

A woman with long, dark, curly hair is the central figure, her arms raised high in a gesture of triumph or protest. She is wearing a dark jacket over a light-colored top. The background is dark, but filled with the red and white stripes of many flags, suggesting a large gathering or rally. The lighting is dramatic, highlighting the woman's face and her raised arms.

“Walid Phares has been a pioneering scholar in raising awareness in the free world about the relentless threat of global Jihadism.”

—MITT ROMNEY

THE

COMING REVOLUTION

STRUGGLE FOR FREEDOM
IN THE MIDDLE EAST

WALID PHARES

AUTHOR OF *FUTURE JIHAD: TERRORIST STRATEGIES AGAINST AMERICA*

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After the 9/11 Commission concluded in 2004 that the U.S. was engaged in a war with terrorists and never realized it, they reasoned that “a failure of imagination” had prevented us from seeing terrorism coming. In effect, Americans were simply unable, or in fact disabled, to fathom that there were people who hated and opposed our democracy with such ferocity. But after billions of dollars and almost a decade fighting a war in the Middle East, will we miss the threat again?

With penetrating insight and candor, Walid Phares, Fox News terrorism and Middle East expert and a specialist in global strategies, argues that a fierce race for control of the Middle East is on, and the world’s future may depend on the outcome. Yet not a failure of imagination, but rather, of education has left Americans without essential information on the real roots of the rising Jihadi threat. Western democracies display a dangerous misunderstanding of precisely who opposes democracy and why. In fact, the West ignores the wide and disparate forces within the Muslim world—including a brotherhood against democracy that is fighting to bring the region under totalitarian control—and crucially underestimates the determined generation of youth feverishly waging a grassroots revolution toward democracy and human rights.

As terror strikes widen from Manhattan to Mumbai and battlefields rage from Afghanistan to Iraq, many tough questions are left unanswered, or even explored: Where are the anti-Jihadists and the democrats in the Muslim world? Does the Middle East really reject democracy? Do the peoples of the region prefer the Taliban, the Muslim Brotherhood, or Hezbollah over liberals and seculars? And is there really no genuine hope that freedom and democracy can prevail over the Islamist caliphate?

Phares explores how the free world can indeed win the conflict with the Jihadists, but he says, not by using

(continued on back flap)



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THE COMING REVOLUTION

Struggle for Freedom in the Middle East

WALID PHARES



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To those whose company I was deprived of because of my choice for freedom . . .

And in memory of my father, Halim, and mother, Hind—my greatest inspirations and heroes, who, before they left us, raised me to appreciate justice and liberty.

As I stay behind, I have dedicated my life to speak on behalf of the weak and oppressed.

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My thinking regarding this book's subject has evolved over a span of thirty years as I observed the suffering and struggles of the oppressed in the Middle East. I want to thank each one of those freedom fighters, human rights activists, public figures, and courageous men and women who reached out to me, from Beirut to Washington, to relate their personal tales and the stories of their nations. Born and raised in Beirut, I witnessed the saga of many who wrote about freedom deprivation. Since I relocated to the United States in 1990 and adopted my new homeland, I tirelessly researched and published about the causes of freedom in the Greater Middle East, listening and interacting with dissidents and voices of courage whom I would like to thank for their sacrifices. They are too numerous to be listed.

I would like to thank Fox News's leadership for trusting me to be the channel's expert on Middle East affairs since 2006 and all my colleagues at the network for their support. Between 2004 and 2010, I was a senior fellow at the Foundation for the Defense of Democracies (FDD), whom I thank for hosting me professionally in Washington, D.C.

Over the years, I've interacted with many journalists, show hosts, anchors, and producers in the media—in television, radio, and print—both in the United States and overseas, including MSNBC, CNN, France 24, Russia Today, Canada CTV, and others. I'd like to thank them for giving me the opportunity to share my findings and analysis with the public. From the front lines of the battle of words I wish to cite the very courageous and relentless Lebanese Hamid Ghuriafi of *al Siyassa*, Syrian Nihad Ghadri of *al Murarer*, and Egyptian commentator Magdi Khalil.

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Writing this book needed sacrifices by members of my closest circle in life. I thank the “Commander” and the “Scholar” for being willing to allow me to use “our” time. I owe them every day and hour of writing and editing I spent away from daily life and vacations. My best regards go to my sister, Liliane, my childhood coach, and to my brother, Sami, intellectual mentor during my teenage years.

This book and my writing career are in acknowledgment to my late parents, Halim and Hind, now together on the other side. Their sacrifices and love, basic ingredients for my education and passion for justice, made me understand the sufferings of people in past and current times. At times I regret the years of separation we experienced and I consented to so that I could think and express myself in liberty while they lived behind the wall of oppression. Now we’re all free, even though in two worlds, until we meet again.

Virginia, July 30, 2010

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PREFACE

A Revolution against the Caliphate?

In the first decade of the twenty-first century, as terror strikes were widening from Manhattan to Mumbai and battlefields raging from Afghanistan to Iraq, many tough questions had yet to be answered: Where are the “moderates” in the Muslim world? Why do we hear only from the “radicals”? Is the Middle East really rejecting democracy? Do people in the region prefer the Taliban and Hezbollah, Hamas, and the Muslim Brotherhoods over liberals, feminists, and seculars? Or is this perception the work of the stronger, wealthier, dominant forces in the Arab and Muslim world who want us to believe that there is no hope that a war against the terrorists can be won and democracy will never take hold in the region?

In fact it is both, for the reality is that in this dangerous and critically important part of the world, there is a very explosive race going on—a competition to the end between those who want to bring all countries from Morocco to Afghanistan under what they call a “Caliphate” or a totalitarian empire, and those who have been working feverishly to launch a revolution against this empire in construction. This is the untold story of a region that can be described as “Middle Earth,” in which the world has invested much hope and which could determine the future of the planet in the decades to come.

After the collapse of the Ottoman Empire in 1919, the Greater Middle East from North Africa to Central Asia witnessed one of the most dramatic struggles in history between the forces pushing backward toward the reestablishment of an Islamic Caliphate or a theocratic regime, and the forces of progress moving in the direction of modernity, democracy, and human rights. The race was deeply affected by Western intervention, World War II, a long Cold War, and the rise of oil power.

Instead of the liberal revolution that many hoped for, coup d'états and ultranationalist ideologies brought the people of the region under authoritarian and oppressive regimes for decades. At the very top of the regimes is the absolute power of rulers; below, the constant challenge by the Islamist movements; and below both layers, the democratic elements at the edges of civil societies. During their half-century confrontation, neither the West nor the communists helped bring democratic change to the region.

With the collapse of the Soviet Union a second historic window opened for democratic revolutions to rise. The liberation of Eastern and Central Europe, the expansion of democracies in Latin America, and the transformations in South Africa were powerful signals indicating the global shift toward freedom, but this was not so in the Middle East. This unlucky region witnessed a further penetration by jihadi forces, a competition between Salafism and Khomeinism, a radicalized political culture, a blocking of the Arab-Israeli Peace Process, and further alienation of minorities, women, and youth. As the world was moving gradually away from totalitarianism, and people were gaining rights and freedoms they never had before,

“Middle Earth” was losing liberties.

As a result of 9/11 and the subsequent terror attacks in the West, a third historic window opened abruptly and unexpectedly for the forces of democratic change in the region. Western intervention removed two of the most brutal regimes by military force: the Taliban in Afghanistan and the Baathist dictatorship of Saddam Hussein in Iraq. This post-9/11 earthquake shook the foundations of the regional authoritarian system. The United States and Western powers were battling jihadi forces across the region on two major battlefields and in an intense war of ideas. The fight, with Washington and its allies betting on the success of an electoral democracy and the cohorts of Salafi and Khomeinist regimes betting on an all-out jihad to defeat the Western incursion into “Muslim lands,” rages on.

The region’s regimes, political parties, intellectuals, and “streets” had to side with one or the other camp. Some, like Saudi Arabia, Turkey, Egypt, and Pakistan, thought they’d profit from the clash of titans by consolidating their existing power. Ruling elites felt they could handle the extremist factions and that the Americans and the West should not get involved.

A two-way struggle spread through the region between the U.S.-led efforts to provoke a change in the region and the Islamist and jihadists expanding their base. Between 2001 and 2010 billions of dollars were spent on the “war on terror,” hundreds of millions on the “war of ideas,” tens of thousands were killed in wars and terror attacks, hundreds of leading figures were assassinated, and a whole decade was lost for the peoples of the region, still far from enjoying liberty. But was all hope really lost?

Some among the most oppressed civil societies in the region were granted enough space and freedom to build a democracy. The jury is still out on whether these infant democracies will succeed, and the dangers are significant. Afghan women were liberated from the medieval Taliban, but the country is still assaulted by ferocious fundamentalist militias. Pakistan’s seculars are also under attack by the jihadists. Iraqi Shiites were saved from Saddam, but Iranian-backed Islamists are pushing Sharia law across the land. In Lebanon, the Syrian occupation receded, but legislators, journalists, and citizens are still being killed, and Hezbollah is holding power. Last but not least, Darfur’s genocide is recognized by the international community, but the massacres continue.

It is true that in the wake of 9/11 and the Western intervention in the region, democratic forces and dissidents felt relief, despite what anti-Western propaganda has been arguing forcefully over the past eight years. From Egypt, Syria, Saudi Arabia, the Emirates, Algeria, and Iran, new faces of dissidence have acquired international visibility. In the region, free bloggers, talk shows, journalists, human rights activists, and even newly elected legislators rise to the surface fighting an uphill battle against the combined forces of the status quo (regimes) and jihadi fascism (Salafists and Khomeinists). A breach in the wall of authoritarianism has opened: Democracy has penetrated the fortress of “Middle Earth.” Youths, students, women, minorities, and artists are increasingly expressing their will to see their societies become freer. But will the jihadists and the repressive regimes allow the revolution to happen? Not at all, as events are showing us in this first decade of the twenty-first century. Half a century after the end of the Nazi Reich and twenty years after the fall of one of the most

suppressive totalitarian regimes in history, the Soviet Union, their copycats in the Arab and Muslim world aren't letting go of their privileges.

Despite some often irreconcilable ideological differences, a brotherhood against democracy has emerged in the center of the planet. Absolute monarchies, ultrachauvinist Baathists, antipluralism elites, Islamist movements, and jihadists have formed one of the most formidable walls in history, insulating the region's peoples from the international community. Empowered by their full control of the Arab League, the Organization of the Islamic Conference, OPEC, and most media networks in the region, and influence over the United Nations, the African Union, the European Union, and a large segment of America's elite, the "antidemocracy brotherhood" strikes back against the timid surges of democracy in Lebanon, Iraq, Afghanistan, Sudan, and the rest of the Arab world and beyond. The jihadists lead the assault.

The West backed off and chose another direction as of 2009. A general retreat seems to have begun. In Central Asia and the Indian subcontinent, even as they have waged military operations, the United States and NATO bend over backward by seeking a partnership with the so-called moderates in the Taliban. In Lebanon, Britain is recognizing Hezbollah and U.S. officials have been preparing the public for the same. In Iraq, as the U.S.-led coalition begins its redeployment, the democratic groups have been abandoned in favor of a pragmatic alliance with the Shia and Sunni Islamists. With Assad of Syria, the U.S. administration builds hopes of "engagement" at the expense of reformers. Sudan's regime, accused of genocide against black Africans in the south and in Darfur, is now being sought for "dialogue" by the U.S. administration. Last but not least, Washington has opted to "sit down" with the mullahs in Iran and cut regional deals even after the Tehran uprising in reaction to the latest "election." The jihadists are winning psychologically and the authoritarian regimes are stronger than ever. But are the region's democrats defeated? Are they going back to the catacombs?

The answer is no, they are still in the race. From Beirut to Darfur, from the Berber mountains of North Africa to the marshes of Ahwaz on the Persian Gulf, revolutions are brewing. As of June 2009, demonstrators clashing with the Basiji militia have been changing history in Iran. Young souls have seen freedom and mature adults have had glimpses of fundamental human rights. The violet index fingers of Iraq's voters, women legislators in Afghanistan, and the million-men and -women marches of Lebanon and Iran have sparked in the masses' imagination the wildest dreams of human liberties. From the most fertile soil for jihadism may come the most fiery revolutions of the twenty-first century. The Cedars Revolution in Lebanon, the rise of the marginalized black identity in Sudan, the Amazigh revolt of the Kabyle, the stubborn reformers of Syria, the antifundamentalist Muslim intellectuals, enlightened seculars of Turkey, Iraq's NGOs, Iran's women and students, liberals of the Arabian Peninsula and all their diasporas, are gearing up for a final prolonged showdown in "Middle Earth" with the most extreme forms of jihadi, totalitarian, and racist terror. The retreat of the current Western governments in the face of terror and the power of oil regimes, often sugarcoated as "engagement," is leaving the birthplace of the three monotheistic religions to a looming mother of all confrontations.

Will Middle Eastern democrats succeed in resisting and then reversing the tide against the jihadists? Can they rebel against regimes and fight back against the

Islamists while they are unarmed, unrecognized, unfunded, and demonized by militant propaganda as “agents of the West”? The race between the rise of the Caliphate and the democratic revolution in the Greater Middle East is on.

And how should the United States, the West, and the international community deal with this race? Are we to engage the regimes and cut deals with them at the expense of their peoples’ freedom? Are we to engage the jihadists and abandon the democrats? Should we support the forthcoming revolutions in these civil societies or allow their theological and authoritarian regimes to dispose of them with ease? This book will help answer these troubling questions and explain to readers the untold story of a struggle that will determine if the Middle East will at last reach freedom and democracy in this century and if the planet will avoid the potential wars set to explode by the followers of Salafism, Khomeinism, and other jihadis in the years to come.

INTRODUCTION

How the West Missed the Story and May Miss It Again

The 9/11 Commission concluded back in 2004 that the United States was engaged in a war with terrorists and didn't know it, but offered insufficient explanation of why. In a briefing I participated in, one of the commissioners stated that in the end, "It was a failure of imagination on the part of Americans." According to the four-hundred-page study, America as a nation wasn't able to fathom the reality of what was taking place in the days, months, and years preceding the strikes. In other words, Americans weren't able to imagine that people out there could hate their country that much and do such horrible things to it.

I argued that we, as a nation, didn't have a failure of imagination. The United States has distinguished itself throughout modern history with stunning discoveries and achievements primarily because of its fertile imagination. Advancements including nuclear power, landing on the moon, and the internet were possible because of the innovative minds of Americans. These are evidence of an endless capacity to break all walls of intellectual restraint. There was a failure, I countered, but of education. Indeed, Americans and Western democracies in general were deprived of basic information, education, and updates about the real roots of the rising jihadi threat, and thus failed in seeing the terror coming. And they continue to fail in combating this developing worldwide threat.

Chillingly, we were not educated in our classroom by our professors and were misinformed by our own media. Throughout the 1990s I had seen how most of the scholarly establishment blocked the public from seeing the truth and missing the critical connections. Rarely in history have nations been so subverted by their own elite.

While classical Middle East scholars in America and Europe adopted an apologist attitude blaming violence and the rise of jihadism on post-Western colonialism and the so-called foreign policy "blunders" of the United States and its allies, the real antidote to extreme Islamist ideologies was ignored: sound democratic cultures. The mainstream intellectual establishment on both sides of the Atlantic, deeply influenced by postcolonial thinking and manipulated by oil interests, dodged investigation of why Middle Eastern societies weren't moving toward pluralism and democracy and instead promoted the idea that bridges must be built with the "radicals," regimes, and movements. Although strong signs were coming from the region that liberals, counterjihadists, minorities, youth, and women's movements opposed fundamentalism and craved their freedom and secular values, the West stayed on the sidelines.

Western elites didn't understand, or perhaps refrained from accepting, that the multiplication of political parties and elections in Iraq and Afghanistan has unleashed the dreams of the youth and women around the region, especially in Iran, and that the Cedars Revolution in Lebanon has captured the imagination of reformers in Syria. We

haven't realized that the genocide of southern Sudan has enflamed Darfur's resistance to the jihadists and that mere debates about a possible democracy in the region have triggered unprecedented liberal narratives in the Gulf, the Maghreb, and beyond.

Today, there is a plethora of analysts, writers, and scholars who are discovering the documents that inspire the jihadists. Over the past few years, a whole school of thought has brought attention to the Salafists and Khomeinists, unveiling them as a foe to be reckoned with that threatens the future of freedom and international law. Yes, the increase in awareness in Washington, New York, London, Paris, Madrid, Berlin, Moscow, and beyond is occurring because the jihadists—their boldest members, at least—have revealed many of their deeper ideas and designs. So much has been disclosed by the ideologues and leaders of the radical Islamists, on al Jazeera, on al Manar, and on YouTube, that ignoring their message completely became impossible. Even as apologists in the West try to avoid the debate on the roots of terror and on the mere existence of a jihadist threat, the latter's noise is too astounding, bloody, and loud not to be noticed and addressed, even though our democracies haven't understood yet the essence of its seriousness.

Most governments and academic elites in the West are attempting to dissipate the concerns of the public by changing the narrative of the confrontation.¹ “There is no war on terror,” “These are small factions of extremists,” “Real jihad is a spiritual experience,” “If we enhance the economic opportunities in the Muslim world things would change,” and many other ideas are thrown into the debate to convince the public that in fact there is no such thing as a “global jihadist threat” and that global efforts to change things on the other side are not needed.

Facing off intellectually with the dominant Western powers, small activist groups and writers based in liberal democracies are counterarguing by informing their readers of the theological bases upon which the Islamists have been building their indoctrination and mobilization campaigns. Oddly, the current clash of ideas within the West is between a large “apologist” camp denying that the jihadi threat exists and a small “anti-Islamist” camp scrambling to alert the public of recently made discoveries about “radical Islam.”

In short, these are only the first baby steps in a greater clash of arguments that is yet to come. The bigger moment in Western strategic choices will come when the small camp of anti-Islamist commentators can attract greater numbers of citizens and confront the apologist camp with political realities—in the voting booths, demonstrating on the streets, and in mainstream media.

Sadly, nine years after the September 2001 attacks and despite all the signs of potential reform, U.S. and Western policies surrendered to the pre-9/11 dogma that the prospects for change in the Greater Middle East are hopeless, and the only forces with which we can partner are, ironically, the movements that have been blocking the rise of pluralism: the Islamists, Salafists, Wahabis, Muslim Brotherhood, and the Khomeinists as well as the hard-core Baathists and other dictatorships. But those who have undertaken the mission of bringing awareness to the free world for the last half century cannot stop trying. Each one has been doing his or her part: writing, speaking, marching, organizing, lobbying, researching, and disseminating material.

I myself have experienced several stages and tried different paths, on different continents. From the Eastern Mediterranean, I offered twenty years of hard work,

from writing graffiti on Beirut's walls at a very young age, to publishing books, broadcasting, and lecturing to thousands. Despite five books, hundreds of articles, and more than a thousand interviews and lectures, the bulk of my work in those lands of violence and repression seemed like one tree falling in the forest, and at the time it had no impact in the West. I had to relocate to America and abandon my native country in order to pass my message on.

I assert that the free world can win the conflict with the jihadists, but certainly not using the tactics and policies it has employed so far. I strongly urge policymakers on both sides of the Atlantic to win the battle of identification. If we can't define the enemy, the threat, its ideology, and its strategies, we surely cannot claim any advance or any so-called victory.

Are Western leaders working to define the enemy? With the exception of some shy discourses made by U.S. leaders and a few European chief executives in the years following 9/11, the answer is no. A huge effort to educate the public must be undertaken, since in democracies one cannot engage in sustained national efforts without sustained popular support. A worldwide coalition to isolate the jihadists must be assembled. However, for the tide to turn, it is necessary to believe in and support a democratic revolution in the Greater Middle East.

In this book, I'll explain how the Middle East failed to evolve toward democracy and how a chance was given to its underdogs to rise again as the clash between the West and the jihadists widened. I'll make the case that this unlucky region has struggled and continues to struggle in a harsh race between the forces, such as the Taliban, aimed at establishing an oppressive fundamentalist Caliphate, and the civil society forces aimed at democracy and social liberation. I have called this race of the two forces a *race in Middle Earth*, where the nature of the twenty-first century will ultimately be decided. Either the jihadists will seize power in twenty-one Arab countries, Iran, Turkey, and large segments of Africa and South Asia, or a younger, determined generation of democrats and humanists will sweep the region from below.

The race is on.

1.

The Missed Century: How the Democratic Revolution Failed During the Twentieth Century

The Greater Middle East is the cradle of the oldest civilizations on Earth: Egyptian, Persian, Assyrian, Phoenician, and others. Many of its intellectuals boast about the region's high cultures during ancient times as compared to Europe's state of tribalism in the same period. Historians, poets, and ultranationalist politicians argue that these civilizations practiced sophisticated engineering, advanced sciences, built roads, gardens, and towers, and compiled legal codes while barbarians were roaming in the regions of the Danube and the Rhine. Phoenicians offered the world an alphabet, and their commercial ships established the first multinational corporations some twenty-five centuries ago. Moreover, Eastern Christian, Jewish, and Muslim interfaith assemblies have often asserted that the three Abrahamic religions came from that region.

The wealth of stories about the uniqueness of this old region of the world comes in great contrast with its contemporary hostility to the development of democratic societies. The contradiction between the region's so-called rich history of sophistication and its current poor productivity in human rights advancement and fundamental freedoms is stark. It was the cold continent of the barbarians—Europe—and its emigrants to new worlds that produced charters for democracy and embodied them in modern texts, and not the cities of the Greater Middle East that had produced the letters of the alphabet, the Code of Hammurabi, laws of the seas, and the sciences of humanity.

Furthermore, Latin America's nations, on different scales, have been able to move from Iberian colonialism to acceleration of modernization, to acceptable multiparty systems—with few exceptions—while the Arab world's societies, said to be much older in settlement, failed to do the same. Argentina and Chile, Brazil and Colombia, Mexico and Jamaica were all colonies, and most have experienced military regimes, yet they all gradually accepted the idea of pluralism and the peaceful coexistence of elites, while Saudi Arabia, Syria, Iran, Libya, and Sudan, despite the huge regime differences between them, didn't move beyond the one-party system or the no-party system.

Even more dramatic is the comparison with some African countries, such as Côte d'Ivoire, Senegal, and Ghana, that, despite having fewer resources than the Middle East, in some ways have moved toward plural politics. Even where discrimination is at its worst, in South Africa, the country moved away from apartheid toward the end of the twentieth century, while Sudan dove into practicing slavery and ethnic cleansing.

Last but not least, the treatment of women in their own families and society offers stunning comparative images. While wealth is abundant and construction projects are

endless in the Wahabi Kingdom, Saudi women can't drive, or even walk unescorted. Women in Madagascar and Trinidad live poorer, but freer lives. Under the Islamic Republic, Iranian women are severely restricted; they are arrested on the streets by female police to check on their hijab.¹ However, in Sri Lanka, a woman is prime minister. Even within the Muslim world, the oddities of sexual repression are salient. In Pakistan, Benazir Bhutto was elected head of government while her countrywomen in Waziristan are living under laws from the Middle Ages. Not surprisingly, Bhutto was assassinated by the Taliban, the force imposing severe sexual discrimination in Waziristan and other valleys.

The question of why democracy didn't emerge as a winning political culture south and east of the Mediterranean is relevant at a time when many in the West and worldwide are condemning entire societies for their inability to produce a democracy that protects basic freedoms. Some argue that the East by nature cannot bypass authoritarianism. Others assert that the lack of secular democracy is embedded in the canonical texts of the Islamic religion, and many postulate that this part of the world is simply condemned to live unhappily forever, no matter the explanation.

Beyond the debate about the "democratibility" of the Arab world and its neighborhood, scores of hard-core realists in the West claim that it is in the interest of the industrialized world that strongmen continue to rule the region. A surge of unstable democratic culture, they feel, would destabilize the capitalist societies, or, more accurately, would injure those in such societies who live off the oil trade with Arab Muslim petro-regimes. Ironically, as harsh as this equation seems to be, we may see that it really serves the interest of financial elites on both sides of the Mediterranean. Our analysis throughout this book will show the incredibly ferocious interests involved in the obstruction of freedom in the region.

Democracy's Failure to Take Root in Middle Earth

For half a century, scholars and propagandists have charged that colonialism, corruption, and Western foreign policies are the real root causes for the failure of democratic freedoms in "Middle Earth." I disagree.

The classical pressures that have precluded societies in other struggling regions from advancing toward freedom haven't completely blocked the march of human rights toward theoretical and practical victories. Colonialism, postcolonialism, imperialism, Western foreign policies, and multinational corporations have had an impact on Latin America, Eastern Europe, Oceania, parts of Asia, and countries in black Africa, but in all these huge zones of the planet, democracy pierced the layers of obstruction and established home bases. Brazil and Uruguay decolonized from Portugal and Spain, endured their own military regimes, and eventually reached functional multiparty systems with acceptable electoral processes. The Philippines, Japan, and India lived under military occupations but swiftly moved on to sophisticated free governments. Setbacks to democracy have also quickly bred postcolonial experiments, as in Cuba, Venezuela, and Thailand, but sexual equality wasn't reversed dramatically once it had begun to move forward. Women's rights have survived, even when political rights have regressed. Even in communist China