Teaching Notes

ISLAMISM AND DEMOCRACY IN NEW ARAB DEMOCRACIES

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Since the Arab Spring Revolutions have ended in North Africa and the Middle East, certain states have started down a long road towards democracy. Historically, the countries of Egypt and Tunisia had authoritarian governments without significant electoral participation or popular representation. After the Arab Spring revolutions in 2011, both countries successfully deposed their authoritarian presidents and sought to install new governments elected by popular vote. When evaluating democratically elected parties and politicians, it is useful to examine how consistent their platforms and rhetoric are with their actions in office. Using Ruth Grant's moralism/moderation and hypocrisy/integrity ethical framework, identify where these parties best fit and whether such an observation provides meaningful insight into the political decision making of these parties.

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Understanding Hypocrisy and Integrity

Often ethical action is depicted as a continuum, with cynicism on one end, moral fanaticism on the other and integrity as the perfect center. The problem with viewing ethical action as a continuum, Ruth Grant explains, is that it obscures the fact that there are multiple forms of integrity and hypocrisy. Grant is Professor of Political Science and Philosophy and Senior Fellow in the Kenan Institute for Ethics at Duke University.

She identifies two different forms of integrity: the integrity of the moderate and the integrity of the moralist. The moderate focuses upon the consequences of her actions and is willing to "be a little bad" in the pursuit of the greater good. The moralist, on the other hand, evaluates actions by the motivations that guide them and is inclined to obey his or her conscience. The results therefore mean nothing if they were pursued in a fashion that goes against a moral code.

The moralist is unwilling to compromise her principles because she associates integrity with purity. Purity, she believes, is achieved by ensuring that her motives are not tainted by self-interest and her actions are not corrupted by compromise. The moderate finds this struggle for purity unproductive. Moral actors are unlikely to achieve complete purity of motivation, the moderate argues, as humans are complicated and conflicted creatures. While she believes that individuals should strive to ensure that selfish motivations do not prevent them from pursuing just outcomes, the moderate emphasizes that an obsession with the purity of one's motives and deeds can hinder the pursuit of such outcomes.

Just as there are different kinds of integrity, there are different kinds of hypocrisy. The most obvious is the cynical hypocrite, who deliberately uses the pretense of virtue to obtain selfish and ignoble ends. However, most hypocrites are not consciously aware of their hypocrisy, and both moderates and moralists may be self-deceiving hypocrites. The moderate engages in hypocrisy by telling herself that she is compromising for the greater good when she is really pursuing her own interests. Or, she is simply complacent, failing to recognize injustice rather than disturb her own comfortable position. The moralist engages in hypocrisy when she tells herself that she is standing on principle, despite when her actions are motivated less by the justness of the principle and more by a desire to feel and appear morally superior.

Integrity/Hypocrisy and Moralism/Moderation are interactive by nature and therefore can be placed in a matrix. These concepts can be specifically applied to the analysis of political decision-making. Note that the 'Statesman' type is not limited to politicians (but it is worth considering whether or under what circumstances we might find political actors in this category as opposed to any of the others).

	Moderation	*Moralism*
Integrity	*Statesman*	*Moralist*
Hypocrisy	*Complacent Hypocrite*	*Righteous Hypocrite*

Moralists and moderates have difficulty understanding each other, because each believes that their form of integrity is the only form of integrity. As a result, each sees only hypocrisy in the other. Whereas the moderate believes that all moralists are self-righteous hypocrites willing to sacrifice a just outcome for selfish reasons, the moralist regards the moderate's willingness to compromise as a lack of conviction. Perhaps moralists and moderates would understand each other better if they recognized that there are multiple forms of hypocrisy and integrity.

See Ruth Grant, Hypocrisy and Integrity: Machiavelli, Rousseau and the Ethics of Politics (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1999), pages 62-8 and 171-2

This case asks students to apply the concepts of moralism/moderation and hypocrisy/integrity illustrated by Grant to a political context they are not necessarily familiar with. This case allows for students to address Grant's framework to determine if these parties fit within the model and where these parties might be located. Being unfamiliar with this political system also allows for students to address this from a perspective different from the typical two party system found in the United States. These events are quite recent and are very much relevant to current popular topics being addressed in international security peace and conflict.

1) *What are the most important in your evaluation of these two parties? Is it the platform voice during political campaigns? Is it their policy decisions while in office?*

   Opening question meant to establish student interpretations of party evaluations early on. By identifying what each student thinks about evaluation methods, the discussion is more likely to consist of the defense and criticism of various perspectives.

2) *How would you identify the Ennahda movement and the Muslim Brotherhood within Grant's framework? Do they properly fit within this framework?*

   This question begins to incorporate the moderate/moralist doctrine summarized in the second section of the case. It allows for the class to begin establishing definitions for both parties and also opens the floor to discussion of Grant's framework as well.

3) *Would a member of a secular opposition party categorize these parties differently than a party member? In the cases of Egypt and Tunisia, these opposition parties strongly believe in a separation of Church and State which has caused a great deal of gridlock as both states attempted to draft a new constitution.*

   Now the matter of multiple perspectives can come into play. As Grant already indicated, moralists and moderates have a difficult time cooperating because both see their form of integrity to the only form of integrity.

4) *Lets turn our attention to American politics for a moment. It is well established that political candidates will shift their platforms from somewhere near the middle of their respective party during primaries to somewhere closer to the center of the aisle during general elections.*

   a. *How would you characterize this pattern of behavior according to Grant's matrix? Do you think that category accurately represents typical US politicians?*

   b. *Some scholars argue that the US two party system incentivizes this behavior. Why might this be true? Do you agree? In what ways might a multiparty system encourage less ideological mobility?*

   This question asks students to reflect on the ethical issues or problems raised by particular electoral structures, given the constraints they may apply to politicians. (Proportional representation in a system with multiple parties might, for example, reward "moralists": parties with unwavering ideological positions may still get a power share by joining a coalition with other distinct parties. On the other hand, a first-past-the-post strong two-party system may encourage "moderates" who are willing to reframe their positions in order to draw votes away from their opponent.)