based is available in the OA.

Figure 1 presents our findings for the ideological voter type. In the genesis of the literature on Islamism, the ideologue has historically been considered the core voter of Islamist parties. Our findings broadly confirm this claim, yet add some interesting nuances. In seven of the ten countries in the sample, the ideologue is significantly more likely to vote for an Islamist party. This effect is particularly strong in Tunisia, Egypt, Palestine, and to a lesser extent Lebanon, where the likelihood of voting Islamist is 35 to 40 percent higher compared to a secular individual. By contrast, in Algeria and Iraq the secularism cleavage does not seem to drive voters toward Islamist parties, whereas in Libya the trend is broadly in line with the rest of the sample but the coefficient does not quite reach levels of statistical significance. We also observe an interesting variation in the case of Egypt, where our finding suggests that concerns for Sharia-based legislation were driving voters toward Islamist parties as a whole, yet not particularly to the biggest Islamist party, the Muslim Brotherhood's FJP. Rather, it seems that ideological voters have been drawn to the Salafist Al-Nour, which has rightly been perceived as more resolute in matters regarding the implementation of the sharia.

¹⁷ We used the R package Zelig to calculate predicted probabilities.

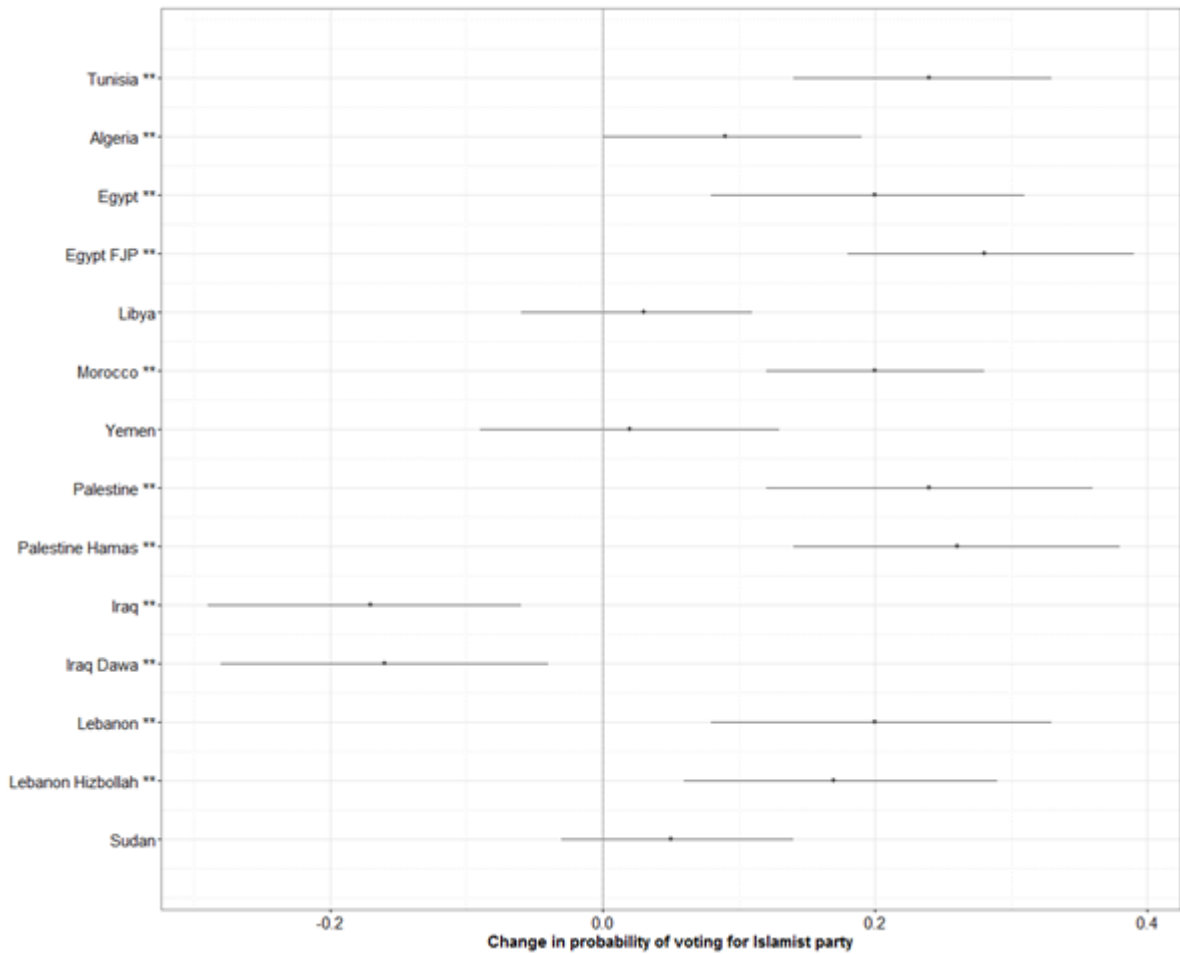
Figure 1: The Ideologue



Note: * significant at 0.10 level ** significant at 0.05 level

With significant findings in six out of ten countries (Figure 2), it seems safe to say that the social conservative represent another key constituency of Islamist parties in the Middle East. Tapping into a pious, gender-conservative voter spectrum, the social conservative type is particularly prominent in the case of the Egyptian FJP, the Tunisian Ennahda, and the Palestinian Hamas, with the change in the probability ranging between 25 and 30 percent. Slightly weaker in size, a similar effect can be observed in Morocco, Lebanon, and Algeria. By contrast, in the case of Libya, Yemen, and Sudan, socially conservative voters do not seem to be particularly drawn toward the Islamist spectrum. Finally, the results for Iraq are remarkable in that socially conservative voters seem significantly less likely to identify with a Shia Islamist party – a finding which survives in all our robustness tests (see below).

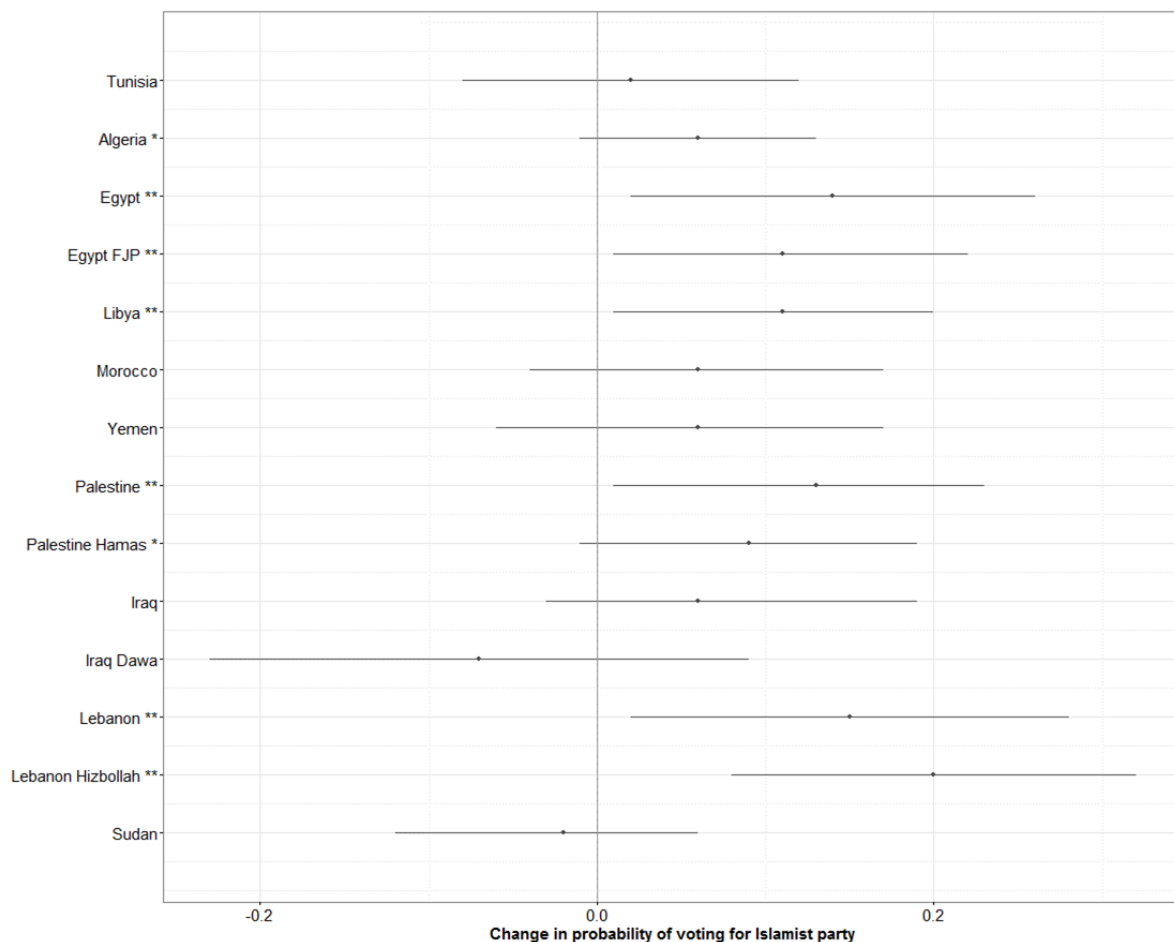
Figure 2: The Social Conservative



Note: * significant at 0.10 level ** significant at 0.05 level

Figure 3 presents our results for the nationalist voter type. Save for the Dawa party in Iraq and Islamist parties in Sudan, the direction of all coefficients is positive, suggesting that Islamist parties do indeed appeal to segments of the nationalist voter spectrum. The effect is strongest in Lebanon where the Hizbollah seems particularly attractive for voters harboring anti-American attitudes and an aversion against foreign interference. In view of the cross-country pattern, the nationalist voter type is particularly prominent in countries with (recent) histories of external conflict. That said, it is not exclusively limited to countries at the frontline of the Arab-Israeli conflict, as the case of Algeria and Libya demonstrate. Overall, Islamist parties capture part of the nationalist vote in every other country in the sample.

Figure 3: The Nationalist

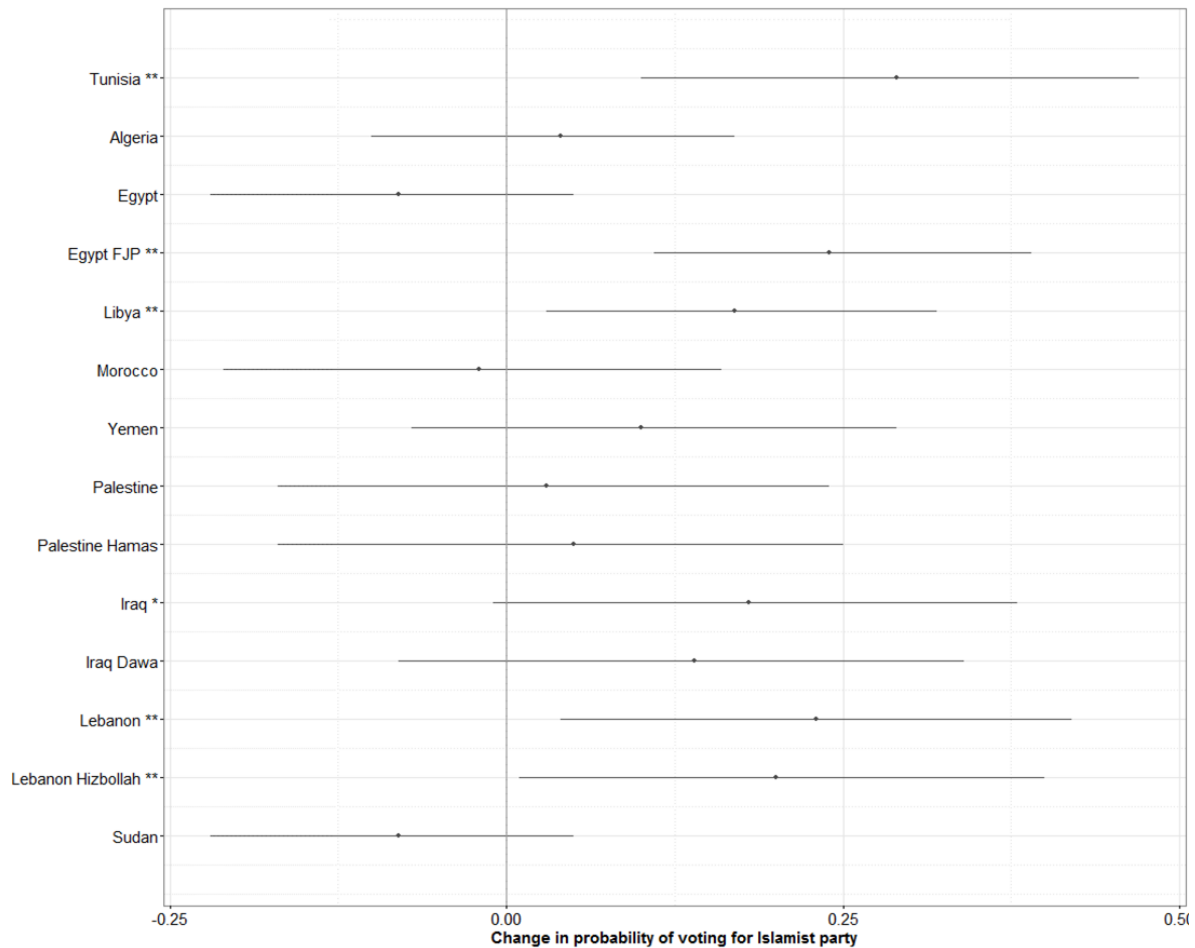


Note: * significant at 0.10 level ** significant at 0.05 level

Turning from the ideational to our socioeconomic voter types, Figure 4 presents our findings for the deprived voter type. While it appears that Islamist parties indeed capture the vote of “the poor” in some places, the picture is much more nuanced than some of the literature suggests. In fact, what we see is that deprived voters were particularly drawn to Islamist parties in recent transition countries, such as Egypt in the case of the FJP, Tunisia, and Libya. In addition, deprived voters were more likely to identify with Shia Islamist parties in Lebanon and, to a lesser extent, in Iraq. By contrast, in the other half of the sample, Islamist parties fail to attract underprivileged voters, with negative average effects in Sudan, Morocco, and Egypt – suggesting that both Al-Nour and the Al-Wasat party attract middle to

upper class voters as opposed to the FJP, drawing the average effect of the Egypt coefficient into the negative.

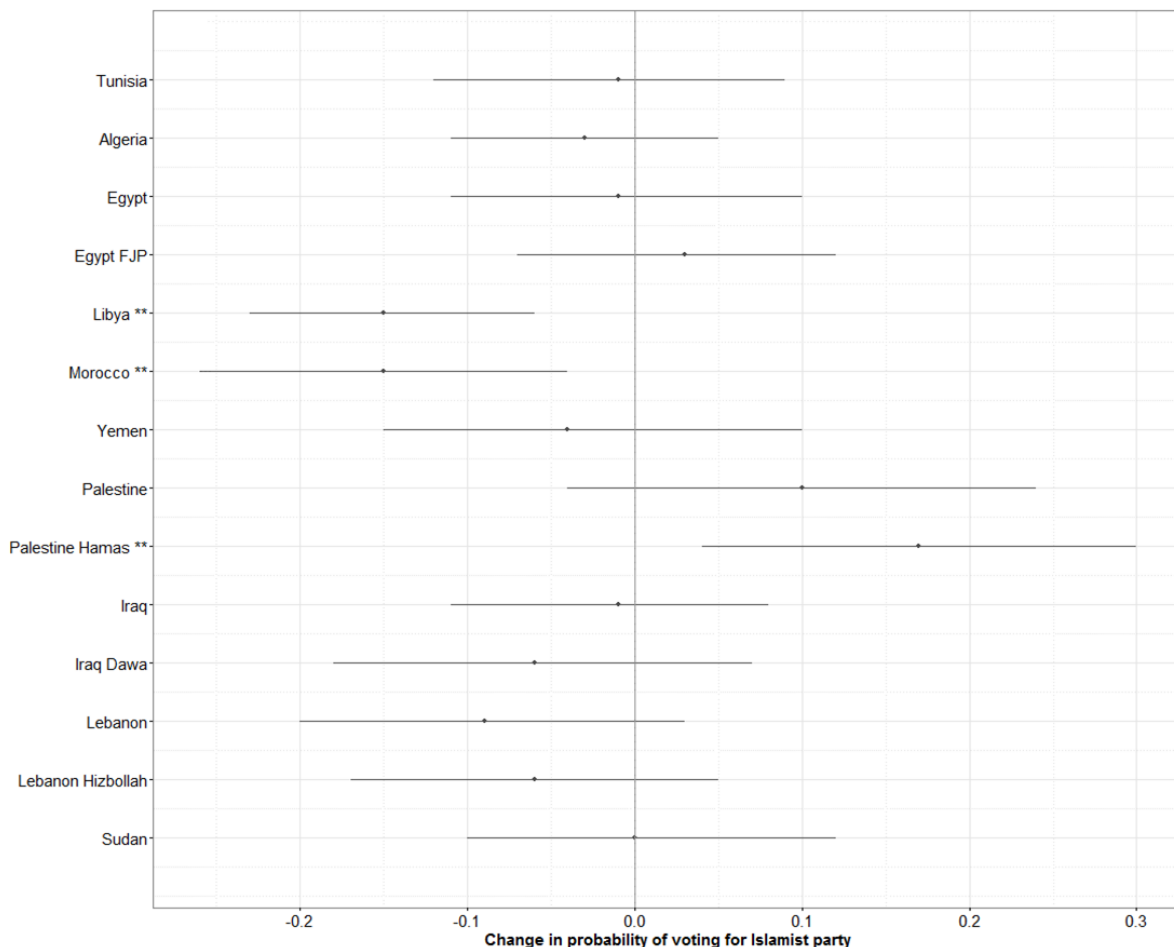
Figure 4: The Deprived



Note: * significant at 0.10 level ** significant at 0.05 level

Finally, Figure 5 plots the results for the petit bourgeois voter type. Quite remarkably, despite a voluminous body of literature highlighting the importance of small entrepreneurs as a backbone of Islamist parties, we find no evidence that would justify this emphasis in the MENA region. By and large, the predicted average effects are negative and in the case of Libya and Morocco statistically significant, suggesting that petit bourgeois voters are less likely to identify with Islamist parties. The only exception to this pattern is the Palestinian Hamas, which seems to capture some of the entrepreneurial voter spectrum.

Figure 5: The Petit Bourgeois



Note: * significant at 0.10 level ** significant at 0.05 level

Robustness Tests

To assess the robustness of the above patterns, we conduct two types of robustness tests. For key variables for which we have alternative items in the ABIII, we rerun our analysis changing each variable in turn. More specifically, we first use an alternative measure of support for Islamic law, asking respondents whether they find a system governed by Islamic law and without parties or elections appropriate for their country (R1). Second, we replace our *Interference* variable with an item asking individuals whether external demands for reform were acceptable or not (R2). Third, as our income measure might not reflect relative

financial capacity appropriately, we replace it by an item asking individuals to what extent their income covered the expenses of the household (R3). In addition to that, we replace our baseline logistic model with a weighted model, using the survey weights provided in the ABIII to adjust for effects of over- or under-sampling in the data (R4).

The results of these sensitivity analyses are shown in Table 4. The table provides a succinct summary of the different tests; more detailed coefficient plots for each test have been placed in the OA. Taken together, the results confirm both the prominence of our three ideational voter types and the robustness of the cross-country pattern.

As for the ideologue, the tests suggest that we might in fact slightly underestimate its relevance as the effect turns significant for the FJP and in Libya for a number of robustness tests. Regarding the social conservative and the nationalist voter, the results are nearly identical to those of the baseline model, except in the case of Sudan where the weighted regression model shows a positive significant effect. This again suggests that we might slightly underestimate the importance of the social conservative vote. As for the nationalist, in Algeria the weakly significant finding for the nationalist survives only one of the three robustness tests; this finding should thus be viewed with caution. Similarly, though more robust, the nationalist in Libya also retains its significance in only two of the four tests.

As regards the deprived voter, the initial findings of our main model are largely consistent throughout the tests. In the case of R3 which substitutes our income variable with a measure of the household's economic situation, we do not recover the significant finding in the case of Lebanon, so this finding comes with a caveat. The model furthermore suggests a deprived voter type in the case of Yemen and Palestine, although we are reluctant to place too much weight on this finding, given that it did not show up in any of the other specifications. Finally, concerning the petit bourgeois voter, R3 suggests that Islamist parties in Egypt might

capture some of the entrepreneurial vote, though we would again caution against over-interpreting this finding.

Table 4: Robustness Tests

	Ideologue					Social Conservative					Nationalist					Deprived					Petit Bourgeois				
	BL	R1	R2	R3	R4	BL	R1	R2	R3	R4	BL	R1	R2	R3	R4	BL	R1	R2	R3	R4	BL	R1	R2	R3	R4
Tunisia	++	++	++	++	++	++	++	+	++	++						++	++	++	++	++					
Algeria		++				++	++	++	++	++	+				+										
Egypt	++	++	++	++	++	++	++	++	++	++	++	+	++	++											++
Egypt <i>FJP</i>		++	++			++	++	++	++	++	++	++	++	++	++	++	++	++	++	++					
Libya			++	++	++						++	+	++			++	++	++	++	++	--	--	--	--	--
Morocco	++	++	++	++	++	++	++	++	++	++											--	--	--		--
Yemen	++	++	++	++	++														++						
Palestine	++	++	++	++	++	++	++	++	++	++	++	++	++	++	++					++					
Palestine <i>Hamas</i>	++	++	++	++	++	++	++	++	++	++	+	++	++	+	++						++	++	++	++	++
Iraq		--				--	--	--	--	--			+			+	+	+			+				
Iraq <i>Dawa</i>		--				--	--	--	--	--			--							++					
Lebanon	++		++	++	++	++	++	++	++	++	++	++	++	++	++	++	++	++		++					
Lebanon <i>Hizbollah</i>	++		++	++	++	++	++	++	++	++	++	++	++	++	++	++	+	++		++					
Sudan	++	++	++	++	++					+			--												

Note: BL = baseline model; R1 = robustness test 1; R2 = robustness test 2; R3 = robustness test 3; R4 = robustness test 4; ++ positive significant at 0.05 level; + positive significant at 0.10 level; -- negative significant at 0.05 level; – negative significant at 0.10 level

4 Discussion and Concluding Remarks

Ideology Matters

This study has set out to unpack Islamist party identification and identify core constituencies of Islamist parties across the Middle East. The first unequivocal result of this endeavor is that Islamist core constituencies seem predominantly motivated by ideas and ideology, rather than their socioeconomic status. Against a widespread tenet among scholars and the wider public, it is not the underprivileged urban poor (Bennani-Chraïbi, 2008; Torelli et al., 2012; Yavuz, 2009), the losers of globalization (Delibas, 2015; Tibi, 2009) and failed development (Turner, 2000), or the “petty entrepreneurs” (Gulalp, 2001, p. 438) who predominantly identify with Islamist parties. Rather, our study shows that the Islamist core constituencies are to be found among three types of voters:

First, Islamist parties appeal to voters who care about the implementation of Islamic law commonly referred to as Sharia. While this might not come as a surprise, the uniformity of this pattern across our sample is indeed quite striking. Not only is this voter type the most prominent across the sample – it flags up in seven out of ten countries – the size of its effect is also by far the strongest. The finding also goes against recent claims that the secularism fault line has narrowed and that the issue has in some countries been “settled” (Masoud, 2014, p. 3406). On the contrary, our results underline the importance of the secularism cleavage as a persistent gravitational element in Middle East politics.

Second, Islamist parties tap into a pious, socially conservative voter spectrum. While this voter type has been suggested in the literature (Badran, 2013; Belal, 2011), it has conceptually often been conflated with other voter types, such as the ideologue (Ibrahim, 1980) or the petit bourgeois voter (Akarca, 2013; Balkir, 2007). This study is the first to

empirically establish it as a distinct voter type and systematically demonstrate its importance across a wider range of countries. Given the extent to which patriarchal social values are perceived to be underpinned by religious sources (Tessler, 2015, p. 2402), it is understandable that the region has yet to witness the emergence of an ostensibly social conservative secular party. By consequence, the social conservative voter spectrum is likely to remain a major backbone of Islamist party support for some time to come. This finding is in line with other research that has highlighted the particular salience of gender conservatism in the Middle East (Price, 2015).

Though not the primary focus on this paper, we note that the social conservative voter type seems less pronounced in societies with strong tribal ties, such as Libya, Yemen, and Sudan. This suggests that a specific type of development might be necessary for this cleavage to become salient. As for Iraq, the result indeed defies the cross-regional pattern in that social conservative voters seem less likely to identify with Islamist parties. While a solid explanation of this pattern exceeds the scope of this study, it is noteworthy that other gender-related survey items, such as the question if men make better political leaders, also show that Shia Islamist voters in Iraq seem surprisingly more gender-liberal than the rest of the population.

Third, we present robust evidence that Islamist parties attract significant support from the nationalist voter spectrum. Given that Islamist parties have since their inception positioned themselves as strong opponents to Western domination and, more recently, US hegemony in the region (see, for instance, Gelvin, 2010; Jamal, Masoud, & Nugent, 2013; Voll, 2013), it is surprising that this voter type has thus far not been subject to a systematic cross-country evaluation. This study thus fills an important gap in this respect. Moreover, we also demonstrate that the rallying of nationalist voters behind Islamist parties mainly occurs in contexts in which (i) domestic politics has been shaped by the Arab-Israeli conflict (Egypt,

Lebanon, Palestine) or (ii) the country has a legacy of (recent) foreign interference (Algeria, Libya, Iraq in R2). In the case of Libya, it is also possible that decades of Gaddafi's anti-Western propaganda have left a trace on the country's political culture.

Islamists' Left-wing Constituency

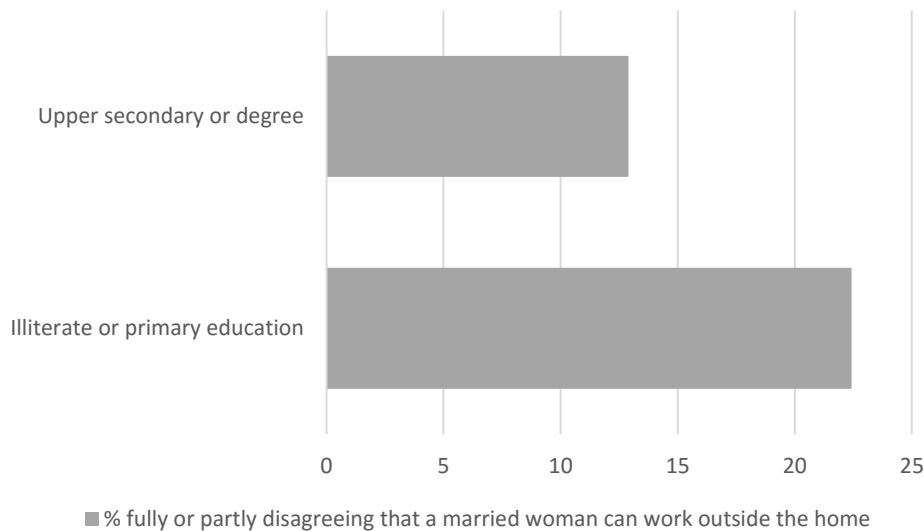
While we emphasize the importance of ideological and attitudinal motivations of Islamist voters, socioeconomic voter types should not completely be discarded. In fact, we do find that Islamist parties garner support among what Cammet and Luong (2014, p. 199) have called the "poor and needy" and what we have characterized as deprived voters. Less common than the ideologue and social conservative and more confined to specific Islamist parties within a country, the deprived voter seems to matter under two types of circumstances:

Firstly, deprived voters appear attracted to Islamist parties in countries with a legacy of ethno-religious marginalization and discrimination. This is particularly visible in the case of Lebanon where the Shiite community has politically and economically been marginalized in the country's colonial and postcolonial periods (Cammett & Issar, 2010, p. 399). A similar logic would explain the, albeit weaker, appeal of Shia Islamist parties to deprived voters in Iraq where the Shia community had developed a profound resentment at increasing discrimination and ethnic favoritism under the Baath (Tripp, 2002, p. 208).

Second, we find that Islamist parties tap into the deprived electorate in contexts of recent political transitions where their outreach to this voter group is no longer encumbered by a dominant ruling party (such as in Algeria or Sudan) or an electoral system that is stacked against any party reaping large majorities (such as in Morocco). This finding is thus in line with Tarek Masoud's (2014) argument that Islamists successfully tap into traditionally left-wing electorates in post-transition contexts because they are locally better embedded and can

partly take over the patronage networks left by former ruling parties. One of his main conclusions is that there is a large untapped pool of voters for leftist parties, provided they improve their organizational capacity.

Figure 6: Gender Conservatism by Levels of Education



Note: Figure based on weighted percentages of pooled ABII sample.

However, based on our finding on the social conservative voter type, we would qualify this conclusion. While it is true that voters with redistributive preferences might be programmatically susceptible to left-wing parties, it is also true that this electorate is considerably more gender-conservative than the upper-middle class electorate. As Figure 6 shows, individuals with lower levels of education – a major correlate of income and thus deprivation – are nearly twice as conservative as individuals with at least an upper secondary education. Now, given that individuals with gender-conservative values are significantly more likely to support Islamist parties, we would lower expectations that well-organized left-wing parties could easily snatch away potential pro-redistribution voters from Islamist parties. As long as left-wing parties in the Middle East remain rather progressive with regard

to gender issues – which the majority of them are – they will struggle to fully exploit the potential of left-wing voters in the region.

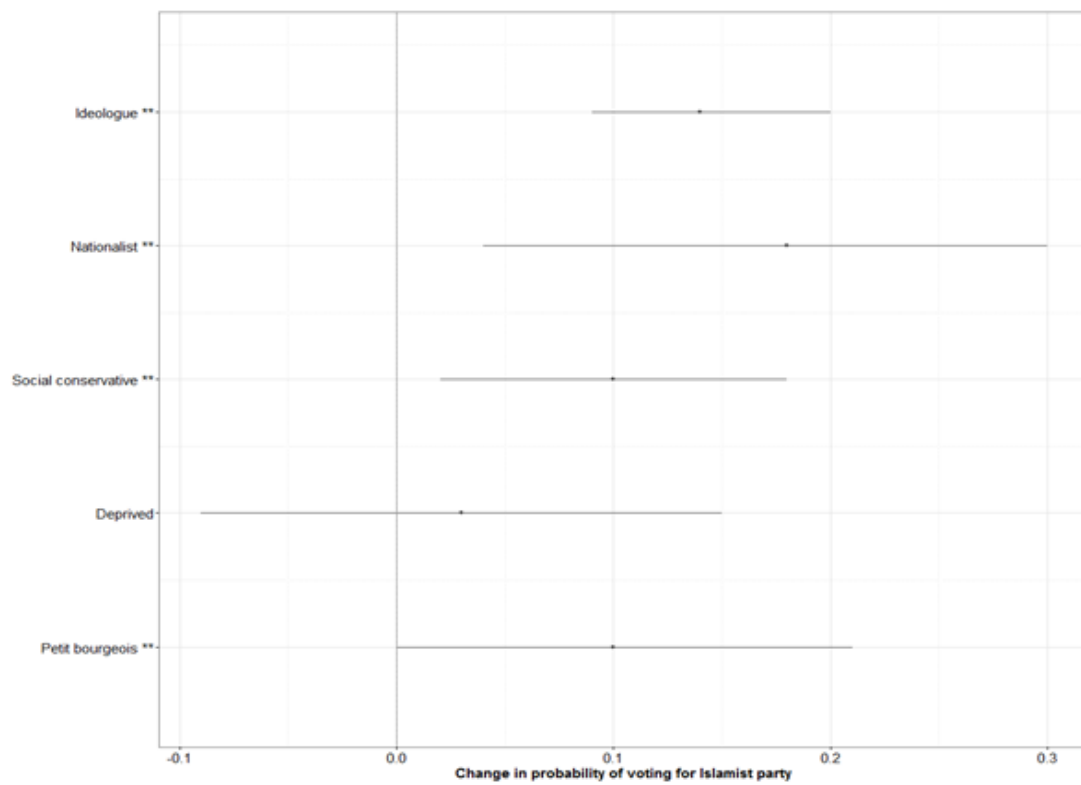
The Petit Bourgeois is Turkish

A third major conclusion of this study is that the petit bourgeois voter type is in no way a core constituency of Islamist parties in the Middle East. This is indeed surprising considering how much ink has been spilled on the relationship between the small entrepreneurial class and Islamist parties: Arjomand (1989) argues that one of the key supporters for the Islamic Revolution in Iran came from the traditional bazaar economy; Sezer (2002) talks of a new pro-Islamist bourgeoisie; Eickelmann and Piscatori (1996) consider petit bourgeois traders and merchants amongst key supporters of Islamist movements. More recently, this line of argument has been developed in the Turkish context where the rise of the AKP has been associated with the ascendancy of a new business class with an interest in economic liberalization and an aversion against state intervention in the economy (Balkir, 2007; Çarkoğlu, 2002; Delibas, 2015; Yavuz, 1997, 2009).

Since most of the above-cited authors do not rely on survey data to make their case, we were curious to see whether we would be able to recover a petit bourgeois voter type when applying our approach to Turkish data. Using the most recent World Values Survey (WVS, 2012), Figure 7 displays the relative importance of our five voter types in Turkey. We refer the reader to the OA for the details of our model. The important point here is that petit bourgeois entrepreneurs indeed represent a significant constituency of the AKP. While a comprehensive explanation of the absence of this voter type in the Middle East lies beyond the scope of this article, we would suggest that the legacy of heavily state-led, rent-driven industrialization followed by partially liberalized crony capitalism (Heydemann, 2004; S. J. King, 2007) has simply prevented small- and medium-sized entrepreneurs from becoming a

sizeable electoral constituency. The fact that the petit bourgeois voter type is only significant in Palestine where state capitalism was not an option and the circumstances of the Israeli embargo of Gaza favor an economy based on small businesses, is also in line with this explanation.

Figure 7: Islamist Voter Types in Turkey



Note: * significant at 0.10 level ** significant at 0.05 level

5 References

- ABIII. (2014). Arab Barometer Third Wave. Retrieved May 19, 2016, from <http://www.arabbarometer.org>
- Akarca, A. T. (2013). *Modeling Political Performance of Islamist and Islamist-Rooted Parties in Turkey* (No. 786). *ERF Working Paper*. Cairo.
- Al-Awadi, H. (2004). *In Pursuit of Legitimacy. The Muslim Brotherhood and Mubarak, 1982–2000*. London: I.B. Tauris.
- Al-Ississ, M., & Atallah, S. (2014). Patronage and ideology in electoral behavior: Evidence from Egypt's first presidential elections. *European Journal of Political Economy*, 37, 241–248.
- Anderson, L. (1997). Fulfilling Prophecies: State Policy and Islamist Radicalism. In J. L. Esposito (Ed.), *Political Islam: Revolution, Radicalism or Reform?* (pp. 17–32). Boulder: Lynne Rienner.
- Arjomand, S. A. (1986). Iran's Islamic Revolution in Comparative Perspective. *World Politics*, 38(3), 383–414.
- Arjomand, S. A. (1989). *The Turban for the Crown: The Islamic Revolution in Iran*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Ayubi, N. M. (1991). *Political Islam: Religion and Politics in the Arab World*. London: Routledge.
- Badran, M. (2013). Political Islam and Gender. In J. L. Esposito & E. E. Shahin (Eds.), *The Oxford Handbook of Islam and Politics* (pp. 112–123). Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Balkir, C. (2007). The July 2007 Elections in Turkey: A Test for Democracy. *Mediterranean Politics*, 12(3), 415–422.
- Bassam Tibi. (2008). Why They Can't Be Democratic. *Journal of Democracy*, 19(3), 43–48.
- Beaumont, P. (2011). Political Islam poised to dominate the new world bequeathed by Arab spring. *The Guardian*. Retrieved from <http://www.theguardian.com/world/2011/dec/03/political-islam-poised-arab-spring>
- Beinin, J. (2005). Political Islam and the New Global Economy. The Political Economy of an Egyptian Social Movement. *CR: The New Centennial Review*, 5(1), 111–139.
- Belal, Y. (2011). *Le cheikh et le calife. Sociologie religieuse de l'islam politique au Maroc*. Lyon: ENS Éditions.
- Bennani-Chraïbi, M. (2008). “Hommes d'affaires” versus “profs de fac”. La notabilisation parlementaire d'un parti de militants au Maroc. *Revue internationale de politique comparée*, 15(2), 205–219.
- Benthall, J., & Bellion-Jourdan, J. (2003). *The Charitable Crescent Politics of Aid in the Muslim World*. London: I.B. Tauris.
- Berinsky, A. J. (1999). The Two Faces of Public Opinion. *American Journal of Political Science*, 43(4), 1209–1230.
- Blaydes, L., & Linzer, D. A. (2008). The Political Economy of Women's Support for Fundamentalist Islam. *World Politics*, 60(4), 576–609.
- Blaydes, L., & Linzer, D. A. (2012). Losing Muslim Hearts and Minds: Religiosity, Elite Competition, and Anti-Americanism in the Islamic World. *American Political Science Review*, 106(2), 225–243.
- Brown, N. J. (2012). *When Victory Is Not an Option: Islamist Movements in Arab Politics*. Ithaca: Cornell University Press.
- Bukodi, E., Erikson, R., & Goldthorpe, J. H. (2014). The Effects of Social Origins and Cognitive Ability in Educational Attainment: Evidence from Britain and Sweden. *Acta Sociologica*, 57(4), 293–310.
- Burr, J. Millard; Collins, R. O. (2003). *Revolutionary Sudan: Hasan al-Turabi and the*

- Islamist state, 1989-2000*. Leiden: Brill.
- Cammett, M., & Issar, S. (2010). Bricks and Mortar Clientelism: sectarianism and the logics of welfare allocation in Lebanon. *World Politics*, 62(3), 381–421.
- Cammett, M., & Luong, P. J. (2014). Is there an “Islamist Political Advantage”? *Annual Review of Political Science*, 17, 187–206.
- Çarkoğlu, A. (2002). The Rise of the New Generation Pro-Islamists in Turkey: The Justice and Development Party Phenomenon in the November 2002 Elections in Turkey. *South European Society and Politics*, 7(3), 123–156.
- Çarkoğlu, A. (2008). Ideology or Economic Pragmatism?: Profiling Turkish Voters in 2007. *Turkish Studies*, 9(2), 317–344.
- Catusse, M., & Zaki, L. (2009). Gestion communale et clientélisme moral au Maroc: les politiques du Parti de la justice et du développement. *Critique Internationale*, 42(1), 73–91.
- Clark, J. A. (2004). *Islam Charity and Activism: Middle-Class Networks and Social Welfare in Egypt, Jordan, and Yemen*. Bloomington: Indiana University Press.
- Dağı, İ. D. (2008). Turkey’s AKP in Power. *Journal of Democracy*, 19(3), 25–30.
- Davis, E. (1984). Ideology, Social Class and Islamic Radicalism in Modern Egypt. In S. A. Arjomand (Ed.), *From Nationalism to Revolutionary Islam* (pp. 134–157). London: Macmillan Press.
- Delibas, K. (2015). *The Rise of Political Islam in Turkey: Urban Poverty, Grassroots Activism and Islamic Fundamentalism*. London: I. B. Tauris.
- Demiralp, S. (2009). The Rise of Islamic Capital and the Decline of Islamic Radicalism in Turkey. *Comparative Politics*, 41(3), 315–335.
- Eickelman, D. F., & Piscatori, J. P. (1996). *Muslim Politics*. Oxford: Princeton University Press.
- Esposito, J. L. (1998). *Islam and Politics*. Syracuse: Syracuse University Press.
- Esposito, J. L. (1999). *The Islamic Threat: Myth of Reality?* Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Gambetta, D., & Hertog, S. (2009). Why are there so many engineers among Islamic radicals? *European Journal of Sociology*, 50(2), 201–230.
- Garcia-Rivero, C., & Kotzé, H. (2007). Electoral Support for Islamic Parties in the Middle East and North Africa. *Party Politics*, 13(5), 611–636.
- Gelvin, J. L. (2010). Nationalism , Anarchism, Reform: Political Islam from the Inside out. *Middle East Policy*, 17(3), 1–18.
- Gulalp, H. (2001). Globalization and Political Islam: The Social Bases of Turkey’s Welfare Party. *International Journal of Middle Eastern Studies*, 33, 433–448.
- Gunter, M. M., & Yavuz, H. M. (2007). Turkish Paradox: Progressive Islamists versus Reactionary Secularists. *Critique: Critical Middle Eastern Studies*, 16(3), 289–301.
- Hamzeh, A. (2001). Clientalism, Lebanon: Roots and Trends. *Middle Eastern Studies*, 37(3), 167–178.
- Hasan, A. (1971). Social justice in Islam. *Islamic Studies*, 10(3), 209–219.
- Heydemann, S. (Ed.). (2004). *Networks of Privilege in the Middle East: The Politics of Economic Reform Revisited*. New York: Palgrave Macmillan.
- Honaker, J., & King, G. (2010). What to do about missing values in time series cross section data. *American Journal of Political Science*, 54(2), 561–581.
- Ibrahim, S. E. (1980). Anatomy of Egypt’s Militant Islamic Groups: Methodological Note and Preliminary Findings. *International Journal of Middle East Studies*, 12, 423–453.
- Ismail, S. (2006). *Rethinking Islamist Politics: Culture, the State and Islamism*. London: I.B. Tauris.
- Jamal, A. (2012). *Of Empires and Citizens: Pro-American Democracy or No Democracy At All?* Princeton: Princeton University Press.

- Jamal, A., Masoud, T., & Nugent, E. (2013). Islamism and the Problem of Western Hegemony: Experimental Evidence from Egypt. *Unpublished Paper*.
- Kalin, I. (2013). The Ak Party in Turkey. In J. L. Esposito & E. E. Shahin (Eds.), *The Oxford Handbook of Islam and Politics* (pp. 423–438). Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Kandil, H. (2015). *Inside the Brotherhood*. Cambridge: Polity Press.
- Kepel, G. (2002). *Jihad: The Trail of Political Islam*. London: I.B.Tauris.
- Ketchley, N., & Biggs, M. (2015). *The Social Contexts of Islamist Activism: Elite Students and Religious Education in Egypt* (No. 2015-04). *Sociology Working Papers*. Oxford.
- King, G., Honaker, J., Joseph, A., & Scheve, K. (2001). Analyzing Incomplete Political Science Data. *American Political Science Review*, 95(1), 49–69.
- King, S. J. (2007). Sustaining Authoritarianism in the Middle East and North Africa. *Political Science Quarterly*, 122(3), 433–459.
- Kurzman, C., & Naqvi, I. (2010). Do Muslims Vote Islamic? *Journal of Democracy*, 21(2), 50–63.
- Mahmood, S. (2005). *Politics of Piety: The Islamic Revival and the Feminist Subject*. Princeton: Princeton University Press.
- Masoud, T. (2008). Are They Democrats?: Does It Matter? *Journal of Democracy*, 19(3), 19–24.
- Masoud, T. (2014). *Counting Islam: Religion, Class, and Elections in Egypt* (Kindle ed.). Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Mitchell, R. (1970). *The Society of the Muslim Brothers*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Munson, H. J. (1986). The Social Base of Islamic Militancy in Morocco. *Middle East Policy*, 40(2), 267–284.
- Ocakli, F. (2015). Notable Networks: Elite Recruitment, Organizational Cohesiveness, and Islamist Electoral Success in Turkey. *Politics & Society*, 43(3), 385–413.
- Pahwa, S. (2013). Secularizing Islamism and Islamizing Democracy: The Political and Ideational Evolution of the Egyptian Muslim Brothers 1984–2012. *Mediterranean Politics*, 18(2), 189–206.
- Pellicer, M., & Wegner, E. (2012). Socio-economic voter profile and motives for Islamist support in Morocco. *Party Politics*, 20(1), 116–133.
- Price, A. (2015). How national structures shape attitudes toward women's right to employment in the Middle East. *International Journal of Comparative Sociology*, 56(6), 408–432.
- Qutb, S. (2006). *Milestones*. (A. B. Al-Mehri, Ed.). Birmingham: Maktabah Bookseller and Publishers.
- Reeves, K. (1997). *Voting Hopes Or Fears?: White Voters, Black Candidates, Racial Politics in America*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Robbins, M., & Tessler, M. (2011). Tunisians Voter for Jobs, Not Islam. *Foreign Affairs*.
- Robinson, G. E. (1997). Can Islamists Be Democrats? The Case of Jordan. *Middle East Journal*, 51(3), 373–387.
- Roy, O. (1994). *The Failure of Political Islam*. London: I. B. Tauris.
- Sadowski, Y. (2006). Political Islam: Asking the Wrong Questions? *Annual Review of Political Science*, 9(1), 215–240.
- Schwedler, J. (2006). *Faith in moderation: Islamist parties in Jordan and Yemen*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Sezer Bazoğlu, D. (2002). The electoral victory of reformist Islamists in Secular Turkey. *The International Spectator*, 37(4), 7–19.
- Tessler, M. (2002). Islam and Democracy in the Middle East The Impact of Religious Orientations on Attitudes toward Democracy in Four Arab Countries. *Comparative Politics*, 34(3), 337–354.

- Tessler, M. (2010). Religion, Religiosity and the Place of Islam in Political Life: Insights from the Arab Barometer Surveys. *Middle East Law and Governance*, 2(2), 221–252.
- Tessler, M. (2015). *Islam and politics in the middle east: Explaining the views of ordinary citizens* (Kindle ed.). Bloomington: Indiana University Press.
- Tibi, B. (2009). *Islam's Predicament with Modernity: Religious Reform and Cultural Change*. London: Routledge.
- Torelli, S. M., Merone, F., & Cavatorta, F. (2012). Salafism in Tunisia: Challenges and Opportunities for Democratization. *Middle East Policy*, 19(4), 140–154.
- Tripp, C. (2002). *A History of Iraq*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Turner, B. S. (2000). Islam, Civil Society, and Citizenship: reflections on the sociology of citizenship and Islamic Studies. In N. A. Butenschøn, U. Davis, & M. S. Hassassian (Eds.), *Citizenship and the State in the Middle East: approaches and applications* (pp. 28–48). Syracuse: Syracuse University Press.
- Voll, J. O. (2013). Political Islam and the State. In J. L. Esposito & E. E. Shahin (Eds.), *The Oxford Handbook of Islam and Politics* (pp. 56–66). Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Waltz, S. (2014). Islamist Appeal in Tunisia. *The Middle East Journal*, 40(4), 651–670.
- Weber, M. (2005). *Wirtschaft und Gesellschaft. Wirtschaft und Gesellschaft. Grundriss der verstehenden Soziologie*. Tübingen: Mohr-Siebeck.
- Wegner, E. (2012). *Islamist Opposition in Authoritarian Regimes: The Party of Justice and Development in Morocco*. Syracuse: Syracuse University Press.
- Wickham, C. R. (2002). *Mobilizing Islam: Religion, Activism, and Political Change in Egypt*. New York: Columbia University Press.
- Wiktorowicz, Q. (2004). Introduction: Islamic activism and social movement theory. In Q. Wiktorowicz (Ed.), *Islamic activism: A social movement theory approach* (pp. 1–33). Bloomington: Indiana University Press.
- Willis, M. J. (2012). *Politics and power in the Maghreb: Algeria, Tunisia and Morocco from independence to the Arab Spring*. London: Hurst.
- WVS. (2012). World Values Survey Wave 6. Retrieved May 19, 2016, from <http://www.worldvaluessurvey.org/>
- Yavuz, M. H. (1997). Political Islam and the Welfare (Refah) Party in Turkey. *Comparative Politics*, 30(1), 63–82.
- Yavuz, M. H. (2009). *Secularism and Muslim Democracy in Turkey*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Yildirim, A. K., & Lancaster, C. M. (2015). Bending with the Wind: Revisiting Islamist Parties' Electoral Dilemma. *Politics and Religion*, 8(03), 588–613.