A Clash of Islamic Models

By Aylin Ünver Noi

I N THE EMERGING ORDER OF THE POST-ARAB SPRING MIDDLE EAST, COMPETING Islamist ideologies and models for organizing political life are shaping diplomacy between states as well as the political struggles within them. Well before the 2011 Arab uprisings, the Islamic Republic of Iran and Saudi Arabia were in competition with each other in exporting their respective models of Shiite and Wahhabi Islamism. At the time, however, the political alignments of countries and subnational groups across the Middle East and North Africa (MENA) were shaped not just by sectarian differences, but by their political stance towards the West, including Israel, and toward Palestine. As such, analysts wrote about a "New Arab Cold War," between the Iranian-led regional alignment "Resistance Camp" composed of Syria, Hamas, Hezbollah, and Qatar, and the Saudi-led "Pro-Western Camp" aligned with the U.S. and composed of Egypt, Jordan, and the Gulf states.[1]

When Turkey was ruled by a secular and Western-oriented government, it was effectively a "non-actor" in the MENA and never directly involved itself in the intra-regional rivalry between Saudi Arabia and Iran. However, since the Islamic-rooted Justice and Development Party (AKP) came to power in 2002, Turkey's orientation and involvements in the MENA have begun to change. By espousing a foreign policy based on the principle of "zero problems with its neighbors," Turkey has sought to normalize and then improve its relations with the countries of the MENA region. Moreover, in what some analysts have described as "neo-Ottomanism," Ankara has sought to regain the influence in the MENA that it had lost over a century ago. These new policies have perforce involved Turkey in the intra-regional rivalry between competing

Islamic models. It has also raised deep questions about Turkey's relations with the West and its place in the emerging regional order.

The first part of the article examines three models of Islamic politics—Saudi Arabia's, Iran's and Turkey's—and analyzes them within the evolving context of the Sunni-Shiite rivalry and Turkey's role in MENA.. In the second part, the new wave of political Islam now emerging in the post-Arab Spring countries are evaluated in terms of the shifting regional alignments. This sheds light on how sectarian factors are shaping relations between and within states in this newly emerging MENA.

The Iranian Model

IN THE IRANIAN MODEL OF ISLAMIC POLITICS, THE STATE DERIVES ITS LEGITIMACY FROM its application of Islamic principles and from the rule of the Supreme Religious Leader (*Vali-e Faqih*): the final arbiter of both what these Islamic principles are and how they should be implemented.[2] Therefore, in the Khomeinist concept of Islamic government, the people are forced to submit to the superior authority of the clergy.[3] The people's role in the choice of their representatives consists of candidates that the Guardian Council has pre approved after the vetting process of the Executive and Supervisory Board of Election. Besides this, the institutions of the *Velayat-e-Faqih* constrain the powers of the president.[4]

The Constitution of Islamic Republic gives the Supreme Leader unlimited powers. It empowers him to command the armed forces and Revolutionary Guard, dismiss any elected official, counter certain parliamentary legislation, and declare war and peace. He is subject neither to elections nor the scrutiny of elected institutions or the public; nonetheless, he oversees all national affairs.[5] The Iranian people thus delegated their sovereignty to their Supreme Leader and to the Guardian Council.[6] The constitution allows the Islamic Consultative Assembly to pass laws that are not contrary to Islam.[7]

Since the 1979 revolution, Iran's foreign policy and outreach in the MENA has been based on the revolutionary vision of Ayatollah Khomeini. He believed that Western countries had been conspiring to undermine the unity of Islam and the Muslim world through the dismantling of the Ottoman Empire and the subsequent sectarian rivalry between Sunni-led states and Iran. The Zionist movement and the State of Israel were part of this foreign plan.[8] For Khomeini, the existing borders of the MENA region nation-states were created by Islam's enemies. He attributed the Muslim countries' acceptance of these borders and their self-interested behavior to their

adherence to "American Islam" and lack of commitment to true Islam, which was embodied in the Islamic government of Iran.[9]

The Khomeinist revolutionaries have sought to reorganize the international order in the image and spirit of their own revolution. The rulers of the Islamic Republic have thus appointed themselves the defenders of Muslim rights, and liberating the Muslim oppressed through an export of their revolutionary ideals has been their major aim.[10] In this, the Khomeinist rhetoric and vision for creating a new, Islam-centric order in the Middle East was deeply shaped by that of Ali Shariati, who sought to infuse Islam with the revolutionary spirit of various "Third-Worldist" thinkers.[11] Since 1979, this Iranian rhetoric has acquired considerable traction and influence in the region, and perhaps most especially among Shiites. Insofar as Iran has managed to portray its leadership and outreach as truly pan-Islamic, and not as Shiite or Persian nationalist, it has also acquired influence among Sunni populations. Even though Shiites are a minority within Islam, the Islamic Republic has thus emerged as a serious contender for leadership of the Islamic Movement. In response, Sunni powers such as Saudi Arabia have sought to stress the Shiite and Persian character of Iranian outreach. This sectarian competition between Iran and Saudi Arabia began in the Persian Gulf, Pakistan and Afghanistan, and has since expanded to many other parts of the Islamic world.[12]

The Saudi Model

SAUDI ARABIA'S ISLAMIC ORDER COMBINES A MONARCHY WITH AN ULTRACONSERVATIVE implementation of *Sharia* law rooted in Wahhabi teachings. Under this regime, an act of protest against the monarchy is sinful; Wahhabi doctrine requires that Muslims submit to their rulers.[13] As Saudi Arabia's dominant faith, Wahhabi Islam stands for the revival of practices from the early period of Islam and for the authority of revivalists like Muhammad Abd al-Wahhab as the sole qualified interpreters of Islamic scripture. These revivalists oppose what they perceive as the historical and "local" deviations from Islam as it was originally revealed.[14] The Wahhabis claim that they are the true believers and champions of Islam; they perceive Orthodox Sunni Muslims, including those represented by the four schools of Islamic jurisprudence (*Hanafi, Shafi'i, Maliki* and *Hanbali*) as living in a state of pre-Islamic paganism (*jahiliyya*).[15] Wahhabism's first adherents thus accused Orthodox Sunni Muslims who were living under the Ottoman Caliphate of *bid'a* (innovation) and *kufr* (nonbelief). All Shiites were also branded as *kufr* and *rafida* (rejectionists) by Abd al-Wahhab.[16]

The Saudi monarchy sustains its domestic legitimacy by portraying itself as the leader of the Islamic faithful. The survival of the House of Saud, or "Al-Saud," thus depends on successfully balancing competing Islamic forces within Saudi Arabia as well as its capacity to outmaneuver competing Islamic trends in the region.[17]

After Ayatollah Khomeini's revolution in Iran in 1979, Wahhabi clerics in Saudi Arabia demanded greater power and influence over the kingdom's domestic and external affairs. The monarchy eventually responded by granting religious leaders wide sway over every aspect of Saudi life. Moreover, in order to thwart the regional spread of Iranian influence and revolutionary Shiite Islamism, the Saudi King began to aggressively export Wahhabi Islamism around the Islamic world through Islamic colleges, centers, mosques, and schools, and international organizations such as the Muslim World League, the World Assembly of Muslim Youth, the International Islamic Relief Organization, and various royal charities such as the Popular Committee for Assisting the Palestinian Mujahedeen.[18]

The *fatwas* issued by Saudi-aligned and neo-Salafist scholars generally reflect Wahhabism's well-known puritanism and intolerance as well as its opposition to revolution, popular government and elections. They also reflect deep hostility to Iran and to Shiism. Taken together, they reveal what Al-Saud most wants, that is, to protect its monarchical rule and to increase its sphere of influence around the MENA against alternative Islamic models.

However, the Saudi-backed Wahhabi Islamist universe has served as the ideological background out of which the salafi-jihadist movement has emerged.[19] As a result of this, the Saudi regime has faced a basic tension between its need to counter Iranian influence in the region and its need to counter the jihadist threat. The Saudi regime's promotion of Wahabbi Islamism has also created conflict between it and the United States, which is the monarchy's principal protector. Moreover, the U.S. has also pressured Saudi Arabia to require Palestinian organizations to make peace with Israel. But this has been difficult for the monarchy to do both because of strong domestic support for the anti-Israel struggle and also because of the monarchy's felt-need to compete with Iran, which is widely perceived as a champion of Palestinian aspirations.[20]

The neo-Salafist movement poses a threat not only to Iran and to the West but also to mainstream Islamic movements and competing Sunni Islamist movements, such as the Muslim Brotherhood. Neo-Salafist scholars have stridently opposed what they see as the spread of "Western democracy" in the MENA, and the rise to power of the Muslim Brotherhood in Egypt and Tunisia via elections has created enormous controversy within the movement. It has given rise to a new form of "political Salafism" which has sought to compete with the Muslim Brotherhood and to effectively "Salafize" and coopt it.

Meanwhile, the Brotherhood's now decades-old feud with salafist-jihadism has also been exacerbated.[21] The Muslim Brotherhood is condemned as "corrupt sellouts that place temporal power and comfort over the call of God" by the Salafi-jihadists whereas Salafi-jihadists are described as "extremist fanatics that commit atrocities against fellow Muslims and irrationally condemn the society around them" by the Muslim Brotherhood.[22]

The Turkish Model

MUSTAFA KEMAL ATATURK, THE FOUNDER OF THE REPUBLIC OF TURKEY, TRANSFORMED post-Ottoman Turkey into a modern, Western and secular state that rejected what it perceived as its backward and repressive Islamic past.[23] With the abolition of the Caliphate in Turkey in 1924, the position of nominal spiritual leader of the whole Sunni Muslim world was eliminated.[24] Ataturk and his supporters saw Westernization as a form of modernization and self-strengthening, and not as a form of cultural emulation.[25] Alawites in Turkey supported Ataturk's secularist ideology because they believed sectarian discrimination against them would be minimized under a secular political system that did not establish Sunni Islam as the state religion.[26]

While the Kemalist state outlawed traditional Sufi orders, they have nonetheless survived as important religious networks. The Naksibendi and the Kadiri orders (*tarikats)* that are most active today have acquired influence through business and political networks.[27] The first Islamic parties of Turkey—the National Order Party Milli Nizam Partisi) and the National Salvation Party (Milli Selamet Partisi)—were established through support of the master of the Naksibendi Khalidi *tarikat*, Sheikh Mehmet Zahit Kotku. Many Naksibendi also joined the Motherland Party of Turgut Ozal. During Ozal's administration (1983-1989), various Naksibendi religious orders, the political National View (Milli Gorus) movement of Necmettin Erbakan, and the Hizmet movement inspired by the teachings of Fethullah Gulen all contended with one another over the proper role of Islam in society.[28]

During this period (1983-1993), the influence of the reformist Hizmet movement, which has its roots in the Nurculuk movement of Said Nursi (1873-1960), grew considerably. The founding father of Hizmet, Fethullah Gulen, teaches that the time of the "jihad of the sword" is now over. Now is the era of the "jihad of the word," which calls for the reconciliation of science and rationalism with Islam.[29] Gulen's teachings attach great importance to Muslim involvement in public life, in business, and on using Islamic networks to promote harmony among Islam, Christianity, and Judaism.[30]

The Hizmet movement's worldview thus contrasts sharply with Wahhabism, and the former does not divide the world into *dar al-harb* (abode of war) and *dar-al Islam* (abode of Islam). Instead, Gulen teaches that one must serve the world continually because it is *dar al-Hizmet,* or an abode of service to humanity for the sake of God.[31]

Two of Turkey's traditionalist Islamic parties, the Welfare Party and Virtue Party of National View (*Milli Gorus),* were banned respectively in 1998 and 2001. A group of traditionalists from these parties led by Necmettin Erbakan and Recai Kutan opposed any serious change in the approach or policy of Turkish political Islam.[32] Many reformists, including Recep Tayyip Erdogan and Abdullah Gul, argued that the party needed to rethink its approach to democracy, human rights and relations with the West.[33] This latter camp also opposed Erbakan's authoritarian leadership, and called for greater inner-party democracy.[34] The resulting need for a reformist-dominated Islamic party that would bring together both some "traditionalist" and "reformist" Muslim orientations ultimately led to the establishment of the AKP. [35]

While Kemalists have eyed the Hizmet movement with deep suspicion, Hizmet members argue their movement does not seek to overturn Turkey's secular order. Instead, they emphasize what they see as the "Ottoman model" of pluralism, and the importance of developing democracy and commerce.[36] Many have argued that the Hizmet movement and the AKP seek to replace the Kemalist model of secularism with a new one that would make more room for religion and democracy without establishing an Islamic state.[37]

This perhaps helps to explain Prime Minister Recep Tayyip Erdogan's statement in Cairo after the uprisings: "I hope there will be a secular state in Egypt."[38] When Erdogan called on Egyptians to adopt a secular constitution and a secular state, he was urging them to adopt "Islamic secularism." Erdogan, rejects defining AKP in religious terms and calls the AKP agenda "conservative democracy." The AKP's electoral success and its "conservative democracy" are the result of a pious "Muslim bourgeoisie" in Anatolia who is "more concerned about maximizing profits, creating access to international currency markets, and ensuring political stability than about introducing Islamic law or creating a theocracy."[39] According to the scholar Hakan Yavuz, this is the product of a blend of Islamic traditionalism and European Union norms, including democracy, fundamental freedoms, human rights, and the rule of law. [40]

Since AKP came to power in 2002, Turkey has been cultivating ties with pan-Islamic Muslim Brotherhood groups, including the Egypt-based Muslim Brotherhood.[41] For example, Turkish businessmen, under the Independent Industrialists and Businessmen's Association (MUSIAD), have provided financial support to the Muslim Brotherhood. Moreover, the Turkish charity IHH (The Foundation for Human Rights and Freedoms and Humanitarian Relief) has also networked extensively with Muslim Brotherhood

representatives.[42] Erdogan called for intra-Muslim solidarity at a speech he made at the MUSIAD International Fair and 16th International Business Forum on October 11, 2012.[43] In this venue, the prime minister emphasized the importance of foreign aid and humanitarian aid provided by Turkey to Muslims around the world.[44] Erdogan also stated that

> we should take into consideration the advice that says Muslims are stones of a building that supports each other. This advice indicates to us that protecting poor Muslims all around the world as well as establishing a solidarity among Muslims in all fields primarily on trade is needed.

This new "pan-Islamic" AKP foreign policy has involved establishing and/or increasing ties with Muslim countries through trade agreements and humanitarian aid. Moreover, a number of initiatives that Turkish business and charity networks have undertaken have been complementary to this stated policy.[45]

As Turkey's outreach into the MENA has deepened, claims that the AKP is not committed to democracy have proliferated. In contrast to the AKP's first two terms, the AKP has increasingly demonstrated less interest in promoting freedom and human rights. Now, during Erdogan's third term—what the prime minister calls his "master" term—many have accused the AKP's agenda of outright authoritarianism. An increasing number of people have been arrested and jailed apparently for political reasons and laws which infringe on personal freedoms have been enacted. This has led to increasing criticism of the AKP. Indeed, some analysts have said "the more power Erdogan won at the elections, the less interested he appeared in taking steps toward freedom of expression and human rights."[46] Moreover, because of the party's authoritarian direction, there now appears to be increasing disagreement within the AKP itself.

Intra-Islamist Rivalry Before 2011

THE PRESENT-DAY HOSTILITY BETWEEN IRAN AND SAUDI ARABIA IS BASED MAINLY ON ethnic and sectarian differences that go back centuries.[47] The Iranian revolution, however, exacerbated the rivalry as it took the initiative in exporting its revolution to other Muslim countries. Iran's aspirations to regional hegemony posed a direct threat to Saudi Arabia's domestic stability and its regional influence.[48] Despite the fact that Iran's government has a clear Persian and Shiite character to it, Sunni Arab Muslims

who want to see their own governments stand up more boldly to the West have discovered much to admire in Iran's foreign policy and its defiance of the West.[49] And since the 1979 Revolution ended the monarchy in Iran, it also led to the deterioration of Iran's relations with those Muslim countries still ruled by monarchies. In addition to this, the Islamic government's support for Shiites in the Middle East poses a threat to those Sunni-dominated countries that have sought to suppress Shiites.[50]

TABLE 1.1. COUNTRIES WITH MORE THAN 100,000 SHIA MUSLIMS

Country	Estimated 2009 Shia Population	Approximate Percentage of Muslim Population that is Shia
Iran	66-70 million	90-95%
Iraq	19-22 million	65-70%
Turkey	7-11 million	10-15%
Yemen	8-10 million	35-40%
Afghanistan	3-4 million	10-15%
Syria	3-4 million	15-20%
Saudi Arabia	2-4 million	10-15%
Lebanon	1-2 million	45-55%
Kuwait	500,000-700,000	20-25%
Bahrain	400,000-500,000	65-75%
UAE	300,000-400,000	10%
Oman	100,000-300,000	5-10%
Qatar	100,000	10%
World Total	154-200 million	10-13%

Source: Shias include Twelvers (Ithna Asharis), Ismailis, Zaydis, Alevis and Alawites.[51]

Although the rivalry between Saudi Arabia and Iran declined during the relatively more "pragmatic" presidencies of Rafsanjani and Khatami, Iran's foreign policy during the Ahmadinejad era and its nationalistic claims to be the preeminent regional power have reinvigorated it. Moreover, Iran's aggressively pro-Islamist agenda

has appealed to Palestinian and Arab opposition forces that have struggled against the U.S. and Israel. This has further adversely affected Iranian relations with U.S. allies in the Persian Gulf..[52]

The Islamic Republic's revolutionary activism has also strained Iranian-Arab relations since Tehran's policy has increased Iranian influence over Shiite minority populations in Arab countries. Rising Iranian influence over these populations concerns Arab leaders[53] since "most of the Shiites in this region are loyal to Iran, and not to the countries they are living in."[54] Iran's nuclear program is also contributing to its deterioration in relations with Arab countries as it threatens to disrupt the existing balance of power in the Middle East.[55]

Economic dysfunction, political autocracy, and a general sense of "humiliation" at the hands of Western nations has contributed to a general resurgence of political Islam in the MENA resulting in the increased popularity of Iran and its leaders.[56] Ahmadinejad's anti-imperialist and anti-Western discourses, and his tirades against Jerusalem during the Israeli war on Lebanon in 2006, made him more popular among ordinary Arabs than among his own people.[57] This is especially significant provided the latent hostility between Sunni Arab states and Iran's Shiite theocracy.

Iran's efforts to extend its influence into the Arab world through creating what's been described as a "Shiite Crescent" in the very heart of the Sunni world has escalated the region's sectarian rivalry. Sunni countries such as the Gulf States, Egypt, and Jordan took their places in the Saudi-led regional alignment, or the "pro-West" camp. These states were willing to work in various forms of strategic partnership with the U.S. and also to come to terms with Israel.

Meanwhile, other Sunni countries and forces, such as Syria, Qatar, and Hamas, had various motivations in joining the axis of Shiite Iran, the "Resistance Camp." These states are unwilling to accept U.S. hegemony over the region and are anti-Western in their foreign policies.[58] Syria, with its pretensions as the cradle of Arab civilization and of pan-Arab ideology, saw the Iranian-led axis as a framework for enhancing its regional status. In addition, the Damascus regime was motivated by considerations of political survival, and hoped that its alliance with Iran would provide it with some protection against the international tribunal for the assassination of former Lebanese Prime Minister al-Hariri. Hamas, which had a few friends in the Arab world, received increasing support from Iran. Qatar also aligned itself with the Iranian-led Resistance Bloc and played a crucial role by initiating the pro-Iranian and anti-Saudi oriented 2009 Doha Summit to the dismay of Saudi Arabia and Egypt. Qatar invited Ahmadinejad to the Summit against the will of several Arab Countries. It also called on Egypt to revoke its peace agreement with Israel and on Saudi Arabia to withdraw its initiative for peace with Israel.[59]

Turkey Enters the Fray

EVER SINCE THE AKP OFFICIALLY ABANDONED TURKEY'S "NON-ACTOR" STATUS IN THE Middle East, the question of Turkey's place in the emerging regional order has generated heated discussions. Ankara's new approach, called "zero problems with its neighbors," has aimed at normalizing and improving Turkey's relations with Syria, Iran, and Iraq, as well as with Hamas.[60] Unsurprisingly, the new policy caused a deterioration in Turkey's relations with its former strategic ally Israel. The breakdown in Turkish-Israeli relations began with Prime Minister Recep Tayyip Erdogan's heated exchange with President Shimon Peres at Davos over Turkey's support of the Palestinians following the 2008 Gaza War. It continued with the so-called "low chair crisis" and reached its highest point with the Israeli raid on the Gaza flotilla.[61] These events contributed to the growing perception of many around the region that Turkey had joined the Iranian-led Resistance Bloc.

Turkey intended to play a constructive role in the region primarily through the exercise of its "soft power." Several factors contributed to making Turkey a "force of attraction," including the country's soaring economic take off and pop culture, such as glamorous Turkish soap operas. Turkish Islamic movements have also established schools and built business networks throughout the region that have facilitated Turkey's cultural infiltration in the Arab world.[62]

For instance, the Hizmet movement has established schools across the Middle East. Their activities are especially noteworthy in the Kurdish regions of northeastern Iraq where they have opened fifteen schools and a university with the aim of "spreading the concept of dialogue, democracy and pluralism in Kurdish communities."[63] On the Hizmet principle that "education is a force for reducing inter-group conflict,"[64] the movement's schools may be seen as a complement to AKP's efforts to improve relations with the Kurdish Regional Government (KRG). This "rapprochement" is part of a larger attempt to resolve Turkey's now decades-old conflict with the Kurdistan Worker's Party (PKK).[65] The movement's schools are also located in all the Muslim countries of the Middle East except, however, for Iran and Saudi Arabia. Yavuz ascribes this, and, the fact that Hizmet engages in very little *intra*-religious dialogue with other Islamic movements, to Turkish Islam's Ottoman past.[66] As such, the Ottoman legacy including its rivalry with the Safavids helps to explain the Hizmet movement's distance from Shia and also from those Arab societies with a strong Salafist presence.[67]

Ankara's new policies in the MENA since 2002 amount to an "axis shift" and represent a break from the Western-centric policies that it pursued in the Cold War era.[68]

With its new foreign policy orientation, Turkey has attempted to develop a new set of relations with all MENA states. It shifted its foreign policy toward the Middle East and North Africa while maintaining its ties with the West. As a result of this policy, Turkey has played a leading role for facilitating interactions among the people of this region by removing visa requirements, allowing purchase of real estate and establishing free trade areas and so forth. It has also attempted to play a leadership role in mediating role in solving crises in the MENA. Thus, despite the perception that Turkey was an emerging party in the Iran-led regional alignment, its increasing involvements in MENA affairs has been an indication of its intention to become a regional power in its own right. Such "neo-Ottoman" ambitions have prevented Turkey from becoming a part of the Resistance Camp led by Shiite Iran.

After the Uprisings

THE ARAB SPRING HAS TRANSFORMED POLITICAL DYNAMICS ACROSS THE MENA REGION, including the rivalry between Iran and Saudi Arabia. The Islamic Republic, for its part, actively supported the Arab uprisings, and described them as an "Islamic Awakening" that was inspired by the Iranian revolution and the country's long-standing defiance of the West. While diplomatic relations between Tehran and Cairo had broken off with the 1979 Khomeinist Revolution, Iran's early support for the Egyptian uprising provided it with an opportunity to re-establish relations with the country's newly elected Muslim Brotherhood-dominated government. Meanwhile, Saudi Arabia opposed the uprisings fearing spillover could lead to instability in the kingdom and possibly even topple the monarchy. Subsequently, Cairo began to distance itself from Saudi Arabia due to the kingdom's counterrevolutionary and pro-Mubarak stance.[69]

As a consequence of these developments, it seemed to some that the Muslim Brotherhood's rise to power would destabilize or even bring to an end the pro-Western regional alignment that had existed between Egypt and Saudi Arabia. For this reason, Saudis began counterbalancing the Muslim Brotherhood by providing financial support to their Islamist rivals, the Salafists, who see the Sufi-oriented Brotherhood as religiously too syncretic and idolatrous. Many have also claimed that Saudi Arabia and the UAE support Salafist opponents of the Muslim Brotherhood in Tunisia.[70]

As Iran rekindled relations with an Islamist-dominated Egypt, it appeared to some that the two countries would form the basis for a new regional alignment.[71] Such speculations seemed increasingly unlikely, however, as Iran's principal ally, Syria,

disintegrated into civil war. From August 26-31, 2012, Egyptian President Mohammed Morsi participated in the 16th Non-Aligned Movement summit convened in Tehran. At this meeting, Morsi voiced Egypt's solidarity with the Syrian people "against an oppressive regime that has lost its legitimacy is an ethical duty and a strategic necessity." Morsi's remarks and his failure to meet with Ayatollah Ali Khamenei during his visit to Iran showed the limits of the emerging relationship between Egypt and Iran.[72] Moreover Egypt's Sunni and Shiite leaders made statements during Ahmadinejad's February 5, 2013 visit to Cairo that clearly indicated that any attempt by Iran to spread its form of Shiite Islamism in Egypt would be unacceptable. A spokesperson for Shiites in Egypt, Bahaa Anwar, said that, "Egyptian Shiites are not calling for a religious state and they reject the Iranian oppression of the Sunni minority in Iran." The words of Hassan El-Shafi'i, advisor to Ahmed el-Tayeb, the Grand Imam of Al-Azhar, are also important in this respect: "Al-Azhar would not tolerate any attempts to spread Shiism in Egypt."[73]

Furthermore, President Morsi's official visit to Saudi Arabia on July 10, 2012 indicated that his government sought to balance its relations with both Iran and Saudi Arabia.[74] As Riyadh and Tehran jockey with one another for influence in Egypt, Cairo might seek to use this to its advantage and aid its economic recovery.[75]

Meanwhile, the ongoing uprisings in majority-Shiite Bahrain have further escalated tensions between Iran and Saudi Arabia. Popular demonstrations in Bahrain demanded reform of the Sunni-dominated and Saudi-backed ruling regime. They also called for Sunni-Shiite unity as well as an end to inequality in the enforcement of laws governing naturalization.[76] The Bahraini government, in turn, portrayed the demonstrators as Shiite radicals backed by Iran who aimed to overthrow the regime. The government then called on its GCC allies to help suppress the protest movement.[77] Saudi Arabia and the Gulf countries have since accused Iran of interfering with Bahrain's internal affairs by trying to stir-up Shiite unrest there. On March 14, 2011, Saudi Arabia even sent at least 1,000 troops to Bahrain to help drive out protestors.[78] In response, one of the leading clerics of Iran, Ayatollah Ahmad Khatami, accused Saudi Arabia of having committed "savage crimes" against the people of Bahrain, and demanded that the monarchy withdraw its forces from the country.[79]

When the uprisings in Yemen began in January 2011, the country soon became another theater for Saudi-Iranian rivalry. Iran condemned the Saudi-backed government's crackdown on protestors. On February 27, 2012, revolution brought the thirty-three period of rule by Ali Abdallah Saleh to an end. Abdu Rabu Mansour Hadi, who served as vice president under Saleh, became Yemen's new president in the February 2012 Yemeni elections. Hadi had the support of Saudi Arabia and the US, as well as the leading Islamic party, al-Islah (the Yemeni branch of the Muslim Brotherhood which Saudi Arabia had helped to establish as an opposition party and counterweight to Saleh's

power.)[80] Many see Hadi's election as a continuation of the *status quo*: he has not won the support of the Houthi, Southern Yemenis, and regional tribal and religious factions affiliated with al-Qaeda.[81]

Iran, meanwhile, has sought "to use Yemen as a pressure point against Saudi Arabia and all the countries in the Arab Gulf," by simultaneously supporting both Sunni and Shiite activists.[82] For example, Iran increased its influence over Yemeni activists including the supporters of the southern separatist movement Herak. There are also claims that Iran supports the Houthis, who practice a quasi-Shiite form of Islam, against the existing government in order to weaken the position of Saudi Arabia in Yemen. However, a Houthi spokesman, Yahya Al-Houthi has denied these claims.[83]

The situation in Yemen shows that the Saudi-Iranian rivalry is not strictly sectarian. Indeed, Iran has demonstrated a capacity to reach across religious divides to work with Sunni groups that share an anti-Saudi or anti-US agenda. According to Saudi claims, Iran is providing covert financial support to the Sunni-Wahhabi group Ansar Al-Sharia, an al-Qaeda affiliated militant group in Yemen. This is occurring despite the divergent ideological agendas of the Iranian regime and the Sunni group. Tehran's aim has been to encourage Ansar Al-Sharia to kidnap more Saudi diplomats to force the monarchy to comply with their demands.[84] Likewise, Iran has provided support to the Taliban in Afghanistan. It has additionally provided sanctuary to al-Qaeda's most senior leaders, such as Yasin al-Suri, Saif al-Adel and Abu Muhammad al-Masri.[85] Not surprisingly, Iran's connections with the salafi-jihadist movement have evolved as the once cooperative relations between al-Qaeda and Saudi Arabia have become increasingly hostile.

When the Arab uprisings spread to Syria, Saudi Arabia changed its earlier counterrevolutionary position and strongly supported regime change in Damascus.[86] If the Assad regime falls, Iran would lose not only its major Arab ally, but its connection to Hezbollah in Lebanon. As a result of its support for anti-regime opposition groups in Syria, Turkey became a part of this rivalry between Iran and Saudi Arabia.

A Third Pole?

THE SECTARIAN RIVALRY AND POLITICAL UPHEAVAL ACROSS THE MENA REGION HAS also produced a new alignment of states with Turkey as its leader. As a majority Sunni and democratic country, Turkey has attempted to use its "soft power" to became a role model for post-revolutionary Arab Spring countries, particularly for Egypt and Tunisia. This emerging alignment is therefore composed of elected Sunni Islamist governments.

If it lasts, this new grouping of states could increasingly become known as the "Sunni Resistance Camp" because of their generally anti-Israeli and pro-Palestinian stances as well as the AKP government's increasingly independent policy in the MENA.

Moreover, Turkey's Islamic model, described as "conservative democracy" or "Islamic secularism," and the AKP government's new efforts to influence the region has made Turkey a rival of both the Saudi model of Sunni Islam and the Iranian model of Shiite Islam. This is evident in Turkey's new foreign policy stances. In Syria, for example, Turkey supports Sunni Arabs against the Alawite Assad regime. Ankara has also developed close relations with the Kurdish Regional Government (which is mostly Sunni) while having disputes with the Shiite-dominated government in Baghdad, including by protecting fugitive Sunni Iraqi Vice President Tariq al-Hashimi. Moreover, Turkey has deepened its relations with Hamas and the Muslim Brotherhoods in the Arab countries, while marginalizing the Salafis.

Turkish officials have sought to downplay this new alignment and its role in it. For example, Turkish Foreign Minister Davutoglu has stated, "Turkey is against all polarization, in the political sense of Iranian-Arab tension or in the sense of forming an apparent axis." Nonetheless, many in the region consider Turkey to be a leader in this emerging camp of states.[87]

Rashid al-Ghannouchi, the leader of the al-Nahda party in Tunisia, promoted this view of Turkey during the election campaigns of 2011. He promised voters that if his party won then Tunisia could imitate the AKP model in Turkey and experience a similar economic boom. He has also said that the Tunisian people consider the Turkish experience with democracy a model for post-revolutionary Tunisia.[88] Whether or not Tunisia could successfully implement the AKP's model remain to be seen. In Egypt, however, Turkey's role as a model is highly doubtful. A 2012 Gallup survey showed that eleven percent of Egyptians view Turkey as a political model for Egypt, and, that most Egyptians express skepticism toward external "models."[89] Moreover, Turkey's AKP government has faced strong criticism for its own democratic shortcomings. If Turkey's internal circumstances worsen, it may also adversely affect Turkey's appeal as a model.[90]

The sectarian rivalry and shifting alignments with the MENA have exacerbated Iraq's sectarian divisions. This has compelled the KRG to form better relationships with Iraq's non-Arab neighbors.[91] Iraq's changing internal dynamics in part explain the growing cooperation between Turkey and the KRG.[92] Prime Minister Erdogan, however, has demonstrated the limits of this cooperation when he said that Turkey supported the territorial integrity of Syria and opposed any changes made for or by the Kurds. This occurred after KRG leader Masoud Barzani made an effort to bridge the differences between Syrian Kurdish groups, unite them against the Assad regime

and enable them to pursue more autonomy in the post-Assad era. Turkey's reaction is best understood as a function of Ankara's close ties with the Syrian National Council, particularly the Muslim Brotherhood of Syria, and its worries over the autonomy of Syrian Kurdestan.

The AKP launched its "Kurdish opening" initiative in 2009 in an effort to find a political settlement to Turkey's longstanding internal conflict with Kurds. The Naksibendi Sufi order, the most influential and best organized Islamic group in the Kurdish Region of Turkey, has been quite active and played an important role in enabling the AKP to increase its votes in eastern and southern cities that traditionally voted for pro-Kurdish parties (AKP won 54 percent in 2007 vs. 27.29 percent in 2002). This Sufi Islamic outreach thus helped to prepare the ground for Ankara's policy shift.[93] Moreover, adherents of the Hizmet Movement have supported the idea of a new constitution in Turkey based on citizenship that is granted on the grounds of *jus soli* rather than *jus sanguinis* and relies on shared values, specifically Islam, rather than ethnic origin.[94] As such, these Islamic groups' approaches to the Kurdish issue have played an important role in shaping the AKP's policy toward Kurds.

The AKP has accelerated its Kurdish opening through negotiations with the PKK. Furthermore, the Kurdish opening also serves the purpose of preventing the domino effects of a territorial disintegration of Syria. Ankara inaugurated the Imrali Negotiation Process on January 3, 2013. The KRG has since supported the effort, whereas Iran and Iraq's central governments have few reasons to embrace it. Although Iran officially supports the process, some analysts claim the contrary. In a piece published in the Jomhouri-e Eslami newspaper on April 29, 2013, Ali Rezakam (who is considered to be close to Ali Khamenei) accused Prime Minister Erdogan of supporting the creation of an independent Kurdish government in Iraq, in order to benefit from the KRG's energy resources, and to use the PKK card against both Syria and Iran.[95] As such, since the outbreak of the Arab Spring, AKP Turkey's original policy of "zero problems" and "developing relations with all Muslim states" has seemed to shift toward a policy more focused on developing relations with mostly Sunni Muslim states and Sunni subnational actors like the Kurds.

Conclusion

ISLAMISM HAS BECOME A MAINSTREAM POLITICAL FORCE IN THE MENA REGION.[96] IN this new and increasingly Islamic political atmosphere, sectarian differences have become powerful instruments that have the capacity to alter regional alignments and

shape the relations that states have with one another. Traditional rivals frequently exploit these differences with the understanding that "my enemy's enemy is my friend" often for geopolitical purposes. [97] The emerging picture of the MENA region in the post-Arab Spring era indicates that changing ideological orientations that shape regional alliances in this region are mostly the result of sectarian differences.

Turkey's changing relations with the greater Middle East seems to be one of the most important determining factors in the emerging order. However, the prospects of Turkey's "Islamic secularism" and "conservative democracy" serving as a model for other states remains to be seen.[98] The Turkey model faces stiff competition both from Salafists and from Iran. The Muslim Brotherhood's tactical alliances with Salafists in Egypt and in Tunisia on certain major political issues contribute to the perception that the Muslim Brotherhood is becoming Salafisized.[99] Meanwhile, Iran has continued its outreach and support to the Resistance Camp, as well as to the weak government in Baghdad. This competition among the region's powers to advance their own Islamic models will have enormous bearing on the future politics of the region.

NOTES

1. It is called "New Arab Cold War" since the ideologies and actors of the term "Arab Cold War," which was coined by Malcolm Kerr to describe inter-Arab rivalry, have changed. The latest form of Arab Cold War resurfaced as a result of the US invasion of Iraq in 2003 and was exacerbated by the 2006 Lebanon War. Malcolm Kerr, *The Arab Cold War: Gamal 'Abd al-Nasir, 1958-1970* (London: Oxford University Press, 1971).

2. Shireen T. Hunter, *Iran's Foreign Policy in the Post-Soviet Era: Resisting the New International Order* (Santa Barbara: Praeger, 2010), 23.

3. Ray Takeyh, *Hidden Iran: Paradox and Power in the Islamic Republic* (New York: Hol|Sham, "Religio-Constitutional Institutions of Iran in the 20th Century: Relevance and Viability for the Future" in *Iran and the World: Some Contemporary Developments*, ed. Bahram Navazeni (Newcastle: Cambridge Scholars Publishing, 2010), 34. In the absence of the Mahdi (Twelfth Imam), Twelver Shiites (Ithna Asharis) believe that clerics can substitute for his authority. Khomeini transformed this religious power to Iran's system of governance. Juan Cole, "Iran and Islam," http://iranprimer.usip.org/resource/iran-and-islam (March 20, 2013).

7. Valentine M. Moghadam, "Women in the Islamic Republic of Iran: Legal Status, Social Positions and Collective Action," 2004, http://www.wilsoncenter.org/sites/default/files/ValentineMoghadamFinal.pdf (November 29, 2012), 1.

8. Shireen T. Hunter, *Iran's Foreign Policy in the Post-Soviet Era: Resisting the New International Order,* 26.

9. Shireen T. Hunter, *Iran's Foreign Policy in the Post-Soviet Era: Resisting the New International Order,* 27.

10. Ali M. Ansari, *Confronting Iran: The Failure of American Foreign Policy and the Next Great Crisis in the Middle East* (New York: Basic Books, 2006), 71.

11. Ray Takeyh, *Hidden Iran: Paradox and Power in the Islamic Republic*, 14.

12. Shireen T. Hunter, *Iran's Foreign Policy in the Post-Soviet Era: Resisting the New International Order,* 191, 192. Hajj pilgrimage has been used by Iran to spread its form of Islam and to attack "American Islam," and to propagate its anti-US and anti-Israeli views. Lionel Beehner, "Arab Views of a Nuclear Iran," April 20, 2006, http://www.cfr.org/publication/10491/ (March 21, 2010).

13. This explains why Salafists did not actively take part in the Arab uprisings. However, they actively took a role in the post-revolution period despite the fact that Salafis regard an Islamic state as unnecessary. Ahmad Moussalli, "Wahhabism, Salafism and Islamism: Who Is the Enemy?" January 2009, http://conflictsforum.org/briefings/Wahhabism-Salafism-and-Islamism.pdf (March 5, 2013). Some Salafist parties behaved like al Nour Party of Egypt, which became one of the leading parties by winning about 25 percent of the votes. Karen Elliott House, *On Saudi Arabia: Its People, Past, Religion, Fault Lines—and Future* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 2012), 27.

14. Richard Penaskovic, "Gulen on Healing the Rift between Islam and the West" in *Islam and Peacebuilding: Gulen Movement Initiatives*, eds. John L. Esposito and Ihsan Yılmaz (New York: Blue Dome Press, 2010), 127, 128.

15. Although this approach started to change towards Orthodox Sunnis in the 1950s, it remained as disapproving towards Shiites. W. Andrew Terill, "The Saudi-Iranian Rivalry and the Future of Middle East Security," 2011, http://www.strategicstudiesinstitute.army.mil/pdffiles/PUB1094.pdf (February 20, 2013).

16. Moussalli, "Wahhabism, Salafism and Islamism: Who Is the Enemy?" 5, 6.

17. House, *On Saudi Arabia: Its People, Past, Religion, Fault Lines—and Future,* 230.

18. House, *On Saudi Arabia: Its People, Past, Religion, Fault Lines—and Future,* 29, 30, 234.

19. All Wahhabis are Salafists, but not all Salafists are Wahhabis. Wahhabis and Salafists merged together and created neo-salafism and *takfiri* jihadism after the 9/11 terror attacks against the US and the invasion of Iraq. For Salafists, the world is divided into infidels and believers. According to this view of Salafists, they are hostile to the West, which lies in the latter category. Salafists associate jihad with *da'wa* (spreading of the faith) and argue that jihad constitutes a form of Islamic propagation to build an ideal alternative society free from Western cultural influence and control. Moussalli, "Wahhabism, Salafism and Islamism: Who Is the Enemy?" 3, 21. The Saudi government financially aids jihadists fighting in Afghanistan, Chechnya, and Bosnia, but these jihadists carried their attacks into Saudi Arabia itself against Al Saud. House, *On Saudi Arabia: Its People, Past, Religion, Fault Lines—and Future,* 29, 30, 233; Trevor Stanley, "Understanding the Origins of Wahhabism and Salafism," July 15, 2005, http://www.jamestown.org/programs/gta/single/?tx_ttnews%5Btt_news%5D=528&tx_ttnews%5BbackPid%5D=180&no_cache=1 (March 3, 2013).

20. House, *On Saudi Arabia: Its People, Past, Religion, Fault Lines—and Future,* 29, 30, 233.

21. Moussalli, "Wahhabism, Salafism and Islamism: Who Is the Enemy?" 21.

22. Marc Lynch, *The Arab Uprisings: The Unfinished Revolutions of the New Middle East* (New York: Publicaffairs, 2012), 211.

23. Angel Rabasa and F. Stephen Larrabee, *The Rise of Political Islam in Turkey* (Pittsburgh: RAND Corporation, 2008), 32, 33. During the First World War, Arab revolts with British support defeated the Ottoman Empire that ruled the Arab world for nearly four centuries. The revolts by the Arabs that embraced Arab nationalism were interpreted by the Turks as "the empire's Arab population stabbing Turkey in the back by siding with the English and French." Graham E. Fuller, *The New Turkish Republic: Turkey as a Pivotal State in the Muslim World* (Washington DC: United States Institute of Peace, 2010), 14, 21.

24. Graham E. Fuller, *The Future of Political Islam,* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2003), 18.

25. Graham E. Fuller, *The New Turkish Republic: Turkey as a Pivotal State in the Muslim World,* 15.

26. The AKP is not a popular party among Alawites in Turkey, who mostly support the Kemalists in the CHP opposition party, and who have kept their distance from the ruling AKP owing to the fear that the AKP has a hidden agenda, namely, to create a Sunni Islamist state in Turkey. Matthew Cassel, "Syria Strife Tests Turkish Alawites," October 22, 2012. http://www.aljazeera.com/indepth/features/2012/10/201210217225938535.html *Al Jazeera* (November 2, 2012). Angel Rabasa and Stephen Larrabee, *The Rise of Political Islam in Turkey*, 21.

27. Angel Rabasa and F. Stephen Larrabee, *The Rise of Political Islam in Turkey*, 15, 34. The Naksibendi were at the root of political Islam in Turkey.

28. Angel Rabasa and F. Stephen Larrabee, *The Rise of Political Islam in Turkey*, 15.

29. Angel Rabasa and F. Stephen Larrabee, *The Rise of Political Islam in Turkey*, 15.

30. Angel Rabasa and F. Stephen Larrabee, *The Rise of Political Islam in Turkey*, 17.

31. John Esposito and Ihsan Yilmaz, "Gulen's Ideas on Freedom of Thought, Pluralism, Secularism, State, Politics, Civil Society and Democracy," in *Islam and Peacebuilding: Gulen Movement Initiatives,* eds. John L. Esposito and Ihsan Yılmaz (New York: Blue Dome Press, 2010), 25, 26.

32. The traditionalists of *Milli Görü* movement was focused on establishing a society based on traditional Islamic values. It was reluctant to make compromise with the secular establishment to expand their political support. The Movement was also anti-Western and regarded Islam as incompatible with Western values. Its opposition to Turkish membership to the EU and its willingness to intensify ties with Muslim world can be explained within this framework. Angel Rabasa and F. Stephen Larrabee, *The Rise of Political Islam in Turkey*, 46.

33. Angel Rabasa and F. Stephen Larrabee, *The Rise of Political Islam in Turkey*, 45.

34. Angel Rabasa and F. Stephen Larrabee, *The Rise of Political Islam in Turkey*, 45.

35. Graham E. Fuller, *The Future of Political Islam*, (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2003), 130. The Reformist of *Milli Görüş* which led to the establishment of the AKP were open to cooperation with secular establishments and prefer to develop its ties with all states. The AKP sees the Western agenda overlapping with its own. Contrary to the traditionalists, the AKP saw the EU membership as a means of reducing the influence of military and establishing a political framework that will expand religious tolerance and ensure its political survival. The AKP also promoted liberal market policies and abandoned anti-globalization discourse of Traditionalists. Angel Rabasa and F. Stephen Larrabee, *The Rise of Political Islam in Turkey*, 47.

36. Prime Minister, Recep Tayyip Erdogan said "I hope there will be a secular state in Egypt" in a speech he made in Cairo following the Arab Spring.

37. Angel Rabasa and F. Stephen Larrabee, *The Rise of Political Islam in Turkey,* 18.

38. Sabah, "Basbakan Erdogan'dan Laiklik Acilimi," September 15, 2011, http://www.sabah.com.tr/Gundem/2011/09/15/basbakan-erdogandan-laiklik-acilimi (February 28, 2013).

39. Omer Taspinar, "Turkey: The New Model?" 128; Marc Lynch, *The Arab Uprising: The Unfinished Revolutions of the New Middle East,* 211.

40. Hakan M. Yavuz, *Secularism and Muslim Democracy in Turkey* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010), 14.

41. Atul Aneja, "Iran and the Arab Spring," July 5, 2011, http://www.irandiplomacywatch.com/2011/07/iran-and-arab-spring.html (November 4, 2011).

42. Atul Aneja, "Iran and the Arab Spring."

43. Turkiye, "Alan Eldik, Veren El Olduk," October 11, 2012, http://www.turkiyegazetesi.com.tr/haberdetay.aspx?newsid=24759 (June 3, 2013).

44. Turkiye, "Alan Eldik,Veren El Olduk," October 11, 2012, http://www.turkiyegazetesi.com.tr/haberdetay.aspx?newsid=24759 (June 3, 2013).

45. Hakan M. Yavuz, *Secularism and Muslim Democracy in Turkey*, 36.

46. Omer Taspinar, "Turkey: The New Model?" 135.

47. Shireen T. Hunter, *Iran's Foreign Policy in the Post-Soviet Era: Resisting the New International Order,* 185, 190.

48. Yigal Carmon, Y. Yehoshua, A. Savyon, and H. Migron, "An Escalating Regional Cold War—Part I: The 2009 Gaza War," February 2, 2009, http://www.memri.org/report/en/0/0/0/0/0/0/3281.htm (October 4, 2010).

49. Graham E. Fuller, *The New Turkish Republic: Turkey as a Pivotal State in the Muslim World,* 105; Ali M. Ansari, *Confronting Iran: The Failure of American Foreign Policy and the Next Great Crisis in the Middle East*, 179.

50. Lionel Beehner, "Arab Views of a Nuclear Iran."

51. The Pew Forum on Religion and Public Life, "Mapping the Global Muslim Population: A Report on the Size and Distribution of the World's Muslim Population," October 2009, http://www.pewforum.org/newassets/images/reports/muslimpopulation/muslimpopulation.pdf (March 20, 2013), 9, 10.

52. Yigal Carmon, Y. Yehoshua, A. Savyon, and H. Migron, "An Escalating Regional Cold War—Part I: The 2009 Gaza War;" Shireen T. Hunter, *Iran's Foreign Policy in the Post-Soviet Era: Resisting the New International Order*, 199; Ray Takeyh, *Guardians of the Revolution: Iran and the World in the Age of the Ayatollahs* (Oxford & New York: Oxford University Press, 2009), 237.

53. Iran supported a plot to overthrow the Bahraini Government in 1981. Khomeini expressed support for Shiited who bombed Western embassies in Kuwait in 1983. Iranian pilgrims rioted during the hajj in Mecca, Saudi Arabia. Iranian officials were involved in both training and assisting Saudi Hizballah operatives in executing the 1996 terrorist bombing of the US military housing facility at Khobar Towers near Dhahran, Saudi Arabia. Lionel Beehner, "Arab Views of a Nuclear Iran."

54. Barry Rubin, "Iran: The Rise of a Regional Power," *The Middle East Review of International Affairs* 10, no. 3, http://www.gloria-center.org/2006/09/rubin-2006-09-10/ (February 22, 2011).

55. Lionel Beehner, "Arab Views of a Nuclear Iran."

56. Ray Takeyh, *Guardians of the Revolution: Iran and the World in the Age of the Ayatollahs*, 21.

57. Shireen T. Hunter, *Iran's Foreign Policy in the Post-Soviet Era: Resisting the New International Order,* 200.

58. Joshua Landis, "End of Arab Cold War Makes Syria Man in the Middle," *Syria Comment*, December 25, 2009, http://www.joshualandis.com/blog/?p=4895 (September 25, 2010).

59. Yigal Carmon, Y. Yehoshua, A. Savyon, and H. Migron, "An Escalating Regional Cold War—Part I: The 2009 Gaza War."

60. Graham E. Fuller, *The New Turkish Republic: Turkey as a Pivotal State in the Muslim World,* 166.

61. Aylin Unver Noi, "The Arab Spring: Should Turkey Coordinate Its Foreign Policy with the European Union?" *Mediterranean Quarterly*, 23, no. 3, (Summer 2012): 65.

62. Aylin Unver Noi, "The Arab Spring: Should Turkey Coordinate Its Foreign Policy with the European Union?" 67.

63. Fezalar Educational Institutions (FEI) also helps businessmen to establish their business in Iraqi Kurdish markets. Harun Akyol, "The Role of Turkish Schools in Building Trusting Cross-ethnic Relationships in Northern Iraq," in *Islam and Peacebuilding: Gulen Movement Initiatives,* eds. John L. Esposito and Ihsan Yılmaz (New York: Blue Dome Press), 326, 331.

64. The Carnegie Report claims that 'Education is a force for reducing inter group conflict...' as an ethnic conflict prevention method. Harun Akyol, "The Role of Turkish Schools in Building Trusting Cross-Ethnic Relationships in Northern Iraq," 325.

65. Aylin Unver Noi, "The Arab Spring: Should Turkey Coordinate Its Foreign Policy with the European Union?" 67.

66. It much more focuses on *inter*religious dialogue. Hakan M. Yavuz, *Toward An Islamic Enlightenment: The Gulen Movement* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2012), 194.

67. Hakan M. Yavuz, *Toward An Islamic Enlightenment: The Gulen Movement*, 194.

68. Turkey aims to have an independent foreign policy and a deepening of relations with all states, which makes for some shifts from its earlier Washington-centric and Europe-centric policies. Graham E. Fuller, *The New Turkish Republic: Turkey as a Pivotal State in the Muslim World,* 168, Ahmet Davutoglu, *Stratejik Derinlik: Turkiye'nin Uluslararası Konumu. (Strategic Depth: Turkey's International Position)* (Istanbul: KureYayınları, 2010), 550.

69. Egypt allowed Iranian warships to transit through the Suez Canal to the Mediterranean Sea for the first time since 1979. It participated in a Non-Alignment Summit held in Tehran. "Egypt Allows Iranian Warships 'can Use Suez Canal,'" *BBC News*, February 18, 2011, http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-middle-east-12493614 (February 20, 2011); "Iran Visit by Egypt Leader Still Stirs Debate," *The Daily Star*, September 9, 2012, http://www.dailystar.com.lb/News/Middle-East/2012/Sep-09/187257-iran-visit-by-egypt-leader-still-stirs-debate.ashx#axzz263P5Hb5Z (September 10, 2012).

70. Mohammad Farazmand, "The Arab Spring and the Role of Regional Powers," *IR Diplomacy*, July 6, 2011, http://www.irdiplomacy.ir/en/news/52/bodyView/14412/The.Arab.Spring.and.the.role.of.regional.powers.html (July 1, 2012).

71. The Egyptian-Israeli peace treaty, Egypt's close relationship with the US, Anwar Sadat's decision to host the Shah in Cairo and refusal to hand the Shah over to the Islamic regime in Tehran, Iran's support of Hezbollah and Hamas, Egypt's support of Iraq during the Iran-Iraq War, and its closer relationship with Saudi Arabia to counterbalance Iran's regional aspirations were among

the reasons of enmity between Iran and Egypt. Ahmed Morsy, "An Eager Iran, and Hesitant Egypt: Relations Before and After the Arab Spring," September 13, 2012, http://muftah.org/an-eager-iran-hesitant-egypt-relations-before-after-the-arab-spring/ (March 11, 2012); "Egypt Allows Iranian Warships 'can Use Suez Canal," *BBC News*, February 18, 2011, http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-middle-east-12493614 (February 20, 2011).

72. "Iran Visit by Egypt Leader Still Stirs Debate," *The Daily Star*.

73. Fady Salah, "Salafis, Shi'a React to Ahmadinejad Visit," *Daily News Egypt*, February 6, 2013, http://www.dailynewsegypt.com/2013/02/06/Salafis-Shia-react-to-ahmadinejad-visit (March 20, 2013).

74. "Egypt-Saudi Ties Under Spotlight as Mursi Pays First Official Visit to Kingdom," *Al Arabiya*, July 11, 2012, http://english.alarabiya.net/articles/2012/07/11/225732.html (September 9, 2012).

75. W. Andrew Terill, "The Saudi-Iranian Rivalry and the Future of Middle East Security," 2011, http://www.strategicstudiesinstitute.army.mil/pdffiles/PUB1094.pdf (February 20, 2013), ix; "Ahmadinejad Offers Loan to Egypt, Al-Ahram Reports," *Arabia msn news*, February 6, 2013, http://arabia.msn.com/news/middle-east/1286178/ahmadinejad-offers-loan-egypt-alahram/ (March 20, 2013).

76. Tariq Ramadan, *Islam and the Arab Awakening* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2012), 40.

77. Tariq Ramadan, *Islam and the Arab Awakening*, 40.

78. Thomas Erdbrink and Joby Warrick, "Bahrain Crackdown Fueling Tensions Between Iran, Saudi Arabia," *The Washington Post*, April 22, 2011, http://articles.washingtonpost.com/2011-04-22/world/35231321_1_bahrain-crackdown-tiny-island-kingdom-saudi-arabia (June 2, 2013).

79. *Associated Press*, "Iran Cleric Urges Protesters to Resist Bahrain Government Crackdowns," *Haaretz.com*, April 6, 2011, http://www.haaretz.com/news/world/iran-cleric-urges-protesters-to-resist-bahrain-government-crackdowns-1.354461 (April 6, 2011).

80. Peter Alsis, Marissa Allison and Anthony H. Cordesman, "US and Iranian Strategic Competition in the Gulf States and Yemen," 2012, http://csis.org/files/publication/111121_Iran_Ch5_GulfState.pdf (July 1, 2012), "The Truth about al-Islah and the Yemen Revolution," *Yemen Post*, October 12, 2011, http://www.yemenpost.net/Detail123456789.aspx?SubID=4175 (March 8, 2012). Yet, the Muslim Brotherhood's Yemeni leader, Sheikh al-Zindani, who has proven unreliable and is a potential challenger to the Islamic legitimacy of the Saudi regime, was not in a position to be preferred by Saudi Arabia. Mohammad Farazmand, "The Arab Spring and the Role of Regional Powers." Hadi was the only candidate of the Yemeni elections.

81. Peter Alsis, Marissa Allison and Anthony H. Cordesman, "US and Iranian Strategic Competition in the Gulf States and Yemen," 50.

82. Eric Scmitt and Robert F. Worth, "With Arms for Yemen Rebels, Iran Seeks Wider Mideast Role."

83. Eric Schmitt and Robert F. Worth, "With Arms for Yemen Rebels, Iran Seeks Wider Mideast Role," *New York Times*, March 15, 2012, http://www.nytimes.com/2012/03/15/world/middleeast/aiding-yemen-rebels-iran-seeks-wider-mideast-role.html?_r=1&pagewanted=all (August 17, 2012).

84. Muaad Al-Maqtari, "Saudi Arabia Accuses Iran of Supporting Ansar Al-Sharia in Yemen," *Yemen Times*, April 30, 2012,

http://www.yementimes.com/en/1568/news/781/Saudi-Arabia%C2%A0accuses%C2%A0Iran-of-sup-porting-Ansar-Al-Sharia-in%C2%A0Yemen.htm (August 17, 2012).

85. Seth G. Jones, "Al Qaeda in Iran: Why Tehran Is Accommodating the Terrorist Groups," *Foreign Affairs*, January 29, 2012,

http://www.foreignaffairs.com/articles/137061/seth-g-jones/al-qaeda-in-iran (August 17, 2012).

86. The minority Shiite Alawite sect rules over the majority Sunni Muslims in Syria. Tariq Ramadan, *Islam and the Arab Awakening*, 39.

87. "Turkey Warns Against Shiite-Sunni Cold War," *JPost.com*, January 4, 2012,

http://www.jpost.com/LandedPages/PrintArticle.aspx?id=252207 (January 4, 2012).

88. Servet Yanatma,"Al-Ghannushi Says Turkey's Democracy a Model for Tunisia," *Today's Zaman*, February 23, 2011,

http://www.todayszaman.com/newsDetail_getNewsById.action?load=detay&newsId=236392&link=236392 (October 27, 2011).

89. Mohammed S. Younis, "Turkish Delight? The Feasibility of the 'Turkish Model' for Egypt," *Hurriyet Daily News*, April 2, 2012,

http://www.hurriyetdailynews.com/turkish-delight-the-feasibility-of-the-turkish-model-for-egypt-.aspx?pageID=238&nID=17399&NewsCatID=396 (April 7, 2012).

90. By 2012, the AKP government had been criticized due to democratic shortcomings. The more power Erdogan won at the elections, the less interested he appeared in taking steps toward freedom of expression and human rights. Omer Taspinar, "Turkey: The New Model?" 135.

91. Ray Takeyh, *Guardians of the Revolution: Iran and the World in the Age of the Ayatollahs*, 253.

92. Most Kurds are orthodox Sunni Muslims (Shafi'i), which distinguishes them from the majority of Turks and Arabs, who are Hanafi Sunnis, and the majority of Iranians, who are Shiites. Yet, not all the Kurds are Shafi'i Sunnis. The majority of Kurds living in Iran are Shiites (Twelver Imam). There are also Alevi, Yezidi, *Ahl-e Haqq* (*Kakai*) Kurds living in Turkey, Iraq and Iran. Martin Van Bruinessen, *Aga, Seyh, Devlet* (*Agha, Shaikh and State: The Social and Political Structures of Kurdistan*) (Istanbul: Iletisim Yayıncılık, 2006), 43-45.

93. Angel Rabasa and F. Stephen Larrabee, *The Rise of Political Islam in Turkey*, 67.

94. Risale Haber, "Kürt Sorunu Çözümünde Akla Said Nursi Gelmeli," 16 April 2011,

http://www.risalehaber.com/kurt-sorunu-cozumunde-akla-said-nursi-gelmeli-104765h.htm (10 June 2013). This idea reflects the "Constitutional Patriotism" of Jürgen Habermas in which citizenship relies on a shared sense of values rather than a common history or ethnic origin.

95. Al-Monitor, "Turkish Ties with Iraq, Iran Worsen over PKK Peace Plan," 19 May 2013,

http://www.al-monitor.com/pulse/originals/2013/05/turkey-iraq-ties-pkk-worsen.html, (11 June 2013).

96. Marc Lynch, *The Arab Uprisings: The Unfinished Revolutions of the New Middle East*, 212.

97. Qatar's Prime Minister and Foreign Minister proposed for the establishment of an organization composed of the Gulf CooperationCouncil (GCC) member states and Iran. This act of Qatar has been interpreted as Qatari support for the Muslim Brotherhood in Syria in order to counterbalance Saudi Arabian support for radical powers in Syria. Interview with Dr. Masood Assadollahi, "Qatar Using Iran's Initiative to its Advantage." During the March 2010 Iraqi national election, the Saudis clearly favored secular Shi'ite leader Dr. Ayad Alawi, who complained that Iran interfered

quite heavily in the political negotiations. W. Andrew Terill, "The Saudi-Iranian Rivalry and the Future of Middle East Security," 53.

98. Aylin Unver Noi, "The Arab Spring: Should Turkey Coordinate Its Foreign Policy with the European Union?" 78. The peaceful protests began on 28 May, 2013 over plans to redevelop Gezi park in Taksim, Istanbul has spread to other cities of Turkey owing to "excessive use of force" by police and Prime Minister's speeches. The Protestors accuse Turkish government of becoming increasingly authoritarian. Imposition of conservative Islamic values through several bans which infringe personal freedoms also become catalysts of these demonstrations. The more power Erdogan won at the elections, the less interest he appeared in taking steps toward freedom of expression and human rights, which are *sine qua non* of functioning democracy. Omer Taspinar, "Turkey: The New Model?" 135.

99. Ammar Ali Hassan, "Muslim Brothers and Salafis," *Al-Ahram Weekly*, December 6, 2012, http://weekly.ahram.org.eg/News/502/32/Muslim%20Brothers%20and%20Salafis.aspx (March 15, 2013).