

“International Relations of the Middle East”

Course #: 21402 – POLS 354-01 (4 units)

**University of San Francisco, California
Department of Politics and the Middle Eastern Studies Program**

**Dr. Rami Zeedan
Visiting Assistant Professor
Israel Institute Visiting Faculty
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rzeedan@usfca.edu**

Week 3

3.1 Regime types: Democracies, Dictatorships, and Hybrid Regimes

**3.2 Are/Why there are no Arab Democracies?
Are/Why there are no Muslim Democracies?**

3.3 The Type of Regimes in the Middle-East and North-Africa in a Comparative Perspective

3.4 Case studies: The Republic of Tunisia and The Lebanese Republic

3.1 Regime types: Democracies, Dictatorships, and Hybrid Regimes

FAWCETT (2016). CHAPTER 6: THE PUZZLE OF POLITICAL REFORM IN THE MIDDLE-EAST, PP. 127-147.

PLATTNER, M. F. (2015). IS DEMOCRACY IN DECLINE?. *JOURNAL OF DEMOCRACY*, 26(1), 5-10. [LINK](#)

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Classifications of regimes and the history of Political Science

■ The ancient Greeks and the Romans:

- ◆ Plato (428-348 BC): Monarchy and Aristocracy; Timocracy; Oligarchy; Democracy and Anarchy; Tyranny.
- ◆ Aristotle (384-322 BC): Connection between institutions, approaches, and ideas to processes and performance.

	Ruled by		
Type	One Ruler	Very Few Rulers	Many Rulers
Pure / Real / For the common interest	Monarchy	Aristocracy	Polity
Impure /Distorted / For the interest of the ruler(s)	Tyranny	Oligarchy	Democracy

Classification of regimes

Liberal Democracy

**Illiberal Democracy
(or Hybrid regime)**

Authoritarian

What do we want to know?

- **What is a democracy and why do people strive for it?**
- **Should all countries democratize? Is it a goal unto itself?**
- **What are the advantages of democracy over autocracy?**
- **If democracy is better, what makes un-democratic regimes so appealing that they persist? Why do their leaders survive much longer than in democracies?**
- **Why are we experiencing a decline in democracy since the “high” of the 90s? Are we really experiencing a decline?**
- **How can we tell if a country is on the right path to democratization? What causes the process to break down?**

What do we want to know?

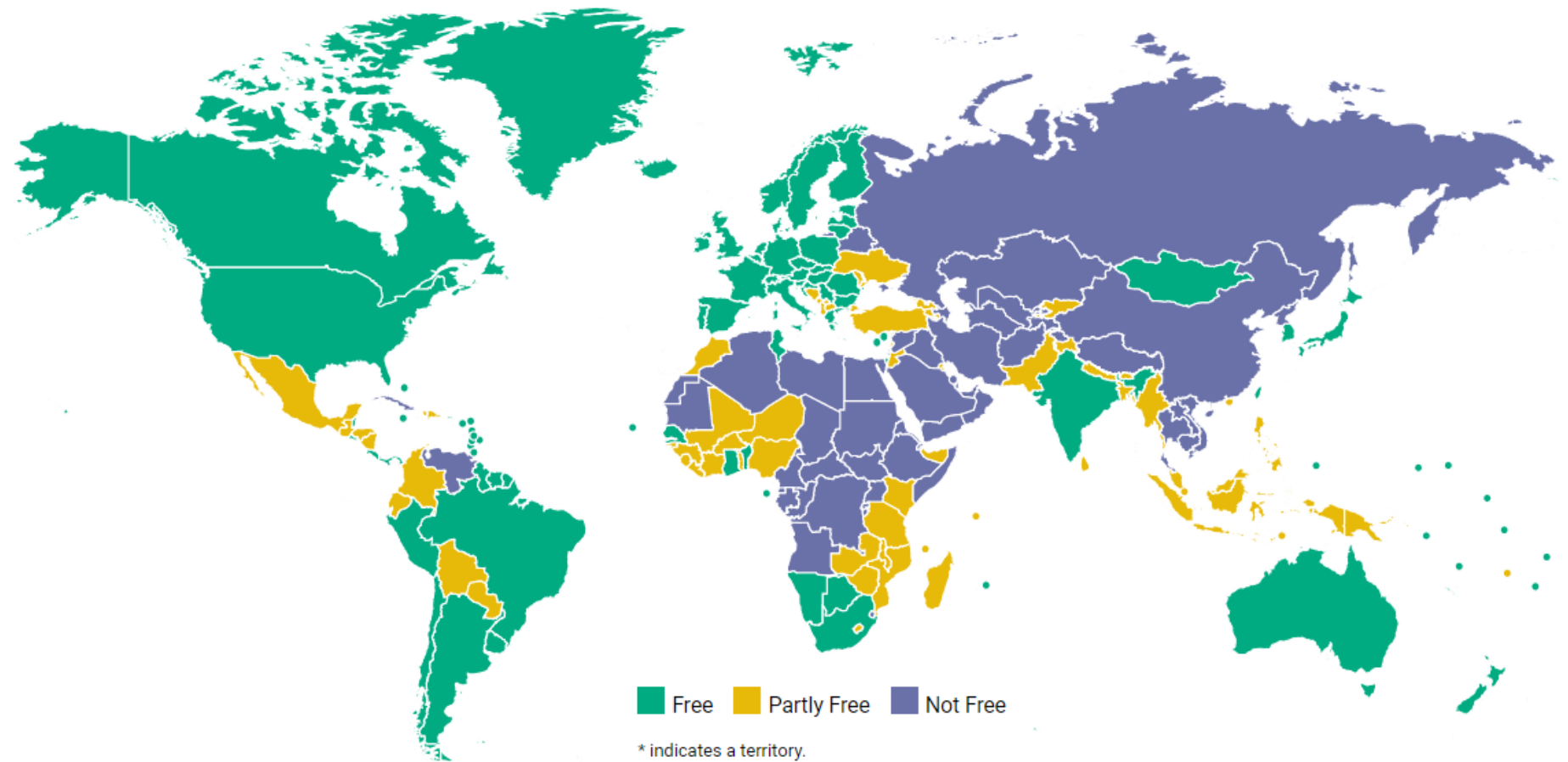
- **What is Democracy?:** Diamond (2002)- democracy consists of four key elements:
 - ◆ A political system for choosing and replacing the government through free and fair elections
 - ◆ The active participation of the people, as citizens, in politics and civic life
 - ◆ Protection of the human rights of all citizens
 - ◆ A rule of law, in which the laws and procedures apply equally to all citizens
- **Are all democracies the same?:** No two democracies are exactly the same, but no two autocracies are exactly the same either
- **Is democracy in decline?:** The question is under serious debate

The Democracy Index (Economist)

Type of regime	Scores	Number of countries	Percentage of countries	Percentage of world population
Full democracies	8 to 10	19	11.4	4.5
Flawed democracies	6 to 7.9	57	34.1	44.8
Hybrid regimes	4 to 5.9	40	24.0	18.0
Authoritarian regimes	below 4.0	51	30.5	32.7

<https://infographics.economist.com/2017/DemocracyIndex/>

Freedom House: “free countries”

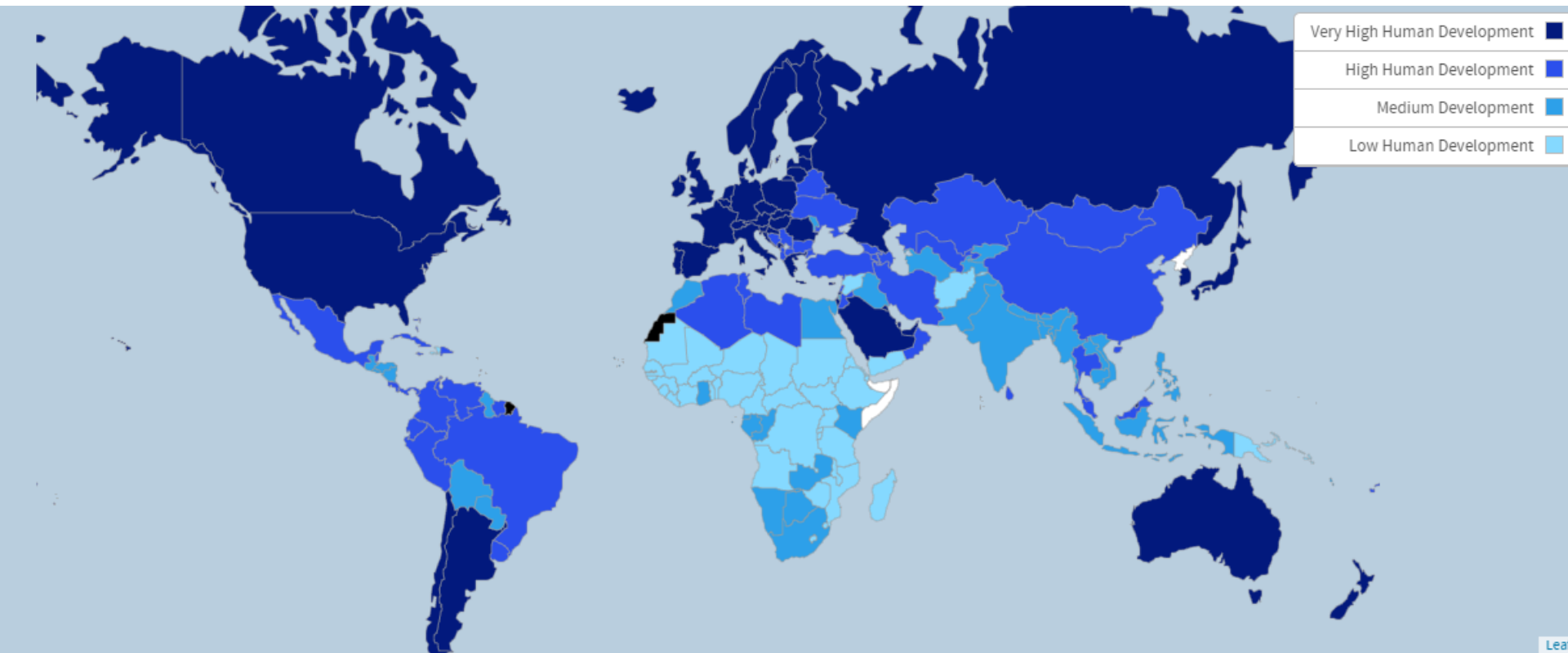


<https://freedomhouse.org/report/freedom-world/freedom-world-2017>

Freedom of the Press

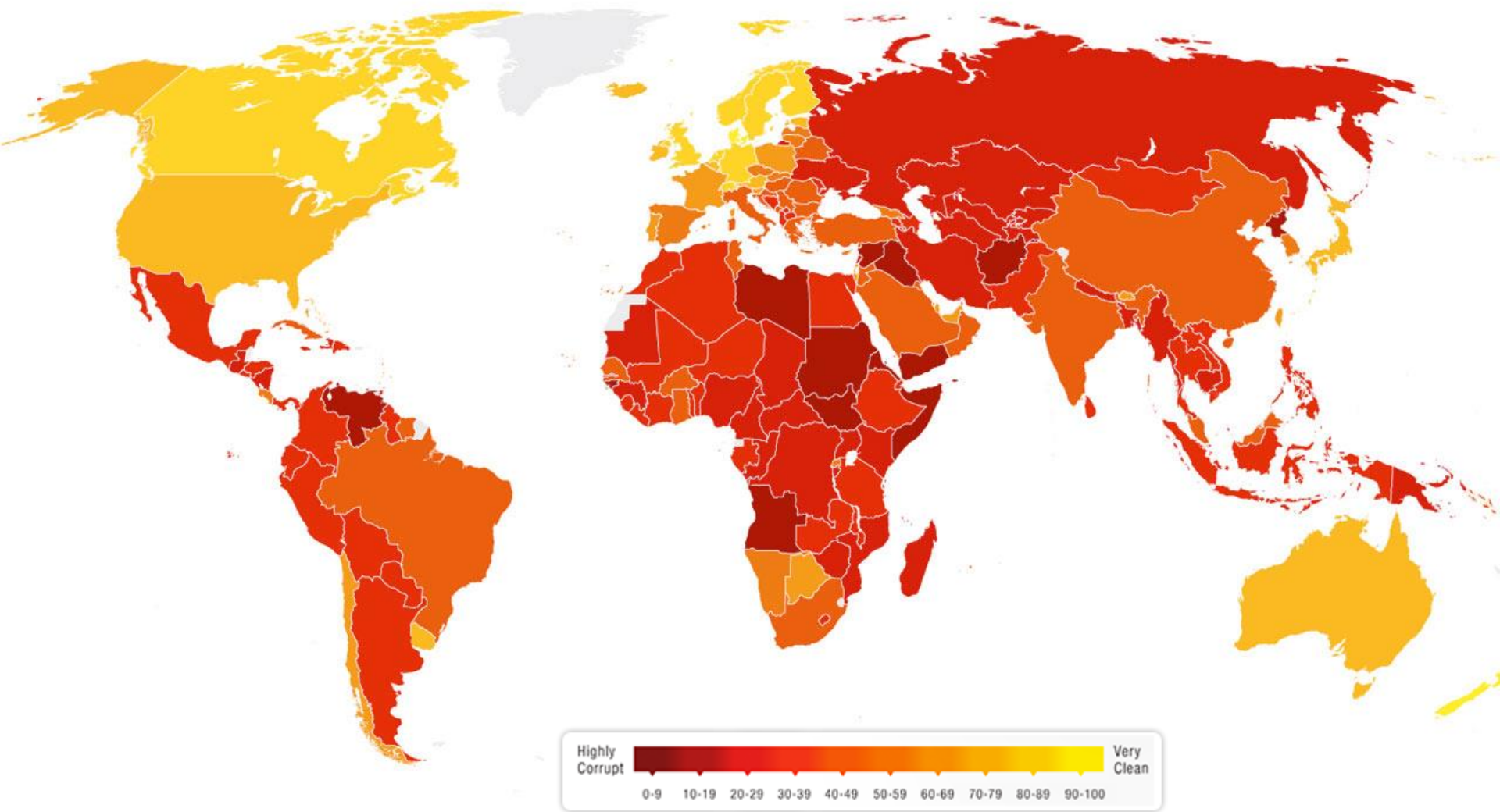


The Human Development Index by United Nations Development Program



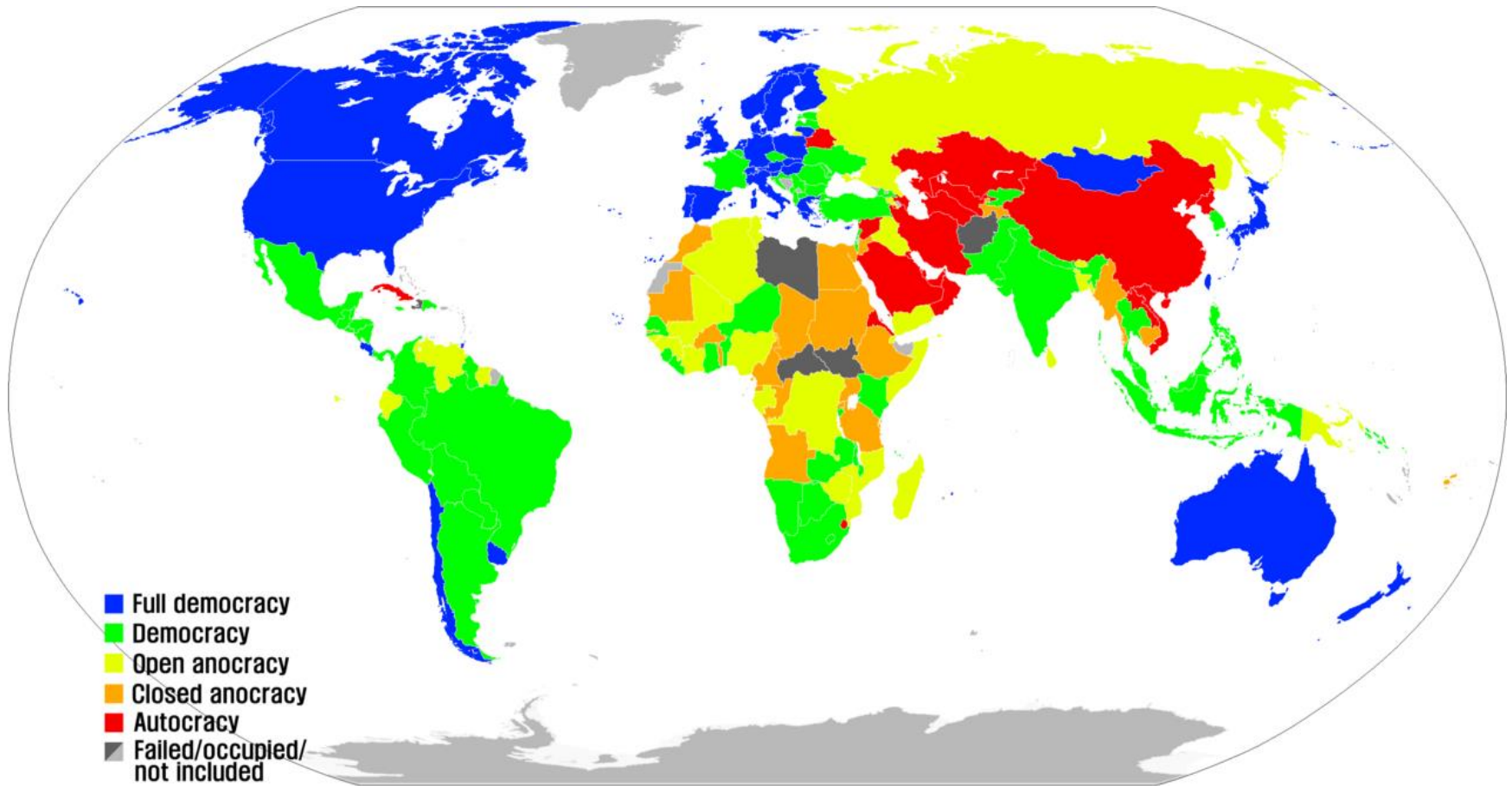
<http://hdr.undp.org/en/countries>

The Corruption Perceptions Index by Transparency



https://www.transparency.org/news/feature/corruption_perceptions_index_2016

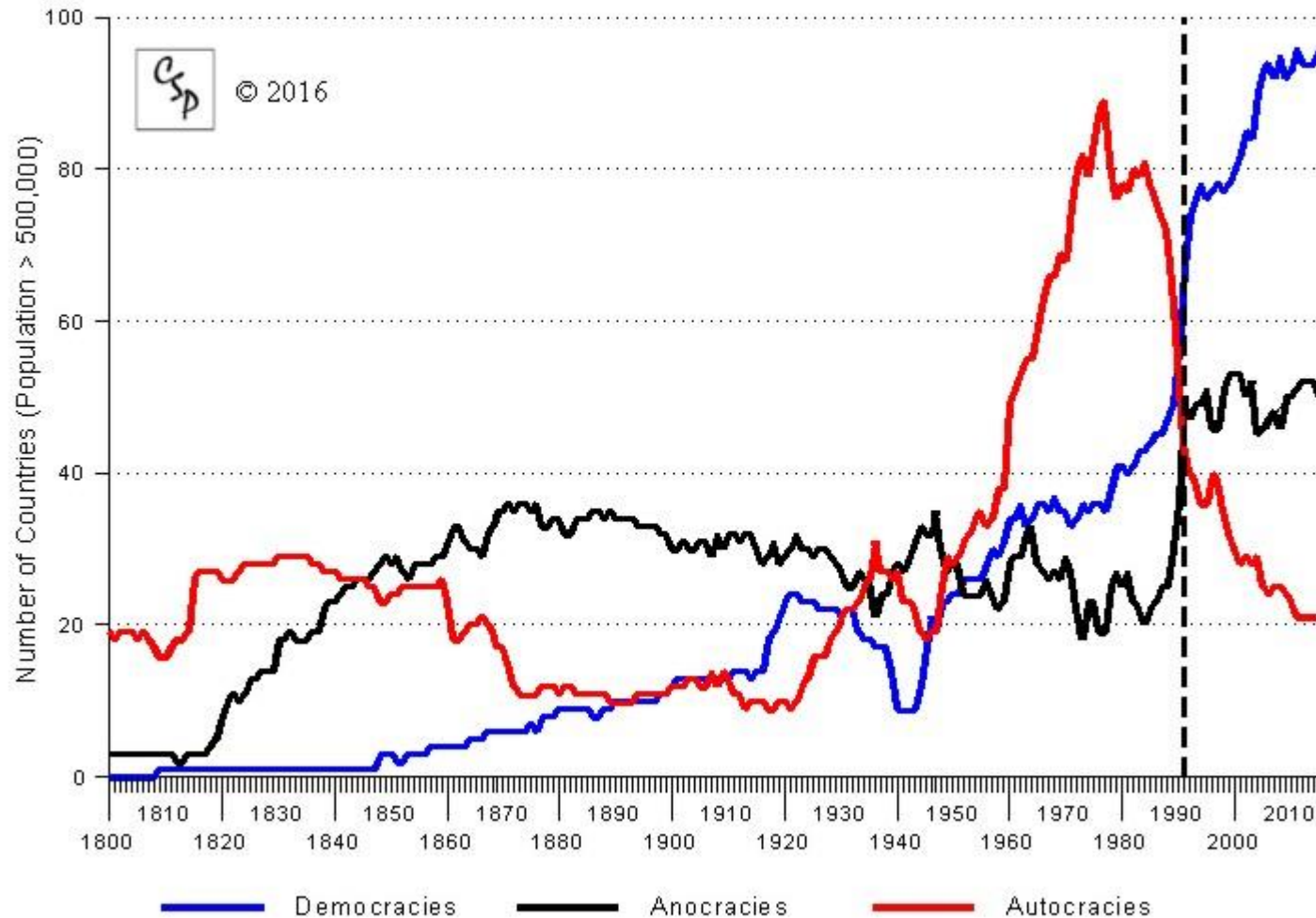
The Polity IV Scale



<http://www.systemicpeace.org/polity/polity4.htm>

Polity IV

Global Trends in Governance, 1800-2015



Classification of regimes

Liberal Democracy

**Illiberal Democracy
(or Hybrid regime)**

Authoritarian

Classification of regimes

Criteria

Type

Authoritarian

Communist, Fascist, Tyranny, Military rule, Party-based regime, Royal family, Theocracy, Presidential

Illiberal Democracy

Type of representative democracy

Liberal Democracy

Type of representative democracy

Main Characters

The ruler is above the law and exempt from responsibility towards the people; Political participation is limited.

There is no fair competition; The ruler intervenes in the rule of law, in the media and in the economy; The protection of individual rights is limited

Representative government is limited by law; Regular, general, free and fair elections; Respect for individual rights

Example

China, Pakistan, Vietnam, Syria.

Venezuela, Malaysia and Turkey

Australia, Canada, France, Germany, USA

Classification of regimes

Criteria

Authoritarian

Illiberal Democracy

Liberal Democracy

Political
communication

Conscious and
non-critical
communication

Communication is
controlled but
with some
freedom. Not
critical enough

Free and critical
communication

Political
economy

Centralized and
planned economy
or a targeted
economy in favor
of the ruler

Free market
economy, but
subject to
political
intervention

Free market
economy-
capitalism - (USA)
or a coordinated
market economy -
socialism -
(Germany)

Classification of regimes

Criteria

Authoritarian

Illiberal Democracy

Liberal Democracy

Political participation

Low participation is handled and its purpose is to protect the ruler. In a totalitarian regime - a high and organized participation.

Participation is limited, is channeled through elections, and its purpose is to fortify and confirm the authority of the ruler.

Moderate participation, mainly voluntary and in order to influence decisions.

Elections and voters

Elections for an institution or office that is not important. Competition is restrained by an authoritarian regime and does not exist under a totalitarian regime

The elections are more free than in Authoritarian, but still limited by a lack of fair competition.

Free, fair and competitive elections.

Classification of regimes

Criteria

Authoritarian

Illiberal Democracy

Liberal Democracy

Political parties

Parties in dictatorships are a shield and a power tool for the ruler.

Parties are not the real source of authority, or the proposed selection does not present an alternative platform to the electorate.

The choice between coherent parties that allows voters to influence the way the government.

Law and constitution

The constitution is vague and the status of the judicial system as a poor law shield.

Law and Justice are in second level to the government

The purpose of the rule of law - to convert human governance into a rule of law. A constitution includes a definition of the political system and a declaration of individual rights.

Classification of regimes

Criteria

Authoritarian

Illiberal Democracy

Liberal Democracy

The Legislature

Most authoritarian regimes have a Chamber of Deputies of some sort, but the House of Representatives generally functions only as a shadow institution. In totalitarian regimes the elected houses were even more marginal than in an authoritarian regime

The political status of the legislature may be significant in areas that do not endanger the realities of presidential leadership. The national leader sees himself as responsible to the entire nation, not to representatives of the House of Representatives

The functions of the legislature: representation, discussion, legislation, approval of expenses, formation of government and supervision

The executive

There are no constitutional or electoral control mechanisms, or they are not completely effective. It is not the constitution that limits the scope of the executive branch, but the political realities

The president operates without a whole set of constitutional restraints. The President uses the direct mandate he received from the people and claims that he is acting in the long-term interests of the people to overshadow rival institutions such as the courts and the legislature, but without prejudice to the status of these institutions

The authority of the executive branch is subject to constitutional limitations. The administration is elected and must also re-run in elections at regular intervals

Why do Countries Transition to Democracy?

- Two-level analysis by Singer- The Nation-State and The international system.
- Six level analysis by Russett and Starr- Individual, role/office, Government, Society, The State, The international system.
- Three levels of analysis by Waltz: Individual, The state, The international system.
- Approaches to the study of democratizations:
 - ◆ **The Bottom-Up Approach** (or: the Structural Approach)
 - ◆ **The Top-Down Approach** (or: the Strategic Approach)
 - ◆ **The Economic Approach**
 - ◆ **Change from Outside** (or: International Approach)

Transition to Democracy- Does it Corelate with Economy and Society?

■ Two main approaches to this argument:

- ◆ **Endogenous- "modernization"** theory : Democracies are more likely to emerge among countries that develop economically
- ◆ **Exogenous:** Democracies emerge independently of economic development, but more likely to survive in developed countries

Democratic Consolidation and Reverse

- If a functioning state exists, five interconnected and mutually reinforcing conditions must be present or be crafted **for a democracy to become consolidated**:
 1. A free and lively **civil society**
 2. Relatively autonomous and valued **political society**
 3. **Rule of law** to ensure legal guarantees for citizen's freedoms
 4. A **state bureaucracy** that is usable by the new democratic government
 5. An institutionalized **economic society**
- All five arenas must work together

Authoritarian Rule- Various Versions

■ Forms of authoritarian regimes:

1. **Personal despotism** (or Tyranny)
2. **Monarchy** (or royal family)
3. **Ruling parties** (including Communist / Fascist)
4. **Ruling president**
5. **Military rule**
6. **Theocracy**

■ The forms of authoritarian regimes presented are pure types; Many contemporary authoritarian regimes are a mixture.

3.2 Are/Why there are no Arab Democracies? Are/Why there are no Muslim Democracies?

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Islamic Religion, Arabic Culture, and Regime Types

- Why many **Muslim countries** are authoritarian?
- Is there a connection between Islamic Religion and regime type?
- Why many **Arab countries** are authoritarian?
- Is there a connection between Arabic culture and regime type?

(*) Arab countries means her, those countries with Arab-majority.
Muslim countries means her, those countries with Muslim-majority.

Islam and Authoritarianism

- Fish (2002) questions **if the Islamic world is more authoritarian**, as claimed, and why?
- The examination included 47 countries with Muslim majority, compared to more than 100 countries.
- The findings show that **Muslim countries are democratic underachievers**:
 - ◆ They have the lowest rating by the Freedom House and Polity
 - ◆ They have the least economic development
- The British colonial heritage and the Communist heritage were not found significant to explain the difference in democratic level.

Islam and Authoritarianism

■ Fish (2002) **rules out these reasons:**

- ◆ Islamic societies tend to be **more violent** (Montesquieu, Huntington and others): Was found false.
- ◆ **Lower interpersonal trust** among Muslim societies: Was found false.
- ◆ Muslim polities are **less secular**: Was found false.

■ Fish (2002) suggests that **the main factor to distinguish Muslim countries than others is the patriarchal social structure** that subordinates women to men dominance.

Arabic Culture and Authoritarianism

- The third wave of Democratization (since 1974) has reached to many regions but one, and to many cultures but one- the Middle East and the Arab countries. The question is – **Why is there no Arab democracy?**
- The common belief is: common cultural, structural, and practices among Arab countries prevent them from transforming to democracy.

Arabic Culture and Authoritarianism

- Diamond (2010) suggests that **neither Islam or Arabic culture** offers a convincing explanation for the Arab democratic deficit.
- Diamond **rules out these explanations:**
 - ◆ Sectarian and ethnic divisions are an obstacle to democratization in Arab countries- Was found false
 - ◆ Arab population don't want to value electoral democracy - Was found false
 - ◆ Economic development is the obstacle in Arab countries- Was found false

Arabic Culture and Authoritarianism

- Diamond suggested that the problem is the economic structure in most of these Arab countries that rely on **revenues from natural resources** (“the Resource curse”).
- Non-Oil based countries, rely on **foreign aid** in a similar way as Oil-countries.
- Further, these Arab non-democratic regimes master the **hold of power** at the highest level of proficiency.
- **The Israeli-Arab conflict** is used by Arab dictators to divert public frustration away.
- The Arab-League is not an advocate for democratic norms.

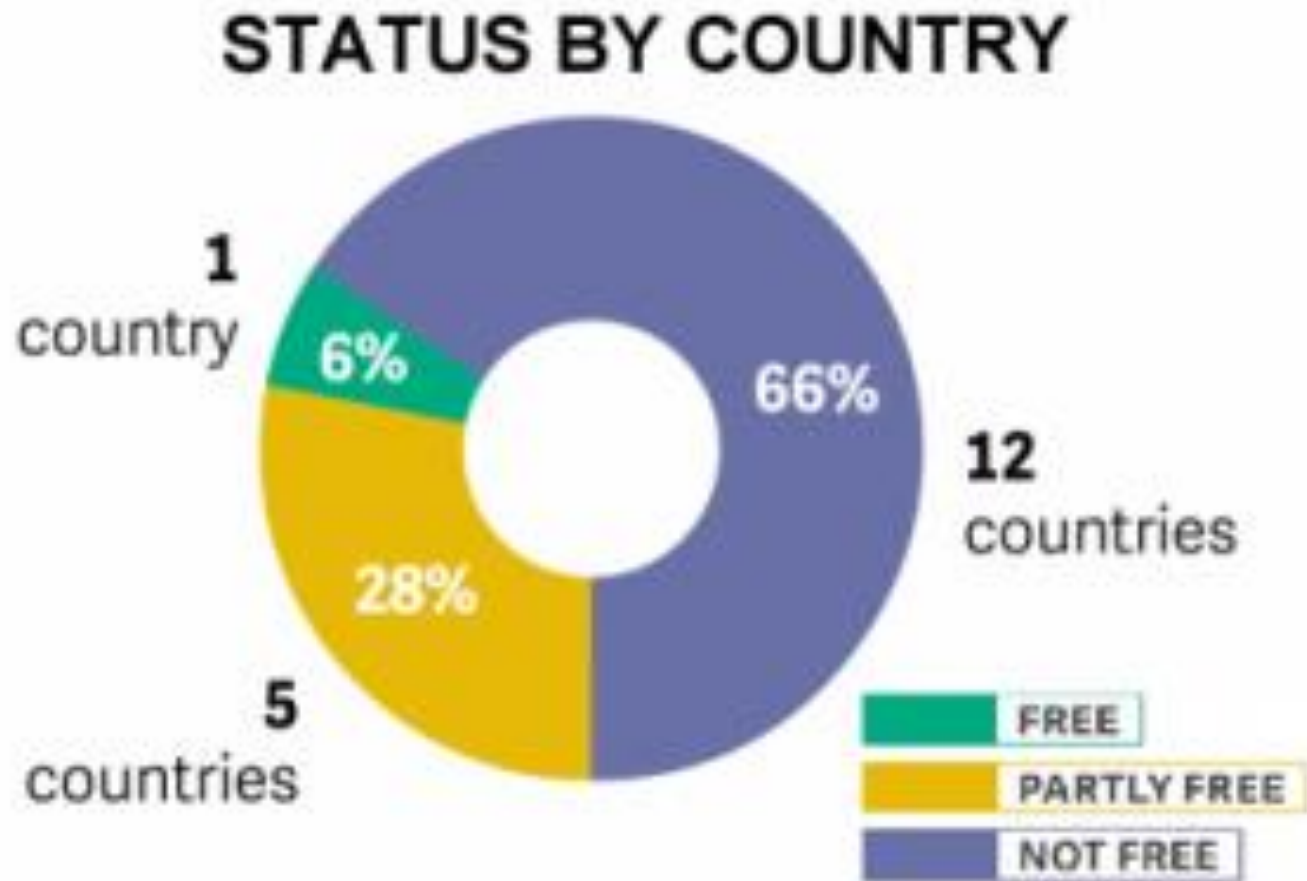
Arabic Culture and Authoritarianism

- Diamond prediction on the future: Arab countries could be more democratic when:
 - ◆ The emergence of a single democratic polity in the region, that might be seen as a **model**.
 - ◆ A change in the **US policy and EU countries** that would encourage democratic reforms
 - ◆ A steep decline in world oil prices
- Comparing to the common belief (common cultural, structural, and practices among Arab countries prevent them from transforming to democracy), Diamond **approves the structural and practices**, and disapproves the cultural (Arab).

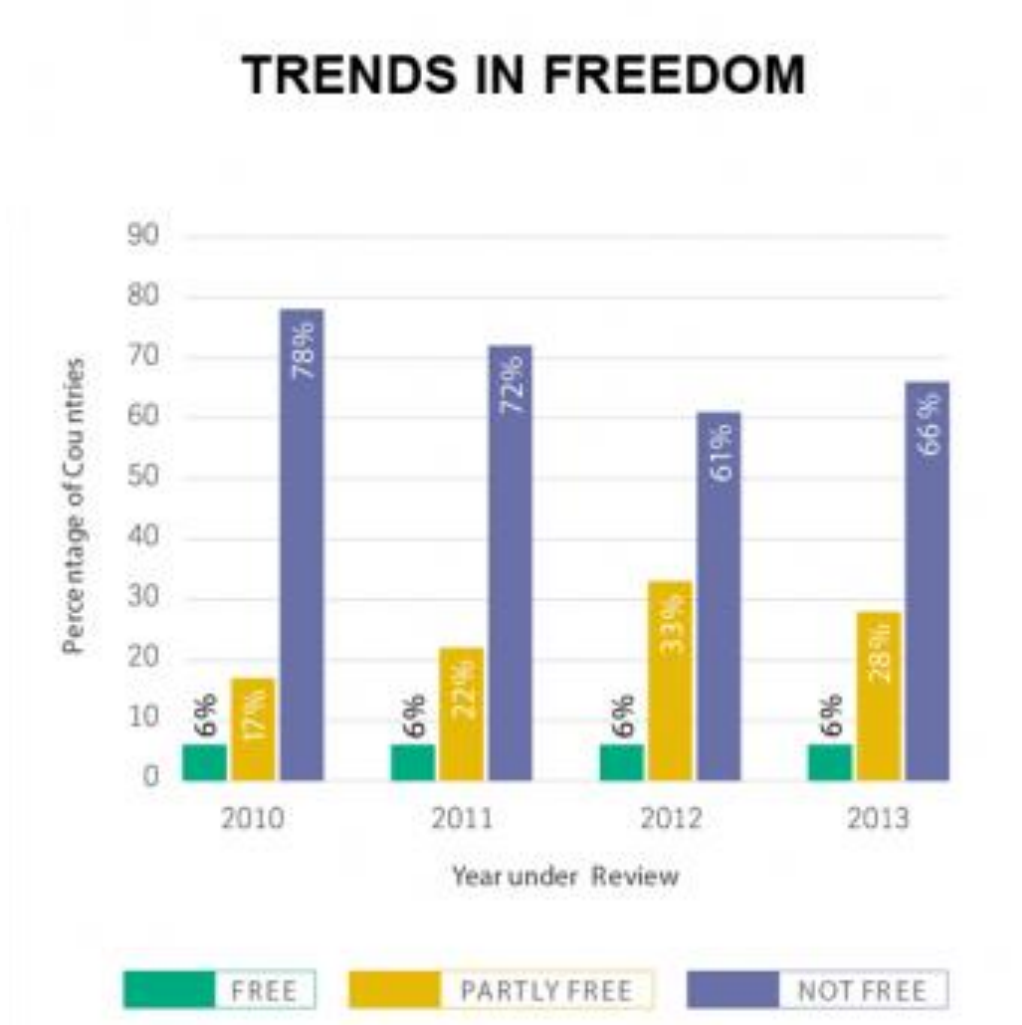
3.3 The Type of Regimes in the Middle-East and North-Africa in a Comparative Perspective

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Freedom in the Middle-East and North-Africa in a Comparative Perspective

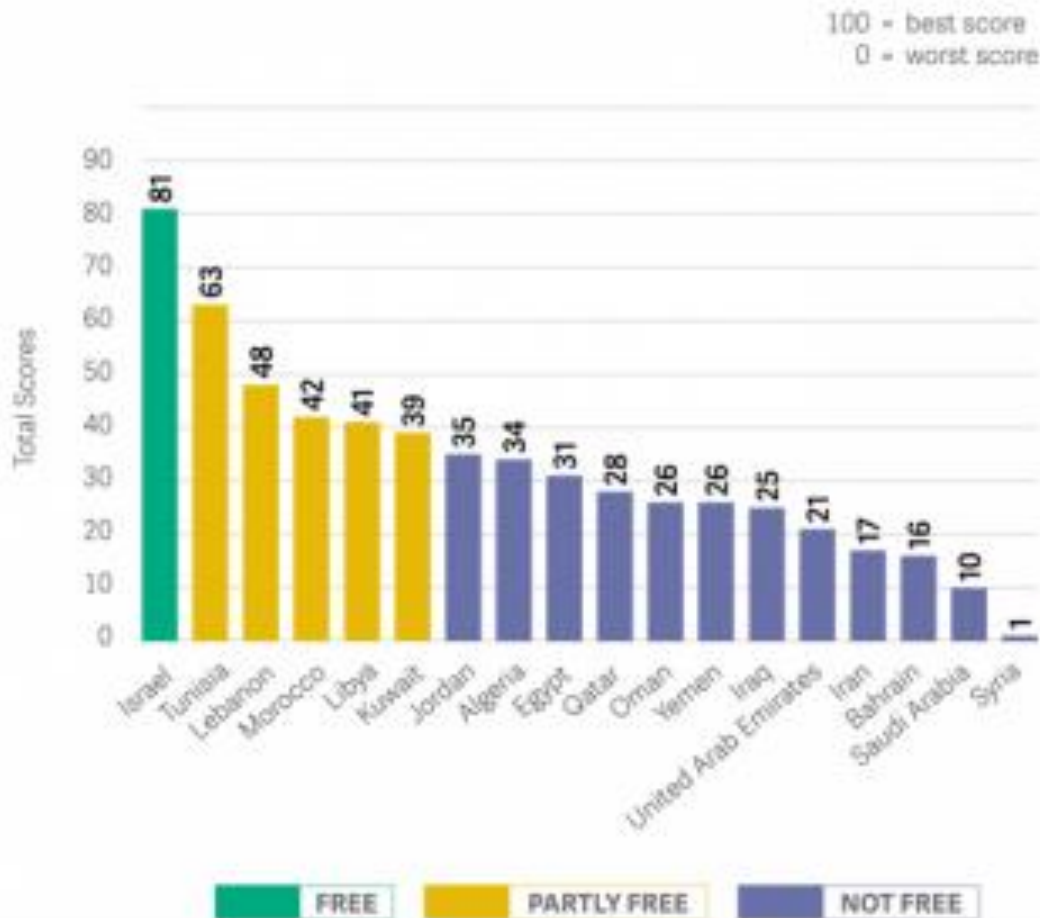


Freedom in the Middle-East and North-Africa in a Comparative Perspective



Freedom in the Middle-East and North-Africa in a Comparative Perspective

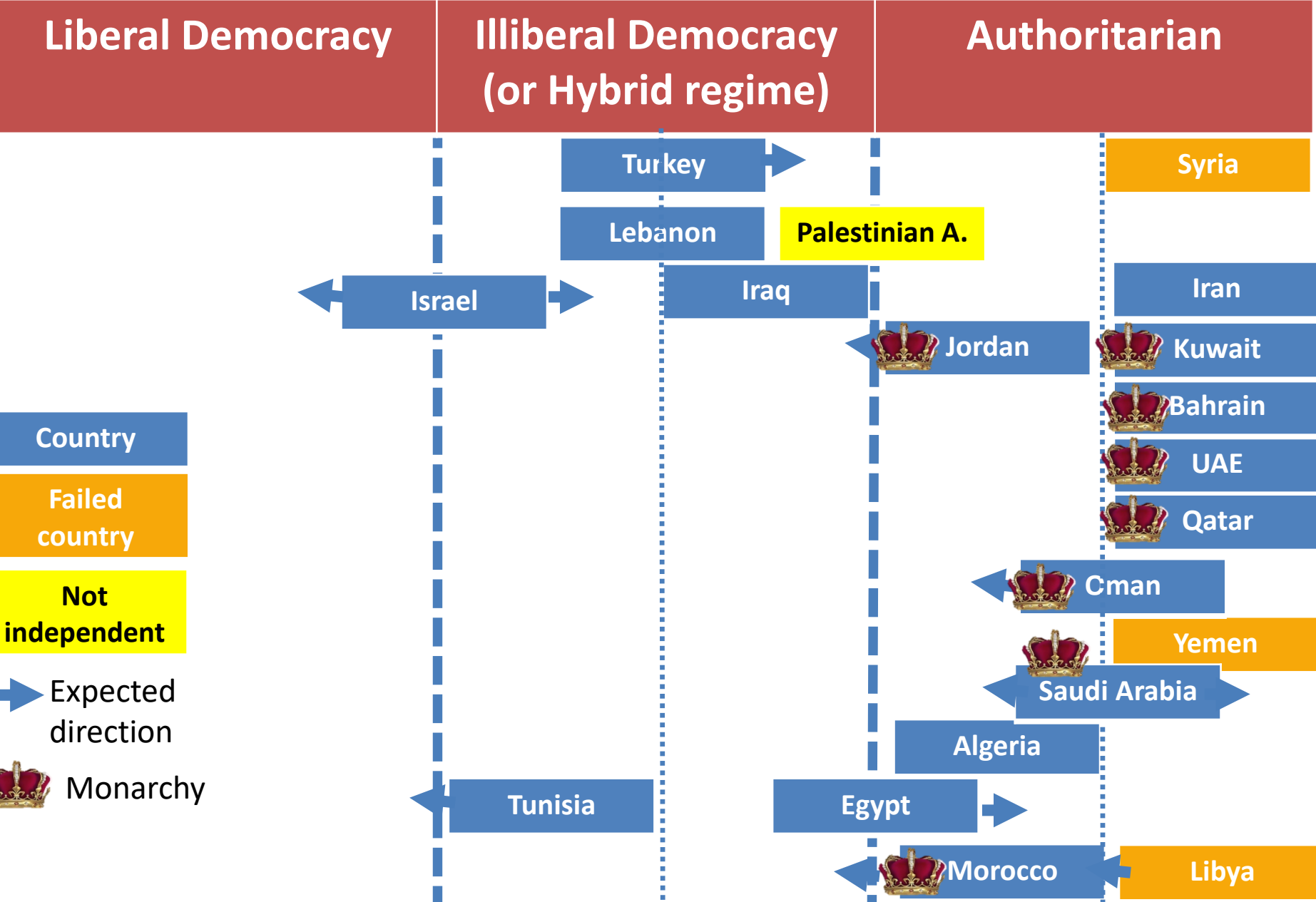
AGGREGATE SCORES



Freedom in the Middle-East and North-Africa in a Comparative Perspective

#	Contry	Freedom House evaluation	Freedom House ranking
1	Israel	Free	81
2	Tunisia	Partly Free	63
3	Lebanon	Partly Free	48
4	Morocco	Partly Free	42
5	Libya	Partly Free	41
6	Kuwait	Partly Free	39
7	Turkey	Not Free	38
8	Jordan	Not Free	35
9	Algeria	Not Free	34
10	Egypt	Not Free	31
11	Qatar	Not Free	28
12	The Palestinian Authority	Not Free	28
13	Oman	Not Free	26
14	Yemen	Not Free	26
15	Iraq	Not Free	25
16	UAE	Not Free	21
17	Iran	Not Free	17
18	Bahrain	Not Free	16
19	Saudi Arabia	Not Free	10
20	Syria	Not Free	1

The Type of Regimes in the Middle-East and North-Africa in a Comparative Perspective



3.4 Case studies: The Republic of Tunisia and The Lebanese Republic

GASIOROWSKI & YOM (EDS). (2016). CHAPTER 15: REPUBLIC OF TUNISIA, PP. 463-490.

GASIOROWSKI & YOM (EDS). (2016). CHAPTER 3: REPUBLIC OF LEBANON, PP. 79-110.