

## Marketing Democracy

For nearly two decades, the United States devoted more than \$2 billion toward democracy promotion in the Middle East with seemingly little impact. To understand the limited impact of this aid and the decision of authoritarian regimes to allow democracy programs whose ultimate aim is to challenge the power of such regimes, *Marketing Democracy* examines the construction and practice of democracy aid in Washington, DC, and in Egypt and Morocco, two of the highest recipients of US democracy aid in the region. Drawing on extensive fieldwork, novel new data on the professional histories of democracy promoters, archival research, and recently declassified government documents, Erin A. Snider focuses on the voices and practices of those engaged in democracy work over the last three decades to offer a new framework for understanding the political economy of democracy aid. Her research shows how democracy aid can work to strengthen rather than challenge authoritarian regimes. *Marketing Democracy* fundamentally challenges scholars to rethink how we study democracy aid and how the ideas of democracy that underlie democracy programs come to reflect the views of donors and recipient regimes rather than indigenous demand.

Erin A. Snider is an assistant professor of international affairs at Texas A&M University's Bush School of Government and Public Service. She was a fellow at the New America Foundation, a postdoctoral fellow at Princeton University's Niehaus Center for Globalization and Governance, a Gates scholar at the University of Cambridge, and a Fulbright scholar in Egypt. Her research has been published in *International Studies Quarterly*, *PS: Political Science and Politics*, and *Middle East Policy*, among others. She holds a PhD in politics from the University of Cambridge.

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*The Political Economy of Democracy Aid in the  
Middle East*

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Erin A. Snider  
Texas A&M University



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*For my family*

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## Acknowledgments

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While the research for this book began over a decade ago, its origins extend further back to 2002. Three years before I first arrived in Cairo as a student of Arabic, I spent two months working throughout Afghanistan on a project to support the United Nations' efforts to remove landmines in that country. That experience was deeply transformational in sparking my interest in the politics of development and foreign aid in the Middle East. Through my work, I saw firsthand the impact and effectiveness of development programs driven by Afghan citizens rather than international staff. During that trip, I was also introduced to the contradictions and different cultures of development work, as representatives from donor governments and international organizations arrived in Kabul fueled by both optimism and opportunity in the wake of the US invasion of Afghanistan. Most of the diplomats and practitioners that I met were inspiring and passionate about their work but felt that their efforts were frequently frustrated and stymied by the politics of their respective bureaucracies. I left the country with a deep interest and curiosity in understanding the sometimes-perverse effects of those politics on development aid, and eventually, that for democracy.

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## Note on Transliteration

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In this book, I rely principally on the system established by the *International Journal of Middle East Studies* (*IJMES*) for the transliteration of Arabic. For readability, I follow *IJMES* guidelines in rendering place names and prominent figures to follow accepted English spellings. For the specificities of the Egyptian dialect, names of Egypt-specific individuals and places are transliterated with a “g” to represent the Egyptian pronunciation of the Arabic letter *jīm* (for example, Gamal Abdel Nasser rather than Jamal Abdel Nasser).

Abbreviations

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AMIDEAST	America-Mideast Educational and Training Services, Inc.
ANE	USAID’s Asia-Near East Bureau
AOJS	Administration of Justice Support Project
CDT	Democratic Confederation of Workers
CIPE	Center for International Private Enterprise
CRS	US Congressional Research Service
CSO	civil society organization
DDI	Development of Democratic Institutions
DOS	Department of State
DPI	USAID’s Democratic Pluralism Initiative
DSS	Decision Support Services
DWG	US Interagency Democracy Working Group in Rabat
EDI	USAID’s Egyptian Decentralization Initiative
ENGOS	Egyptian nongovernmental organizations
ESF	Economic Support Fund
ETS	Egyptian Transition Support
EU	European Union
FMD	USAID’s Financial Market Development Project
FTA	Free Trade Agreement
GAO	General Accounting Office (now Government Accountability Office)
GOE	Government of Egypt
GOM	Government of Morocco
IFES	International Foundation for Electoral Systems
IG	Office of the Inspector General
IGM	Collège des Inspecteurs Généraux des Ministères
INDH	National Human Development Initiative
IRI	International Republican Institute
LD II	Local Development Project II
LGP	USAID’s Local Governance Project
MCC	Millennium Challenge Corporation

List of Abbreviations

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MDP	USAID’s Media Development Program
MEPI	Middle East Partnership Initiative
MET	Middle East Transitions office at the State Department
MIC	Ministry of International Cooperation
MOI	Ministry of Interior
MOSA	Ministry of Social Affairs
MOSS	Ministry of Social Solidarity
MSI	Management Systems International
NDI	National Democratic Institute
NED	National Endowment for Democracy
NPR	National Partnership for Reinventing Government
OIDS	USAID’s Office of Institutional Development Support
OMDH	Organisation Marocaine des Droits de l’Homme
OMEP	USAID’s Office of Middle East Programs
ONA	l’Omnium Nord-Africain
PADCO	Planning and Development Collaborative, Inc. (now AECOM)
PJD	Justice and Development Party
PVO	private voluntary organization
RFA	Request for Applications
RTI	Research Triangle Institute
SEED	Support for East European Democracy Act
SFCG	Search for Common Ground
TTD	USAID’s Transitions to Democracy Project
UMT	Moroccan Union of Workers
USAID	United States Agency for International Development
USFP	Union Socialiste des Forces Populaires

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