Soldiers and Societies in Revolt

Military Doctrine in the Arab Spring

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ABSTRACT

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This dissertation explores civil-military relations in democratizing contexts, specifically how the historical relationship between the military and the broader public shapes responses to political crises such as riots and revolutions. I develop a novel theory, rooted in civil-military relations literature from political science and sociology, for how an army's historical interactions with the population and with foreign sponsors create doctrine by shaping organizational culture and practices toward the population. Doctrine, in turn, influences the military's response to a popular uprising. The foundations of military doctrine are historical and include the military's institutional origins, role in national independence, and relationship to the ruling party. Subsequently, doctrinal innovation occurs as a result of interacting with the domestic population and foreign military sponsors. The dissertation features qualitative case studies of Tunisia, Egypt, and Syria during the Arab Spring and a quantitative data analysis of major uprisings worldwide since 1950. Both qualitative and quantitative evidence demonstrate that the nature of military doctrine explains soldiers' behavior during popular uprisings better than alternative arguments based on capacity, patronage, and ethnicity.

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Chapter 1

The Puzzle of Military Responses to Uprisings

In Tunis, then Cairo, and across the Arab world, armored personnel carriers rolled into the central gathering places whose names would fill newspaper headlines in the first months of 2011: the Kasbah, Tahrir Square, Pearl Roundabout. Swarms of black-clad riot police, plainclothes toughs, and armed soldiers staked out positions of authority to face down the exuberant crowds calling for radical change. As the unprecedented popular mobilization gained strength across North Africa and the Middle East, rulers and their security forces were defiant but fearful. During the uprisings, authoritarian regimes looked to their militaries to restore order when anti-regime protests overwhelmed the normal repressive capacity of the state police. Subsequently, divergent military responses were instrumental in creating varied political outcomes across the region: Tunisia's army remained neutral, enabling a nonviolent political transition, while Egypt's forced out the president and eventually seized power itself, and Syria's launched military operations against demonstrators, starting a conflict that devolved into a devastating and still ongoing civil war. The uprisings proved that even if protesters shared similar symbols, slogans, and aspirations, the military's dissimilar responses could lead to either social transformation or human tragedy. Until now, soldiers' decisions in these critical moments have remained a black box to outside observers. When and why do militaries intervene to repress mass uprisings, and under what conditions is revolution possible without violence?

In this dissertation, I investigate the causal underpinnings of military intervention in revolutions through the divergence in the uprisings across the Arab world in 2010–2011. Existing theories for both the outcomes of the Arab Spring generally and the military role in particular offer explanations based on characteristics of the military, such as professionalism, patronage or ethnicity. Instead, I argue that the primary variable in military behavior during revolutions is doctrine: the set of rules and understandings through which military planners conceptualize and prepare for future engagements.[1] Doctrine is shaped by the military's relationships with the general population and with the foreign armies that provide armaments, training and military education. An army's doctrine for domestic intervention provides the guidelines by which soldiers perceive uprisings as either threats or opportunities and governs the nature their response.

This dissertation develops a novel theory rooted in civil-military relations literature from the disciplines of political science and sociology. The theory holds that doctrine first emerges during the formative years of a military's development under colonial rule. In the former territories of the Ottoman Empire, the creation of modern armies was heavily influenced by the interests of European colonizers, and foreign influence continued into the early post-independence period. Later, as domestic political regimes consolidated power, native sons (and occasionally daughters) filled the ranks of the military hierarchy, establishing a new military-society relationship in line with nationalist principles. Over time, the armed forces' emergent doctrines became institutionalized and routinized, calcifying into a stable organizational culture and set of established practices. In the development of military doctrine, the most edifying moments come when an army is tested operationally, whether in foreign combat or domestic intervention. Across the Middle East, the 1970s and 1980s were a time when public approbation for post-colonial regimes was faltering, as economic crisis, social unrest, and the rise of Islamism as a popular political movement shook the foundations of the Arab state. In one country after

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1. My definition mirrors standard definitions (e.g. Zisk 1993, 4) but broadens its scope to encompass military missions other than warfighting, *i.e.* domestic crisis response.

another, mass demonstrations led to bloodshed, as protesters overwhelmed the police and rulers ordered the army to intervene. The varied experiences of domestic intervention and its consequences at this critical juncture established lasting legacies in military organizations, with important implications for the institution's behavior when faced with later mass uprisings.

1.1 The Arab Spring

A wave of protest, popularly known as the "Arab Spring" (Arabic: *al-rabīʿ al-ʿarabī*)[2] began in Tunisia in December 2010. Protests continued to escalate until President Zine el-Abidine ben Ali fled the country on January 14. Due to the strength of Middle Eastern regimes' coercive apparatuses (Bellin 2004, 2012), few previous protests had achieved high levels of mass mobilization, but precedents can be found in smaller, often regional-based protest movements, as well as national strikes, riots, and other mobilizations often classified, somewhat dismissively, as "social unrest" (Le Saout and Rollinde 1999; Chomiak and Entelis 2011; Khatib and Lust 2014). The Arab Spring filled public squares with many first-time protesters, alongside experienced social, religious, and political activists and organizations (Anderson 2011; Larémont 2013; Gerges 2014). The success of this mobilization can be attributed to the development of a negative coalition that "bridged the diverse goals and interests of different groups, thus pitting society as a whole against the regime and its loyalist supporters" (Goldstone 2011, 457). Fueled by international media coverage, notably on the Qatar-based Al-Jazeera satellite television network, anti-regime protests spread to nearly every country in the region, although only some protests escalated to revolutionary proportions. Egypt, Libya, Syria, and Bahrain each experienced dramatic revolutionary scenarios, leading to regime change in the former two countries and brutal crackdowns in the latter. The Arab Spring was unprecedented within the region

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2. For formal Arabic, I follow the style guidelines of the International Journal of Middle East Studies (IJMES). Colloquial Arabic phrases are transliterated according to local convention. Personal and place names use accepted English or French spellings where available.

in terms of spontaneous, cross-class, nationwide anti-regime protests; in the previous three decades, only the Iranian Revolution of 1979 and Algeria's "Black October" riots of 1988 saw comparable mobilization. This makes these uprisings a particularly good test for how militaries act under particularly tough circumstances.

A few months after the uprisings began, Gregory Gause (2011) posed the question many were asking: Why did Middle East studies miss the Arab Spring? More specifically, why did observers fail to predict the collapse of the alliance between ruling autocrats and the military apparatuses supporting them? By 1980, exceptionally stable authoritarian regimes were entrenched across the Middle East and North Africa, and the study of the military in politics in the region began to suffer neglect (Kamrava 2000; Barak and David 2010). Researchers' lack of access to Arab national security circles and the rarity of coups d'état and domestic military interventions in the region reinforced this inattention. Moreover, once consolidated, Arab regimes employed large and mostly effective police and intelligence services to handle internal and regime security, including the repression of political opposition and suppression of public protests. As a result, scholars of the period focused on the everyday apparatuses of authoritarian rule, especially electoral institutions (Lust-Okar 2005; Blaydes 2010; Masoud 2014), and occasionally the visible elements of police and intelligence services responsible for routine repression (Wedeen 1999). Thus, despite the previously dominant role of the military in historical Arab politics, contemporary scholars of the Middle East politics focused on other political actors in their work on authoritarian stability and breakdown. Suddenly, in 2011, the "defection" of several armies away from long-ruling presidents created an epochal shift in Arab politics, rekindling an urgent interest in the region's civil-military relations.

As protests continued through the spring of 2011, it became increasingly evident that the response of each country's military to the uprising would have a defining effect on the political success or failure of the revolutionary moment (Bellin 2012; Lutterbeck 2013; Brownlee *et al.* 2014). Where national armies did not engage in repressing the

protests (Egypt and Tunisia), old political leaders were swept from power. But where national armies brought to bear their full military might against civilians (Bahrain and Syria), existing regimes remained in power. Even where the military split apart (Libya and Yemen), and mutinous troops joined the ranks of armed rebellion, military repression kept leaders in power until foreign intervention tipped the balance.[3] This was certainly not the first time that the region's military forces played a decisive political role. Following the decolonization of the Middle East after World War II, armies rapidly established prominence in new authoritarian political systems (Richards and Waterbury 2008, chap. 13). Coups d'état, a classic indicator of military involvement in politics, were common in the region through the 1970s, after which they became less frequent. However, the reduced incidence of coups does not mean that the role of the military in Arab politics had diminished. After 1980, authoritarian leaders in the region remained just as likely to have their rule ended by military coup as before (Albrecht 2015b). On the eve of the Arab Spring, military forces continued to play a major role in regional politics. Rather than seizing power directly, the region's most politically powerful militaries "ruled without governing," using their influence to coerce civilian governments (Cook 2007). Most Arab leaders had a military background: of the six countries most affected by the uprisings, five were led by former career military officers.[4]

The Arab Spring cases demonstrate how influential the armed forces are during popular uprisings. They also demonstrate how diverse and seemingly unpredictable these military responses can be. Table 1.1 presents the largest sustained anti-regime uprisings in the Middle East and North Africa in 2010–11. In all six cases, the armed forces intervened on the ground as part of the government response to popular protests. In most cases, the

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3. Libya's Muammar Gaddafi lost power only through external military intervention by NATO, which overwhelmed the government's remaining military forces. Yemen's Ali Abdullah Saleh relied on military repression to survive one year in office after protests began. He was forced out under Saudi pressure while receiving medical treatment in the United States.

4. These were Bahrain, Egypt, Libya, Tunisia and Yemen. The exception, Syria, was led by Bashar al-Asad, was training as an ophthalmologist when his elder brother, Basil, died suddenly in 2004. He then served six years as a military officer before taking power.

Table 1.1: Large-Scale Arab Spring Uprisings, 2010–11

Country	Leader	Military Violence*	Political Outcome
Tunisia	Zine el-Abidine Ben Ali	None	Regime change
Egypt	Hosni Mubarak	Low	Regime change
Yemen	Ali Abdullah Saleh	Extreme	Executive change
Bahrain	Hamad bin Isa Al Khalifa	Extreme	Government victory
Libya	Muammar Gaddafi	Extreme	Regime change
Syria	Bashar al-Asad	Extreme	Civil war

* Original data. Collection procedure detailed in Chapter 6.

military used large-scale violence against civilians. Nonviolent political transitions were possible only where soldiers limited their use of force.

1.2 The Military's Critical Role in Revolution

I define popular uprisings as sustained, broad-based, primarily nonviolent protest movements demanding regime change. My definition is similar to Beissinger's (2013, 574n1) concept of urban civic revolts, which involve "the rapid concentration of protesters in urban spaces and the articulation of demands for political and civil freedoms and/or free-and-fair elections." While mass mobilization is notoriously difficult to predict, even the most rapid and unexpected uprisings have antecedents. The coalitions of protesters and social groups that come together to push authoritarian leaders from power are not spontaneous creations of the revolutionary Zeitgeist, but rather constellations of social groups united by common interests and aspirations.[5] Mass mobilization is difficult to predict because, in an authoritarian context, most individuals will refrain from any form of protest – and even express a false preference for the regime – unless and until they believe regime

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5. For example, Laryssa Chomiak (2014, 23) demonstrates that the "creation myth" of the Arab Spring – that the immolation of a Tunisian street vendor sparked not only that country's revolution but the entire wave of uprisings across the region – holds little explanatory power. In reality, the uprising "emerged from seemingly scattered activism in pre-revolutionary Tunisia and certain moments of resistance under dictatorship that were closely interconnected."

change is imminent; however, once a critical mass is reached, mobilization can escalate rapidly and sweep regimes from power (Granovetter 1978; Kuran 1991). In focusing on military behavior, I do not intend to discount the agency of the opposition movement itself, as illuminated by scholars of contentious politics and revolution (Beissinger 1998; Tilly and Tarrow 2006); protest movements can sometimes coordinate to act strategically, and it would be a mistake to think of them as mindless mobs (Nepstad 2011).

Because the military generally has the physical capacity to violently disperse demonstrations, the military often becomes a *de facto* arbiter between protesters and the regime. For would-be rebels, the brutality of modern warfare and the low odds of success in a protracted civil war raise the attractiveness of nonviolent methods of resistance. When citizens opt for nonviolent protest, repression becomes only one of several less-costly tools regimes may use to counter their demands, along with concessions and even ignoring (Bishara 2015). For political leaders, countering with physical repression relies on the cooperation of the security forces. In most cases, the police are up to the task of basic repression, dispersing crowds and restoring calm. But if protests escalate beyond the repressive capacity of police and other internal security forces, leaders must choose whether to resort to the most severe form of physical repression: military force against unarmed citizens. In these cases, the armed forces are the state's last resort to halt protesters. Tilly (1993, 241) argues that a revolutionary outcome is marked by a loss of the monopoly of force, which results when the regime or the military is unwilling to use (sufficient) force against protesters. In this way, the military determined the success or failure of the great European revolutions:

> the organization of military force [has] mediated effectively between revolutionary situations and revolutionary outcomes: challengers to existing rulers who actually lack the capacity to seize power often produced revolutionary situations... but no one seized state power without gaining effective control over military force.

Likewise, Brinton (1938) documents this key moment of defection in his comparison of

the English, American, French, and Russian revolutions. He argues that in any revolution, there is at least one moment in which constituted authority is challenged and the authority responds with the force of its police or military. Brinton concludes that the regime's continued existence depends on success during this moment: "no government has ever fallen before revolutionists until it has lost control over its armed forces or lost the ability to use them effectively," and "conversely that no revolutionists have ever succeeded until they have got a predominance of effective armed force on their side" (111). Military force is usually effective against civilians: the military firepower available to most states today can disperse even the largest mass mobilization, if the consequences in civilian casualties are deemed acceptable (Chorley 1943; Barany 2016b). Furthermore, the comparative politics literature provides empirical evidence of the military serving as a gatekeeper to regime change, especially in cases of popular revolution (Stepan 1988; Bellin 2004; Svolik 2012). In their study of nonviolent protest movements, Stephan and Chenoweth (2008) find that "People Power" revolutions are 46 times more likely to result in regime change when the military defects from the government. Ultimately, Barany (2012) concludes, no process of political liberalization can go forward without the support, or at least tolerance of the armed forces.

This central role of the military in revolution has long been observed, but not well explained. Most existing research frames the question in terms of *defection* and points to various factors believed to influence the military's loyalty to the political regime. As Lee (2015) argues, the critical question for military officers is whether to "defect or defend." Loyalty is an appealing explanation because it fits cleanly into a rational choice, political economy framework. Whether loyalty stems from officers' values (professionalism), material interests (patronage) or identity ties (ethnicity), it is assumed that soldiers will refrain from challenging the political regime, and will even fight to defend it, as long as they remain faithful to its leader. In this dissertation, I argue that this scholarly focus on loyalty is misplaced. The loyalty paradigm assumes that the armies most likely to

carry out a coup d'état are also the most likely to defect from the regime during a popular uprising. In fact, armies with no history of coup-plotting have nevertheless "defected" from regimes facing popular revolts. Despite its potential political influence, the military is not a primarily political actor in most countries. Its central mission, national defense, occupies most of soldiers' day-to-day energies. For soldiers, a popular uprising represents exceptional circumstances, not business-as-usual, and their responses to events can have exceptional, long-term consequences.

Military responses to revolution can encompass an array of behaviors besides mass defection or loyal defense of the regime. In a crisis, the military might also split into rival factions (Albrecht and Ohl 2016), remain quartered in their barracks (Pion-Berlin and Trinkunas 2010), or attempt a coup d'etat (Casper and Tyson 2014). As such, officers' loyalty to the political leadership is insufficient to explain the wide variety of roles they play in revolution. Many discussions of the Arab Spring have framed the military response as a binary: defend the regime or support the revolution. However, when soldiers confronted the Arab Spring, they responded not only with loyalty or desertion, but with a variety of strategies to manage and restore public order. The Egyptian armed forces took an active role in the crisis from the beginning, but with mixed intentions: first, they used force to quell protests, but later they delivered an ultimatum for Mubarak to resign. In Tunisia, the army's restraint toward protesters allowed the revolution to succeed, regardless of officers' political preferences. Meanwhile, mass defections in Syria were not enough to topple the regime, because the remaining forces applied warfighting tactics to kill and punish civilian demonstrators. In the next chapter, I offer a theory of military doctrine to explain this diversity of responses to popular uprisings, illuminating the varied roles played by soldiers in the Arab Spring.

1.3 Existing Explanations

Observing the critical role of the military in the success or failure of the Arab uprisings, researchers have produced a growing body of work seeking to explain these responses (Albrecht and Bishara 2011; Barany 2011; Lutterbeck 2013; Nepstad 2013; Taylor 2014; Bou Nassif 2015a; Albrecht and Ohl 2016). In this section, I survey the theoretical literature to identify the most prominent competing arguments. While the literature on the subject is large and growing, most scholars have repeated the same few explanations, which are based on capacity, professionalism, patronage, or ethnicity. However, I argue below that they do not offer a convincing explanation of military responses to revolution.

A Word on Coup-Proofing   Since Quinlivan (1999) applied the label "coup-proofing" to Middle Eastern politics, these strategies have been a popular explanatory variable in studies of military behavior. Coup-proofing is an intentional effort by a political leader to increase military loyalty through the use of patronage or ethnic linkages. As the term suggests, coup-proofing is designed to discourage coups d'état, not to ensure loyalty during mass challenges. Numerous studies have pointed to this phenomenon to explain the diverse outcomes of the Arab Spring (Gaub 2013; Louër 2013; Makara 2013; Albrecht 2015a; Bou Nassif 2015a). Coup-proofing is not a single variable, but rather a catchall for the multifaceted efforts of civilian leaders to control the military. In the discussion below, I disaggregate coup-proofing strategies based on patronage (i.e. material interests) or ethnicity and consider each as an alternative explanation in its own right. A third coup-proofing strategy is institutional counterbalancing, which proliferates rival organizations within the coercive apparatus to make successful coup plotting more difficult (Quinlivan 1999; Belkin and Schofer 2005; Böhmelt and Pilster 2015; De Bruin 2017). In this formulation, counterbalancing matters because it reduces patronage to the military, or creates a situation of relative deprivation vis-à-vis the police. While I find the rivalry explanation unconvincing, I address it below along with other patronage arguments.

Capacity

A first set of explanations focuses on capacity, or the military's ability to repress the uprising by force, which depends on the size of the protests, the size and ability of the armed forces, and foreign intervention. Because internal security forces almost always respond to protests *before* the military, the question at hand pertains to the subset of cases where demonstrations surpass the repressive capacity of the regular police and necessitate military intervention.[6] In responding to an uprising, the military's first consideration must be its ability to subdue protesters by force. Officers rightly worry that the application of insufficient force may generate a backlash of increased popular mobilization (Koopmans 1997; Francisco 2004; Carey 2006). In theory, the military should refrain from violence if it is too small, poorly trained, or ill-equipped to confidently confront demonstrators. However, no modern army is weak enough to be incapacitated by an unarmed crowd (Chorley 1943, 243). It is this basic capacity to repress which makes the military a perennial gatekeeper to revolution (Barany 2016b, 4-5).

Despite the brute strength of the armed forces, some have argued that raw capability can be undermined by the absence of force cohesion. In this view, disunity or factionalism within the military creates a lack of capacity to respond to uprisings, regardless of senior officers' will to repress. If a military faction breaks away to stage a coup d'état, or junior commanders (*i.e.* those tasked with carrying out the order to repress) refuse to obey orders, military repression can fail (Lee 2015). Cohesion may fail because of ethnic stacking (McLauchlin 2010), generational gaps within the officer corps (Bou Nassif 2015a) or social cohesion (Lehrke 2014). If cohesion is too low, the military will be unable to act against protesters, resulting in effective military neutrality. Accordingly, these scholars argue that less cohesive militaries will be less likely to use violence against protesters. Ultimately, these theories of cohesion rest fundamentally on soldiers' loyalty

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6. In other words, it is beyond the scope of this dissertation to investigate whether larger or more highly skilled police and intelligence apparatuses are able to prevent protests from reaching a critical mass.

to the regime (Albrecht and Ohl 2016). However, even severely divided armies are often capable of dispersing unarmed protesters.[7] These sources of force cohesion help explain why armies have more or fewer defections while confronting a popular uprising, but not why the military organization as a whole responds with violence or restraint.

Regardless of the military's strength and intentions, foreign intervention can be decisive either for or against the regime, but foreign powers usually wait for events to develop in one direction or another before intervening directly. McKoy and Miller (2012) argue that mere signals of support or disapproval from a foreign patron can determine state responses to uprisings, even claiming that the Egyptian revolution strongly supports their theory (923). But the empirical record shows military violence against protesters often occurs despite foreign condemnation and even threats of intervention. For example, the Libyan army employed force against protesters despite an impending international military intervention, which came in the form of a NATO air campaign that annihilated the Libyan armed forces. Actual military intervention by a stronger foreign power can of course determine the outcome of a revolution, but it does not explain the prior military response.

Professionalism

A second prominent explanatory variable for military responses is the professionalism of military officers. Professionalism is drawn from traditional civil-military relations theory and has been widely embraced despite suffering from conceptual problems that undermine its explanatory power. A substantial majority of the contemporary civil-military relations literature identifies professionalism as a primary cultural factor which explains military behavior in various security and political contexts (Moskos 1976). Professionalism is generally believed to improve combat performance in war (Biddle and Long 2004; Brooks and Stanley 2007; Talmadge 2015; Narang and Talmadge 2017). However, the

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7. For example, the armed forces in Syria, Libya, and Yemen saw large-scale defections during the Arab Spring, but still suppressed protests with violence.

evidence on whether professionalism deters or encourages political intervention is mixed. Among the most influential arguments is the claim that military professionalism, or the inculcation of professional values, encourages depoliticization and submission to civilian control (Huntington 1957; Janowitz 1964; Feaver 1999; Barany 2012). In the Arab Spring, scholars have claimed that professionalism either increased or decreased the likelihood of defection. For those who focus on the military's institutionalization, professionalism is associated with pro-revolutionary responses (Lutterbeck 2013; Bellin 2012); but for others, professionalism instead implies submission to civilian control (Gause 2011; Barany 2011).

Classical civil-military relations theory focused on the question of military obedience to the political leadership, and offered primarily ideological rationales for military officers to obey their civilian leaders. Huntington's (1957) *The Soldier and the State* is the best-known formulation of the hypothesis that professionalization, or the inculcation of professional values in the officer class, is the ideal means of establishing military respect for civilian authority. He argues that an officer corps, "to the extent that it is shaped by functional rather than societal imperatives," will adhere to a common worldview (*Weltanschauung*) and professional ethic (61–62). Universal military values, attitudes, and perspectives "inhere in the performance of the professional military function and... are deducible from the nature of that function" (61). Janowitz's (1964) own classic text of civil-military relations theory challenges Huntington's proposed division of labor between military and civilian elites, but ultimately echoes the belief that civilian control is a question of professionalism.

Classic theory proposes a dichotomy between a professional army, in which soldiers are bureaucratic agents of the political regime, and a praetorian army, which operates as an independent political power (Perlmutter and Bennett 1980, 3-4). Professional armies are prevalent in the developed world, and praetorian ones in developing countries. The relationship between professionalism and apoliticism is causal, classical theorists argue, so military interventionism in developing countries can be reduced by

professionalizing the armed forces. However, classical theories were developed in the context of consolidated Western democracies, where citizens and soldiers share a near-universal belief that the duly-elected civilian government is a legitimate representative of the people, which in turn is the ultimate source of the authority to rule. In authoritarian systems, or in weak democracies, the relationship between civilian authority and popular legitimacy – critical to a classical conception of military professionalism – breaks down.

Countering the view of professionalism as a recipe for civil-military harmony, Finer (1962, 25) argues that, instead of assuring apoliticism, military professionalism "in fact often thrusts the military into collision with the civil authorities." Echoing Finer, Stepan (1973, chap. 2) argues that professionalism encourages political interventionism when state interests, as perceived and defined by the officer corps, are threatened.[8] Similarly, Böhmelt *et al.* (2018) find that, because it strengthens the cohesiveness of the officer corps, professionalism also increases the risk of coups d'état. In sum, professionalism alone does not predict the military's political stance. Worse still, professionalism has suffered conceptual stretching,[9] becoming a catchall for normatively preferred attributes in any given context, whether abstention from coups, support for democracy, or combat effectiveness. To clarify the concept, I distinguish two distinct uses of the term professionalism, which capture separate characteristics: capability and values. Military analysts use the term professionalism quite differently from most social scientists. The military itself views professionalism as a measure of capability and rigorous training, what we might call *technical* professionalism. Political scientists, however, are chiefly concerned with soldiers' embrace of professional *values*, most critically the supremacy of civilian authority.

Following the assertions of Huntington and Janowitz, many scholars of civil-military

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8. Similarly, Kamrava (2000) argues that in the Middle East, professionalization tends to increase the military's corporate identity and institutional autonomy, thereby increasing its politicization.

9. Sartori (1970, 1035-36) coined the term as follows: "In order to obtain a world-wide applicability the extension of our concepts has been broadened by obfuscating their connotation…. It appears that we can cover more—in travelling terms—only by saying less, and by saying less in a far less precise manner." See also Collier and Mahon (1993).

relations, have assumed a tight link between technical and political professionalism without exploring how these dimensions may vary independently from one another. I argue that these dimensions are largely independent factors, with different effects on military responses to uprisings. Counter to Huntington's predictions, professionalization does not automatically instill the values of civilian supremacy and political non-intervention. In fact, the opposite relationship may hold; a recent study finds that enhancing technical professionalism actually increases the likelihood of military-led coups d'état, even when they are trained by a democratic state, because increased capabilities make it easier to overthrow the government (Savage and Caverley 2017). In fact, the two factors operate independently: advanced technical training and modern organization improve *capacity*, while political values and institutionalization influence *will*. Therefore, I exclude technical professionalism as an explanatory variable more liked to capacity and focus instead on values.

Although professionalism, or professional values, is the master variable of classical civil-military relations theory, it has overstretched its conceptual boundaries and become a placeholder for a wide array of desired liberal values, as well as military competence, efficacy, and efficiency. In this application, it is often non-falsifiable. For example, a large body of work addresses the military's willingness to cede power to civilians during a political transition to democracy. Stepan (1971, 1988) and others recognized long ago that establishing civilian control over the armed forces was a necessary component of democratic consolidation. Geddes' (1999) well-known contribution to the democratization literature frames the military as a central actor in authoritarian breakdown. By the late 1990s and 2000s, scholarship on civil-military relations had come to focus almost exclusively on the problem of democratic transitions (Diamond and Plattner 1996; Cottey *et al.* 2002; Bland 2001; Croissant *et al.* 2010; Bruneau and Matei 2008; Barany 2012). Much of this literature focuses on the inculcation of liberal values, which are assumed to be

inherent to military professionalism.[10] Yet with its narrow focus on civilian control, this literature contributes little to our understanding of military responses to crises. When an autocrat faces a popular uprising, which is the more professional military response: to interfere in politics by supporting the revolution or to submit to civilian control by repressing demonstrators? A universal concept of professionalism cannot resolve this contradiction.

Patronage

A third set of explanations rests on patronage. The fundamental problem of civil-military relations has often been framed as a principal-agent or moral hazard problem, and both political scientists and economists have produced countless formal models of the strategic interaction between a ruler and his military (Hurwicz 2008; Besley and Robinson 2010; Svolik 2013; Casper and Tyson 2014; Leon 2014; McMahon and Slantchev 2015; Amegashie 2015). In these models, the military considers its collective political and economic interests before deciding whether to strategically support or overthrow the political regime. In this constant strategic game, the regime, ever fearful of a coup d'état, tries to buy the loyalty of the armed forces by satisfying its material (economic and political) interests. Various forms of military intervention in politics, from policy pressure to coups d'état, result when the regime fails to adequately compensate the military for its continued support.[11] Generally, these theories do not distinguish between plotting a coup d'état during a period of normal politics and abandoning a regime besieged by mass protests. Instead, both are termed "military intervention in politics." In this way, patronage arguments conflate political interventions *led by* the military, on the one hand, and political crises to which

10. In the broader civil-military relations literature, professionalism has also been related to democratization. Because civilian control is considered a "*sine qua non* for democratic consolidation" (Croissant *et al.* 2010, 960), some assume that increasing professionalism will *cause* democratization, committing a *cum hoc ergo propter hoc* fallacy. In fact, military professionalism has also been used to sustain imperialism and authoritarianism (Stepan 1988; Luckham 1994; Kamrava 2000).

11. The simplest, and perhaps simplistic, version of this model is Besley and Robinson (2010). More complex models provide better intuition about the circumstances under which this bargaining breaks down, resulting in military intervention (e.g. Svolik, 2013; McMahon and Slantchev, 2015).

the military must *react*, on the other. Anti-regime public opinion and mass mobilization, when included as variables, are seen to strengthen the military's bargaining position vis-à-vis the regime.[12]

On the political side, revolution can reduce the military's status and influence under a new government, particularly if officers are closely associated with the previous regime. Many political scientists assume that the military desires both institutional autonomy and influence over policy, and argue that defection occurs when the political benefit of continued loyalty to a civilian regime is lower than the expected reward from seizing power directly (Geddes 1999; Svolik 2012). On the economic side, many focus on the payoffs a regime provides to buy the military's loyalty. Accordingly, rentier states (e.g. where government revenues derive from oil wealth, not domestic production) should more easily purchase support, while regimes facing severe economic crises may be unable to maintain these payouts (Haggard and Kaufman 1995; Smith 2004; Bellin 2004).

A subset of the patronage theory argues that the military's institutional autonomy determines the cost of regime change to the military organization. The military's organization is patrimonial if it depends on personal rather than formal networks and hierarchies. In this view, a patrimonial military will resist revolution in order to protect the privileges, status, and material benefits conferred by their ties to the regime. Conversely, well institutionalized armies are less averse to regime change because they will not be "ruined by reform" (Bellin 2004, 2012; see also Stepan 1988). Institutionalization increases the organizations autonomy from the regime, improving the odds that soldiers will abandon the dictator during a revolution, confident in their ability to defend the military's corporate interests under a new regime. Collectively, this research suggests that institutional autonomy leads military officers to value internal cohesion over other political and economic interests, but neither theory explains how the military develops institutional autonomy *ex ante*. Since the military often survives intact after civilian

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12. Alternatively, Casper and Tyson (2014) argue that protests are merely an informational mechanism, which facilitates elite coordination.

regime change, while other institutions can be changed or eliminated, structural arguments cannot predict what the revolution's impact will be on the military.

In a rational choice framework, the behavior of the military is commonly assumed to follow directly from the orders of its highest commanders. Because economic payoffs and political clout accrue disproportionately to the upper echelons of the military hierarchy, most scholars focus narrowly on the loyalty of the most senior military officers (Barany 2016b). However, some recent scholarship focuses on the loyalty of junior officers, rather than the top brass, pointing to mutinies by enlisted soldiers (Albrecht and Ohl 2016) or divisions between junior and senior officers (Bou Nassif 2014). Even the wealthiest states cannot afford to buy the loyalty of an entire army, and a lack of support or loyalty from junior officers can force senior officers to back down from supporting the regime (Bou Nassif 2013, 2015a).

Ethnicity

A final variable, ethnicity, is the focus of a significant school of thought, which treats on the ethnic composition of the armed forces relative to society at large as a primary causal variable (Enloe 1977; McLauchlin 2010). Scholars have argued that ethnicity determines military behavior in both war (Posen 1993; Castillo 2014) and revolution (Makara 2013; Lehrke 2014; Bou Nassif 2015a). According to this school, armies are less prone to violent repression when their own ethnic or ideological composition mirrors that of society at large, and more violent when "ethnic stacking" fills the upper echelons of the military hierarchy with "co-ethnics" of the embattled leader (Lutterbeck 2013). With its violent response to protesters, the Syrian Armed Forces have become a paradigmatic example of the power of ethnicity to determine military behavior.[13] However, a closer look at the history of the Syrian military reveals inconsistencies in this neat, monocausal explanation. My case study of Syrian political-military development (chapter 5) finds that the *politicization*

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13. For example, Barany (2016b, 152) writes of Syria, "sectarian identity was the critical factor affecting the military leadership's decision to stand firmly behind Assad's Ba'ath Party dictatorship and to inflict massive violence in its defense."

of ethnic bias in the military, not the ethnic *composition* of the military relative to society, shaped the military's doctrine and response to the 2011 protests. More broadly, ethnicity primarily affects military cohesion, rather than political loyalty or operating procedures (Albrecht and Ohl 2016). Because cohesion is not a direct cause of military responses, the "direct" effect of ethnicity is small. In sum, the ethnic composition of the armed forces relative to that of society at large does not reliably predict the military response to uprisings. On the other hand, politicized ethnicity sometimes features prominently in a military's doctrine, which in turn shapes soldiers' interactions with the population. Therefore, I do not deny that ethnicity is not a critical factor in some cases, but I argue instead that existing theory fails to explain the conditions under which ethnicity will play a role in the military response.

1.4 A New Theory: Military Doctrine

This section introduces an alternative theory, which holds that *military doctrine* is the main determinant of soldiers' responses to domestic crises. Doctrine provides a roadmap of the military's political and strategic orientation, and it can be more precisely defined and measured than the broad patterns of civil-military relations identified in previous work. In my attention to military doctrine, I diverge from the political science literature's focus on loyalty and defection. Instead, my theoretical framework is based on organizational learning, the process of development and change in an organization's behavioral modes and cultural values (Levitt and March 1988; Huber 1991). In addition to organization theory, I draw from the interdisciplinary fields of civil-military relations and security studies, with their emphasis on the processes of military decision making. Even in moments of crisis, officers typically act as they have been prepared to act (Allison and Zelikow 1999). When we assess military performance on the battlefield, we think of soldiers as hamstrung by doctrine and culture. But when domestic politics are involved, we assume a rational choice calculus. To reconcile these contradictory views of military

behavior, I rely on theories of organizational culture and military innovation.

In the developing world, doctrine began to take shape when a modern military was first established, during the colonial or early independence era. Based on historical evidence from the Middle East and North Africa, I argue that colonial institutions provided the basis for early military doctrine, which also responded to defining events like national independence and consolidation of the post-colonial political order. I also identify two critical factors that can shift the development trajectory of military doctrine: military-society relations and foreign influence. First, the military's social and strategic interactions with the population generate organizational culture and practices which, once institutionalized, influence the military's response to later uprisings. Doctrine does not emerge spontaneously, but rather is developed historically through multiple interactions. In addition, foreign powers shape the organization, ideas, and practices of armies in the developing world. Foreign influences often date to the military's creation during the colonial era, and they continue throughout the twentieth century in the form of military training and aid relationships. In this way, wealthier and more powerful states, especially the United States and the Soviet Union, had a significant effect on the military doctrine that developed in authoritarian regimes in the postcolonial era.

When popular uprisings surpass the repressive capacity of the internal security forces, the military often becomes the final authority capable of restoring public order (Barany 2016b, 4-5). In this situation, soldiers face a difficult choice whether to employ violence to disperse and control protesters (McLauchlin 2010; Pion-Berlin *et al.* 2014; Albrecht and Ohl 2016). The use of violence by the military is most likely when its domestic security doctrine frames citizens as enemies of the state and prescribes combat in the state's defense. In many cases, military violence is short-lived because military force is quickly decisive against unarmed protesters. Many military officers are either conservative by nature or socialized to be more conservative through their indoctrination into the military (Caforio 2018, 291). As a result, officers may favor the stability of the

status quo over the uncertainty of political change. In authoritarian regimes, senior military leaders are typically appointed by the president on the basis of political loyalty. At the same time, military officers resent performing functions which conflict with their understanding of "proper" military missions and roles, including police functions like crowd control and political repression (Barany 2016b, 32). While loyalty is a universal military value, soldiers might be trained to serve the nation or party, rather than the ruler himself. Therefore, political loyalty is not sufficient to explain military responses globally.

The civil-military relations literature reminds us that the military, more so than other political actors, is influenced by cultural norms and codes of conduct specific to the military profession and organization. Soldiers' motivations for service vary, ranging from impoverished youth seeking a stable income to ethnic minorities striving for recognition as citizens (Krebs 2006). Moreover, soldiers worldwide are subjected to strict control over their personal lives and expression, and indoctrinated into the organization's doctrine during countless hours of training and education throughout their careers. Therefore, military behavior cannot be fully explained by a rational decision making process.

In sum, adversarial relationships between state security forces and the population develop over decades, not days, and the preexisting relationship between these two groups should condition each side's behavior during an uprising. On one side, public opinion concerning the army's trustworthiness and complicity in regime abuses influences whether protesters view the army as an adversary (*i.e.* defender of the *status quo* regime against which they are protesting) or a potential ally in the fight for change. On the other side, soldiers adhere to previously established tactics and rules of engagement when confronting a mobilized public. Their decision making and individual behaviors are guided by the organization's doctrine, which has developed from the historical military-society relationship and been shaped by foreign influences as well. The goal of the following chapters is to understand how military doctrine shapes soldiers' behavior when a mass uprising threatens to topple an authoritarian leader, leaving the armed forces as the

regime's last line of defense.

1.5 Research Design and Case Selection

This dissertation employs a comparative case study methodology designed to trace the causal processes of popular revolt and military response to develop new theoretical insights into the strategic dynamics of regime overthrow through popular uprising. Middle Eastern militaries and political regimes have long been studied as a distinct universe of cases, owing to shared political, linguistic and religious bonds (Hurewitz 1969; Cook 2005). In particular, the region is notable for its relative absence of democracy, which has been attributed to the strength, coherence, and effectiveness of Middle Eastern states' coercive apparatuses (Bellin 2004). At the same time, coercive apparatuses in the region are notable for their hybrid nature: police forces are militarized while military forces sometimes perform internal policing roles (Sayigh 2011). Despite the importance of the military to Middle Eastern politics, studies of the military in the Arab Spring have been "exercises in curve-fitting, divining officers' intentions from their actions" (Brownlee *et al.* 2014, 38). The varied outcomes of the 2011 uprisings represent a novel opportunity to compare states with comparable political histories but divergent outcomes. As discussed above in Section 1.1, the largest uprisings occurred in Tunisia, Egypt, Yemen, Bahrain, Libya, and Syria. In each case, a popular uprising threatened regime survival, and in most cases the military responded by defending the regime, leading to either government victory or a violent escalation into civil war. In three cases (Tunisia, Egypt, and Yemen), the military's response led to the replacement of a long-ruling authoritarian president.[14] Along with a diversity of outcomes, the cases also exhibit the variety of causal mechanisms influencing military decision-making during revolutions.

My selection of a primarily qualitative research design is motivated by two factors. First, my initial review of the literature in the areas of civil-military relations, coups

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14. Ali Abdullah Saleh, who had served as president (first of North Yemen, then of unified Yemen) since 1978, survived in office for more than a year after protests began.

d'état, military loyalty and defection, and military responses to revolution uncovered a serious lack of theoretical innovation. Most studies available were case studies of one or a few cases of military response, but the theoretical basis for their claims relied on a small number of sweeping generalizations "discovered" in the 1960s. I noted a troubling tendency to repeat the same claims of previous studies despite a lack of original evidence, and to list a kitchen sink of explanatory variables without any means of testing whether they had any causal effect on the outcome. As a result, I embarked on a single deep-dive, theory-building case study (Tunisia) rather than surveying multiple cases for high-level generalizations, as previous scholars had done. Second, I realized that most civil-military relations studies do not involve any meaningful fieldwork. This is understandable, due to the extreme difficulty of accessing data sources, interview subjects, and official documents in heavily securitized authoritarian context. But the upshot is that very few primary sources ends up providing all of the data for countless secondary studies. The overreliance on a limited number of sources has also led to basic factual errors: as I began learning about the Tunisian military's response to the 14 January Revolution, I noticed major inconsistencies between the narratives offered in published research, which relied on Western media sources, and those found in primary documents, original interviews and the local media. For example, many scholars' explanations of events depend crucially on whether Ben Ali ordered the army to shoot protesters or not, but no scholarly consensus existed on whether the event had ever taken place.[15] In fact, it had not! My qualitative fieldwork provided the opportunity to collect new and better data on the Tunisian armed forces and the major events of its historical evolution.

This dissertation relies on a case study methodology (Gerring 2004; George and Bennett 2005; Van Evera 1997; Gerring 2007; Bennett and Elman 2006). My qualitative research design relies on the case of Tunisia, where the Arab Spring's least violent and most successful regime transition took place, for inductive theory generation. Tunisia is an

15. See chap. 56, n. 4.

excellent theory-building case because it witnessed the most successful revolution, with the lowest level of violence, of any Arab Spring country. Tunisia offers an ideal setting for process tracing because the independent and dependent variable values are strongly positive.[16] In other words, it is the exemplar of the phenomenon under study and is therefore the best case in which to identify the causal mechanisms at work (Mahoney and Goertz 2006). Tunisia also exhibits historical, within-case variation in military responses. The military used violence against protesters in 1978 and 1984, before shifting its doctrine away from domestic intervention. A comparison of these incidents provides additional insight into the causal process. I also employ process tracing within each of the case studies. The process tracing method identifies the causal chain and mechanisms which connect explanatory (independent) variables to outcome (dependent) variables (Bennett and Elman 2006; Beach and Pedersen 2013). Causal inference using this method does not rely on comparisons across cases, but on identifying the effect of the causal mechanism within a single case.

Interview research was essential to the main case study because Tunisia's military had rarely been studied prior to the Arab Spring, and hardly any information was publicly available from abroad. During five months of fieldwork based in Tunis, Tunisia, between 2014 and 2017, I conducted dozens of semi-structured interviews with military and political elites, as well as collecting primary and secondary documentary evidence to support my case narratives. Interviews are also an important source of data in politically sensitive areas, like military intervention in politics, where developing trust with a network of interview subjects is the best way to gain access to further interviewees (Rathbun 2008; Mosley 2013).

After developing the theory through the case study of Tunisia, I conduct two comparative case studies from the region of Egypt and Syria, where similar uprisings led to different outcomes. The pre-2011 regimes in Tunisia, Egypt, and Syria bore a striking

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16. This accords with Van Evera's (1997) suggestion to "select cases with extreme high or low values on the [dependent variable] and explore them for phenomena associated with it."

resemblance: all three were led by civilian presidents-for-life, with military training, who centralized decision making, employed their hegemonic ruling parties to distribute privileges rather than generate policy, held power through pervasive police surveillance and repression of dissent. Moreover, political scientists usually classified the three countries in the same regime type category, whether "sultanistic" (Chehabi and Linz 1998; Barany 2011), "neopatrimonial" (Brownlee 2002), or "mukhabarat" regimes (Kamrava 2000).[17] Although the short-term outcomes of the Tunisian and Egyptian uprisings were superficially the same (i.e. the fall of the regime), a closer look reveals significant differences in the role played by the two armies. (These differences, in turn, help explain why Tunisia's transition stayed on track while Egypt reverted to military rule.) As in Tunisia, I first trace the development of relevant military doctrine prior to 2011, then assess the effect of this doctrine on the military response in each case. Compared with Tunisia, there is a wealth of secondary materials available on the armed forces of Egypt and Syria, where the military has played a far more prominent role in politics in the post-colonial era. One goal of the study is to address the conceptual slippage endemic in studies of civil-military relations and military professionalism (Collier and Mahon 1993). By studying two cases with similar values of the dependent variable (military response), I am able to identify the variation that does exist between these cases in order to refine the variable itself (Mill's [1843] method of agreement). I next include the dissimilar case of Syria to avoid the pitfall of "selecting on the dependent variable" (Geddes 1990). As with the Tunisia case, I also take advantage of within-case variation in military responses to further test my hypotheses. The Egypt and Syria cases are also particularly informative because they are prominent examples of the use of patronage and ethnicity, respectively, to establish

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17. Geddes *et al.* (2014b) code Tunisia as a "party-based" regime, but Egypt and Syria as "party–personal–military" (see Table 1.1). Whether the personalism of Ben Ali matched the level of Mubarak or al-Asad may be debated, but all three regimes were deeply associated with the individual president-for-life. For example, protesters called for Mubarak's ouster, not the abolition of the RCD (although both resulted from the revolution). In any case, strongman leaders and hegemonic parties featured in the ruling strategies of all three regimes. The Geddes et al. typology does not address the role of intelligence and police forces in regime maintenance.

control of the military. In both cases, the conventional wisdom proves inadequate to explain the military response to the Arab Spring.

Finally, I also conduct quantitative data analysis to assess the generalizability of the theory beyond the Arab Spring. The dissertation's theory of military responses to popular uprisings is not in any way specific to the Middle East context, but is instead a general theory of military behavior. To expand the theory beyond the Middle East, I created a new data set of military repression during popular uprisings. My data measure the use of violence by the armed forces against civilian protesters during large, anti-regime protests worldwide from 1950 to 2013. The new data are fully compatible with the NAVCO data set on nonviolent campaigns, a large project offering numerous variables on mass mobilization (Chenoweth and Lewis 2013). My cross-national statistical analyses, presented in chapter 6, provide preliminary evidence that both colonial legacies and foreign military relationships condition military responses to mass protests globally. I also incorporate available data to empirically test the three major alternative arguments – capacity, patronage, and ethnicity – and find no evidence of an effect on military responses.

1.6 Plan of the Dissertation

In the following chapters, I will argue that none of these factors adequately explain the variation observed in the Arab Spring. Instead, military doctrine established prior to the Arab Spring had a powerful influence over military responses to the uprisings. Chapter 2 outlines a theory of organizational culture. The main argument is that military responses to uprisings are best understood through the lens of doctrine, a largely overlooked aspect of military organizational culture. I describe two causal mechanisms through which doctrinal change (*i.e.* military innovation) occurs: an army's interactions with the population and foreign military training and education generate binding organizational culture and practices vis-à-vis the population. This doctrine in turn influences the military's response to popular uprisings in moments of domestic political crisis. In the following chapters, I

employ qualitative process-tracing and a cross-national quantitative test to demonstrate that doctrine explains military responses to revolution better than competing theories rooted in capacity, professionalism, patronage, and ethnicity.

Chapter 3 develops the theory with evidence from Tunisia, where I find that the historical development of a non-interventionist doctrine was critical in making possible the "revolution of dignity" of 14 January 2011. Since independence in 1956, the Tunisian military cultivated a doctrine of restraint, which enabled protesters to make common cause with the military during the Arab Spring. When soldiers deployed to protect public buildings during the revolution, they did so with restraint and without violence, opening a pathway for citizens to topple the Ben Ali regime through nonviolent protest. Drawing on dozens of interviews with senior military officers and political leaders, as well as other documentary evidence, I document how the Tunisian army's past experiences with domestic intervention and foreign military education influenced its response to the revolution.Following a series of high-profile incidents in the 1970s and 1980s, the army valorized its relationship with Tunisian society and developed specialized doctrine and policy for dealing with the public to protect its republican image. The army's proactive commitment to serving as a positive force in society were instrumental to its role in the 2011 revolution.

My assessment challenges the view that the peaceful outcome in Tunisia resulted from the professionalism and small size of its military. Counter to the conventional wisdom, I find that the small Tunisian army was still capable of suppressing the revolution with force had it chosen to do so. Moreover, the professional officer corps had used violence to suppress past uprisings, and it did not proclaim its support for the goals of the revolution until *after* Ben Ali had fled the country. Tunisia's democratic transition resulted not from the democratic *bona fides* of the nation's military commanders, but from their commitment to restraint and nonviolence. This commitment held even when protesters mobilized in great numbers to call for revolutionary change, allowing

the political contest between the government and the people to play out without military interference.

Next, chapters 4 and 5 test the theory through case studies of the 2011 uprisings in Egypt and Syria. In each case, the military played a markedly different role in responding to the popular protests of the Arab Spring. The Egyptian military's doctrine of control led the Supreme Council of the Armed Forces (SCAF) to precipitate Mubarak's departure from office and seize power directly. By contrast, the Syrian army's doctrine of combat resulted in the use of methods of warfare against the civilian population, giving rise to a devastating civil war. Through these cases, I assess two popular alternative explanations for military response: patronage and ethnicity. These arguments hold that where material or identity ties bind the military to the political regime, it is virtually guaranteed that soldiers will repress any anti-regime challenge. Patronage and ethnicity represent the conventional wisdom on Egyptian and Syrian civil-military relations, respectively, but both arguments fall short of explaining the outcomes of the Arab Spring uprisings in those countries.

Chapter 6 explores generalizability of the argument beyond the Middle East. To test the argument globally, I collected original data on military responses to uprisings worldwide from 1950 to 2013. I find that the historical sources of military doctrine (*e.g.* role in the independence movement, relationship to the ruling party, and receipt of American foreign military education) predict the use of violence against protesters. Chapter 7 completes my discussion of the Arab Spring. I apply the theory to the uprisings in Bahrain, Libya, and Yemen and discuss the diverse political outcomes witnessed across the region. The chapter concludes with implications of the theory for the study of military behavior and directions for future research on military intervention in politics.

Chapter 2

Military Doctrine in Popular Uprisings

In light of the critical role of the military in shaping the outcomes of attempted revolutions, this dissertation offers a novel explanation for the surprising and diverse forms of military responses to popular uprisings. To understand soldiers' behavior in these moments of political crisis, many scholars rely on rational choice or strategic explanations. Instead, I take a new approach to explaining military responses to uprisings which focuses on the military's behavior as a complex organization. Beginning with theories of organizational behavior, I ask: how do militaries make decisions? Like any organization, armies respond to events based on their existing practices and knowledge. In military organizations, doctrine plays a central role in determining behavior, whether in fighting wars against other states or nonstate actors or in responding to domestic crises. I hypothesize that during a popular uprising, when the potential collapse of the political regime thrusts soldiers into a central decision making role, the military's response is guided by *doctrine*, not material or political interests. To the contrary, military behavior is constrained by organizational factors which limit, determine, and shape the rational and strategic pursuit of military interests. In particular, I explore how processes of organizational learning, both from historical experience and foreign influences, prepare the ground for future decisions (see figure 2.1).

The chapter proceeds as follows. First, I explain how military doctrine guides mil-

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┌──────────────┐      ┌──────────────┐      ┌──────────────┐      ┌──────────────┐
│  Formation   │ ───▶ │  Innovation  │ ───▶ │   Adoption   │ ───▶ │  Behavioral  │
│              │      │              │      │              │      │   Response   │
└──────────────┘      └──────────────┘      └──────────────┘      └──────────────┘
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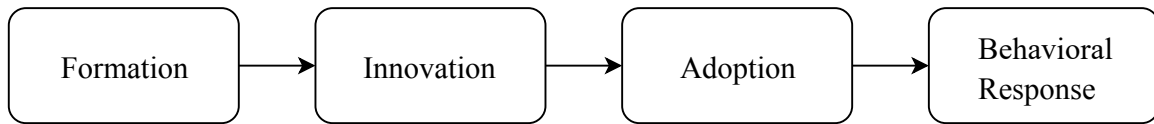
itary responses to popular uprisings. Rather than rational choice or strategic bargaining, the theory takes an organizational view of behavior (Levitt and March 1988). Second, I explore how military organizations learn from experience and innovate through the diffusion of ideas, adapting and modifying their routines, standard operating procedures, and orientations towards specific targets or goals. I investigate two principal sources of military learning and innovation that are particularly important for domestic crisis response: direct interactions with society and foreign military training. Both of these influences have the potential to spur innovation in military doctrine. Third, I discuss the processes by which a military adopts the particular values, routines, and formal rules that institutionalize a given doctrine prior to a crisis. Finally, I characterize three ideal-type military doctrines, each with different effects on military responses to popular uprisings.

2.1 Explaining Military Behavior

To explain state responses to popular uprisings, it is first necessary to identify the identity and interests of the relevant actors. Bendor and Hammond (1992) provide three criteria for classifying theoretical models of organizational behavior: (1) is the state a unitary actor or better understood as a collection of independent actors, and do those actors have the same or conflicting goals? (2) are actors perfectly or imperfectly rational? and (3) do the actors have full or partial information? A revolutionary scenario involves countless political actors with divergent interests. Because of the military's role as the gatekeeper of revolution (see section 1.2), the regime and the military are the two principal actors on the government side. From an analytical perspective, the police and other internal security forces can be treated as an extension of the regime, because their interests and political

fates are closely linked. The armed forces, by contrast, are not an integral part of the political regime in most authoritarian systems.[1] In some cases, the military is much less tied to the regime than are the police, who engage in the routine practice of authoritarian repression. Unlike the police, military officers may not have an existential stake in the status quo;[2] therefore, the relationship between military and regime interests should be treated as variable.

The potential for the military to act independently of the regime is evident in the classical view of military intervention in politics. This view – expressed in the oft-cited phrase, *quis custodiet ipsos custodes*[3] – implies that the military, once empowered as guardian of the nation, may shirk from this mission in pursuit of its own goals. In comparative politics, the dominant political economy approach mirrors this view: the military is an independent and unitary political actor, acting as an agent of the regime, which must constantly fear being overthrown by a military putsch. The long history of independent political action by the armed forces worldwide, whether by coup d'état or less direct forms of influence, strongly supports a dual-actor model (Svolik 2013). The next question, then, is whether the military's interests are divergent from or consistent with those of the regime.

If the military often acts independently from other elements of the state, what are its motivations as a collective actor? In particular, how do military interests differ from regime interests, and to what extent do these institutions have conflicting goals? Political economy models of civil-military relations generally assume divergent interests, and the strategic dynamic between regime and military takes the form of a principal-agent or

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1. The exception is military regimes, in which a group of high-ranking officers exercises direct control over the dictator's decision making (see Geddes *et al.* 2014a).

2. The wealth of research on how to democratize civil-military relations in post-authoritarian states demonstrates that, in reality, military reform is usually quite limited after regime change (Diamond and Plattner 1996; Trinkunas 2006; Bruneau and Trinkunas 2008; Serra 2010; Barany 2012). In addition, public opinion research demonstrates that the armed forces in the authoritarian states of the Middle East are significantly more trusted and respected than other government institutions (Lotito and Miles 2018).

3. Who will guard the guardians themselves? (Juvenal, Satire VI, lines 347–8). For a broad discussion of the problem, see Leonid Hurwicz's (2008) Nobel Prize acceptance speech.

moral hazard problem. Because the military has no intrinsic motivation to defend the regime, civilians must effectively purchase the loyalty of officers to stave off rebellion (Besley and Robinson 2010; McMahon and Slantchev 2015; Svolik 2013; Amegashie 2015). Another patronage argument holds that the military pursues its corporate, or collective, material interests, which range from salaries and equipment from the national budget to profit-sharing through corrupt business dealings (Thompson 1973; Pion-Berlin 1992).[4]

Conversely, I argue that military behavior is driven more by soldiers' identities and cultural values than by material interests. This alternative explanation for military intervention in politics is based on organizational culture rather than strategic motivations. In this view, soldiers' behavior is driven by their professional identity and values, which we observe as military doctrine. Identity-based theories of civil-military relations date back at least to Plato, who recognized the risk of soldiers' using their physical strength to overthrow the political order. To avoid this, Plato suggests indoctrinating the army with a "noble lie," that soldiers are born to protect and not to profit, and denying them all personal property to eliminate incentives for material accumulation (*The Republic,* Book III [2013]). By virtue of the values instilled in each soldier, he argues, they will serve their mission without any external check on their power. Modern theorists have interpreted Plato's noble lie as a call for military professionalism: in a highly professionalized army, they argue, soldiers will uphold military values, including apoliticism, even at the expense of their personal political or material ambitions (Huntington 1957).

In my view, the political values often associated with professionalism are better understood as a multidimensional component of military doctrine. Values can exert a powerful influence on military behavior, but the effect is not constant or easily predictable. As described in the previous chapter, professional military values cannot be universally defined or agreed upon. Still, these values are the aspect of military culture most closely associated with the military's political behavior. Apoliticism, or a commitment to dif-

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4. See also Lee (2008) for a critical review of this literature.

ferentiating the political from the military sphere, and to non-intervention in politics, has been described as a cornerstone of professional military values (Huntington 1957). In practical terms, apoliticism amounts to an assertion of civilian supremacy, which is considered a sine qua non of *democratic* civil-military relations. However, the concept of apoliticism is problematic in authoritarian regimes, where regime challengers may have a greater claim to democratic representation than the existing civilian authorities, presenting a direct contradiction. If professionalization does in fact encourage military officers in authoritarian regimes to support democracy, rather than civilian supremacy, we should not expect authoritarian leaders to encourage or authorize such indoctrination of their officers (Miles 2018).

Organization theory recognizes the influence of institutional process on the decisions and actions of organizations, especially during crises. Graham Allison's foundational text, *Essence of Decision* (1999), infused the study of foreign policy with a concern for the role of bureaucratic decision making in producing outcomes. This focus on bureaucratic or organizational decision making has helped scholars understand actions that seem to defy rational choice theory, and largely improved the explanation of discrete events such as crisis outcomes. Further research has demonstrated the influence of military culture on decision making curing crises (Snyder 1984).

Although these literatures demonstrate the influence of organizational memory and organizational culture in other contexts, discussions of revolution have overlooked the role of organizational factors in military behavior. Previous work has emphasized the strategic interests of military leaders in explaining military responses (*e.g.* Lee 2009; Pion-Berlin *et al.* 2014; Bou Nassif 2015a). But research on organizational decision making may be more useful in explaining the response of the whole military organization to a revolution or other political crisis. Crises such as popular uprisings also differ from other decision making scenarios in terms of the constraints placed on decision makers. Research on naturalistic decision making has explored how real world conditions affect

decision making. When military officers make decisions under crisis conditions, high pressure, time sensitivity, and limited information environments reduce their ability to make fully rational strategic calculations. The theory emphasizes the role of situation assessment in decision making, arguing that most decisions are not deliberated over at all, but instead are the natural response to a given situation (Zsambok and Klein 1997).[5] The main contribution of this research is to highlight the extent to which an initial assessment and classification of the situation determines the overall decision (Lipshitz *et al.* 2001). In revolutions, soldiers' first step in responding is to decide which class of situation they find themselves in, whether a harmless demonstration, a riot, or a revolution.

Military doctrine provides soldiers with a repertoire of action for crisis scenarios (Swidler 1986). Organizational learning influences which courses of action are perceived by soldiers as possible. This approach recognizes the role of factors like culture and routine in shaping behavior, rather than assuming a fully rational, strategic decision making process. In his seminal work, *Bureaucracy*, James Wilson (1989) highlights the role of bottom-up processes in determining the success of various organizational behaviors. Similarly, during a popular uprising, the military bureaucracy's lowest rungs, the soldiers on the ground, create organization-level outcomes. In this case, the military's repertoire of action comes into confrontation with protesters' repertoire of contention in streets and public squares across the country (Tilly 1978, chap. 5; 2006, chap. 3). The interaction between the dynamic processes of contestation on both sides can generate outcomes far outside the control of military planners in the Ministry of Defense or presidential palace.

Existing scholarship recognizes the importance of military doctrine in shaping organizational behavior. The organizational cultures of armed forces are widely acknowlededged to influence both combat performance (Posen 1984; Snyder 1984; Zisk 1993; Kier 1997; Long 2016) and political intervention (Huntington 1957; Finer 1962; Janowitz 1964;

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5. Naturalistic decision making theory was originally developed for the explicit purpose of enhancing military effectiveness. The United States Army was the first major backer of this research, which began in the mid-1980s (Klein 2008).

Stepan 1971; Barany 2012). In the literature on combat performance in war, doctrine is a crucial explanatory variable (Pollack 2002; Talmadge 2013). Doctrine, however, has not been proposed as an explanatory variable for political intervention or crisis response, and the role of doctrine in determining military responses to domestic political crises remains unexamined. I contend that organization theory explains the crisis behavior of military organizations better than the strategic, rational actor models prevalent in the literature. In my view, military behavior during uprisings is not primarily strategic and interest-based, but rather a routine-based organizational response, similar to all other tasks the military performs.

In the heat of a crisis, military behavior will be highly dependent on organizational beliefs and routines established prior to the crisis. Officers' initial course of action in a crisis draws on the military's doctrine for domestic intervention. Doctrine provides an understanding of their mission (as it relates to internal security) and guidelines for carrying out that mission vis-à-vis the population. Although senior military officers also consider the political consequences of their actions as a crisis unfolds, much of the military's actual response hinges on how the military conceives of its role in the crisis, how officers view the restive population, and how regular soldiers interact with protesters. When commanders are sent into the streets to defend public institutions, for example, they must rely on the training they have received and the culture of the military organization to guide their decisions.

2.2 The Origins of Doctrine

As defined previously, doctrine is the set of rules and understandings through which military planners conceptualize and prepare for future engagements. Doctrine includes the army's understanding of its roles and missions, the professional values soldiers embrace, and the operating procedures and routines they establish to pursue their organizational mission. To explain military responses to popular uprisings, I focus on what I call domestic

security doctrine, the subset of military doctrine which relates to internal or domestic security. Domestic security doctrine guides military behavior in areas such as protest response, public order maintenance, and political repression. I argue that doctrine determines which forms of political activity the military engages in, what level of commitment officers have to values like civilian supremacy and democracy, and which routines and standard operating procedures they rely on when intervening domestically. If the military doctrine favors political intervention, commanders will be likely to use violence against protesters. If, on the other hand, the military has established a doctrine of restraint, the standard procedures for handling an emergency will favor nonviolence and restraint.

In my reading, doctrinal development in Arab militaries has followed a consistent temporal pattern consisting of four phases: formation, innovation, adoption, and response. First, each military formed an initial doctrine during the colonial and early independence eras, from the late nineteenth to mid-twentieth century. Early doctrine was influenced by the design of colonial institutions, as well as the army's relationship to the national independence movement and ruling political party. Second, these doctrines evolved through a process of innovation, as officers gained experience in military interventions and received foreign military training. By the late 1970s and 1980s, as post-colonial regimes stabilized across the region, the military became institutionalized within this political order. Consequently, the region's militaries completed the adoption of their unique doctrines, through processes of internalization, routinization, and formalization. Occasionally, mass protests put these initial doctrines to the test, and soldiers used their experiences to develop new ways of responding to uprisings, riots, and other crises of public order. Finally, when popular challenges to the post-colonial, authoritarian order erupted across the region during the Arab Spring, armies responded to the popular uprisings on the basis of their established doctrines.

The initial origins of a particular military doctrine coincide with the foundation of the military institution in that country. The formative period of military development in

the Middle East extends from the colonial era through the first decades of independence. The first source of doctrine is the military institution's colonial origins. When an army is established, often at the moment of national independence, a foundational doctrine is established which draws heavily from the unique circumstances and historical precursors of its founding. As the European colonies of the Middle East and North Africa gained their independence, they established national armies which drew heavily from their colonial precursors. The new armies inherited much of their doctrine, and often their officers, from the colonial-era military, and followed many of the same patterns of behavior after independence (Nugent 2017, chap. 3).

The second major source of doctrine is the armed forces' relationship to the national independence movement. The role that the army played in fighting for national liberation strongly shapes its understanding of its role and purpose. For example, Algeria's People's National Army is a direct descendant of the National Liberation Army which fought the war of independence. As a result, the army's doctrine draws heavily on its image as guardian of the nation. Moreover, the modern states of Algeria, Egypt, and Turkey were each founded by military officers: Houari Boumédiène, the Free Officers (including both Gamal Abdel Nasser and Anwar Sadat), and Mustafa Kemal Atatürk, respectively. This military-led national liberation established the guardianship of the military over the nation from the first days of independence, creating a powerful nationalist narrative to support this unique military role (Cook 2007, 28-31). To the contrary, Tunisia's independence was won through diplomacy, not war, so the newly constituted Tunisian National Army could make no nationalist claims to supragovernmental legitimacy.

Finally, where the military has a close relationship with the ruling party, political considerations will play a greater role in the military's approach to domestic security. Where the military is more autonomous,[6] military doctrine is more insulated from politi-

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6. Confusingly, Bellin (2004, 2012) uses the terms "institutionalization" and "autonomy" interchangeably, and contrasts them with patrimonialism. Here, I focus specifically on the military's independence from the ruling party (i.e. autonomy).

cal control. In most Arab countries, the minister of defense is a military officer and there is little civilian oversight of the defense establishment. Officers possess technical expertise which civilian commanders do not have, and this informational advantage allows them greater control over the content of doctrine (Feaver 2005, 69-70).[7] Second, doctrine can be difficult to change because it consists in and of the combined beliefs and practices of an entire organization. As a result, changing doctrine from the outside is not as simple as signing an order (Posen 1984). Nevertheless, the regime's efforts to shape military doctrine do have a tangible effect, which I trace in my case studies.

2.3 Doctrinal Innovation

A military rarely faces a situation for which it has no prior planning or training whatsoever, and large-scale protests are no exception, particularly when they occur decades after independence. Interactions between the military and civilians have been previously overlooked as a source of military innovation, and one that is essential to understanding military responses to popular uprisings. My argument is built around a theory of military innovation in response to mass protests and other domestic crises. The theory is grounded in literatures on organizational learning and military innovation, which indicate the processes through which militaries change their doctrinal approaches to various classes of threats and determine the operational and tactical approaches they use to respond to future crises. First, I outline the fundamental insights of sociological research on organizational learning. Then I interpret recent findings on military innovation and apply these insights to the question of military responses to mass protests.

The study of organizational learning has yielded several important insights. My approach draws from a seminal paper by Levitt and March (1988), who describe organizational learning as routine-based, history-dependent, and target-oriented. Each of these elements has implications in the military context. From an organizational perspec-

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7. The exception is often the authoritarian leader himself, who usually has a military background. However, his background does not guarantee the military institution will share all relevant information.

tive, routines are the cornerstone of behavior. They provide individuals (soldiers) with a playbook of appropriate actions for a wide range of scenarios. Most often, decision makers stick to tried-and-true routines that been effective in the past. Organizational memory is transmitted through routines, which "maintain and accumulate" the lessons of experience, "despite the turnover of personnel and the passage of time" (327). Routines are developed and modified through the retrospective evaluation of past successes and failures, and transmitted to new generations within the organization. History is critical to future behavior, because "routines are based on interpretations of the past more than anticipations of the future" (320). In other words, strategic thinking in organizations tends to be retrospective rather than prospective. When evaluating past experience, "people in organizations form interpretations of events and come to classify outcomes as good or bad" (323). This is because organizations draw sharper distinctions "between success and failure than among gradations of either" (320). In making these judgments, individuals suffer from common perceptual biases (*e.g.* availability bias and disregard for sample size), which lead organizations to learn lessons imperfectly (Tversky and Kahneman 1986).

These insights about organizational learning yield several theoretical propositions. The historical context of a military's development is a critical factor in its future actions. Existing theories based only on the military's interests at the moment of crisis fail to account for history-dependent, routine-based behavior. Instead, the military organization's collective interpretations of past interventions generate and update routines to guide future responses. These routines persist in the doctrine taught to new recruits in their military education and training. When responding to an uprising, military officers are more likely to follow these established routines than to spontaneously diverge from the existing doctrine. When officers evaluate an engagement or intervention, they will tend to judge the mission sharply as a success or failure. Therefore, the lessons learned from an intervention depend primarily on whether the overall outcome is judged as good or bad, not a granular estimation of points of success and failure. In turn, definitions of

success and failure depend on how the military understands its primary roles and missions (*i.e.* the organization's target). Therefore, a theory of military behavior during uprisings should account for how the military interprets and learns from past interventions, how the organization comes to define its primary roles and missions, and how these routines and objectives are codified and transmitted through military doctrine.

A large and distinct field of research has studied the process of military innovation (Griffin 2016). Although these studies have almost exclusively focused on military's warfighting activities, and these mostly within the United States military, the insights from how militaries learn to fight their wars are broadly applicable across the full spectrum of military roles and missions. Traditional theories of military innovation focus on changes initiated by political and military leaders, rather than the corps as a whole (Posen 1984; Zisk 1993; Avant 1994; Rosen 1994; Katzenstein 1996; Farrell and Terriff 2002). However, a seminal article by Adam Grissom (2006) introduced a focus on bottom-up learning originating in field formations. This observation is germane to the context of mass protests, where soldiers' experiences on the ground translate into broader organizational understandings and routines that shape future interventions.

Traditionally, the study of military innovation has been limited to the domain of interstate conflict, to the exclusion of the military's role in domestic crises (Huntington 1957; Avant 1993; Rosen 1988; Horowitz 2010). While a focus on interstate war makes sense in the West, it is less obvious in developing countries, where military intervention in domestic politics has been the rule, not the exception. How then do militaries learn and innovate in their responses to domestic crises and uprisings? Keller (2017) describes rebel groups' shift from violent to nonviolent tactics as a form of innovation. Unsurprisingly, while militaries have never undergone wholesale nonviolent innovation, as the use or threat of violence is the inherent purpose of a military organization, they have nevertheless introduced nonviolent tactics and restraint as doctrinal elements of their crisis response. Significant shifts to more restrained and less violent modes of action are

a category of innovation that has been overlooked by scholars of the military.

What are the sources of innovation in military doctrine? Military organizations are often accused of "fighting the last war," implying they are stubbornly resistant to innovation (Sloan 2012, 252). In reality, military history offers examples of both successes and failures in adapting to the changing security environment.[8] Moreover, historical experience is often the military's best guide for future planning. As Wilson (1989, 43) argues, the lessons of the past are critical even in the fast-changing landscape of modern war:

> Generals are often accused of preparing to fight the last war. That is not a fair criticism. Since no general, at least in modern times, can know with any certainty what the next war will be like, all he has to draw upon in making his preparations are experience and conjecture. Since conjecture is, after all, conjectural, experience inevitably will play a large and proper role in guiding his plans. Successful generals do not ignore the lessons of the past. No one knows in advance what the lessons will be, but some people guess better than others.

Scholars of military innovation have identified three major sources: defeat in war, civilian intervention, and internal innovation, i.e. conscious efforts by senior military leaders. Generally, past successes and failures shape officers' beliefs about future conflicts (Khong 1992). Historical experience at the organizational level in turn drives the process of self-evaluation and organizational learning that generates change in military culture and doctrine over time. However, Rosen (1988, 136) finds that neither military defeat nor civilian intervention are necessary causes of innovation, and that internal innovation depends mainly on the committed support of senior military leaders. Innovation, in this view, is not an automatic response to the failure of past doctrine, but rather the intended outcome of a purposeful struggle for change within the armed forces. Historical experience is the grist of innovation, but not its direct cause. For doctrine to change, the senior leadership

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8. For example, Germany's stubbornly offensive doctrine helped to cause the strategic disaster of World War I (Snyder 1984). During the war, however, Germany was more adaptive than the Allied powers in overcoming the stalemate of trench warfare by developing the "modern system" of force employment (Biddle 2004).

must endorse and carry out the course correction (Avant 1994).

Past Interventions

A branch of research known as image theory describes how values, goals, and plans influence personal and organizational decisions . Researchers find that self-image is a salient factor guiding organizational behavior during crises (Zsambok and Klein 1997, chap. 7). Therefore, the military's concern for its image should directly influence its response to an uprising. Expressions of the military self-image can be found in official military histories, which offer collective interpretations of past events, and the procedures. The armed forces rely on strong internal and external identities (e.g. *infantryman*, *soldier*, or *warrior*), as well as cultural indoctrination, more than civilian organizations (Franke 1999; Woodward and Neil Jenkings 2011; Caforio 2018). When it comes to doctrine for domestic security, the military's most important historical experience comes from past interventions, in which soldiers interacted with the population. In the aftermath of domestic interventions, soldiers are aware of the public condemnation or praise that results from their actions, and sensitive to perceptions of glory or shame.

The academic field of civil-military relations offers an interdisciplinary framework emphasizing the deep linkages between the military and broader society. When political scientists draw from this literature, we tend to focus on formal institutions at the expense of sociological factors (e.g. Huntington 1957; Bland 1999; Belkin and Schofer 2005; Hurwicz 2008). Similarly, formal theories of civil-military relations often simplify the problem down to a bilateral relationship between the military and a civilian government (Besley and Robinson 2010; Svolik 2012; McMahon and Slantchev 2015). On the other hand, a sociological approach considers the *trilateral* relationship between military, state, and society (Schiff 1995; Feaver 1999; Cottey *et al.* 2002). This literature does not limit its definition of "civilian" to the state or political regime, as political science work often does, but emphasizes the military's place in society and the social identity of soldiers and

officers. One of the few studies of the military's public relations comes from the United States, where major historical shifts have occurred in public perceptions of the military leadership, even in the absence of domestic military intervention (Kemble 2007). Although it is beyond the scope of this dissertation to study public attitudes toward the military in depth, they may be an important but overlooked factor shaping civil-military relations (Lotito and Miles 2018).

I view military-society relations as a fundamental pillar of broader civil-military relations. Diffuse interactions between soldiers and citizens shape the military ethos within the armed forces towards civilians. The military's orientation towards the population, codified in military doctrine, and popular attitudes toward the military, determine the course of these groups' interactions during a political crisis. When intervening during moments of severe political crisis, the military must confront a mobilized public in order to restore order. A critical question in this moment is whether the military and the public see each other as fellow citizens or as adversaries. If protesters mount a direct challenge to the army's political status, a nonviolent protest movement will likely develop into a violent one. On the other hand, if protesters and the army do not view each other as adversaries, a peaceful pathway remains open wherein both soldiers and protesters eschew violence, enabling a nonviolent change of power. In this scenario, the ultimate outcome is nonviolent revolution.

Foreign Influence

The field of military innovation research also recognizes the role of international diffusion. In the case of mass uprisings, learning occurs through two main channels. First, professional military education has become deeply internationalized, with soldiers from around the world receiving training in foreign military academies and especially concentrating their learning within a few Western military establishments, especially those of the United States and France. Education and socialization in these systems generates a diffusion

of ideas regarding responses to political crises, including mass protests. Second, more immediate learning occurs when political crises in neighboring countries require military responses. Reinforced by the strong identification among soldiers in different armies, the diffusion of ideas can occur rapidly when soldiers confront a crisis and the outcomes of their interventions are known to soldiers in neighboring countries. Therefore, the lessons learned from successful or failed responses to mass protests in one country diffuse rapidly, especially within the geographic region, where context is considered relevant. I argue that foreign powers can exert a significant influence over military doctrine through a diffusion mechanism.

Previous studies on the role of foreign actors in popular uprisings focus on coercive pressure by a strong outside power (Yeo 2006; McKoy and Miller 2012). For example, Lee (2009) argues that disgruntled senior officers may defect if they receive direct foreign support, and Nepstad (2013) argues that a loss of foreign support may encourage defections among junior officers. Counter to these arguments, I maintain that foreign powers influence crisis responses primarily through historical relationships, not direct threats. Over time, foreign sponsors shape the organizational cultures of developing militaries through doctrinal diffusion, which conditions their responses to future uprisings. This argument draws on a tradition of theory in international relations linking system-level variables to domestic political outcomes (Gourevitch 1978; Putnam 1988). Except in rare cases, where foreign powers are willing to undertake direct military intervention themselves, the course of revolutions is determined by domestic actors, not foreign governments.

In contrast, I argue that motivated great powers can influence military organizational culture *ex ante*, potentially affecting unforeseen revolutions when they eventually arise. Although direct intervention by foreign powers can be decisive, it is more often the domestic military's response which determines revolutionary outcomes. When protest movements reach a critical mass, attracting international media attention, major powers often issue statements on the events and may even propose or threaten intervention.

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Regime change threatens a state's existing alliances, so foreign powers are often concerned to maintain the status quo. In most cases, such statements are ignored as cheap talk because the foreign power is unwilling to intervene directly. There are important cases, however, when a foreign patron's interest is strong enough to make coercive threats credible. For example, Yeo (2006) argues that popular uprisings in South Korea and Poland were made possible by policy changes by their superpower patrons, the United States and Soviet Union. In these cases, the foreign sponsor has effective veto power over regime concessions (McKoy and Miller 2012). Foreign support for the opposition can also push dissenters within the military to openly break from the regime (Lee 2009), while the loss of foreign sponsorship may signal impending regime collapse, thereby hastening defections and bolstering resistance (Nepstad 2013). However, despite the power of coercion to shape military responses to uprisings, it is rarely a significant factor because foreign powers are usually unwilling to intervene directly in the conflict. Instead, I consider the long-term diffusion of military values and practices, especially through foreign military training, to be the most important form of foreign influence on military responses.

Diffusion differs from coercion because it is based on long-term, repeat interactions. The primary pathway of diffusion from one military to another is through international military education and training programs, a form of *vertical diffusion* from trainer to trainee. Run by Western powers and formerly the Soviet Union since decolonization, these programs have helped educate the officer corps of virtually every developing country. Military diplomacy and military-to-military relations are an influential, yet often overlooked, form of international engagement (Blair 2013). In the long term, foreign military training (FMT) may facilitate the transfer of norms, for example against using military force to suppress protests. A number of studies have investigated the effects of foreign training on military behavior. Some have searched for unreasonably large direct effects (for example, American training causing democratization) and predictably found no consistent effect (Taylor 2014, ch. 8). But other recent studies have pushed the theory

beyond an implied contact theory (*i.e.* "Westernizing" foreign officers' behavior by putting them in a Western classroom for a while) to specify causal pathways connecting FMT to military behavior. Savage and Caverley (2017) study the effect of FMT on coup propensity and find that FMT actually *increases* coup risk by strengthening the military relative to the regime. Soeters and Van Ouytsel (2014) argue that FMT can lead to significant change in the organizational culture of the target military, but only when intergenerational shifts occur. Both of these studies greatly advance the literature on this question by defining the causal process connecting FMT to changes in military behavior. In the following chapters, case studies of the armies involved in the Arab Spring trace the process of persuasion qualitatively, seeking to determine the conditions under which doctrine is transferred between trainers and trainees. I find that relatively short training experiences of 1–2 years in France or the United States can instill an understanding and appreciation of Western military doctrine and civil-military relations. In military organizations where a majority of ranking officers share a common background of substantial Western training, notions of civilian control and concern for human rights reach a critical mass and begin to change the organizational culture, as reflected in doctrine.

A second form of influence, what might be called *horizontal diffusion*, occurs when officers observe events in foreign countries and update their own doctrine to incorporate lessons from the experience of other militaries. Organizations everywhere learn by observing the experience of others, and this particular pattern of diffusion has been shown to influence military innovation in warfighting (Horowitz 2010). Similar to the way officers learn from their own past interventions, uprisings abroad can trigger a process of analogy formation, wherein decision makers select which foreign regimes and uprisings serve as useful examples for their own situation and adapt their own beliefs and behaviors (*i.e.* doctrine) accordingly (Khong 1992; Reiter 1996). Horizontal diffusion provides an additional source of organizational learning beyond the more limited national experience of revolution. When considering the subject of revolution, military officers are no less

likely than civilians everywhere to consider major historical examples like the Tiananmen Square protests or the fall of Ceaușescu. At the same time, organization theory suggests that the military's own historical experience will be the most influential source of innovation.

2.4 Adoption of Doctrine

The adoption of doctrine is a process of internalization, routinization, and formalization. Military organizations establish a particular doctrine through their values, routines, and formal rules. I describe this I then elaborate a typology of domestic security doctrines.

The first aspect of doctrine is the military's internalization of its central missions and roles. According to Huntington (1957, 11), military roles are universal and inherent, derived from the "vocation" of officership. He cites Weber's concept of vocation to describe military officership:[9]

> The vocation of officership meets the principal criteria of professionalism. In practice, no vocation, not even medicine or law, has all the characteristics of the ideal professional type. Officership probably falls somewhat further short of the ideal than either of these. Yet its fundamental character as a profession is undeniable. In practice, officership is strongest and most effective when it most closely approaches the professional ideal; it is weakest and most defective when it falls short of that ideal.

In Huntington's view, the primary military roles are guaranteeing the national defense and protecting the national interest. The latter mission may motivate intervention to suppress protests, riots, or other disturbances to the peace, creating an alignment in regime and military interests, but such an alignment cannot be assumed in all cases. Many scholars assume that victory in war is the principal and universal military interest, because defeat in war is so catastrophic, risking soldiers' lives and honor. The primary interests of the military do not necessarily include regime maintenance or political repression. On paper, the missions and roles of armies worldwide are remarkably similar: national de-

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9. See Weber (1994), "The Profession and Vocation of Politics," 309–69.

fense, internal stability, disaster response, and occasionally other humanitarian functions such as peacekeeping. In practice, however, there is considerable cross-national variation in how the armed forces define these missions.

The organization must embrace a given mission in order to perform it effectively. The military's role can be defined as its "broad and enduring purpose," and it must be must be clearly defined in order for the armed forces to operate effectively (Shemella 2006, 122-23). When soldiers are ordered to perform missions that conflict with established roles and missions, performance, internal cohesion, and morale fall into steep decline (*i.e.* role dissonance). Compared with other professions, military officership critically relies on professional socialization, so the selection of officer trainees (cadets) is designed to iden-tify individuals who are well-suited to this socialization (Caforio 2018, 274). An officers' inclination to embrace military values and attitudes is essential to the cohesion of the force. Moreover, his or her embrace of professional values is a vital ethical consideration, because the military is authorized to kill on behalf of the nation (Gal 1990). At the same time, the social status of military officers varies widely across countries, and for many middle- and lower-class recruits, the military is a rare opportunity for social mobility. Thus it is necessary to consider the social background and motivations of the military officer corps not with a universal, one-size-fits-all model, but on a case-by-case basis (Moskos 1976).

The second aspect of doctrinal adoption is routinization. Wilson (1989, 25) argues that an organization's behavior is driven by its "critical task." Many public bureaucracies, including the military, do not have clear and specific goals. Even a seemingly unambigu-ous objective, such as national defense, might be interpreted and pursued in countless ways. Because an organization is unable to precisely define its ultimate goal, it instead identifies the critical task it must accomplish to solve the problem it faces. For an army at war, that problem is the enemy's firepower, and the task is to find a way to overcome it. For an army responding to a domestic uprising, the problem is public disorder, and

the task is to restore and maintain order. In other words, military officers thrown into a situation of mass demonstrations respond to those circumstances, which dictate the task of order maintenance. In this way, the circumstances that soldiers face on the ground – whether an enemy battalion, a natural disaster, or a rioting crowd – determine which task the organization pursues. Once defined, the central task – whether overcoming an enemy's firepower or restoring order – might be pursued in several different ways. Each military interprets its role within a given context to create routines and standard operating procedures. Given the impossibility of perfectly centralized decision making, officers from platoon leaders to brigade commanders rely on established routines to guide their individual decisions.

The final aspect of doctrinal adoption is formalization. In addition to values and routines, soldiers rely on formal rules and guidelines, which constitute a third component of military doctrine. Military operations require some level of delegation, wherein junior officers must interpret specific orders from their superiors according to changing conditions on the ground, while complying with broader rules of engagement, general orders, and military procedures. As a result, military organizations can be highly legalistic, exhibiting an increased reliance on formal, standardized rules and procedures. According to the sociologists Sitkin and Bies (1993, 346), a "legalistic organization" adopts the trappings of the legal process in its internal processes because "legalistic characteristics confer an institutional legitimacy on otherwise ambiguous acts to preserve access to critical organizational resources." Legalism, they note, "is a cornerstone of Weber's legal-rational form of authority, [but] it can be dysfunctional to the organization, as Weber himself noted" (347). Militaries in authoritarian states are especially prone to legalism because it provides external and internal legitimacy (i.e. bureaucratic cover) for officers' individual decisions. Bellin (2004, 145) notes that the level of institutionalization of the armed forces is variable. In her definition, "An institutionalized coercive apparatus is one that is rule-governed, predictable, and meritocratic." Where institutionalization is less developed, patrimonial

modes of organization predominate.

In addition to internal rules, the armed forces operate within an external legal framework at the national level. Constitutional or statutory law often codifies military roles and missions, and may also authorize or proscribe specific military actions. In any given state, no higher power exists to force the military to comply with a formal legal framework. Moreover, authoritarian regimes are characterized by poor rule of law, meaning that violations of written law are less likely to be punished (Weingast 1997). Nevertheless, legal frameworks offer military decision makers a set of boundaries to consider when responding to exceptional circumstances. For example, if the military is legally prohibited from arresting civilians, a commander must be exceptionally motivated during a crisis to violate this restriction on his own. Conversely, an officer may employ an otherwise toothless prohibition as an excuse not to carry out orders he deems personally or professionally risky. On the other hand, if the legal framework dictates a responsibility to assure a given mission, commanders must violate the law in order to avoid the mission. In both cases, the law serves as a framework or plan from which to deviate, not a hard constraint, but may still condition military behavior.

Unfortunately, military secrecy largely prevents researchers from accessing military documents and internal rules from the Middle East. Unlike in the United States, where Army training manuals and operational plans are often declassified after a few decades, no declassification procedures exist in the Arab countries studied in this dissertation. Therefore, it is impossible for an outsider to observe the internal rules and orders written to implement military doctrine. Instead I rely on officers' firsthand accounts (where available), as well as secondary sources documenting similar firsthand accounts, and make inferences about unobserved rules from observed behavior. While not a completely satisfactory substitute, I endeavored in my research to separate *post hoc* justification from accurate historical narrative. In each case, my version of events is corroborated by multiple independent sources.

Table 2.1: Typology of Domestic Security Doctrines

Doctrine	Central Task	Response to Uprising	Examples
Restraint	Defend borders	Nonintervention	Tunisia
Control	Defend nation	Order maintenance	Egypt, *Algeria, Turkey*
Combat	Defend regime	Warfare	Syria, Bahrain, Libya

2.5 Typology of Doctrinal Responses

By accounting for the military's relationship to the population, my theory improves on existing typologies of civil-military relations, which focus instead on the military's relationship to the political regime.[10] Kamrava's (2000, 71) widely-cited typology of Middle Eastern civil-military relations highlights the limitations of the regime-focused approach: Syria, Egypt, and Tunisia are all classified in the same, narrow sub-category ("Autocratic officer-politicians: Mukhaberat states"), yet their militaries had strikingly different responses to the Arab Spring protests. To address this, I develop a typology based on the military's doctrine for domestic intervention, which characterizes the military's approach to dealing with the population during moments of unrest. Domestic security doctrine encompasses the military's understanding of its roles and missions during domestic crises, as well as relevant routines and procedures for accomplishing these roles. In my study of the Arab Spring, I identify three doctrinal ideal-types, which indicate the military's stance toward the population: *restraint*, *control*, and *combat*. These ideal-types are exemplified in the cases of Tunisia, Egypt, and Syria, respectively.

The use of violence against unarmed civilians is the most visible element of the military's response. Maximum military repression, pursued by armies with a combat

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10. The most widely-cited typologies come from Nordlinger (1977) and Perlmutter (1977). Nordlinger distinguishes between ruler (military actively dominates state institutions), guardian (military takes control temporarily when necessary), and moderator regimes (military vetoes government decisions but does not take power). Perlmutter collapses the latter two categories into "arbitrator" regimes, and uses the umbrella term "praetorian armies" to describe both types. On classifications of Egypt, see Perlmutter (1974); Harb (2003, 270n2).

doctrine, relies on heavy weapons, heavy armor, and combat tactics to kill protesters and destroy their property. Where a combat doctrine predominates, soldiers interpret protesters as enemies of the state and respond using the tactics of warfare. At the other extreme, total nonviolence requires a complete withdrawal of military forces to the barracks, where they play no role in the ongoing crisis. A nonviolent outcome results when the army follows a doctrine of restraint and refrains from intervention. Mild or moderate levels of military violence result when soldiers try to assert a minimum level of control using deterrent force, demonstrations of force, or limited direct violence. Under a doctrine of control, soldiers respond to uprisings by working to re-establish and maintain order, but mass mobilization that does not threaten the military's core interests, including national security, is allowed to proceed with little military violence. When citizens breach the limits of military tolerance, however, re-establishing order can escalate to extreme repressive violence.

At the tactical level, restraint can be difficult to implement, because it depends on capable junior officers and well-trained soldiers employing both their training and their good judgment to implement what amounts to a wait-and-see strategy until the outcome of the political contest between regime and popular demands becomes clear. Difficult or complex crises raise serious concerns about splits or fractures developing in the military organization. As mentioned previously, existing scholarship has established that military officers are particularly concerned with maintaining cohesion within the ranks. Because unity of action is essential to military action, and because any mutiny or defection could quickly result in operational failure, organizational collapse, or even civil war, military leaders may consider a split in the ranks even worse than defeat or surrender (Stepan 1988; Geddes 1999; Geddes *et al.* 2014a). Because neutrality requires restraint and judgment rather than decisive action, it is a riskier strategy for maintaining military cohesion; therefore, neutrality is both less likely and more puzzling.

An army can establish neutrality over time by defining its doctrine, missions,

and operating procedures accordingly, and training its officers and soldiers with conflict avoidance in mind. Absent advance preparation, neutrality can be difficult—even impossible—to achieve because confronting crowds of protesters with armed soldiers will usually result in bloodshed if, for example, even one provocateur riles a scared conscript into discharging his weapon. The theories of organizational learning described in the previous section help explain why some militaries develop nonviolent, noninterventionist doctrines, while others do not. Despite downstream risk that the military will join with protesters in revolution, the political regime will likely encourage these doctrines because military apoliticism reduces the risk of a coup d'état. It should be noted that some regimes nevertheless rely on an explicit politicization of the military for their political purposes, in which case any attempt to develop a neutrality doctrine would be limited to low-profile, internal military efforts shielded from regime oversight. In some countries and periods, this will be not be feasible, and the military will remain highly politicized vis-à-vis the population regardless of military officers' incentives to the contrary.

The remaining two doctrines, control and combat, assign the military a more active role in domestic security. In a doctrine of control, the military envisions guardianship of the state as its primary role. During an uprising, the military will use force to maintain public order and control the population, with the primary goal of assuring national security, not the survival of the political regime. This doctrine emerges in military-dominated political systems in which "The officers seek to rule but not to govern" (Cook 2007, ix). In these cases, the military adopts a supervisory role that is superior to either political or popular authority, and accountable to neither. This system has been described as *praetorian*, because "the military class of a given society exercises independent political power within it by virtue of an actual or threatened use of military force" (Perlmutter and Bennett 1980, 199). In their defense of the state, praetorian armies arrogate unto themselves the right to unilaterally interpret the national interest, regardless of the demands of either the ruler or the ruled. As a result, a doctrine of control compels neither a pro- nor an

antirevolutionary response to an anti-regime uprising. Military officers might refuse to defend an unpopular leader facing mass protests, but if they believe the will of the people is misguided, they will not hesitate to use violence against civilians to restore military control.

The final doctrine, combat, frames the protesting population as enemies of the state. Whereas a doctrine of control authorizes the military to act independently of the political regime, a doctrine of combat requires subservience. In this doctrine, the military's critical task is preserving the existing regime, because the identity of the state, regime, and military are identical. This is not to say that officers share objective identity traits with political leaders, but rather that officers internalize a common identity with the regime, while othering nonconformist segments of society. Procedures in this doctrine will emphasize deterring mobilization to preserve stability, and will encourage the use of violence to achieve these ends. A doctrine of combat is likely to emerge where there are close personal and institutional linkages between the military and the ruling party.

The following chapters test the doctrinal theory of military responses to revolution against the popular uprisings in Tunisia, Egypt, and Syria in 2011. Protests in these countries shared many commonalities: demonstrations were initially nonviolent; they brought together a broad coalition representing political and socio-economic diversity; and demonstrators made nearly identical demands, often recycling the same slogans, like the famous "the people wants the fall of the regime" (*al-sha'b yurīd isqāṭ al-niẓām*). In each case, the military's response to the mobilization was critical to the outcome However, the outcomes of these revolutionary moments varied widely. the diversity of possible military responses. Historical narratives of the Tunisian, Egyptian, and Syrian armed forces reveal major differences in the historical origins of the three armies, their past experiences of domestic intervention, and the role of foreign sponsors in the education and training of their officers. Through process-tracing and comparisons among these cases, I find that these factors (historical origins, past intervention, and foreign influence) caused these

militaries to develop in opposing directions. As a result, on the eve of the Arab Spring, the three countries represented exemplars of the three doctrinal types: restraint, control, and combat. When the moment of decision came in early 2011, these doctrinal orientations defined both the meaning of a successful intervention, and the means, via violence or restraint, of achieving that objective.

Chapter 3

Tunisia: A Doctrine of Restraint

For the 338 killed and 2,174 wounded, their families and friends, and those who stood beside them terrorized as the police gunned down protesters, Tunisia's 14 January revolution was not peaceful. Yet on that day, the revolutionaries succeeded in ousting the country's autocratic president of twenty-three years without the force of arms. The key to their success was the restraint of the army, which did not join the police in suppressing the anti-regime protests that would topple Ben Ali and lead to the country's first free and fair elections in history. This military response – unique in the Arab world – defies simple explanation, yet it played a critical causal role in the success of the revolution. Tunisia is an ideal case to study the role of the military in non-violent revolution because it is the only still ongoing democratic transition to result from the wave of popular, pro-democratic uprisings. The national army's political neutrality throughout the revolution and transition has been critical to Tunisia's democratization. Not only did the army refrain from intervening to suppress the 14 January revolution, but it also remained unified and capable enough to restore order in the aftermath of Ben Ali's fall.

In this chapter, I develop my argument that the Tunisian Army's doctrine for domestic crises, which was shaped by both historical experience and foreign military training, influenced officers' ultimate decision not to suppress anti-regime protests in 2010–2011. The Tunisian military's response to the uprising represents not defection

or incapacity, but an exercise of restraint when faced with anti-regime protests. The seeds of this neutral orientation were planted during the era of French colonialism and Tunisia's first years of independence, nourished by decades of Western military training, and solidified after fateful interventions in 1978 and 1984. Tunisian officers' commitment to restraint was established long before protesters took the streets in December 2010, and without it, Tunisia's peaceful "revolution of dignity" would likely have failed.

Since the Arab Spring, scholars have worked to make sense of the Tunisian army's surprisingly positive role in the revolution. Most explain the army's response as a result of either incapacity or disloyalty, motivated by professionalism (Bellin 2012), organizational interests (Brooks 2013), or personal grievances against the civilian regime (Bou Nassif 2015b). Upon closer inspection, however, we see that the army was neither disloyal nor incapacitated, but genuinely neutral. As late as mid-January, the military still had the strength to crush the revolution by force, had it chosen to defend Ben Ali at all costs.[1] Instead, soldiers stood impassively in front of government buildings, leaving demonstrators and rioters to clash with the police. At the same time, the Tunisian military did not force Ben Ali from office, and senior military officers never sought power for themselves during the revolution, despite ample opportunity to take advantage of the situation.[2] Nor did the army refuse orders to fire on protesters, because explicit orders to do so never came. Instead, the army consistently followed a strategy of political neutrality, limiting its order maintenance operations and avoiding confrontations with protesters until after Ben Ali fled Tunis on January 14.

The chapter proceeds as follows. First, I discuss the foundation of the Tunisian armed forces at independence and the initial sources of its doctrine. I identify three primary sources: the design of coercive institutions during the colonial era, the role of

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1. Brigadier General Mohamed Ali El Bekri (former Inspector General of the Armed Forces), interview by the author, December 3, 2015. All ranks refer to retired officers of the Tunisian Army unless otherwise noted. See Table 3.1 for a hierarchy of Tunisian Army ranks.

2. "General Ammar: I refused the coup in Tunis [rafiḍtu al-ʾinqilāb fī tūnis]", *Al-Jazeera*, November 6, 2015. Ammar even claimed afterward that Ben Ali's cabinet had implored him to seize power himself, but that he refused.

the military in securing national independence, and the relationship between the military and the hegemonic, postcolonial political party. Next, I explore how historical interventions and foreign influence generated innovation in the military's doctrine for domestic security. Tracing the army's history in each of these areas, I describe how soldiers' ideas about neutrality and restraint were reinforced by their experience, and how these ideas were internalized, routinized, and formalized prior to 2010. Finally, I establish the role of doctrine in the army's response to the revolution, which promoted nonviolence and enabled the peaceful transfer of power on January 14 and afterwards.

A Note on Sources

Most scholars of civil-military relations have relied exclusively on secondary sources to assess the role of the Tunisian army in the revolution.[3] Unfortunately, the existing literature on Tunisian civil-military relations prior to the revolution was extremely limited. As a result, studies have tended to repeat similar claims about the Tunisian military, emphasizing its professionalism, political marginalization, and heroic refusal to fire on protesters. The limited information available about the Tunisian military also led to some factual errors; for example, initial reports that the Army Chief, General Rachid Ammar, had refused a direct order from Ben Ali to fire on protesters turned out to be false.[4] Given these limitations, and despite the difficulty of accessing military elites in what was, until recently, a deeply closed and authoritarian system, qualitative interview research was the best methodology available to study civil-military relations in Tunisia.

To dig beneath the clichéd arguments and better understand why the Tunisian mil-

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3. To my knowledge, three other researchers have done fieldwork interviewing military officers in Tunisia since the revolution (Jebnoun 2014; Bou Nassif 2015b; Grewal 2016).

4. The claim that Ben Ali gave the order to fire, which the chief of the army then refused, spread in both the national and the international press (Azzeddine Neffati, "Gloire à notre armée nationale," *La Presse* (Tunis), February 19, 2011; David Kirkpatrick, "Chief of Tunisian Army Pledges His Support for the 'Revolution,'" *New York Times*, January 24, 2011). Most academic sources repeat the claim, citing media reports (Barany 2011, 26-27; Bellin 2012, 134; Lutterbeck 2013, 35; Pion-Berlin *et al.* 2014, 242; Barany 2016b, 136). A Tunisian blogger, Yassine Ayari, later admitted to creating the false rumor to push the army to defect from Ben Ali (Mehdi Farhat, "Yassine Ayari: 'L'armée n'a jamais reçu l'ordre de tirer' [The army never received the order to shoot]," Slate Afrique, July 20, 2011, `http://www.slateafrique.com/15009/yassine-ayari-revolution-tunisie-blogueur-rachid-ammar-armee`). See also Bou Nassif (2015b, 77-78).

itary became politically neutral prior under the Ben Ali regime, I undertook five months of fieldwork in Tunis, Tunisia. I interviewed mainly retired, senior military officers, many of whom had served in the highest positions of authority under the old regime. Most held the most senior army ranks, general or major colonel.[5] Table 3.1 shows the commissioned officer ranks of the Tunisian Army. In addition, I interviewed two former Ministers of National Defense, one former Minister of the Interior, senior officials in these ministries, and members of parliamentary committees engaged with the military and security policy. The ranks and positions of my primary interview subjects are broken down in Table 3.2. For background, I spoke with several local journalists and security experts, as well as a handful of American embassy employees responsible for U.S.-Tunisia security cooperation. Almost all interviews were conducted in French, with an interpreter present in case the subject was more comfortable expressing him or herself in Arabic. Translations are my own. A few of my interlocutors requested anonymity, which was granted, in accordance with IRB directives, due to the sensitive nature of security and political issues in Tunisia. Active soldiers and current employees of security ministries are forbidden by Tunisian law from giving interviews, severely curtailing both Tunisian and foreign researchers' access to interview data regarding military and security policy.[6] Indeed, the lack of transparency in Tunisia's security sector has itself become an object of significant policy importance and debate (Hached and Ferchichi 2014; Meddeb 2015b; Jebnoun 2017). Despite these limitations, the historical documents and original interviews uncovered in my fieldwork provide a compelling narrative of the Tunisian Army since independence, and especially of soldiers' historical interactions with the public and with foreign military education.

  While Tunisian MoI and MoD archives remain inaccessible, the United States has

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5. "The rank of major colonel (ameed in Arabic) was created by Ben Ali to ease the backlog of colonels waiting to become generals. In the Tunisian armed forces, the rank of general is generally granted only to those occupying one of the top five positions: the chiefs of staff of the army, air force, or navy; the director general of military security; or the inspector general of the armed forces" (Grewal 2016, 4n18).

6. Following official channels and procedures, I formally requested an interview with the external affairs department of the Ministry of National Defense. My requests remain unanswered several years later.

Table 3.1: Tunisian Military Ranks

	Rank (in French)	NATO
General Officers	Corps General (*Général de corps d'armée*)	OF-7
	Major General (*Général de division*)	
	Brigadier General (*Général de brigade*)	OF-6
Senior Officers	Colonel Major (*Colonel-major*)	OF-5
	Colonel (*Colonel*)	
	Lieutenant Colonel (*Lieutenant-colonel*)	OF-4
	Major (*Commandant*)	OF-3
Junior Officers	Captain (*Capitaine*)	OF-2
	First Lieutenant (*Lieutenant*)	OF-1
	Second Lieutenant (*Sous-Lieutenant*)	

declassified many government documents from the Cold War era, most created by the Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) or the Department of State. The "Kissinger Cables" (1973–1976) and the "Carter Cables" (1977–1979), collections of diplomatic cables which were declassified by the US government, were released by the National Archives and Records Administration, and published by Wikileaks in April 2013 and April 2014.[7] A second useful collection is CREST,[8] which provides access to CIA documents which have been declassified following a statutory 25-year review under the Freedom of Information Act (FOIA). This collection features intelligence reports from embassies and analysts in Tunisia and Washington. Thanks to the close diplomatic relationship between the United States and Tunisia, American diplomats had excellent access to political and military officials, reflected in the detail and inside knowledge in the reports.

3.1 Foundations of Doctrine

When a new postcolonial military is created, its initial doctrine derives principally from three sources: the design of coercive institutions under colonial rule and in the first years

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7. Wikileaks, Public Library of United States Diplomacy, `https://wikileaks.org/plusd/`. Government documents may be accessed using record locators provided in notes.

8. CIA Records Search Tool: 25 Year Archive, `https://www.cia.gov/library/readingroom/collection/crest-25-year-program-archive`.

Table 3.2: Interviews with Former Tunisian Officials, Oct. 2015–May 2016

Rank	Respondents
General officers	2
Senior officers	14
Government ministers	4
Other senior officials	3
Members of parliament	6

of independence, the role of soldiers in obtaining and securing national independence, and the relationship between the military and the ruling political party. From the French protectorate, Tunisia inherited a small and powerless conscription army alongside a robust civilian bureaucracy, establishing a civil-military balance that persists to this day. Armed resistance played little role in securing Tunisia's independence, so civilians like Habib Bourguiba, considered the founding father of the Tunisian Republic, and his Neo-Destour party monopolized the postcolonial political scene. As president, Bourguiba established a personalistic, single-party regime – asked about Tunisia's political system, he once remarked, "The system? What system? I am the system!"[9] – and banned soldiers from the Neo-Destour, enforcing a separation of military and civilian roles in the new regime. Together, these foundations established an initial military doctrine that tended toward nonintervention, but was not yet fully committed to restraint.

Institutional Origins

The Tunisian Armed Forces (*al-Quwwāt al-Musallaḥa al-Tūnisiyya*) were established by decree on June 30, 1956, as the country was released from French colonial "protection."[10] While technically a new organization, the national army was built on the institutional foundations of the conscription-based army France had built to contribute Tunisian troops to its foreign wars (Hartnett *et al.* 2018). The new army incorporated not only the Beylical Guard, but also some soldiers transferred from the French Army. Beginning in the colonial

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9. Cited in Moore (1965, 41).

10. "Décret du 30 juin 1956 portant institution de l'Armée Tunisienne," JORT 1956, N° 52.

era, the national service (i.e. conscription) has formed a fundamental tie between the army and society. National service was formally established in 1830 under Ahmad Bey, but was rarely enforced until the 1880s, under the French protectorate, when a standing army was finally established (Anderson 1987, 142-143). French authorities then leveraged Tunisia's *de jure* conscription policy to provide auxiliary infantry to assist in the two World Wars in Europe and in the Rif War in Morocco.[11] Casualty rates among Tunisian conscripts were enormous, and Tunisian families came to equate military service with virtually certain death. Long after independence, the Tunisian population continued to view conscription in these colonial terms, as the sacrifice of a son, not as an act of citizenship.[12]

Since independence, every Tunisian male citizen has been subject by law to mandatory military service. Although only a small percentage of eligible young men actually perform their required military service, one-year conscripts comprise the majority of the country's armed forces. Due to high levels of evasion, authorities occasionally struggle to recruit enough young men to fill the ranks. In such cases, the army organizes spot checks in the country's towns and villages to identify eligible recruits (Meddeb 2015a). Yet because manpower requirements are so low, and the unemployment rate has been so high, the system has been generally effective in maintaining the armed forces at an acceptable strength (Anderson 1987, 236). Those who serve are typically poor people with limited means, since evading conscription is trivially easy for more prosperous citizens (Ware 1985, 39). Thus, beyond the professional officer corps, the army consists of average young men from across the country, performing a civic duty often out of lack of better options. Despite the somewhat coerced nature of national service, this influx of young citizens into the army's ranks each year creates a shared identity between the army and the public, in a way that voluntary service—whether in a professional army or police force—does not.

Officers, too, represented a diverse cross-section of Tunisian society. After an

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11. Kamel Morjane (Former Minister of Defense), interview with the author, May 26, 2016.
12. Colonel Major Fawzi Aloui (Former Director General of Prisons and Rehabilitation), interview with the author, May 25, 2016.

open, nationwide call for applications, a group of young men was selected in 1956 to train at the prestigious French Special Military School at Saint-Cyr Coëtquidan.[13] The initial class, who would become the core of the military elite for a generation, was known as the "*promotion Bourguiba.*" The nickname, an homage to the president, reflected the cadets' devotion to both the man and his nationalist politics (Ben Kraïem 2009, 51-52). Members of this class played an enormous role in the development not only of the army, but also of the civilian state. The class included, among other military and civilian leaders, one future governor, seven ambassadors, and three government ministers: Generals Habib Ammar, Abdelhamid Escheikh, and Zine el-Abidine Ben Ali (206-207). From its first class of cadets, the officer corps represented the country's socioeconomic and regional diversity, which has helped the army to foster its public image as a representative of the Tunisian people (12).

Following the model of the French administration, Tunisia's political leaders relied on a pervasive, centralized system of surveillance to control political dissent (Hibou 2011). Consistently high unemployment rates throughout Tunisia's modern history have facilitated recruitment into the ranks of the domestic national guard and national security police, which converted this surplus of inexpensive labor into a massive and pervasive surveillance and policing apparatus Anderson (1987, 236). Organized under the Ministry of Interior (MoI), Tunisia's internal security forces include national and local police, National Guard (a paramilitary gendarmerie), political police (abolished in 2011), and several civilian intelligence services. Since the Ministry of Interior (MoI), not the military and Ministry of Defense (MoD), has primary responsibility for both internal and regime security, both domestic intelligence and political repression were dominated by the police, to the exclusion of the armed forces (Jebnoun 2017, chap. 3). In addition, the MoI was also explicitly tasked with implementing government policy, including both economic and political initiatives, at the local level.[14] To this end, the MoI was granted direct control

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13. Founded by Napoleon Bonaparte in 1802, Saint-Cyr is the most prestigious military school in France.
14. "Décret N° 75-342 du 30 mai 1975, fixant les attributions du Ministère de l'Intérieur," Journal Officiel

over local governance: regional governors[15] were appointed by the president but worked under the direction of the MoI. Each governor was in direct control of all government functions within his territory, from the police and national guard to the tax service.[16] As a result, the military has never played a role in day-to-day security operations in Tunisian cities and towns.

Under the constitution of Tunisia, the president is the commander-in-chief of the armed forces,[17] but his authority over the military is generally exercised through the Minister of National Defense, a civilian who legally directs the activities of both the MoD and the service branches. At the top of the military hierarchy sit the chiefs of staff (*chefs d'état-major des armées*), who are tasked with commanding the service branches and advising the MoD on "the doctrine of use of the armed forces."[18] From 2002 to 2013, the general staff of the army was led by General Rachid Ammar, whose personal role eclipsed that of the civilian Minister of Defense. Officially, the army's missions were national defense, disaster response, and occasionally contributing to economic development projects and infrastructure. The army's only operational experience has come from rare domestic interventions at home and from peacekeeping missions abroad. Bourguiba contributed Tunisian troops to United Nations peacekeeping operations as early as July 1960, just four years after establishing the new army.[19] The primary rationale was to enhance the country's international standing and earn goodwill from allies who might one day need to rescue Tunisia from invasion, but UN contributions may also have served to distract

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de la République Tunisienne (JORT) 1975, N° 39. This and other issues of the JORT may be consulted online at the Centre National Universitaire de Documentation Scientifique et Technique (CNUDST), `http://www.cnudst.rnrt.tn/`.

15. Tunisia was first divided into fourteen governorates (*wilayāt*) by royal decree on June 21, 1956 (JORT 1956, N° 50). There are now twenty-four.

16. Béchir Mejdoub (Former Governor of Kef), Interview with the author, Tunis, November 24, 2015. Regional bureaucrats reported directly to the governor, even before government ministers. This system ended after the revolution.

17. Constitution of 1959, article 44; Constitution of 2014, article 77.

18. "Décret N° 75-671 du 25/09/1975 fixant les attributions du ministere de la défense nationale," JORT 1975, N° 64.

19. United Nations, "First Report by the Secretary-General on the Implementation of Security Council Resolution S/4387 of 14 July 1960," 7.

military officers from domestic politics (Albrecht 2018).

In sum, the Tunisian Armed Forces were designed from their creation to serve clearly delineated roles and missions, which did not include domestic intervention. The institutional design and colonial legacies of the nation's robust police and surveillance organizations further distanced the military from domestic politics. Despite this, popular uprisings blur the lines between national security and regime security and inevitably raise the specter of military intervention. From a legal standpoint, early Tunisian laws designated the armed forces as a backup to the internal security forces in cases of extreme need. Order maintenance, as such missions are described, has always been a secondary role for the Tunisian military.[20] By law, "The Minister of National Defense is responsible... to participate in the maintenance and the restoration of order by the employment of the Armed Forces, when it is legally required by the competent civil authorities."[21] Accordingly, domestic interventions by the army have been rare, occurring only a handful of times before 2011, and require the president to declare a state of emergency and explicitly request military intervention (Ben Kraïem 2009, 195-198). Nevertheless, Tunisian law has always left the question of military intervention up to the president, leaving open the possibility of using soldiers to repress anti-regime protests.

Role in National Independence

At independence the national myth, or common story of how independence was won, plays an important role in legitimating the institutions of the protean state (Moore 1970, chap. 2). Thus, the role the army played in winning national independence helps determine the army's initial level of political legitimacy. Unlike in neighboring Algeria, "Tunisian independence was not won by an army, but by politics, so the army had no legitimacy except by the constitution."[22] What armed resistance did take place came at

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20. As used in Tunisia, the term "*maintien de l'ordre*" also encompasses the broader idea concepts of law enforcement and the policing of public space.

21. "Décret N° 75-671," JORT 1975.

22. Colonel Major Mahmoud Mzoughi, interview with the author, November 4, 2015.

the hands of non-state militia groups called *fellagha*, but these organizations were not members of the leading Neo-Destour wing of the nationalist movement. Since few, if any, soldiers could claim to have fought for Tunisia's independence, the new armed forces had no political legitimacy of their own. On the other hand, Habib Bourguiba won enormous personal legitimacy for his role in securing independence via negotiation, and he quickly consolidated power in a "presidential monarchy," backed by the hegemonic Neo-Destour Party.[23] When Bourguiba assumed the presidency in 1956, he faced armed insurrection from some members of the *fellagha*, who supported his principal political rival, Salah Ben Youssef.[24] Tunisia's protean indigenous military, numbering only a few thousand troops with very limited training, were powerless to stop the revolt, and Bourguiba soon invited the French police and army to intervene to put down the rebellion (Perkins 2014, 135-136). Naturally, their reliance on Tunisia's former colonial master to provide security further weakened soldiers' legitimacy as political actors on the national stage.

The circumstances of Tunisian independence therefore empowered Bourguiba with a deep personal legitimacy, while depriving the military of any claim to political author-ity. Bourguiba's political philosophy focused on modernization, meaning he directed the state's limited resources toward education and economic development, rather than military power (Moore 1965, 41-45). From independence, the military budget was and remained unusually low by regional standards (Anderson 1987, 236). Bourguiba spurned the purchase of expensive weapons systems and other military hardware, and directed the armed forces to invest in education and training. The army also took full advantage of opportunities to train its officers abroad at no cost to the Tunisian state. Many officers

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23. The name for this political current, *destour* (constitution), is an homage to Tunisia's constitution of 1863, the first in the Arab world. The Constitutional Liberal Party (*al-Ḥizb al-Ḥurr al-Dustūrī*), founded in 1920, advocated liberation from French colonialism and was widely lauded for its role in negotiating Tunisia's independence. Its successor, the Neo-Destour (formally the New Constitutional Liberal Party), was renamed the Destourian Socialist Party (PSD) in 1964. Upon seizing power in 1987, Ben Ali replaced the PSD with a new ruling party, the Rassemblement Constitutionnel Democratique (RCD), which remained hegemonic until the revolution of 2011.

24. Along with Bourguiba, Ben Youssef was a key leader of the Tunisian national movement. After independence, he became Bourguiba's main political nemesis and was forced into exile in 1958 (Moore 1965, 68-69).

considered their treatment – "ridiculously low" pay and insufficient equipment[25] – part of a persistent strategy on the government's part to "marginalize" the army (Ware 1985, 39). Nevertheless, Bourguiba's emphasis on training rather than equipment encouraged professionalization in the officer corps and set a precedent that continues to the present day.

Moreover, France's early intervention against the *fellagha* became emblematic of Bourguiba's foreign policy and defense strategy, which relied heavily on foreign military assistance. Nevertheless, Tunisia has faced few external threats since independence, and the army surmounted its only major challenge, the Gafsa affair of 1980, despite its low budget. Bourguiba justified his government's low military budgets with the conviction that Tunisia's strong friendships with Western powers would provide adequate defense in case of foreign invasion. Accordingly, independent Tunisia charted a neutral course in international diplomacy and equipped its military only to slow down a potential invasion temporarily while waiting for backup from the international community. Throughout the Cold War, Tunisia was a steadfast American ally, yet Tunisia's diplomats nurtured friendly ties with virtually every country it could.[26] For example, Tunisia hosted the headquarters of the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO) from 1982 to 1991 without a breakdown in relations with the Western powers.

As a result, the Tunisian army remained small, but highly professional and well-trained by regional standards. Although Tunisia has never published an explicit national defense strategy document,[27] the country has continued to follow Bourguiba's basic principle of national security: make friends, not enemies. In practical terms, the military's

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25. Interview with a senior army officer, November 2015.

26. Ambassador Ali Hachani (Former Permanent Representative of Tunisia to the United Nations), interview with the author, May 24, 2016.

27. Since 2011, members of Tunisia's defense community, with encouragement and assistance from foreign military partners, have argued in favor of developing an explicit national security strategy. For example, the United States allocated $99,205 in FY2014-15 to "engagements related to development of a strategy and policy white paper" (Department of Defense, "1211(a) Report to Congress," August 1, 2016). The project has been discussed in parliament but has not been adopted into law (Dr. Souheil Alouini [Vice President, Defense and Security Commission, Assembly of the Representatives of the People], Interview with the author, Tunis, May 15, 2016).

designated role is to repel any attack on the national territory – relying in part on a popular defense, meaning the participation of all Tunisian citizens, especially those trained during their national military service – until a diplomatic solution or United Nations intervention can be organized.[28] The strategy explicitly recognizes Tunisia's limited military capacity, and aims to supplement this weakness with diplomatic strength. Tunisia's key allies, especially the United States, have expressed direct support of this strategy. Assessing this strategy, a top aide to Secretary of State Henry Kissinger wrote in 1975, "We do not believe that [the Government of Tunisia] has been wrong in the past to devote the great bulk of its resources to social and economic development… Tunisia's moderate policies have earned her many friends both within the Arab world and in the wider international community, a factor which by itself enhances Tunisian security."[29]

Soon after independence, Tunisia's military humiliation against French forces in the Battle of Bizerte served to reinforce the domination of political over military forces in the new state. At the time, the northern port city of Bizerte was home to both French and Tunisian naval bases. In order to pressure France to withdraw, Tunisia imposed a blockade against a much stronger French navy. From a military standpoint, the battle was a decisive defeat: inside three days, 630 Tunisians had been killed but only 25 French, and France had extended its control to the entire town of Bizerte. However, at the conclusion of the Algerian War some three months later, France finally withdrew from Bizerte, offering Tunisia a diplomatic victory. Despite the military embarrassment and significant loss of life among soldiers and civilians alike, neither the army nor the government responded to the crisis by demanding an urgent increase in the size and equipment of the armed forces. Instead, President Bourguiba held up the French withdrawal as a validation of his

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28. This strategy was described to me in numerous interviews with military officers and was stated succinctly in a 1979 US diplomatic cable: "Tunisia's basic defense strategy is two-fold. First, it is to possess sufficient ground capability to conduct a delaying action against an invasion from either Libya or Algeria, and secondly, to use the time gained to organize international support in the United Nations and elsewhere." (Embassy Tunis, "Annual Integrated Assessment of Security Assistance to Tunisia," Wikileaks Cable: 1979TUNIS03534_e, dated April 30, 1979.)

29. Department of State, "Tunisian Request for Military Assistance," Wikileaks Cable: 1975STATE043531_b, dated February 26, 1975.

hold-and-negotiate defense strategy. The experience of the Bizerte Crisis demonstrated to Tunisia's young officers that diplomacy is a key part of strategic success, and further increased Bourguiba's influence over the nascent military's doctrine.[30]

Relation to the Ruling Party

Under the edicts of Habib Bourguiba, the military was disenfranchised and banned from membership in any organization. In particular, soldiers were banned outright from all political activities and memberships, even within the ruling Neo-Destour Party (Ware 1985, 37). The military elite maintained some links to civilian politics, and were occasionally appointed to civilian positions in the MoI or as regional governors, but not a single military man was appointed to a cabinet-level position until Ben Ali in 1987, who had by then spent the majority of his career in the civilian security administration (Bellin 2012, 146n32). Thus, Bourguiba imposed a policy of apoliticism that effectively discouraged political engagement by the military elite, and even private political discussions became rare within the officer corps.[31] With these efforts, the Bourguiba regime largely succeeded in removing the military as an actor in elite politics. The "republican ethos," a nationalist ideology propagated within the armed forces, encouraged soldiers to define their role and mission as defending the republic instead of encouraging loyalty to a particular leader or political party. Soldiers were and are completely banned from joining political or religious associations of any kind, and they are discouraged from expressing political opinions either within the military hierarchy or in public. Despite this formal apoliticism, however, the military remained active supporters of the government in power and were at the president's disposal to maintain the internal security of the country. Moreover, the Tunisian armed forces remained heavily dependent on political elites to approve their promotions, budgets, and operations, thus weakening their institutional autonomy from the regime (cf. Bellin 2012).

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30. Interviews with senior officers.
31. Interviews with senior officers.

The non-political model of Tunisian civil-military relations was consolidated in the 1960s, at a time when coups d'état were a common feature of Arab politics. Regional leaders like Nasser in Egypt, Qasim in Iraq, the Ba'thists in Syria, and Boumédiène in Algeria had all come to power by coup d'état, and coups were occurring more frequently in the Middle East than in any other region (Picard 1990, 190). Bourguiba was deeply concerned with avoiding a similar fate, especially after the Free Officers' Revolt in Egypt in 1952, as he admitted in a 1962 speech:

> Unless we take, as of today, the necessary measures [for economic development], the country in a few decades will experience serious convulsions. The disinherited will find leaders to express their grudges. Their children, brought up in hatred, will infiltrate the ranks of the army. Then one day at dawn, they will try to seize power and arrest the Head of State, Sovereign or President of the Republic with his ministers.[32]

His concerns soon found justification. In 1962, a small group of soldiers attempted to overthrow Bourguiba, but the plot was discovered in the planning stages and the plotters were harshly punished: most were executed within a month.[33] Both followers of Salah Ben Youssef and Communists were implicated in the plot, providing Bourguiba ample justification to eliminate his last remaining political rivals. The plot did not enjoy widespread support within the army, and did not indicate a broader politicization in the ranks – to the contrary, most military officers remained uninvolved in politics. Nevertheless, the coup attempt hardened the regime's approach to depoliticizing the military and repressing political dissent more generally. To reinforce the military's depoliticization, the government cracked down hard on the 1962 coup attempt, sentencing the plotters to death, strictly controlling the training and education of military officers, and establishing a deep intelligence apparatus within the military.

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32. Public speech, March 12, 1962, quoted in Moore 1965, 197n46.

33. Demonstrating the value of elite status in Tunisian society, one particularly well-connected plotter escaped this fate. Moncef El Materi, a member of the *Promotion Bourguiba*, had his sentence commuted to ten years' hard labor after an appeal by Bourguiba's wife. He was later pardoned, founded a successful pharmaceutical company, and saw his son marry the daughter of President Ben Ali. Since the revolution, however, he has been in exile fighting extradition on money laundering charges. His memoir of the coup attempt offers a rationale for opposing Bourguiba in 1962 (El Materi 2014).

Conventional wisdom holds that the lack of military coups in Tunisia is a direct result of Bourguiba's distrust of the military, for which reason he kept the army too underdeveloped and ill-equipped to undertake a coup. Yet inaction does not demonstrate incapacity, and the dual plots of November 1987 underscore how little strength of arms is actually required to unseat a civilian leader. Historically, coup-proofing in authoritarian regimes has served to lengthen the incumbent's average time in office, but not to reduce the likelihood that he will eventually fall to a coup d'état (Albrecht 2015b). True to this pattern, a coup d'état eventually did take place in Tunisia, ending Bourguiba's presidency on November 7, 1987 – but it was the interior security services, not the military, which organized the transfer of power. Eighty-four years old and in poor physical and mental condition, Bourguiba had become increasingly erratic in his decision making. As his cabinet became a revolving door, popular dissatisfaction mounted and the national political situation became untenable (Ammar 2016, 79). As a result, when Prime Minister Ben Ali and an elite group of civilian security forces moved to depose the president-for-life, they enjoyed near-universal public support.[34] Incredibly, the date of Ben Ali's coup was fixed for November 7 to preempt a *second* coup plot – this one headed by the *Mouvement de la tendance islamique* (MTI, later renamed *Ennahda*) and involving the cooperation of a small number of mid-rank army officers – that his secret services had unmasked (Ammar 2016, 94).[35] However, the military as a whole was not active in either plot, and Ben Ali received only tacit support from the chief of staff of the army, while the rest of the officer corps was not informed.[36] As such, the incident is actually a striking case of military *nonintervention*, and offers an informative "dog that did not bark" counterfactual: the political situation in Tunisia had reached a crisis point, prompting separate coup plots, one within the Islamist

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34. "The transfer of power elicited no protests on behalf of a restoration; nor were there jubilant celebrations. Rather, the prevailing mood was one of gratitude that the transition had occurred constitutionally, peacefully, and seamlessly" (Perkins 2014, p. 188).

35. See also Fathi Amdouni, "Interview exclusive : J'ai fait avorter le coup d'État islamiste du 8 novembre 1987," December 25, 2012, `https://www.tunisie-secret.com/Interview-exclusive-Fethi-Amdouni-J-ai-fait-avorter-le-coup-d-Etat-islamiste-du-8-novembre-1987_a251.html`.

36. Mzoughi, interview, 2015.

movement and another within the civilian elite, led by Prime Minister Ben Ali. In the end, Ben Ali's coup went off without a shot fired, and even the small Islamist conspiracy had posed a serious threat of succeeding. The lack of an army-led putsch even in these highly favorable circumstances demonstrates how apolitical the officer corps had already become. Together, these incidents suggest that the military's inaction was the result of its political orientation and doctrine, not its weakness.

When Ben Ali, a career security officer and former brigadier general in the army, took power, observers in Tunisia and abroad believed that the army was poised to play a much greater role in Ben Ali's new regime (Ware 1988). But despite starting his career as a military officer, Ben Ali took office with a wary eye turned toward his former comrades. Rather than bringing the military closer to the ruling party (now rebranded as the *Rassemblement Constitutionnel Démocratique*, RCD), Ben Ali's rise to power heralded a turn for the worse in officers' fortunes. In 1991, hundreds of military officers were suddenly arrested and accused of illegally supporting the Islamist Ennahda movement. The incident, known as the Barraket Essahel affair, marked a turning point in the army's estrangement from the regime, reinforcing the army's political neutrality prior to 2010 (Jebnoun 2014, 302). The case involved the sudden arrest of 264 soldiers accused of organizing an Islamist-leaning coup d'état against the president. In the words of the accused, the charges were purely political.[37] Ben Ali planned to "pillage" the country but knew he had two potential threats: the army, which he distrusted in spite of his own military background after decades in the MOI, and the Islamist Ennahda party, which was positioned to take a sizable portion of the vote if open elections were held as promised.[38] The Barraket Essahel accusations implicated both the military and Islamists in a plot against the state, allowing Ben Ali to strike against both threats at once.[39] The arrests corresponded with a period

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37. The government's allegations were improbable at best. A senior officer in charge of military security at that time told me that the supposed planning meeting simply could not have occurred. The sleepy town of Barraket Essahel, he said, did not have a building large enough to hide 200-some conspirators.

38. Colonel Amor Ben Romdhane (Vice President, INSAF Association), interview with the author, October 28, 2015.

39. After the revolution, Ben Ali was convicted *in absentia* for his role in the torture of military officers

of excluding Army officers from top political appointments – such as positions in the civilian MoI, to which Ben Ali had appointed military officers during the first years of his presidency – indicating his desire to diminish the Army's political influence within the regime (Bou Nassif 2015b, 70-71). Some military officers who were uninvolved in the affair described an atmosphere of fear in the officer corps, fueled by concerns about guilt by association or false accusations.[40]

If Barraket Essahel was indeed a political effort to marginalize the Army, it may have been intended to provide cover for Ben Ali's associates, especially the family of his wife, Leila Trabelsi, to ramp up their corrupt business dealings without inciting challenges from state institutions. In the 1990s, the Ben Ali regime became increasingly tarnished with a reputation for corruption (Schraeder and Redissi 2011, 9). Yet while the regime's corruption was seen to extend to the police forces, the military was not directly implicated in any form of corruption.[41] The relative absence of corruption in the military may be interpreted as a sign of its political professionalism, but it also indicates military officers' distance from real political power during this period. Widespread allegations of rampant corruption within Ben Ali's family and associates also contributed to some military officers' desire to distance themselves from the president and his political circles.[42] In consequence, the armed forces became increasingly estranged from the RCD and the political leadership during the Ben Ali period (Bou Nassif 2015b). While the Tunisian military, unlike highly political armies elsewhere in the region, was relatively apolitical from its founding, the 1990s nevertheless brought a further weakening of the army's relationship to the ruling party.

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involved in the Barraket Essahel affair (Le Monde 2012). The officers themselves were rehabilitated to their military rank and pensions, but prevented from re-joining the military.

40. Commandant Alia Mzoughi, interview with the author, November 4, 2015.
41. Mahmoud Mzoughi, interview.
42. Khalfi, interview.

3.2 Past Interventions

Soldiers' experience interacting with citizens during domestic interventions generates innovation in the army's doctrine for future interventions. Because military intervention in response to protests or riots has been historically rare, each intervention on Tunisian territory has served as an influential guide for doctrinal innovation. The lessons learned from a small number of domestic interventions in the 1970s and 1980s, which nevertheless came at a critical time in the professional development of the army as a whole, therefore drove a process of major doctrinal innovation, which ultimately created the neutrality doctrine observed in the 2011 revolution.

Apart from peacekeeping, the Tunisian Armed Forces have only participated in two significant military engagements in Tunisia's modern history: the Battle of Bizerte, in July 1961, and the Libyan-backed attack on Gafsa in January 1980. In both cases, the Tunisian armed forces took immediate, but limited, military action while political leaders used diplomacy to secure reinforcements from abroad. In my interviews with senior army officers, these two incidents were almost universally cited as critical moments in the history of the Tunisian military, indicating the influence the events had on the development of military doctrine. In the eyes of the military, both engagements were positive examples of the correct and proper role of the military. In both cases, the public lauded soldiers' heroism and sacrifice, as compared with the public backlash after the army intervened against civilians.

Since its creation in 1956, the army has generally maintained positive relations with society, but during crises, officers worried that tensions would erupt and the situation would get out of control. In one officer's words, "We were always afraid that a confrontation would explode and the situation would become uncontrollable."[43] When the army, following established protocol, is brought in to back up the security forces,

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43. Colonel Major Ahmed Ghiloufi (Former senior military instructor), interview with the author, October 30, 2015.

soldiers can either try to calm the situation or escalate the use of force. In the army's first post-independence intervention in 1978, the army intervened violently, killing and injuring civilian demonstrators (Disney 1978, 13-14). After 1978, however, officers' strategy for domestic intervention shifted away from overwhelming force and toward peacefully defusing the situation.

Turning Point

The military's direct involvement in domestic politics peaked in the final decade of Bourguiba's presidency, when the army carried out its two largest domestic interventions of the twentieth century. Despite being formally apolitical and largely disengaged from elite politics, the Tunisian Army initially accepted a primary role in order maintenance through the 1970s. The army's first major intervention came during the fall and winter of 1977 and 1978, culminating January 28 on a day known as "Black Thursday." As the government inaugurated a second Five-Year Plan in 1977, increasing Tunisia's dependence on foreign investment, tensions mounted between the country's largest trade union, the *Union générale de travailleurs tunisiens* (UGTT) and the hegemonic *Parti Socialiste Destourien* (PSD). Receiving only minor concessions from the government, UGTT leader Habib Achour resigned from the political bureau of the PSD and called a nationwide general strike to begin in January 1978, its first since independence. The union coupled economic grievances with demands for political pluralism, highlighting the UGTT's position as the only capable challenger to the PSD, as it had been since 1956 (Perkins 2014, 167). As the police, army, and a little-known PSD militia clashed with demonstrating students and workers, the strike devolved into violent rioting. This was the first case in post-colonial Tunisia where protests escalated beyond the capacity of the police.

Responsibility for the government's response to these protests fell to Director General of National Security Zine el-Abidine Ben Ali. Under Ben Ali's direction, the police and national guard used live ammunition to disperse public gatherings. As the strike

gained support across the country, protesters began to fill streets in towns and villages across the country. Bourguiba then declared a state of emergency and instructed the Minister of Defense to order the army into the streets to disperse the protests. According to a former MoD spokesman, the army chief's close ties to the political elite influenced his decision to intervene:

> In 1978, the army chief was too close to the politicians, so when they asked him to intervene, he sent the army into the streets. This led to [the army] firing into crowds, which is contrary to the principles of the army.[44]

Sending armed conscripts into the street with simple orders to put down the protests virtually guaranteed a violent outcome. One senior officer, who later served as inspector general of the armed forces, observed, "The army went out against riots, stupidly with weapons, but they were not prepared for riots. You have armed soldiers facing provocation without any training for this."[45] The official death toll was forty-seven, but most sources put the number as high as two hundred (Anderson 1987, 242). Although the forceful combined response of the police and army ended the protests quickly, the state's brutality created a negative public reaction (Disney 1978, 14).

The military's subsequent actions demonstrated an acute sensitivity to the public criticism of the army's role in putting down the unrest. Once the protesters were subdued, the government and army moved to protect their image. Unofficial casualty figures, circulating on international news wires, were censored from the national press, which ran only the improbably low government figures.[46] On January 19 Hassib Ben Ammar, director of a political newspaper and an ex-Minister of Defense, had published an editorial criticizing the army's role in repressing protests early in the conflict; he was quickly brought before a military tribunal, which convicted him on charges of defaming the institution of the army. With the newspapers censored to prevent negative coverage, Bourguiba delivered

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44. Colonel Major Mokhtar Ben Nasr, Interview with the author, November 25, 2015.

45. El Bekri, interview.

46. Department of State, "New York Times Articles," Wikileaks Cable: 1978STATE024708_d, dated January 31, 1987.

a public address thanking and congratulating the armed forces for restoring order.[47]

Yet the military itself was deeply shaken by the events. A week after the events, the US Ambassador reported that "Officers, from Army Chief of Staff General Excheikh (sic) on down, are still shaken up," while junior officers appeared "confused" and ill-informed about the events and their causes.[48] Many officers, both junior and senior, regretted their involvement in Black Thursday and were determined to avoid being drawn into another political confrontation with the public (Ware 1985, 39). The US Embassy monitored the situation closely, interviewing senior government officials and military officers of all ranks. The American ambassador reported strong dissatisfaction among the armed forces: "They see themselves as being blamed by many Tunisians for shooting other Tunisians, a decision over which they had no control."[49] Later, as these officers reached positions of influence within the military, they would make sure that the next time a domestic crisis threatened the government, the military itself would have a measure of control over the decision to intervene.

Steps toward Restraint

In 1980, an incident known as the Gafsa Affair helped push the military's focus back to traditional defense, rather than politics. In the 1970s, tensions had escalated with neighboring Libya and its volatile leader, Muammar Gaddafi. On April 1979, the Minister of Defense told the US Ambassador that Tunisian defense strategy was " almost exclusively on the threat from Libya."[50] By the end of that year, social unrest had begun to reappear, echoing the general strike of 1978. Seeking to take advantage of the political turmoil, Gaddafi had trained a group of Tunisian militants in commando tactics and helped them

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47. Embassy Tunis, "Bourguiba Congratulates Army," Wikileaks Cable: 1978TUNIS00967_d, dated February 8, 1978.

48. Embassy Tunis, "Reaction of Tunisian Military to Use of Armed Forces against Rioters," Wikileaks Cable: 1978TUNIS00831_d, dated February 2, 1978.

49. Embassy Tunis, "Assessment of Tunisian Situation," Wikileaks Cable: 1978TUNIS01109_d, dated February 13, 1978.

50. Embassy Tunis, "Tunisian Defense Strategy-Meeting with with [sic] Minister of Defense Farhat," Wikileaks Cable: 1979TUNIS03246_e, dated April 20, 1979.

infiltrate back into Tunisia, hoping to instigate an uprising that could topple Bourguiba's government (Perkins 2014, 169). On the night of January 26, 1980, a group of about thirty commandos launched a surprise raid on the southern city of Gafsa.[51] Thanks in part to intelligence warnings of an impending attack, the Tunisian Army competently repelled the attack, limiting civilian casualties while retaking control of the city and preventing the escape of the assailants.[52]

The Gafsa Affair forced Bourguiba to admit the necessity of an army to defend Tunisia's borders (Perkins 2014, 170). As a result, he grudgingly augmented the military's budget for provisions and equipment (Ware 1988, 594). Nearly all of the military's new resources were spent countering a series of cross-border raids launched by Gaddafi over the coming years, so the change did not massively increase the resources available to the military.[53] However, the incident demonstrated that Tunisia, though extremely secure by regional standards, was not without need of a robust national defense. Finally, public praise of the army's performance provided a stark contrast to the wave of criticism that had followed the army's last intervention. As a result, the material strength of the military was actually increasing through the 1980s. Rather than weakness, the non-interventionist policy of the Tunisian army must be understood as a choice. As one commander explained, "During the three crises of 1978, 1980, and 1984, the regime depended on the army. In other countries in this situation you would have seen the army take power, but the Tunisian army does not involve itself in politics. This is a point of pride for us."[54]

When nationwide bread riots broke out four years later, avoiding bloodshed at the hands of the army had become a top priority, demonstrating how doctrine had already begun to shift following the disastrous events of 1978. The "bread riots" of January 1984 were set off by a severe reduction in government subsidies for bread and semolina

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51. Boubaker Ben Kraïem, "L'affaire de Gafsa en 1980 : Témoignage du Colonel Boubaker Ben Kraiem." *Site officiel de Moncef El Materi.* Accessed on: Dec. 3, 2015.
52. A senior officer who did not wish to be named, Dec. 6, 2015.
53. Interview with a senior military officer, November 7, 2015.
54. Colonel Major Hedi Tajani, interview with the author, May 18, 2016.

(i.e., couscous) at the behest of the IMF and World Bank (Perkins 2014, 172). As riots broke out, Bourguiba recalled Ben Ali from an ambassadorial post in Poland, to again oversee the brutal suppression of the protests in his former role of director general of national security. Ben Ali again ordered the police and national guard to fire on crowds of unarmed demonstrators, and the MOI called for assistance from the military (Paul 1984). With many officers already concerned about the reputational costs of firing on unarmed civilians, some commanders leading the 1984 intervention sought to reduce casualties. One regimental commander described his approach as follows:

> We had declared a state of emergency, the highest level of emergency, at which point the Army is charged with maintaining order. I had no direct experience with this, but I had the lessons and ideas from my comrades who had participated in 1978... I said to myself the most important thing is that no one be killed by the Army's bullets. I wanted the civilian leadership stay in place, not to replace it with military government.[55]

Although many commanders who had experienced the disaster of 1978 looked for creative ways to diffuse confrontations without violence, others followed orders and opened fire. Several army units participated with the police and national guard in firing on demonstrators, killing dozens of civilians. This time, the military crackdown created such a severe public backlash that Bourguiba was forced to reverse himself. He immediately restored the subsidies and implausibly claimed that his prime minister had implemented the cuts without the president's knowledge (Perkins 2014, 173).

Officers' involved in these order maintenance operations recognized that they were doing political work by confronting crowds of demonstrators chanting slogans against the political regime. They chafed against their deeply held conviction that the army should not involve itself in politics, and their immediate response was to minimize their political involvement. The officers also recognized that the protesters were angry with politicians, and perhaps the security forces, but not with the army. Following the 1984 crisis, a group

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55. Colonel Major Moussa Khalfi (Former Director of Military Security), interview with the author, November 6, 2015.

of senior officers informed Prime Minister Mohammed Mzali that they would not support future orders to deploy against unarmed civilians.[56] Another group of senior officers informed the US Embassy at the time that they are "uncomfortable with assignments to put down civil unrest and fear that Mzali will call on them again."[57] Although Mzali's government made efforts to strengthen the internal security forces, the CIA assessed in May of 1984 that these efforts were likely to be insufficient, requiring the government to again depend on the Army "to put down unrest, which may prompt the officer corps to throw its weight behind a replacement and the rank-and-file to perform in a lukewarm fashion." This experience provided the insight and motivation for innovation in the way the army would prepare to respond to future political crises. The generation of military officers whose first command experiences came in the popular uprisings of 1978 and 1984 would later lead the army's doctrinal shift toward nonintervention. Their experience struggling to control rioting crowds without resorting to lethal force taught this cadre of officers the value of nonviolent tactics, as well as the steep reputational costs the army risked incurring if the situation got out of hand.

3.3 Foreign Influence

While the literature in comparative politics has tended to view the military as an independent, domestic political actor, international relations scholars have viewed foreign partnerships and alliances as highly influential in military outcomes. Contrary to common perception, a national military can be highly influenced by foreign relationships, especially those forged through international training and educational partnerships, as well as ongoing cooperation on terrorism and regional security. The causal process unfolds in three parts. First, domestic and international politics determine foreign relationships. Second, trans-governmental relations, i.e. direct military-to-military partnerships at sub-

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56. The officers described their conversation with the prime minister to the US military attaché, whose report circulated within the CIA.

57. Directorate of Intelligence, "Tunisia: More Troubles Ahead," FOIA Document: CIA-RDP85T00287R001301600001-2, May 23, 1984.

state level, foster an exchange of ideas and cultural values. Third, these exchanges in-fluence military organizational culture, encouraging the diffusion of values and ways of doing things. Although the exchange is officially bidirectional, in practice the more developed army provides the lessons while the visiting officers learn from the model provided.[58] In the case of Tunisia, the most important form of foreign influence on the military was through education and training abroad, especially in French and American military schools.

In Tunisia, the pattern of Western military training and assistance dates to the 1830s, before the French protectorate, when two French officers were dispatched from Algiers to Tunis to instruct a new *nizami* army in European-style drilling techniques.[59] The exchange, which ended in acrimony after only six months, nevertheless established a lasting pattern of military cooperation (Anderson 1987, 67).[60] Henceforth, whenever the Tunisian military sought to develop or expand its institutional strength, it looked to the French, and later American, models for techniques, frameworks, and assistance. Despite multiple earlier attempts to establish an indigenous standing army, lasting success came only under the French protectorate, beginning in 1883 with the backing of significant French financial and administrative resources (143). In this way, the army has been a joint partnership between Tunisia and Western donors since its inception. Naturally, this relationship strongly influenced the military's mode of organization and doctrinal orientation.

From the start of the post-colonial era in the Middle East, military officers had

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58. One exception to this pattern is the exchanges of high-level delegations, who are invited to the National Defense University and other educational institutions to share insights on their own regions.

59. Tunisia's Ahmad Bey (r. 1837–1855) attempted to build a standing army which would for the first time incorporate native Tunisians (Brown 2015, chap. 8). Often called a *nizami* army, the force was modeled on the Ottoman *Nizam-ı Cedid,* which replaced the traditional slave-warrior caste known as *Janissaries.* Tunisia was a quasi-autonomous province of the Ottoman Empire until the French invasion in 1881.

60. Ahmad Bey's reform attempts were doomed by both international politics and the domestic economy. The French trainers were recalled to Algeria by an ill-fated plot to place Hussaynid rulers on the thrones of Constantinople and Oran (Brown 2015, 264). Moreover, government revenues were far too meager to support a standing army. In its first and only expeditionary mission, Ahmad's army joined the Crimean War against Russia in 1855. The Tunisian forces were obliterated, bringing an end to military modernization until the colonial period (Perkins 2014, 20).

played a dominant role in regional politics, and coups d'état were prevalent through the late 1940s, 1950s, and 1960s. In this regional context, Bourguiba decreed early on that Tunisian military officers would not receive training in the Eastern (Arab) or Soviet countries, not wanting his officers to witness an army that was both politically conscious and empowered. Instead, he leaned on France and the United States, believing that the influence of Western militaries would discourage the politicization of the armed forces.[61] American diplomatic correspondence demonstrates the Americans' reluctance to help Tunisia's military get involved in domestic politics. In 1974, the Department of State rejected a Tunisian request for military training in internal security, counter-insurgency investigation, and personnel investigation, stating that the US "would prefer to see Tunisians arrange for potentially repressive activity through non-American channels."[62] In this way, the Western model steered the developing Tunisian armed forces away from involvement in domestic affairs.

Initially, Western military schools directly provided all officer training for the Tunisian army, while Tunisia worked to establish its own military academies and officer schools. The Army's own Military Academy was inaugurated in 1967, and the Staff College opened in 1977.[63] All of the domestic schools and training programs closely followed the American and French models, in their design and curriculum, and the instructors conscientiously mirrored what they saw as the "republican ethos" of their Western partners.[64] From independence to the mid-1980s, the military education of officers gradually shifted from France to the United States, beginning with the "Saint-Cyriens" of the *Promotion*

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61. Colonel Major Mahmoud Mzoughi (Former Director of the National Defense Institute), interview with the author, November 4, 2015.

62. Embassy Tunis, "Tunisian Request for Military Intelligence Training," Wikileaks Cable: 1974TUNIS05387_b, dated August 30, 1974.

63. The Military Academy (*Académie Militaire*) in Fondouk Jedid provides an initial officers' training, while the Staff College (*Ecole d'Etat-Major*) in Le Bardo prepares officers for company command. In addition, a War College (*Ecole Supérieure de Guerre*) was inaugurated in 1996 to provide high-level instruction for senior officers who will be promoted to the highest command positions and the ranks of colonel and general. More recently, Tunisia established a Defense Institute (*Institut de la Défense Nationale*) to bring together senior civilian and military officials from across the government.

64. Colonel Major Mahmoud Mzoughi, interview with the author, May 19, 2016.

Bourguiba, who soon saw active duty *against* the French in the Battle of Bizerte and witnessed a corresponding decline in Tunisia's relationship with France. By the time of the 1984 Bread Riots, most field commanders had done the bulk of their training in the United States (Ware 1985, 38). Among the lessons imparted by Western military education was a sense of duty and code of "republican" values:

> We had a Western education where we well understood what a republic is. The country comes before individuals. And, Tunisia had the fortune not only in the Army but in my whole generation of being educated either abroad or by foreigners in Tunisia. In the West or by Westerners in Tunisia. Now that we are the instructors, it's not the same. We try to impart the same values, but it's not the same as living it abroad. They haven't lived in France. They haven't lived in the United States for a period of six months to understand what it means to be a citizen, the importance of the state, of the flag. All these things that elevate the mind (*l'ésprit*).[65]

The generation of young officers who commanded units during the interventions of 1978 and 1984, educated in the military schools of the United States, had reached the army's highest ranks by the 2000s. Their training and experience inspired doctrinal innovation in the way the army approached domestic intervention, favoring nonviolence and leading to the army's response to the revolution in 2011.[66] Conscripts, who comprise over four-fifths of the total force, serve only twelve months before returning to civilian life. They do not receive direct foreign training or education, as their short-term service precludes all but the most basic indoctrination and skills training, along with rigorous physical training. As a result, conscripts rely on the guidance of the officers who train and lead them. In this way, the education and doctrine of the officer corps dictates the behavior of the entire army.

Even as Tunisia has developed its own military training and education infrastructure, officers have continued to benefit from foreign training as well. From 2002–2012, the United States trained a total of 4,000 Tunisian soldiers, whether in Tunisia or

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65. Khalfi, interview.

66. By a fortunate coincidence, many these officers are recently retired from the senior-most ranks of the Army and generously offered their time for interviews.

Figure 3.1: IMET Trainees, 2000–2012

Data from SecurityAssistance.org and IISS (2013)
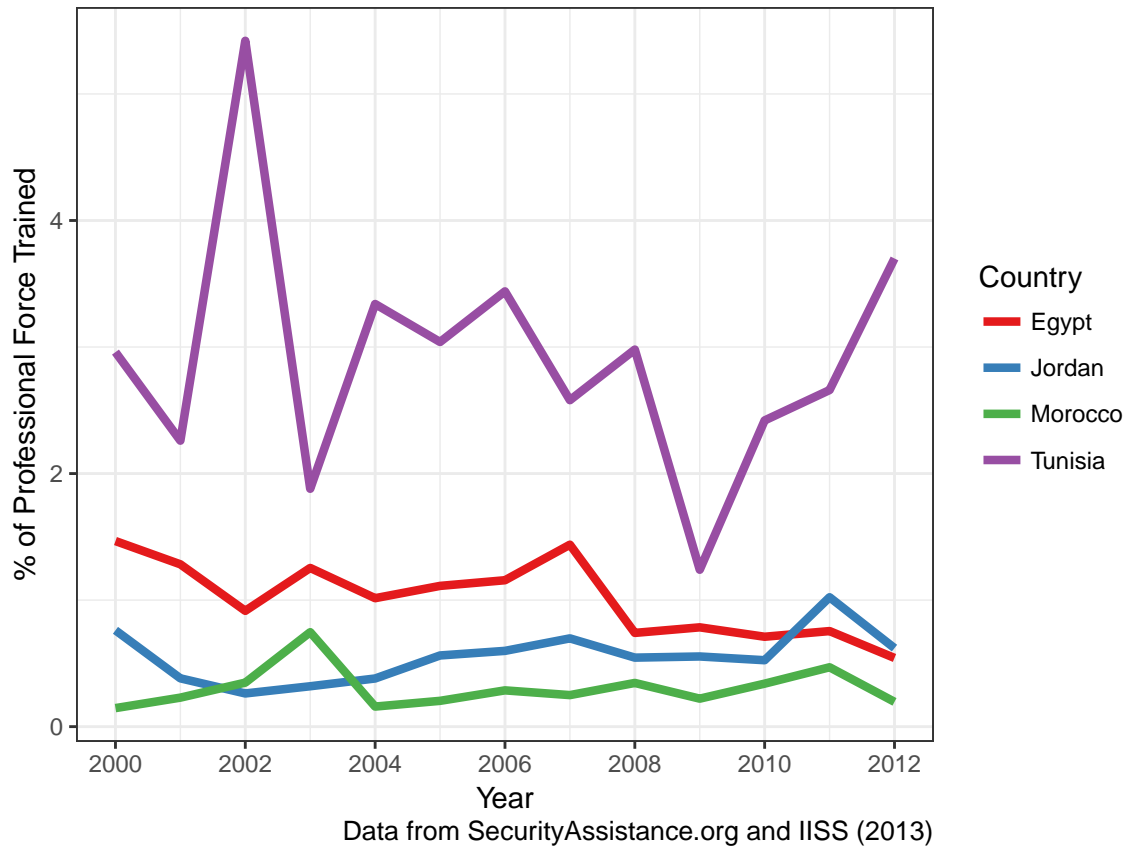
the United States.[67] That figure is especially striking in relation to the modest size of the professional army, which numbered only about 5,000 in 2018.[68] Through the US International Military Education and Training (IMET) program, Tunisia receives more than a hundred trainee positions each year.[69] While this is lower than the numbers allotted to other major partners, such as Egypt and Jordan, the small size of the Tunisian officer corps means that a much higher percentage of Tunisian officers receive US training each year. Figure 3.1 shows the percentage of the professional army trained each year from the four largest Arab recipients of IMET; Tunisia's rate is typically two to three times higher than that of the next highest recipient.

Foreign military aid also includes the provision of weapons, vehicles, and other

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67. "Tunisia – Army." *Jane's Sentinel Security Assessment - North Africa.* IHS Markit. Posted Feb. 14, 2018.

68. Jane's 2018.

69. Securityassistance.org

matériel, whether by purchase, loan, or grant. Tunisia's very first efforts at military modernization began in 1830 when Ahmad Bey purchased modern weapons from several European suppliers, including France (Perkins 2014, 19). With no domestic defense industry, Tunisia has continued to depend on Western suppliers, mainly France and the United States, for all of its military equipment. At independence, the newly established armed forces had no equipment at all. The force soon received donations of small arms from Egypt, artillery from Yugoslavia, and leftover World War II armaments from the United States. Afterwards, the United States was the most consistent supplier, both through donations of used equipment and purchases of American products with government loan guarantees.[70] This security cooperation has allowed Tunisian armed forces to equip themselves with relatively modern weaponry well beyond their limited fiscal means. Although American assistance to Tunisia was relatively small in absolute terms, it was very significant as a percentage of the Tunisian military procurement budget.[71] As of 2012, the US embassy in Tunis estimated that 70% of the Tunisian military's inventory was of US origin.[72] This form of security dependence is typical of smaller, developing countries like Tunisia.[73]

The reliance on a small number of powerful allies for military procurement may reinforce the influence of these donors over the armed forces. Typically, to maintain interoperability between weapons systems, an army will equip itself primarily with either Western or Soviet/Eastern weapons systems, rather than mixing and matching, and transitioning from Eastern to Western hardware can take decades.[74] Tunisia has used Western equipment almost exclusively, reflecting both diplomatic alignments and military

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70. Mzoughi, interview, 2016.

71. Alexis Arieff, "Political Transition in Tunisia," Congressional Research Service, December 16, 2011, cited in Brooks 2013, 214n27.

72. "Tunisia – Army," *Jane's Sentinel Security Assessment - North Africa,* IHS Markit, updated February 14, 2018.

73. Mzoughi, interview, 2016

74. For example, Egypt was a Soviet ally during Nasser's presidency, but transitioned to the Western camp under Sadat. After nearly three decades of massive US military aid, Egypt has still not replaced all of its Soviet-era equipment. See chapter 4.

considerations.[75] For comparison, most Algerian equipment is manufactured in Russia, with an increasing turn to Arab suppliers and China (IISS 2014, 309-310). In addition, military equipment requires a steady supply of replacement equipment and spare parts for routine maintenance, such that military acquisitions engage a long-term supplier relationship. At the same time, the leverage that military relationships provide should not be overstated. The US has struggled to make demands of even the largest recipients of military aid, such as Pakistan and Egypt, belying the simple premise of a patron-client relationship (Omelicheva *et al.* 2017). However, for a small military such as Tunisia's, the exclusive influence of Western powers in military training and education can have powerful long-term effects. American military aid does not guarantee compliance with US interests, but an army like Tunisia's, built on Western principles from the ground up, is far more likely to adopt Western attitudes toward civilian control over the military and the role of officers in politics.

3.4 Doctrinal Adoption

In the 1970s and 80s, the Tunisian military's experience with domestic interventions and foreign examples caused a doctrinal innovation in favor of restraint and nonviolence. As officers took lessons from their education and experience, they internalized the core concepts of a non-interventionist doctrine. In my interviews, many senior officers referred to the uprisings of 1978 and 1984 to explain why the Tunisian Army changed its doctrine. A few even mentioned the Romanian revolution of 1989 and the uprising at Timişoara, where the army's intervention had failed when soldiers began firing at unarmed civilians, leading to total chaos, many civilian casualties, and eventually the downfall of the Ceauşescu regime (Siani-Davies 2007, 63-66). To Tunisian officers, examples like these offered a bloody case study in how not to intervene.[76] From personal and historical

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75. Apart from 100 Yugoslav anti-aircraft guns, all current Tunisian equipment is made by NATO-aligned countries (*Jane's* 2018).

76. "I had in my mind what happened in Timişoara, in Romania. When the army made an intervention against people in Timişoara, they killed 80 people. Why? They were not there to kill people, but there

experience, they recognized that shooting civilians can be costly to the military. As Bellin (2012, 132) observes, "shooting on civilians... can spell serious damage to the military's core institutional interests: cohesion, discipline, prestige, and legitimacy." In light of these interests, the Tunisian military responded to the backlash against its 1978 and 1984 interventions by reforming its doctrine for domestic crises.

Recognizing the nature of the army's relationship with the population, the professional officers at the top of the military organization came to understand that they could enhance their social position and prestige by refusing to use force against civilians. According to several military officers, the army's public reputation benefited greatly from its respect for the law and abstention from use of force against the population. A retired senior military officer described the army's public relations under the Ben Ali regime as follows:

> The police did not have a good reputation in the country, but the army did. Because several times the army came to help them—especially in natural disasters—the army had an appreciation in the population. That's very important, because we have always treated them that way. The law says that the military doesn't even have the legal ability to deal with the population. To ask someone in the street for his identity card, you must be a judicial [non-military] police officer, the law says so.[77]

Col. Maj. Ben Nasr, army spokesman during the revolution, explained that the army reformed itself after 1984 specifically to avoid police work and the reputational cost of confronting citizens directly. "After [the bloodshed of 1984] the army reformed its rules and said, if we keep doing this [order maintenance], our role will be confused with the police. After that it was very strict: Under General Ammar, the army only accepted the role of defending state institutions, not intervening against the population. This is where divisions were created between the army and the politicians. Ben Ali did not agree with the army's stance."[78]

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are provocateurs. People were peacefully protesting, but someone inside the crowd fires at the army and [machine gun noises]. This is what happened in Tunisia, I'm convinced that happened" (El Bekri, interview).

77. Interview with a senior army officer, December 5, 2015.

78. Ben Nasr, interview.

Meanwhile, as the military eliminated the use of violence against protesters from its repertoire of action, the practice of nonviolence became routinized. From the army's founding, the institution stood apart from the coercive apparatus of the state. Because of the social composition and public role of the army, the public did not initially identify the army as part of the regime's coercive apparatus after independence. When Tunisia's internal security forces responded to major demonstrations under Bourguiba and Ben Ali, violence was commonplace. But unlike the internal security forces, the army did not participate in routine state repression, nor did officers engage in the face-to-face, low-level interactions with citizens that so often lead to petty corruption and abuses of power. Thus, citizens came to expect different behavior from soldiers than from police. In interviews, several senior officers attested that throughout the army's history, crowds of protesters have tended to respond more peacefully to soldiers than to the police. One officer described the dynamic as follows:

> Unfortunately the police do not have good relations [with the public] because they provoke confrontation; they use force. But the population doesn't accept that, and it's [the army's] role to calm the situation. Generally when we intervene on the ground, the population calms down. Generally, we do not allow the police direct contact with the population. We say to the security forces, 'stand back, we will handle this.' Then the police see the population calm down in front of the soldiers, and of course, still seek confrontation with the police.[79]

This scenario, repeated in similar form by several of my interviewees, describes strikingly positive relations between soldiers and society, based on the army's limited role in internal security. Because domestic interventions were rare, the population believed *ex ante* that the young soldiers, fellow citizens performing their national service, probably would not harm them. If they were afraid of military intervention, it was a fear of the unknown, not fear of a known threat as with the police.

Major labor strikes in the Gafsa mining region in 2008 further routinized the doctrine of restraint. As protests grew, they soon overwhelmed the internal security forces,

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79. Ghiloufi, interview.

despite their use of tear gas and water cannons (Chouikha and Gobe 2009, para. 26). Meanwhile, the army moved to secure key strategic sites, including the mines themselves, but ignored the escalating crisis in the streets. According to Col. Maj. Ben Nasr, the army's restraint was initiated entirely by the military itself, much to the consternation of the political leadership: "The Army decided to guard the installations, of phosphates, without intervening on the ground, or in the street to oppose the population. And that started the tensions between the Army and the political side. The president didn't appreciate that but he couldn't do anything about it, because it's the law."[80] There was no love lost between the army and the president; their relations had been fairly icy for decades, despite Ammar's deep personal loyalty to Ben Ali. Yet the Gafsa uprising may have given Ben Ali an insight into how far the armed forces had moved away from the order maintenance role, establishing a useful precedent for the revolution.

The army joined the intervention only after President Ben Ali declared a curfew on June 6. Even then, it was the internal security forces who used live ammunition to disperse the crowds, killing one and injuring twenty-one others, while the military held its fire (Chouikha and Gobe 2009, para. 29). Kamel Morjane, Minister of Defense during the crisis, described the military intervention in the town of Redeyef:

> The Army entered around 6 o'clock in the evening. At the beginning, [the strikers] started throwing a lot of things... but when they realized it was the Army, they started applauding. The bakers who were on strike went to their bakeries and began preparing bread for them and distributed it to the Army. Because they knew that they would not touch them. Because if [the Army is] in charge of protecting a bank, as far as [protesters] don't touch it, no soldiers will intervene. Which means for them a certain confidence: if you don't have bad intentions, the Army will not touch you. There is a sort of confidence in the fact that they don't often have contact with people, except those who come for their national service.[81]

To many participants on both sides, the strikes came to be seen as a precursor to the 2011 revolution. In the words of one protester, who demonstrated in both 2008 and 2011,

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80. Ben Nasr, interview, November 25, 2015.
81. Interview with the author, May 25, 2016.

"The revolution started here in 2008 in Moulares and Redeyef"[82] The remarkable success of the military's restraint in Gafsa signaled that nonviolence had become routine within the Tunisian armed forces.

Moreover, the Tunisian army had taken explicit steps many years earlier to prepare its nonviolent response. One implication of the doctrinal shift was an overhaul of the army's training and tactics for public order operations. During Rachid Ammar's command of the army, the general staff worked to implement reforms in the training of soldiers for domestic interventions, focusing on defending public buildings and minimizing confrontation with demonstrators. A senior officer working on the staff at the time, Brigadier General Mohamed Ali El Bekri, described their motivations as follows: "As we took the lessons from [the past interventions], we trained people how to deal with a population in front of them. We had as a background to try the maximum to avoid civilian casualties."[83] From 2004-2010, under General Rachid Ammar, the army implemented a specific training doctrine for crowd control. A senior officer involved in the planning described these preparations as follows:

> We did all that we can to protect the population because we felt that we must not, absolutely not [use force]. Because the people are asking for freedom or asking for rights, they must not be killed. It is against humanity. So we trained our people. The training and the preparation... is important to avoid shooting stupidly. Because you have weapons, you think you are allowed to kill people who are not protected.[84]

To mitigate the risk of a violent confrontation with protesters, the army followed a simple procedure: soldiers first delineated clear lines to the demonstrators, then refrained from interfering the protesters or responding to insults or provocations. If protesters did not fully respect the limit, soldiers would warn them by firing on a harmless, predetermined target. Force would be used only as a final resort, if protesters attempted to disarm the

82. Carlotta Gall, "Tunisian Discontent Reflected in Protests that have Idled Mines," The New York Times, May 13, 2014.
83. El Bekri, interview.
84. El Bekri, interview.

soldiers. El Bekri, an architect of these tactical plans, described them as follows:

> One of the steps is you shoot down [into the ground]. Here, the main importance is they do not take your weapons. Because if they take your weapons they can shoot on you or on other people... Unfortunately, if you shoot sometimes ricochet can cause accidents. We take another step, to show people that the bullets can kill, in our plans we choose a place—for example if there is a big wall behind the crowd, we make a square target and fire on that target to show the population it kills, it's real bullets. Why did we do that? Because in 1978, some in the population would say, when [soldiers were] firing in the air, "Oh, it's blank ammunition. Don't worry about it! Cross the line, it's blank ammunition!" So it's one more step to show the population.[85]

These procedures are not intended to provide crowd control, since they do not enable soldiers to clear an occupied area, nor to disperse protesters. Moreover, the Tunisian Army does not possess if non-lethal crowd control equipment, such as batons, water cannons, or tear gas. Instead, this approach allows the army to defend a fixed point, such as a government building, without directly confronting the population. In most cases, however, the army tried to keep weapons out of the equation altogether. The director of military security in the 1990s explained the value of confronting protesters unarmed:

> If you see a soldier with a weapon you think he's going to oppose you; if you see a soldier or policeman who was unarmed you think he is just doing his job. [He] is not going to use weapons against me. These things are very important. All the years I was in charge of military security, whenever there was a disturbance or situations like this in the country, I always kept this in mind, but above all, soldiers must not act as though they are armed, going into battle. They should act as Tunisians, explain what they are doing and try to find a solution. If you can avoid force, and especially weapons, all the better.[86]

In addition to domestic training, the Tunisian army formalized its nonviolent tactics during deployments in support of UN peacekeeping missions in Cambodia, Somalia, and Rwanda, where they received high praise from UN commanders for their exceptional professionalism and exemplary contributions to multinational forces.[87] According to *Jane's*,

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85. El Bekri, interview.
86. Khalfi, interview.
87. Mzoughi, interview.

a highly-respected defense analysis publication, "Deployments with UN peacekeeping missions in Africa provided the essential experience and resource capabilities to fill the void left by the collapse in legitimacy and capacity of Ben Ali's Ministry of Interior security forces in 2011" (IHS 2016).

In conclusion, soldiers' reflections on previous interventions and their Western military education internalized the values of nonviolence and nonintervention. Restraint became routine as more and more officers exercised discretion when confronting their fellow citizens. Finally, officers' formal training and peacekeeping experience served to formalize a nonviolent repertoire of action for domestic security, which ultimately ensured the Tunisian army's peaceful and politically neutral response to the revolution.

3.5 Responding with Restraint

In December 2010 the tragic self-immolation of Mohamed Bouazizi, which catalyzed the revolution, took place 100 kilometers north of Gafsa in another economically-depressed city of the southern interior, Sidi Bouzid. As massive protests developed and spread throughout the country, the army avoided contact with the protesters. Instead, the Army Chief of Staff, General Ammar, ordered his forces to defend strategic sites and state institutions like the national radio, but not to go beyond this minimal mission (Jebnoun 2014, 304-9). The army spokesman at the time explained that Ammar was explicitly following the doctrine established previously and employed on a smaller scale during the mining protests in Gafsa (see section 3.2):

> During the revolution it was the same [as in 2008]. The Army was solicited, it intervened and positioned itself at certain sensitive points and stopped there. When the army was asked, in certain places, to intervene the army said, "Look, we do not fire on the population. That's the role of the police and the National Guard." There was a dispute with the president, so the chief of staff [Ammar] wrote, "no soldier may fire on the population, no matter the situation, without prior authorization from his commander." Which is a nonsensical order in a military context, but it was to forbid firing on crowds.[88]

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88. Ben Nasr, interview, November 25, 2015.

Thus, crowd control and order maintenance were left to the internal security forces under the direction of the MoI. Meanwhile, the MoD and military commanders continued to participate in crisis meetings with President Ben Ali, but neither suggested nor supported a plan to increase military involvement in the response. As protests spread across the country, the size and scope of demonstrations began to overpower police capacity. By early January, many low-ranking police officials throughout the country had lost contact with high-ranking officials, who had turned off their cellphones (Mekouar 2017, 858). Citizens began attacking police stations and overrunning barricades throughout Tunisia, but the military did nothing to defend the police.[89] In isolated cases, it was reported that soldiers and police even exchanged fire.[90] By January 14, police authority had completely collapsed, and Ben Ali ordered Army Chief of Staff General Ammar to take control of the central operations room at the MoI (Grewal 2016, 5). With the situation escalating out of control, why did the armed forces not respond in force to subdue protests?

The answer lies in the doctrine of neutrality the army had developed over the previous decades. As the crowds swelled in December 2010 and January 2011, the internal security forces under the MoI, not the army, deployed to confront them. As the police used deadly force against civilians, the police themselves became the target of demonstrators' rage. Protesters attacked the police in front of them at demonstrations, along with police stations and the MoI headquarters in downtown Tunis (ICG 2011c). The army, however, avoided engaging the protesters by only defending major government institutions and strategic sites, like the state radio station and presidential palace (Brooks 2013, 206n5). This strategy of restraint was entirely consistent with the restrained approach army officers had developed for order maintenance after the 1978 and 1984 uprisings and had codified under General Ammar's command. In response, protesters did not target govern-

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89. In the words of a senior officer interviewed by Hicham Bou Nassif, "We shed no tears when the people attacked police stations. The police were corrupt and arrogant vis-à-vis the population and the armed forces. That the military should kill civilians in order to protect the police was out of the question; whatever happened to the police, they asked for it" (Bou Nassif 2015b, 86n79).

90. These reports cannot be confirmed, but skirmishes like these between various branches of the state coercive apparatus are common during political transitions (Gledhill 2012).

ment sites defended by the army, but preferred instead to attack the major manifestation of government abuse in their own lives: the offices of the ruling RCD party and the palaces of Ben Ali and his family and allies, along with police stations (Aleya-Sghaier 2013, 38-39). In this way, the army used its strategy of restraint to avoid engagement with the entire revolution until late on January 14, when Ben Ali fled into exile.

Once the regime fell and protesters' demands were met, the army quickly stepped in to reestablish security. Having stood by impassively for two months, the military suddenly acted firmly to restore order, demonstrating a latent capacity that was intentionally untapped during the revolution (Jebnoun 2014, 311). In one much-publicized incident, soldiers raced to secure a large supermarket in the Tunis suburbs, arriving just in time to disperse a mob of looters descending on the giant building.[91] The army had sufficient tactical capability and organizational strength to halt the looting and criminal activity that proliferated after the collapse of the interior security forces. During the revolution, nine of the country's eleven prisons had been abandoned, and thousands of inmates escaped, most of whom were not political prisoners, thus presenting a serious risk for public safety and security.[92] At least thirty-seven civilians were killed by the military over the next six weeks, but calm returned to Tunisia under the security guarantee of the armed forces.

A retired chief of staff of the navy later asserted, "Had the orders been given to shoot, the officer corps in its entirety would have turned against 'Ammar" (Bou Nassif 2015b, 80n77). His view reflects the extent to which restraint and nonviolence were firmly entrenched in the military's doctrine. On the other hand, a brigadier general of the army who worked closely with Ammar asserted to me that if Ammar had decided to crush the uprising by force, even as late as January 14, he could absolutely have done so.[93] Yet the general never came close to giving such an order, even after gathering in a crisis meeting with the country's top officials on January 13 (Jebnoun 2014, 305). Instead, his soldiers

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91. "Carrefour, défendu par les forces de l'armée nationale, et fermeture provisoire," Leaders (Tunis), 10 February 2011.
92. Aloui, interview.
93. El Bekri, interview.

hewed closely to the neutral role they had established for themselves over the past three decades. In the end, it was this doctrine which enabled the largely peaceful revolution of 14 January and the subsequent transition to electoral democracy.

Conclusion

The Tunisian military's response to the Arab Spring was entirely consistent with the doctrine of restraint that had been established prior to the uprising. Since its founding, the Tunisian army has asserted its political neutrality and refrained from meddling in civilian politics. This stance, unusual in the Arab world, can be explained by the Tunisian armed forces' origins in a marginalized colonial-era institution, their lack of participation in the national independence movement, and the absence of direct ties to the ruling party. Yet despite its formal apoliticism, the army continued to play a role in major domestic crises, notably when responding to popular uprisings in 1978, 1984, and 2011. In its first domestic interventions, soldiers fired on unarmed protesters, demonstrating that the institution's non-political foundation was not enough to guarantee a nonviolent response to popular uprisings. However, the reputational backlash that soldiers suffered in these early incidents led to innovation in military doctrine. By the 1990s, the officer corps had internalized a doctrine of restraint, routinized the tactics of restraint through training and application in smaller interventions, and formalized the dictum of neutrality in the army's standard operating procedures and rules. The military's experience intervening against mobilized citizens had generated a doctrinal orientation toward political neutrality, and declining relations between the military and the political regime further motivated soldiers' pursuit of institutional autonomy. When the revolution began, the army was poised to respond with restraint, allowing the revolution to succeed without mass violence.

Conventional wisdom holds that the Tunisian military defected from the Ben Ali regime in 2011 because the army was small, politically marginalized, and highly professional. However, capacity does not explain the army's inaction during the revolu-

tion. Tunisian history reveals that the army's small size and meager armaments were no obstacle to the use of deadly force against protesters in 1978 or 1984. In addition, the Tunisian armed forces demonstrated their capacity to impose order immediately after Ben Ali's fall, when soldiers quickly and competently reestablished security across the country.[94] Furthermore, interview evidence reveals that the officers' discontent about their political marginalization has been vastly overstated. It was Bourguiba, not Ben Ali, who established that Tunisian soldiers would be banned from politics and the ruling party. Yet far from resenting this exclusion, Tunisian officers universally acclaim the wisdom of Bourguiba's decision and fully embrace the separation of military and political affairs. In sum, neither capacity nor political grievances explain the Tunisian military's response in 2011.

The professionalism of Tunisian officers seems to better explain their behavior. Even before its widely-lauded role in the 2011 revolution, the Tunisian army had been described as a positive model for regional militaries because of its professionalism. While this chapter broadly supports the Tunisian military's positive reputation, it is nevertheless important to clarify the meaning of professionalism, a term which has taken on an imprecise and overly broad set of meanings according to different theorists, and even become a catchall for positive military attributes. This dissertation finds that the critical factor in soldiers' response was the military's prior commitment to restraint and nonviolence toward civilians. Although previous research has labeled these attitudes "professional values," they are inherent neither to professional (versus conscript) armies, nor to highly-trained and disciplined soldiers. Instead, soldiers' response to the revolution was guided by military doctrine, which had internalized, routinized, and formalized the practice of nonviolent restraint. As the next chapter demonstrates, the traditional hallmarks of military professionalism, technical expertise and institutional autonomy, did not prevent the Egyptian armed forces from seizing power through mass violence against civilians in 2013.

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94. Compare the descent into chaos which followed the toppling of Saddam Hussein or Muammar Gaddafi, for example, because the armed forces in those countries had collapsed or been disbanded.

Chapter 4

Egypt: A Doctrine of Control

This chapter presents the first of two comparative case studies, which follow a similar form to the Tunisia case study. Along with Tunisia, Egypt and Syria are the two countries whose Arab Spring revolutions created the greatest disruption to politics as usual, although with far different outcomes. Despite the superficially similar role of the Tunisian and Egyptian armies in the Arab Spring, the actions they took during the 2011 uprisings were fundamentally different. Instead of neutrality, the Egyptian Armed Forces responded to the uprising by forcing the president from power and asserting military control over the ensuing political transition. Meanwhile, the Syrian Armed Forces, despite many similarities to their Egyptian counterparts, took the opposite approach to the Arab Spring demonstrations, applying unrestrained military force to suppress them. The brutality of the military response in Syria led not only to the fracturing of the armed forces, but also to an armed uprising against the government. In each case, the military followed a doctrine for domestic crises established over decades of experience.

Both Egypt and Syria boast large and well-trained armies, and both militaries are seen as highly politicized. While Tunisia is considered a classic case of a professional, non-political military, Egypt and Syria are paradigmatic examples of militaries based on patronage and ethnicity, respectively. In Egypt, the military controls a substantial share of the national economy, which has helped to subsidize a military budget above $4 billion an-

nually since 2006 (including around $1 billion from US military aid). Retired officers, too, participate in the military's vast economic empire, reaping substantial financial rewards after their years of service. Syria's military is also active in industrial production and construction, providing material benefits to officers. However, the Syrian armed forces are best known to analysts for their ethnic composition. As in the civilian government, the minority Alawi sect holds a disproportionate share of power and influence within the military. Sunni Arabs, the majority ethnic group in Syria, are severely underrepresented among the top brass and in elite units. Before the Arab Spring, conventional wisdom held that patronage in Egypt and ethnic ties in Syria would guarantee the loyalty of the armed forces to the regime and the political status quo. In 2011, this conventional thinking failed in Egypt. Although the outcome in Syria was consistent with prior expectations, I nevertheless reconsider how ethnicity came to play the role it did in the Syrian armed forces, in light of the dissertation's theory. While institutionalized ethnic bias contributed to the Syrian military's doctrine of combat, the army's historical behavior is inconsistent with the standard ethnicity argument.

As compared with Tunisia, both the Egyptian and Syrian armies played a larger historic role, since independence, in their countries' political and economic life. Many of the defining moments in Egyptian and Syrian history cast the armed forces in central roles, for example the catastrophic defeat both nations suffered in the Six Day War against Israel, and the massacre at Hama, Syria, in 1982. The two countries, which had even been joined in a political union during a critical period from 1958 to 1961, shared comparable levels of professionalism but reacted in different ways to the challenge of the Arab Spring. I argue that a critical difference between Egypt and Syria was the military doctrine for domestic intervention that had developed in each country from the 1970s to the 2000s. Where the Egyptians' doctrine of control dictated that officers seize power at the regime's expense, the Syrians' doctrine of war dictated an all-out military offensive against an uprising they viewed as an existential threat to military and regime alike.

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With generals holding the presidency for six consecutive decades, the armed forces abstained from direct intervention in politics until February 11, 2011, when the Supreme Council of the Armed Forces (SCAF) forced Mubarak to resign. Egypt's Arab Spring, known as the 25 January Revolution, succeeded in dislodging the unpopular autocrat after thirty years in power. Yet the political result of the uprising was a reassertion of military domination of the Egyptian state. In the wake of its decree removing Mubarak, SCAF seized power directly, issuing constitutional decrees and serving as the country's executive authority until June 30, when Morsi was sworn into office. The military was likely surprised by the narrow electoral defeat of its preferred candidate, General Ahmed Shafik (who lost 48.3%–51.8% in the second round) but chose to allow Morsi, a member of the Islamist Muslim Brotherhood, to take office. Only a year later, on the first anniversary of Morsi's inauguration, massive protests erupted calling for his resignation, and the military deemed Egypt's experiment in pluralism a failure. Within a week, the head of the Armed Forces, General Abdel Fattah el-Sisi, announced that the military had removed Morsi from office. The military-appointed interim government then declared the Brotherhood a terrorist organization, clearing the way for el-Sisi to replace him.[1] For Egypt, the upshot of the Arab Spring has been a further retrenchment of the political power of the armed forces, even surpassing that of the Mubarak era (Brooks 2015, 29).

4.1 Foundations of Doctrine

Institutional Origins

Like the state itself, the Egyptian Army has created a proud myth of its lineage from Pharaonic times, through Ottoman and mamluk rule, to the Free Officers' revolt and the

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1. The military appointed a placeholder, interim President Adly Mansour, until el-Sisi was elected in 2014. The vote was marred by the disqualification of the Muslim Brotherhood (winner of the past two elections), a boycott by most political parties, and the presence of only one other candidate, the politically marginal Hamdeen Sabahi (El-Ghobashy 2018).

establishment of the republic.[2] The modern Egyptian Army was established in the early nineteenth century by Muhammad (Mehmet) Ali Pasha, whom most nationalists claim as "the founder of modern Egypt" (Fahmy 1997, 12).[3] The Pasha built a military academy (now Africa's oldest) in Cairo in 1811, and set out to build a modern, European-style army on the organizational model of the *Nizam-ı Cedid* of Ottoman Sultan Selim III. To fill the ranks, Muhammad Ali conscripted tens of thousands of *fellahin* (peasant farmers) and indoctrinated them into a new national identity – that is, he trained them to consider themselves Egyptians.[4]

In 1881, Egyptian Colonel Ahmed ʿUrabi organized a short-lived military coup to challenge the entrenched, Turkish-speaking ruling elite. Unfortunately the mutiny, known as the ʿUrabi Revolt, created a pretext for Great Britain to invade in "defense" of the Khedive Tewfik Pasha. ʿUrabi's forces were dispatched with relative ease by the British, who established a "veiled protectorate" over the Khedivate of Egypt in 1882.[5] The British subordinated and further weakened the native army, while propping up the increasingly illegitimate ruling class. To Egypt's emergent nationalists, ʿUrabi's daring challenge to the elite inaugurated a "myth of national heroes in uniform" rising up to save Egypt, which

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2. Today, nationalist and militarist imagery often features Pharaonic images blended with modern military equipment.

3. Muhammad ʿAli Pasha al-Masʿud ibn Aga commanded the Ottoman army that, in alliance Britain, drove French forces out of Egypt in 1801. He remained there after the French withdrawal, declared himself *Khedive* of Egypt and Sudan (a title denoting greater autonomy within the Ottoman Empire), and raised his own army. Muhammad Ali and his son, Ibrahim Pasha, fought a series of military campaigns, first on behalf of Ottoman Sultan Mahmud II, and later against him. Muhammad Ali's descendants ruled Egypt – albeit under significant British influence – until the Free Officers' coup in 1952. On Napoleon's Egypt campaign, see Cole (2007, chap. 12); on the establishment of Muhammad Ali's reign, see Sayyid-Marsot (1984, chap. 3). On Muhammad Ali's contribution to modernization, see Vatikiotis (1991, chap. 4).

4. According to Fahmy (1997, 19), "The Pasha's army did indeed turn the population of Egypt into loyal and devoted citizens of Egypt." But the transformation of *fellah* into citizen was accomplished by force: conscription was strongly resisted all across the country, and the awakening of nationalism among the soldiers was more akin to propaganda than to self-discovery. Ultimately, Mohammed Ali – himself an ethnic Albanian from Macedonia – fostered Egyptian nationalism in order to secure his own hereditary rule.

5. Formally, Egypt remained an autonomous tributary state of the Ottoman Empire until World War I, when Britain replaced the Khedivate with a protectorate called the Sultanate of Egypt. Members of the Muhammad Ali dynasty continued to rule as sultans until 1922, and then as kings of the "independent" Kingdom of Egypt until 1953. However, the British exercised *de facto* imperial rule over Egypt throughout the entire period, 1882–1953.

would provide a precedent for the Free Officers' coup d'état in 1952 (Abul-Magd 2012, 152). Colonial domination continued even after 1922, when Britain unilaterally declared Egyptian independence, and continued to inspire nationalist mobilization, especially in the middle class.

In 1936, the first middle-class cadets were admitted to the Military Academy, previously reserved to members of the Egyptian upper class (Abdel-Malek 1968, 44). Many of these new recruits, including Gamal Abdel Nasser, would go on to lead the Free Officers Movement. The young officers identified strongly with their Egyptian national identity, and suffered the humiliations of British domination and Egyptian military weakness with growing discontent (El-Bishry 1979, 539-540).[6] Despite a reduced British presence in Egypt after the Anglo-Egyptian Treaty of 1936, a contingent of 10,000 British troops still controlled the Suez Canal Zone, and the Egyptian King Farouk, then only sixteen years old, was evidently incapable of standing up to the United Kingdom. It was in this context that the Egyptian Army joined the Arab coalition against the newly-declared State of Israel in 1948 – and suffered a shocking defeat, known by Arabs as *al-Nakba* (the catastrophe).[7] Lacking training, equipment, and experience, the Egyptian contingent felt betrayed by its government as it suffered heavy losses. Their aspirations turned to their homeland; Nasser wrote, "We were fighting in Palestine, but our dreams were in Egypt" (Rogan 2009, 267). Ironically, public dissatisfaction with the defeat would come to strengthen the military politically, when a group of officers deposed the monarchy in 1956.

The Egyptian army was designed as a mixed conscript and professional force,

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6. The movement also had a distinct class element: junior officers of the middle class resented the traditional privileges of the upper classes. Not only had the landowning elite, largely of Turkish or Circassian descent, monopolized economic opportunities at the expense of "native" Egyptians, but they had completely dominated the upper military ranks. Thus, the Free Officers – an ideologically diverse group without a specific political program – acted quickly to enact agrarian reform in 1952 (Vatikiotis 1978, 205-209). However, socialism figured in Egyptian rhetoric only after Nasser became president in 1956.

7. Even today, the true causes of the Arab defeat in 1948 remain controversial (see for example, "Why the Arabs were defeated," *Al-Jazeera,* July 13, 2009). Unlike other British colonial subjects, the Egyptians had seen almost no combat during World War II, and so were untested in battle (Kandil 2012, 11). Like other Arab states, Egypt also underestimated Jewish combat strength and inadequately mobilized its population (Pollack 2002, 15-27).

with a large professional officer corps numbering about 100,000 men, and around 200,000 short-term conscripts serving for one to three years (IISS 2018, 329). In most countries with conscription-based armies, the presence of so many regular citizens filling the ranks, and the officers' dependence on them to carry out their duties, tends to strengthen and improve the relationship between the military and society. In Egypt, however, the social, political, and economic strength of the professional officer corps dominates whatever effect national service might have on military-society relations. Instead of conscripts bringing the popular will into the military institution, conscripts simply join up with "Military, Inc.," for a short term of service (Marshall and Stacher 2012). An Egyptian proverb suggests that military service has long been seen a means of subsistence for many poor young men: "*in kunta ʿāyiz taʾkul ʿaish, ruḥ li-l-gaysh*" (if you want to eat bread, join the army) (Sassoon 2016, 100). Indeed, soldiers generally enjoy a higher standard of living than society as a whole (Jane's 2016).

As a result of the military's distinct corporate identity and socio-economic organization, the military enclave became an essential feature of Egyptian society. Cook (2007, 14) defines the enclave as "an elite preserve that is in many ways separated from society in military-only facilities such as schools, hospitals, clubs, and residential areas." Through this bifurcation into military and civilian spheres, the armed forces are able to exist as a self-contained community apart from, and largely above, regular society. Under Mubarak, there developed a "neo-Mamlukian military elite that lives in virtual isolation from civilian society," in Nasr City and other purpose-built military developments around Cairo (Springborg 1989, 104). While the military is in some respects independent of civilian society, most Egyptian families are linked in some way to the armed forces. Therefore, despite the military's economic and political autonomy, it retains a pervasive influence at all levels of society.

Among professional officers, the isolation of military society fosters a distinctive worldview, featuring, for example, a complete faith in the military as a modernizing force

in Egyptian society (Cook 2007, 15). As (Frisch 2001, 1) argues, "the ethos and discourse of the Egyptian armed forces resembles the style of the early and mid-twentieth century," such as gender roles and "The army continues to be the repository of military values." This distance from the population shapes the doctrine to be distrusting, and even fearful, of the population. Likewise, the Egyptian public did not trust the military as much as Tunisians did during the tumultuous days of the Arab Spring. These mutual suspicions ultimately did not prevent the military from recognizing the end of the Mubarak regime and publicly siding with demonstrators, but events following Mubarak's departure demonstrate that Egyptian army's did not enjoy the same respectful relationship with the population that Tunisia's did.

The Minister of Defense and Military Production is the top-ranking uniformed officer of the armed forces and their commander-in-chief. This means that unlike Tunisia and most democracies, there is no civilian with direct oversight of the military except for the president, who in practice is also a military officer. Egypt boasts the largest military of any Arab country, with a total strength of 438,500 active and 479,000 reserve personnel (IISS 2018). Egypt also began developing a capable air force in the 1960s, when the Soviet Union supplied modern MiG-21 and Sukhoi Su-7 combat aircraft.[8] Under Mubarak, who was an accomplished air force officer, the air force became Egypt's favored service (Cook 2007, 16). In an indication of Egypt's history of civil-military tensions and elite infighting, the presidency is protected by the praetorian Republican Guard (*Quwwāt al-Ḥaras al-Jumhūrī*), comprised of 24,000 carefully selected soldiers. It is the only military force allowed to operate within the capital, Cairo.

Primary responsibility for internal security falls to the Ministry of Interior (MOI), which is thought to employ at least 1.5 million police officers.[9] The Egyptian National

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8. Nearly all of these aircraft were destroyed in the Six Day War (most on the ground during initial Israeli airstrikes), but were replaced by further acquisitions from the Soviet Union. As many as 54 later-model MiG-21s are still in service in Egypt, alongside American F-16s, French Rafales, and a growing fleet of brand new Russian MiG-35s (IISS 2018).

9. Walsh, "Why Was an Italian Graduate Student Tortured and Murdered in Egypt?"

Table 4.1: Egyptian Military Ranks

	Army Rank (in Arabic)	Air Force	NATO
General Officers	Field Marshal (*Mushīr*)	—	OF-10
	General (*Farīq ʾawwal*)	Air Chief Marshal	OF-9
	Liutenant General (*Farīq*)	Air Marshal	OF-8
	Major General (*Liwāʾ*)	Air Vice-Marshal	OF-7
	Brigadier General (*ʿAmīd*)	Air Commodore	OF-6
Senior Officers	Colonel (*ʿAqīd*)	Group Captain	OF-5
	Lieutenant Colonel (*Moqaddim*)	Wing Commander	OF-4
	Major (*Raʾid*)	Squadron Leader	OF-3

Police (ENP, *al-Shurṭa al-Waṭaniyya al-Maṣriyya*) is the country's main police force. However, Egypt's massive paramilitary forces, numbering nearly 400,000, are most important in responding to popular uprisings. In particular, the Central Security Forces (CSF, *Quwwāt al-ʾAmn al-Markazī*) includes around 325,000 short-term conscripts, mainly used for riot control and intimidation, and is widely considered the "battering ram" of the SSI (the MoI's secret intelligence service).[10] As described below, a mutiny by CSF conscripts in 1986 proved to be a pivotal moment in the development of the military's doctrine for domestic intervention.

The military's participation in politics has changed over time, going through three distinct phases under Nasser, Sadat, and Mubarak. Yet the military's ultimate authority has been the foundation of the Egyptian political regime despite the ebb and flow of officers' involvement in day-to-day governance. As Imad Harb (2003, 270) observes, "Throughout these periods of changing political roles, the Egyptian military remained the loyal repository of political power answerable only to a strong executive leadership in the person of a former military officer (the President) and sure of its privileged position within the polity."

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10. Mohamed Adam, "Brute force: Inside the Central Security Forces," *Egypt Independent* (Cairo), November 11, 2012. When called for national service, recruits are assigned to the branches of the armed forces (mainly the army) according to their skill and education. Those with the poorest education and vocational skills are sent to the CSF.

Independence Movement

Officially, Egypt gained nominal independence from the United Kingdom in 1922 by dec-
laration of the British government. However, with a controlling stake in the Suez Canal
Company and 80,000 troops stationed along the waterway, the British continued to exert
a dominant influence over Egyptian economic and security policy. Complete national
independence was only achieved in the 1950s, when a new nationalist, republican gov-
ernment demanded the complete withdrawal of British forces and nationalized the Canal
by force. Behind these nationalist achievements was a group of soldiers known as the
Free Officers Movement, who led a coup d'état in 1952 and established the Republic of
Egypt. Among their leaders were Mohammed Naguib, Gamal Abdel Nasser, and Anwar
Sadat, who became Egypt's first three presidents. By 1956, when the last British soldiers
withdrew from Suez, the Free Officers' resistance to foreign occupation had turned them
into unimpeachable national heroes, endowing military leaders from Nasser to el-Sisi with
a powerful nationalist legitimacy.

Kandil (2012, 9-10) points to three main factors motivating soldiers to revolt in
1952, each of which impinged directly on the military's image and corporate interests: hu-
miliation at home and abroad, the increased reliance on the military for domestic repres-
sion, and transferring control of military affairs from elected government to the monarch.
After their ignominious defeat in Palestine, soldiers returned home to find domestic po-
litical tensions spiraling out of control. King relied the army to repress civilian demon-
strators, especially after thousands of police officers joined the protests (El-Bishry 1979,
292-95). The protests continued intermittently until 1952, and escalated after the British
Army captured the Ismailia Police Station by force on January 25, after which rioters set
fire to downtown Cairo.[11] The Egyptian military stepped in to restore order, but officers
now felt like the henchmen of an illegitimate political regime (Aly 1994, 63). Several

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11. In 2009, Mubarak decreed a National Police Day holiday on 25 January in commemoration of this
event. Protesters in 2011 selected this day to highlight police brutality, starting what would become the 25
January Revolution.

groups within the mid-ranking officer corps began organizing a nationalist revolution.

The Free Officers Movement, organized by Nasser and with Mohammed Naguib as its figurehead, was the most effective of these factions, and successfully seized power on July 23, 1952. After the coup, the officers established a Revolutionary Command Council, which framed itself as the "vanguard of the revolution" against the *ancien régime* (Cook 2007, 66). The revolt established a specific form of nationalism to legitimate its exceptional status in Egyptian society. "The military has derived a significant measure of legitimacy from nationalist narratives that place the officers at the center of struggles against colonialism, external aggression, and the realization of the 'national will'" (Cook 2007, 28). Naguib became Egypt's first president, but Nasser soon gathered the political strength to replace him. In 1956, a public referendum overwhelmingly ratified a new constitution and Nasser's election as president. In July of that year, Nasser took the bold step of nationalizing the Suez Canal, provoking a tripartite invasion of British, French, and Israeli forces. Despite its military disadvantage, Egypt prevailed in the diplomatic contest, and the last foreign troops left Egyptian territory in March 1957. Thus, the Suez Crisis solidified the popularity and political legitimacy of both the president and the military in the first decade of Egyptian self-rule.

Unlike in Tunisia, the Egyptian military's active role in national defense has further legitimated the military and enhanced its status as guardian of the nation. As the largest Arab army, Egypt led coalitions against Israel in 1948, 1967, and 1973. Following the Arab defeat in 1948, resistance against the "Zionist entity" became a major source of legitimacy for the military. Yet Egypt's losses in 1967 were again catastrophic, exacerbated by Egypt's ongoing involvement in the civil war in Yemen (Ferris 2012). After the defeat, "demands that the armed forces should be accountable began to be loudly expressed in Egyptian society. A population that had been promised the strongest army in the region suddenly realised it had been misled as a result of the gross negligence of its leadership, which led to massive defeat" (Karawan 2011, 44). Widespread protests began in 1968,

"sparked by lenient sentences meted out to those in the air force high command convicted of negligence for their contribution to the 1967 debacle." (Springborg 1989, 96) As a result of the protests, the initially light punishments were reversed in 1968, and relations between the military and society reached a nadir.

Humiliated and held in public contempt after *al-naksa* (the setback), the military establishment immediately retrenched and redoubled their commitment to Egypt's national defense. Aiming to recover its stature and redeem its purpose – and prodded along by Nasser's March 30 Program – the military "relinquished its significant role in the day-to-day governance of Egypt in favor of a mission that focused almost exclusively on preparing for another round of warfare with Israel" (Cook 2007, 66-67). Rallying around the slogan "everything for the battle," the military established first claim to the nation's resources, and the Armed Forces' total personnel swelled to a historic peak of nearly 900,000 men (Springborg 1989, 95). Reinforced and refocused, the military sought its redemption in what became known as the October War. In a surprise attack on the Jewish holiday of Yom Kippur, October 6, 1973, Egyptian troops crossed the Suez Canal and stormed deep into the Israeli-occupied Sinai Peninsula.[12] Within three weeks, Israel had regrouped and put the Egyptians back on the defensive, before the international community brokered a ceasefire. Despite their rather modest accomplishments on the battlefield, Egypt accomplished its ultimate purpose: to force Israel to take the Egyptian threat seriously, and to restore pride to the Egyptian people. Thus, the Arab-Israeli conflict eventually enhanced the nationalist legitimacy that the Egyptian military had claimed in 1952.

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12. The Yom Kippur War, as it is called in Israel, began October 6, 1973, with a joint Egyptian-Syrian surprise attack on the Israeli-occupied Sinai and Golan Heights. According to the Egyptian commander Mohamed El-Gamasy (1993, 180), the date was chosen to catch Israeli soldiers off-guard during their celebrations.

Relationship to the Ruling Party

From 1952, the Egyptian state developed a large civilian bureaucracy, which neither infiltrated nor directly controlled by the military, but was instead developed and led by soldiers-turned-politicians. The domestic political sphere soon took the shape of a police state, enforced by the internal security forces of the Ministry of Interior (MoI) and the General Intelligence Directorate (GID, *Jihāz al-Mukhābarāt al-ʿĀmma*; widely known as the Mukhabarat). In addition to the GID, an officially secret organization reporting directly to the presidency, the MoI and MoD also controlled their own parallel intelligence agencies. Under the MoI, the State Security Investigations Service (SSI, *Mabāḥith ʾAmn al-Dawla*) focused entirely on internal security and is believed to employ 100,000 personnel and at least as many informants.[13] As John Waterbury (1983, 338) writes, "There have been police states more repressive and brutal than Egypt's of the 1960s, but it is significant that both the [political] left and the right eventually concurred that it was a question of a police state."

At the same time, the military remained deeply influential, despite its hands-off approach to day-to-day governance. Since 1952, every Egyptian president except Mohamed Morsi, who served only one year after the 2011 uprisings, has been a senior military officer.[14] Over time, the military ceded greater control over political development and policy management to the nominally civilian president and his administration, while retaining influence at the highest levels of government.[15] Beginning with the Sadat

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13. Declan Walsh, "Why Was an Italian Graduate Student Tortured and Murdered in Egypt?" *New York Times*, August 15, 2017. The SSI was formally dissolved on March 15, 2011, as a response to the 25 January Revolution. However, its functions and organization continued, and the agency was reconstituted after the coup in 2013 as the National Security Agency (NSA, *Qiṭāʿ al-ʾAmn al-Waṭani*; also known as Homeland Security). The organization gained international notoreity after an Italian PhD student, Giulio Regeni, was killed in Cairo, when it was revealed that the NSA had been tracking him prior to his death.

14. I exclude civilian *acting* Presidents Sufi Abu Taleb, who held office for eight days after Sadat's assassination, and Adly Mansour, who was appointed by SCAF after Morsi's removal. After the 25 January Revolution, the Chairman of the SCAF, Field Marshal Mohamed Hussein Tantawi also served as acting president.

15. A former senior military officer reported that in the early 2000s, "at the highest level of the Egyptian state there is no appreciable difference between military and civilian" Cook (2007, 73). This pattern was briefly reversed after the 25 January Revolution, but has been strengthened under President Abdel Fattah

presidency (1970–1981) and continuing through Mubarak's term in office (1981–2011) the army became increasingly autonomous from the civilian regime. In Egypt, Hazem Kandil (2012, 2) observes, "The armed forces and the security establishment work *with* rather than *for* the political apparatus" (emphasis in original); therefore, the nature of the political system is shaped in large part by the relative weight of these three institutions.

Despite the predominant role of the internal security forces in day-to-day governance, the armed forces have remained the ultimate guardian of the Egyptian state. Since the 1950s, they have presided over a "military dominated" system in which civilians can lead the government only with the support of the military, which retained the right to intervene should the government come to threaten its core interests (Cook 2007, chap. 3). Although Egypt's generals ceded control of day-to-day politics to civilian politicians, they have always stood at a short distance from politics, ready to intervene when necessary. To this end, the Military Intelligence and Reconnaissance Administration (ʾIdārat al-Mukhābarāt al-Ḥarbiyya wa-l-Istiṭlāʿ) has carried out extensive surveillance within Egypt, exceeding the traditional military intelligence mission of spying on foreign militaries and the internal mission of surveiling Egypt's own military personnel.[16] Traditionally, the presidency and the military have formed a close partnership, with the military entrusting the president – almost always a senior military officer[17] – as "the steward of the state and political development" (Cook 2007, 73). Despite periods of tension between the presidency and senior officer corps, the relationship has mostly been symbiotic and cooperative: "The presidency remains the crucial institutional mechanism of the military establishment's political influence" (70). By contrast, the hegemonic ruling party has always been secondary to the military-executive partnership. Nasser's Arab Socialist Union was never

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el-Sisi.

16. For example, in 1970–71, Sadat relied on Military Intelligence to protect him from rivals with influence in the civilian intelligence agencies. However, the same agency failed in its more direct mission, to detect the plot within the military to assassinate the president. Military Intelligence had reportedly investigated the assassin, Lt. Khalid Islambouli, only weeks prior, but failed to discover anything unusual (Sirrs 2010, 144–145).

17. Egyptian generals have always resigned from the military prior to holding civilian office, including the presidency; however, the minister of defense remains a military position.

able to operate within the military (Springborg 1989, 96). Its successor under Sadat and Mubarak, the National Democratic Party (NDP), received support from the military, but senior officers did not consider it essential to sustaining their own political position (Cook 2007, 70).

Nasser, 1956–1970   After the coup, Egypt became a "military society," in the words of Egyptian historian Anouar Abdel-Malek (1968). The Free Officers infiltrated the civilian bureaucracy under the pretext of carrying out the "revolution" against the *ancien régime*, but their immediate goal was to sideline potential challengers to Nasser and his collaborators (Kandil 2012, 17). The struggle for power left Nasser significantly paranoid, and he filled all important civilian positions with close allies from the military (18). However, in leaving the military for government careers, officers turned their focus from national defense to regime security. Men like Zakaria Mohieddin and Ali Sabri – both military officers who went on to head the *mukhabarat* and later serve as prime minister – contributed to building Egypt's massive internal security apparatus.[18] Thus, the military began to develop its autonomy from the civilian regime even as former military officers dominated the political sphere.

The Six-Day War of 1967 was perhaps the most important turning point in modern Egyptian civil-military relations. The humiliation in Palestine was understood as a perverse result of the politicization of the armed forces, leading both the president and the officer corps to turn firmly away from direct involvement in politics (Hashim 2011, 72). Nasser promulgated the "March 30 Program," which purged the powerful army chief, Field Marshal Abdel Hakim Amer (formerly Nasser's closest friend) and Amer's allies within the military, while legally reclaiming control of the armed forces (Hashim 2011, 68). In practice, though, with Israel continuing to occupy Egyptian territory in Sinai, the army remained too important to marginalize (Springborg 1989, 96). Nasser died suddenly of a heart attack in 1970, and was succeeded by his vice president, Anwar Sadat.

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18. Both Mohieddin and Sabri made the progression from Free Officer, to director of the GID, to prime minister, to vice president of Egypt.

Sadat, 1970–1981   As Sadat came to power, the defeat of 1967 still weighed heavily in the national consciousness. Faced with an ongoing economic crisis – partly caused by the ongoing "War of Attrition" against Israel – and a weakened and deeply unpopular military, Sadat launched what he called the "Corrective Revolution," a series of leadership and policy changes that aimed to restore Egypt's economic and military strength. He won popular approval by reining in the power of the secret police, in part by dismissed two of the most powerful figures in the regime, Vice President Ali Sabri and Interior Minister Sharawy Gomaa. To further address popular demands, Sadat pushed the military to prepare for a renewed confrontation with Israel, but in so doing, to eliminate the politicization that he saw as the root of the 1967 failure. To this end, Sadat set out to demilitarize the civilian government, first by replacing most of the former military officers who had been serving as ministers and governors (Springborg 1989, 95-6). He then pushed the top brass hard to develop a winning strategy for the coming fight. The October War of 1973 was only a partial success, but it generated a sense of euphoria and won Sadat public acclaim as the "hero of the crossing." Egyptians broadly believed Sadat had redeemed the national humiliation of 1967, at least partially, and considered Sadat's "Revolution" a triumph. After the war, Sadat continued to demilitarize the state by decreasing the direct involvement of military officers in the civil administration and political ranks.[19]

Meanwhile, the military's economic interests grew, thanks to the two policies that were Sadat's legacy: the economic opening (*infitāḥ*; i.e. liberalization), and the diplomatic opening to the West and Israel. Both policies required Sadat to ignore public opinion, which eventually led to the bread riots in 1977 and the "autumn of fury"[20] in 1981, which ended in Sadat's assassination.[21] The military offered Sadat only tepid support, but did not oppose him in this critical moment. After the landmark Camp David Accords,

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19. For example, 38% of the government ministers Sadat inherited from Nasser started in military careers. From 1971–1974, only 17% of Sadat's cabinet appointees started in the military. After *infitah* (1974), the percentage declined further, to 7.8% (Hinnebusch 1981, 448).

20. Prominent Egyptian journalist Mohamed Heikal coined this term in the title of his 1983 book.

21. In the words of Jason Brownlee (2012, 15), "Bold diplomacy required fierce autocracy."

which permanently ended the decades-long, recurring conflict with Israel, the military was substantially relieved of its responsibility to prepare for an imminent war. The reduced threat to national defense, combined with the influx of American military aid as a result of the peace deal, left the military with a relative wealth of resources to expand its industrial ventures. In addition, the military downsizing implemented after 1973 targeted mainly the lower ranks, creating a top-heavy military hierarchy full of senior officers with the influence and opportunity to develop commercial interests. The military's economic ambitions had begun immediately after the Free Officers revolt, and began to deepen in the 1970s. Sadat's *infitah* economic policy created a new Egyptian capitalism, but did not privatize the public sector, which continued to grow as a share of total employment even as wages stagnated (Aulas 1982).

Mubarak, 1981-2011   Sadat's efforts to reduce the size and political reach of the armed forces largely succeeded, but had engendered significant dissatisfaction among the officer corps by the time of his assassination (Springborg 1989, 97-98). Upon assuming the presidency, Hosni Mubarak – only recently been promoted to the vice presidency from a distinguished military career – took the natural step of seeking reconciliation with the officer corps. However, in his efforts to placate the military, he inadvertently empowered its charismatic commander-in-chief, Field Marshal Abdel Halim Abu Ghazala. In the 1980s, the situation resembled Max Weber's (1978) "paradox of the sultan", in which "the ruler's increased reliance on the military gradually transforms him from superior to subordinate" Springborg (1989, 104). In 1989, Mubarak found an excuse to replace Abu Ghazala, when the American FBI discovered his involvement in a scheme to illegally import missile parts from the US. Ultimately, Abu Ghazala's firing removed a rival to Mubarak's position, but did not reverse the military's deepening autonomy.

Throughout the Mubarak era, the military played a secondary role to the civilian regime in politics, and to the MoI in security. With the military's core interest in national defense relatively secure, senior officers turned increasingly to their economic

interests. Mubarak's overall strategy to maintain military loyalty was to share patronage and bestow economic benefits on both military-run industries and retired officers' private businesses (Bou Nassif 2013). Throughout Mubarak's presidency, the military's economic role deepened, and its diverse portfolio of manufacturing, infrastructure development, agribusiness, and services made the military the single most important economic entity in the country (Cook 2007, 19). The military's economic and industrial and interests became a source of independent power and influence for the armed forces, but also gave the military a greater stake in the continuity of the regime. In this sense, Bou Nassif (2013, 509) goes so far as to claim that "Mubarak *wedded* senior military officers to his regime... by enhancing their material privileges and allowing them to profit from their postretirement positions" (emphasis mine). His strategy achieved its immediate goal of keeping the officer corps happy, but did not create a deep interdependence between the military and the regime. Despite empowering the military economically, Mubarak failed to tie these gains to his personal continuation in the presidency. In addition, the growing influence of Mubarak's businessman son, Gamal, increased the distance between officers' economic interests and those of the regime. Gamal represented a rising capitalist class, which could pose a threat to the military economy. Instead, the 25 January Revolution gave officers an opportunity to sideline their challengers and, ultimately, increase their economic power to new heights (Marshall 2015).

4.2 Past Interventions

Egypt's largest mass demonstrations of the twentieth century were the Black Saturday burning of downtown Cairo in 1952 (an immediate precursor to the Free Officers' coup), student protests in 1968, 1971, and 1972, the bread riots in 1977, and the CSF riots in 1986 (Springborg 2009, 14). Internal security forces from the MoI were able to suppress the student protests, but the other three cases overwhelmed their capacity, requiring an emergency appeal to the military for backup. It should be noted that all protests were

illegal under Nasser, who justified the suppression of freedoms of speech with the slogan, "No voice above the voice of battle" (Drainville 2015). Like in Tunisia, the army served as a backstop to the internal security forces in cases of civil disturbances. The Egyptian Armed Forces consider themselves the state's last line of defense against all security threats, foreign or domestic. However, the military is reluctant to get involved in domestic security issues unless the civilian authorities prove unable to resolve them. Therefore, military intervention within Egyptian territory has been rare. The first major incident took place in January 1977, when Sadat ordered the army to confront rioters protesting price increases on bread and other staples. The army objected to playing any role in restoring public order, but complied after Sadat agreed to withdraw his unpopular decision. The second incident came in 1986, when thousands of CSF conscripts mutinied and began rioting around the capital. Here, the military readily agreed to clean up the embarrassing failure of the MoI, thus emphasizing the military's superiority over the civilian internal security forces and demonstrating the regime's dependence on the military for protection.

Bread riots of 1977   Sadat's *infitah* economic plan began in 1974, on the heels of the October War, and quickly reversed the government's gains in public approval. In September 1976, transport workers in Cairo started a strike that continued until the army began using its own buses to break it. Despite this and other early warning signs of the blowback to come, and under strong pressure from the International Monetary Fund, Sadat decided in January 1977 to end state subsidies on basic foodstuffs and other necessities. Prices rose dramatically overnight, and the public responded with "spontaneous insurrection from Aswan to Alexandria" (Aulas 1982). While the riots were a popular response to oppressive economic conditions, there were also signs of organization: identical anti-regime literature appeared simultaneously across the country, systematic attempts to cut internal communications, coordinated attacks on neighboring police stations, and selectivity of targets, concentrating on state property (?, 239). As rioting spread, the police were quickly overwhelmed by the size of the crowds, despite their rapid resort to deadly

force.[22] Sadat's government looked to be on the verge of toppling; he even secured refuge in Iran, in case he should be forced into exile, from Mohammad Reza Shah.[23]

The bread riots of 1977 were one of the most severe moments of crisis in presidential-military relations to date (Cook 2007, 73). As the police proved inadequate to the challenge, Sadat called upon the military to suppress the protests. But rather than rising to the regime's defense, the military entered into a negotiation. The army chief, Gen. Abdel Ghani el-Gamasy, "made it clear to Sadat that the army would not intervene before price increases were cancelled" (Karawan 2011, 46). Only after Sadat reversed the price increases did Gamasy lead a military intervention restore order (Brownlee 2012, 25). The results of the riots were 79 civilian deaths (mostly at the hands of police, but some were also killed by the army) and a hobbled government, which abandoned its goal of reducing subsidies (Jackson 1981, 61). For the military, the uprising was evidence of the civilian leadership's incompetence, and proof that the armed forces were the ultimate guarantor of Egypt's peace and security. Overall, officers blamed Sadat's government for creating the necessity for military intervention, but believed their intervention had successfully restored order and stability.

CSF riots of 1986 Major rioting reoccurred early in the reign of Mubarak, but this time, the rioters came from the MoI itself. as thousands poorly paid and poorly armed conscripts mutinied from the Central Security Forces. In February 1986, a rumor spread among recruits that their national service, already the maximum three years, would be further extended without an increase in rank or salary. On February 25, thousands of CSF conscripts in the Haram district of Giza (near the Great Pyramids) mutinied, pouring out of their camp and setting vehicles and luxury hotels ablaze. Both the rumor and news of the mutiny spread to CSF bases in six other governorates, and a total of around 25,000

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22. On January 19, the US consulate in Alexandria reported, "people are dying" in confrontations with police. Consulate Alexandria, "Renewed Demonstrations in Alexandria," Wikileaks Cable: 1977ALEXAN00065_c, dated January 19, 1977.

23. Instead, it was the Shah who fled to exile in Egypt, only two years later.

conscripts joined the violent demonstrations.[24] For two days, rioting continued as the MoI failed to restore order.

Following Sadat's assassination in 1981, the government had enacted a sweeping Emergency Law, which authorized the military to intervene with practically unlimited force on Egyptian territory. Now, Mubarak called on the armed forces to crush the rebellion. The officer corps, led by Field Marshal Abu Ghazala, was ambivalent about the request: "The military looked upon this motley collection of illiterate peasants with very mixed feelings. On the one hand it did not want to be involved in suppressing public disorder, but it did not favor resources being allocated to another barracked force" (Springborg 1989, 101-102). Ultimately, armed troops running amok inside of Egypt was intolerable to the military, and the officers chose to intervene with full military force. The military unleashed artillery barrages and airstrikes on the hapless conscripts, officially resulting in 107 deaths.

With order restored, Mubarak fired the Minister of Interior, Ahmed Rushdy, and the incident was regarded as a massive embarrassment for the MoI. Meanwhile, the intervention strengthened the military politically, and especially improved the personal influence of Abu Ghazala.[25] Above all, the CSF riots, like the bread riots before them, proved that the civilians of the MoI could not guarantee public security. The regime's reliance on the military underlined the reality that the real protector of the regime was the armed forces (Springborg 1989, 102). Military elites also used their political clout to block various proposals to strengthen the CSF, which might have improved the forces' effectiveness and cohesion, but also could have allowed the MoI to threaten the military (Springborg PAGE). Thus, the balance of power was maintained, with the military enjoying ultimate control over state security. At the same time, the generals demonstrated zero tolerance for popular dissent, and sought to deter future uprisings: "The army also craves stability: the name of the game is social peace and national unity. Although the leadership cannot

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24. Adam, "Brute force."
25. Adam, "Brute force."

be characterised as populist, the army is made up of conscripts and the generals do not want a repeat of January 1977 or April 1986" (Karawan 2011, 46).

By the 1970s, Egyptian soldiers began avoiding intervention in political crises, unless and until the civilian authorities proved incapable of resolving the situation and restoring public order. By remaining uninvolved until the eleventh hour, the armed forces maintained their position as arbiter of domestic political contests. On the rare occasions when they were forced to play this role, the officers could rely on their overwhelming superiority of arms to reestablish control, all while dictating terms to the parties in dispute. Together, these military's experiences of domestic intervention in the twentieth century served to confirm the validity of this doctrine for domestic intervention in the minds of the senior officer corps. As I discuss in section 4.5, it was this same playbook that the generals turned to when unrest began again in 2011.

4.3 Foreign Influence

Since the late 1970s, American military aid has dominated Egypt's foreign cooperation landscape. Each year, the US provides over one billion dollars in military aid, in the form of an account which Egypt's government uses to purchase military equipment and services from American suppliers (Sharp 2018a, 31-2).[26] Egypt ranks among the largest recipients of military aid in the world, currently surpassed only by Afghanistan, Iraq, and Israel;[27] however, US security cooperation has had a far smaller effect on military doctrine and behavior in Egypt than in Tunisia for two main reasons. First, only a tiny fraction of total American aid is used for military training and education. Therefore, instead of influencing the behavior of Egyptian officers, the aid reduced their dependence on the political regime, thus enhancing their political power and encouraging a more interventionist role that is

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26. Egypt has also received at least $100 million in US economic aid every year since the late 1970s, with much higher levels (nearly one billion dollars annually) until the mid-1990s. Between 1946 and 2016, Egypt received a total of $78.6 billion (current dollars, *i.e.* not adjusted for inflation) in bilateral foreign aid from the United States (23).

27. Israel has received a larger US military aid allocation than Egypt each year since the late 1970s. Currently, the US provides $3.8 billion annually (Sharp 2018b).

counter to Western doctrine. Second, Egypt was not a consistent Western ally during the Cold War, but instead switched from Soviet to American patronage in the late 1970s. By that time, the future President Mubarak had already done advanced military training in the Soviet Union, been promoted to Commander of the Air Force, and reached the age of 50. Thus, Mubarak and his contemporaries in the military lived their formative years under Soviet, not Western, tutelage. This is a critical difference between Egypt and Tunisia, where Western military doctrine and political ideas have been a core component of the overall military education system and the philosophy and doctrine of the armed forces since independence.

Education and Training

Egypt's foreign military relationships have been far less constant than Tunisia's. Initially, Egypt began in the American orbit: the Free Officers shared their intentions with the US Embassy shortly before the 1952 coup d'état and pledged to protect American interests. In return, the US lent critical support by interceding with Britain not to intervene on behalf of a king they already disliked (Kandil 2012, 15). However, Egypt's relations with the West soon deteriorated over issues including the Suez Canal and the establishment of a Jewish state in Palestine. To counter Western support for Israel, Nasser aligned Egypt diplomatically and militarily with the Soviet Union (Oweidat *et al.* 2008, 4). As a result, Egyptian officers received foreign military training primarily in the Soviet Union and other non-Western countries through the late 1970s. Table 4.2 lists the most senior leaders of the political-military elite, including ministers of defense (most of whom achieved the highest military rank, Field Marshal, and simultaneously served as commander-in-chief of the armed forces) and presidents. Among these leaders, only Field Marshal Ali (Minister of War in 1973), Gen. Sobhy, and President el-Sisi trained in NATO countries, while the others trained in the Soviet Union or received no foreign training at all. Compare with Tunisia, where virtually every senior military leader has received training in the US,

Table 4.2: Senior Leaders' Military Ranks and Foreign Training

Rank[*]	Name	Born	Held Office	NATO	Soviet
President					
LTC	Gamal Abdel Nasser	1918	1956-1970		
COL	Anwar Sadat	1918	1970-1981		
ACM	Hosni Mubarak	1928	1981-2011		✓
FM	Abdel Fattah el-Sisi	1954	2012-2014 (MoD) 2014-pres. (Pres.)	✓	
Minister of Defense					
FM	Abdel Hakim Amer	1919	1956-1967		
FM	Ahmad Ismail Ali	1917	1973-1973	✓	
FM	Abdel Ghani el-Gamasy	1921	1974-1978		
FM	Ahmed Badawi	1927	1980-1981		✓
FM	Mohammed Aly Fahmy	1920	1975-1978[†]		✓
FM	Abdel Halim Abu Ghazala	1930	1981-1989		✓
FM	Mohamed Hussein Tantawi	1935	1991-2012		
GEN	Sedky Sobhy	1955	2014-pres.	✓	

[*]FM: Field Marshal; GEN: General; ACM: Air Chief Marshal; COL: Colonel; LTC: Lt. Colonel.
[†]Served as Commander-in-Chief of the Armed Forces, but not Minister of Defense.

France, or both, and the limited influence of American education on the Egyptians is clear.

Despite Egypt's reliance on the Soviets during this period, the military did not fully embrace Soviet doctrine for several reasons. First, Nasser rejected the Communist measure of attaching political commissars to army units to report on the officers, preferring a less ideological, and more personalistic, model of direct control and pervasive surveillance (Kandil 2012, 14).[28] Second, even though Egypt was officially a socialist regime at the time, Soviet Communism resonated little with the majority of Egyptians, inside and outside the military, because of its fervent atheism. Third, Soviets officers' attitudes toward their Egyptian clients tended toward haughtiness and disdain, creating friction in the relationship. The Six-Day War, which came right in the midst of a Soviet campaign to arm Egypt with modern weaponry, did not help the situation: "The Soviets

28. Compare Syria, where al-Asad pursued an ideological model more in line with Soviet doctrine (see section 5.3).

were staggered by the magnitude of the Egyptian catastrophe [in 1967]. Embarrassment over the failure of their weaponry in the hands of their Arab allies made them resolve to seriously train the Egyptians, even if it meant treading on their toes.... [Officers] were not at all fond of their 'boorish' Soviet patrons. The Soviet advisers were considered coarse louts who did nothing to hide their contempt for Egyptian military prowess. Moreover, the Soviets had taken over Egyptian bases and acted as if they owned them" (Hashim 2011, 71). To make matters worse, Egypt's military and economic debt to the Soviets then totaled $4 billion (more than $15 billion in 2018 dollars), and further Soviet aid was getting harder to come by. In 1972, with secret preparations well underway for the surprise attack on Israel, Sadat abruptly expelled all 7,752 Soviet advisers, weapons experts, field troops, and dependents from Egypt (Seale 1989, 191). Sadat's risky display of displeasure paid off, and Soviet aid reached unprecedented levels to both Egypt and Syria over the next year (192).

Empowered by his popularity after the semi-victory of the October 1973 War, President Sadat moved to break Egypt's twenty-year relationship with the Soviet Union, which he considered an unreliable and difficult partner. Instead, Sadat began a realignment with the United States, a better fit for his anti-communist views and plans for economic liberalization. The new alliance ultimately succeeded because the Americans offered major inducements, military and economic aid, which reassured the Egyptian elite, and especially the military, that its interests would be well served in a Western partnership. When Sadat stunned the world by visiting Israel in 1978, his most senior officers sent him cables of support. As the peace with Israel was signed, Sadat directed the military to focus prepare instead for regional conflicts, and to restructure itself as a (smaller) rapid-response force, although this restructuring was never accomplished. The new peace did reduce the need for such a massive army, however, and the military's total size shrank by nearly one-half over the next decade (Springborg 1989, 95).[29] The officers did not warmly embrace a

29. The size of the armed forces has grown only modestly since the 1980s, totaling 438,500 men under arms in 2018 (IISS 2018, 329).

further reduction in the size and ambition of the military, although they appreciated the massive influx of American military financing and equipment.

Officer training in the United States started in 1978 with a $200,000 IMET program (Brownlee 2012, 29). While many Egyptian officers have benefited from education and training abroad, they represent a smaller share of the total officer class than in Tunisia. Another aspect of cooperation has been a biennial joint training exercise called Operation Bright Star, which was first carried out in 1980 (39). In the words of one American participant: "Bright Star presents the opportunity for sharing doctrine, tactics, and analysis, but at its core it has always been focused on personal engagement and fostering relationships that may yield diplomatic opportunities – or, as appears to be the case now, may not."[30] This is because, as Robert Springborg told the *New York Times* in 2013, military supplier relationships buy access, not influence.[31] Overall, joint exercises and educational exchanges have provided channels of communication between Egyptian and American military leaders, but they have not resulted in American influence over Egyptian decision makers.

Because Western military education was not foundational to the philosophy of the Egyptian armed forces, its influence on Egyptian doctrine and officers' attitudes on core questions of civil-military relations is more limited than in Tunisia. The prevailing attitude among Tunisian officers, that the United States was a model for Tunisia in its political and military development, seems not to be widely shared among Egyptian officers who received similar training in the United States. For example, el-Sisi himself attended the United States Army War College in 2006. The capstone of his studies was a research paper, entitled "Democracy in the Middle East," whose central thesis is that Western democracy is "a secular entity" and "unlikely to be favorably received by the vast majority

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30. John McRae, "Operation Bright Star: A U.S. Soldier on Training with Egypt's Army," Daily Beast, August 26, 2013. `https://www.thedailybeast.com/operation-bright-star-a-us-soldier-on-training-with-egypts-army`.
31. Eric Schmitt, "Cairo Military Firmly Hooked to U.S. Lifeline," *The New York Times*, August 20, 2013.

of Middle Easterners."[32] Current Minister of Defense Sidki Sobhy, who attended the War College with el-Sisi, expressed a similar skepticism of democracy as a model for the region, while leveling a sweeping critique of Western foreign policy towards the Middle East.[33] Moreover, despite the presence of hundreds of Egyptian officers in American military schools each year, Egyptian soldiers are trained to be guarded and reveal little about the Egyptian Armed Forces. As a result, there is little fraternization between American and Egyptian officers during foreign training and education, unlike with Tunisian officers (Hashim 2011, 63).

To be sure, the Egyptian Armed Forces do benefit from training with the world's most advanced military. The fact that el-Sisi and Sobhy, two of the army's brightest rising stars, were sent to America for an advanced training course demonstrates that Egyptian officers see some value in American military training. However, this does not mean they embrace the political and military values they encounter in the US. Moreover, the Egyptian army does not depend on American training – indeed, it does not seem that American training has had a significant impact on the operation of the Egyptian Armed Forces. For example, the US military has pushed the Egyptians for more than fifteen years to reorient its force structure, acquisitions, and doctrine from conventional warfare to counterterrorism, border security, and antismuggling operations, notably without success.[34] As demonstrated by senior commanders' educational backgrounds (table 4.2), US training of the Egyptian Armed Forces began in earnest only after the foundational period of institutional development, and even today only a relatively small percentage of senior officers receive a Western military education. Therefore, unlike Tunisia, Egypt has not been influenced sufficiently by US training to induce doctrinal change.[35]

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32. Abdel Fattah el-Sisi, "Democracy in the Middle East," U.S. Army War College (Carlisle, PA), Mar. 15, 2006, 3.

33. Sedki Sobhy, "The U.S. Military Presence in the Middle East: Issues and Prospects," U.S. Army War College, Mar. 18, 2006.

34. "U.S. Dismayed Egypt Still Views Israel as Chief Adversary, WikiLeaks Cables Show," *Associated Press*, December 31, 2010.

35. For example, there were no noticeable results of a stark decrease in the number of Egyptian trainees from 2015 to 2016 (1,407 trainees to just 477) after the US Government Accountability Office reported to

Military Financing

Rather than military training, the core of US-Egypt cooperation has always been military financing and arms sales. In times of popular unrest, Americans have often expected this aid to translate into leverage over Egypt's military commanders. After all, Egypt has received over $38 billion dollars in military aid from the United States since 1978. The Egyptian army has relied on American assistance to acquire and sustain equipment, and it would be deeply affected by an American arms embargo that prevented Egypt from acquiring the necessary equipment and supplies – even if other Egyptian allies were to step in to provide funding. Despite this, the United States has gained very little leverage over Egyptian officers from this aid. A major factor in this failure of influence is the fact that despite using American weapons (among others), Egypt does not depend on American prestige systems (*e.g.* the F-16 fighter or M1A1 Abrams tank) to counter any immediate national security threat. As US Secretary of State Cyrus Vance remarked early in the relationship: "The importance of American arms sales to Sadat is primarily political. He does not expect arms sales of an amount which would affect the arms balance in the area. He sees modest American arms sales as a means of strengthening support of the all-important Egyptian military establishment for him and the peace effort in which he is engaged.... Sadat knows he must retain the loyalty of his military if he is to stay in power." (Brownlee 2012, 25-26)

From the perspective of the US military, influence over Egyptian domestic affairs has always been a secondary priority. Instead, military aid and joint exercises are intended primarily to strengthen security cooperation between the two countries on matters such as counterterrorism, as well as to guarantee access to Egyptian airspace and the Suez Canal. These efforts are notably *not* directed toward democratizing or liberalizing either Egypt or its armed forces (Brownlee 2012). Historically, when the Egyptian military has

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Congress that legally-mandated human rights vetting had not been completed before to training Egyptian security forces. SecurityAssistance.org. https://securityassistance.org/blog/us-foreign-military-training-benin-mexico-and-ukraine-spike-2016

been implicated in human rights abuses, the US military has resisted civilian efforts to disrupt the relationship. Overall, the US-Egypt arms relationship has been a stable feature of Middle East geopolitics: "Cairo still receives $1.3 billion annually in US military aid, and has long been upgrading its inventories with US systems. There is little incentive to endanger its ability to continue this process, or undermine support and maintenance agreements. That Cairo might widen its list of suppliers is not inconceivable in some capability areas, but since the two countries' Peace Vector deal in 1980, US equipment has increasingly replaced Egypt's aging Soviet-era equipment" (IISS 2013, 374).

In the Mubarak era, the military gained significant political leverage from its close relations with the United States military (Abul-Magd 2012, 155). Mubarak and his first defense minister, Abu Ghazala, had been classmates at the military academy, trained in separate but overlapping programs in the Soviet Union in the early 1960s, and had worked closely together to develop the American military aid package in the 1970s (Springborg 1989, 98). When they rose to the positions of president and commander-in-chief, they continued to believe that the aid relationship with the United States was a boon to the armed forces. In time, senior officers came to see this aid as non-negotiable: "Egypt's military-political elite value these ties to the extent that the public discussion of relations between Washington and Cairo is placed off-limits."[36] Yet even while reinforcing Egypt's military partnership with the US, Mubarak also invited Soviet technicians back to Egypt to repair aging Soviet equipment, both to convince the US to provide still more and better equipment of its own, and also to hedge against strategic dependence on Washington (Brownlee 2012, 45). Combined with the military's booming commercial activities, foreign military aid in the Mubarak era helped the military establish its autonomy from the president's leadership, all while Egypt established its partial autonomy from the United States.

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36. When the opposition press broke this taboo in the mid-1980s, a military spokesman responded angrily that "while democracy and opposition are respected in Egypt, such inquiries only compromise national security" (Cook 2007, 23).

At the same time, US military aid has been important both monetarily and also to the army's international reputation. As the Egypt-Israel peace became firmly established in the 1990s, the threat of a resumption of hostilities between the two nations declined. In consequence, the Egyptian leverage that had won American aid concessions in the 1970s no longer seemed as potent. With human rights and democracy promotion playing a larger role in American foreign policy, the threat to cut off aid if the military behaves inappropriately began to be a real concern for the Egyptian officers. that might constrain them in certain public ways. Since the end of the Cold War, putschists worldwide have adorned their coups d'état in the trappings of democracy. Since 1961, US law has mandated that foreign aid be cut off automatically to any government that comes to power by coup d'état. Rather than demonstrating American commitment to democratic civil-military relations, however, the law's implementation has shown just the opposite: after the military removed Morsi in 2013, the US government skirted the law by refusing to officially declare it a coup d'état (Abul-Magd 2012). Thus it is unsurprising that the threat of losing foreign aid has not prevented the military from violating human rights.

4.4 Doctrinal Adoption

Unlike in Tunisia, where the military's doctrine shifted significantly in the 1980s and 1990s, Egypt's military doctrine was already internalized by the late 1950s and became further routinized and formalized over time. Although the military played a grudging role as a backstop to the Ministry of Interior's forces in 1977 and 1986, officers had already internalized the view that domestic intervention was exceptional, not a regular military function. From the late 1970s to the 2000s, the military's increasing distance from the ruling party reinforced the military's orientation away from the messy business of internal security whenever possible. Yet despite the military's decision to delegate routine order maintenance to the civilian MoI, domestic security and stability remained a core interest of the armed forces. Thus, the military's proper role was defined as nonintervention in

"normal" periods, but seizing power directly – by force if necessary – when a serious crisis threatened the state itself. This doctrine, what I label "control," would become routinized and formalized over the ensuing decades, but it was already present in the minds of Egypt's early military leaders.

The army's domestic interventions served to routinize this doctrine. Paralleling the history of domestic intervention in Tunisia, the Egyptian army was called in to re-press two major uprisings in the 1970s and 80s: nationwide bread riots in 1977 and a violent mutiny by conscripts of the Central Security Forces in 1986. Both interventions were based on the principle of emergency authority, and thus classified as exceptional circumstances. After these incidents and until 2011, the Army actively limited its role in order maintenance. In that time, there was only one significant uprising, a general strike in 2008, which was suppressed with overwhelming force by security forces without military intervention. However, these behavioral similarities belie a deeper, if subtler, difference. Unlike in Tunisia, the Egyptian Army has historically seen the public as something to fear and control, not defend. As Sadat pushed military advisers out of civilian government, officers refocused their attention on the military institution itself, becoming more protective of the army and coming to see the population as a potential threat to military interests. Both of these interventions, I argue, reaffirmed to the army its role as a moderator of Egyptian politics, and the necessity to establish military control should a political crisis come to threaten the state.

The evolution of terrorist threats and counterterrorism policy since the 1980s has served to formalize the military's roles and responsibilities. Egypt is the birthplace of the Muslim Brotherhood (*al-Ikhwān al-Muslimūn*), an influential, transnational organization whose political and religious ideology has helped to inspire both pacific political move-ments and violent extremism. Founded by Hassan al-Banna in 1928, the Brotherhood combined political activism with community building, focusing initially on Islamic edu-cation and charity, and providing schools, health clinics, and other social services to those

left out of state patronage systems (Masoud 2014). Never recognized as a legal political party before 2011, the Brotherhood nevertheless was an important voice in opposition politics throughout the century (Nugent 2018). As Sadat made overtures to Israel in the 1970s, the Brotherhood became a vocal critic of the government's foreign policy, as well as the military's alliance with the United States and contribution to the 1991 Iraq War (Cook 2007, 85-88). By 1992, the group's strength had grown to the point that it threatened to alter the political order, virtually guaranteeing the military would support crackdown (88). This is also the pattern the army would follow after the revolution, allowing the Muslim Brotherhood to reach the zenith of its power, the presidency, before launching not only a coup d'état but a full-scale eradication campaign against the entire organization.

Until 2011, the military played only a minor role in responding to political demonstrations, choosing to cede this responsibility to the internal security forces. Even as Islamic extremism surged in the 1990s, the MoI led counterterrorism efforts with only limited support from the military (e.g. providing paratrooper units and prosecuting terrorism suspects in military courts). The regime's increasing use of ISF in counterinsurgency further distanced military from internal security role. Although political repression has been primarily a MoI mission, military courts have been used extensively to repress opposition groups (Cook 2007, 22). Since 1992, the Emergency Law (162/1958) and related regulations "essentially place the country under military rule, if not martial law, and have been used as a pretext for the creation of a parallel judicial system and the widespread use of military tribunals" (26). The law also provides a basis for referring civilians to military courts: "Originally intended to provide for swift sentencing in cases related to terrorism, military tribunals were increasingly used to try civilians who were not involved in violent antistate activity" (72). The most common domestic target of the military's has been the Muslim Brotherhood (84). Each of these laws demonstrate the formalization of a military doctrine which denies primary military responsibility for political repression, yet enshrines a military prerogative to claim nearly unlimited authority in cases of national

security.

During the three decades of the Mubarak era, the interaction between the military's increasing autonomy and separation from society, and its experience restoring order and stability to Egypt in times of dire national crisis, confirmed the military's existing doctrine of control. When the revolutionary moment arrived in 2011, the military followed this doctrine and responded by seizing direct control of both the political and the security situation in the country. Although officers hesitated to throw out Mubarak, who had diligently maintained their economic and political prerogatives, they also tried to stay out of what they viewed as a domestic political issue. In following this doctrine, soldiers largely refrained from violence against protesters in 2011. Ultimately, as Mubarak and his security forces failed to quell the unrest, the officers decided the only way to stabilize the crisis was to seize power themselves.

4.5 Responding with Control

As Tunisia's Zine el-Abidine Ben Ali fled into exile in Saudi Arabia on January 14, 2011, Egyptians of all political stripes who had grown tired of the stagnation and corruption of their own government began to feel a sense of hope that Mubarak might be next. Activists seized on the upcoming Police Day celebrations (see fn. 11) as an opportunity to highlight their dissatisfaction with police abuses of their civil rights, as well as broader political, economic, and social grievances. Unlike the Tunisian revolution, which featured a cross-class alliance of disproportionately young protesters, the Egyptian revolt was primarily urban, middle-class, and middle-aged (Beissinger *et al.* 2015, 2). On January 25, protesters converged on Tahrir Square (*maidān taḥrīr, lit.* "freedom square;" a central plaza in downtown Cairo), and the police responded violently, with tear gas, batons, and arrests of peaceful demonstrators. Despite the abuse, demonstrators carried on for the next two days, until January 28, the first "Day of Rage," a broad movement of hundreds of thousands who converged on public squares throughout Egypt. Violent police tactics

further provoked protesters, who began torching police stations, and the police began to collapse. At this point, the army began to intervene with tanks in Tahrir and elsewhere, although they announced on January 31 that their presence was to ensure public safety and protect freedom of expression. Yet two days later, soldiers stood by passively as pro-regime thugs (known as *balṭagiyya*, *lit.* "hatchet men") and plainclothes policemen on camelback attacked protesters in Tahrir, an incident known as the "Battle of the Camel."[37] Ultimately, the regime's measures to suppress the demonstrations only served to further inflame protesters, and Mubarak was forced to turn to the armed forces.

On February 9, President Mubarak chaired a first meeting of the Supreme Council of the Armed Forces (SCAF), a statutory body which has routinely met during serious national crises since 1954. The following day, however, the SCAF reconvened without Mubarak, signaling the military's permanent break from the existing civilian regime. The army quickly issued an ultimatum demanding Mubarak's resignation, which it received on February 11. Next, the military moved forcefully to shut down the mass mobilization that had taken Egypt to this point. Only three days later, the military imposed an outright ban on all gatherings and strikes, which continued to paralyze the country as thousands of state employees, including police, and pro-democracy activists vowed to continue demonstrating until their demands for change were met.[38] The army also cleared out the remaining protesters from Tahrir Square, the symbolic birthplace of the revolution. In sum, the military's strategic approach – consistent with its established doctrine – was to give the civilian authorities a chance to solve their own political crisis, and then, should the government fail to calm the situation, to assert direct military control.

Despite the public appearance of a popular revolution, the events of 2011 are better understood as a reassertion of the military's political power (Albrecht and Bishara 2011). As Crisis Group analysts concluded, "While there is little doubt the army would not have

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37. The state-run media later called it "the day the tide turned" irreversibly against the Mubarak regime. Yasmine Fathi, "Egypt's 'Battle of the Camel': The day the tide turned," *Al-Ahram*, February 2, 2012.

38. Craig Whitlock and Sudarsan Raghavan, "Egypt's army demands end to strikes; opposition vows for change," *Washington Post*, February 14, 2011.

acted without the protests, once it deployed and its rivals within the regime were swept aside, what it ultimately carried out bears the hallmarks of a coup" (ICG 2011a, 16). The result of the uprising was that the army seized power, not the people. In January 2011, the army made it clear to everyone that it would not fire at the demonstrators (Karawan 2011, 46). This was an assertion of the military's independence from the political regime, not a declaration of fealty to the popular will. In fact, senior officers had very little confidence in the democratic forces sweeping Egypt, and maneuvered against Mubarak in order to stem the democratization of Egyptian politics. While the revolution occurred without significant bloodshed at the hands of the military, this relatively peaceful outcome was far from certain when protesters took to the streets. From early in the conflict, the army took pains to signal publicly that it stood with the people, yet the meaning of these pronouncements was uncertain. As events unfolded, many participants on both sides doubted the intentions of the other, and many foresaw a potential for violent conflict.[39] On the protesters' side, unambiguous efforts were made to win the Army over to the people's cause. The well-known slogan, "the army and the people are one hand" (*el-geysh wel-shaʿb iyd waḥda*), is emblematic of a pattern of fraternization between soldiers and protesters throughout the course of the revolution (Ketchley 2014). The rosy picture of unity of purpose between the Army and the population must be critically evaluated, however. There is no doubting the army's embrace of some of the protesters' main demands: the SCAF publicly forced Mubarak from office and allowed the country's first free and fair elections. Yet this peaceful and seemingly democratic outcome not only obscures the tremendous uncertainty of this process, but also misinterprets the power relationship between army and people – and the idea that a true transition occurred.

If the military no longer recognized presidential authority on February 10, nor did it recognize democratic, or popular, authority. Instead, the military recognized its own sovereign authority over the Egyptian state. The SCAF orchestrated a change in civilian

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39. Evan Hill and Muhammad Mansour, "Egypt's army took part in torture and killings during revolution, report shows," *The Guardian*, April 10, 2013.

leadership while maintaining its own role as guardian of the state, what Joshua Stacher (2012) calls "a structural change to the regime rather than regime change" (160). When free elections were held in 2012, they took place at the pleasure of the armed forces, and under the guidance and protection of the SCAF (although the electoral process itself is widely considered democratic). Throughout the democratic experiment that ensued, the army maintained an iron grip on the nation's defense policy, with the chief of the army, first Field Marshal Mohamed Hussein Tantawi and later el-Sisi, also serving as Minister of Defense. The events of the following years shed light on the true nature of military intervention during the revolution. Not long after the revolution, many liberal scholars and activists became concerned by SCAF's tight grip on the political transition. In the first year after the revolution, more than 12,000 civilian demonstrators were tried in military courts, more than during the thirty years of the Mubarak era combined (Rutherford 2013, xxvii). Some saw in these moves a resurgence of the "deep state," which threatened to undo Egypt's democratic gains (El Amrani 2012).

During the political transition (2011–2013), the military took a direct role in governing (*e.g.* by issuing constitutional decrees and dictating the parameters of the electoral process) while maintaining a pretense of staying on the sidelines while civilians took charge. But through the process, the military fundamentally rejected civilian control and asserted its right to make major decisions over the political process and constitution. Civilian political actors, finding themselves competing in a chaotic free-for-all, struck deals with the military to one-up their rivals, reinforcing the military's role as kingmaker (Brown 2013, 52). Meanwhile, other major state institutions, from the judiciary to the police to the media, carried out their own efforts to limit the power of the Islamist presidency.

Egypt's democratic moment came to an end in 2013, when the SCAF engineered a coup d'état to remove the country's first democratically-elected president, Mohamed Morsi. Representing the Muslim Brotherhood, the army's traditional political nemesis and

Boogeyman, Morsi was a perfect target for the military's intervention. Morsi's strategic blunders likely hastened the return of a general – this time, Abdel Fattah El-Sisi – to the presidency, but the military was never really disempowered to begin with. The campaign to remove Morsi had begun as a popular movement, known as Tamarod ("rebellion"). But by July 3, 2013, when soldiers arrested him and brutally cracked down on his supporters, the grassroots organization had been co-opted and supplanted by the SCAF; therefore, the military's actions constituted a classic coup d'état, albeit one with significant public support – what Stepan called a "Brumairian abdication to the military."[40]

An investigation by Human Rights Watch found that state security forces from the police and army committed a massacre of more than 1,150 protesters at Rābaʿa al-ʿAdawiyya Square and elsewhere during July and August 2013.[41] While the threat of opprobrium did not prevent the massacre, it pushed the regime to create a pretext for the assault: the military allowed protesters to arm themselves, so that they could not be classified as "unarmed civilians." The demonstrators – who reasonably feared an impending violent crackdown – were allowed to bring weapons into the demonstration site, which would later ensure a justification for the use of force against them. If the military had wanted the protests to be peaceful, they could have assured that, since there were checkpoints set up at the entrances to the square. In sum, while the military sees certain parts of society as enemies, they need to keep up the pretext and public image of protecting the public and abiding by international standards in order to placate their international donors.

Under el-Sisi, US-Egypt relations stand at a potential crossroads. the value of American aid has declined dramatically in real terms because the amount has held steady around $1 billion for decades without any adjustment for inflation (unlike aid to Israel, which has been increased to keep up with inflation). Into this gap have stepped the oil-rich

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40. Alfred Stepan, "The Recurrent Temptation to Abdicate to the Military in Egypt," *Freedom at Issue Blog*, Freedom House, January 13, 2012.

41. https://www.hrw.org/report/2014/08/12/all-according-plan/raba-massacre-and-mass-killings-protesters-egypt

Gulf states, who provided $23 billion in financial assistance to the Egyptian government within eighteen months of Morsi's removal from office.[42] Meanwhile, the new regime has diversified Egypt's procurement sources to include a larger share of Russian and European systems. Despite procuring new systems almost exclusively from the US for decades, Egypt has maintained its older non-US systems as well, and only about half of all Egyptian military hardware is currently American. While diversification of sources increases maintenance expenses and creates logistical challenges, it also has reduced Egypt's dependence on a single nation. This independence was a non-issue under Sadat and Mubarak, who maintained exceptionally close military cooperation with the US, but could open the door for a further decline in American influence over the Egyptian military.

Conclusion

Time will tell whether the military's experience since 2011 will induce doctrinal innovation in the Egyptian Armed Forces. Under the regime of General Abdel Fattah el-Sisi, a former director of Military Intelligence and Minister of Defense under Morsi, the military has taken an unprecedented, active role in domestic repression. Security forces under the MOI continue to carry out the sustained effort of everyday repression, which has resulted in the arrest of at least 40,000 political prisoners since 2013.[43] But the military itself has also engaged in numerous campaigns to repress any organized political opposition and to suppress public demonstrations against the military regime, notably at Rabaʿa Square. Moreover, the military has claimed a broad and explicit legal authority to intervene in domestic affairs, including but not limited to security. Whereas past interventions relied on an emergency law (even if emergency provisions were in force more often than not), the military's new authorities are permanent and empower the army to intervene at its discretion to protect all "public and vital facilities."[44] This expansion of military prerog-

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42. "Egypt got $23 billion in aid from Gulf in 18 months: minister," *Reuters*, March 2, 2015.
43. Human Rights Watch, *"We are in Tombs": Abuses in Egypt's Scorpion Prison*, September 28, 2016.
44. Email from B. Rutherford.

atives under the el-Sisi regime represents the accomplishment of a process of military takeover that began in 2011. Not only can the army guide policy through the National Defense Council, but it can also try civilians in its own military courts, placing the military institution almost entirely outside – and above – the civilian legal system.

But as el-Sisi, the latest military officer-turned-politician, has consolidated power, signs have emerged that the military remains distinct from the political regime. Even as el-Sisi cruised to re-election virtually unopposed in 2018, he could not take complete military support for granted. A presidential challenge from fellow officer Ahmed Shafik appears to have rattled el-Sisi, whose intelligence services surfaced a ready-made sex scandal to sink the general's candidacy. Meanwhile Ansar al-Sharia, a jihadist group waging an insurgency in the Sinai, has shown success in recruiting ex-officers from the military ranks.[45] On the other hand, Egypt's top brass may have interpreted Morsi's disastrous presidency as a sign that the military must take a more proactive role in managing the country's political future. If so, Egyptian doctrine for domestic security may evolve toward the warlike doctrine of combat which now exists in Syria.

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45.   "Egypt's ex-army officers pose growing security threat," Reuters, January 30, 2018. `https://www.reuters.com/article/us-egypt-security-military-insight/egypts-ex-army-officers-pose-growing-security-threat-idUSKBN1FJ1V8`

Chapter 5

Syria: A Doctrine of War

My final comparative case study is Syria, where the Arab Spring uprising was crushed with military force at the direction of President Bashar al-Asad. Syria is an important counterexample to the largely nonviolent responses of the Tunisian and Egyptian armed forces. From the outset of the 2011 demonstrations, Syrian police and soldiers responded with force, employing live ammunition to disperse demonstrators. Rather than quelling the unrest, however, their violent response backfired, provoking armed rebellions in several regions of the country and mass defections from the armed forces. From there, Syrian society collapsed into civil war, leading the International Crisis Group to label the government's brutal response a "slow-motion suicide."[1] To date, the ensuing conflict has taken more than 465,000 lives, injured more than a million, and displaced over twelve million – half of Syria's prewar population – from their homes.[2] Although the military's violent approach has ultimately succeeded in preserving the al-Asad regime's grip on power, it has been a Pyrrhic victory. Syrian military officers have borne enormous costs in the conflict: mass desertions and combat casualties reduced the military's fighting strength from 295,000 to 120,000 men in just three years (Ohl *et al.* 2015). The exceptionally high cost of the war to Syrian soldiers makes the military response in 2011 all the more

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1. International Crisis Group (ICG), "Popular Protest in North Africa and the Middle East (VII): The Syrian Regime's Slow-Motion Suicide," July 13, 2011.
2. "Syria's civil war explained from the beginning," *Al-Jazeera*, March 4, 2018.

puzzling.

Why then did the Syrian armed forces escalate the conflict with brutal, military violence, instead of staying out of the political contest like the Tunisian army, or seizing control like the Egyptian officers? The most popular explanation is that Syrian soldiers were extremely loyal to the al-Asad regime because of "ethnic stacking." The Alawis, an ethnoreligious minority which represented just 12% of the population when the revolution began, have monopolized the senior leadership of both the ruling party and the military since the 1960s.[3] For decades, scholars of ethnic politics have asserted that the dominance of Alawis in the military virtually guaranteed the military's loyalty to the al-Asad regime (Horowitz [1985] 2000, 492–507; McLauchlin 2010). Since the Arab Spring, ethnicity (i.e. sectarianism) has become a popular explanation for the Syrian military's violent response (Barany 2011; Makara 2013; Bou Nassif 2015c; Droz-Vincent 2016). However, the Syrian military's history of domestic intervention belies a simple relationship between ethnicity and violence against protesters. On one hand, The military carried out its first campaign of mass violence against civilians in 1978–82, before Alawis came to dominate the officer corps. On the other, the great majority of officers have remained loyal since 2011, including non-Alawis who lack ethnic ties to the regime. Moreover, even if Alawis dominate the officer corps, Sunni conscripts fill the ranks of the regular army. Loyal officers can order soldiers to attack civilians, but they ultimately rely on their subordinates to carry out the killing. Thus, while officers' preferences strongly influence how the armed forces respond to an uprising, officers' loyalty to the regime does not automatically translate into a violent pro-regime response. In sum, the politicization of ethnic identity contributed to the development of Syrian military doctrine, but the history of domestic military interventions belies a direct causal relationship between the military's ethnic composition and its response to protests.

Instead, the military's warlike response to largely peaceful demonstrations in 2011

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3. "The 'secretive sect' in charge of Syria," BBC News, May 17, 2012.

can be explained by the organization's doctrine for internal security, which framed domestic interventions as a form of combat. Like other military doctrines, Syria's doctrine developed over decades of direct experience and foreign influence, and was firmly established by the time of the Arab Spring. Under the rule of Hafiz al-Asad (1970–2000), the Syrian Armed Forces learned to treat domestic intervention as a form of warfare, especially during the Islamist uprising, which climaxed in the massacre of thousands of residents of Hama in 1982. Within the ruling Baʿath Party and the military, al-Asad employed pervasive ethnic stacking, favoring Syria's previously underprivileged minorities, to secure his power, which generated an "us-vs-them" mentality within the armed forces. Close military ties with the Soviet Union, a leading proponent of integrating the military and the ruling party, encouraged the deep politicization of the officer corps and emphasis on personal loyalty rather than professional values. By the time Bashar al-Asad succeeded his father in 2000, officers had learned to see foreign and Islamist enemies behind every regime critic. Through historical interactions with the population and foreign contacts, the Syrian Armed Forces developed a doctrine for domestic intervention which called for the immediate use of overwhelming force to maintain order and stability. In this worldview, the armed strength of the state was all that kept Syrian society from falling into the abyss of ethnosectarian conflict and chaos.

5.1 Foundations of Doctrine

Among the three foundational sources of doctrine – institutional origins, role in national independence, and relationship to the ruling party – the first and third elements were the most influential. The institutional design of the Syrian army during the French mandate period resulted in the over-representation of ethnoreligious minority groups in the armed forces, which in turn created permissive conditions for the establishment of ethnic minority rule under the Baʿath Party. While the military played no significant role in national independence, it was central to the rise of the Baʿathist regime, which came to

power through a series of military coups. Moreover, the al-Asad family's close alliance with the military has been central to their ability to weather countless political challenges during nearly fifty years in power. By the time Hafiz al-Asad became president in 1970, the Syrian Armed Forces had developed a doctrine that favored violent intervention in all kinds of political crises, from leadership struggles to popular protests.

Institutional Origins

European colonialism in Syria was shorter than in Tunisia or Egypt, lasting from 1919 to 1946. Nevertheless, the French played a formative role in establishing the Syrian military. For centuries, the country had been an integral part of the Ottoman Empire, which promoted harmonious relations among the diverse ethnoreligious communities of the Levant (Shaw 1976, 132-135). With the Ottoman defeat in World War I, Syria came under French administration, giving the French a powerful influence over the formation of the modern Syrian state and national identity.[4] French authorities organized the first indigenous Syrian army, then known as the Levantine Forces (*Troupes spéciales du Levant*), in the very first year of the mandate. In line with French ethnicity-based approaches to colonial control, the Levantine Forces recruited mainly rural volunteers from Syria's minority ethnic groups, especially Alawis (or Alawites), Druze, Kurds, and Circassians, for whom enlistment represented an escape from crushing poverty (Batatu 1981, 334). They were commanded by French officers and graduates of a new military academy, also established in 1920 (Cleveland and Bunton 2009, 222). The last French officers were forced out in 1946, and the Levantine Forces officially became the Syrian Armed Forces. At the time, the Homs Military Academy was the only free educational institution in Syria, making it the best pathway to social mobility for poor young men from minority backgrounds (Seale 1989, 38). Syria's minority groups, typically rural and poor, were unable to afford costly exemptions from military conscription. As such, ethnic minorities continued to

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4. French control resulted from the infamous Sykes–Picot agreement, which divided the Ottoman Arab provinces into areas of British and French influence.

dominate the enlisted ranks of the military after independence and came to dominate the officer corps after 1963. At that time, the Alawis were one of several minority groups to seek social mobility through the army.

When the French withdrew from Syria, they left a vacuum of national political authority. As indigenous political forces struggled to assert national power for the first time, the military recruitment policies established by the French administration in the interwar period directly contributed to the consolidation of minority rule. Syria's first three decades of independence were characterized by political turmoil and punctuated by many sudden changes of power. In this turbulent context, the military was a natural vehicle for ambitious men to assert their influence. Military officers carried out successful coups d'état in 1949, 1954, 1961, 1963, 1966, and finally 1970, when Hafiz al-Asad succeeded in establishing a durable authoritarian regime. The initial outburst of coups can be attributed to severe factionalism within the officer corps, which was at that time predominantly Sunni, not Alawi (van Dam 2011, 28). Each resulted in purges of officers who had supported the unsuccessful faction, thus shifting the sectarian and political balance within the army. In this way, successive coups progressively shifted the ethnic composition of the armed forces in favor of the Alawi minority, a process Horowitz (2000, 486) calls "ethnic attrition." Because of colonial recruitment policies, Alawis already formed a plurality in the rank-and-file and predominated among NCOs when Syria gained independence, which made possible their takeover of the officer corps in the late 1960s and 1970s (Drysdale 1979). However, the Alawis did not initially represent a unified political bloc, and the military remained deeply politicized even after the first Baʿathist coup. To co-opt the officer corps into his regime, Hafiz al-Asad relied on cross-cutting ideological, ethnic, and class linkages – not ethnic stacking. With al-Asad in office, coup plotting declined precipitously in the armed forces, even as non-Alawi minorities and Sunnis remained in senior military posts. In fact, the most serious challenge to al-Asad's rule came not from sectarian rivals, but from his own brother, Rifaat, who plotted against

him while he struggled with heart problems in 1983 (Seale 1989, chap. 24). Nevertheless, members of the Alawi sect, who constituted approximately 11% of the Syrian population in the 1970s, claimed a disproportionate share of elite positions in the Baʿath regime (Drysdale 1979, 359). However, the ultimate basis of the military–political alliance was a combination of partisanship and personalism, not ethnicity.

On paper, the Syrian military follows a similar model to the Tunisian or Egyptian, with professional officers in command of conscripted soldiers. But because the al-Asad regime prioritized loyalty and regime security above all other military considerations, the Syrian Armed Forces used conscripts differently than Egypt or Tunisia. Unlike in the colonial and early post-colonial periods, the conscripted ranks of the armed forces today reflect the ethnic composition of the Syrian population, with a majority of Sunni Arabs (Bou Nassif 2015c, 638). As a result, senior officers have long known that they could not rely on conscripts to suppress popular protesters from the same ethnic and social origins. Instead, the military organized elite units within the military command structure, which prioritized loyalty considerations in their recruitment and promotions. For their part, the masses of regular conscripts played only a minor role in responding to domestic crises. Thus, colonial recruitment patterns gave rise to a duality within the military: elite units, vetted for loyalty, took primary responsibility for regime security, while regular units, expected to sympathize with the population at large, were relegated to support roles. This duality was incorporated into the military's doctrine for domestic security, which relies on elite units to spearhead the violent repression of civilian resistance.

Independence Movement

Syria's independence, at the conclusion of World War II, resulted in large part from British wartime actions against the Vichy French regime then occupying Syria. Because the national army had not contributed to the independence movement, soldiers had no initial claim to political authority, and it was the protectorate-era republican government which

formally took control after the French withdrawal. However, soldiers' public stature soon burgeoned as the military joined the Arab war against neighboring Israel. From the first Arab-Israeli war in 1948, resistance against Israel became a major source of legitimacy for the Syrian Armed Forces, as well as the Baʿath Party, which promoted Arab unity primarily, if not exclusively, to collectively overcome Zionism. Since then, opposition to Israel has been a central mission of the Syrian Armed Forces, second only to domestic regime security. Moreover, the two goals have often been mutually reinforcing, since opposition to Israel and the West served to enhance the regime's domestic legitimacy. Besides framing the armed forces indispensable defenders of the nation, the Arab-Israeli conflict – especially the defeat of 1967 – also stimulated insecurity, which in turn "legitimated the creation of an authoritarian national security state" (Hinnebusch 2002, 7). Unlike in Egypt, where the defeat caused massive popular unrest and inspired a far-reaching initiative to professionalize and depoliticize the officer corps, in Syria, censorship and propaganda allowed the military to keep its humiliation out of the public eye (Sassoon 2016, 110). Nevertheless, Defense Minister Hafiz al-Asad became personally obsessed with redeeming the defeat, even as he rejected personal responsibility for causing it (Seale 1989, 185).

The Syrian Armed Forces participated in the surprise attack on Israeli positions on Yom Kippur in 1973, but were less successful than their Egyptian counterparts. Syria's primary war aim was to recapture the Golan Heights, occupied by Israel since 1967.[5] After briefly seizing part of the Golan, Syrian forces were soon expelled, and the Israelis advanced to within 35 kilometers of Damascus. The Soviet Union began supplying the Arab forces, including 3,750 tons airlifted to Syria alone, while the US supplied Israel. Syria also received direct support from 2,000 Soviet technicians and military personnel, repairing equipment and advising the Syrian command at every level, from battalions to supreme headquarters (Pollack 2002, 505). After 243 days of fighting, the war ended in a

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5. Al-Asad was Minister of Defense during the 1973 conflict and, as president, became "obsessed" with recovering Syria's lost territory Seale (1989, 185-86).

US- and Soviet-backed ceasefire, which restored only a small portion of Syrian territory and established a buffer zone between Syria and the Israeli-occupied Golan.[6] Syria's poor performance in the war was exacerbated by al-Asad's refusal to send his best commando units to the Golan, relying on them to protect his regime instead (Pollack 2002, 509-10). "When Sadat made a separate peace at Camp David a few years later, Syria felt deeply betrayed, both by its erstwhile ally and by the United States, which had claimed Syria would be part of any peace deal (Seale 1989, 260-61).

Syria has also maintained an active political and military stake in neighboring Lebanon, which was under Syrian military occupation from 1976 to 2005.[7] Originally invited, under an Arab League mandate, to help stop an eruption of civil violence, 20,000 Syrian soldiers remained fifteen years after the end of the Lebanese civil war. In large part, the occupation became a proxy battle with Israel, which occupied parts of southern Lebanon in 1978. However, the majority of Syrians viewed the intervention through the confessional lens of the Lebanese civil war and interpreted al-Asad's stance as anti-Sunni sectarianism, inspired by his Alawi identity (Lefèvre 2013, 72). During the occupation, the Syrian military meddled constantly in Lebanese domestic politics and helped to empower various militia groups, giving military officers decades of experience with political inter-vention. The Syrian military had perverse incentives to perpetuate the ethnosectarian conflict, both to weaken its neighbor and to promote the idea that the collapse of the Baʿathist order in Syria would inevitably lead to similar chaos, bloodshed, and conquest by Islamist extremists. Despite Lebanon's unique history and social characteristics, the Syrian regime used Lebanon's strife as proof that only al-Asad stood between order and chaos. Experience in Lebanon exposed military officers to the logic of order at any cost and normalized the cynical provocation of sectarianism for political purposes. The same

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6. The ceasefire lines have held since 1974 under continuous supervision of the United Nations Disengagement Observer Force (UNDOP).

7. The population of Lebanon has historically been roughly one-third that of Syria. Today, an estimated 1.5 million Syrian refugees are living in Lebanon, whose prewar population was only 4.3 million. (Eric Reidy, "Will Lebanon Force a Million Syrian Refugees to Return to a War Zone?" *The Nation*, January 24, 2018.)

ideas would be driven home in the fight to suppress Islamist uprisings in Syria, as described in section 5.2.

Relationship to the Ruling Party

The Arab Socialist Baʿath Party (*Hizb al-Baʿath al-ʿArabi al-ʾIshtirākī*) came to power in 1963, when the party's Military Committee staged a successful coup d'état to take control of Syria. With the rise of the Baʿath came a corresponding rise of the military within the Syrian state. Devlin (1976, 281) writes that as soon as the Baʿath party took power, it "ended any pretense of cooperation with other organized civilian political forces in Syria," immediately beginning a process of institutionalizing the military as a key political player. The Military Academy's recruitment became explicitly ideological as well, as hundreds of young Baʿathists (including Rifaat al-Asad) were admitted to replace ideological rivals purged from the officer corps (Seale 1989, 79). Meanwhile, many Alawi noncommissioned officers (NCOs) received promotions to commissioned ranks, and additional minority candidates were enrolled in the military academy (van Dam 2011, 31–36).

In 1966, a second, bloodier coup was staged by the neo-Baʿath faction of the Military Committee, which was characterized by younger, more radical members of the party dissatisfied with the policies of the current government, and led to the murder or exile of the party's historical founders. The main architects of both coups included Hafiz al-Asad, who would become Syria's defense minister in 1966 and its president in 1970. Following the second coup, the newly consolidated regime under General Salah Jadid purged the government and military of its former members, and sought to restructure Syrian society to benefit the country's minority sects at the expense of its majority (Devlin 1976, 281). This restructuring benefited rural peasants, urban public workers, and minorities at the expense of the Sunni traditional land owning classes. By this time, the government was filled with military officers, the majority from al-Asad's Alawi clan.

Socioeconomic restructuring along ethnic lines not only reflected the Baʿathist

ideology, as articulated by Syrian intellectuals Michel ʿAflaq and Salah al-Din al-Bitar, but also mirrored demands of the party's support base. Ethnic minorities had traditionally been underprivileged, and cross-cutting cleavages overlay ethnic divisions onto class divisions. The country's majority, the Sunnis, had been economically favored and concentrated in high numbers among the country's middle and upper classes. Ethnoreligious minorities such as the Alawis, the Druze, and the Ismaʿilis (a branch of Shiʿism) were concentrated among the country's lower class and among the country's rural and peasant populations. Their underprivileged position made these classes susceptible to radical forms of Arab nationalism, particularly Baʿathism (*al-Baʿathiyya*, meaning "resurrection"). Baʿathism promotes the creation of an Arab nation, and differs from mainstream Arab nationalism in its emphasis on the importance of the leadership of a vanguard party and a revolutionary state in creating this nation. Before the Baʿathist coup d'état in 1963, Syria's minorities had already been mobilized into peasant movements, citing inequality between urban and rural areas and elite monopolization of revenue from the agrarian sector as main grievances. The Syrian Baʿath party recruited young people from these radical peasant movements, and as a result much of the party's support was based on these populations (Hinnebusch 2002, 4). What made Baʿathism particularly attractive to ethnic and religious minorities in the Arab world was as a secular ideology, which emphasizes Arab unity over religious or ethnic divisions.[8] In addition, Baʿathism views socialism as an important tool for the development of a strong Arab nation, which in theory would benefit the masses as the expense of the traditional business elite (Devlin 1976, 79).

From 1963 until the consolidation of the al-Asad regime in 1970, factionalism intensified in the civilian and military sectors alike. While the Minister of Defense, Air Force Major General Hafiz al-Asad, worked to consolidate his control over the armed forces, his rival, Salah Jadid, established dominance over the civilian Baʿath party apparatus, creating

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8. Ironically, a bitter schism split the movement in 1966, creating Syrian-dominated and Iraqi-dominated wings. Syria and Iraq remained bitter rivals throughout the rule of Saddam Hussein and his Arab Socialist Baʿath Party – Iraq Region.

a "duality of power" (*ʾizdiwajiyyat al-ṣulṭa*). Within the armed forces, "collateral contacts" (*ʾittiṣalāt jānibiyya*) – coreligionists communicating directly, and illegally, outside the military chain of command – undermined the command structure and military unity, but strengthened al-Asad's grip over the military (van Dam 2011, 36–37). Finally, in an act he called the "Corrective Movement" (*al-ḥaraka al-teṣḥīḥiyya*), al-Asad seized power in November 1970. He became Syria's first Alawi president, a position traditionally reserved for Sunnis. As al-Asad and his Baʿath Party achieved domination of the political system, the dual power system gave way to a consolidated, personalistic dictatorship.

The al-Asad Regime, 1970–present

To legitimate his rule, al-Asad assiduously presented himself as the leader of the Baʿath Party, not head of the military, but the regime was military in most other respects. It was al-Asad's power base in the Armed Forces, and especially the Air Force, that brought him to power in the first place (Ma'oz 1990, 55). And under his rule, the Syrian Armed Forces became an explicit vehicle for political and ideological indoctrination.[9] He sought to transform the "army in politics" that had brought him to power into a truly "ideological army" with a hierarchical party structure, modeled on the civilian Baʿath organization (Seale 1989, 89). As both a praetorian guard and powerful interest group, the military has remained "the most powerful actor which, particularly in times of crisis, has the potential to shape outcomes" (Hinnebusch 2002, 69). Unlike in Egypt, the armed forces did not develop autonomy or independence from the civilian regime, leading to a conflation of national security with regime security.

Building on its initially close relationship with the regime, the military continued to play a central role in the governing apparatuses of Syria over the three decades Hafiz al-Asad ruled as president. Although parliamentary elections were held with some regularity beginning in the mid-1970s, *de facto* power remained with the president and his inner

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9. A Baʿath party document adopted in 1963 declared, "The organic fusion of the military and civilian Vanguard sectors is an urgent prerequisite for ... socialist reconstruction" ("Baʿḍ al-Munṭalaqāt al-Naẓariyya" [Some Theoretical Perspectives], *Nidal al-Baʿath*, vi:232-91, quoted in Seale [1989, 88]).

circle, the majority of whom are high-ranking military (Mora and Wiktorowicz 2003, 102). The military became the most important support for the al-Asad regime, at the expense of party and internal security organizations (Ziadeh 2011, 24). Since the beginning of the Baʿath rule beginning in 1963, the regime has relied on a combination of familial and ethnic linkages to strengthen its relationship with top military elites. This has manifested itself in the military receiving funds beyond its usefulness to the country. While the military has not been involved in major combat operations since 1973 military spending was estimated at 30 percent of GDP and it was reported that the army employed 21 percent of the male labor force in Syria between 1977 and 1998 (Hinnebusch 1998, 227).

Under the al-Asad regime, military officers were categorized into concentric circles of loyalty, based first on familial and personal relationships and secondarily on Baʿathist partisanship and rank. In moments of domestic crisis, only the inner circles of loyal commanders were entrusted with sensitive regime security missions. Even in the largest domestic interventions (1976–82 and 2011–present), officers in the outer circles were not assigned to lead order maintenance or combat operations. To strengthen loyalty throughout the officer corps, the military establishment created an enclave, comparable to the one in Egypt, which shielded officers from the interests and concerns of broader Syrian society. The segregation of lower- and mid-level officers in particular served to isolate them physically and socially from the general population. Khaddour (2015) has described this strategy as the "ghettoization of the officer corps," pointing to the development of a benefits system for army officers "that links nearly every aspect of their professional and personal lives to the regime." A striking example of this is a state-subsidized home purchase program for military officers. Many of these homes were located in exclusive military developments, such as Dahia *(Ḍāḥiyyat al-ʾAsad*, "Asad's suburb"), which housed more than 100,000 residents in March 2011. As a result of their physical segregation into military-only living spaces, Syrian officers "may have been too physically and socially isolated for many of them to see defecting as viable early on in the conflict — even if

they'd wanted to." In particular, segregation in the military enclave heightened loyalty among lower- and mid-level officers, who in turn lost touch with the concerns of the broader Syrian population and came to see defection from the regime as unthinkable.

Beyond these party, ethnic, and social ties, the closely connected nature of regime and military is manifest in the military's economic power, which operates primarily through patronage and resources, rather than a parallel military economy (as in Egypt). Under Hafiz al-Asad, the military developed a number of businesses affiliated with the Ministry of Defense. By 1985, the most expansive of these, the Military Housing Establishment (known as Milihouse), had become the largest firm in Syria (Seale 1989, 449). The military was thus able to gain control of important economic sectors and industries, namely those related to public works, industry, and farm production. Some smaller business ventures included manufacturing batteries, bottled mineral water, and furniture (Richards and Waterbury 2008, 341). In contrast to Egypt, though, large-scale military industries were not the only, or even the primary, revenue stream for military officers. Instead, individual officers built private wealth through their political connections and ethnic ties to the ruling family.

When Bashar al-Asad succeeded his father in 2000, he largely maintained the power structure he inherited from his father. Despite a longstanding official policy of economic liberalization – necessitated by economic turmoil in the 1980s and the loss of resources after the end of the Syrian occupation of Lebanon – the old guard has remained protected. Military advantages such as favorable taxation policy, subsidies for housing and consumer goods, and preferential treatment from the bureaucracy have continued unabated (Gambill 2000). Meanwhile, hundreds of senior officers have operated as facilitators for private businesses, offering "protection" from state interference, and constitute a major segment of Syria's economic elite (Haddad 2012a, 68). Thus, while liberalization has extended the circle of cronyism to include a new business elite, it has not alienated the military in doing so.

5.2 Past Interventions

Today, the Syrian Armed Forces (*Quwwāt al-Musallaḥa al-ʿArabiyya al-Sūriyya*) consist of the Army, Navy, Air Force, Air Defense Force, in addition to paramilitary forces which are informally under military command. Before the 2011 revolution, there were 295,000 active and 314,000 reserve military personnel, plus around 100,000 men in the People's Army, an armed militia controlled by the Baʿath Party (IISS 2011).[10] The al-Asad regime relies on four separate intelligence directorates to perform internal security functions. The General Intelligence Directorate (GID, *ʾIdārat al-Mukhābarāt al-ʾĀmma*) is a civilian force under the direction of the Ministry of the Interior.[11] Within the GID, the State Security Internal Branch (known as Branch 251) is especially active in internal security and repression.[12] Another civilian agency, the Political Security Directorate (*ʾIdārat al-ʾAmn al-Siyāsī*), is also responsible for surveillance and repression of the political opposition (Ziadeh 2011, 23). However, unlike in Tunisia or Egypt, the military intelligence services – Syrian Military Intelligence (*Shuʿbat al-Mukhābarāt al-ʿAskariyya*) and the Air Force Intelligence Directorate (*ʾIdārat al-Mukhābarāt al-Jawiyya*) – also play an expansive, and brutal, role in domestic surveillance, demonstrating the more active involvement of the Syrian military in regime maintenance.[13] The heads of these services are members of the innermost circle of al-Asad family loyalists, or even members of the al-Asad family.[14]

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10. The army's total size is estimated to have dropped by one-half in the first two years of the war (IISS 2013).

11. Compared with Tunisia or Egypt, there is a paucity of reliable information available from open sources about the Syrian intelligence services. Here, I rely primarily on classified US diplomatic cables released by Wikileaks.

12. Embassy Damascus, "Riad Seif Details Recent Security Service Interrogations," Wikileaks Cable: 06DAMASCUS702_a, dated February 21, 2006.

13. Ahed Al Hendi, "The Structure of Syria's Repression," *Foreign Affairs*, May 3, 2011. According to one opposition activist, "Air Force Intelligence is known as one of the most brutal security directorates." See also Embassy Damascus, "Prominent Opposition and Civil Society Figures Arrested Throughout Syria," Wikileaks Cable: 06DAMASCUS1358_a, dated March 27, 2006.

14. For example, Bashar's brother-in-law Asif Shawkat was a top official in Military Intelligence and led the agency from 2005 to 2009 (Leverett 2005, 199). His brother, Gen. Maher al-Asad, commands the Republican Guard (a post formerly held by their eldest brother, Basil, who died in a car accident in 1994) and is "notorious for his personal greed and complicity in corruption" (29).

In addition to the Baʿath Party paramilitary, various elite special forces units and pro-government militias have played a major role in Syria's internal security operations, as well as in foreign interventions in neighboring Lebanon and Jordan. Notably, Rifaat al-Asad, the youngest brother of Hafiz, commanded a militia known as the Defense Companies (*Sarāyā al-Difāʿ*), which led Syria's intervention in Lebanon and participated in the massacre at Hama, as well as the 1967 and 1973 wars with Israel. The infamous militia later became the backbone of two elite military units: the Republican Guard (a praetorian guard) and a special forces division. These and other elite units were originally trained by the Soviet special forces, and adopted Soviet doctrine in areas like tank battle and siege warfare (Pollack 2002). Since the 1980s, the regime has also mobilized supporters in pro-government militias known as *shabīha* (comparable to Egypt's *baltagiya*). The *shabiha* are mostly Alawi and have operated at times in the manner of criminal syndicates (including assassinations, smuggling, and protection rackets) and as mercenary soldiers in the civil war (al Hajj Saleh 2012).

The prevalence of paramilitary forces is a distinct feature of the Syrian Armed Forces, in comparison to other Arab armies. In most countries, paramilitary forces serve non-military roles, such as border security and riot control, while traditional military units are equipped with heavy weapons and perform all combat functions. Syrian military doctrine, on the other hand, relies heavily on elite strike forces, which are trained and equipped for combined arms warfare. Elite units of the military are oriented primarily toward regime security, and promotions are, above all, based on loyalty considerations, especially familial ties, ethnicity and geographic origin. Hinnebusch (1990, 160-62) describes the military establishment as a set of three concentric circles. At the top are the president's personal allies, mainly family members and other Alawis, who monopolize the most sensitive positions, like leading elite military units and intelligence services. In the next ring are the politicized officers, ranking Baʿathists who predominantly, but not exclusively, members of religious minorities. The rest of the professional officer corps,

those without close ethnic or party ties to the al-Asad family, are still privileged members of the establishment, but they tend to perform strictly professional functions rather than critical regime security roles.

Consistent with its political orientation, the army has rarely hesitated to intervene with deadly force to counter popular mobilization. During the post-colonial period, the Syrian Armed Forces have used deadly force against protesters on several occasions, but the military response to Islamist-led uprisings in the late 1970s and early 1980s far surpassed the scale and brutality of other regime responses prior to 2011. The uprisings were spearheaded by a self-styled "Fighting Vanguard" of Islamist extremists, inspired by a violent current within the Muslim Brotherhood.[15] From 1978 to 1982, the Syrian military, pro-government militias, and other security forces waged open war on not only the insurgents, but anyone suspected of Islamist sympathies as well. Government forces' warlike response to the uprisings resulted in tens of thousands of civilian casualties, including the massacre of an estimated 20,000 at Hama in February 1982. The military framed its intervention as a legitimate response to the treasonous, anti-nationalist, and foreign-sponsored Muslim Brotherhood. Not only was this rationale consistent with the Baʿath regime's nationalist ideology, but the narrative was also strengthened by state propaganda, spread under a suffocating regime of censorship. As such, the Syrian public largely accepted the regime's version of events, and the military's overwhelming use of force did not trigger the same backlash that military attacks on civilians engendered in similar incidents elsewhere in the region. In addition, the interventions were highly successful in crushing the opposition forces that had instigated them, and therefore taught the army the lesson that violence was an effective tool for maintaining both military and regime interests.

15. Like the Egyptian Islamic Jihad and Islamic Group, the Syrian extremists were inspired by Sayyid Qutb's advocacy of the use of violence to overthrow Arab regimes judged as "impious" (Lefèvre 2013, chap. 5). After the 1978-82 uprising failed, a minority of Syrian Islamists would follow this line of thinking into the ranks of al-Qaida and other jihadist groups.

Islamist Uprisings, 1978–82

The rise of the Baʿath Party in the 1960s came at the expense of its secular rivals, mainly Nasserists and Marxists, who were quickly suppressed. The Baʿathists then moved against the Muslim Brotherhood, their most implacable challenger. When the Brotherhood was banned in 1964, its furious supporters, predominantly urban Sunnis, launched strikes and demonstrations in each of Syria's major cities (Batatu 1982). An especially strong protest movement developed in Hama, reputed as a stronghold of conservative Sunni Islam, and President Amin al-Hafiz ordered the military put down the insurrection.[16] Soldiers killed 70–100 alleged members of the Brotherhood while restoring government control. In so doing, the regime pushed the Brotherhood underground and inspired some of its members to embrace violence in their politico-religious struggle.

In the late 1970s, with al-Asad now leading Syria, radicalized Islamists led a series of popular uprisings across Syria, which escalated steadily for several years before culminating in a full-scale revolt in Hama. By early 1980, demonstrations paralyzed nearly all major cities in Syria, as many opposition groups, both religious and secular, joined the uprising. In March, the military switched to war fighting tactics. Combat operations against anti-regime protesters were led by Special Forces, who killed 200 people in two days (Lefèvre 2013, 76). Following a failed attempt on al-Asad's life, the president's brother, Rifaat, led a military assault on a Palmyra prison holding jailed members of the Muslim Brotherhood, killing 550 prisoners in a mass extrajudicial execution. Next, units from the Third Army Division entered Aleppo, a center of gravity of the Islamist opposition, and imposed a brutal, yearlong occupation, which claimed 2,000 lives. The "military" campaign finally climaxed in February 1982, when al-Asad decided to make an example of the city of Hama, another anti-regime stronghold, whose leaders had made the fateful decision to declare open rebellion against the Baʿathist regime. Between 10,000 and

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16. As a member of the Baʿath Party's Regional Command (the central decision-making body), Hafiz al-Asad supported the use of force in Hama (Seale 1989, 94).

40,000 residents of Hama were killed by government forces in a full-scale military assault.

In the assault on Hama, the military sent 12,000 troops to seal off the city, then unloaded with heavy artillery, tanks and helicopter gunships (Drysdale 1982). Heavily armed units then moved in, demolishing buildings (some with dozens of civilians inside), leveling entire city blocks, and executing people at random. For the most extreme acts of violence against the population, the military did not rely the Sunni rank-and-file. Instead, each of the major assaults on civilians were led by elite units commanded by Alawis (McLauchlin 2010, 342). To compensate for the reduction of force strength from leaving out Sunni conscripts, the military and the party recruited and armed citizen militias in minority-majority regions. Across Syria, the regime armed groups of party members and supporters to supplement its coercive strength. Pro-government militia and paramilitary units varied widely in terms of organization and professionalism, from gangs of pro-regime thugs (*shabiha*) to elite special forces units (*e.g.* the Defense Companies). Some of these groups were directly incorporated into the military command hierarchy, while others operated semi-independently, taking orders informally from various government, party, and military leaders. Regime discourse legitimated the use of militias and the *shabiha* as "the people in arms," a concept more typically associated with total war than with order maintenance. The reliance on multiple, overlapping forces to accomplish a single mission (without, necessarily, strict coordination among them) was and is characteristic of the organizational structure of the Syrian Armed Forces. The concept of the "people in arms" would reoccur in the 2011 conflict in the guise of the paramilitary National Defense Forces (Droz-Vincent 2016, 177).

Although the Syrian Ba'ath Party is often conflated, especially by its detractors, with the Alawi ethnic group, it is ideologically a pan-ethnic party. In 1963, it was the party that seized power, not the Alawi sect, and the replacement of Sunnis by minority Alawis, Druzes and Isma'ilis in government and the military officer corps resulted not from ethnic bias but from a need to replace anti-Ba'ath functionaries and officers the party's base of

support and the existing composition of the military rank-and-file. Consequently, the concentration of Alawis in the regime spiked in the 1970s, as the Islamist uprising and the unpopular intervention in Lebanon forced Asad to rely increasingly on his most loyal supporters, especially fellow Alawis, for political survival (Batatu 1981). Thus, the "Alawization" of the military did not occur immediately with the establishment of "minority rule" in 1970. Instead, both the regime and the military became Alawi-dominated because of a combination of institutional precedents and the pressures of a major popular uprising. In conclusion, the dominant role of ethnicity in Syrian military doctrine after 1980 was a result of pre-existing features of the military organization, dating to the colonial period, as well as the formative experience of the Islamist uprising.

After the massacre, stability was restored to Syria, and the military, in coalition with the al-Asad regime, came out stronger than ever. The success of the army's indiscriminate application of war-fighting tactics civilians, and the positive (or at least not openly critical) public response to their actions, seemingly justified the armed forces' aggressive doctrine for domestic intervention. According to Thomas Friedman (1989, 101), who visited Hama not long after the massacre, the Syrian population as a whole supported the military's actions in Hama: "They might have said, 'better one month of Hama than 14 years of civil war like Lebanon.'" Al-Asad's narrative that only he could hold Syria together found a receptive audience among many Syrians, including Sunnis, who were watching the Lebanese war develop across the border. The al-Asad regime also pushed the narrative that the Muslim Brotherhood was fundamentally anti-Syrian, inspired by foreign ideology and funded by the Iraqi Baʿath Party (Lefèvre 2013, 130).[17] The regime also blamed the United States for instigating the violence in unspecified ways, as well as those who opposed Syria's "steadfastness" against Israel (Drysdale 1982). Pointing out foreign plots behind the domestic uprisings shifted the reference point for the government response: if protests called for policing, a foreign-backed insurgency called for war.

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17. The Syrian and Iraqi Baʿath remained bitter rivals after their 1966 schism. See note 8.

These official narratives about the nature of the uprising and its instigators may have been intended to convince soldiers at least as much as the general public. The regime's discourse also provided a way for officers to justify their participation in what might otherwise be called gross human rights violations. If their targets were enemy combatants, their repression could be a legitimate act of war. Syrian military doctrine called for the armed forces to approach popular uprisings as insurgent threats to national security, and the "success" of Hama simply reinforced this image. Given the magnitude of the violence in Palmyra, Aleppo, Hama, and many other cities, the uprisings left a dramatic mark on the participants on both sides: "Today, more than ever before, the Syrian regime, composed of a number of officers and politicians who have themselves, or through the experiences of their relatives, lived through the internal crisis of the late 1970s and early 1980s, is looking at the current uprisings through the lens of its own history" (Lefèvre 2013, 184).

5.3 Foreign Influence

Like in other post-colonial states, Syria's foreign patrons exerted a powerful influence over the development of military doctrine. Throughout the Cold War, the Soviet Union was Syria's main arms provider and diplomatic ally. Syria began purchasing Soviet weapons after the Suez Crisis in 1956, but the relationship deepened under Salah Jadid, the *de facto* leader of Baʿathist Syria from 1966 to 1970. Internationally, Jadid was considered an extremist in both domestic and foreign policy. While pursuing a socialist transformation of Syrian society, he aligned the country firmly with the Soviet bloc, but his government's left-wing "adventurism" was not appreciated by the Soviet leadership. When al-Asad took power in 1970, he sought to moderate Syria's foreign policy, primarily to gather enough support to again challenge Israel. In his view, the Soviet Union was the only possible source of enough weapons to win the upcoming war (Seale 1989, 186-87). Over time, al-Asad made Syria into the Soviets' indispensable Middle Eastern ally, a status which

has persevered through the present civil war. Although al-Asad was "never more than a cautious ally of the Soviets," Syria remained solidly in the Eastern bloc throughout the Cold War, and subsequently continued as a Russian client (Pollack 2002, 105). Despite the significant cultural barriers between the two countries, Russian influence has been effective in Syria, in part because it is unconstrained by the limitations that democratic states face when attempting to influence authoritarian regimes through military assistance (Biddle *et al.* 2018).

Meanwhile, Syria's foreign relations within the Arab world degenerated throughout the second half of the century. Relations with Egypt soured when Syria pulled out of their short-lived political union (1958–61), and fractious wartime alliances in 1967 and 1973 did little to improve the relationship. By the 1970s, Egypt's Sadat had become a vocal critic of what he called the "Alawi Baʿath" (van Dam 2011, 93). Relations with neighboring Jordan reached a nadir during Black September 1970, when Syrian forces entered Jordanian territory. Syria's goals were not fully clear, but the results were unambiguous: military defeat and a new enemy in King Hussein. Following the Iran's 1979 Revolution, Syria increasingly turned to the Islamic Republic for diplomatic and military backing. Open support for Iran in turn created tensions with Gulf states in particular, who had previously provided substantial economic aid. Thus, Syria's relationships with Russia and Iran have been the most influential in shaping Syrian military doctrine, while the Western influences observed in Tunisia and, to a lesser extent, Egypt have been entirely absent.

Military Aid

Soviet sponsorship in the 1970s and 80s provided cover for the development of an authoritarian national security state, the domestic counterpart of Hafiz al-Asad's assertive foreign policy. As Hinnebusch (2002, 7) observes, "the resources for this project partly derived from Syria's exploitation of Cold War rivalries that allowed it to access Soviet protection, arms and development aid." Syria's foreign policy required large investments in military

expansion and equipment. Egypt's peace with Israel brought a "peace dividend" – reduced military expenses plus substantial American aid – but Syria took the opposite tack. In carrying the mantle of resistance, Syria entered into a ruinous regional arms race, becoming one of only ten countries in the world to spend over ten percent of GNP on the military in the early 1980s (Drysdale 1982). Escalating military costs were a major burden on the state budget, diverting resources from economic and social development. Despite a partial subsidy from the Arab League, the costs of military occupation in Lebanon ran at least $1 million daily by one estimate (Drysdale 1982). At the same time, Syria remained one of the world's largest arms importers, a feat made possible by Soviet resources.

Armaments were the bloodline of the Soviet-Syrian relationship. The Arab coalition had relied on the Soviets to arm them for battle with Israel in 1973, and Soviet technicians were on the ground during the war, repairing damaged equipment and advising Syrian officers. As Sadat turned Egypt away from the Soviets after the war, Syria became even more essential to Soviet influence in the region (Cobban 1991, 113). Throughout the 1980s, al-Asad pushed the Soviets to help Syria achieve "strategic balance" with Israel: "Syria continued to rely heavily on the Soviet Union, which resupplied the Syrian armed forces with sophisticated weapons, and with which it concluded the Treaty of Friendship and Cooperation on October 8, 1980. This relationship did not evolve, however, to either country's complete satisfaction. As of early 1987, Syria had not granted the Soviets permanent port facilities, and, although the Soviets had pledged to defend Syria if it were attacked by Israel, it refused to support a Syrian blitz on the Golan Heights" (Collelo 1987, 226-28). Syria could also rely on the historical example of 1967 and 1973, when the Soviets went so far as to threaten invasion in order to push Israel to accept a ceasefire (Glassman 1975).

Despite these policy disagreements, a stable, if transactional, relationship evolved between Damascus and Moscow, which provided the al-Asad regime with a reliable weapons supplier (Seale 1989, 218). Importantly, Soviet assistance to the Middle East was not

conditional on domestic politics in the recipient country. The Soviets did not use arms sales as leverage to impose human rights standards or democratization, as Washington sometimes did with its allies. While Moscow did foster ties between the Communist Party and the Syrian Baʿath, it was uncoerced and intended to foster greater influence (Freedman 1985, 42). Notably, Moscow never discouraged the use of deadly force against civilians. In the post-Soviet period, the Russian military used indiscriminate violence in its own internal wars, for example in Chechnya (Lyall 2009). Thus, at a minimum, Syrian officers could safely assume that using their Russian-made weapons to attack civilians would not impede further acquisitions. Continuing support from Russia, as well as Iran, after 2012, even as the Syrian military was credibly accused of numerous war crimes, demonstrates how guaranteed access to Russian arms enabled the Syrian military to pursue a military campaign against civilians in contravention of international law.

Education and Training

The Soviet Union also served as the most important foreign influence on civil-military relations in Syria. As discussed above, French recruitment and promotion policies during the mandate period served to politicize and polarize the military along ideological and sectarian lines prior to independence (see section 5.1). Then, during the formative post-colonial period in Syria's national development, the Soviet Union became patron and sponsor of the Syrian Armed Forces. As Syria's military patron throughout the Cold War, the Soviet Union provided the great majority of foreign training opportunities for Syrian officers. Some Syrians also trained with other Arab forces, but this exchange was limited by rising tensions in Syria's regional relationships. For his part, Hafiz al-Asad received military training both in the USSR and in Egypt, where he studied with fellow Air Force officer Hosni Mubarak (Ma'oz 1990, 53). Overall, the Soviet influence over Syrian doctrine has been less significant than Western influence in Tunisia, but some important characteristics were transferred through military-to-military exchange. Since

the 1960s, Syria and the Soviet Union (later Russia) have had an ongoing military-to-military exchange, with dozens of Syrian officers traveling to Moscow for military training each year, and hundreds and even thousands of Soviet trainers giving courses in Syria at any given time. Soviet influence was felt most in three areas: general doctrine and force structure, the relationship between the ruling party and the military, and methods of control within military units.

First, Syria's military relationship with the Soviet Union significantly influenced the doctrine and organization of the Syrian forces. The 1960s were a prime era of military development in Syria, as the armed forces adopted modern weaponry and corresponding tactics from the Soviet Union. Because senior officers were preoccupied with the turmoil of constant coups d'état, the few hundred Soviet advisers sent to train and educate forces in Syria had an important influence on doctrine at a pivotal moment in Syrian military history (Pollack 2002, 459). As a result, Soviet doctrine would have a residual influence in Syria for generations. In internal security operations like in 1980–1982 and 2012–2013, the Syrians often relied on siege tactics which strongly mirrored Russian tactics formerly seen in Chechnya and elsewhere (Droz-Vincent 2016, 180).

Second, the politicization of the Syrian military, already rampant prior to the Soviet relationship, was only encouraged and reinforced by Soviet concepts of civil-military relations. Luckham (1971, 23-24) labels the communist model of civil-military relations "apparat control."[18] In this model, a "well articulated ruling party apparatus" is able to balance the power of the military, "though both institutions are powerful." The party achieves its influence over the military by establishing lateral connections with junior officers and by ensuring the ideological indoctrination of soldiers of all ranks; "importance is attached to the diffusion within the military of political as well as military doctrine." Under Soviet influence, Syria's Baʿath Party developed a similar system to govern the relationship between party and military, drawing ideological justification from Leninist

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18. The term apparat refers to the administrative system of a communist party, but Luckham applies it to other socialist or fascist regimes as well.

political philosophy. Like in the Soviet Union, the army was explicitly considered a political "vanguard" in early Baʿathism (Galvani 1974, 8). After the Baʿathist coup in 1966, the regime made a serious effort to implement a Communist model of civil-military relations (Hinnebusch 1990, 158). Thus, indoctrination and party loyalty were central to military training, doctrine, and promotions, especially to the most elite (and most privileged) military formations (159–62). Politicization, as described here, has the result that Syrian officers account for political goals in the strategic planning and operations of the armed forces, even at the expense of strictly military considerations. Although Syria's military would have been politicized even in the absence of Soviet mentorship, Soviet training inevitably reinforced this politicization.

Finally, Soviet ideas about ensuring political control of the military likely inspired some of the strategies of the al-Asad regime. In particular, the Syrian military adopted certain Soviet concepts for ensuring internal security within military units. The central problem of civil-military relations theory is to ensure civilian control over the military. In the Soviet Union, the Communist Party exercised this authority not only vertically, from the top down as in the West, but also horizontally, through the ideological indoctrination of soldiers and officers. To ensure "ideological education" and civilian control within the military, the Party appointed a political commissar, responsible for indoctrination and surveillance, to each military unit (Colton 1979). Politicizing the military in this way was anathema to the Western model of the professional, apolitical soldier (Huntington 1957; Janowitz 1964; Finer 1962); however, it resulted in a stable, "coalitional" relationship between military and party leaders (Perlmutter and LeoGrande 1982). Syria did not adopt the Communist system directly, but assured a similar horizontal form of political control by assigning security officers to each military unit. Like Soviet commissars, security officers are responsible for monitoring soldiers' behavior and political attitudes, limiting the ability of individual commanders or units to go rogue. Because the regime prioritizes political security above military considerations, security officers are highly empowered

and sometimes even more influential than the unit commander (Droz-Vincent 2016, 172).

The "Axis of Resistance": Iran & Hezbollah

Hafiz al-Asad was an early supporter of the revolutionaries in Iran in 1979, and a confluence of interests, as well as Shiʿa identity ties, have motivated a close partnership between the two nations. Syria's support of Iran in its war with Iraq (1980–88) further distanced Syria from the moderate Arab countries (Collelo 1987, 45). During the devastating eight-year war, the Islamic Republic employed popular mobilization tactics to leverage its population advantage against Iraq's superior military. In particular, the *Basij* was established as a volunteer paramilitary force to serve as auxiliaries in the war and to assist with internal security. As relations with Iran deepened, these concepts began to influence the thinking of Syrian commanders. For example, in the Syrian Civil War, the government organized a new militia called the National Defense Forces to combine the models of the Baʿathist "people in arms" from the Islamist uprising with the *Basij* model, all with the assistance of Iranian advisers (Droz-Vincent 2016, 177).

The civil war in Lebanon offers another example of Iran's militia-based military doctrine. Both Iran and Syria were active in the conflict. As discussed previously, Syria's direct military intervention began in 1976, and although billed as an Arab League peace-keeping mission, Syria operated as an independent party to the conflict. It was the Israeli invasion of Shiʿa-majority southern Lebanon in 1982 that motivated Iran to involve itself. In the following years, Iran helped Lebanese supporters of Ayatollah Khomeini to consolidate various Shiʿa militias into a single organization, Hezbollah (Party of God). Syria endorsed Hezbollah by allowing 1,500 troops from Iran's Revolutionary Guard into Lebanon to train the new militia. Iran has continued to support Hezbollah financially, and the militia is seen as both an Iranian proxy and a Syrian ally in the conflict with Israel. In the 2000s, Iranian officials began using the term "axis of resistance" to describe the Iran–Syria–Hezbollah alliance against Israel, and Syrian officials emphasized their alliance with

the "Shiites" to project strength against Saudi interference in Lebanon.[19] Demonstrating the strength of the alliance, Hezbollah joined the Syrian Civil War in 2012 on behalf of the al-Asad regime.

5.4 Doctrinal Adoption

The adoption of Syria's warlike doctrine for domestic interventions took place as the al-Asad regime consolidated power in the 1970s and 1980s. The development of doctrine in Syria is consistent with the three processes outlined in chapter 2: internalization, routinization, and formalization. The foundations of military doctrine in Syria had long favored a combative, us-versus-them mentality, which had been internalized by the officer corps late 1970s. But it was in responding to the the Islamist uprising of 1978–82 that Syria's combative doctrine was routinized and formalized. The massacre of Hama in 1982 was a watershed moment in Syrian military development. When the Islamist uprising pushed this political order to the brink, the military was forced to either break or double down. With its overwhelming brutality against civilians, unparalleled in the modern histories of Tunisia or Egypt, the Syrian military went to war on its fellow citizens. The military's organizational response to the uprising was to formalize the existing loyalty structures within the armed forces and paramilitaries. In this way, elite military units were officially organized to provide a robust defense of the status quo during the next uprising.

The uprising severely tested the loyalty of the armed forces, but the army avoided widespread insubordination and succeeded in crushing the city's resistance. Soviet patronage provided the resources necessary to sustain the authoritarian security state in this critical time, allowing the military to expand despite economic strain. The institution's existing biases were reinforced: a partisan leaning toward the ruling party grew into a deep ideological alignment with its Baʿathist ideology, and ethnicity, long manipulated

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19. Embassy Damascus, "Iranian President Visits Damascus," Wikileaks Cable: 06DAMASCUS208_a, dated January 19, 2006.

by colonial policies, created new tensions as the military institution rose in prominence, fueling the politicization of sectarian identities. In the Muslim Brotherhood's account of the events, it is observed that the regime's strategic ethnic composition of soldiers and officers made collective revolt "impossible," while the Baʿath Party's official history lauded the "internal cohesion and unity" of the armed forces (van Dam 2011, 114). These assessments exaggerate the sectarian composition of the military, as well as its loyalty. Even the crushing assault of Hama was slowed down considerably by soldiers' disloyalty Hinnebusch (1990, 297). In the end, though, al-Asad's fellow Alawis did prove more reliable in enacting mass violence against the Sunni majority, leading to a retrenchment of the sectarian approach to internal security (McLauchlin 2010, 342).

However, it was not only the regime which politicized Syria's ethnic diversity. The Islamist movement also relied on sectarian rhetoric in its anti-regime campaign, hoping to incite popular opposition to minority rule. In the late 1970s, Islamists of the radical "vanguard" hoped to draw Syria's Sunni Muslim majority into the campaign by exposing the regime's "sectarian face" (Lefèvre 2013, 63). To this end, the Brotherhood released a reform manifesto, which called for the armed forces to be freed from their "sectarian composition" – implying a purge of Alawis from positions of power. By framing the anti-regime movement in increasingly sectarian terms, they hoped to "polarize antagonisms in Syrian society around the confessional axis" (van Dam 2011, 108).

Unfortunately for the opposition, the sectarian tack backfired. Before the uprisings, the opposition's characterization of the regime as an Alawi one were overstated, and al-Asad had actually taken steps to balance out the sectarian composition of the Baʿath leadership since taking office (Drysdale 1982). But as nationwide rebellion pushed the regime to its breaking point, the elite began relying more heavily on its most loyal circles – family, tribal, and regional connections, who were of course predominantly Alawis. Thus, the accusation of rampant sectarian bias in the regime became a self-fulfilling prophecy. As the crisis developed, the military embarked on a major campaign to "ethnically stack"

the officer corps with Alawis, recruiting heavily from the ethnic group while purging Sunnis suspected of disloyalty. Since the early 1980s, Alawis have comprised 80–85% of every incoming cohort at the military academy (Bou Nassif 2015c, 631-32).[20] Moreover, the "Alawization" of key positions in the security and military sectors has been a classic tactic of the al-Asad regime in times of crisis (Droz-Vincent 2016, 176).

Long after the uprising was crushed, the regime continued to exaggerate the threat the Muslim Brotherhood posed to Syria.[21] This strategy makes sense because the Brotherhood are Sunnis, who the regime claims would oppress Syria's religious minorities (possibly as retribution for past repression). Even after being thoroughly dismantled by the regime, the Brotherhood represented the most organized opposition force in Syria. Thus, the regime used them as a straw man for any political alternative to the al-Asad regime. The regime also exploited opportunities to burnish its pro-Islamic credentials, like the Danish cartoon crisis in 2006, when officials tacitly encouraged rioters to attack European embassies in retaliation for the publication of an image offensive to many Muslims.[22]

5.5 Responding with War

On the eve of the Arab Spring, Syria's most senior officers had an unprecedented loyalty and deep interdependence with the political regime. Still, divisions continued within an army built on divide-and-rule rather than unity from its founding, and grievances among Sunni soldiers were particularly salient (Bou Nassif 2015c). The army did fracture as the conflict wore on: although senior officers remained steadfast in their support of the regime, many junior officers began defecting before the end of 2011 (Albrecht and Ohl 2016, 47). Neither superior loyalty to the regime nor unity within the ranks fully explains

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20. In fact, Hafiz al-Asad initially sought as president to moderate the sectarian antagonism he had inherited from his "neo-Baʿath" predecessors; it was only during the 1978–1982 crisis that he fully embraced Alawization (Lefèvre 2013, 71, 77).

21. Embassy Damascus, "The Muslim Brothers in Syria; Part I: Could They Win an Election Here?" Wikileaks Cable: 06DAMASCUS517_a, dated February 8, 2006.

22. Embassy Damascus, "Mood of the SARG; Cabinet Reshuffle Rumors," Wikileaks Cable: 06DAMASCUS528_a, dated February 9, 2006.

the brutality of the military crackdown. Instead of focusing on loyalty alone, I argue we should look to the army's doctrinal development, shaped by the army's historical role in domestic crises, especially in violent crackdowns on anti-government demonstrators, and Soviet influence through military education and financial assistance.

When the Arab Spring arrived in Syria, "The members of the decentralized ruling coalition perceived the challenge from society as existential. Either the coalition remained intact or the regime would collapse. There was no soft out as in the case of Egypt. Unwilling and unable to change the ruling coalition, state-society relations were reduced to a zero-sum game as the state tried to stop the protests." (Stacher 2012, 160). The International Crisis Group observed: "When the opposition says it will topple the regime, what Alawites hear is that their source of income, employment, and physical protection will be eliminated. When it evokes the undoing of the system and all its institutions, they hear a return to second-class citizenry. When it speaks of justice and accountability, they hear the threat of collective retribution."[23] The al-Asad regime had long promoted itself as the country's only hope for stability, and it seems that many Syrians believed them.[24]

Knowing the al-Asad regime would not willingly yield power, the opposition pleaded with military officers to turn on the regime (Droz-Vincent 2016, 173). Just like Egyptian protesters before them, Syrian demonstrators chanted the slogan "the army and the people are one hand" and waved olive branches to passing soldiers. Conscious of the military's violent response to past protests, they hoped that in the euphoria of the Arab Spring, the military would be prove more sympathetic this time around. Unfortunately, protesters' hopeful attempts at fraternization never gave way to actual cooperation between soldiers and citizens. Instead, the army quickly joined the police in using live ammunition to put down the unrest (Nepstad 2013, 344).

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23. ICG, "Syria's Mutating Conflict," 2012.

24. In 2006, US chargé d'affaires Stephen Seche reported, "Most Syrians we talk to believe that President Asad still represents their best hope for change without instability. It is their fear of instability that stops the majority of Syrians from pushing harder for internal change." Embassy Damascus, "Applying Targeted Sanctions to Syria," Wikileaks Cable: 06DAMASCUS68_a, dated January 4, 2006.

Even as the military escalated its engagement with the demonstrators, the great majority of officers remained loyal, and very few soldiers of all ranks deserted until mid-2012, after the conflict had metastasized into a full-scale civil war (Koehler *et al.* 2016, 454). As protests continued, the regime leaned on senior officers' ethnic and kinship ties to the al-Asad family to bolster unity at the top of the military hierarchy (Haddad 2012b). The continuing loyalty of the senior officer corps, even as the prospect of a quick military victory faded, demonstrate the regime's success in getting officers invested in the regime's continuity (Bou Nassif 2015c). The military's long-term success in maintaining adequate loyalty and manpower throughout the civil war is a testament to its original doctrine for domestic crises. The army's behavior in the civil war has mirrored the aggressive warfighting approach to internal security developed over decades. As attrition through casualties and defections increased, the military shored up loyalty through strategic purges and promotions of ethnic and familial relations, and doubled down on the use of militia forces (often based on a particular sect or ideology) to meet manpower requirements[25]

Why did Syria turn from a revolution into a war? The answer lies in the military's warlike response to the initially peaceful demonstrations. The regime was taken by surprise by the demonstrations, but the demonstrations gained momentum more slowly than in Tunisia or Egypt, where the suppression of public dissent had been far less severe.[26] In conjunction with massive physical repression, the regime used propaganda to stoke fear, especially among minorities, of imminent sectarian bloodshed, and to portray demonstrators as foreign agents and armed Islamists.[27] From the first days of the uprising, the regime promoted a war narrative, which labeled protesters "rebels," not demonstrators (Droz-Vincent 2016, 178-79). In fact, the regime led the way in calling the uprising a "war," as the International Crisis Group (2011b, 9) reported: "Even in late-March, at a time when

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25. Tom Cooper, "What's Left of the Syrian Arab Army?" *War is Boring Blog*, May 18, 2016, `https://warisboring.com/whats-left-of-the-syrian-arab-army/`.

26. On the suppression of political expression in Syria, see Wedeen (1999); Pearlman (2016, 24-26).

27. ICG, "The Syrian Regime's Slow-Motion Suicide."

the popular movement appeared manageable, the regime resorted to language suggesting that all protests represented a decisive threat. In a letter sent to most administrative departments in the capital, the governor of Damascus, following cabinet instructions, requested civil servants to draw up plans to contribute to the 'war effort' (*al-majhud al-harbi*); in a more or less contemporaneous speech, the president spoke at length of a global conspiracy, which helped shape the security services' response." On March 25, 2011, as the New York Times reported Syrian soldiers had opened fire on demonstrators,[28] Syrian state media blamed a vast foreign conspiracy to spread "fabricated news and lies on the situation."[29]

Yet for the regime to so powerfully impose the war narrative on the armed forces, it was necessary that the military's doctrine already reflected this way of thinking. And indeed, the military response to the uprisings was an echo of previous conflicts. Lefèvre (2013, 181-82) notes a "historical continuity" between the military's responses in the late 1970s and in 2011: "In a rhetorical twist echoing that of the late 1970s, early on the regime justified its crackdown on the protests by arguing that it had to uproot the 'jihadist elements' and 'gangs' supposed to be active in the demonstrations." On the protesters' side, the late-1970s uprisings would also become a theme of the new protest movement: "We will not let the massacres of 1982 be repeated!" In recalling the past uprisings, protesters of course hoped that 2011 would be different. At first, Syrians resisted these narratives; in July 2011, the ICG still assessed that, "The Syrian people have proved remarkably resistant to sectarian or divisive tendencies, defying regime prophecies of confessional strife and Islamisation."[30] But the regime's escalation of the conflict eventually opened the door for extremism to flourish, and over time, the Syrian government's insistence that the opposition were all jihadist extremists became a self-fulfilling prophecy.[31]

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28. Michael Slackman, "Syrian Troops Open Fire on Protesters in Several Cities," *New York Times*, March 25, 2011.

29. Fadi Allafi, "Mass Rallies All Over Syria Stressing Importance of National Unity for Opposing Foreign Campaign Targeting Syria," *Syrian Arab News Agency*, March 25, 2011.

30. ICG, "The Syrian Regime's Slow-Motion Suicide."

31. ICG, "Tentative Jihad: Syria's Fundamentalist Opposition," October 12, 2012.

Once the military phase of the conflict was underway, Syrian officers reached a point of no return: they knew that their acts of violence in service of the regime had eliminated any prospect of survival in a post-Asad Syria (Landis 2012). With the rapid conquest of Syrian territory by the Islamic State (*al-Dawla al-ʾIslamiyya fī-l-ʿIrāq wa-l-Shām*) in 2015, senior officers had justifiable fears that a post-Asad political order might be worse not only for them, but for all Syrians. The prospect of sectarian reprisals, that even innocent Alawis would be punished for their co-ethnicity with the former oppressor, may also have motivated officers to carry on fighting through the darkest days of the war. But for the vast majority of military officers, the situation at the start of protests in the spring of 2011 still offered nonviolent alternatives. In the moment of crisis, the Syrian Armed Forces simply followed their doctrine, which called for a declaration of war. Seven years later, that war has killed 400,000 Syrians and driven half the population from their homes.[32] Even if the al-Asad regime and its military loyalists survive, the catastrophe of the war belies any claim of rationality behind the military's choice to brutalize peaceful demonstrators in 2011.

Conclusion

Overall, the case of Syria supports the dissertation's theory better than the main alternative, ethnic loyalty. Conventional wisdom holds that Syria's military stayed loyal because of the over-representation of Alawis, kinsmen of President al-Asad, in the officer corps. In a classic statement of the argument, Horowitz (2000, 497-501) describes the rise of "ethnocracy" in Syria as a process of "ethnic attrition" by which a minority group, the Alawis, consolidated power by sequentially excluding rival groups from power, narrowing the ethnic basis of their rule to ever-smaller circles. Further, Horowitz claims that "regimes that rest on the support of small minority groups," like the al-Asad regime, are exceptionally durable because they "are not likely to be lulled into a false sense of security."

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32. "Timeline of the Syrian conflict as it enters 8th year," *The Associated Press*, March 15, 2018.

However, this informal logic has been overturned by quantitative scholarship, which finds that excluding large ethnic groups from political power increases the likelihood of civil conflict (Wimmer *et al.* 2009). Moreover, all consolidated authoritarian regimes concentrate power in the hands of a small circle of stakeholders, yet authoritarian breakdown remains commonplace (Geddes *et al.* 2014b).

Instead, I find that the historical development of military doctrine offers a better explanation for the military's response to the Arab Spring. Per the theory, each of the factors observed in Syria predicts the development of an assertive, even aggressive, doctrine for domestic security, and the consequent use of extreme violence against protesters. First, colonial institutions favored the separation of soldiers from the general population, especially by skewing the ethnic composition of the force. Moreover, colonial policies favored the creation of a strong military institution but a weak civilian government; therefore, the sudden lifting of imperial domination created a power vacuum into which military officers would step. Like the Egyptian military, Syrian soldiers played no role in winning national independence, but they gained legitimacy by helping establish national sovereignty in the following years, especially in the pan-Arab struggle against Zionism. When officers took power in a series of coups d'état, the military was the primary elite base for the regime's power, leading to close and durable ties between the ruling party and the military.

The combination of social segregation from the population and deep ties with the ruling elite instilled soldiers with a powerful inclination to defend the existing order. From 1970 to the mid-1980s, the military's doctrine of combat against domestic unrest was routinized and formalized, in the aftermath of the Islamist uprising and with the support of the Soviet Union and revolutionary Iran. By the time the Arab Spring reached Damascus, Syrian officers had internalized an antagonistic view of the population, routinized the means of suppressing dissent through violence, and formalized the elite command structures to carry out effective violence against civilians. In light of the military's doctrinal

evolution, its violent response to the next round of unrest is, tragically, unsurprising.

Chapter 6

Generalizability

The central claim of this dissertation is that the military's historical development and foreign training relationships shape its doctrine, which in turn determines how soldiers respond to popular uprisings. Qualitative case studies of three simultaneous uprisings during the Arab Spring (Tunisia, Egypt, and Syria) support the hypothesized causal mechanisms. The goal of this chapter is to test the generalizability of my argument to the other Arab Spring uprisings and to attempted nonviolent revolutions worldwide. First, I apply the concept of military doctrine to the remaining Arab Spring uprisings, namely Bahrain, Libya, and Yemen. After discussing the uprisings and responses, I assess the extent to which the military's behavior is predicted by the theory. I then describe the political trajectory of the Middle East and North Africa after the uprisings, highlighting the effect of military behavior on regional politics.

Next, I broaden the scope of the investigation to all nonviolent revolutions worldwide since 1950. To test the theory cross-nationally, I develop a new data set of military responses to uprisings. In each case, I gather data on the military's relationships with the independence movement and the ruling party, as well as its history of receiving military education and training assistance from the United States. Regression analysis indicates robust support for the proposed mechanisms, while failing to confirm the alternative explanations of capacity, patronage, and ethnicity.

6.1 Across the Arab Spring

The case studies in the previous chapter document the particular pathways that Arab militaries took from their foundation to the Arab Spring. In the Middle East and North Africa, the development of modern coercive institutions began in the early twentieth century under the influence of the European colonial powers. Emerging from colonial rule in the 1950s, the Arab states were left to grapple with diverse institutional legacies. The relationship of the military to the independence movement and the emergent political regime would come to have a powerful long-term influence on military doctrine. Before long, the Middle East was caught up in the Soviet–American competition for client states, and the region's militaries received exceptionally high levels of foreign assistance from both sides. Where each state fell along the Cold War battle lines would also come to influence the shape of military doctrine for generations to come.

The Arab Spring encompassed a diverse array of military doctrines and revolutionary outcomes. The uprisings included both violent and nonviolent military responses, successful and unsuccessful protest movements, and divergent political trajectories, from authoritarian retrenchment to democratization. In Tunisia, a doctrine of restraint kept the military on the sidelines of the revolution, which enabled a largely peaceful transfer of power and subsequent transition to democracy. In Egypt, a doctrine of control prevented widespread military violence during the 2011 revolution, but also inspired a bloody, military-led counterrevolution in 2013. In Syria, a doctrine of combat led the armed forces to immediately engage protesters with tanks and artillery, provoking a disastrous civil war. All three cases demonstrate the influence of historical factors on military doctrine and behavior, as well as the critical role of the military in shaping the course of events during popular uprisings.

After the fall of Tunisia's Ben Ali, significant protests took place in virtually every Arab capital. Overall, the region's monarchies proved more resilient to the Arab Spring

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than the republics, owing to their broad-based traditional sources of popular support, robust coercive apparatuses funded by rents from natural resources or foreign aid, and the protection of foreign patrons (Yom and Gause 2012, 75-76). The Kingdom of Bahrain was the exception that proves the rule. With a staunch and combative military response and foreign assistance from the arch-conservative and oil-rich Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, Bahrain crushed the uprising quickly and completely. Unlike the national armies discussed previously, the Bahraini military was established from the beginning as a praetorian force, designed to defend not the nation but the monarchy, and staffed with foreign mercenaries (Louër 2013, 248-53). The result was a doctrine of combat, which dictated the use of violence to defend the status quo.

Among the Arab republics, protests escalated to full-scale revolution in both Libya and Yemen in 2011. The authoritarian leaders of both countries were ultimately deposed, but only after their armies responded with violence against civilians, and then dissolved into rival factions whose fighting continues to this day. The divisions that split the Libyan and Yemeni armies were not spontaneous consequences of the Arab Spring. Instead, these militaries lacked cohesion since their founding and never established a unified doctrine or common agreement on roles and missions (Gaub 2013; Knights 2013). In Libya and Yemen, a disunified doctrine helps to explain the rapid fracturing of these forces into rival militias and insurgent groups.

Bahrain

Bahrain remained a British protectorate until 1971, when it came under the rule of the Khalifa family. Since 1973, the family has ruled the tiny Persian Gulf nation as a constitutional monarchy, protecting its political supremacy but also establishing a national assembly. Members of the ruling family dominate the nation's highest political and military posts. Notably, the royal family is Sunni, whereas roughly 70% of Bahrain's approximately 677,000 citizens are Shia Muslims.[1] When the uprising started on February 14, 2011,

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1. More than half of the resident population in Bahrain is comprised of non-citizens.

the lack of political representation was important to protesters, as was the Sunni bias in the military. In particular, they denounced the government's policy of recruiting Sunni foreigners, mainly from Pakistan, Yemen, Syria, and Jordan, into the Bahraini military (Nepstad 2013, 343). On February 17, King Hamad ordered his troops to fire on the demonstrators. However, this actually galvanized the protesters. According to international media reports, 200,000 citizens (*i.e.* 25% of the adult population) were spurred to action after this event.[2] Military violence escalated in March, when the regime declared a state of emergency and invited its allies to send security forces to assist in restoring order. Saudi Arabia sent 1,000 soldiers, while the United Arab Emirates sent 500 policemen (Kamrava 2012, 99). Using live ammunition, pro-government forces cleared the central demonstration site at the Pearl Roundabout, and protests subsided. When revolution threatened the monarchy, the Bahrain Defence Force performed exactly as it had been trained to, vigorously defending the regime. Moreover, Bahraini forces later contributed to the Saudi-led intervention in Yemen's civil war. This decision can be explained not only by pressure from Saudi Arabia, but also by their doctrinal orientation to defend the status quo.

The case of Bahrain is generally consistent with the theory of the dissertation. Military doctrine in Bahrain most closely resembles Syria's doctrine of combat, in which soldiers are trained to view dissidents as enemy forces and respond with violence. However, the original causes of this warlike doctrine in Bahrain differ from the historical circumstances found in the other cases. Unlike national armies elsewhere, the military was created in 1969 to protect the Al Khalifa family, and it is dominated by members of the ruling family and the ruling family's co-ethnics (Louër 2013, 257-58). Despite the family's continuous rule since 1971 many, if not most, Bahraini Shias "continue to view them as invaders" (Barany 2016a, 16). In the short history since independence, Bahrain did not experience a popular uprising prior to 2011. However, Shia Islamists undertook

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2. Adrian Humphreys, "The Arab Awakening: A Bahraini activist struggles to keep protests alive," *National Post* (Toronto), December 21, 2011.

a serious coup attempt in December 1981, which led to purges of Shia officers from the military and a doctrinal shift from accommodation to confrontation with the regime's Shia opponents (14). Like the Islamist uprising occurring at the same time in Syria, the conspiracy against Emir (later King) Hamad cemented the military's doctrinal shift to a combative posture.

While the Bahrain armed forces' institutional origins and past interventions are both consistent with my main hypotheses, the case fails to confirm the influence of foreign military training. Bahrain has been a United States ally since its independence, and the country hosts the headquarters of the United States Navy's Fifth Fleet. The Bahrain Defence Force was extremely weak through the 1990s, and the US has worked to build it into a useful regional ally. By 2011, Bahrain had received only 20 years of American military aid, but virtually all senior officers had already received significant training in the United States. Therefore, the case does not support the hypothesis that American training decreases the use of violence against protesters. However, it is possible that whatever American influence may have existed was canceled out by countervailing tendencies toward a more combative doctrine.

When considering the alternative explanations for military response, the outcome of Bahrain's revolution appears to be over-determined. Capacity, patronage, and ethnicity all point to a violent response from the military. Although the armed forces are small, with only 8,200 active members, yielding a ratio of 61.9 soldiers per ten thousand inhabitants, comparable to 63.2 per 10,000 in Egypt (IISS 2018). Moreover, readily available foreign assistance means that pro-government forces had ample capacity to suppress a revolt of any size. Military spending per soldier is far higher in Bahrain than in other Arab Spring cases, because the force is small but, with US encouragement, has invested heavily in American prestige systems such as F-16 fighter jets. In addition, a high proportion of Bahrain's soldiers are foreign mercenaries who depend on the monarchy for their continued livelihood in Bahrain, thus constituting an extreme patronage relationship.

Bahrain also qualifies as a case of minority rule, and the military is ethnically "stacked" in favor of Sunnis, against a Shia-majority population. As such, the case of Bahrain cannot be used to distinguish among the competing explanations, but is compatible with all of them.

Libya

The Libyan Army was established in 1951, when Libya gained its independence from Italy. In 1969, the young Colonel Muammar Gaddafi led a coup d'état, establishing himself as Revolutionary Chairman, and later the "Brotherly Leader," of the country. During much of Gaddafi's tenure, the government budget was flush with oil revenues, allowing the regime to reduce popular opposition through generous handouts. The Libyan army did not confront mass mobilization prior to 2011, but was instead employed in various missions abroad, including occasional peacekeeping missions and numerous border skirmishes with Egypt, Chad, and Tunisia. In this way, the military never developed a clear doctrine for domestic intervention but became familiar with the tactics of combat. Thus, the military met the 2011 uprising with a blend of aggression and disorganization, killing thousands of civilians before disintegrating under NATO's air assault.

The Libyan military's response to the Arab Spring was consistent with its disunified doctrine, as shaped by its institutional design, past interactions with the population, and foreign influences. Unlike neighboring Tunisia and Egypt, where well-developed nationalist movements celebrated the arrival of independence, Libyan independence was an accidental consequence of European politics. Historian Dirk Vandewalle (2012, 43) explains, "Libya had passed from colonialism to independence at the behest of the Great Powers, without a unifying ideology or a movement whose goals and aspirations were shared throughout the country." Thus, although the new Libyan Army was dominated by Senussi veterans of the anti-Italian resistance, the mantle of national liberators rested uneasily on their shoulders.

Gaddafi's leadership was extremely personalistic, and he stripped the armed forces of any authority to exercise political influence. In his own terminology, soldiers were not "authorized to guide the popular revolution" (Gaub 2013, 230). Gaddafi further reduced the military's authority by purging all of the Senussis from the armed forces, along with all general officers (i.e. anyone who outranked him). He then significantly refashioned the military institution, redesigning the armed forces with an eclectic mix of Egyptian doctrine – namely the creation of elite praetorian guard units loyal to the regime – and a socialist concept of a People's Army, as outlined by Gaddafi in his revolutionary manifesto, the "Green Book." As in Baathist Syria and post-revolution Iran, Libya established a popular paramilitary force known as the People's Resistance Forces (*quwwat al-muqawama al-sha'biya*, known as the "People's Militia"). Intended and trained to protect public buildings, the force had the effect of militarizing Libyan society (Mattes 2004). Gaddafi harbored a deep distrust for the armed forces and refused to centralize command or strengthen their organization. The doctrinal result of these policies was disunity and factionalism, leading to both violence against civilians and disintegration.

The Libyan case presents a previously unexplored consequence of disunified or weak military doctrine, which occurs when organization's culture, organization, and training are weakly and unevenly established. When the Arab Spring began in 2011, the Libyan military was deeply factionalized along the lines of kinship and geographic origin, and soldiers were not well indoctrinated into a common set of values and expectations. Therefore, army units initially fell back on what they knew – warfighting – but could not maintain cohesion under enemy assault. As seen in the final case, Yemen, this kind of disunified doctrine was not unique to Libya and might also be found in other weakly institutionalized states in the developing world.

The competing arguments of capacity, patronage and ethnicity find mixed support in the Libya case. With 76,000 active duty soldiers and only 6.2 million inhabitants in 2011, Libya had the highest ratio of military personnel to population of the states affected by the

Arab Spring, thus predicting their violent response, but not the factional splits which soon crippled the force. The patronage argument holds little explanatory power, since military spending per soldier was middling prior to the revolution and officers were excluded from elite privileges. Although tribal identity is central to Libyan politics, Gaddafi's regime did not share an ethnic bond with the armed forces; therefore, the ethnicity argument fails to explain the outcome.

Yemen

Although Britain had relinquished colonial control of both northern and southern Yemen by 1968, the two territories were not unified until 1990. At that time, the President of North Yemen, Ali Abdullah Saleh, became president of the combined state, and South Yemen's president became vice president. Because Saleh was not from a religiously important family or a large, influential tribe, he maintained his position by creating his own patronage network with his family at the top: his seven brothers were placed in critical government positions, and he also relied on "sons, daughters, sons-in-law, and nephews" in both the civil and military hierarchies. Beyond his immediate family, he relied heavily on the loyalty of two tribes, his own Sanhan tribe and the Hamdan San'a (Kadhim 2013, 309). Although the national unification agreement provided for the integration of both countries' military forces, the military organization remained extremely decentralized and was led through personalistic and family ties, not a formal command structure. When protests broke out in 2011, Saleh immediately made significant concessions, but they did little to quell the unrest. On March 18, security forces killed 52 protesters, and the conflict escalated. The protests continued despite military violence against demonstrators, and some regime opponents soon turned to armed resistance. Before long, the armed forces split, with the defection of a large faction of former loyalists. Although Saleh eventually stepped down, he was replaced with his deputy, and the rebellion escalated to a full-scale civil war.

A major source of Yemen's combative military doctrine was the North Yemen Civil War (1962–1970), in which Republican forces allied with Egypt used chemical weapons against civilians. After more than 100,000 deaths on both sides, the Republicans won, and their forces became the backbone of the new independent military. As predicted by the theory, the soldiers' role in securing national independence improved their claim to political authority, leading to a more assertive military doctrine. However, the institutional merger of the northern and southern armies in 1990 was fragile and increased divisions within the military hierarchy (Albrecht 2016, 134-35). The incorporation of southern troops into the northern military was partial at best, and created a similar disunity in Yemeni military doctrine to that experience by the Libyan army. While the unified army did not have experience responding to popular protests prior to 2011, its officers were veterans of bloody civil conflicts, which favored a warlike orientation in their planning and operations. Ultimately, the military response was consistent with the combative but disunified doctrine the military entered the conflict with.

In the case of Yemen, the conventional alternative explanations do little to explain the complex factional divisions that characterized the military response. With a large conventional force of 66,670 and an even larger paramilitary numbering more than 71,200, Yemeni forces would have had more than enough capacity to repress a rebellion if they had remained unified. Patronage was essential to the personal networks that held the armed forces together prior to 2011, but many previously loyal officers defected as protests continued (Knights 2013). As in Libya, tribal affiliations did help determine the lines along which the military disintegrated, but ethnic stacking in the military was not a factor. Overall, the institutional origins and historical experience of the Yemeni military better explains the response to the Arab Spring than the alternatives.

Table 6.1: Military Repression and Campaign Outcomes

Country	Regime Type[a]	Military Repression[b]	Campaign Outcome[c]
Tunisia	Party-based	None	Success
Egypt	Party-personal-military	Mild	Success
Yemen	Personal	Extreme	Success
Bahrain	Monarchy	Extreme	Failure
Libya	Personal	Extreme	Success
Syria	Party-personal-military	Extreme	Failure

[a] Geddes *et al.* 2014b. [b] Original data. [c] NAVCO 2.1.

Politics after the Arab Spring

In the aftermath of the 2011 uprisings, the countries affected followed widely divergent political trajectories, ranging from democratization to civil war. The question of why attempted political transitions in Tunisia, Egypt, Libya, and Yemen produced different results has been treated at length elsewhere (Brownlee *et al.* 2014; Nugent 2018). In addition to strictly political factors, such as elite polarization and the outcomes of early elections, the military's response to the protests also played a significant role in what followed. Table 6.1 summarizes the military responses to and campaign outcomes of the Arab uprisings in 2010–11. The most striking feature of these data is the high incidence of "success" despite extreme military repression. However, the NAVCO definition of success measures immediate, short-term political outcomes (i.e. leader replacement), without accounting for the medium- and long-term outcomes of the political process set in motion by the campaign. In other words, a campaign is considered successful if it removes an authoritarian leader even if he is soon succeeded by an even harsher autocrat. In Egypt, the success of the January 25 Revolution was followed in 2013 by a military-led counterrevolution. The 2013 coup, which brought military strongman Abdel Fattah el-Sisi to power, was a direct response to the 2011 revolution, and must be understood as

Figure 6.1: Electoral Democracy after the Arab Spring
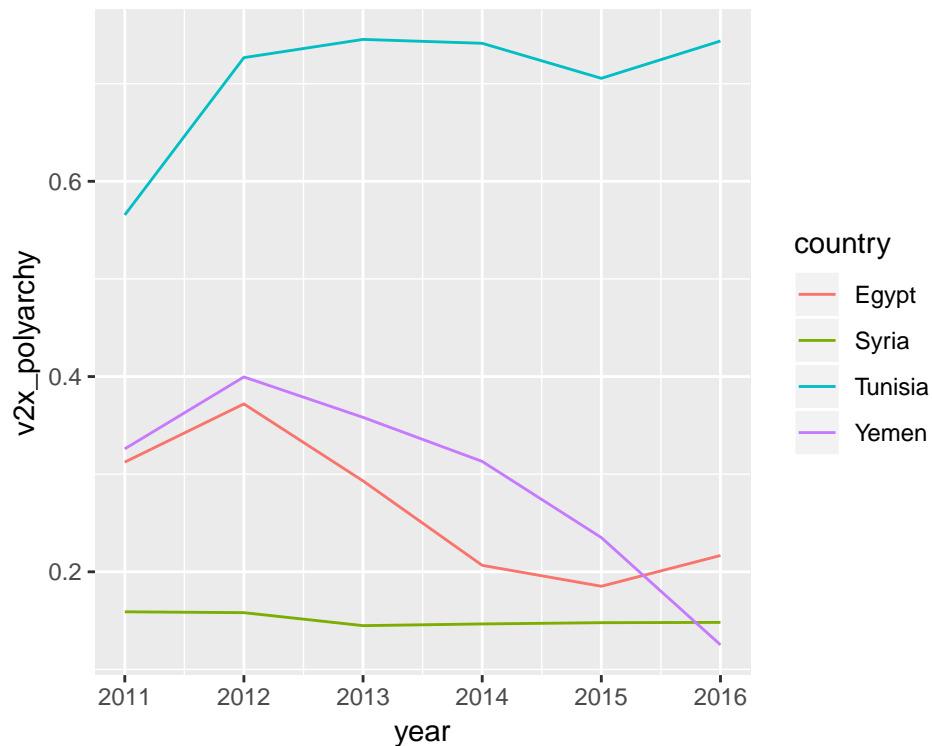
the ultimate outcome of Egypt's Arab Spring. In Libya and Yemen, protesters' success in toppling authoritarian leaders was immediately outweighed by the devastation of war. Both countries, destabilized by revolutionary violence and the collapse of the strongman politics that had held competing power centers in check, continue to suffer violent insurgencies which take Libyan and Yemeni lives and hinder effective governance. Again, these outcomes resulted from the military responses to the Arab Spring protests in 2011.

Despite their initial promise, the Arab Spring did little to contribute to the growth of democracy in the region. Figure 6.1 shows the trends in the quality of electoral democracy after the uprisings in Egypt, Syria, Tunisia, and Yemen. The upward climb of Tunisian democracy is striking, representing the only true "success" of the Arab Spring. Meanwhile, both Yemen and Egypt witnessed only one year of increased democracy before sinking *below* 2010 levels. I exclude Bahrain and Libya because their records of democratic governance are abysmal both before and after the uprising. In sum, the ability of protesters

to remove a leader from office is an important goal of many pro-democratic movements, but it is not sufficient to guarantee a democratic outcome. In light of this, it is all the more important to understand the role of the military in shaping the outcomes of both revolutions and political transitions.

6.2 Cross-National Data

Next, I perform a medium-n, quantitative analysis of popular uprisings for regime change worldwide from 1950 to 2013. To test the theory, I collected original data on the use of violence by the military in responding to popular uprisings. Modeling the data in an econometric framework, I find support for the dissertation's main argument that both institutional origins and foreign influences affect the military's propensity to use violence against peaceful protesters. By contrast, I find no support for the three main competing hypotheses from the literature: capacity, patronage, and ethnicity.

At the macro level, military doctrine can only be observed in its application – that is, in the military response. Therefore, the quantitative model tests the relationship between the initial causes (i.e. factors which influence doctrine) and the ultimate outcome (military response). On the strength of the empirical process tracing in previous chapters, I assume here that any relationship observed between the hypothesized initial causes and observed effect operates through the proposed mechanism of military doctrine. The statistical results indicate support for the theory of the dissertation, suggesting that both colonial origins and foreign influence affect a military's long-term propensity to use violence against civilians during popular uprisings.

Data Collection

To perform a general test of the dissertation's theory, I assembled a quantitative data set including all large, initially nonviolent protests for regime change in the modern era. The data are based on the Nonviolent and Violent Campaigns and Outcomes (NAVCO) Data Project (Chenoweth and Lewis 2013). After combining NAVCO with various open data

sources, I manually coded an additional variable measuring my main outcome of interest, the military response to the campaign.

The scope of the theory is subject to three bounding conditions. First, the original regime must be authoritarian in nature, but need not be a case of direct military rule. Second, the popular uprising must be of a scale and intensity sufficient to threaten the survival of the original regime. This excludes localized, regional protests which do not threaten the national government's power over the center. In other words, although my definition does not explicitly require protests to be concentrated in urban centers (cf. Beissinger 2013, 574n1), uprisings which threaten the center of national power will inevitably entail the mass occupation of urban spaces. Third, the military must act as an arbiter between the government and society, not as the instigator of a coup d'état. As I discuss below in greater detail, I include uprisings which start as popular movements, even if they later result in a military coup. Note as well that I include cases which start as food riots or strike actions if they ultimately evolve into mass movements calling for regime change. In my qualitative research for this chapter, I observed that in many revolutions, organized labor is responsible for bringing the first demonstrators to the streets. Such cases are included in my study only if they grow into anti-regime movements by expanding their base beyond workers in a given sector and by articulating political, as well as economic, demands.

My theory explains military responses to nonviolent protest movements, but not to armed insurgencies, which the military responds to using a distinct doctrine and tactics. Therefore, cases where the popular resistance *initiates* violence against government forces are outside the scope of this study. However, the theory does apply to cases like Libya in 2011, where political protests first started peacefully but were transformed into armed resistance within a week after the *state* initiated violence. However, NAVCO classifies campaigns using an annual measure of the primary method of resistance (violent or nonviolent). This variable indicates whether protesters' tactics were primarily nonviolent

in the first year of the campaign, regardless of whether resistance later became violent. But if the turn from nonviolent to violent tactics occurs quickly (*e.g.* after a few days or weeks), NAVCO will not pick up the movement's nonviolent origins. Thus, NAVCO mischaracterizes (for my purposes) Libya in 2011 as a violent campaign. The erroneous exclusion of such cases shrinks the number of observations in my data, thus weakening the statistical power of the model; however, their exclusion should not bias the results.[3]

Although popular uprisings sometimes succeed quickly (for example, Egypt's 2011 revolution lasted just two and a half weeks), they are often suppressed even faster. NAVCO includes only *sustained* campaigns, thus excluding uprisings which are suppressed quickly, before they can mature into sustained campaigns.[4] For example, the bread riots in Tunisia (1984) and Egypt (1977) were quickly suppressed and are therefore excluded, while bread riots in Sudan (1985) are included because they led to regime change. These cases are distinguished by their outcomes, not their causes (*i.e.* selected on the dependent variable). This leaves many of the critical past interventions out of the data set (*e.g.* the bread riots in Tunisia and Egypt). In future iterations of the analysis, I plan to collect new data on military responses to shorter uprisings. Nevertheless, the existing data represent a hard test of the hypotheses because they systematically include the strongest campaigns and exclude weaker campaigns. The theory predicts a stronger historical legacy effect from responding to a sustained campaign than a flash in the pan, so the selection process should bias against my theory.

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3. In statistical terms, the miscoding produces a truncated sample, i.e., observations where the outcome variable is above a certain threshhold are systematically excluded. Specifically, where the military is extremely repressive, protesters may resort to violence as soon as protests begin, and the case will be excluded as a violent campaign. As a robustness check, I fit a truncated regression model on the data (Greene 2018, 833-39). The results are consistent with the main model.

4. The NAVCO 2.1 Codebook (2018: 4) admits, "Other would-be nonviolent campaigns that are crushed in their infancy (and therefore fail) will not be included in this dataset. This is the major limitation in this study, and it is difficult to avoid."

Coding Procedure

To approximate these inclusion criteria, I began with NAVCO's consensus list of "mature" protest movements worldwide. NAVCO 2.1 covers the years 1945 to 2013 and includes information on the goals, structure, and size of sustained, large-scale protest movements.[5] I used the auxiliary variables to exclude protest campaigns which did not meet my case selection criteria. Following the scope conditions outlined above, I filtered the full set of campaigns in NAVCO to identify large-scale ($\geq$ 100,000 participants), primarily nonviolent protest movements demanding regime change. I excluded movements which are strictly regional (e.g. campaigns for local autonomy or secession), anticolonial movements, and primarily violent campaigns. To satisfy the third scope condition above, that the military must be an arbiter between the regime and the population, I excluded from my analysis any campaign which was suppressed by the internal security forces alone, without requiring an appeal to the military.

Next, I created a measure of my primary outcome variable, military repression against protesters, by manually coding an extension to the existing NAVCO data. My new variable disaggregates the NAVCO measure of state repression against each campaign, to identify the use of violence by the military in responding to the uprising. I define military responses to protests differently from previous studies, by focusing on the *use of violence* against unarmed civilians, rather than political motives. The military's use of violence is a more precise concept than alternatives like political orientation or loyalty to the regime, which can only be inferred from observed behaviors. Consequently, military violence can be coded with greater accuracy and less subjective bias than explicitly political outcomes.

Before researching individual cases, I wrote a coding protocol for the new variable. I modeled the protocol on the NAVCO codebook, mirroring as much as possible the coding instructions for their state repression variable, to maximize compatibility with the existing

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5. NAVCO 2.1, an update providing campaign-level data for 2007–2013, has not yet been released publicly, and was provided to the author by special agreement.

data. Like the state repression variable, my military repression variable is ordered and categorical, taking the values none, mild, moderate, or extreme.[6] Before generating the data, I test-coded a few randomly selected cases to hone the coding protocol, mainly to clarify the handling of borderline cases. After revising the protocol, I deleted the test coding and started again, working through the cases region by region.

After using the data from NAVCO to identify a list of candidate uprisings, I used secondary sources to determine whether the military response was violent or nonviolent.[7] First, I referred to the state repression variable in NAVCO and located the reference used by the NAVCO coders. In several cases, the military was mentioned in the same source as a perpetrator of violence. Next, I checked the Global Nonviolent Action Database and its works cited for any explicit mention of military violence.[8] In most recent cases, the use of violence by government troops anywhere in the world makes global headlines, and the military response can be clearly identified in wire reports by the Associated Press, Reuters, or Agence France Presse.[9] Where news reports did not discuss the military, I searched Google Scholar for scholarly works mentioning both protests and the military in the country. In some especially repressive contexts, particularly in historical cases, government censorship blocked straightforward reporting of military atrocities. As a last resort, I performed a general internet search for credible, third-party investigative reports. Non-governmental organizations committed to human rights and conflict prevention have done admirable work documenting these abuses in most cases. In particular, I relied on case reports compiled during the uprisings by investigators from Human Rights Watch and the International Crisis Group.[10] In most cases, these sources were sufficient to de-

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6. In the main analysis, military violence is modeled as a binary response, either violent (moderate or extreme repression) or nonviolent (mild or none).

7. A full list of references is provided in the replication data for this chapter.

8. Swarthmore College, Global Nonviolent Action Database, available at `https://nvdatabase.swarthmore.edu/`.

9. Wire reports are cataloged in the Nexis Uni database. For each event, I searched using the location and date range of the protests, using the keywords "military," "army," "soldier," and "troops."

10. Reports available online from Human Rights Watch at `https://www.hrw.org/publications`, and International Crisis Group at `https://www.crisisgroup.org/latest-updates/reports-and-briefings`.

termine whether the military used violence against protesters.[11] If the size of the protests was small, and the police were able to disperse the mobilization without military backup, the case was excluded with a code of "not applicable."

Explanatory Variables

In order to test the dissertation's theory, I collected data on three causal factors that, per the theory, affect the military's propensity to use violence against peaceful protesters. To capture the historical origins of the military institution, I measure the military's relationship to a) the national independence movement and b) the ruling party. As I argued in chapter 2, the role soldiers play in securing national independence shapes the military's conception of its appropriate missions and roles. Where decolonization was won through combat, I expect the military's doctrine to favor the use of violence against public disturbances. Similarly, the armed forces' relationship to the ruling party, whether closely ideologically integrated or clearly institutionalized apart, should shape the military's doctrine for domestic political crises. Where soldiers play an active role in party politics, they will be more likely to resort to violence in defense of the status quo.

To operationalize these variables, I rely on two indicators. First, I proxy for the role of the military in the national independence movement with an indicator of whether the state's independence campaign was violent or nonviolent. These data are available from the Issues Correlates of War (ICOW) project.[12] Typically, where indigenous armed groups fought for independence, the liberation organizations became the backbone of the national army after the colonizer's retreat. Therefore, I expect that states which won their independence through violence will be more likely to see military violence against protesters.[13]

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11. Only one case, the Anti-PRI campaign of 1986–2000 is coded as unknown. The Mexican army employed extreme violence during this period in counterinsurgency operations against armed groups, but there was not clear evidence whether the military ever targeted peaceful anti-government demonstrators.

12. ICOW Colonial History Data, available at: `http://www.paulhensel.org/icowcol.html`.

13. A non-systematic review of the data indicate that the proxy is a good one, despite some anomalies. One case for which the proxy fails is Egypt, which is coded as a case of nonviolent independence in 1922. While this is technically accurate, *de facto* independence did not occur until the military seized power in

Second, I proxy for the relationship between the military and the ruling party using regime type data. Specifically, I rely on Geddes et al.'s (2014b) Autocratic Regimes Data, which includes autocratic regimes' start and end dates, and a composite, categorical regime type variable specifying various configurations of authoritarian power sharing. The latter variable indicates the participation of various elite groups (e.g. a ruling party and the military) in political rule, so it serves as a good proxy for the military's relationship with the ruling party. Importantly, this is not simply a measure of "military regimes," where soldiers rule directly (cf. Geddes 1999). Instead, the autocratic regimes data indicate whether the military is an integral part of the political regime, or if the system is better characterized as personalistic or party-based.[14]

To test the second part of the theory, which argues that foreign military training shapes doctrine for domestic interventions, I rely on military aid data from the USAID Greenbook.[15] The data cover all state recipients of American military assistance from 1950 to 2014. Because no reliable data are available on the number of foreign soldiers receiving American training each year, I instead rely on annual military assistance to indicate an ongoing military relationship between the United States and a given recipient state. The theory states that in countries where a substantial portion of all active military officers have received Western training, the military will be less likely to use violence against civilians. In order for a significant portion of the officer corps to be influenced by Western military values, an entire generation of officers must receive foreign training. To operationalize this causal factor, I construct a dichotomous variable from the USAID data to indicate whether the military had received a cumulative 25 years of US military assistance prior to the uprising.[16]

1952.

14. For further discussion, see the Autocratic Regimes Data Codebook, available at: http://sites.psu.edu/dictators/.

15. U.S. Overseas Loans and Grants (Greenbook), available at: https://catalog.data.gov/dataset/us-overseas-loans-and-grants-greenbook-usaid-1554.

16. As a robustness check, I also calculated indicators for five or ten years of US military assistance. In addition, I tested whether ongoing US assistance at the time of the uprising had a similar effect. Regression results with these indicators are available in the appendix. As the theory predicts, short-term aid flows have

At first glance, it is counterintuitive to count some American allies, like South Korea during the 1960 Student Revolution, as negative cases (i.e. non-US influence). After all, the US military had already occupied South Korea (1945-48), fought in combat alongside the ROK Army (1950-53), and trained Korean soldiers since the occupation. However, ROK officers in this period had been trained in the Imperial Japanese Army and continued to view their new overlords with suspicious (Stueck and Yi 2010). Thus, Western military doctrine had not yet taken root in the South Korean military by 1960, but was in greater evidence during Korea's second popular uprising in 1979, after 30 years of US assistance.

A final mechanism proposed in the theory of this dissertation is that the military's past interventions can influence future responses by motivating officers to innovate the organization's doctrine. In my case studies of the Arab Spring cases, I identified qualitatively how soldiers reacted to their historical interventions, interpreting their experiences as positive or negative lessons, and then either upholding or updating the army's doctrine, depending which lessons they took from these encounters. My military repression variable offers an indication of an army's previous responses. However, only 20 of the 86 uprisings in my dataset took place in countries where the army had historically used violence against protesters – too small a number to decisively study its impact quantitatively. I do include past military repression as a variable in one model, but this specification is underpowered, so the null result cannot be interpreted as a refutation of the hypothesis. Moreover, the theory predicts that this variable operates as an interaction with the military's self-evaluation of the response. In other words, past military repression should predict future military repression only when soldiers evaluate the historical experience as a success. Data on soldiers' evaluations is not readily available, and in any case the small number of cases would further weaken the statistical power of the quantitative model.

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no statistical relationship with the military's use of repression.

Additional Variables

In addition to the explanatory variables described above, I include variables measuring the three main competing hypotheses from the existing literature, as outlined in chapter 2: capability, patronage, and ethnicity. First, I operationalize the military's capability for suppressing an uprising as the number of military personnel per 10,000 citizens, calculated using Correlates of War data.[17] If the capability argument is correct, a higher ratio of soldiers to citizens should increase the propensity to use force. Second, I use the military's annual budget allocation, relative to the total number of military personnel, as a proxy for patronage. According to the literature on military patronage, soldiers are more likely to side with the regime if they are satisfied with their equipment and remuneration. In this view, the military should be more likely to use violence against anti-regime protesters if the military receives more resources per soldier from the government. Finally, I test the ethnicity argument with an indicator for ethnic minority rule. Using Ethnic Power Relations (EPR) data, I construct and indicator for whether an ethnic minority group holds dominant or monopoly power in the polity at the time of the uprising.[18] According to this argument, minority ethnic groups like the Alawis in Syria are more likely to employ ethnic stacking in the armed forces to ensure loyalty in moments of crisis. Thus, violent military repression should be more likely under minority rule.s

The main analysis relies on a medium-n data set (86 observations), so the inclusion of extraneous "control" variables is likely to wash out meaningful results. For completeness, I also ran regressions with various control variables added to the model, including population, GDP, and an indicator of whether the country experienced an armed conflict within the past five years.[19] Because the primary measures described above are constructed as ratios (relative to population or military personnel size) I would not expect

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17. Correlates of War, National Military Capabilities (v. 5.0), available at: http://www.correlatesofwar.org/data-sets/national-material-capabilities.

18. Vogt *et al.* (2015), Ethnic Power Relations, available at: https://icr.ethz.ch/data/epr/.

19. UCDP/PRIO Armed Conflict Dataset (v. 17.2), available at: http://ucdp.uu.se/downloads/. See also Allansson *et al.* (2017).

population or GDP to have an independent effect on the military response. Conversely, they may weaken the statistical significance of the main findings because they are correlated with the primary indicators, and they decrease the model's degrees of freedom. It seems plausible that a recent war would cause a military's doctrine to become more warlike, but there is not a strong theoretical motivation for this hypothesis, and again the inclusion of an extraneous variable weakens the statistical power of the model.

The full data set includes 86 uprisings from 1952 to 2013, of which 52 succeeded in producing regime change. As the bread riot example illustrates, the apparent success rate is subject to selection effects: only the most effective campaigns are able to grow to massive scale and sustain themselves in the face of escalating state repression. Of the 39 successful campaigns which faced extreme government repression, 67% succeeded only after major defections from the military and/or state security forces. Table 6.2 presents summary statistics of the main variables included in the analysis.

Table 6.2: Summary Statistics

Dichotomous Variables	Yes	No		
Violent response (*dependent variable*)	57.0%	43.0%		
Violent decolonization	53.5%	46.5%		
Regime-military ties	23.3%	76.7%		
US military aid (25+ years)	44.2%	55.8%		
Minority rule	14.0%	86.0%		
Continuous Variables	Mean	Std. Dev.	Min.	Max.
Military personnel per 10,000	66.4	63.4	7.10	320
Military expenditure per soldier	$11,645	$14,857	$152	$118,000
Observations	86			

Results

I model the data as a standard logit function, with a binary response variable for the use of military violence against demonstrators. Four of the six predictors are dichotomous. The other two, continuous variables are standardized to mean zero and unit variance. The

main regression results are provided in Table 6.3. The effects of the three main explanatory variables outlined in my theory are all significant at the 0.05 level and in the expected direction. Of the three alternative causes, the coefficients on minority rule and military budget are in the expected direction but not statistically significant. Meanwhile, military size (relative to population) is significant in the *opposite* direction from the prediction of the capability argument. The data show that having a higher ratio of soldiers to citizens makes military violence *less* likely, perhaps because larger armies are more likely to adopt a doctrine of control, which calls for violence only in extreme circumstances.

Table 6.3: Main Model Results

	(1)	(2)	(3)
Violent Independence	1.425*	1.353*	1.213*
	(2.45)	(2.34)	(2.13)
Regime-Military Ties	1.373*	1.372*	1.084
	(2.12)	(2.12)	(1.63)
US Military Aid (25 yr)	-0.952*	-0.991*	
	(-2.12)	(-2.22)	
Military Size	-0.691*	-0.671*	-0.530
	(-2.08)	(-2.05)	(-1.68)
Minority Rule	0.662	0.677	0.779
	(0.79)	(0.83)	(0.98)
Military Budget	0.286	0.246	0.279
	(1.24)	(1.14)	(1.16)
Past Military Violence		0.635	
		(1.16)	
US Military Aid (10 yr)			-0.488
			(-0.71)
Constant	-0.437	-0.534	-0.303
	(-0.78)	(-0.98)	(-0.39)
Observations	86	86	82

t statistics in parentheses

* $p < 0.05$

The substantive effect sizes of the main explanatory variables are quite large. Fig-

ure 6.2 plots the marginal effect of a one-unit change (from 0 to 1 for binary variables) in each variable on the probability of military violence against civilians, holding other variables at their mean values. Due to the sample size, the confidence intervals around these estimates are very wide, but the effect sizes are substantively meaningful. The effect of winning national independence through violence is estimated to increase the probability of violent military repression by 34.8%. This supports the hypothesis that when the military is involved in securing national independence, military doctrine calls for soldiers to act as guardians of the nation, defending the national interest even against fellow citizens. Similarly, the military's participation in the ruling coalition, *ceteris paribus*, increases the probability of violent repression by 33.4%. This significant effect is evidence for the hypothesis that the military's relationship with the ruling party conditions its doctrine for domestic security, increasing the likelihood of resorting to violence. Finally, receiving US military aid for 25 or more years, all else equal, decreases the probability of military repression by 23.2%.

Of the alternative predictors, only military size has a statistically significant effect, but it is in the opposite direction from the prediction. In other words, the data suggest that larger militaries are actually *less* likely to use violence against protesters. This contradicts the capacity argument, which hypothesizes that smaller armies are unable to repress large protests. The national military budget per soldier does not have any effect on response. Admittedly, the budget per soldier captures only one type of military patronage, but the lack of any statistical relationship does contradict simple models of loyalty buying (e.g. Besley and Robinson 2010). Finally, ethnic minority rule has no effect on military responses. This is perhaps the most surprising result, since minority rule is rare (only 14% of cases) and represents the most extreme form of ethnic bias. Therefore, this relationship can be considered a hoop test for the ethnicity hypothesis, and the null result is especially problematic for the argument (Collier 2011).

Because several countries witnessed multiple uprisings during the period of anal-
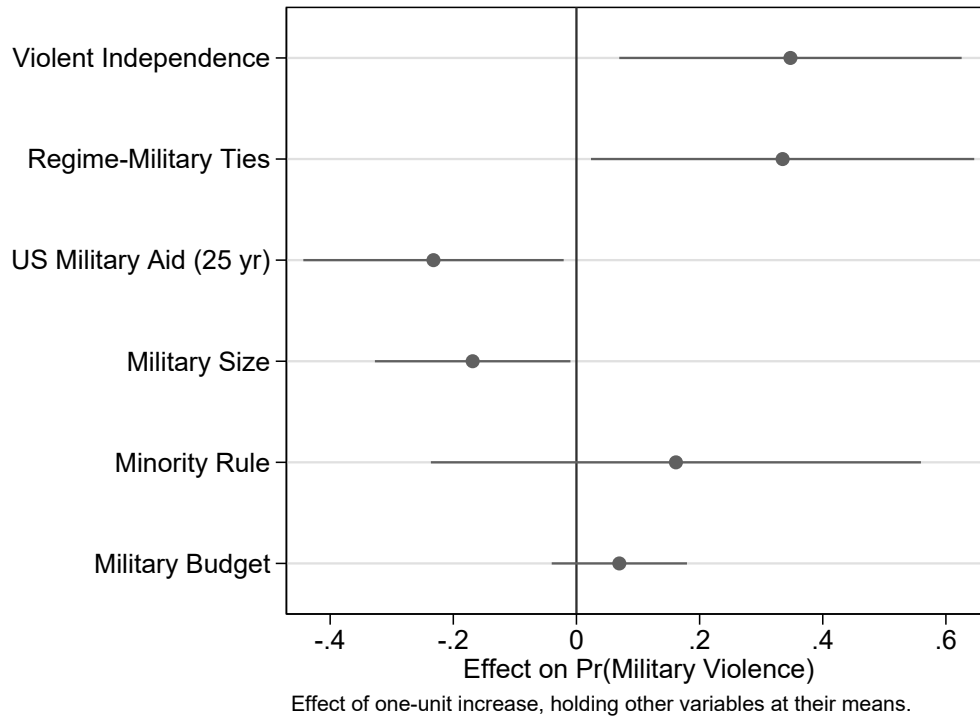
192

Figure 6.2: Quantitative Results: Marginal Effects

ysis, a cluster-robust standard errors are appropriate to correct for heteroskedasticity within country observations. However, when used with non-linear models (*e.g.* binomial logit), robust standard errors can fail to correct biases resulting from model misspecification (King and Roberts 2015). Instead, I perform a generalized information matrix (GIM) test, a formal statistical test for model misspecification. The GIM test statistic (13.97, $p = 0.35$) indicates that the model is not misspecified, increasing confidence in the estimates.[20]

Table 6.3 also presents two alternative model specifications. Model 2 adds an indicator of whether the military used violence in responding to a previous uprising. The main explanatory variables are almost identical in this specification, The coefficient for past military violence is in the expected direction but is, unsurprisingly, not significant

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20. Cluster-robust standard errors and the GIM test were implemented in R using the `RobustSE` package (see `https://github.com/IQSS/RobustSE`). Based on GIM test statistic, we fail to reject the null hypothesis that the model specification is correct.

Table 6.4: Results with Additional Controls

	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)
Violent Independence	1.381*	1.812**	1.281*	1.663*
	(2.43)	(2.69)	(2.32)	(2.49)
Regime-Military Ties	1.347*	1.350	1.382*	1.312
	(2.13)	(1.88)	(2.10)	(1.81)
US Military Aid (25 yr)	-0.907*	-0.955*	-0.975*	-0.934
	(-1.98)	(-1.97)	(-2.02)	(-1.69)
Military Size	-0.656*	-0.659	-0.617*	-0.497
	(-2.03)	(-1.77)	(-2.08)	(-1.57)
Minority Rule	0.718	0.844	0.458	0.749
	(0.83)	(0.94)	(0.51)	(0.72)
Military Budget	0.294	0.401	0.0278	0.309
	(1.26)	(1.00)	(0.06)	(0.39)
Population	0.137			0.148
	(0.55)			(0.51)
GDP (per capita)		-0.000		-0.000
		(-0.27)		(-0.37)
Recent War			0.0558	0.164
			(0.13)	(0.35)
Constant	-0.428	-0.582	-0.297	-0.403
	(-0.77)	(-0.77)	(-0.48)	(-0.50)
Observations	86	80	76	70

t statistics in parentheses

* $p < 0.05$, ** $p < 0.01$

(see discussion in section 6.2 above). Model 3 repeats the main model using an alternative measure of US military assistance: 10 years of aid rather than 25. As hypothesized, 10 years should be insufficient for Western military doctrine to significantly affect military behavior, and indeed, the effect of a ten-year aid relationship is not significant.

As a robustness check, I also ran the model with three additional control variables: total population, gross domestic product per capita, and an indicator of whether the country had experienced a war in the previous five years. Regression results are provided in Table 6.4. As predicted, none of these controls have a significant relationship with the outcome. When the extraneous variables are included, the standard errors increase on the main predictors due to a lack of power, but the point estimates remain fairly consistent.[21]

Overall, the empirical results provide strong support for the dissertation's theory. My findings suggest that the institutional origins of the military and the influence of foreign military training both have a significant effect on military responses to popular uprisings. Moreover, the main competing explanations find no support in the cross-national data. Despite including the entire universe of popular uprisings worldwide in the modern era, I nevertheless arrive at a medium-n analysis, which can provide only suggestive evidence of the theory's validity and generalizability. Nevertheless, the results of this general empirical test are encouraging and should motivate further testing of the theory through the appropriate qualitative methods.

Discussion

Military responses vary substantially across region, although most regions have witnessed both violent and nonviolent military responses. Figure 6.3 maps the prevalence of military violence globally. Notably, East Asia has seen mostly violent responses, while states with only nonviolent histories are scattered among the other world regions. It is no surprise that democratic North America, Western Europe, and Australia saw few or no uprisings

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21. With all three controls included, $n = 70$ versus $n = 86$ in the main model. The pseudo-R^2 value is also lower, indicating poorer model fit.
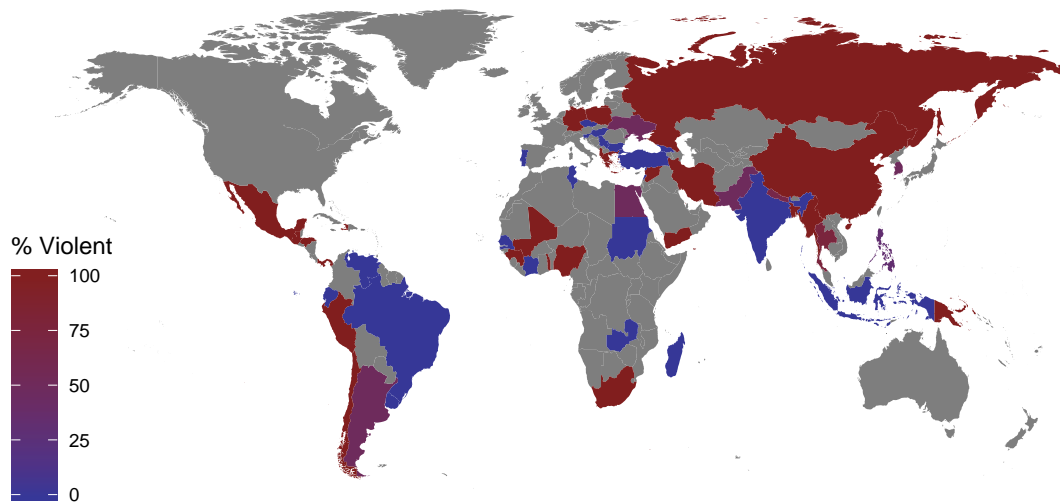
Figure 6.3: Violent Military Responses as Percent of Uprisings

in the post-WWII era. More surprising is how many authoritarian states in Africa do not enter the data. One possible explanation is that African mobilization has been overlooked by Western journalists and scholars, resulting in undercounting in the data. Another explanation could be the exceptional weakness of postcolonial African states, rendering state capture via mass mobilization less attractive. However, the historic prevalence of armed insurgencies in the region suggests there must be an alternative cause. While this question is beyond the scope of this dissertation, it could serve as a direction for future research.

During the coding process, two factors stood out from the qualitative data. First, during several uprisings, the military responded by seizing power in a coup d'état. Although the case selection criteria exclude coups and other military-led revolts, the theory still applies to scenarios where the military *reacts* to popular mobilization by staging a coup. Using Powell and Thyne's (2011) data on coup attempts, I identified whether a coup attempt occurred during the uprising. In the existing literature, a violent military response is associated with disloyalty to the regime. By this logic, armies which use violence to defend the regime should not be expected to carry out coups. Surprisingly,

Table 6.5: Coup Attempts during Popular Uprisings

Response	Coup Attempts		
	None	Failed	Successful
None	24	2	2
Mild	6	0	0
Moderate	7	2	0
Extreme	28	3	9

the data reveal that most coup attempts occur during uprisings in which the military also uses extreme violence against demonstrators. In many of these cases, military hardliners lead a crackdown but are undercut by the coup plotters. But in other cases, such as Burma in 1988, the military took a hard-line approach throughout the conflict, first by shooting protesters and then by overthrowing the government because, in officers' view, it was too soft on dissent. Although this correlation alone does not indicate any specific causal relationship, it does suggest that military loyalty to the regime is not the only factor determining the military's treatment of protesters.

In addition to the diversity of military responses, I observed variation in the state's actions toward the military. I did not attempt to code whether the executive gave an order to open fire on protesters. As the example of Tunisia demonstrates, private discussions between a besieged leader and his military chief are often unknowable. Occasionally, the military was ordered *not* to use violence, as in East Germany in 1989, when Soviet troops were ordered not to retaliate against protesters even under "extreme provocation" (Barany 2016b, 114-16). On the other hand, the military sometimes publicly defied government orders by refusing to intervene, as in Argentina in 1987. Of course, in a number of countries, the regime itself was a military junta. In my theoretical framework, a military which takes direct power is demonstrating a doctrine of control, which can lead to extreme violence against opponents viewed as enemies of the state. A common theme in the cases of extreme military repression is the "othering" of protesters by association with allegedly foreign ideologies, especially Communism and Islamism. In other cases, the military

itself was largely foreign. For example, anti-communist uprisings in Eastern Europe were sometimes suppressed by the Soviet Army, under orders from Moscow, not by indigenous forces. Where foreign troops are involved in repressing uprisings abroad, they are likely to view demonstrators as enemies, akin to the Syrian military's approach to domestic opponents, and therefore adopt a doctrine of combat.

Chapter 7

Conclusion

Why did the Arab Spring fail? In 2011, the unprecedented mobilization of Arab citizens demanding regime change generated a surge of optimism across the region and beyond. Tunisian protesters' efforts to change the system, lay claim to a share of the economic pie, and regain their dignity, soiled by decades of government abuses, inspired sizeable copycat protests in virtually every Arab-majority country. In six of these countries (Bahrain, Libya, Egypt, Syria, Tunisia, and Yemen), demonstrations grew into popular uprisings that overwhelmed the capacity of the domestic police forces, forcing the political regimes in power to appeal for help from the military. Once called to the streets, soldiers' response to the assembled crowds dictated the trajectory of each country's politics. The military's divergent responses determined how many civilians would lose their lives and what the political landscape would look like for years to come. Only in Tunisia did the military act with restraint, allowing a nonviolent political transition to take place. In Egypt, the military ended a brief experiment with democratization after just one year, bringing the country back under dictatorship. Most appallingly, Syria's protests were met with the full repressive force of the military, which drove thousands of formerly peaceful demonstrators to join an armed insurgency that has devastated the country. In Bahrain, Libya, and Yemen, military repression helped leaders remain in power, if only to be toppled through foreign intervention. These narratives offer a clear answer to the failure of the

Arab uprisings: the role of the military. In the next section, I summarize the dissertation's contribution to our understanding of military responses to popular uprisings, reviewing the main arguments and sources of evidence. Next, I discuss the theory's implications for our understanding of democratization and civil-military relations. Finally, I conclude with an outline of opportunities for future research on the role of military doctrine in domestic politics.

7.1 Military Doctrine for Domestic Intervention

This dissertation is an investigation of the causal underpinnings of military intervention in revolutions, viewed through the lens of the Arab Spring. Previous attempts to explain military responses to revolution have focused on characteristics of the military, such as professionalism, patronage or ethnicity. Instead, I find that the best explanation for military behavior during revolutions is doctrine: the set of rules and understandings through which military planners conceptualize and prepare for future engagements. Through my fieldwork in Tunisia, qualitative case studies of the other Arab Spring uprisings, and quantitative data analysis, I find that military doctrine determines whether soldiers view demonstrators as enemies, and whether it is the appropriate role of the military to intervene. To explain the historical divergence of military doctrines across the region, I offer a novel theory of doctrinal development, rooted in the processes of institutional development and organizational learning.

I have argued that military doctrine is essential to understanding military responses to popular uprisings and, as a result, revolutionary outcomes. In the security studies literature, the concept of military doctrine has been central to theoretical understandings of combat performance, cohesion, and conflict outcomes. However, the role of doctrine – i.e., the set of rules and understandings through which military planners conceptualize and prepare for future engagements – has been missing from studies of domestic military intervention. My view differs from existing explanations of military

responses, which point to the utilitarian interests of the officer corps to explain decision making during mass protests. In the conventional view, popular uprisings confront soldiers with a binary choice to support either the status quo or the revolution. Weighing the costs and benefits of each option, the officer corps instructs soldiers to defend the regime or to defect in favor of the popular will. While it is undeniable that rational officers, often master tacticians and strategic thinkers, make strategic calculations during political crises, it is my contention that the organizational response to protests is driven primarily by preexisting beliefs and values established prior to the uprising. Just as soldiers train and prepare for future wars, so do they prepare for domestic interventions, and their plans and preparations can play a decisive role in shaping the military response.

The dissertation's central argument is twofold: first, that military doctrine shapes soldiers' responses to popular uprisings; and second, that doctrine evolves through long-term historical processes. In particular, I argue that the origins of a military's doctrine trace back to the establishment of the national military, often during the colonial era. Historical factors such as the design of colonial institutions, soldiers' role (if any) in securing national independence, and the relationship between the military and the ruling political order established in the early post-colonial period establish a protean doctrinal orientation in the new national armed forces. Next, the military confronts two major influences on its doctrine: domestic interventions, such as protest response, which challenge existing ways of thinking and doing, and foreign military partnerships, which provide innovative training and alternative operational models.

The conditions and processes of doctrinal development and innovation are central to the historical case studies of the previous chapters. Often, the emergent doctrine of an authoritarian military is conservative, and in their first interactions with society, most armies use violence to defend the status quo. However, soldiers' historical interactions with the population sometimes demonstrate the value of political neutrality, encouraging the military organization to develop a doctrinal orientation favoring restraint. Once a

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military has established a doctrine of restraint, and soldiers have sufficient tactical professionalism to reliable carry out orders, then senior officers are in a position to respond neutrally to a popular uprising. The Tunisian army met these conditions in 2010, which enabled its nonviolent response and eventual support for the revolution of dignity. In the Egyptian revolution, a doctrine of direct intervention led the SCAF to force Mubarak from office and seize power – at first indirectly, and from 2013, directly. Thus, both military-society relations and foreign military partnerships can drive a process of doctrinal innovation in the armed forces.

7.2 Implications

Military responses are critical to the outcomes of popular uprisings. Mass protests can grow into revolutions, producing political transitions and even democratization, or turn violent and devolve into civil war. To explain the broad variation in military responses, this dissertation advances a novel theory of military doctrine for domestic security, which guides soldiers' behavior in moments of crisis. Although military doctrine is widely accepted as a major cause of victory or defeat in war, the concept has been absent until now from studies of military behavior in revolutions. Military doctrine can contribute to our understanding of both democratization and civil-military relations under authoritarianism. The literature on authoritarian repression has made great advances in explaining the causes of repression and how political elites perceive threats to their rule. Yet much remains unexplained in the dynamic process of authoritarian breakdown. My work disaggregates the state as a unitary actor by differentiating between the regime's and the military's incentives. Considered separately, the threat posed to the regime is different from that to the military, yet the military is often the group that ultimately sets the course of regime transition. The concept of military doctrine helps to explain military behavior in this critical context.

According to the dissertation theory, military behavior during revolution is best

understood through the lens of "structured contingency" (Karl 1990). In this view, elites facing political upheaval have many options available to them, but their most likely responses are those with institutional precedents. While other explanations for military responses have focused on the balance of institutions and material interests, such as economic ties to the regime, and personal loyalties, I emphasize the prescriptive role of doctrine in guiding officers' decision making in critical moments. Similarly, Mahoney (2001) argues that during critical junctures like revolutions, the choices made by political actors are typically rooted in "antecedent historical conditions." More concisely, in the words of Bratton and van de Walle (1994, 45), "people can make their own history, even if not under conditions of their own choosing."

This dissertation highlights several historical factors, such as colonial legacies and past interventions, which were central to the development of Arab civil-military relations. My findings suggest that greater scholarly attention should be paid to the historical processes that shape civil-military relations. At the same time, I find evidence that military doctrine can and does change over time, especially in response to operational experience and foreign influence. Therefore, my approach differs from structuralist theories of coup propensity, which offer deterministic formulas for military loyalty. The framework of structured contingency helps to account for the agency of individual decision makers within the bounds of historical structures (i.e. military officers considering the appropriate response to a popular uprising). My theory describes a dynamic process by which the military updates its strategic orientation in response to their experiences and foreign contacts.

The ultimate goal of this project has been to explain military decision making during popular uprisings. Because the military is so critical to the process of democratization, it is worth getting it right. In the years prior to the Arab Spring, civil-military relations in the Middle East were a neglected subject of research (Barak and David 2010). As a result, most scholarship on the role of Arab militaries in 2011 has relied on theory developed in

other regions and contexts. While useful, these theories lacked attention to the unique histories of Arab militaries. I hope that my attention to the specificities of the Middle East context, like foreign military aid inflows due to the region's geostrategic importance, improve the scholarly understanding of Arab civil-military relations more broadly.

Another contribution of the study is to begin to disentangle how different causal pathways have led to similarly disastrous outcomes in the Middle East. Since the Arab Spring demonstrations reached their end, Libya, Syria, and Yemen have all been beset by civil war. Observing this outcome from a 10,000-foot level, the same factors may appear to operate in each case, whether tribalism, sectarianism, or religious fanaticism. Yet upon closer inspection, the three armies responded differently to protesters, and for different reasons. Had the international community better understood soldiers motivations in 2011, perhaps the foreign interference in these conflicts might have been redesigned to pacify, not escalate, the conflicts. For example, had Western powers understood the Syrian Armed Forces' longstanding doctrinal commitment to regime defense, they would not have so quickly predicted the collapse of al-Asad's regime. On the other hand, a recognition of the deep divisions within the Libyan military might have helped NATO planners predict the inevitable collapse of security as Gaddafi's forces disintegrated.

Admitting the causal influence of historical events does not require a deterministic fatalism. Instead, recognizing how historical inform contemporary patterns of behavior is the first step to altering those patterns. For example, this study concludes that foreign military training is less influential than institutional legacies and past experience in shaping military responses to uprisings. If policymakers assume, as they sometimes do, that a short stint in an American war college will radically alter foreign military officers' behavior, these programs are destined to underachieve. However, my empirical analysis also indicates that, in the right circumstances, training can have a positive impact on military doctrine. To achieve positive results, my findings show that Western military assistance must be thorough, involving a high proportion of senior officers in the recipient military,

and sustained for at least 25 years, the equivalent of a full generation of military officers. In line with previous studies, I find no evidence that short-term programs have any effect (Taylor 2014). This finding requires confirmation through further study; however, the data suggest that foreign military training would be more effective if resources were concentrated on a smaller number of recipients, instead of including as many partners as possible. My results suggest that, if the study is confirmed, policy makers should favor long-term training commitments to stable and permanent allies, rather than providing limited aid to a larger number of partners.

A final contribution of this project is to shed a new light on the role of armed forces in internal security. One simple reason for the neglect of internal security is that it falls between the sub-fields of comparative politics and international relations within the political science discipline. Another factor is Western-centrism: because the militaries of North America and Europe play little or no role in internal security at home, the topic is neglected by Western academics. In counterinsurgency contexts, such as Iraq and Afghanistan, the Western military establishment and the academic field supporting it have struggled to break out of a conceptual straitjacket, which holds that an army is for warfighting, not domestic security. In the study of civil-military relations and democratization, the same conceptual boundaries have been a stumbling block.

7.3 Extensions

A top priority for future research is to improve the available data on domestic intervention by the military. Countless studies have enumerated and analyzed the causes and consequences of coups d'état, but no existing data set systematically measures military responses to protests and riots. The data collected for this dissertation provides a partial solution, but it is limited by relying on mature campaigns from NAVCO (see chapter 6). Recent data collection projects like ACLED are greatly expanding the availability of event data for smaller-scale mobilization. Using fine-grained event data as a starting point for

further data collection on military responses will reduce concerns about possible selection bias and also increase the statistical power of the analyses. In developing this dissertation into a book project, I plan to take advantage of the latest advances in event reporting and geospatial modeling to improve the statistical power of the analyses.

An additional extension to this work would expand the qualitative analysis through the use of archival sources. While my case study chapters incorporate archival materials available online from US government agencies, they could be expanded through additional research in physical archives. In particular, the former colonial powers, Britain and France, kept detailed records of their colonial administration of the Middle East. These documents could help shed light on the effect of colonial era policies on the initial military doctrines of postcolonial states.

In the course of this study, I often uncovered evidence that the military's behavior was shaped by soldiers' perceptions of the demonstrators. Unfortunately, studies focused on the military often give short shrift to the relationship between the military and the popular opposition. Future work should apply the techniques of public opinion research to the domain of military-society relations. Studying the interaction between military and civilian attitudes and beliefs could offer powerful insights into the interactions between the two groups.

In light of my findings, scholars may wish to reconsider whether the same dynamic process contributed to military behavior during the pacted negotiations of the third wave in Latin America, or the rapid collapse of communism in the Soviet bloc. The assumption in both of these literatures is that the military suddenly defected because of shifts in their material interests, but the literature does little to explain the sources of this sudden change. Stepan's (1971; 1973; 1988) pioneering work on the Latin American transitions underscores the power of military officers to enable or prevent democratization. Taking an agent-focused approach, he demonstrates that when elites make the "right" choices, they can help create positive political transformation. But an analysis of the structural

conditions these officers face is a necessary complement to Stepan's work. Future work could build on his legacy of civil-military relations research by uncovering the causes of the military's historical evolution or the generational shifts of officers who shape the institution over time.

The dissertation theory recognizes the importance of interactions between soldiers and societies during periods of unrest in shaping future military behavior. However, the evidence provided in the dissertation covers only one side of the story: the military's view of the population. From this project, I plan to develop a research agenda on the *mutual* perceptions of the military and the population. A first effort in this direction is underway with an ongoing study of public trust in authoritarian and democratizing armies (Lotito and Miles 2018). Motivated by the finding that citizens' perceptions of the military condition their response to soldiers during revolutions, the working paper uses survey data to discover the sources of variation in public attitudes toward the military.

In this dissertation, I find that the design of military institutions during the colonial era can affect the organization's behavior a century later. Unfortunately, as (Greitens 2016, 20) notes, the role of coercive institutions in repression is "assumed far more than… analyzed." In another research project, my coauthors and I are undertaking a comprehensive investigation of the colonial origins of coercive institutions in the Middle East (Hartnett *et al.* 2018). The comparative politics literature has long relied on potentially flawed assumptions about the institutions of state coercion. Although this dissertation focuses on the role of the military during revolutionary moments, such moments are extremely rare. In normal periods, and even in most popular uprisings, the military has little or no role in political repression. Despite this, scholars have traditionally focused on the military as their unit of analysis, even though it is domestic security institutions such as the police and intelligence services that are tasked with the regime's defense. Relative to the internal security forces, the military has actually played a declining role in the maintenance of Arab authoritarianism: the army is rarely deployed to the streets,

except in rare moments of extraordinary mobilization, and coups have become increasingly rare events in the Middle East. One goal of this research is to open the black box of these other coercive institutions by studying their historical development before and after independence.

A second contribution of the project is to challenge problematic assumptions about the historical development of coercive institutions. Dominant political science theories suggest that coercive institutions are established when an authoritarian leader comes to power, and that authoritarian leaders have full autonomy in constructing those institutions. Instead, we find that even revolutionary leaders inherit the institutional apparatus of the state from the previous period, and cannot easily start over from a *tabula rasa*. This is particularly true for leaders coming to power in the twentieth century, after major state building processes took place. Contemporary authoritarian leaders rely on the predetermined resources and capabilities of the states they inherit. In conclusion, we argue, the origins of modern coercive institutions should properly be located in the colonial era, not in the authoritarian regimes of the postcolonial Middle East.

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Despite its surprises, the Arab Spring also revealed deep continuities in the politics of the Middle East. Rather than asking why Middle East studies missed the Arab Spring (Gause 2011), it may be more fruitful to ask how the existing literature on Arab authoritarianism can help us explain these revolutionary moments. Following Brownlee *et al.* (2014), I conclude that the Arab Spring, and revolutions in general, are best understood not as spontaneous and unprecedented, but rather as deeply rooted in historical context. The political and military elites who made headlines during the uprisings and throughout the transitions were already fixtures of the political scene decades earlier (e.g. Tunisia's 91-year-old President Essebsi, who entered politics in 1941). All of the politicians, activists, officers, and functionaries acting during these turbulent times were guided by the context of their political experience. Moreover, the fundamental role of coercive institutions in

revolution and regime change was well-researched prior to 2011 (Bellin 2004; Tilly and Tarrow 2006). While the prospects for political development remain dim across much of the Arab world, scholarly inquiry continues offer a pathway to understanding the power structures inhibiting human progress.

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Appendix

Codebook

`mil_repress`: Military Repressive Episode(s)

Description: This variable measures the most repressive episode or activity perpetrated by the military in response to campaign activity.

Coding rules: This variable looks at repression from the perspective of the opposition campaign, not the state. Focusing on peak events, coders should measure the extent to which the military acts to quell opposition. If the military does not respond, or responds in a conciliatory manner, this variable is coded as "none."

Coding:

-1=not applicable - internal security forces do not require backup - government does not order military intervention - campaign size is too small to warrant intervention

0=none - few or no actions taken on the part of the military - appeasing or surrendering to campaign - making statements of support for campaign's demands - taking action that signals intention to cooperate or negotiate with campaign - expressing intention to cooperate or showing support

1=mild repression - verbal or threatening action short of physical action - express intent to engage in conflict or threaten - decline to cease ongoing conflict; maintain the status quo during conflict

2=moderate repression - physical or violent action aimed at coercing campaign - harassment and imprisonment of campaign members - no apparent intention to kill

3=extreme repression - physical action exhibiting intent to kill and violently silence campaign - torture or severe violence (such as severe beatings), which could easily kill someone - mass violence

-99=unknown

Case List: Popular Uprisings, 1950–2013

Campaign	Country	Year	Success	Mil. Violence
South Africa First Defiance Campaign	South Africa	1952	No	Extreme
East Gemany Worker Uprising	East Germany	1953	No	Extreme
Hungary Anti-Communist	Hungary	1956	No	None
Poznan Protests	Poland	1956	No	Extreme
South Korea Student Revolution	South Korea	1960	Yes	Extreme
Leftist rebels (URNG)	Guatemala	1961	No	Extreme
Czech Anti-Soviet Occupation	Czechoslovakia	1967	No	None
Anti-Khan	Pakistan	1968	No	Extreme
Anti-Tsiranana Campaign	Madagascar	1972	Yes	None
Greece Anti-Military	Greece	1973	Yes	Extreme
Carnation Revolution	Portugal	1973	Yes	None
Thai student protests	Thailand	1973	Yes	Extreme
Anti-Indira Campaign	India	1974	Yes	None
Democracy Movement	China	1976	No	Extreme
Argentina pro-democracy movement	Argentina	1977	Yes	Extreme
Iranian Revolution	Iran	1977	Yes	Extreme
Anti-Bhutto	Pakistan	1977	Yes	None
South Korea Anti-Junta	South Korea	1979	No	Extreme
Solidarity	Poland	1980	Yes	Extreme
Diretas ja	Brazil	1983	No	Mild
Anti-Pinochet Movement	Chile	1983	Yes	Extreme
People Power	Philippines	1983	Yes	None
Second Defiance Campaign	South Africa	1984	Yes	Extreme
Uruguay Anti-Military	Uruguay	1984	Yes	None

Campaign	Country	Year	Success	Mil. Violence
Anti-Jaafar	Sudan	1985	Yes	None
Anti-National Governing Council (CNG)	Haiti	1986	No	Extreme
Anti-Zia al-Haq	Pakistan	1986	No	NA
Argentina coup plot	Argentina	1987	Yes	None
Bangladesh Anti-Ershad	Bangladesh	1987	Yes	Extreme
Anti-Noriega	Panama	1987	No	Extreme
South Korea Anti-Military	South Korea	1987	Yes	Mild
Burma pro-democracy movement	Burma	1988	No	Extreme
Bougainville Revolt	Papua New Guinea	1988	No	Extreme
Slovenia Anti-Communist	Slovenia	1988	Yes	None
Anti-Roh Tae Woo	South Korea	1988	No	None
Albania Anti-Communist	Albania	1989	Yes	Extreme
Bulgaria Anti-Communist	Bulgaria	1989	Yes	None
Tiananmen	China	1989	No	Extreme
Ivorian Pro-Democracy	Cote d'Ivoire	1989	Yes	None
Velvet Revolution	Czechoslovakia	1989	Yes	None
East Germany pro-dem movement	East Germany	1989	No	Moderate
Hungary pro-dem movement	Hungary	1989	Yes	None
Mali Anti-Military	Mali	1990	Yes	Extreme
The Stir	Nepal	1990	Yes	Extreme
Russia pro-dem movement	Russia	1990	Yes	Moderate
Zambia Anti-Single Party	Zambia	1990	Yes	None
Active Forces	Madagascar	1991	Yes	None
Anti-Eyadema	Togo	1991	No	Moderate
Thai pro-dem movement	Thailand	1992	Yes	Extreme
Nigeria Anti-Military	Nigeria	1993	Yes	Extreme
Anti-Suharto	Indonesia	1996	Yes	Mild
Anti-Milosevic	Serbia	1996	Yes	None
Anti-Fujimori	Peru	2000	Yes	Extreme
Second People Power Movement	Philippines	2000	Yes	None
Anti-Diouf	Senegal	2000	Yes	None

Campaign	Country	Year	Success	Mil. Violence
People Power III	Philippines	2001	No	Extreme
Orange Revolution	Ukraine	2001	No	Moderate
Madagasar pro-democracy movement	Madagascar	2002	Yes	None
anti-coup Venezuelan campaign	Venezuela	2002	Yes	None
Rose Revolution	Georgia	2003	Yes	None
Awami League Protests	Bangladesh	2004	Yes	Moderate
Rebellion of the Forajidos	Ecuador	2005	Yes	None
Cedar Revolution	Lebanon	2005	Yes	Mild
Anti-Thaksin	Thailand	2005	Yes	None
Anti-Gnassingbe/Coup Crisis	Togo	2005	No	Extreme
Lebanon Political Crisis	Lebanon	2006	Yes	Mild
Anti-Calderon	Mexico	2006	No	Extreme
Nepalese Anti-government	Nepal	2006	Yes	Moderate
Anti-Mubarak Movement	Egypt	2007	Yes	Mild
Guinean Pro-Democracy Movement	Guinea	2007	Yes	Extreme
Saffron Revolution	Myanmar	2007	No	Extreme
Anti-Musharraf Campaign (Lawyer's Movement)	Pakistan	2007	Yes	Moderate
Southern Yemen Secessionist Movement	Yemen	2007	No	Extreme
Frente Nacionalæde Resistencia Popular (FNRP)	Honduras	2009	No	Extreme
Green Revolution and Day of Rage	Iran	2009	No	Extreme
Red Shirt Campaign	Thailand	2009	No	Extreme
Maoist Anti-Government Protests	Nepal	2010	Yes	NA
Snow Revolution	Russia	2010	No	Moderate
Anti-Ben Ali Campaign (Jasmine Revolution)	Tunisia	2010	Yes	None
Anti-King Hamad Campaign	Bahrain	2011	No	Extreme
Syrian Civil Conflict	Syria	2011	No	Extreme
Anti-Ali Abdullah Saleh	Yemen	2011	Yes	Extreme
Let's Save Togo (Anti-Gnassingbe)	Togo	2012	No	Moderate
Anti-Morsi Protests	Egypt	2013	Yes	Extreme
Anti-Erdogan	Turkey	2013	No	NA
Euromaiden	Ukraine	2013	No	None

Robustness Checks

Dependent Variable:	(1) Extreme Viol.	(2) Violence	(3) Violence	(4) Violence
Violent Independence	1.418* (2.26)	1.425* (2.47)	1.780* (2.01)	
Regime-Military Ties	1.569* (2.39)	1.373* (2.07)	1.737 (1.85)	
US Military Aid (25 yr)	-0.977 (-1.87)	-0.952 (-1.78)	-1.442 (-1.63)	
Military Size	-0.553 (-1.64)	-0.691* (-2.04)	-0.776 (-1.71)	-0.279 (-1.34)
Minority Rule	1.451 (1.48)	0.662 (0.84)	0.817 (0.79)	
Military Budget	-0.0367 (-0.15)	0.286 (0.92)	0.301 (0.79)	0.0462 (0.29)
Violent Independence				0.874 (1.83)
Regime-Military Ties				1.373** (2.73)
US Military Aid (25 yr)				-0.652 (-1.37)
Minority Rule=1				1.242 (1.41)
Constant	-1.047 (-1.75)	-0.437 (-0.95)	-0.477 (-0.75)	
Model	Logit	Logit	Logit with RE	Ordered Logit
Observations	86	86	86	86

t statistics in parentheses

* $p < 0.05$, ** $p < 0.01$