



Bread, Freedom, Human Dignity

The Political Economy of Protest Mobilization in Egypt and Tunisia

Jana Warkotsch

Thesis submitted for assessment with a view to
obtaining the degree of Doctor of Political and Social Sciences
of the European University Institute

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European University Institute
Department of Political and Social Sciences

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List of Abbreviations

AISPP	International Association for the Support of Political Prisoners
ALTT	Tunisian Association for Struggle Against Torture
ATFD	Tunisian Association of Democratic Women
ASU	Arab Socialist Union
CNLT	National Committee for Liberties in Tunisia
CPR	Congress for the Republic
EFTU	Egyptian Federation of Trade Unions
ENP	European Neighborhood Policy
FDTL	Democratic Forum For Labour and Liberties
FY	Fiscal Year
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
GNP	Gross National Product
ICT	Information and Communications Technology
IFI	International Financial Institutions
IMF	International Monetary Fund
LDTH	Tunisian Human Rights League
MB	Muslim Brotherhood
MDS	Movement of Socialist Democrats
MENA	Middle East and North Africa
MTI	Islamic Tendency Movement
NGO	Non Governmental Organization
NDP	National Democratic Party
OECD	Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development
PCOT	Communist Worker's Party of Tunisia
PCT	Tunisian Communist Party
PDP	Progressive Democratic Party
POS	Political Opportunity Structures
PSD	Socialist Destourian Party
PSO	Public Sector Organization
PUP	Party of People's Unity
RCD	Constitutional Democratic Rally
RM	Resource Mobilization
RSP	Progressive Socialist Rally
SMT	Social Movement Theory
SOE	State Owned Enterprise
UDC	Union of Unemployed Graduates
UDU	Unionist Democratic Union
UGET	General Union of Tunisian Students
UGTT	Tunisian General Trade Union
USAID	United States Agency for International Development
UTICA	Tunisian Union for Industry Commerce and Handicraft

1. INTRODUCTION

When the Arab spring started in the marginalized interior areas of Tunisia and spread to the densely populated capital of Egypt, removing two of the longest-standing dictators in the Middle East and North Africa (MENA), it left observers and scholars with many puzzles to solve. After all, this was a region studied for its sturdy resistance to pressures for democratization. Scholars who had predominantly been occupied with understanding the unusual stability of Middle Eastern autocracies suddenly found themselves in need to explain the opposite - their unexpected vulnerability in the face of popular resistance. Their theories it seemed, were ill equipped for the task. Emerging out of the democratization-focused transitions literature, authoritarianism studies had in recent years departed from asking how institutions could push along democratization, to focus instead on how even seemingly democratic institutions could provide authoritarian regimes with stability and longevity. Their analysis thus heavily leaned on understanding elite coalitions and the institutions - formal or informal - that ensured regime maintenance. When scholars tried to understand the role of political opposition forces under authoritarian rule, it was mostly in the framework of either their lack of role or their (unwilling) support of authoritarian rule. The masses over which these regimes ruled, however, only rarely put in an appearance. It does therefore not come as a surprise that authoritarianism studies should have missed the widespread grievances brewing within Middle Eastern societies.

While authoritarianism studies thus struggled with its neglect of societal forces, social movement studies had to deal with its own problems. The discipline that had reinvented itself during the heyday of the civil rights movement in the US and Europe had arrived at a cross roads. While the 'paradigm' of the three once predominant approaches - political opportunities, mobilizing structures, and framing - had come under fire from different directions, no alternative had crystallized that could take its place. Criticism itself varied, but some of its central themes were the concepts' difficulty to console agency and structure, objective and perceived reality, and in recent years increasingly its theoretical neglect of an empirical world beyond the West. While an increasing number of scholars applied its concepts to non-Western cases, a *systematic* consideration of movements in non-democratic settings beyond theory application remained missing. Authoritarianism studies in the aftermath of the Arab Spring thus struggled to reconcile its elite and institution centred focus with the breadth of societal mobilization previously thought impossible, and social movement studies had foregone the region almost entirely. Neither of

the two thus foresaw the immense mobilizing potential simmering within Egypt's and Tunisia's societies.

Since then, explanations of the momentous events have multiplied.¹ Initially, many analyses zeroed in on the use of ICTs, describing events variously as Twitter, Facebook, or just generally social media revolutions spearheaded by a Gene Sharp-reading youth, inspired by the Coloured Revolutions in Eastern Europe in their quest for democracy. (Alterman 2011) This imagery of a tech savvy youth besting camel riding, stick wielding, and very obviously *not* modern autocratic regimes resonated with a Western audience. At the same time, it took a somewhat limited aspect of the events and declared it their formative characteristic, in the process silencing the multitude of voices and experiences that comprised the uprisings.² The unitary image of 'one' Arab spring thus often marginalizing the very people who sustained mobilization with their bodies and lives, but lacked the media power to effectively contest these narratives.

In the meantime after the initial euphoria subsided, more balanced accounts shedding light on the uprisings from a variety of angles have emerged. Taking a structuralist rentier-economy perspective, Achcar (2013) argued that the mismatch between high rent income and low productive income led to the structural imbalances we witnessed in the run up to the uprisings. Tripp (2013) attempted to show the relationship between "forms of power and forms of resistance" (p. 14), and how one shapes the other, while Kandil (2012b) employed a more elite and institution based focus. His explanation of the events thus rested on deep rifts within the ruling bloc between its political and security components, and its military component leading to the defection of the latter. Bellin (2012) similarly narrowed in on the nature of the coercive apparatus as the main explanatory factor for its decision to defect from the ruling coalition, while Goldstone (2011) examined the impact of cross-class coalitions on elite defections.

These are only a small selection of the many accounts that mushroomed since 2011. What they show is that there are many stories that can be told about the events and their causes. The preference for one story over another will however not simply be rooted in 'objective' truths

¹ For a comprehensive bibliography see: <http://terrorismanalysts.com/pt/index.php/pot/article/view/301/html>

² While many people, especially in the immediate aftermath of the uprisings, used the term revolutions to describe the momentous amount of change, this thesis will use the more neutral term 'uprisings.' Thus, it will not examine the uprisings in the context of the study of revolutions. As the events of the last three years have shown, the uprisings might have been the easy part compared to what was to follow. Not only did mass protests not start out with the aim of overthrowing their regimes, they also did not do so bringing forth an alternative vision of society. And while they did succeed in the impossible, the toppling of deeply entrenched dictators, the kind of deep social and political transformation that would justify the term of revolution has yet to happen.

about the events, but in ontological, epistemological, methodological and ideological preferences. The aim of this thesis is thus not to present the one true account of the Arab spring, but to tell a story that tries to understand the events as well as the people involved through a deeper look at their structural roots within the political economy of regime maintenance and change. It will do so by using the idea that different strata of society are linked to their regimes through spheres of mobilization and interaction, structuring experiences and expectations. They will be understood as a tool, a conceptual lens through which to look at the events based on the assumption that any and all explanations will be by their very nature somewhat truncated by privileging some facts, some events, some actors, and some explanatory factors over others. This thesis is no exception. It does not therefore claim to be an exhaustive account of all the myriad ways in which people seized an agency that had too long been denied, and their reasons for doing so. It does however claim to offer a conceptual lens that enables a better understanding of why dynamics unfolded the way they did as well as an account that gives more voice to a variety of actors less visible in many accounts of the Arab spring. It will do so by combining insights from both authoritarianism and social movement studies to form a framework for understanding mobilization under authoritarian rule.

In the language of variables, its dependent variable will be the differences in the mobilizational processes that set the two cases apart, despite the fact that they reached the same outcome - cross class mobilization resulting in the overthrow of long standing dictators. These differences were to be found in the geography of mobilization (capital city vs. periphery), the social composition of the initial mobilizers (middle class vs. marginalized) and the nature of initial demands (political vs. social). They will be explained by relying on spheres of interaction and mobilization shaping different trajectories between groups of actors and their respective regime.

Part I of the thesis will deal with the theoretical foundations of the analysis. **Chapter 2** will trace the roots of both theoretical traditions to the grand theorizing of modernization theory that shaped the discipline of comparative politics in the 1950s and 1960s. Beyond being a mere exercise in reviewing the existing literature, historically embedding both strands of literature will show that not only are the events and empirical phenomena we observe and analyse path dependent and grounded in historical patterns, but so are the scholarly discourses theorizing them. Showing how modernization theory and its critics were embedded in and influenced by political and social dynamics enables us to develop a better understanding of the theoretical path taken by authoritarianism studies, and social movement studies. Bringing together insights from the preceding literature analysis will be **Chapter 3**, in which I will delineate the central

theoretical idea of *spheres of mobilization and interaction*. I will argue that we cannot properly understand the present day society-wide cross class mobilization that characterized the uprisings without situating the different societal strata involved within distinct historically embedded patterns of incorporation. Located on the exercise dimension of the political regime concept, these patterns of incorporation determine the structural boundaries of spheres by looking at the regime's actual or perceived support coalition. Support coalitions are those groups in society, whose active support, or at least passive acquiescence the regime sees as essential for the maintenance of its rule. So it can, it will try to secure the support of these societal groups by either dispensing benefits, by granting a privileged position in the political process, by favoring them in their ideological discourse and so forth. They are not synonymous with ruling coalitions, i.e. those parts of society that have gained access to the regime and hence participated and benefited from inclusion on the access dimension of political regimes.

Part II of the thesis will deal with the two uprisings on an empirical level. **Chapter 4** will give a detailed day by day account of the uprisings themselves, starting from the tragic self-immolation of Mohamed Bouasizi in Tunisia, and moving on to the less than three weeks that would be the end of Husni Mubarak's rule in Egypt. **Chapter 5** will situate the uprisings within a historical institutional analysis of the political economy of regime emergence and development in Egypt and Tunisia. **Chapter 6** will subsequently detail the methods used for the analysis which will follow in *Part III* of the thesis.

Part III will finally present the centrepiece of the thesis, a detailed comparison of the way societal strata were engaged with the respective regime in Egypt and Tunisia in different spheres of interaction and eventually mobilization, in **Chapter 7**. There I will argue that while the spheres differed in the interaction they were based on and the rules and expectations this generated, they experienced a parallel disintegration in the patterns of incorporation that had previously structured interaction. By generating grievances and spaces for resistance, this paved the way for cross class mobilization. The conclusion in **Chapter 8** will sum up the argument and connect the preceding analysis back to the broader theoretical issues raised in *Part I*.

PART I

2. THE STATE, MODERNIZATION AND POLITICAL OPPORTUNITIES

“In the new states “modern” means democratic and equalitarian, scientific, economically advanced and sovereign. [...] No country could be modern without being economically advanced or progressive. [...] It is the model of the West detached in some way from its geographical origins and locus.” (Shils, 1959)

What does Edward Shils’ – one of the founders of modernization theory – by now classic formulation on what it means to be modern have to do with social movement theory and authoritarianism studies as we know it today? At first sight it appears not much. After all, modernization theorists from the 1950s onwards and well into the 1970s were first and foremost concerned with the question of how the New States brought to life by the wave of decolonization that swept the world after the Second World War, could be helped out of their backwardness (and in that way also away from Communist influences) and set on a trajectory towards stable and modern political systems. The story of Comparative Politics as we know it today is inextricably linked with the rise of modernization theory as its predominant paradigm in the 1960s. By following the story of modernization theory, we can not only understand something about the rise and shape of the two theoretical traditions at the center of this thesis – social movement theory and authoritarianism studies – but of progress and theorizing in the social sciences as such.

Modernization theory as a scientific paradigm was shaped not only by purely academic factors, but the changing geopolitical position of the US after the end of World War II. The onset of the Cold War and the sudden emergence of a host of new nations posed significant challenges for US policy makers and social scientists alike. As Lucian Pye explained, “the end of European colonialism had produced a host of new states that soon had profound implications for the study of comparative politics. Before the Second World War comparative politics consisted of little more than the descriptive analysis of the constitutional arrangements of the handful of major powers, and the study of the dominant ideologies of the day—Fascism, Nazism, Communism (Friedrich 1937). Now there was suddenly a multiplicity of new states.” (Pye 2006, 798) With the conclusion of the Korean War US policy makers understood that the battle field in the great power competition had shifted towards these newly independent nations, making it imperative to gain the upper hand and remove them from Communist influence. With increasing interest it became clear that a lack of knowledge necessitated a rapid expansion of

scientific research on these new states. (Tipps 1973, 209) Thus modernization theory's quest for identifying the conditions for progress in the developing world becomes explicable only if we understand the intimate connection between foreign policy interests and social science research. The transformation of backward societies into industrialized modern polities was not simply an empirical process, readily observable and in need of explanation. Rather, it was a goal to be achieved, and modernization theory was to provide the blueprint by identifying the general determinants for successful development.

One of its figureheads was Talcott Parsons who argued for analysing the economic system as a subsystem of the wider sociological system, and that hence its analysis had to proceed within the framework of an analysis of social action. (Gilman 2004, 80) From modernization theorists' leanings toward grand theorizing about complex societies or whole world regions about which they effectively knew fairly little, to their embrace of an evolutionary model of social change, Parsons' and Shils' (1951) work would exert a considerable amount of influence on the later development of modernization theory. Modernization theory as they saw it was premised on a conception of human development subject to certain uniformities. This social evolutionary approach originating in nineteenth century enlightenment thought centered on a conception of progress as the uniform development of all societies evolving "from small-scale, traditional, kin-oriented and relatively undifferentiated units toward large-scale industrial societies with a high degree of differentiation of organizations and roles." (Weinberg 1969, 8) The end point of this process was Western societies and states, on whose example traditional societies would eventually converge in their transition to modernity. Since all societies thus shared common characteristics, they could and should be analyzed through common conceptual categories. Modernization scholars not only tried to unify within one conceptual scheme human experience in the making of modernity, but in the process to impose a unifying, grand conceptual scheme on Comparative Politics research itself. (Almond 1960, 4) The combination of a systems approach with a focus on political functions earned modernization theory the label structural functionalism.³

Beyond its theoretical constructs, one of the lasting legacies of modernization theory were the methodological innovations of the behavioral revolution. According to Huntington, the behavioral revolution "involved an effort to combine theoretical rigor and empirical research

³ Especially the concept of political systems, borrowed from David Easton illustrates the notion of universality underlying modernization theory, because in contrast to 'the state', it was applicable to all political entities, including traditional and 'primitive' ones that might fall short of 'stateness.' (Almond 1960, 7) What united all political systems was that they had to perform similar input and output functions. (Almond 1960, 17)

and to test generalizations through systematic cross-national comparisons” and “a major effort to make more precise and quantitative measurements of political phenomena than had been made before. The improvement in the statistical services of governments and international agencies made it possible to amass large quantities of data on the social, demographic, economic, and at times, political characteristics of societies. The development of survey research in the United States, followed by its export abroad, created substantial data files on the background characteristics, attitudes, values, and behavior patterns of individuals. The refinement of more sophisticated means of mathematical analysis plus the emergence of the high-speed computer as a standard tool of social science research made it feasible to analyze the relationships among a variety of variables in ways that had been totally impossible before.” (Huntington and Dominguez 1975, 2) Thus, modernization theory not only brought in its tow a focus on grand theory, on the conceptual reinvention of the discipline, but it also introduced large-scale methodological innovations that count among the standard, if not predominant way of going about political science today: variable oriented research designs, statistical tools as method of analysis, the focus on characteristics of individuals to explain macro-structural developments.⁴

Thusly equipped modernization theory started its ascent to predominance in Comparative Politics from the end of the 1950s onwards, arriving at its height in the mid-1960s. While there were many different strands of modernization theory, most of them shared a basic commitment towards a number of assumptions. One of these concerned the link between economic and political development, most famously expressed by Seymour Martin Lipset in 1959 in an article on “Some Social Requisites of Democracy,” stating that “the more well-to-do a nation, the greater the chances that it will sustain democracy.” (Lipset 1959, 75) To achieve modern political systems, Western governments thus needed to aid the economic development of traditional Third World societies. More fundamental still was the dichotomy between tradition and modernity. Traditional societies were marked by underdeveloped (i.e. poorly industrialized) economies, low rates of literacy and urbanization, and backwards cultural traits. Countries falling under this description ranged from Latin American, to Asian, to African and Middle Eastern ones. Despite this regional diversity, the same abstract universal categories were to explain developmental trajectories of a vast number of cases. (Tipps 1973, Weinberg 1969)

⁴ One of the best examples of these shifts in political science is the prominent article on “Social Mobilization and Political Development” by Karl Deutsch, which epitomizes the shift towards more formalized methods of analysis with formalization of variables and statistical analysis

Modern in contrast to the theory's general universalism had an explicit historical connotation, meaning to emulate the model of Western industrial and social development.⁵ (Bendix 1959, 362) The contrast between tradition and modernity, while fundamental for understanding modernization theory, was only an intermediate step, however. Its main interest was to show how the transition between the two followed a universal pattern of human development epitomized in the process of modernization, whereby the social transformations associated with industrialization would come to make these traditional societies more Western. (Lipset 1959, 80) Human and societal development were thought to evolve in sequences, of which democracy was the highest stage. The fundamental transformations that modernization theorists had in mind went even deeper, however. Indeed, it was not just the economy that was thought to be backward, it was society as a whole, and with it the institutions and structures socializing individuals into traditional patterns of authority and association. It was therefore not just the economy that needed to modernize; it was traditional 'man.' (Deutsch 1961, 493) The stage between tradition and modernity not only promised prospects for higher development, however, but brought the dangers of Communism, social disintegration, and general unrest to the fore. (Weiner 1971, 159) Mass participation in developing societies, which had yet to develop modern institutions and patterns of incorporation formative for Western countries, could therefore lead to undesirable amounts of strife and unrest. Far from simply describing the social mobilization and increases in un-channeled demands for participation, many scholars, especially towards the end of the 1960s took a fairly explicit stance against this form of mass involvement in politics. Many theorists advocated a more elitist model of politics, instead, where the upheavals of modernization were eased by the development of a sufficiently educated, and westernized elite that adhered to a scientific understanding of rationality. This elite would manage state institutions and successfully drive modernization from above, without the disruptive interference of the masses. (Huntington 1968)

Early hopes for a quick recapitulation of European experience in the new states started to give way to a more subdued vision, where progress was not easily achieved and the transition process fraught with perils. As Huntington put it "modernity breeds stability but modernization breeds instability." (Huntington 1968) Thus, just as US foreign policy itself, later theories at times

⁵ Thus, according to Coleman, "[a] modern society is characterized, among other things, by a comparatively high degree of urbanization, widespread literacy, comparatively high per capita income, extensive geographical and social mobility, a relatively high degree of commercialization and industrialization of the economy, an extensive and penetrative network of mass communication media, and, in general, by widespread participation and involvement by members of the society in modern social and economic processes." (Almond and Coleman 1960, 532)

displayed an implicit support for the many developmental dictatorships that took over the developing world in the 1960s and 70s.

The shifting focus from political democracy to political stability is aptly illustrated by the works of scholars like Huntington (1968). According to him, threats to stability result from the gap between the aspirations for status and power especially of newly mobilized groups, and their actual possibilities: “political instability and particularly political violence occur when men become dissatisfied, and they become dissatisfied when their achievements and capabilities fall below their aspirations” leading to “a sense of ‘relative deprivation.’” (Huntington and Dominguez 1975, 8) What we can see in these formulations of modernization theory is that structure not only constrains actors, but determines them. While they are not necessarily as irrational as modernization theory’s critics have claimed, they have very little margin of choice to act differently.

Collective Behavior

The mass involvement that appears on the side lines of modernization theory as the specter of potential chaos, was more explicitly theorized by approaches subsumed under the label ‘Collective Behavior.’ Collective behavior, while essentially a modernization theoretic outgrowth to some of its sub-concerns (political stability), departed in the degree to which psychological factors were emphasized over macro-structural ones, while still reflecting some of the basic assumptions about ‘man’ in developing societies. Traditional or transitional men were not simply prone to irrationalism, however, but were embedded into the structural conditions of their environment to an extent that sometimes left them little alternative to rebellion. Riots ensued if the social disintegration caused by the decline in traditional patterns of association and social embeddedness was not quickly enough compensated for by the rise of modern forms of association providing alternative mechanisms of integration. The lack of regularized channels of grievance articulation in this transitional phase when their environment was rapidly changing almost forced ‘transitional men’ onto the streets. Turner and Killian for example link the factors which give rise to collective behavior to conditions similar to modernization theoretic ones. (Turner and Killian 1957, 12) These early formulations of collective behavior are by no means as simplistically grievance-based as later accounts of social movement studies would have it, however. Grievances caused by social disintegration do play an important role in laying the

foundation for collective behavior. But actual mobilization still needs “some shared image of a better state of affairs which can be attained by collective action – a hope for things to come and a belief that they can be made to come” and at least a minimal amount of connectedness as basis of communication. (Turner and Killian 1957, 21)⁶

In contrast to that stands Neil Smelser who explicitly based his work on Parsons and Shils’ theory of action. In his 1962 book on the “Theory of Collective Behavior” he outlined a framework for the study of collective behavior as an episode of social action in which a “belief envisioning the reconstitution of some component of social action” combines with a method of communication and mobilization. (Smelser 1962, 11) According to him, the determinants of collective behavior are found in the combination of (1) structural conduciveness, (2) structural strain (real or anticipated deprivation), (3) growth and spread of a generalized belief giving meaning to situations, and lastly (4) precipitating factors in the form of specific events which lead to the manifestation of the former three factors. (Smelser 1962, 15-16)

Lastly, Ted Gurr’s work on “Why Men Rebel” from 1970 is probably amongst the best known pieces on ‘relative deprivation’, the “perceived discrepancy between value expectations and value capabilities.” (Gurr 1970, 37) It is possibly also the most explicit in spelling out how changes caused by economic transformations are translated into psychological mechanisms. These lead to changes in political behavior i.e. political violence by those experiencing frustration over stunted achievement capacities. Known as the so called frustration-aggression hypothesis, its psychological roots are much more explicit than in the works of Smelser & Co who posit these kinds of mechanisms as important, but secondary, and emphasize the *social* character of political mobilization and violence instead.

The ethnocentrism of modernization theory and its collective behavior siblings, their structural determinism reducing actors to victims of their psychological states and structural environments thus rightly led to a wave of criticism building up from the mid-1960s onwards. More importantly, initial hopes had quite simply not matched up with reality. These failures of modernization theory thus led many scholars to turn their backs, disregarding not only individual tenets of the framework, but the framework in its entirety. What modernization

⁶ The supposed irrationality of crowds, while maybe implied in some suggestive formulations, is by no means self-evident either. Indeed, the strict dichotomization of rationality vs. irrationality is mostly rejected due to the fact that emotion and rationality are neither irreconcilable, nor does the distinction map itself neatly onto institutional vs. collective behavior. Instead they suggest that the common label of collective behavior as irrational is much rather a result of on the one hand a normative rejection of behavior perceived as alien by the observer, and on the other hand a confusion of irrational with seemingly unpredictable. (Turner and Killian 1957, 17)

theory shows, however, is how theory development is neither strictly speaking linear nor entirely scientific. (Kuhn 1962) Instead, many factors in the temporal and geographic environment influence which theories are picked up, which ones rejected, and which ones built upon.

These insights are important if we want to understand the shape and form that the two strands of theory at the center of this analysis took. Their path was as much shaped by the methodological innovations of modernization theory - making some modes of analysis and some kinds of conceptualizations more attractive than others - as by the political and social environment of their time. And even though they took quite different and separate paths, both of them arrived at a focus on explaining events by taking a snapshot of their current environment that missed much of their broader structural environment and historical trajectories, and their interconnectedness to the other subsystems of society. Their paths will be the focus of the two following sections, dealing first with the emergence of the political process model as an explicit rejection of modernization theory, while authoritarianism studies went through a process of a more organic distancing, retaining some of its core assumptions.

Political opportunities between structure and agency

The development of social movement scholarship as we know it today originated in the 1960s in response to theories of collective behavior. The civil rights movement in the US and student movements in Europe inspired many scholars to reject collective behavior approaches based on their own experiences in participating in and studying these movements. (Piven and Cloward 1977, 18) They turned their focus instead to the centrality of resources for movement actors. With this shift in theory came a shift in the conception of the movement actors involved. Resource mobilization posited movement actors as *strategic actors* poorly positioned within the political system, and thus without the necessary resources to seek redress for their demands from within. (Meyer 2004, 127) The main thrust of resource mobilization arguments was that mobilization into social movements is immensely facilitated by pre-existing social networks. Thus the better the integration into social networks, the higher the chances of mobilization, an argument seemingly opposed to traditional approaches positing that the *lack* of embeddedness was facilitating mobilization. (McCarthy 1996, 142) While this new approach rapidly gained a broad following, it did not remain without its critics. Beginning in the 1970s and more pronouncedly in the 1980s scholars criticized its perceived oversimplification of movement development as well as over-reliance on processes internal to movements, while neglecting the context in which they developed. This led to the development of approaches centering on political opportunity structures (POS) - which later came to be combined with resource mobilization in the so called political process model. (McAdam 1982)

Curiously enough, modernization theory's downfall and social movement theory's rise are both intimately connected with the name of Charles Tilly. In his work on the link between revolutions and the modernization of Europe Tilly ended up not only questioning modernization theory's claim to account for Europe's experience, but some of its central causal mechanisms: "despite the many recent attempts to psychologize the study of revolution by introducing ideas of anxiety, alienation, rising expectations, and the like, and to sociologize it by employing notions of disequilibrium, role conflict, structural strain, and so on, the factors which hold up under close scrutiny are, on the whole, political ones. [...] Population growth, industrialization, urbanization, and other large-scale structural changes do, to be sure, affect the probabilities of revolution. But they do so indirectly, by shaping the potential contenders for power, transforming the techniques of governmental control, and shifting the resources available to contenders and governments." (Tilly 1973, 447) His critique reflected broader

changes in the discipline by narrowing down the factors counting as legitimate explanations, to *political* ones, hence more explicitly demarcating political science from neighboring disciplines like sociology and psychology.

The newly emerging resource mobilization theory (RM) thus shifted its emphasis away from broad structural process and towards political and strategic factors. Part of the reason for doing this were certainly political and disciplinary. Many young scholars that were to play a role in later social movement studies were witness to (and possibly participating in) the several rights movement that swept the US and Europe at the end of the 1960s. It is therefore no surprise that when these scholars compared the experiences of young students organizing protest with theoretical assumptions by modernization scholars focused on the behavioral consequences of societal transformations in the Third World, they found these assumptions wanting. (McCarthy and Zald 1977, 1212-3) Similar to Tilly before them, RM scholars oriented their approach on political, economic and sociological theories rather than the social psychology of collective behavior (McCarthy and Zald 1977, 1213), drawing disciplinary boundaries by redefining which factors should be taken into account to produce legitimate explanations. Beyond the emphasis on more narrowly political factors, this also included a shift in ontology. They thus introduced an economic approach to their actors' rationality, conceptualizing movements as strategic actors, who rationally pursue the best possible option to influence political outcomes, employing the limited resources at their disposal.⁷ (McCarthy and Zald 1977, 1216)

But RM approaches did more than just embrace different actor conceptions, they more fundamentally reversed the relation between agency and structure, giving the former clear precedence over the latter. Rationality is thus something that accrues to everyone, social movements acting outside the bounds of institutionally prescribed rules and norms, as well as those actors from within, hence the emphasis on the "continuities between movement and institutionalized actions." (Jenkins 1983, 528) The theory's key hypothesis is that the better the integration into social networks⁸, the higher the chances of mobilization. (McCarthy 1996, 142)

In comparing RM approaches to the collective behavior approaches in opposition to which they developed, it seems that the differences between the two were on the one hand overdrawn in an effort to distinguish the approach from what came before. But on the other hand some of these

⁷ This becomes particularly clear when they adopt Mancur Olson's free rider problem as guiding their analysis: "since social movements deliver collective goods, few individuals will 'on their own' bear the costs of working to obtain them. Explaining collective behavior requires detailed attention to the selection of incentives, cost-reducing mechanisms or structures, and career benefits that lead to collective behavior"

⁸ These can either be primary networks such as kinship, family, friendship, tribe, ethnicity, or secondary ones, such as voluntary associations, occupational, religious, civic or economic networks. (Oberschall 1973, 119)

differences were simply due to differences in the object of study. While collective behavior looked at social movements as only one manifestation of crowd behavior, and thus focused on broad mechanisms that covered a range of phenomena, social movement studies narrowed the focus to social movements only. The development of social movement theory, beginning with resource mobilization approaches in the 1970s in this respect seems more like continuity than a radical departure, a case of what slice of reality is the focal point to begin with. Resource mobilization's most important departure is thus disciplinary - the shift toward political factors explaining behavior - as well as methodological from structure to agency. While not entirely ignoring the force of structural conditions, it nonetheless reduced them to constraining the resources available to calculating actors. The rationality that scholars perceived in movement actors within the civil rights movement was transferred to how actors were conceptualized on a theoretical level.

From Resource Mobilization to Political Opportunities

By the end of the 1970s resource mobilization's overly actor centric renunciation of collective behavior's structural determinism gave rise to a corrective strand of theorizing that sought to embed RM's strategic actors into a structural environment. The 'Political Opportunity Structure' approach therefore developed out of a partial critique, while at the same time incorporating its main conceptions, both in terms of theory and ontology. Together they dominated social movement studies under the label of the 'political process model' for decades to come.

The term political opportunity structures was first made popular within social movement research by Peter Eisinger in his 1973 article on "The Conditions of Protest Behavior in American Cities." Situated at the city level, he explores how environmental factors⁹ serve to open up chances for political activity or constrain it, thus influencing the chances of movement success. (Eisinger 1973, 11) His most important imprint on POS scholarship was the hypothesis that the relationship between protest and the political opportunity structure of a given city was curvilinear, meaning that neither fully closed POS, nor fully open ones presented an ideal environment for protest, but rather a mix of both. (1973, 15)

The conception of political opportunities as being dependent upon the strengths and weaknesses of the actors in opposition to movement actors also plays a central role in Charles Tilly's 1978 book "From Mobilization to Revolution." His conception of opportunity is exceedingly broad, encompassing in principle all environmental factors which impinge on the interests and wellbeing of a movement. (1978, 4-53) In Tilly's work, opportunity has a negative counterpart in the concept of threat, which is equally, if not more important to mobilization. (1978, 4-53) What is interesting about Tilly's use of opportunities is that he explicitly conceptualizes opportunities as situated within contexts of strategic interaction between challengers and those challenged; the structure part of a 'political opportunity structure' is thus missing. And while Eisinger's conception entails objective shifts or openings, Tilly's opportunities and threats have to pass through actor's perceptions first.

⁹ Among them factors such as "the nature of the chief executive, the mode of aldermanic election, the distribution of social skills and status, and the degree of social disintegration, taken individually or collectively" as well "as the climate of governmental responsiveness and the level of community resources" (1973, 11)

Bringing together ideas from Eisinger and Tilly, Doug McAdam's 1982 book on "Political Process and the Development of Black Insurgency 1930-1970" was arguably one of the most influential works on the political process model. His concept encompassed "the particular set of power relationships that define the political environment at any point in time" and shifts therein, consisting of "any event or broad social process that serve to undermine the calculations and assumptions on which the political establishment is structured." (1982, 41) These processes that occasion shifts in political opportunities are in McAdam's view long term processes, which oftentimes fundamentally reshape social structures such as industrialization, wars, demographic changes, periods of sustained and widespread unemployment etc. (1982, 41) For mobilization to actually take place, furthermore needed are mobilizing structures, and shifts in cognitive processes, which McAdam termed "cognitive liberation." (1982, 48) Other than in later work on political opportunity structures, his use actually refers to processes that are in fact deeply *structural*. In this sense, we have thus a certain emphasis on processes modernization theorists were preoccupied with. The crucial difference is that while modernization theoretic processes affected the individual in its cognitive understanding of and capacity to interact with the world, POS confronting movements were structures *external* to them, open to their rational assessment and manipulation. McAdam thus departs from Tilly by removing cognitive elements of perception from political opportunities, positing them as mediating between objective structures and individual action. (1982, 48) The way we understand political opportunities today, however, was fundamentally influenced by Sidney Tarrow's "Power in Movement" from 1994. He defines political opportunity structures as "consistent - but not necessarily formal, permanent or national - dimensions of the political environment which either encourage or discourage people from using collective action." (Tarrow 1994, 18) Whereas mobilizing structures depend on resources internal to the movement, a political opportunity structure is a resource external to it. These resources play a fundamental role in determining the timing, and the reason for movement emergence at the beginning of the mobilization process. (Tarrow 1994, 18) Particularly interesting is his conceptualization of structures as nothing more than resources (in case they are facilitating) or constraints (if inhibiting) for rational actors to calculate the best strategy of action. Thus, even within these supposedly structuralist accounts, structure itself does not actually *do* anything to the actors, it exists as an instrument to be used or a hurdle to overcome.

Tarrow's book was the last stepping stone to an edited volume, which brought together the most important scholars on social movements, and which established the research program of the political process school. "Comparative Perspectives on Social Movements" edited by Doug

McAdam, John D. McCarthy and Mayer N. Zald combined scholarship on political opportunity structures, mobilizing structures, and framing into one volume. It represented a first attempt at synthesizing the three approaches into something resembling a united research program. At the same time, the volume also already contained scepticism towards these approaches, and particularly towards the most dominant one – political opportunity structures. The biggest development to come forth from this volume was the presentation of a list of political opportunities as consensual among scholars, a list that restricted the concept to a few factors concerning formal institutional structures of political systems, and informal elite configurations. Thus the list contained variables such as the relative openness or closure of the political system towards movement actors and demands, the stability of elite alignment, the availability of influential allies, the dividedness of elites, as well as the states capacity and propensity for repression. (McAdam 1996, 27; Tarrow 1996, 54f.)

The turn towards subjectivism: Critiques and Reformulations

The 'paradigmatic' political process model, and especially the POS approach did not remain without criticism either. Framing approaches, which later were added to the canon of the political process model, originally developed as a critique. They sought to bring individual beliefs and cognitions back to the study of mobilization through the concept of 'frames,' understood as cognitive structures located at the level of the actor. These frames help actors to individually make sense of the world, but they are at the same time a product of social interaction, and thus socially constructed. A precondition for *any* kind of collective action, according to framing approaches is the perception of some wrong or injustice that not just *should* be altered but that also *can* be altered. (Snow and Benford 1992, 137) Social movements themselves can play an important part in facilitating this process of identification or redefinition of an objectionable condition by substituting "a dominant belief system that legitimizes the status quo with an alternative mobilizing belief system that supports collective action for change." (Gamson, Fireman, and Ryan 1982, 15) In naming grievances and putting them into context by situating events, people and conditions within a broader network of meaning, they not only help shape the world that activists see, but they also point out particular ways to react upon, and interact with it. Hence, political opportunities cannot simply be taken as an objective resource or hurdle confronting all movement actors in a similar fashion. Instead, they acquire

meaning only within discourses and interaction, and can thus be perceived quite differently between different actors. Structure thus does not constitute agents, but agents constitute structure in constant interaction with other agents.

Despite their rather substantial critique of the nature of political opportunities as conceptualized by social movement scholars, framing approaches moved on to be incorporated into the political process model, complementing it with a more subjectivist touch. Their inclusion did not, however, give rise to an overhaul of the POS ideas themselves. This explains why more substantial attacks were to follow in its wake. The 1990s thus saw more fundamental strands of criticism developing. Problematizing the lack of consensus in defining the essential features of political opportunities, David Meyer compiled a list of opportunity variables used in the literature that is impressive in its extent: “the organizations of previous challengers (Minkoff 1997, Meyer & Whittier 1994), the openness and ideological positions of political parties (Amenta & Zylan 1991, Kriesi et al. 1995, Rucht 1996), changes in public policy (Costain 1992; Meyer 1993a, 2005), international alliances and the constraints on state policy (Meyer 2003), state capacity (Kitschelt 1986, Amenta et al. 1994), the geographic scope and repressive capacity of governments (Boudreau 1996; also see Brockett 1991, Schock 1999), the activities of countermovement opponents (Meyer & Staggenborg 1996, Andrews 2002, Fetner 2001, Rohlinger 2002), potential activists’ perceptions of political opportunity (Gamson & Meyer 1996, Kurzman 1996), and even the prospects for personal affiliations (Goodwin 1997),” correctly noting that “opportunity variables are often not disproved, refined, or replaced, but simply added” (2004, 135), while Della Porta observed that this growth in variables might have “enlarged the explanatory capacity of the concept but reduced its specificity.” (Della Porta 1996, 63)

More fundamentally though, there has been a persistent debate within social movement studies over the role of non-structural elements in the development and trajectory of social movements. While Tilly, already in 1978, held the belief that political opportunities are necessarily subjective and have to pass through actors’ perceptions to take effect, only in the 1990s did mainstream scholars from within the research tradition such as Gamson, Rucht, McCarthy, and later on also McAdam and Tarrow start to assert that opportunities are seldom just out there, and have to be perceived in order to be converted into action. Thus, more critical approaches have moved away from purely structural conceptions of opportunities as objectively given and towards the integration of perceptual, social, and cultural elements to varying degrees. While McAdam, Tarrow, and Tilly have shifted emphasis to the mechanisms involved in mobilizing

contentious action (2003), other authors have started to view opportunities as inherently relational. (Steinberg 1999, 122) Building on the network theoretic insight that the “structure of relations among actors and the location of individual actors in the network have important behavioural, perceptual, and attitudinal consequences both for the individual units and for the system as a whole,” (Knoke and Kuklinski 1982, 13) relational approaches have reconceptualized political opportunities as dependent on the embeddedness of movement actors into different spheres, such as institutions, or networks of power. The different constellations of actors and interests within these spheres will in turn privilege some movement actors while hindering others. (Steinberg 1999, 122, see also Whittier 2002, 289) While also incorporating actors’ perceptions, interests and ideas into the conceptualization, the main departure consists in abandoning the idea of finding a clear set of necessary and sufficient causes for mobilization. Instead, as Goldstone put it, “every movement (or related clusters of movements) faces its own group- and issue specific fields of external relations.” (Goldstone 2004, 356) While considerably more open to actors’ perceptions, and to the contingency inherent in mobilization, these approaches thus differ from more ‘subjective’ approaches by still incorporating objective factors to some extent.

Approaches moving even further along the subjectivist dimension stress the constructedness of *all* relations and structures; the inherent permeation of all structures by culture; or the importance of psychological factors and emotions in accounting for the mobilization of movement actors. Charles Kurzman, in what he terms *social constructionism*, holds that while patterns do exist within social relations, it is important to see that the effect of these patterns can only be probabilistic, and that they are necessarily socially constructed. (Kurzman 1999, 118) In this view it hardly makes sense to look for objective shifts in opportunities, since opportunities are what actors make of them. With the right mind set opportunities that seem antithetical to mobilization might still give rise to movement action. (Kurzman 1999, 116) Goodwin and Jasper, in decrying the structuralist bias of traditional opportunity conceptions, hold that mobilization is inherently interactional. How these interactions take place is shaped by the meanings that actors attribute to them, the culturally shaped perceptions they hold, and strategies they devise. (Goodwin and Jasper 1999, 52)

Polletta, in contrast, denies this categorization, instead emphasizing that “the task is not to abandon an emphasis on ‘objective’ political structures in favour of potential insurgents ‘subjective’ perceptions and valuations of political structures, but to probe the (objective) resources and constraints generated by the cultural dimensions of political structures.” (Polletta

1999, 64) She objects to the “overly subjectivist and voluntarist” (1999, 65) view on culture, and juxtaposes it instead with a view of culture presenting itself to the agents of mobilization as equally structural and constraining as supposedly objective institutional structures. Indeed, even these so called objective structures are in their development, as well as their current characteristics, deeply cultural themselves. Political opportunities are objective in the sense that they are pre-existent, independent of the individual mind; they are cultural in the sense of being “symbolic, they are ways of ordering reality.” (1999, 68)

Beyond the criticism towards theoretical aspects of the political process model, however, flaws in its empirical basis and application have been problematized in recent years. Most importantly, an increasing number of area specialists dealing with movements situated in non-western contexts have pointed to the structural blindness of the social movement literature towards other parts of the world, and its ‘democracy bias’. There is thus a regional disconnect between the empirical cases of scholars working with social movement theory conceptionally, and those of area specialists, applying the framework to cases outside of the OECD-world.

There is nonetheless a wealth of studies that engage with movements in non-democratic contexts that are highly insightful. The phenomena studied included social movements in Latin America, entangled in a struggle to end authoritarian rule (Foweraker 1995) in Chile, and Argentina (Garreton 1988; Loveman 1998; Oxhorn 1994). Within the Arab world, scholars of Islamist movements have made extensive use of the social movement framework, applying it to moderate Islamist movements, like the Muslim Brotherhood in Egypt, but also to the formation and mobilization of radical groups such as the GIA in Algeria, as well as *Al-Gama'a al-Islamiyya* in Egypt (Hafez 2003; Rosefsky Wickham 2002; Wiktorowicz 2004). In the post-Soviet world, the ‘Coloured Revolutions’ have attracted the attention of social movement scholars more recently, but the disintegration of the Soviet Union, including regime change in the former Soviet Union and its satellite states in Eastern Europe have been at the forefront in social movement research on this region for years. (Beisinger 1996; Bunce 1999) Scholars such as Goodwin have engaged in a far reaching analysis of revolutionary movements in a host of peripheral societies. (Goodwin 2001)

Nonetheless, while all of these studies made interesting points regarding a wide variety of movements, their insights have not been taken on board of social movement theorizing. Social movement scholarship thus missed out on a promising avenue of theory testing and development that could have helped in revising an aging framework by cross testing its supposedly universal mechanism against cases outside of its normal explanatory range.

Social movement studies has thus come under considerable – and justified – criticism. In their attempt to demarcate themselves from their modernization theoretic predecessors scholars had increasingly moved away from understanding mobilization as embedded within broader societal change processes that took place in interrelation with economic and political development, and instead narrowed down factors to more genuinely political and increasingly institutional ones. What they had not abandoned however, was their quest for universal models of mobilization and movement environments that resided in the objective conditions of the world facing movement actors. This quest for universality often ignored the specific background of SMT's central concepts within the democratic countries from which they originated. SMT's claim to universality, to grand theorizing as well as to objectivism have thus been rightly criticised. Coming out of these critiques, it is particularly the idea of relational opportunities, situated in between structural and subjectivist elements that is intriguing for building medium range categories that without claiming universality can provide a blueprint for finding opportunities that are context specific.

Authoritarianism studies – ebbs and flows

Social movement studies thus established themselves as a distinct sub-discipline of Comparative Politics by strongly demarcating themselves from the broad explanatory focus and third world orientation of modernization theoretic approaches. Authoritarianism studies on the other hand embarked upon a considerably less streamlined path. While gradually distancing itself from some of modernization theory's ethnocentric assumptions, scholars retained some of its teleology where democracy as the logical and normatively desirable endpoint of political development was concerned. However, whereas in modernization theory the key dichotomy between tradition and modernity identified democracy with modernity, authoritarianism studies broke with this assumption. Instead, starting from the 1970s and Juan Linz's breakthrough study on totalitarian and authoritarian regimes (1975), authoritarianism was increasingly viewed as a distinctly modern form of political regime. This development notwithstanding, democracy as the natural endpoint of development continued to pervade background assumptions until the onset of the 'authoritarian stability' debates in the 2000s. With the changing faces of political regimes, these assumptions merely changed clothes. The following discussion will show that authoritarianism studies developed in two waves of theorizing.

The first wave of studies developed immediately out of modernization theory in the 1970s. It rid itself of the easy assumption that modernity equaled democracy, but it largely took over the focus of its predecessor in terms of the breadth of explanatory factors considered. Following the fall of many Latin American, and later Eastern European dictatorships in the 1980s, a second wave of authoritarianism studies emerged that departed from some of the themes of first wave studies. First of all, it understandably switched focus from the socio-economic conditions giving rise to authoritarian regimes to factors explaining their breakdown. More importantly, however, similarly to what we witnessed in social movement studies, both, the explanatory factors and what was to be explained, narrowed down considerably to genuinely political factors. Increasingly, political institutions and their effects on structuring elite behavior came to the fore. It is here where we find on the one hand a radical departure not only from modernization theory but from first wave studies. In some ways second wave studies consolidated a first wave trend – that of focusing on political regimes as the lynchpins of explanation and analysis. On the

other hand, they further narrowed in on the institutional features of political regimes, and thus the access dimension of political rule instead of the exercise one. This meant an emphasis on easily quantifiable variables to the detriment of factors that concerned the way these regimes projected power into their societies and its effects. At the eve of the Arab spring, this focus led scholars to overlook dynamism in the relationship between authoritarian regimes and their societies that would turn out to be crucial in favor of the seeming stability of institutional arrangements.

1st Wave Studies

Similar to its modernization theoretical predecessor, first wave studies on authoritarianism took a rather broad perspective on the societal and economic conditions that give rise to authoritarianism, and their consequence for broader societal strata. Authoritarianism for many was the result of elites trying to cope with the nationally and geographically distinct dilemmas of the modernization process. Modernization theory had discussed the different societal subsystems - the economy, society and form of political rule - as an interrelated whole, with none of them necessarily taking precedence in the explanatory weight assigned to them. Within 1st wave studies, this balance shifted towards privileging political factors centering on regime formation as primary goal of explanation, with the other two relegated to the role of explanatory factors. These classic studies thus still shared an interest in the socio-economic conditions shaping authoritarian rule. However, many authors explicitly rejected the supposedly uniform relationship between economic and political development implicit in modernization theory. (e.g. O'Donnell 1973; Schmitter 1971) Instead, they saw different forms of authoritarianism arise as a response to the challenges of the modernization process confronting regimes in the Third World. Different world regions faced distinct dilemmas giving rise to specific forms of authoritarian rule. It is for that reason that authors often focused on a specific type of authoritarian rule prevalent in his/her region of study. Thus, while some attempts at developing more comprehensive typological systems existed (Linz 1975 and 2000; and Perlmutter 1981), most first wave scholarship did not overtly concern itself with systematic attempts to capture the whole range of nondemocratic regimes.

Military regimes were the subject of many scholars working on authoritarian rule in Latin America and the Iberian Peninsula. (Schmitter 1975, O'Donnell 1988, Perlmutter 1986, Linz

1979, Stepan 1988) Socio-economic changes accompanying the modernization process seemed to present these regimes with distinct dilemmas the answer to which often was military intervention. (Finer 1988; Huntington 1968; Huntington & Moore 1970; Nordlinger 1977; O'Donnell 1973; Perlmutter 1981) More specifically, modernization in Latin America led to the mobilization of new societal groups seeking entry into the polity. This development often overtaxed the capacity for incorporation of regimes based on the elite coalitions of a select few. The resulting 'mass praetorianism' (Huntington 1968, 80) therefore posed threats to more established elite segments' access to power. As a result of looming chaos and disorder, military elites intervened in an attempt to reestablish order, severely circumscribing participatory rights in the process. 'Mass praetorianism' thus mirrors late modernization theory's preoccupation with political stability and order and links it explicitly to the rise of a specific form of authoritarianism. These bureaucratic authoritarian military regimes were a response to the resultant dilemmas of incorporation in societies that granted diverse groups citizenship rights without commanding the resources to properly incorporate them. (O'Donnell 1973, 74) The frustration of elite actors led to bureaucratic authoritarian coup coalitions aimed at reshaping social structures in the service of further economic modernization by excluding popular and working class actors. (O'Donnell 1973, 88-91) To solve dilemmas of incorporation, many authoritarian regimes therefore resorted to corporatist arrangements that formally included groups into structures of interest representation along functional lines, but in a tightly supervised and controlled fashion. Corporatism according to Schmitter "can be defined as a system of interest representation in which the constituent units are organized into a limited number of singular, compulsory, noncompetitive, hierarchically ordered and functionally differentiated categories, recognized or licensed (if not created) by the state and granted a deliberate representational monopoly within their respective categories in exchange for observing certain controls on their selection of leaders and articulation of demands and support." (Schmitter 1974, 94) Corporatism was one of the central concepts of this literature.

While military or bureaucratic authoritarianism in Latin America was thus a response to social mobilization in the context of medium economic development, regimes in Africa faced different sets of challenges. Decolonization had left a continent of fairly new states grappling with the double challenges of nation building and economic development. In many cases, anti-colonial nationalist movements riding on a wave of public support turned into single party regimes to cope with the challenges facing the young nations. (Huntington 1968, 418) Consequently, literature on single-party rule was mainly concerned with the role of dominant

political parties in the processes of nation building and national integration.¹⁰ (Apter 1965, 179-222; Coleman & Rosberg 1964; Huntington 1968; Moore 1962; Schachter 1961; Wallerstein 1960; Zolberg 1963 and 1966) In such regimes, the period of colonialism had destroyed traditional structures of political domination and led to the emergence of nationalist movements under the leadership of mainly Western-educated elites. Facing economically as well as socially little developed societies with low levels of national integration, in many cases, these movements transformed into dominant or single parties once independence had been achieved to create political order. (Linz 2000, 229; also see Schachter 1961; Zolberg 1963 and 1966) It is doubtful, however, to what an extent many cases of African single party rule ever reached a level of organization that justifies speaking of “mass parties.” (Schachter 1961) Thus, as Zolberg acknowledges, “the West-African party-states approximate Weber’s patrimonial type in many important respects. The relationships between the ruling group and their followers are indeed based on personal loyalty.” (Zolberg 1966, 141; also see Brooker 1999, 125-29; Harik 1973) This sentiment already foreshadows a development within another type of authoritarian rule. Beginning in the 1970s, Africanists and scholars working on the MENA began to reconsider the distinction by Linz (see Linz 2000, 151-155; also see Chehabi & Linz 1998) between authoritarian and sultanist regimes based on ‘traditional authority’ in the Weberian sense. (see Eisenstadt 1973; Lemarchand & Legg 1972; Roth 1968; Springborg 1979)

Modernization theory had relegated clientelist or patrimonial patterns of behavior to the realm of ‘pre-modern’ or ‘traditional’ politics. In contrast to that the term ‘modern neo-patrimonialism’ first introduced by Samuel N. Eisenstadt (1973) emphasized the fact that some modern political systems seemed to combine legal-rational and patrimonial forms of domination. (see also Médard 1982, 179; Roth 1968) Eisenstadt (1973), and following him scholars such as Jean-François Médard (1982), Robert H. Jackson and Carl G. Rosberg (1981), and Peter Pawelka (1985) describe what they refer to as modern neo-patrimonial or personalist rule as a specific form of (modern) authoritarian regimes that is highly centralistic. Access to power and resources is concentrated at the center in the hands of political elites that are loyal to the person of the ruler. The basis of regime maintenance in such orders is the distribution of resources, rewards and access to spoils (Eisenstadt 1973; Jackson & Rosberg 1981; Médard 1982; Pawelka 1985; Roth 1968).

¹⁰ The communist single-party regimes in Eastern Europe are excluded from consideration here since they would have been considered totalitarian in Linz’s framework. This leaves us with mainly African single-party cases. (see Brooker 1999, 106)

In African studies, the concept of neopatrimonialism “became the orthodoxy of the 1970s and early 1980s” (Erdmann & Engel 2007, 97), but the notion was also widely employed in the Middle East and North Africa (see Bill & Springborg 1994; Pawelka 1985; Springborg 1979), as well as to a number of regimes outside of these regions (see the contributions in Chehabi & Linz 1998). In most conceptions, the notion not only describes a political regime, but at the same time connotes relatively low state capacities with political control being mostly exercised indirectly via cooptation and clientelism. As Médard succinctly put it, under neopatrimonial conditions, “the problem is not development, but the maintenance of order and survival. All the energy of the rulers goes into more or less successful efforts to stay in power.” (Médard 1982, 163) Thus, debate on personalist rule is certainly farthest removed from the focus on socioeconomic conditions characteristic of first-wave scholarship, although the prevalence of neopatrimonial structures is linked with economic underdevelopment.

While later analyses were to narrow in on the regime concept more properly, they did so at the expense of understanding regimes in context. It is therefore their embeddedness into socio-economic factors that gives the broader and comprehensive explanatory strategies of 1st wave approach a retrospective appeal, when looking at the events of the Arab spring. The next section will explore how explanatory factors within 2nd wave approaches narrowed down considerably to exclusively institutionalist factors.

2nd Wave Authoritarianism

Starting with the disintegration of Portugal’s dictatorship in the 1970s and culminating in the collapse of the Soviet Union at the end of the 1980s, the so called ‘3rd wave of democratization’ (Huntington 1991) not only saw the end of many dictatorships across the globe, but also brought on fundamental transformations in Comparative Politics. Academically, it led to a shift in the explanatory goals and factors privileged in research on political regimes. With the breakdown of many authoritarian regimes the conceptual focus shifted from explaining authoritarianism and towards explaining transitions, and the subsequent establishment of democratic rule. (Diamond et al 1989; Rueschemeyer, Stephens, Stephens 1992; Mainwaring and O’Donnell 1992; Valenzuela 1990; Przeworski and Limongi 1993) This shift in conceptual

focus away from earlier pessimism on the viability of democratization to more optimistic assessments was accompanied by a shift in explanatory factors. Based on Southern European and Latin American transitions, explanations now focused on the role of elites, institutions, and processes in bringing about transitions. One of the most noteworthy works of the time was the book “Tentative Conclusions about Uncertain Democracies” by O’Donnell and Schmitter that completed the edited volumes “Transitions from Authoritarian Rule” (O’Donnell, Schmitter and Whitehead 1986) and would become a classic of ‘transitology’. Their central argument was that in many of these cases, it was not the masses from below that brought on successful transitions, but carefully crafted elite pacts from above. (O’Donnell and Schmitter 1986) Thus instead of being the result of modernization creating the requisites of democracy, transitions were now seen as brought on by the “strategic interactions and arrangements among political elites, conscious choices among various types of democratic constitutions, and electoral and party systems.” (Doh Chull Shin 1994, 139)

Starting in the mid-1990s, it became apparent, however, that the third wave had left behind many regimes, whose transitions had resulted in rather ambiguous outcomes. Authoritarianism continued to persist in many countries that had been expected to be on the verge of democratization (e.g. Brynen, Korany & Noble 1995 for the MENA), and some of the new democracies exhibited serious flaws that drew questions on the appropriateness of that label in the first place. (Carothers, 2002) Optimism yet again gave way to more pessimistic prognoses. This new pessimism manifested itself in several sub-debates engaging with the phenomenon of cases seemingly stuck on their way to democracy. Three strands of theorizing emerged from this debate that would dominate conceptual discussions on political regimes in the 1990s.

One way of dealing with the increasing number of imperfectly democratized countries was the idea of ‘democracies with adjectives’ (David Collier and Steve Levitsky 1997), which delineates types of political regimes showing some trappings of democracy, without however satisfying even a minimal definition. In trying to come to terms with these flaws, scholars introduced a host of new concepts such as ‘illiberal democracy’ (Zakaria 1997), ‘defective democracy’ (Merkel 2004), or ‘delegative democracy’ (O’Donnell 1994). The characteristic distinguishing most cases of diminished subtypes from authoritarianism were the presence of formal institutions, such as parliaments, elections, opposition parties that were thought to move a regime on a continuum away from authoritarianism and closer to democracy. Involved in this conceptualization is thus a certain teleology towards the democratic pole of a perceived continuum between democracy and autocracy, a perception aided by the by then standard tools

of ranking regimes such as Freedom House and the Polity data sets. (Alvarez, Cheibub, Limongi and Przeworski 1996; Munck 2006; Hadenius and Teorell 2007)

A second strand of theorizing introduced a mixed form of regime - hybrid regimes - sharing characteristics with both democracy and autocracy. The debate on hybrid regimes differed from the 'democracy with adjectives' debate in its departure from some of the democracy teleology that had plagued the former approach. (Karl 1995; Diamond 2002; Levitsky & Way 2002) Instead of viewing attributes undermining democratic rule as a transitory hindrance on the way to democracy, scholars conceptualized hybrid regimes as a stable form of political order. At the same time, the classification of regimes as hybrid instead of autocratic still relied on the presence of formal institutions removing these regimes from the pool of autocracy. Their presence was therefore still thought to bring an inherently democratic quality to the table, even if they functioned only poorly, or were undermined by informal institutions and practices. (Levitsky and Way 2002, 52)

By the end of the 1990s scholars increasingly realized that few of the regimes classified as hybrid or diminished actually retained any resemblance to democracy. This ushered in the development of work on 'new authoritarianisms' that conceptualized these regimes as properly authoritarian instead. (Schedler 2009) They did not completely break with previous ideas about the inherent democratic qualities of institutions, using formal institutions such as elections to differentiate types such as electoral authoritarianism from other authoritarian subtypes. Doubts persisted, however, whether these classificatory attempts really succeeded in capturing relevant traits. (Snyder 2006) After all, the defining feature is precisely that consistent with other types of authoritarian regimes political power is *not* accessed via elections, even though electoral institutions and procedures do exist. (Schedler 2002 and 2006) In the long run, this led to these perspectives being challenged by work on authoritarian institutionalism starting by the end of the 1990s. Instead of presupposing the democratic qualities of formal institutions, scholars set out to understand how they actually functioned within their authoritarian contexts. Based on the assumption that "most authoritarian governments that hold elections are not hybrids but simply successful, well institutionalized authoritarian regimes," (Geddes 2005, 6) authoritarian institutionalism thus shifted the focus of the debate. They showed that while many of these formal institutions might display trappings of democracy, the actual functions they performed were distinctly authoritarian, thus contributing to the stability of these regimes rather than undermining them. (see Albrecht and Schlumberger 2004, Blaydes 2010; Gandhi & Lust-Okar

2009; Koehler 2008; Lindberg 2009; Lust 2009; Lust-Okar 2006; Magaloni 2006; Schedler 2006)

This development correlated with and was influenced by other disciplinary developments. In the 1990s the rational choice variant of neo-institutionalism increasingly gained traction as the theoretical backdrop informing many studies on authoritarian institutions. In methodological terms this led to the rise of formal models as explanatory tools for quantitative cross-national comparisons of different types of authoritarian regimes. (Wintrobe 2005, Haber 2006, Acemoglu and Robinson 2006, Przeworski and Ghandi 2007) This development away from past attempts of finding one grand theory in the developmental processes of a wide range of regimes had become evident with the literature on transitions. Debates surrounding ‘authoritarian stability’ consolidated this trend. Thus studies examined the reason for differences in longevity of authoritarian regimes, and the reasons for why they break down or endure, and tied them back to differences in their institutional make-up. (Hadenius and Teorell 2007, Magaloni 2008, Geddes 1999, Ulfelder 2005) Other studies examined the way institutions structure opposition politics (Lust, Lust-Okar), the functions of ‘imitative institutions’ in authoritarian politics (Albrecht and Schlumberger 2004, Albrecht 2005), the role of ruling parties in building and maintaining support coalitions (Blaydes 2010, Koehler 2008, Magaloni and Kricheli 2010), and the dynamics of authoritarian elections (Ghandi and Lust-Okar 2009).

Authoritarian stability debates thus departed in important ways from not only the grey zone debates but also the ‘authoritarianism with adjectives’ debate, while nonetheless retaining some of their characteristics. This concerned as much their conceptual focus on the effects of institutional arrangements, the role and strategic choices of elites in shaping institutional environments, as well as a methodological focus on formal and quantitative cross-national analysis. As in Comparative Politics more generally, authoritarianism studies thus witnessed the increasing impact of institutionalist theorizing in the 1990s. Especially rational choice institutionalism gained in influence, emphasizing “the role of strategic interaction in the determination of political outcomes. That is to say, they postulate, first, that an actor’s behavior is likely to be driven, not by impersonal historical forces, but by a strategic calculus and, second, that this calculus will be deeply affected by the actor’s expectations about how others are likely to behave as well. Institutions structure such interactions, by affecting the range and sequence of alternatives on the choice-agenda or by providing information and enforcement mechanisms that reduce uncertainty about the corresponding behavior of others and allow ‘gains from

exchange' thereby leading actors toward particular calculations and potentially better social outcomes."(Hall and Taylor 1994, 946) Institutions in this view develop because they are functional for the actors involved, and they survive because they bestow more benefits than alternative institutional solutions to the collective action dilemmas political actors routinely face. (Hall and Taylor 1994, 946) In concrete terms, this focus manifested itself on the one hand in authors trying to explain how institutions like ruling parties, parliaments, etc. had been developed in order to fulfill functions of authoritarian regime maintenance. On the other hand, many authors tried to develop typological systems of authoritarian rule almost exclusively based on institutional and procedural factors.

By relying on these factors, typologies produced interesting research, and the fact that they were relatively easily applicable lent itself to either quantitative or formal large-N research. (Brownlee 2007, 2009a and 2009b; Gandhi 2008; Geddes 2003; Magaloni 2008) Barbara Geddes' (1999 and 2003) three-fold typology for example differentiates between military, single-party, and personalist regimes on the basis of the main actors involved in making binding decisions, and the functional logic of the regime in question. Other authors, such as Jennifer Gandhi (2008) and Beatriz Magaloni (2008), classify authoritarian regimes on the basis of the way in which power is accessed (Gandhi 2008; Haber 2006; Magaloni 2008), leading to slightly different typological systems. However, they often led to wildly different classifications of individual cases. Egypt under Mubarak for example with reference to his military background has been qualified as military by some observers (Gandhi 2008), some (Hadenius and Teorell 2007), looking at the presence of formal institutions, have classified it as a limited multiparty regime, while others classify it as a single party or dominant party system (Magaloni and Kricheli 2010).

At the eve of the Arab spring this elite-centered focus led scholars trying to explain authoritarian stability to correctly assess and predict certain features of authoritarian rule in the MENA, while missing important parts that did not concern elite-interactions. They made important contributions for understanding these specific elite-centered spheres, and their assessment and predictions seemed to hold true for the Arab spring as well, where classical opposition actors, hampered by decades of authoritarian rule, proved unable to initiate change. However in restricting their view to rationally calculating elite actors - whether from the regime or the opposition - acting within the formal and informal arena prescribed by the regime, they took the stability within these alignments to signify the stability of the whole system, thus missing important dynamics within the relationship between regimes and their societies.

Theory conclusion - what's the take away?

There are three points to take away from the above discussion: one concerning our theories more generally, and two concerning the distinct theories discussed in this literature review. It traced the development from modernization theory as it started out in the 1940s and 1950s, in its tow shaping the conceptual and methodological tools of the discipline to the more specific sub-debates that were to follow. These sub-debates, while (more or less) gradually distancing themselves from their modernization theoretic origins, nevertheless continued to be shaped by its inventions. The inventions in question include among other things the proclivity for universalist categorizations, and for institutionalist variables.

The hunt for universally valid categories was not only visible in SMT's theorizing, especially where POS were concerned, it was also one of the main sources of later criticism. Instead of finding the right objectively given opportunities that apply to all movements in the same way regardless of time and space, the discussion has shown that we need to move to approaches that allow for context sensitivity. The desideratum of the debate on social movements is therefore the importance of stressing relational approaches that allow for a variety of context specific structural factors to enter into the analysis.

While the quintessence of the SMT discussion is thus the *relationality* of opportunities, authoritarianism studies has shown a persistent neglect of societal factors entering the analysis via the *exercise* dimension of political regimes. The elite and institution centered focus on the access dimension of political regimes thus forgot to account for how power is exercised and maintained towards societal strata and non-elite actors and groups. Building on these two theoretical conclusion from the literature review, the next section will explore conceptual tools that can aid our understanding of mobilization under authoritarian rule by bringing these two insights together.

3. SPHERES OF MOBILIZATION AND INTERACTION

How can we use the lessons from the literature review to explain the Arab spring without falling prey to some of the same biases? Both literatures can give us an understanding of some aspects of the Arab spring. Authoritarianism studies can explain the vulnerability of regimes that appeared outwardly stable. Social movement studies can help to understand a mobilizational process that in seizing on these vulnerabilities at least partially created them. Besides these concrete theoretical insights, the lessons of the preceding literature review are more fundamental. They touch upon points raised earlier about how we see progress and how this in turn shapes our view on theory building, theory development and ultimately theory rejection. Our previous discussion cautions us about accepting sweeping dismissals and to question the roots of theory change. Scholars in both theoretical traditions had good reasons for dismissing some aspects of the paradigmatic frame of their time. But their rejection was embedded into deeper social and political processes that did not necessarily speak to the value of the theories being dismissed. This thesis therefore tried to carefully evaluate the merits and shortcomings of past traditions on their own terms – not those of the theoretical competitors that would come to replace them. In doing this, it gained an appreciation for modernization theory's attempts to elucidate broad structural change processes as interrelated wholes as opposed to snapshots of current arrangements to be viewed and quantified in isolation. Another insight was the inherent relationality of most human endeavours. People do not perceive their environments, and social standing, their grievances and hopes in absolutes, but relative to what they see in the present, have been brought up to expect in the past, and hoped to gain in the future.

In the following section, I will build on these insights: of social movement studies on the relationality of movement environments and the need for conceptualizations of authoritarian rule that do not disassociate them from their societies.. I will argue that mobilization under authoritarian rule can be understood by incorporating insights from authoritarianism studies into our ideas about social movement environments. In conceptual terms this means understanding mobilization under authoritarian rule as embedded in relational sets of opportunities, constituting different *spheres of interaction and mobilization*. These spheres will not be understood as a new, true way of capturing reality, but as one particular lens through which to look at a certain aspect of mobilization. In recent years, several authors have come forth with spatial ideas of how to grasp social movements and their embeddedness into specific contexts. While not based on them, and different in many respects, mine is akin to them. Most

recently, McAdam and Fligstein (2011, 2012) conceptualized collective action as embedded into the interactive framework of Strategic Action Fields (SAF), while Goldstone focuses on ‘external relational fields’ (2004).

The former, while situating the stability of structures closer to the mind of the individual, remains actor-centric by endowing the individual with an overtly rational capacity to interact with structure. The assumption is still present therefore that all individuals share the same perception of the ‘structureness’ of their environment, and hence an ability to engineer change. The latter moves the debate towards promising relational avenues of research that acknowledge that “there is no clear set of necessary and sufficient conditions for the emergence, growth, actions, and outcomes of social movements. [...] Rather, it would appear that every movement (or related clusters of movements) faces its own group- and issue-specific fields of external relations.” (Goldstone 2004, 357) However, it neglects to point out how to identify the relevant patterns of relations determining individual movement contexts, instead proposing to rely on quantitative data to find frequently recurring patterns. (Goldstone 2004, 360) The contribution of this thesis is similar in that it relies on a view of relationality, based on spatial conceptions of movement context. It departs, however, in its view on structure and in the contention that we can actually find relevant patterns of relational opportunities for movements on a theoretical level, by consulting the large body of research on political regimes.

Structure, as a central concept, will be understood as a collectively created and carried construction, presenting itself to agents in different degrees of ‘structureness.’ The perception of structure and the potential for agency can therefore vary, depending on where the individual is positioned in interaction with authorities, how this interactive sphere has shaped the available repertoire, and actors’ assessment of how amenable to change their environment is. Structure functions as ‘structure’ only for as long as enough people believe it to actually be immutable, beyond the reach of the individual. It is therefore both constructed *and* a relatively permanent and stable feature embedding every-day life and political action. It provides a more or less fixed set of rules establishing predictability of expectations, of what constitutes acceptable and effective means of political action, and its anticipated results. In contrast to an overly rational actor conception, these expectations do not have to be correct. Actors can and quite frequently do err in their assessment of the situation they confront, and the appropriate means and strategies to achieve goals. But as long as they are shared by enough people they will nonetheless provide stable patterns of expectations. ‘Spheres of interaction and mobilization’ in this context are then structures created through the repeated interaction of (societal) actors and

the regimes they confront. They cannot be easily changed, but are not permanently fixed either, being subject to change and renegotiation over time. This temporal dimension includes the fact that the choices made at one point in the interaction will be part of what shapes the boundaries of the sphere at a later point by setting precedents for interaction, rewarding certain behaviors and punishing others.

The structural boundaries that set the parameters for these spheres are the characteristics of the regime in question. In the case of mobilization under authoritarian rule, they are found in the subtype of authoritarian rule. The relational component of spheres of mobilization are therefore demarcated by the specific kind of regime and the way it exercises power towards and projects it into society. It mixes elements of stasis and dynamism – a relatively stable regime type, and more dynamic elements of incorporation, negotiated between elites, and between elites and societal actors. Being subject to changes and renegotiation, it therefore also opens the possibility for miscalculation, and more generally a playing field for agency and contingency to unfold within the structural boundaries set by the different spheres.

Political regimes are commonly understood as the rules of the game of any given polity, combining the dimension of access to power with its exercise. Munck for example sees them as “the procedural rules, whether formal or informal, that determine the number and type of actors who are allowed to gain access to the principal governmental positions, the methods of access to such positions, and the rules that are followed in the making of publicly binding decisions, and, on the other hand, by the strategic acceptance of these rules by all major political actors and the lack of normative rejection of these rules by any major political actor.” (Munck 1996, 6) These rules thus determine (1) the number and types of actors which are allowed access to political power; (2) the methods by which this access may be achieved; and (3) the rules which determine the exercise of that power. (see also Fishman 1990, 428; Munck 1996, 4) These basic rules will provide actors with an understanding (albeit incomplete, and sometimes erroneous) of the institutional characteristics including the strengths and vulnerabilities they confront, the regime’s strategies and patterns of incorporation, and hence its basis of legitimacy and power, degree of responsiveness, and inclusive- or exclusiveness.

The conception of authoritarian rule used here will in contrast to earlier work rely less heavily on formal criteria specifying the first dimension (access to power). Instead, it will incorporate aspects of the second part of the regime dimension, the exercise of power. This expanded focus will allow complementing elite-level institutional factors with questions of how these elites and institutions relate to non-elites and the states they are embedded within and command (some

more, some less) as instruments of control. We will find the answers to how it was possible for regimes which had endured for decades to perish (at least on the surface) within weeks, by looking at this often neglected regime dimension of the exercise of political power.

This dimension of exercise looks at the regime's actual or perceived support coalition, i.e. those groups in society, whose active support, or at least passive acquiescence it sees as essential for the maintenance of its rule. So it can, it will try to secure the support of these societal groups by dispensing benefits, by granting aristocratic positions in bargaining processes, by privileging them in ideological discourses on regime legitimacy and so forth. While the opaque surface authoritarian regimes present towards the outside often make it tempting to cast them as omniscient strategists that can anticipate the outcomes of their actions, authoritarian rulers can err in their assessment of who to assign status of importance, who to curb and control, and who to incorporate further. The interaction between a political regime and broader sets of societal actors through historically grown patterns of incorporation will therefore have important repercussions for the structure of the regime itself, for decision making, for the relationship with societal groups, and therefore for the exercise of political power.

Looking at these patterns also necessarily means looking at the states in which regimes are embedded, which grant them instruments and agents of control. Complementing the access dimension with a closer look at the exercise dimension will thus enable us to differentiate between regimes that may have the same form of access – say military for example – but which differ profoundly in their reach into society. Examples of this would be the difference between a 'capital city regime' that barely extends beyond the confines of a country's geographic and administrative center vs. a regime that disposes of an infrastructure of control down to the level of individual villages (see Snyder 2006 for similar ideas). If political regimes regulate the rules of the game of any given polity, the state within which these regimes are embedded is necessary to understand the extent and power of the instruments a regime has at its hands. Political regimes are therefore the rules and norms regulating the access to the power of the state, its main tool of exercise over society. (Mann 1986, 26-27)

Because structures need time to develop and consolidate, the boundaries of spheres are created over time through the processes of regime formation, consolidation and transformation. The key change processes determining the formation and transformation of spheres of mobilization are changes in patterns of *incorporation*. No regime can survive on fear and repression alone (even though they might sustain it over some time), and all regimes need to practice some kind of incorporation, as selective as it may be. Rule always needs to be accompanied by a certain

extent of if not legitimacy than at least acquiescence and this legitimacy or acquiescence is acquired by incorporating *enough* parts of society.

In asking about incorporation, about those groups the regime grants access and benefits in one way or another, we also ask about who remains excluded, who is not part of the support basis of the regime, and how this affects their interactions with agents of the state, their abilities to get their interest, and demands met, and grievances redressed. Incorporation as a central concept was in many ways inspired by the thinking within more classically oriented authoritarianism studies during its first wave, with its still visible kinship to modernization theory. Based on this, differences in the scope of incorporation, as well as the means can be deduced. Only if the means of incorporation are political in nature does this incorporation/the group incorporated actually become relevant for the regime dimension that is typically used for classificatory purposes – the *access* to power. The resulting possible relationships between these two are ideal types of relationships, while in empirically observable relationships there might be overlap between different categories. These relationships can range from (1) not being incorporated at all, to (2) being part of a passive populist coalition¹¹, in which *interest and demands* become incorporated from above, to (3) being part of the regime's support coalition, with privileged access to interest representation, demand articulation, and grievance redress, to (4) being part of its ruling coalition with access to decision-making as well as decision makers. Because of the long-term nature of changes in patterns, they confront most people as relatively fixed structures at any given moment in time where they enter into an interaction, or even bring forth a challenge. Within these structural bounds, on a second more dynamic level medium term events and interactions act as structures in the making. The nature and outcome of regime-opposition interaction, the changes in repertoires made and tested at one point become part of the inherited structures embedding action at a later point. These spheres give the boundaries in which actors' agency and creativity, judgment and misjudgment can unfold creating the very vulnerabilities necessary for authoritarian facades to crack.

Based on the above distinction, we can differentiate between four patterns of incorporation characterizing the relationship between regimes and societal groups that vary along the two dimensions of scope and means. The dimension of scope entails whether incorporation is present at all and if so whether it is active or passive. The dimension of means includes

¹¹ The idea of populism followed here is closely aligned with ideas by authors such as O'Donnell and Ayubi, who understand populism as lower class (often the urban popular class) activation by largely distributive means (i.e. economic incorporation, mixed with political exclusion), controlled from above in order to increase the power and autonomy of the regime. (Ayubi 2001, 208; O'Donnell 1973)

incorporation based on political, economic, or ideological/rhetorical means. In combing them to four ideal typical patterns we get the following results:

- 1) No incorporation: Societal groups enjoy neither active incorporation based on political means, nor passive incorporation based on their interests being served by either dispersion of economic benefits or ideological inclusion.
- 2) Populist incorporation: Societal groups do not enjoy active incorporation based on political means. They do selectively enjoy economic and/or ideological incorporation of some of their demands and/or interests through broad based populist policies.
- 3) Support coalition: Societal groups might enjoy selective political incorporation of individual representatives. They enjoy economic and/or ideological incorporation in that their interests have a privileged position in the bargaining process.
- 4) Ruling coalition: Societal groups enjoy political access to the formal/informal decision making process as well as to individual decision makers. Political incorporation enables them to seek economic inclusion and favorable treatment/benefits.

These patterns are prone to change over time, and the direction of change will have an impact on their relationship towards grievance formation and ultimately mobilization. Thus two groups might be within the same pattern of incorporation, but arriving there on different paths, altering their propensity for mobilization. The direction of change with likely the most significant impact on mobilization is a decrease in incorporation either threatening to, or removing groups from one pattern to the one below. How then do patterns of incorporation affect the propensity for mobilization of different societal groups? I hypothesize that pattern number

- 1) Of no incorporation will establish a sphere of mobilization and interaction, in which people will be late risers to the mobilizational process. While incorporation establishes the expectation of rights and duties, its lack results in the absence of a normative basis of claim making rooted in the perceived violation of duties and responsibilities of the state. In the absence of incorporation the only form of interaction left with the state and its agents is one based on neglect and/or violence. This can create the basis for deep-seated grievances in the long run that might be mobilized once the process is underway. If, however, a group that has previously been incorporated in some form sees their status deteriorate to no incorporation, the perceived violations of expectations regarding duties and obligations will lead to increases in the propensity for mobilization, and hence potential early-risers.

- 2) Populist incorporation will establish a sphere where groups have some expectations concerning the responsibilities and duties of the state that can provide a normative basis for claim making. The disappointment of these expectations can lead to a feeling of relative deprivation and hence grievances for mobilization. Groups belonging to this pattern may be early movers or late risers in the mobilizational process, depending on the extent to which responsibility for well-being is routinely assigned with the state.
- 3) Similar to pattern number (2) incorporation into the support coalition will establish a sphere where a basis for making claims towards the state exists and mobilization is more or less likely depending on whether groups experience relative deprivation, and whether they are provided with an alternative route of incorporation. The more groups are also selectively politically incorporated, the more likely are accommodationist strategies that lead them to be late risers.
- 4) Finally groups in the pattern of incorporation into the ruling coalition are unlikely to be susceptible to mobilization. For as long as their political incorporation ties their survival and benefits to regime and they will hence neither be late risers, nor early movers. Exceptions to this can be found if the stakes of survival seem higher without the regime in place, in which case band-waggoning on existing mobilization might occur.

Patterns number (2) and (3) are therefore the most likely early movers in the mobilizational process. Their partial incorporation in either economic or ideological terms creates expectations that can be disappointed by the gradual or abrupt disintegration of incorporation. The resulting relative deprivation can give a normative basis for claim making based on the expectations created through previous patterns of incorporation. The more politically incorporated groups are, the less likely they are to belong to early movers. This affects particularly groups in pattern number (3) and (4). On the extreme end of the scale, groups belonging to pattern number (4) are unlikely to become mobilized at all.

As the above hypotheses illustrate, these spheres of mobilization and interaction are formed by the structural basis of patterns of incorporation which change throughout time, are renegotiated, shift, and disintegrate. They delineate, but do not determine, the space where agency and contingency can unfold by showing where grievances find a structural basis in history. Whether and when actors actually chose to mobilize on these grievances will always to a certain extent remain a question of choice that cannot be completely explained away. The next part (II) will do two things. One is to show the actual processes of mobilization in detail, which will enable the reader to identify the early movers and late risers in both cases empirically. The second one

is to delineate the overall historical processes that shaped both regimes structural trajectories from their inception to approximately the year 2000 before the comparison in part III will deal with the development of the individual spheres in more detail.

4. METHODS

Before we turn to the empirical and comparative sections a few words on method are in order. The thesis is an in depth study of Egypt and Tunisia via a most similar systems design. (Della Porta 2008, 214) This choice is rooted in the shared regional, historical, and cultural background of the two countries, and our interest in explaining the differences we observe in the spread and sequencing of the mobilizational process. The thesis' small-N research offers several advantages to this end. One of them is in finding "similarities and differences through dense *narratives*, with a large number of characteristics being taken into account, often together with their interaction within long-lasting processes." (Della Porta 2008, 204) Another one is its ability to deal with the problem of equifinality. (George and Bennett 2005, 157) Equifinality - multiple causation with similar outcomes achieved via differing paths - can be a real problem when cases are seemingly similar, even though the processes by which they arrive at the same outcome vary decidedly. A detailed, small-N comparison allows for an analysis of differences that would have been easily overlooked by a quantitative study. (Ragin 1987) Small-N research finally allows incorporating the detailed histories of a small number of cases in order to highlight the causal mechanisms that connect outcomes to their structural origins.

This thesis will therefore be a small-N qualitative comparison that will aim for two things. It will firstly show the causal mechanisms leading to the eventual disintegration of support coalitions and cross-class mobilization by tracing the processes of the profound social, political and economic changes that occurred within the two countries in the framework of a comparative historical analysis. (George and Bennett 2005, Skocpol and Somers 1980, Mahoney and Rueschemeyer 2003) It will then show how differences in these structural processes led to the differences in the processes of mobilization we observed during the uprisings. Instead of taking a "snapshot view" of the uprisings, it will systematically embed them "in a temporal sequence of events and processes stretching over extended periods." (Pierson 2004, 2) This approach shares much common ground with Historical Institutionalism. (Sanders 2006; Mahoney and Thelen 2010, Steinmo et al 1992, Hall and Taylor 1996) However it diverges somewhat in keeping the analysis open to change processes that occur outside of the institutional arena. While historical institutionalism literature has produced many insights, this thesis will view institutions as often constituting epiphenomena of deeper processes that need not be connected to only the political realm. They might also represent shifts in the balance of power, in elites transitioning between

the economic and political realm, as well as changes in socio-structural alignments. Strictly institutionalist analyses all too often fall prey to the dangers of functionalism in relying on outcomes as explanatory causes. This was at times visible in the authoritarian institutionalism debate linking the existence of institutional arrangements to the functions they performed for authoritarian maintenance. This not only unduly imbues autocratic rulers with a degree of omniscience, but it erases the potential for sheer chance and contingency, mistakes and unintended consequences that often characterize the political (and economic) process. (Pierson 2004, 8) Once they are created “patterns of political mobilization, the institutional ‘rules of the game,’ and even citizens’ basic way of thinking about the political world will often generate self-reinforcing dynamics.” (Pierson 2004, 10) Thus even though what we look at might present itself as deeply structural, it is often formed through path dependent sequences during which collective understandings of how the world works are formed. Only once they are established do they exhibit the persistence in structuring future interaction and expectation that leads to them being viewed as ‘structures.’ (Pierson 2004, 40)

In this account, even the structuralism of historical comparative analysis does not preclude agency. It simply constrains its expression and gives its possibilities boundaries that are self-enforced through collective understandings. Embedded in structural processes and their path dependent trajectories are thus again and again moments of choice, of agency and contingency that shape future expressions of structure. While this might restrict the amount of options available to actors at any given point in time, it does not determine which one of those will be chosen in the end. Stinchcombe’s revolutionary situations (1965) might be viewed as a good example of the combination of agency and structure with the difference being that agency finds more expression than just in extreme situations of political flux. It rather expresses itself in myriad interactions that need not be significant in and of themselves but that may modify the path a given system is taking. As unsatisfactory as it might be, the nature of contingency is such that it always leaves a remainder of uncharted territory. This uncharted territory outside of the bounds of explanation is necessary in order not to repeat the mistakes of earlier structuralist accounts where pre-determined actors were simply acting out a pre-written play.

The central tool in our analysis will be spheres of interaction and mobilization. They combine the structure of historically grown patterns and sequences with the agency of actors mobilizing against their dictators and thus offer a mid-range analytical tool (Mair 2008) to understand the formation of spaces for mobilization and resistance. Situated at the sub-national level, using these spheres as our tools of choice will enable us to enlarge our pool of observations by comparing the two countries at different levels of analysis - in terms of their overall

developmental trajectories, as well as the specific spheres connecting individual groups to the regime. (King, Keohane and Verba 1994, 121) The move to make spheres the central unit of analysis in the comparative chapter at the heart of the thesis not only increases inferential leverage by upping the number of observations being compared from two countries to ten spheres – five in each country. But it also enables insights that would not be accessible otherwise. The increase in inferential leverage does not only come courtesy of simply enlarging the N, as is often encouraged by scholars pursuing a quantitative research logic. (see exemplary King, Keohane and Verba 1994) But it provides us with a theoretically specified way to “deepen the knowledge of causal processes and mechanisms in these cases, rather than extend the study to additional cases.” (Brady and Collier 2010, 195) Only by tracing the processes within our two main cases that connect different groups to their regime can we evaluate the merits of institution and elite based arguments against our proposed explanation. (Bennett 2010, 207) Process tracing according to Bennett “involves the examination of “diagnostic” pieces of evidence within a case that contribute to supporting or overturning alternative explanatory hypotheses. A central concern is with sequences and mechanisms in the unfolding of hypothesized causal processes. The researcher looks for the observable implications of hypothesized explanations, often examining evidence at a finer level of detail or a lower level of analysis than that initially posited in the relevant theory.” (Bennett 2010, 208) Within the context of five paired comparisons this thesis will therefore trace the processes of disintegrating patterns of incorporation in the spheres connecting five different actor groups in Egypt and Tunisia.

The research that went into this thesis was carried out over the course of almost six years of field work first in Egypt and later in Tunisia. It started in 2005 before the commencement of the PhD with field research on what was at the time themed the ‘Caireen spring’ when a number of small protest movements challenged then President Mubarak and the perceived plotting for his son’s inheritance of power. Since then I collected more than 60 semi-structured qualitative interviews with activists, politicians, journalists, political analysts, Islamists, workers, and ordinary citizens.

Field research in the form of interviews was therefore an important part of data collection. The interviews helped to “reconstruct events the researchers have never experienced” (Rubin and Rubin 2011, 3) through the eyes of the participants, thereby providing depth and richness to the narratives of the Arab spring in the words of those who lived it. But interviews, especially the open-ended semi-structured ones collected for this thesis, do more than adding detailed description to the overall narrative. By exploring “various realities and perceptions” (Bauer and Gaskell 2000, 45) they enable a look behind the curtain separating agency from structure to find

illustrations of how structures as lived experiences manifest in actors' recounting of their own stories of the uprisings. Interviews with participants were thus an important source of gaining insights into the various versions of 'facts' on the ground, as well as an inspiration for generating and assessing ideas and hypotheses.

Where possible, interviewees were selected to collect a range of perceptions and narratives, resembling the range of representations and experiences of actors on the ground. Where time and resources constraints limited the availability of interviewees, participants were collected using a snowballing procedure that relied on established networks of trust. This method worked particularly well with movement actors in Egypt, especially with regard to the ideologically diverse youth revolutionary movements. In Tunisia, where organized movements were a more rare occurrence, participants were selected less via pre-established networks and more via a directed attempts to include actors from as many organizational vehicles as possible on the one hand, and participants outside of organizational networks on the other.

PART II

This second part is the most empirical part of the thesis. It serves two purposes. Firstly, while most people know the approximate parameters of the two uprisings, few are familiar with their exact path, what groups were involved first, which ones joined later, where did mobilization originate, and how did it spread. In order to establish that there were different actor constellations and sequences to the mobilizational process to begin with, we need to trace the empirical path of events starting from the 17th of December 2010 in detail. Secondly, the two historical chapters will provide the general structural backdrop to the later comparison. They will introduce the general trajectories in the political, economic and social development of Egypt and Tunisia. This part is necessary not only to give historical depth to the analysis but to situate the more focused part on the individual spheres within the more comprehensive description of both cases.

5. THE UPRISINGS

The following pages will therefore contain a detailed description of the two uprisings as they developed from Bouasizi's self-immolation in December 2010, the fall of Ben Ali to mass mobilization in Egypt and ending finally with Mubarak stepping down. While mobilization continued in both cases, the end date of both dictators' rule allows for an easier comparison in analytical terms. The day by day account thus outlines the main aspects of the puzzle that will occupy later sections of the thesis. It will show on the one hand how in both cases the mobilizational processes moved to encompass a cross section of nearly all societal strata. It also shows the stark contrast between mobilizational dynamics and sequences.

Tunisia

The Tunisian uprising, or the Sidi Bouzid revolution as it is commonly called in Tunisia itself, starts with a narrative. It is a compelling narrative, even a shocking one, that of the humble citizen Mohamed Bouasizi, a young man selling fruits and vegetables on the street of his fruit cart in order to eke out a humble living. On December 17th 2010, a female municipal official

not only stopped him but confiscated his scales, essential for carrying out his business, because he lacks a proper license. To add insult to injury, she not only threatened to take away his livelihood but when he complained, publicly humiliated him by slapping him in the face. He went to the local municipality to demand his scales back and when his request is rejected, driven to desperation, he set fire to himself, causing injuries so severe that he would die of them two weeks later. Mohamed Bouasizi's self-immolation and later his death would provide the backdrop to protests that, starting from his hometown Sidi Bouzid located in the neglected west of the country, would first set fire to the immediate region, then spread to other regions before finally reaching the capital, Tunis, where they would lead, to the astonishment of the national and international audience, to the first fall of a dictator in the phenomenon that would become the Arab Spring. Within the span of less than a month, lasting from December 17th 2010 to January 14th 2011 Tunisia's ruling autocrat of 23 years, President Zine Abdine Ben Ali had done the unthinkable and in fleeing the country had helped a national protest movement to success that nobody had really known existed.

The unequivocal starting date for the protests was December 17th 2010, the day of Mohamed Bouasizi's self-immolation. That very same day, protests were started by his family, relatives and friends, and some say also some local trade unionists protesting the circumstances which led to Bouasizi's tragic fate, as well as broader social injustices and economic hardships. (ICG 2011, 3) The protests spread all over the city, continuing for days, with youth voicing their frustration by attacking police and clashes lasting well into the night. (ICG 2011, 4) On December 22nd, another youth committed suicide by electrocuting himself after shouting "no more poverty, no more unemployment" according to a local trade unionist.¹²

The state reacted by trying to contain not only the protests, but the flow of information emanating from the region, increasing surveillance of journalists, and inhibiting access to the small town of Sidi Bouzid, Bouasizi's hometown.¹³ While the cities were in virtual lockdown, news of the events got out nonetheless, spreading via social media, in some cases even international news channels like Al Jazeera and France 24.

¹² „Le 22 décembre, un jeune Tunisien de Sidi Bouzid, s'était électrocuté au contact de câbles de haute tension après avoir escaladé un poteau électrique en criant qu'il ne voulait "plus de misère, plus de chômage", selon Ali Zari, un dirigeant syndicaliste“, France 24: De violents affrontements ont opposé la police aux manifestants près de Sidi Bouzid”, <http://www.france24.com/fr/20101224-violents-affrontements-ont-oppose-police-manifestants-amenzel-bouzayane-etudiants-sidi-bouzid>

¹³ IFEX, Police violently prevent journalists from covering Sidi Bouzid riots, 23.12.2010 http://www.ifex.org/tunisia/2010/12/23/makhlouf_assaulted/

Despite promises for an employment program worth \$10 million by the minister for development who traveled to Sidi Bouzid on the 23rd of December¹⁴, on December 24th protests spread, arriving in Menzel Bouzaienne, a small town of 5000 inhabitants 60 kilometers south of Sidi Bouzid. Protesters mourned their first casualties here, when two people died after getting shot in the chest by police, several more were injured. Local trade unionists continued to spread information on the events.¹⁵

While protests spread further in the region, arriving in Kairouan, Sfax and Ben Guerdane around December 25th,¹⁶ first attempts were made to bring them to Tunis on the 27th of December. Around one hundred opposition activists protested at the seat of the national UGTT bureau in downtown Tunis. The protests were easily contained by the police, which prevented them from leaving the space.¹⁷

It took the regime more than 10 days to finally react. In a public address President Ben Ali called the protests an exaggerated reaction due to political manipulation.¹⁸ Local activists of the general union UGTT tried to get involved, as did lawyers. Much of the information conveyed to international channels stemmed from local union activists, who tried to support protests and provide them with organizational space. Ten days into the protests the regime still tried to quiet them by making partial concession, without acknowledging their overall magnitude, however. Several governors were dismissed on the 29th of December, in addition to the Minister of Communication, Trade, and Handicraft, and the Minister of Religious Affairs.¹⁹ While protests continued unabated in the interior regions of Tunisia, by the end of December there were again attempts by more traditional opposition actors to bring the protests to the capital by using the relatively ‘safe’ square at the UGTT headquarter, and lawyers continued to organize demonstrations across Tunisia (ICG 2011, 5).

While the internet had been instrumental as a means for making information on and videos of the protests accessible to a broader national and international audience, the struggle between

¹⁴ AFP: Tunisia tensions boil over as teenager dies in riot, 24.12.2010, <http://www.google.com/hostednews/afp/article/ALeqM5ho0lZCwZNe5xBDc4Zi0PDG7VWL3g?docId=CNG.66d6de1802a8cf2712e2068cee292844.301>

¹⁵ See footnote 1

¹⁶ Al Jazeera: Timeline: Tunisia’s uprising, 23.01.2011

¹⁷ France 24: La jeunesse défie le président Zine el-Abidine Ben Ali, 28.12.2010, <http://www.france24.com/fr/20101227-jeunesse-defie-ben-ali-contre-chomage-precarite-tunisie-police-manifestations-sidi-bouzid>

¹⁸ All Africa: Tunisia: President Ben Ali’s Address to Tunisian People, 28.12.2010, <http://allafrica.com/stories/201012290880.html>

¹⁹ Nawaat: Tunisie: Revue de presse des événements de Sidi Bouzid, 31.12.2010, <http://nawaat.org/portail/2010/12/31/tunisie-revue-de-presse-des-evenements-de-sidi-bouzid/>

activists and the government intensified online as well, with the international hacker collective Anonymous starting attacks on government websites on January 2nd and 3rd 2011, while numerous activists reported their passwords for mail servers and social network sites stolen and their accounts disabled.²⁰ With a veritable cyber war going on between the regime and the protesters, the battle became one of free speech and censorship, as much as socio-economic grievances.

The protests started to acquire a more representative nature when the reopening of schools on January 3rd brought together students returning from holidays to join the protests in many cities. Even the UGTT leadership so far on the fence, drawn between the activism of local trade unionists and mediating attempts of the union's headquarter finally joined the fray, announcing a general strike for January 6th. Two weeks after his self-immolation Mohamed Bouasizi died in a hospital near Tunis on the 5th of January. Over 5000 people attended his funeral in Sidi Bouzid,²¹ giving new impetus to protests, which had started to taper off (ICG 2011, 6). One day later thousands of lawyers went on strike, while the regime tried to stop the new-found momentum by arresting popular bloggers and cyber activists, like Slim Amamou and Azyz Amamy.²²

But it was the days of the 8th, 9th and 10th of January - the massacres of Kassrine and Thala - that would cause outrage amongst Tunisians, leading to a wave of renewed protests all across the country. When special police forces start using live ammunition on January 8th to disperse protests in Kassrine, at least 21 people die. Rumors of snipers on rooftops shooting to kill abounded in a context where there was little solid information and the only information that did get out consisted in often gruesome videos posted online.²³ While the protests had always had political undertones in addition to the central social and economic demands, after the two massacres they took on a more overtly political and national character. The UGTT's leadership finally abandoned its attempts at mediation and positioned itself firmly on the side of the protesters on the 8th of January. The events set in motion a flurry of activity.

²⁰ Al Jazeera: Tunisia's bitter cyberwar, 06.01.2011, <http://www.aljazeera.com/indepth/features/2011/01/20111614145839362.html>

²¹ Le Monde: Le réveil tunisienne, 06.01.2012, <http://www.monde-diplomatique.fr/carnet/2011-01-06-Tunisie>

²² Al Jazeera: Thousands of Tunisian lawyers strike, 06.01.2011, <http://www.aljazeera.com/news/africa/2011/01/201116193136690227.html>

²³ Al Jazeera: The massacre behind the revolution, 16.02.2011, <http://www.aljazeera.com/indepth/features/2011/02/20111215123229922898.html>

On January 10th, President Ben Ali gave his second public speech addressing the protests²⁴, while mobilizational hotspots such as schools and universities were closed until further notice. Finally after almost three weeks of mobilization, popular contention outside of activist circles reaches Tunis.²⁵ The popular sector and working class quarters of Bab Jdid, Bab Eljazira, Boumendil, Bab Laassel, Bardo were the first ones in the capital to witness large scale mobilization, as did the university campuses in Mannouba, the National School of Engineering, and the high schools in Khaznadar, Mannouba, and Den Den. In Jenouba, protesters took over the town and set the RCD headquarters on fire, in Ben Guerdane 2000 people (basically the whole village) participated in a sit in, Ben Ali posters and billboards were ripped down by protesters.²⁶

More significantly, on the 10th of January the police disappeared from the streets, often replaced by the much more popular Tunisian army. Amidst further nation-wide protests, on the 11th of January, more neighborhoods of Tunis, including Zahrouni and Sidi Hsein joined in (Ayeub 2011, 475), while the police took violent actions against lawyers and artists trying to protest in downtown Tunis. The government made feeble attempts to curb continued mobilization by prohibiting café owners to show Al Jazeera, while the UGTT finally calls for a general strike.²⁷

On the 12th of January Sfax saw one of the largest demonstrations prior to the fall of Ben Ali, with nearly 30 000 joining the fray, enticed by the UGTT's call, bolstered by the "support of local businessmen fed up with the economic marginalization of the city in comparison with Sousse and Monastir, where the ruling families were well established" (ICG 2011, 6).

The government continued its attempts at stick and carrot, arresting the leader of the Communist Worker's Party of Tunisia (PCOT), imposing a night curfew on Tunis, but also dismissing the Minister of Interior, and announcing the release of protesters arrested up to that point. On the 13th of January, yet another demonstration in downtown Tunis was violently broken up, amid further nation-wide protests. Speaking in Tunisian dialect for the first time, Ben Ali held his 3rd, and as it turns out final speech, in which he "vowed not to seek re-election in 2014. He also promised to institute widespread reforms, introduce more freedoms into

²⁴ Brian Whitaker: Ben Ali's speech, 10.01.2011, http://www.al-bab.com/blog/2011/blog1101a.htm#todays_events_in_tunisia

²⁵ Nawaat: January 10th 2011: Manifestations à Tunis, Morts à Regueb #sidibouid, <http://24sur24.posterous.com/manifestations-a-tunis-morts-a-regueb-sidibou>

²⁶ Nawaat: January 10th 2011: Manifestations à Tunis, Morts à Regueb #sidibouid, <http://24sur24.posterous.com/manifestations-a-tunis-morts-a-regueb-sidibou>

²⁷ Brian Whitaker: Today's events in Tunisia, 11.01.2011, http://www.al-bab.com/blog/2011/blog1101a.htm#todays_events_in_tunisia

society, and to investigate the killings of protesters during demonstrations that have spread throughout the country over the past month. [...] In his speech, Ben Ali ordered state security forces not to fire at demonstrators and vowed to cut the prices of staples such as sugar, bread, and milk "Enough firing of real bullets," he said. "I refuse to see new victims fall." Ben Ali also promised to introduce more freedoms of information, assembly and speech in a society that has grown used to extreme censorship. After Ben Ali's speech, changes seemed to occur almost immediately, according to Reuters. Taoufik Ayachi, an opposition figure, and Naji Baghourri, a former journalists' union chief, appeared on television - an unheard-of event. Websites that were formerly blocked, such as YouTube, Dailymotion and the site for French newspaper *Le Monde*, suddenly became available. "I understand the Tunisians, I understand their demands. I am sad about what is happening now after 50 years of service to the country, military service, all the different posts, 23 years of the presidency," Ben Ali said. "We need to reach 2014 with proper reconciliation."²⁸ Despite Ben Ali's promises to stop the shooting, there were still reports of snipers killing protesters, however. The national leadership of the UGTT held onto its call for a general strike for the next day.

Even though his concessions were cautiously endorsed by parts of the population and some opposition politicians, amongst them Neïib Chebbi of the PDP, and Mustafa Ben Jaafar of the FDTL, the general mood was less easily swayed.²⁹ In the morning of the 14th of January thousands took to the streets to demand Ben Ali's immediate withdrawal from power, chanting 'degage' in a historic demonstration in front of the interior ministry in Avenue Bourguiba in the heart of Tunis. After a few hours the demonstration was violently dispersed, and in the afternoon Ben Ali announced a state of emergency forbidding the assembly of more than three people at a time, as well as a curfew beginning from 5pm onwards, allowing the army to shoot everyone who does not oblige. In the afternoon, Mohamed Ghannouchi, Ben Ali's prime minister announced the dismissal of most of the government, as well as the holding of parliamentary elections within six months' time. In the afternoon, rumors started to fly of President Ben Ali having fled the country, which become certainty at 6.40pm when Ghannouchi announced that he has temporarily taken over the functions of the presidency and will undertake the necessary economic and social reforms in cooperation with all parties and civil society.³⁰ It is confirmed that Ben Ali and his family have found refuge in Saudi Arabia.³¹

²⁸ AlJazeera: Tunisians cautious on concessions, 14.01.2011,
<http://www.aljazeera.com/news/africa/2011/01/201111441336340951.html>

²⁹Ibid

³⁰ Mohamed Ghannouchi: "J'exerce les fonctions de président de la République et appelle tous les fils et filles de la Tunisie à faire preuve de civisme afin de passer cette période difficile [...] Je m'engage à respecter la Constitution et

à entreprendre les réformes économiques et sociales annoncées, en concertation avec tous les partis politiques et l'ensemble de la société civile", France 24: Le président Ben Ali a quitté le pays, le Premier ministre assure l'intérim , 15.01.2011, <http://www.france24.com/fr/20110114-ben-ali-quitte-pays-pouvoir-premier-ministre-mohammed-ghannouchi-tunisie-interim>

³¹ While Ben Ali's flight from Tunis is certainly not the end of the story, with protests continuing on against Ghannouchi's caretaker government as well as the regime party RCD in the following months, in order to facilitate comparison and due to space constraints, for the time being we will chose Ben Ali's departure as cut off point for Tunisia's Sidi Bouzid revolution.

Egypt

The way the conventional story is told, the events that would turn into a revolution started when the popular Facebook group ‘We are all Khaled Said’ used its platform to call for a demonstration against torture and police brutality on January 25th 2011. This day marks ‘National Police Day,’ commemorating the role of the Egyptian police during the British occupation. The call that went out that day was far from being the first time that protest events for this specific day had been called for. Other than in the previous years, however, and inspired amongst other things by the recent, monumental events in Tunisia, this year’s call, which went out around the 8th of January, and was also publicized by TV channels such as Al Jazeera, quickly attracted the (virtual) support of hundreds of thousands of Facebook members.³² Behind the call was a conglomerate of members of different youth groups, among them the 6th of April movement (named after a general workers’ strike in April 2008), the Coalition to Support El-Baradei (a group in support of Mohamed El-Baradei and his potential bid for the presidency), the youth wing of the Democratic Front party, as well as the Justice and Freedom movement. The account of the lead up to these demonstrations reads like a spy novel, with secret daily meetings, and only five people to know the full plan, who then each directed a group of further 20 activists. These groups were to start protests from separate locations, which were later to join up.³³ In the run up to the 25th, activists distributed flyers instructing people on ‘How to Revolt’, which detailed not only their demands, but also strategic goals like the “seizure of key government buildings” or the “attempt to incorporate police and military officers into the ranks”, down to the appropriate clothing (goggles, scarves, comfortable shoes, flowers as signs of peacefulness) over trusted e-mail networks. Still, even in light of these preparations, the organizers themselves freely admitted that none of them actually believed they were starting a revolution.³⁴ This sentiment was only to change on the day itself, when what was expected to be a larger than usual demonstration, but nonetheless a singular event, for the first time managed to gather huge masses oftentimes spontaneously from the neighborhoods of which they passed through. They succeeded in capturing Midan Tahrir – the symbolic center of the revolution – if only till the night when the anticipated police crackdown finally occurred.³⁵ The same day the first ‘Friday of Anger’ to take place after the Friday prayers of the 28th of January was announced. In between the 25th and the 28th, protests erupted in a number of

³² Interview with activist, Cairo, 09.05.2011

³³ Interview with organizer and activist, Cairo, 28.04.2011

³⁴ Interview with leading activist, 28.04.2011, Cairo

³⁵ Interview with activist, 12.04.2014

Egyptian cities, which turned fiercely violent in the case of Suez, where battles with the police ensued for days to avenge the death of protesters.³⁶

The regime meanwhile, as much taken by surprise by the sheer number of protestors, and in a largely ineffective move to contain the anticipated protests on the 28th moved to disrupt first online services such as Facebook and Twitter. In the night from the 27th to the 28th, finally mobile phone service was cut off. The tactic of the regime to cut communication networks dramatically backfired in a context where people were already on the streets for Friday prayers, and those that were not, came to the streets simply to get information on what was happening on the ground. On this day, in Cairo alone, hundreds of thousands of protesters marched on the streets, chanting the by now well know slogan that united their demands, from economic to political - “the people want the overthrow of the regime”.³⁷ According to Al Jazeera, eleven people die that day, mostly in Suez where violence was wide-spread, over 1030 people get injured throughout the country.³⁸ This day also marks the first day of the ‘capturing of Tahrir, which was to remain in protesters hand throughout the revolution until the day President Mubarak finally stepped down on the 11th of February. While protesters were thus busy outfoxing the regime, the regime itself, shaken in its self-confidence by the events in Tunisia, reacted by oscillating between the tried and tested tactics of repression, while adding a few concessions. The first significant concession came during the President’s first speech in the night from January 28th to the 29th in which he offered the dismissal of the hugely unpopular Nazif government. The most notable feature of his speech, however, is a theme that would recur in the efforts of the Egyptian regime to remain in power - the contrast between the stability of the state and the chaos inflicted on society as a whole were the protests to continue and Mubarak to step down.³⁹ This strategy of playing on the fear of chaos and instability was backed by widespread reports of looting in Cairo, which many believe was carried out by agents of the regime itself, as well as the complete withdrawal of police from the city. That same day, Omar Suleiman, former security chief was appointed the first vice president of Egypt under Mubarak, putting the nail to the coffin that was the rumored aspirations of the President’s son, Gamal Mubarak’s, bid for power in the 2011 presidential elections. As Egypt’s police withdrew from the streets, the military appeared, while the state had effectively ceased to exist in Egypt’s countryside, where state presence had been traditionally weak. (Crisis Group 2011, 5)

³⁶ Crisis Group report, p. 3

³⁷ Crisis Group, p. 4

³⁸ Al Jazeera, Timeline: Egypt's revolution

³⁹ Reuters, Highlights: Egyptian President Hosni Mubarak's speech, 29.01.2011

While the regime was thus struggling to find the right strategy in dealing with the protests, the occupation of Tahrir was in full swing, with thousands having set up camp, and participants ranging from Cairo's poor to middle and upper class people, across the political spectrum, across religious divides. But while the numbers participating in the protests reached unprecedented heights, public opinion on the revolution was far from being uniform, fluctuating between support for the protesters and a wish for regaining stability. Two key events that signified this wavering support took place on the 1st and 2nd of February respectively. On the 1st of February President Mubarak held yet another speech, in which he not only offered constitutional amendments long sought after by Egypt's opposition forces, but also promised to not run again in the upcoming presidential elections, instead guiding a peaceful transition process in the upcoming six months till the next elections. Apart from these political concessions though, he also acknowledged the legitimate right of the youth to protest, portraying the escalation of the events that led to the current stalemate as the result of their manipulation by political forces.⁴⁰

At the same time, he appealed to the hearts of the people by citing his long years in the service of the country, his achievements during the war with Israel, and his desire to die on the soil of his homeland.⁴¹ This speech, for a short moment managed to shift the balance in Mubarak's favor, or as one activist observed, after this speech, "had there been a referendum on the presidency, Mubarak would have won."⁴² Thus, while the numbers protesting in Cairo and other cities at points approached millions of Egyptians (some say about 12 million were involved over-all), the President managed to garner the support of not a few Egyptians: "The president's speech on the 1st of February had an effect on people. This was when activists returning from Tahrir were attacked by normal people who were afraid that we were damaging the country."⁴³ This advantage was not to last and events the following day shifted the balance again back in favour of the protests. The infamous "battle of the camel" saw the largely peaceful anti-regime protests in Tahrir attacked by pro-Mubarak supporters on horses and camels armed with knives, sticks, and clubs.⁴⁴ The attacks which were largely believed to be orchestrated by supporters of Gamal Mubarak within the ruling 'National Democratic Party' left at least 15 dead and hundreds injured. (Crisis Group 2011, 8) Violence continues into the next days, with snipers

⁴⁰ Same as above.

⁴¹ Same as above.

⁴² Interview with activist, Cairo, 09.05.2011

⁴³ Interview with activist, Cairo, 09.05.2011

⁴⁴ AlJazeera: Timeline: Egypt's Revolution, 14.02.2011, <http://www.aljazeera.com/NEWS/MIDDLEEAST/2011/01/201112515334871490.html>

on rooftops killing at least five, and injuring many more.⁴⁵ While the regime thus stepped up its attempts at violently repressing protesters, it also increased its efforts at driving a wedge between the protesters and ordinary Egyptians. The state run media thus portrayed them relentlessly as infiltrated by foreign agents, the result of manipulation of obscure powers trying to profit from chaos in Egypt.⁴⁶ . On the 5th of February, in a desperate bid to save what could be saved, the President's son, the widely unpopular Gamal Mubarak, and with him the entire leadership of the equally unpopular ruling 'National Democratic Party' finally resigned, leaving the party that had effectively stopped operating at the start of the revolution head- and leaderless. On top of that Wael Ghoneim, head of the Arabic Facebook page of 'We are all Khaled Said,' gave an emotional interview after his release from prison that provoked an overwhelming amount of sympathy. Protesters' ranks swell again on the 7th and 8th of February, with Midan Tahrir and Cairo seeing some of the largest crowds since the start of the revolution.⁴⁷

These last days are characterized by the back and forth between the protesters and the regime, intertwined in a stalemate neither seemed to be able to decide. Protesters had become trapped inside the square, fearful of the consequences of not succeeding and the inevitable revenge on organizers and key figures.⁴⁸ The regime for its part continued to try a combination of intimidation, and partial concessions in a bid to split the opposition on the square. With the increasing wariness of general public time seemed to not be on the side of protesters. Not only had the lives of many ordinary Egyptians been interrupted for a considerable amount of time, but many of them believed that the concessions Mubarak had offered were sufficient. (Crisis Group 2011, 12)

The regime's fate was finally sealed when Egypt's workers appeared on the revolutionary stage, calling for general strikes on the 9th and 10th of February. Thus, many believe that it was the workers involvement into the protests, paralyzing what was left of the economy that actually led the military, and its representation in the Supreme Council of the Armed Forces (SCAF), to finally side against the regime. While the military had been welcomed by many protesters, they had so far played a rather ambiguous role.⁴⁹ On the 10th of February, however, the SCAF finally

⁴⁵ Al Jazeera: Timeline: Egypt's Revolution, 14.02.2011, <http://www.aljazeera.com/NEWS/MIDDLEEAST/2011/01/201112515334871490.html>

⁴⁶ Interview with Omar Suleiman, state television broadcast, 03.02.2011

⁴⁷ Al Jazeera : Timeline: Egypt's Revolution, 14.02.2011

⁴⁸ Interview with activist, Cairo, 28.04.11

⁴⁹ Interview with activists, Cairo, 28.04.11, 09.05.11, 07.05.11, see also: Jadaliyyah, English translation of interview with Hossam El-Hamalawy n the role of labor/unions in the Egyptian revolution, 30.04.11

sided with the protesters, releasing ‘Statement No 1’. That effectively removed Mubarak from power.⁵⁰

While Mubarak still clung to power following the military’s intervention, he did try to make some final concessions. They were too little too late, however. The condescending and paternalistic tone of his last speech⁵¹ in addition angered many, an anger that unleashed itself in renewed mass demonstrations well into the next day. On the 11th of February at 4pm in the afternoon Mubarak finally steps down. The protesters had won an impossible victory.

⁵⁰ Supreme Council of the Armed Forces Statement No. 1, <http://www.sis.gov.eg/Ar/Story.aspx?sid=44060>

⁵¹ BBC, Egypt Unrest: Full Text of Husni Mubarak’s speech, 10.02.11, <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-middle-east-12427091>

6. ROAD TO REVOLUTION – THE ORIGINS OF REGIMES AND STRUCTURES OF INCORPORATION

The preceding description of the mobilizational process in both Egypt and Tunisia shows that much of what protesters accomplished was due to their agency, determination and courage, as well as a good deal of contingency. However, agency, and contingency do not exist in a vacuum (and if they did indeed they could not move beyond mere randomness). We therefore need to complement the above account of the events themselves with an account of the enabling and constraining structural conditions within their social, cultural, political and economic environment. Before turning to the detailed comparison of the different spheres of interaction and mobilization, this part will therefore give a historical overview of the general trajectories of regime formation, consolidation, and change in Egypt and Tunisia.

Starting from independence in the 1950s, both regimes at a first glance seem remarkably similar in their developmental trajectories. Egypt and Tunisia both started out as post-colonial independence regimes, experimenting with socialist economic policies and state-led industrialization driven by import substitution in the 1960s. These economic policies were accompanied in both cases by populist measures of working class and popular sector incorporation. When failure became apparent by the end of the 1960s, both regimes emerged on a path of economic restructuring along neoliberal lines, and a concomitant reorientation of their social support coalition towards bourgeois social strata and private sector elites from the 1970s onward. After neoliberal stabilization programs were introduced, etatist policies continued to carry the day, however, leaving the economies of both Egypt and Tunisia only semi-transformed into a form of 'state capitalism'. They shared important political traits as well. Both were broadly classifiable as instances of post-populist personalist rule. Thus, in spite of their manifold individual variations, at least in analytical terms they experienced broadly similar developments, having undergone similar political and economic trajectories, situated within the same regional context.

Since the history of both countries is immeasurably rich, the historical summaries will follow the advice that *“summaries should focus on the outcomes that we wish to describe or explain.”*⁵² (King, Keohane and Verba 1994, 54) The empirical information collected will thus follow the theoretical argument about the importance of patterns of incorporation and the resulting

⁵² Italics in the original

political, economic and social consequences in both countries. More concretely, this historical part will be looking at each case through the lens of five factors: (1) the social and political composition of the regime; (2) its goals; (3) its instruments; (4) the society it faced and its way of dealing with societal forces; (5) the outcomes it intentionally and unintentionally created (such as class construction and change, economic crisis, institutional legacies). The information on these factors will be systematically collected across both Egypt and Tunisia, organizing it in a way that allows not only their description but makes general parallels and divergences visible. (King, Keohane, and Verba 1994, 45-46) Going along with our theoretical propositions, the main themes will therefore be regime maintenance in the context of profound structural changes affecting their basis within constellation of social classes, as well as the way in which changing source of regime support affected and shaped regime structures, and expressed themselves in its economic and social policies.

Tunisia

Similarly to Egypt, the origins of the political system as we find it today in Tunisia are found in the period of independence in the 1950s, when Tunisia like many of its regional neighbors rid itself of colonial rule in 1956. Other than Egypt, however, independence in Tunisia was the result of a negotiated elite bargain between French authorities and an indigenous Tunisian elite spearheaded by the nationalist Neo Dustour party under the leadership of Habib Bourguiba.

In their quest for independence, Tunisian nationalist leaders profited on the one hand from the country's relative lack of geopolitical importance, and on the other, and more importantly so, from the strong roots of the nationalist movement within society. At the heart of this nationalist movement stood the Neo-Dustour party, itself a split away from the more conservatively oriented Dustour (meaning Constitution) party in 1934. The original Dustour party, founded in 1920, was a mixture of different elements, not all of which were reconcilable: "It was a 'radical' group in its demands made on the French, including independence, yet it was socially and politically conservative. It was the first modern mass political party in Tunisia, but had little sense of organizational activity. It could claim national support, yet it certainly did not faithfully represent all the various interests in Tunisia, particularly the economically underprivileged and those classes being created or expanded by the colonial situation." (Brown 1964, 39) The classes underpinning the Destour - religious leaders, traditional landowning elites, merchants etc - as well as the background of its leadership in the old Tunis bourgeoisie contributed to their short-sighted view on societal developments, which would ultimately impact the party itself. The gravest oversight in this respect certainly concerned the development of an urban, wage-earning social stratum, as well as the rise of an alternative intelligentsia from a more modest background that had profited from increased avenues for education (French-Arab schools, and Sadiki College). (Brown 1964, 44) It was exactly this new intelligentsia, a class of educated professionals that was to split away from the Dustour and form the Neo-Dustour in 1934. In contrast to the Dustour party, which found its support within the traditional elite, the Neo-Dustour's appeal was strongest in the coastal towns and the Sahel region, where the new Middle Class was dominantly located. (Moore 1964, 81) With its rise not only did more radical views on independence enter into the political spectrum of Tunisia, but also a new elite, which shared some common characteristics: "a modest, popular background; a modern, secular upbringing; a modern-type middle-class employment; and a nationalist political socialization. [...] They were mostly employed in modern strata of the labor market, be it in the new liberal professions or in

the emerging public sector.” (Erdle 2010, 56) Thus, while the previous elite had gained elite status from inherited privilege, this new elite gained it via educational achievement. And while they were eager to establish independence from French rule, they did not reject the West as such, but rather strove to emulate it, to push Tunisia’s progress towards modernity so it could take its place as an equal among modern European nations. (Brown et al 1964, 69)

However, while Habib Bourguiba – a lawyer by training stemming from the Sahel region – perfectly embodied the rise of this new elite, he was not uncontroversial within the movement, which in itself harbored different political factions, some of which more progressive and some less. The leading figure of the more traditionalist camp was Salah Ben Youssef, then secretary general. The power struggle between the two almost brought the country to the brink of civil war, and Bourguiba only narrowly managed to decide it in his favor. Bourguiba represented the more westernized, secular elements of the Neo-Dustour, while Ben Youssef united more traditional elements that had rallied behind him after the demise of the old Dustour. When Bourguiba negotiated partial independence with the French authorities in 1955, Ben Youssef rejected this as insufficient, in favor of a more radical, pan-Arab solution. Things came to a head in October 1955 with Bourguiba expelling Ben Youssef from the party, swiftly moving to gain control of it a month after Ben Youssef’s expulsion. Bourguiba’s victory over his competitor could only be achieved via the last minute mobilization of the UGTT cadres, however. It did not entirely eradicate the threat emanating from Ben Youssef and his supporters. Centered on his hometown Djerba and its surroundings, the next few months saw a violent insurgency which could only be squashed with the help of the French colonial power as well as local UGTT militants. (Willis 2012, 39)

On 20 March 1956, France finally granted Tunisia full independence. Elections for the first Constituent Assembly taking place only five days later were thoroughly controlled by Bourguiba’s Neo-Dustour, granting him the job of prime minister on 11 April 1956. They subsequently led to the abolishment of the monarchy, the establishment of Tunisia as a republic, as well as Bourguiba’s election as president in 1957 (Murphy 1999, 49). Bourguiba’s ascent to power, where he would remain for the next thirty years, was complete.

Many observers of Tunisian politics have argued that the challenges Bourguiba faced in his ascent to power informed his later choices in alliance as well as institution building. Most immediately significant was his reliance on the UGTT as arguably the tipping point in the conflict against Ben Youssef in 1955. This support, borne out of the seemingly natural overlap of interests between Bourguiba and his ‘modernizing’ elites and the UGTT as representative of

a fairly new societal strata of an urban wage proletariat, resulted in guaranteeing the UGTT a substantial share in post-independence politics. The UGTT since 1954 had been led by Ahmed Ben Salah, a young Neo-Dustour activist with a socialist vision of Tunisia's development. In exchange for the UGTT's backing, Bourguiba declared his support for a socialist development program and during Tunisia's first legislative elections in 1956 in which the Neo-Dustour ran in a united front together with the UGTT, Bourguiba granted the union a substantial share of seats in the resulting National Assembly, as well as four ministerial posts in the new government. (Alexander 1996, 86) Thus, the UGTT, the only other organization with nationalist credentials and organizational power to rival the Neo-Dustour, became an integral element of Bourguiba's support coalition.

The second factor is found in the impact of Ben Youssef's struggle to gain control of the Neo-Dustour on Bourguiba. The uprising launched by Ben Youssef in Tunisia's hinterlands in 1955, it is said, instilled in Bourguiba a deep distrust of society. In addition, the fact that Ben Youssef found wide spread support not only in the traditional elite, but also amongst the dispossessed in Tunisia's interior provinces, brought home the insight that Tunisian society was far less progressive and modern as Bourguiba might have wished for. It could therefore only be brought into modernity under strict supervision and guidance from above: "The ease with which large numbers of Tunisians had flocked to Salah Ben Youssef severely undermined Bourguiba's faith in the rationality and trustworthiness of the Tunisian population. He became convinced that Tunisians 'lacked the political sophistication to evaluate wisely options confronting them' which led him to believe that a strong hand was required to lead Tunisia towards progress and away from harmful and distracting alternatives!' He regarded regular elections as 'feverish periods' liable to aid 'the proliferation of germs dangerous to the health of the country.' Thus formal institutions or mechanisms designed to allow ordinary Tunisians to participate in the decision-making process were kept to a minimum in favor of a form of authoritarian paternalism that sought to guide Tunisia along a 'correct path.'" (Willis 2012, 71)

From the moment he acquired it, Bourguiba thus moved to accumulate and centralize power in his own hands. This applied as much to the power localized in the state apparatus, as to the Neo-Dustour itself. The implementation of a majoritarian voting system in the run up to the elections for the National Assembly secured almost complete control by the Neo-Dustour. The constitution subsequently adopted by this very National Assembly provided Bourguiba with far reaching powers: "He was concurrently head of state, head of government, chairman of the Destour, minister of defense, and commander in chief of the armed forces. As such, he was

endowed with sweeping policy-making and nominating powers. He could determine the overall guidelines of public policy; make or veto legal acts (which included the right to propose legislation and to rule by decree); appoint or demote senior state officials (ministers, governors, ambassadors, judges, as well as the heads of the police and the army); and last but not least dissolve parliament and declare a state of emergency.” (Erdle 2010, 63) After successfully using the party’s organizational monopoly to capture the state and its institutions, Bourguiba then moved to subdue the party more fully by enacting a series of internal reforms in 1958. (Erdle 2010, 63) These reforms established the Neo-Dustour as a formidable instrument of control in Bourguiba’s hands by restructuring it to reflect and parallel the organizational apparatus of the state. (Murphy 1999, 51) While the ‘winner takes it all’ principle introduced by the majoritarian voting system ensured that the only option available for politically active Tunisians who wanted to make their vote count was the Neo-Dustour, the 1958 reforms brought the Neo-Dustour under an even firmer grip. The reforms instituting party structures, which reached further into society, were designed to mirror those of local and regional government administration. (Willis 2012 65). However, it was not simply a case of state and party structures mirroring each other, but Bourguiba systematically moved towards a comprehensive interpenetration between the two, creating a “full-fledged party-state complex during the following decade. Party members began to fill the upper echelons of the state bureaucracy, while government members moved in parallel to assume control of the ruling party’s leading bodies.” (Erdle 2010, 67)

In parallel to Bourguiba consolidating his control over the state and the party, he also sought to create an elite that was ever more dependent on him. To this end, not only did he frequently reshuffle ministers and important figures to prevent potential challengers from building up independent bases of support, but he also gradually replaced members of the elite. This affected particularly those that had risen with him – and hence commanded legitimacy that was tied to their role within the party during independence, instead of legitimacy that based on ties to him – which were replaced by a newer, more technocratic elite. (Willis 2012, 60)

Being essentially pro-Western, Bourguiba needed this full control to modernize the country after the example of Western European countries on a social, as well as an economic level. At the helm of the system stood Bourguiba as embodiment of the nation. While the system put into place thus certainly qualifies as a case of charismatic leadership, power remained a means to an end, and not an end in itself, necessary to implement his vision for Tunisia. (Willis 2012, 52). Bourguiba subsequently moved to introduce far reaching social reforms, the most famous of which was the introduction of a new Personal Status Code in 1956. One of the most modern

legal codes in the Arab world, this “collection of legal statutes that governed matters of marriage, divorce, child custody and inheritance, and was traditionally based on Islamic Sharia law” granted women for the first time “the right to contract into a marriage voluntarily, making divorce subject to judicial processes (thus abolishing the practice of unilateral repudiation by a husband) and banning polygamy” (Willis 2012, 74), effectively providing for legal equality of women in Tunisia. Furthermore, Bourguiba undertook a substantial revision of the educational system, expanding educational opportunities, while at the same time establishing a more unified educational system, incorporating religious schools into the system, and integrating the famous Zeytouna mosque into the newly created University of Tunis. In the judicial realm, Sharia courts were abandoned in favor of state tribunals. Overall, while these reforms created a more unified, secular and modern legal framework in the realm of social and judicial policy, they also abolished pockets of institutional independence, rooted in particular within the traditional Islamic institutions. In the course of these reforms they were placed under state supervision, as in the case of the Zeytouna mosque, or replaced entirely with state organs as in the case of the courts. (Erdle 2010, 65)

Bourguiba’s vision of a unified Tunisia found its expression politically in the corporatist nature of the institutions he designed. They achieved control by eliminating free spaces of activity and articulation and incorporating organizations and broad social groups into a system of state supervision and control. During its early years the regime endeavored to establish a host of corporatist organizations under the umbrella of the single party, incorporating groups ranging from professionals, farmers, students, businessmen, women, and most importantly workers. These organizations were either headed by party members, financially dependent on the party, or deeply penetrated by it. (Murphy 1999, 54) In classical corporatist fashion, they allowed for some degree of interest articulation on part of its constituency, but only as long as it remained within the confines of party loyalty and refrained from questioning the basic tenets of the system. The prime example of Tunisian corporatism since the inception of the regime was of course the UGTT.

In its origins, the UGTT was an independent organization rivaling the Neo-Dustour in terms of nationalist credentials and organizational power. After it split away from its French counterparts in the 1940s, it was the first independent trade union federation not just in the MENA, but in Africa more generally. Beyond that, it was an integral part of the nationalist struggle against French colonial rule, and of the support coalition of the Neo-Dustour’s political struggle. (Willis 2012, 172) Around the time of independence the UGTT boasted a relatively large

membership, with numbers steadily increasing from around 100,000 workers in the early 1950s (Alexander 1996, 81) to around 180,000 at the time of independence. (Bellin 2002, 93) What is more, it had secured a host of prestigious positions within the post-independence government through its support of Bourguiba against Ben Youssef. At least on a rhetorical level, in exchange for the UGTT's support, Bourguiba pledged his support for socialist policies.

In the second half of the 1950s, the UGTT's relationship with the Neo-Dustour became so close that some observers spoke of it as little more than the worker wing of the party. Between the two organizations, there was a quite substantial overlap in membership and they joined forces in a 'National Front' in the elections for the National Assembly in 1956 and 1959. However, while Bourguiba needed the UGTT's organizational prowess, he never intended to share power. Instead he worked on subjugating the UGTT by offering substantial benefits for cooperation (seats, positions, organizational support etc), while cleverly exploiting internal rivalries to pluralize and divide its leadership. By the late 1950s, several factions had emerged within the UGTT, some of which more ideologically oriented, as that led by the staunchly leftist university professor Ahmed Ben Salah, and some were more base oriented, as that led by Bourguiba loyalist Habib Achour. When in 1956 the former displayed too much political ambition, it was neutralized in favor of the more base-oriented faction. (Bellin 2002, 94)

This triple commitment of trying to represent workers' interests within a rapidly developing political and economic context, of representing the state and its interests in the context of UGTT's participation in government, and of obeying the limits of party loyalty essentially produced a tamed union that moderated workers' demands at the base in favor of national development, and the security of their own positions. Between "1955 and 1961 the UGTT made no wage demands, even though the cost of living had risen 11% by 1960. Wages remained largely frozen throughout the 1960s, save for a brief reprieve in 1965. [...] To retain the loyalty of workers, the trade union focused on projects that would advance workers' welfare without inflating wage levels, such as the development of literacy programs for working people, the creation of worker vacation colonies [...]. The UGTT gave itself over to being little more than the party-state's transmission belt, popularizing and defending the government's policies to the working class rather than aggregating and communicating the interests of workers to the state." (Bellin 2002, 97) What resulted was thus a classical 'social pact' bargain in which the state incorporated workers by providing for material gains and some extent of interest articulation in exchange for forgoing challenges and demands for political participation.

In terms of economic policy, Bourguiba's rhetorical endorsement of socialism to placate UGTT's leadership in the mid-1950s had not actually led to its implementation. To the contrary, in the early years of independence, up until the early 1960s, Bourguiba actually endorsed private sector growth. For political as much as for practical reasons, Bourguiba initially shunned a statist development strategy in favor of the continuation of a more liberal approach. Bourguiba himself, while certainly interested in economic development, was not necessarily ideologically committed to a certain form of that development. Instead, his hope for continued foreign, and especially French aid, his fear of capital flight, as well as the fact that Tunisia was rather capital poor resulted in him favoring an approach in which the private sector would take the lead. In lieu of a substantial indigenous private sector, the Tunisian state hoped by offering substantial benefits it could encourage foreign capital to remain within the country and indigenous capital to take a more proactive role in the industrialization of the economy: "The state preserved (and improved on) pre-existing colonial decrees that guaranteed loans and extended tax holidays to investors in industry. It set in place prohibitive customs tariffs to protect infant industries and, in some sectors, expanded this protection to include comprehensive import bans." (Bellin 2002, 18)

To no avail, however: not only did capital flight prove endemic despite the state's effort to project a secure investment climate. But Tunisia's indigenous private businessmen eschewed the role the state had assigned to them, choosing instead to invest their capital in ventures that offered easy profit after the departure of the French. The result was a stagnating economy that threatened to produce negative growth by the beginning of the 1960s. (Bellin 1994, 428) In an effort to counter negative growth and salvage what was left of the economy, Bourguiba enacted a sweeping strike, appointing Ahmed Ben Salah as Minister of Finance and Planning in 1961, finally making real on his prior endorsement of socialism. Ben Salah, who had fallen out of favor in the mid-1950s for what was perceived as an excess of ambition proceeded to institute far reaching reforms, substantially restructuring Tunisia's economy, and embarking on nearly a decade of state-led, import-substituting development under socialist auspices. Etatism was firmly anchored with the publication of the first Three-Year Plan in 1962, and socialism as a guiding principle highlighted by renaming the Neo-Dustour to the Socialist Dustour Party (PSD) in 1964. While Bourguiba's commitment to Socialism remained questionable, the failure of the national bourgeoisie domestically, as well as regional developments (amongst them most notably Nasser's experiment with Socialism in Egypt) seemed to make a radical reorientation not only necessary, but also possible. Ben Salah was thus given the opportunity to implement his ideas in the realm of economic policy. This included centralized economic planning, a

forced collectivization program in agriculture, and a massive expansion of state investment in the industrial sector, resulting in huge increases in state owned enterprises (SOE), and public sector organizations (PSO). They rose from 25 in 1960 to around 185 in 1970, and the state's share of gross investment increasing from 1,8 % to 33,7% (Erdle 2010, 73), making "the state the country's largest proprietor, producer, investor, and employer - and the prime 'mover and shaker' in economic and financial affairs." (Erdle 2010, 74) However, Tunisian Socialism in the 1960s by no means meant a renunciation of the private sector or of private property more generally. Indeed, during that very same period, the private sector benefitted from state credits and assistance amounting for up to 75% of total investment, supporting the development and growth of its bourgeoisie instead of stunting it. (Alexander 1996, 107-08) The state thus took over centralized planning and industrialization from above as an emergency measure born out of necessity rather than something it had planned on doing to begin with.

At the party congress in Bizerte in 1964, which also saw the renaming of the Neo-Dustour into the PSD, Bourguiba completed what Erdle has called the 'governmentalization' (Erdle 2010, 72) of the party, and its fusion with the structures of the state on a national, as well as a local level. Henceforth, previously elected sheikhs at the village level were replaced by omdas, appointed from above; election was furthermore replaced by appointment at the level of the Dustour's (at least nominally) main decision-making body, the political office. The 1960s thus represent not only the height of Tunisian populism but also the height of the corporatist restructuring of its political and associational landscape. The party and the associations had two similar functions within the system: "both should explain public policies to their members, and mobilize popular support for them. Both should serve as intermediaries, conveyor belts and feedback channels, between the state and the nation. Their assigned missions, however, differed in one important aspect. While the former should integrate the population along politico-ideological lines, the latter would do so along socio-professional ones. This meant that the Destour and its satellites were permitted to promote the concerns of their constituencies, but should refrain from aggregating them into coherent programs of political action." (Erdle 2010, 72)

On a societal level, the state continued to expand its output within the context of its 'social contract' with the population whereby it provided for the economic and social necessities of its citizens in return for political acquiescence. Thus, between "1962-69, the government invested 90 million dinars a year in a broad range of social and economic projects. As a result of these efforts, the population living below the poverty level fell from 70-75% to 40-45%. Expenditures

for education, roads, water and electricity, and health care increased dramatically.” (Alexander 1996, 116-17)

Ultimately, by the end of the 1960s, owing to a mixture of economic as well as political pressures, Ben Salah, and with him Tunisia’s socialist experiment fell from grace and Ben Salah was tried on charges of corruption and sentenced to ten years of hard labor in 1969. (Erdle 2010, 75) While some observers attribute his downfall to the economic shortcomings of his policies, which suffered from many of the usual side effects of import substitution, such as inefficient production, the balance of trade in deficit, a persistent fiscal crisis, as well as the failure of corporatization policies (Bellin 2002, 23), others see its reason in the threat he posed to political elites. Whatever the concrete reason, the time preceding and following his departure was one of profound crisis for the regime Bourguiba. Having to concede failure on an integral part of official state doctrine pointed to cracks within the picture of Bourguiba as infallible father of the nation who knows best. This contributed to an overall atmosphere of increasing political pluralization within the party as well as without by the end of the 1960s.

This pluralization was abetted by the fact that on an ideological level, the failure of Ben Salah’s economic project and the complete turnabout towards state capitalism under his successor Hedi Nouria discredited the political imagery of the past to some extent. This applied to the ‘Bourguiba knows best’ dogma in particular, but also to the ‘national unity’ rhetoric more generally, which had served to justify the almost complete centralization of competences and powers within Bourguiba’s hands for the sake of developing and modernizing the nation. While pluralism had thus been painted as detrimental for unity and the health of the body politic, the liberalization of the economy explicitly introduced the concept of competition and diversity into official discourse. The nation was now recognized as and allowed to consist of a diversity of social groups and viewpoints. (Erdle 2010, 82) After the abrupt dismissal of Ben Salah in 1969, Bourguiba thus faced substantial criticism from *within* the PSD. Things came to a head at the party’s congress in Monastir in 1971. Led by former Minister of Defense Ahmed Mestiri, a liberal faction had emerged that demanded political liberalization to accompany the economic opening, calling for more democracy within as well as without the party. When Mestiri’s faction was close to winning against Bourguiba’s, Bourguiba intervened and proceeded to reassert control by purging the party from overtly liberal (associated with Mestiri) and socialist (associated with Ben Salah) elements. The result was a tightening of authoritarianism, with the party congress in 1973 voting to formally reject multi-partyism, electing Bourguiba President for life the following year. (Alexander 1996, 153) In the economic sphere, Ben Salah’s dismissal

resulted in the appointment of former director of Tunisia's Central Bank Hedi Nouira as prime minister, who was to pursue a more economically liberal approach. He dismantled the collectivization programs, opened the economy towards the outside, and further encouraged the private sector to adopt export oriented strategies. This policy known as 'infatih' (opening), which we also saw in Egypt, relied on native entrepreneurs to take the lead in industrialization and economic development. To this end, the state offered a host of benefits, tax breaks, protected domestic markets, state provided credit, and monopolies that virtually guaranteed profits through price controlling and government contracts. Far from opening the markets to increase profitability and competitiveness, entrepreneurs were to be enticed by state provided special rents into partaking in industrialization. (Bellin 1994, 428) However, while two successive investment laws liberalizing the economy were passed in 1972 and 1974, the state remained in charge of much of heavy industry intensive in cost, as well as strategically important sectors of the national economy, such as mining, transport, energy, and banking. (Erdle 2010, 80) Thus, far from a genuine move towards a free market based economy, Tunisia turned to a mixed approach, combining market and planning in a form of 'state capitalism'. This ultimately left the state not only in charge of key sectors of the economy and master of an ever growing array of SOEs, but also of the distribution of access to the economic boom of the 1970s. In order to offer entrepreneurs protection not only from foreign but also domestic competition, the state used a licensing system, which established quasi-monopolies in many sectors of the national economy, and left the state to decide the point at which a sector had reached saturation and no further licenses were granted. (Bellin 2002, 26) In addition to economic access thus being dependent on state facilitation, policies in the 1970s furthered a tighter alliance between state and private sector elites. The state designed a furlough policy which enabled the bureaucracy to function as a training ground for private sector entrepreneurs. It permitted them to take a two year leave of absence to succeed in the private sector during which they were guaranteed the possibility of returning to their old jobs. This resulted in a substantial share of private sector entrepreneurs with roots in the public sector. (Bellin 2002, 25)

While the 1970s were a time of unprecedented economic growth, they were also a time of increasing gaps in income and living standards between Tunisia's have and have-nots. The regime tried to offset the potential conflict this might cause by retaining price controls on all essential staples, leading to a growth in the total amount of subsidies from only 10 million dinars at the beginning of the decade to over 80 million dinars in 1986. (Murphy 1999, 90) However, while the state guaranteed the provision of basic goods and food stuff for the more disadvantaged sectors of society, disparities nonetheless grew substantially. In addition, the state

increasingly struggled to provide adequate employment for its growing population: “Wage earners did not fare so well. Although average income climbed steadily, the percentage of national income allotted to salaries dropped. Moreover, the high production costs of local goods and the expense of now readily available imports drove consumer prices upward twice as rapidly as salaries. Disparities between rich and poor were hardly unknown, but the mechanisms of the liberal economy dramatically deepened the gulf between the classes.” (Perkins 2004, 164).

Not only did the neoliberal turn increase the burden on the wage-earning population, however, but as result of the regime’s drive for social modernization, population growth accelerated. The problem was exacerbated by the fact that the work force grew even more rapidly, averaging 3.1 % between 1975 and 1984, in contrast to a population increase of 2.5 %. (Ghose 1991, 9) This was particularly problematic for a growing number of university graduates which had benefitted from educational expansion in the 1960s, but was faced now with decreasing possibilities to realize the social mobility benefits promised by the regime. The resulting increase in unemployment posed significant problems. With the private sector lagging in creating the jobs necessary to fulfill the demand, the regime continued to rely on the public sector to at least partially absorb the wave of surplus labor, especially among Tunisia’s educated. However, unemployment remained high, with many Tunisians seeking to escape by either internal or external migration. Internal migration was pushed by the fact that despite some efforts on part of the regime, development was highly uneven, with interior regions benefitting comparatively less from infrastructural and industrial development. Thus, there resulted a steady flow of rural migrants to the cities in the coastal areas, resulting in an increase of the urban work force of about 6.6 % compared to the 2.6 % growth of the rural one. (Ghose 1991, 9) In addition to unemployment driving a rural exodus, many Tunisians chose to leave the country altogether, with labor migration abroad accounting for almost one third of the labor force between 1962 and 1981. (Ghose 1991, 25) Labor migration thus represented a way of relieving pressure from the domestic labor market, while at the same time generating a steady stream of rents. The income generated through workers’ remittances from abroad was negligible at first. By the late 1970s it contributed to nearly $\frac{1}{4}$ of the GDP. (Ghose 1991, 4) This signifies how rents contributed to heightening living standards, also in rural areas where the state was either not capable, or willing to create sustainable structures for growth. It also signifies, however, the extent of the demographic pressure the regime’s modernization policies had inadvertently created, which could not be absorbed by the national economy alone.

After the failed experiment in populism during the 1960s, the 1970s thus saw a weakening of the organic link between the nation and the state that Bourguiba had tried to create. Instead the regime seemed to have moved to pragmatically ensure that people could make a living by upholding basic subsidies and allowing often clandestine migration abroad. At the same time, key groups, which were seen as having the organizational potential to obstruct the process, remained selectively incorporated. Particularly crucial in this respect was ensuring the continuing cooperation of the UGTT's leadership. Both the union's leadership and its rank and file were worried that the turn towards liberalism would have profound implications for the workplace. In exchange for moderating base demands and actions, the leadership was thus to gain more say in matters of wage negotiations. In an effort to placate the union, the regime gave the UGTT the right to defend workers' interests by entering into direct, state supervised bargaining with the employers association UTICA (Union Tunisienne de l'Industrie, du Commerce et de l'Artisanat). In 1972, the regime established the first collective wage bargains between the two, which over the course of the 1970s substantially raised the average real wage for workers. However, even though the government strengthened the UGTT's bargaining position vis-a-vis employers, the 1970s were a period of continued labor unrest. This culminated in the infamous general strike of 1978, which resulted in the brutal repression of the UGTT. The reasons for this persistent unruliness can be traced to a combination of two factors - the general political climate at the time, and organizational changes within the union.

In the aftermath of the Ben Salah debacle, Bourguiba had moved to (re-)promote Ben Salah's long-time rival Habib Achour to the head of the UGTT. However, while Achour himself might have been a Bourguiba loyalist, he was not completely insulated from rank and file pressure within the union. In lieu of institutionalized channels for expressing differing views on Tunisian political life, and combined with structural changes within the UGTT, the union thus developed into a focal point for dissent. In the 1960s, Achour, in a bid to secure his support basis with the union, had been working to bring in new elements. Between 1970-72 alone 17 new national federations were established, consisting mostly of white collar federations such as engineers, bank employees, and university professors. (Alexander 1996, 180) It was these well-educated new cadres who subsequently contributed to a substantial politicization of the UGTT and increased labor militancy. Another factor in explaining the UGTT's politicization by the end of the 1970s is the preceding politicization of Tunisia's student body. Upon entry into professional life, these former students brought along the more politicized outlook they had acquired in the late 1960s, and early 1970s.

While the union leadership tried to ensure worker moderation, the union basis was engaged in increasingly militant worker action, with strikes increasing in frequency and duration. (Bellin 2001, 102) In trying and often succeeding to pressure the union leadership into adopting more radical stances and officially endorsing strike action, they launched a multitude of strikes that originated within the rank and file of the union. When leftist cadres began occupying more central positions due to their backing by Habib Achour, the rhetoric of the union also politicized and the cross connections with the student movement increased. In 1977 the conflict between the union and the state finally escalated. UGTT radicals had not only publicly pondered the idea of forming a workers' party, but successfully forced Achour to resign from his position in the political bureau of the PSD. When the PSD tried to regain control by intervening in UGTT leadership matters and union finances, the UGTT responded by calling for a general strike on the 26th of January 1978. (Bellin 2002, 106) Repression was swift and severe. The state called on the military to intervene and squash riots which had erupted in several cities, resulting in the death of at least 51 people and leaving several hundreds more injured. In the immediate aftermath, Achour and 30 UGTT officials were arrested, and following trial, condemned to harsh sentences. (Murphy 1999, 60) As a result of the 1978 general strike the UGTT entered a period of crisis, with most of its leadership imprisoned and its political ambitions subdued.

Particularly noteworthy in the conflict was the fact that just before the final escalation, the UGTT had signed a so called social contract with the state in a bid to placate its base. This social contract guaranteed a 33% increase in the minimum wage as well as a promise of price stability on basic commodities during the duration of the 1977-1982 five year plan, in exchange for an increase in worker productivity. While these conditions intended to guarantee social peace seem quite generous at first, they were nonetheless rejected by the base for lack of consultation. (Disney 1978, 13) The decision to enter into explicit conflict with the regime on part of the union base despite the quite generous offer shows that workers' contention was driven by genuinely political goals, amongst them their dissatisfaction with the corporatist arrangements tying the union leadership closer to the regime than to its base. It also, however, shows the structural disconnect between organized workers and the general population. While Tunisians employed in the informal sector, unemployed or forced to migrate abroad suffered economically from the first attempts at structural readjustment, the workers, due to their strategic position with the regime's corporatist framework actually managed to negotiate gains. The disproportionate bargaining power of the union relative to its actual bargaining weight in terms of numbers, as well as the self-confident way in which workers on the ground organized to

press for their demands indicates that both workers and the regime shared an understanding of the structural position as well as the power associated with that position that was not necessarily due to entirely structural constraints but to subjective assessments of power relations.

What made contestation with the union even more problematic for the regime from a strategic point of view was that strikes, often wildcat strikes organized from within the union base, were increasingly joined by university students. The respective student union, the Union General des Etudiants Tunisien (UGET), had developed into a veritable hotbed of contestation from the mid-1960s onwards, a development that increased in prominence after the dismissal of Ahmed Ben Salah. While the Neo-Dustour had its own student organization, the Jeunesse Destourienne, it maintained close corporatist ties with the official student union, the Union Général des Étudiants de Tunisie (UGET). How tightly intertwined the UGET and the party were during and after independence becomes apparent by the fact that its foundation in 1953 in Paris happened under the auspices of the Neo-Dustour. (Moore and Hochschild 1968, 23) With students closely resembling the party elite in terms of ideological outlook, educational background, as well as socio-economic origins, the UGET until well into the 1960s resembled a transmission belt for regime policies as well as training ground for future political elites more than a genuine representation of student interests. With excellent employment opportunities awaiting university graduates, and the chance to rise within the ranks of the party, control of the UGET functioned smoothly. While its leadership was fully co-opted, the regime exercised control in a flexible manner, allowing for some degree of freedom of expression, for as long as it did not translate into action. (Moore and Hochschild 1968, 32) Fissures started to appear by the mid-1960s. Initially centering on university related issues, protests started to increase in frequency. By 1967, they encompassed broader issues, fueled by the disaster of the 1967 Arab-Israeli war. What really shook the relationship between the students and the regime was the abrupt dismissal of Ahmed Ben Salah in 1969. The admission of fallibility on part of the regime, and the intra-elite as well as societal conflicts surrounding the affair gave more credence to those fractions within the UGET, which were pushing for greater autonomy from the Neo-Dustour. (Entelis 1974, 547-49) This momentary loss of control, which was to last well into the 1970s, while in some way contextually dependent on domestic political events, in others was the outcome of structural changes induced by regime policies themselves. Thus, the modernization driven educational expansion had resulted in a sharp increase in the number of students. With Bourguiba trying to build a modern state via the bureaucratic apparatus, channeling these students into the state bureaucracy initially succeeded in satisfying the increased demand for employment. However, by the end of the 1960s, the absorptive capacities of the state had begun

to falter: “What has hit the students particularly hard has been the drastic reduction in employment opportunities after graduation. It appears that the elite’s mobilization of the educated young towards modernist goals has been extended beyond the regime’s distributive capabilities and resources.” (Entelis 1974, 549) In 1971 at a student union congress in Korba a regime loyal leadership was elected to the board of the UGET in openly manipulated elections. (Entelis 1974, 561) The aftermath of these elections saw considerable student mobilization between 1971-72, leading to the temporary closure of the University of Tunis, and severe repression of protesting students. (Entelis 1974, 552) Repression could not, however, curb student contention, and the 1970s saw an increasing degree of cooperation between students and more politicized rank and file members of the UGTT. In the aftermath of the violent repression of the 1978 general strike, many students at university and in high school went on solidarity strikes to protest government brutality, despite the warnings of the Ministry of Education.

That both the students and the union politicized in the 1970s is not only due to the contentious nature of that particular period, but to the inherently transient nature of the student body itself.⁵³ Thus, as we have seen earlier, those union federations that were the most contentious were mostly white collar federations made up of former university graduates. When students that had become politicized in the late 1960s/early 1970s left the university to go on to professional careers, many of them brought with them a more politicized outlook on life and on the potential and actual function of the UGTT itself. The UGET’s struggle for its independence ultimately remained unsuccessful, however. With its contentious leaders graduating into professional life and regime repression on the increase, no new contentious leadership managed to emerge and consolidate itself. By the end of the decade, the UGET had returned to its former docility. In addition to forming what was to become the leadership generation of future opposition parties, the student movement, however, in one way or another also contributed to the formation and rise of the Islamist movement, which was to become the only viable challenge to an increasingly authoritarian regime in the 1980s.

Originating in discussion groups that had formed in the mid-1960s within the Zeytouna mosque in Tunis, a feeling of alienation by the overt secularism of post-independence Tunisia led to the formation of the Jamaa Islamiyyah (Islamic Group). (Willis 2012, 160) In an effort to counter leftists influence on the university campuses, the state actively encouraged the Jamaa Islamiyyah by inviting them to join the Society for the Preservation of the Quran set up after

⁵³ Interview with activist, 16.08.2012, Tunis

the abandonment of Salahism in 1969. Originally they were a religious group taking advantage of organizational opportunities provided by a state in need for new allies. In the course of the more contentious atmosphere of the 1970s, however, and the increasing disaffection of broad strata of society with widening social disparities, the group took on a more explicitly political tone. In 1979, the group elected Rachid Ghannouchi as its leader. In 1981, they renamed themselves into the Islamic Tendency Movement (MTI) and announced their intention to enter the formal political process. (Willis 2012, 164) Several reasons may account for the MTI's increasing politicization in the course of the 1970s. On the one hand, the economic downturn of the late 1970s exacerbated economic grievances among the general population on the societal level. On the other hand the violent escalation of the labor-state conflict in 1978 rallied many critical voices behind the UGTT. By the early 1980s, the MTI had gathered enough confidence to openly challenge the state: "Over the next two years the MTI developed local and regional structures, and at a press conference in June 1981, its newly-formed provisional executive bureau presented itself and its platform to the public. The MTI officially called for a reconstruction of economic life on a more equitable basis, the end of single-party politics, and a return to the 'fundamental principles of Islam' through the purging of well-entrenched social decadence. Further, the MTI representatives announced that they were seeking recognition as a political party according to guidelines established by the government the preceding autumn." (Waltz 1986, 653) Repression was swift, and shortly thereafter most of the MTI's leaders were imprisoned.

The early 1980s were thus a period of crisis for the regime in which the partial break down of the social bargain between state and society led to increasing societal contention. There were substantial differences between the 1970s and the 1980s, however. The 1970s saw discontent due to organized groups, which were technically incorporated into the corporatist structure of the regime - the UGTT and the UGET - trying to renegotiate the details of their bargain by using contentious action to press for leverage and independence. The progressively worsening economic conditions, as well as Bourguiba's increasingly authoritarian and erratic leadership style saw this organized discontent seep into broader parts of the population. Not organized along corporatist lines, they increasingly felt excluded from previous social bargains. This was expressed in several outbursts of discontent that severely tested the regime's capacity for control. Many of these outbursts originated in the south and west of Tunisia, regions traditionally impoverished compared to the Sahel region and the rich coastal towns. The first of these incidents took place in 1980, when Tunisian dissidents, backed by Libya, attacked the town of Gafsa, one of the most important towns in the impoverished south, close to the Libyan

border. It took the government a week to subdue the rebellion by relying on the armed forces yet again. While ultimately successful, the incident demonstrated the weakness of government control as well as the degree of discontent simmering especially in Tunisia's west and south. (Vandewalle 1988, 609)

The second, more serious disturbances occurred when in late 1983 the government announced the reduction of subsidies on basic staples such as bread, pasta and semolina in an effort to curb the rising budget deficit. The resulting doubling of prices almost overnight triggered a wave of unrest, which erupted in early January 1984. Unrest would spread yet again from the poor south-west moving on to the capital's shantytowns first, and then high school and university students in Tunisia's more affluent areas. These riots were spontaneous expressions of discontent from below, independent of the organizational efforts of political forces. Neither the UGTT, nor the MTI had a role in their organization, even though Islamists slogans were prominently on display. And while the sudden increase in prices might have been the immediate trigger, it is no accident that it originated within the south to then spread to middle class youth. (Seddon 1986)

The origins of persistent social discontent that seemed to cluster in the south-west of Tunisia's interior regions are to be found in highly uneven development that disadvantaged those regions compared to the richer coastal towns. They are not only Tunisia's poorest regions historically, with higher unemployment rates than the rest of the nation, but had also profited comparatively less from the economic boom of the 1970s *infatih* period. Thus, of the overall around 86,000 jobs that were created between 1973 and 1978 alone, only around 4,000 were located in the south. Unemployment was especially rampant among Tunisia's youth. At the beginning of the 1980s, around 60% of Tunisians were under the age of 30. With an official unemployment rate of 20% - which most certainly is an underestimation - this made for a veritable proportion of unemployed youth. They often saw no way out than to seek refuge either by emigration to countries such as Libya, which at the time hosted about 60,000 labor migrants, or by labor migration to the rich urban and coastal areas in the north and east of Tunisia. (Seddon 1986, 11-12) Thus, with national unity exposed as an illusion discarded with the onset of *infatih* policies, visible discrimination in economic as well as political terms, and no genuine channel for upward communication and interest articulation available, discontent turned to contention. That this contention happened despite the fact that the political arena had been opened up to a limited extent two years prior and that the UGTT had negotiated substantial wage increases illustrates the respective insulation of these spheres of action from broader societal

developments. When the government suddenly and without much warning broke the implicit social contract between the state and its citizens, in absence of any formal mechanisms with which to address their grievances and in a general climate of social and political agitation, the measures unleashed riots that could only be quelled by the combined effort of security forces and the army in a vicious response which left at least 60 people (but possibly double the number) dead, and hundreds injured. A day after the repression of the bread riots, calm was restored by Bourguiba announcing the reinstatement of subsidies.

Also on the level of party politics the 1978 protests had made it clear that discontent within Tunisian political life was on the rise, and was seeking an outlet that the institutional system as it was could not provide. With a new, and more liberal prime minister, Mohammed Mzali taking over from Nouira in 1980, the regime thus moved to introduce some elements of - contained - political liberalization, first by allowing for limited competition within the PSD and shortly thereafter by promising seats to any (formally still illegal) opposition party, which could cross a five percent threshold in the upcoming elections to the National Assembly in 1981. Unsurprisingly, the PSD in coalition with a temporarily subdued UGTT won 94,6% of the vote and no other party managed to cross the threshold set out at the beginning. Nonetheless, in 1982, the regime moved to legalize the Parti Communiste Tunisien (PCT), which it had outlawed in 1963. A year later it introduced a further measure of liberalization by legalizing the Mouvement des démocrates socialistes (MDS) of former PSD Minister of Defense Ahmed Mestiri as well as the Parti de l'unité populaire (PUP), a moderate split-off of an attempted party by exiled Ahmed Ben Salah in 1983. (Murphy 1999, 64) The MTI remained excluded from the political game, however, and despite their efforts at moderation, no legal status was granted.

By showing the limits of government control, the riots of 1984 scared the regime into action. Further potential for unrest was to be contained by strengthening societal incorporation. On the one hand, the regime thus extended the already impressive party apparatus especially to the more remote south, while increasing centralization at the top. (Moore 1988, 187-88) On the other hand, in a gesture of leniency, that same year the leaders of the MTI, among them Ghannouchi himself, were released from prison in the context of a general amnesty.

Even though the UGTT had no role in organizing the bread riots of January 1984, their brutal suppression nonetheless led union militants and increasingly also the union leadership under Achour to use strikes to express their dissatisfaction. This open show of dissent led the regime to step up its efforts to suppress the union, resulting in its almost complete neutralization by 1987: "In 1984, in the wake of an upsurge of strikes, led by the UGTT, the regime prohibited

trade union meetings at the workplace. Later that year, in reaction to heavy strike activity concentrated in the public sector, the regime dismissed more than two thousand civil servants and imprisoned several hundreds. In 1985 the regime suspended the trade union's journal, *Al-Sha'b*. It also voided the system of 'syndical detachment' under which the government had paid the salaries of public sector workers elected for permanent assignment to the UGTT. Finally, it sequestered UGTT bank accounts and removed UGTT enterprises from trade union control. [...] All the while the government-controlled press conducted a propaganda campaign against the UGTT's leadership, accusing it of deviationism, antipatriotism, and corrupt management." (Bellin 2002, 112-13) By the end of 1985, they had placed Habib Achour under house arrest again, trying him on trumped up charges. By January 1986 they invaded UGTT's headquarters, and rid the union of its unruly leadership. The subjugation of the UGTT was made final at a special congress in 1987, where a loyal leadership was imposed on the UGTT's cadres. (Bellin 2002, 113)

The tightening of authoritarianism not only affected the UGTT, leading to its eventual subjugation, but turned against other political actors. Towards the mid-1980s, the regime's tacit approval of the MTI turned into straight out rejection, leading to the attempted destruction of the movement. The MTI, had developed into a rather vocal opposition force in the first half of the 1980s. In this it seemed to have eclipsed the few oppositional alternatives the regime had allowed thus far and thereby started to increasingly be perceived as a potential challenger. While in the immediate aftermath of the bread riots, as a gesture of reconciliation in a tense political climate, the government released the MTI's leadership from prison, this conciliatory tone was not to last. Whether it was because the regime's strategy of divide and rule succeeded in giving more moderate opposition parties a stake in the system, these parties felt threatened by the Islamists success, but few of the remaining opposition actors came to the MTI's aid.. And even though the MTI tried to moderate its official position to the point that by 1985 they "stated that the Sharia may not contain the answer to every modern problem and needed to be redefined to give it a contemporary Islamic meaning" (Vandewalle 1988, 612), a number of factors led the regime to tighten the screws. With the economic situation taking a turn to the worse from the mid-1980s onwards, and Bourguiba increasingly struggling with health problems without there being a clear successor, the general climate was one of insecurity: "The picture that contemporary observers painted of the political situation resembled a 'twilight of the gods'. Faced with a 'street seething with anger and dominated by the 'barbus' of the MTI, and surrounded by elites squabbling for power and plotting for the 'day after', the old president had locked himself up in his palace, where he was only accessible to a handful of relatives and

courtiers, who did their best to further isolate and manipulate him. His increasingly erratic decisions (replacing ministers at break-neck speed and revoking his own decisions almost on a daily basis) undermined the faith in his leadership and further fanned up the flames of the crisis.” (Erdle 2010, 86) While the liberals around Ahmed Mestiri and his MDS represented a viable challenger from *within* the elite, they never moved beyond the boundaries of established elite consensus. The MTI, however, represented a challenger from the outside, from the midst of society, not only to the elite itself but to their conception of state and society.

In the final years of the regime Bourguiba, more established opposition actors also became the target of repression. In 1986 he imprisoned Ahmed Mestiri, head of the MDS. That same year in an increasing slide towards erratic and rapidly changing decision-making, Bourguiba dismissed Prime Minister Mzali (who was subsequently tried for alleged economic and political irregularities during his time in office), divorced his politically too influential wife and distanced himself from his son. Afterwards he named several conservative hardliners for ministerial portfolios, amongst them Rashid Sfar for prime minister, and General Zine Abedine Ben Ali for interior minister. Sfar’s first and foremost task was to stop the country from a further slide towards economic disaster, which had arrived at worrying proportions by 1986. While the 1970s had been a period of unprecedented economic growth, at the beginning of the 1980s, this growth experienced a downturn, plunging the economy into an increasingly serious economic crisis. When from 1980 onwards, oil prices began to fall, domestic savings declined, and the budget deficit rose. These developments were compounded by changes in the regional context ushering into a downturn of rents accruing from tourism, and most importantly, droughts bringing on a series of bad harvests in 1982 and 1986. (Murphy 1999, 93f.) With Tunisia unable to cope with the crisis, in 1986, newly appointed prime-minister Sfar negotiated a stand-by agreement with the IMF, and implemented a series of economic reforms, including the “liberalization of prices, interest rates, and imports, reductions in public spending, devaluation of the dinar, legal innovations to improve the functioning of the market (including tax reform, financial sector reform, and investment reform), privatization of public enterprises, and ever-stronger emphasis on export orientation and the integration of the Tunisian economy into the international system.” (Bellin 2002, 37) Included in these reforms were substantial reductions in subsidies, which hit the growing mass of marginalized Tunisians particularly hard. They also did not entirely spare the private sector, however, which had grown in size and influence due to its generous nurture through state policy in the 1970s. Thus, according to Eva Bellin, by 1987, close to 400 firms in the private sector had gone bankrupt. (Bellin 2002, 39) While it seems clear that the rise of a new *infatih* bourgeoisie from the 1970s onwards created shifts in the

incorporation strategy of the regime as well as its perceived basis of support in society, this observations opens up the question of how much control over decision makers and the policy process this new elite really gained, and hence to what extent this new elite controlled the state, or was still controlled by it. While some scholars argued that this private bourgeoisie was a class created by the state, and thus dependent on it, others saw in it the reconstitution of old elite strata, mixing elements from the old urban bourgeoisie, the rural landed classes, with the new private sector industrialists. There is some evidence indicating that the old landed classes never entirely lost the favor of the regime, and could wield at least some influence when their interests were threatened. The strongest indicator for that – besides the fact that even in its nominally ‘socialist’ period the state never actively threatened private interests – was the dismissal of Ben Salah at the end of the 1960s. When Ben Salah realized the imminent failure of his collectivization program and in an effort to save it decided to forcefully nationalize also big property, the rural bourgeoisie turned directly to Bourguiba, successfully pressuring him to abandon the program and Ben Salah in its wake. (King 1998, 11) However, while these new and old business elites might have intermittently been able to exert influence to preserve their interests, this does not necessarily translate into commanding structural power vis-à-vis state elites. In addition to the new class of private sector industrialists owing a “debt of origin to the state”, business success in large measure depended on good relationships with state authorities in order to access “licenses, loans, and subsidies”, which “were all distributed by the state on a discretionary basis” (Bellin 1994, 429), and businessmen remained largely excluded from access to political power.

As the regime started to pursue a more pronounced incorporation of business elites into the support coalition on the one hand, it narrowed broad based social integration on the other. This narrowing integration affected not only economic inclusion, but also to some extent political inclusion through the corporatist framework. Economically, the regime that had historically based itself on a populist coalition comprised of urban workers and rural peasants, incorporated into the state via the selective distribution of benefits, with the introduction of infitah policies and a program of economic stabilization, shifted the distribution of resources and benefits towards more narrow based class interests, without, however, completely abandoning its populist dress at least on a rhetorical level. Politically, while the framework of corporatist inclusion provided most social groups with some platform for negotiation and bargaining to articulate and push for their interests, during the 1970s and the 1980s, this space reduced. This was as much due to the diminishing opportunities in the wake of economic

liberalization, as it was to Bourguiba's increasing reluctance to compromise with societal forces and the rise in authoritarianism accompanying it.

Thus, even with the economic reforms promising a measure of stability in the economic realm, the tightening of authoritarian rule furthered political instability. This was especially visible with regards to Tunisia's growing Islamist opposition. Already the bread riots of 1984, while far from being organized by the MTI itself, had shown an increase in Islamic symbolism, indicating the growing resonance that Islamists ideals found within the population. While in terms of membership, the MTI at least initially recruited its cadres mainly on the country's university campuses, their appeal extended well beyond, finding a solid base of support especially within the lower classes: "It was especially among the politically volatile population of unemployed or underemployed lower-class youth, which was growing rapidly as a result of the liberal development strategy adopted in the 1970s, the world recession and falling oil prices of the early and mid-1980s, and the country's high birth rate. Fueled by the simmering discontent of the lower classes, the MTI became Tunisia's largest opposition group in the mid-1980s." (Gasiorowski 1992, 90) Responsibility for the increasingly stalling upward mobility promised by educational expansion was the half-baked reform of the education system, which furthered Arabization for most subjects while keeping a dual French system for some. This introduced a bias into education whereby students from poorer, more provincial non-Francophile backgrounds, while able to access education as such, remained stalled in their upward mobility. It is these strata from less privileged backgrounds, compromised in their upward mobility through recent regime policies, in which the MTI found the growing support that would increasingly turn it into a threat in the eyes of the regime. Consequently, in 1987 the MTI's leadership was arrested yet again and put on trial for forming an illegal organization, allegedly planning the overthrow of the government, and establishing an Iranian style theocracy. However, when put in front of a judge in October 1987, the court could not be convinced that the MTI leadership was in fact responsible for what it had been charged with. Bourguiba, infuriated by the verdict tried to impose a retrial from above with the aim of achieving the death penalty. (Ware 1988, 591) This set the stage for the escalation of the conflict between the Islamists and the regime.

In this tense situation came the 'constitutional' or 'white' coup of General Zine Abedine Ben Ali, who by then had rapidly risen through the ranks, making it to Prime Minister, and secretary general of the PSD by 1987. In a cloak and dagger operation that took the elite as well as the broader nation by surprise, on the night from the 6th to the 7th of November 1987 Ben Ali

consulted with a team of doctors who unanimously declared Bourguiba unfit to rule. Bourguiba was subsequently placed under house arrest, while his main aides were arrested and strategically important localities were occupied by elements of the security forces loyal to Ben Ali. In a public declaration the next day, Ben Ali invoked article 57 of the constitution which regulated the procedures in case the President was incapacitated. (Erdle 2010, 94)

Ben Ali's effort to give the (bloodless) coup a legal veneer, as well as the overwhelming relief at Bourguiba's removal resulted in strong initial support for his rule. Having few structural bases of support within the elite or the general populace, Ben Ali initially sought to further this general goodwill by promising extensive reforms. Reforms were to include the pluralization of the political system, the abolishment of the presidency for life, as well as of the State Security Courts. Shortly thereafter, the UGTT's Habib Achour was released from his house arrest, the MTI leadership and many of its followers were freed from prison. As sign for his more inclusive leadership style, Ben Ali crafted a National Pact in 1988 to be signed by all political forces within the country, including the MTI. This endeavor sought to bring all political forces within the country under one roof, redrafting them as corporatist partners to the state instead of opposition, thus establishing a consensus about the rules of the game of politics in Tunisia. (Murphy 1999, 174) This 'quasi-constitutionalist' pact was to establish the rules under which opposition forces could hope to be included in the political game, as Anderson put it, "creating the appearance of political pluralism in the absence of political actors with autonomous social and economic power." (Anderson 1999, 4)

Ben Ali had much to lose in this initial period. He came from a security background without much experience in politics. As such he neither had a firm basis in the ruling party on whose support he could count, nor did he hail from an organization with strong roots in society. His initial initiatives thus speak of the attempt to appeal to as broad an audience as possible and to assure established political forces that he would grant them more space for political activities. While outwardly conciliatory, at the same time he moved to assert himself within the ruling party and the state. He disposed of Bourguiba's closest allies within the party to the benefit of a younger, technocratic elite, renamed the *Dustour* into the *Rassemblement Constitutionnelle Democratique (RCD)*, widened its social basis via a recruitment campaign designed to draw in new elements, and taking control of its political bureau. (Murphy 1999, 170-71)

His initial promises as well as steps towards political liberalization notwithstanding, the regime Ben Ali soon showed first signs of faltering resolve during the parliamentary elections of 1989. Despite the rapprochement with the MTI immediately after his coup, Ben Ali was not willing to

grant the only viable challenger full participatory rights. Things were certainly not helped by the fact that the now renamed Ennahda movement won a considerable number of seats. In lieu of legalization, they ran their candidates as independents and won close to 17% of the vote, while the secular opposition parties together managed barely 3%, thus missing the 5% threshold that would have granted them access to parliament. The regime had initially sought to appropriate Islamic symbolism to generate more broadly based legitimacy, and to draw away support from Ennahda. However, the outcome of the parliamentary elections showed clearly that they had failed to do so. The majoritarian ‘winner takes all’ electoral system did its job in preventing Ennahda from entering parliament, but it also prevented the remainder of the opposition from gaining representation, thus resulting in a parliament entirely dominated by the RCD. (Alexander 1997, 26) This was not the outcome intended: “Ben Ali’s strategy was not necessarily well-served by the RCD’s sweeping victory. His intention had been to allow the opposition to gain some representation, giving the National Assembly credibility as a democratic institution and drawing the smaller parties into the support-base for his government. The fact that the RCD won so convincingly, and that there was a degree of result tampering in the regions, demonstrated that the regional structures of the RCD did not view his initial experiment in democratization as favorably as he did. They were distinctly unwilling to share power and regional committees, unlike the higher echelons of the party, could not be so easily stuffed with pro-Ben Ali reformers. Middle-ranking party officials remained true to the old guard of the party, and still exercised virtually absolute power in their own domains.” (Murphy 1999, 182)

That same year the regime finally decided to put an end to Ennahda’s aspirations for legalization and denied their application for political party status. What followed was a spiral of escalation that would end in Ennahda’s almost complete dismantlement, with thousands of its supporters jailed and its leadership exiled by the early 1990s. On Ennahda’s side, with the hopes of legalization dashed, its more radical elements that had so far been kept under control, further radicalized, embracing more violent tactics. From 1990-91 the relationship continuously deteriorated. Externally, the victory of the FIS in Algeria, as well as the subsequent descent of the country into civil war after the military’s intervention, provided a chilling example. Internally, the regime managed to tie a series of violent attacks to Ennahda radicals, causing a backlash against the movement within society. In September 1991 the regime’s claim to have discovered a violent plot to overthrow the government spelt the final blow against Ennahda. (Willis 2012, 117) Whether these allegations were true or not is another matter entirely, however, in the general atmosphere of insecurity, it sufficed as a reason to squash the

movement until it had effectively vanished from the domestic scene (Erdle 2010, 235) Over 8,000 individuals were jailed by the regime during this period. (Alexander 1997, 35) Anderson argues that the force with which the regime set about the destruction of Ennahda was due to the fact that they “challenged the regime where they needed and wanted support – the realm of symbolic production.” (Anderson 1991, 104) The fact that Ennahda was subdued so easily can therefore be traced back to their reliance on mobilizing via the usage of powerful symbols. While this had made for easy successes early on, in the face of profound regional developments and few political allies, this proved too fragile a basis for the movement to endure the onslaught of regime repression.

On the domestic level, while its repression clearly deviated from the promised democratization and liberalization of the political system, it nonetheless did not generate any significant backlash from the remainder of the opposition, some of which felt as threatened by the Islamists as the regime itself. Indeed, the Islamist question was skillfully employed by the regime to cow society and opposition alike, with the specter of an Algerian scenario looming large. (Erdle 2010) Their treatment thus served to divide the ranks of the opposition into those whose ideological enmity pushed them to side with the regime, and a few remaining ones who felt that the Islamist question was one of democratic rights and not one of ideological congruence.

This hardliner/softliner distinction that emerged among the opposition parties in the early 1990s would be further entrenched when the regime in the run up to the parliamentary elections of 1994 introduced a system that retained majority rule, but with the caveat of a predetermined percentage of seats (12%) reserved for the opposition. (Sadiki 2002, 64) On the surface this system guaranteed the opposition a representation they might not have been able to achieve on their own (as the secular opposition’s dismal figures in the 1989 elections seemed to have shown). Underneath the veneer of inclusiveness, however, it introduced a veritable tool of control and patronage. Hailed as a momentous step in allowing oppositional participation in parliament for the first time since independence, the new system served to further the complete insulation of the ruling party from competition. It not only ensured an automatic absolute majority for the RCD, but also divided the opposition into those playing a ‘constructive role’ i.e. remaining mostly loyal, and those aiming to fulfill a more genuinely oppositional role. While the 12% of the seats allotted to opposition parties were technically divided amongst them according to the proportion of votes gained, in reality these numbers had little to do with the actual distribution of seats. Instead, those parties that had ‘behaved’ and played according to the regime’s rules of the game were rewarded with seats and hence government patronage through

access to party financing. These sums were far from negligible, amounting to around US\$ 60,000 for gaining representation in parliament, in addition US\$ 5,000 for each seat ‘won.’ They represented one of the few legal sources of party financing open to opposition parties, and hence constituted an important incentive for participation. (Penner Angrist 1999, 95)

In the end, out of the five legal opposition parties, the MDS, which after the departure from political life of Ahmed Mestiri veered into a decidedly pro-regime direction, gained ten seats, the PUP two, the UDU three, and the Mouvement de la Rénovation (former CP) four. The only party to voice criticism of the government’s treatment of the Islamists, the leftists RSP, remained excluded. (Perkins 2004, 195) Apart from the financial gain through parliamentary representation, being in parliament had little further effect, however. As an institution, parliament remained weak, de facto unable to initiate legislation, entirely incapable of counterbalancing the overwhelming might of the executive. (Penner Angrist 1999, 98) The situation did not much improve for the elections of 1999. To further prove their utter meaninglessness, the parliamentary elections of 1999 were overshadowed by the simultaneously scheduled first multi-candidate elections for the presidency. Instead of introducing more competition into the political realm, however, (the previous two presidential elections had been held without alternative candidates) these elections rather reinforced the projection of dominance by Ben Ali. Several of the alternative candidates proclaiming their support of Ben Ali prior to the elections (Willis 2012, 134), which Ben Ali, unsurprisingly ‘won’ with 99,4% of the vote. (Sadiki 2002, 67) All the while the parliamentary elections ended with an official vote of 91,5% for the RCD. With Ben Ali having changed the electoral rules to up the allotted share of opposition parties in parliament to 20% this made for 34 seats out of a total of 182. Yet again, only those opposition parties that had remained within the discourse of loyal/constructive opposition gained seats and hence access to state resources. (Pripstein Posusney 2002, 42)

As the elections of 1994 and 1999 illustrate, once Ben Ali had successfully consolidated his position the 1990s subsequently saw a tightening of political space for virtually *all* political actors – be they opposition or not – and the transformation of what had always been a rather repressive system into a veritable “*mukhabarat* state.” (Sadiki 2002, 68) This *mukhabarat* state not only reasserted its control over potential and actual political opponents, but also extended its reach more deeply into the everyday lives of its citizens. In its wake, it extended organizational capacities for repression, surveillance, and control, making Tunisia one of the most heavily policed states in the region.

Repression was most severe when directed against Islamists, or people suspected of harboring Islamist sympathies. It took several forms ranging from outright political repression, including imprisonment and torture, to more subtle if possibly more pernicious forms of economic and social repression that often extended not only to the opponent itself, but threatened to engulf family and friends. Its basic mechanism was that of exclusion – exclusion from economic security, such as employment, having the means to raise a family, achieving upward mobility, depriving individuals subjected to it from the social security of being a part of society, and enjoying the privileges of a full-fledged citizen. It included such measures as taking away passport and ID cards, the latter of which is essential for accessing social services, denying internet access at home, requiring frequent check-ins with police, often as many times as every two hours, making it impossible to hold regular jobs, imposing administrative roadblocks at each point of contact with state authorities, be they from the tax office, public health services, municipal authorities, and so forth. (Hibou 2011) These measures of administrative control, using the state and the mundane ways it penetrates the everyday lives of its citizens to single out and exclude those deemed outside the boundaries of permitted attitudes and behavior resulted in a form of “social death,” whereby individuals are deprived of their social networks, and the means to lead a normal, private life. (Hibou 2011, 6)

These mechanisms of repression, while particularly harsh in case of Islamists, were also in use in one form or another against secular opponents. However, in marked contrast to Ennahda, their organizational activities, while severely constrained, monitored and often repressed, were nonetheless tolerated within certain bounds. Thus, not only did Nejjib Chebbi’s PDP remain functional, but so did Mustapha Ben Jafar’s non-legal but tolerated FDTL. The fact that regime repression was not targeting their direct organizational survival did not mean, however, that they were spared the multitude of administrative control measures. Harsh guidelines on party financing meant that most parties had a hard time collecting the necessary resources for their functioning, for publishing their newspapers, for reaching out to society.⁵⁴ Exploiting the link between the economic and the political gave the regime leverage to control opposition parties on three levels. Firstly, in addition to the lack of funding through the state for those parties failing to play by the regime’s rules of the game, its leverage was increased by introducing a law stipulating that state money “will be withheld from parties if they fail to present their books to the state’s accounts court. Among the data required by the court is an itemized list of the source and amount of private financial contributions of the party. The law has reportedly diminished the financial support flowing to the opposition.” (Penner Angrist 1999, 95) Secondly, with the

⁵⁴ Interview with party activist, 15.08.2012, Tunis

state's complete control over the regulation of the economy, many businesses, afraid of losing (or never gaining) the favor of the state, withheld their advertising business from opposition newspapers, depriving those that managed to exist outside of state funding of a crucial source of revenue. Lastly, with voting being non secret, and the state continuing to be one of the country's main employers, voting for, or being a member of an opposition party could have severe repercussions on access to civil service jobs, goods and services distributed by the state, as well as job security, once employed in a public sector firm. (Penner Angrist 1999, 95)

While regime repression thus ensured that efforts to build sustainable organizational structures on part of opposition parties was to be futile, the electoral system did its part to ensure that they would nonetheless be able to fulfill their function in democratic window dressing. The two-tier electoral system that set aside the fixed 12 % (and later 20%) of seats for opposition parties, while guaranteeing them a share in parliament, at the same time directed electoral competition away from the RCD and towards other opposition parties.⁵⁵ Seeing that societal outreach was severely restricted through regime repression, that outside of election times open campaigning was next to impossible, and that seats were distributed on the basis of loyalty towards the regime not on the basis of votes gained, opposition parties remained capital city based, elite-centered and feeble organizations, with weak links towards and basis within society.

While some opposition parties nonetheless tried to at least rhetorically challenge the regime once in a while, the 1990s proved to be a comparatively quiet period for what was once the center of contention, the UGTT. Under the leadership of Ismail Sahbani, who had taken over in 1989, the UGTT had either rid itself of its more radical elements or silenced them.⁵⁶ Instead the leadership preferred a moderate course that sought to realize workers' interests by accommodating and aligning itself with Ben Ali's political course. After a series of devastating blows to the union in the increasingly repressive climate of the 1980s Ben Ali worked on resurrecting it, albeit in a more controlled and moderate fashion. Thus, the amnesty of 1989 benefitted many union activists, and Ben Ali undertook efforts to help union members, fired under Bourguiba due to their activism, to regain their positions. Throughout 1988-89 the new government also sought to make sure that moderates would carry the day in regional and federal union elections and that radical elements from the left (particularly those belonging to the forbidden PCOT) and from the right (from Ennahda) were either purged or marginalized. (Alexander 1996, 263-64) The regime needed the union to be strong enough to retain the support of rank and file workers, without however descending back into its conflictual role of

⁵⁵ Interview with activist, 15.08.2012

⁵⁶ Interview with union leader, 29.08.2012

the 1970s and 1980s. It thus moved to ensure more than just a basic minimum of workers' rights by establishing decentralized wage bargaining, facilitating "moderate wage increases, stalled labor code reforms that would give private owners more 'flexibility,' slowed privatization and developed a battery of measures designed to minimize its effects on unionized workers, and pushed for reforms that established clearer union rights in the work place." (Alexander 1996, 305) It also retained some of the repressive measures instituted under Bourguiba, designed to curtail the union's independence. Amongst those was a refusal to reinstate the automatic 1% check-off of public sector workers' salaries, which guaranteed the union financial independence. Instead it stuck to a system in which workers wishing to financially support the union had to declare their membership and payment in written form. (Bellin 2002, 119) These twin moves - guaranteeing workers' rights while ensuring their moderation - were designed to depoliticize the union, marginalize its more politicized elements as well as fragment the union basis to make cross-sectoral solidarity harder. At the same time, the benefits that accrued to organized workers in the 1990s went far and above their actual bargaining power. As Bellin argues, they were mostly due to the political interest of the regime to keep the UGTT at bay by guaranteeing it a quasi-aristocratic position over its counterparts in the informal sector, and the unemployed (Bellin 2002, 151).

It was not just the former hotbed of contestation UGTT that found itself tamed during the 1990s. The regime also managed to utterly subdue the student union UGET, and the student body as such. The UGET, after its contentious period in the 1970s and early 1980s had, similar to the UGTT, suffered the backlash of repression in the wake of the bread riots of 1984. Equipped with a new and more docile leadership it entered the 1990s as a much less contentious actor than previously. Part of that can certainly be attributed to the transient nature of the student body. After the contentious leadership of the earlier period had left, no new leadership emerged that was similarly contentious to replace it. Part of the explanation, however, can also certainly be found in the increase of control on university campuses. Whereas before university campuses were a relatively free playing ground for students for as long as their activities remained confined to the campus, in the wake of Bourguiba's crackdown on opposition from the mid-1980s onwards, Bourguiba instituted police presence on university grounds, and imposed a more docile leadership on the UGET.⁵⁷ As a result of the tightening of authoritarianism under Ben Ali at the beginning of the 1990s, the general with or against us mentality in the regime's fight against Islamists, and the stricter surveillance of university campuses, the student body as such underwent a fundamental depolitization. But surveillance -

⁵⁷ Interview with activist, 15.08.2012

be it through formal police presence on campus or informal policemen within the class room – not only affected the students, but also university teachers. The 1990s thus represent for many a decade in which Ben Ali not only strove for and achieved the neutralization of basically all political forces outside the regime, but of the population more generally.

What some people describe as the “desertification of the youth”⁵⁸ was a phenomenon which seemed to have enveloped the nation as such, a re-specification of a social contract (Heydemann 2004), or security pact (Hibou 2011) in which the people and especially the youth were provided with the means to partake in consumer and entertainment culture in exchange for the almost complete eradication of politics from everyday life. This depolitization succeeded with a combination of carrot and stick, extending control far beyond the public sphere to intrude upon the private life of citizens. With a police force encompassing between 80,000 and 133,000, an army of ‘informers,’ as well as large numbers of RCD members, the regime achieved a rather powerful projection of state omnipresence, whereby “to one degree or another, everywhere in the country, in the regions, in administrative offices, public companies and even the big private enterprises, on the roads and on public transport, at places of work and in bars and places of relaxation and entertainment, all of these agents are keeping people under surveillance and carrying out a continuous check on citizens, travelers, employees, school pupils, students, believers, car drivers, readers, parents, consumers, passers-by, lovers and tax payers. [...] The ubiquity of the Ministry of Interior is not merely physical. It is also moral, administrative and political. Moral first and foremost, in the sense that all public policies or economic projects have taken on board the watchwords of stability, security and public order. All the other administrations depend in some way on the Ministry of Interior: in the civil service, since at least the start of the 1990s, it has been the Ministry which decides on new recruits. It verifies that a job-seeker is affiliated with the RCD. The National Police Force carries out an inquiry to see if the candidate personally – or any friend or family member – is a sympathizer with Islamists or, since around 1998, a sympathizer with the opposition, of whatever tendency.” (Hibou 2011, 82) While for many, membership in the RCD thus constituted as much of an obligation to be endured as an opportunity to access state benefits ranging from access to the state’s social programs and health care provision, to state jobs, and credit.⁵⁹ Membership, however passively exercised thus acted as a gate keeper for social and economic citizenship, particularly within the less well-off strata of society. (Hibou 2011, 89-90)

⁵⁸ Interview with political activist and teacher at the University of Tunis, Tunis, Tunisia, 22.08.2012

⁵⁹ Interview with participant of the uprising, 01.08.2012

The regime Ben Ali thus not only represented an objective growth in the instruments and agencies of surveillance and control, but a subjective feeling of state omnipotence.⁶⁰ When politics became something so taboo that it was avoided even in the privacy of the home, it mattered less whether the state *actually* had the capacity to carry out such comprehensive surveillance of its citizens, but more that it was able to project an amount of power into society that it became not only believable but a common sense notion. Thus, with the RCD remaining the main channel for upwards mobility, politics a taboo, most societal and political forces thoroughly subdued, and Tunisia's 'economic miracle' promising the imminent attainability of a middle class life style for all, the 1990s were a decade of relative quiet and stability.

The 1990s were also a period where control not only spread throughout society, but encompassed the ruling party itself. The RCD thus experienced a downturn in internal debate and general leniency towards differing viewpoints parallel to that of opposition actors, and society more broadly. Penner Angrist attributes the reduction in internal freedom to the introduction of opposition parties into parliament resulting in tightened control and party discipline: "Prior to that year [1994], RCD deputies apparently had more leeway to criticize laws and, at times, to abstain or vote against them in plenary session. [...] Since 1994, some RCD deputies have described themselves as 'prisoners', other routinely refer to them as such. RCD deputies sometimes ask opposition colleagues to raise criticism they themselves do not feel free to voice" (Penner Angrist 1999, 99). Willis attributes the tightening of discipline at the parliamentary level to more general developments within regime hierarchy whereby the presidential palace increasingly established tighter control on the party and its patronage and power resources. (Willis 2012, 133)

The ruling party had thus become the president's party, implementing his decisions, extending regime control, surveillance, as well as integration in from the center outwards. While a small percentage of the RCD's upper echelons, many of them appointed by the president himself, remained part of Tunisia's elite landscape, influence and decision making shifted towards the presidential palace in Carthage, signifying the further centralization of power within the political system. "The palace," Erdle writes, "is Ben Ali's two-tiered personal apparatus in the suburb of Carthage that comprises administrative services, comparable to a normal ministry and concerned with day-to-day tasks, and a small group of political advisors, composed mostly of former ministers and senior officials, but also close friends and family members. In fact, the

⁶⁰ On several occasions interviewees suggested that even in the privacy of their homes, politics would either not be talked about at all, or only after security measures such as removing the batteries of cell phones to thwart surveillance had been taken.

palace has grown so much in size and power that it has become the country's actual government and an unrivaled power center." (Erdle 2010, 214) Centralization hence did not just see the RCD's political role and importance decrease, but affected other central regime institutions, such as the ministerial bureaucracy, as well. Ben Ali not only revised the institutional power balance within the regime institutions, but also furthered change in the composition of Tunisia's political elite. The main changes in this respect were the further technocratization of political elites at the ministerial and administrative level, as well as the increasing influence of his personal entourage, comprised of members of both Ben Ali's and his second wife Leila Trabelsi's extended families. Under Ben Ali the substitution of politicians with technocrats that was begun under Bourguiba was thus completed. In contrast to Bourguiba however, the 1990s also saw the increase of personalist elements, and the encroachment of the presidential family on access to political and economic power. (Erdle 2010, 214)

While elite institutions granting access to political influence and decision making thus significantly narrowed during this period, efforts at bottom up social inclusion actually increased. During the same time span that saw the RCD losing political influence at the top, also it underwent rapid extension at the bottom. By the end of the decade, according to (chronically unreliable) official numbers, it boasted more than 2 million card carrying members, as well as 7,800 party cells in a population of approximately 9,5 million Tunisians. (Penner Angrist 1999, 94) It therefore extended its capabilities to act as one of the main channels of communication of regime policy downwards, as well as local grievances upwards, giving the possibility of grievance articulation as well as redress, for as long as their articulation remained within the regime designed framework. Thus, while the RCD clearly lost importance as a basis for power brokers and decision-makers, it remained a crucial instrument in the hands of elites for integrating the population into regime institutions, and membership remained a precondition for a political or administrative career. Its function of integration from below, and social cooptation thus actually gained weight, in part also due to the introduction and expansion of institutions designed to relieve poverty and provide social security to the most vulnerable. The most well-known of these is the national Solidarity Fund (NSF), better known as the 26-26 after its postal code. Set up as a welfare project in the 1990s to eradicate poverty and improve living conditions for Tunisia's poorest (Sadiki 2002, 68) it was not only officially created at the initiative of Ben Ali himself, but also operated under his exclusive custody. Since its founding in 1992 the fund developed into a form of private taxation on business owners, who on a supposedly voluntary basis contributed money, which was then distributed on a fairly discretionary basis, fanning clientelism and corruption. Failure to comply with this act of

'solidarity' by either not giving at all or by not giving enough would promptly result in a business encountering numerous problems in their inevitable dealings with the state. This could take on the form of belated tax demands, being passed over for government contracts, or general bureaucratic hurdles. (Willis 2012, 241) Similar demands on compliance applied to the receiving end of the 26-26's dealings, making it an important part of the interlinkage between the political and the economic by enforcing a certain code of conduct, and outward compliance in order to gain access to Tunisia's economic society. Despite their usage as tools for control and source of corruption, these organizations did provide aid to the country's needy. The National Program of Assistance to Needy Families established in 1986, the year structural adjustment started, covered up to 114,000 households by the year 2001, clearly targeted towards the interior regions. The 26-26 covered around 220,000 households between 1993-2003, reaching around 1 million Tunisians. (Ayadi et al 2005, 36-37) Poverty alleviation was further aided by at times impressive economic growth that created many jobs particularly in the tourism and textile/clothing sectors. Both of these relied heavily on low-skilled labor, and were concentrated in the coastal areas, close to the big urban centers. This meant not only that employment opportunities were located away from more marginalized areas of the country, but that the demand they created for unskilled or semi-skilled labor did not match up to the supply of a steadily increasing educated workforce of recent graduates, which had gained access to education with the modernizing reforms of the education sector since the 1950s. Nonetheless, per capita GDP grew steadily, 2.0% between 1990-1995, and 4.2% between 1995-2000, while the occurrence of poverty was substantially reduced, from over 20% in 1980 to around 4% in 2000, cutting the overall poverty rate by close to 80%. These developments also benefitted the more disadvantaged regions in the interior to a certain extent, where the rate fell from plus 30% to a bit over 8%. (Ayadi et al 2005, 3) However, while poverty was substantially reduced on an absolute level, on a relative level discrepancies between the regions remained high. The worst-off region in the center west (poverty rate of 10.8%) was still ten times worse off than the Greater Tunis area with only 1%. (Ayadi et al 2005, 12) Nonetheless, during this second phase of liberalization, the government successfully implemented stabilization programs in accordance with orthodox views on economic liberalization espoused by the IMF and the World Bank. Spanning two five-year plans, "Tunisia's international credit standing has been restored, public finances have been stabilized and budget deficits greatly reduced. Inflation has been kept under control, production and exports have been liberalized and trade balances have been improved. In addition, foreign and private investments have been attracted, the dinar has approached convertibility and the economy as a whole has continued to grow at a faster rate than the

population. [...] In 1995 the American Heritage Foundation proclaimed Tunisia to be in the category of 'wholly liberalized economies', with per capita GNP equating with the poorer peripheries of Europe. Moreover, the IMF and the World Bank regularly cite Tunisia as an example of successful adjustment, while Europe gave it the stamp of approval in the form of an association agreement signed in 1995." (Murphy 1997, 115) At the same time, however, while the economy grew in overall terms, and poverty was successfully reduced in absolute terms, these numbers disguise not only the aforementioned regional imbalances, but also the actual increase in income inequality during economic stabilization.

What we find in Ben Ali's Tunisia of the 1990s therefore is a de-institutionalization of elite incorporation resulting in a narrowing of the ruling coalition at the highest and the support coalition at intermediary levels. At the same time, we find a depoliticization of the masses, with emphasis on social and economic citizenship as opposed to a political one, monitored and enforced by a pervasive state apparatus, duplicated in an equally pervasive party apparatus.

At the same time, the economic situation had created a dependency on external rents in the form of favorable treatment by international donor organizations as well as preferential trade agreements with the EU that made certain instruments of repression more attractive than others. Thus, while Western governments as well as investors valued the stability that Ben Ali's regime could provide, the international discourse on democracy placed an increasingly stronger emphasis on political conditions, leading to more aid conditionality. While this did not contribute to a lessening in authoritarian control, to the regime did rely on administrative or legal veneers more than overt political repression.

Egypt

The 1950s were a turbulent time in the Middle East and North Africa. Not only did the beginning of the Cold war cause the rearranging of international alliances, but Israel's declaration of independence in 1948 changed the regional equilibrium. In the MENA and beyond a host of newly decolonized states emerged. In Egypt, a coup d'état instigated by young and middle ranking officers in 1952 brushed aside its constitutional monarchy and continued British presence. The 'Free Officers' coup, starting point for a political regime that was to remain in place until the uprising of 2011, was as much a product of the changing international system, as it was rooted in domestic conditions. While internationally, the Cold War and Decolonization set the scene, domestically Egypt had experienced a period of strife and prolonged domestic turmoil.⁶¹ The heated mix of anti-British nationalism and domestic chaos that pervaded the years prior to the coup served as the backdrop to the 'Free Officer' conspiracy. In the context of this highly politicized atmosphere, the army itself had become a playing ground for political forces. Opposition movements such as the Muslim Brotherhood, the Communists, and the Young Egypt movement had established a foothold. By the end of the 1940s, a group of young officers from a variety of political leanings had emerged. (Vatikiotis 1978, 105) When the king nullified their successful election to the Officers' Club executive committee, and in an increasingly chaotic domestic situation, the officers seized power in a bloodless coup d'état in July 1952.

Assessments vary on Nasser's role within the Free Officers, but it seems clear that it took him some time to consolidate his position as *primus inter pares* within the group. The Free Officer coup was generally welcomed within the population, removing the unpopular monarchy that for many Egyptians' liking had catered too much to British demands. However, the officers, all of them young medium rank officers in the 30s and 40s were generally unknown to the population. In order to give themselves a likable and relatable façade they recruited the popular General Mohammed Naguib to be their public figurehead. While not part of the original Free Officer movement, he had joined the group shortly before the coup as the only senior figure amongst junior officers. In September 1952 Naguib assumed the premiership, while Nasser became secretary general of the Liberation Rally and Minister of Interior.

⁶¹ During this incident, British colonial troops attacked an Egyptian police station in an attempt to capture a group of suspected saboteurs, who had found shelter within it. This led to an outbreak of anger within the population in the course of which parts of Cairo were burnt down.

The following two years saw Nasser working relentlessly to secure Free Officer rule, as well as his own position at the top of the movement. He ruthlessly eliminated internal and external rivals, and subdued all potential loci of independent organizational power, even those that had initially supported the military's take-over. The first crucial struggle was ridding the military of divisive elements more generally, and particularly eliminating his strongest internal competitor. General Naguib had been chosen as official figurehead for his affable personality and popular appeal. To Nasser's chagrin, his function as face of the group had worked all too well, and Naguib earned considerable public backing, despite lacking any real power within the group. This became increasingly problematic for Nasser when it became clear that Naguib not only favored an eventual return to parliamentary democracy, but disapproved of the military's harsh repression of its opponents. (Moore, 1974, 196) Shortly after their take-over the military had launched a repressive 'purification campaign,' in the course of which revolutionary tribunals were set up, the state apparatus was purged of undesirable elements, and political parties were put under the control of the Ministry of Interior. Repression did not stop there, however. After abolishing the constitution, the military confiscated all assets of political parties, and secured absolute power for the Commander in Chief. (Vatikiotis 1978, 133) The first waves of repression were to hit the leftist political spectrum. Prominent Communist politicians and parties were targeted, and worker mobilization was quelled at the root. The bloody suppression of workers at Kafr el-Dawwar in August 1952 that resulted in the trial and execution of two prominent labor leaders indicated the military regime's zero tolerance for mobilization. (Abdel-Malek 1968, 70)

In a bid for legitimation, the military at the same time introduced at least on paper truly revolutionary policies in the agricultural sector. A land reform passed in 1952 aimed at restructuring property relations in the countryside by breaking up big properties above 200 feddan, and redistributing land towards the landless. In a society made up of 65% peasants this move guaranteed gains in legitimacy within the populace, while undermining the ideological support for organizational adversaries on the left. At the same time it served more structural goals of regime consolidation by weakening the economic basis of political power of Egypt's landed elite. Having traditionally relied on their economic control over the countryside to bolster their political strength, they represented an obstacle to the new regime's consolidation of power, which lacked comparable resources. (Vatikiotis 1978, 132)

After the military regime demolished the organizational as well as economic basis of the ancient elites, and eliminated a burgeoning political left, and their organizational grassroots-basis within

the labor force, it turned to its most potent adversary: the Muslim Brotherhood (MB). The relationship between the military rulers and the MB had been strained from the start, made complicated by a web of connections stemming from their shared history in the struggle against colonial rule, and a substantial overlap in membership. While the Communists had been easily uprooted through the initial purification campaigns, the MB commanded not only a substantial degree of legitimacy through their previous anti-British agitation; they also commanded a substantial following and a competing claim to post-coup rulership the military could not ignore. Thus, as soon as the chance presented itself, Nasser moved to destroy them. When in October 1954 Nasser was shot at supposedly by a member of the MB, this not only created a wave of popular sympathy that would help him triumph over Naguib, but it also delivered the pretext for the violent suppression of the MB. In its wake, seven thousand MB were arrested, 867 condemned, and six executed. (Abdel-Malek 1968, 96)

What ultimately brought about Naguib's demise was his misconception about the sources of political power within the newly forming authoritarian regime. While his rallying of public support certainly delayed the establishment of Nasser as the undisputed ruler of Egypt, power did not reside within the populace. Instead, the struggle for it was ultimately decided via Nasser's superior hold on the state apparatus, and here particularly the armed forces, and the state bureaucracy. (Vatikiotis 1978, 147) In the end, what counted for Nasser's ability to prevail over Naguib was the fact that he was backed by a decisive part of the *elite* – the part that controlled the means of violence within society.

What implications did the Free Officers consolidation of power have for the overall elite structure of the country? As was the case with many post-colonial regimes in the region, the new rulers overwhelmingly stemmed from a modest but respectable background. They were fairly homogenous, their fathers hailing from the Delta and Upper Egypt provinces, where they worked as mid-level farmers, low-level government officials, or had small landholdings. The early 1930s saw their sons take to the cities to take advantage of newly emerging educational opportunities. (Vatikiotis 1975, 46) They thus came from a rural lower middle class background, and were amongst the first ones to profit from a liberalization of the admissions procedure for the Military Academy in 1936, which had previously been reserved for members of the aristocracy. (Vatikiotis 1975, 45) The 'Free Officers' specific background, and the ascension of that societal stratum more generally, illuminates some of the antagonism towards the landed elites. At the same time it represented a significant shift in the patterns and mechanisms of elite recruitment that would see further encouragement through the new regime.

Whereas political power in pre-coup Egypt depended on the access to property and hence economic power, Nasser was part of an aspiring generation where advancement was increasingly to be based on education and merit. However, while this generation had made considerable progress, prior to the coup, merit only took them so far. Positions at the top remained reserved for members of the economically dominant ancient elite. When Nasser sought to institutionalize his and the military's rule via the use of state institutions, it marked a significant shift not only in the way the elite itself was composed, but also in the way access to it was granted. This privileged a budding middle class, which had been the main beneficiary of the recent expansion in higher education. (Faksh 1976, 147)

However, apart from the intended displacement of the traditionally powerful elite, the staffing of high administrative and political posts with military men and technocrats also served concrete ideological purposes. Following common ideological principles of the time, the Free Officers espoused a developmentalist project to transform and modernize society. The concrete outlines of this project initially remained vague. Having little knowledge of economic policy making, the Free Officers originally hoped that the private sector would aid in the modernization of the economy. When they found it hard to mobilize private capital, however, it became clear that the state needed to step in as agent of transformation. After Nasser had successfully removed his main competitor from the inside, he embarked on his own program of modernization, guided by the belief a) in the power of the state to effect the social and economic development of the country towards a modern polity, and b) that any kind of pluralism and factionalism (which could be used interchangeably) were detrimental to that effort. He thus embraced an organic view of society, where all parts had to function together harmoniously in order for the whole system to work. Conflict was detrimental to the health of the system as such. (Richards and Waterbury 1996, 174) This idea of society and state working together as a whole was manifest in the slogan 'Unity, Discipline, Work' of the 1953 founded Liberation Rally. The Liberation Rally was intended to provide mechanisms for including the population at large, functioning as the counterpart to the consolidation of control at the top of the political system. Nasser was, however, loathe to return to a system of interest representation that had previously not only provided the platform for divisive political conflict, but also represented the basis of political power for traditional elites. The Liberation Rally, of which Nasser quickly became secretary-general, was to fulfill several purposes at once. One of these was to give the regime a veneer of popular inclusion, while providing an organizational basis from which to outmaneuver existing organizations with a mass following. Beyond that, and in stark contrast to mass mobilizing organizations in other parts of the newly decolonized world, it was not intended and

did not function as a means to organize and mobilize society. Instead, it vaguely followed a corporatist ideological outlook, as Nasser argued that “[T]he Liberation Rally is not a political party, and it is not conceived as such in order to provide privileges and gain for its members, or to satisfy their desire for power. The reason for its formation is the desire to organize the powers of the people, and to build a society on a new healthy foundation. The Liberation Rally is the school in which the people will learn the true meaning of elections.” (Nasser, cited in Vatikiotis 1978, 168)

From 1954 onwards, the ‘revolution from above’ turned into a full-blown military regime that had led go of the pretense of a return to constitutional government. Their institutionalization happened with minimal popular involvement. After two years the contours of the regime started to take shape, with Nasser at the top, surrounded by a military and technocratic elite that had been strategically placed in top posts in the administration and bureaucracy. As Hinnebusch describes it: “Initiative and responsibility were thus highly concentrated in the Presidency at the expense of other political institutions. Around Nasir [Nasser] was a core elite whose members served as vice presidents, premiers or in strategic ministerial or party posts. Except for a handful of outstanding civilians, this group was exclusively military, recruited and replenished from the Free Officers movement. An outer circle of the elite was made up of relatively apolitical civilian professionals and technocrats who held less politically crucial ministries and another stratum of officers appointed as sub-ministers and to the governorships, crucial political-security links between center and periphery. The military scattered across the heights of the state apparatus functioned as a relatively cohesive political cadre which decided and enforced the regime’s policies; the civilian experts provided them with the technical competence needed to do the job.” (Hinnebusch 1985, 15) After Nasser successfully engineered his election to the Presidency in 1956, and a new constitution was adopted that same year, first elections to a National Assembly were to be held. For that purpose a new mass organization, the National Union supplanted the Liberation Rally in 1957. Similar to its predecessor the National Union was characterized less by its political platform, and organizational structures, and more by its symbolization of the eponymous unity of the nation. (Richards and Waterbury 1996, 279) As an organizational entity it remained as anemic as the Liberation Rally, and with the re-orientation towards ‘Socialism’ in 1961 it was replaced by yet another mass organization engineered from above, the Arab Socialist Union (ASU).

While therefore the rhetoric of the regime – with its insistence on unity and an organic view of society – and the mass organizations it had created were strongly suggestive of corporatism from

early on, it lagged behind considerably where actions were concerned. Indeed, its early years were characterized by an overall reluctance to allow the centralized representation of interests, especially with regards to labor. As the brutal repression of strikes only two months after the coup had indicated, the regime was decidedly against worker' mobilization, actively preventing the formation of a centralized union confederation. Some of the reasons for that were their general reluctance to see bottom up mobilization. But some of it was also due to their desire to maintain an environment of political stability in order to consolidate themselves, and facilitate economic stability through preventing the loss of foreign business investments. Thus, even though early reform measures such as the agrarian reform laws might have signaled a turn towards more radical leftist policies, the ideological commitment towards social justice was a rather vague, poorly elaborated one, while economic policies in these first years remained conservative, and business-friendly. Early measures included a reversal of Egyptianization measures from the 1940s, an assurance of property rights, increased protection for domestic businesses, and introduced conservative monetary and fiscal policies. (Pripstein-Posusney 1997, 42) At the same time, even though they repeatedly entered negotiations with labor leaders concerning the formation of a union confederation, they continued to thwart all attempts, and to pressure the union leadership to purge its ranks of Communists. Far from creating a strong centralized union structure as basis for the corporatist inclusion of the working class, the regime initially tried to undermine labors' attempts, fearful of the mobilizational power that this would grant them.

Things gradually began to change towards the mid-1950s. On the one hand, Nasser discovered the potential use of labor's power for his struggle against General Naguib. On the other hand, private investment for the industrialization of the country was lagging far behind what was hoped for. To the contrary, investments between the years 1952-56 even decreased, culminating in an official refusal by major Egyptian banks to invest in 1955, as well as a sudden withdrawal of financial support guarantees for the Aswan-Dam prestige project by Western powers in 1956. Coming only a month after Nasser's official inauguration as President of Egypt, the reluctance of the national bourgeoisie to participate in the industrialization of the country, in combination with the last minute investment stop by the US and Great Britain ushered in a radical change of policy. In 1956, Nasser announced the nationalization of the Suez Canal. After the joint invasion of the Sinai through Israel and Great Britain in response to the nationalization was stopped last minute by a US intervention, Nasser proceeded to forcefully Egyptianize all commercial banks, agencies, and insurance companies in 1957. (Abdel-Malek 1968)

This change in policy set the stage for a new chapter in the relationship between the military and the union movement, as well as ideological adaptations to go along with it. In 1957, Nasser finally approved the creation of a union federation, even if only under state supervision, with its leaders handpicked by the regime. While Nasser remained deeply suspicious of the union, this step initiated the corporatization of the Egyptian labor movement, while the Egyptianization measures indicated the regime's turn towards state planning. At the beginning of the 1960s the regime started to more fully embrace state-directed economic development with the famous 'Socialist decrees' of 1961, and the concomitant adoption of 'Socialism' as official guiding ideology. This meant not only comprehensive nationalization measures with regards to industry, but it also meant dealing a considerable blow to a national bourgeoisie that had refused to partake in the regimes' industrialization efforts. In a series of decrees the regime nationalized all banks and insurance companies, as well as numerous other heavy and basic industry firms. It furthermore established state control of over 200 firms by making the state the majority shareholder. (Abdel-Malek 1968, 153) While parts of these measures were rescinded later on, they make the intent of the regime sufficiently clear: give the state the resources necessary to carry out comprehensive industrialization policies of its own, and break the social and economic power of the once powerful bourgeoisie while doing so. A first five year plan covering 1960-65 led to significant industrial expansion, an average economic growing of about 6.6%, and industrial output by around 12.3%. (Pripsetin Posusney 1997, 71) The state now commanded a substantial part of the national economy.

With the turn towards Socialism came the more thorough corporatization of Egypt's unions under the leadership of loyalist labor leaders, who had accepted the ban on strikes in exchange for expected gains. (Bianchi 1989 79) In exchanging political exclusion for economic inclusion, (organized) workers "became state employees whose standard of living, along with many middle class Egyptians, improved markedly. Public-sector workers received extensive social benefits, such as health care; access to consumer cooperatives, which sold subsidized food and other basic commodities; subsidized housing; pensions; the right to elect representatives to management boards of all public enterprises; and an annual cash distribution of 3 percent of the profits of public-sector firms. The minimum wage of many workers was doubled. Real wages increased by one-third from 1960 to 1964, while the number of weekly hours of work declined by 10 percent. The government guaranteed all university graduates a white collar job and all high school graduates a blue collar job. Firing a public-sector worker required a review by a committee including representatives of the union, the Ministry of Labor, and management." (Solidarity Center 2010, 11f.) In addition to real benefits accruing to workers,

they also saw their importance rise within the regime's discourse on modernization, elevating them to a symbol of productivity and progress. (Beinin 1989, 85) This was reflective as much of the real increase in importance, seeing that industrialization had significantly expanded the labor force, as it was due to strategic ideological calculations on part of the regime. However, with their increased standing and organizational capacities also came a new role. From the early 1960s onwards, the corporatization of the union movement was completed, with unions now expected to make up for the increase in benefits by becoming "instruments for pushing forward the wheels of production."⁶² (Pripstein Posusney 1997, 73) They were not, however, to challenge the regime on its policies, instead serving as channels of top down communication and organizational vehicles for ensuring discipline amongst workers. The most telling remark came courtesy of Nasser himself, who responded to union criticism with: "The workers don't demand; we give." (Pripstein Posusney 1997, 74)

The 1961 decrees also contained substantial parts extending the regime's control into the countryside. While the agrarian reform measures of 1952 had generated a substantial amount of goodwill if not outright support among the large peasant population, their actual redistributive effects had remained marginal, mostly benefitting the peasants at an intermediate level. In order to institutionalize control over the countryside, and integrate the rural population into the coalition of popular forces, more far reaching agricultural reforms were passed in 1961. (Bianchi 1989, 77-78) The intention of these measures was as much to strengthen the populist support basis of the regime, as it was to undermine, and eventually break the hold of the old ruling class, replacing it with the state instead. (Pool 1994, 208) And even though the actual amount of redistributed lands in the end was only a relatively small percentage of the overall land, peasants still profited from Nasser's agricultural reforms in very real terms.

What tentatively started to develop from the mid-1950s onwards, to be more fully implemented in the 1960s, was therefore a conception of society organized from above, and subject to the common good as prescribed by a paternalistic military regime. In return, they took on the responsibility to provide for the well-being of its society, therefore disposing of the need to mobilize for demands from below. Workers stood on the more organized side of the spectrum of a social pact encompassing peasants, the middle class, and to a certain extent also the popular class. On the one hand, the regime imposed loyal leaders on institutions of interest representation, and severely restricted the public display of dissent. On the other hand, however, it provided employment guarantees and therefore social advancement guarantees for

⁶² Official propaganda published in a government newspaper in 1961, cited after Pripsetin Posusney 1998, 73

those strata on which it intended to build its rule, as well as the availability of subsidized goods for the broader population. (Hinnebusch 1985, 20) Even though their characteristic dislike for the disorderliness of political life had made them as unlikely a champion for the political participation of the popular classes as the ancient elite, when it came to the socio-economic equilibrium in Egypt, they were much more eager for change – be it for ideological reasons or as a strategy for securing their rule. In that respect, they were the first rulers to cater to a mass audience within the popular sector with redistribution at the heart of the political agenda.

The turn towards socialism also necessitated changes within the organizational landscape of the regime at the level of institutional configurations. The 1961 founded ASU was not only to reflect the change in ideology, but also to extend regime control more efficiently into society. (Richards and Waterbury 1996, 279) Retaining the National Union's emphasis on unity and non-partisanship, it was to provide the framework for key societal groups to converge in one organizational framework. This corporatist inclusion of organized societal groups was supplemented by the populist incorporation of the masses via the provision of economic and social benefits in form of access to subsidized goods, housing and government services. (Richards and Waterbury 1996, 314) The creation of these organizations thus reflected an acknowledgement of the fact that some kind of organizational structure for at least partial incorporation was necessary in order to tie the population to the regime, and provide channels for interest and grievance articulation and redress. (Hinnebusch 1985, 18) Nasser's fear of challengers emerging out of these organizations, however, led him to keep them weak and ineffectual, in some sense undermining the very purpose of their creation. Corporatist organizations therefore remained instruments for control from above, while the regime retained its highly centralized and personalist characteristics.

Despite the seemingly socialist bent of the reforms undertaken by the regime in the industrial and agrarian sector (Moore 1974, 196), the characterization of Nasser's regime as 'socialism without socialists' (Ayubi 1991, 3) seems apt. Not only did socialism guide policy only in very general terms, but the majority of bureaucrats tasked with implementing 'socialist' policies were far from ideological adherents. Nevertheless, the single most important tool in Nasser's strive for modernization remained the bureaucracy, and not the 'mass party' ASU. The embodiment of the modern state, Nasser had sought to rationalize it, but was foiled in his attempts by the increasingly apparent mismatch between rising numbers of university graduates, and a semi-developed economy. Since state socialism had come with an employment guarantee for these strata, the state was forced to take on a responsibility that the economy could not shoulder. The

regime thus fell back on using the bureaucracy to manage the virtually irreconcilable tasks of becoming the efficient rational managers of economic and social modernization, and the employer of the vast number of graduates flooding the labor market. With achievements in the expansion of higher education outpacing industrialization and economic growth, the state itself became the main employer of its people: “from 1962/3 to 1969/70, the national income of Egypt increased by 68%, resting on an increase from the labor force of no more than 20 percent. Yet, at the same time, posts in the public bureaucracy had increased by 70 percent and salaries by 123 percent. Thus far, the rate of bureaucratic growth had quite exceeded the rate of growth in population, employment and production.” (Ayubi 1991, 94) The public sector, more generally heavily dominated economic activities, accounting for almost 75% of industrial production, and almost half of production as such. In investment, it accounted for 90%, amounting to nearly 35% of GDP by the end of the 1960s. (Apter 1987, 199-200) The regime Nasser thus initiated a trend that was to continue under the regimes of Sadat and Mubarak, using the government to employ around a third of all working aged Egyptians not part of the agricultural sector. (Moore 1974, 199) But not only did the bureaucracy serve as a receptacle for surplus ‘white collar’ middle class labor, but also as an instrument for elite recruitment and inclusion. Through this, the regime’s efforts at modernization caused fundamental changes in Egypt’s social structure, bringing forward new social strata, and expanding particularly middle class professions such as technocrats, engineers, and teachers. (Pool 1994, 207) While the pre-coup state had relied on the landed aristocracy to staff its apparatus and maintain its hold, these new strata almost exclusively relied on the state for employment and social advancement, constituting a new ‘state bourgeoisie.’ (Richards and Waterbury 1996, 203) At the same time, the contradictory task facing the bureaucracy led to systemic inefficiencies, overstaffing, an abundance of red tape, corruption, as well as escalating costs. (Ayubi 1991, 8) The increasingly bloated bureaucracy, and accumulating public debt thus pointed to the contradictions inherent between “the ‘etatist’ and the ‘populist’ orientations of the state and the opposing functions it was trying to combine: development vs. welfare; production vs. distribution.” (Ayubi 1991, 222)

To compound bureaucratic inefficiencies was the fact that the new state bourgeoisie increasingly engaged in patrimonial and clientelist practices. Using their control over the state and its resources to further their own ends, they drove the patrimonialization of the state apparatus, instead of its rationalization: “Patrimonialization partly resulted from the imposition of modern organization on a semi-traditional, resource-scarce society, but the weakness of its political institutions made the regime especially susceptible to it. In the absence of political channels of interest aggregation, individuals naturally sought privileges and exceptions through bureaucratic

channels, corrupting and fueling clientelism inside the state machine at the expense of policy implementation. In the absence of strong checks – an effective party or parliament, social forces independent of the government – officialdom was accountable at best only to the political elite at the top and no countervailing forces existed to keep it responsible.” (Hinnebusch 1985, 33) This political elite, a mixture of technocrats and military, themselves underwent a transition toward an increasing embourgeoisement. Many of the Free Officers married into families belonging to the old elite, adopting their lifestyle in the process. Consequently, political and economic alliances started to reflect these changes in elite dynamics, registering an uptick in alliances between the new state elite and the private bourgeoisie. (Hinnebusch 1985, 30) The resulting inefficiencies in the professional capabilities of state institutions did not spare key institutions such as the military either, contributing to the disastrous military loss against Israel in the Six Day War in 1967.

The defeat of 1967 had devastating consequences not only on the country’s economy, but on the overall perception and standing of the regime Nasser. It called into question the quality and integrity of the army, previously an almost sacrosanct entity, and led to wide-spread protest. As a consequence, Nasser offered his resignation (only averted through an outpouring of public sympathy, orchestrated by the regime), and a purging of the army itself. In ridding the army of patrimonial officers recruited on the basis of loyalty instead of merit, this purge established the basis of the army’s retreat from overt political involvement and its following professionalization. However, these measures could not disguise the significant loss of legitimacy the regime incurred through the 1967 defeat. The social pact like bargain that Nasser had struck with his population in which economic incorporation was exchanged for political exclusion (Apter 1987, 208) was therefore not able to insulate the regime from popular opinion entirely.

Apart from the restructuring of the Egyptian military, the defeat initiated more general policy revisions. The loss of the Sinai and its oilfields, as well as the resulting dip in tourism contributed to a sizable economic recession. (Richards and Waterbury 1996, 184) In addition, the Import Substituting Industrialization (ISI) strategy had started to falter in the mid-sixties. A lack of adequate financing led to an increase in borrowing from abroad, and mounting external debt. Taken together these developments eventually led to a reevaluation of the viability of economic transformation via the public sector, and to a movement towards private capital. Nasser’s last years in office thus saw the beginnings of a turnabout in economic policy making that reflected the increasing interlinkage between the new technocratic elite and the old bourgeoisie.

Overall, even though Nasser's rule was one of expanding social mobility that brought new social classes to the fore, their exclusively economic incorporation into his populist coalition made them a passive support at best. The creation of the ASU did nothing to provide for more active incorporation. Especially in the villages and the traditional urban neighborhoods, it continued to be dependent on local notables. (Hinnebusch 1985, 33) As Hinnebusch argues, with the coup d'état in 1952, a newly emerging middle class in the form of the Free Officers took over political power, leaving in its wake a gap between the inherited structures of social power and the newly established structures of political power. Nasser tried to remedy this gap by using the agrarian reform measures of the 1950s and early 1960s to destroy the landed classes' basis of social power - their control over land. Thus, while often cited as the poster child of Arab Socialism, the reality of the regime's brand of socialism was more one of a convenient strategy to achieve the political and economic ends of regime maintenance via the corporatist inclusion of key organized groups, as well as the exclusion of rival social strata. Hence, the regime's self-description as socialist conformed to discursive opportunities in the 1960s more than to an actual ideological adherence. Instead, the more accurate description of the regime under Nasser, that captures the essence of its methods for and key elements of the maintenance of power, is a populist-corporatist regime. While the 1960s saw Nasser succeed to a certain extent in pushing back the power of ancient elites, they never quite disappeared. The defeat of 1967 initiated their slow return.

When Nasser died a sudden death in 1970, his then Vice-President and fellow Free Officer co-conspirator Anwar Es-Sadat took over the Presidency. With Sadat came sweeping changes within the political as well as the economic realm. However, underneath the surface, much remained the same, with changes in institutions and policy more adaptive strategies rather than genuine changes in the core functions of the system. One of the recurrent themes connecting Sadat's rule to that of Nasser is the tight interlinkage between the economic and the political. Some of the changes Sadat introduced might have been due to genuine ideological commitments, but much of it can be attributed to changing needs in support coalition management. Sadat's economic opening policies known as the Infitah policies were as much result of the necessity to secure his newly found power through the (re-)incorporation of different social strata as they were the cause of their further consolidation. The more open configurations of *political* institutions of the 1970s in this regard are if not an epiphenomenon then at least in large parts influenced by modifications within the economic realm and the concomitant ideological adaptations.

The first step towards a course of economic liberalization was Sadat's launching of the 'Corrective Revolution' in 1971, which was to provide opportunities for Arab and foreign capital to invest in Egypt. (Ayubi 1991, 223) An expanding role of the private sector within the economy was to be supplemented by a pluralization of the political arena. However, at least according to official doctrine, Nasserist socialism was not to be abandoned as such, but its mode of application was to be adapted to a changing international and economic environment. At least theoretically, its gains were to be institutionalized, at the same time as its flaws were to be corrected. (Hinnebusch 1985, 112) This economic and political opening was quickly put into action the same year. A new 'Permanent Constitution' established a form of semi-pluralism at the institutional level, with some enhanced liberties and a greater rule of law to go along with economic liberalization. In strong contrast to Nasser who had rejected the idea of party politics as detrimental to the health of the body politic, Sadat was willing to grant at least some measure of pluralism, provided that it remained contained and within the bounds of what he deemed acceptable.

The single party ASU was restructured by allowing the internal establishment of a leftist, a centrist, and a rightist/liberal platform. They were to compete in elections for a newly constituted People's Assembly in 1976. That same year, the ASU was formerly split up and the three platforms were granted independent political party status. (Beattie 2000, 192-6; Cooper 1982) In 1979, the regime finally replaced Nasser's Arab socialism with democratic socialism (the Arab equivalent of social democracy) as its official political doctrine. This doctrinal change and the at least verbal embrace of pluralism, on the one hand catered to the elites' desire for greater predictability and freedom, at least where their own activity was concerned. At the same time, however, while this move gave voice to dissenting political positions, it also purged these voices and the interests they represented from a legitimate channel *inside* the regime party. Sadat thus strategically excluded "recalcitrant factions—workers, peasants, students, academics, and their advocates—who opposed his Open Door policy. Since they were too large to censure outright, these troublesome factions, instead, were muzzled by affiliating them with new political parties too weak to influence government policies and operations. As a result, many members of the underclass who had previously spoken out through various ASU departments were no longer able to attract attention to their critical conditions." (Toth 1998, 77)

Sadat's early years therefore saw a general shift towards the (re-)empowering of Egypt's upper-class. The newly opened economic and political channels, far from increasing the participatory opportunities for all strata of society, disproportionately benefited a mixture of the old

bourgeoisie and a newly emerging *infatih* bourgeoisie. These strata benefitted from increasing heterogeneity at the elite level, and particularly from a reduced role of the military. The diversification in leading personnel was at least partially due to Sadat's efforts at removing left-over influence of the Free Officer clique in particular, and high military officers in general in a bid to secure his power. Whereas under Nasser they had staffed top positions within the party, in peak years making up to 66% of all members in the executive committee, and 62% of all leading members in the general-secretariat, under Sadat there was a significant civilianization of posts, with officers accounting for only 22% of the NDP's Politburo. (Hinnebusch 1985, 105) The decreased legitimacy of the military as a revolutionary elite also affected its function as an elite recruitment pool and therefore as one of the main channels of upward mobility. While the army did retain its importance in some vital matters - the question of succession, a last resort back up of the regime - its political influence, as well as its dominance in state institutions diminished significantly. (Springborg 1979, 50) Sadat's strategy seemed to bear fruit when Egypt, with the help of US intervention came out the at least 'moral' winner of the October war against Israel in 1973, significantly strengthening Sadat's hand against domestic rivals and in his attempt to professionalize the military.

The decline in military influence on elite-recruiting therefore made space for other elite strata's rise to prominence. Especially interesting in this regard was the newly emerging state bourgeoisie. Originally the somewhat unintentioned outcome of Nasser's use of the bureaucracy as *the* tool of state driven modernization, it merged with a traditional bourgeoisie resurfacing towards the end of the 1960s. The power of this new elite stratum did not simply lie in their control over land, but their control over state assets and access to state organs. However, since their titles did not consist in something inheritable, they were eager to use their privileged positions within the state to build an existence outside of it establishing footholds in the private sector. (Hinnebusch 1985, 89) More traditional politics of domination resurfaced in the countryside, with landlords and rich peasants reestablishing their local power structures, while the state's penetrative capacities retracted. The resulting integration between different elite strata - "the semiaristocracy of the ancient regime, the military-technocratic elite of the Nasserist period, and the commercial *nouveaux riches* of *infatih*" (Ayubi 1991, 80) was cemented by the interlinking of familial relationships through marriage, and business alliances. The new economic and political elite took on a more unified, upper class character. (Hinnebusch 1985, 109)

While the political elite became more bourgeois, the Presidency itself became more patrimonialized, visible amongst others in the *mode* of elite recruitment. (Bianchi 1989, 84) The first and foremost criteria for joining the political and administrative elite (not the economic one, however) henceforth were to be found in the loyalty to the president. This created an elite largely made up of “technocrats and professionals who lacked coercive bases or special political credentials and who, being his creatures were beholden to him, and could be freely dismissed.” (Hinnebusch 1985, 87) With elites frequently rotating in office (the average tenure of posts declined from 44 months under Nasser to only 21 months under Sadat), he encouraged self-enrichment to a certain extent, in this way giving elites who participated a stake in the system. For those elite member closest to President, personal connections granted access to the most immediate elite circles, and established a web of power brokers with considerable influence independent of their office. For elite actors further removed from the center, however, “high office was a crucial resource. Official incumbents had some decision-making power in their own domains, and individual ministers had considerable decree power within the bounds of very loosely drafted parliamentary legislation. High officials enjoyed some discretion over funds and appointments, had privileged access to the President and benefitted from the habitual compliance of those below them in the bureaucracy. They acquired all this with office, and lost it when they lost office.” (Hinnebusch 1985, 124) Patronage and personalism held all of this together, pervading the bureaucracy and state institutions, tying officials through various levels of power brokers all the way to the top of the regime. However, while concentrating an enormous amount of power in the person of the President, Sadat was not averse to leaving a considerable degree of freedom to those below him with regards to everyday politics, acting as an arbiter when necessary. (Hinnebusch 1985, 90)

Greater leverage included interest groups as well, especially those with elite links, who could benefit from greater policy impact in realms and on issues that were not immediately relevant for questions of political power. More leverage at the elite level did not necessarily amount to greater participatory impact of either the urban or rural majority, however. This was due as much to the confinement of political freedoms to elite level politics - be they within the oppositional or the regime domain, as to the fact that those institutions introduced with *infitah* politics and formally available for the provision of participatory opportunities remained mere shells, void of independent political life. Real politics was located at the level of informal institutions inaccessible to a broader public. Formal institutions were not entirely without importance, however, and the regime worked to ensure their absolute control. Case in point were any and all parliamentary elections held since the reintroduction of multi-party politics

under Sadat. When Sadat undertook to reform the ASU he allowed several platforms to develop into different organizational vehicles - the National Socialist rally (later the National Democratic Party, NDP) at the center, the Liberal Socialists on the right wing, and the National Progressive Unionists (Tagammu) on the left side of the political spectrum. (Owen 2000, 151) When these platforms were to compete for the first time during the newly instated parliamentary elections of 1976, it unsurprisingly led to an overwhelming victory of the center platform, which was later to become the ruling party NDP. It won 280 of the 350 seats, leaving the Liberals with 12, and the Tagammu with only 2 seats, the rest going to independents. The result was representative of the de facto atrophy of pluralism within the Peoples' Assembly already at the inception of party politics. (Owen 2000, 152) The centrist platform was not only the clearly favored vehicle of the regime, but it also boasted an impressive array of government officials amongst its candidates. At the same time as Sadat strengthened the NDP's position within the institutional web of rule, he made it increasingly attractive as a channel of elite recruitment as well as elite positioning. This forestalled the possibility of the development of genuine political parties with roots in the population, which could compete against the regime either on the basis of religious appeal towards more traditional strata of society, or revolutionary appeal towards workers and peasants. (Owen 2000, 152)

While interest representation through party organizations thus remained limited, even in the context of Sadat's lukewarm attempts at liberalization the union movement witnessed some amount of pluralization. With Sadat's position being far from secure at the beginning of his rule, union elections saw a number of communists gain representation at the local union level. Even though the elections remained marred by internal rivalries, and ultimately under the control of the regime, this pluralization nonetheless represented a novel development, giving local activists an opportunity for input previously denied. (Pristein Posusney 1997, 96) The honeymoon was not to last, and with Sadat's embracing of economic liberalization came renewed tensions between workers and the state. In the aftermath of *infitah* policies, Egypt witnessed an increase in wildcat strikes on the local level, while the regime attempted to tighten its hold on the central union structure. The regime's tactic in asserting control was symptomatic of the more general relationship between labor and the state. While workers were too potentially disruptive a force to allow open and prolonged disobedience, at the same time, they remained too important towards the perceived project of regime maintenance and legitimation. In spite of the newly forged path of economic liberalization the regime did not dare to completely shed its image of the caretaker of the nation. Harsh police repression and official condemnation of strike action was often closely followed by substantial economic concessions

to redress workers' grievances. Thus even with union control strengthened at the top, extending through the organization via pyramidal structures of hierarchical control, neither the union, nor the regime managed to entirely contain the occasional backlash of anger and fear amongst workers provoked by liberalization measures.

Union level pluralization was matched by increasing contestation in the professional syndicates. Syndical elections turned into hotspots of contestation that saw almost all political forces, legal and illegal compete for seats. Syndicates represented only a limited portion of Egyptian society, however. Increasing participatory opportunities therefore mainly benefitted middle and upper class strata. Still, some of the syndicates evolved from corporatist instruments of control into something more genuinely representing the interests of its members and into a form of genuine opposition. This was particularly true of the Journalists' and the Lawyers' syndicates, who to this day continue to function as focal points for opposition politics, while other syndicates such as the Engineers' syndicate remained close to the regime. (Hinnebusch 1985, 150-1)

Middle class incorporation first and foremost remained economic in nature, however. Notwithstanding the regime's discourse on economic liberalization, the main instrument of this incorporation remained state institutions. Regime maintenance strategies thus continued to rely on the economically inefficient over-staffing of the state bureaucracy. During the 1970s, over 500,000 new graduates entered the labor market, almost twice the number of graduates Egypt's universities had produced *combined* till the end of the 1960s. (Ayubi 1991, 82) In order to incorporate this newly emerged, state created middle class into its support basis the regime was yet again forced to resort to the bureaucracy. It did so directly, by providing them with the employment necessary for satisfying middle class aspirations. The middle class was also bolstered indirectly by providing them with the consumer goods associated with a middle class life style, whose satisfaction were part and parcel of the expectations associated with the climb toward middle class status. To finance this, the state increasingly relied on imported goods. The resulting balance of payment crisis could not as had initially been hoped be averted through the influx of foreign capital and private sector investment.

From the mid-1970s onwards, the uneasy balance between economic liberalization, and the state as continued care taker therefore led to significant economic problems. The economy was increasingly faced with crosscutting and often contradictory pressures, only some of which could be relieved by redesigning political and institutional factors. On the one hand, even within the context of economic liberalization, the increasing embourgeoisement of the elite, and the encroachment of powerful business elites, the regime still had to make space for at least some

measure of popular class incorporation. Subsidies, while extremely costly and an immense burden on state and economy, were part of the populist bargain struck between Nasser and the people in the 1960s. By the mid-1970s Egypt's agricultural economy was unable to keep up with the rapidly growing population. To compensate, the regime resorted to the massive import of goods, with grain imports at such high numbers as to put Egypt at number three of the world's largest importers. (Bush 2007, 259) These imports were financed by accumulating external debt through borrowing, as well as external rents in the form of generously subsidized US loans. The rapid increase in food imports by almost eight times in the period between 1970 and 1980 had noticeably negative effects on the balance of trade, especially in the agricultural sector, which rose from a deficit of \$800 million in 1977 to a deficit of \$2.5 billion in 1980-81. (Bush 2007, 1603) Infitah policies, while opening the economy to a certain extent, increasing investment and profit opportunities for private and foreign capital, nonetheless left Egypt's extensive system of subsidies untouched. What is more, consumer subsidies actually expanded throughout the 1970s, with additional foodstuffs such as beans, rice, meat, lentils, joining the fray, pushing the total number of subsidized foods up to 18. (Gutner 2002, 462) With the average Egyptian income by the end of the 1970s at under \$300 a year, the majority of the population depended on food subsidies to subsist. (Tucker 1978, 5) Thus, infitah politics seemed to have had regressive outcomes with regards to the distribution of resources within Egyptian society. This affected the balance between different social strata, disproportionately benefitting the upper classes over the salaried wage earners from middle class to working class, between the countryside and the cities, benefitting urban populations over rural ones, and between different sectors of the economy, having detrimental impacts on agriculture and manufacturing in favor of trade, finance and construction. (Bianchi 1989, 46)

Consequently, many Egyptians had to face increasingly dire economic conditions during Sadat's years in office, including rising costs of living, compounded by steep demographic growth, and increasingly crowded urban centers. Cairo alone experienced unrelenting urbanization with rates of around 1,100,000 people per annum. (Toth 1998, 86) Confronted with increasing social and economic pressures the regime nonetheless managed to keep the social peace. Sadat combined sheer luck (an oil boom in neighboring Arab countries), clever political maneuver (the acquisition of economic and strategic rents), an element of *laissez faire* (relinquishing some control - over workers' remittances, political opposition), as well as a restructuring towards a more sustainable support coalition towards the bourgeoisie and business elites. On the one hand, the regime maintained an increasingly untenable approach to economic incorporation despite the foreseeably detrimental impact this had on the economy. On the other, after initially

trying to contain labor emigration, it began to see its benefits for not only reducing pressures on the labor market, but also gaining another source of external rent income. With the oil boom in neighboring Arab countries, Egypt profited from the influx of indirect rents via workers' remittances that accompanied growing levels of worker migration. The importance of these rents becomes clear if we contrast the fact that poverty in the countryside during the years of infitah between 1974/5 - 1981/2 actually declined (Richards 1991, 1725), despite public investment in agriculture declining in parallel to around 8% in 1978 from about 24 % in the mid-1960s. During those years its per capita food production declined as well, while the total area of food crop production remained relatively stable. (Adams 1985, 711-14) Nonetheless Egypt's nominal debt grew 10 fold from less than \$2 billion in 1970 to around \$21 billion ten years on. With the economic opening not resulting in a more productive economy, emigration and government employment together accounted for as much as 90% of new employment generated in the decade 1976-86. (Richards 1991, 1725) The move of integrating workers' remittances into its strategy of economic survival management bought the regime some time and leverage. However, the profound contradiction between its developmentalist and distributive policies ultimately brought the economy to the verge of ruin towards the mid-1970s. Having used the state, its organs, and its policies as instruments for the creation of social strata dependent on that very same state for their subsistence, consumption, and as avenue of mobility, it increasingly struggled to live up to the needs and expectations it had itself created. (Cooper 1983, 453) The economic structure of state capitalism had made the state vulnerable to resource crises, since the "mass subsidization of subsistence coupled with the constant expansion of employment in the state and an aggressive investment policy place[d] the regime in an extremely precarious resource position." (Cooper 1983, 465)

This precarious economic position was not without effects on the political arena. Political liberalization, even to the limited extent that it was granted during Sadat's first years in office, fell victim to the regime's precarious economic position. Towards the latter years of the 1970s, political liberties thus regressed and political space contracted yet again. The opposition did not put up much of a struggle, owing their existence to a strategy of ascertaining control at the discretion of the rulers rather than the genuine institutionalization of greater liberties to begin with. (Brownlee 2004, 8) This contraction of the political arena was manifested in the growing resort to plebiscites, won with overwhelming majorities, the creation of an additional government appointed second chamber, the Shura Council (Bianchi 1989, 86), and increases in repression. It was epitomized also in the elections to the (rather short lived) Peoples' Assembly

of 1979. The regime party ran under the NDP label for the first time, its victory even more pronounced than in 1976, winning 92% of seats. (Ayubi 1991, 96)

Both economic pressures and political deliberalization originated within the same intricate mix of domestic pressures and foreign policy imperatives, manifesting themselves in two key events towards the later 1970s. One of them represented the consequences of an attempted break of the social bargain during the infamous bread riots of 1977, and the other one the domestic political consequences of the highly controversial decision to make peace with Israel in the context of the Camp David accords of 1978.

Thus, Egypt's turn towards economic liberalization at the beginning of the 1970s was as much due to the failure of state-led economic planning, as it was a gesture towards a foreign policy realignment to acquire new sources of foreign rents. With the move towards Western allies and away from the Soviet Union as main alliance partner also came an opening towards International Financial Institutions (IFIs): "By the end of 1976, Sadat's cabinet faced a \$2 billion budget deficit. Foreign debt exceeded GDP, and debt repayments were an estimated 70 percent of exports. Desperate to dig out of this hole, Sadat and his ministers decided to cut state subsidies on cooking gas, rice, and sugar.⁷⁰ The costs of these subsidies had skyrocketed from \$175 million in 1972 to \$1.7 billion in 1976, and the reductions, it was hoped, would generate \$600 million. Such savings would stop the budget from hitting a projected \$3.25 billion deficit in 1977. The decision to reduce subsidies, rather than curb military spending, debt servicing, or investment, reflected the government's priorities about placating domestic and foreign elites. Price changes threatened a 15 percent increase in the cost of living for an Egyptian of mean income.." (Brownlee 2012, 651)

When on the 17th of January 1977 the government announced substantial cuts in subsidies on food stuffs as well as bonuses for public sector employees protests started that quickly spread.⁶³ Their violent repression could only be achieved by calling on the army, and by ultimately backtracking on Egypt's agreement with the IMF, reinstating the previously cut subsidies. (Gutner 2002, 462) The official death toll of their violent repression came in at 73, even though it is widely estimated to be much higher, with some estimates going up to almost 800.⁶⁴ While the protests succeeded in rescinding the subsidy cuts, they also resulted in massive repression not only against those involved, but those perceived to represent a threat to regime stability. More than 2000 Egyptians were arrested "on charges of demonstrating, inciting riots, or

⁶³ <https://libcom.org/history/1977-egypts-bread-intifada>

⁶⁴ <https://libcom.org/history/1977-egypts-bread-intifada>

membership in secret organizations,” (Stevens 1978, 18) particularly leftists and Islamists. Further mass arrests followed Sadat’s controversial visit to Jerusalem, resulting in the Camp David accords in 1978. These unprecedented steps had been preceded by a rapprochement with the US and Israel after the 1973 war, culminating in Sadat’s historic visit to Jerusalem in 1977, and the initiation of the Camp David Accords. Egypt’s realignment on the international stage would see it become the second largest recipient of US foreign aid (after Israel), but also result in its almost complete isolation from its fellow Arab countries. (Hinnebusch 1985, 113) On the pay-off side Egypt gradually managed to regain several sources of direct rent revenues it had lost in the course of the 1967 defeat. Most important of these was the reopening of the Suez Canal in 1975. It also resulted in an increase in Egypt’s attractiveness for tourism, and a renewed flow of tourism rent income. Moreover, after the Camp David settlement was signed in 1979, Egypt regained control of the Sinai Peninsula and their oil fields from Israel, . (Richards 1991, 1725)

While both US support and regained avenues of rent income represented an invaluable source of revenue for the economically battered state, they also stirred resentment at home. This came particularly from Islamist forces on the right, and forces like the Tagammu party on the left. Especially Islamist militants from the Gamaat Islamiyya had voiced their opposition to the accords. Having originally been endorsed by Sadat to counter leftist influence at Egypt’s universities, in the course of the 1970s they had undergone a profound radicalization process, ultimately turning them against the regime. (Tucker 1978, 6) From the left of the political spectrum, the Tagammu’ had become a vocal opponent to the regime’s realignment. Contrary to the regime’s intention of providing a platform for a loyal opposition to the left, it had started to collect amongst its ranks a diverse array of leftist forces, including workers representatives, Marxist and other brands of leftist’ intellectuals, as well as Nasserists. (Tucker 1978, 6)

In combination these pressures contributed to Sadat’s increasing dissatisfaction with his experiment in pluralism. Confronted with dissent from seemingly all quarters of society, he resorted to repression. Mass arrests filled Egypt’s jails with thousands of prisoners, dozens of students were expelled from their universities, public sector workers subjected to administrative harassment. (Stevens 1978, 19) After the 1977 bread riots, members of the Tagammu and the trade unions were the first to be detained. (Tucker 1978, 7) They were followed by members of nearly every organization of political and civil life, such as the MB, the Copts, the journalists, the lawyers, the students. The crisis culminated a month before his assassination: “In a furious television address he announced the imprisonment of more than 1,500 people whose views

spanned the entire spectrum of Egyptian public opinion. At the same time he revealed a particularly audacious plan to nationalize every mosque in the country, including thousands of private mosques, which by that time represented Egypt's last islands of associational freedom.” (Bianchi 1989, 86-7)

As Sadat's final years show, the initial political pluralization, while superficially conforming to an image of an increasingly institutionalized and regularized pluralist system, neither represented the actual entrenchment of broad participatory opportunities for the masses, nor resulted from actual institutional gains. It was the partial and retractable formalization of privileges granted to some societal strata based on their socio-economic status and their role within the support coalition of the regime. Hence, it remained dependent upon the continued tolerance of the regime itself, and had to tow the informal lines of conduct to be guaranteed continued existence. Furthermore, the pluralization of the political arena also added levers of control. The rules of the game were created in a way that ensured that no ideological adversary *not* born out of the midst of an elite controlled political and social arena could come into being. This worked not only because of the inherent weakness of top-down created political and associational groups, but rather the profound absence of grassroots ties into the broader population of these groups. In the countryside, peasants were still largely tied to local patrons via clientelist channels, and those patrons continuously delivered their votes to the regime party.

The same inconsistency between discourse and actual policies was visible with regards to the politics of economic liberalization. Far from actually steering the economy on a thoroughly capitalist course, *infatih* policies partly enabled and partly coincided with the move of the Egyptian economy towards a semi- or quasi-rentier status. The dependence on exogenous rents grew from about 6% of all available resources at the beginning of the 1970s to around 45% at the beginning of the 1980s. The state therefore became increasingly dependent on oil exports, tourism, Suez Canal revenues, and workers' remittances, as well as strategic rents extracted from the US, the OECD, and the IMF. (Richards 1991, 1721) Economic liberalization thus remained subject to political criteria rather than economic ones, and the regime ensured that it would not be thorough enough to severely deprive the masses of a livelihood for which they relied on the state. It was nonetheless sufficient enough to deliver opportunities and benefits for new and old elite strata. The state thus tried to maintain much of what was characteristic for the social contract under Nasser, while at the same time including new elite elements in its inner circles. These profited more directly from new economic opportunities by using the creation of a mixed economy to open up new channels for different elements of the economic,

bureaucratic, and political elite to secure advantages in the distribution of spoils, and influence. The Sadat years therefore witnessed the Egyptian regime clearly executing a shift in the social basis of its support coalition, benefitting mostly upper and upper middle class strata.

After Sadat's death in 1981, Husni Mubarak acquired the presidency by virtue of his position as Vice President. As did his predecessors, Mubarak had made his career in the military. He inherited from both Nasser and Sadat elements of personalist rule - the frequent rotation of elites to prevent alternative centers of power from emerging, the promotion of loyalty over ambition, and of bureaucrats and technocrats over politically ambitious individuals - which he proceeded to institutionalize into a system of technocratic rule. Commanding neither significant charisma, nor a distinct vision of state and society, his rule was characterized by continuity. His style was more managerial than political, preferring technical solutions over political ones, compromise over conflict. As Ayubi observed, "In principle, the President enjoys tremendous powers, especially under the existing 'emergency laws' that were passed after the assassination of Sadat in 1981; yet Mubarak has chosen not to use them either to change the composition of the ruling elite, or to make important shifts in the socio-economic system along the lines of Nasser's 'socialist transformations' or Sadat's policy of *infatih*." (Ayubi 1991, 136) Staying on the path Sadat had chosen before him, Mubarak mixed half-hearted economic reforms with limited political pluralization within the parameters set by the necessities of power maintenance. Especially during his first years in office this took the form of a relative expansion in civil and political liberties, while economic reform was continued, albeit in a stalled manner. (Kienle 1998) This included the revival of multi-party politics, starting with the parliamentary elections of 1984, as well as the strengthened position of interest group representation.

Multi-party elections during the 1980s were held in 1984 and 1987. In this context, apart from providing an outlet for elite strata, they also increasingly took on the function of incorporating key societal elements - from businessmen to rural notables to interest group representatives. In this way they became part of the legitimating discourse of the regime, at the same time becoming even more strongly politically managed and regulated. The NDP, favored with the backing of the regime and the resources provided by the vast bureaucratic apparatus of the state thus 'won' a safe 2/3rds majority during any and all parliamentary elections. With consistently low electoral turn-out rates (they were reported to be as low as 10% in urban areas), the NDP thus time and again managed to reach huge parliamentary majorities delivered not only through the regime's control over the electoral process, but also through its corporatist ties to organized interests. Thus the union federation's control over workers' benefits enabled them to pressure

workers into voting for the NDP, as did landlords' control over the peasants in the countryside, or administrative control at the voting sites themselves. These strategies from the 'menu of manipulation' (Schedler 2002) were complemented by the provision of selective benefits prior to the elections to urban poor, and public sector workers' constituencies. (King 2003, 95-96) Incorporating key clienteles into their support coalition, the regime party NDP thus developed as one of the key instruments of control during Mubarak's tenure. It granted access to spoils as well as channels for the distribution of goods through clientelism and patronage. And even though it could hardly be compared to a political party in the classical sense, it nonetheless served to integrate clienteles of the regime into its structures, thereby ensuring at least some degree of interest aggregation and grievance redress. The party itself was composed of a mixture of rural notables, infitah businessmen, and local patrons. It was from its inception more of an extended arm of the regime, than a genuine instrument to generate bottom up representation, relying on state resources and patronage to attract followers and disperse resources from the top down to the population through its pyramidal patronage networks. This enabled the extension of regime control far into the countryside and tied local intermediaries to the central apparatus. (Ayubi 1991, 99) While the regime thus allowed the semblance of competition, it continued to restrict the playing field in a way that ensured no viable challenger could emerge and participate in the electoral arena. Through the prohibition of parties based on sectoral, class, or religious interests - excluding potential parties able to represent a labor, peasant, bourgeois, or traditional constituency - it ensured that those groups in society that wanted to see their interests served, had to do so through the NDP. (King 2003, 93) Opposition parties in each of these elections consequently did not manage to make significant inroads.

The only exception to this was the forbidden but partially tolerated Muslim Brotherhood, which managed to establish somewhat of a parliamentary presence. Its continued status as a tolerated but illegal organization made its containment easy, however, with regular crackdowns keeping them in check. As Egypt's strongest (and possibly only serious) opposition force at that time, they benefitted from the initial liberalization of the political sphere more generally and the electoral arena particularly. Even before Sadat initiated a tentative rapprochement to secure his rule at the beginning of the 1970s the MB had maintained underground organizational structures. Additionally, they benefitted from their far-reaching networks for distributing charity and social services to Egypt's ever growing number of people in need. The continued denial of a legal status meant, however, that the MB had to rely on alliances with other, legal opposition parties in order to gain access to the electoral arena. During the first elections in 1984, they coalesced with the recently relicensed Neo-Wafd party, under whose ticket they succeeded to

get eight of their members elected. They were able to repeat this success in an electoral alliance with Hizb al-Amal (Labor party) and Hizb al-Ahrar (Liberal party) in the elections of 1987, where they won 38 of the available seats. (Koehler and Warkotsch 2009, 5)

While the MB thus tried to enter the formal political arena in order to achieve their goals, the remnants of the Islamic student groups further radicalized. Due to a divergence in goals and strategies the *gama'at islamiyya* split into two different groups following the successful assassination of President Sadat through the young lieutenant Khalid al-Islambouli, and the subsequent repressive campaign against them. While the *Gama'a Islamiyya* sought to build a mass movement through preaching and enforcing social and religious norms within society, Al-Jihad sought to achieve change by cutting off the head of the infidel Egyptian regime through. The latter group never managed to regain their strength in the wake of regime repression. The former, however, resurrected their organizational structures and established strongholds in Upper Egypt, and in some of Cairo's shantytowns. Since they provided badly needed social services to the poor in these areas, the regime at least during the 1980s extended a certain amount of tolerance, being unable to guarantee the continued provision due to yet another looming economic crisis. (Koehler and Warkotsch 2009, 9) While the regime thus in a certain way exchanged partial tolerance for social peace, it also thereby granted a space outside the law where Islamic militantism could take root and grow. This space was to provide the basis for the years of violent insurgency witnessed in the 1990s.

The MB and more radical Islamist groups were not the only ones to profit from greater political and organizational space granted by the regime during the 1980s, however. In exchange for political support, the regime also accorded more leeway to organized interests, such as the labor union, the syndicates, and the business chambers. This further incorporation, while providing the leadership of these organizations with more space, also pushed ahead their insulation from the rank and file. Under Mubarak, union leadership for example saw significant increases in their power, and the growth of more reciprocal avenues of influence on policy-making. This new power included the "exclusive control over a new Workers' University [...]. In addition, the Confederation has been allowed to join in the widening movement of 'syndical capitalism' initiated by the many corporatist professional associations and business chambers that have used pension funds and state subsidies to establish independent economic enterprises, including joint ventures with foreign investors." (Bianchi 1986, 433) This growing influence came at a price, however. In return for it, the union's leadership was expected to support economic liberalization, and reign in rank and file mobilization. Thus, in the course of the

1980s, a gradual lessening of the union's resistance to the abolishment of price controls and the reduction in subsidies was observable. Part of the reason for that was to be found in the fact that Mubarak, having learned from Sadat's experience in 1977, moved in a more gradualist and above all more covert way. (Pripstein Posusney 1997, 197) Also part of the reason was that the union leadership managed to channel selective benefits to workers in compensation for losses incurred through price increases. In exchange for moderating the reforms' impact on its constituency, the unions in return accepted infitah in its principle tenets, including the need to structure the economy along capitalist lines. The gains in influence on the side of the union leadership most visibly manifested themselves in the stillbirth of the agreement with the IMF in 1987 due to the regime's efforts at appeasing the unions. (Pripstein Posusney 1997, 199) Pressure on workers' interests was further relieved by the continuous facilitation of worker migration. Having started under Sadat, worker migration under Mubarak reached considerable proportions, constituting one of the main avenues of revenue for many Egyptians. By 1984, between 10 and 20% of Egypt's agricultural labor force was employed abroad, sending back between \$780 million and \$1.5 billion per annum. (Adams 1985, 716/7)

The regime nonetheless faced intense economic pressures by the mid-1980s, resulting in yet another attempt to selectively restructure the burden of the crisis towards the popular sector. Having learned their lesson from the violence that followed the bread riots in 1977, the regime Mubarak took a more cautious and gradualist approach. At the same time as they reduced subsidies, they handed out compensation measures to strata deemed more crucial for regime survival, to the detriment of more generalized popular incorporation: "Some 80% of government spending consisted of subsidies, public-sector salaries, interest on the public debt, and the military. The last two were sacrosanct, forcing all adjustment on the spending side onto the first two. As new foreign lending dried up in the latter half of the 1980s, the deficit was increasingly financed by the banking system." (Richards and Waterbury 1996, 225-226)

Notwithstanding the regime's efforts to cushion the effect of these measures on key strata such as workers, they had a detrimental impact on wage earners more generally, whether in the public or private sector. The regime pushed ahead with these measures nonetheless because of an increasingly dire economic situation, partially caused by domestic economic deficiencies, partially by changes in the international context outside of regime control. Externally, with the oil glut dying down, income generated by oil declined from \$2.9 billion in 1983 to \$1.36 billion in 1987. This triggered a parallel decline in workers' remittances, as well as in income generated through Suez Canal traffic. The state's persistent neglect of agricultural investments also meant

that agricultural exports continuously deteriorated, with the trade deficit amounting to \$2.8 billion in 1987. Between 1980 and 1992, investment fell by almost 10% from 32% to 23%. (Bush 2007, 259) And while industrial exports did somewhat better, textiles and other industrial exports relied at least partially on subsidies to do so. (Richards 1991, 1723) Other economic indicators for that period also painted a dire picture of Egypt's overall economic situation. By the mid-1980s Egypt had accumulated over \$38 billion in foreign obligations, with debt service charges exceeding \$4 billion per year, making it one of the world's biggest debtor nations. (Richards and Waterbury 1996, 219) By the end of the decade, and on the eve of the gulf war, international debt had grown to even bigger proportions, arriving at \$50 billion. This brought with it a decrease in real wages not only of unskilled workers, which saw a reduction of 40% in only 4 years, but also of civil servants, whose income fell by half compared to what they had earned in 1973. (Richards 1992b) This development was accompanied by a doubling in unemployment as well as a further deterioration of government services such as health, education, transport etc. The average deficit was equally high, coming in at 21.2% of GDP for FY 1982/90. Declining revenue along with oil income, and the state's inability to compensate for a shortage in revenue by cutting spending eventually led to the deficit spiraling out of control. (Richards and Waterbury 1996, 225-226)

With the economy in bad shape by the end of the 1980s, the population was hit unevenly, depending on the level of incorporation of each particular social strata. The instrument of choice for incorporating key groups into the regime's support coalition had remained the bureaucracy. With the basic tenets of economic policy remaining in place, elites continued to profit from their tight interlinkage with the regime. Elite composition therefore hardly changed during the 1980s, with many of Mubarak's political staff being 'old guard' personnel, often bureaucrats themselves, who had remained fairly stable in the positions they had acquired under Sadat. (Richards and Waterbury 1996, 229) Elites continued to be made up of the top echelons of public sector bureaucrats, private business elites, and the military, all of which remained relatively unaffected by the economic crisis. And in spite of the increasingly negative economic indicators, bureaucratic expansion continued apace. Profiting from this was a state bourgeoisie that had taken shape under Sadat, and whose persistent embedment in the upper echelons of the bureaucracy fueled not only uneven bureaucratic expansion, but even more deeply entrenched links between state bureaucrats and private economic elites. This expansion mostly took three forms: It firstly included the continuing absorption of surplus labor, especially university graduates. This labor was for the most part neither needed, nor usefully employed. However by getting graduates off the market, the regime was able to at least partially provide the

middle class with channels and opportunities for satisfying economic and occupational aspirations, even if it meant tolerating long waiting times, and poor working conditions. The bureaucracy, secondly, expanded unevenly across the different ministry areas. Thus, in the wake of the bread riots of 1977, Sadat's assassination, as well as a wave of Islamist terrorism, it was the state's perceived need for control and security that led to the particularly noticeable expansion in those state institutions concerned with exerting control and repression. Amongst them were the Ministry of Interior, the central security forces, and army, but also the State Security Courts and 'Morals' Courts, as well as the Public Prosecutor's functions. (Ayubi 1991, 100) Lastly, the upper echelons profited comparatively more than did the lower ones: "The desire by the state to maintain its political and economic hold has led, at a time of growing private capital, to the state offering various privileges to the higher echelons of the bureaucracy in an attempt to persuade them to support its efforts to safeguard the general movement of capital. Furthermore, members of these higher bureaucratic echelons are usually the ones who earn further income through the symbiotic linkages they often manage to build up with the private sector, domestic, Arab and foreign. Income differentials have widened between the top of the bureaucracy and its lower levels of state officials and public sectors workers and technicians etc." (Ayubi 1991, 101)

Significantly, the military, which had seen its political role diminish under Sadat, reemerged as a powerful economic player. While officially due to the military's desire to establish self-sufficiency, it started to produce goods as varied as motors, telephones, fans and everything in between, in addition to having a share in producing varied food stuffs. (Richards and Waterbury 1996, 341) What is more, its economic activities actually penetrated far into civilian markets and industries, building a powerful enclave within the economy, while remaining largely unaccountable to parliamentary oversight. (Richards and Waterbury 1996, 340) In exchange for their withdrawal from politics they were enabled to establish a vast economic empire. Thus the military continued to be one of the backbones of the regime, called upon in cases of emergency. At the same time, however, the regime also sought to safeguard itself by employing coup-proofing strategies, expanding rival organizations controlled by the Ministry of Interior. These strategies explain the general expansion in the state apparatus concerned with internal security. But they also show the continued importance of the military, which remained a crucial veto player in questions of big politics.

While the new elite thus consolidated itself under Mubarak to the detriment of broader societal groups, the regime not dare to completely abandon the basic tenets of Nasser's social contract.

But whereas the regime Nasser was torn between the contradictory goals of development vs. distribution, the regime Mubarak simply tried to retreat from both, aiming to leave development to the private sector, while continuing to exploit the public sector for at least enough distribution to ensure social peace. The beginning of the 1990s thus already see the narrowing of support coalitions in favor of increased access for bourgeois and private sector elites. Their influence would increase in the following decade when the advent of structural adjustment led to a rearrangement of networks of privileges (Heydemann 2004), and a concomitant contraction of political space. Two themes therefore dominated the 1990s: On the one hand the regime's struggle with an armed Islamists insurrection, and on the other hand intensified efforts at economic liberalization that saw the economic and political power of the bourgeoisie and private sector elites further increase to the detriment of other societal groups.

Mubarak had inherited Islamist extremism from Sadat, who had encouraged the so called *gama'at al-islamiyya* at Egypt's universities in order to counter leftist influence in the 1970s. These Islamist student associations soon took on a life of their own, not only growing to be the dominant force on campuses, but also increasingly relying on violent tactics. When Sadat withdrew his support and turned against them in anticipation of their opposition to the peace treaty with Israel they further radicalized, culminating in Sadat's assassination in 1981. In the 1990s things finally came to a head. In 1992, the regime was forced to rely on some 16,000 security forces to 'liberate' the Cairo shantytown of Imbaba, in which the *Gama'at Islamiyya* had established a 'liberated zone' outside of state control, within which they enforced their own vision of Islamic society. The resulting violent insurgency left 1,442 people dead between the years of 1992-1997, and led to a massive repression campaign against Islamist militants and people connected to them through family and friendship ties. But persecution was also directed against the wider, non-militant Islamist movement, and in its course, almost 47,000 people were jailed, many of whom were subjected to torture and arbitrary trials. (Kienle 1998)

The crackdown on Islamist militants was just one feature of a general climate of political deliberalization, however, with the year of 1992 proving to be a watershed year. Even before the 'liberation' of Imbaba in December of 1992, the regime had passed a set of laws that significantly tightened the screws on oppositional activity more generally. In July 1992, an NDP dominated parliament amended the penal code, introducing stiffer penalties for a host of crimes including "belonging to organizations considered to be undermining social peace or the rule of law, or for advocating the aims of these groups, or obstructing the application of the law, or preventing law enforcement officers from performing their duties, etc. Prison terms were

replaced with forced labor, temporary sentences with life sentences, and life sentences with the death penalty. Theoretically, all crimes against the security of the state and the public were to come under the sole jurisdiction of the Supreme State Security Courts, the verdicts of which could not be appealed except on procedural grounds. Particularly harsh penalties befell the perpetrators of “terrorist” acts, a vague term which was newly introduced into the penal code. Provided force or even the threat of force was used to disrupt public order, any act which actually or potentially harmed individuals, or damaged the environment, financial assets, transport or communications, or which involved the physical occupation of sites and places, or obstructed the application of the law, could now be considered terrorist.” (Kienle 1998, 221-222) The extremely far reaching nature of state prerogatives in essence enabled the regime to ban all political activity save that happening within its own tightly proscribed boundaries.

The highly restrictive penal code was complemented in December of that year by an amended party law. From now on newly founded political parties were neither to accept foreign funds, nor engage in political activity before their official recognition. With recognition in the hands of state officials, this meant a literal ban on new political parties during the 1990s. The final tightening of liberties was to be an amended press law, passed in 1995, which included heavy-handed sentences for a range of publication crimes. It was the only law to be abrogated in 1996, after a year of sustained protests, while all other laws remained in place. (Kienle 1998, 222-223) This deliberalization also affected the judicial system. Since the reinstatement of the emergency laws in 1981, the regime had engineered a parallel system of jurisdiction, which fell under its exclusive control. Since 1992, cases deemed politically sensitive had increasingly been tried before State Security Courts, State Security Emergency Courts, as well as Military Tribunals. These courts are usually headed by handpicked government persons, and do not offer the right to appeal a court verdict. (Kienle 2001, 95f.) The freedom of action of the judges was additionally confined to the legal framework created by the regime itself. Thus, while the judiciary had shown at times considerable efforts in defending the constitution, their focus was on defending what was already written, not extending liberties beyond those already enshrined in the constitution.

Consequently, with the legal environment for political activity taking a turn for the worse, the developments in the electoral arena matched the general climate of political deliberalization. Especially the parliamentary elections of 1995 stood out as involving an unprecedented degree of manipulation, repression, and violence. While manipulation was not unknown in previous elections, its extent had remained more limited. The elections of 1995 in contrast resulted in a

People's Assembly dominated by a 94% NDP majority, amid wide-spread allegations of electoral fraud, intimidation, and violence, as well as the arrest of more than 1000 members and sympathizers of the MB. (Kienle 1998, 224-26) They thus stood for a wider trend in the institutionalization of more authoritarian practices towards the mid-1990s. Further expressions of this development was the 1999 NGO law that suspended all previously licensed NGOs. By forcing them to reapply under newly tightened regulations it in effect banned all associational activity considered political in nature. (Mitchell 1999, 465)

The contraction in political and civil liberties that Egypt witnessed in the 1990s, and of which the changes in formal rules and regulation were only a part can be traced back to two sets of factors. One can be found in the increasingly violent climate surrounding the regime's fight against Islamist extremism, while the other is connected to a program of structural adjustment that benefitted few, but hurt many. Islamic extremism not only necessitated harsher measures to curb violent insurrection, but also delivered the pretext for cracking down on unwanted dissent more generally. The political oppositions' own ambivalence towards Islamists, prevented them from presenting a united front against regime repression. The escalating conflict was casting a long shadow, with fear of Islamist extremism causing many members of the opposition to either support the crackdown, or if they did have qualms about regime brutality to at least keep quiet. At the same time, the regime's discursive instrumentalization of the Islamist threat painted everyone who spoke out against the regime's heavy handed approach as terrorists themselves. The clever ideological use of Islamist extremism, as well as the actual terrorist threat were only part of the story. The other part were to be found in problems *within* the oppositional landscape. While the regime did actively prevent them from building effective party structures and develop societal outreach, they were also crippled internally by some of the same authoritarian practices that characterized the regime. The combination of their internal mirroring of authoritarian and paternalistic attitudes and structures, and their inability to transcend the bounds of loyal opposition explains their general ineffectiveness. Nonetheless, even in the context of a highly skewed playing field, where elections were everything *but* a way of accessing political power or political decision-making prerogatives, legal recognition held a number of benefits that induced opposition actors into playing a game that was stacked against them. Benefits ranged from the publication of party newspapers, some if limited amount of funding, as well as some organizational freedoms denied to more contentious actors. (Koehler 2008, 981)

A similar picture emerged when casting a wider glance at Egypt's organizational life in civil and political society. In addition to the vast repressive powers granted through the emergency laws, restrictive laws and measures were introduced on the level of syndical and union politics, at the countries' universities, as well as on the level of local politics. When the MB won the leadership of the doctors', lawyers', pharmacists', and engineers syndicates, the regime intervened by imprisoning scores of MB members and enacting formal legislation that brought syndicates under the control of government appointed judicial committees. (Brownlee 2002, 7) For union activists, the screws began to tighten starting in 1991, when the regime intervened in union elections to exclude unwelcome candidates, and ensure a majority for those from the NDP. In 1995, it moved to deliberalize provisions of the trade union law, which showed their effect by yet again returning a huge NDP majority during the trade union elections of 1996. (Kienle 1998, 227) Last but not least, the regime moved to ascertain its control over the countryside by replacing the election of village chiefs with their appointment through the ministry of interior in 1994, and within the university by henceforth appointing the deans instead of electing them. (Kienle 1998, 228)

Regarding the second set of factors driving the crackdown on political life, economic restructuring undertaken by the regime with renewed energy in the 1990s had a profound impact not only on the level of actual institutional and policy choices, but also on the level of strategic decision-making. It brought in its tow substantial changes in the distributive system as well as the support coalition on which the regime relied to sustain its rule. Far from being unequivocally supported within the regime, restructuring had become a necessity as a consequence of the state's near bankruptcy at the beginning of the 1990s. Bankruptcy could only be averted through a) clever political maneuvering of Egypt's support for the US invasion in Iraq in exchange for substantial debt relief. Debt relief came courtesy of the United States, and its Arab allies in 1991, amounting to a combined US\$ 13 billion. This was in addition to a cancellation of US\$ 6.7 billion in military debt to the US, as well as to Egypt striking a deal with its debtors in the Paris Club, subsequently halving its US\$ 20.2 billion debt. (Bromley and Bush 1994, 202)

Equally important, Egypt b) agreed to the introduction of a Stand-By agreement with the IMF, as well as a Structural Adjustment Loan with the World Bank in 1991. Both times it secured favorable conditions. On paper the goal of these programs was to correct the mistakes that in the views of International Financial Institutions (IFI) had resulted from decades of misguided state-led development. Introducing far reaching reforms of the financial sector, these included

macro-economic stabilization, the privatization of state assets, the reduction of inflation, the tying of the currency to the dollar, the reduction of the budget deficit, and the deregulation of the foreign exchange market as well as interest rates. (Bromley and Bush 1994, 203) These policies were initially successful, leading to Egypt being labeled a poster child for successful structural adjustment by the IMF. Thus, “[f]iscal and monetary discipline brought the inflation rate below 5 per cent and reduced the government budget deficit from 15 per cent of the country’s gross domestic product (GDP) to less than 3 per cent and for some years less than 1 per cent, among the lowest levels in the world. The economy was said to be growing at over 5 per cent a year and a revitalized private capitalism now accounted for two-thirds of domestic investment. The value of the Egyptian pound was pegged to the US dollar, supported by hard currency reserves that reached US\$ 20 billion” (Mitchell 1999, 455) Leaving aside the question of whether as Mitchell claims these policy successes were entirely due to the government embellishing their numbers (1999, 461), or whether they were actually the outcome of an increase in economic efficiency as the IFI’s claim, they did result in substantial reversals. These reversals affected concrete policies, but also the structures of state-society interaction, and particularly the way the regime incorporated different societal strata into its active or passive support coalition. A noteworthy example of the latter were the roll-back in agricultural reform, which owed as much to the pressure of elite elements as to that of the IFIs, and here especially USAID. Commanding substantial leverage due to the enormous amounts of US aid funneled through their channels, they pushed for a further liberalization of the agricultural markets because in their view the rights accruing to small farmers were an impediment for more efficiently using agricultural land. (Mitchell 1999, 464) Policy reversals initiated within the context of structural adjustment represented the final stepping stone to an eventual return to big landholder control over the countryside. Liberalization of agriculture had already been begun under Sadat, who had started to return land to wealthy landowners, and was continuously pursued under Mubarak in the 1980s. It was only fully reversed to the standards prior to the agrarian revolution under Nasser, however, when Mubarak in 1992 passed Law 96, to be fully implemented after a temporary period in 1997. Law 96 of 1992 rescinded the tenancy guarantees introduced by Nasser in 1952, which had fixed a ceiling on rent, and protected tenants from eviction. In effect, this led to massive rent increases from 1997 onwards, resulting in many evictions of previously protected tenants. In some cases rent increases amounted to as much as 400 %. While the reforms did not elicit wide-spread revolt in the countryside, it did lead to resistance, with a total of 119 deaths, 846 injuries and the arrest of 1409 people. Short of acknowledging reform-induced grievances, however, the regime blamed any acts of opposition

on militant Islamism. (Bush 2007, 1605-07) By the end of the decade, inequality in the countryside had not only reverted to pre-1952 standards, but had even worsened beyond them, with 0.05 % of landholders owning 11 % of the landholding area. (Bush 2007, 1612) The result were noticeable increases in poverty throughout the countryside as well as in urban areas, where recent rural to urban migrants sought refuge in the informal sector. This development had already been initiated with the timid liberalization efforts of the 1980s, which had seen poverty rise alone in rural Egypt from 16.1 % at the beginning of the 1980s to 28.6 % by the beginning of the 1990s. Within the same period, it rose from 18.2 % to 20.3 % in urban areas. Depending on what definitions of poverty are used, the percentage might have been as high as 40 % in both rural and urban areas. (Kienle 1998, 232)

While the increases in poverty in the 1980s were due to a combination of economic crisis and the regime retreating from the provision of generalized benefits, the 1990s saw it more fully reneging on the structural incorporation of varied social classes, and essentially on the social contract established under Nasser in the 1960s. This included more fully engaging in liberalization measures to the detriment of workers' interests, as well as the above mentioned almost complete reversal in agricultural policy that reinstated the power of the landed classes. Peasants were therefore not the only ones to suffer. The 1990s in fact saw a comprehensive rearrangement of the burden of economic policy and reform, from which an increasingly narrow sector of society profited disproportionately, while the costs were allocated to the broader population. These changes in the relationship between state and society more generally, as well as the ruling bargain more narrowly, were accompanied by changes within the elite sector. The agreements with the IMF and the World Bank laid the foundation for the *infatih* and private business elite to cement their stronghold in the economy. In alliance with the upper echelons of the state bureaucracy, this finally pushed the still uneasy balance towards liberalization proponents also within state institutions. Mubarak himself, at least officially now fully onboard with the idea of structural adjustment, initially remained close to the parts of the state bureaucracy that were wary of too radical changes. (Sfakianakis 2004, 82) Adjustment and a public sector reduction, it was feared would not only reduce the government's ability to control its people by dispensing general as well as selective benefits, but also the administrative elite's avenues of profit and influence, which had so far used its privileged position within the state apparatus to protect their interests and funnel resources their way. (Wurzel 2004, 102)

While structural adjustment and in particular privatization did impact the distribution of privileges and benefits at the elite level, it did so by *reshuffling* networks of privilege

(Heydemann 2004), rather than eliminating them. They therefore affected an at least partial elite change that would see the old guard of political power-holders, which had risen through the state bureaucracy or the military together with Mubarak, gradually be pushed aside in favor of a younger, Western educated elite that had made their fortune in the private sector. Since the time of Sadat's *infitah* policies there had been an intimate and mutually beneficial relationship between the private sector and the state bureaucracy. The networks established then were put to use during the 1990s, when the privatization of at least some state assets started in earnest – albeit still according to political criteria and in an uneven, at times severely circumscribed way. Privatization in many cases enabled private sector elites to profit from their privileged access to the very same state bureaucracy that was in charge of liquidating public sector companies. Thus, far from removing market distortions by divesting itself of unprofitable public sector companies, the regime merely created monopolies in different hands, diverting resources towards a few private sector capitalists, commercial banks, and speculators. (Mitchell 1999, 461-62) As Sfakianakis describes it, “some 32 businessmen comprised the established business elite of Egypt, with a large majority engaged mainly in import-substitution. This elite sector flourished behind barriers of protection, was largely uncompetitive in the international market, and existed in large part due to rent-seeking operations that became more pronounced in the 1990s as the Egyptian economy expanded. Many of these businessmen were importers and agents, and benefitted from a selective regime of high tariffs in the 1990s. [...] By preventing the system from becoming more competitive and more transparent, even as it underwent a partial and selective process of economic reform, these businessmen sustained their privileged access to information, links with well-positioned bureaucrats, and economic opportunities.” (Sfakianakis 2004, 79)

This relationship was far from being a one-way street, however. Starting from the 1990s the tight interlinkage between the ‘state bourgeoisie’ and the private sector also enabled many former bureaucrats and military personal to use these ties to move from public service to the private sector. (Albrecht and Schlumberger 2004, 379) Thus what should have been a dismantling of the state's patronage system resulted in a restructuring of its networks of privilege and the distribution of economic benefits within them. The state's privatization efforts, while closing down some avenues of gaining economic advantage opened up others. This on the one hand preserved the rentier-system of the state, while on the other allowing some privileged actors to transition to the private sector, thusly economically incorporating new actors, especially from a younger generation of businessmen. (Wurzel 2004, 120-22)

The rise of wealthy business families created thusly was initially confined to the economic realm. While they had their networks of influence within the state, they remained clients of the incumbent political elite. (Sfakianakis 2004, 82) This was only to change towards the end of the 1990s, with the rise of the President's son Gamal Mubarak through the ranks of the NDP. Gamal Mubarak himself had little independent standing within Egypt's political elite, lacking an essential background in either the military or other societal institutions. He brought with him a new generation of Western-educated businessmen into the political game, enhancing the overall position of private sector elites, who with his help started to infiltrate the higher ranks of the NDP. While they thus gained another channel for influence and leverage at the same time it enhanced the importance of the regime party as a channel for elite advancement. This played into a tactic of outward legitimation that increasingly relied on giving the regime a more 'modern' appearance. The expansion of political party activity under Mubarak, even in the context of highly controlled and extensively manipulated elections therefore did not serve to co-opt the masses into the political system, but to include and co-opt emerging elite actors from the political and economic realm through formal, or 'imitative' institutions. (Albrecht and Schlumberger 2004, 383)

While the NDP did provide for some degree of elite-level incorporation, it nonetheless was not designed as a tool for the broader incorporation of societal groups. These groups were originally to be tied to the regime via the Nasserist social contract of economic benefits for political acquiescence. However, during the 1990s, societal incorporation took increasingly less place on the economic level. Structural adjustment saw a decrease not only in government subsidies, but in government services, as well as the provision of advancement opportunities through the public sector. Unlike developments in the elite sphere, the political scene did not provide an alternative political base of incorporation through the representation via political parties. The regime instead continued to prefer its people's political acquiescence, its silence and non-participation, thus depriving them of voice as well as goods. The outcome of this lack of mass incorporation was not exclusively to be found in repressive regime politics that forestalled the development of opposition grassroots-structures. It also resulted in the opposition's general alienation from the popular sector, which was poorly understood and at best thought of in terms of recipients of either political or economic benefits provided to them by the political class. Harsh restrictions on political and civil liberties were the corollary to neoliberal reforms. Entering the 2000s, the ground was therefore prepared for the neoliberal restructuring enforced by increasing repression that benefitted only the richest strata of society.

Historical Conclusion

The story of both regimes up until the 2000s thus shows several things. It shows that the nature of both regimes makes it hard to speak of an economic and a political logic. Instead, the economic and the political were so tightly entwined as to constitute two sides of the same coin, the core of which ultimately was regime maintenance. Political tools and policies such as the repression of opponents, the creation of a multiparty arena, and of policies regulating all sectors of society were frequently used for furthering an economic agenda, for pushing structural adjustment, and for redistributing economic gains away from some and towards others. But in the same vein, economic policies served as means for ensuring inherently political goals, for the stability and adaptability of authoritarianism, for rewarding political clients and binding together ruling and support coalitions. The two historical investigations thus show the necessity of analyzing political regimes and their trajectories within a political economy perspective that recognizes the importance of analyzing structural change within a framework that takes the complementarity of both seriously.

This part also detailed how both regimes since their inception underwent deep processes of change that saw them readjust their support coalition within society as well as their ruling coalition within the elite. Partly driven by economic necessity, partly by political imperatives, and more often than not an intricate mix of the two, the two regimes thus gradually narrowed their patterns of incorporation from broad populist coalitions to private sector bourgeois alliances. In the process many sectors of society that had previously profited from incorporation were not only left without benefits, but without a voice to seek redress for their grievances. In the next chapter we will see how this created spaces for resistance within different spheres of interaction, and the different patterns developed and transformed within Egypt and Tunisia.

PART III

7. COMPARISON

The forgoing empirical as well as historical chapters have left us with two principal observations. On the one hand, both Egypt and Tunisia underwent broadly similar political and economic developments since their regimes' inception in the 1950s. In both countries moreover did these regimes find themselves with a narrowing basis of support that preceded the disintegration of not only their support but eventually their ruling coalition once crisis hit. These developments are significant explanatory factors for understanding how revolutionary situations were created in both cases. They explain how broad societal strata were available for mobilization in late 2010/early 2011 - the precondition for and basis upon which a cross class coalition could be mobilized that would bring about the end for the regimes Mubarak and Ben Ali. They also show the changing faces of personalism. Complemented with nominally participatory institutions, it nonetheless excluded broad strata from having a voice. This continued even when the failing incorporative capacities of both regimes called for alternative channels of integration. Together they present the structural frame within which mobilization could unfold, marking the outer borders of more concrete spheres of interaction and mobilization.

At the same time, the detailed empirical accounts of the uprisings also show that before mass protests merged on the symbolic centers of the two countries the mobilization process itself was subject to decidedly different dynamics. These dynamics were not only different, but seem to be entirely reversed: While in Tunisia the geography of mobilization involved a movement from the periphery to the center, in Egypt mobilization started in the center and moved to other urban centers, largely sparing the periphery. While in Tunisia demands started out as social and economic, being politicized on their way to the center, in Egypt they started out as political, and as involvement gathered speed picked up on wide spread social and economic demands through the inclusion of broader strata in the mobilizational process. Lastly, while in Tunisia mobilization was initiated from below, by the neglected and marginalized, and only after their inception helped along by organized groups, in Egypt protests were initiated by organized youth activists from a Middle Class background, who were joined via street mobilization by broader, and often more marginalized strata of Egyptian society.

Thus underneath the veneer of apparent similarity that marked the initial reporting on the Arab spring, we find quite profound differences awaiting explanation. The following chapter will provide this explanation by analyzing the developments within the theoretical frame outlined in

Chapter 5. It is based on the assumption that only very general statements can be made by looking at the broader picture of the regimes and their trajectories. In order to understand the differences between the cases, this general account of historical developments needs to be complemented by a relational account of how the interaction between regimes and specific groups created norms for behavior, expectations of appropriateness as well as precedents for mobilization that shaped these groups' abilities to create spaces of resistance. Apart from the methodological value of increasing observations on which variance might be observed, dividing up the two cases into several spheres is of theoretical necessity if we want to avoid the pitfalls of one size fits all theorizing that especially social movement studies has suffered from in the past. It therefore enables insights that might not otherwise be gained if we remained on the more general level of analysis provided by the two cases.

The following pages will therefore show how the interaction between categories of actors and the regimes created different *spheres of interaction and mobilization* which provided different sets of relational opportunities for mobilization. These spheres are established through repeated interaction during which rules are communicated via trial and error. They are path dependent in that this interaction establishes the boundaries of future ones by providing precedents from the past that shape expectations for the future. They are also far from being uniform across the spectrum of different actors. In some instances they followed quite strict and predictable rules and expectations, in others they were more loosely regulated. However, in all cases they shaped not only the expectations and strategies of actors, or the actually existing spaces for action, but the *perception* of available spaces for contestation and acceptable strategies for action. The more organized the part of society – with social strata on the loose end, and political organizations such as parties etc. on the more organized end – the more clear-cut the rules of interaction were, and the more tightly regulated the available spaces for political action and organization. Thus different actors within both Egyptian and Tunisian society faced different constraints in how and who to mobilize, where to do so, the strategies available and perceived as appropriate, as well as the red lines to toe and taboos to respect.

For the relevant actors, this chapter identifies five categories of actors whose presence (or absence) would turn out to be crucial for the success of cross class mobilization. The actors subsumed within these categories vary significantly in terms of their 'actorness', i.e. their conscious self-identification as a distinct group, their degree of organization, and coherence, and thus the extent to which each group command agency and identity *as a group*. Without intending to reify these categories, their similarities in social positions as well as shared

experiences and location in the in the political process nonetheless provide sufficient reason for analyzing them and their interrelationship to the respective regime as that of a distinct group. The categories on which the comparison will center will thus be the political opposition, the workers, the Islamists, the previously unmobilized middle class, and the previously unmobilized popular classes. The selection of relevant actor categories relied on the one hand on frequently made distinctions between relevant actors in the literature on the region in general and the two countries in particular. This literature in particular consistently identifies the three groups on the more organized end of the spectrum - the classical opposition, Islamist movements, and workers - as the most salient (political) actors outside of the regime, and the two on the less organized - middle and popular class - end of the spectrum when talking about societies in the MENA. On the other hand, these distinctions seem to have mostly been borne out by the events themselves, in which these categories allowed us to identify meaningful trajectories that could be traced back to characteristics relevant for the identified categories of actors. Nonetheless, there are a myriad ways to segment the social and political space into categories in ways that do justice to some, while ignoring others. These categories are no different in that they can only be to some extent arbitrary, lumping together some actors, while leaving out others. The choice of categories hence can never entirely be justified by their representativeness of the 'real' multitude of categories within these societies, but always needs some external motivation based on the goal of research in question. In this case, the above categories are an attempt to bridge the gap between depicting meaningful realities on the ground and giving voice to a multitude of different actors, while maintain a research design that is economical and offers the possibility of abstraction beyond the individual cases studied.

The comparison of these different spheres will be guided by the hypotheses on the relationship between patterns of incorporation and the propensity for mobilization elaborated in the theory part in Chapter 5. As a reminder, I distinguished four patterns, whereby pattern number:

- 1) in which there is no incorporation will establish a sphere of mobilization and interaction, in which people will be late risers to the mobilizational process because they lack a normative basis of claim making rooted in the perceived violation of duties and responsibilities of the state. The absence of incorporation shapes an interaction with the state and its agents based on neglect and/or violence. This creates the basis for deep-seated grievances that can be mobilized once the process is underway.
- 2) in which there is populist incorporation will establish a sphere where groups have some expectations on responsibilities and duties of the state can provide a normative basis for

claim making. The disappointment of these expectations can lead to a feeling of relative deprivation and hence grievances for mobilization. Groups belonging to this pattern may be early movers or late risers in the mobilizational process.

- 3) in which groups are integrated into the support coalition, similar to pattern number (2) will establish a sphere where a basis for making claims towards the state exists and mobilization is more or less likely depending on whether groups experience relative deprivation, and whether they are provided with an alternative route of incorporation. The more groups are also selectively politically incorporated, the more likely are accommodationist strategies that lead them to be late risers.
- 4) which includes groups incorporated into the ruling coalition will be unlikely to experience mobilization. Their political incorporation ties their survival and benefits to regime and they will hence neither be late risers nor early movers.

Based on these general hypotheses and the five actor categories identified above, what can we expect to find in the analysis? A few general hypotheses can already be stated. *Popular class actors* will experience differing degrees of susceptibility to mobilization depending on whether there was no incorporation (pattern 1) or passive populist incorporation (pattern 2) In the latter case, depending on the degree of perceived violations, they might be susceptible to initiate mobilization. *State created and dependent middle classes*, long part of the regimes' support coalition, will be unlikely to engage in mobilization – for as long as incorporation is upheld (pattern 3). In case of breakdown, the expectations generated through previous incorporation will generate relative deprivation and make them susceptible for mobilization. Having been part of the regimes' support coalition (pattern 3), *workers* are unlikely to take a lead in mobilization. Mobilization from above becomes less likely the more the unions are also politically incorporated. Mobilization from below might occur if workers experience relative deprivation. *Islamists* in both cases are likely to fall into different patterns of either no incorporation (1), or selective incorporation (3). Neither will lead to them initiating mobilization, though they might join it depending on the degree of inclusion vs exclusion. Finally, the *classical political opposition* were dependent on toleration from above and will be treated as selectively politically included (pattern 3). In those cases they make for an unlikely champion of mobilization.

The following chapter will analyze the developments in each sphere of interaction and mobilization created between one of the above five groups of actors and their respective regime. It will compare how they were created and how they have changed between their counterparts in each country. It will start with the organized actors of the spectrum – the political opposition,

the workers, the Islamists – and move down to broader societal groups such as the middle class and the popular classes. Each individual section will firstly introduce the actor through the role they played during the uprising. It will then trace the development of the sphere through time and finally the last ten years when structures began to morph, sometimes opening up the spaces for mobilization. A brief comparative conclusion will summarize the findings.

Opposition Sphere

The state-opposition sphere is at first sight maybe the most interesting one when comparing the uprising. After all, it was the most visible sphere in the run up, with much of the academic debate on authoritarian stability focusing on authoritarian regimes' strategies of controlling and emaciating opposition actors. It is also the sphere where we would expect the least dynamism based on the hypotheses above, as well as the tightest and most predictable web of rules and expectations. What actors do we mean when talking about the opposition sphere? While many actors (Islamists, contentious workers) could be said to constitute opposition of some kind, this sphere focuses exclusively on the brand of organized opposition actors identified in the literature. These mostly center on the classical opposition parties (legal and illegal), the political movements that sprung from them, as well as political associations.

A glance at the actors most intimately involved in the uprisings yields an ambiguous picture. On the one hand, there is a noticeable absence of traditional opposition parties in the organizational process prior to the uprisings, as well as during the mobilization itself. On the other hand, actors emerging from the opposition sphere were pivotal for initiating mobilization in Egypt, while increasingly visible (if still few) cyber activists, as well as some civil society members at least aided in sustaining mobilization in Tunisia. Both of these observations call for a more nuanced assessment of the role of opposition actors in the run up to the uprisings and on the ground, as well as their connection with and development out of the traditional (and traditionally crippled) opposition scene.

In Egypt, mobilization for the uprising happened with advance warning. Weeks beforehand, youth groups mobilized virtually on Facebook, as well as physically during meetings between different youth organizations. The groups most intimately involved in organizing the January 25th protests were the 6th of April movement, the Coalition to Support El-Baradei, the youth wing of the Democratic Front party, and of the Justice and Freedom movement. Within these groups, people belonged to different political currents. What united them was the fact that a) they were all relatively young, mostly in their 20s to early 30s. That they were b) *activists*, many of whom had been involved in opposition politics, Human Rights work etc. for quite some time. And that they c) came from a similar middle class background. These activists had not only participated in demonstrations for years, they had actively partaken in organizing them, thus refuting the claim that revolution was merely a spontaneous uprising inspired by the events in Tunisia.

While Tunisia had an impact, for the most part this manifested itself in activists' hopes of getting bigger numbers onto the street.⁶⁵ But these actors were not only not new, they were actors that were well connected amongst each other. They had cooperated previously, oftentimes attending the same universities, and collected experience in organizing opposition activism within and outside the confines of the university campus.⁶⁶ Thus, when talking about the initial mobilizers, those who put out the call for action, we are talking about young, educated, well connected activists mostly from a Middle Class background. These facts also help to shed some light onto the other factor that has received media attention: the role of social media. These tools were important for the initial mobilization due to their potential to disseminate information to a broad audience, past the tightly controlled regular channels of communication. However, as we will see later they are tools that are wide spread only within certain parts of the population. They were also tools that had been used for similar purposes from 2005/6 onwards, but with vastly different results.⁶⁷ Thus, while Facebook & Co were important, their role is not sufficient to explain the extent of the mobilization witnessed during the revolution. And while activists improved on their strategies and tactics in terms of secrecy and surprise, those were essentially still the tried and tested strategies of opposition movements from before.

But if these activists relied on similar strategies, so did the regime, which found itself utterly overwhelmed in dealing with the sheer numbers that turned out on the 25th of January and the 28th.⁶⁸ The regime thus vastly underestimated not just the extent of mobilization, but the capacity of 'Facebook kids' to organize themselves. When they realized their mistake, they fell back on the tried and tested methods of detaining the usual suspects, such as well-known opposition figures, and leading members of the Muslim Brotherhood. To no avail, however. Instead of relying on the previously existing opposition parties and movements for organizing the protests, the activists had relied on tight networks amongst themselves. Traditional opposition parties, while not absent from the protests, were neither crucial in organizing them in the forefront, nor in carrying them once they were underway. During the occupation of Tahrir, while party politicians often participated as individuals in the protests, the parties themselves at no point

⁶⁵ Interview with activist 28.04.11

⁶⁶ Particularly important in this regard was the activist networks coming from Cairo University

⁶⁷ Rabab Al-Mahdi, talk at a joint panel discussion on: "From Revolution to Transformation: Egypt 2011/ Germany 1989" by the American University in Cairo and the Freie Universität Berlin, 08.05.2011

⁶⁸ During a private conversation, someone recounted a conversation with a security officer who had been told in advance of the 28th that there would be no more than around 70 000 protesters in all of Cairo, a number the security service would have been well able to deal with. Instead the police was faced with that number on one of Cairo's central bridges alone, leaving the security apparatus incapable of effectively policing protests in a way they had done so on previous occasions.

took over an organizational role aiding and sustaining mobilization. Also during this time, youth networks were active on the ground in organizing strategies to hold onto the ground and sustain mobilization.

In Tunisia, opposition parties were less notable for the role they played during the uprisings, as for the seeming lack of it. This was expectedly true of the 'loyal' opposition parties, which were opposition only by name, but it also applied, albeit to a lesser degree to more genuine opposition parties like the PDP, Takatol (FDTL), the Tajdid. The only exception was the illegal PCOT, which was the opposition party with the most genuine oppositional stance, even though its political platform severely limited its mass appeal. While some such as the PDP claimed to have had activists in the region aiding mobilization that claim is most likely overstated. The initial mobilization was largely spontaneous, driven by the urgency of Mohammed Bouasizi's self-immolation and the subsequent outburst of anger and desperation. So naturally opposition parties, whose radius of activity was largely confined to the capital, would have a diminished role in this. Their role if there had been one could have been in sustaining and spreading mobilization through the activation of their organizational networks. But even as mobilization was spreading inside the interior regions, the role of opposition parties remained muted, and largely confined to capital city activities. That claims of having activists on the ground is still not entirely untrue is due more to the specific social, and economic geography of Tunisia, than the mobilizational capacity of opposition parties. The economic marginalization and political neglect of the interior regions in Tunisia's west and center led to a high amount of labor migration to Tunis and the coastal regions. This pooling of labor and resources naturally affected university education. With some of these regions having no universities operative to begin with, students had to move to Tunis or the other bigger cities in the coastal area to attend studies, thereby almost by necessity establishing cross regional personal networks in university and later employment. While parties might not have had formal party offices in the interior regions, many people stemming from these regions retained their networks, and at the time of the uprisings were thus in a position to participate, even if not as part of an organized party effort.

Thus, what was true during the last decades of Ben Ali's rule, remained true during the revolution: when opposition parties did enter the picture, they did so from Tunis, and they did so via symbolic gestures of support in form of public statements, and press conferences, and as a go-between for the dissemination of information via newspaper articles that international news agencies could pick up on. This does not mean that their activities were devoid of impact, but it

does signify the extent to which they were confined to the roles that they had managed to carve out for themselves. That is to say, they stayed within the same playbook as during ‘normal’ authoritarian times. Some caveats to this have to be made for Tunisia’s civil and professional associations, however. As the empirical account showed, lawyers and some civil society activists did attempt to aid mobilization from early on by staging support demonstrations, also in the regions. While this involvement would put them on the side of the early risers, it was nonetheless based on personal and informal networks outside of organizational decision-making processes. Overall, civil society followed and was constrained by the same rules applying to political parties. This means that while they did engage in protests, their engagement followed mobilization, and did not initiate it.

Apart from the absence of oppositional grassroots structures that could have aided the organization of mobilization, protesters initially were faced with an additional problem: How to draw attention to their grievances in a context where all national media were government controlled, and the internet was in the grip of tight state surveillance. As we will see in later sections, contrary to the narrative of surprising and unprecedented protest mobilization against decay and neglect in the interior regions, this was not the first time that a Tunisian had self-immolated out of desperation, nor was it the first time that this sparked local protests. What was unique, was the fact that mobilization *spread*, crossing not only geographic but social lines. An influential role in this was played by actors which had emerged as oppositional actors only recently, together with the rise of the internet as new communication platform. Cyber activists as a group, while in the last years clearly moving towards political activism, nonetheless stood apart from more traditional opposition actors. Their development was an outcome of the extremely restricted opposition sphere: on the one hand the emaciated opposition parties were not an attractive avenue of participation. On the other hand the extent and means of the regime’s attempts at controlling every possible expression of dissent actually led to the politicization of people interested originally not in opposition politics per se, but in freedom of information. By 2010 there was thus a small number of cyber activists that when mobilization was initiated undertook to aid it by helping to make information on the events accessible to a wider public. Their role was less in sustaining mobilization where it already had happened but to help spread it to other regions and strata by distributing first-hand accounts and mobile videos of demonstrations and police violence taken by the participants themselves online.⁶⁹ They thus functioned as the virtual interface between protesters on the ground and a broader audience, as well as international media.

⁶⁹ Interview with cyber activist, 15.07,2011, Tunis

Opposition actors' involvement in and contribution to the uprisings yields a mixed picture. In line with our hypotheses above classical opposition actors were notably absent from the organization of protests, contributing only marginally to the success of mobilization. In contrast to that those actors with an important role and impact were actors that had left traditional opposition politics behind because of the restrictions it embodied. Thus, the tightly circumscribed boundaries of opposition spheres in Egypt led to a younger generation setting out to find their own vehicles for articulation and organization, which would eventually carry protest mobilization at the start of the January 25th revolution in 2011. In Tunisia this door was largely closed so young activists either participated in associations or were seeking voice in the anonymity of the internet. To understand these two observations, we will firstly look at how both regimes since their inception in the 1950s created spheres for opposition actors to enact some aspects of opposition deemed tolerable on a playing field whose boundaries were determined by the regimes themselves. We will secondly see how the paradoxes of authoritarian maintenance resulted in the creation of inefficient opposition whose partial political incorporation kept them at bay. At the same time the nature of the opposition sphere left no space for aspiring young actors to find their place within, forcing them to escape the very restrictions that had kept the classical opposition in check, in their wake creating precedents for activism and mobilization that would shape the available techniques and repertoires for years to come. We will therefore show how the structures of control sewn into regime-created opposition spheres because of their very effectiveness generated the seeds of evasion enabling their own circumvention.

At the outset of the revolution the opposition spheres in both Egypt and Tunisia were clearly circumscribed, with a relatively stable set of rules and actors, many of whom had been players on the field for years. They were also relatively self-contained: however contentious issues were within, they hardly spilled over into other spheres or broader society. As long as opposition actors did not touch the essential taboos, and most importantly, did not mobilize across class lines, they were granted some space, some voice, and some share in spoils. The functioning of these spheres had also remained relatively constant. In order to be allowed onto the playing field opposition actors had to accept the rules, set by regimes unwilling to tolerate challenges. In Egypt the opposition sphere was mostly populated by political parties, some civil society organizations, and as we will see in the following pages in the last few years also protest movements. In Tunisia, civil associations were important players on the opposition scene as were the usual suspects, opposition parties. And while civil society activism increased in recent years it remained more limited than in Egypt.

In both countries opposition spheres were constructed when the regimes instituted formal multi-party parliamentary systems, in combination with regularly held elections. In both cases opposition parties had existed well before independence. In Egypt they were banned swiftly after Nasser's take over, and in 1963 Tunisia's Bourguiba followed suit and banned the only still functional opposition party, the Communist Party. The 1960s saw single party rule in both cases.

In Egypt single party rule was only broken up under President Sadat in 1976, regular multiparty elections for parliament were held since 1979 (Beattie 2000, 241), making elections a regular feature of Egyptian political life. However, the formation of the ruling party, as well as the split-offs, which would become the later opposition parties were entirely elite level projects. Neither were political parties the results of bottom up mobilization or interest aggregation at their inception, nor was this to change throughout their existence. Their role within the political system was hence limited from the start, providing an outlet for elite level discourses and some freedom of opinion, which had become necessary with the liberalization of economic life in the context of *infitah* policies. However, while they were to provide some degree of pluralism at the elite level, they were never intended to be capable of, nor interested in actually challenging the ruling party or harbor their own aspirations for power. Not once since the inauguration of a multiparty system had the ruling party, after the split of the ASU now called the National Democratic Party (NDP), less than a comfortable 2/3rds majority in parliament – from 87 % in 1984 to 77 % in 1987, 81 % in 1990, 94 % in 1995, 87 % in 2000, and 70 % in 2005 – guaranteeing it hegemonic party status at all times. (Sartori 1976, 230)

While the NDP was thus essentially a part of the regime, over the years a number of opposition parties managed to gain legal recognition. Of the 21 officially existing parties, however, only five could be seen as at least somewhat relevant: the liberal *Hizb al-Wafd*, the leftist *Hizb al-Tagammu'*, the Nasserist *Hizb al-Nasseri*, *Hizb al-Amal*, as well as *Hizb al-Ghad* (Stacher 2004, 216f.). The numerous restrictions they were exposed to however ranged from outright repression, the use of formal laws and regulations, to the ultimate tool of the emergency laws, in place since Sadat's assassination in 1981. This established a framework for interaction that rewarded opposition actors sticking to 'constructive' forms of opposition, which were criticizing the regime on some issues but always remained within the bounds of the overall acceptable. Not acceptable were criticizing the President himself, his family as well as high ranking regime members. Outright challenges to the status quo usually ended with prison terms. (Kassem 1999; Koehler 2008) However, keeping the legal status was almost as difficult as getting it. Since

1998, seven of the 21 legal parties were frozen by the regime controlled Political Parties Committee. (Stacher 2004, 216)

A similar picture emerges with respect to Ben Ali's Tunisia. In power since a coup through the backdoor in 1987, which disposed of an increasingly senile Bourguiba, Ben Ali's Rassemblement Constitutionnelle Democratique (RCD, after his accession to power Ben Ali simply renamed Bourguiba's Neo Dustour) controlled an even larger share of parliament embedded in an even more tightly controlled political sphere. Similarly to Egypt, opposition parties in Tunisia resulted from splits by regime insiders. Thus by the end of the 1990s after Ben Ali in his initial years had liberalized the Parties Law, there were six opposition parties that had managed to gain legal recognition: the Parti de l'Unité Populaire (Popular Unity Party), the Union Démocratique Unioniste (Unionist Democratic Union), the Mouvement des Démocrates Socialistes (Movement of Social Democrats), the Mouvement Ettajdid (Renewal Movement), the Parti Social Libéral (Social Liberal Party), and the Rassemblement Socialiste Progressiste (Progressive Socialist Rally), four of which were present in parliament. (Penner Angrist 1999, 94) The appearance of formal pluralism notwithstanding, the limitations on the sphere of politics in general and opposition politics in particular were enshrined even in the formal rules to a high degree. After Ben Ali took over power in 1987, he initially embarked on what seemed like liberalization. He "abolished the state security court and the presidency for life, reformed laws governing pretrial detention and ratified the United Nations' convention on torture. Ben Ali also supported new legislation that made it easier to form associations and parties." (Alexander 1997, 35) However, both the Islamist Renaissance Party (Ennahda), and the Communist Workers Party remained illegal, and with the honeymoon period soon thereafter fading, the RCD took 100 % of parliamentary seats in the 1989 elections. In order to continue to project at least the appearance of pluralism, since the 1994 parliamentary elections, Tunisia had a dual system in which the majority party got a fixed share of 88% of seats, with the remaining 12% to be divided amongst the smaller parties. (Fuentes 2010, 526) This established a mechanism by which loyal opposition parties could be rewarded via their inclusion into parliament, thereby splitting the ranks of the opposition. Those formal and informal parties - in the 1990s these were predominantly the Parti Démocrate Progressiste (PDP) under Nejib Chebbi, as well as the till the early 2000s unrecognized Forum Démocratique pour le Travail et les Libertés (FDTL) under Mustafa Ben Jaafar - which voiced more substantial criticism never managed to claim a single seat in parliament. But opposition parties were not only restricted in the kind of criticism they were able to voice, but also in their ability to maintain party structures financially as well as organizationally. Financially, most sources of party financing outside of

regime sponsorship remained prohibited under Ben Ali. Even publishing an opposition newspaper represented a considerable financial strain, and often relied on voluntary private donations.⁷⁰ Organizationally, the regime put heavy restrictions not just on the type of activity, but also on its geographic radius. Thus, opposition politics remained a capital city phenomenon. Neither opposition parties, nor associations were allowed to operate in the regions, away from Tunis, and neither had a regional infrastructure to speak of. Outside of election time, they were confined to meetings inside their own premises.⁷¹

On a more abstract level, the depiction of these spheres, their tight regulation and control as well as the rather obvious undemocraticness of the inclusion it provided raises questions. Why for example bother to create such a sphere for opposition actors to participate on part of the regime? And why participate as an opposition party, clearly understanding the inherent limitations of your role? The literature gives several answers that seemed to be borne out by the Egyptian and Tunisian experience. It points out how regimes profit from “inclusionary cooptation,” which limits oppositional activity vis-a-vis the regime, and fragments the oppositional landscape into co-opted, “loyal” opposition, and non-co-opted, excluded opposition, dividing its ranks and foreclosing inclusive oppositional alliances. (Eisenstadt 2000; Albrecht/Schlumberger 2004; Lust-Okar 2004) It also shows how electoral and legislative institutions functioned as the arena for this inclusionary cooptation, embedding opposition actors into a web of patrimonial practices that invested them with a stake in regime survival: “Throughout the Arab world, such institutions serve as a tool for *creating networks and loyalties* and as *channels for upward social mobility*. Gaining a parliamentary seat means immunity, access to incumbents with decision-making power, the possibility of building up networks of loyalty, dependency, and patronage at the local level, and facilitated access to information that can be used for achieving material benefits. [...] In turn, the individual parliamentarian becomes dependent on those who secured him or her a seat. Thus, parliaments are a prime instrument for co-optation, for buying opposition figures, and for rent allocation.” (Albrecht/Schlumberger 2004, 383) Informality characteristic of personalist dictatorships meant that it was not the legal rules that predetermined the rules of the games and could hence give rise to stable expectations. It was rather their arbitrary application as instruments for the enforcement of the informal rules of the game that made them relevant. (Springborg 2003, 186)

By the beginning of the 2000s the opposition scene in both countries was populated by largely ineffective opposition parties, and the spheres were so tightly regulated as to suffocate even the

⁷⁰ Interview with member of Tajdid, 16.08.2012, Tunis

⁷¹ Interview with member of the PDP, 17.08.2012

more outspoken parties. However, while these structures worked remarkably well in enforcing the boundaries of established patterns of interaction in the decade running up to the uprisings, their very effectiveness in silencing opposition voices gave rise to new forms of activism and mobilization that sought to expand the boundaries or escape them entirely.

In Egypt, in view of the upcoming renewal of President Husni Mubarak's 5th term in office and his son's apparent grooming for hereditary succession, by late 2004 a protest movement, the Egyptian Movement for Change (Kifaya), consisting in a coalition of the mostly illegal and/or frozen opposition parties developed in Cairo, voicing unprecedented direct criticism of the President and his family, defying a ban on public demonstrations as they went along. In Tunisia, cyber activists started to explore the possibilities that had arisen with the internet starting from the late 1990s/early 2000s onwards, at times even transcending the boundaries of the virtual into real world activism.

In Egypt the tale of Kifaya is the tale of the at least partial resuscitation of Egypt's civil and political society after the relative calm of the 1990s. By most activists' accounts it starts with demonstrations in support of the 2nd Palestinian Intifada in 2000, which led to wide scale mobilization on Egypt's streets, and would turn into the source of activism in Egypt. They involved re-mobilized activist figures from the student protests in the 1970s, but also politicized a new generation of activists at Egypt's universities and beyond.⁷² These developments converged in late 2004, and throughout 2005 in what some had termed the 'Caireen Spring,' with multiple protest movements springing up to protest the lack of democracy in the upcoming 'election year' in 2005. The most vocal, and most prominent of these was the Egyptian Movement for Change (al-Haraka al-Masriyya min agli-l-Taghiir) or Kifaya (Enough!), a largely urban-based pro-reform movement.⁷³ While Kifaya was able to capitalize on a pre-existing level of mobilization when it emerged in 2004, it also innovated on the existing forms of protest mobilization by breaking the taboo of directly criticizing the President, his family, or members of the ruling elite.⁷⁴ Its members came from all parts of the political spectrum, but there were considerable differences in the strength of involvement according to formal status. Whereas the officially licensed opposition parties were hardly present, those parties not enjoying formal

⁷² Interview with Kamal Khalil, head of the Socialist Studies Center, September 25th 2005, Cairo.

⁷³ *Kifaya* held its founding conference on September 22nd 2004, parallel to the annual conference of the ruling NDP. Their first demonstration took place on December 12th 2004.

⁷⁴ *Kifaya* was also credited with breaking the ban on public demonstrations in general, but it is quite obvious that public demonstrations, even if not condoned by the authorities, were no innovation on the political scene in Egypt in the strict sense - What really was innovative was the nature of the demands that were aired at those demonstrations.

recognition were more active.⁷⁵ A significant number of especially younger activists also came from groups with strong leftist leanings, such as the Trotskyite Revolutionary Socialists (al-Ishtirakiin al-Thawriin) and activists involved with the Socialist Studies Center (Markaz al-Dirasat al-Ishtirakiyya). Most of these younger activists were joined together in a sub-organization, called “Youth for Change” (al-Shabab min agli-l-Taghriir).⁷⁶ Their demonstrations throughout the year 2005 attracted a for Egyptian standards sizable following of on average around 500 to 1000 protesters, but even bigger was the media attention from inside and outside Egypt. The movement thus made a veritable splash in Egypt’s opposition scene, a success that was as unexpected as it was facilitated by relative regime restraint. They failed, however, to attain their stated goals of preventing Mubarak’s reelection, and worse, to leave any noticeable impact on the outcome of the same year’s parliamentary elections. The aftermath of the 2005 parliamentary elections was characterized by a period of crisis across the oppositional landscape. While many parties were plagued by infighting, Kifaya all but disappeared from the political scene. Drawing its very own lessons from the elections, and the Muslim Brotherhood’s considerable success, in early 2006 the state started to crack down on the Muslim Brotherhood, oppositional journalists, as well as judges that had become too outspoken over issues of judicial supervision of the elections. (Wolff 2009) And while Kifaya continued to exist as a vehicle for opposition figures to voice demands in the press and in conferences, it all but ceased to play a role, with many especially younger activists moving on to other ventures.

Kifaya continues to exist to this day, but it also continues to be plagued by the same flaws that proved its undoing after its promising start in 2005: it is and was to a large extent a phenomenon that originated within a circle of opposition elites and never developed much of an appeal outside of these limited perimeters. The background of Kifaya in the peculiar Egyptian system of authoritarian opposition helps to explain why the movement emerged in the first place. The ‘election year’ of 2005 presented a liberal moment that the movement seized, partly protected by a massive media presence, partly playing on the political elite’s need to uphold its reformist image abroad.⁷⁷ But even during the height of mobilization Kifaya essentially mobilized

⁷⁵ Examples from this second category include *Hisb al-Karama* (Dignity Party), a party with Nasserist leanings, *Hisb al-Wasat* (Center Party), an Islamist leaning party which had already been fighting for formal recognition for some years, and *Hisb al-Amal* (Labor Party), a socialist-turned-Islamist party which had been ‘frozen’ by the state in 2000. Of the officially recognized parties, particularly younger activists of *Hisb al-Tagammu'* (National Progressive Unionist Party, NPUP) and *Hisb al-Ghad* (Tomorrow Party) were prominently present, while the establishment of those parties remained visibly absent.

⁷⁶ Youth for Change had originally been designed to facilitate communication and coordination between *Kifaya* and various leftist student groups.

horizontally, not vertically, relying primarily on existing networks of opposition activists. These mobilizing structures included leftist student groups, the networks associated with some of the illegal political parties and activist circles concentrated around specific NGOs such as the Socialist Studies Center or the Hisham Mubarak Law Center. In addition, the key actors in Kifaya were linked by common experiences in the students' movement of the 1970s and were connected by networks stretching back to that time. These 'shilla' networks connecting most of the movement's founding members were the movement's most stable organizational feature.⁷⁸ Hence, Kifaya was not – and for the most part was never devised as – a vehicle for connecting opposition elites with the masses. Rather, the movement functioned as a vehicle whereby challenging elites tried to mobilize their previously inactive opposition 'colleagues',⁷⁹ mostly aiming at those parts of the opposition that were perceived to be ineffective and coopted.⁸⁰ The reluctance of Kifaya's leadership to get involved with workers' protests, which had started from 2006 onwards, beyond a purely rhetorical endorsement points to the main reason for this strategy of horizontal mobilization: Kifaya leaders in 2005 were well aware that the leeway they were accorded by the state was mainly due to that year's exceptional political circumstances. As long as they confined themselves to the rather narrow circle of oppositional networks in terms of mobilizing strategies, they could hope to further profit from the state's temporary tolerance.⁸¹ Thus, in a way, Kifaya's organizational and mobilizational weakness was an important strength. While preventing it from effectively pushing for their demands, it also enabled the state to show lenience, establishing the basis for their limited success in 2005. They did, however, expand the repertoire of action available to opposition actors in a lasting way. By creating a space that in some way could not entirely be closed anymore, even after the regime clamped down on activists they created precedents for mobilization that would influence later oppositional activism. At the same time, they also reproduced the patterns of deeply engrained opposition-regime interaction. While contesting some taboos, even the long standing ones, they still toed the regime line in refraining from actual mass mobilization, illustrating the inherent suspicions

⁷⁸ Interview with former Kifaya member and political commentator Nabil 'Abd al-Fatah, October 16th 2005, Cairo. The fact that Kifaya was de facto controlled by these informal networks of course prevented the establishment of formal organizational structures within the movement. As a leading Kifaya member affirmed, this was due to the fact that "in a movement you have to make decisions immediately. So there is an inherent conflict between democracy and the effectiveness of a movement" (interview with Kifaya leader, September 2007, Cairo).

⁷⁹ Interview with Kifaya leader, October 3rd 2005, Cairo

⁸⁰ This is clearly visible in their self-description as a "catalyst for political opposition". Interview with leading member, October 18th 2005, Cairo

⁸¹ Kifaya members confirmed in interviews that they expected the state to react harshly to any attempt by the movement to mobilize a mass constituency (interview with Muhammad al-Sayyid Said, October 13th 2005, Cairo). One Kifaya leader even stated that the opposition was as afraid of the 'masses' as was the regime (interview with Kifaya leader, September, 2007, Cairo).

many middle class members, even from an opposition background harbored towards the popular classes.

After 2006, activists previously involved in Kifaya started to move away, with many younger activists from Youth for Change moving on to other, more grass roots oriented projects like Tadammon, and later the at first largely internet based 6th of April movement.⁸² As one activist puts it, it was not that people actively quit Kifaya, because there was nothing to quit.⁸³ This event also marked the first appearance of the 6th of April youth movement, founded by youth activists with Hizb Al Ghad, who had used Facebook to endorse the general strike announced for that same day. While originally intended for this occasion only, the overwhelming online resonance compelled the group to stay active beyond its original purpose, a presence that continues until today. Many more groups would come to emulate their particular formula of Facebook activism coupled with ‘real life’ events, the most prominent of which would come to be the ‘We are all Khaled Said’ group, which issued the original call for the revolution on January 25th 2011. One of the characteristics of this activism, apart from its extensive use of social media, was its cross ideological nature, gathering people around specific demands that transcended the lines between Islamists, leftists and liberals. But not only did they eschew the display of overly ideological positions, they also rejected the tight coupling with existing political forces, especially the existing opposition parties, something that would reoccur in the run up and during the revolution itself (Shehata 2011, 6). When internationally renowned Mohamed El Baradei announced his potential presidential bid in November 2009 it led to considerable remobilization, with the 6th of April movement rallying on Facebook behind his nomination, the formation of the National Association for Change (NAC), a group collecting many well know opposition activists, as well as the Coalition to Support El-Baradei, a more youth oriented movement. Yet again, mobilization lost steam along the way, however, especially true after the (massively rigged) parliamentary elections in spring 2010. For many opposition activists they marked the point, “when politics died”.⁸⁴ The infamous death of young Khaled Said and the resulting online campaign on Facebook in his name was the final ingredient for the organization for January 25th 2011. We will return to this case below as it had enormous significance in activating middle class youth into activism. It is relevant in this section as well, however, because it provides the link between the several youth groups that formed in the wake of Kifaya, as well as the increasing link between online and real life activism in Egypt at the end of the decade.

⁸² Dina Shehata, talk at a joint panel discussion on: “From Revolution to Transformation: Egypt 2011/ Germany 1989” by the American University in Cairo and the Freie Universität Berlin, 08.05.2011

⁸³ Interview with activist, Cairo, 28.04.2011

⁸⁴ Interview with activist, Cairo, 03.05.2011

What the story of opposition politics and oppositional activism in the decade running up to the January 25th revolution thus shows is that while the legal opposition parties remained in the straightjacket of traditional opposition regime interaction, many of the newer movements tried to find ways to challenge the status quo. While these challenges did not result in any substantial revisions, it did result in the activation and politicization of a new generation of activists that increasingly rejected the conventional way of staging politics

In Tunisia the picture of traditional opposition activism was even gloomier. The multiplicity of repressive means, of invasive political and social control, as well as modest gains in welfare due to Ben Ali's often promoted 'economic miracle' made the 1990s a dark age for political activity. Repression was not only the hallmark of the 1990s, however, but continued unabated in the 2000s, remaining a daily feature of activists' lives. This explains the incentives for potential allies to keep their distance from overt political activism and the relative isolation of opposition politics. The repertoire of repression ranged from legal, to extra-legal, to political, to economic repression. Legal repression often meant the usage of legal instruments such as fabricated court cases to impose punishment for digressions. Thus, one activist reports that while under constant police surveillance, plain clothed policemen would wait for female activists to go to bars in order to arrest and try them for drunkenness in public.⁸⁵ Others report how the government invented unpaid taxes in order to sentence them to high fines.⁸⁶ The wide-spread use of the legal system gave repression a façade of orderliness and discredited people in public, complementing the many instruments of extra-legal repression such as extralegal detainment, and torture. Political repression was mostly found in the use of smear campaigns against individuals or organizations in the government-controlled press, the fabrication of arbitrary criteria to exclude party list from elections, hence denying them the chance for public funding. In addition to constant police surveillance of party and association offices, the most common and basic form of intimidation was the constant shadowing of individual activists throughout their daily lives, resembling psychological warfare. Creating a feeling of otherness, of separation from normal life and people was furthermore promoted by confiscating passports often for years on end, by threatening and harassing family members and friends. The perhaps most pernicious form of repression, however, was economic repression. People who were politically active were often under threat of not gaining employment, or of losing employment due to government pressure. In a country which heavily relied on public sector employment, being denied entry for people with known activist background foreclosed an important route of social advancement. Often,

⁸⁵ Interview with female activist 11.08.2012

⁸⁶ Interview with journalist 24.08.2012

repression not only personally affected activists, but targeted family members as well, with children being denied university education or placed at geographically marginal ones. It was a form of repression that denied people the very chance of fulfilling aspirations. Repression therefore served and often succeeded in separating and isolation its victims from normal social and economic life, and from non-activist members of society who often looked at activists with suspicion.

However, the story of the Tunisian opposition sphere is more complex than just repression. Oppositional ineffectiveness was also driven by factors originating within the opposition party landscape. The opposition scene was thus plagued by internal schisms that went beyond the divide between co-opted and genuine opposition parties. With a party law that banned most forms of funding except that which could be attained via parliamentary representation and an electoral law that forced political parties to compete amongst each other instead of with the ruling party RCD, the basis for intra-opposition divisions was already solid. (Gobe 2009) But beyond this, cooperation was hampered by ideological issues. At times there was a substantial overlap between regime policies on progressive issues such as women's rights, possibly more so than between the mostly secular opposition parties and a society less progressive than opposition actors might have wanted. (Cavatorta and Haugbølle 2011) What is more, since the formation of Ennahda, there had been an ideological rift between those secular parties in favor of including Islamists and those against it, which the regime could exploit to prevent opposition unity. The only serious attempt at overcoming this rift came in form of a coalition, signed on the 18th of October 2005 between the PDP, the CPR, and Ennahda amongst others. This coalition was symbolically momentous, representing the first formal alliance between the Islamists and secular political parties. But after years of trying to come to an understanding it nonetheless had little more to show than a joint declaration on civil and political rights. They neither formally contested elections together nor did they organize political action outside of the confines of party politics. What is more, other opposition parties such the Tajdid chose to stay away, decreasing the unity of the challenge. As a member explained: "We had the same criticisms as them, we were against tying up freedoms. When they formed a coalition against the government, we didn't want to have that strategy because of the Islamists, they tend to be violent. In taking an Islamist approach it's not clear where religion ends and politics starts. We are all Tunisians, you don't have to say we are for Islam as a party, just state your political position. The personal status code with its liberties and freedoms is against what Nahda wants,

they would ask for having four wives, so they wouldn't be good for what gains the country made."⁸⁷

That the 2000s nonetheless offered more opportunities for political activism was due to a combination of factors. With the internet and the rise of satellite media, more information was entering the country in ways that a regime relying on a monopoly of information could not always contain. But more information also reached outside actors, with international human rights organizations and NGO's taking an interest in Tunisia and its absence of political and civic liberties:

"A shift happened at the end of the 1990s. First there was the revolution in information technology, which meant that the regime no longer held the monopoly on media and Tunisians could watch foreign media like Al Jazeera and could have information. With satellite TV, mobile phones, the internet came a very big shift. Facebook was important too, but it came only later. The 2nd was the support of international NGOs for human rights like Human Rights Watch, Amnesty International, amongst others. They played an important role by influencing the media in the West, and through that parliamentarians, especially European ones. These are major factors which explain the shift. Amnesty International and so forth were also active in 1990s, but in combination with the technology came the shift."⁸⁸

Opposition actors, whether from the party or the associational variety thus increasingly strove to add an extra layer of protection by incorporating external lobbying of international human rights organizations into their repertoire of contention. This strategy came at a price, however, precipitating a further orientation of opposition activity away from domestic audiences. The regime tried to counter this development by on the one hand using defamation campaigns in the state run media, while on the international floor it often simply created duplicates of existing associations and parties, drowning out the voices of the real opposition actors.⁸⁹

The barrage of repression - be it legal, extra-legal, political, or economic - that openly political opposition was facing on a daily basis accounts for some of this preference towards lobbying international actors. Other factors include the absence of organized party infrastructures in the marginalized regions, enforced by regime control, making it nearly impossible to reach that

⁸⁷ Interview with member of Tajdid, Tunis, 16.08.2012

⁸⁸ Interview with member of the PDP, 17.08.2012

⁸⁹ Or in the case of the LTDH, the regime created a law allowing the internal infiltration of the organization in order to paralyze the work of the association.

audience.⁹⁰ Similar to Egypt, classical opposition remained almost exclusively a capital city phenomenon. And while their general disconnect from society might have been in part to blame for that, the regime itself systematically undermined the opposition's ability to build a grass-roots base. The only time opposition parties were granted the ability to try and connect with a broader audience was during the election time. This at least partially explains the fact that parties competed in elections even though the outcome depended mostly on their standing with the regime in addition to party financing. As a Tajdid member explained:

“If we didn't participate we weren't able to do actions, to introduce our party, to criticize government. [...] We wanted to motivate people to be involved and vote so that they would see for themselves the manipulation, so that this would make it real for them through their own experience. [...] Both sides used this for their own sake. The government used it so that they can show, see we have active opposition parties in parliament. Tajdid used it to tell the world about their ideas and their message. We mainly managed to keep existing by being in parliament and by getting the financial support and that's what helped us to publish our newspaper and keep our office and hold conferences.”⁹¹

To escape these numerous restrictions on their activity, many members of opposition parties thus sought additional playgrounds for political activism, leading to the multiplicity of organizational membership characteristic of Tunisian activists. It was not uncommon for opposition politicians to also be members of the Tunisian Human Rights League (LTDH), or any other organization with similar content, be it the Tunisian Association of Democratic Women (ATFD), and the Tunisian Association for Struggle Against Torture (ALTT), the National Committee for Liberties in Tunisia (CNLT), or the UGTT, or both. These different organizational memberships offered not only more opportunity for articulation but also different degrees of protection. The same was not true the other way around, however, and being in an opposition party actually decreased protection and public support for professionals.⁹² Particularly the UGTT, which will be the subject of a later section, by virtue of its status as the general and hence only union, united many people with many different professional as well as political backgrounds. This caused internal frictions as to how confrontational and political vs. accommodating and cooperative towards the government it should be and down the line the often ambiguous position of the union. Opposition actors could thus evade restrictions to some extent, albeit a very limited one. This did not, however,

⁹⁰ Interview with member of Tajdid, 15.08.2012

⁹¹ Interview with Tajdid activist, 16.08.2012

⁹² Interview with journalist, part of SNTJ, 24.08.2012

substantially enlarge their potential for truly challenging the regime or the skewed playing ground imposed on them from above, nor did it give them a better reach into society. Thus, part of the reason that the opposition parties did not play a bigger role during the revolution was that they neither had the necessary grassroots organizations and infrastructures, nor adjusted their political strategies towards the most discontented audiences within the marginalized interior.

The inherent limitations of oppositional activity within formal organizations of any kind as well as the societal isolation of opposition actors accounts for the fact that when with the rise of the internet new forms of activism emerged, they did so away from traditional opposition vehicles. The start was made with groups of cyber-activists by the end of the 1990s, which were not strictly speaking anti-regime, but represented attempts to address specific grievances, in this case regime censorship. These groups politicized in the course of the 2000s, taking on increasingly oppositional stances in the wake of often brutal regime repression. They would play a limited but important role during the uprising in aiding the dissemination of information from the isolated interior regions to online sources and international media.⁹³

Cyber-activism as a genuine phenomenon started in 1998 with a group of cyber-activists called Takriz established to circumvent censorship. In 2000 the group's website along with many other such like that of Amnesty International, Reporters without Borders got banned. Activists further politicized with the blatant contradictions experienced during the 2005 World Summit on the Information Society (WSIS) hosted by Tunisia, which was ironically accompanied by a wave of regime repression and a crackdown on freedom of expression outside the summit's doors. In the years following the summit, regime repression increased even more:

“In Tunisia, meanwhile, Ben Ali's online censorship had been growing increasingly draconian. (In 2009 Freedom House would rank Tunisia below China and Iran on measures of Internet freedom.) Dailymotion and YouTube were blocked in 2007. A technique called deep packet inspection (which is much what it sounds like) was used to stop e-mail deliveries, strip read messages from in-boxes, and prevent attachments to Yahoo mail. Reports about Gafsa on Facebook, which then included just 28,000 of some two million Tunisians online, led the regime to block Facebook itself for two weeks. By October 2009, with national elections approaching, over 800,000 were on the social-networking service. (As Ben Ali fled more than a

⁹³ Interview with cyber activist, 15.07.2011

year later, the number would reach 1.97 million—over half of Tunisians online, and almost a fifth of the total population.”⁹⁴

Most political activists of one kind or another credit the appearance of the internet as such, irrespective of cyber activists, with reviving oppositional activity more generally. Getting around regime imposed controls to access video sharing sites such as Youtube became a popular sport amongst ordinary Tunisians, not only activists accessing oppositional content. During the uprising the internet was the main tool for sharing videos of demonstrations and the oftentimes violent police reactions, functioning as a transmission belt between people on the ground, and international news stations such as Al Jazeera. These in turn provided information about ongoing events to the majority of the Tunisians via satellite TV. This mechanism highlights the role of satellite TV in a country that despite having one of the most wide spread internet penetration rates in the Arab world, still only reaches a quarter of the country. (Murphy 2011)

Just as the internet became one of the few spaces available for a tightly controlled population and its usage as an additional space for articulation grew, so did the regime’s attempts at controlling the medium. Hence, it is no accident that Tunisia was counted amongst the 10 enemies of the internet, a country where webpages such as Youtube were either completely or temporarily unavailable and ‘Ammar 404’, the sign for ‘webpage not available’ a catch phrase. Many Tunisians who would go on to become cyber activists did not start out with an overtly political agenda. Instead they were people that experienced specific grievances related to the pervasive scope and indiscriminate means by which the regime tried to exert control over this new space. Thus, many cyber activists got into the oppositional sphere of activity via their struggle against a sub-aspect of the regime – its excessive attempts at censorship – and not because of their particular political affiliation:

“The first time of the Youtube censorship I wrote my first blog post. At that time I was not entirely against censorship, you have to control the information system. If you do not have the means of big countries to exert that control, then maybe censorship is the only means available for smaller countries. In 2008 I wrote another post against censorship this time. I realized that the internet is different because it is about censoring the tools, to keep people underdeveloped. It’s like preventing the tool of fire after you develop it. [...]In 2010 the regime retaliated, there was a huge wave of censorship. It was so massive that even the pro-regime blogs were censored

⁹⁴ John Pollock How Egyptian and Tunisian youth hacked the Arab Spring, Streetbook September/October 2011, <http://m.technologyreview.com/web/38379/>

and shut down. In response we started a campaign with the name of Sayeb Salah, which consisted of posters with a picture of yourself and the slogan leave me alone/enough in Arabic.”⁹⁵

Even though these activists considerably politicized during the 2000s they nonetheless kept their distance from traditional opposition actors, refusing to get involved with political parties: “People get scared when they hear about the implication of opposition parties. The idea is that ‘we are not talking politics, but just ask for something broken to be fixed’.”⁹⁶ It seems that this fear of being seen as involved in opposition parties, stoked by the regime, in combination with their quest for protecting the anonymity of their online personas to safeguard their real life existence, made many reluctant to overtly associate themselves with opposition parties.

This sentiment notwithstanding, cyber activists started to increasingly step into real life. Campaigns such as the ‘Tunisie en Blanc’ campaign in early 2010, while gathering an impressive online support, nonetheless failed to materialize on the streets. (Chomiak 2011, 75) Repression was swift to follow. The 2000s thus saw the high profile imprisonment and often torture of cyber activists. The resulting manhunt atmosphere led many activists to either cease activity or seek exile abroad.⁹⁷ This illustrates the relatively limited impact of this kind of activism within the context of a highly restrictive oppositional sphere and a regime willing and capable of repressing dissent. Their previous activism nonetheless gave them the oppositional inclination, the technical skills, and the practical experience to function as a tool for distributing political content online and as a go-between for disseminating information that had few ways of reaching the outside in the context of the massive media black-out enacted by the regime.

A look at the noticeable similarities in how opposition spheres in both cases were constructed and maintained helps us to address some aspects of the initial puzzle – why the differences in the process of protest mobilization when the outcome and starting point seemed quite similar. The answer in some respects seems like quite the classical political opportunity answer – the impetus for mobilization in Egypt was a political one originating in activist networks because there were activists networks to begin with, having found more space than in Tunisia. The Egyptian regime had allowed that space out of necessity, because it did not command the infrastructural power to quell all political dissent, and out of negligence, because it did not see

⁹⁵ Interview with Slim Ammamou, 15.07.2011

⁹⁶ Interview with Slim Ammamou, 15.07.2011

⁹⁷ John Pollock How Egyptian and Tunisian youth hacked the Arab Spring, Streetbook September/October 2011, <http://m.technologyreview.com/web/38379/>

the potential of seemingly feeble opposition actors to manage substantial mobilization. Similar to their experience with Kifaya in 2005, the regime showed a considerable degree of tolerance towards activists initially. Believing them not to constitute a threat, and misjudging the mobilizational potential of the situation, it simply allowed opposition actors enough space to build and sustain political networks. In Tunisia, in contrast, the regime had quelled the mobilizational potential of the opposition sphere to such an extent that mobilization could not have originated in these circles, because there was simply neither space, nor opportunity left for it.

Thus, while the rather insubstantial role of classical opposition actors in mobilizing protests might have been striking at first, a look at how these tightly regulated spheres of opposition politics were created since the inception of both regimes makes it quite clear that being part of it crippled classical opposition actors from the get go. Not only did they lack potential to mobilize even their own followers, but their perception of the possibilities for agency and change within that sphere were as restricted as that of the regime. At the same time both regimes seem to have fallen prey to the same bias as outside observers (and opposition actors themselves), locating the root of threats to regime maintenance within the landscape of classical opposition actors. This was reflected in both regimes' attempts at quelling the protests by arresting opposition party leaders. The ultimately useless maneuver signified how poorly they understood the dynamics of what they were facing, as well as their origins. But having been shaped in their expectations of what to find and where to look as much by the skewed playing field they had created, as the political opposition itself, neither of them was capable of looking beyond. These highly personalist regimes afraid of alternative centers of powers had thus created a context where challenging elites were as cut off from and afraid of 'the masses' as the regimes themselves. In the end, the mutual frame of reference and expectations led both to misjudge the situation, as well as its inherent revolutionary potential. It also led to the development of alternative spheres of action that while rooted in political activism nonetheless sought to depart from the tried and tested, limited and resented methods and actors from the opposition sphere.

How do these empirical findings relate back to our theoretical hypotheses about patterns (and breakdowns therein) of incorporation relate to the probability of mobilization? At first it seems difficult to assign political opposition to any of the four patterns initially identified. On the one hand, political opposition is generally not economically incorporated in the classical sense. While one might make exceptions for those parties constituting loyal opposition in these countries, based on the fact that these can hardly be described as opposition in the first place,

we have excluded them from our category of classical opposition. However, the case is less clear cut with respect to political incorporation. While traditional opposition cannot be said to belong to the support coalition of the respective regime, they do experience some form of political incorporation nonetheless. This becomes especially clear when comparing the fate of Ennahda in Tunisia with that of its secular counterparts in the political opposition. This illustrates that in authoritarian regimes selective toleration can function as a form of political incorporation when it is exchanged for political accommodation towards the basic rules of the game. Both the exchange as well as the basic rules of the game it refers to are regulated through complex sets of informal rules enforced through repressive measures as well as in many cases anticipatory obedience.

Workers sphere

While both Egypt's and Tunisia's opposition actors were rather inefficient in mobilizing protest, a different picture emerges with respect to workers. With modernization the number of workers in the MENA consistently increased. Being located at a strategic point in the industrialization process this necessitated their structural incorporation into the regimes' support coalitions via the institutions of the state. (Pripstein-Posusney 1997) The tool of choice were the respective trade union organizations mediating between state and unionized workers. It is thus *unionized* workers, as well as their organizational embodiment in the Egyptian EFTU and the Tunisian UGTT that will be at the center of the following section. Lacking formal status gave informally employed or unemployed workers a considerably less privileged bargaining position vis-à-vis the state. This necessitates dealing with both groups separately, with informally employed or unemployed workers being integrated into the section on popular classes.

Working class impact on the organization and mobilization of the two uprisings was a somewhat contested issue. In Egypt the disagreement concerns the questions of how much influence the workers' calls for general strikes had on the outcome of the revolution, their presence on Tahrir before the call, as well as their influence on strategies and tactics. What is clear by all accounts is that the general strike was the first time during the revolution that workers as a more or less organized force came into play, thereby shifting the balance in favour of the protesters. Less clear is the role of the workers before this general call. While some argue that they were not present at all, some say they were there all along, only as individuals rather than as 'workers'. Two points can shed light on this contradiction. On the one hand, workers only very recently started to establish their own unions, independent of the state controlled corporatist union federation EFTU. On the other hand, their appearance as an organized group was inhibited by the fact that with the start of the uprising employers had closed their factories, shutting down a potential physical locus of working class mobilization. Thus, initially whether workers showed up on Tahrir depended on their political attitudes, and not a collective union decision. Many workers, who had become politicized in the strike wave from 2006 onward attended the demonstrations from the very beginning.⁹⁸ The experiences in contesting authority they had gathered during this strike wave⁹⁹ not only contributed to them being available for mobilization, but to them creating their own ways and strategies of dealing with the regime: "If you look at the

⁹⁸ Interview with activist, Cairo, 09.05.2011

⁹⁹ Rabab Al-Mahdi, talk at a joint panel discussion on: "From Revolution to Transformation: Egypt 2011/ Germany 1989" by the American University in Cairo and the Freie Universität Berlin, 08.05.2011

tactics adopted during 18 days, the labor movement was important. For example occupation and sit in the streets are labor tactics, especially the not leaving space part. The taking-over of significant places like the main TV station are tactics that came from the tax collectors in 2007 with their sit-in in front of the parliament”.¹⁰⁰

In Tunisia, the role of working class involvement was even more complex, especially where the role of the general union UGTT was concerned. They were drivers of mobilization and at the same time hesitant up until the point where they had little choice left but to side with the demonstrations. This ambivalence was caused by factors rooted in its structure, and therefore embedded in the history of regime union interaction. In order to understand the UGTT’s role, one needs to start with the narrative of Mohamed Bouasizi, whose self-immolation would set the uprising in motion. It is as well-known as it is oft repeated that Bouasizi was a street vendor, part of an army of unemployed graduates, whose fate epitomizing their destitute conditions. However, there are hints that Bouasizi’s story was as much a stylized narrative to further mobilization as it was an individual’s tragic fate. An article by Christophe Ayad for example traces his story via the story of the municipal official, Fayda Hamdi, who supposedly slapped him the day of his self-immolation – her act the final humiliation. He cites a local trade unionist from Sidi Bouzid, who told him that “En fait, on a tout inventé moins d’une heure après sa mort. On a dit qu’il était diplômé chômeur pour toucher ce public, alors qu’il n’avait que le niveau bac et travaillait comme marchand des quatre-saisons. Pour faire bouger ceux qui ne sont pas éduqués, on a inventé la claque de Fayda Hamdi. Ici, c’est une région rurale et traditionnelle, ça choque les gens. Et de toute façon, la police, c’est comme les Etats-Unis avec le monde arabe: elle s’attaque aux plus faibles.”¹⁰¹ The truth of that account is as hard to verify as the original story. What it typifies however, is the role that many have attributed to the local trade unionists, the role of an actor trying to give spontaneous protests a more broadly resonating frame, and communicating this frame to a wider audience. Throughout the revolution, Bouasizi would predominantly be framed as a young university graduate, stunted in his aspirations for a proper, middle class life promised to him and many others by the regime. Denied even that by arbitrary state repression he chose the only way out that remained – his almost certain death. This brilliant framing epitomized a social problem of explosive dimensions that the regime had struggled to contain in its consequences since the 1980s as well as the lived experiences of many poor Tunisians in the story of one man.

¹⁰⁰ Rabab Al-Mahdi, talk at a joint panel discussion on: “From Revolution to Transformation: Egypt 2011/ Germany 1989” by the American University in Cairo and the Freie Universität Berlin, 08.05.2011

¹⁰¹ Christophe Ayad: La révolution de la gifle, Liberation 11.06.2011, <http://www.liberation.fr/monde/01012342664-la-revolution-de-la-gifle>

Beyond crafting and consolidating Bouasizi's narrative, almost everyone, from seasoned party activist, to union activists, to members of Tunisia's civil society credits the UGTT with being pivotal on the ground. Some point out that the local unions provided the protesters with their offices as a space for (re-)organization, discussion, information exchange, or simply rest from the events.¹⁰² Others credit it with being essential for transmitting information from the events to the outside world.¹⁰³ Especially the latter is corroborated by evidence in news sources. With national media muzzled by regime control, most Tunisians got their information via news channels such as Al Jazeera, Al Arabia, and France 24. It was nearly impossible for these news stations to have reporters on the ground, so they relied on two kinds of sources. One was the countless videos posted online everyday via social media, being taken in the heat of the moment by the participants involved, without however providing much context. The other was the information distributed by local activists via phone and press conferences. Many if not most of these sound-bites providing empirical information of events, state repression, and plans, as well as situating them within a more coherent frame of cross regional protests against social injustice, economic deprivation and state repression came from local union activists, which were again and again cited as the primary source of information. While it will remain a challenge to quantify the exact degree to which the local UGTT structures and activists made a difference in perpetuating the protests, what can be said is that they were one of the only, if not *the* only organized force on the ground. They not only had the organizational capacities, grassroots structures, and resources, but also years of activist experience, with many of them belonging to the more politicized leftists currents within the UGTT.

This involvement on a local and regional level has to be contrasted with the hesitance of the union leadership on a national level. Far from aligning itself with the protesters they tried to mediate between them and regional authorities, and appeal to national authorities. And while they did grant local and sectoral union organizations a margin of freedom to participate, they also decided not to call for a general strike, holding out until almost the end of the protest cycle.¹⁰⁴ This position not only proved futile, but became unsustainable in the face of an increasing blood toll. With the massacres in the Kasserine and Thala on the 9th and 10th of January 2011 it reached unprecedented heights, propelling the UGTT leadership into finally calling for a general strike. The UGTT's approach was thus not so much characterized by ambiguity than by a thorough disparity between the union leadership and its base. Local chapters and selected sectoral union chapters displayed an independence and unruliness that

¹⁰² Interview with party and civil society activist, 13.08.2012, Tunis

¹⁰³ Interview with union activist, 09.08.2012, Tunis

¹⁰⁴ Interview with UGTT leader, 29.08.2012, Tunis

has characterized some of the leadership-base relationship in the past. It is tied not only to the specificities of the union's organizational structure but to its rocky history between incorporation and contestation. At the eve of the uprising the union leadership thus found itself torn between the demands of an increasingly contentious base, and the painful lessons of history.¹⁰⁵

The unions in Egypt and Tunisia thus in one way or another played a role during the uprisings, even though their roles differed substantially. Some of these differences can be ascribed to contingent decision-making by union leaders regarding the proper positioning towards the state. Others were the outcome of deep-seated structural differences in the relationship between the unions and the state leading to varying degrees of organizational independence, institutional strength, as well as contentious legacies. Still others were informed by the experiences union leaders and activists gained during the past decade informing their choices and repertoires. On a theoretical level, based on their thorough incorporation into the regimes' support coalition, we would expect neither union to be a driver of mobilization. They thus fall squarely into pattern number 3, in which incorporation on the one hand establishes expectations that when disappointed can provide a basis for claim making towards the state and thus ultimately the regime. On the other hand the more incorporation is accompanied by political inclusion the more likely it is that accommodationist strategies will prevail. The following pages will show these patterns at work and provide some bases for further differentiation.

In Tunisia, two events marked the cornerstones of the UGTT's approach to the crisis. One was the history of violent repression dating back to a general strike in 1978 that led to structural changes in the union-state relationship. The other was the union's experience with protests in the Gafsa mining basin in 2008, which led to a reevaluation of its strategic choices and their pay-offs. The former left most of its leadership imprisoned, and the top of the union for years manned by pro-government puppets. The latter saw its reputation damaged for its perceived lack of support of unemployed miners' protests violently repressed by the regime. In Egypt, a legacy of top down creation for incorporating a newly formed urban wage proletariat had left the EFTU a pliable instrument in the hands of the regime. With a strike wave sweeping the country from 2004 onwards Egypt saw first attempts at breaking away from the organizational straightjacket of the union umbrella, and the subsequent formation of nascent independent union structures. The history of the two unions reflects broader institutional legacies.

¹⁰⁵ Interview with former union leader, 09.08.2012

Egypt's EFTU was essentially a top down creation to integrate the new urban wage proletariat into a corporatist, state controlled framework. In exchange for their subordination the union leadership was granted some voice, but only within the confines of tight state supervision. (Hinnebusch 1985) As the ruling party was created to integrate the masses and mobilize their (passive) support, from its inception the union was designed as an instrument for controlling from above what was feared from below. Nasser, generally reluctant to allow any organizational expression of interest representation, only allowed the formation of the EFTU in 1957. This first step towards the corporatization of Egyptian labor ushered in a period of substantial economic improvements in workers' status and economic well-being. These benefits were not secured through the union's bargaining power, however, but at the hands of the regime, which exchanged economic inclusion for political exclusion and acquiescence. (Richards and Waterbury 1996) Workers essentially became state employees in the 1960s, with the EFTU maintaining control through the same pyramidal structures characteristic of the ruling party itself. Its ranks were stacked with members loyal to the regime. Workers were not a per se organized class when Nasser came to power in 1952. But their increasing strength in numbers, their strategic placement in the state-led industrialization process, and not least their ideological relevance for the state's newly acquired socialist development strategy accorded them a key position within the regime's legitimation strategy. (Beinin 1989, 85) Nasser was trying to secure his power against elements from the political and economic elite of the ancient regime. But his project went further than rule consolidation. He initiated a project of modernization from above via state-induced and -led industrialization that would change the face of Egypt's economy. Incorporation of the working classes into his support basis thus served legitimation purposes as much as it bought political acquiescence from a potentially disruptive social force by providing material gains in living and working conditions.

Nasser's successor, President Anwar Es-Sadat's strategy of economic liberalization in the 1970s reneged on this incorporation on two fronts - it decreased the importance of worker incorporation for regime support, as well as for regime legitimation. Regarding the former, infitah brought with it the rise of a private bourgeoisie which in intermixing with the state bourgeoisie from the end of the 1960s onwards created an alternative source of structural regime support. (Ayubi 1991) This necessarily involved a marginalization of the working class in favor of this new elite. On an ideological level, with the abandonment of state socialism, and the adoption of a more liberally oriented economy backed by Western support, embracing workers ideologically simply became less opportune internationally, and less necessary domestically. This did not mean the complete abandonment of workers' incorporation. However, its basis

shifted, relying more on economic incorporation. This worked for as long as the state could afford to uphold its extensive subsidy program. With the economy profoundly in crisis from the 1980s onwards, economic incorporation became more difficult to sustain.

Similar to Tunisia, with the state close to bankruptcy at the beginning of the 1990s, the gloves came off and where the regime had previously delayed the implementation of more drastic liberalization measures, it now had little choice but to at least provide the semblance of compliance with structural adjustment. (Bromley and Bush 1994) Thus, the 1990s saw the tightening of economic screws for workers, resulting in a concomitant increase in base level worker militancy.¹⁰⁶ This worker militancy was mostly centered on economic demands, but it would create the basis for plant level networks outside the union hierarchy that would come to play an important role in worker mobilization during the 2000s. Both Sadat and Mubarak over the years therefore gradually distanced themselves from Nasser's populist coalition and the associated policies. However, there was never an explicit break with past that would have denied the state's responsibility for the welfare of these groups, and their role within legitimating state discourse. Whenever Sadat wanted to roll back state concessions towards the working class, he tried to do so via the unions, by asking for them to accept reversals instead of simply taking them away and using repression to quell dissent. The state, while having shed itself of workers as key constituency was at the same time afraid of completely alienating them.

The Tunisian UGTT in contrast was a more ambivalent actor within the uprising as well as the institutional framework of the state under Ben Ali. Tunisia's workers look back on a long history of worker organization stretching as far back as the 1920s. At the eve of independence in the 1950s, the UGTT was not only a close ally of the Neo-Dustour, but also an independent organization with a substantial mass base of its own, commanding its own nationalist credentials. (Alexander 1996) Post-independence, Bourguiba strove to gain control of the ruling party and the state apparatus, but also of potential challengers within political and civil society. In the following decade, the UGTT and the regime settled into an uneasy period, alternating between accommodation and confrontation. With the onset of liberalization in the 1970s, the regime sought to appease labor's concerns about its potential detrimental impact on worker's interests by granting the UGTT an even more privileged position in the bargaining process. To no avail, however. While the union leadership tried to sell the bargain to its base, unrest amongst workers on the ground nonetheless increased. (Bellin 2001, 102) Structural changes within the union saw the influx of white collar federations in the early 1970s that not only were

¹⁰⁶ Interview with labor rights activist, Cairo, 12.03.2008

considerably more politicized, but in lieu of alternative channels for articulation turned towards the union structures to voice and organize dissent.

A general strike called for by the UGTT in 1978 ended this period of union-regime cooperation. Its bloody repression not only left 51 workers dead but its entire leadership imprisoned and replaced by regime puppets.¹⁰⁷ The union's almost complete subjugation at the hands of the regime was to last throughout the 1980s, a period which saw Bourguiba become increasingly hostile towards opposition in general. Following Ben Ali's white coup in 1986, it initially seemed like the new president would reverse some of Bourguiba's repressive policies towards the UGTT. Instead, the union leadership and the regime settled more firmly into a pattern of accommodation and submission in the 1990s. Accompanying accelerating economic reforms under the new President Ben Ali, the 1990s yet again saw union benefits and bargaining power increase - far beyond the UGTT's actual weight. These regular increases in worker's benefits thus signifies the nature of the social bargain in the union-regime sphere. It also shows the union's aristocratic position compared to its unorganized counterparts in the informal sector or amongst the unemployed. The benefits it received were thus part of a *political* logic of silencing the only organizational counterweight in society. As one UGTT activist observed, while the union certainly learned its lesson from history and the heavy costs of being too political, so did the regime learn that a complete destruction of the union would incur costs that it might not survive.¹⁰⁸

As was the case with the opposition sphere the worker sphere in both countries saw change and dynamism in the 2000s. This included in both cases to some degree the emancipation of workers from regime tutelage. In Tunisia this happened on the level of the union base and to a more limited extent on the leadership level. In Egypt emancipation was restricted to base level workers, who frustrated with what they perceived to be a crumbling social bargain, and denied channels for expressing even a limited amount of dissent, turned towards creating their own unions.

In Egypt the start of worker emancipation curiously enough coincided with Kifaya's decline. Starting from 2004 and gaining traction in 2006, Egypt witnessed one of the most sustained, and far fledged worker mobilization since World War II, involving at least 1.8 million workers overall. This wave started with the traditional hotspot of labor mobilization in the industrial city of Mahalla al Kubra, where in 2006 24 000 workers went on strike over unpaid bonuses. (El-

¹⁰⁷ Interview with member of UGTT, 09.08.2012, Tunis

¹⁰⁸ Interview with member of the UGTT, 09.08.2012

Mahdi 2011) The period between 2004 and 2008 alone saw about 1900 strikes. (Solidarity Center 2010, 14) Worker mobilizations saw an unprecedented height in 2007, with 590 incidents of collective action reported, compared to 222 in 2006, and with a total amount of workers involved ranging between 300 000 and 500 000.¹⁰⁹

What is interesting about the wave of strike activity from 2004 onwards is that even though these strikes started out as economic and to some extent particularistic, they quickly morphed into calls for independent unions, and genuine representation through workers' organizations from below. They thus represent not only a shift in the expectations articulated towards the state, but an implicit attempt to exchange one way of incorporation – purely economic – for another, more political one, acknowledging that purely economic incorporation would always leave workers vulnerable to changes imposed from a politically incorporated union leadership from above. When economic incorporation partially broke down, a reclaiming of rights foregone under the social pact of the 1960s was initiated. In the 2000s, more contentious activity characterized the overall political atmosphere, and repression alone could not uphold the crumbling remains of the ruling bargain. State corporatism only worked for as long as the corporatist organizations were on the one hand not completely ossified and still capable of channeling base demands upwards, securing at least some grievance accommodation. On the other hand, those groups incorporated still had to tangibly profit from incorporation.

At the outset of the revolution, the sphere of worker – regime interaction was thus one of tentative accommodation on the side of the regime, as well as an increasingly confident emancipation from regime tutelage on part of the workers. While the regime had in the past decades marginalized the role of workers in their support coalition, they were neither prepared, nor arguably capable of simply suppressing striking workers, and thus fell back on piecemeal economic inclusion. It therefore showed surprising leniency towards striking workers, trying not only to appease them with economic pay offs but also with rhetorical inclusion, emphasizing workers' importance for state and society. One condition for this was that workers did not attempt to breach the boundaries between their sphere and the sphere of opposition politics. Thus, tolerance only extended so far, the separation of classes, as well as avoiding an overtly political challenge to the political arrangements at the heart of the state, were preconditions of partial accommodation and tolerance. The political opposition not only had little contacts into the labor movement, and mainly via strategically located labor activists, but they also often believed the economic demands of the labor movement to be too particularistic. They could

¹⁰⁹ Al-Ahram Weekly, No. 895, 1. - 7. May 2008

not therefore be capable of bringing about large scale structural change, and mobilization could not succeed along exclusively economic demands.¹¹⁰ Workers on their part, at least where leadership was concerned, were keenly aware of the nature of regime-worker interaction. Not only did they not perceive any substantial gain from collaborating too closely with the generally inefficient political opposition. But they were furthermore scared of the potentially detrimental impact a breach of the boundaries would have on their ability to press for demands, in addition to the potentially grave consequences in terms of repression: “When demands become political, the government is afraid of interference by the opposition. If the demands are purely economic, the probability of success increases. This is because of the political elite’s mindset. The government rather wants to deal with strikes by asking ‘what does it cost?’”¹¹¹

Thus workers level of mobilization continuously increased the 2000s. This was in large parts due to a demonstration effect. With workers in such key factories as *Misir Spinning and Weaving* in Mahalla demonstrating that contentious action can help to increase the responsiveness of the Egyptian state, protest over time became more attractive as a strategic option. Workers were in a slightly better position than the political opposition within their sphere of interaction with the regime for two reasons. On the one hand, while neither could openly contest the rules of the game that delineated the skewed playing field in the first place, worker contention was perceived as less proximate to the rules of the game most relevant for political power. Hence while workers contention might have questioned part of the regime’s apparatus of control, political opposition questioned the very rules that guaranteed the regime’s existence. In contrast, workers’ demands were restorative and, indeed, conservative in nature, trying to protect the limited privileges they had enjoyed under the old etatist system.

At the eve of the revolution, workers were therefore more politicized than ever, but still at some distance from the political opposition. At the same time, while the establishment of unofficial independent unions represented first inroads into the state’s monopoly of representation, these unions had yet to build a solid organizational presence and broad representation within workers’ ranks. It was hence a sphere in transition, increasingly uncoupled from state control but without secure footing of its own.

In Tunisia from 2002 onwards the UGTT began to reclaim some margin of freedom, without, however, completely distancing itself from the regime as well as its privileged position towards

¹¹⁰ Interview with analyst and activist, Mohammed El-Sayed Said

¹¹¹ Interview with labor rights activist, Cairo, 12.03.2008

it.¹¹² A locally confined workers' uprising in the Gafsa mining basin region in 2008 was not only according to some observers "the most important protest movement seen in Tunisia since the Bread Revolt of January 1984" (Gobe 2011, 1), but also vividly illustrates the linkage between the union and the regime, and the complexity of intra-union dynamics. Located in Tunisia's poor south west, the region hosts one of the world's largest phosphate companies, the state owned Gafsa Phosphate Company (CPG), which is also one of the region's main employers. When in January 2008 the hiring of 380 workers not stemming from the large pool of the region's unemployed was announced, the feeling of injustice exploded into regional protests. These protests were not only directed against the company, but against the regional management of the UGTT. Their secretary general Amara Abbassi was a prominent local RCD member, and the owner of several subcontracting firms of the CPG. When the recruitment process resulted in the hiring of mostly relatives, friends, and politically and tribally connected workers, it kick-started the Gafsa mining basin revolt. It was led by the regions unemployed, their friends and relatives as well as the widows of former workers and quickly gathered the support of high school students, and local UGTT representatives. These local union activists not only helped to sustain protests over almost six months in Redeyef, the town at the heart of the unrests, but they did so against union policy. Far from being supportive of the plight of the region's residents, the national union leadership kept its distance till almost the very end. Its failure to take sides, as well as the perceived interlinkage between union structures and structures of the state, the benefits of which excluded more marginalized parts of the local population, subsequently caused a substantial loss in reputation for the UGTT. (Gobe 2011) At the same time the incidents represented one of the first instances of sustained social protests since Ben Ali's take-over in 1987 that mobilized people on a larger scale. They thus symbolized a crack in the façade of an almighty regime that had dominated public imagery for decades.¹¹³ And it was yet again a more radical rank and file, located in the more politicized sectoral federations that forced the leadership to eventually side with protesters. These sectoral and local union branches were often penetrated by individuals who also belonged to other, more overtly political organizations.¹¹⁴

Even the marginally more independent post-2002 national leadership of the UGTT¹¹⁵ was forced to maintain an indecisive position between honoring base interests and local union/party barons. History had shown that confrontation between the UGTT and the regime was likely to

¹¹² Interview with member of UGTT, 09.08.2012, Tunis

¹¹³ Interview with member of UGTT, 09.08.2012, Tunis

¹¹⁴ Interview with member of UGTT, 29.08.2012, Tunis

¹¹⁵ Interview with member of UGTT, 29.08.2012, Tunis

end in a bloody stalemate, incurring huge costs in terms of lives, but also in the life span of unionist careers at the top of the hierarchy. Thus, in exchange for their moderation the UGTT leadership had been able to negotiate favorable deals for their clientele, had been granted favorable access to power holders within the regime, as well as relative safety from government crackdowns. Moderating base demands militancy was thus the price to pay for selective political incorporation. This difficult position manifested itself in the union's evolving reaction towards the uprising in 2010. As the only mass organizing able to parallel the ruling party, they would have made for a natural 'champion' of mobilization. This is what not only opposition actors outside of the UGTT, but also those more contentiously inclined within the union were hoping for. Strategic concerns and past experiences combined, however, to produce a rather tame and delayed reaction towards the mobilization in the interior regions. Contrary to the past, while they did not openly side with the protests until very late in the process, they did not actively inhibit their rank and file in their support either, instead waiting to see which side would prevail.

Where does this leave us in terms of the broader picture of comparing spheres via their patterns of incorporation? Both cases share important characteristics. In both cases, for example, did unions belong to the support coalition of the regime, bound to it by levers of corporatist control that made the union leadership relatively pliable instruments in the hands of the regimes. Both unions profited from that incorporation as organizational entities that enjoyed an aristocratic bargaining position vis-à-vis those employed in the informal sector or the unemployed. But in both cases workers themselves also manifestly profited in their privileged access to material benefits and grievance redress. While they were therefore not necessarily well off, in relative terms they were certainly better off than their informal counterparts signifying the ongoing partial effectiveness of social bargains, even in an age of neoliberal restructuring. In line with the expectations formulated in our initial hypotheses, this incorporation resulted in the relative tameness of unions compared to their organizational weight. In neither case therefore were the unions initiating the wide-spread mobilization that would spell the end of the regime Ben Ali, and shortly thereafter Husni Mubarak.

Important differences persist, however, that seem to go beyond the explanatory power of the initial hypotheses. Differences in the spheres binding unions to their respective regimes thus caused differences in the behavior and role of the unions and base level unionists in the run up and during the events. While in Tunisia base unionists played midwife to protest mobilization at the local and regional levels once they were initiated, their Egyptian counterparts remained at the sidelines, with individual workers joining at first, and through independent unions towards

the end of the protests. How can we account for these differences in worker contention in the face of leadership accommodation? The main source of divergent outcomes within the structures of the individual spheres was the organizational legacy and structural loci for independence. Where unions were created from above as instruments of corporatist control, the union itself never managed to claim independence or serve as an incubator for political and civil activism. Indeed, the Egyptian EFTU's effectiveness in stifling workers' voices from within eventually led to the creation of new independent unions when the contradictions between a regime reneging on a traditional social bargain and the continued denial of voice became too great to bear. Where the union entered the period of regime formation as an independent entity, it managed to preserve some of that potential even when silenced through years of repression and cooptation. This allowed local structures of contention and disruptive mobilization to persist, even in the face of a co-opted leadership. In the case of the UGTT, the regime thus saw itself forced to negotiate, bargain, and ultimately include an organization commanding disruptive potential and independent base-level structures of its own. On the flipside, even in the case of politically incorporated union hierarchies, and hence the dominance of accommodationist strategies at the leadership level, the organizational legacy of independence not only grants spaces for resistance inside of the union, but also encourages more effective incorporation economically, and hence less relative working class deprivation. Thus, while both cases experienced extensive neoliberal restructuring that made parts of the populations worse off, in unison with the UGTT, the Tunisian state protected workers' interests throughout to a much higher degree. Egyptian workers on the other side suffered severe losses that brought on the wave of workers strikes from 2004 onwards. In the absence of an independent locus for organization that would have allowed for more structural political power within base union structures no structural base for politicized contention ensued keeping striking workers tied to their indeed more particularist agenda.

Islamists

The spheres of Islamist movements interacting with their authoritarian counterparts is interesting not only because Islamist movements commonly are counted amongst the few serious challengers authoritarian regimes in the MENA face. But also because they are amongst the only challenger actually bringing forward an alternative model of politics, of the relationship

between state and society. In the run up to the uprisings they had thus established themselves as the only viable challengers to stake out divergent modes of legitimation against authoritarian regimes whose modernizing ideology had failed to deliver the promised benefits. While the main Islamist movements in both countries – the Muslim Brotherhood (MB) in Egypt and Ennahda in Tunisia – thus posed serious challenges, only in Egypt did the MB manage to gain a significant foothold. Ennahda, in contrast, in the two decades leading up to the uprising was unable to translate their potential into actual organizational prowess, being almost eradicated by regime repression. Their different structural position in the interaction with the regime was thus reflected in their role during the uprisings, or in the case of Ennahda, their absence.

With respect to Islamists' role in Tunisia's mobilizational process it is safe to say that they played none. While individual Islamists may have participated in the events, as an organized force they were virtually absent in the run up and during the uprising. Most of the leadership of the biggest Islamist political movement, Ennahda, was in exile, trying to sustain organizational structures from abroad. Its members at home suffered severe economic and political repression, as did their families and those suspected of harboring Islamist sympathies. During the uprising Ennahda itself remained mum, refraining from publishing statements either in favor or against the protests. According to the ICG, however, an NGO close to the movement threw its support behind the protesters already 2 days after their start. (ICG 2011, 8) Whether their overall silence was due to a decision not to polarize and divide the protests by introducing overtly Islamist statements as some members have claimed (ICG 2011, 8), the lack of people remaining on the ground capable of aiding mobilization, or simply due to a calculus of not further provoking a regime one hoped would allow some gradual increase in activity in the future, is hard to ascertain. What does seem clear, however, is that neither were the protests characterized by Islamic symbolism, nor did the movement lend any visible sign of support either from the inside or the outside.

In Egypt, in contrast, one can hardly doubt the importance of Islamists for sustaining protest mobilization. The MB had originally decided to not join the protests officially, all the while allowing their youth wing to attend them unofficially. According to high ranking members, they were afraid that their official involvement might lead to the protests being portrayed as an Islamist attempt at overthrowing the regime or, if unsuccessful would provoke a violent backlash against the group: "We provided material and support to the Revolution, but we realized that the regime depended on the presence of the MB to scare people. The Minister of the Interior

said on the 25th of January that the protests were instigated by the MB. Also the President was saying on the 1st of February that there was only him or the MB. We anticipated this reaction.”¹¹⁶

That their fear of repression was not entirely unfounded, can be seen in the fact that several of their leaders were arrested in the run up to the 28th of January in a bid to prevent the protests from garnering support. The overwhelming success of the January 25th protests that saw many ordinary people join, swelling the ranks of the demonstrations to an unprecedented scale made the MB reconsider, finally deciding to throw their weight behind the revolution. On the 27th of January they called on their members to join after the next day’s Friday prayer.¹¹⁷ Apart from the sheer numbers they brought to the protests, however, what many activists credit them for is the efficiency with which they organized the defence lines around the embattled protesters in Tahrir, preventing them from being “crushed” by the regime and its plain clothed thugs:¹¹⁸ “The 28th was the day of the revolution when everything changed. Most of the deaths occurred at that day, and most of these killings happened in front of police stations. People succeeded in storming Tahrir. Also by the end of the day the Muslim Brotherhood officially decided to join the protests so gave they orders to all of their members to mobilize. A very well organized and big force was now part of the movement. This was of course an important factor because it was the only force capable of playing an organized leading role. All other forces were much smaller and less organized.”¹¹⁹ Interesting from an organizational point of view was the divide between an older generation and a younger one already visible during the uprising and exacerbated in its aftermath. Similar to the young generation of secular opposition activists and stemming from years of organizing university politics together, the younger MB generation was much more willing to enter into genuine cooperation with other political activists across the political spectrum.¹²⁰ Whether the MB leadership decided to join out of a purely strategic calculus or not, the fact that the organization threw its weight behind the protests gave them a degree of organization that was essential for protesters’ ability to hold on to the symbolic space of Midan Tahrir.

When formulating hypotheses earlier on, sorting Islamist actors into one of the patterns of incorporation characterizing the structural bounds of the sphere connecting them to their authoritarian regimes proved difficult. The case seems relatively straightforward with Tunisia’s Ennahda, which at the time of the uprising falls squarely into pattern (1), predicting the absence

¹¹⁶ Interview with MB member, Cairo, 22.05.2011

¹¹⁷ Interview with MB member, Cairo, 22.05.2011

¹¹⁸ Interview with activist, Cairo, 03.05.2011

¹¹⁹ Interview with activist, 12.04.2014

¹²⁰ Interview with activist of the MB youth, 24.05.2011

of inclusion. This would result in a sphere of mobilization and interaction that put members of this category at the late riser spectrum of the mobilizational process. While the absence of expectations of state duties and responsibilities that could be violated establish no normative basis of claim making, the nature of the interaction based on neglect and/or violence creates deep-seated grievances that can be mobilized once the process is underway. The same cannot be said for the MB, however, whose relationship to the Egyptian regime is much harder to classify. Both their continuous illegal status as well as regular bouts of repression would seem to qualify them for pattern number (1) as well. However underneath this veneer of similarity lie substantive differences that liken the organization in some respects more to the Tunisian UGTT than its Islamist counterpart. Despite their illegality they were mostly tolerated by the Egyptian regime. They had well-known headquarters, participated in elections, and on occasion even in opposition alliances. In return, they refrained from overtly challenging the regime, as well as from mobilizing its mass following in the streets of Cairo. They thus seem to be a mix of no incorporation (pattern 1), and selective incorporation (pattern 3). According to our hypotheses, neither will lead to them initiating mobilization, however. In the following pages we will see how these patterns developed and how they structured not only the interaction between Islamists and their respective regime, but also their position towards the rising protests.

The explanation for why the MB – even as it was illegal and often repressed – could play such a pivotal role is rooted in its history and the structures of mobilization created over almost six decades of interaction with their authoritarian counterparts. Founded in 1928 by the school teacher Hassan Al Banna, the Muslim Brotherhood initially focused on Islamic revival through preaching and service provision to disadvantaged sectors of society. With quite a few of the Free Officers having affinities to the MB, they were initially allowed to operate. Not for long, however. A failed assassination attempt on Nasser in 1954 served as the pretext for the regime to violently crack down on the MB, executing six of its members, and condemning around 800 to lengthy prison sentences. Many thousands more are jailed without trial. (Abd al-Monein Said and Wenner 1982, 342) It was not simply the MB's attempt on his life that compelled Nasser to move against them, however, but the MB's organizational prowess combined with their open aspirations to at the very least a share in power. (Vatikiotis 1978, 88) Nasser's elimination of the MB thus had as much to do with their violent tactics as it was a pretext to eliminate a political challenger.

After a short period of more conciliatory policies in 1964, which saw many MB freed from prison to counterbalance leftist influence, a renewed crackdown was not long in the making.

Starting from 1965 onwards the MB were yet again charged with planning to overthrow the government, waves of arrests brought many of their members back to prison and in 1966 three of its leading figures were executed. During Nasser's time in office the MB thus constantly struggled to maintain itself organizationally in the face of harsh regime repression. Things only started to look up after Nasser's death, when new President Sadat released many Brethren from prison in an effort to secure his rule against internal competitors. This move sought to undermine critics on the left from the Nasserist spectrum by supporting their ideological competitor on the right organizationally and politically. But it also aimed at building broader ideological legitimacy by dressing his regime in more Islamic garb. It thus not only allowed the MB to reconstitute itself in public (without ever granting them legal status however), but also supported the formation of Islamic groups at Egypt's university campuses, where traditionally the left dominated. While the first few years were characterized by accommodation on the side of the regime as well as by the attempt of the MB to rebuild their structures and exert some influence on the policy making process, this was to change yet again with the advent of the Egyptian-Israeli Peace Treaty as well as the Iranian revolution. What followed was a spiral of escalation, which saw the MB and other Islamist groups stepping up their criticism of and challenge to the regime. Sadat on his part intensified repression out of worry about Islamists' influence and the potential repercussions for his pro-Western course. The resulting wave of arrests of opposition activists from all parts of the political spectrum in 1981 finally culminated in Sadat's assassination by Muslim extremists in 1981. (Abd al-Monein Said and Wenner 1982, 359)

Under President Mubarak, Sadat's former vice-president and the successor, the pattern of accommodation in exchange for moderation seemed to repeat itself. Mubarak himself was initially perceived as a weak interim leader who had only been able to advance to the position of vice president because of how utterly unthreatening and unambitious he seemed. In an effort to ease political tensions and establish his own basis of support he embarked on a more tolerant course towards the MB as well as the remainder of the political opposition. Several factors joined together in the 1980s to make the interaction between regime and MB not only comparatively smooth but enabled the MB to strengthen their presence in society. On the one hand, the relative freedom granted under Mubarak's initial years left the MB in a position to conquer new spheres of influence and consolidate old ones. They strengthened their stronghold in the student unions, and moved into the professional syndicates: "The Muslim Brothers took control of such spaces and, by providing their constituency with services that superseded and surpassed those supplied by the state, were able gradually to gain the support of those

constituencies and to build up an informal legitimacy.” (Al-Awadi 2005, 62) Especially the latter was enabled by the regime’s parallel retreat from comprehensive service provision in times of economic crisis. So in a way, both sides at least partially profited from this bargain: the regime had found an organization willing to shoulder some of the burden that had started to weigh heavily on its budget, but from which it was scared to withdraw, while the space freed by the state gave the MB the opportunity to further build a basis in society. (Al-Awadi 2005, 63)

The late 1970s/early 1980s saw the rise of a new middle generation. Their pragmatic outlook made them open towards political forms of participation. Thus from the 1980s onwards the MB moved into the sphere of party politics. Since 1984 it has run candidates in parliamentary elections. The pendulum swung to the side of repression yet again, when the onset of violent Islamist extremism at the beginning of the 1990s adversely affected the position of the MB. However, repression was less a result of the MB’s Islamist character or any potential affiliation with more radical groups. Instead, it was the MB’s disturbing display of strength in syndicalist elections in the 1990s that caused the regime to fear their potential success in the upcoming parliamentary elections of 1995 and 1999. (Kienle 2000, 137) This established a game between partial toleration of the MB’s activities interrupted by bouts of repression in exchange for the MB moderating their discourse and ambition that was to last till the revolution in 2011. Hence, while the MB leadership did attempt to stretch the boundaries of regime tolerance to exert influence at times, they did so while trying not to overstep them at the same time. It is for this reason that they did not engage in mass mobilization throughout the decades, even though they were possibly the only organizational force with the mobilizational potential to do so. Their powerful organizational base guaranteed that they had some influence on policy-making on lower, non-power-related levels. In the end neither the MB nor the regime had any interest in an actual trial of strength. The regime Mubarak hence – whether it needed a moderate Islamic force to split away support from radical Islamists in the 1990s or whether it was because they feared the risk – while trying to keep the MB contained, never actually attempted to eliminate them entirely.

While the events following the uprisings might suggest an initial similarity between the Egyptian and the Tunisian case, with Islamist parties in both countries sweeping elections, the vantage point of Islamist actors in Tunisia nonetheless differs substantially. The historical chapter introduced some of the trajectories of Islamism in Tunisia that illustrates why a movement that easily swept the elections in the aftermath of Ben Ali’s departure nonetheless played no role in his demise. It shows that Ennahda’s history with the regime Ben Ali was complex and more

nuanced than the common narrative would suggest, combining accommodation with confrontation. (Allani 2009) Their eventual domestic destruction had as much to do with the international and domestic climate at the beginning of the 1990s, as it had with Ben Ali's attempts at securing his rule. In contrast to much of the opposition landscape of the time, Ennahda represented a viable challenge from the outside. It could not only draw on substantial support from within the population, and increasingly from those socially and economically marginalized. But it also had positioned itself outside the established elite consensus (amongst regime *as well as* opposition elites) on the fundamental conceptions of state and society.

The story of the regime's interaction with Ennahda hereby resembles more closely that of more radical fringe movements in Egypt than the Muslim Brotherhood, especially where origins are concerned. While ideologically oriented towards the Muslim Brotherhood in Egypt, and especially the teachings of its founding father Hassan Al Banna, Ennahda had its origin in the politically contentious atmosphere of the 1970s. Bourguiba was a staunch supporter of secularism and a modern state. However, when faced with internal challenges from liberal strands of the elite as well as leftist challenges by an increasingly confrontational UGTT, the regime tacitly encouraged the development of Islamist groups on the country's university campuses. With Ennahda (at this time still the MTI) openly challenging the regime by the beginning of the 1980s, the first of many waves of repression saw its leaders imprisoned, only to be released in the wake of the bread riots in 1984. Their support within a population disenchanted with increasingly dire economic conditions as well as base on university campuses turned them into Tunisia's most viable opposition force in the course of the 1980s. They were consequently yet again to become the target of increasingly violent regime repression. Things only seemed to look up with Ben Ali's white coup in 1987, initially supported by Ennahda. This honeymoon phase included the movement's endorsement of Ben Ali's National Pact, most noticeably its provisions on the secular basis of the state as well as women's rights, and their participation in the parliamentary elections of 1989. (Allani 2009) A number of domestic and international factors led to a quick end of this temporary truce. Their relative success at the polls, and the subsequent final denial of an official party license initiated a spiral of escalation that gave the regime the pre-text to crack down on Ennahda. After two years of violent repression, most of its activists were either in jail or in exile, and Ennahda had effectively ceased to exist on the ground. Their partial radicalization that allowed to attribute some violent attacks to the movement, their success in mobilizing support and legitimacy rivaling a regime eager to consolidate its own rule, as well as their opposition to the regime's support of the first Gulf war made them a challenger threatening enough for the regime to unleash its full coercive force.

The specter of an Algerian scenario cowed opposition to their treatment amongst social and political forces alike and made it easy to dismantle its structures and prosecute its adherents.

The regime's fear of alternative centers of power within society, outside of its bounds of control *and* its capacities for incorporation, led it to seek its domestic eradication. Two facts made Ennahda's incorporation difficult. Firstly, Ennahda's mass mobilizational basis was located amongst Tunisia's poorer strata. For a regime that had built its support increasingly on the private bourgeoisie this overstretched its incorporative capacities as well as arguably interest. Secondly, they commanded ideological legitimacy on parts of the ideological spectrum that the regime simply could not rival. Tunisia's political and cultural elite was mainly secular. Bourguiba had attempted to educate its masses away from religious traditionalism, towards modern secular understandings, but with mixed results. Thus Tunisian society remained more traditional than the elite would have liked it to be. Especially during the 1990s therefore Ennahda's importance was more in the way its existence structured the ideological and political alignments within Tunisia, than any actual political role the movement played. Even after they had ceased to pose a threat, their specter continued to exert considerable political influence in dividing the ranks of the opposition. This was not only due to the regime's artful manipulation of people's fears, but also to the ideological commitments of some secular opposition forces.

The 2000s brought changes in the immediate environment for both the MB and Ennahda. These changes were to some extent spill-over effects from the changes in the opposition sphere, but still followed their own logic. This is especially true for the MB, who successfully contested the 2005 parliamentary elections. It was their biggest electoral victory so far, winning 88 seats out of 444. From 2006 onwards successive waves of repression saw hundreds of its members imprisoned, however, and the movement effectively blocked from contesting municipal elections two years later. As Hamzawy and Brown describe it: "in the first half of the current decade, the Brotherhood managed to overcome many of the effects of the harsh repression of the 1990s, select a new leader on two occasions, place itself at the center of Egyptian political debates, reach out to other opposition forces, develop a clear reform agenda, attract and foster the public role of a new generation of movement activists, and show that it was the most viable opposition political movement in the country." (Hamzawy and Brown 2010, 30) These positive developments were at least partially off-set by the regime's attempts at containing Brotherhood influence, as well as by the Brotherhood's own cautious maneuvering, and ambiguous political positioning.

The success of the first half of the 2000s was at least partially enabled by the more tolerant attitude of the regime within the opposition sphere. Through a combination of external pressure and their selective cooperation with opposition forces, the MB could reap some of the benefits of this more permissive climate, because they shared part of the arena where opposition politics played out. Nonetheless, with Kifaya mobilizing in 2005, both the MB and the regime found themselves forced to recalibrate their position within their sphere of interaction. The regime, subjected to an unusual degree of exposure, extended a substantial amount of tolerance towards Kifaya. This temporary tolerance also included the MB, in as much as they cooperated with the protest movement or moved within a mutually shared sphere. Despite this occasional cooperation, however, the MB did not engage in extensive mobilization itself. There were a number of reasons for the MB to abstain from overt mobilization in support of Kifaya. Among them were the history of enmity and distrust between the MB and more secular oriented opposition actors, and the MB's disbelief in the movement's capacity to affect change. Weighing in more heavily, however, was the movement's strategic engagement with the nature of the Islamist-regime sphere they were confronting. Their cautious approach was thus premised on assumptions of its functioning, and the anticipated outcome of and response to their actions.

Whereas Kifaya thus openly pushed red lines, the MB practiced at least partial respect for them, not directly positioning themselves against the regime nor a potential succession by the President's son. Arguably more important, however, was the absence of mobilization that could be seen as overtly challenging. This theme of signaling a willingness to remain within the rules of the game, striving for reform instead of power ran through their justification for electoral participation as well, where they espoused an equally gradualist and long-term approach that stayed clear of escalation. (ICG 2008, 3) This put them somewhat at odds with the opposition forces collected within Kifaya. As the crackdown on the MB and opposition actors more generally was to show in the following year, it did perhaps reflect a more accurate assessment of the chances of success vs. the likely repressive response. The MB's electoral success during the first round of parliamentary elections thus triggered a repressive counter-strategy that continued throughout the second half of the decade. Hundreds of Brethren were arrested from 2006 onwards, and the organization effectively banned from participating in the electoral arena. The crackdown hereby largely spared the Brotherhood's social and religious projects, focusing almost exclusively on its political activities. The Brotherhood seemed to largely accept repression as an attending ill in exchange for the ability to continue to participate. (ICG 2008) This indicates a largely shared understanding of the rules of the game on both sides. Unlike the

regime Nasser in the past, the regime Mubarak did not seek the eradication of the Muslim Brotherhood, but rather its political containment. Having learnt the painful lessons of the past, the Brotherhood, while trying to assert their status as the most serious opposition voice, at the same time did so with restraint, emphasizing their focus on political reform and shying away from positioning themselves on questions critical to the regime. (ICG 2008, 6) This strategic long term outlook avoidant of overt challenges was far from unequivocal within the MB, however. Instead, it was informed by the experiences, and choices of the MB's aging leadership, the so called generation of 1965. This generation had in its time experienced the attempted eradication of the MB under Nasser, waves of imprisonment and torture that only allowed the organization to persist in secrecy. The years of clandestine activities and repression had thus rendered the MB a tightly knit organization, with a far greater degree of internal unity, discipline and a sense of obedience than the other opposition actors. (Wickham 2011, 221) They were not entirely monolithic, however, and past repression engrained in the memories of the movement's leadership was at times at odds with the participatory ambitions of the more pragmatic middle generation, which emerged in the 1970s and 1980s, or the more collaborative approaches to political opposition that emerged at Egypt's university campuses in the 2000s with the MB's younger generation.¹²¹

Despite an increase in repression in the aftermath of their electoral success, the MB were continuing to rely on a two-pronged approach of delivering services to mostly lower strata clients, as well as participating in the political arena with the MB's more educated cadres. They continued to hold on to their anti-mobilizational approach, only briefly trying to unsuccessfully connect with workers' struggles during the attempted general strike in 2008. (Hamzawy and Ottaway 2011, 8) Amid the regime tightening its grip on independent media, the MB announced their intention to yet again contest about 30% of seats in the upcoming parliamentary elections in 2010. In response, scores of members were arrested, according to the MB over 1200, on the commonly used charge of membership in an illegal organization. Decried by human rights' groups as one of the most fraudulent elections in Egypt's history¹²²,

¹²¹ These internal struggles were reflected in the controversial outline of a future party program published in 2007, which contained discriminatory attitudes towards religious minorities and women. This draft program not only seemed to prove the fear of many secular opposition forces about the MB's illiberal views and their general lack of trustworthiness, but it was rejected by many younger members. The outline as well as the announcement of a planned political party symbolized that the MB were in it for the long run, slowly establishing a foothold through participating in existing institutions.

¹²² <http://www.theguardian.com/world/2011/feb/11/hosni-mubarak-resigns-analysis>

the outcome saw no member of the MB make it to a parliament now controlled to 95% by the NDP.¹²³

At the eve of the revolution, the MB thus faced an increasingly closed political arena, in which following their 2005 electoral victory, access had been denied in all remaining electoral arenas – from municipal, to student union, to labor union and finally to parliamentary elections. Despite this, the MB's leadership remained unwilling to renege on its stance against grassroots mobilization during the initial days of the uprising in 2011. Nonetheless, at the movement's base, amongst its younger activists, a new generation had been socialized during the more contentious period of the early 2000s. Their formative experience was during the protests in support of the Palestinian Intifada, against the war in Iraq, and finally during the anti-regime protests of Kifaya. This changing climate, as well as the shared experience in organizing student politics had led to them building networks across the political spectrum and amongst other youth activists who would be the drivers of mobilization in the run up to January 25 2011. While the leadership adhered to the unwritten rules of the sphere of Islamist politics, its youth activists had started to transcend it. However, once the MB's leadership – afraid of being left on the sidelines of potentially historical events – did decide to join, they could make a substantial difference in the protesters ability to defend Tahrir square. Because protest mobilization and sustenance was dependent on the symbolic space of the square, the protest success was tied up with the protesters ability to hold and defend it. This necessitated by its very nature tighter networks to coordinate daily activity and some organizational coherence that the MB could bring to the table.

In Tunisia, with its leaders exiled, its domestic structures dismantled and its former members and potential sympathizers within the country subject to strict control and regular repression, the 2000s offered only little reprieve for the country's main Islamist movement. Nonetheless, a few developments stand out that subtly modified Ennahda's position. Any potential change in the movement's trajectory were cut short, however, by the unforeseen events following Bouasizi's self-immolation in December 2010. When in the run up to the infamous World Information Summit in 2005 well-known opposition figures announced a hunger strike and subsequently the October 18th coalition, they counted Ennahda amongst its lines. Their hunger strike for more freedom of expression and association attracted short-lived attention in and outside of Tunisia. While the coalition continued to exist in the following years, it never managed to establish an active presence beyond initial declarations. Soon internal divisions

¹²³ <http://www.ikhwanweb.com/article.php?id=27550>

emerged over Ennahda's role within the coalition. A leaked cable from the US embassy in Tunis expands on the issue, stating that: "The group's alliance between secularist opposition parties and Islamists has proven to be the most contentious issue facing the group, potentially threatening to fracture the Movement. Several prominent Islamists, including Mohamed Nouri, president of the International Association for the Support of Political Prisoners (AISPP), were among the original 18 October strikers. Since then, An-Nahdha leaders such as Ali Laaridh and Zied Doulatli have joined the movement. 18 October leaders such as Mustapha Ben Jaafar have responded to criticism from anti-Islamist quarters by explicitly stating that any political party, including Islamists, sharing the 18 October goals could join the movement, although he excluded "extremists." In the months after, however, internal splits in the Collective on the Islamist question began forming, with some members fearing that Islamists were only using the Movement for political gain. These members noted that the Islamist representatives refused to engage in any debate that would force them to define specific political platforms."¹²⁴ While the coalition continued in the years following, it did so in relative anonymity, unbeknownst to most regular Tunisians.¹²⁵

Ennahda meanwhile continued and even expanded its activities in exile. Its leadership in the UK and France worked on sustaining the movement's presence by making use of the increased opportunities for communication and articulation that had arisen by the early 2000s: "On the one hand, they have been quick to tap new communicational resources, such as satellite television, and online publishing. They have successfully launched their own TV station ("Zeitouna TV") and their own website (www.nahda.net) which can both be indirectly accessed from within Tunisia. They are also increasingly employing other means of mass communication, such as e-zines, chat-rooms, weblogs, etc. At the same time, they have been eager to graft already existing structures within Tunisian civil society, such as NGOs, labor unions, or professional bodies. They are also increasingly present in human rights organizations (such as the LTDH and CNLT), in the professional syndicates (particularly the COAT and ATJA), and even in some political parties (such as the PDP)." (Erdle 2010, 237) Similar to other political actors, the movement thus made use of one of the few opportunities left for opposition activists of any political color: using the wide-spread multiplicity of organizational memberships and covers to pursue at least partial interest articulation. (ICG 2011) This external lobbying always came with the disclaimer of Ennahda's interest in peaceful political participation and its rejection of violence. The continued imprisonment of Ennahda members,

¹²⁴ Confidential cable from the US Embassy in Tunis, Reference ID 06TUNIS2661, 31.10.2006, <https://wikileaks.org/cable/2006/10/06TUNIS2661.html>

¹²⁵ Interview with activist during the uprising, 01.08.2012, Tunis

sometimes for decades, started to build external human rights pressure, leading to the inclusion of the movement's political prisoners in the regime's regular amnesties by the 2000s. This decade thus saw remaining Ennahda members, often imprisoned on trumped up charges of attempting to overthrow the regime, gradually freed.¹²⁶ In 2008 the last Ennahda prisoners, among them some of its leading figures, were released. (Erdle 2010, 128) Whether the reason for this was to please an international audience, a first harbinger of an eventual rapprochement between Ennahda and the regime, or the regime's attempt to capitalize on an increasingly visible return to religiosity on parts of society remains up for debate. (Kausch 2009) The statements made by one of Ennahda's former leaders, Sadok Chorou upon his release are suggestive of some kind of backdoor negotiations between the movement and the regime, however: "President Ben Ali's conditional release of an-Nahdha prisoners in November] is a step towards improving the relationship between an-Nahdha and the state. We hope that this will eventually lead to the movement being granted the right to act politically in a legal framework. ... Now that the last of an-Nahdha's leadership has been released from prison, we hope that the movement will regain some of its former strength. To do this, we must overcome the obstacles before us and begin to rebuild, hoping that we can restore the popular support we once had. ... Any initiative for reconciliation is predicated on the state sincerely and effectively accepting such an overture. ... But I don't think that the political demands of the movement, which can be summarized as being allowed to openly practice party politics with the aim of reform and change, are open to negotiation or to being waived. ... During my time in prison, an-Nahdha had decided that the goal of its political work was to achieve a comprehensive and inclusive national reconciliation that restores political equilibrium and prevents a monopoly by any one party in deciding the fate of the country."¹²⁷ While secret talks might or might not have taken place, publicly discussing Ennahda's return to Tunisia was deemed unacceptable, and Chorou was promptly rearrested.

What might have played a role in any potential rapprochement is the attempt by the regime Ben Ali in the years leading up to its demise to incorporate the growing re-Islamization trend under the control of regime supervision. This included setting up a religious radio channel called Zeytouna under the President's son in law, which due to heavy regime promotion quickly gained in popularity. (Kausch 2009, 19) Whether the regime's first careful steps in embracing greater religious observance amongst Tunisians would have eventually led to Ennahda being enabled to regain a foothold can only be speculated. It is clear, however, that even though

¹²⁶ http://www.freedomhouse.org/report/countries-crossroads/2007/tunisia#.U43Rz_mqkdc

¹²⁷ Cited according to Human Rights Watch, <http://www.hrw.org/news/2009/03/12/tunisia-revolving-door-shows-intolerance-dissent>

Ennahda did profit from the prisoner amnesties, and made first steps towards more sustained cooperation with other opposition forces, it remained marginal during the 2000s. Its supporters as well as Tunisians with Islamist leanings more generally continued to face police and administrative harassment and isolation, amounting to what Hibou called “social death.” (Hibou 2006, 188) Participation in opposition coalitions thus signified a certain rapprochement between Islamist forces and secular opposition actors, at the same time they did not manage to entirely undo the doubts each side had about the respective partner.

While the interaction between Islamist actors in Egypt and Tunisia shows the structuring effect that these historically grown spheres exerted on the movements’ abilities and willingness to challenge the respective regime during the uprisings, we do witness substantial differences in the two movement’s role not only within the uprising but the entire political process. These differences are reflected in the difficulties of assigning these actors to only one pattern of incorporation as well as the differences in patterns assigned. The main differences between complete exclusion and partial toleration seem to be found in two structural differences in the position of each movement to its respective regime. On the one hand, the MB were an organization with substantial roots in society as well as organizational resilience due to its long period of activity, whereas Ennahda could resort to only a comparatively short history. These differences in inherited capacities for organizational survival, honed in decades of surviving cycles of repression, secondly expressed themselves in a crucial strategic difference: the willingness to self-contain within accommodationist strategies. The MB had learned that lesson painfully during the 1950s and 60s when their overt ambition for power had led to their almost eradication. They had thus understood that accommodation was the price to pay for continued operation. Without recourse to the same organizational memory, Ennahda’s open ambition as well as miscalculation of its capacity for mobilization and resilience, led to its eschewing of accommodationist strategies in the face of a hostile regime and its organizational demise in the 1990s. If anything, the rhetorical turn towards espousing gradualist and reformist ambitions in the 2000s represents the movement’s catching up with the lesson the MB had learned decades in advance. The MB’s experience in repression and survival, as well as its organizational learning thus not only led to accommodationist strategies but engrained itself into the structure of their sphere, structuring expectations of the outcomes of future actions and strategies on part of both the MB and the regime. While the MB knew that as long as it practiced self-restraint it would continue to be allowed to operation amidst regular crackdowns, the regime understood that continuing to let the MB operate and provide badly needed services to the poor would not lead to them openly challenging the regime and endangering its position. This strategic calculus

solidifying into inherited structures thus explains the awkward position of the MB between two patterns of incorporation – the only organization capable of challenging the regime (pattern 1) but locked into an truce that entailed their subordination to the regime’s survival interest in exchange for at least partial recognition (pattern 3), as well as their hesitant approach towards mobilization at the outset of the uprising.

Popular Sector

The popular sector, while not per se an organized group, played an important part in the mass mobilizations of 2010/11. The variance in their involvement in Egypt and Tunisia illustrates how differences in the interaction between the two regimes and their societies established divergent precedents for mobilization as well as structural potentials for resistance. Both regimes in the 1970s and 1980s had seen popular sector riots in response to neoliberal restructuring that infringed on people's ability for subsistence. These bread riots, while caused by similar feelings of relative deprivation, followed divergent patterns that were to re-emerge in the uprisings of 2011. While riots in Tunisia were located mostly in the impoverished and economically and politically marginalized south-west interior regions, in Egypt they were a mostly urban phenomenon centering on Cairo. In both cases did the regimes react with a mixture of heavy repression, but also the reinstatement of previously cut subsidies. These prior incidents of mobilization not only illustrate that subsequent mobilization often relies on established patterns and precedents, but also that the cause for popular class mobilization was in both cases to be found in a perceived violation of a social contract and thus of perceived state obligations and duties.

Popular sector participation in the uprisings in 2011 was facilitated by similar breakdowns in patterns of popular sector incorporation across Egypt and Tunisia, but yet again they followed distinct patterns. In Tunisia, popular sector contention in the interior regions kick started the protests. Only after the initial mobilization were they helped along by more seasoned labor activists in order to shift scale (Tarrow, Tilly, and McAdam 2003) from regional to national. In Egypt in contrast, mobilization emerged from activist networks, and only through the inclusion of bread and butter demands and concrete mobilizational example managed to achieve popular sector mobilization in urban centers.

While the opposition, workers and Islamist spheres portrayed above lend themselves more easily to description because of the relatively organized and identifiable nature of the actors involved, the case is not as straight forward in spheres where actors are less part of an organized collectivity, but have more diffuse group membership. They form a category based not on organizational and networked connections but on shared social positions and everyday experience in dealing with each other and the state. The popular sector sphere does not only have less stringent membership criteria, but they face a diffuse mélange of institutions of

political rule. These institutions consist in a multitude of state actors, sometimes overlapping, sometimes disparate, which were not necessarily characterized by a coherent strategy making their actions into a comprehensible 'one'. Interaction in this sphere connecting the 'masses' to the state is often less composed of carefully calibrated demand making strategies, but more of evasion and avoidance of the state and its agents, and neglect and exploitation on part of the regime. In the literature, authors such as Diane Singerman and Assef Bayat have extensively chronicled how popular sector actors use a myriad of strategies to (often illegally) take what they need to survive from a state that has long since abandoned its care function. (Singerman 1995, Bayat 1997) Interaction with the state is either based on coercion or on clientelism and patronage, which pervade societal structures and eventually produce social atomization, and a distance to the state and its institutions. By linking people at the bottom through favors and resources to patrons, they are left with little means to push for citizenship rights as *rights* instead of favors granted via particularistic channels.

On a structural level, both Egypt and Tunisia witnessed sharp divisions in the spheres of interaction between the regime, political actors, and different social classes. These divisions were most potent between the popular sector and the political sphere. Whether by design from above or the feebleness and disinterest of opposition actors themselves, the political sphere remained profoundly detached from the everyday lives of the majority. The reasons for this are manifold: the opposition sphere was seen as something far removed from everyday life, with little perceived relevance for people's individual plights. In both Egypt and Tunisia this division was supported by linguistic barriers to entry. In Egypt this concerned the predominance of Classical Arabic in political and media discourse over the local dialect Ameyya that most ordinary Egyptians spoke. In Tunisia, the barrier divided the Arabophile majority from the Francophile elite that dominated politics and the media. Thus a language that people did not relate to or sometimes even understood contributed, as did discourses that often did not resonate with everyday experience. Deep cultural divides in both countries thus disadvantaged substantial parts of society. In the absence of opposition parties' grassroots structures for political incorporation and a free press, alienation not just from politics but specifically from opposition actors was further entrenched through smear campaigns that often succeeded in damaging the reputation of opposition parties - if they were known to begin with. The combination of opposition actors' failure to establish networks and find a discourse that could speak to everyday people and the regime's efforts to disparage opposition parties thus abetted a thorough division between popular class actors and the political sphere. Politics for most people

remained a domain reserved for elites.¹²⁸ The result in both cases was the cultural, political and economic marginalization of large parts of society. This marginalization was a complex phenomenon made up of objective factors such as disproportionate unemployment or informal employment, stunted aspirations, and political exclusion, as well as subjective factors of relative deprivation, of perceived neglect, and lack of dignity. The combination of objective and subjective marginalization not only generated grievances, but through the very nature of neglect, also opened up spaces for the evasion of political and economic control, and ultimately for nascent resistance. These spaces became visible not only during the uprisings themselves, but in the years leading up to them, shaping experiences and structures, memories and perceptions.

Popular sector exclusion was thus the hallmark of the exercise of authoritarianism in Tunisia and Egypt. Regarding our analytical hypotheses, this would lead to the assumption that popular sector actors would fall into the first pattern of incorporation, whereby its absence will establish a sphere of mobilization and interaction based on neglect. People would be late risers to the mobilizational process because they lack a normative basis for making claims on the state rooted in the perceived violation of its duties and responsibilities. The absence of incorporation would at the same time create deep-seated grievances that can be mobilized once the process is underway. The above general exploration of marginalization would therefore ring true with this theoretical assessment. However, actual dynamics were more complex, and only in Egypt did popular sector mobilization follow this pattern. In order to understand the puzzle of divergent popular sector mobilization in Egypt and Tunisia, we will therefore have a closer look at the nature of and changes in marginalization in both cases.

In order to understand marginalization and its effects in Tunisia, Bouasizi's story which provided the spark for popular class mobilization in the interior regions gives useful clues. His fate symbolized the intersection of structural conditions and perceived injustices that made large numbers of people in these areas susceptible to mobilization: educated, but unemployed, suffering the desperation of people in a region left behind, at the mercy of arbitrary state repression. His fate speaks to the importance of not only objective factors in causing dissent, but of perceptual elements that add a subjective and relational quality to people's grievances. In doing so it thus illustrates the contradictions within projects of modernization from above in the contexts of underdeveloped economies, between official narratives and lived experiences.

The official narrative of the regime Ben Ali emphasized the country's miraculous economic progress during his time in office. It was backed up by economic data showing impressive

¹²⁸ Interview with activist, Cairo, 03.05.2011

improvements in terms of economic growth as well as overall human development. At the same time, however, large parts of the population in the interior regions experienced a stagnation or even deterioration in living standards. These contradictions show the complexity of the economic process and the accompanying social bargain.

In terms of overall economic performance, Tunisia, while not as miraculous as the regime would have liked, did indeed show a marked improvement in many key areas. In the last decade, its economic growth rate averaged 5%, far more than its MENA neighbors. Due to Bourguiba's emphasis on progressive family planning politics, its population growth was at just 1.1% per annum. In combination, this pushed per capita growth in GDP above 3% for that same period, with per capita income rising from US\$ 2,713 in 2005 to \$3,720 in 2010. In addition, "its economy was relatively diversified, with an increasingly important role for the service sector, whose share has increased from 55 percent in the early 1990s to more than 62 percent currently. In the meantime, the contribution of agriculture to GDP has declined from 13 percent to 8 percent since the 1990s. The country has diversified its exports with a relatively high share of manufacturing." (Achy 2011, 4-5)

Nevertheless, economic growth was highly uneven, benefitting some regions and some people more than others. And even worse, it was also unsustainable. Being built on low skill labor, and a reliance on the European market it was vulnerable to external shocks. Systematically excluded from economic growth were people living and working in the interior regions. The geographic bias of both the regime Bourguiba and Ben Ali, the former of whom came from the Sahel town of Monastir, while the latter from the Sahel town of Sousse (Pargeter 2009, 1035), and an overtly centralistic economic decision making and implementation process thus relegated the interior to a reservoir of cheap labor. In terms of access to basic services such as water and sanitation, but also to infrastructure, education and the labor market it was left far behind its prosperous coastal neighbor regions. (Jemmali and Amara 2014, 13) Politically motivated centralized economic planning thus meant that out of the 90% of public spending managed by the central government, approximately two thirds was allotted to the coastal areas and greater Tunis. (Achy 2011, 20) Lacking infrastructural and industrial development, the interior regions suffered particularly hard from unemployment and poverty. While the poverty rate declined from almost 16% in 1990 to a mere 7% in 2005 (Bibi et al 2011, 7), a number far below the regional average, poverty reduction was uneven, leaving the interior regions comparatively worse off, double the rate of coastal regions, where poverty stood at only 3.7%. (Paciello 2011, 6) The numbers for the region moreover show an alarming rate of youth unemployment, way above

the national average. For the generation between 15 and 29 years, the numbers were 40% and up in the governorates of Kef and Gafsa, compared to 30% nationally. Even more worrying was the rate of unemployment among people with higher education, however. (Hermassi 2013, 83) While Tunisia quite consistently faced official unemployment numbers of around 15% (unofficially the numbers were thought to be significantly higher), up until the mid-1990s unemployment among the country's university graduates was insignificant. (Achy 2011, 8) However, from the mid-1990s onwards Tunisia experienced a dramatic increase in unemployment rates amongst graduates, especially in the interior regions. Hermassi thus calculated that the rate was up to 48% of all graduates in the governorates of Sidi Bouzid (Bouasizi's hometown), 46% in the Gafsa governorate and similarly high in the surrounding governorates, compared to a nation-wide rate of 29%. (Hermassi 2013, 83) These numbers might still not reflect the problem in its entirety, however, since many of the region's youth sought refuge in either the vast informal sector, or in clandestine migration to Europe. (Paciello 2011, 5) This was accompanied by considerable internal migration towards the coastal areas and the big cities in search for employment. These migration flows "created around these coastal agglomerates belts of poorly integrated neighborhoods inhabited by a poor population coming from the interior governorates. [...] Between 1999 and 2004, interior areas recorded 38.9% of departures and arrivals of 14.4% of the whole country." (Hermassi 2013, 82) Poverty trends reflected these disparities, with the center west of the country showing rates 14 times those of Tunis in 2004, a trend that had been on the increase, having 'only' been at 8.5 times the Tunis one in 2000. (Achy 2011, 19) The increase in unemployment and poverty especially in the interior in the last decade can be seen in the negative development of the GINI coefficient, which had shown an overall positive development until 2005, but has been on the increase since.¹²⁹

However, it was not only systematic government neglect that was to blame. Despite the glaring differences, the national numbers themselves were also not reassuring. They reflected the contradictions between the modernizing aspirations of state-led development under Bourguiba and Ben Ali, and the political logic of power maintenance. Despite a lack of demand for increasing numbers of highly educated graduates, their share amongst job seekers rose from 20% at the beginning of the 2000s to 70% by the end of the decade. This increase in graduates, driven by the regime-led expansion in higher education, was not matched by the needs of the labor market. Economic growth was therefore not only uneven in terms of geographical distribution, it was also uneven and ultimately unsustainable in terms of sectors. Most jobs were

¹²⁹ <http://www.tradingeconomics.com/tunisia/gini-index-wb-data.html>

created in low skill industries such as tourism, while the traditional avenue of social mobility for university graduates – the public sector – could absorb less and less of the incoming new graduates. (Achy 2011, 9) Thus the regime's ideological proclivity for state-led modernization in its early years, together with its basis of legitimation in Tunisia's economic miracle and the fulfillment of middle class aspirations had created expectations of social mobility and of partaking in Tunisia's economic life that increasingly did not match up with the lived reality of many young people. (Achy 2011, 10) Youth from these areas had educational titles that should have granted access to the country's middle class, but increasingly failed to do so. Unemployment and sinking living standards excluded them from the life promised as a reward for forgoing political and civil rights, and in a way from a share in the reproduction of societal worth and personal dignity. Unemployment of graduates especially from marginalized areas was compounded by regime policies of the past. While Bourguiba, in an attempt to modernize not only the economy but also society, had vastly extended access to university education for lower and middle class students, these educational reforms were riddled with internal contradictions. While indeed greatly expanding educational opportunities for many of Tunisia's less privileged members of society, the fact that some French speaking programs were retained, while the vast majority was made available in Arabic meant that de facto those from a non-elite background that were not Francophile got access to an education that made them inferior to their Francophile counterparts from more urban, better-off, settings. (Daoud 1991) After the economic boom subsided, graduates' location in marginalized interior regions, as well as their educational rooting within the Arabized part of university education made these graduates considerably worse-off than their peers in the coastal areas. The compound effect was not only one of marginalization per se, but of *experienced relative* marginalization that included cultural and social aspects in addition to the economic ones. This marginalization was made worse by the absence of effective channels for articulating the demand for economic and social inclusion that would provide redress even in its simplest form of being seen.

The regime, which had placed the social bargain tying broad social strata to the state at the heart of its legitimation strategy in exchange for withholding many civil and political rights, was not only aware of the explosive potential of these developments, but tried to actively counter them. Its efforts, however, did not address the structural imbalances created by its own policies. Instead its approach was tempered by the logic of power maintenance inserting itself into the institutions and practices of social policy. (Hibou 2011) This affected not only the specific organizations tasked with providing aid and alleviating poverty, but over time also eroded the integrative capacity of key institutions of social, economic and political control. Key examples of

the former are the infamous National Solidarity Fund, also known as the 26-26, while for the latter, the decreasing incorporative capacity of the regime party RCD is instructive.

The RCD had boasted an impressive administrative apparatus of social and political control and incorporation, enabled by its vast structures penetrating every corner of the country. It contained about 7500 local cells and 2200 professional ones (Hibou 2011, 86), serving as an intermediary between state power and the population at large. In this it resembled a bureaucracy more than an actual political party, an impression that was reinforced by the fact that not only does its structures duplicate that of the state administration, but it had in its employ over 10,000 actual civil servants, paid by the state but working for the regime party. (Hibou 2011, 88) The RCD tied together a network of clients, interested in political but more often the social and economic advancement that was part and parcel of participating in society: finding a job, housing, access to the banking system, to the bureaucracy for obtaining permits, grants, and documents of all sorts, access to medical treatment, to education, and to financial aid. As Hibou describes it, the RCD was at its time maybe *the* essential redistributive mechanism through which the state ensured a minimum of grievance accommodation in the absence of mechanisms for articulation and participation, as well as popular incorporation. All of this happened under one condition: the at least passive, and sometimes active show of support for the regime Ben Ali. As such, even in the absence of wealth belonging to the party, the RCD in its role as an intermediary was “extremely wealthy. It has at its disposal financial resources that it can constantly and rapidly appropriate through sums of money regularly gathered from individuals and, in particular, private and public businesses, depending on their degree of prosperity. In particular, it possesses indirect resources, which do not belong to it but which it can manage and which it glories in: social programmes, mobile health services, Eid presents. But its main strength lies in the ability of its members to influence and act with *savoir-faire*. In close collaboration with the police, the RCD turns out to be a necessary stage in the obtaining of authorizations (taxi permits, building permits, authorization to open a shop, a restaurant, or a bar, and, generally speaking, any economic activity, whether it be legal or illegal), in the acquisition of accreditation, and the facilitating of requests to the administration (obtaining documents to show one's civil status, lodging a complaint with the state prosecutor), in the granting of certain ranks ('families in need', 'the poor', 'zones of shadow'), and in the real benefit of certain forms of aid (such as 26.26).a Ramadan meals, sheep for Eid, and, previously, the World Food Programme, are also in the remit of the RCD. [...] Being part of the RCD means that you can benefit from its capacity to intercede within society, it means taking advantage of its role as a facilitator and its status as an essential mechanism in the exercise of

power, it means being able to solve local problems, pull strings, accelerate procedures, make use of various advantages, and so on.” (Hibou 2011, 89) Its wide-spread nature and its function as a gate-keeper of access to all kinds of necessary services thus made it a potent tool for surveillance and for monitoring and enforcing obedience. A prime example for this is the famous 26-26. Created in 1992 in order to eradicate ‘shadow zones’ of poverty and unemployment, the fund had statistically speaking been a success story, providing aid to about 1.2 million Tunisians, at a cost of around \$550 million dinar. It has helped Tunisia to cut poverty statistics by half, build 30 000 housing units for the needy, provided poor children with school books, increase the reach of basic infrastructure, and health services, and even institutionalize micro-credit programs. It was complemented by a social program specifically targeted at youth unemployment, the National Employment Fund (or 21-21) in 1999. (Sadiki 2008)

While these benefits were real and the two funds have made a difference in the lives of many Tunisian, they were only part of the story. The Tunisian regime’s preoccupation with popular incorporation and youth unemployment was not only a publicity tool aimed at increasing its popular image and legitimacy, but of real concern to the regime. This was reflected in the country’s comparatively high level of public expenditures devoted to social policies of around 19% in the period between 1987-2005. (Paciello 2011, 4) Nonetheless, these numbers disguise the intimate relationship between these funds and the maintenance of power and control. This applied to the input side of the funds, which nominally depended on ‘voluntary’ donations, as well as the output side, where the RCD was having full discretion over determining access to the funds’ aid programs. ‘Donations’ to the fund in fact constituted a form of informal taxation in a country notorious for the extent of tax fraud and evasion (some sources speak of up to 50% of the official taxes). While public sector workers and farmers had their contribution automatically deducted from their annual income, companies and enterprises were expected to donate voluntarily, preferably around national holidays, such as the 7th of November (the annual celebration of the day of Ben Ali’s take-over in 1987). If a company or an entrepreneur either did not donate voluntarily or did not donate sufficiently, the consequences could be severe, from attracting the attention of tax inspectors, facing administrative hurdles in their business dealings to the closing off of access to domestic markets. These public contributions therefore not only served as a show of support for the regime Ben Ali and its policies but as an internal marker of loyalty and obedience. Even more interesting were the tight interlinking of social services and social and economic control on the output side, where the omnipresent RCD served as the ultimate gate-keeper of eligibility. Thus being needy was only part of what made

people eligible. With the ruling party directly in control of the list of recipients, eligibility depended on the either passive or active support of the RCD and the regime Ben Ali by extension. Excluded from benefits were those associated with the political opposition proper or broadly oppositional activities. (Paciello 2011, 4) Distribution of fund money moreover followed a highly clientelist and political logic that saw many less connected individuals especially in the more marginal regions excluded from the social security measures the regime had instituted to counteract worsening economic conditions.

The already dire situation for many youths in the marginalized interior would become even bleaker in the course of the 2000s. With the economic crisis in the EU, Tunisia's biggest export market, the Tunisian economy took a turn for the worse, further hampering the regime's efforts at job creation. At the same time, the already highly personalist characteristics of the regime increased to the detriment of other regime institutions such as the RCD.¹³⁰ This personalization was reflected on the economic level, where the interrelation between money and power turned the economy into the personal fiefdom of Ben Ali's extended family. The combination of economic crisis and political sidelining had important consequences for the incorporative capacities of the RCD. In the absence of formal participatory mechanisms, the RCD was the central integrative mechanism within society. It thus not only projected the state into society, but served as a transmission belt for societal grievances upwards, and a mechanism of grievance redress. With the waning of the RCD's central position came a weakening of its ability to fulfill these functions. These processes represented a long-term corrosion of the party's and therefore state's integrative capacities, having started in the late 1980s under economic duress, exacerbated by the regime's embrace of neoliberal restructuring as advocated by the IMF in the 1990s. (Hibou 2011)

Worsening economic conditions brought on a further disintegration of the societal bargain. This disintegration was occasionally made visible by unrest in the interior regions, the most important one in Gafsa in 2008. It was far from the only one, however. The incidents shared their origins in concrete violations of the social contract, thus illustrating the relationship between grievances, expectations and mobilization in Tunisia's interior. They also illustrate that the origins of the Sidi Bouzid uprising are not to be found in a vacuum.

The protests that would set the precedent for the Sidi Bouzid uprising was the one in the Gafsa area. On January 5th 2008 a controversial hiring decision at the region's largest employer, the Gafsa phosphate company, evolved into a semi-uprising lasting almost 6 months. At first

¹³⁰ Interview with party activist, 22.08.2012, Tunis

participants were mainly comprised of the disaffected families of local miners who had been overlooked in the hiring process in favor of outsiders with inside connections. But the uprising quickly evolved to include a broad range of protesters, attracting the attention of opposition forces, many of the area's unemployed graduates, as well as high school students. (Gobe 2011, 1) It quickly spread to other cities in the area, but took on the most organized character in Redeyef, where they were supported by local UGTT activists with the teachers union, who went against their leadership's position in siding with protesters. The call for a right to employment was initially met with containment strategies on part of the regime, which ensured that no news of the events leaves the region. A few opposition voices also tried to get involved, most notably the illegal PCOT (Part Communiste des Ouvrier Tunisie) and some local members of the LDHT, who support demonstrations in Redeyef. In addition the 2006 formed UDC (L'Union des Diplômés Chômeurs), an attempt to form a union representing the interests of unemployed graduates from the region, get involved.¹³¹ Violent crackdowns follow in April of the same year. Local union leaders are arrested, some of whom, are later suspended from the UGTT. The next two months see police pressure increase and the interaction between protesters and the police grow more confrontational. In June the regime finally decides to put an end to the Gafsa uprising. Using live-ammunition the police violently cracks down on a demonstration on 6th of June 2008, the next day the army is deployed. (Gobe 2011) This is followed by a repressive campaign that marks the end of the Gafsa rebellion that symbolized demands for social and economic inclusion.

The Gafsa protests were important because not only does the area have a history of contention, but they fractured the regime's narrative of an all-inclusive economic miracle. In doing this it exposed the underbelly of uneven and unequitable economic development in Tunisia that usually remained hidden out of sight by a heavily regime controlled national media. For many participants and political activists the uprising thus represented the training ground for the same processes we were to witness in 2010/2011.

These concrete violations of the social contract were embedded into broader foreign policy developments. In the course of the 2000s, Tunisia strengthened its cooperation with the European Union on migration issues in an effort to combat irregular migration to European shores. As part of an Association Agreement signed in 1998, in 2004 Tunisia thus revised its migration policies, introducing harsher penalties for assisting irregular migration. (Migration Policy Center 2013, 4) In 2008, the country entered the Union for the Mediterranean as part of

¹³¹ Interview with UDC activist, 16.08.2012

the European Neighborhood Policy (ENP). In exchange for combating irregular migration, Tunisia gained entry into a free trade zone for industrial products.¹³² Strengthened security cooperation had severe implications for one of the traditional exit options to escape life in poverty. Labor migration to Europe and other Arab states represented a significant avenue of escaping unemployment, especially for young people. Close to one tenth of the population were living and working abroad. Despite the regime's attempts at curbing irregular migration, the Gafsa uprising showed immediate effects, leading to large scale departures of young, predominantly male youth from the region. (Boubakri 2013, 2) Until 2008, the numbers of irregular migrants from Tunisia arriving in Italy hovered between 500 and 1500. The year 2008, however, saw a massive increase, with 7,633 Tunisians being registered. (Migration Policy Center 2013, 3) In response to this the European Union strengthened its bilateral efforts, with success: numbers for 2009 and 2010 show a radical drop registering only 115 Tunisian migrants for the last quarter of 2009, and 711 Tunisians arriving in Italy in all of 2010. (Boubakri 2013, 5) While these steps gained the Ben Ali regime many economic advantages in its relations with the European Union, it also barred one of the last escape routes for people desperate to flee their misery: "When they did that [blocking of the coastal borders preventing clandestine migration], they also shut the door of hope. The youth had no hope anymore since for them, there were no jobs inside the country and it was now impossible to go outside. Before that thousands took the risk to die in the sea with the hope to succeed in reaching the shore of Europe."¹³³

The cumulative effect of a disintegration of the social bargain discrediting the option of loyalty, the violent clamping down on voice, as well as the closing off of exit (Hirschman 1970) thus led to an explosive situation easily inflamed in which the very idea of personal dignity came to be at stake. The significance of this claim for a dignified life rests in its connection with the discourse from above, with a Tunisian state that had prided itself in economically modernizing the country, and that had withheld participatory rights for exactly this reason. Thus the state not only had claimed for itself the role as the prime mover and shaker of economic matters, but also the role of primary care taker for its people. It was not simply the denial of a chance at a decent life that turned marginalization into a relevant matter for contestation, but the fact that this chance had been an integral part of the legitimization discourse of the regime itself.

In Egypt, contrary to the narrative popular especially, but not exclusively in Western media of tech-savvy Facebook kids running the uprising, the country's popular sector played an

¹³² http://www.enpi-info.eu/mainmed.php?id_type=3&id=399

¹³³ Interview with opposition activist, 17.08.2012

important role in the process and persistence of mobilization. Vast regional disparities also exist in Egypt, especially between the country's rural regions and urban centers. But they did not turn into a source of mobilization in the countryside, which remained remarkably calm during the days of the January 25th uprising. This lack of mobilization of economically, socially and politically marginalized rural inhabitants does not indicate the absence of marginalization as a driver for grievance articulation and protest mobilization, however. Indeed, popular sector participation was propelled by a profound feeling of marginalization in social and economic terms and constituted an important feature of the cross class coalition that managed to capture and hold Midan Tahrir. However, mobilization in Egypt was a predominantly urban phenomenon, centered on Cairo and a few other cities like Suez and Alexandria. This analysis will focus on Cairo as the center of the uprising in order to illustrate some of the dynamics that brought huge numbers of ordinary Egyptians, many from the informal neighborhoods of the capital, to the streets. Their participation was in part due to clever strategies by opposition youth activists marching through popular class neighborhoods more traditional opposition actors had previously eschewed. But many more of them joined because the feeling of deprivation, of neglect and abuse at the hands of the state and its agents had become unbearable. While they arguably did not take a lead in organizing the uprising, their unprecedented numbers, as well as their unique strategies in dealing with repressive agents were an important factor contributing to the mobilization's overall success: "If it had not been for the marginalized, the third class of Cairo and its surrounding areas on the 28th things would not have moved. What united these people was that all of them hated Mubarak, but none of them was mobilized because of electoral politics, but rather because there are no jobs, they have no food."¹³⁴

Popular class actors thus complemented the tried and tested (and usually failed) tactics that middle class activists brought to the table. As one of these activists recalls, "on the 25th it was mainly middle class people mobilized through the internet. But on the 28th it was different. And people from the lower classes were essential for fighting against the police. I for example never even thought about attacking soldiers or police. Activists would just run away and collect themselves somewhere else and try the same again. The people who came with the idea of attacking back were not activists. The experience people had in encountering police in their daily lives is very different. [...] Political activists were not on those fronts defending Tahrir simply because they lack the skills. People from the middle class are not normally in contact with the police in their daily lives, and political activists encounter them but in a different way

¹³⁴ Interview with activist, Cairo, 07.05.2011

than lower class people”.¹³⁵ Thus strategies growing out of the specific way in which social strata interact with authority played a big part in the protesters’ ability to hold on to the physical space of Midan Tahrir. This shows how protests were not only shaped by Middle Class kids using social media, but also by lower class participants actively affecting the available action repertoire. It is these people from in and around Cairo that in the end made the difference to previous attempts at mobilization of the years past.

The calls for bread and dignity, wide-spread among popular class participants reflect the complex relationship between the popular class residents of Egypt’s shanty towns and slums, and the regime. Their sphere of interaction was bound on the one hand by a social bargain that was not only in the *process* of disintegration, but had already disintegrated. Most of its defining features like the provision of free education, public health care and affordable housing had decayed, leaving behind a dismal health care system, an educational system in ruins, and a housing and labor market that left the step into informality as only viable option for many of Egypt’s urban poor. The only aspect left in place of that bargain was the retention of subsidies on basic food staples, especially bread. Neglect of the popular sector’s basic welfare needs was complemented by violence and exploitation on part of the state’s agents in the bureaucracy and the police.

For the regime on the other hand, the urban poor represented a dilemma of sorts that made a combination of neglect and police control the most serviceable option. Populist incorporation strategies under Nasser had created objective relationships of dependence as much as subjective expectations towards the role of the state. Nasser, at first glance similarly to Bourguiba, presided over a dominant, nominally mass mobilizational, party organization that was to aid the incorporation of broad sectors of society into the ruling bargain. Unlike Bourguiba, who delivered benefits to the masses through the massive party apparatus of the Neo-Dustour, Nasser’s mass organization in its various incarnations neither started out with deep societal roots, nor did it develop them in the process. Support, instead of being actively mobilized, was to be given passively by acquiescence in exchange for an improvement of people’s social and economic situation.

With the failure of state-led development strategies apparent by the end of the 1970s the new regime under President Sadat not only enacted an economic revisal, but a change in the basis of regime support. However, when Sadat tried to unburden the regime from some of the costs of an extensive subsidy regime in 1977, it learned the painful lesson that Egypt’s poor were not

¹³⁵ Interview with activist, Cairo, 03.05.2011

willing to suffer silently when their very livelihood was threatened. The bread riots and the fear of mass rioting they instilled would be one of the cornerstones of not only the regime Sadat, but the regime Mubarak's approach towards its urban poor. The siege of Imbaba, a Cairo shantytown where militant Islamists had established a state-free stronghold that could only be broken by a massive show of force in 1992 only cemented the popular sector's status as potentially unruly. Thus, while the change in support basis had made popular sector incorporation for rule maintenance moot, these incidents nonetheless advised a cautious approach that combined the continuation of basic subsidies, some amount of tolerance (or neglect) of the vast informal areas that characterized Egypt's urban centers, with a security based approach.

This security approach necessitated a vast police network. According to some accounts, the police forces guarding the capital alone number around 100 000. (Dorman 2009, 424) For many poor Egyptians they represented the only agents of the state they regularly encountered. These experiences thus shaped expectations, and repertoires in dealing with the state: "Interaction with these agents and agencies, particularly with the police, has been a structuring element of the everyday life of the residents of both the informal quarters and the city's old established districts. Police carried out regular and diverse campaigns in popular neighborhoods with the goal of imposing control of space and managing the populations conduct and activities. [...] The police stations were the sites of violent government through torture, verbal abuse, and humiliation, while police officers have long served as agents of everyday government in the popular quarters." (Ismail 2013, 871-72)

Marginalization, neglect, and everyday violence have thus always been an essential feature of the sphere connecting the popular sector to the regime and to the state over which it ruled. The last ten years, however, saw a considerable worsening of poor people's economic and social circumstances, at the same time as Egypt's economy expanded and its GDP grew. Urban income poverty had already started to increase in the 1990s with the advent of structural adjustment (Bayat 2000, 2), but it accelerated in the 2000s due to a combination of several factors. On the one hand, the rise of a business oriented new political elite stratum was reflected in a more technocratic and big business friendly neoliberal government under Ahmed Nazif from 2004 onwards. The Nazif government accelerated neoliberal economic policies, pushing forward with liberalization and privatization largely to the benefit of crony capitalists. While these policies resulted in respectable economic growth in terms of GDP and per capita income, in the absence of distributive efforts and targeted social programs this growth did not trickle

down to Egypt's poor, or even its middle class. Thus, at the turn of the century, factors of well-being such as child malnutrition and youth unemployment worsened, from 20 to 30% and 20 to 35%, despite continued GDP growth. (Breisinger et al 2012, 2) Simultaneously, public spending on education, health and social security decreased by 25% in health, while the proportion of public expenditure on education fell to 12.6% down from 16.2%. (Bush 2012, 66) Egypt has an overall poverty rate of 40% (under 2\$US per day), but according to the World Bank, between 2000 and 2005, absolute poverty was on the increase, partly due to high inflation driving up consumer prices. (World Bank 2007, iii) The situation only worsened after 2005. From 2005 to 2009, total per capita income further decreased by 8.7%. (World Bank 2014, 47) This decrease particularly affected urban areas, with Cairo seeing mean real income decrease by a staggering 14%. (Rijkers et al 2014, 48) At the same time, Egypt enjoyed a prolonged economic growth period, with growth rates above 5% between 1996 and 2010, and up to 7% between 2006 and 2008. (World Bank 2014, 1)

The already dire economic situation of Egypt's popular sector was exacerbated when in 2007-08 the country was hit by a food price crisis. Egypt is one of the world's largest net-importers of wheat. During the 2007-08 period, the onset of the world food crisis resulted in the price of wheat more than tripling. (Bush 2010, 124) A high inflation rate (in 2009 it was as high as 18.9%) additionally drove up consumer prices by almost a third, leaving many of Egypt's poor in ever more destitute conditions. (Sabry 2009, 7) They were of course not the only Egyptians affected, a fact to which the high incidents of workers' strikes bear testimony. However, while organized labor were able to negotiate 30% salary increases, the popular sector was largely left to fend for itself, leading to outbreaks of violence at subsidized bread queues, where people would stand for hours to get their daily rations of bread. (Sabry 2009, 8) Being predominantly employed in the informal sector, urban poor thus lacked collective bargaining tools.

The explosive potential of this increase in economic hardship combined with daily experiences of violence and humiliation become clear if we look at the sheer numbers of urban poor that populated Cairo alone. While reliable data are hard to get by, Cairo is one of the world's most densely populated cities of around 45 000 people per square meter (Argaman 2014), a megacity that is the home to between 9.7 million and 12 million people¹³⁶, according to some numbers, around 66% of which are dwelling in informal settlements and slums. (Sabry 2009, 16) The so called *ashwa`iyyat* (literally random or haphazard areas because of their lack of formal regulation) came into focus after the 'liberation' of Imbaba in 1992. In the wake of these

¹³⁶ <http://www.merip.org/mer/mer202/facts-figures-cairo>

incidents the media and official sources branded them as a haven for disorder, violence and criminality. (Dorman 2009, 421) However, not only has most of Cairo's growth since the 1970s consisted in informal development (up to 80% according to some numbers), but the regime has largely tolerated this development, punctuated by bouts of repression: "Informal urbanization ironically helps to reproduce a political order based on elite privilege by insulating Egypt's rulers from bottom-up demands for housing and services." (Dorman 2009, 422) The regime thus tacitly tolerated informal settlements for as long as they did not impinge on their own economic interests (i.e. the land was not needed for state projects). This was at least partially due to a lack of resource to formally develop the city in a way that would provide affordable housing also to its lower class constituencies. (Dorman 2009, 430) These settlements more often than not remained cut off from the provision of public services, such as sewage, electricity and water, however. As Dorman notes, "indeed, some Western observers have suggested that in Cairo the notion of informality functions largely as a pretext for rationing scarce infrastructure (Abt Associates Inc. et al., 1982; Tekçe, Oldham & Shorter, 1994). It is thus more generally a means by which the city's rulers sidestep the human costs of Cairo's inevitable expansion and shield themselves from the demands the city's growth engenders." (Dorman 2009, 434) The costs of this are disproportionately born by these quarters' poor residents. In addition to the high incidents of illiteracy, unemployment or underemployment in the informal economy due to low educational achievements, the areas are over-crowded and full of environmental hazards and unhygienic conditions due to the lack of services. (Sabry 2009, 21) The poor counter this state neglect by silently encroaching on the state's resources, illegally taping electricity lines, bribing officials to get access to services, and evading taxes. (Bayat 2000) Nonetheless, while some authors view these tactics as a conscious choice for autonomy and disengagement (Bayat 2000, Singerman 1999), informality kept many popular class members away from even the little social assistance the state provided: "Official paperwork requirements, such as national identity cards and birth certificates, prevent a lot of poor Egyptians from receiving any government services. The process of issuing documents is cumbersome, challenging, lengthy, unclear and expensive, and can be humiliating for the illiterate and poor, causing some people to give up. An estimated 55 per cent of all women do not have an identity card and almost half of the population is illiterate. Assaad and Rouchdy state that the lack of identity cards excludes the poor from the legal institutions of society." (Sabry 2005, 38)

These patterns of interaction show a state hardly present; an alien entity only encountered as agent of repression, or neglect. They shed light on the question of why mobilization did not originate within the popular classes and why when it did occur it was against police repression,

and for dignity more than electoral politics. Not only did the high game of politics as played by the opposition have no resonance within broader sectors of society. But neither did the opposition's discourses centered on democracy. At best they were not understood as translating into daily grievances and at worst they were perceived as alien Western imports. Grievances that brought people onto the streets instead related to the hardship and violence that characterized people's daily lives.

Marginalization and neglect were thus the common denominator between the two cases that eventually ushered in mobilization. But why did they do so differently? Why did the marginalized lead mobilization in Tunisia, while they followed it in Egypt? Clearly the hypothesis about the effects of no incorporation needs to be modified or at the very least specified. The crucial step in doing so is to add a temporal dimension to our hypotheses about the relationship between incorporation and mobilization. After all, much of our argument about the nature of spheres of mobilization centers on how they are formed and solidified over time, how actions and strategies at one point turn into structure at a later one. Thus when in Egypt the weakening of populist ties by the onset of *infatih* set in motion the gradual decline of incorporation from above, it also gradually reduced expectations towards the state that functioned in terms of rights, and thus the basis for claim making in case the state failed to live up to its perceived moral obligations. While this also meant less ability on part of the regime to mobilize and enforce outward shows of obedience and support, for a state burdened by debt and a fairly autonomous regime this was an acceptable bargain. When the decade prior to the uprising saw a sharp deterioration of poor people's living conditions, patterns of incorporation had been diminished and the state had long abandoned its caretaker function. With no incorporation the status quo, and no precedents for wide scale mobilization, grievances born out of a mixture of politicized consumption and daily humiliations needed an external driving force to ignite, but once mobilization was under way could easily be motivated into joining.

In Tunisia, at first glance the state was similarly alien, and state neglect rampant in its interior regions. However, patterns of incorporation nonetheless differed significantly. The RCD had a history of securing not only basic bottom up communication but some form of incorporation, and the state never comprehensively rejected its caretaker function in word or action. Thus, even in the face of marginalization and neglect Tunisia up until the 2000s qualified more for the pattern of passive populist incorporation than that of no incorporation. Hence, the regime's continued insistence on its caretaker function in the context of an increasingly defunct network of integration, and a worsening economic climate generated grievances that went beyond

objectively worsening living conditions. Instead it generated grievances of *relative* deprivation - relative to past experiences and expectations, and relative to better off regions. As overall economic indicators show, Tunisia was relatively well off and relatively few Tunisians were affected by the kind of absolute poverty wide-spread in Egypt. Thus, it is not necessarily the presence or absence of incorporation per se that impacts mobilization, but changes in patterns of incorporation, the decline of which engender grievances of relative deprivation that in turn spur mobilization.

Middle classes

Despite the observed variance, an important similarity is the impact of middle class mobilization. Their participation gave rise to truly cross-class mobilization and pushed the uprising to a level that ultimately proved the downfall of both regimes. Traditionally, both Egypt and Tunisia had relied on the middle class as a key constituency of regime support. In both countries, its development was the direct result of modernization policies from above creating a middle class dependent on the state for status and income, expected to be politically acquiescent in return. This mixture of economic benefits, educational opportunities, and political demobilization resulted in largely depoliticized middle classes suspicious of political life, which remained profoundly detached from the political sphere. Our expectation therefore would locate the middle classes of both cases within the incorporation pattern three, whereby the inclusion into the support coalition renders groups reluctant to mobilize. Nonetheless, middle class participation was the crucial stepping stone for cross class mobilization in both uprisings, depriving the regime of a former key support basis. In order to account for this paradox we will delve into the developments leading up to the two uprisings.

In Egypt, the development of middle class incorporation was rooted in Nasser's quest to modernize society alongside the economy by creating a state-dependent middle class in the 1960s. Nasser expanded access to university education by making it free of charge, and promised university graduates secure state employment. His intention was not only to tie these elements to the state, but to build up a technocratic elite, which could staff state organs and carry out the task of implementing his reforms, a professional bureaucracy directing modernization from above. (Hinnebusch 1985) However, despite initial successes, towards the end of the 1960s economic development stagnated. The employment guarantee - perfectly rational from a political point of view - became a paradox of sorts, which saw the regime sacrifice the aim of efficiency for that of job provision. This resulted in the overstaffing of the bureaucratic apparatus, its general inefficiency, as well as an abundance of red tape. (Richards and Waterbury 1996) The introduction of *infatih* policies at the beginning of the 1970s brought a nominal decrease in the role of the state. The concomitant relaxation of the employment guarantee for white collar professionals slowed down employment into the public sector, without halting it, however. The bureaucracy, and with it middle class upward mobility, continued to grow from 1.2 million in 1974 to 4.8 million in 1986 to finally 5.5 million in 2000. (Kandil 2012, 207) With the public sector being the most important employer of this state

dependent middle class, continuous growth enabled the consumption patterns of a middle class lifestyle. The opening of the markets to foreign imports made new consumer goods available, and the expansion of big business in the wake of structural adjustment in the 1990s saw the construction of huge consumer temples and shopping malls for the middle and upper strata of society. The numbers also show, however, that from the 1990s onwards, employment into the public sector considerably slowed down, adding only 700 000 new jobs between 1986 and 2000. As the work force expanded from 17 to 27 million, and private sector growth did not produce enough new jobs to compensate, middle class status became increasingly insecure in the 2000s. (Springborg 2011, 87) But not only did the private sector lag behind on job creation, the jobs that it did create were “increasingly bimodal, concentrated at the top and bottom of the skill-level and income scales. A recent study, for example, shows that between 2000 and 2009 the share of middle-level employment in the private sector declined by over 5% in numbers and more than 9% in share of wages. This was due to the declining importance of manufacturing as compared to services, construction, tourism and transport. While financial services have created well-paying jobs, the other economic sectors have generated a disproportionate number of low-skilled, low-paying ones.” (Springborg 2011, 87-88)

In addition to increasingly insecure job prospects even for educated, middle class Egyptians, several developments conspired to aggravate middle class economic woes. On the one hand, the allying of the regime with big business, especially after 2004, elevated this sector from a profiteer of economic reform to its engineer. The result was an economic order that increasingly catered to the interests of the business elite only: “A new tax regime imposed 60 per cent of the tax burden on the general population via indirect taxes and tariffs that do not discriminate between rich and poor, and halved taxes on business revenues from 40 to 20 per cent; the currency exchange rate was floated, costing the Egyptian pound 25 per cent of its value vis-a`-vis the US dollar, thus skyrocketing the price of imported goods.” (Kandil 2012, 210) Inflation coupled with soaring food prices thus not only affected the popular sector, but the middle class as well. These developments could not be set off by an increase in subsidies. Subsidies benefit the better-off strata disproportionately more than the poor, with a majority going towards energy products like fuel and non-targeted food subsidies. (World Bank 2007, V) Nonetheless more and more lower middle class Egyptians were faced with the prospect of proletarianization. Indeed, public sector workers, for example, were to be found at only the 62nd percentile of the Egyptian income distribution. (Beissinger et al 2012, 18) Having experienced upward mobility under regime tutelage in the past, they now struggled to make ends meet and find employment. The deteriorating economic situation and the increasingly visible influence of

crony businessmen and their conspicuous consumption did not pass unnoticed, as shown by survey data. 70% of the population cited the economy as their main concern in 2008, up from 20% in 2000. Their concern with the economy was complemented by a worry about the seeming increase in corruption which in 2010 46% list as their main concern (a perception that is matched by Transparency International rankings of Egypt, where the country slipped from rank 70 of 158 in 2008 to rank 115 of 180 in 2008). (Diwan 2012, 13-14)

The counterpart to the worsening economic situation is what El Mahdi calls “policed neoliberalism.” (Mahdi 2012, 134) Having restructured their support coalition towards the upper class and its economic elite, traditional patterns of incorporation could no longer be maintained. The regime thus increasingly resorted to coercion to enforce the new economic order: “Because under neoliberalism the regime could not afford to economically appease its population as it used to do in earlier phases, and because the growth model depended on concentration of wealth, the regime had to shift more towards the use of coercion to keep the ‘losers’ in check.” (El Mahdi 2012, 139) While the popular classes bore the brunt of increasing coercion, it did not entirely spare the middle classes. Egypt, in contrast to Tunisia had always boasted a residual sphere, a gray zone where a certain degree of freedom of expression and activity was granted without grave repercussions. Despite this, repression not only increased but became less predictably attached to overt oppositional activity.

On the eve of the January 25th uprising, the country’s middle class had thus experienced increasing alienation from the state, and a detachment from the political sphere, where years of regime propaganda had successfully in instilled an image of politics and opposition politicians as essentially dirty: “I went to the first anti-Mubarak protest in 2004 but did not get further involved with activism back then in part because I was scared, I felt safer as a Human Rights defender than as a political activist. But another part was also due to the victory of stereotypes about political activists and opposition. That stereotype is that they are not clean people that are manipulating the young people to be in the fore front of protests for their own aims and agendas.”¹³⁷

This detachment from the political sphere combined with the increasing encroachment of the regime on economic security and the remaining spaces for expressing opinion led many, especially younger middle class participants that would *not* have previously qualified themselves as activists, into online spaces. It is thus with previously unmobilized middle class actors where tools that have been hailed as the hallmarks of the uprisings, actually proved to have the most

¹³⁷ Interview with activist, Cairo, 03.05.2011

impact. While the uprisings most certainly were not tweeted (Alterman 2011), social media tools were more easily accessible to middle class strata in both countries and significantly aided in bringing them to the streets. They thus contributed to the transmission of information and the low risk partaking in mobilizational dynamics that preceded real life mobilization. That these tools were not the tools of the majority can be seen in the numbers. While almost every Egyptian and Tunisian has a cellphone, in 2010 internet usage stood at only 27% (Egypt) and 37% (Tunisia) respectively. The Facebook penetration rate was even lower, with only 11.4% of Egyptians and 26.3% of Tunisians using the social media platform in 2011. (Pis 2012, 109)

Nonetheless, these tools had their role in bringing especially a middle class audience to the streets. In Egypt, it was the Khaled Said case and the online mobilization against police brutality that inched people closer to activism. The kind of repression it embodied in the past was reserved for political opposition and popular class strata, but suddenly seemed to engulf the middle class. The Khaled Said case marked a departure with the past. In changing perceived patterns of repression, it epitomized the fracturing in structures of incorporation.¹³⁸ These changes in perception were due to Khaled Siad's class background as well as his lack of prior involvement in political activism. As has been noted before, police repression and violence, as well as impunity for those who commit these acts are everyday features of popular sector life in Egypt. At the same time this is less true for people of a middle class background, where the assumption was that as long as you stayed clear from politics, you would not have to face police brutality. This perception, especially for young, middle class people changed with the Khaled Said case, as he "put a face to torture in Egypt, one that the activist middle class can identify. [...] Young kids with access to the internet saw themselves in him. He was known in his community, and people could no longer hide behind the mental veil of thinking, 'maybe he was an actual criminal and deserved it.' There was no mistake in this one. So the story was bound to resonate,' in the words of Ahmed Seif al-Islam, a human rights lawyer and co-founder of the Hisham Mubarak Law Center.¹³⁹ His case, and the widely circulated pictures of his corpse, led to the formation of the eponymous Facebook group 'We Are All Khaled Said' that expressed exactly this sentiment that 'none of us is safe from this, it could happen to each and every single one of us, without the police ever being held accountable,' and which quickly rallied hundreds of thousands, the majority of whom had never been involved in politics before.

¹³⁸ Al Masry Al Youm, Year Ender: Egypt's torture face revealed, 31.12.2010

¹³⁹ Al Masry Al Youm, Year Ender: Egypt's torture face revealed, 31.12.2010,

<http://www.egyptindependent.com/news/year-ender-egypt%E2%80%99s-torture-face-revealed>

Middle class involvement in Egypt was thus facilitated by the ease of switching from a spectator to a participant role within a social media context, changes in the way the middle class viewed and related to the regime and its state agents, as well as the mobilizational dynamics following the 25th of January 2011 that added different societal layers to mobilization.¹⁴⁰ The unprecedented and unexpected extent of mobilization on that day created a climate of possibility and contagion, bolstered by the events in Tunisia, that pulled those in that had no record of prior activism. Its enabling conditions were the disintegration of patterns of middle class incorporation altering the pay off balance between the regime and the middle classes. This violated perceptions of the state's moral obligations stemming from previous modes of incorporation among middle class Egyptians.

Whereas middle class mobilization in Egypt went hand in hand with the mobilizational process itself, starting slowly online and being drawn into the events as they happened, in Tunisia it significantly lagged behind popular class mobilization. Part of the reason might be the regional dynamics of mobilization, which swept up the marginalized inhabitants of the interior first before moving towards the coastal centers. However, when mass demonstrations first emerged in the capital, they did so in popular class neighborhoods such as Tadhamon and El Kram.¹⁴¹ Middle class mobilization was much slower to spread, firstly enveloping Sfax, and spreading to Tunis only towards the end of Ben Ali's reign around the 11th of January 2011. Similarly to Egypt, middle class involvement, especially of the country's middle class youth was at the very least facilitated by new social media. However, several caveats are in order. For one thing, similarly to what we saw in Egypt, internet still only reaches a quarter of the country. (Murphy 2011) While internet cafes were wide spread, they were also heavily monitored through both informers and digital techniques. In contrast to that, shared access to satellite dishes and therefore satellite TV was available in virtually every home, in addition to news programs being shown in many cafés. (Murphy 2011) While participants, especially those from a middle class background, thus report on the importance of becoming involved by sharing content as a way of gradually easing into full blown participation, this mechanism is nonetheless of limited overall explanatory power.

The turning point for cross class coalition formation was the city of Sfax: "In Sfax the movement got big, people there are bourgeois and upper middle class. The bourgeoisie in Sfax suffered from the corruption of Ben Ali as well so they also seized the opportunity. They are legal merchants doing business in a legal way but corrupt people would come to legal businesses

¹⁴⁰ Interview with Egyptian opposition activist, 12.04.2014

¹⁴¹ Interview with activist, 18.07.2011, Tunis

and demand to be part of the company because they are family members of Ben Ali. So the legal businesses went down, while the illegal ones prospered. For example there was only one man who could import bananas in the whole country which is why they were so expensive, Imad Trabelsi, the same with shoes. They controlled everything even if a small business owner would open a sandwich shop, regime people would come to extract money. It was in Sfax when the Middle Class and the bourgeoisie got involved, around the 11th of January. That's when the movement became big because it is the 2nd city in Tunisia and one of its economic capitals.”¹⁴²

From there on, mass mobilization spread to the capital Tunis. Once the middle class in Tunis mobilized, it spelled the end of the regime Ben Ali. Having built his support coalition around the middle class and the satisfaction of their consumer interests and status aspirations, it was the first time that middle class grievances swept them onto the streets.¹⁴³ What brought a strata that was supposedly one of the prime profiteers from the regime Ben Ali onto the street against it? The answer is a combination of more general disintegration of incorporative strategies, of a lack of voice, and finally a perception of blocked aspirations in the context of an increasingly predatory regime that encroached on economic interests at all levels of the economic spectrum. At the center of this stood the increasingly visible rapaciousness of ‘the family’ Ben Ali’s and his wife Leila Trabelsi, which violated not only economic interests, but standards of propriety in the eyes of many Tunisians. In combination with a sidelined RCD that was increasingly unable to channel benefits to broad strata or function as channel for grievance redress, this represented a renegeing of sorts on the social contract built on Ben Ali’s economic miracle.

As in Egypt, middle class incorporation was a function of the modernization project envisioned and enforced from above by the newly independent regime. The country’s middle class profited from and expanded under the developmental policies of the regime Bourguiba and following him Ben Ali. Their level of income and oftentimes the income itself were created by state intervention and public sector employment. Similarly to Egypt the aim was to foster a middle class according to Western models of modernization that was to carry the modernity of the new state in terms of attitude as well as employment. (Hermassi 2013, 81) The main instrument for bringing this middle class into being was Bourguiba’s educational expansion opening the country’s universities to the ‘generation of the revolution.’¹⁴⁴ In addition to educational opportunities, the middle classes profited from the regime economically and

¹⁴² Interview with activist, 17.08.2012, Tunis

¹⁴³ Interview with activistm 21.07.2011, Tunis

¹⁴⁴ Interview with academic and former journalist, 22.08.2012, Tunis

socially more broadly. Mostly clustered in urban areas, they profited from access to state jobs, better health care and education, as well as rising living standards. (Erdle 2010)

Even though as early as the 1980s the state struggled to create enough employment to keep up with increasing demand (Murphy 1999, 127), the 1990s were a decade of relative prosperity and increased opportunities for consumerism. Since implementing structural adjustment programs in the mid/late 1980s, Tunisia had become one of the fastest growing economies in the region. (Chemingui and Sánchez 2011, 4) Official ideology touted the middle class and the accompanied lifestyle as a pillar of the regime, profiting from a regime engineered economic miracle. Partaking in the country's rising economic prosperity came with a price tag, however. The well-known social bargain struck between Ben Ali and his middle class exchanged social mobility, societal peace, and stability for a silent consumerism that stayed clear of criticism and politics, except when to show support at RCD-mobilized participation.¹⁴⁵ This expectation was enforced by an elaborate system of controls, of which the RCD was just one. The mechanisms in place ranged from access to public sector jobs, to affordable consumer credit, to a vast network of police and informers encouraging self-censorship and the atomization of not just voice, but opinion. Hibou describes this pact as follows: "It [the security pact] is clearly the assurance of order and tranquillity. From a material point of view, it is the good functioning of a certain society of consumption and well-being. The Tunisian authorities thus make it a point of honour to enumerate the benefits that they are bestowing on their middle classes. [...] Debt is the central mechanism in this process: power by credit, life on credit, credit as the mainspring of the security pact. [...] The bank is simultaneously an institution of protection and security and an institution that creates dependency, control and surveillance." (Hibou 2011, 183)

Despite initial overtures towards more inclusive government with the National Pact of 1987, Ben Ali's rule soon showed a marked increase in repression, accompanied by an expansion in the repressive apparatus. Repression not only increased, however, but it changed in nature, transforming the relationship between the regime and its society. Whereas under Bourguiba "there was a sort of interaction between power and society there and this interaction gave society sometimes a big margin of liberty and sometimes a small one. [...] Under Ben Ali there was no more interaction with society. He had his own decisions, and these decisions had to preserve the interests of one cast in society and one power and without major interaction. This is why repression changed. [...] We were against Bourghiba but we can go to a ministry and discuss with him and after that have one member in the jury. But with Ben Ali there was no more

¹⁴⁵ Interview with protest participant, and middle class youth, 01.08.2012, Tunis

dialogue, but only repression and infiltration.” Ben Ali’s rule thus represented the “systematization in the use of force”¹⁴⁶ that tried to control and police not just opposition activities but speech as such.

The 1990s in particular were a decade of profound depoliticization of everyday life. Dissent was not only stifled within the political sphere, and opposition politics more specifically, but at Tunisia’s universities, at professional associations, in the media, and even in everyday interactions. At universities, the police found their way onto campuses and into classrooms¹⁴⁷ turning them from hotspots of politicization into a “factory of diplomas.”¹⁴⁸ This “desertification” of political awareness and activity, was compensated for by an expansion in entertainment culture: “The regime would build huge stadiums and spend a lot of money on football and sports and entertainment and festivals all year long, to take out the excess of energy of young people, so all the negative energy would go out in stadiums.”¹⁴⁹

The 1990s thus were a decade of consumerism, of a Westernized middle class life style and the consumption and entertainment opportunities to go along with it being made available to increasingly broader strata.¹⁵⁰ At the same time the growing security apparatus with its Stasi-esk network of spies under the Ministry of Interior created an atmosphere of fear and distrust. The very discussion of politics came under generalized suspicion. Getting ahead in life and not being denied opportunities was being synonymous to not only staying away from politics but to the symbolic support of the regime and its manifestations.¹⁵¹

Regime repression had created an orbit of fear around politics, and a society of distrust. With the number of Ministry of Interior employees spying on the population according to some sources at almost 150 000 including informal informants, against a population of around 8 million Tunisians, anybody could have been working for the ministry. Oppositional activity carried the risk of repression in both Egypt and Tunisia. But the Tunisian regime in addition resorted to a form of economic repression, which was much more effective in turning away everyone but the most determined from the political sphere. This form of economic repression in essence created 2nd class citizens in those it targeted, unable to access their passports and travel, subject to difficulties in either getting a job or keeping it, not being able to access university education or only in remote locations far away from home, barred from entering

¹⁴⁶ Interview with member of Ettajdid, 15.08.2012, Tunis

¹⁴⁷ Interview with academic and former journalist, 22.08.2012, Tunis

¹⁴⁸ Interview with academic and former journalist, 22.08.2012, Tunis

¹⁴⁹ Interview with member of Takatol, 22.08.2012m Tunis

¹⁵⁰ Interview with member of Takatol, 22.08.2012, Tunis

¹⁵¹ Interview with activist 01.08.2012, Tunis

public sector employment in a country that still largely relied on the public sector to keep its graduates employed, risking political and economic harassment not only of themselves but also their family members.

The social pact designed to guarantee middle class acquiescence began to crumble in the 2000s due to a combination of factors. They include the gradual erosion of the middle class due to increasing unemployment amongst university graduates, and rising consumer prices that entailed a de facto reduction in wages, the dramatic rise in predatory behavior on part of regime elites, as well as the disaffection of the small and medium scale business sector. Under the regime's tutelage by the 2000s the middle class had grown to become the biggest segment of Tunisian society, encompassing as much as 81% of the population. (Chemingui and Sánchez 2011, 4) If we consider the rising incidents of graduate unemployment, it becomes clear how precarious middle class status, especially amongst the lower ranks of the middle class had become. With 46% of those graduates entering the labor market not finding jobs that matched their education level or not finding jobs at all, the social mobility and consumption expectations that formed part of belonging to and partaking in society could no longer be fulfilled for a large segment of middle class youth. (Marzouki 2011) Added to that was a high level of personal indebtedness, with almost 70% of employees paying off debts on bank mortgages.¹⁵² This debt economy worked as a double control mechanism. On the one hand it enabled consumption within large segments of society and hence democratized the financial system. This put a lifestyle within reach for many Tunisians that was not supported by their actual level of income. (Hibou 2011, 71) On the other hand, access to the banking system more general and loans more specifically depended at least in part on people's political record, and once in place debt could be used to ensure compliance.

Topping off worsening economic conditions and perceived threats to economic expectations and rights, was a rise in corruption that festered at the heart of the regime. There were an abundance of reports of corruption outside of Tunisia and on the inside rumors were plentiful. They were confirmed by the infamous Wikileaks reports, one of which for instance states that "while corruption in Tunisia may be on a smaller scale than in some developing countries, the political relevance of the rumors is notable because corruption - at least as a topic of public conversation -- is a relatively new phenomenon in Tunisia. Conspicuous consumption - from extravagant properties to luxury cars -- was not common in Tunisia ten years ago. Tunisians are increasingly frustrated with this new development and are confused about its relevance to their

¹⁵² <http://www.al-monitor.com/pulse/culture/2013/12/tunisia-middle-class-economy.html#>

daily lives. Under President Bourguiba, Tunisians focused on achieving a good education and comfortable lifestyle, both goals Bourguiba himself embodied. Today, elite Tunisians boldly, if not publicly, denounce Ben Ali and the Trabelsi family as uneducated and uncultured nouveaux riches whose conspicuous consumption is an affront to all patriotic Tunisians. Some fear that this new phenomenon is sucking the life-blood out of Tunisia – leading to a spiraling educational, moral, social and economic decline.”¹⁵³ The corruption of the first family around the Ben Ali’s wife Leila Trabelsi thus violated notions of propriety among many Tunisians, especially as seen against their own worsening economic conditions. But it had even more concrete implications for many Tunisian businesses. In addition to petty corruption present at every level of the state, corruption in Tunisia involved also a high degree of predation on part of elites connected to the family that acquired a large share of the country’s wealth through the capture of the state’s regulatory framework. (Rijkers et al 2014, 24) Regulatory capture and high entry barriers that benefited connected family members not only distorted the market, creating inefficiencies in its wake, but disadvantaged regular business interests, deterred foreign investment and thus prevented the emergence of a healthy independent private sector. (Paciello 2011, 7) Corruption – from petty everyday corruption, to high level elite corruption, to wide spread rumors about elite indecency – thus turned into an important source of mobilization for Tunisia’s middle class. The perception of the regime breaking this bargain, excluding the middle classes more and more from its benefits in favor of a small circle of ultra-rich elite members turned economic grievances into a sense of moral indignation into something ultimately more political: “Both the social and political are intertwined and linked to corruption itself. Because of corruption the initial social demands got political as well because corruption came from the political system.”¹⁵⁴

We thus find considerable similarities in both Egypt and Tunisia in regard to one of the, if not *the* most important factors explaining the societal breadth of mobilization – middle class participation. Both middle classes were increasingly alienated from regimes they were supposedly profiting from – and in return support. Both spheres fractured along similar lines, and in neither case was that line democracy per se. Instead of electoral politics, the key issues were in the realm of individual freedoms – the freedom to take part in the economic sphere and lead a prosperous life, to be free of police brutality, to express ones’ opinions. Patterns of incorporation thus broke down when the regimes no longer delivered the benefits and opportunities they promised without, however, budging on the question of personal liberties.

¹⁵³ 06TUNIS1673, 05.07.2005, <http://wikileaks.org/cable/2006/07/06TUNIS1673.html>

¹⁵⁴ Interview with activist, 17.08.2012, Tunis

The manifestations and dynamics of break-down differed however. While changing patterns of repression spurred pre-mobilizational (online) politicization of Egypt's middle class, the lack in freedom of opinion and increasingly closed economic opportunities were the main factor driving middle class mobilization in Tunisia.

Preliminary Comparative Conclusion

The aim of the preceding analysis was threefold. In breaking with the narrative of the Arab spring as a unified set of events revolving around similar telegenic youth actors confronting aging authoritarian regimes, it sought to trace the varied and sometimes profound differences in the actors and processes of mobilization. It also aimed at showing the complexity of mobilization processes within each country. While the common narrative emphasized young actors demanding democracy - images Western audiences could easily relate to - mobilization was driven by a vast array of grievances and actors. Embedded into different spheres of interaction and mobilization, they brought distinct tools, expectations, and grievances to the table, created in decades of interaction with the respective regime. In deconstructing the uprisings into these constituent spheres and focusing on their history with (or against) their authoritarian regimes, it aimed to give voice to a variety of actors who each were instrumental in furthering mobilization, and confronting the repressive apparatus of the state. Lastly, it showed how these actors were embedded into their structural environments and how their participation was enabled by the disintegration of patterns of incorporation on parts of the regime.

Determining the boundaries of the different spheres, patterns of incorporation were one of the central lenses through which we looked at emerging protest conditions. They combined several traits of the two literatures at the center of the theoretical analysis - authoritarianism studies and social movement studies - in order to understand mobilization under authoritarianism in a way that takes account of both agency and structure. In our two cases we saw how within five distinct spheres of mobilization the creation, maintenance as well as eventual breakdown of patterns of incorporation readied the ground for mass mobilization that brought together broad cross class coalitions against the authoritarian rule of the regimes' Ben Ali and Mubarak. Created during the populist experiment with Socialist policies and state-led development in the 1950s and 60s, social-pact like incorporation established spheres of interaction between specific groups and the respective regimes that defined expectations of rights and duties, and the boundaries and spaces of permissible activity. With the introduction of neoliberal reforms in the 1970s and 80s the regimes started to fail to live up to these expectations. In combination with the concomitant readjustment of ruling coalitions towards private sector and bourgeois elites the stage was set for deep-seated grievances among broad strata of society to form. The key element in the mobilizations of 2011 was the defection of the middle class from the regimes' support coalition. Their joining the demonstrations in huge numbers enabled the uprisings to cross the threshold

to national phenomena, and ultimately marked the beginning of the end for the regime Ben Ali and Mubarak.

Guiding the preceding analysis was the analytic distinction between four main patterns of incorporation: no incorporation, passive populist incorporation, incorporation into the support basis, and finally partial political incorporation. Full political incorporation, reserved for political elites, was not part of the preceding analysis of society-regime interactions, and will thus not figure in this preliminary conclusion either. This comparative conclusion will summarize the insights gained from the forgoing analysis starting from the pattern of partial political incorporation and moving to no incorporation.

The effects of partial political incorporation have become abundantly clear across spheres and cases. The more an actor or a group of actors is politically incorporated the less likely it is to bring forth a challenge to the rules of the game that structured its incorporation in the first place. However, not all actors are created equal, and the analysis shows important variation depending on the degree of organizational strength an actor brings to the bargaining table. The feeble opposition parties in both Egypt and Tunisia were a case in point for actors lacking native strength and resources. Their continued dependence on regime tolerance for survival maneuvered them into a position whereby they were forced to adhere to rules of the game imposed from above – as skewed as they may be – unable to connect to broader strata or challenge existing rules and rulers. Interestingly enough, on the other end of the spectrum of partial political incorporation and organizational strength appear two initially very different organizations that were nonetheless locked into similar patterns of tolerance, accommodation and repression. Both the Muslim Brotherhood in Egypt and the UGTT in Tunisia thus found themselves in similar structural positions towards their respective regimes. As the only viable organizational challenger, they not only commanded an independent organizational legacy originating from *before* regime inception in the 1950s, but resources and substantial membership. This made them as much of a potential threat as an actor in need of being incorporated. The precarious balance of accommodation on part of the MB and the UGTT and partial tolerance/repression on part of the regimes was the result of decades of organizational learning, failed challenges and bargaining processes that engrained themselves at times painfully into the organizational memories of *all* sides and subsequently formed the structural boundaries of their respective spheres. An example for what happened to actors who overstep these boundaries was Tunisia's Ennahda. Ennahda not only lacked the organizational gravitas of the MB or the UGTT, but its early successes also caused them to overestimate their

organizational power in open challenge to the regime. It therefore misjudged the regime's willingness to ruthlessly repress them, as well as their reservoir of support within the population. At the same time, the regime Ben Ali not only had less need of alternative routes to social benefit provision, but had made them an integral part of its legitimation strategy as the one and only caretaker of the Tunisian people. Ennahda's overestimation of the regime's need to incorporate them facilitated its own demise.

Thus on the one hand, the interplay between organizational weakness and partial political incorporation resulted in the kind of feeble opposition actors often at the center of authoritarianism studies' analyses. On the other hand where legacies of organizational strength and independence were involved partial political incorporation resulted in accommodation and moderation. The more politically and economically incorporated an actor was, the less likely it was to initiate mobilization.

While patterns of partial political incorporation remained relatively stable and predictable over time, making the actors on the more organized end of the spectrum unlikely champions of mobilization, patterns of incorporation into the regimes' support coalition experienced significant changes that were inductive for mobilization. In the absence of more democratic means of incorporation, political incorporation is costly to authoritarian regimes, especially the post populist regimes of the MENA that rely on highly personalist transmission belts of political power. Incorporation of key sectors of society, and here especially the state created middle classes thus needed to rely on alternative, mostly economic, and mostly passive ways of incorporation. Economic incorporation into support coalitions was thus a viable alternative - for as long as the resource basis of these regimes could stem the economic burden. Middle class mobilization during the uprisings indicated what happens when this is not the case anymore and thereby illustrates some more abstract points. On the one hand it illustrates the paradoxes of post populist regimes trying to reconcile legacies of past developmental and populist policies with current needs for regime maintenance. The less organized a societal group, the more likely it was to be economically instead of (partially) politically incorporated and the more likely it was to fall victim to adaptive authoritarian strategies that limited access to economic spoils. The effects of this are most likely to be noticed where the state had created the very expectations it was later to disappoint. Where regimes entered reciprocal relationships that incurred perceptions of duties and responsibilities, the disappointment of expectations without compensation was a powerful driver for mobilization. This brings us to our second point about the breakdown of middle class incorporation that ties into insights from social movement

studies: a weakening of incorporation in the absence of mechanisms for compensation will lead to feelings of relative deprivation that in turn might spur mobilization. The erosion of incorporation and its wake support coalitions and the resulting vulnerability of both regimes therefore became most powerfully visible when the middle classes started to mobilize.

What differentiates these two cases of breakdown of incorporation seems to hinge on predictability. Thus in lieu of being able to offer compensatory mechanisms such as expanded political incorporation, the Egyptian regime not only increased repression but made it less predictable, whereas in Tunisia repression was relatively predictably attached to certain forms of discourses and actions. Repressive structures both in terms of rewards for conformity as well as punishment for deviation were thus the counterpart to grievance accumulation through relative deprivation and account for the different sequence of entering the mobilizational process.

In contrast to Egypt, Tunisians thus bought much more into the regime created narrative of the state as ultimate provider or destroyer of economic livelihoods, in no small part because the regime enforced this perception by its discourse as well as by making examples of those that deviated. The role of relative deprivation in societal mobilization extended beyond the middle classes, however. Indeed, it seems to have been a central component in addition to absolute grievances for mass mobilization as such, also within those strata not incorporated, like most of the popular sector. Two points bear repeating: while objective grievances, such as poverty, and state neglect are important, they themselves do not explain the incidents of popular sector mobilization we witnessed. For as severe as poverty was in Tunisia's interior, it was still less severe than in other countries in the region. Particularly with respect to our two cases it poses the paradox of why relatively better off Tunisia saw popular sector mobilization as the impulse for mass mobilization, whereas the significantly poorer Egypt only saw it follow initial middle class mobilization. Poverty per se does not move people, but its comparison to previous states or unmet expectations, representing either a deterioration within a pattern of incorporation or a change from one pattern to another, does. In order to propel mobilization against authoritarian rule as we have seen during the two uprisings, however, a second condition is necessary. Thus, relative deprivation as motivator for mobilization needs the attribution of blame at the doorstep of the regime. These differences were visible in the popular class sphere. In both cases, grievances had accumulated following the breakdown of patterns of incorporation by regimes either lacking the resources to continue funding comprehensive social benefits, or having reoriented its incorporative strategies towards other sectors of society. That they nonetheless entered the mobilizational process differently can be explained by variations in the

disintegration of incorporation. Whereas in Egypt mobilization joined existing mobilization in a context of no incorporation and limited attribution, in Tunisia it started overall mobilization in the context of deteriorating passive populist incorporation and continuing attribution of responsibility with the state. The differences in mobilizational trajectory were thus a result of deterioration within passive incorporation with left over claim making on the state as well as continued state responsibility in Tunisia, where the regime had built its legitimacy around not only the provision of goods but the satisfaction of lifestyle ambitions, intimately tied to employment. The prolonged lack of employment opportunities thus translated into an inability to participate in social and economic life, of gaining social status, and ultimately dignity. In Egypt no incorporation was only alleviated by the remnants of a system of subsidies allowing basic survival, while the state had almost completely abandoned responsibility for social welfare, resulting in distrust of the state, and wide-spread evasion of its agents, rules, and regulations. The only thing left of the state's former populist incorporations strategies was therefore a somewhat politicized consumption. However, without a set of expectations assigning responsibility for their general welfare with the state, the absence of that responsibility, and the lack of formal organization could not give rise to the initiation of mobilization.

Analyzing the uprisings through the lens of patterns of incorporation enables us to tackle some of the initial questions that have been raised by the Arab Spring. Why do authoritarian regimes that seemed stable suddenly crumble under the weight of popular mobilization? When and how do grievances unite in mobilization under authoritarian rule and how can mobilization succeed? As has become clear, the single most important similarity accounting for the success of mobilization in Egypt and Tunisia was the formation of a cross class coalition converging on the demand to end authoritarian rule. They were united in the fact that everybody was disaffected with the regime in some way, and attributed at least part of the blame for their grievances at its doorstep. This formation of a cross class coalition signified the breaking apart of support coalitions from which too few people profited, made possible by the narrowing patterns of incorporation undergirding the regimes.

The analysis also tells us something about the nature of mobilization under authoritarian rule: despite the general surprise at the unexpectedness of the uprisings themselves, they were both embedded in histories of contention. Neither uprising happened in a vacuum, and there were histories of mobilization foreshadowing some of the most notable aspects in both cases. While previous incidents and cycles of mobilization did not succeed in key aspects, they provided the groundwork for later success by a) showing the vulnerability of regimes whose apparatus of

repression and control was once believed to be omnipotent; and b) establishing spaces, repertoires, and precedents for action that would provide the blueprints for later mobilization. The importance of mobilizational precedents can be seen in the fact that the uprisings followed roughly the same patterns. Tunisia's protests remained largely socio-economic with some covert political support and participation, but no overt political coordination or facilitation. Egypt's protests were political to begin with, even though confined to pre-mobilized middle class activists. Where Tunisia's preceding protests failed in crossing over into the political as well as into other regions, Egypt's protests failed at crossing over to non-oppositional segments of society, and connect to the social and economic grievances wide-spread amongst ordinary Egyptians. This illustrates the above observation that the disintegration of patterns of incorporation enabled not only the mobilization of specific actor groups but it weakened the boundaries separating different spheres from one another, enabling cross-class mobilization. Patterns of incorporation thus not only tied actors to the regime in sphere-specific ways but they established interaction based on difference, which is why one of the fundamental rules of nearly *all* spheres in *both* cases was refraining from mobilizing across prescribed boundaries.

So how do post populist personalist regimes maintain power, how do they fracture? Power maintenance - or loss - hinges on the regimes ability to uphold patterns of incorporation for enough members of its support coalition. Power maintenance also depends on the continued separation of the different spheres, their actors and grievances. And it depends furthermore on the continued ability to project power into those spheres, especially in those cases of disintegrating incorporation. Upholding the image of omnipotence enforces the perception of each sphere as deeply structural to the actors within and in doing this the isolation of grievances. The disconnect between societal actors thus isolated challenges even where discontent might have been wide-spread.

8. CONCLUSION

Almost four years after the Arab spring the MENA region continues to be dominated by turmoil and hopes for a more democratic future have been dashed by the return to authoritarianism in Egypt, the ongoing civil war in Syria and failing state in Libya, with only Tunisia offering a glimpse of democracy and stability. But it did not need the vastly differing trajectories in the MENA post-Arab spring to gauge the vast differences contained within this seemingly unified phenomenon called the ‘Arab spring’. This thesis attempted to do just that – disaggregate the narrative of the Arab uprisings by looking at the two countries that provided the backdrop to the initial global enthusiasm. The narratives about what the Arab spring was really about – ICTs, youth, unemployment – circulating in the immediate aftermath of the events were attempts to capture some element of reality, to understand and analyze the component deemed most important. The focus and conceptual tools of this thesis are just that – they did not aim nor claim to be a comprehensive account of what happened and why it did. Instead the thesis contributed to the burgeoning literature on the Arab spring by embedding its stories of agency and courage, of the ingenious use of new instruments and techniques of mobilization, but also of pent up desperation exploding into action, into an account of their structural origins. It departed from the premise that we cannot understand agency detached from its structural environment and the way changes in this environment opened up and shaped spaces for participation, organization, and ultimately resistance. Many of these spaces developed hidden from the view of academic observers (and potentially the regimes), within the societies of Egypt and Tunisia. By broadening the traditional view on elites and institutions to how regimes interacted with and tried to control their societies it explained the paths toward mobilization different actors in both countries took, as well as their ultimate convergence into cross class coalitions to bring down their dictators.

The analysis was embedded into two theoretical traditions – authoritarianism studies and social movement theory – whose origins and developments were traced in Part I. In tracing our current theories for analyzing authoritarianism and mobilization to their modernization theoretic predecessors it showed how the evolution of academic discourse itself was embedded within the social and political stories of its time, defying strictly linear accounts of progress often implicit in theory choice. Authoritarianism studies and social movement theory developed

partly in continuation, and partly in contradiction to this paradigm that shaped the discipline theoretically, methodologically, and philosophically. The thesis shows how their development had as much to do with theoretical disagreements over modernization theory's assumptions as with a changing political and social environment. By providing academic answers to the question of how societies underwent transformational change on their way to economically, socially and politically modern polities, scholars not only influenced policy per se. But they influenced the perceptions and ideas of the very nations they analysed. Thus many of the dilemmas facing the rulers of Egypt and Tunisia resulted from the very projects of modernization they attempted to impose from above, creating consequences they ultimately could not control. These *dilemmas of modernization*, imposed on late developing countries by an autocratic political order were a central theme of this thesis.

Chapter 5 sought to combine insights from authoritarianism studies and social movement studies, providing a theoretical lens that took into account both the structural roots of mobilization as well as the agency that unfolded in its process. The resulting spheres of interaction and mobilization framed the main comparison in Chapter 8 by delineating different spheres of interaction between the regimes in question and different groups of actors, each with distinct histories, experiences, repertoires and ultimately logics. Based in regimes' efforts at power maintenance these logics found their expression in different patterns of incorporation which over time crystalized into the structural boundaries of the different spheres. They established different expectations about the rules of interactions, and what constituted violations, imbuing societal actors with distinct perceptions of their structural environments, spaces for agency, and action repertoires. Social movement theory therefore added insights from below: about how actors can deal with power and authority; and how societal and economic change processes in late developing countries can create contradictions that bear the beginnings of deep-seated grievances. Authoritarianism studies provided the boundaries of spheres and thus restricted the options and spaces for agency.

In order to give more empirical depth to the analysis Chapters 6 and 7 provided the empirical and historical backdrop respectively to the uprisings and the historical developments of the two countries in which they were embedded. Taken together Chapter 6 to 7 provided the groundwork for the centerpiece of the thesis - the comparative Chapter 8. Using the idea of relational spheres it disaggregated the two cases into five paired comparisons between opposition actors in Egypt and Tunisia, Islamists, workers, middle class, and popular class participants. The individual comparisons were guided by hypotheses about the relationship

between different patterns of incorporation as structuring the nature of the spheres and the probability of mobilization as well as the place within the mobilizational process. The comparison showed how changes within patterns of incorporation sowed grievances across different spheres. While these grievances were specific to the individual spheres and often different in nature, the disintegration of structures of incorporation in the long run affected the regimes' ability to maintain their support coalition. With waning incorporation came a weakening of structures of control that ultimately allowed for spaces of resistance to build and mobilization to start.

This wide-scale breakdown in incorporation has its origins within the political economy of regime maintenance in post populist personalist regimes and the way they dealt with the dilemmas of modernization. The detailed analysis of changes in the political economy of both regimes also revealed, however, the enormous adaptability and plasticity of these regimes that lies at the root of their decades-long survival and therefore speaks to broader theoretical issues that authoritarianism studies has tried to deal with over the past decade. One of the flaws that hampered the discipline was too often casting authoritarian rulers as omniscient strategists. Lacking information about the 'black box' of internal decision making, the outcomes of regime strategies such as institution building was often viewed as functional solutions for the specific problems and dilemmas confronting authoritarian rulers. The debate on authoritarian stability was a result of this brand of thinking. What the analysis has shown, however, is that these rulers may be better conceptualized as adaptive strategists, good at avoiding problems rather than creating functional institutional solutions. The most visible outcome of this is the process of economic liberalization and the concomitant transformation of networks of privilege. Enacted under the pressure of international financial institutions and collapsing economies it was turned into opportunities to restructure support coalitions and create new avenues for rent. None of these solutions were perfect, however, and they created a myriad of new problems, inefficiencies and unintended consequences. These reactive rather than perspicacious strategies that further down the road required new patchwork solutions, proved to be sufficiently adaptive in the short and even medium run. However, in the long run they undermined the states' structural roots in society and its capacity to incorporate enough societal groups to maintain stability. With that they also undermined the regimes' ability to project strength, revealing vulnerabilities and changing actors' perceptions.

In showing how these general processes played out differently within the five spheres, the comparative Chapter 8 thus served many purposes. On the most obvious level, the comparison

revealed how breakdowns in patterns of incorporation that were to the detriment of ever broader societal groups spurred discontent and ultimately mobilization. On a deeper level, however, it also allowed us to reflect back on the theoretical underpinnings of our central concepts and to assess their problems and merits in light of empirical evidence.

For example, the common assertion that authoritarianism studies failed to predict the Arab spring, seeing outward stability instead of the dynamism underneath is certainly true in some respect. However, upon a closer look at what these debates actually dealt with, we see that they were not necessarily wrong in their predictions, but that they quite simply took a part for the whole. They thus inferred from the correctly predicted inability of opposition parties to mount challenges, to the stability of the broader system. In doing so they ignored most of the state-society dynamics that turned out to be crucial. As our analysis showed, however, they correctly predicted the stability of regime opposition alignments, which had previously seemed like the only space where politics was and could be taking place. This addressed one of the most puzzling features of the Arab spring, where mobilization seemed to have taken place everywhere but in the sphere of the classical opposition. But as authoritarianism studies had predicted, the strategies of the regimes led to these opposition parties remaining ineffective in bringing about change.

This lack of ‘the masses’, of broader socio-structural alignments outside of elite circles, where politics was supposedly made, pointed on a more abstract level to shortcomings in the way the regime concept was commonly used, thereby opening up new avenues for future research. In both cases changes in the socio-structural make up of regime support and incorporation could not be captured by the current focus on the access dimension of political regimes. While the access dimension of the regime concept certainly captures essential characteristics, in ignoring how institutions were embedded into society, how they relate to the state as the primary instrument of the exercise of power, classifications remained truncated, resulting in authoritarianism studies being as unprepared for the events of the Arab spring as the dictators themselves. As the analysis has shown, in order to understand authoritarianism, its stability, as well as its vulnerability, future research has to take into account the less used exercise dimension of political regimes. With its focus on the way power is exercised towards, and projected into society it is inherently more interactional and better able to account for the role of state society relationships in the maintenance or breakdown of political power.

Social movement studies on the other hand struggled with the ahistorical voluntarism and rationalism of the political process model. The neglect of perceptual and subjectivist elements

touches upon issues that were discussed in Chapter 3 of the thesis. Far from being merely theoretical exercises, the question of how we chose our theories and how theories come to be rejected showed itself to be acutely relevant when one of the central concepts that aided us in understanding wide-scale mobilization was itself a ghost from the past. SMT's rejection of the deterministic and value laden judgment with which modernization theory had infused societal mobilization was understandable on an academic as well as personal level. Nonetheless, the comparison of what moved different kinds and groups of actors to mobilize and challenge their authoritarian regimes in Chapter 8 has shown that a more nuanced assessment would have kept some parts of a useful concept that were thrown out prematurely. The analysis of the Arab spring presented in this thesis thus illustrated the difficulty of building universal explanations of mobilization, and actor conceptions devoid of contexts. Different actors embedded in different spheres of interaction were simply moved by different grievances. Some of these grievances could arguably be described in resource mobilization and POS terms, while others did not fit that bill as easily. Relative deprivation accounts stripped of their deterministic and agency-barren aspects therefore appear not mutually exclusive with current SM scholarship, especially where more relational or subjectivist aspects of mobilization are concerned, but complementary.

Last but not least, taken together, the theoretical, empirical, as well as analytical chapters of this thesis shed some light on the deeper questions of agency and structure in the Arab spring. In asking what made regimes that seemed stable for decades crumble within weeks we got insights into how perceptions of structure uphold those very structures and how changes in perception can result in previously unimaginable successes for mobilization. In both Egypt and Tunisia cracks in the regimes' armor contributed to people perceiving a chance to be heard and seen at last and therefore in these structures holding less power. This interplay of genuinely structural conditions *and* peoples changing perception of the 'structuredness' and stability of their environment ultimately spurred mobilization. The importance of peoples' engagement with structures for them to uphold became most impressively clear during the process of mobilization itself, when through the act of going to the streets, the wall of fear, solidly in place for decades began to crumble, giving way to mass mobilization. The mobilizing power of this disappearance of fear thus eloquently speaks to the notion that structures need peoples' belief in them in order to continue shaping expectations and hence options for actions.

While the thesis as such thus offered insights into a range of empirical and theoretical questions, even more avenues for research remain to be explored. This applies to questions of

theory building and testing, and in particular to exploring ways to develop and apply regime concepts that transcend the current elite and institution focus. Comparative studies asking how different regime types might not only vary on the access, but the exercise dimension would contribute to a better understanding of the dynamics of authoritarianism or political regimes more generally, and the potential avenues of impact for societal actors. Social movement studies could profit from these insights tying societal actors to their regimes, as they could from asking systematic questions about mobilization under authoritarian rule: about how different types of authoritarian regimes might impact the nature, timing and chances of success of anti-authoritarian movements, about the trajectories of movements and regimes in transition, as well as about the differences between movements mobilizing under autocracy vs democracy.

Empirically, the past four years have brought many changes and with them a host of new questions to be researched. While the region more generally witnessed turmoil and bloodshed, our two initially successful cases could not have gone on to more different trajectories. Tunisia has given reason for hope and optimism, having more or less successfully navigated the complicated path of transition towards a more inclusive, democratic system of rule. However, the fact that its most recent elections saw figures from the old Ben Ali regime democratically elected gives reason to caution. The results not only disappointed many activists, but also hint at the complexity of life under the regime Ben Ali and the impact of personal and national insecurity during transitions. Egypt on the other hand, after three turbulent transition years, has emerged on a path of re-autocratization that saw the most repressive regime in Egypt's recent history take over power, with the complicity of many former activists. The questions these events raise individually and comparatively are manifold. Why for example did new actors not manage to gain a significant foothold against ancient elites? Why do the trajectories of both countries nonetheless diverge so radically? How did authoritarian learning contribute to Egypt's slide back into authoritarianism? How did Tunisia manage to establish a consensual style of transitional politics enabling the largely peaceful transition?

This thesis cannot answer these questions, but it can attempt an outlook at how its framework might be able to elucidate some of the post-breakdown transitional dynamics. In looking at the characteristics of the transitional phases in both countries, it becomes obvious that asking why Tunisia managed its first steps toward democracy, while Egypt descended into autocracy might be the wrong question. The real question that needs to be asked is how Tunisia managed to channel the transitional process into institutionalized channels of conflict resolution, while Egypt remained marred in chaos and conflict, battled out in often bloody street fights. (Koehler

and Warkotsch 2014) While much more detailed research will be needed to fully answer this question, first tentative hints emerge from the research presented in this thesis. The main difference seems to reside in who drove the uprisings on both sides, and what their structural position meant for their chances to define their aftermaths. As we have seen in Tunisia, the uprising was driven first and foremost by marginalized popular sector youth in the country's interior, in Egypt it was urban middle class youth activists. They had in common their youth, roots in either movements or entirely outside of organizational politics, and dissatisfaction with the speed and direction of the transitional process, but this is where the comparison ends. Their dissatisfaction led both groups to continue mobilization, but only one had the structural power and tools to do so successfully, and herein lies the key for the divergence. The ability of Egyptian activists to shape the narrative of the uprising and claim its fruits as its 'legitimate' voice led many activists to remain on the streets and eschew institutional politics for continued mobilization for a myriad of new causes, seemingly successfully at first. But while their action repertoire and legitimacy gave them considerable disruptive power, they did not translate into a channel for effective influence. In continuing to reject institution building and institutional politics they ensured ongoing turmoil, without gaining in influence. Thus the success of their uprising essentially ate itself. The very success of mobilizational tactics that had ensured authoritarian breakdown, now hindered institutionalized conflict resolution.

In Tunisia in contrast, already the initial labels as twitter revolution signified how little power over shaping the narrative its main driving source in the marginalized interior had in the aftermath of Ben Ali's fall. But not only did they struggle to keep their voices heard, but they struggled to exert pressure in a way that would have allowed them to meaningfully shape the course of events. Thus, dissatisfied with the pace and direction of the transition, they did try to stage protests and even marches from the interior to Tunis, but they lacked the discursive and disruptive power to insert themselves successfully into the transitional bargaining process. Instead, more politically apt actors from the political establishment took over and divided the cake amongst themselves. Thus a lack of experience and a rejection of institutional politics led to continued disruption in case where the structural strength of mobilizing groups was high, and post-breakdown marginalization where it was low. Whatever path the two countries took, four years on, it is the ancient regime that has managed most successfully to traverse the rocky transitional path - whether by coup d'état or electoral victory. But the stories of the two transitions are as complex as the uprisings themselves, and thus better explored elsewhere in more detail. It seems clear, however, that the Arab spring and its consequences have not only transformed the region, but will continue to be the backdrop to intriguing research.

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INTERVIEWS

EGYPT

2005

Interview with Kifaya coordinator from 2004 to 2007, Cairo, 16.09.05

Interview with political analyst at the Al-Ahram Institute of Political and Strategic Studies, Cairo, 20.09.05

Interview with journalist and member of Journalists for Change, a Kifaya spin-off, Cairo, 24. 09.2005

Interview with Head of the Socialist Studies Center and member of Kifaya, Cairo, 25.9.2005

Interview with General Secretary of Hizb Al-Amal and member of Kifaya, Cairo, 28. and 29.9.2005

Interviews with political analyst at the Al-Ahram Institute of Political and Strategic Studies and former member of Kifaya, Cairo, 05.10.2005 and 13.10.2005

Interview with leading member of Hizb al-Wasat, and Founding Member of Kifaya, Cairo, 03.10.2005

Interview with Head of the Hisham Mubarak Law Center a Human Rights and Legal Aid Advocacy Organization/Law Firm, Cairo, 11.10.2005

Interview with member of the Popular Campaign for Change, Cairo, 12.10.2005

Interview with leading member of Hizb al-Tagammu', Cairo, 13.10.05

Interview with political analyst at the Al-Ahram Institute of Political and Strategic Studies, Cairo, 16.10.2005.

Interview with editor of Al-Araby, Mouthpiece of the Nasserists, later of Al-Karama Newspaper and Member of Kifaya, Cairo, 17.10.2005

Interview with political analyst at the Al-Ahram Institute of Political and Strategic Studies and member of Kifaya, Cairo, 17.10.2005

Interview with prominent member of Kifaya, Cairo, 18.10.2005

2007

Interview with al-Messiri, Abdal-Wahab: Coordinator of Kifaya, independent intellectual, Cairo, September 2007.

Interview with editor of Al-Araby, Mouthpiece of the Nasserists, later of Al-Karama Newspaper and Member of Kifaya, Cairo, 17.09.2007

Interview with former General Coordinator of Kifaya, Cairo, 18.09.2007

Interview with leading member of Hizb al-Wasat, and Founding Member of Kifaya, Cairo, 22.09.2007

Interview with (one of the) president(s) of Hizb al-Ghad, Cairo, 23.09.2007

Interview with political analyst at the Al-Ahram Institute of Political and Strategic Studies, Cairo, 01.10.2007

2008

Interview with head of Center for Trade Union and Workers' Services, Helwan, 12.03.2008

Interview with Managing Director of Hisham Mubarak Law Center, Cairo, 26.03.2008

2011

Interview with former Kifaya Coordinator, Cairo, 21.04.2011

Interview with political analyst, Cairo, 22.04.2011

Interview with former coordinator of the English facebook page of We Are All Khaled Said, 27.04.11

Interview with professor of political science and founding member of the Social Democratic Party, Cairo, 27.04.2011

Interview with leader of al-Baradei Support Campaign and Coalition of Revolutionary Youth, advisor of al-Baradei, Cairo, Groppi, 28.04.2011

Interview with leading member of the Social Democratic Party, Cairo, 28.04.2011

Interview with activist and Human Rights NGO worker, Cairo, 03.05.2011

Interview with member of Hizb al-'Adl, Cairo, 04.05.2011

Interview with Socialist activist and member of al-Tahaluf al-Sha'bi, Cairo, 07.05.2011

Interview with Secretary General of Tagammu', Cairo, 08.05.2011

Interview with Socialist activist, member of al-Tahaluf, 09.05.2011

Interview with young MB member, revolutionary activist, 10.05.11

Interview with former MB MP, Secretary General of FJP in Cairo, 22.05.2011

Interview with MB Youth and Coalition of Revolutionary Youth member, Cairo, 24.05.2011

2014

Interview with scholar and analyst, activist in the revolution in 2011, 19.3.2014.

Interview with Member of the April 6th movement, and the movement coalition Road to Revolution, 22.3.2014

Interview with one of the founders of Shayfeen.com, an election monitoring and human rights organization, 25.3.2014

Interview with a young MB since 2009, joining in 2011 the Strong Egypt party. He also participated in an NGO called 'Awareness', that aimed at bringing together Egyptians from different ideologies and religions, 08.4.2014

Interview with a prominent women's rights activist during and after the revolution, 10.4.2014

Interview with activist and student leader, co-founder of Dostour (constitution) party in 2012, headed by Mohamed El Baradei, 10.4.2014

Interview with activist in the Presidential campaign of Abdel Moneim Aboul Fotouh; program manager at the Egyptian Democratic Academy (EDA), a Cairo-based democracy development NGO, 10.4.2014

Interview with one of the founders of the April 6th movement, 12.4.2014

Interview with member of the Socialist Renewal Current, revolutionary socialists who join other forces to form a new party, in addition to the other leftists forces: the Popular Alliance Party, 12.4.2014

Interview with student in at Cairo University, activist from 2011 to 2013, 15.4.2014

Interview with a member of Al Dustour party, and a political activist in student politics since the revolution, 22.4.2014

Interview with a former member of the Muslim Brotherhood youth, involved in the revolution, and actually a member of the Strong Egypt party, 26.4.2014

TUNISIA

2011

Interview with Tunis, 05.07.2011, activist, member of the green party

Interview with political analyst, Tunis, 11.07.2011

Interview with activist, Tunis, 12.07.2011

Interview with Tunis, 15.07.2011, cyber activist, transitional government minister

Interview with 18.07.2011, cafe, leftist revolutionary activist from the south

Interview with 19.07.2011, journalist, activist

Interview with, member of the JID (Jeunes Independantes Democratique) and IWatch NGO
21.07.2011

2012

Interview with activist during uprising, Tunis, 29.07.2012

Interview with revolutionary activist, Tunis, 01.08.2012

Interview with director of the CGTT, Tunis, 08.08.2012

Interview with former leading member of UGTT, labor activist, Tunis, 09.08.2012

Interview with political activist and member of ATFD, Tunis, 11.08.2012

Interview with member of Takatol, and LTDH, Tunis, 13.08.2012

Interview with member of Tajdid, Tunis, 15.08.2012

Interview with member of Tajdid, Tunis, 16.08.2012

Interview with leading member of Union Diplômé des Chômeurs (UDC), 16.08.2012

Interview with member of the Unionist Popular Front, leftists revolutionary activists, Tunis, 17.08.2012

Interview with member of the Unionist Popular Front, leftists revolutionary activists, Tunis, 17.08.2012

Interview with leading member of the PDP, Tunis, 17.08.2012

Interview with professor at the Faculty of Law and Social Sciences, and journalist, Tunis, 22.08.2012,

Interview with female member of Political Bureau of Takatol, Tunis, 22.08.2012

Interview with Head of the French section of Takatol, Tunis, 22.08.2012

Interview with member of Takatol, Tunis, 22.08.2012

Interview with journalist and member of SNTJ, Tunis, 24.08.2012

Interview with member of UGTT, PDP, Tunis, 28.08.2012

Interview with member of Al Qutub, and PDP, Tunis, 28.08.2012

Interview with leading member of UGTT, Tunis, 29.08.2012