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THE EVOLVING RULING BARGAIN
IN THE MIDDLE EAST

SUMMARY REPORT

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Cover image: Former Tunisian President Zine El Abidine Ben 'Ali.

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WORKING GROUP SUMMARY REPORT

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THE EVOLVING RULING BARGAIN IN THE MIDDLE EAST WORKING GROUP SUMMARY REPORT

Middle East experts, scholars, and laymen were equally caught off guard by the startling political upheaval that rippled through the Arab world like a contagious disease in early 2011. While the situation is still in flux and one cannot draw conclusions as to what will ultimately emerge, the unexpected nature of these Arab uprisings has certainly provoked debate around some of the existing assumptions about the domestic politics of the region. Over the years, a robust body of scholarship has developed focusing on the durability of authoritarian rule in the Middle East, and the remarkable resilience of the regimes in power. Much of this analysis has been based on the rigorous study of the patterns of socio-political behavior in the Middle East, both at the regional level of analysis as well as that of individual states, and, in particular, on the carefully crafted “ruling bargains” between regimes and their citizens.

Over the decades, in the Gulf monarchies as well as in the Arab secular regimes, a ruling bargain between the governed and the governing has evolved to consolidate state-society relations into a “stable” form of authoritarian rule. This implicit bargain under-writing political rule is one in which citizens surrender their political and social rights to participatory government, accept the legitimacy of the ruling regime, and in return are rewarded with a variety of socio-economic benefits. The extent of state munificence extended to citizenry is dependent on the state’s financial capacity, making the ruling bargain stronger in some states and weaker in others.

While much of the academic literature has been devoted to the intransigence of these ruling bargains, current events would indicate that inadequate attention has been given to the potential causes for their erosion. It is now time to probe some of the existing analytical assumptions and develop new understanding of the drivers of change in the Middle East.

In line with this, CIRS launched a research initiative on “The Evolving Ruling Bargain in the Middle East.” The purpose of this project is to scrutinize the ways in which domestic political arrangements in the Middle East are evolving, and how the authoritarian bargains are being challenged. This project brings together a number of distinguished scholars to examine a variety of relevant topics and to contribute original chapters to the CIRS book titled, *Beyond the Arab Spring: The Evolving Ruling Bargain in the Middle East*.

Some of the areas addressed through our efforts include: the need for modifying theoretical paradigms explaining authoritarian perseverance in the Middle East; the role of key actors and institutions (the role of the military, the bureaucracy, the ruling party, and opposition figures); evolving sources of political legitimacy; the dynamics of the domestic and international political economy, and the impact of the failure (or the efforts) to reform domestic economies; the social dislocations which served as drivers for recent protest movements; the impact of various social groups and networks and their engagement with domestic politics; the relevance of Political Islam and the role of Islamism in the opposition; and the role of traditional media, new media, and social media. In addition to various thematic issues, the project also includes specific country case studies.

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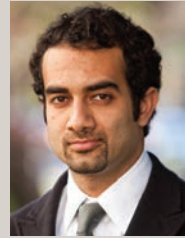
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1. *Introduction*

Mehran Kamrava

By and large, Middle East experts, scholars, and laymen were all equally caught off-guard by the startling political upheaval that rippled through the Arab world beginning in December 2010. Interestingly, much of the scholarship on Middle East politics up to that point had concentrated on the durability of authoritarianism. There was something of an “Arab Spring” in early 2005, a dress rehearsal for what transpired in 2011. In the earlier Spring, Iraqis went to the polls for the first time since the fall of Saddam, Syria withdrew from Lebanon after mass protests in downtown Beirut, Saudi Arabia staged municipal elections, and determined opposition by Egyptian activists forced Mubarak to give meaning and substance, albeit temporarily, to his promises of reforms. Nevertheless, authoritarianism persisted unabated for another five years.

While the final chapter of the Arab Spring is yet to be written, the unexpected nature of these Arab uprisings has provoked lively debate and has spawned much fruitful scholarship around some of the existing assumptions of the domestic politics of the region. Over the years, a robust body of scholarship has developed focusing on the durability of authoritarian rule in the Middle East, and the remarkable resilience of the regimes in power. Much of this analysis has been based on the rigorous study of the patterns of socio-political behavior in the Middle East, both at the regional level of analysis as well as that of individual states, and, in particular, on the carefully crafted “ruling bargains” between regimes and their citizens.

Over the decades, both in the Middle East’s monarchies as well as in the many presidential republics, a ruling bargain emerged between the governed and those governing aimed at consolidating state-society relationships and maintaining various forms of authoritarian rule. In broad terms, this implicit bargain under-writing political rule has been one in which citizens surrender their political and social rights to participatory government, are expected to accept the legitimacy of the ruling regime, however begrudgingly, and in return are rewarded with a variety of goods and services, most of them tangible but some also intangible, as well as socio-economic benefits. The scope of state munificence extended to citizenry is dependent on the state’s financial capacity, making the ruling bargain stronger in some states and weaker in others, or at least in relation to some citizens more so than others. The elites judged crucial to the regime got substantially more than the average citizen, introducing a distinct element that became part and parcel of the resentment against local regimes.

While much of the academic literature has been devoted to the durability of these ruling bargains, current events would indicate that inadequate attention has been given to the potential causes for their erosion. The chapters in this volume probe some of the existing analytical assumptions and develop a new understanding of the drivers of the historic change in the Middle East beginning in late 2010 and early 2011.

Mehran Kamrava is Professor and Director of the Center for International and Regional Studies at the Georgetown University School of Foreign Service in Qatar. His current areas of research interest are on the international and domestic politics of the Gulf. In addition to a number of publications, he is the author of *The Modern Middle East: A Political History since the First World War* (2005), and *Iran’s Intellectual Revolution* (2008). Kamrava’s edited volumes include *The International Politics of the Persian Gulf* (2011); *Innovation in Islam: Traditions and Contributions* (2011); *The Nuclear Question in the Middle East* (2012); and *The Political Economy of the Persian Gulf* (2012).

2. *The Rise and Fall of Ruling Bargains in the Middle East*

Mehran Kamrava

The Arab Spring took place within the context of the unraveling of the dominant “ruling bargain” that had emerged across the Middle East beginning in the 1950s. This ruling bargain is being actively replaced by a new one that is redefining the sources of authority and legitimacy through a variety of devices (such as constitutions), experiences and processes (mass protests, civil wars, and elections), redefinition of the roles, functions, and at times the structures of institutions (political parties and organizations, the armed forces, the executive), and personalities and personal actions and initiatives (agency). Across the Arab world and the Middle East, conceptions of “authority” and “political legitimacy” are being redefined and re-articulated. The ultimate question revolves around the new shape, voracity, and staying power of these new, emerging conceptions of authority.

In this chapter, I examine the nature and evolution of ruling bargains across the Middle East, the political systems to which they gave rise, the steady unraveling of the bargains over time and the structural consequences thereof for the systems concerned, and the uprisings that engulfed much of the Middle East beginning in December 2010. Throughout the region implicit understandings emerged between state elites and social actors as the basis of regime legitimacy through which a number of state services and functions were provided in return for general political acquiescence. These ruling bargains, or social pacts as they are sometimes called, were in reality imposed from the top by state elites rather than mutually agreed-upon and negotiated through a process of give-and-take between state and social actors. As such, repression or the threat of its employment was never far from the practice of politics, and the state remained fundamentally authoritarian. Nevertheless, bargains of various shapes and voracity came to underlie the legitimacy of one Middle Eastern state after another.

Before long, in a matter of two decades or so, the authoritarian ruling bargains began unraveling and Middle Eastern states had to make adjustments of various kinds if they were to continue holding on to the reins of power. Several developments began unfolding almost simultaneously. As states proved increasingly incapable of delivering on the promises and premises of the bargains they had crafted, they relied steadily on ad hoc mixtures of controlled liberalization and reinvigorated authoritarianism to coopt opponents, or, alternatively, to hold them at bay. Some allowed new parties to form. Others banned old ones. All made promises of a democratic tomorrow. Meetings with amenable opponents were convened, National Charters were drafted and signed, and new, supposedly clean, elections for long-pliant parliaments took place. Economic difficulties, meanwhile, coupled with the dictates of international investors and monetary agencies, especially the World Bank and the IMF, prompted many to marginally liberalize their economies and to sell a limited number of state assets.

In the process, Middle Eastern authoritarianism proved itself adaptable and resilient, dynamic and persistent. No doubt, however, that despite multiple survival strategies, of oscillating cycles or combinations of cooption-repression, *fear* emerged as more and more of an elemental ingredient of the political formula, increasingly replacing whatever was left of the regime’s once compelling legitimacy. By the 1990s and the 2000s, little of the original ruling bargain remained. Its pillars, once sources of comfort and mass ebullition, now comprised of fear, loathing, suspicion, and submission. All that needed to be done for the one-legged bargain to collapse—in fact for the whole basis of rule to crumble—was for the grip of mass fear to be broken. And, when that happened, the Arab Spring followed.

I trace the rise and fall of ruling bargains across the Middle East, the adaptability and resilience of dictatorships as their imposed bargains began to come unstuck, and how their dynamic adaptability prolonged their repressive tenure in office. The chapter then provides a summary of the series of uprisings that came to be known as the Arab Spring, and how and why the Tunisian and Egyptian revolutions unfolded in the form of mass-based uprisings while the Libyan and Syrian rebellions took the form of civil wars. The chapter ends with a discussion of what the central elements of emerging sources of legitimacy—the evolving ruling bargain—are likely to be.

3. *Taking Power, Re-Making Power: The Threads of the Cultures of Resistance behind the Arab Spring*

John Foran

Radical social change, in the sense of a deep transformation of a society, in the direction of greater economic equality and deeper political participation, and accomplished by the actions of a strong and diverse popular movement, is clearly in the air we now breathe. In 2011 we witnessed the Arab Spring, followed by the indignados' revolt in Spain, student protests in Santiago and Québec, street demonstrations and battles in England and Greece, movements around corruption in India and housing in Israel, striking miners in South Africa, Pussy Riot in Russia, workers wild-cattling across China, and finally, the American Autumn of Occupy Wall Street.

Explosions of change always raise the question: Where do they come from? It looks like these dramatic events just happen, but there is always a history and a context. This leads to another question: Are the events of 2011 connected? What—if any—threads of affinity do they share, and what explains their simultaneity and common sensibilities? I will argue that we are witnessing the rise and articulation of new political cultures of opposition on a global scale—ones that are rather different from those that inspired the great social revolutions of the twentieth century.

The origins of radical political cultures lie in the experiences of *people* and in the subjective emotions and dynamics that animate their daily lives. At the same time, consciously articulated ideologies—such as, in the twentieth century, socialism, nationalism, democracy, or radical interpretations of religion—travel from revolutionary groups into local settings. Meanwhile, “idioms” or folk understandings also circulate in communities, putting people’s concerns in everyday terms such as fairness, justice, dignity, or freedom. When this happens, a radical or revolutionary movement can gain enough committed followers to take power when other favorable conditions are present. What we might term the “old” or classical cultures of revolution featured armed insurgents directly engaging the state, with well-identified individuals at the head of guerrilla militaries, socialist parties, or religious leaderships acting *in the name of* the people.

In the twenty-first century, the nature of movements for radical social change has itself changed, as activists have pursued largely non-violent paths to a better world, intending to live and act as they would like that world to be.

Two distinct and rather different new paths to change have arisen and are sometimes pitted against each other: the electoral path to state power being pursued by the elected left-of-center governments of the Latin American “Pink Tide,” most radically in Venezuela and Bolivia, and the opposite route of turning one’s back on state power, and instead carving out autonomous spaces both below it at the level of the community as the Zapatistas have done in Chiapas, Mexico, or above it, as the global justice movement and Occupy have sought to do. The Arab Spring opens up a third new path, starting with massive non-violent direct action and following up with a struggle for new democratic institutions. All of these paths can be distinguished from what came before, not least in the new political cultures that have attracted people to them.

In January and March 2011, long-entrenched dictators fell to popular uprisings in Tunis and Cairo through massive occupations of public space by broadly-based social forces that resolutely resisted state repression with non-violent, ongoing, and creative direct action. In both cases, and unlike elsewhere in the greater Arab Spring, the regimes they faced gave way to popular demands and stepped aside. After these clear targets were sent into

exile or prison, the movements faced the structural obstacles of the old regimes' economic and military elites and quickly or slowly pushed them into elections that have cemented these non-violent political revolutions.

It is clear that the Arab Spring revolts were driven less by appeal to any ideology than by tapping into popular idioms of everyday concern. These were concentrated in the slogans chanted by crowds, in the first instance against the dictatorships: "We won't leave until *he* leaves." On top of these demands were economic and social demands: "Bread, Freedom, Social Justice," "No to youth unemployment," "No to Poverty," and most direct, "We Want to Live! We Want to Eat!" A coalition of the young, the poor, workers, and parts of the middle classes formed the backbone of the Arab Spring. Cross-class and intergenerational social forces combined to create the nucleus of broad popular movements that provided both the numbers and the slogans that animated the political cultures in play.

The originality of this approach to overthrowing dictators suggests that another path to radical social change has opened up in the twenty-first century: the sustained occupation of public space followed by struggling for a more open democratic polity—a kind of third way between taking national power through elections and re-making power by wresting communities from neo-liberalism's clutches. Rather than the dichotomous choice between seeking to change the world through elections versus building a new society from the bottom up, the future of radical social change may well lie at the many possible *intersections* of committed political coalitions pushed from below by deeply democratic social movements. The Pink Tide is already working near this intersection. Other struggles that point toward this include the long movement for radical reforms in Kerala, India; the experiences of the world's Green parties; the political movement that has grown up in Iceland since the great economic crash of 2008; and the global climate justice movement. The Arab Spring shares important characteristics with each of these new types of progressive experiments.

The post-2011 democracies of Tunisia, Egypt, and Libya are young, and it will take time to fashion new parties that embrace the anti-authoritarianism, social-media facility, and radical promise of those who occupied the squares. The people in each of these places—the most radical ones, the younger ones, the most savvy—have rejected the old ruling bargains. Like their 2011 counterparts everywhere, they are not done yet. If they continue, a new era in Middle East politics may open.

John Foran is professor of sociology at the University of California, Santa Barbara, and co-director of the International Institute for Climate Action Theory. He is the author of *Fragile Resistance: Social Transformation in Iran from 1500 to the Revolution* (Westview, 1993) and *Taking Power: On the Origins of Third World Revolutions* (Cambridge, 2005). He is currently working on a book titled, *Taking Power or (re)Making Power: Movements for Radical Social Change and Global Justice*, and is engaged in ethnographic research on climate justice movements. He has authored a number of articles and chapters in edited volumes on twentieth century revolutions and on the prospects for radical social change in the twenty-first century.

4. *The Arab State and Social Contestation*

Nadine Sika

Though the developmental paths of most Arab states were similar, the differences in the outcomes of the wave of Arab uprisings are substantial, and merit further analysis. Why did Tunisia and Egypt encounter less violence during the apogee of their uprisings, for example, while Libya's leader was ousted through civil war and foreign intervention? Why is Syria undergoing a civil war? Why was the uprising in Bahrain contained? Why was the uprising in Yemen comparatively more violent and why did it not result in a total change of the regime?

This chapter explores the similarities and differences in the Arab state formation process, which led to the different political outcomes in the post-uprisings era. Through focusing on three main countries, namely Egypt, Tunisia, and Syria, I argue that the nature of the states concerned, the extent to which the regimes were able to hegemonize both civil and political society, in addition to the historical use of the coercive apparatus against the citizens, are the most decisive factors for these different outcomes.

The chapter will first shed light on the state formation process of Arab states. Second, it will analyze the economic liberalization projects initiated by Arab regimes from the 1990s onwards, and their impact on the different regimes' ruling bargains. Third, state-society relations will be tackled in order to further our understanding of how the past two decades have led to the exclusion of large segments of Arab citizens, which led to the subsequent rise of social movements challenging the authority of the state.

State-building processes and the capacity of authoritarian regimes were different in Egypt and Tunisia as compared to those of Syria. Egypt and Tunisia saw similar patterns in institutional development, state capacity building, regime power, the personalization of different institutions, and the rule of law. State hegemony over the public sphere was also similar in both countries, where the state used "soft" authoritarian measures in coopting opposition forces and political dissent. This was juxtaposed with the development of a large state security apparatus, which was directly tied to the executive office. Both countries developed into "police states," where conventional political dissidents, especially political protest movements and human rights activists, were consistently harassed and detained. However, such harassments did not extend to the majority of citizens.

Decisive in the ousting of both Ben 'Ali and Mubarak were the framing of grievances that were enacted on the streets by the protest movements weeks before the ousting of the rulers. Because of unfair treatment and humiliation by the state security apparatus, Mohamed Bouazizi's dramatic suicide in Sidi Bouzid was soon to travel across Tunisia. Different groups such as unemployed graduates, school teachers, and students who shared Bouazizi's grievances demonstrated in Sidi Bouzid. On December 28, 2010, unionists and lawyers in different parts of the country, especially in Gasfa, called for solidarity demonstrations with the Sidi Bouzid movement, which by then had already featured calls for Ben 'Ali's resignation. When the regime's response to demonstrations were delayed, the main frame changed to "the people demand the fall of the regime."

Egyptian activists, especially bloggers, used the ousting of Ben 'Ali on January 14, 2011, to call for demonstrations on January 25, 2011. Symbolism here was essential, as January 25 is a national holiday in Egypt commemorating the police force. From January 14 to the 25th, many opposition websites boldly proclaimed that "Tomorrow Egypt will Follow Tunisia." Thus, Egyptians were prepared for mass demonstrations, initially calling for "food, freedom, and human dignity." When the regime ignored the initial demands, they soon followed the precedent of Tunisia—"The people demand the fall of the regime."

The regimes in both Egypt and Tunisia used violence against protesters through state security apparatuses. The military, however, which had been increasingly marginalized by the presidents of both countries, decided to abstain from using violence on protesters. Hence, in the case of Tunisia, the military decided not to intervene in the demonstrations. In Egypt, the military decided to side with the demonstrators after the “battle of the camels.” In the meanwhile, due to the increasing personalization of state institutions, the security apparatus and the police force proved weak and collapsed after the first wave of mass demonstrations in both countries.

Syria, on the other hand, developed stronger and politically more independent institutions as a result of its fairly new development as a nation-state. The creation of stronger and more independent institutions led to more decentralization. Hence, the Syrian Baath party was more powerful than the Constitutional Democratic Rally (RCD) in Tunisia and the National Democratic Party (NDP) in Egypt, and the military developed into a more powerful institution than, for instance, the Tunisian military. Nevertheless, the process of institutional development was accompanied by increased sectarianism, with a marked power of the Alawite minority versus the rest of the population. In addition, the regime was known to use extra-judicial and brutal reactions to social discontent, especially by the Islamists. The Hama affair—Rifaat Assad’s 1982 massacre of tens of thousands of civilians associated with the Muslim Brotherhood in Hama—was the most brutal incidence against civilians conducted by any of the rulers in these case studies. Hence, beginning with the first wave of demonstrations and lasting for what seemed like endless months afterwards, the military opted to side with the regime rather than with the demonstrators. This strategy was not only meant to save the regime but also to save the army itself due to its close connection with the regime.

The state in Bahrain, on the other hand, has shown a contradiction between the need to build modern state institutions, and the urge to retain control over the political and public sphere. The demonstrations did not lead to the ousting of al Khalifa, due to the prevailing contentious politics that had been ebbing and flowing during the past decade. Although the Arab uprisings may seem to be similar, this chapter highlights some of the differences between the public protests taking place in three distinct countries focusing primarily on the outcomes of the uprisings.

Nadine Sika is Assistant Professor of Political Science at the American University in Cairo (AUC). She received a Ph.D. in Comparative Politics from the University of Cairo. Before joining AUC, she was Visiting Scholar at the Political Science Institute of the University of Tübingen (Germany) and Assistant Professor of Political Science at the Future University (Egypt). She is currently consultant to the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and member of the Board of Directors of Partners in Development, an independent Egyptian think tank. Sika is the author of *Educational Reform in Egyptian Primary Schools since the 1990s: A Study of Political Values and Behavior of Sixth Grade Students* (Lewiston: Edwin Mellen Press, 2010); “The Role of Women in the Arab World: Towards a New Wave of Democratization or a Reverse Wave of Authoritarianism?” *Journal of International Women’s Studies* (forthcoming); “Youth Political Engagement in Egypt: From Abstention to Uprising,” *British Journal of Middle Eastern Studies* 39, no. 2 (2012), 181-199.

5. *Islamist Movements and the Arab Spring*

Abdullah Al-Arian

The Arab uprisings that unseated a number of dictators from Tunisia to Yemen have given way to questions concerning the role that Islamist movements are poised to play in the reformulation of the norms of governance within these states. This process entails a transition from a system based on the tenuous arrangements between semi-authoritarian rulers and their subjects to one rooted in democratic legitimacy, independent institutions, and a redefined relationship between the state and its citizens. The future status of religious norms broadly, and the Shari'a in particular, are central to this transition.

In order to address this question with the care and precision it requires, this chapter charts the evolution of political Islam in the Arab world and, in particular, highlights its growing engagement with the state. The decades of experience witnessed by groups such as the Muslim Brotherhood provide a rich pool of data from which one can draw more careful conclusions regarding the movement's posture in a post-authoritarian setting.

The weeks and months of protests resulting in the ouster of long-standing regime heads in Tunisia, Libya, Egypt, and Yemen signify a watershed moment in the modern history of the Middle East. However, this period is perhaps equally notable for solidifying the transformation of Islamist groups, long considered to be revolutionary forces in Arab societies, into reform-minded organizations that had found some accommodation with the region's authoritarian regimes. Thus, with some notable exceptions, the role of Islamic politics in the crucial events of the Arab uprisings appears to have been largely muted, drowned out by a broader protest movement shaped by a non-ideological civic identity. Nevertheless, while they may not have played an initial leadership role, Islamic movements by and large broadened the scope of their missions and adopted the popular refrain of "dignity, freedom, and social justice," around which millions of fellow citizens had united.

In contrast to their actions during the uprisings, the performance of Islamist movements in the transitional period that followed belongs within a separate analytical category. The primary distinction between the two is, on the one hand, the pursuit of a common national objective around which all political factions were united, and the subsequent attempts to marshal support behind a particular political agenda, and indeed, to impose a distinct vision for the post-authoritarian order. This can be observed in Egypt, for instance, where scarcely four weeks after Mubarak's removal the Muslim Brotherhood found itself at odds with the country's other political forces over the very structure of the transitional period.

Indeed, it is the behavior of Islamist movements during the transitional period that provides the best insight into their vision of a post-authoritarian ruling order. It was during this critical historical moment that many of these groups established official political parties for the first time, abandoned abstract slogans in favor of coherent political platforms, wrangled over the role of Islam in a revised constitution, and attempted to shape the powers and responsibilities of state institutions.

Finally, moving beyond the turbulence of the post-uprising settlement, this chapter also looks ahead to the long-term trends developing out of the contributions of Islamist movements to the emerging governance structures across the Arab world. Specifically, the interpretations of the Shari'a (whether expansive or limited), the understanding of the nature of the civil state, and the shape of democratic participation are set to define future modes of governance. Moreover, just as the impact of Islamist movements on the state are subject to

scrutiny, one can also examine the effects of governance on the movements themselves. The transformation from mass movement to political party is sure to exacerbate the tension between the quest for political power and the traditional social mission, while the need for greater pragmatism and compromise at the root of effective democratic governance cannot help but challenge the ideological orientation of Islamic movements.

As the aftermath of the Arab revolts has attempted to redefine the state on another basis, one that incorporates the spirit, if not the letter, of the Islamist mission, its need to persist as a discernable social phenomenon will gradually decline, until it ceases to exist at all. In that regard, Islamism is no different than all social movements that arise out of a particular historical moment only to recede once its aims have been achieved.

This transition has only just begun, but it can already be seen playing out in a number of challenges facing Islamist groups as they seek to redefine the nature of their systems of governance. In Tunisia, Egypt, Libya, and elsewhere, this has meant that, in some ways, political platforms of mainstream Islamist parties have become so generalized in some areas, whether on matters of the economy or foreign policy, so as to become virtually indistinguishable from those of non-Islamist parties.

To be sure, Islamist movements still face numerous challenges and contradictions that will only be addressed during the course of their experience in government. On the issue of citizenship rights, movement leaders have repeatedly expressed their support for national identity as the basis of a “civil state” but in practice, it remains to be seen how legislating according to Islamic principles would avoid adversely affecting the rights of women or religious minorities.

In the area of economic policy and social justice, the platforms put forward in the early stages of political contestation by Islamist parties lacked any imagination. They vacillated between vague allusions to Islamic directives that tend to the needs of the most vulnerable segments of society, and staunch commitments to the continuation of neo-liberal policies that were at the root of many of the socioeconomic ills characteristic of the authoritarian era. Similarly, in the arena of foreign relations, platitudes about pan-Arab and pan-Islamic solidarity, such as the continued verbal commitment to the Palestinian struggle, were often outweighed by more narrow national interests that precluded actual policy changes. Pressures from global and regional powers such as the United States and Saudi Arabia offered new considerations to Islamist parties unaccustomed to dealing with uncomfortable geopolitical realities.

Internally, the Islamist movement faces its own challenges, attempting to temper its traditional ideology to the changing political realities, while also adapting its organizational structure to meet the needs of a democratic society. In Egypt, the Muslim Brotherhood faced significant defections because of its inability to respond adequately to the concerns of its vast following. The rise of Salafi groups in Libya, Tunisia, as well as in Egypt added yet another major player to the emerging landscape of post-revolutionary Islamist politics, forcing a recalculation of each group’s religious credentials, or the questioning of whether such a metric will really matter in the struggle for popular support for political power. In addition, the shift in resources toward the political sphere has adversely affected the social mission of Islamist groups since the Arab uprisings began. While this may permanently transform the nature of Islamist organizations like the Muslim Brotherhood, it is likely to be

viewed by its leadership as a positive step toward the realization of Hasan al-Banna's original vision which deems the ideal government to be the mirror image of a sufficiently Islamized society. In that scenario, the evolution of Islamist activism renders it practically undetectable within a state governed by its virtues.

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6. *Political Party Development Before and After the Arab Spring* Shadi Hamid

Political parties have long struggled to gain traction in the Arab world due to a number of inhibiting factors, among them a potent mix of repression and government co-optation. This is not to say that the region has lacked viable opposition forces. Islamist movements—most of which are branches or descendents of the Muslim Brotherhood—have over time solidified themselves as leading political actors. Yet, they are a far cry from traditional, Western-style parties.

Whether acting according to the traditional model of party competition (where winning elections is an end) or “alternative competitive” and “restricted competition” models (where winning is a means), political parties generally seek to win elections and assume executive power. In the Arab world, however, parties were rarely given the opportunity to govern—or think about governing—at the local or national levels. Citizens saw little utility in joining parties that would never be permitted a real stake in the political process.

In country after country, regimes’ growing resort to repressive measures—including in Egypt, Jordan, Yemen, Algeria, and Tunisia—fatally weakened political party life in the 1990s. To the extent that if citizens wished to involve themselves in politics, they tended to join civil society organizations, professional associations, and, as mentioned, religious movements. However, as inconsequential as they may have seemed, political parties served a purpose under some semi-authoritarian regimes. Rather than eliminate dissent altogether, regimes hoped to manage and contain it. Political parties provided the illusion of freedom and pluralism. At the same time, opposition parties used elections—and all their accompanying rules and procedures—to negotiate the boundaries of political contestation with regimes.

Importantly, the ongoing transitions in Egypt, Tunisia, and Libya have provided a new space for the formation and development of parties. With the fall of old regimes, parties were, for the first time, allowed to win elections, thereby propelling them to a newfound prominence as the primary vehicle for political expression and representation. Despite a flourishing of new parties, in quantity if not in quality, those political parties in government have come under mounting criticism in Egypt and Tunisia for their failure to address economic woes. Those in the opposition, meanwhile, have too easily resorted to obstructionism while failing to provide coherent alternatives. Increased polarization, particularly in Egypt, raises the question of what makes a “loyal opposition”? Political parties themselves may decide that party politics is not the best avenue to challenge Islamist-dominated constitutional orders that they see as illegitimate. The resort to street protest and civil disobedience—as occurred in late 2012 over President Mohamed Morsi’s moves against Egypt’s judiciary—may lead to a re-emergence of civil society and vibrant popular movements, but it is just as likely to undermine the institutionalization of strong party systems, for both better and worse.

Party systems are a product of a country’s particular history. In their seminal 1967 study *Party Systems and Voter Alignments*, Seymour Lipset and Stein Rokkan argue that the process of state formation and modernization along with fundamental shifts in economic structures—the industrial revolution and accompanying urbanization—gave rise to differences among citizens and provoked lasting cleavages. Over time, the economic dimension of conflict in Western Europe became institutionalized—or “frozen”—in the form of parties that self-defined according to economic concerns, in particular the distribution of capital and the state’s role in economic production.

Yet it would be a mistake to think that party systems are historically determined. Parties inject cleavages into politics, by deciding what issues to prioritize in order to distinguish themselves from the competition. Those

cleavages in turn become more salient, forcing other parties to respond to and address them in the public arena. These considerations are important in situating the democratic transitions in Egypt and Tunisia. Both countries feature underlying patterns of party stability—oriented around an “Islamist-secular” divide—which are likely to hold for the foreseeable future.

Libya provides an interesting counterpoint to its neighbors. Unlike Egypt and Tunisia, Libya did not have anything resembling an existing political community. Qaddafi’s rule was characterized by a purposeful, and ultimately brutal, effort to block the emergence of institutions. Just as there were no political parties, there was no “party system” or any recognizable political cleavages.

After Qaddafi’s fall, Libya’s Islamists, well aware of their comparative advantage, tried to make religion an issue. Muslim Brotherhood leader Mohamed Sawan accused Mahmoud Jibril, former prime minister and leader of an alliance of liberal parties, of being a reincarnation of Qaddafi for not embracing Islam’s role in public life. The strategy failed, in part because Islamists were attempting to create a cleavage that did not resonate in the Libyan context. In a deeply conservative society, there was no recognizable “secular” constituency. Libya’s dozens of newly established parties reflected a widely held and relatively uncontroversial conservative consensus. It would be a mistake to assume, however, that religion will not emerge as the primary cleavage in Libya. Nothing about the party system is “frozen.”

Lastly, there is the question of whether strong parties are good for the Arab world in the first place. Due in part to higher levels of polarization, the notion of technocratic governments, presumably free of partisan allegiances, steadily gained favor in the Egyptian national debate. President Mohamed Morsi, in one of his first moves, appointed Hisham Qandil, a relatively unknown figure who had been a senior government bureaucrat, to the position of prime minister. This push for technocratic governments reflects—as well as amplifies—the increasingly widespread view that political parties, despite (or perhaps because of) their popular mandate, cannot be trusted with something as serious as government. Such views are likely to be damaging in the long run, as they make it difficult for the electorate to hold political parties accountable for their performance in subsequent elections, since they are not fully implementing the partisan platform they were presumably elected for. By depending on unelected technocrats, there is also the question of democratic legitimacy and the sort of ruling bargain that will come into existence between leaders and their constituents.

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7. *Revolution and Constitution in the Arab World, 2011–12*

Saïd Amir Arjomand

Considering constitutions as the formalization of the political reconstruction and the establishment of new ruling bargains for regimes following revolutions, the chapter traces the steps in the evolution of the new ruling bargains in the three countries where the Arab revolution of 2011 succeeded: Tunisia, Egypt, and Libya. It compares the pattern of constitutional politics in these countries after the ouster of Ben ‘Ali and Mubarak and the overthrow of Qaddafi as the struggle for the new political order among competing social and political groups and institutions that will entrench the emerging ruling bargains by making new constitutions. The comparisons are centered on four sets of variations. The first and second types of variation are in the traditions of the rule of law, as well as those in the character of the old states and the power structures sustaining them as key determinants of the parameters of constitutional change. The third is variation in the extent of negotiated change versus that forced by revolutionary violence. Here, a distinction is made between negotiated revolutions, where the old state persists and negotiates a new ruling bargain with the opposition, and the ones in which the state is destroyed and the revolutionary power struggle among competing groups determines the outcome of the revolutionary process. Tunisia and Egypt fall into the first category and Libya in the second. The making of a new ruling bargain differs considerably in the two cases. The last source of variation concerns the constitutional placement of Islam.

The absence of a tradition of the rule of law and the lack of a strong legal culture in Libya as compared to their long history in Tunisia and Egypt makes the outcome of the Arab revolution of 2011 largely dependent on the revolutionary power struggle. Secondly, Qaddafi’s state destruction and emasculation of the professional army is contrasted with the building of strong bureaucratic states and professional armies in Tunisia and Egypt, on the one hand, and important differences between the Tunisian and Egyptian state structures, on the other. Two sets of differences stand out as the most salient. The army remained aloof from revolutionary and constitutional politics in Tunisia, whereas in Egypt, it quickly gained control of the revolution and became the major arbiter of its constitutional politics. Perhaps an equally important difference between Tunisia and Egypt has been the far greater extent of judicialization of constitutional politics in the latter country due to a stronger judiciary in Egypt and its involvement in two decades of legal mobilization against the excesses of Mubarak’s authoritarianism. Thirdly, the very different itineraries of negotiated revolution in Tunisia and Egypt are explained in terms of the first two sources of variation.

Last but not least, the constitutional placement of Islam in Iran after its Islamic revolution in the 1979 Constitution of the Islamic Republic of Iran is compared with that of Egypt’s new Constitution of 2012 and the Tunisian and Libyan constitutional documents. The Iranian constitution is based on a clericalist Islamic ideology that made Islam the basis of the new political order and its constitution. It thus represented Shi‘ite counter-constitutionalism in the heyday of Islamic political ideologies. With the passing of the age of ideology in the Middle East, Islam has been proposed by the Arab Islamist parties as a limitation on the legislative power of the “civic state” and in sharp contrast to the Iranian counter-constitutionalist premise that it should be the basis of the constitution of an Islamic ideological state. Egypt’s new Constitution is accordingly examined as an embodiment of the emerging post-2011 ruling bargain presented as Islamic constitutional democracy.

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8. *Renegotiating Iran's Post-Revolutionary Social Contract: The Green Movement and the Struggle for Democracy in the Islamic Republic*
Nader Hashemi

In comparing democratic struggles in Iran and the Arab world, an important common denominator that unites both cases is the crisis of legitimacy facing authoritarian regimes across the region. In this context it should be stated that as you move from one country to the next, social conditions that bolster authoritarianism and impede democratization vary. The nature and character of authoritarian rule and the internal crisis of legitimacy facing political regimes are different. Each country has its own internal story. Notwithstanding the broad structural similarities in terms of economic and political grievances that have produced these revolts, the more we focus our analytical lens, the more we see that democratic forces confront different obstacles in each country related to class and minority cleavages, the strength of the military and state institutions, and the unity and coherence of opposition forces.

In this chapter I turn to an exploration of the crisis of legitimacy facing the Islamic Republic after the 2009 presidential elections. Specifically, I argue that the emergence of the Green Movement in 2009 was a second attempt by the reformist movement to democratically renegotiate Iran's post-revolutionary social contract. This social contract was formed in the immediate aftermath of the 1979 revolution and was embodied in the Constitution of the Islamic Republic of Iran that was confirmed in referendum in the same year. For the first thirty years of the Islamic Republic, this political arrangement remained largely intact and enjoyed broad support within Iran, but it has now unraveled. The electoral crisis in June 2009 is a key turning point in Iranian politics and the Islamic Republic today faces what Jürgen Habermas has called a "legitimation crisis."

According to Habermas, as individuals become increasingly disillusioned with the political status quo, the state is faced with the possibility of a mass withdrawal of loyalty and support. The core organizing principles of a society that previously existed now prevent the resolution of political problems that are critical for its continued existence, hence a "legitimation crisis."

I begin by examining Iran's 1979 revolution and the social contract that emerged as result of this political upheaval. A discussion of social contract theory and its linkages to political legitimacy are included in this section. I then turn to an analysis of how and why Iran's post-revolutionary social contract began to unravel and how it led to both the rise and fall of the reformist movement in the late 1990s and its second iteration in the form of the Green Movement in 2009. The similarities and differences between these two movements will be examined. Finally, the chapter turns to an examination of the Green Movement itself. What are its political origins, its key characteristics, its strategy for democratization, its strengths and weaknesses, and what obstacles does it face in terms of democratizing Iran? A final comment on the challenges and future political trajectory of the Green Movement is offered.

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9. *Challenging the Trade Union, Reclaiming the Nation: The Politics of Labor Protest in Egypt, 2006–2011*
Marie Duboc

The unprecedented mobilizations that toppled Hosni Mubarak's presidency in February 2011 have involved a broad range of Egyptians who shared economic and political grievances against his regime. Mobilization is nothing new to many Middle Eastern countries, and, in Egypt, labor protests, which were amplified during the 2000s, became a key facet of politics under the last decade of Hosni Mubarak's presidency. Between 2004 and 2010, over two million workers had voiced their grievances through labor strikes, sit-ins, and other forms of protest against the erosion of wages, rising inflation, and precarious employment. In addition to labor protests, demonstrations were organized by residents against water cuts or poor housing, as well as sit-ins staged in front of the parliament or the prime minister's cabinet in 2010 to voice Egyptians' grievances publicly. In retrospect, the overthrow of Mubarak's regime does not seem sudden or surprising given the discontent that these protests voiced. But while the erosion of legitimacy is not enough to explain social movements and mobilization, analyzing the process whereby the sites of power are contested provides a heuristic for understanding the political scope of protests and the conditions under which they take place.

This chapter focuses on the upsurge of labor action in Egypt beginning in 2006, analyzes the nature and demands of these protests, and examines what the notion of a "ruling bargain" has entailed for the Egyptian labor movement and how this arrangement has been questioned. The political economy context is critical to situate labor grievances against a background of rising casualization and changing role of the state since the adoption of liberalization policies (*infitah*) in the late seventies. However, this chapter argues that although local in scope, workers' collective action has not been rooted in a moral economy of protest that supposedly aims to maintain the status quo in exchange for economic and social concessions. By focusing on the defensive nature of grievances, the moral economy framework creates a dichotomy between economic and political demands, which overlooks the dynamics of labor protests and their relationship to authority.

Rather, I contend that the generalization of strikes, sit-ins, and demonstrations over the past decade has reshaped the scope of political participation. The need for grievances to be publicly articulated is part of the "politics of visibility," a process whereby overt protest becomes a form of widespread action to voice grievances among Egyptians and across Egypt. This shift, which is critical to understanding how Egyptians took to the streets in February 2011, has been given little attention in the literature. One strand has been primarily concerned with elites and institutions, while scholars who have dealt with "everyday forms of resistance" have focused on ordinary behavior and tactics that marginal and poor people resort to in order to respond to domination. Building on the contribution of this literature, this chapter goes beyond the split between overt and hidden mobilization to take into account changing patterns of protest.

I focus on the state-controlled trade union structure to examine how issues of representation and cooptation were part of the ruling bargain to ensure the political quiescence of the labor movement. Workers' initiatives undertaken since 2007 to challenge the state-controlled trade union federation have shown the limits of this arrangement. The wave of strikes that has swept Egypt must therefore be related to the 2006 trade union elections, which demonstrated that workers had no genuine representatives even within the trade union committees. The role of the trade union is also important to understanding the complex conjunctures in which labor protests operate.

While the state-controlled trade union federation is discredited and challenged by concurrent organizations, it has been the framework that workers need to take possession of in order to secure financial concessions. Finally, labor protests show the salience of nationalism in the social pact that emerged in post-colonial Egypt. Based on an ethnographic research conducted among textile workers in two factories of the Nile Delta region between 2008 and 2010, I argue that strikes have become a patriotic duty, a struggle to reclaim the nation at the local level in response to the state's incapacity to represent the nation.

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10. *Microcosm of the Arab Spring: Sociology of Tahrir Square*
Bahgat Korany

Al-Midan, also known as Tahrir Square (Liberation Square), is taken here as a microcosm for an analysis of the build-up to, and the events of, the eighteen-day mass protests—between January 25 and February 11, 2011—which culminated in the ousting of President Hosni Mubarak.

Tahrir Square was not just the locus of the mass uprising that brought down the Mubarak regime; it has remained as the central public space for political expression more than two years since. Tahrir continues to be the center of national and international news. During the sit-ins and protests, the protesters denounced the suggested December 15, 2012 referendum on a draft constitution proposed by the Muslim Brotherhood-dominated Constituent Assembly. According to protesters, the constitutional draft was not—in both content and process—the social contract or the outcome of the political bargaining they had been working for since Mubarak’s fall in February 2011. Liberals, leftists, the majority of Egyptian women and youth, and representatives of the Egyptian church had boycotted the Assembly and returned to Midan Tahrir in November and December 2012. Tahrir thus confirmed its credentials as the public space *par excellence* of contentious politics in search of the “right” bargaining formula for political rule, as shown during the uprisings against President Mubarak’s regime.

Though it is not well-known, these mass protests were preceded by a number of other protests, especially by the labor movement, which included more than 510 strikes and sit-ins in 2010 alone. Why did the Al-Midan protests of 2011 prove successful and lead to the demise of the regime? Was it a function of the middle-class youth that sparked them? Was it the massive use of new social media tools that young protestors were very adept at using? Was it the aggravation of social ills such as corruption or increasing poverty (about 40 percent of Egypt’s 84 million people live below \$2 a day)? Was it simply the growing erosion of an authoritarian regime that had grown too sure of itself, overdoing its crudeness and thus becoming provocative and insulting? The brutishness and gross fraud of the 2010 parliamentary elections is surely an indicator of regime excesses. Was dignity not a main component of the slogans chanted in Tahrir Square?

This chapter starts by briefly situating Al-Midan in Egypt’s modern social history, emphasizing its practicality as the meeting place of nine main arteries. This practicality helped the protesters overpower police forces and consequently compelled the security forces to flee as early as the evening of January 27, 2011. The second section explicates contentious politics as the paper’s analytical framework and the third section focuses on what the paper identifies as the three Ms: the Military; the Mosque; and the (Liberal-Leftist) Masses. The rest of the chapter marshals data and analysis to substantiate the analytical framework.

The chapter argues that group diversity notwithstanding, the initial spark of the Al-Midan protests was youth-dominated. Consequently, much of the paper is devoted to the specific context of youth organizations and their political socialization into mass protests through organizations such as Kefaya and the National Coalition for Change led by Mohamed El-Baradei. The emphasis here is on the contribution of these political socializing agents. However, later disillusionment pushed the youth to take things into their own hands and establish their own organizations, such as Harakat Shabab 6 Abril (April 6 Youth Movement), and Kollena Khaled Sa’eed (We are all Khalid Sa’eed). Analysis of the actions of these organizations leads us to emphasize the under-researched

generational divide among the protesters and to investigate the impact of new techniques of mobilization and framing, especially social media, in what has sometimes been dubbed as the “republic of Facebook.”

Tahrir Square has been iconic as the symbol of the “Arab Spring,” depicting the peak of contentious politics and inspiring other movements in Libya, Syria, and Wall Street. In terms of Middle East politics and society, Tahrir reflected primarily a by-passing of established opposition politics of the traditional political parties, and even many civil society organizations. Tahrir brought in new political actors that are here to stay, indicating the rising complexity of the “evolving ruling bargain.”

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11. *Protests, Regime Stability, and the History of Authoritarian State Formation in Jordan*
Ziad Abu-Rish

Dominant narratives of the protest movements that erupted in Jordan during 2011 and 2012 either repeat clichéd notions about Jordanian politics or hedge their bets by asserting that Jordan is “forever on the brink” of revolt. This chapter seeks to challenge such narratives’ underlying approaches by offering an alternative understanding of the persistence of the political status quo in Jordan. In short, what some analysts have referred to over the past twenty years as the “reform game” is still playing itself out in the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan, with little indication (thus far) of a rebellion against the conventional rules of Jordanian politics. More specifically, significant socio-political formations that hold the capacity for anti-regime collective action continue to be invested in the status quo, either as active supporters of the regime, or as an opposition that nevertheless does not question the legitimacy of the underlying political framework—even if only for strategic reasons. These dynamics are by no means fixed or permanent. However, absent significant shifts in institutional-strategic relations, the opportunities for changing them remain limited.

Despite its authoritarian and increasingly neoliberal practices, the mobilizations that occurred in Jordan during 2011 and 2012 were relatively small and never about regime change. This is not to deny the fact that some anti-regime sentiments were expressed in these mobilizations, or that perhaps such sentiments are actually shared by a significant portion of the population. Nor is this to deny the fact that some of the mobilizations that occurred in countries such as Bahrain, Egypt, and Tunisia initially took on a similar pattern, but eventually turned into mass-based mobilizations calling for an overhaul of the entire political system. The underlying analytical challenge, therefore, is to explain the conditions that have constrained the size of cross-sectoral mass mobilization in Jordan, as well as the factors that have tempered the anti-system orientation of the so-far limited mobilizations that have actually occurred in the country.

It is compelling to simplistically attribute these dynamics to the prevalence of pro-regime popular values among Jordanians, or the regime’s supposed “benevolence” and its (supposed) non-coercive orientation. I argue, however, that the seeming absence of a zero-sum game between the Jordanian regime and its challengers, as well as the general limitations of popular mobilization in the country, pertain to a particular history of state formation in Jordan—one that differs in subtle, yet significant, ways from that of countries that experienced full-fledged uprisings. At first glance, Jordan’s trajectory of state formation mirrors that of other Arab authoritarian states. However, and as the divergences between the cases of Tunisia, Egypt, Libya, and Syria highlight, it is by examining the historical-institutional and historical-strategic levels of analysis that productive sense-making of contemporary dynamics becomes possible.

The argument of the chapter is divided into three components. First, the particular history of Jordanian state formation is discussed, outlining important political, economic, social, and institutional developments, as well as the patterns of alliances and conflict they engendered. Second, the major socio-political forces capable of mass collective action during the period in question will be identified, and their strategic interests vis-à-vis the question of regime change highlighted. Finally, the potential for an alternative socio-political force to emerge is discussed, helping to conclude the argument advanced throughout all sections. The argument, in sum, is that institutional and strategic relations—themselves a function of the particular history of state formation in Jordan—produce

important disincentives on the *desirability* of anti-regime mobilization for those forces capable of organized mass-based contentious politics, and impose considerable constraints on the *capacity* for mass-based contentious politics for those individuals and potential groups that are interested in anti-regime mobilizations.

The goal of the analysis is therefore to shed light on some of the factors that mitigate against mass-based anti-regime collective action. Barring a contingency that will undermine or reconfigure such institutional and strategic factors, it would be presumptuous to expect an uprising *a la* Tunisia, Egypt, or even Syria. The conduct of various groups towards the regime will ultimately be colored by the short- and long-term strategic calculations within a particular historical context and set of contemporary legacies. These calculations center on the perceived and real likelihood of a violent regime crackdown, self-assessments of how each group would fare in the potential day-after scenarios, the imagined and/or real fears surrounding a potential Islamist victory, or even the potential for some form of widespread civil strife. Also important are perceptions about powerful external actors, such as the Gulf monarchies, the United States, and Israel, particularly in the ways in which they might come to the aid of the regime.

Change in the structure of political and economic power in Jordan depends on the level of polarization, and the rationale of calculation by various groups with respect to how they would fare in the status quo versus any number of potential day-after scenarios. Facile explanations of “enough is enough” or “the regime has run out of cards” ignores this fact. There has always been criticism, dislike, and even hatred for the regime. The fact that the current situation has emboldened some to publicly voice such sentiments should not be lost on us. But neither should the fact that such sentiments, however much shared by the rest of the population, do not necessarily or uniformly translate into broad-based mobilizations or widespread demands for the fall of the regime. In other words, the possible outcomes depend largely on the circumstances in place, which in turn differently structure the rationale of various collective social actors that make up the Jordanian political field.

As the vast majority of Jordanians continue to struggle to meet their needs and realize their aspirations, one should note that getting to “the brink” will depend on a number of factors. These include, the ability of alternative forms of political mobilization taking hold, the ability to expand such mobilizations to incorporate important social and political forces, the radicalization of the demands in the resultant coalition, and the ability to sustain such a mobilization whereby the alternative to meaningful change becomes too costly for the regime in the long run rather than the short term. Such abilities are not simply a function of will alone, but are informed by a series of institutional, strategic, and resource constraints. While such constraints are not impossible to overcome, and might be completely undone as a consequence of some unexpected contingent event, they are nevertheless significant and currently determinant.

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12. *The Persian Gulf Monarchies and the Arab Spring*

Russell E. Lucas

Has the Arab Spring caused a major change in the way that the Arab monarchies of the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) are governed? While in recent years the public image of the Gulf monarchies had transformed from that of the isolated and traditional desert oasis into the hyper-globalized skyline of Dubai, the political image in the popular imagination never transcended that of the traditional autocrat. The more scholarly approach towards the GCC states, however, uncovered slow but increasingly meaningful steps towards political reform.

The explosion of protests in the Arab world, labeled as the Arab Spring, has not left the Gulf monarchies untouched. It would be a gross over-statement to speak of the GCC states as having been affected by the Arab Spring as a unified block. As with the whole Middle East, in the Gulf monarchies there has been a variety of popular and government reactions to the events that started in North Africa in 2010. Protests in the GCC run from the quiet on the streets of Doha to the simmering insurgency of nearby Manama. Unlike their North African counterparts, no regime in the GCC has fallen.

This chapter argues that in each of the GCC countries, the ruling bargain has evolved but has not radically changed since 2011. After describing how events in the GCC have proceeded since the Arab Spring, this paper analyzes why the GCC seems to stand out in terms of the number and severity of protests compared to the rest of the Arab world. While the challenges facing the GCC states are not fundamentally different than those facing all other Arab states, the GCC faced different degrees of popular protests.

The next section notes that just as the degree and severity of protests has varied in the GCC, reactions by their monarchs have also differed—and not always in ways directly in proportion to the nature of the protests. Nevertheless, the policies of the GCC monarchies share some similarities that amount to an evolution of the ruling bargain in the Gulf. Economic stimulus was used to quell the initial wave of protests in all the Gulf monarchies. In most GCC states, political concessions have also been granted allowing for some limited degree of greater political liberalization—if not now, in the future. However, the most notable change in the ruling bargain in the Gulf has been the increased use of repression by state authorities against oppositional groups and individuals. Censorship, imprisonment, and even torture, have become much more commonplace in the GCC. Finally, GCC states have used the framework of regional dynamics to link domestic disputes to larger geopolitical forces in the “securitization” of sectarian identities as a cover for their imposition of greater repression.

Finally, the paper concludes with how citizens in the various GCC states view the evolution of their countries’ ruling bargains. While there is growing dissatisfaction with the monarchies of the GCC, the discontent is contained. This condition stems from the fact that Gulf citizens are not facing the existential economic deprivations that exist in other Arab states. Only in Saudi Arabia and Oman can one find a citizen economically in the working class. And across the GCC, neo-liberal economic policies have not made middle class citizens as downwardly mobile as they were in states like Egypt, Tunisia, or Morocco. The economic safety net from petroleum wealth has kept the floor from falling out on Gulf citizens. This classic “rentier” trade-off of economic wellbeing in return for political quiescence seems to still hold in the Gulf. Economic stimulus and the securitization of sectarian identities have brought Gulf regimes some political space. While Gulf leaders cite that they never promised democracy but rather “leadership”—unlike Mubarak’s or Ben ‘Ali’s elections—the rentier

bargain in the Gulf is beginning to fray. Marginalized groups in the Gulf are sustaining political activity because of new technologies and greater international interest in Arab activism. The increased use of repression—while effective in the short run—does involve the unclinking of coercive activities that in countries like Kuwait or the Emirates had little presence, let alone visibility. Repression will likely further undercut the rentier bargain and draw attention to the lack of economic and political equality between the rulers and the ruled in the GCC.

The Gulf monarchies are not immune from the forces demanding social and political change in the region. Yet, the social contract in the GCC has not been fundamentally rewritten in the Arab Spring—in fact, its leaders seem to have been generally reading from an old script. Nevertheless, structural and institutional factors allowed the Gulf monarchies more time to respond and more tools to use in making reforms in order to ride the wave of the Arab revolts—if they choose to do so.

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13. *Bahrain's Fractured Ruling Bargain: Political Mobilization, Regime Responses, and the New Sectarianism*
Quinn Mecham

In the context of the Arab uprisings of 2011 and 2012, Bahrain's tenuous and controversial ruling bargain came under intense pressure and rapidly evolved into a high-stakes political standoff, punctuated by periods of unilateral political decision-making and multilateral demonstrations of force. Although Bahrain has long seen political polarization between the ruling Sunni elite and the dominantly Shi'a opposition, the events of 2011-12 stand out because of the intensity of the popular mobilization, the state's reliance on violent repression, and the increasing shift from economic and political grievances to sectarian religious conflict. While Bahrain's ruling authorities remained in power during a period in which other Arab leaders were not as fortunate, both the remarkable levels of popular mobilization and the sectarian framing of the conflict in 2011-12 have dramatically altered the character of the underlying ruling bargain in Bahrain.

Bahrain's contentious ruling bargain underwent a seismic shift in the context of broader regional political activity, for several reasons. First, Bahrain's history of compounding social and religious cleavages primed the population for mass mobilization against the existing regime, as the costs of collective action decreased. This led to dramatic levels of popular mobilization, including the highest per capita levels of popular protest in the Arab world. Second, experiments with political reform in the previous decade created an institutional and ideational framework through which popular demands against the ruling elite could be framed, while failing to allow for the effective communication and resolution of grievances through state institutions. This created unmet expectations for political dialogue that would lead some to reject the ruling bargain outright. Third, the regime played a mixed strategy of concession and repression, which simultaneously accelerated popular expectations and amplified social and political grievances. Strategic inconsistencies within the ruling elite's behavior failed to create popular confidence that the normal rules of Bahraini politics were still applicable. Finally, Bahrain's small size and strategic position between rival Sunni and Shi'a power centers further stimulated mass political participation and increased the perceived political stakes of what would otherwise be considered a local fight.

For much of the period since the uprising began, the Bahraini regime has used a mixed strategy of both repression and concession to contain the challenge of mass popular mobilization. The regime rather systematically repressed the opposition (muzzling the media, making widespread arrests, preventing protests, and using violence against political activists), but it also made a number of limited concessions (release of political prisoners, establishment of an independent inquiry, and calls for dialogue) that indicated the government's desire to return to some form of ruling bargain that is based on popular consent rather than repression. This disproportionately repressive but overall mixed regime strategy in Bahrain has had two principal effects on the Bahraini opposition. It has led to a major rupture between the government and opposition forces—one that is qualitatively different from previous conflicts between the regime and its opponents. Likewise, it has divided the opposition between those who benefit the most from regime concessions (primarily the Sunni opposition) and those who suffer the worst from regime repression (the major Shi'a opposition groups).

The political contest in Bahrain has thus taken on an increasingly sectarian character over time, despite the explicit desire of the principal opposition groups to frame the conflict in political rather than sectarian religious terms. Some of the reasons for this increased sectarianism are structural, while others are based in strategic

choices by members of the ruling elite. Structural causes include the dominantly Sunni character of the Bahraini security forces, including the presence of many originally foreign but naturalized Sunnis, who are greatly resented by many in the Bahraini Shi'a community. The context of the Saudi-Iranian rivalry has also played a role in framing the conflict as a sectarian one. Although the early protestors avoided references to broader Shi'a identity, the regional rivalry between the two powers over Bahrain has led some participants to understand Bahrain's conflict within this larger context.

Importantly, the Bahraini regime itself has sought to portray the popular mobilization as an Iranian-inspired threat to Sunni hegemony in the region. One effect of the sectarian framing of the conflict has been a decisive split in the original protest coalition, with Shi'a groups losing many of their original Sunni allies. This has facilitated the regime staying in power in the short run, but has led to a longer-term rupture in the ruling bargain that will be very difficult to mend. A systematic reinforcing of the sectarian divide over the course of 2011 prevented the Bahraini opposition from building the coalition necessary to force the regime to capitulate, as eventually occurred in Tunisia and Egypt. Even among Shi'a groups, the opposition has fragmented over whether the ruling family has forever discredited itself through its support for violent repression, or whether there should be an ongoing role for the al-Khalifa in governance. The degree of fragmentation across the opposition has made a negotiated solution increasingly difficult to achieve, and has enabled the regime to maintain power under conditions of a tense stalemate. Despite continued popular pressure, divisions in the opposition allowed the regime to avoid any clear moves toward a negotiated resolution.

The Bahraini Monarchy has so far survived the remarkable popular challenge against the prevailing ruling bargain, but it has done so by making short-term decisions (to repress and divide the opposition) that will make it very difficult to sustain the traditional ruling bargain over the longer term. By increasing popular levels of both anger and fear, the regime's response to the uprising has deepened the social divisions within Bahrain, making the long-standing Bahraini social and political challenges more severe than they have ever been before. The use of repression has also backed the king into a corner, from where he cannot now turn to a dominantly conciliatory strategy and still preserve the ruling family's perceived interests. Because the events of 2011-12 have hardened popular feelings against the monarchy, truly opening up the political system will inevitably put severe and unwelcome demands on the monarchical system. Ultimately, a path forward in Bahrain will require difficult political compromises if it is to be jointly created through the actions of domestic stakeholders. If this does not happen through domestic political leadership, it is likely that international stakeholders will be necessary to define the terms of a political resolution.

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14. *Yemen and the Arab Spring*

Thomas Juneau

In November 2011, after months of street protests and growing nation-wide violence, Yemen's president Ali Abdullah Salih agreed to resign and transfer power to his vice-president. At the time, some observers anticipated that the Arab Spring would be the spark that would push Yemen towards collapse. For others, the uprising would provide Yemen with the opportunity to escape the spiral of state fragility and move towards state-building. Instead of overhauling state-society relations, however, the Yemeni version of the Arab Spring is leading to more of the same: a perennially unstable country where elite factions still dominate the political landscape.

Politics in Yemen prior to the Arab Spring were the product of an intra-elite struggle for power in which the people had little say. At the center was President Salih. A skilful political operator, he built a complex system of patronage integrating military, tribal, and business leaders allowing him to govern through a combination of bargaining, cooptation, and coercion. The result was a personalized system with brittle institutions, while channels for expressions of the popular will were weak.

The formal opposition to Salih was, until 2011, an opposition in name only. Its main vehicle was the Joint Meeting Parties (JMP), a coalition of six parties. Its leaders were embedded in the system that Salih built; they were neither democrats nor reformists. There were, however, growing frictions with the president starting in the late 1990s, primarily because of Salih's efforts to surround himself with family members and kinsmen. Nonetheless, JMP leaders did not, before 2011, seek to have Salih removed; tensions were mostly due to efforts by Salih to reduce their share of the spoils of power.

This order was contested, sometimes violently. The Houthis and the Southern Movement, in particular, resent the monopolization of power in Sana'a and are frustrated by the lack of development in the north and south, respectively. The Houthis also seek to protect their distinct Zaydi identity, while southerners seeking either autonomy or independence claim that their separate identity is incompatible with rule by tribally-minded northerners.

The 2011 protests acted as a catalyst causing this elite struggle to take an explosive turn as the formal opposition seized the opportunity to attempt to remove Salih from power. After months of occasionally violent confrontation, an agreement brokered by Saudi Arabia and supported by the United States led to Salih's resignation and his replacement by the vice-president, Abd Rabbu Mansour Hadi. This transition deal, however, only caused problems down the road: the ruling bargain still arises from an elite struggle for power, though some of its features have changed.

In the past, the political order was built around Salih. This has changed, as Salih is not *primus inter pares* anymore. Indeed, the balance of forces has shifted: Salih has been weakened and his adversaries strengthened. The Arab Spring has also seen the emergence of a new actor. Members of the street opposition, however, have not been able to insert themselves into a system that is unwilling to grant them a say. Most street opposition groups have thus rejected the transition deal, as did the Houthis and the Southern Movement.

External actors have played an essential role. Increasingly anxious at the prospect of prolonged instability in Yemen, Riyadh and Washington pushed throughout 2011 for the adoption of the transition agreement. By doing so, they helped prevent the emergence of fundamental changes to the ruling bargain: assessing that the risk of state collapse was growing, they supported an agreement that perpetuates the old order.

Yemen thus begins the post-Salih era facing much uncertainty. Because elite factions are succeeding in closing off access to networks of power to new actors, it is difficult to be optimistic about the likelihood of a more inclusive

ruling bargain emerging, one that would integrate civil society and dissatisfied groups. The situation in Yemen is thus likely to remain volatile: as long as the old order is perpetuated, Yemen will not be able to tackle the myriad economic, political, and security challenges it faces. There is, as a result, a strong possibility of protracted instability, with violence ebbing and flowing along with the intensity of elite struggles.

The most important variable shaping the future of Yemeni politics is the status of the Salih clan. Hadi, the new president, has ordered shuffles in senior ranks of the security services and the bureaucracy, pushing many Salih allies aside. The Salih clan, nonetheless, retains control over significant levers of power and intends to defend its position. The cohesion of what used to be the formal opposition, a loose coalition of diverse interests, is, in addition, a question mark. Some cracks have already appeared. The evolution of the de facto alliance between the formal and the street opposition will also be crucial. The relationship has been awkward, as both sides recognize the incompatibility of their goals.

Another development to watch is the National Dialogue promised by the transition deal. Will it incorporate the full spectrum of actors or will it evolve, as many predict, into a venue for the traditional elite to perpetuate their dominance? There are many reasons to be pessimistic. In addition to elite efforts to defend their privileges, many pressures will complicate efforts towards reform. Pressure from below will continue, while the threat of intra-elite violence remains barely hidden. Strife in Sana'a, moreover, has led the government's tenuous grip on the country to slip further. Underlying this uncertainty are the country's tremendous and mounting economic challenges.

The ruling bargain in Yemen prior to the onset of the Arab Spring, in sum, was the product of a complex struggle among a loosely knit group of elite factions. The 2011 uprising acted as a catalyst that modified the balance of forces among the regime's factions and modified the rules of the game. Nonetheless, the ruling bargain has not fundamentally changed: politics are still defined by a struggle among the same elites. Dissatisfied groups remain on the periphery, while civil society, despite unprecedented mobilization, has not been able to insert itself into networks of power. As a result, for the foreseeable future, Yemen will likely witness ongoing elite struggles for control over a weakening state, high popular frustrations because of unfulfilled aspirations, the constant threat of violence in the south and north, an al-Qaeda insurgency, and a deteriorating economy.

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15. *The Fragmented State of the Syrian Opposition*

Bassam Haddad and C. Ella Wind

To assume that the Syrian regime succeeded in staying in power for so long, and in staying afloat during the past two years or so as a result of its brutality, is to be near-completely unaware of the regime's historical policies and the Syrian political landscape. In this chapter, we provide a survey of the key events that highlighted the opposition's difficulties at undertaking collective action since the beginning of the uprising. This survey allows us to demonstrate the ways in which the regime, as well as certain factors of the Syrian political landscape, contributed to the fragmentation of the opposition.

First, we look at the regime's role in contributing to the opposition's fragmentation since before the uprising. We assert that as a result of the mild form of political bargaining before 1986, and its subsequent shift in alliances towards business interests afterwards, the Syrian regime succeeded in accomplishing two simultaneous and seemingly contradictory goals: first, it achieved a strong sense of leveling egalitarianism based on its distributive policies and political commitments to labor and most minorities, where it kept flagrant forms of social distinction at bay and provided a functional safety net for most social sectors (at least until the early to mid-1990s); on the other hand, it succeeded in keeping the regime afloat economically, and building a strong cross-sectarian base of support among the middle classes. The regime's brutality did take care of the rest, but was more of a deterrent than a continuous and ubiquitous exercise after 1982. Thus, however, the threat of brutal repression and force always lingered in the background, but was not the sole means to exact compliance. The end result was that the regime undermined collective action among both the losers and the potential winners from reshuffling alliances, while maintaining a substantial and loyal political, economic, and social base. At the same time, it is important to note that this took place at the expense of the "state" as state and the long-term stability of the regime.

The historical and structural factors that animated the rise and development of the opposition field in Syria continue to set the stage for divisiveness within society as the uprising continues. Within a few short months after the uprising, the infiltration of the opposition by external actors further exacerbated existing rifts and actively segmented off those parts that served the interests of sponsor countries. We have identified four factors which we believe to be the most important for understanding the fragmentation and obstacles of the opposition during the uprising, namely the geography of Syrian cities, which lie diffused from one another along the borders; a profoundly heterogeneous society; a polarized and still unfledged media environment; and a regional and international context in which many opposing and competing players are attempting to manipulate and administrate the uprising to their own benefit. We demonstrate the ways these factors have influenced the outcome during some specific key events that shaped the trajectory of the uprising and relations within the opposition and between the segments of the opposition and outside actors.

In a similar vein to the how the regime strategy played out, the interference of foreign powers, the empowering media landscape, and easy movement across Syria's many borders strengthened the hand of the opposition against the regime in some sense, but also stifled the short-term need to engage in real dialogue within the opposition to organize in a meaningful and encompassing coalition that included a wide variety of opposition elements to ensure its own crude survival. We thus find that regime strategies and the Syrian political landscape can explain paradoxically both the breakdown of the regime and the opposition at the same time.

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16. *Beyond the Civil War in Libya: Toward a New Ruling Bargain*
Dirk Vandewalle

Of all the “Arab Spring” popular uprisings, Libya’s rebellion that started on February 17, 2011 against the regime of Mu‘ammar al-Qaddafi stands as one of the most idiosyncratic and unexpected in the region. Few observers predicted that the country’s citizens would prove capable and willing to stand up against a regime whose mechanisms of repression had been an inextricable part of the divide-and-rule policies of Qaddafi’s rule honed over 42 years of arbitrary and highly exclusionary rule. By doing so, Libya’s citizens broke an implicit ruling bargain that had traded patronage for political quiescence.

Observers had long noted the severe deficiencies in the development of social and political institutions during the Qaddafi years, predicting both long-term chaos and enormous difficulties in reconstructing (or perhaps more accurately, constructing for the first time) a modern state in Libya. There is now some hope that Libya may well become the country that proves to be the exception to the widely accepted notion that all oil exporters in the Middle East and North Africa region are invariably highly authoritarian and deny their population a political voice. If indeed a more democratic system takes hold, the notion that oil countries tend to be less or non-democratic may also be proven wrong—a claim that has often been made by the rentier literature.

Developments in Libya thus present us with a number of intellectual challenges that go to the heart of how the academic community and policy circles have studied and described the durability of political regimes and of their underlying ruling bargain in the Middle East and North Africa. The literature on the resilience of authoritarianism now looks somewhat tarnished, particularly in the wake of the Libyan experience. The arguments “rentier state” theorists have made about the immutability of institutions, about the immobility imposed by one-sided social contracts, and about the resultant difficulties in constructing state institutions over relatively short periods of time, appear equally suspect.

This chapter focuses on how Libya’s new leaders will be able to reshape or in part create ex nihilo a new ruling bargain when faced with some of these structural legacies of the past. To what extent can it change the role of the state as providential provider in light of the relatively low capacity it possesses, and in light of popular expectations? Can the government avoid the kind of long-term patronage that in an oil exporting country makes governing easier in the short term, but imposes long-term political and economic consequences on the government? Will this “shadow of the past” continue to loom over Libya, or can a future government move beyond these structural impediments?

We should realize, however, that the ruling bargain and the accompanying patronage patterns that sustain them in oil exporting countries are most often very tenacious and difficult to remove, even if one political system is replaced with another. Particularly, the entitlement aspects linked to both prove very hard to reform, and patronage patterns often re-establish themselves in post-revolutionary situations, manipulated by new elites who take over access points from their previous occupants. Moreover, as elaborated above, ruling bargains develop over relatively long periods of time, reflecting the compromises those in charge of the state are willing to make to implement each ruler’s vision of what a particular political community should look like. Even if these bargains prove minimal in what they provide—as one could argue in Libya—they are deeply ingrained and turned into sets of entitlements citizens

come to take for granted in lieu of more tangible political representation. As we know from riots throughout the region, even small adjustments (or announcements of potential adjustments) to these entitlements can be highly dangerous, and governments are loathe to tinker with ruling bargains until pushed to the wall. Libya, even under the highly authoritarian rule of Qaddafi, proved no exception, as a history of its attempts at economic reform prove.

What then happens to such an implicit bargain when a revolution takes place that promises to replace its informally understood rules with a more normal and more durable state that relies on formalized, explicitly formulated rules? Although one would expect that citizens would want to trade up for more formal rules in order to enjoy greater security and predictability, the knowledge that entitlement arrangements may be altered often muddies the waters. And since, particularly during the political uncertainty that follows the overthrow of regimes, there are few rules to go by, instinctively protecting one's own (or one's own group's) entitlement at the expense of the overall community usually prevails initially.

This conundrum—that a seemingly very powerful state that regulated the minutiae of its citizens' lives could not muster the willingness to successfully implement and sustain economic reforms during the Qaddafi years—hints at the broader social and political structures within Libya's political economy. The question the country now faces is whether this conundrum of a former fierce (i.e. coercively powerful, with low quality social contracts) state incapable of economic and political reform is a harbinger of the future. Beyond the euphoria of Libya's July 2012 elections, the task of reshaping and creating state institutions that prove capable of greater accountability, and the ability to avoid the temptation of solving problems through wholesale patronage (and in the process recreating or maintaining some of the earlier patronage configurations) remains an immensely difficult challenge to the country's new government.

This construction of a new ruling bargain in Libya in the wake of the country's civil war has, however, started in earnest. The recent national elections were the first tangible sign of a consultation process that hints seductively at a possibly new understanding of how the state and the country's citizens will interact. As a result of its history, its emergence as an oil economy, and the idiosyncratic vision of Qaddafi, Libya emerged as a country where neither state institutions nor the country's ruling bargain between the state and citizens were clearly articulated.

It is against this background that the efforts of those that have taken up the responsibility to craft a political formula and a new ruling bargain in the wake of the country's civil war will be judged. In light of the country's history, those efforts will undoubtedly be very difficult. In comparison, the July 2012 elections will undoubtedly be seen in retrospect as a very important but relatively easy step to take, the beginning of a long road toward creating a new political community guided by a new ruling bargain, the contours of which are only now starting to emerge.

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