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JULIEN MORENCY-LAFLAMME AND ANJA BRUNNER[*]

Abstract *This article seeks to analyse why mass protests during the Arab Spring of 2010 did not always result in the toppling of authoritarian leaders and why in some cases it actually led to the reinforcement of certain authoritarian regimes. In attempting to understand this puzzle, most scholars have concentrated on the impact of populist movements but have overlooked the importance of the incumbent regime's divisions and the character of its relationship with opposition forces.*

Drawing on O'Donnell and Schmitter's theory on transitions "from above", this research demonstrates that authoritarian responses to mass protests were conditioned by the existence of divisions within the ruling circle itself. We argue that the only transitions to culminate in the establishment of an electoral democracy were those in which mass protests succeeded in provoking rifts between softliners and hardliners within the authoritarian elites and in which pro-reform forces subsequently negotiated new rules of governance with opposition forces. We also distinguish between latent crisis, when tensions within the regime exist but are contained, and overt crisis, when the unity of the ruling bloc is broken. We demonstrate our hypothesis by comparing events in Bahrain and in Egypt, two cases that led to very different political patterns and outcomes following the emergence of popular protest movements. In the case of Egypt, soft-liners managed to get the upper hand and Mubarak's National Democratic Party was toppled, while in Bahrain the monarchy could count on the support of a majority of the ruling class that was largely opposed to political liberalization and ready to quell the opposition coalition.

Introduction

In January 2011, a surge of national protests in Tunisia fuelled by economic and political grievances, forced then-president Zine El Abidine Ben Ali to resign and flee the country. In the months that followed, a wave of protests that would become known as the "Arab Spring" swept across the Middle East and North Africa region (MENA). These protests can generally be classified into two distinct categories: peaceful popular protests and armed insurrections (although there is a great deal of variation within the two categories). On the one hand, the short-term results of these large scale peaceful protest movements were (a) the removal from power of two long-standing authoritarian leaders in Egypt and Tunisia; (b) reforms of the monarchy in Morocco; and (c) a renewal and reinforcement of the governments in Jordan and Bahrain. On the other hand, armed insurrections in several countries resulted in civil war that led to (d) the resignation of President Saleh without a major change in the government in Yemen; (e) the overthrow of the Gadhafi government and a very tentative attempt at democracy in Libya; and (f) an ongoing bloody confrontation between different factions in Syria. Focusing on the first

category of uprisings (largely non-violent civic resistance campaigns), the objective of our article is to elucidate the dissimilar results of those protests. It is important to note that we do not seek to explain the trajectories and outcomes of the second category of uprisings, meaning violent confrontation ending in civil war. Furthermore, our research focuses on two divergent results, regime resilience or regime change.

Social scientists and commentators have proposed various theories to understand the causes and consequences of the 2011-12 wave of mass protests in the MENA region. These scholars generally discuss variables such as the reinforcement of civil society, the integration of social media, the consequences of international pressures, and the effects of economic policies on the social composition of MENA states.[1] Most studies on the matter pay little attention to the dynamics within authoritarian regimes.[2] This neglect is puzzling, given that democratization specialists nearly unanimously agree on the importance of this variable to explain the success or failure of democratic transitions since 1974.[3]

Following O'Donnell and Schmitter's 1986 influential publication "Tentative Conclusions about Uncertain Democracies", studies of democratic transitions have analysed rifts within ruling coalitions as key determinants of regime change. Specifically, these theorists argue that the status quo is broken when reformist factions, or softliners, within the ruling coalition, gain the upper hand and ally themselves with moderate opposition forces.[4] Inversely, when defenders of the *status quo* (hardliners) are preponderant, there is little opportunity for regime change. The success of such an agreement depends on the ability of opposition moderates to keep popular protest contained, as the dynamics of these mass protests carry the risk of radicalization and of derailing the transition project.[5]

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[1] On civil society, see Sharon Erickson Nepstad, "Nonviolent Resistance in the Arab Spring: The Critical Role of Military-Opposition Alliances", *Swiss Political Science Review* 17/4 (2011), pp. 485-491. On the integration of social media: Philip N. Howard and Muzammil M. Hussain, "The Role of Digital Media", *Journal of Democracy* 22/3 (2011), pp. 35-48; Habibul Haque Khondker, "Role of the New Media in the Arab Spring", *Globalizations* 83/5 (2011), pp. 675-679; A. Dunn, "Unplugging a Nation: State Media Strategy During Egypt's January 25 Uprising", *Fletcher Forum of World Affairs* 35(2011). On international pressures: Daniel S. Morey et al., "Leader, Follower, or Spectator? The Role of President Obama in the Arab Spring Uprisings", *Social Science Quarterly* 93/5 (2012), pp. 1185-1201. On effects of economic policies: Sarah A. Tobin, "Jordan's Arab Spring: The Middle Class and Anti-Revolution", *Middle East Policy* 19/1 (2012), pp. 96-109; George Joffé, "The Arab Spring in North Africa: Origins and Prospects", *The Journal of North African Studies* 16/4 (2011), pp. 507-532.

[2] With the exception of certain articles focusing on the role of the armed forces, including Ibrahim A. Karawan, "Politics and the Army in Egypt", *Survival* 53/2 (2011), pp. 43-50; Zoltan Barany, "The Role of the Military", *Journal of Democracy* 22/4 (2011), pp. 24-35; Philippe Droz-Vincent, "The Military Amidst Uprisings and Transitions in the Arab World" In Fawad A. Gerges (ed) *The New Middle East: Protests and Revolutions in the Arab World* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2013), pp.180-208; Lisa Anderson, "Demystifying the Arab Spring: Parsing the Differences Between Tunisia, Egypt and Libya", *Foreign Affairs* 90/3 (2011), pp. 2-7; Eva Bellin, "Reconsidering the Robustness of Authoritarianism in the Middle East : Lessons from the Arab Spring", *Comparative Politics* 44/2, pp. 127-149.

[3] Valerie Bunce, "Comparative Democratization: Big and Bounded Generalizations", *Comparative Political Studies* 33/6-7 (2000), p. 707.

[4] See Guillermo O'Donnell and Philippe Schmitter, "Tentative Conclusions about Uncertain Democracies", in Guillermo O'Donnell, Philippe Schmitter, and Lawrence Whitehead (eds) *Transitions from Authoritarian Rule: Prospects for Democracy*, (Baltimore: The John Hopkins University Press, 1986), p. 16.

[5] Terrly Lynn Karl, "Dilemmas of Democratization in Latin America", *Comparative Politics* 23/1 (1990), pp. 1-21; Enrique A Baloyra, *Comparing New Democracies: Transition and Consolidation in Mediterranean Europe and the Southern Cone* (Boulder, Co.: Westview Press, 1987).

A second generation of research on democratic transition has brought more emphasis on the importance of civil society groups.[6] According to these theories, the involvement of civil society in transitions is crucial in pushing through regime change, as authoritarian elites base their calculations of whether or not to open up the regime on their assessment of opposition strength.[7] Popular participation of civil society in mass protests ensures that the costs of repressing dissent outweigh the costs of liberalizing, therefore making a regime transition more favourable.[8] Recently, scholars of regime resilience have argued that the specific characteristics of regime and opposition forces are a primary determinant of regime defections.[9] More specifically, rivalries between members of the ruling coalitions are often mediated by institutions like political parties or authoritarian legislatures.[10] Taking into account these recent developments, we theorize that divisions between softliners and hardliners occur as the result of two differentiated but related types of regime crisis: latent crisis (in this case internal rivalries within authoritarian regimes) and overt crisis (when internal fissures within the regime interact with larger challenges to the regime's survival – namely massive popular protests). The interaction of these two crises presents an opportunity for regime change.[11]

The democratization literature has yet to extensively analyse the importance of elite factionalism during the Arab Spring. Instead, studies tend to highlight the causes, composition and demands of opposition movements to the detriment of the balance of power within the authoritarian ruling clique. We intend to fill this gap by studying the importance of internal regime dynamics in response to popular protests in Bahrain and Egypt between 2010 and 2012. In both cases protests reached more than 100,000 participants and involved both new civil society groups and already established regime opponents. Furthermore, the government in both states was lobbied by western state representatives, particularly American representatives, to show restraint and not to repress opponents. Finally, important regime figures publicly declared that they were in favour of some of the protesters' demands in the few weeks that followed the initial protests. Still, only in Egypt did this lead to leadership change.

In applying these observations to the Arab Spring rebellions, we argue that popular mobilization led to regime change only when the ruling coalition was already fractured and the stronger factions within the coalition favoured political liberalization. Through a comparison of Bahrain and Egypt, we highlight how the differences in the relative strength of the factions within their respective regimes and the characteristics of the opposition coalitions influenced the outcomes. In Bahrain, hardliners were predominant and succeeded in quelling the popular uprising, while in Egypt softliners cooperated with the opposition forces and toppled Hosni Mubarak. We do not seek to explain the causes of successful transition to democracy in the

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[6] See Nancy Bermeo, "Myths of Moderation: Confrontation and Conflict during Democratic Transitions", *Comparative politics* (1997), pp. 305-322; Michael McFaul, "The Fourth Wave of Democracy and Dictatorship: Noncooperative Transitions in the Postcommunist World", *World politics* 54/2 (2002), pp. 212-244; Valerie Bunce, "Rethinking Recent Democratization", *World politics* 55/2 (2003), pp. 171-72.

[7] Valerie Bunce, "Rethinking Recent Democratization".

[8] Guillermo O'Donnell, "Schmitter's Retrospective: A Few Dissenting Notes", *Journal of Democracy* 21/1 (2010), p. 30.

[9] See Jason Brownlee, *Authoritarianism in an Age of Democratization*. (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2007); Nicolas Van de Walle, "Tipping Games: When Do Opposition Parties Coalesce?" In A. Schedler (ed) *Electoral Authoritarianism: The Dynamics of Unfree Competition*. (London: Lynne Rienner Publishers, 2006), pp. 77-94.

[10] Brownlee, *Authoritarianism in an Age of Democratization,* p. 37.

[11] Ibid, p. 42; Joy Langston. "Elite ruptures: When do ruling parties split?" In Andreas Schedler (ed) *Electoral Authoritarianism: The Dynamics of Unfree Competition*. (London: Lynne Rienner Publishers, 2006), p. 59.

MENA region, solely whether popular uprisings were quelled or led to regime change. Through this analysis, we hope to (1) bring into light the importance of regime factionalism during the Arab Spring and (2) provide a new model through which regime crisis can be analysed into crisis sequences, both within the ruling circles and broader societal forces, and how regime and civil society characteristics shape regime crisis outcome.

Methodology

Four concepts are critical to our analysis: softliners, hardliners, latent crisis and overt crisis. We use the concepts established by Schmitter and O'Donnell in *Transition from Authoritarian Rule* (and employed in many democratic studies publications afterwards) to conceptualize political factions within the regimes we analyse.[12] Softliners are regime members open to discussion with moderate opposition forces and in favour of political liberalization, while hardliners place a high value on the maintenance of the status quo and oppose the opening of the political sphere or cooperation with other social forces. A latent crisis is marked above all by tensions between different factions of the ruling "clique" that compete for influence within the regime. Such tensions may persist for an extended period of time without necessarily threatening the cohesion of the regime. In fact, authoritarian leaders put in place institutions, such as authoritarian parliaments and political councils, as mechanisms to effectively manage such rivalries.[13] Events outside the regime's control (such as economic crisis, military defeat, the death of a charismatic leader, long-term economic or political grievances) which are accompanied by increased political mobilization in civil society can challenge regime unity. In this case, a latent crisis can turn into an overt crisis as certain factions try to gain the upper-hand by appealing to opposition leaders and publicly endorsing political liberalization. For example, Lee concluded that in Indonesia (1998) and the Philippines (1986), prior to their respective transition from authoritarianism to democracy, there had been rivalries between military factions for decades. Only when civil society groups launched a series of large-scale protests, however, did some factions in both of these cases appeal to social groups outside of the ruling coalition for support in their bid for power.[14] In other words, overt crises are moments where rivalries are no longer contained within the regime structures, as members of the regime seek political backing from outside forces in an effort to gain an advantage over their political rivals.[15]

We verify our hypothesis through a small-N comparison; this comparative method is used when researchers want to demonstrate the importance of a given variable and control the

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[12] Guillermo O'Donnell and Philippe Schmitter, "Tentative Conclusions about Uncertain Democracies", in Guillermo O'Donnell, Philippe Schmitter, and Lawrence Whitehead (eds) *Transitions from Authoritarian Rule: Prospects for Democracy*, (Baltimore: The John Hopkins University Press, 1986), pp. 15-17. For others articles using the same category, see Jason Brownlee. "… And Yet They Persist: Explaining Survival and Transition in Neopatrimonial Regimes". *Studies in Comparative International Development*, vol. 37/3, (2002) pp. 35-63; Richard Snyder "Explaining Transition in Neopatrimonial Regimes" *Comparative Politics,* 24/4 (1992), pp. 379-399.

[13] In fact, authoritarian leaders put in place institutions, such as authoritarian parliaments and political councils, as mechanism to effectively manage such rivalries. See Brownlee. *Authoritarianism in an Age of Democratization,* p. 37.

[14] Terrence Lee, "The Armed Forces and Transitions from Authoritarian Rule: Explaining the Role of the Military in 1986 Philippines and 1998 Indonesia", *Comparative Political Studies,* 42/5, (2008), pp. 640-669.

[15] Langston. "Elite ruptures", p. 59.

influence of others.[16] By contrasting the political evolution of both regimes, we demonstrate the importance of the variable studied in the article and how variations in the degree of elite unity, and the various attitudes towards protesters' demands, affected the regime's response to these demands. We analyse this regime rivalry over two periods: (1) in the decade which preceded the Arab Spring (the latent crisis) and (2) during the Arab Spring (the overt crisis) between 2010 and 2012.

We selected two cases for this study: Bahrain and Egypt. In both of these cases, the authoritarian regime in place had already showed signs of strain prior to the beginning of mass mobilization in 2011, but the existing dissent was never sufficient to break up the unity of the ruling block. In Egypt, for example, the military mobilized in 2003 in a bid to prevent Gamal Mubarak from claiming leadership in the event of his father's death. In Bahrain, the king publicly announced in 2008 that all ministers would have to follow the crown prince's reform path. In both cases, opposition parties had been active before the sustained campaigns of popular protests that arose in early 2011. These two examples were selected because in both cases opposition was on a larger scale than in other countries, with hundreds of thousands of protesters present at key sites.

Unlike the Egyptian case, Bahrain's revolutionary moment was short-lived. We suggest that this is due to the fact that the internal crisis between hardliners and softliners within the Bahraini monarchy ended with the hardliners emerging as the strongest.[17] In Egypt, the partisans of Gamal Mubarak were thwarted by softliners within the armed forces who were willing to accept the election of civilian leaders and the integration of Islamists and liberals into the political system.[18] In fact, our two divergent cases exemplify not only the importance of softliners emerging on top in the power struggle between authoritarian regime factions, but also provides evidence that popular movements can initiate a transition process by transforming latent dissensions among authoritarian regime factions into an overt regime crisis.

There are certain differences between the Bahrain and Egypt scenarios which must be examined in order to assess their impact on the phenomenon we studied. Both regimes were authoritarian in nature, but Egypt was a dominant-party regime while Bahrain was, and still is, a constitutional monarchy. While it is true that certain types of authoritarian regimes are more likely to suffer from regime defections and even collapse, single-party systems and monarchies are the most stable forms of authoritarian regimes.[19] To the extent that authoritarian regimes vary in their composition and have individual dynamics, blanket regime categories do not offer a sufficient explanation for this article's puzzle.[20] Both states had created multiparty legislatures before the Arab Spring (unlike many states of the MENA region), though in both cases elections and legislation largely advantaged political parties close to the ruling elite. Overall, the differences in the composition of these regimes do not appear to have been a significant factor in the outcomes discussed here.

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[16] Alexander L. George and Andrew. Bennett. *Case Studies and Theory Development in the Social Sciences.* (Cambridge, Massachussets: The MIT Press, 2005),p. 155; Peter A. Hall, "Systematic Process Analysis: When and How to Use it", *European Management Review* 3/1 (2006), p. 27.

[17] Gregg Carlstrom, "In the Kingdom of Tear Gas", *Middle East Research and Information Project* (April 13, 2012).

[18] Tarek Masoud, "The Road to (and from) Liberation Square", *Journal of Democracy* 22/3 (2011), p. 23.

[19] Barbara Geddes, Joseph Wright and Erica Frantz, "Autocratic Breakdown and Regime Transitions: A New Dataset" *Perspectives on Politics,* 12/02 (2014), p. 320.

[20] Borrowing the definitions of Henry and Springborg, Egypt is a bully praetorian republic while Bahrain is a globalizing monarchy. See Clement M. Henry and Robert Springborg, *Globalization and the Politics of Development in the Middle East* (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 2001), pp. 134 & 168.

Another factor that can influence the outcome of an overt crisis is the amount of resources available for each regime; resilient regimes, unlike those that fall, would have sufficient means to provide perks and other incentives that might prevent regime defection.[21] While Bahrain had larger oil revenues, both states had been in prolonged periods of economic growth from 2000 onward which benefitted the members of the regime.[22] Therefore, the resource argument cannot explain the defection or non-defection of regime members from the ruling circle. A third factor is that foreign actors played different roles in both states. While the United States lobbied the Egyptian military to tolerate the opposition mobilization, Saudi Arabia, the UAE, and Qatar sent troops to Bahrain in support of the regime. The importance of this factor, however, is undermined by the fact that in each case rifts within the two ruling cliques were already in place before foreign actors attempted to lobby for their favoured outcome. Furthermore, while the spectre of Iranian interference and the subsequent military intervention by the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) Defence Force did help to bolster the regime, the military intervention by the GCC members happened after the beginning of the crackdown by security forces on protesters.[23] While the fear of Iranian interference did play a role in the formation of hardline factions within the Bahraini regime, it has more to do with the composition of the regime (mostly Sunni) against the predominantly Shi'ite background of Bahraini society. These sectarian differences played a much bigger role in Bahrain than in Egypt, where Coptic-Muslim relations, while sometimes tense, have not been used by Mubarak's regime as an important means of regime resilience. These sectarian relations, as we explore later in this article, are an important part of our framework because the use of identity as a proxy for regime loyalty meant that the Bahraini regime privileged certain groups to assure their allegiance. In other words, it is not the presence of sectarian groups that was responsible for the high degree of power held by the Sunni-led army and government, but rather that certain groups realized that their privileges were tied to the status quo.[24]

When investigating the genesis and development of a crisis under an authoritarian regime, however, scholars often face a practical constraint: the lack of visible or reliable indicators of divisions within authoritarian regimes, which forces them to rely instead on proxy measures.[25] In the face of such difficulties, we have focused on whether or not changes in circumstances may have increased risks for certain key factions and led them to change their preferences.[26] Such changes can include (1) shifting alliances between members of the authoritarian elite and opposition parties, (2) the end of the involvement of certain actors within the authoritarian regime, (3) the rise of new independent actors, (4) the imminent death of the founder of the regime or (5) the promotion of liberalization by authoritarian regime partisans in an effort safeguard their interests. These indicators, we argue, can be used to identify 'latent' splits within the ruling coalitions, but not 'overt' splits.

An indicator of increased factionalism during the 'overt' crisis is public disagreements with the regime. Following this logic, our proxy measures of a regime crisis are designed to

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[21] Steven Levitsky and Lucan Way. *Competitive Authoritarianism: Hybrid Regimes after the Cold War*. (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2010), p. 65.

[22] International Monetary Fund, "World Economic Outlook" (April 2014), online: http://www.imf.org/.

[23] For instance, the February 2011 take-over by security forces of the symbolic Pearl Roundabout was clearly a sign that hardliners were willing to act without the support of foreign troops.

[24] See Theodore McLauchlin, "Loyalty Strategies and Military Defection in Rebellion." *Comparative Politics* 42/3 (2010): pp. 338-340.

[25] Martins, "The 'Liberalization' of Authoritarian Rule in Brazil", p. 75.

[26] Przeworski, "Some Problems in the Study of the Transition to Democracy", p. 55.

identify softliners on the basis of their public actions, namely (1) the proposition of credible, serious and committed reform plans, and (2) public discourse denouncing the regime and/or its policies, including the appeal for outside support. Furthermore, (3) the defection of key regime supporters, such as the armed forces, and the refusal to obey orders by certain government branches are also good indicators of a regime-split.[27] Finally, a regime crisis involves a power struggle between different factions of a previously united ruling block. These struggles, which are also indicators of the presence of softliners, can be observed in (4) erratic policy changes when different branches of government speak or act in an ostensibly uncoordinated fashion.

We also assess how popular mobilization during the Arab Spring relates to the "fear of the masses" argument defended by many authors. Many scholars have argued that the success of bargaining in democratic transitions depends in a large part on the ability of opposition moderates to marginalise radicals.[28] According to McFaul, mobilized masses "spoil the party" by frightening potential regime softliners and driving them closer to the hardline faction.[29] If protest movements are perceived as intense threats, "even bland regime actors will conclude that the costs of toleration are greater than those of repression" and the movement for democracy will fail.[30] Bahrain is a prime example in support of such an argument.

Egypt's Nile Revolution

In January 2011, the Egyptian regime was challenged by one of the largest protest movements the country had ever seen. Faced with growing pressure and the police's failure to end the daily protests, President Hosni Mubarak, a former army officer, called for the army to intervene and save his regime. The army had been the cornerstone of Mubarak's National Democratic Party (NDP)'s rule over Egypt and yet, despite this historical relationship, the army's high command refused to help the NDP government.

The explanation for the army's refusal to support the NDP lies in the evolution of the relationship between these groups. The army, which was slowly removed from the political sphere in the 1990s, now faced economic marginalization with the preparation of Gamal Mubarak's ascendency to the presidency. The January 2011 protests became an opportunity for the armed forces to push their rivals out of the regime. In exchange for certain guarantees towards its corporate interests, the armed forces' high command accepted the rise of a new

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[27] O'Donnell and Schmitter, "Tentative Conclusions about Uncertain Democracies", p. 25; Przeworski, "Some Problems in the Study of the Transition to Democracy", p. 56; Antony Oberschall, "Opportunities and Framing in the Eastern European Revolts of 1989," in Doug McAdam, John D. McCarthy and Mayer N. Zald (eds), *Comparative Perspectives on Social Movements: Political Opportunities, Mobilizing Structures and Cultural Framing*, (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 1996), p. 100.

[28] O'Donnell and Schmitter, "Tentative Conclusions about Uncertain Democracies"; S. Huntington, "The Third Wave: Democratization in the 21 century"; (Norman, Ok: University of Oklahoma Press, 1991), T. Karl, "Dilemmas of Democratization in Latin America".

[29] Michael McFaul, "The Fourth Wave of Democracy and Dictatorship: Noncooperative Transitions in the Postcommunist World", *World Politics* 54, no. 2 (2002), pp. 212-244.

[30] Nancy Bermeo, "Myths of Moderation: Confrontation and Conflict During Democratic Transitions" in L. Anderson (ed), *Transitions to Democracy* (New York: Columbia University Press 1999), p. 98.

civilian government. In the words of Kandil: "the sudden collapse of the regime in 2011 was the cumulative result of the six decades of power struggles within the ruling coalition."[31]

The Egyptian Armed Forces Before 2000

The Egyptian armed forces have played a critical role in their country's political sphere since the Young Officers' coup of 1952. In the mid-twentieth century all of the state's leaders were picked from the Egyptian army. Mubarak, however, continued a process of civilianization initiated by Anwar Sadat in 1973 and, by 2011, only a few cabinet ministers had any military background.[32] The military officers were, increasingly, kept out of day-to-day politics.[33] In the background, however, the armed forces remained very powerful. For example, nearly all of the regional governors appointed by Mubarak were former military officers.[34] For the most part, as Norton has argued, the Egyptian generals used their veto-like power from behind the scenes.[35]

In an effort to gain more autonomy from the army, Mubarak also tended to keep the armed forces away from domestic crises. By the 1980s, regime maintenance missions were given to new security institutions, most of them under the jurisdiction of the Ministry of the Interior.[36] The budget and size of these security institutions continuously expanded from the end of the 1980s.[37] As Droz-Vincent has argued, one of the objectives of another non-military institution, the *Mukhabarat*, was to counterbalance the power of the regular army high command.[38] In an effort to curb the army's desire for political participation, changes in the army's command were also implemented, as older officers were pushed into retirement and replaced with younger officers who had been trained to remain apolitical.[39] Furthermore, hundreds of officers were forced into retirement.[40] By the 2000-2010 period, the police, according to Kandil, was the preeminent powerful political force and formed a sort of state within the state.[41]

Still, the Mubarak regime required the army's support to maintain its rule, especially in the face of increased domestic and international pressure to implement more thorough political reforms. To do so, the NDP leadership offered a series of economic perks to the military. Officers, both individually and as a corporate entity, were given the opportunity to purchase large segments of Egypt's agricultural lands as well as private companies. The armed forces owned factories run by various parastatal companies, including the National Service Projects

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[31] See Hazem Kandil *Soldiers, Spies, and Statesmen: Egypt's Road to Revolt* (New York: Verso, 2012), p. 220. It should be noted that Kandil predicted that the post-revolution dynamics would be a constant confrontation between the police and the army for political power.

[32] Stephen H. Gotowicki and L.T.C. Stephen, *The Role of the Egyptian Military in Domestic Society*, (National Defence University: Institute of National Strategic Studies, 1997), p. 10; Karawan, "Politics and the Army in Egypt", p. 45.

[33] Droz-Vincent, "The Military Amidst Uprisings and Transitions in the Arab World", p. 187.

[34] David M. Faris "Deep State, Deep Crisis: Egypt and American Policy", *Middle East Policy* 20/4 (2013), p. 101.

[35] Augustus Richard Norton, "The Return of Egypt's Deep State" *Current History*, 112/758 (2013), p. 338.

[36] Issandr Al-Amrani, "Sightings of the Egyptian Deep State" in David McMurray and Amanda Ufheil-Somers (eds), *The Arab Revolts: Dispatches on Militant Democracy in the Middle East* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2013), p. 103.

[37] Kandil *Soldiers, Spies, and Statesmen,* p. 195.

[38] Droz-Vincent, "The Military Amidst Uprisings and Transitions in the Arab World", p. 186.

[39] Tewfik Aclimandos, "Armée populaire" *Outre-Terre* 3 (2011), p. 321; Eva Bellin, "Lessons from the Jasmine and Nile Revolutions: Possibilities of Political Transformation in the Middle East?", *Middle East Brief* 50 (2011), p. 4.

[40] Kandil, *Soldiers, Spies, and Statesmen*, p. 194.

[41] Kandil, *Soldiers, Spies, and Statesmen*, p. 198.

Organization, and, in 2007, they also became the owner of the Alexandria shipyard.[42] Over time, the armed forces bought and developed companies in various economic sectors, ranging from the manufacturing of basic household appliances to commercial construction.[43] Furthermore, many former military officers can be found within the civil service, in the National Assembly where many of the seats reserved for workers and farmers are filled by retired officers, and in the many parastatal companies. While the exact economic weight of the companies controlled by the army is unknown, most estimates place it somewhere between five and forty per cent of Egypt's GDP.[44] These developments led to a number of political dynamics which largely influenced both Mubarak's rule and the transitional process. First, as Faris has concluded, while the regime kept the military out of daily affairs, a military enclave or 'deep state' developed where military officers present in most state institutions exerted a large influence, if not control, over political officials.[45] Second, there was a growing separation between the interests of Mubarak and of the military command as the latter began to define their own corporate interests as being different from the regime's.[46]

The Latent Crisis: Gamal Mubarak and the Armed Forces' Clashing Visions

The 2000-2011 period was marked by rising tensions within the NDP ruling coalition because the military was challenged by a rising clique composed of Gamal Mubarak, the son of the president, and close associates of his who were mostly private entrepreneurs, bankers and industrialists.[47] Gamal and his allies joined the NDP and began to monopolize power within the party-ranks. As Brownlee has explained, by 2000 Gamal's "New Guard" began to win internal elections and rules began to be changed to increase their power over rival factions.[48] Once dominant within the NDP structures, the oligarchs slowly took control of key government branches like the police and the interior ministry.[49] Even other political forces were slowly being pushed-out in an effort to assure Gamal's ascendancy and, as a result, guarantee that he would become his father's successor. Electoral rules were changed to deny electoral victories to the Muslim Brotherhood (MB) and, as with Ayman Nour in 2005, arrest and harassment were used

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[42] Shana Marshall and Joshua Statcher, "Egypt's General's and Transnational Capital" in David McMurray and Amanda Ufheil-Somers (eds), *The Arab Revolts: Dispatches on Militant Democracy in the Middle East* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2013), p. 107 & 109.

[43] Imad Harb, "The Egyptian Military in Politics: Disengagement or Accommodation?", *The Middle East Journal* 3/1-2 (2003), p. 285. See also Shana Marshall and Joshua Statcher, "Egypt's General's and Transnational Capital".

[44] Tarek Masoud, "The Road to (and from) Liberation Square", *Journal of Democracy* 22/3 (2011), p. 25. Rashid M. Rashid, a former trade minister, guessed that the military would own less than 10% of Egypt's economy; see Shana Marshall and Joshua Statcher "Egypt's General's and Transnational Capital" p. 107.

[45] Faris, "Deep State, Deep Crisis", p. 100.

[46] John T. Sidel, "Dangers and Demonizers of Democratization in Egypt: Through an Indonesian Glass, Darkly" In Fawad A. Gerges (ed) *The New Middle East: Protests and Revolutions in the Arab World* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2013), p. 233.

[47] For their similarities with Russian oil and gas industrialists, see David B. Ottaway, "Egypt at the Tipping Point?", *Middle East Program Occasional Paper Series* (2010), p. 4.

[48] Jason Brownlee, "The Heir Apparency of Gamal Mubarak", *The Arab Studies Journal* 15/2-1 (2007), p. 46.

[49] Valérie Collombier, "Gamal Moubarak et le Parti national démocratique ou la stratégie du désastre. Comment ceux qui prétendaient préparer la succession présidentielle ont précipité la chute du régime", *Outre-Terre* 3 (2011), p. 335.

during elections to assure the NDP's victory.[50] This New Guard's main clash was not with regime opponents, but was instead with other members of the ruling coalition and particularly with the military. Under the new government of Prime Minister Ahmed Nazif, the NDP engaged in a large privatization campaign between 2004 and 2011.[51] This economic liberalization program was aggressive and had major implications. Cole has estimated that between 1991 and 2011, 150 of the 314 state owned factories had been sold to private interests.[52] As Ottaway reported in 2010: "In the mid-1980s, the state controlled two-thirds of the economy; now the same proportion belongs to the private sector."[53]

The armed forces, which had large economic interests in many of these state corporations, did not favour moves which placed companies formerly in their control under the ownership of the oligarchs of the New Guard. On various occasions, Omar Suleiman, director of the intelligence program, and Mohamed Hussein Tantawi, defence minister and head of the Supreme Council of the Armed Forces (SCAF), found themselves in power struggles with Gamal over the policy direction of the regime. While Hosni Mubarak considered the succession a *fait accompli*, certain elements within the army were considering alternative plans. In 2003, when the president fainted and was rushed to the hospital, the armed forces moved rapidly in their bid for power and sent tanks into the streets of Cairo.[54] As Colombier reported, "significant signals suggested that the military was opposed to Gamal, and that in case Hosni Mubarak were to die before the end of his mandate, the military would seize power rather than let the son succeed his father".[55] There was even talk of a coup d'état by some of the most disgruntled officers.[56] There were, to sum up, tensions within the ruling coalition on the eve of the Nile Revolution. While these tensions were not sufficient to challenge the stability of the regime, as the January-February 2011 protests demonstrated, they greatly weakened the Mubarak's power base and were a necessary factor in his downfall.

The Nile Revolution: The Overt Crisis

The protests that began on 25 January 2011 became the greatest challenge that the NDP ever faced as it became rapidly clear that the internal security services were failing to contain the protesters. The security services, as Chalcraft reported, were unprepared for crowd control and, by the end of January 2011, the only units still intact were the Presidential Guard units stationed around the national TV station and the presidential palace.[57] By January 28, the government had

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[50] See Dina Shehata, "The Fall of the Pharaoh: How Hosni Mubarak's Reign Came to an End", *Foreign Affairs* 90 (2011), p. 29; Ann M. Lesch, "Egypt's Spring: Causes of the Revolution", *Middle East Policy* 18/ 3 (2011), p. 39; Brownlee, "The Heir Apparency of Gamal Mubarak", p. 48.

[51] Droz-Vincent, "The Military Amidst Uprisings and Transitions in the Arab World", p. 188.

[52] Juan Cole, "Egypt's Modern Revolution and the Fall of Mubarak" In Fawad A. Gerges (ed) *The New Middle East: Protests and Revolutions in the Arab World* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2013), p. 74.

[53] Ottaway, "Egypt at the Tipping Point?", p. 4.

[54] Roger Owen, *The Rise and Fall of Arab Presidents for Life*. (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2012), p. 144

[55] Virginie Collombier, "Egypt in 2011: A Regime that No Longer Knows How to Adapt? Fluid Conjunctures and Regime Transformations in Perspective", *EUI Working Papers* 3 (2012), p. 7.

[56] Aclimandos, "Armée populaire", p. 325.

[57] He also estimated that around 80 police stations were burned in this period. See John Chalcraft, "Egypt's 25 January Uprising, Hegemonic Contestation, and the Explosion of the Poor", In Fawad A. Gerges (ed) *The New Middle East: Protests and Revolutions in the Arab World* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2013), pp. 175-176.

called on the army to put down the protest.[58] In the words of Hashim: "As the regime found itself backed into a corner, with the police and CSF [Central Security Forces] having a hard time suppressing the teeming masses in Tahrir Square, the military emerged openly on the political scene for the first time in year."[59]

Although Mubarak had hoped the army would rapidly end the protests, two factors seemed to have precluded the military high command from doing so. First, there were fears within the high command that any decision to use force against peaceful protesters would lead to rebellions among the military ranks. Second, the participants in the protests came from diverse backgrounds and could not be attached to a specific political party or organization.[60] This diverse group, like the armed forces, had major economic grievances against the New Guard and the consequences of its economic policies.[61] In addition, there was a great reluctance to defend a regime which, in the words of Chalcraft, would "sell off the country to Gamal's clique".[62] The army's neutral stand between 28 January and 11 February made apparent the ambivalence of SCAF and senior officers. Rather than end the protests, the army protected the buildings surrounding Tahir Square. In this period, the regime was purged entirely of the New Guard as the government was dismissed on 29 January and, six days later, Gamal himself was expelled from the NDP. As Masoud has pointed out, the military effectively used the protesters to remove their most powerful opponents from the ruling circles.[63]

At this point, with its rival eliminated, the armed forces could have decided to suppress the opposition movement and secure Hosni Mubarak as president, but as the protests continued, SCAF instead began to distance itself from Mubarak. Many officers had even publicly endorsed the protesters' demands.[64] SCAF also unofficially appointed certain officers, including Sami Annan, Mamdouh Shahin and Mohsen al-Fanagry, to negotiate with civil society groups.[65] On 10 February, the Mubarak-SCAF rupture was complete as the council met for the first time without the president and his vice-president, Omar Sulayman.[66] Also on 10 February, General Hassan al-Roueini, in charge of the Cairo Brigades, told the protesters that "all your demands will be met today".[67] The following day, Tantawi announced he would take over the government and that SCAF would lead Egypt during the transitional period.

The Nile Revolution marked two important dynamics. The first was the rupture between the military, the president and the New Guard. While there were frictions beforehand, the protesters provided the opportunity for the military to actually act on their grievances against

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[58] This is in sharp contrast with the 1990s counter-insurgency campaigns when the army was kept out of a domestic crisis.
[59] Ahmed Hashim, "The Egyptian Military, Part Two: From Mubarak Onward", *Middle East Policy* 18/4 (2011), p. 116.
[60] See Cole, "Egypt's Modern Revolution and the Fall of Mubarak", p. 75; Chalcraft, "Egypt's 25 January Uprising, Hegemonic Contestation, and the Explosion of the Poor", pp. 169-170.
[61] Chalcraft, "Egypt's 25 January Uprising, Hegemonic Contestation, and the Explosion of the Poor", p. 163.
[62] Chalcraft, "Egypt's 25 January Uprising, Hegemonic Contestation, and the Explosion of the Poor", p. 176.
[63] Masoud, "The Road to (and from) Liberation Square", p. 23.
[64] Droz-Vincent, "The Military amidst Uprisings and Transitions in the Arab World", p. 193.
[65] Holger Albrecht and Dina Bishara, "Back on Horseback: the Military and Political Transformation in Egypt", *Middle East Law and Governance* 3/1-2 (2011), p. 16.
[66] Sulayman was the head of one of the army's rival, the Mukhabarat. He survived an assassination attempt, most likely ordered by military personnel, on 4 February 2011. See Al-Amrani, "Sightings of the Egyptian Deep State", p. 105.
[67] Anthony Shadid and David D. Kirkpatrick, "Mubarak Refuses to Step Down, Stoking Revolt's Fury and Resolve", *New York Times* (February 10 2011), p.A1; Albrecht and Bishara, "Back on Horseback", p. 16.

Gamal's clique. Furthermore, the failure of Hosni Mubarak to come to an agreement with representatives of the protesters pushed the military to negotiate with the protesters themselves. The protests were the catalyst for the military-government rupture.

Regime Change in Egypt

After these events, negotiations occurred between SCAF, the Islamist forces and a loose coalition of secular groups. While the armed forces made no attempt during that period to install a new permanent military regime, they made a number of demands, namely the return to social peace, a limited scope of reforms and the defence of its corporate interests.[68] In exchange, they offered to lift the ban of important political parties like the Muslim Brotherhood (MB) and the Salafis. Nevertheless, the relationship between the army high command and the secular forces deteriorated.

SCAF, having an interest in a rapid restoration of order and peace, sided with the MB, calculating that they would be best positioned to control the street protests.[69] Faris has interpreted this political development as the co-option of the Islamists into the Mubarak-era political system which was still mostly intact.[70] In a referendum supported by the MB and the Salafis, the Egyptian electorate approved political reforms proposed by SCAF.[71] This reform package included term limits for the presidency and judicial oversight of elections.[72] Furthermore, the MB partisans remained largely outside of the continuing protests after February 2011.[73] In exchange for support of its favoured political reform package, the new civilian government gave its consent to the economic privileges and autonomy from government supervision that the military had granted itself.[74] The election, as Faris pointed out, was the last liberal-islamist entente as both groups worked together to prevent Ahmed Shafiq, the candidate favoured by the army, from winning the presidency.[75] In the presidential election of May-June 2012, the armed forces abided by the results of the vote and Mohamed Morsi of the MB became president.[76]

The period between May 2011 and the end of 2012 was marked by two dynamics which largely influenced the fate of Egypt's transition: the provisional *entente* between the armed forces and the MB, and the schism between secular forces and Islamists moderates. As mentioned above, the agreement between the SCAF and MB leadership shaped the post-Mubarak institutions as both actors agreed to limit political reforms and allow a large degree of autonomy for the military over their own spheres of activity. This agreement appeared to have

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[68] Karawan, "Politics and the Army in Egypt", p. 46.

[69] Al-Amrani, "Sightings of the Egyptian Deep State", pp. 101-02; Eberhard Kienle, "Egypt without Mubarak, Tunisia after Bin Ali: theory, history and the 'Arab Spring' ", *Economy and Society* 41/4 (2012): pp. 538-539.

[70] Faris, "Deep State, Deep Crisis", p. 100.

[71] Rex Brynen, Pete W. Moore, Bassel F. Salloukh & Marie-Joelle Zahar. *Beyond The Arab Spring: Authoritarianism & The Democratization in the Arab World* (London: Lynne Rienner Publishers, 2012), p. 164.

[72] Edward D. Mansfield and Jack Snyder, "Democratization and the Arab Spring", *International Interactions* 38/5 (2012), pp. 724-725.

[73] Al-Amrani, "Sightings of the Egyptian Deep State", p,102.

[74] Karawan, "Politics and the Army in Egypt", p. 46; Hashim, "The Egyptian Military", p. 109.

[75] Faris, "Deep State, Deep Crisis", p. 101; Norris "The Return of Egypt's Deep State", p. 340; Brynen et al., *Beyond The Arab Spring*, p. 26.

[76] It should be noted that a year afterwards, the growing rift between the MB and the other Egyptian social forces, including the armed forces, led to the July 2013 coup.

ensured both regime change and that the armed forces return to their barracks.[77] However, the schism between these two forces and the secular groups meant that the main proponent for more thorough political reforms was cut out of the entire process. The liberal-secularist demands were largely ignored as the MB and SCAF agreed on a limited reform agenda.[78] The entrenchment of authoritarian structures with limited political reforms and the maintenance of large military prerogatives meant that the new political system that came out of the Nile Revolution fell short of the standards of an electoral democracy. In short, the military reformers-opposition forces *entente* brought a regime change in Egypt, but it failed to bring greater government accountability. The social forces behind the revolution were increasingly marginalized by SCAF and the new MB government.

Bahrain: The Repression of the Opposition Movement

We now turn to analysing Bahrain. We will demonstrate that whereas dissent within the Bahraini monarchy had been present throughout the years leading up to the Arab Spring, it was not a threat to the internal unity of the ruling block. However when massive demonstrations against the regime started to rock the island, these tensions transformed into an overt crisis with the crown prince publicly announcing a dialogue on political reforms. This initial willingness to compromise was overtaken by events, as the radicalization of opposition groups enabled the ascension of hardliner elements within the regime. The hardliners, by gaining the support of the moderate King Hamad, outmanoeuvred the crown prince. Consequently, proposals for a dialogue on political reforms were called off and dissent was crushed with the help of mainly GCC military forces.

Bahrain's Latent Crisis: The Years Before the Arab Spring

The internal conflicts and manoeuvrings between different factions of Bahrain's monarchy predate the 14 February uprising of 2011. In fact, for the previous decade, King Hamad bin Isa Al Khalifa had been arbitrating between two main power centres: one led by reform-minded Crown Prince Salman bin Hamad Al Khalifa, the other led by Prime Minister Khalifa bin Salman Al Khalifa, the king's uncle and head of what Louer labels "the dynasty's old guard" (also called the "Khawalids").[79] Until the outbreak of the Arab Spring rebellion in Bahrain, Crown Prince Salman bin Hamad Al Khalifa was largely considered the rising figure within the monarchy; according to Louer, he was "young, Western educated, and liberal-minded" and "he has long been the sweetheart of Western diplomats" due to his conviction that reform is necessary to ensure that "the regime bends but does not break under popular pressure".[80] Prince Salman gained influence largely with the help of a broad reform project called "Economic Vision 2030"

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[77] This was, of course, temporary in light of the 2013 events.

[78] Among the liberal-secularist demands were: "prosecuting and imprisoning former regime officials, compensating the martyrs of the revolution, ending military detentions and trials, canceling emergency laws, reforming the Ministry of the Interior, and establishing a democratic political order." See Eric Trager, "Egypt's Triangular Power Struggle" *The Washington Institute on Near East Policy* (July 24 2011) p. 2.

[79] Laurence Louer, "Houses Divided: the Splintering of Bahrain's Political Camps", *Carnegie Endowment for International Peace* (April 4, 2012).

[80] Louer, "Houses Divided: the Splintering of Bahrain's Political Camps"; Reza H. Akbahri and Jason Stern, "Bahrain's Triangle of Conflict", *Foreign Policy: The Middle East Channel* (May 17, 2012).

which was considered by many observers as a direct challenge to the way the Prime Minister Khalifa had been handling the economy since Bahrain's independence from Britain in 1971.[81]

By this point, Khalifa had come to be the leader of a faction of Sunnis who feared Shi'ite empowerment in the event of democratic change. Together with the Royal Court Minister Khaled bin Ahmed al Khalifa and the minister of defence and commander-in-chief of the Army Khalifa bin Ahmed al Khalifa, Khalifa formed a triumvirate of regime hardliners with the firm conviction that every step towards reform was a slippery slope towards the end of the al-Khalifa family's reign. Furthermore, Khaled bin Ahmed al Khalifa was suspected to be a sponsor of radical Sunni Islamist movements, a claim endorsed by many specialists.[82] Essentially, the Khawalids represented "the last of the old lions", whereas the crown prince and his circle of technocrats were considered to be Bahrain's future, with King Hamad somewhere between the two, "understanding that reform is critical to Bahrain's success but unable to turn his back on tradition and the stability it provides".[83]

Tensions surfaced for the first time in 2001, when Prince Salman officially became heir to the throne. Acting on behalf of his father King Hamad, he chaired a committee to implement the National Action Charter (NAC) which changed the Bahraini government from an absolute to a constitutional monarchy. Khalifa was said to be highly skeptical of these developments and later pushed the king to abandon many of his reform plans, enstating further limitations on the power of Bahrain's parliament.[84] A few years later, in 2006, a public report written by a Sudanese-British advisor to the Bahrain government pointed out the increasing power of the Khawalid faction and accused them of leading a secret campaign to undermine reformers within the ruling family. The report identified Ahmed Ativallah, the then-head of Bahrain's intelligence services and the nephew of the royal court minister, as the leader of this campaign. "That was when things started going wrong", a senior member of the ruling family later recalled, "you could see that they [the Khawalids] had more power than most realized."[85]

Then, in 2008, a major clash between the crown prince and the prime minister occurred over the economic reforms that Prince Salman attempted to implement in his capacity as new head of Bahrain's Economic Development Board (EDB). In a rare public exchange of letters, Salman complained to the king that some factions in the government resisted his institutional decisions, specifically accusing the prime minister of financing surrogates to undercut Gulf Air (the struggling national airline), colluding with business leaders to diminish the effect of labor reforms, and negating the EDB's "one stop shop" for foreign investors by using the cabinet to impose additional layers of bureaucracy.[86] In his response, King Hamad backed the crown prince and threatened to dismiss any minister who did not follow Prince Salman's final authority in economic matters.[87] Following this incident, the crown prince announced on 7 February 2008 the appointment of King Hamad's cabinet-level economic and technical ministers to the EDB board

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[81] Andrew Hammond, "Analysis: Bahrain Hardliners in Driving Seat after F1 Fiasco", *Reuters* (April 24, 2012).

[82] International Crisis Group, "Popular Protest in North Africa and the Middle East (III): The Bahrain Revolt", *MENA Report* 105 (April 6, 2011).

[83] Global Security.org, "Bahrain - Crown Prince H.H. Shaikh Salman bin Hamad bin Isa Al-Khalifa" (accessed on August 21, 2014).

[84] Charles Levinson, "A Palace Rift in Persian Gulf Bedevils Key U.S. Navy Base", *Wall Street Journal* (February 22, 2013).

[85] Levinson, "A Palace Rift in Persian Gulf Bedevils Key U.S. Navy Base".

[86] Global Security.org, "Bahrain - Crown Prince H.H. Shaikh Salman bin Hamad bin Isa Al-Khalifa".

[87] Khalil Mazraawi, "Bahrain's Internal Power Struggle Amid the Unrest", The Global Intelligence Files (February 21, 2011).

of directors, therefore essentially annexing the prime minister's cabinet into a parallel government.[88]

Despite his victory over the prime minister, the role of Prince Salman remained essentially limited to the economic realm, and until the outbreak of the Arab Spring, there were no more public confrontations between the different power centers. We therefore label this situation "latent crisis stage".

The Arab Spring and the Overt Crisis

In February 2011, massive demonstrations exceeding 100,000 participants moved the tensions within the Bahraini monarchy into an overt crisis. This was first evidenced by uncoordinated government action: while some government representatives, including King Hamad himself, announced that protests would be tolerated, police forces used all means necessary to end the protests. The lack of a unified response was a clear sign that different factions within the monarchy were competing for influence and vying to impose their own course of action. The highly inconsistent treatment of protesters is only one of the numerous examples of such erratic changes in government behaviour. On 17 February, government forces caused multiple casualties when they used live ammunition against protesters, mourners and news reporters, yet only two days later protesters were allowed to return to the Pearl Roundabout and King Hamad offered a televised address to apologise for the deaths.[89]

The widespread use of torture by certain branches of the security apparatus, despite direct orders from the crown prince for the police officials to avoid sectarian discrimination and to exercise restraint in dealing with protesters, offers another example of how different branches of government openly defied each other instead of pursuing a coherent, unified course of action.[90] According to the Bahrain Independent Commission of Inquiry (BICI) report, during the uprising, detainees were interrogated by three government agencies, the Ministry of Interior (MoI), the National Security Agency (NSA) (both led by government hardliners) and the Bahrain Defence Force. Whereas the first two agencies were said to have been making extensive use of torture in their dealings with detainees, the Bahrain Defence Force did not seem to follow the same policy of torture.[91]

A few weeks after King Hamad's 17 February televised address to the nation, Prince Salman reached out to a coalition of moderate opposition parties headed by Al-Wefaq and offered a dialogue on political reforms. His "seven principles" included a stronger elected lower house of parliament, fairer boundaries for electoral districts and an effort to curb official corruption, among other concessions.[92] He even offered the departure of the prime minister within a three-month timeframe.[93] The moderate opposition was ready to accept the crown prince's invitation for dialogue.[94] With this in mind, we believe that it is appropriate to conclude that the offer for reforms was not a simple attempt by a unified authoritarian regime to dissipate protests, but a real offer of compromise by regime softliners.

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[88] Reza H. Akbahri and Jason Stern, "Bahrain's Triangle of Conflict".
[89] Caryle Murphy, "How Hardliners Ruined Chance of Compromise in Bahrain", *The National* (April 4, 2011).
[90] Andrew Hammond and Sami Aboudi, "Bahrain Crown Prince Urges Police Restraint over Protests", *Chicago Tribune News* (July 31, 2012).
[91] Kelly McEvers, "Bahrain: The Revolution that Wasn't", *NPR Special Series* (January 5, 2012).
[92] Gregg Carlstrom, "In the Kingdom of Tear Gas", *Middle East Research and Information Project* (April 13, 2012).
[93] Murphy, "How Hardliners Ruined Chance of Compromise in Bahrain".
[94] Carlstrom, "In the Kingdom of Tear Gas".

The Crown Prince in the Minority

In the spring of 2011, Crown Prince Salman, found himself becoming relatively isolated. His main support came from his father King Hamad, who we qualify as a moderate or reluctant softliner. During Hamad's reign, Bahrain had seen a series of reforms aimed at economic and social modernization, including the release of all political prisoners, the dissolution of the State Security Court and the abolition of the 1974 Decree on state security measures.[95] He also expanded the rights of women and opened up some positions in the government to Shi'ites, who have historically been discriminated against in matters of employment in the public sector.[96] Finally, after the uprisings in Pearl Roundabout, King Hamad apologized for the deaths of protesters and promised to investigate the incidents. Later on, he showed restraint while demonstrations against him continued for several weeks.

According to political sources, King Hamad first reluctantly supported Prince Salman's negotiations on reform, and warned that military action would have to be considered if talks had not been successfully initiated within three weeks.[97] We consider this to be evidence of King Hamad's ambivalent position towards the political situation, a fact that benefitted hardliner elements within the regime when opposition demands became more radical. Furthermore, opposition within the ranks of the Khawalids was fierce. An aide to the crown prince later revealed in an interview that the royal court minister confronted the crown prince at a family meeting after Prince Salman had proposed a deal to the opposition that would have granted the Shi'ites a greater share in parliament, which was a historic concession. As it became clear that the crown prince's position would not change, the royal court minister flew to Saudi Arabia and convinced King Abdullah to oppose the crown prince's efforts, while some units of Bahrain's security services began to attack opposition marches.[98]

Other members of the royal family also opposed Prince Salman. Sheik Nasser bin Hamad al Khalifa, in charge of Bahrain's Olympic athletes, made a televised address during the protests declaring that "anyone who called for the fall of the regime, may a wall fall on his head […] Whether he is an athlete, socialite or politician (whatever he is) he will be held accountable… Bahrain is an island and there is nowhere to escape".[99] Journalists, like Murphy, have suggested that media like the state-run television and press were also under the control of royal family hardliners, and that these hardliners worked during the first weeks of demonstrations to undermine Prince Salman's efforts to begin a dialogue. For instance, the media "gave almost no support to dialogue and instead consistently featured Sunni extremists speaking demeaningly of Shi'ites, accusing them of being loyal to Iran and suggesting they leave the country". In consequence, the Crown Prince found himself so marginalized that he could not carry through his political reform plans.[100]

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[95] Amnesty International, "Bahrain: Promising Human Rights Reform Must Continue", *AI Index MDE11/005/2001*, News Service no. 46 (March 13, 2001).

[96] Alexander Smoltczyk and Souad Mekhennet, Interview with the King of Bahrain: "Arab Spring? That's the Business of Other Countries", *Der Spiegel* (February 13, 2012).

[97] Lin Noueihed, "Analysis: Bahrain Talks Stall, Divisions Widen After Crackdown", *Reuters* (March 23, 2011).

[98] Levinson, "A Palace Rift in Persian Gulf Bedevils Key U.S. Navy Base".

[99] Dipesh Gadher, "Bahraini Hardliner is VIP at London Olympics", *The Sunday Times* (April 15, 2012).

[100] Murphy, "How Hardliners Ruined Chance of Compromise in Bahrain".

The Armed Forces as Hardliners

Prince Salman's share of control over strategic elements such as the armed forces was weak and steadily declining throughout the conflict. He had formerly been the Commander in Chief of the Bahrain Defence Force but he lost his position in 2008 to regime hardliner Khalifa bin Ahmed al Khalifa. During the events of February 2011, it became clear that Salman's control over the security apparatus had largely faded. Whereas he managed to order the army off the streets at the beginning of the protests, he was unable to prevent the army from taking over a hospital, destroying the symbolic Pearl Roundabout and implementing a crackdown on rioters by the end of February.[101]

One major reason for this lack of control may be found in the composition of the army itself. Contrary to the situation in Egypt, where the armed forces emerged as the main softliners in the regime, Bahrain's armed forces may be considered hardliners in that they were much more willing to maintain internal order on behalf of the incumbent regime. This may be explained by what Chenoweth and Stephan label "social distance": when the coercive institutions are distant from society (e.g. members from a different country or members of a special, advantaged group), they are less likely to defect and more efficient for repression, as connections between the members and the protesters are less likely.[102] In the case of Bahrain, where a Sunni minority rules over a largely Shi'ite population, a clear "Sunni bias" within the army and official government institutions effectively bars Shi'ites from serving in the armed forces. Additionally, nearly fifty per cent of the security institutions are staffed with foreigners (mostly from Pakistan and other Sunni-dominated Arab countries like Saudi Arabia) in order to achieve greater integration of the coercive apparatus into the regime and to distance the armed forces from society.[103] In other words, the military personnel in Bahrain were largely Sunni, while the Bahraini population is seventy per cent Shi'ite.

The Radicalization of Opposition Forces and the Shifting Preferences of Moderates

Even though softliners within the Bahraini monarchy found themselves in a minority position when the Arab Spring broke out on the island, we believe that there was a real and credible prospect for negotiations with the moderate opposition parties until the radicalization of opposition demands tilted the balance within the authoritarian regime in favour of hardliners.

At the beginning of the protests in mid-February, the uprising was not remarkably radical: a few hundred young people turned out in response to a call by unidentified political activists on Facebook. Although some activists from more militant parties took part in the demonstrations (for example Abdul Wahab Hussein, the head of the radical Al Wafaa party that demands the overthrow of the monarchy), the majority of protesters did not call for the removal of the king and instead demanded the transformation of Bahrain's political system. While most activists in the Pearl Roundabout were Shi'ite, at the beginning of the uprising they were joined by many Sunni Bahrainis demonstrating for greater freedom and better living conditions.[104]

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[101] Kevin Conolly, "Bahrain Unrest: Protesters Reoccupy Pearl Square", *BBC* (February 20, 2011).
[102] Erica Chenoweth and Maria J. Stephan, *Why Civil Resistance Works: The Strategic Logic of Nonviolent Conflict* (New York: Columbia University Press 2011).
[103] Philippe Droz-Vincent, "A Return of Armies to the Forefront of Arab Politics?", *Instituto Affari Internazionali* Working Paper 11, pp. 21; Sharon Erickson Nepstad, "Mutiny and nonviolence in the Arab Spring: Exploring military defections and loyalty in Egypt, Bahrain, and Syria" *Journal of Peace Research* 50/3 (2013), p. 343.
[104] Murphy, "How Hardliners Ruined Chance of Compromise in Bahrain".

But when protests grew in intensity, moderate opposition parties did not keep their own radicals, meaning those who favoured the overthrow of the monarchy, in check. In fact, while the crown prince was reaching out to the main opposition coalition headed by Al-Wefaq, three radical Shi'ite groups (Al Haq, Wafa and the Bahrain Freedom Movement) joined together to form the "Coalition for a Bahraini Republic". The leaders of these parties contended that the official opposition under Al-Wefaq did not represent their interests and called for the establishment of a "democratic republican system";[105] a move that was considered an escalation by both moderates and hardliners in the Bahraini authoritarian regime. There were other provocations by radical Shi'ite demonstrators, such as a march to Riffa (where members of the royal family live) on March 11, the erection of barricades on March 13 on a motorway cutting access to Manama's financial district and the extension of the Pearl Roundabout protests to Salmaniya hospital where some of the predominantly Shi'ite medical staff criticised the government. We believe that the overt call for the abolition of the monarchy and its replacement with a democratic republic constituted the turning point that tipped the balance within the royal family in favour of the hardliners. As we have explained before, King Hamad himself was not a convinced softliner but rather a moderate who was comfortable with limited reform. When confronted with the demands of the radical Shi'ite coalition, we believe that King Hamad was frightened by the prospects of the dynasty crumbling and of an Islamic takeover. For instance, the government has long maintained that Al Haq has ties to Iran, and though the "Coalition" did not mention "Islamic" Republic, Sunnis in Bahrain believed this was tacitly understood.[106]

At the same time, the slow pace of the dialogue between the crown prince and the umbrella of moderate opposition parties exasperated members of the royal family who felt that the protesters would never be satisfied.[107] Therefore, it is plausible that the escalation of protests changed King Hamad's strategic calculations and led him to prefer a takeover of hardliners in the regime to the detriment of the crown prince's negotiations with the opposition. Prince Salman's sudden loss of support within the regime is evidenced by the fact that he was still negotiating with opposition forces and trying to reach a compromise when government forces began their clampdown on 15 March. By the time martial law was declared, sources say that the power "to protect the safety of the country and its citizens" had already been transferred to Sheikh Khalifa bin Ahmed al Khalifa, head of the Bahrain Defence Force. Since 2011, the softliner faction within the Bahraini monarchy has lost much of its power. The crown prince's most recent appointment as first deputy prime minister may somewhat amend the balance, although this remains speculative and without support from any policy changes to date.[108] In fact, conciliatory statements by King Hamad aimed at the majority Shia community have not been followed up by action. Many of the 2,500 state employees fired for taking part in pro-democracy protests are still out of work while senior Bahraini police officers suspended for torturing detainees have been reinstated without trial.[109] While the crown prince has regained a formal institutional role in

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[105] Lin Noueihed, Frederik Richter and Samia Nakhoul, "Hardline Shi'ite Groups Demand Republic in Bahrain", *Reuters* (March 8, 2011).

[106] Murphy, "How Hardliners Ruined Chance of Compromise in Bahrain".

[107] Noueihed, "Analysis: Bahrain Talks Stall, Divisions Widen After Crackdown."

[108] Ronald Neumann, "Bahrain: A Very Complicated Little Island", *Middle East Policy* 20 (2013), pp.45-58.

[109] Patrick Cockburn, "Power Struggle Deepens Divisions Among Bahraini Royal Family", The Independent, (September 27, 2011).

policy-making, most observers still agree that ultimately Prince Salman is still the *deputy* of (and therefore subordinate to) his great uncle Sheikh Khalifa, rather than the reverse.[110]

Conclusion

Before 2011, both the Bahraini and Egyptian regimes had successfully established limited pluralistic institutions, legislatures and multiparty systems, and allowed more free press without losing their grip on their respective countries. Still, intra-regime dynamics were set in motion which would challenge regime resilience in a period of extensive civic resistance. In Egypt, the clash between Gamal's partisans, alternative security agencies and the armed forces, created much resentment towards Hosni Mubarak among the military elite.[111] In Bahrain, two factions within the royal family struggled for domination of both the regime and its policy agenda.

Civic protesters in 2011, in Egypt and in Bahrain, gathered the support of regime reformists and disgruntled groups. The military elite in Egypt sided with the protest leaders in a bid to remove the Gamal's New Guard. As the Muslim Brotherhood agreed to many of the military elite's demands, the latter group accepted a return to civilian rule. Disagreement among opposition forces opened the way for another military coup in 2013 which then ended civilian rule. In Bahrain, while the crown prince negotiated with the protesters in 2011, the dynastic old guard rapidly moved to prevent any challenge to their power. Furthermore, as the opposition forces began to split among radical and moderate groups, regime moderates began to side with the hardliners.

Despite differences in terms of regime composition, societal characteristics and economic traits, Egypt and Bahrain passed through similar critical junctures in 2011. The latent crises within both regimes became public in periods of heightened popular mobilization as certain factions appealed to regime opponents in order to gain the upper hand on their rivals. The Bahraini case demonstrates, however, that the presence of regime reformists accompanied by domestic mobilisation is not a sufficient condition for regime change; the regime hardliners, thanks in large part to its control over the military, overpowered the regime opponents and side-lined regime reformists.

As our analysis also demonstrates, the outcome of an overt crisis is also influenced by the opposition movement's characteristics. In both cases, anti-regime protests attracted large crowds. As radical groups tried to take-over the protests in Bahrain, moderate leaders' ability to negotiate with regime representatives was diminished as the declarations by radicals were used by the hardliners to sway moderates. In Egypt, the relative unity of the opposition movement in January-February 2011 enabled certain opposition leaders to convince the military to not only purge their opponents within the regime but to push Hosni Mubarak to resign and to initiate a political transition. The failure of the opposition to agree on a reform agenda in the subsequent year and to oppose a return to military rule in 2013 enabled the military to return to power.

In both cases, the military played a critical role in the final outcome of the Arab Spring. Hosni Mubarak's lack of control over the military elite meant that he could not order them to crush the protesters while the Bahraini security forces responded to the calls by the regime hardliners to violently suppress the protests. The presence of rival security institutions in Egypt

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[110] Gengler, Justin, "Crown Prince Salman Appointed Managing First Deputy Prime Minister for Important and Serious Affairs", BHPolitics Blog (March 12, 2013).

[111] Hazem Kandil, *Soldiers, Spies, and Statesmen: Egypt's Road to Revolt* p. 220.

was one of the main factors that diminished Mubarak's hold on the military. Conversely, in Bahrain, selective (Sunni) recruitment in the military explains in part the military's willingness to repress Shi'ite protesters. The effects of military policies on soldier's loyalty to ruling elites should be considered in future research.

The argument in this article was that societal pressure can lead to regime change only when (1) there are already fractures within the ruling elite and (2) where the most powerful factions within the elite can be swayed to back a regime transition. The ability of opponents to convince ruling elites to support a transition depends on a number of characteristics including the strength of the protests, and the ability of opposition leaders to both remain united and limit their demands for reforms. Future research on regime change/resilience should assess how overt crises can challenge regime stability. While institutional characteristics can help us to understand which social forces are critical to regime survival, institutional analyses do not grasp intra-regime dynamics which can pose a serious challenge to the maintenance of the status quo. Similarly, analysis of civic resistance campaigns often fail to consider how ruling cliques can set in place measures which prevent elite defection by affecting the relative distribution of power among political factions. Only an analysis that takes into account how the mobilization of domestic opponents affects intra-regime rivalries can explain the dynamics of regime resilience.