

THESIS

PEOPLE POWER FROM LIBERATION SQUARE TO ALEPOO: A COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS OF
NONVIOLENT RESISTANCE IN THE ARAB SPRING

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ABSTRACT

PEOPLE POWER FROM LIBERATION SQUARE TO ALEPOO: A COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS OF THE APPLICATIONS OF NONVIOLENT RESISTANCE IN THE ARAB SPRING

Beginning with Gene Sharpe's seminal work *The Politics of Nonviolent Action* (1974) strategic nonviolent action has been touted as an alternative to violent insurrection against repressive regimes, and, in its earliest hours, many touted the Arab Spring as a powerful example of nonviolent resistance in the face of longstanding and well-armed bastions of power. However, the epithet "Liberation Square" imprinted on the architectural center of the protests that overthrew Hosni Mubarak has faded, while the architectural centers of Aleppo, Manama, and Misrata no longer exist. However, the Arab Spring should not be forgotten by nonviolent actors. By mapping the methods, both the successes and failures, and the dynamics of resistance as it spread across the region this project forwards three central arguments regarding nonviolent action. First, participants in civil resistance do not maintain uniform agency across cases, and structural conditions play a significant role in determining the success of nonviolent resistance. Second, nonviolence should not be an ultimatum, and integrating violent strategies of resistance can bolster resiliency and strength. Finally, nonviolence is not a panacea, and should be contextualized within the political and economic contexts of resistance.

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Chapter One- Introduction

In 2011, beginning with the self-immolation of a street-side fruit vendor in Sidi Bouzid Tunisia, a wave of protests embracing democratic ideals and the expansion of political freedoms swept through the Arab World. Lauded for their nonviolent emphasis in the face of notoriously repressive regimes, these protests initially forced Zine al-Abidine Ben Ali from power on January 14th, 2011, and subsequently ended Hosni Mubarak's nearly 30 years as president of Egypt. Since, Libya, Syria, Bahrain, and Yemen, as well as a number of other countries, have felt the effects of this spread of civil unrest, not to mention, in many cases, the marked increase in both political instability and civil war.

Unfortunately, the inspirational moment that was the Arab Spring quickly gave way to what Vijay Preshad (2012) calls “the Libyan Winter”. Within a matter of days largely peaceful protests in Benghazi transitioned into an armed insurgency throughout Libya, and sectarian violence quickly emerged in Syria following the onset of protests in mid-March. Eventually, a North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) lead air campaign against Qaddafi’s forces empowered a violent overthrow of the Libyan regime, while the Gulf Cooperation Council’s (GCC) interventions in Yemen and Bahrain quelled popular unrest in the Persian Gulf. Yet, even in the face of the chaotic and troublesome political outcomes the protest movements tied to the Jasmine Revolution in Tunisia has engendered, many still hold on to the possibilities and potential that those first few months of protests possessed.

To be sure, all of the protests drew from an evolving and largely inspirational zeitgeist, and popular media and news coverage overwhelmingly placed emphasis on the nonviolence of strategies of resistance implemented. In the first few months of 2011, powerful images of popular unrest from Tunis, Cairo, Sana'a, Tripoli, Dera'a, and Manama captured imaginations across the globe, and highlighted the potential of individual action for achieving radical political change. Put differently, in rhetoric, the protests of the Arab Spring epitomized the agency of the individual in the face of long standing, well-armed bastions of power. For many, these images of protests in Cairo and Tunis also fostered analogies between them and other prominent and well known cases of nonviolent resistance—Ghandi’s resistance

movement in India, the Civil Rights Movement in the United States, the African National Congress's (ANC) resistance to apartheid in South Africa, and the Serbian student movement in 2000 to name only a few (see for example al-Khawaja 2014; Batstone 2014; Zunes 2011, 2013a, 2013b).

Put differently, especially in the early period of the uprisings, many authors found that preliminary evidence existed for the fruitful application of strategic nonviolent action, a burgeoning theoretical approach to contentious action started in large part by Gene Sharpe (1973, 2005), to the political developments surrounding the protest movements of the Arab Spring. In fact, perhaps most significantly, many of the movements central to the wave of resistance—especially those in Egypt and Syria—explicitly used several of the authors discussed above in preparation for their demonstrations. As a case in point, in 2011 al-Jazeera noted that leaders of the initial stages of the Syrian resistance movement used Gene Sharpe's 1993 book titled *From Dictatorships to Democracy* as a means of teaching nonviolent strategies (Q & A with Gene Sharpe 2011). Similarly, a plethora of news outlets have reported on how the April 6th movement in Egypt, spent time studying the Serbian student revolution detailed by Sharpe (2005) and Stephan & Chenoweth (2011), and furthermore Zunes (2011) affirms such anecdotal evidence—even explicitly saying that the April 6th organizers had access to the works of Gene Sharpe (400).

Moreover, in many ways the organizers and protest leaders across the Arab Spring contexts even consciously followed many of the strategies and advice found within strategic nonviolent action literature. For example, the April 6th movement in Cairo spent years planning and preparing for the type of demonstrations observed in January and February, 2011 (Khalil 2011, 21-67; Lynch 2011, 55-65; Zunes 2011). Further, the April 6th movement built itself around a largely decentralized form of organization, as suggested by Schock (2005); spent time prior to and during the protests communicating and organizing a commitment to nonviolence, as suggested by Ackerman and Kruegler (1994), Francisco (2005), and Stephan and Chenoweth (2008, 2011); attempted to highlight and publicize regime brutality, as suggested by Francisco (2005), Sharpe (2005, chap. 3), Sutton, Butcher, and Svensson (2013); focused on advocating clear and concise objectives, as suggested by Schock (2005) and Stephan & Chenoweth (2008,

2011); tried to create an inclusive and open-minded protest environment, as suggested by Sharpe (2005, chap. 3), Schock (2005), and Stephan & Chenoweth (2008); and even developed strategies to directly increase the resiliency of the protest movement itself, as suggested by Ackerman and Duvall (2000), Schock (2005), and Sutton, Butcher, and Svensson (2013)—implementing defensive measures, providing provisions, and even shelter and medical care in certain cases. Lastly, many of the activists’ central to the success in Egypt played active roles supporting and participating with the Syrian and Libyan opposition movements as the Arab Spring spread throughout the region, and therefore these protesters were also influential in organizing and promoting the spread of the uprisings throughout the region (Batstone 2014; Zunes 2011).

Finally, amidst the propensity for academic literature to dismiss the Arab Spring as a “black swan” or an anomaly, at least initially, theory surrounding strategic nonviolent action, or what Ackerman and Duvall (2000) label “people power”, seemed to hold potential in terms of explaining the impact of those early protest movements. In particular, the theoretical framework behind strategic nonviolent action, through its promotion of the power of individual agency, the disruptive potential of nonviolent action, and the communicative advantages nonviolent action presents in terms of garnering increased levels of international and domestic support, seemed to offer some prediction regarding how, if not when, the long awaited Arab Awakening could occur. Lastly, the transition to Preshad’s “Libyan Winter”, for some, even provided empirical support for the enhanced success of nonviolent resistance vis-à-vis more violent strategies of contentious action (al-Khawaja 2013; Batstone 2014; Zunes 2011, 2013a, 2013b).

However, the enthusiasm of these early academic works has all but faded away, and to what extent the Arab Spring actually conforms to the theoretical framework underpinning strategic nonviolent action is a question that remains largely unanswered. More precisely, perhaps two central questions represent important avenues within which research on nonviolent contentious action can progress and evolve, especially in relation to the Arab Spring. First, does strategic nonviolent action present a model with lasting significance for individuals within the political contexts of the Arab World? Or, second, does the theory adequately account for the outcomes associated with the extreme diversity of political contexts

within the region? Essentially, will the methods of contention intrinsic to the various protest movements be repeated in any significant fashion, and is strategic nonviolent action similarly effective across cases with diverse economic, political, and demographic conditions such as Yemen, Tunisia, Egypt, Libya, Bahrain, and Syria?

In brief, this project argues that the theory surrounding strategic nonviolent action maintains significant shortcomings in relation to the evidence associated with the Arab Spring, even in its earliest incarnations. More specifically, three central arguments deserve elaboration. First, the nonviolence that did exist within the Arab Spring was selective and limited. I say selective, because the type of nonviolence observed maintained a strictly counter-hegemonic emphasis. That is to say, nonviolent strategies existed only in relation to the security apparatuses directly tied to the regimes in power; otherwise, in every case, significant amounts of violence occurred along ethnic, sectarian, tribal, gender, or class fault-lines. Moreover, I say the nonviolent emphases were limited because they were temporary, and maintained specific and limited geographies. Put bluntly, primarily nonviolent resistance rarely outlasted the first week of demonstrations, was typically isolated to major urban centers, and was ubiquitously supported by episodic fringe violence. Together, the selective and limited nature of nonviolence within the Arab Spring altered how demonstrations disseminated across contexts, and impacted how effectively they drew in less politically engaged segments of the population.

Second, the importance of strategy and the degree of agency present across cases exhibited significant variability. More importantly, such variability was also highly correlated with specific structural and historical conditions. Among others, divisive demographic heterogeneity, specific colonial experiences, and the influence of regional and global power politics all altered both the strategic menu available to and the degree of agency possessed by individuals and organizers, which eventually played a significant role in determining the outcome of resistance. In some instances, foreign intervention effectively destroyed resistance, and in others demographic heterogeneity promoted escalations of violence and limited the solidarity of protest movements across regions. Moreover, while it may be possible to assign an important degree of influential agency to and highlight the role of strategic decision

making in Tunisia and Egypt, such agency occurred in relation to the absence of many of these aforementioned conditions. Both are highly homogeneous societies, have well-constructed national identities, avoided the most significant pitfalls of the Ottoman Capitulations, Colonialism, and the Sykes-Picot agreement—as opposed to Syria and Iraq for example—and lacked key strategic factors which eventually led to external intervention in other contexts.

Moreover, two additional points in relation to the degree of agency and strategic decision making that pervaded resistance in each case are important. For one, the three cases of successful regime change—Tunisia, Egypt, and Yemen—directly contradict the notion that nonviolent resistance is more likely to be successful. In particular, as Sharpe (2005), Stephan and Chenoweth (2008, 2011), and Sutton, Butcher and Svensson (2013) all point out, the key to successful resistance lies in increasing levels of social mobilization. However, in these three cases, the massive influx of individuals necessarily implied both a loss of strategic control by organizers, as well as an empirical upswing in violence: That is to say, as these movements became more successful, they also became more *violent*. For another, in all cases, demonstrations drew from a population largely outside the sphere of institutionalized politics or opposition groups, and protests themselves were almost universally most successful when they were most spontaneous. No-one predicted the events associated with the Arab Spring, and as protests became more predictable, organized, and infused with institutionalized actors, they also became easier to control and repress.

Third, in part derived from the previous two arguments, strategic nonviolent action lacks both the generalizability and explanatory power that theory has attributed to it. As noted, structural conditions impacted the significance of group-level agency across cases, and further, specific conditions may significantly alter the potential and possibly even the desirability of strategic nonviolent action altogether. Not only may nonviolent resistance not necessarily be better than violent resistance, but in many cases there may be much better alternatives, even potentially the absence of resistance altogether. In short, where and why nonviolent resistance should occur are still two questions that deserve further consideration. Further, these structural conditions also played a crucial role in determining the outcome of

resistance; hence, whether or not resistance is nonviolent may not represent an independent variable with strong explanatory power for explaining successful outcomes. In fact, many of the causal mechanisms outlined by strategic nonviolent theory may not even be neatly tied to the use of nonviolent strategies, and therefore nonviolent theory might suffer from both spurious arguments and intervening variables.

Moving forward, this paper will proceed as follows. First, I will present the existing literature on strategic nonviolent action, providing a concise definition of the term, an analysis of the important arguments presented within nonviolent theory, followed by an elaboration on many of the arguments made in this section. Second, I will outline the method and data collection techniques implemented, as well as provide a justification for the cases selected. Third, I will present the six case studies relevant to the Arab Spring. These cases will be grouped according to the similarities between the structural conditions observed, and each grouping will be followed by a discussion of the implications of the component case studies. Fifth, I will discuss and synthesize the information provided, and pose additional questions for future research.

Chapter Two- Literature Review

To begin, this section is broken into three distinct sections. First, I outline the definitional advancements that have contributed to a more precise conceptualization of what constitutes strategic nonviolent action. Essentially, this section addresses the questions of what nonviolent resistance is and what it looks like in practice. Second, I will outline the core arguments nonviolent theorists have developed out of the cursory definition presented. Third, I will highlight three potential weaknesses within the literature. In particular, I argue that there is likely an interaction between violent and nonviolent modes of contention in certain contexts, that structure tends to play an important role in terms of determining both the eventual outcomes and how resistance unfolds, and that nonviolent resistance has been inadequately defined, and may suffer from conceptual stretching.

(2.1) What is Strategic Nonviolent Action?

To begin, definitions of nonviolent resistance typically focus on three objectives. First, literature attempts to precisely describe both what nonviolent resistance is and what it is not. Put differently, a corollary emphasis to defining nonviolent action within the literature is to provide a negative definition of nonviolent resistance, primarily in order to highlight a range of theoretical and popular misconceptions associated with what nonviolent resistance actually is. Second, the literature focuses on identifying the specific methods through which nonviolent contention occurs, and contains two principal theoretical arguments regarding both the nature of these methods as well as why they are effective. Third, literature empirically identifies cases of nonviolent resistance, essentially highlighting the range and generalizability of nonviolent resistance both spatially and temporally.

First, building off his earlier contributions Gene Sharpe (2005, chap. 2) offers perhaps the foundational definition of strategic nonviolent action, emphasizing its strategic nature, its ability to be successful even in acute conflicts (as in ethnic and religious based conflicts), as well as both its historical observability and future potential. In all, Sharpe highlights 198 different methods for nonviolent strategic

action, which can be further broken into three general categories: Actions to send a message (protest and persuasion), actions to suspend cooperation and assistance (noncooperation), and methods of disruption (nonviolent intervention). These methods range from less disruptive forms such as boycotts and petitions to the much rarer extremes of large-scale protests and demonstrations.

In addition, Sharpe (2005, chap. 2) also provides a list of important misconceptions that serve to more precisely outline what is meant by the idea of nonviolent resistance, and such misconceptions have been similarly outlined and elaborated on by others (Ackerman & Kruegler 1994, chap. 1; Ackerman & Duvall 2000, chap. 1; Schock 2005, chap. 2; Stephan & Chenoweth 2008, 2011, chaps. 1, 2). In particular, specific misconceptions include the idea that nonviolent action must be principled, that is rooted in a pacifist ideological position, the notion that nonviolence is similar to forms of violent contention, that it has little or no disruptive properties, that it requires special leadership or extraordinary as opposed to ordinary individuals, that it is limited in terms of its geographic or historical observability, that it is limited when facing repressive and non-democratic regimes, or that it takes a comparatively longer time to succeed. In all, these misconceptions promote a conceptualization of nonviolent resistance that is intended to be both highly natural as well as pervasive within the vast majority of resistance movements. That is to say, nonviolent resistance occurs within every type of resistance movement, even primarily violent rebel organizations, and may even be normalized into our day-to-day lives, that is, outside of explicit moments of resistance (McAllister 1999; Sharpe 2005, 78-93).¹

Second, definitions of nonviolent action typically maintain two important theoretical components. For one, nonviolent theory establishes an expansive notion regarding the amount of agency that resistance movements and resistance leaders possess in relation to achieving their political objectives. In other words, perhaps, the central pillar of nonviolent theory rests on the notion that specific forms and manifestations of power inevitably exist within any political context, which can be specifically exploited through the strategic organization and actions of nonviolent demonstrators in order to achieve their goals (Ackerman & Kruegler 1994; Ackerman & Duvall 2000; Schock 2005; Sharpe 2005; Stephan and Chenoweth 2008, 2011). Ackerman and Kruegler (1994) even formally incorporate decision-making

models present within military strategy literature into their framework for nonviolent action, and Schock (2005, chap. 5), Sharpe (2005, chaps. 3, 4, 5), and Stephan and Chenoweth (2008) all similarly construct frameworks to empirically elaborate on the specific types of strategic action that may promote successful resistance in individual cases.

For another, nonviolent action is defined as a type of resistance capable of taking a litany of different forms and styles, and is also defined as a generalizable form of resistance across cases. First, nonviolent action can be viewed as broad in that it can incorporate a wide variety of economically, politically, and socially based forms of resistance. As stated, Sharpe (1973, 2005) identifies 198 forms of contention in total, and these have been elaborated on by others (Ackerman & Duvall 2000; Francisco 2005; Nepstad 2013; Schock 2005; Stephan & Chenoweth 2008, 2011). As such, the quantity of styles of nonviolent resistance has been shown to promote its viability and utility across differing scales and types of resistance (Ackerman & Kruegler 1994; Sharpe 2005; Stephan & Chenoweth 2008, 2011). In other words, nonviolence is as applicable to small scale environmental or economic protests (strikes particularly) as it is to national revolutions, and therefore different forms and styles of nonviolent action can be selectively applied to individual circumstances and settings, making it a highly useful and malleable tool for resistance movements.

As such, third, nonviolent theory argues that the presence of specific manifestations of agency intrinsic to nonviolent actors in combination with the flexibility of nonviolent strategies, promotes the potential for strategies implemented within individual cases to be generalized from and implemented in others. For one, many nonviolent theorists have elaborated on the important nonviolent elements that have historically played a central role even within many prominently violent resistance movements. Pam McAllister (1999) shows that boycotts, hunger strikes, petitions, and other forms of nonviolent protest were as important as violence in a variety of Marxist revolutions including those in Vietnam and China. Similarly, Stephan and Chenoweth (2011) argue that within violent movements, important nonviolent forms of contention have contributed to the maintenance of support for resistance, the placement of enhanced and variable forms of pressure on state actors, and the expansion of the scale of support, both

internationally and domestically, for resistance movements. In all, Ackerman and Duvall (2000) summarize such viewpoints rather bluntly, “violent victors had not always won because they used violence” (458). Essentially, nonviolent resistance is highly important even in civil war, a fact which could potentially promote its universal utility, and even, according to some, across examples of resistance empower nonviolent resistance as a universal replacement for violent resistance (Ackerman & Kruegler 1994; Batstone 2014; Sharpe 2005, 14-26, Stephan & Chenoweth 2008, 2011; Zunes 2011).

For another, nonviolent theorists have highlighted the significance of the variation in cases in which nonviolent action is evident, and have also explicitly attempted to promote the application of nonviolent action in examples where its application is seemingly limited. For one, many seminal cases of nonviolent theory—such as the Indian independence movement, South African resistance to Apartheid, or the Serbian student movement in 2000—exhibit both temporal and geographic variation. Sharpe (2005) expands analysis to 17 cases, Ackerman and Duvall (2000) add five more, and Stephan and Chenoweth (2011) provide significant regional diversification to the Middle East and North Africa. In short, examples of nonviolent action have been identified in every inhabited continent and in every decade since 1900 (Ackerman & Duvall 2000, 456).

In addition, Sharpe (2005), Stephan and Chenoweth (2011), and Zunes (2011, 2012, 2013b) have also highlighted the utility of nonviolent action in what Sharpe (2005) labels acute conflicts—or those maintaining heavy ethnic or sectarian overtones (11). Nonviolent theorists also highlight the utility of nonviolent action even in authoritarian contexts likely subject to high degrees of repression (Ackerman & Duvall 2000; Sharpe 2005); in areas with low levels of technological capacity for mobilization (Ackerman & Duvall 2000; Batstone 2014; Schock 2005; Zunes 2013a, 2013b); in areas with geographically dispersed populations (Batstone 2014; Sharpe 2005; Stephan & Chenoweth 2011); and in areas with strong histories of violence (Ackerman & Duvall 2000; Sharpe 2005; Stephan & Chenoweth 2011; Zunes 2013a).

(2.2) Why is Strategic Nonviolent Action Effective?

To begin, the definitional advancements associated with strategic nonviolent action have contributed to several arguments regarding both why and how nonviolent action can be successful, and also forwards explicit arguments regarding the enhanced effectiveness of nonviolent resistance vis-a-vie forms of violent resistance, even in examples of national revolution. Most explicitly, Stephan and Chenoweth (2008 2011) present a model that empirically outlines the increased effectiveness of nonviolent resistance as compared to violent resistance. Utilizing a variety of sources, Stephan and Chenoweth (2008) find that nonviolent resistance movements have achieved success in 53 percent of the cases compared to a success rate of only 26 percent for violent resistance movements (8). Further, Sharpe (2005), Ackerman and Kruegler (1994), and Ackerman and Duvall (2000) utilize qualitatively based comparative case studies to similarly argue that nonviolent resistance has maintained enhanced effectiveness across a wide variety of cases.

Moreover, arguments regarding the enhanced effectiveness of nonviolent resistance vis-a-vie violent resistance have highlighted a variety of important mechanisms that can be broken down into two general categories: Those that support enhanced levels of social mobilization, and those that engender negative consequences for regime legitimacy and power. Obviously, these two types of mechanisms are in many cases tightly linked, as enhanced social mobilization tends to be a leading factor behind the occurrence of either of the two principle sources of negative consequences for regime actors, political jujitsu or military defection; however, the specific causes behind each type of mechanism can be differentiated, and are thus important to consider separately.

First, nonviolent action literature argues that strategic nonviolent action presents positive impacts for resistance movements in terms of obtaining heightened international or domestic support. Put differently, nonviolence may inhibit external promotion of repressive regimes while simultaneously providing sources of revenue, protection, and influence for resistance movements themselves, and may also be a primary source of domestic mobilization (Ackerman & Kruegler 1994, chap. 2; Batstone 2014; Sharpe 2005, chaps. 2 and 3, Stephan & Chenoweth 2008, 2011; Zunes 2011). In particular, nonviolent

strategies maximize the potential for the strategic use of popular power—or power derived from increasingly larger demonstrations—by expanding participation beyond able-bodied young men (Schock 2005, 26-45; Sharpe 2005, 47-51; Stephan & Chenoweth 2008, 2011, 17-28; Zunes 2011 2013a, 2013b). Nonviolent resistance can also occur in areas with more population density than is possible utilizing violent resistance, which avows for increased participation out of convenience and word-of-mouth (Sharpe 2005, 51-55; Sutton, Butcher, & Svensson 2013; Zunes 2011, 2013b). Nonviolence can also force the hand of international supporters of repressive regimes, creating financing opportunities for resistance movements, enhancing the degree of media coverage and public support, and potentially posing economic restraints on regime actors, as in South Africa for example (Ackerman & Duvall 2000, chap. 4; Schock 2005, chaps. 3, 5; Sharpe 2005, chap. 6; Stephan & Chenoweth 2008 2011; Sutton, Butcher, and Svensson 2013; Batsone 2014).

Finally, many have highlighted specific characteristics of nonviolent resistance that may bolster the probability of increasing social mobilization and external support. For example, Schock (2005, chaps. 2, 3) finds that resiliency is increased by more decentralized approaches to organization, a multifaceted and flexible approach to the methods of nonviolent action, more expansive and inclusive movements, and finally by the existence of tactical innovations in both the forms of contention and the responses to repression. Stephan and Chenoweth (2008, 6-13) also highlight the importance of pre-existing campaigns, or that nonviolent resistance can help lead to the enhanced success of future examples of nonviolent resistance within individual cases. In particular, pre-existing campaigns tend to normalize nonviolent strategies into the repertoire of contention, and also serve to solidify future expectations of what participation in nonviolent resistance will entail.

Second, nonviolent action facilitates the occurrence of two central outcomes that pose significant problems for regimes: Military defection and political ju-jitsu, first coined by Sharpe (1973), to indicate situations in which regimes experience negative backlashes from episodes of repression (Ackerman & Duvall 2000, chap. 2; Nepstad 2013; Sharpe 2005, chap. 3; Stephan & Chenoweth 2008, 2011; Sutton, Butcher, and Svensson 2013). In terms of military defection, perhaps most exhaustively and similar to the

strand of thinking presented within this project, Nepstad (2013, 338-341) highlights specific structural conditions for which military defection and disobedience occurs in relation to nonviolent resistance. In particular, military actors are more likely to refuse to defect or disobey when they have the potential to lose large amounts of influence or privilege from a reduction of military authority, or when they perceive the regime as particularly strong. Further, perceptions of the strength of regimes depend on several factors: The international support garnered by the regime, the military capability of the regime, as well as the scale and scope of demonstration movements themselves.

Similarly, Sutton, Butcher, and Svensson (2014) present, to date, the only empirically based study on political ju-jitsu, which places emphasis on the role of effective communication in enabling resistance, elaborates on the specific conditions that help lead to regime backfire, and also places emphasis on the role of “pre-existing campaigns”, or when nonviolent strategies have been effectively routinized as a legitimate means of resistance (3-6). In particular, these authors find that political ju-jitsu occurs in 46 percent of the cases in which the repression occurred during a pre-existing nonviolent campaign (11). Further, they find that political ju-jitsu occurs most frequently when parallel media institutions, especially those not affiliated with state-run media outlets, are present both within and around resistance. In general, political ju-jitsu is intrinsically linked to the ability of nonviolent resistance movements to maintain a positive image vis-à-vis the repressive regime, which subsequently enhances the potential of international support and popular mobilization to separate regimes from their traditional pillars of support (Francisco 2005, Sharpe 2005, Stephan & Chenoweth 2008, 2011).

In brief, a number of important elements within the previous two sections warrant re-iteration. First, as Sharpe (2005) highlights nonviolent actors have a broad range of forms of resistance to choose from in order to achieve the withdrawal of both consent and assistance from the *ancien régime*. In addition, nonviolent resistance is more successful than violent resistance. In particular, it incorporates a higher portion of the population, creates a higher probability for military defection and disobedience, fosters a greater degree of international support, and targets regime vulnerabilities in ways they are not necessarily prepared for. Further, as Ackerman and Kruegler (1994) and Stephan and Chenoweth (2008),

among others, show strategy and strong leadership are highly important for successful nonviolent action. Strategic decision making can bolster resiliency, help effectively communicate goals and objectives, and alter international and domestic perception.

(2.3) Discussion

To begin, this section outlines three potential theoretical weaknesses present within the literature highlighted above. First, nonviolent literature often forwards an oppressively narrow definition of violence, and ignores important feedback loops between forms of violent and nonviolent resistance. Second, nonviolent literature expresses an expansive notion of individual and group-level agency, which does not mesh well with the political outcomes of the Arab Spring. Structural conditions significantly shaped the impact of individual and resistance movement agency across cases, and may pose significant barriers to effective nonviolent resistance. Third, nonviolent literature may overstate the generalizability of nonviolent resistance across cases, as well as the explanatory potential of nonviolent strategies in relation to successful resistance. In other words, the application of nonviolent resistance may be limited, and its success, when it occurs, may be determined by a host of alternative factors

(2.3.1) Conceptual Stretching and Radical Flanks

To begin, nonviolent theory tends to marginalize the impact of episodes of violence within any case of nonviolent resistance examined, or to re-word Ackerman's and Duvall's (2000) statement, it is possible that nonviolent victors did not always win because of nonviolence. More specifically, three arguments may hold significance. First, forms of nonviolent and violent contention are rarely completely absent from episodes of resistance, especially on a national scale, and this fact presents significant externalities that warrant consideration. Second, radical flanks and various types of physical violence may have important positive impacts on even otherwise nonviolent resistance movements. Third, nonviolent literature also tends to produce an overly narrow definition of violence thereby placing virtually complete emphasis on nonviolence in relation to hegemonic forces, that is typically the coercive apparatuses of the

state, and, in relation to the first point, alternative forms of violence, drawing from Galtung (1996, chap. 1 and 2), this may significantly impact the process of nonviolent resistance for a host of reasons.

First, the interplay between forms of violent and nonviolent contention, as well as the strategic importance of radical flanks are both important factors to consider. Seidman (2001) shows how violent guerilla groups were important strategically within the ANC resistance, especially initially, to Apartheid in South Africa—a classic, almost universal, case for nonviolent theorists. Similarly, Herbert Haines (1994) identifies a radicalization of the civil rights movement in the United States during the 1960's, which he argues was the catalyst for the unprecedented change achieved. Haines defines radical as any group directly opposed or viewed as particularly threatening to some segment of society (16), and finds that radical flanks within the civil rights movement actually served to support and benefit the mainstream movements themselves. While Haines does not explicitly link radical flanks with violence, others have shown that more violent groups can have similar positive impacts for resistance (Tilly 2008, 20-27; Tarrow 2011, 103-111). Evidence from the Arab Spring also supports such a conclusion. The Tunisian and Egyptian examples maintained significant examples of violence, even if specific geographic locales and demographic populations maintained strong elements of nonviolence, and Syria, Libya, and Yemen quickly turned violent, but also still simultaneously maintained examples of nonviolent resistance in major urban centers.

Furthermore, the existence of radical flanks is even a point conceded by several authors within strategic nonviolent action literature. For example, Schock (2005) finds that positive, and importantly specifically violent radical flank effects existed in at least half of the cases of nonviolent resistance he examined, and Sutton, Butcher, & Svensson (2014) even find that violent radical flanks can explicitly create political ju-jitsu derived from changes in international backing—therefore becoming a potentially important factor in determining the success of resistance.

In addition, it is important to consider how more expansive definitions of violence may impact the spread of resistance, as well as how physical violence may be problematically directed against specific segments of the population, in part due to longstanding examples of cultural and structural violence. For

one, Brantz (2014), drawing heavily from Galtung (1996), shows how nonviolent resistance fails to address many sources of violence within society. In particular, Brantz argues that what many nonviolent theorists, focusing on Sharpe (1973) most explicitly, have essentially posed is a situation in which:

...there is a temporary separation of the current head of state from the pillars of support, not an entire restructuring of the state system to make it more inclusive and life enhancing. Furthermore, even if collective refusal to cooperate with government leads to top-level resignations, economic structures are likely to remain unchanged, particularly if most property is privately owned. The dictator and his guards are gone; the structural violence is the same (6).

Hence, Brantz views most strategic nonviolent campaigns as reformist, and therefore as not altogether revolutionary. Put differently, strategic nonviolent action tends to create minimal changes to pre-existing structures, and although possibly changing who benefits, does not affect the way in which society generally functions. As such, due to factors derived from structural inequalities, racism, or other forms of discrimination, nonviolent resistance may fail to spread evenly across geography especially on a national level. Underprivileged ethnic groups may fail to participate, and privileged groups may back the regime. For example, in Syria Sunni organized protests in Dera'a failed to spread evenly or cohesively across the Kurdish dominated areas, and largely failed to reach the central bases of regime support in Damascus and Aleppo. Moreover, as Brantz shows, nonviolent resistance may be least capable of overcoming these structural obstacles, or may face extreme difficulties in doing so.

For another, many of the outlined mechanisms behind the effectiveness of nonviolent resistance, such as military defection and political ju-jitsu, tend to place complete emphasis on the importance of avoiding violence in relation to hegemonic forces—as in reactionary violence against regime repression—as opposed to avoiding violence against other forces or segments within society. Such is in part necessary, as no movement is typically entirely nonviolent, in order to have empirical data to analyze nonviolent action, literature must identify cases of nonviolent resistance even if important and blatant examples of what Tilly (2003) labels individual aggression—such as looting, non-fatal beatings, and rape—occur. However, individual level violence can potentially be strongly linked to cultural norms and historically derived grievances, and thus may be highly difficult for resistance organizers in certain situations to control.²

Hence, even if protest movements can maintain a nonviolent stance towards hegemonic forces, they are unlikely to be able to control violence against segments of society that have been traditionally, or, in some instances where economic grievances related to inequality persist, newly disenfranchised. Moreover, the organizational problems associated with individual level aggression imply that where grievances along sectarian, gender, or ethnic lines are especially pronounced, the execution of nonviolent action faces unique difficulties. In highly patriarchal societies women may be less inclined to participate due to the negative attention and violence they may receive, and the same logic applies to religious and ethnic minority groups. As such, while nonviolent theory certainly stresses the importance of broad and inclusive movements, the central reason such movements exist may be due to the lack of significant ethnic, sectarian, or tribal cleavages, which all represent factors beyond the control of individuals or movements themselves. Put differently, the reality of individual aggression linked to specific grievances may significantly alter the degree to which protests spread, as well as the extent of solidarity and coordination between geographically separated groups.

In short, collectively, these violent realities across all resistance movements indicate that descriptions expressing the lack of physical violence within the Arab Spring may necessitate the use of lenses of analysis that are extremely limited by both scope and scale. For example, within the Egyptian context moving geographically away from Tahrir Square, as well as temporally away from January 25th, the nonviolence of resistance begins to fade away (Thager 2011; Masoud 2011; Kirckpatrick b, 2011). Looting in Alexandria and Luxor was taking place soon after protests started, and the widespread destruction of infrastructure and buildings was rampant even in Cairo. Over time, protests espousing divergent political orientations emerged, and eventually the intimidation of Coptic populations became normalized within protests themselves. Put differently, nonviolence may be a normal starting point for resistance movements attempting to place pressure on highly militarized regimes; however, such emphases are rarely effective in their own right, and are likely temporary, eventually giving way to differing forms of violence.

To summarize, this section highlights two central points. First, resistance is rarely ever totally either entirely violent or nonviolent, and radical flanks may have important benefits for nonviolent resistance. Second, differing forms of violence, such as structural or cultural violence, as well as different targets of violence, as in the state or other hegemonic actors as compared to more disenfranchised segments of population, are likely to occur in cases maintaining sectarian or ethnic conflict, and may also be an inevitable consequence of higher numbers of participation. As such, individual level aggression targeted at specific populations may create important difficulties for nonviolent demonstrations.

(2.3.2) How Strategic is Nonviolent Resistance? The Agency-Structure Problem

A second weakness within nonviolent theory may be the emphasis typically placed on individual or group level agency, and its relative lack of emphasis on the importance of specific structural conditions. First, as discussed above, the presence of either of Galtung's (1996) definitions for structural or cultural violence, or the presence of Tilly's (2003) individual level aggression against underprivileged segments of the population may be one mechanism through which nonviolent resistance faces structural difficulties. To simplify, one particular structural condition that may hold significance is the presence of stark ethnic or tribal heterogeneity. Here, Syria, Bahrain, Libya, and Yemen are prime examples highlighting the difficulties of the effective dissemination of protests across these fault lines. Moreover, the stark homogeneity of both the Tunisian and Egyptian population may provide insight into why these protest movements were relatively more successful.

For example, in Syria, the problematic reality of a regime dominated by a minority sectarian group representing about 12 percent of the total population, almost certainly limited the potential, and potentially even the desirability of persistent nonviolent action. For one, military defection in such instances is highly unlikely, as it would effectively destroy the privileged position of military personnel and put them in danger of retributive violence (Nepstad 2013; Bellin 2014). For another, the regime itself may be more likely to have an all-or-nothing attitude towards resistance, and therefore may be far more resistant to any type of political or economic change. In short, to put such an argument in the context of a

prominent nonviolent example, it may be true that Christian Serbians could successfully overthrow Slobodan Milosevic, but it would likely be problematic to suggest Muslim Bosniaks could do the same. Unfortunately, while violent resistance by minority groups may not be more desirable than nonviolent resistance, no resistance may be the best solution of all.

Second, structural conditions may significantly alter the strategic considerations of both regional and international state actors regarding regime change, and this may have significant influence on the outcome of resistance. Here, Bahrain is the most obvious example: Saudi Arabian apprehension to a democratic, and therefore Twelver Shi'a dominated Bahrain eventually led to military intervention by the GCC on March 14th, 2011. Similarly, NATO intervention occurred in Libya, but not in Syria in part due to international support within the Security Council for the Assad regime, as well as his strong regional ties between the Assad regime and both Hezbollah and Iran. In short, in cases where international intervention is likely, as in Bahrain for example, nonviolent protests may be especially vulnerable, and in some cases, as in Libya and Yemen, may even force a transition to more violent strategies.

Third, a host of other factors also had important impacts on the strategic nature of the Arab Spring protests. For one, the strategic nature of the Tunisian protests in particular, but also of the five subsequent cases has been overstated. As a case in point, the symbolic suicide of Muhammad Boazizi seems unlikely to represent a *strategic* point of origination for nation-wide protests. Further, clear messaging and effective communication in Sidi Boazid, or in protests in Tunis and elsewhere around the country lack evidentiary support. These protests were far more spontaneous than they were strategic, and Egypt's, Syria's, Bahrain's, and Yemen's early demonstration drew heavily from the example of Tunisia. Moreover, the central mechanism behind the success of movements such as those in Tunisia and Egypt, the large scale of protests, significantly deteriorates the ability of movements to effectively communicate and act strategically. Put more bluntly, to succeed these movements required more protesters, yet with larger protests came an inevitable loss of centralized or even decentralized control.

Put differently, the very mechanism through which nonviolent action can achieve success and engender political ju-jitsu and military defection, increasing levels of social mobilization, may also imply

a loss of strategy. In both Tunisia and Egypt, centralized protests not only grew to numbers reaching into the millions, seemingly all but eliminating the prospects of organizers effectively controlling individual actors, but each movement also relied to a large extent on a significant degree of geographic dispersion—as for example between Luxor and Alexandria or Sidi Bouzid and Tunis—that also likely limited the ability of organizers to act strategically and communicate effectively, especially as virtually all formal communication networks ceased to function. Further, given the violence that occurred in areas that experienced enhanced repression, such as in Suez or Sidi Bouzid, it seems possible that the nonviolent nature of contemporaneous protests—those in Cairo and Tunis—may be highly correlated to the comparatively lower levels of regime repression in those locales. Had repression in Tunis occurred on a similar scale as that in Sidi Bouzid, the outcome may have been significantly different.

Moreover, while the size of demonstrations or the degree of disruption they caused were central to the success of both the Tunisian and Egyptian protests; those variables can easily be linked to a number of other explanations. Years of economic stagnation left important demographic categories unemployed, educated, and likely bored, perhaps this was more important in determining the scale of initial protests. Further, to give one example, Batstone (2014), Stephan and Chenoweth (2008, 2011), and Zunes (2011) all link enhanced international pressure as a possible mechanism through which regimes became severed from their external support; however, it was also one of the single most limiting factors in the Bahraini, Syrian, and Yemeni contexts. In addition, international support explicitly promoted the transitions to violence in Libya, and attempted, if only half-heartedly, to do the same in Syria. While some admit this point, the degree to which the influence of external actors directly influenced the outcome of protests is hard to overstate. Put bluntly, where the economic powers of both the International System and the region promoted protest movements, they succeeded, where they did not they failed, and this may not be significantly linked to the means of resistance implemented.

As such, there is an important degree of ambiguity with which identified mechanisms for effective resistance are actually related to the nonviolence associated with the strategies implemented. At times, nonviolent resistance caused significant degrees of external pressure on entrenched regimes, but at

times this failed miserably and in other cases transitions to violence even caused such pressure (Libya for example). Moreover, the agency of protesters may be highly contingent on specific structural and historical conditions across cases, and this is an important point to effectively understand and unpack.

(2.3.3) Is Nonviolent Resistance Generalizable Across Cases?

A third weakness of nonviolent resistance is that the forms and styles of nonviolent resistance may not be generalizable across cases, and nonviolence may not be effective as a primary strategy in many cases altogether. The successful strategies, regardless of how nonviolent they actually were, utilized in Egypt cannot simply be transmuted to and replicated in political contexts like Syria and Libya—and in many respects, such was rather exhaustively attempted to little to no success. Moreover, the effective communication and strategic decision making which were able to occur within the Egyptian example, was buoyed by a host of structural factors that avowed for successful resistance to Mubarak, and the absence of these conditions posed monumental stumbling blocks to protests elsewhere. In short, the agency of protesters and organizers was quickly subsumed by structural realities, which subsequently determined the success, and in some instances the extent of nonviolence, for each individual movement.

In other words, taken collectively, the arguments presented above present a rather bleak picture of either the utility of generalizing applications of nonviolent action to other cases, or its function as an explanatory variable of unique significance. For one, areas with stark demographic heterogeneity, and protests in countries that possess problematic strategic considerations for external actors, may be poor areas for the initiation of nonviolent resistance. As a case in point, the fact that both Yemen and Bahrain maintain majority Shi'a populations, while neighboring (in Bahrain's case connected by a 15 miles long highway) one of the most important Sunni Arab countries in the world was highly problematic. Further, in Yemen, multiple violent secession movements existed, the Houthi rebels in the North and the al-Qa'eda in the Arab Peninsula (AQAP) in the Southwest, which presented a potentially significant limiting factor for the application of nonviolent resistance. Similarly, Syria maintains a Shi'a dominated government, which represents a huge minority in the face of a nearly 67 percent Sunni majority, this time

neighboring the most powerful Shi'a country in the world. In Libya, historical conditions and tribal relationships had created large differences between the Eastern, Western, and Central regions of the country, and Qaddafi had also systematically isolated every possible source of external support.

In summation, the nonviolence observed was highly selective, only observable in relation to hegemonic forces, and was limited both temporally and geographically across cases. Second, the agency and strategic capabilities of protest movements was almost entirely determined by two structural conditions: The extent of social heterogeneity and the strategic interests of external actors. External support also had little to do with the activities of resistance movements, and dissemination and solidarity across regions were limited by pervasive demographic heterogeneity. In all, the application of nonviolence may be limited, and the degree of nonviolence within particular examples of resistance may not be as significant of an explanatory variable as theory would like to believe.

Endnote

¹ This point is certainly not confined or original to literature on strategic nonviolent action, which in part leads to my argument of conceptual stretching. For example, it correlates nicely with innovations within social movement literature such as Scott (1985, 1-88) or Tarrow (2011, 93-118). In short, because violence may be easier to explicate from day-to-day life, it may be important to better distinguish between everyday resistance and “nonviolent revolution”.

² Here Galtung (1996, Chaps. 1, 2, and 3), Tilly (2003, chap. 2), and Tarrow (2011, chaps. 5-8) all offer theoretical support. In short, increasing social mobilization may pose dynamic problems, as increasing violence in relation to longstanding manifestations of cultural and structural violence, may beget examples of physical violence under circumstances such as the Arab uprisings. In turn, this may actually negatively impact levels of mobilization, and may pose barriers, based on individual and group level expectations, to mobilization in the first place.

Chapter Three- Method, Data, and Case Selection

(3.1) Method

To begin, this project presents a set of the category of comparative case studies, which Liphart (1971) labels “theory-infirmiting case studies”. According to Liphart, theory-infirmiting case studies present a largely inductive picture, which highlights “infirmiting” evidence for existing hypotheses (see 684-686). To be sure, Liphart finds this category of case studies to have limited utility; however, central to Liphart’s preference for other types of case studies is the assumption that the theory under consideration involves an adequate accumulation of case studies therefore limiting the utility of adding only one more theory-infirmiting case study. Hence, the central logic behind the methodology implemented, centers on the argument that strategic nonviolent action does not contain a large enough number of cases to adequately dismiss the value of a single non-conforming case, much less a set of six.

In particular, two issues lend credence to such an argument. First, existing comparative studies inevitably contain bias towards nonviolent resistance vis-à-vis violent resistance. For one, the breadth of forms of nonviolent contention, avow researchers to empirically focus on cases where the objectives of resistance are more achievable than in many cases involving violent resistance. According to Stephan and Chenoweth (2008), the best empirical study within the literature, “To be designated as a “success” campaigns must meet two criteria: (1) its stated objective must have occurred within a reasonable period of time (two years), (2) the campaign had to have had a discernible effect on the outcome” (17). In short, the “stated objective” of a boycott or a strike is much different than the “stated objective” of a violent revolution, or even claims associated with more small scale types of violence such as terrorism. Groups opting for violent strategies may be operating from a disadvantaged starting point, or may be operating in situations exhibiting extreme instability, as in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC) for example. Further, “a discernible effect” is not a highly rigorous categorization, and may bias results in favor of

nonviolent resistance because of potential visibility increases; that is to say, mainly due to the fact that methods of nonviolent contention can be subtler and fine-tuned towards specific purposes.

Second, research has the potential of exhibiting systematic bias due to the fact that structural conditions may exist as a significant intervening variable. Again, taking the most exhaustive empirical study presented above, Stephan and Chenoweth (2008), two problems emerge. First, the primary independent variable, whether a movement utilizes nonviolent or violent resistance, is merely represented by a dummy variable, which seems inadequate to effectively outline the complexity of types of contention within resistance. Second, indicative of the central point mentioned above, the independent control variables utilized leaves much to be desired, especially in comparison to the nuance of both controls and methodology in literature on violent resistance (conflict literature for example). As a case in point, a Polity Score on a scale ranging from -10 (authoritarian) to 10 (democratic) is included, yet Collier and Hoeffler (2004), Lujala (2010), and Ross (2012), to avoid listing the full gambit of conflict literature, have all shown that polity is irrelevant in terms of predicting onset. In other words, standard practice in conflict literature involves a squared polity score in order to test non-linear effects on onset, because resistance in general seems more likely in locations with political instability, not highly entrenched democratic or authoritarian regimes. Similarly, a control for income or GDP/capita is absent, which could also significantly skew results towards nonviolent resistance.

As such, while limited in terms of empirical capability, this project has two general intentions: First, as a potential guide for future empirically based research, and second as a means of addressing the structural deficiencies of previous research. In all, each case study attempts to answer three general questions: (1) what structural conditions were relevant to the political environment and groups involved, (2) to what extent did protest movements effectively implement nonviolent resistance, and (3) to what extent are the answers to the first two questions inter-related? Put differently, relying on a set of inductively built, primarily descriptive, case studies this project attempts to highlight specific structural conditions that both create the space for nonviolent resistance, and dictate the success of nonviolent strategies.

In addition, any hesitance to make over-reaching generalizations from the case studies presented, does not imply that this project is simply intended as a pilot study or some stepping stone towards future empirical research. Flyvberg (2006, 237-241) has shown how it is possible for researchers to effectively generalize from descriptively inclined case studies, and also shows how such case studies are not merely limited to hypothesis construction and testing. Nonviolent literature exists on the agency side of agent-structure issues, and individual structural characteristics that emerge as determining factors across cases almost certainly apply to other cases. Further, if through descriptive analysis structure is found to play an important role in either determining the extent of agency or the probability of success, that very fact is generalizable in relation to other cases of nonviolent resistance, even if the particular structural conditions are different.

In summation, this project utilizes an inductive set of cases to outline the relationship between specific structural conditions and both the nature of resistance and the success of resistance. As such, this methodology necessitates effectively describing the social, political, and economic context in which resistance occurred, as well as the way in which resistance disseminated and changed over time. For clarity, the extent to which the historical record is presented is determined by the importance of specific aspects of that record in understanding the nature and causes of resistance. This inevitably implies different historical timelines, as the problems associated with colonialism for example are not homogeneous across cases. Yemen, Libya, and Syria were impacted by colonialism in different, and often times more problematic ways than say Tunisia and Egypt.

(3.2) Data

This project utilizes data collected in relation to two types of sources. First, in order to develop a narrative regarding the existence of relevant structural conditions, each case will draw from a variety of historical accounts. As such, each case's structural background is intended to be highly descriptive, and synthesizing a wide variety of sources mitigates the potential of bias from over-reliance on anyone author. Second, accounts of the protest movements themselves will rely on first-hand or second-hand accounts

largely derived from regional or international newspaper outlets with either regional affiliates or on-the-ground reporters.¹

As such, the second set of sources entail a far greater degree of complexity than the first in terms of data collection problems and information verification. For one, regional and local news outlets throughout the region have the tendency to exhibit significant degrees of bias towards regimes, if not existing as pure propaganda tools for regime actors. Hence, regime affiliated new sources may tend to overstate the negatives associated with resistance, as in its potential links to Islamic Fundamentalism, the amount of violence present within demonstrations, and its potentially sectarian nature (as in Bahrain and Syria for example). Put differently, local sources may not be valuable in terms of obtaining casualty numbers or other specific characteristics of resistance, but they may hold value in terms of indicating where and what to look for.

For another, across cases regimes cracked down on media access, and shut down all formal communication networks. Hence, first-person sources may contain selection bias due to the fact that they represent groups and individuals that the regime did not feel necessary to outwardly ban. Again, it is important to consider the general implications of individual sources, rather than relying on them for specific details. Further, where violence within resistance is highlighted by individual sources, it is also important to actively verify such details across sources. In all, throughout I attempt to blend local and international sources in order to mitigate potential biases, and as a means of verifying specific details

(3.3) Case Selection

According to the Liphart (1971) a central mechanism for improving comparative efficiency resides in, “a focus on comparable cases” (686). In context, “comparable” refers to a set of cases that are similar in regards to specific characteristics or variables, but vary in terms of the way in which they relate to one another. Further, Liphart argues that an alternative possibility in strengthening the comparative

¹ Due to the methodological requirements of incorporating a vast amount of newspaper articles, in cases where the author is anonymous, citation of articles will take the form of the first three major words within the title separated by a comma from the last word of the title.

methodology lies in focusing on specific geographic regions. While others have forwarded opposing arguments, it seems clear that geographic regions are not only related in terms of locational proximity, and possibly maintain similar cultures, inter-related political regimes and economies, and similar external influences, all in addition to similar climates and geographies.

Furthermore, as this project is intended to be at its core descriptive, negative cases are avoided, and cases are selected according to the following criteria: (1) did individual cases maintain protest movements that initially emphasized nonviolent strategies, and (2) were these cases geographically and temporally linked to the first case, Tunisia in late 2010 and early 2011. Such is not intended to downplay the potential utility of understanding the lack of protest movements that occurred in many of the Arab Monarchies for example; however, that question is not the central focus of this project. In other words, case selection aligns with the primary six cases of the Arab Spring, and includes the protest movements that occurred following the Tunisian example in Egypt, Syria, Yemen, Bahrain, and Libya. Each of these cases involved a highly discussed and well covered period of resistance, each protest movement maintained a nonviolent emphasis at its outset, and each unfolded in relation to structural conditions in differing ways.

In short, case selection was made in order to maximize both the inter-related nature of the various protest movements, as well as variation in structural conditions. Specific cases are also organized in order to effectively highlight several significant variations, and also to help address a host of alternative explanations. For example, the importance of sectarian divides between regimes and protest movements, rather than the case specific sectarian divide, as in either Sunni or *Shi'a*, can be highlighted in relation to Bahrain and Syria. In the first case, a majority Shi'a population existed in relation to a Sunni minority government, while the sects were reversed in the Syrian case. Moreover, the absence of such sectarian divides in Tunisia and Egypt serve as relevant counter-examples to be considered.

More precisely, the organization of cases is dependent on structural conditions. Egypt and Tunisia are grouped to consider the importance of highly homogeneous populations, and the lack of strategic importance for other regional and international actors. Syria and Bahrain are grouped in order to consider

countries with significant sectarian differentiation, which maintains specific strategic dimensions for other regional and international actors. Finally, Libya and Yemen are grouped to highlight the importance of heterogeneous populations maintaining largely tribal dimensions, the lack of a clearly defined national identity, and the existence of strategic implications for other regional and international actors.

Chapter Four- Tunisia and Egypt: Social Homogeneity and External Inaction

In general, taken together, the Egyptian and Tunisian cases present two central findings regarding the application of strategic nonviolent action. First, they highlight the selective and limited nature of nonviolent strategies of resistance. These protests were never entirely nonviolent, and nonviolence, where it did exist, can be described as both selective, as it only existed in relation to hegemonic actors (primarily the police apparatuses connected to either Hosni Mubarak or Zine al-Abidine Ben Ali), and limited, as it was geographically isolated and temporally impermanent. Second, the lack of militarization of resistance, and the success in achieving regime change in each case were promoted by two central structural conditions. First, both populations are extremely homogeneous in relation to either sectarian or ethnic differences. Egypt is 90% Sunni Arab and Tunisia is 98 % Sunni Arab (Richards and Waterbury 2008, 332-333). Second, both countries did not face external intervention for two central reasons. For one, neither represented a key strategic interest to key regional or international powers, and, for another, both had highly autonomous and institutionalized military apparatuses that alleviated the post-resistance anxiety of regime change. Put bluntly, the implications of regime change in either context was simply not as dire as in other cases. Hence, these structural conditions promoted the agency of individual protesters in ways that did not occur in other examples tied to the Arab Spring.

(4.1) Case One: Tunisia

To begin, the Tunisian case is a prime example of three important issues related to the theory of strategic nonviolent action. First, a set of specific structural conditions influenced the various protests within the Tunisian case in three critical ways. Structural conditions played a pivotal role in determining the extent to which specific protests maintained influential agency, influenced the degree to which the protests maintained nonviolent emphases, and finally played a central role in facilitating the removal of Ben Ali. Second, Tunisia highlights both the selective and limited nature of nonviolent action. Ben Ali focused his repressive capacity on the ongoing resistance in Sidi Boazid Governorate, and this

engendered both space and opportunities for the dispersion and expansion of protests to other urban centers.³ Moreover, as the protests spread throughout the country nonviolent strategies maintained strictly counter-hegemonic emphases, and in many cases were absent altogether. Third, the success of Tunisian resistance was as dependent on spontaneity as it was on strategy. Here, Muhammad Boazizi's self-immolation essentially represents a case and point. However, beyond the fact that the inspiration for the symbolic action behind the Jasmine Revolution can be derived from a spontaneous action, spontaneity also became embedded within the protests in two important ways: The expansion of protests was highly unpredictable both in terms of geographic expansion and increasing degrees of social mobilization, and the organization of individual protests lacked the centralized organization associated with formal political parties and activist groups.⁴

(4.1.1) The Nature of Social Homogeneity in Tunisia

To begin, the modern demographic trends in Tunisia contain two important patterns. First, Tunisia possesses an extremely homogeneous population in terms of ethnic and sectarian composition. Nearly 98 percent of the population of 10.5 million people are Arab Sunnis, with the remaining two percent largely comprised of relatively isolated Bedouin populations. Second, Tunisia's population demonstrates the prototypical pyramid shape associated with lengthy increases in population growth. Since 2000, population growth has occurred at an annual rate of 1.4 percent, and in 2010 individuals between the ages of 0 and 14 represented 23.3 percent of the population, while those aged 65 and above represented only 7.5 percent—in a population with an average life expectancy of nearly 74.2 years (World Bank Indicators 2015).

In particular, these population trends are important for several reasons. For one, the population growth rates, combined with universal primary school enrollment and high levels of tertiary education, have produced a problematic situation in relation to the limited concomitant job growth produced by the Tunisian economy. In 2010 nearly 29% of the total youth population was unemployed, as were nearly 30% of males between the ages of 15 and 24, which severely hampered their ability to gain independence

from their families and marry (World Bank Indicators 2015). These numbers also possess a high degree of geographical stratification that does not emulate the relatively even population spread amongst urban centers that Tunisia possesses. For example, in 2007 unemployment in the Galia Basin region reached highs of 38.6 %, nearly triple the national rate, and the presence of intermittent protests since 2008 in geographic fringe areas such as Gafsa or along the Libyan border point to similar conclusions (Murphy 2011; Perkins 2014, 222).

Furthermore, politically, beginning in the late 1990's domestic perception of the Ben Ali regime was becoming increasingly negative. For example, in July 2010 a Gallop Poll showed that the number of respondents who felt they were "thriving" fell consistently by 10% from 2008 to 2010, and nearly 40% of all young adults indicated that they wanted to emigrate (Osman 2011, 185). Moreover, in 2002, mainly due to upswings in domestic unrest related to the increasing consequences of economic reform, Ben Ali began to roll back previous reforms ensuring civil liberties, and began relying more and more heavily on the use of repressive tactics by the independent security apparatus (Alexander 2010, chap. 4). Essentially, in practice the police apparatus served two primary functions: First, as a means of ensuring the coercive balance between the regime and the military to protect the Ben Ali regime, and second, as a means of garnering loyalty. However, in practice police corruption was highly visible and rampant; police routinely unlawfully extended detentions, falsified documents, utilized excessive force, often committed abuses of power, and frequently refused to report claims and offenses altogether (Fergany 2016, 58-70; Perkins 2014, 200-213).

In addition, within the general population, the overriding perception was that police impunity was granted as a means of assuring Ben Ali's authority, and for the defense of the rampant cronyism and corruption engaged in by both the political elite and the Ben Ali family. While not entirely conclusive, hints regarding the extent of the Ben Ali family's control over the Tunisian economy are beginning to emerge. A World Bank report in 2014, reported that politically connected firms evaded nearly 1.2 billion dollars' worth of import taxes from 2002 to 2009, and the total number of family owned firms was estimated to be around 220, in all accounting for nearly 21% of private sector profits (Rijkers, Baghdadi,

and Raballand 2015). Reports even indicate that Ben Ali's wife successfully smuggled nearly 37.6 million dollars in gold bullion on her way out of the country in 2011 (Tunisia: Ousted President, Gold; Guardian Unlimited: Ice, World).

Finally, perhaps the one important source of partisan division within the Tunisian population, that existing between secular and religious political orientations, had itself even been muted throughout the 1990's and 2000's. For one, Tunisia possesses a highly urbanized and educated population, with a relatively strong middle class—at least by MENA region standards—and Tunisia maintains a primary school enrollment rate of nearly 100% with literacy rates and other human development indicators amongst the highest in the region (WBI 2015). For another, regional economic integration with European and Mediterranean countries had also been underway since 1995, and helped increase Western influence within the country, as well as develop a burgeoning industrial base, which by 2010 represented 38 percent of the economy (WBI 2015). Finally, Ben Ali had also effectively eliminated the most significant Islamist party, al-Nahda, from domestic politics by 1992, and the primary religious institution al-Zaytouna has been widely heralded for its moderate teachings (Perkins 1994, 28-34; Willis 2012, chap. 5).⁵ In short, while present, the Islamist-Secular divide was less divisive in Tunisia than other contexts, and contained more moderate tendencies and a larger amount of class-based overtones than many other contexts as well.

In all, significantly, the homogeneity of the Tunisian population expands beyond the presence of ethnic and religious similarities. The majority of the population is under the age of 35, resides outside of the largest city—the capital Tunis—faces similar constraints in terms of economic opportunities and social mobility, and faces similarities in terms of experiences with both the regime and the police apparatus in particular. These shared experiences are also exacerbated outside of Tunis in areas where the extent of police oversight is limited, and economic opportunities most constrained. Such is obviously not intended to ignore the obvious complexity of identity and ideology present within the country; however, Tunisian society is remarkably homogeneous, especially when compared to other countries within the MENA region.⁶

(4.1.2) The Reasons for External Indifference

As a starting point, many of the factors described in the previous section, as well as two other structural conditions—the institutionalized nature of the military apparatus, and Tunisia’s political history since Habib Bourguiba’s presidency—also impacted the strategic calculations of potentially influential external actors. For one, over time the extent of familial corruption, journalistic and scholarly opposition to Ben Ali, and persistent human rights abuses served to gradually derail the enthusiasm of Western support for Ben Ali’s regime. Although official French relations never changed significantly, several WikiLeaks cables have noted the pervasive perception amongst US political elites of Ben Ali as a liability, one even referring to the U.S. relationship with Tunisia as an “expendable friendship” (Rejeb 2013, 84). Such a fact is also logically enhanced by the lack of resource wealth, as well as the lack of regional trade importance of the Tunisian economy. For another, the same factors that muted the divisive nature of secular-religious political orientations, also served to limit the importance of Tunisia and Ben Ali in relation to the War on Terror following September 11th. Finally, the lack of the potential of a sectarian change emanating from regime change, as existed for example in a Sunni majority ousting a Shi'a minority in Syria, in part prevented regional power politics from altering political outcomes within the Tunisian case.

However, two alternative factors also influenced strategic considerations by external actors. First, Tunisia had developed a highly autonomous and institutionalized military apparatus.⁷ In particular, the institutionalization of the military had two possible impacts on the outcome of resistance. For one, it largely mitigated the potential of a large-scale loss of human life as, for example, was possible if Qaddafi was allowed to march on Benghazi. Put differently, Ben Ali was unable to order military personnel to fire on demonstrations, and was also vulnerable to military intervention on their behalf. For another, it lowered the risk of regime change in terms of producing political and economic chaos, as was distinctly possible in Syria and Yemen. Throughout, the military maintained a clear monopoly on the use of coercive force, and this mitigated some of the uncertainty that would ultimately plague many of the future cases.⁸

Second, at the onset of protests, Tunisia could be politically differentiated from the Arab Monarchies, and also had traditionally maintained a historical tendency towards relatively isolationist policies. In regards to the first point, the lack of political similarity to Saudi Arabia as well as its geographic distance from the Persian Gulf, as opposed to Bahrain and Yemen for example, likely limited the extent to which Riyadh feared protests in Tunisia would impact their own domestic political situation. Tunisia was not a Constitutional Monarchy, and also plays an insignificant, that is almost non-existent, role in global oil production. In regards to the second point, Former president Habib Bourguiba had effectively isolated Tunisia from the rest of the Arab world in three significant ways. First, Bourguiba maintained a highly diffident view of Islamism, often outwardly criticizing and repressing Islamist groups, and this differentiated Tunisia as the growth of Salafism and the Iranian Revolution made religion an increasingly important political consideration throughout the 1960's and 1970's. Second, Bourguiba had also maintained a strictly pro-Western stance throughout his tenure, and was at times even outwardly critical of both Egypt and the spread of Nasserism throughout the region. Bourguiba also chose to remain largely on the sidelines as the Arab-Israeli conflicts grew in intensity throughout the second half of the 20th century, and chose Western development strategies over the military driven statist policies that became entrenched in other Arab contexts (Perkins 2014, chaps. 5 and 6).

In short, the Ben Ali regime represented a non-essential partner in relation to most regional and international powers. The United States had explicitly labelled its relationship with Ben Ali as an “expendable friendship” in security cables, and the extent of corruption created problems in terms of Tunisia’s relationship with the European Union (Willis 2012, chap. 9; Rejeb 2013). Further, historical trends had also created separations between the successive Tunisian regimes and their Arab counterparts.

(4.1.3) Nonviolent Resistance and the Jasmine Revolution

As a point of departure, at the onset of protests, a plethora of factors engendered reasonable frustrations amongst Tunisians, which would eventually become powerfully encapsulated and symbolized by the story of Muhammad Bouazizi. Boazizi was a 26 years old street vendor, who had left school in

order to support his family, and his younger sister's education in particular. His mother later indicated that the intensity of police harassment was becoming hard for him to bear, and that being slapped in the face by a female police officer, whom Boazizi refused to allow to confiscate his produce, was in essence the final straw. In desperation and in reaction to the humiliation of the incident the day before, Boazizi marched to the municipal government building in Sidi Boazid, doused himself with gasoline and lit himself on fire.

However, emphasizing the catalytic nature of Boazizi's self-immolation largely belies the extent to which the Tunisian protests drew on an existing history. First, the Tunisian movement had significant labor origins, and as the protests progressed the mobilization capacity of labor groups such as the *Union Generale Tunisienne du Travail* (UGTT) played an important role in organizing protests in support of those in Sidi Bouzid (Benien 2015, chap. 3; Zemni 2013). Second, the growth and expansion in communication technology, while not the determinant factor many make it out to be, also likely contributed to the expansion of interpretation across various communication platforms, which significantly facilitated the emergence of a complex collective social identity (Halverston, Ruston, & Treheway 2013; Webb 2014, chap. 4). Put differently, social media helped develop and entrench a shared narrative that built off of historical precedents—most prominently the North African Martyr narratives that have played important anti-establishment roles throughout North African history. In addition, social media outlets may also enhance a sense of communal cohesion, even if that cohesion is not entirely factual, during events that cross class, ethnic, and sectarian boundaries, and may also force individuals to take a higher degree of ownership over the process of information dissemination—both of which may enhance participation.

Moreover, the influence of non-traditional outlets also significantly began to alter the way in which traditional and popular media began to cover the protest movements, a point typified by the popular portrayal of Boazizi's action. The video of the act spread throughout Tunisia very quickly, and even became a model of action, occurring at least seven more times throughout the period of protest (Burning for Change, Protests).⁹ Popular media within the Tunisian context also began to emphasize

aspects of Boazizi's life—his piousness, his generosity, and his recurring struggles against repression—that aligned Boazizi's story with the traditional conception of the martyr narrative. Further, emphasis was also placed on identifying and confirming similarities between the collective experience of many Sidi Bouzid citizens, and many Tunisians for that matter, in relation to their individual experiences with economic and political difficulties under the Ben Ali regime. These changes in coverage also influenced regional and global news outlets, which served to shape the international narrative through which the Tunisian protests were covered.¹⁰

Put differently, especially within regional outlets, as the events unfolded the Jasmine Revolution largely avoided much of the vitriol and myopic descriptions of idealized resistance that subsequent cases were subjected to. Chronologically, throughout the first week of protests the majority of demonstrations occurred regionally, were violently repressed as they emerged, and largely lacked autochthonous motivations beyond shows of solidarity to the ongoing situation in Sidi Boazid where they occurred beyond the Sidi Boazid Governorate—even if such solidarity at least mimicked the economic origins of the protests in that city. On the 23rd, demonstrations occurred in Menkassi, Eriquab, and Mazounna, all within the Sidi Boazid Governorate (Police Surround Tunisian, Continues; Social Unrest Continues, Projects). On the 24th, regime violence was witnessed in Manzel Bouzayene, and the first inklings of resistance in the city of Tunis itself emerged, with 1,000 protesters being violently repressed by police forces (Protests in Tunisian, Continues; Youth Employment Sparks, Tinderbox). On the 25th, the breadth of protests in the capital progressed, as trade unionists and human rights activists gathered in solidarity. By the 27th, protests had spread to virtually every city in the Kessarine province, and the narrative of protests in the capital was slowly beginning to shift to emphasizing a unified message of regime change based on the existence of collective economic injustices, rather than simply showing support for the ongoing demonstrations in Sidi Boazid (Social Unrest Continues, Projects; Youth Unemployment Sparks, Tinderbox).

On the 28th, protests in some form or another occurred in every important urban center across Tunisia, and were also evident in many smaller isolated towns and cities and even some rural areas.

However, in particular, two important elements related to both the dissemination of protests, as well as the experiences of individual protests are important. First, even though violence was a relatively ubiquitous strategy across protests, it is true that nonviolent strategies were more evident where both formal organization was highest and repression lowest. Further, as large scale protests spread to economic centers like Tunis, which had seen largely ineffective and intermittent nonviolent protests previously, transitions to violence occurred almost immediately. Second, no central organizing group existed at any point, and where organization was implemented it tended to be less effective than examples of resistance that lacked strong ties to pre-existing organizations. Such is not to say that trade unions such as the UGTT or al-Nahda did not eventually play an important role, but they were neither the inspiration nor the driving force behind the expansion of protests throughout the country (Rare Rally Tunisian, 1,000; Social Protests Tunisia, Says; Zemni 2013).

In many ways, the violence within Sidi Boazid was emblematic of the nature of resistance in the urban interior. Specific details are somewhat unclear as the regime effectively set siege to the city throughout December; however, according to eyewitness reports protests in the city typically started off relatively small, gradually drew in participants, and then utilized violent strategies—destroying government infrastructure, using petrol bombs, throwing other projectiles, and looting shopfronts and stores—as police forces engaged with protesters (Maghreb-Unrest December 24th; Police Surround Tunisia, Continues; Protests Tunisian Towns, Continues; Youth Unemployment Sparks, Tinderbox). These reports also indicate that in the city of Sidi Boazid protesting was occurring throughout the night, thereby pointing to the high probability of looting and rioting as these protests were never as geographically contained as protests in other parts of the country. Further, as protests spread throughout neighboring provinces they unfolded in a similar fashion. For example, reports of a peaceful student organized protest in the center of Manzel Bouzayene on the 24th, gave way to an onslaught of reports indicating the presence of violent rioting, the destruction of government infrastructure, police targeting, and looting as participation increased on the 27th (Maghreb-Unrest December 26th; More Riots Reported, Soldier On).

Moreover, as protests spread to the larger urban centers of Tunis and Sfax, a similar logic of resistance unfolded with one added dimension. In particular, the largely ineffective and intermittent protests organized by trade unions and other political organizations began to grow in size, and as they did transitions to violence ensued. By the 12th of January, intermittent gun-battles were seen throughout the capital, government buildings were targeted and looted, and violence between protesters began to emerge as a concern (Boazza, Ganley 2011; Kirkpatrick 2011a; Tunisia-Unrest 14th). Ben Ali loyalist demonstrations were also targeted and violent clashes between anti-government protesters and loyalists emerged as a daily occurrence following the 12th. To take another example, in the resort town of Hammamet, by mid-day on the 13th initially nonviolent protests had cornered and beaten the non-local members of the limited police force that remained, ransacked a host of store fronts, and also destroyed and looted the largest house, belonging to the connected Tablesi Family, in the city (Kirkpatrick 2011b).

In short, the nonviolence within the Tunisian case was highly limited and selective, as it never applied to non-hegemonic forces. As the Manzel Bouzayene example above highlights, at most persistent nonviolent resistance lasted for only two or three days. Sidi Boazid transitioned to violent tactics within hours, and as protests spread looting and rioting grew and intensified. At times violence targeted elements of the Ben Ali regime, Ben Ali loyalists, and a plethora of non-reported, small scale examples of violence were alluded to in many reports. Further, areas like Tunis and Sfax transitioned to violence as participation increased, and violence persisted even as Ben Ali fled the country after the 14th of January. Reports as late as the 28th of January also indicated the pervasive instability and chaotic nature of post-resistance Tunisian society. In addition, the selectivity of nonviolent strategies, in that they were only implemented when protests were in direct contact with segments of the coercive apparatus of the state, within the Tunisian case also likely failed to detract from the resistance underway due to the extreme inequality and unfair political environment that had defined the country for two decades. Here, perhaps the case of the resort town of Hammamet is the most blatant example. Within hours a large portion of the population had attempted to collectively loot one single mansion, and had upper class segments of the

population been more diverse and numerous the continued expansion of participation may have been hampered.

Moreover, one point in particular—that violence increased with participation—is significant in an additional sense, as participation was also perhaps the single most important factor behind both the durability and success of protests. For example, the UGTT organized protests on the 24th were disbanded within three hours, and the larger protests on the 27th and 29th fared little better (Kirkpatrick 2011b; Rare Rally Tunisian, 1,000). The UGTT did eventually play a significant role as a political go-between, and in certain cases as a source of organization and message framing; yet, they were only ever significant after the fact, and relied on increasing participation that they could not effectively control.

Put differently, the organization within the Tunisian Revolution, at best can be characterized as a strategic response to spontaneous actions, and further may actually have been inherently limited by strategically inclined actors. Trade unionists were able to draw on specific populations; however, two largely interconnected issues emerged within these institutionally organized demonstrations. First, where the trade unionists planned demonstrations, popular integration was limited by the publically available knowledge that these protests were likely candidates for regime repression (Social Protests Tunisia, Says; Zemni 2013). The UGTT had several ministers within the Ben Ali regime, and also maintained a set of comparatively formal and centralized communication networks that facilitated regime monitoring, at least in comparison to the relatively informal and decentralized networks, typically Facebook or some alternative form of social media, utilized by the youth based demonstrations. Second, individual parties and organizations such as trade unions presented narrow interest groups, which did not effectively draw upon the pervasive social narratives available. More than anything, time gaps between the start of planned protests and the actual influx of non-affiliated participants occurred, most significantly in Tunis, and as such also instilled important elements of spontaneity into the demonstrations themselves—in that participation increases were more random than predictable (Kirkpatrick 2011b; Social Protests in Tunisia, Says).

Effectively, what emerged rather than top-down organization, were pervasive social agreements. Gradually, protest activity became routinized following noon-prayer, essentially separating daily activity into two spheres: Relative normalcy in the morning and protest in the afternoon. To be sure, such social agreements were subject to similar logics of repression as were formally organized protests, but most importantly they capitalized on and influenced the collective social narrative under construction, and therefore produced more expansive demonstrations by drawing in previously apathetic segments of the population. Significantly, the expansion of the collective social narrative was also never highly linked to the explicit framing of each demonstration as overwhelmingly inclusive; no real geographical or architectural center as was present in Cairo or Manama existed, and no real attempts at cohesive message framing occurred outside of the relatively limited mediums of Facebook or Twitter. Those able to gain illegal access to foreign media were able to gain limited knowledge about events in other provinces, but outside of the limited communication between regionally based segments of the UGTT or between extended families, these remained largely isolated albeit congruent and closely aligned demonstrations.

Moreover, the impact of the combined social narrative within the Tunisian case was bolstered by the similarity of both the grievances protesters held, and the ethnic and sectarian homogeneity between the protesters themselves. The segments of the population targeted by resistance were clear minority groups: Either Ben Ali loyalists, Ben Ali's coercive apparatus, or extremely wealthy individuals (which more often than not implied ties to the regime as well).

In addition, a clear national identity was present, and nothing beyond political interests, as in ethnic or religious cleavages, presented sources of anxiety for post-resistance society. These two points are significant. In terms of the former, the general demographic homogeneity prevented the growth of demonstrations from being regionally constrained, or from being absent from certain segments of the population altogether. In terms of the latter, the relative dearth of post-resistance anxiety avowed for the inclusion of relatively well-off populations, especially in the political and economic centers such as Tunis and Sfax, and likely facilitated the expansion of movements to these centers as well. To be sure, many factors contributed to this expansion. Al-Nahda was much less active than say the Muslim Brotherhood

(MB) in Egypt, the highly institutionalized nature of the Tunisian military alleviated fears of a total political and economic collapse as in Libya or Yemen, and the liberal and highly educated nature of Tunisian society limited the potential political success of radical Islamists.

In other words, by the new-year regular protests were occurring daily in at least 35 major cities, and the regime was being forced to back down in the ongoing situation in Sidi Boazid (Maghreb-Violence January 4th; Montagne 2011; Tunisian-Unrest January 9th). Only then and only half-heartedly, did Ben Ali and the RCD attempt to initiate non-repressive tactics such as reforms, cabinet re-shuffles, and forced resignations. Such reactionary moves were inevitably too little too late, and the social momentum of protests had already built up to a level of no return. Such a position, in relation to the Ben Ali regime, was emphasized by the expansive nature of social media communications regarding the events in question, the lack of external support manifesting out and out allies for Ben Ali, and the expansive nature of the protests themselves. Ben Ali's future as president of Tunisia was untenable, and on the 14th of January he officially resigned and was extradited to Saudi Arabia.

(4.1.4) Discussion

In particular, the Tunisian case effectively addresses two principal questions. Does the Jasmine Revolution present evidence for strategic nonviolent action, and what structural conditions were important in determining the course of events? In relation to the former, the evidence is unclear at best. For one, the protests were never categorically nonviolent, and for another they were far more spontaneous than they were strategic. Further, nonviolence was linked to low, institutionally derived participation, and as participation increased protests became increasingly violent *and* successful. Such a finding directly contradicts evidence presented by nonviolent action theory. Nonviolence did not make these protests more successful, and neither did strategic decision making; in fact, both were more closely linked to higher probabilities of effective regime repression and ineffective resistance.

In terms of the second question, the presence of a clear national identity, an extreme amount of ethnic homogeneity combined with a host of other factors that enhanced the social homogeneity of

Tunisian society, and a lack of international intervention all played central roles in determining the extent and characteristics of resistance. A clear national identity and ethnic homogeneity facilitated the spread of the combined social narrative throughout the country, and the lack of foreign interference allowed for the autochthonous resolution of the political situations. Moreover, the lack of intervention was itself linked to many important structural factors. Ben Ali's regime was viewed as an "expendable friendship" by many U.S. diplomats, and other Arab leaders only cared about the events in Tunisia insofar as they loomed ominously for their own precarious political situations. Moreover, the relatively liberal nature of Tunisian society, and the institutionalized nature of the Tunisian military made regime change less likely to engender negative political outcomes for Europe or the United States. To be sure, it is possible to argue that the generally nonviolent nature of protests generated international apprehension to heightened repression by the Ben Ali regime; however, in comparison with the later cases presented, international apprehension and pressure is highly vulnerable to structural conditions that impact the strategic decision making of external actors.

Obviously, other factors played a major role, and the importance of the protesters themselves cannot be understated; however, these structural conditions, especially in comparison to other cases, remain highly significant. Such a conclusion, more than anything else, points to the necessity of effectively considering the importance of specific structural conditions as they relate to other examples of nonviolent resistance.

(4.2) Case Two: Egypt

To begin, the original protest movements in Egypt beginning on the 25th of January maintain important points of differentiation from the Tunisian case. For one, these protests were never entirely spontaneous, and maintained important elements of strategy and organization. Further, the Egyptian protests spread from the most important urban centers—Alexandria, Cairo, Luxor, and Aswan—to other less populated and less developed areas. Moreover, the nonviolent nature of protests, especially initially,

was far more pronounced than at any point during the Tunisian revolution. Cairo during the first few days of protest was a powerful experience, and participation was highly diversified and largely peaceful.

However, unfortunately, such a description presents only a cursory analysis of the political situation and resistance movements that were evident in Egypt during 2011. For one, nonviolent emphases exhibited similar geographic tendencies as in the Tunisian case, and also exhibited a high degree of temporal impermanence. By the 28th of January, the violence of resistance within the key urban centers of Cairo and Alexandria had escalated, and in areas where the degree of economic dislocation was more pronounced, such as Aswan and Suez, a much higher upswing in violence occurred. For another, the agency of individual participants and resistance organizers was similarly facilitated by important structural factors, with the added caveat of also being afforded the benefit of drawing heavily from the Tunisian example that predated the Egyptian Revolution.

Put differently, the Egyptian case amplifies many of the conclusions that emerge from the Tunisian case. Three points in particular are important to consider. First, similar structural conditions avowed protest movements the agency to succeed and expand, and therefore eventually alter the political environment. Egypt, although less so, is still made up of a highly homogeneous population in comparison to other countries within the MENA region. The spread and expansion of the protests faced no significant ethnic or sectarian limitations (Coptic Christians, the most significant minority, represent only about 10 percent of the population), and divergent political actors and organizations were able to overcome partisan differences and coalesce around forcing the resignation of Mubarak. For another, the institutionalized nature of the military, the perception of the democratic potential of Egyptian society, the relative strength of the Egyptian national identity, the relative global insignificance of the Egyptian economy, and the increasing regional isolation of Egypt since the fall of Gamal Abdel Nasser limited external resistance to regime change, even if it still existed on some level.

Second, even though Egyptian opposition parties and organizations had been maneuvering and active for at least a decade, and that the popularity of Hosni Mubarak and the National Democratic Party (NDP) had been decreasing since the turn of the century, all planned demonstrations prior to the Jasmine

Revolution had failed to garner the type of public support and participation that occurred in 2011.¹¹ Furthermore, the timing of the Egyptian Revolution also impacted the effectiveness of regime repression. Mubarak's response wavered, was probably disastrously delayed, and was never enough to address the central grievances associated with the demonstrations. In effect, the idea of waves of resistance may generate unique windows of opportunity for nonviolent action to succeed, and in the Egyptian case served to promote the agency of protesters and limit the agency of the state to repress and end resistance.

As such, the modularity of the Tunisian case represents a factor that cannot be understated in terms of effectively understanding the outcomes associated with the Arab Spring in Egypt. As a case in point, devoid of a concomitant martyr comparable to Boazizi, Egyptian organizers undertook a posthumous mythologization of a teenager, Khaled Said, beaten to death by police in 2010 in the outskirts of Alexandria. The mythologization of Khaled Said occurred between the onset of the Tunisian Revolution and the January 25th protests, and similarly emerged as both a source of mobilization and as a source of inspiration for the imperative collective narrative, again drawing on the North-African Martyr figure, that eventually avowed for large-scale protests to take place. Further, as the Tunisian situation escalated activists pushed grassroots mobilization in the slums of Cairo, Alexandria, and Aswan, and by the onset of the protests on the 25th general excitement regarding demonstrations, though muted by the intimidatingly prolonged period of regime stability, was nevertheless growing. Some authors have even referred to the creation of the “social obligation” to protest on the 25th, and this even applied to many of the more affluent populations attending the American University of Cairo (Khalil 2011, chap 4, 5).¹²

Third, while the initial organization of protests was far more centralized, nonviolent, and infused with strategic decision making, in part drawn directly from literature on nonviolent action; as in the Tunisian case, the nonviolence was highly selective and limited, and the expansion of social mobilization and participation served to both dilute the centralized organization and to dramatically increase the degree that violent strategies infused resistance. Violence in the major urban centers within the Egyptian case emerged along similar class fault-lines and targeted Mubarak loyalists as in the Tunisian case, with the events on the 2nd of February, “the battle of the camel”, being the most blatant example. Moreover,

outside of the major urban centers, as in Tunisia, protests were only ever partially nonviolent, and violence directly targeted the police and state-owned infrastructure almost immediately. Finally, Egypt also contains a sizeable minority population, Coptic Christians, which quickly became the target of looting, rioting, and other forms of individual aggression.¹³ Significantly, all of these manifestations of violence within resistance are deeply tied to the massive increase in public participation, which simultaneously involved a dilution of organization and control over the protests, while dramatically increasing the influence and power of resistance.

(4.2.1) The Nature of Social Homogeneity in Egypt

As a starting point, two social factors in particular are significant. First, Egyptians have a relatively strong national identity in comparison to many other MENA countries, even if the exact nature of that identity has been subject to contestation and revision. For one, Egypt maintains one of the earliest histories of political and military centralization within the Arab World, dating back to Muhammad Ali Pasha's destruction of the Mamluk political dynasty in the early part of the 19th century. For another, the architectural legacy of Egypt's historical past has always existed as a point of unification, and the economic importance of this legacy remains a central source of income for a very large segment of the population.

Second, Egypt has a high degree of social homogeneity as Sunni-Arabs make up nearly 90 percent of the population with predominantly Coptic Christian minorities making up around 10 percent. Further, population densities in the urban centers have been steadily rising since 1990, and altogether urban populations made up about 50 percent of the population (WBI 2015). Moreover, according to the more nuanced agglomeration index constructed by Uchido & Nelson (2008) Egypt is the second most urbanized country in the world, which essentially means that the majority of the non-urban population lives very close to the major urban centers along the Nile corridor.

In addition, the problematic trinity of a maturing and increasingly educated youth-bulge, lack of adequate job development, and inflation, endemic to all of the cases under consideration, was particularly

evident in the Egyptian context. In particular, unemployment was highly concentrated within younger populations, and was specifically problematic in relation to youth populations with higher levels of education. In 2010, 52 percent of the total unemployment rate consisted of individuals possessing a tertiary level of education, and unemployment rates for both females and males aged 15 to 24 exceeded 35 percent of those segments of the labor force (WBI 2016). Throughout that period, the total population had also grown at an average of two percent annually since 2000, and demographic-age trends emulated the classic pyramid structure of rapidly growing populations: About 31 percent of the population was under the age of 15, and 18 percent was between the ages of 15 and 24 (WBI 2016).¹⁴

Furthermore, the secular-religious divide within Egyptian society, while present and definitely more pronounced than in Tunisia, did not represent an insurmountable obstacle for the expansion of resistance for two primary reasons. First, the majority of divergent partisan viewpoints held their president in contempt. Mubarak's declining popularity, the increasing visibility of both state and police corruption due to the rise of social media outlets, unpopular diplomatic and political actions, the prospect of the National Democratic Party (NDP) naming Mubarak's son Gamal as Hosni's successor, and the country's problematic economic situation alongside increasingly problematic structural reforms, all engendered a cross-partisan powder-keg that could coalesce around the idea of removing Mubarak from power (Clarke 2014).

Second, the key Islamist party, the Muslim Brotherhood, maintained significant class-based elements of support, which, more than anything, meant that large segments of the rank-and-file were far more aligned with the initial protesters than their membership would imply. For one, beginning after the assassination of Anwar Sadat in 1981, and ramping up during the 1990's as a result of the increasing militancy and radicalization of both al-Jihad and the Islamic Group, Mubarak essentially struck a bargain with the MB as a means to provide moderate leverage against the increasingly militarized radical factions (Weaver 1999, chaps 5, 6; Ashour 2007). In particular, although still not entirely free from regime pushback and repression, this still afforded the MB unrivaled freedom of movement and speech for an opposition party to the NDP. For example, MB members increasingly became prominent figures on an

array of occupational “syndicates”, including those related to pharmacists, lawyers, doctors, and engineers (including eventual president Muhammad Morsi), and in the relatively competitive elections of 2000 even won every seat they contested—64 in total (Campagna 1996, 290-292; Columbier 2007, 100-102). In addition, structural adjustment and increasing liberalization entailed the reduction or absolution of many subsidies lower class Egyptians depended on to survive, and this void was primarily filled by religious organization such as the MB. In short, membership within the MB avowed for two important political commodities, relative freedom of action, and some degree of economic security, which served to enhance its popularity beyond its religious affiliation.

In short, the degree of social homogeneity within Egyptian society, as in the Tunisian case, went far deeper than just ethnic and sectarian composition. The vast majority live in or around urban centers, most are in some sense or another economically struggling if not directly unemployed, and most are under the age of 50. Furthermore, political opposition to Mubarak was deeply entrenched, and crossed partisan boundaries. As such, the dissemination of protests faced no insurmountable geographic or demographic hurdles, and participation, support, and mobilization were primarily dependent on the effectiveness and growth of the protests themselves not on factors beyond the control of protest organizers. In turn this facilitated many of the central mechanisms highlighted by nonviolent literature such as political ju-jitsu and military defection, as inclusion is not limited by demographic factors and the military is unlikely to be demographically differentiated from protesters.

(4.2.2) The Reasons for External Indifference

To begin, Egypt garnered little in terms of staunch external opposition to regime change for a host of reasons. First, on a regional level two separate processes proceeded to limit Egyptian influence within the Middle East. For one, the continued wealth generated by the Persian Gulf, was cementing their position, Saudi Arabia in particular, as a far more crucial Arab actor for both regional and Western interests. Egypt’s once heralded strategic holding of the Suez Canal, witnessed gradual reductions in traffic throughout the 1990’s and 2000’s, and the thoroughfare was increasingly losing out to the growing

reliance on oil-pipelines as a primary transportation method, as well as the growing stability surrounding the Strait of Hormuz. Furthermore, even Egypt's traditional role as an important source for Arab media and culture, was beginning to decline as competing news outlets such as *al-Jazeera*, and increases in social media communications and technology began to further infiltrate Arab societies. For another, the Camp David Accords and Mubarak's entrenchment of policies aligned with the agreement, also gradually nullified any remaining mystique Egypt possessed in relation to the Arab-Israeli conflict.

Second, like Tunisia, several factors also contributed to the lack of staunch international apprehension to regime change from either the Security Council or N.A.T.O. For one, Egypt's army represents a highly institutionalized organization, and even plays a diversified and highly significant role in domestic affairs. At the start of the Arab Spring, estimates placed military control over the Egyptian economy at around 20 percent of GDP, and also showed military participation in industries across a variety of sectors (Harb 2003, 282). In part, such institutionalization likely alleviated the potential risks of post-resistance chaos, and also eventually became the central counterweight to the escalation of violent repression by the Mubarak regime, thereby playing an important role in limiting civilian casualties. For another, Mubarak's effective military campaigns against the IG in the South and *al-Jihad* in the North, as well as his political maneuverings towards the MB had collectively served to limit the relative strategic importance of Egypt in relation to the War on Terror following September 11th, 2001.

Finally, and perhaps not insignificantly, nonintervention by the West could also be interpreted as pro-democratic action. Like many Arab leaders, Mubarak's political rhetoric emphasized implementing democratization slowly, while his actions simply entrenched the depths of his authoritarianism. During the 1990's every application presented to the Constitutional Assembly for official opposition party status was rejected. Moreover, two periods of minimal reform, during the late 1980's and prior to the 2000 election, were almost immediately reversed in subsequent periods. By 2010, the NDP had reverted back to the widespread use of unregistered voters, legislation of restrictions on opposition mobilization, ballot stuffing, and voter intimidation. In short, Hosni Mubarak represented an entrenched authoritarian leader, and the possibility of a democratic Egypt presented an array of strategic benefits to the Western World.

In sum, a breakdown of the specific importance of the structural conditions outlined in the previous two sections is necessary. First, Egypt maintains a highly urban, homogeneous, and relatively well-educated populace, as well as a relatively well established national identity. Second, Egypt's status as an important international power has declined since the height of the Nasser regime, and although Egypt maintains strong relations with the U.S., the importance of that relationship had gradually declined over time, at least as far as the United States was concerned. As in Tunisia, these factors combined to facilitate the expansion of protests, and limit the extent to which external forces determined the course of events. Put differently, these structural conditions served to promote the geographic dispersion of protests, and also enhanced the likelihood of the international community being amenable to regime change. In short, these factors were necessary conditions for resistance to succeed, without them the agency of protesters and protest organizers would have been severely limited.

(4.2.3) Nonviolent Resistance and the Egyptian Revolution

As a point of departure, chronologically, on the 25th of January, protests occurred throughout most of the urban centers. In Cairo, thousands marched intending on meeting in Tahrir Square; however, due to their decentralized and loosely coordinated nature, as well as the regime response in terms of setting roadblocks on important thoroughfares, many demonstrations did not actually reach their destination (Egypt-Unrest 26th; Protests Continue in Downtown, Night). Moreover, while most protests maintained an initial nonviolent emphasis, largely in response to the scale of regime repression, escalations to violence gradually occurred, and by nightfall intermittent street-battles were witnessed across the country (It Started Peacefully, Eyewitnesses). On the 26th of January, the regime publicly banned demonstrations, and as people returned to the streets the violence of resistance within the key urban centers of Cairo and Alexandria escalated (Murdoch 2011; Protests Against Hosni, Day). Furthermore, protests occurring where degrees of economic dislocation were more pronounced, such as Aswan and Suez, maintained higher degrees of violence. Government crackdowns on existing sources of

mobilization also proceeded with thousands arrested across the country, and most formal communication networks were completely disrupted (Lynch 2011, 89; 166 of 1,000, Lawyers).

Significantly, once protesters began entrenching themselves in Tahrir Square on the 26th and 27th, on-the-ground coverage of the unfolding resistance movements, in most cases indicate the presence of demonstrations maintaining a centrally located nonviolent core with significant episodic violence occurring on the fringes of the demonstrations. For example, on the 26th reporters affiliated with the Sun identified the presence of “missile throwing protesters”, and several reports corroborate the death of at least one police officer in Cairo as well as three in Suez (Egypt Erupts). Further, in Suez reports indicate that “protesters set fire to a government building and hurled petrol bombs at offices of the ruling party” (Hundreds Held After, Protests). However, all also discuss the importance of the organized center that existed in Tahrir Square. In part, such a core had to do with the geography of the Square itself, as it contains two major thoroughfares for police entrance connected to a complex web of alleyways and side streets for protesters to escape into.

Regardless, In Cairo, by the 27th a similar process to the social contract present within the Tunisian Revolution began to manifest itself. In general, demonstrations gathered following noon-prayer, and protesters either unwilling or unable to exit loci of resistance formed the bedrock of the population who began to demonstrate around the clock. In all cities violent clashes between protesters and police forces occurred, and violence in areas more prone to regime repression, such as the traditional MB strongholds of Aswan and Alexandria, saw increased violent activity in accordance with increased repression (Murdoch 2011; Muslim Brotherhood to Organize, Monday; Protests Continue in Downtown, Night). The poorer areas of Suez erupted in gun battles, and beginning on the 28th (Thursday) the regime also moved to once again shut down all formal communication networks in the urban centers in an explicit attempt to impede the organization of protests planned for noon prayer on the following day (Friday).

As such, by the 28th and 29th, most formal communication was cut off, and throughout the eve of the 28th protests entrenched themselves in the urban centers, engaging in street battles with police forces

in order to maintain their position. Further, throughout Friday looting and rioting took place across the city, and such looting disproportionately pitted lower class individuals against more affluent segments of the population, especially those living in accessible neighborhoods such as Heliopolis (as opposed to Zamalek for example, which is an island). Eye witness reports indicate the presence of gun battles at the entrances to several gated communities in Cairo, and malls and shopping centers outside of the city center saw the brunt of looting and rioting. On January 30th the New York Times reported that “At the ravaged City Centre Mall, looters had pulled bank A.T.M.’s from the walls, smashed in skylights and carted away televisions, and on Sunday a small crowd was inspecting the damage and debating the causes.” (Kirkpatrick 2011c). Several reports also indicate that the scale of government inactivity was more pronounced in areas that have been traditional strongholds of the MB. This in part led to shortages and inflation tied to the state of emergency, which was in part responsible for the increased degree of looting in cities like Alexandria (Murdoch 2011; Muslim Brotherhood to Organize, Monday).

In response to the events of the 28th three crucial processes unfolded. First, Mubarak appointed a new vice president and cabinet, and gave a largely disastrous crisis management speech on the 1st to the ire of many Egyptians. Throughout the unrest, government rhetoric surrounding the Egyptian museum break-ins and the emergence of chaos and looting in Suez and Alexandria focusing on blaming Islamists and opportunists, contrasted with the belief many protesters held, backed by some official corroboration, regarding the use of government thugs and saboteurs to foment instability. Fears of government saboteurs were also engendered by the massive release of violent criminals by the Mubarak regime on the 29th in areas North of Cairo and in Alexandria, and also by reports that military personnel allowed armed individuals to enter protests in Cairo (Army Out in Cairo, Prevails; Egyptian President’s Use, Commentary; Olster 2011).¹⁵ Throughout, state-ran media outlets fostered narratives that emphasized the existence of looting and crime across differing urban centers, and a general sense of slipping regime control began to creep in. For example, in Cairo neighborhood watches were set up across the sprawling city, and men and teenagers armed with knives, sticks, and golf-clubs set up blockades in order to protect

themselves against the reported looting and rioting taking place (Lawlessness on Egyptian Streets, Clings on; Neighborhood Watch Groups, Thugs; Olster 2011).

Second, as Mubarak gave his speech on the eve of the 28th, the military moved to replace the police force in the urban centers, and significantly, remained relatively neutral as the process unfolded. Furthermore, at least initially, the military take-over was encouraged by protesters themselves as it both insulated them from attacks from the far less trustworthy and institutionalized police apparatus, and therefore also allow for international and domestic pressure to continue to build (Egypt-Unrest 31st; Olster 2011).¹⁶ In particular, the Obama administration maintained dialogue with the regime throughout this period of resistance, and also voiced criticism of excessive repression and threatened to significantly reduce the extent of American aid to Egypt if a political transition did not occur (Lynch 2011, 91-99). In short, the military served a highly important protective role, and the neutrality of the S.C.A.F leadership for all intents and purposes represented the nail-in-the-coffin for the Mubarak regime.¹⁷

Third, both the transition to military control over the protests and the general persistence of opposition demonstrations, facilitated the expansion of social mobilization beyond the youth populations that had made up the core of demonstrations up until the 28th. On the 28th, the General Bureau within the MB finally decided to execute a full call-to-action, and thus the entirety of the largest opposition group, as much of its youth-based constituents were already protesting, was unleashed against the Mubarak regime (Muslim Brotherhood Organizes, Monday; Opposition Call for Million, Strike. Two large scale protests marching towards the center of Rafl district in Alexandria occurred on the 31st, and in Cairo the experienced veterans of the Muslim Brotherhood played a crucial role in enhancing the resiliency of the demonstrations (Sennot 2011). For another, workers in Suez called for a strike on the 31st, that both labor unions and other secular opposition groups eventually propelled to a general strike (Opposition Call for Million, Strike). Essentially, as the full extent of both the industrial labor force and the MB joined into protests, millions of people flowed into the urban city centers, and Mubarak was increasingly pushed into a corner.

For the remainder of the protests, an extreme degree of violence occurred on a daily basis. To take perhaps the most famous example of regime repression, on February 2nd, the most visible signs of regime violence emerged. In the early part of the day, Mubarak loyalist demonstrations emerged often times directly alongside opposition demonstrations, and these pro-regime groups were reportedly typically comprised of both NDP salaried thugs and violent criminals (Khalil 2011, 199-243; Egyptian Presidents Use, Commentary). Around 11:00 in the afternoon, loyalists and police forces began entering the Square in order to directly engage with opposition demonstrations in what would end up being the most violent day of protesting until Mubarak stepped down. In short, initial gunfire transitioned to a siege on Tahrir Square by pro-Mubarak forces riding horses, donkeys, and camels and wielding iron bars, guns, and knives (Cairo Attack Shows, Goes; Foes Sticks to Demands, Rages). By dusk, thousands were injured and an estimated 10 people dead, and for the rest of the night intermittent battles between pro-regime forces and the protesters ensued along four major fronts: In the alleyways in and around Tahrir Square, on the fringes of the protest movements, inside the Square between the entrenched protesters, and at the major entry points where protesters attempted to push police and military forces backwards (Foes Sticks to Demands, Rages). Throughout the night protesters also began to target military installations originally intended to protect the resistance from the police apparatus, and this brought about a series of gunfights that echoed throughout the city.

Eventually, by February 6th most external allies of the Mubarak regime, began to publically denounce the use of repressive tactics, and by February 9th even the Arab Union had expressed its opinion regarding the untenable future of Mubarak's presidency. Finally, on February 11th, Mubarak stepped down from his role as president, was evacuated from the country, and a military takeover of the government immediately ensued.

(4.2.4) Discussion

To begin, the development of the Egyptian Revolution has two central implications for theory surrounding strategic nonviolent action. First, unlike in Tunisia most protest movements exhibited a

prominent nonviolent emphasis at the start of each movement, and most Egyptian cities also had a far more organized resistance than ever really emerged in Tunisia. Groups like the April 6th Movement played a far heavier hand in organizing and recruiting participants before protests themselves started, and the MB played an important stabilizing and defensive role as participation expanded and repression became more lethal. With that said, the 25th of January essentially amounts to an annual day of protest—as it is a state-holiday celebrating the much hated police apparatus—and both the MB and the April Sixth Movement had been unsuccessful in previous attempts to garner the type of support it received in 2011. The central reason for that, is relatively straightforward: The events in Tunisia provided inspiration which drove formerly apathetic citizens to participate, and also provided a blueprint for how resistance could be successful.

Hence, as in Tunisia—and contrary to nonviolent theory—the increase in participation that determined the unique success of the protests movements that occurred after the 25th of January created three important consequences. First, the degree of centralized control exerted by protest organizers greatly diminished as participation increased. Such an argument is largely theoretical in nature: A protest movement of two million people is logically harder to organize and control than one of 2,000. Second, diminishing centralized control entailed the growth of violence within resistance, and that is based on empirical results. For one, by early February violence against non-hegemonic forces became more and more visible. Coptic minorities began to be targets of violence, and looting, rioting, and physical violence directed towards the more affluent segments of society increased as well. For another, violent clashes between protesters and hegemonic forces also became more and more visible; as MB participation increased traditional counter-repression tactics emerged, and in places where repression was more pronounced—such as Suez and Alexandria—out and out attacks on police forces and NDP infrastructure occurred. Third, and most significantly, as the nonviolent emphasis of protests diminished, the effectiveness of protests increased. Such a trend is obviously linked to higher participation rates, but intrinsic to the arguments made above is the idea that a loss of control and transitions to violence are likely highly correlated with significant increases in participation.

Second, the dissemination of protests and the spread of messaging across cities was facilitated by the lack of clear ethnic or sectarian differences within a population that maintained strong similarities in terms of lived experiences, as well as the presence of a strong national identity. Such is not to dismiss the importance of political and ideological differences within the Egyptian protest movements; however, these were mitigated within the time frame of the protests themselves most importantly by the simplistic nature of the demand presented—namely that Mubarak step down.

Finally, the institutionalized and centralized nature of the Egyptian military helped alleviate many post-resistance anxieties, and served to both promote the resiliency of protests and act as the key source of elite opposition to Mubarak. In addition, the structural commonalities within resistance movements helped with the construction of a unified social narrative, and helped to increase the likelihood of military defection, thereby increasing the durability of resistance. Finally, external non-intervention could be justified on pro-democratic grounds, and was similarly bolstered by a host of structural conditions.

(4.3) Summary

To begin, the Tunisian and Egyptian examples highlight two specific sets of weaknesses within literature on nonviolent theory. First and foremost, they highlight the selective and limited nature of nonviolent resistance as they relate to each case. As mentioned above, within a week, even Tahrir Square, the best example of nonviolent resistance in either case, had become the scene of large-scale gun battles, knife-fights, infrastructural destruction, and carnage, and in geographic fringe areas such as Alexandria, Suez, and Aswan nonviolent resistance lasted only a matter of hours. In Tunisia, “nonviolent resistance” was merely an epithet applied to what in reality were protests riddled with violence, and in certain places and circumstances potentially dependent on it. Looting, rioting, classed-based targeting, and many other trappings of political unrest defined the resistance in Sidi Boazid from the onset, and as protests spread from the interior to economic hubs such as Tunis and Sfax violence quickly emerged.

Moreover, nonviolent emphases were always selective. Violence against specific elements of the population, at times targeting upper-class neighborhoods, regime loyalists, women, and Christian

minorities were ubiquitous, except perhaps in the early days of the demonstrations in Tahrir Square. Moreover, the potential negatives associated with the selectivity of nonviolent forms of resistance was overcome by the pervasive degree of social homogeneity that existed in each context. The many had been long oppressed by the few, and this meant that limited violence against these minorities would not severely impact mobilization. In fact, the ability to loot certain areas and populations may have had a positive effect on mobilization as well. However, such an argument is by no means intended as an indictment of either movement, more than anything it seems possible that such violence is merely a product of the necessary influx of numbers each protest movement required to remain resilient. Had protesters in Tahrir Square not outnumbered the pro-government forces that attacked on the 2nd of February by a scale of 10, the outcome may have been different. Moreover, had experienced anti-regime protesters, more often than not associated with the MB, not played a major role in defending the protesters position at the nodes of contestation, the continued presence of the sit-in protesters in Tahrir may have been in doubt. Put differently, some violence is likely inevitable, and some is likely necessary for continued protestation, especially in contexts like Tunisia and Egypt where regime repression is essentially and expected norm.

Second, both of these cases also highlight the fact that the agency wielded by each set of protests was highly contingent on a preferable set of structural conditions, and this point will be eventually bolstered through comparison to other cases as well. In both cases, a large swath of the population shared the same ethnicity and religious affiliation, and also harbored many of the same apprehensions towards both their economic prospects and political freedom. In each case, the vast majority were also young, based in urban centers, and connected in some fashion through increasingly fluid and agile communication networks. Protests had no clear geographic or demographic blockades in terms of dissemination, and protesters coming from vastly different political orientations could temporarily coalesce around a relatively simple set of prescriptions. Therefore, political ju-jitsu could happen leading to enhanced social mobilization, and military defection could isolate the regime from the security

apparatus, as no incentive existed, as in Libya for example, for the military to accept orders from a dictator in an increasingly weakening position.

Finally, regime change went unopposed in each case by regional and international actors. There was no invasion, aerial campaign, or military support given to any actors involved, and this was primarily due to the relevant outlined structural conditions in each case. Moreover, in both cases international support, as predicted by nonviolent theory, inevitably tilted towards the pro-democracy protest movements, and this placed unique pressures on the regimes in power. However, it remains unclear how closely linked this fact is to the means of resistance, although that remains a distinct possibility. Neither regime maintained any significant strategic considerations that would have made regime change problematic for relevant actors, and the likelihood of persistent chaos and instability was relatively lower than in other cases. In short, at the very least important structural conditions should likely be the central concern of future examples of nonviolent resistance.

Endnote

³ Since Sidi Boazid refers to both a city and a governorate, I will be using that name to refer to the city unless explicitly stated otherwise.

⁴ That is certainly not underestimate the eventual role that labor unions and al-Nahda eventually played; however, these movements merely supported the resilience of resistance, and were never in control nor the central reason for the eventual removal of Ben Ali. For a more detailed discussion see Beinin (2015b, especially chaps. 3 and 4), Lynch (2011, 44-46), Murphy (2011), and Perkins (2014, 214-222). For more details on the general maro-economic position of the Tunisian economy see Richards and Waterbury (2008, 239-243).

⁵ For more information on the influence of French education reform throughout the mandatory period see Perkins (1994). Willis (2012, chap. 5) also provides a detailed account of how the Young Tunisian Society influenced reforms at al-Zaytouna, and both Willis and Perkins highlight how Islamic Reformists in Egypt such as Rashid Rida and Muhammad Abduh were highly influential within the Tunisian Ulema. Michael Dunn (1994) also shows how the precursor to al-Nahda, the Islamic Tendency Movement (MTI), was the one of the first, and clearly most moderate Islamist group to participate in secular politics, Dunn also eloquently describes the moderate tendencies of its founder, Rached Gannouchi (149-153).

⁶ Here, the intended emphasis is especially related to lived experiences with both the regime and political and economic conditions of the Tunisian economy. Reality is obviously much more complex; however, most were relatively young, faced difficulties finding employment, were well educated, and lived in urban centers, while political orientations were not identical, divergent actors could coalesce around the similarity of their lived experiences as well as their disdain for the Ben Ali regime.

⁷ For a more detailed discussion of the degree of institutionalization of the Tunisian military see Fergani (2014, 84-102, Perkins (2014, chaps. 5 and 6), and Willis (2012, chap. 3). In particular, Habib Bourguiba was relatively unique within MENA politics for the degree to which he forced military disengagement from politics.

⁸ Here, both Bellin (2012) and Nepstad (2013) provide crucial insights regarding the importance of institutionalization of transitions from autocratic rule. Stacher (2012) may also be applied to the Tunisian case, and in many ways the centralization of authority within Tunisian politics was even more pronounced than in Egypt, given the fact that the Tunisian military was far more disengaged from Tunisian politics and economics.

⁹ As a point of reiteration, to avoid confusion with citations of newspaper articles, I use the name when given, and then abbreviate the title with the first 3 major words of an article title, with a comma indicating a break and the last word of the title.

¹⁰ The role of media in facilitating and expanding the influence of the Arab uprisings has been written about extensively. Kellner (2012, 31-40) provides an interesting analysis of how U.S. politicians, specifically Barack Obama, promoted the rise of a “media spectacle” in Tunisia, which bolstered resistance. Lynch (2011, chaps 1 and 2), perhaps excessively, lauds the role al-Jazeera played, and envisions a unified Arab public-sphere, that was indelibly shaped by media outlets and communication networks. Finally, see Bossia (2014, 9-26) for a detailed account of how media coverage changed over time.

¹¹ Here, I am not intending to ignore the importance of what for example Lynch (2011, 55-64) labels as the “Kefaya movement moment” (56), or the gradual manifestation of popular opposition to Middle Eastern regimes in general and Mubarak in particular beginning in the early years of the 21st century. Nor am I ignoring the importance of labor unions, see Beinin (2012), or other opposition parties and the MB; what is important is that opposition and protests existed, but did not reach anywhere near the levels of mobilization reached during 2011 (Clarke 2014; Khalil 2011, chaps. 4,5, 6). I see Tunisia as a spark that increased the unified stance of divergent political orientations, and brought previously apathetic populations out on to the streets. Here, Clarke (2014, 89) even provides a set of interviews that show how Tunisia even altered the perceptions of important brokers, and brought in different political blocs that would have likely otherwise remained on the sidelines.

¹² Khalil (2011) for example refers to Said as both the “Emergency law Martyr”, and “Egypt’s Muhammad Boazizi” (71). However, Said’s death itself occurred on June 6th, 2010, and was significant in relation to the degree that Said was both needlessly beaten to death and representative of the vast majority of Egyptian Youth. According to reports he was essentially entering an internet café store trying to play the Playstation video game FIFA (soccer) when he was detained and beaten to death. Eventually, the Facebook page “We are all Khaled Said” became a central organizing mechanism for the Youth movement that protested on the 25th.

¹³ For a more detailed description of the Coptic stances on the protest movements see Guirgis (2012). Essentially, the Coptic Catholic Church initially supported protests, and then altered their stance over time; the largest Church, the Coptic Orthodox, remained on the sidelines, and publicly denounced the protests as they unfolded. As such, their demographic insignificance played a role in facilitating the dissemination of protests on some level.

¹⁴ The intended emphasis here is on the similarity of lived experiences. In fact, given the productivity of Egyptian media, many movies and books coming out between 2000 and 2010 offer vivid depictions of this point. Take Ala'a al-Aswany's *Yacoubian Building* (2002), in which the

underprivileged characters, Taha and Buthayna al-Sayed, maneuver in a world mired by corruption, increasingly menacing examples of patriarchy, and unfair disadvantages due to their relative lack of “Wusa”—or connections. In film, Cultural Film (2000) is perhaps the most famous example. In which, in one of the most disheartening scenes, the lead character Effet screams “How many like us are out there?”.

¹⁵ As Khalil (2011, 170-172) describes, the violence on behalf of the protesters that occurred on the 28th was absolutely essential to reduce the impact of regime repression, and also to protect the protest movement in the center of Tahrir Square. In other parts of the country, Suez most blatantly, resistance was far closer to a “war zone” than a peaceful protest (185-186).

¹⁶ For a more nuanced discussion of why the military was essentially called for by protesters see Khalil (2011, 170-192) or Thager (2011). In short, the military is far more institutionalized than the police apparatus, which means less arbitrary violence, and that it commits less visible corruption.

¹⁷ Here, two authors Stacher (2012, 82-86 and 93-119) and Harb (2003) provide a set of crucial insights. First, Harb shows that the disengagement of the military that occurred under Sadat and accelerated under Nasser, was in part predicated on the continued professionalization and institutionalization of the military as an independent actor. Second, Stacher highlights how the centralized nature of executive authority in Egypt was successful at limiting the role of the NDP in Egyptian politics, and actually facilitated regime change because elite decision making within the military could act with limited push-back within alternative elite structures.

Chapter Five- Syria and Bahrain: Social Heterogeneity and Sectarian Intervention

To begin, the Bahraini and Syrian cases are important in two principle ways. First, each highlights how the agency of nonviolent protest movements is contingent upon significant structural factors. In either case, the momentum of the Tunisian and Egyptian revolutions sparked organized, mostly nonviolent demonstrations that ultimately failed to achieve the degree of domestic and international mobilization and support necessary to succeed. Each country is also geographically proximate to a major regional power, and maintains divisive sectarian problems that made each protest vulnerable to foreign intervention. As such, both sets of protests failed to evenly and coherently disseminate across both geographic distance (although Bahrain has little in this regard) or differing populations. In fact, the geography of resistance in Syria neatly aligns with Sunni-Arab populations outside of Damascus, and the Kurdish Northeast maintained cotemporaneous, but largely divergent protests. In Bahrain, Saudi Arabia invaded on March 14th, and in Syria international support for Assad allowed him to recover and eventually both entrench and expand his position.

Second, and in part as a result of these important structural issues, each protest movement also quickly, and perhaps necessarily, transitioned towards violent tactics as regime repression became more intense and lethal. Put bluntly, neither of these cases represent ideal conditions for the implementation of nonviolent resistance, and this is important to consider and unpack. Furthermore, the nature of the social heterogeneity in each case exacerbated the selectivity of nonviolent resistance, which, unlike in the Egyptian and Tunisian cases, placed severe limitations on the expansion and dissemination of resistance. Shi'a minority populations living in Dera'a and Homs were targeted immediately, as were other minority populations that maintained support for the Assad regime due to their traditionally vulnerable situation within Syrian politics. In Bahrain, clashes between Sunni and Shi'a demonstrations were ubiquitous, and Sunni loyalists quickly targeted primarily Shi'a neighborhoods, which fomented necessary transitions to violence, especially in the poorer neighborhoods throughout Manama. In other words, where nonviolent strategies dominated resistance, they were implemented against security forces maintaining stark

asymmetries in terms of the use of coercive force, and individual aggression against minority populations followed similar logics as in previous cases, but in these cases became far more detrimental to the resiliency and impact of resistance.

(5.1) Case Three: Syria

As a point of departure, in relation to nonviolent action theory, the Syrian case presents two central weaknesses. First, the Syrian case highlights the extent to which structural conditions can negatively determine the degree of agency that resistance movements possess in two principle ways. For one, stark ethnic and sectarian differentiations may limit the extent to which nonviolent protests can disseminate across geography, as well as the extent to which geographically stratified protests assert a unified message. Due to the Assad regime's extensive patrimonial networks in key urban centers like Damascus and Aleppo, protests emerged in these areas very late into the period of resistance. Further, the non-dualistic nature of divisions within Syrian society combined with the geographic stratification of particular ethnic or sectarian minorities, may promote divergent types of claims—as in secessionist ones—over unified messages of regime change. For another, the presence of a firm and willing external base of support for the regime, here taking both a regional form in relation to the sectarian connection to Iran and Hezbollah, as well as an international form in terms of the Security Council support of Russia in particular, severely limited the success of nonviolent resistance. In short, Assad was willing and able to kill protesters that stood up nonviolently, and his persistent ability to do so was supported and funded over time.

Second, Syria highlights the lack of control protest organizers have in terms of effectively maintaining nonviolent emphases in relation to both hegemonic and non-hegemonic forces. For one, there was rarely a single situation in which a sizeable protest was not met with harsh repression, and very few if any that did not face live ammunition and devastating casualties. It is likely difficult if not impossible to maintain persistent nonviolent emphases in such circumstances. For another, clashes between divergent ethnic or sectarian groups, or between pro and anti-government protesters were virtually ubiquitous across

locales. Such clashes frequently precipitated discriminatory looting and rioting, and served to reify the divisions within Syrian society overtime. Hence, nonviolent resistance may face difficult dynamic problems associated with controlling violence within resistance. In particular, if intermittent clashes and other types of discriminatory practices reify ethnic and sectarian divisions, even if they were not necessarily important initially, this may directly inhibit the expansion of mobilization and support that is needed in order to insure greater resiliency, and such issues are beyond the control of protesters and opposition organizers.

(5.1.1) The Nature of Social Heterogeneity in Syria

To begin, as Tunisia and Egypt began to experience the repercussions of popular resistance in 2011, the Syrian situation was perhaps the most intractable of the three. In particular, the Alawite minority that formed the bedrock of the Ba'athist regime made up about 12 percent of the population, Sunni Arabs represented somewhere between 60 and 67 percent of the population, and Kurds and Armenians made up about 9.7 percent each (Wieland 2012, 85). In addition, turmoil in Iraq was placing divergent pressures on the Syrian state, emboldening the secessionist Kurds, creating pockets of refugee populations, and leading to an influx of Sunni Arabs, and economic reforms, the precarious financial position of the Assad regime, trade liberalization with Turkey, and international sanctions were all engendering heightened degrees of social animosity.¹⁸

Moreover, historically, for a variety of reasons, the successive Assad regimes had primarily relied on decentralized governing techniques, and focused on the maintenance of fragile power sharing relationships between religious communities and geographic areas. For one, the Alawites themselves do not represent a coherent sect, and are divided in various areas along familial, geographic, and ideational lines. Further, demographically, Alawis make up only around 12 percent of the population, so a degree of confessionalism and decentralization was intrinsic to the stability of the Assad regime (Stacher 2012, chap. 2).¹⁹ Furthermore, while the assertion of sectarian divides tends to oversimplify the complexity of social identities across contexts, and many *Ba'athist* regardless of personal sectarian origins remained

ardent secularists (for example, Bashar's Vice President was Sunni at the time of protest); the realities did not always match perception, and often times enhanced sectarian based perceptions of the Assad regime. Gradually, many Sunni's came to perceive the existence of appalling sectarianism, especially within the military apparatus, and thus the importance of sectarian differences did hold significance for many non-connected Sunnis. Such tendencies were especially pronounced outside of Aleppo and Damascus, which maintained large pockets of well-connected Sunni based regime support. Put differently, Dara'a, Homs, and large portions of the predominately Sunni Northwest continuously represented problematic populations for both Hafiz and Bashar.

Moreover, over time sectarian policies would become further entrenched, and a highly nepotistic and corrupt system of governance emerged, which relied heavily on personal friendships between various ethnic and religious groups and the Assad regime. Connection became much more important than talent in determining advancement, and corruption within the regime became increasingly evident. For example, Assad's younger brother Rifat infamously obtained notoriety for his illicit activities, even reportedly playing an extensive role in the regional hashish trade (Fousad 2012). Throughout Hafiz's regime Sunni opposition mobilization and unrest, in the 1970's and 80's primarily taking the form of the Syrian offshoot of the MB, began to grow specifically in relation to sectarian politics.

In addition, by 2002, outside of Damascus, the extent of Ba'athist control was beginning to show signs of erosion. The important pact inculcated by Hafiz, between Sunni-Arab merchants in Aleppo and Dera'a and both the Assads' and the Alawite elite, was weakening. In the Northeast, the collapse of the post-war Iraqi state, and the developing autonomy of Kurdish-Iraq were both placing enhanced pressure on an already intractable situation. The Kurds had long been excluded by the Ba'athists, as their Arab-nationalist ideology, inclusive in regards to religious differences, for the most part failed to incorporate Kurdish populations into Syrian society. In 1958 hundreds of thousands of Kurds had their citizenship revoked, and official use of the Kurdish language was banned (Wieland 2012, 86-89; Noi 2012, 17-18). As the first decade of the 21st century progressed, the Kurdistan Workers Party (PKK) activity within Syrian territory grew dramatically, and in 2004 riots across the Northeast broke out, leading many

prominent Kurdish figures to admit that they were beginning to lose control over their own population (Wieland 2012, 84-102; Tejel 2009, chap. 6).

Put more succinctly, the extent of social heterogeneity cut far deeper than simple ethnic or sectarian divides. The Sykes-Picot agreement and the history of French colonialism in Syria had engendered a set of territorial boundaries that made Syria a veritable nightmare to govern, and this forced the successive Assad regimes to leverage certain minorities and populations against others. This was emerged as a problematic source of deep mistrust between those enfranchised and those disenfranchised by such a political environment, and eventually placed severe limitations to the geographic and demographic dispersion of protests. Varying experiences with regime repression also made some groups more reluctant than others to join in, and even when cotemporaneous protests existed, they rarely espoused cohesive messages or organized collectively. Finally, the potential of political chaos associated with the lack of an institutionalized military apparatus, the extent of social heterogeneity, and the sectarian nature of regionally fragmented bases of support all promoted pervasive anxiety in regards to regime change.

(5.1.2) The Reasons for External Influence and Intervention

In short, two principle sources of external support existed for the Assad regime. First, on a regional level, the Shi'a dominated Alawite regime represents a geographically proximate and strategically significant partner to neighboring Iran. In particular, diplomatic and economic relationships between the two countries became increasingly important as both countries fell under the purview of harsh Western sanctions throughout the 20th century, and cheap Iranian oil had long been an important subsidized commodity that Assad utilized in order to facilitate political stability in Syria (Lesch 2013, chap. 7). Furthermore, as the relationship between the two countries had altered over time, another important concern regarding regime change in Syria stemmed from the potentially negative outcomes such a situation would engender. That is, Assad's resignation may not be problematic just because it would likely entail a non-allied Sunni government with ties to other Sunni dominated countries, but could

also lead to instability, internecine conflict, and the emergence of fundamentalist groups, which would all inevitably impact Syria's neighboring countries (as they eventually did).

Moreover, while inroads to liberalization and regional integration were attempted, little success was achieved in terms of improving Syria's international position, especially in terms of the debilitating Western sanctions regime in place. Furthermore, Western sanctions, intended to destabilize the Alawite regime, created the diplomatic externality of forcing the Ba'athists to foster relationships with important non-Western allies. Seeking foreign transfers had long been a staple of Syrian politics, and Hafiz largely maintained the patronage networks critical to regime stability through such transfers. In particular, Syria was compensated for its role in the various Arab-Israeli conflicts that emerged in the second half of the 20th century, had built strong diplomatic relations with the Soviet Union, and was also compensated for their support of the Kuwaiti regime during the Iraqi invasion (Wieland 2012, 203). From 2000 on, Bashar also engaged in two debt reduction deals with Putin in Russia, and also visited and opened up trade dialogues with China in 2004 (Lesch 2013, chap. 7). These would end up being key sources of support for the regime as the Arab Spring spread across Syria.²⁰

(5.1.3) Nonviolent Resistance and the Syrian Uprising

To begin, perhaps surprisingly given the political context outlined, Bashar al-Assad, and even many Syrian journalists and intellectuals, maintained a veil of confidence as protests erupted in Egypt and Tunisia. In fact, according to Wieland (2012, 19), the first protest that developed, largely spontaneously, in response to a case of police brutality in Damascus on February 17th even contained protesters chanting: "with our soul and blood, we will fight for you Bashar!". Many A large amount of Syrians also attributed the most damning of brutalities to hardliners within the Ba'athist regime's Mukhabarat, and, to some degree, genuinely saw Bashar as a pragmatist who was attempting to address the concerns of the people (Lesch 2013, chap. 3). Politically, many observers also saw a differentiation between regimes supported by the West, and those that had remained largely outside the purview of Western influence, even if subject to Western sanctions. Such observers criticized the West as fickle supporters, and felt that Bashar

maintained a degree of strength as a result of his specific international allies, an idea largely supported by how events unfolded.

However, although delayed, beginning in March protests began spreading across many regions of the country that were based on similar grievances and implemented similar strategies as in previous cases. Throughout February internet activists attempted to elicit mass scale demonstrations across the country. Further, on February 17, 2011, nine days after the fall of the *ancien régime* in Egypt, an estimated 1,500 protesters gathered in the old-square in Damascus following an incident between a shopkeeper and a police officer. However, all of these protests were effectively dealt with, and failed to spark expansive and influential levels of social mobilization. Moreover, the continued and often immediate repression of instances of resistance by the Assad regime played an important role in manifesting resistance where it occurred, as did the inherent corruption and lack of regime oversight in specific locales, and it would take another month for the full force of anti-regime protests to develop.

As a starting point, on Tuesday, March 15th, 2011, small-scale demonstrations, all between 100 to 300 participants, occurred across Syria, eventually triggering the arrest of roughly 32 people including several important intellectuals and activists (Syria-Protests, March 16th). In response, organizers and activists engaged in an active campaign to engender protests of solidarity for those detained by the police throughout the country, and as with the Yemeni, Tunisian, and Egyptian “days of rage” the mobilization potential of the Friday noon-prayer was utilized. However, the Assad regime quickly deployed tanks to the epicenter of these organized protests, Old Damascus, and the first Syrian “day of rage”, in Damascus at least, faltered with nearly 150 Syrians protesting nonviolently, over 40 of whom were eventually detained (Syria-Protests March 18th; Report: Tanks Deployed, Damascus). On the other hand, in the Sunni periphery, primarily in the Southern city of Dera'a, protesters and local authorities clashed on the 18th eventually leading to the death of three in protesters, while protests in Homs and Hama were quickly and effectively dispersed (Syrian Forces Kill, Deraa). As a result, On Sunday, the 20th of March, following funeral processions mourning those who died in protests on Friday, protesters in Dera'a burned down both the Ba'ath party government building as well as several buildings associated with business holdings

owned by the Assad family (Syrian-unrest 22nd; Violence against Protests, Response). From there, similar to the dispersion of protests from Sidi Boazid in Tunisia, protests in the city of Dera'a continued to grow in size and intensity, reaching sizes of 10,000 demonstrators by Monday the 21st, and gradually began to disperse throughout the rest of Syria's Southwestern Hauran Region.

However, two pieces of clarification regarding the ongoing resistance in Dera'a are important. First, significantly, for the first two weeks of resistance, the political demands asserted by demonstrators remained highly limited in nature, merely calling for the regime to address the pervasive corruption and institute political reforms. Second, as these initial protests grew, they were severely impacted by the failure of protests to disseminate to other parts of the country. Essentially, throughout the first week of protest only largely insignificant small-scale demonstrations emerged in areas dominated by non-Sunni ethnic groups, religious minorities, or in the major urban centers of Damascus and Aleppo (Kurdish Youth in Syria, 'Revolution'; Syria-Unrest March 24th). In fact, throughout this period the most significant turnout in both Damascus and Aleppo occurred along pro-regime lines, and this occurred both because of the networks the Assad regime had carefully constructed and a growing sense of apprehension regarding the potential externalities associated with regime change (Six Dead in Port, Grows). In response, Assad's security forces surrounded and closed off Dera'a from the rest of the country by the 24th, and official estimates, although deemed unreliable by most sources, placed the death toll at 55 after only a week (Queenan 2011; Syrian-Unrest 26th March).²¹

Eventually, after a week of contested opposition in Dera'a protests began to spring up in other Sunni dominated cities, and along the Western Coast. On Friday the 25th, protests in the highly confessional coastal city of Latakia led to death of four people, and the attempted destruction of Ba'athist infrastructure (Six Dead in Port, Grows; Syrian Forces Disperse, Speak). However, by the 25th, as protests in Latakia intensified, the intensity of protests in Dera'a had dwindled, and therefore the full extent of Assad's repressive capacity could be focused on the emergent protests in Latakia. To be sure, protests continued to occur in many parts of Dera'a; however, to a large extent, Assad's repression succeeded in inhibiting the level of social mobilization in Dera'a from reaching a critical mass. Moreover, a similar set

of events occurred in early April as protests spread to the Northern Damascus suburb of Douma, or the Southern Coastal city of Baniyas. By the time protests spread to these two cities on the 4th of April, the intensity of protests in Latakia had severely diminished, and protests failed to recur in Latakia altogether for several months.

Put differently, in the first month of protests the geographically stratified protest movements across Syria reached their mobilization capacity at differing times, and this allowed Assad to avoid both stretching his security apparatus as well as having to deal with the types of large concomitant protests that became problematic in Egypt and Tunisia. Eventually, on April 8th, following regime attempts to mitigate the spread of resistance to the Kurdish Northeast by offering previously revoked citizenship, anti-regime protests spread to four cities within the Kurdish dominated region (Muslim Brotherhood Backs, Protests; Syria-unrest April 9th). By the 15th, protests emerged in Homs and Hama, and on Friday the 17th, the first inklings of resistance in Aleppo was violently repressed (Syria Protests Spread, Aleppo; Syrian-Unrest April 16th).

Eventually, by late April and early May the political demands of protesters within the Sunni dominated peripheral cities shifted towards regime change; however, the government's intense repression limited the spread of information and fostered variability in both participation rates and intensity. For example, only limited, youth-based, non-institutionalized protests emerged in the Kurdish Northeast or Damascus. Moreover, these protests, when they did occur at very low intensity levels, also saw limited or non-existent regime repression, which was primarily due to the fact that the regime strategically allowed a degree of opposition to occur in these locales. As such, one of the central reasons for the limited expansion to the Northeast was that Assad saw non-intervention in the Kurdish regions as politically beneficial (Syrian Kurds Get Citizenship; Syria-unrest April 23rd). Similarly, in Damascus fear of government repression kept populations in that city from rebelling in the manner that occurred elsewhere. Finally, in the two largest and most important Syrian cities, Damascus and Aleppo, the Syrian military maintained a visible and willingly violent stance; eventually leading to the reported death of tens of thousands, likely significantly more, and the displacement of millions.

In addition, moving forward, two aspects of the escalation of violence in Syria are important to highlight. First, as demonstrations grew in intensity, eventually overcoming the temporal stratification of protests in late March and early April, they evoked increasingly widespread repression, and significantly, the regime-demonstration divide became increasingly sectarian. As an example, Maher Assad, Bashar's younger brother in charge of the internal security apparatus, began to selectively utilize sectarian based military units in order to engage with protesters, primarily in order to avoid the potential of defection and disobedience emanating from the inclusion of Sunni soldiers (Ajami 2012, 50-78; Lynch 2011, 178-192). A large paramilitary wing was also dispatched to ensure the dispersal of protests, consisting largely of Alawite and other minority based mercenaries, the Shibliha, who were well compensated by the Assad Regime. Finally, within government rhetoric there was also a persistent, and largely effective attempt (probably because it was partly true) to align Sunni demonstrations with Salafism and religious extremism, and this played an important role of facilitating post-resistance anxiety both at home and abroad.

Second, international responses in favor of the resistance were universally slow to materialize, and only did so after both the onset of civil war and the emergence of evidence of the use of chemical weapons emerged (Committee on Foreign Affairs 2015). Further, the extent of international support for both the regime and the resistance movement was also non-conclusive. Iran had established significant relationships with the Syrian regime, and following the US invasion of Iraq in 2003, the subsequent Shi'a dominated government also became a source of support, albeit complicated due to the Iraqi government's relationship with the U.S. Further, China and Russia both exerted Security Council vetoes and influence, which prevented the extent of overt Western military and aerial support from progressing to that of its role in the Libyan Revolution. In short, the anti-Assad coalition was numerous, but not capable of exerting enough influence to end the military hegemony of the Assad Regime. Turkey, Israel, the GCC, and the U.S. and NATO eventually gave material and technical support to the opposition, but as the opposition remained largely fragmented throughout did not succeed in deposing Bashar. The advent of the Islamic State in Syria and the Levante (ISIL) eventually served to complicate matters even further.

However, beyond the influence of external actors simply being non-conclusive, Syria also presented a dilemma in terms of Western support because there was little in the vein of ancillary pressures available to Western actors. Western sanctions had been reaping havoc on the Syrian economy for several decades, and N.G.O's and international media outlets had frequently highlighted the extent of human rights violations in Bashar's Syria. Given the usually urban nature of nonviolent resistance, material or aerial support also seemed largely unfeasible at the time. In effect, in cases like Syria international material and aerial support on behalf of resistance movements is actually likely to either cause, by directly arming the resistance, or even necessitate transitions to violence. In certain cases, the financial supporters of the regime may be susceptible to pathos centered claims surrounding nonviolent resistance, but that is likely a huge and possibly fatal gamble to take in the case of Syria. Finally, Assad was able to continue financing his campaign of repression, which had it not been for the continued financial and armament support of his external backers would have been increasingly difficult to achieve.

(5.1.4) Discussion

In short, the Syrian case, for all intents and purposes, can be broken into two distinct phases, one in which social heterogeneity and historical experiences with repression, as in the brutally repressed uprising in Hama in 1982, prevented the cohesive temporal spread of protests, and one in which external intervention disproportionately benefited the Assad Regime. Further, the Syrian case also shows how these two sets of conditions can interact and support each other in significant ways,

First, ethnic and sectarian heterogeneity placed significant limitations on the dissemination of protests from the epicenter in the region of Dera'a. For example, protests in the Kurdish dominated Northeast emerged nearly 24 days after the onset of protests on the 15th of March, and when they did emerge, these never grew to the levels observable in the Sunni dominated areas. Furthermore, anxiety in Damascus and Aleppo surrounding the potential for post-resistance instability kept many politically apathetic individuals from outwardly supporting the stance of regime change. Such anxieties stemmed both from both personal self-interest, as well as fears surrounding the potential negative outcomes

associated with the removal of the Ba'athist regime. For all intents and purposes, the major protest movements were always predominately Sunni, and also failed to influence many Sunni elites to defect in geographically important areas for regime control.

Moreover, the confluence of external support for continued repression and pervasive social heterogeneity mutually supported one another in interesting and significant ways. In particular, the strategic interests Iran maintained in a stable Shi'a dominated Syria, allowed for the brutal crackdown on demonstrations in Dera'a, and placed coercive limitations on the spread of protests themselves. Protests in Damascus and Aleppo were met with extreme lethal force, and continued nonviolent resistance in the face of increasingly dire death tolls is difficult to sustain. The regime could also shelter itself from the onslaught of Sunni-Arab, Turkish, and Western condemnation, and maintain access to munitions and armaments primarily through its Iranian and Russian partners. Hence, both the de-facto immunity of the Syrian regime, as well as its continued ability to repress were important elements of regime strength. Moreover, continued resistance in the face of regime immunity and its continued access to repressive capabilities, likely meant that the militarization of resistance was the only reasonable path moving forward. In short, had Assad been left to his own devices, his ability to finance the necessary coercive action would have quickly deteriorated, especially in relation to mercenaries, and this would have altered the trajectory and influence of resistance.

Finally, the limited legitimacy of a unified Syrian state, presented significant problems in relation to the conformity of the protest movements that did emerge. Again, the Kurds represent a case in point. By late April, the Kurdish message, while supporting regime change in Damascus, was primarily focused on the creation of a separated and autonomous Kurdish zone of influence. In part, this was aided by the de-facto autonomy experienced by their Iraqi neighbors, and also stemmed from both historical experience and the increased activity of Kurdish Nationalist groups such as the P.K.K. within Syrian borders. Further, emanating from the early years of Hafiz al-Assad's regime, many of the smaller ethnic and religious minorities that existed along the Western border maintained significant loyalties to the Assad regime as a result of their perceived vulnerability. Hence, many pockets of Druze, Christian,

Jewish, and other minorities rejected the symbiosis between regime change and a unified Syrian state. For these minority populations, the Ba'athist regime represented the only acceptable way in which they could be effectively incorporated into Syrian society, and the absence of the Assad regime posed significant vulnerabilities to these populations.

Moreover, the very process of regime repression, principally because it was an intended consequence of the Alawite elite, served to intensify the sectarian nature of the regime-resistance divide. Specific units were chosen to repress specific protests on the basis of their sectarian identity, and the regime also attempted, in many cases successfully, to foment internecine conflict between the resistance movements themselves. In effect, not only was the effective dissemination of protests limited by social heterogeneity from the outset, it was likely to become increasingly limited as resistance continued. Throughout May, June, and July 2011 the sectarian nature of both the Baathist regime and geographic areas increased significantly; Defections by Ba'athists from Dera'a, the continued sectarian nature of repression, and the insertion of ISIL and the growth of other Salafist groups have created a Syria that is more divided than ever, and this makes the viability of nonviolent resistance less and less likely.

(5.2) Case Four: Bahrain

To begin, the Bahraini protest movements represent a particularly interesting case study for several important reasons. First, in comparison to other examples these demonstrations were highly nonviolent, and for the most part protests in Manama remained primarily nonviolent far longer than did those in Cairo or in Tunis. Moreover, the Bahraini protests maintained the highest rates of participation as a percentage of the total population, and Bahrain is by far one of the most Westernized and diversified economies in the Middle East.²² Female participation in both the labor force and civil society is relatively high, domestic financial markets are extremely well developed, and the Bahraini national population is extremely well educated. Protests even had a very small geographic area to disseminate across, as Bahrain is essentially an island with one large well connected metropolis. Finally, Bahrain also had a relatively

vibrant civil society, and the online forum BahrainOnline had been operating as a voice of opposition for almost a decade (Lynch 2011, 11-14; Miriam 2012, 117-127).

In other words, *ceteris paribus*, the Bahraini case seems a perfect candidate for the application of strategic nonviolent action. However, nonviolent protests failed to initiate regime change, and also failed to a large extent in appropriating any meaningful political concessions. The central reason for such failure: The confluence of divisive social heterogeneity and external intervention. In particular, Bahrain represents essentially the reverse of the Syrian case, as Bahrain is governed by a Sunni minority regime in the face of a Shi'a majority population that is geographically proximate to the most important Sunni-Arab country in the Middle East. Furthermore, Bahrain shows how the interaction between repressive forces and demonstrators can create problems for the maintenance of ongoing resistance. In particular, repression served to intensify sectarian divides, and this both increasingly infused violent strategies into resistance and served to limit the cross-sectarian appeal of demonstrations over time, collectively, eventually limiting their effectiveness.

(5.2.1) The Nature of Social Heterogeneity in Bahrain

To begin, nearly 67 percent of the Bahraini-national population being Shi'a—with Ajami Shi'a, basically implying Persian ancestry, making up roughly 22 percent of that population (Pandya 2012, 66).²³ However, since 1783 Bahrain has been governed, either directly or through British colonialism, by the al-Khalifa family, which represents a Sunni-Arab Monarchy emerging from a minority population that makes up about 32 percent of Bahraini nationals (Mathiesen 2013, 16). Hence, like Syria, Bahrain is governed by a minority sectarian group, that has historically politically disenfranchised the majority population, and has also actively attempted to incentivize Sunni immigration as a means of overcoming their demographic disadvantage. Furthermore, unlike in Syria, the demographic divide in Bahrain is far more dualistic in nature, and as Bahrain is essentially one large metropolis, this has led to the geographic stratification of the two populations over time.

Furthermore, throughout the latter half of the 20th century the majority of the Bahraini Shi'a population continued to maintain strong familial and spiritual ties to Iran, and throughout the 1980's the divergence between Bahrain's minority Sunni and majority Shi'a population would become increasingly visible. In June, 1979 the then Islamic Iranian government officially laid territorial claim to Bahrain, and during this period Shi'a religious figures within Bahrain became increasingly influenced by and publicly supportive of the Ayatollah Khomeini. Essentially, as the 80's progressed the ruling al-Khalifa family and the Sunni dominated merchant class began to become more and more tied to both increasingly Westernized lifestyles and politically tied to the Persian Gulf Monarchies, while the largely disenfranchised Shi'a populations became more and more ideologically linked with the Iranian state and increasingly fundamental interpretations of Shi'a Islam. In short, such a split set the stage for enhanced sectarian tensions and episodic violence that occurred intermittently throughout the rest of the 20th century, most frequently in response to the continuous electoral and legislative failures of Shi'a opposition parties.²⁴

More specifically, throughout the 1990's and 2000's two principal Shi'a opposition groups became particularly important. The most active political organization in the country, with around 68,000 members is al-Wifaq (Mathiesen 2013, 65-89). However, led by Ali Salman, a religious scholar educated in both Riyadh and Qom, al-Wifaq has traditionally maintained a prominently secular rhetoric, emphasizing cross-sectarian issues such as political and economic reform. On the other hand, more recently, a second major group, the al-Haq movement, has emerged, which has yet to be formally incorporated into Bahraini politics and espouses a far more confrontational ideology in relation to both the Sunni population and the al-Khalifa family. Al-Haq was formed in 2005, and has drawn heavily from the Lebanese Shi'a movement Hezbollah. In general, these groups have suffered from extensive Sunni political maneuvering, Sunni influenced gerrymandering, and in total make up only 20 percent of the seats in parliament, almost all in the hands of *al-Wifaq* (Mathiesen 2013, 81-95).

Moreover, economic progress, which has turned Bahrain into a regional legal and financial hub, has disproportionately benefited Sunni populations throughout the last two decades. Like many other

Arab countries, a rising population has been coupled with high unemployment rates of about 15 percent (WBI 2015). In particular, labor force participation rates for males and females, as a percentage of either group between the ages of 15 and 24, was 55 percent and 32 percent respectively in 2010, indicating a large degree of non-participation. These numbers are also important in relation to the fact that nearly 78 percent of the total population was between the ages of 15 and 24 (WBI 2015). Furthermore, two other characteristics of these demographic realities are also important to consider. First, unlike the rest of the GCC Bahrain does not generate sufficient petroleum rents to effectively “pay-off” these problematic unemployed populations, and unemployment for Sunnis is significantly lower than for Shi'a populations, typically being around ten to twelve percent lower across all demographic groups (Mathiesen 2013, 89). As such, the dualistic antagonisms between Sunni and Shi'a populations have generated systematic inequalities and genuine grievances since independence was granted in 1971. Moreover, since the late 1990's the political orientations of young Shi'a populations have been shifting either towards the Shi'a fundamentalism associated with al-Haq or towards more critical secular political parties; however, these populations remained highly skeptical of any formal political connection to the al-Khalifa family, and were increasingly fed up with the status-quo political stances taken by established opposition parties like al-Wifaq.

(5.2.2) The Reasons for External Intervention

To begin, due to Bahrain's sizeable Shi'a population, which is also comprised of roughly 22 percent Ajami (Persian) Shi'ites, the country has routinely been the subject of multiple territorial claims by different Iranian governments over time. In particular, throughout the 1960's as British withdrawal became an increasingly likely scenario Iran, with what appeared to be American support, began to strengthen its influence in Bahraini affairs in a bid to solidify its presence in the Persian Gulf. However, eventually Iran was deprived of its territorial claim, and on August 15th, 1971 the ruling al-Khalifa family established the country's independence. However, Bahrain's relatively low tax base, and low levels of economic activity created public financing shortages that would also see the United States set up a large

naval presence in Bahrain in an effort to maintain stability for other Gulf countries. Moreover, the Iranian Revolution served to limit international support for Iranian influence in Bahrain, and several influential political analysts writing during the height of the protest movements in mid-February cited the continued importance of the naval base that houses the U.S. Navy's Fifth fleet as a means of monitoring both the Strait of Hormuz and Iranian nuclear proliferation (Miriam 2012, 116-121).

In addition, in May 1981 the Bahraini government along with the United Arab Emirates, Kuwait, Saudi Arabia, Qatar, and Oman banded together to form the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC), which made the relationship between the al-Khalifa family and their Sunni neighbors even stronger. US military aid to Bahrain also became more pronounced, and between 1981 and 1986 nearly 164 million US dollars was awarded to the al-Khalifa family in official aid contributions (Miriam 2012, 66). Furthermore, in 1986, the long awaited Saudi funded highway connecting Saudi Arabia to Bahrain was completed, and at its onset the causeway experienced traffic volumes reaching peaks of nearly 10,000 vehicles per day. A push for an integrated GCC defense coalition also mounted amidst Kuwait's invasion by Iraq in 1990, and the long-contentious territorial dispute regarding the Hawar Islands between Kuwait and Bahrain was eventually settled in 1997.

In short, the predominately Shi'a demonstrators were acting in the face of strong and vested external interests in the existing status quo. The continued hegemony of the Sunni minority and the al-Khalifa family ensured that Iranian influence within the Gulf did not expand, allowed for the continued presence of the U.S. naval base on the island, and ensured stability within the GCC Finally, the fact that Bahrain, a country separated by a 15-mile highway from Saudi Arabia, maintained a similar governmental structure, and also contained a population that both represented some of the same demographic issues and interacted with Saudis frequently (Bahrain maintains many Western vices that are hard to find in Saudi Arabia), presented the additional problem that unrest in Bahrain could potentially cause domestic problems within the Kingdom as well. As such, the Saudi government also maintained a large vested interest in the maintenance of the existing status quo in relation to its own precarious domestic situation.

(5.2.3) Nonviolent Resistance and the Bahraini Uprising

In brief, by 2010, while minimal attempts at democratization and liberal reforms had been initiated, the increasing dependency of the al-Khalifa family on GCC participation, and the continued disenfranchisement of the Shi'a populations remained largely intact. Constitutional changes had been legislated in 2002, and in 2010 the third round of scheduled elections occurred on October 23rd. However, Shi'a activists remained concerned about gerrymandering of electoral districts, lack of opportunities to mobilize, and other structural inequalities that severely limited their ability to achieve electoral success. Further, following the 2010 elections a host of small-scale riots and protests were quickly dealt with by the regime, and hundreds of Shi'a demonstrators were arrested.

Moreover, as the protests progressed, the Bahraini government unsuccessfully attempted to negotiate a compromise through existing political channels, which served to highlight the growing disconnect between youth-based populations on the ground and existing political groups. Eventually, protesters accused al-Wifaq and its leader Ali Salman of being overly diffident towards the regime, not effectively standing up for the demonstrations, and such sentiments were only enhanced by the organization of counter-demonstrations by al-Wifaq in mid-February. In short, as the events in Tunisia and Egypt progressed, a youth-coalition emerged under the banner of the 14th of February Movement, which stood in opposition to the two major political coalitions already in existence. Specifically, one set of unlicensed organizations forming the Alliance for the Republic involving Haq, the Bahrain Freedom Movement (BFM), and the Islamic Loyalty Society (ILS) existed, as did a set of licensed organizations that made up the subsidiary societies associated with al-Wifaq.

In terms of the actual protest movement, beginning on the 14th of February youth-based Shi'a organizations attempted to plan the Bahraini version of the “day of rage” protests that occurred elsewhere in the region. In response, security forces immediately targeted poorer Shi'a communities that formed the most politically active segment of the opposition, and intermittent clashes between protesters and security forces occurred in Shi'a neighborhoods across Manama including Karzakan, Newdriyat, and Diya village (Protesters Bahrain Call, Freedom; Zacharia and Birnbaum 2011). From that point on, Shi'a funeral

possessions became the central gathering point, serving a similar function as “noon-prayer” gatherings in other examples, for the protest movements.

On the 16th, the existing institutionalized elements of Shi'a coalitions, al-Wifaq and al-Haq joined several leftist political groups to form a conditional alliance, which emphasized the importance of supporting the predominantly non-institutionalized youth protests underway. On the ground, the 16th was defined by a series of funeral processions, mourning the death of two protesters on the 14th, which marched on the Pearl Roundabout (Thousands of Protesters March 2011; Call for Better Job Prospects 2011). However, early on the 17th, regime forces physically engaged with protesters for the first time. Essentially, in an attempt to clear the demonstrations that had set up encampments around the Pearl Roundabout the previous day, police forces used similar tactics as in previous examples: Rubber bullets, teargas, and water cannons. Within several hours, five protesters were reported to have been killed, and the violence continued throughout the 17th and 18th, with reports of at least 50 other people injured on the 18th (Libya, Bahrain Protests: Live; Middle East Could, Protests; Miriam 2012, 119; Two Dead as Bahrain, Camp). On the 19th, encouraged by US officials, both King Hamad and the Crown-Prince Salman engaged in negotiations with opposition forces. These negotiations were largely unproductive, and labeled key opposition parties as tied to regime interests, significantly harming internal cohesion within the Shi'a opposition by engendering distrust between establishment parties, and the youth-populations on the ground (Libya, Bahrain Protests: Live). Further, these negotiations were also limited by internal opposition within the al-Khalifa regime emanating from hardline conservatives maintaining the strong support of the Saudi government (Miriam 2012, 116; Lynch 2011, 135-141).

Moving forward, protests around the Pearl Roundabout fluctuated in numbers throughout the rest of February and early March; however, they consistently remained a persistently disruptive force for regime stability, and did not radically change demographically. Since the beginning they had been younger, and typically politically unaffiliated Shi'ites. Shi'a based opposition could also be divided into two basic groups: The relatively peaceful demonstrations occurring around the Roundabout, and the intermittent, typically violent, demonstrations that emerged in many of the poorer Shi'a neighborhoods

and communities outside of Manama itself (Zacharia and Birnbaum 2011). The protests around the Roundabout were also more symbolic than actually disruptive; several reports indicate that protesters controlled entry points to the Roundabout, and routinely let civilian cars and Taxis in and out, only prohibiting the entrance of security forces. Moreover, the protests in the poorer Shi'a neighborhoods typically only escalated to violence as they were engaged by regime forces, and due in part to the sectarian conformity of these areas, also maintained little violence in relation to non-hegemonic forces.

In response, the al-Khalifa regime initiated an international campaign to construct regime friendly narratives regarding the ongoing resistance, and also strategically planned and implemented a harsh campaign of repression. First, the regime accused al-Wifaq and Haq in particular, of having ties to the Iranian regime, thereby emphasizing the sectarian nature of protests. In particular, the relationship between al-Dawa'a clerics and those in Iraq and Iran were pointed at, as was the fact that many key figures within Shi'a political societies were educated in Qom. This specific messaging strategy, was also part of an ongoing GCC and Bahraini lobbying campaign to obtain the greenlight from the U.S. for GCC intervention. Second, the sectarian nature of the protests was both central to the regime's attempts to mobilize Sunni opposition to the February 14th Movement, and actively constructed and enhanced by the regime's strategy of repression. As in Syria, repression, was intentionally conducted by Sunni elements of the military apparatus, and the regime also actively imported important mercenary forces that typically maintained Salafist and anti-Shi'a ideational dispositions (al-Khawaja 2013; Lynch 2011, 135-141).

Eventually, as protests in both the poorer Shi'a neighborhoods and around the Pearl Roundabout grew, regime panic manifested itself with the entrance of 2,000 armed GCC soldiers across the highway linking Saudi Arabia to Bahrain on March 15th, 2011 (Saudi Troops Arrive, Escalate; 6 Dead in Bahrain, Crackdown; Thousands of Saudi Troops, Violence). Importantly, on March 11th U.S. Secretary of State Hilary Clinton altered the official position of the U.S. by issuing a statement indicating, “that Bahrain had the sovereign right to invite GCC forces into the country”; within four days the GCC and the al-Khalifa family exercised that sovereign right (Bradley 2012, 87). By the morning of the 19th, the Pearl Roundabout had been cleared and razed to the ground, and the al-Khalifa regime initiated a “state-of-

emergency”, which placed the Shi'a dominated neighborhoods under curfew, rounded up political prisoners, and lead to the death of at least 16 people (6 Dead in Bahrain, Crackdown; Bahrain Protest Casualties, Rise; Bahrain Army Demolishes, Square).

For all intents and purposes, the Bahraini revolution was over, and while occasional protests continued throughout April and May, the official stance of both the key Shi'a opposition groups and the February 14th movement devolved into calls for reform and better political representation instead of out-and-out regime change. Further, in order to alleviate the political uncertainty facing the al-Khalifa regime three important steps were taken. First, the Bahraini government actively encouraged the influx of Sunni immigrants from Saudi Arabia, Yemen, Jordan, and other Muslim countries, and also offered citizenship to existing pockets of Pakistani migrant workers within Bahrain in order to mitigate the demographic problems facing the regime. Second, the regime has combined largely hesitant attempts at engaging in negotiations with al-Wifaq and al-Haq, with the continued targeting of Shi'a populations. The independent report concerning the extent of regime repression has highlighted the staggering number ratio of Bahraini nationals now held as political prisoners (nearly one in eleven), the extent of government purges from public institutions, universities, and even hospitals, and the heightened police presence in Shi'a neighborhoods. Third, the regime has also engaged in processes of geographic manipulation. Since, March 15th the regime has been held responsible by independent reports for the systematic demolition of Shi'a Mosques, the construction of housing projects within Shi'a neighborhoods devoted to integrating the sectarian based communities, and has prevented Shi'a populations from engaging in any religious based festivals or communal gatherings.

(5.2.4) Discussion

In all, the Bahraini case highlights three important limitations in relation to strategic nonviolent action. First, the agency of both organizers and the protest movement in general was severely limited by the interplay between divisive social heterogeneity and staunch regime support from external forces. The fact that Bahrain maintains a majority Ajami Shi'a population, and is both a part of the G.C.C. and

maintains important ties to the U.S. played a huge role in preventing the success of the resistance that emerged. Moreover, without this confluence of structural conditions, these protests would have almost certainly been successful. Almost 70 percent of the Bahraini national population demonstrated in some form or another, in most cases the sectarian identity of protests was not highly exclusive, and a pre-existing infrastructure for civil resistance had been in place for decades.

However, over time the regime both actively fomented sectarian conflict, and spent nearly 1.3 million dollars to convince apathetic or anti-regime Sunni populations of the dangers associated with the retributive and violent nature of the Shi'a protests (Protesters Bahrain Call, Freedom; How a Broken Social, Protests). Eventually, the possibility of enhanced Iranian influence in the Persian Gulf led to the GCC led invasion, and the declaration of a state of emergency by the al-Khalifa regime that placed thousands of opposition members in jail and destroyed the Pearl Roundabout. Moreover, significantly, unlike the Syrian case, the February 14th movement even maintained two external actors, the United States and Great Britain, with both the influential capability and democratic pressures that have facilitated political ju-jitsu in other cases. In short, only half-hearted condemnations of regime repression emerged, and no financial or diplomatic pressure was exerted in the face of increasingly violent and oppressive regime activity. Nonviolent orientations failed to overcome the strategic considerations of important international actors, and this promoted the al-Khalifa regime's resiliency and eventually forced invasion on its behalf.²⁵

Second, as in the other cases, the Bahraini protests highlight the importance of the routinization of large scale social agreements as opposed to the strategic organization of protests themselves. In Bahrain, the use of the funeral procession as an organizing strategy effectively doubled the demonstration size from the 14th of February to the 16th, and from then on protests became both geographically and temporally routinized. Primarily occurring around the Pearl Roundabout, with increasing numbers associated with the conclusion of noon-prayer. Limited demonstrations organized by the existing political organizations were ineffective for a host of reasons, namely al-Wifaq the largest group, only possesses a membership of 68,000 people. While online organization using social media by the February 14th

movement was important and continuous, the size and effectiveness, in terms of fomenting regime panic, remained highly dependent on the spread of social narratives throughout the period of resistance.

However, throughout, Sunni neighborhoods and populations represented distinct barriers to the dissemination of protests, and eventually led to an important degree of pro-regime mobilization as well.

Third, over time three important facets of the case, regime repression, escalations to violence, and the evolution of resistance messaging all served to promote the sectarian nature of the resistance and consequently limit its eventual effectiveness. Initially, protests emphasized their inclusive and cross-sectarian nature, and only presented demands associated with enhanced representation in parliament and economic reform. However, as both the extent of regime repression and the civilian death-toll rose, the demonstrations became simultaneously emboldened and enraged by regime activity. Only then, did the evolution of demands for out-and-out regime change arise, which created problems for many Sunni based populations for two principle reasons. For one, as the violence within Shi'a dominated protests increased, a fact created by the systematic repression of these protests by security forces, many Sunni populations became wary of the retributive nature of Shi'a rule. For another, many largely middle-class and business orientated Sunni populations, saw the al-Khalifa regime as an important counter-weight to the growing influence of Salafi and Wahhabist Islamists immigrating from abroad.

In brief, taken collectively, the points made above highlight how many of the mechanisms outlined by strategic nonviolent action theory are ambiguously to the nonviolence of resistance. For one, the escalation of violence within demonstrations was in large part a product of regime activity. Often Sunni protests deemed entirely “artificial” by independent sources, being essentially bought and paid for, or incentivized through the provision of citizenship, by the regime, were organized specifically to engage with Shi'a demonstrations across Manama. For another, demonstrations had little control over anything but social media communication networks, and these were, for the most part at least, subject to closure and acute censorship by the regime itself. Fallacious connections between Iran and ongoing demonstrations were messages that became entrenched both domestically and internationally, and relatively insignificant escalations of violence, were disproportionately covered by local, regional, and

international news agencies. In short, the ability to both maintain nonviolent dispositions, as well as garner the types of international support nonviolent theory highlights as being crucial factors for success, were systematically mitigated by the important structural conditions, and were not highly linked to the nonviolence within resistance.²⁶

(5.3) Summary

In short, the Syrian and Bahraini cases highlight two central weaknesses within literature on nonviolent action. For one, both cases highlight the extent to which the agency of individuals and groups engaging in nonviolent resistance is contingent on important structural and historical factors. In each case, the nature of ethnic and sectarian identities, the strategic relationship each contested regime maintained with important regional powers, as well as the minority status of each regime posed significant, perhaps insurmountable, obstacles for resistance. For another, these factors also directly impacted many of the mechanisms nonviolent theory has highlighted that make nonviolent resistance effective. The nature of each regime's diplomatic relationships meant that resistance was largely unable to effectively create international pressure. In Bahrain, the external actors' likely to be impacted by effective messaging also maintained important attachments to the regime, and in Syria, the central pillars of regime support were highly unlikely to be influenced by such messaging (nondemocratic regimes). Further, political ju-jitsu and military defection were limited by both the non-institutionalized nature of each regime's coercive apparatus, and the minority status of each regime. Finally, the conditions also placed limits on both the mobilization potential each movement possessed, and made resistance vulnerable to longer term dilemmas associated with regime activity. In each case, the regime actively fomented sectarian conflict, and created problems in terms of each movement's ability to retain full control over its political messaging.

Second, each case also highlights the importance of the interactive effects of strategies of violent and nonviolent resistance, and, in particular, the important benefits strategic violence may provide in terms of maintaining resiliency. Without some degree of counter regime violence Sunni led protests in

Dara'a and Homs were likely to be subject to heavy repression leading to massive amounts of casualties, and placed movements vulnerable to violence stemming from multiple nodes. Assad's Muhkbarakat, as well as other regime affiliated Shi'a populations, infiltrated and targeted opposition protests, and many other minority populations violently opposed opposition demonstrations as a result of their historically safe position under the confessionalism of the Assad regime. Finally, in Syria the transition to militarized resistance avowed for the more influential, and significantly symmetric, in terms of coercive capabilities, insertion of international assistance. Prior, the sanctions and asset withholding that the West had placed on Assad had little to no effect primarily because of the regime's continued support from other allies, and such sanctions had also been in place for the better part of two decades anyways. The militarization of resistance allowed for arms and strategic assistance, that could potentially keep up with the similar assistance the regime was receiving from Russia and other Shi'a dominated regimes. In short, without militarization the extent of international support for the opposition would have been essentially exhausted.

Finally, as in the Egyptian case, both the Bahraini and Syrian cases highlight the importance of the modularity and inspiration of the Tunisian case. The use of social narratives roughly mimicked the use of noon-prayer in the Tunisian case, and the successful North African examples also likely itself bolstered the mobilization potential associated with each set of protests. In short, in both cases the expansion of mobilization was in large part spontaneously caused by the previous examples, and thus civil resistance in these cases was highly dependent on the window of opportunity generated by what essentially amounted to a wave of resistance.

Endnote

¹⁸ Effectively describing the extent of built up animosity between Sunni's, Alawis, Kurds, and the various Christian minorities is important but beyond the scope of this project. Wieland (2012, chap. 5), Lesch (2013, chap 3), Stacher (2012, chaps. 2, 3, 4), and Ajami (2012, chaps. 2, 3, 4) all provide crucial insight. Heydarian (2014, chaps 3, 4) also provides a crucial account of how neoliberalism, and increasing economic globalization significantly impacted the patronage networks that were crucial to stability in Syrian politics, as well as across the Arab World.

¹⁹ For a more detailed synthesis of Alawi history Ajami (2012, chap. 2) presents a compelling narrative as does Kramer (1987, 237-254). More than anything, their traditional disenfranchisement as a result of their break from Islamic Orthodoxy and eventual adoption of Twelver Shi’ite praxis, as well as their geographic isolation inserted the Alawi’s as a potential ally to the French as the ruled with a divide and conquer mindset. Alawi hatred of Sunni Muslims was a product of generations under a clear subordinate status, and eventually as Sunni nationalists deprived the Alawis’ of an independent state they used their privileged status under French colonialism to gain access to key positions within the military apparatus.

²⁰ To be sure, reality is more complex than the cursory analysis presented here. The Bush administration had dropped most of the sanction regime as Assad helped target Sunni rebels in Western Iraq, and the relationship with both Iran and Russia was not always perfect. However, at most the Syrian economy was relieved from sanctions for 6 years, and the sanction regime had been internalized within the Syrian economy—effecting how people held money and invested for example—and made the Syrian regime increasingly dependent on their non-Western allies.

²¹ It is important to note that plenty of sources point to the continued resistance in Dera'a being intricately linked with the mobilization of the Syrian Muslim Brotherhood. While this likely plays a role in explaining the events of Dera'a, there is little evidence that the MB leadership was highly involved, at least in these early stages, and that also represents a narrative that would benefit the Syrian government.

²² For the purposes of this paper I will largely be focusing on the Bahraini-national population, as that represents the elements of the population that are politically active. This only represents around 586,000 people, while the total population, comprised mostly of foreign migrant workers, is more than double this, making up an additional 690,000 people.

²³ It is important to note that while the majority of the Shi'a population is Baharna and indigenous to Bahrain, they are still “Twelvers”, and therefore the distinction is largely based on ancestral history. In general, Ajami Shi'as are wealthier than Baharna Shi'as, and many even speak Farsi and have familial ties to Iran. See for example Pandya (2012, 66-97) for a more in depth discussion of the difference between these two populations, and the specific implications it has on Bahraini society.

²⁴ For a more detailed discussion see Miriam (2013) pages 81-105, or Mathiesen (2013) chapters 2 and 3. The “Shi'a problem” has been a continuous thorn in the side of the al-Khalifa family that was problematically influenced by the Iranian Revolution in 1979.

²⁵ For a more detailed account of the diplomatic history of mid-February to late March 2011 see for example Bradley (2012, 95-133) or Lynch (2011, 131-159). Riyadh played an integral role in limiting the spread of unrest to Constitutional Monarchies such as Morocco and Jordan, and many have cited the Saudi invasion on the 14th as the nail in the coffin of the optimism tied to the Arab Spring.

²⁶ For example, al-Khawaja (2013) highlights how relatively small examples of episodic violence were quickly picked up and exacerbated by both regional and local media outlets, and Lynch (2011, 135-141) and Miriam (2012, 115-127) both highlight how the Bahraini government utilized Public Relations firms in the United States, placed op-eds in many influential newspapers, and benefitted from the state-owned management of al-Jazeera in particular. Finally, al-Rawi (2015) shows how the sectarian nature of protests eventually created animosity between the Bahraini protests, and other concomitant Arab demonstrations going on throughout the region.

Chapter Six- Yemen and Libya: Fragile states, Tribalism, and Necessary Violence

To begin, both Libya and Yemen represent cases where the implementation of sustained nonviolent resistance is, for all intents and purposes, practically untenable. For one, both contain populations that are heavily armed, and whose political environment is defined by shifting tribal allegiances shaped by intermittent clashes and conflict. For another, both also contain large swaths of land largely outside the control of the state, and lack a definitive and entrenched national identity for divergent groups to coalesce around. Lastly, both represent examples extremely vulnerable to external intervention. Yemen maintains a contiguous border with Saudi Arabia, and has recently become a safe-haven from which radical Islamists can operate from. In Libya, the Qaddafi regime represented one of the most isolated countries in the world in terms of diplomatic relationships, having funded and abetted Left-leaning terrorists across the globe throughout the 1970's and 80's. However, Libya also sits on one of the world's largest oil reserves, and this will be a persistent point of contention moving forward.

More specifically, both cases highlight three sets of weaknesses associated with nonviolent theory. First, in cases like Libya and Yemen, the implementation in locales separated from the loci of civil resistance in Benghazi, and in Yemen, the influx of tribesman at times provided a coercive advantage, which helped the demonstrations take and hold ground. Second, both cases highlight the complexity associated with the intricate relationship between the agency of opposition movements, and the impacts that deep rooted structural and historical factors, largely beyond the control of the movement itself, have on determining the outcome of resistance. For one, especially in regards to Libya, these cases highlight, as in the Syrian case, how international support can serve to both cause and necessitate the abject militarization of resistance, and that nonviolent resistance may not necessarily be an effective strategy to achieve international support in many cases. For another, in both cases, the complex historical relationships between divergent segments of the populations, limited how effectively the protests could disseminate and in some instances were a direct cause of transitions to violence within resistance. Finally, both cases also show how waves of resistance can create unique windows of opportunity, on

which many strategies of nonviolent resistance may depend. Put bluntly, the way each set of demonstrations expanded, and the way events unfolded both depended heavily on the example set in the Tunisian case. In both cases, the Tunisian model bolstered mobilization to a point that pushed both Saleh and Qaddafi to the brink of resignation.

(6.1) Case Five: Yemen

To begin, the current political environment in Yemen is perhaps the most difficult to explain, predict, and understand of any of the cases thus far presented. At the moment, GCC and NATO based aerial and drone support is occurring in sections concomitantly with three geographically differentiated separatist movements. In the West, the al-Qa'eda affiliated al-Qa'eda in the Arab Peninsula (AQAP), have emerged as the central power broker in the long volatile Hawdhramat, and in the North the Houthi rebellion movement has taken over the traditional bases of power occupied by the former Zaydi Imamate. In the South, moderate socialists aligned with the Yemen Socialist Party (YSP), a series of more extremist socialist movements, and fragments of AQAP all have an interest in the reimplementation of the political demarcation that preceded unification in 1990. As such, fragments of support for Saleh's Republican government remain in the major urban centers of Sana'a and Ta'iz, but are rapidly losing ground and popular support.

In terms of the Arab Spring, the Yemeni case tends to reaffirm many of the conclusions drawn from the previous case studies. First, the Yemeni context highlights the lack of permanency and effectiveness that nonviolent resistance maintains in certain situations. Second, the existence of geographically, historically, and culturally determined ethnic, political, and sectarian divides significantly limited the spread and permanence of nonviolent resistance. Third, the geographic proximity of Yemen to the rest of the Persian Gulf, its large Shi'a population, and the fundamentalist nature of both AQAP and the Houthi Rebellion introduced a host of problems associated with the maintenance and execution of nonviolent resistance in relation to international influences. In particular, as in Syria, the internal cohesion of resistance as well as its dissemination were destroyed by the existence of competing political demands

and social heterogeneity, the strong interest of international influences promoted the continued presence of Saleh even as he stepped down from the presidency, and the insurmountable levels of instability placed severe limitations on the logical desirability of nonviolent resistance. Finally, even though the objective of resistance was achieved, it had little if anything to do with the extent of nonviolent resistance on its own, and regime change was highly facilitated by the existence of radical flanks, both in relation to the violent separatist movements and the infusion of tribal influences over the primarily student-based resistance movement.

(6.1.1) The Complexity of Structural and Historical Conditions in Yemen

As a starting point, two divergent historical processes set the stage for one of the most important and persistent political divisions within Yemeni society. First, following the collapse of the Ottoman Empire in 1918, Imam Yahya bin Muhammad Hamid al-Din was named as the successor to the Zaydi Imamate, and gradually succeeded in establishing relatively stable control over the majority of the Northeastern part of modern day Yemen. However, stability in Yemeni politics is inherently relative, and throughout the remainder of his reign Imam Yahya fought numerous conflicts with clans previously aligned with the Ottomans in the South, as well as with several Zaydi tribes, whom contested Yahya's claim to the Imamate.²⁷

Second, in the South, the port of Aden, founded by the British East India Company as a coaling station for British fleets, became increasingly important throughout this same time period. Gradually, British influence also expanded inwards, mostly because Aden itself had no water and insufficient arable land to support the population required for the functioning of the port city. However, once in place, the British used their traditional Indian style of colonization, and granted varying degrees of legitimacy to respected notables as a means of maintaining a relatively stable influence. Throughout the 1930's British control over the areas further North of the Aden hinterland was also beginning to expand, mainly as a direct means of limiting Imam Yahya's power base to the North. In short, by 1950 Aden was the second busiest port in the world, and the British had begun implementing institutional reforms that would

eventually lead to the development of a relatively prosperous civil-society (Carapico 1998, chap. 3).

However, British de-facto influence over the fringe territories in the protectorate remained largely non-existent, and tribal conflicts, jihads, and bandits were routine problems throughout these regions, especially in the Wadi Hawdhramat and the Eastern Aden Protectorate.²⁸

Moving forward, in confluence with the continued British presence in the South, two competing sources of regional influences emanating from both Egypt and Saudi Arabia emerged in the second half of the 20th century. Essentially, the next 20 years would see both upper and lower Yemen transition from conflict largely between colonial interests, to a source of conflict between regional interests, specifically between Egypt and Saudi Arabia. In the North, following the death of the successor to Imam Yahya, his son Ahmed bin Yahya, in 1952, a relatively inexperienced tribal affiliate of Ahmed, Muhammad al-Badr, formally took over the Imamate, but was quickly deposed in 1964 by junior army officers maintaining a strong degree of Egyptian influence led by Abd al-Rahman al- Baydani and Abdullah al-Sallel. However, these men were highly inexperienced and not established figures in Yemeni politics, and consequently knew little about handling the complexities of tribal relationships, and ushered in a strong Egyptian presence—by 1965 nearly 15,000 Egyptian soldiers were supporting the new Republic in Northern Yemen, and that number would eventually swell to 70,000 (Ferris 2013, 45-63). Within months the Saudi's decided that an Egyptian revolution on their Southern border was unacceptable, and began to fund royalist opposition to the Egyptian backed government. Throughout the 1960's Saudi support capitalized upon transient tribal affiliations, and as a result shifting allegiances in the countryside remained a continuous burden on Egyptian control.

In the South, fighting in Radfan began in 1963, and as resistance progressed was driven by two important forces. In the countryside, opposition largely resembled its counterparts in the North, with Egyptian subversion replacing the role that Saudi Royalists were playing in the North. Secondly, in the urban centers, most prominently in Aden, resistance maintained important economic overtones. The National Liberation Front (NLF) possessing strong Egyptian support, the Front for the Liberation of Occupied South Yemen (FLOSY), and the Aden Trade Unions Congress (ATUC), primarily a political

entity important for control of Aden, emerged as the primary factions opposing British rule.²⁹ As such, throughout the 1960's a prolonged period of violence and instability occurred, which would outlast the presence of the British in lower Yemen.

Eventually, British withdrawal from the South was finalized in November 1967, and the British exit postdated the Egyptian withdrawal from the North, hampered by the outbreak of war with Israel, by roughly five months. Hence, in both regions the withdrawal of foreign influence created important political opportunities, as well as the potentiality of domination by forces in either region pushing for unification. However, in both areas the factionalization of existing actors combined with historically ephemeral tribal relationships created widespread instability. Typically, the Royalists, largely financed by Saudi Arabia, were of Zaydi descent, while the Republicans, whom became fragmented between the Movement of Arab Nationalists (MAN), NLF, and the FLSOY, were of Shafi'i descent, and therefore typically coming from a less privileged background than their Zaydi counterparts (Brehoney 2011, 20-49). However, drawing the conflicts along sectarian or ethnic lines understates the fluidity of Yemeni society, as well as the role that historical and geographical conditions played in determining tribal allegiances. Further, while the country remained divided along the Ottoman-British treaty of 1905, the border between the two regions was increasingly functioning as more of a grey zone, which tended to shift allegiances rather arbitrarily based on existing conditions.³⁰

In other words, gradually, in both the North and South some strand of the Arab Nationalism engendered by Egyptian influence emerged; however, the South gradually adopted a far more extreme socialist agenda. Further, the greater relative significance of Aden to the rest of the South, compared to Sana'a's importance vis-a-vis urban centers such as Ta'izz, allowed for a more centralized party apparatus that successfully entrenched control over lower Yemen. In the North, while Ali Abdullah Saleh remained powerful in Sana'a following his appointment in 1978, he faced persistent rebellion from the National Democratic Front (NDF), a Southern backed opposition movement, as well as Saudi funded royalist opposition from the Northern town of Sadah (Dresch 2000, chap. 5). Such opposition was based largely off of Islamist claims associated with the historical legitimacy of the Zaydi Imamate, which had

been effectively targeted and largely disbanded under Egyptian control. However, economically and socially the two regimes remained similar. Both were entirely dependent on remittances and foreign assistance for state functionality, and maintained problematic tensions between the tribal politics of rural areas and the ideological politics of the urban centers. In addition, by unification, achieved in 1990, both had amassed huge amounts of external debts, primarily consisted of subsistence agriculture with problematic Qat commercial production that severely drained scarce water aquifers, and generated inequalities that exacerbated tribal and regional disputes.

Essentially, at the time of unification in 1990, Yemen was defined by a power-sharing compromise struck by Saleh's General Popular Council (GPC) formed in 1982 and the Yemeni Socialist Party (YSP), which was the governing political power in the South. In 1990 the GPC won elections making Saleh president of a unified Yemen, with Ali Salim al-Baydh, the YSP candidate becoming vice-president, and the two cabinets merging with an equal number of seats held by both sides. However, by 1993 due to rigged electoral procedures implemented by Saleh, as well as the electoral rise of Islah, for all intents and purposes the MB affiliate in Yemen, the compromise of the transition period radically changed as the GPC won a vast majority of the seats in parliament (Brehony 2011, chap. 12). Almost immediately, hostilities engendered violent demonstrations and resistance, as the YSP began to rethink its decision regarding unification. These hostilities culminated in a war of succession in 1994, which eventually saw forces loyal to Saleh prevail and consolidate control over the newly formed Republic of Yemen.

Subsequently, Saleh's power exhibited many of the traditional trappings of long-term Arab dictators: Enhancing tribal allegiances through cronyism, patronage networks, and divide-and-rule strategies when suitable, creating a tribally rooted police apparatus loyal to his authority, and actively inhibiting opposition mobilization in formal politics. Saleh also continuously ingratiated himself with Yemen's military apparatus, and was able to effectively use them as demonstrations broke out in 2007, and at least initially in 2011. Following 1994, Saleh would align himself politically with Islah, which in the face of the dramatically limited YSP presence ensured the stability of his leadership. However,

throughout the 1990's and 2000's continued Southern antagonism was mixed with the dispersion of Salafi Islamist groups opposed to both his leadership as well as the moderate tendencies of Islah. In addition, in the mid-2000's the former bases of Saudi Royalist support underwent what Fatah (2014) labels a type of Zaydi revivalism (221), and increasingly the Houthis operating out of the Northern town of Sadah became a source of contention for the GPC.

Further, beginning in 2002 a significant grouping of opposition parties developed a coalition, including both the former YSP and Islah, which formed the Joint Meeting Parties (JMP), and in 2006 generated increasing popular opposition to the Saleh regime. Saleh would continue his sustained electoral success, but with a decreased popular mandate, limiting his maneuverability, and increasingly in the face of extreme non-electoral political issues: The Houthi Rebellion, AQAP existing primarily in the Hadhrwahmat, Southern unrest in 2007, and violent clashes with the Southern Mobilization Movement (SMM) or Hiraak beginning in 2008.

In short, the political context of the Yemeni uprising in 2011 was perhaps even more unstable than during the 1994 conflict with the Southern secessionists. Southern secession had not been entirely ruled out of the question, and the extent of Saleh's territorial monopoly on the use of coercive force was diminishing. Further, following 2001 Yemen eventually emerged as an important cog within the War on Terror, and therefore saw both enhanced armament and diplomatic support from both the United States and Saudi Arabia. Outside of Ta'iz, Sana'a, and Aden (and in many cases even within those urban centers) authority was often delegated to tribal confederations, and there remained a persistent disconnect between the rural populations and urban elite, a fact that has not changed very much over time. In all, the Yemeni political context represents a highly complicated one for the implementation of nonviolent action, which is compounded by the fact that per capita, Yemen is the second most heavily armed country in the world (Owen 2012, 95).

(6.1.2) Nonviolent Resistance and the Yemeni Revolution

To begin, in January 2011 popular opposition emerged in much the same vein as it did in Egypt and Tunisia, and was typically immediately repressed with asymmetric violence. In short, Saleh's reaction to protests triggered a succession of tribal based military defections, most importantly by Ali Muhsin al-Ahmar. Moreover, the succession of events was seen as highly problematic by the Saudi regime, and the GCC quickly attempted to assert themselves as arbiters of a national dialogue, which would see a gradual transition from the presidency of Saleh. The Saudi lead negotiations also attempted to revert back to the terms of the original power sharing agreement struck in 1990, a process that created animosity within both the SMM and the Houthi rebels as the interests of both groups were largely ignored.

Put differently, two aspects of the Yemeni demonstrations warrant clarification. First, the protests in Yemen were always organized by the JMP opposition coalition, and therefore represented attempts by opposition actors to capitalize on the political opportunity that the unfolding events in Egypt and Tunisia represented rather than spontaneous protest movements. In particular, on January 27th and February 3rd the two main parties within the JMP, Islah and the YSP, organized a “day of rage” protest throughout the country. Given the constituent elements of those groups, this primarily entailed the emergence of protests in Aden and Ta’iz; however, significant protests also occurred in many other parts of the country. Second, these protests occurred on top of the three simultaneous separatist challenges facing the country, and were not necessarily absorbed by these movements altogether. Hence, the protest movements represented separate challenges to Saleh’s legitimacy emanating primarily from Saleh’s key sources of support; or, basically represented intra-governmental political challenges that stood alongside the presence of significant and protracted non-governmental challenges.

As such, throughout February, March, and April the central rifts between the Saleh regime and the protest movements occurred along two distinct fault-lines. First, the YSP and other Southern political organizations sought to challenge unification along the traditional North-South demarcation. Second, within the Northern constituency of the GPC there existed a competing set of tribally based allegiances. Essentially, Saleh had traditionally governed through a highly nepotistic and corrupt set of tribally based

patronage networks, and as the protests unfolded this created a complex array of competing interests. Specific tribes aligned with Saleh due to the political and economic benefits they had traditionally derived from Saleh's presidency, and other tribes quickly sided with the protest movements, engendering a constant barrage of defections from the regime.

In particular, the influx of tribesmen that occurred in late February had significant implications for the maintenance of nonviolent strategies within resistance. For one, loyalist tribesmen could be used as non-regime affiliated sources of coercion, as Saleh's security apparatus could allow armed tribesmen to enter protests and clash with protesters as a means of limiting the consequence of repression. For another, tribesmen also entered on the side of the protests, and in some areas outside of Ta'iz this actually shifted the coercive balance towards the demonstrators. Hence, protesters themselves could initiate violence, make territorial gains, and occupy strategic locations.

Moreover, the durability of the protest movements eventually led to significant defections within the Saleh regime, and forced GCC intervention in terms of attempting to negotiate some kind of power sharing agreement between Saleh and the JMP. On February 20th tribal representatives came from Arhab, Nahm, Anis (in Dhamar), Shabwah (near the Southwestern *Hadhramat*) and Abyan to support the peaceful protests, mostly in reaction to the influx of tribal loyalists from Sana'a, Ta'iz, Sadah, and Aden. Further, on February 28th, Sheikh Hussein bin Abdullah al-Ahmar, the head of the Hashid tribal confederation, the largest tribal organization in Yemen, and the head of the Baqil confederation, the second largest, both joined the demonstrations calling for the ouster of Saleh (Major Yemen Tribes, Protesters; Yemen: Islamist Party, Power; Yemen Opposition Spurns, Force). As a case in point, on March 14th, the city of al-Jawf, was even "liberated" from Saleh control, when tribesmen within demonstrators cornered and stabbed the provincial governor of Ma'rib province, Naji Zayed, as well as four of his body guards (Yemen Deports Foreign Journalists).

In addition, on March 1st Yassin Ahmad Saleh Qadish the president of the SMM officially asserted that if Saleh was removed, the Southern opposition would force a referendum for secession (Thousands Mark South, Bid). Although, this was not officially supported by the YSP, it seems likely that

the popular opinion within the Southern based demonstrations was leaning towards separation, regardless of what happened to Saleh. Further, also on March 1st the head of the Council of Islamic Clerics and Yemen's MB, Abdul-Majid al-Zindani, officially joined demonstrators in Sana'a, which in combination with Islah meant that all of the Sunni political organizations had joined the protests in opposition to Saleh (Finn 2011; Kasinof 2011). Finally, on March 8th there was even evidence of military personnel defections in both Sana'a and Ta'iz, as around 150 military officers joined demonstration encampments in both cities (Hendawi and al-Haj 2011; Rival Tanks Deploy, Capital).

From that point, in terms of outcomes, Saleh rejected GCC negotiated proposals on March 4th, April 30th, and May 23rd, each time following the release of official announcements indicating he was amenable to signing the agreements. On June 6th, Saleh was evacuated to Saudi Arabia for medical treatment, appointing vice president Abd Rabbuh Mansur Hadi as interim president. Most felt that Saudi Arabia would prohibit Saleh's return, but the Saudi's eventually failed to do so on September 23rd. These repetitive maneuvers by Saleh and loyalist aspects of the GPC eventually forced the militarization of opposition, largely led by General al-Ahmar who was in charge of the Hashim Tribal Confederation (Saleh's own tribe in fact). Eventually, Saleh was forced to leave for Oman, the United States, and Eritrea, and finally on February 23rd, 2012 former vice president Hadi was elected president; however, this has neither effectively ended the Saleh family's influential presence in Yemen nor separated it from the ability to exercise power within the security apparatus. Concomitantly, both the Houthi rebellion, the insurgent activities of AQAP, and the separatist fervor within the SMM and other Southern opposition movements grew in intensity. Essentially, each supported the protests throughout, but more so because of the political opportunities the protests represented than anything else.

(6.1.3) Discussion

As a starting point, in terms of strategic nonviolent action, the Yemeni case offers three central findings. First, given the extent of and complexity within Yemeni social heterogeneity—maintaining overlapping ideological, sectarian, ethnic, historical affiliations, and tribal differences—the extent to

which nonviolent strategies could be maintained over time was severely limited. By mid-February as tribesmen entered on behalf of the JMP organized demonstrations, violence increased in relation to both hegemonic and non-hegemonic forces. Tribally led protests were far more likely to engage, even initiate, in clashes with the security apparatus, and were also more prone to target non-security based segments of the population—whether that implied tribal loyalists, Houthi demonstrators, or *Salafis*. Further, non-militarized protests in both the South (Aden) and North (Sadah), transitioned to military driven strategies by mid-March, and the Hashim Tribal Confederation essentially became a militarized operation in late May as Saleh reneged on signing the GCC brokered deal for the third time.

Second, given the fact that by the second time the GCC brokered negotiations were officially close to succeeding Saleh maintained almost no bases of support outside of his family and several well-connected members within the GPC, the extent to which external forces supported the regime is important. To reiterate, by his second refusal, on April 30th, roughly two thirds of the former members of the GPC had defected, as had the two largest tribal coalitions (including Saleh's own tribe), virtually all Sunni political organizations, and every Southern affiliate. Further, such defections do not even highlight the fact that roughly half of the country existed under the control of a non-government associated separatist leaning organization. However, Saleh managed to remain in power officially for over a year following the onset of protests, and change when it did occur did not significantly alter the existing political infrastructure that Saleh had built.

More than anything, the failure of protests to instigate political change was largely due to the warranted concern both the GCC and the U.S. had in a political transition. According to most accounts of the JMP opposition, the external brokers forced significant concessions on the side of the JMP, and left the extent to which Saleh's family would remain in power, as well as the time frame open to interpretation. Further, most opposition members felt that Saleh's trip to Saudi Arabia in June would give the Saudi's the opportunity to force Saleh's hand, but this failed to occur. In particular, both the U.S. and Saudi Arabia remained concerned regarding both the growth of the AQAP in Southwestern Yemen, as well as the extent to which Iranian intervention on behalf of the Houthi rebellion would occur—a

questionable assertion at the very least given the huge differences between Persian and Zaydi Shi'ites. Hence, these factors made all involved uncomfortable with a political transition, amenable to Saleh's continued repression, and the move to Hadi occurred only as the situation became more and more inevitable.

Finally, the Yemeni case shows that, at the very least, organized non-militarized protests that utilize violent defensive techniques and counter regime forces when possible, may be a better option in certain cases than complete deference to nonviolent strategies. Saleh, civilian loyalists, and the security apparatus all had the political motivation and willingness to repress on a similar scale as occurred in the Libyan, Syrian, and Bahraini cases. However, the insertion of violent tactics, largely aligned with the influx of tribesmen associated with the demonstrations, served to protect protesters, place pressure on the regime, engender enhanced resiliency so as to allow for the gradual insertion of external forces, and to increase the degree to which the regime was amenable to negotiation. The influx of both the Baqil and Hashim Tribal Confederations, also facilitated the JMP's attempts at capitalizing on the political opportunities the protests created, and also led to increases in popular participation. The increase in demonstration size was in part due to the Tribal Confederation's ability to force member participation, but was also due to the enhanced security many non-affiliated individuals and students felt that the tribal presence guaranteed.

(6.2) Case 6: Libya

As a point of departure, the Libyan example presents four significant implications for strategic nonviolent action theory. First, the Libyan case highlights how international support for resistance is not clearly linked to the use of nonviolent strategies, and international support itself may even be a cause for transitions to violence. Put differently, the agency of resistance movements and organizers may be severely limited by external actors, and previously developed strategic interests and relationships in particular. Second, Libya also highlights how historical context can pose significant limitations for both the dissemination of nonviolent resistance, as well as the probability that resistance movements avoid

transitions to violence. In particular, Libya maintains a highly heterogeneous population divided primarily along tribal lines, clear regional differences fostered by both historical and geographic conditions, as well as a poorly established national identity. Third, as Bellin (2012) and Nepstad (2013) have shown, the specific patrimonial and kin-based structure of the Libyan military presented significant implications for both the viability and desirability of persistent nonviolent resistance. Fourth, Libya is another prime example of the significance of the interplay and feedback between forms of violent and nonviolent contention. To be sure, the Libyan case was never highly nonviolent; however, many forms of resistance implemented in Benghazi and Tripoli maintained enhanced significance due to the effectiveness of the rebel insurgency in other parts of the country.

(6.2.1) The Complexity of Structural and Historical Conditions in Libya

As a starting point, the first two post-independence Libyan regimes—those of Sayyid Idris and Moammar Qaddafi—were significantly impacted by previous historical and geographic conditions. First, prior to World War II, large segments of the Arab and Bedouin populations in central and Northeastern Libya endured a brutal period of Italian colonization. In 1912, the Ottomans recognized Italian sovereignty over the territory of Tripolitania, and following World War One, the Italians also officially consolidated control over the neighboring former Ottoman territory of Cyrenaica through a remarkably bloody military campaign. However, Italian control over Cyrenaica was much more contentious than it ever was in the West, and for the remainder of Italian colonialism Tripolitania remained a base of control from which the Italians persistently attempted to quell Eastern resistance.³¹

More Specifically, during the 19th century, al-Sayyid Muhammad Ali al-Senussi had effectively united largely disparate tribal groups along the Northern half of the Eastern border with Egypt, building consensus through an emphasis on Arab self-rule and the unifying potential of the Islamic proof-texts—somewhat similar to contemporaneous strands of Islamic Modernism in Egypt and Tunisia. Gradually, the quasi-religious order that al-Senussi established adopted many tribal attributes and institutions, and emerged as a tribal fraternity dominating most of the Ottoman territory of Cyrenaica. Over time, the

Senussi political bloc would evolve towards a decentralized form of government managed by local hierarchical authority structures, and for the most part effectively incorporated and governed a highly diverse array of identities and familial and tribal differences. The Senussis' would also migrate further South, making the central city of Kufra its base operations beginning in 1895, expanding their degree of influence until more successful Italian opposition could be mounted (Lobben and Dalton 2014, 34-40).

Moreover, Italian colonization essentially prevented the formation of political structures as well as the development of a class of literate and educated elites to ensure effective management of post-war Libya. The Italians also had actively fomented internecine conflict in a bid to maintain their dominance across both regions, essentially taking advantage of the fluidity of Bedouin tribal relationships. In Cyrenaica, the grandson of al-Senussi, Sayyid Idris, whom had continuously throughout the 1930's and 40's organized indigenous resistance in exile in Egypt, and as World War II progressed eventually convinced the British to play an active role in facilitating the establishment of Senussi independence. In short, by 1945, British rule had emerged in Tripolitania in the Northwest, and was both combined with and hugely dependent on the influence and power Sayyid Idris exerted as Amir in Cyrenaica.

In addition, post War Libya was in shambles, and had been adversely effected by the war itself. The major ports of Benghazi, Tobruk, and Tripoli were severely damaged, and commercial activity in the urban centers was at a complete standstill. Further, since Italian nationals had a virtual monopoly over the agrarian economy, a major economic restructuring was in order, even with roughly 40,000 Italian nationals remaining in Libya. On the other hand, for the Bedouin populations and the Senussis in the East, the end of war largely meant a return to pre-Italian life. In general, as the integration of the two regions began to progress, political and economic life was beginning to be increasingly determined by the growing reluctance of a burgeoning urban bourgeoisie in Tripoli to accept Senussi political domination, coupled with a growing geographically based class conflict which pitted rural farmers and nomadic populations against the political interests of the urban centers (Oakes 2011, chap. 7; Lobben and Dalton 2014, 45-52).

Eventually, in 1949, an international compromise was enacted, which promised Libyan independence in 1952 after a brief period of UN trusteeship, intended to prepare the country for self-governance. Throughout the trusteeship, a political struggle over the form of post-independence government ensued, which in 1952 lead to the establishment of a federal system with high degrees of local autonomy and a monarchically organized, relatively weak central government which elevated Idris to national power. However, the first four years of independence were largely defined by Libyan dependence on foreign aid—by 1953 in total 26 million had been awarded by the United States and Britain, a figure that represented a little more than half of all national income (Oakes 2011, 64-66). Thus, until 1956 the economic solvency of a Libyan state was highly problematic, a situation which was only alleviated after Idris' decision to allow foreign capital to explore the possibility of exploiting Libya's latent oil reserves. Yet, the expansion of oil production during the 1960's was significant, and led to radical changes to the feasibility of an integrated Libyan state. By 1968 production had reached 1.7 million barrels per day, a level that was on par with the other major oil exporters—Iran produced 2.8 million and Saudi Arabia produced 3.4 million (Oakes 2011, 74).

Moreover, while oil caused a dramatic increase in government revenue and significantly padded royal coffers, it also engendered important social ramifications. Urban migration ramped up, and by 1970 Tripoli's population was increasing at a rate of 5,000 people per year. Dramatic changes to labor demand forced the creation of a more technically literate populace, and continued exploration in the Libyan interior forced previously isolated nomadic populations to become further integrated into Libyan society. Such transformations were also accompanied by the surge of Arab Nationalism that had swept the Arab world since the rise of Nasser in Egypt, and increasingly Idris' government was becoming isolated and out of touch with the political zeitgeist of the day. In brief, one of the most important consequences of the influx of petroleum rents was the changing demographics, and the dramatic increase in economic importance of the previously sparsely populated interior regions.

Hence, on September 1st, 1969, a young 27 years old officer named Moammar Qaddafi was promoted to Colonel via the Revolutionary Command Council (RCC), which essentially amounted to the

Libyan version of the Free Officers Movement in Egypt. Significantly, Qaddafi was from the interior, had been educated as Libyan oil wealth dramatically expanded, and as such was indicative of the fact that the RCC was part of a set of processes which saw the tribally dominant interior become opposed to the urban elite and the Senussi political hegemony. The stated goals of both the RCC and Qaddafi included freedom from external manipulation, the expansion of social justice and the establishment of Arab unity, and therefore the movement heavily drew ideologically from Egypt, even using the 1952 coup as a direct model for action. Hence, while maintaining Idris' ban on opposition political parties, the RCC sought to effectively engage the population in order to garner a similar type of popular legitimacy to the Nasserist regime in Egypt. The RCC also made strenuous efforts to depict the former tribal leadership structures and Senussi monarchy as puppets of the foreign imperialists, as well as to effectively eliminate their physical and psychological influence over Libyan affairs.³²

However, in brief, the cultural and political revolution Qaddafi and the RCC was attempting to create remained inherently limited by the extent of traditional relations to the previous leadership both locally and regionally, which were for all intents and purposes entirely dependent on locally based tribal affiliations. The significance of such a point is difficult to understate, the People's Councils were imposed on a set of existing political structures that co-opted the Councils far more than the Councils revolutionized existing structures. Qaddafi himself was the son of a Bedouin farmer of the al-Qadhadfa tribe about 45 miles south of Sirte in the central interior, and virtually all of his personal security force was derived directly from his tribe, and the importance of patronage networks linked to kin and clan were the defining element of Qaddafi's power (Hweio 2012; Vandawelle 1998, chaps. 2 and 3).

Further, over time Qaddafi's regime became dependent on a fragile coalition of three principal tribes: the al-Qadhadfa, the al-Magariha, and the al-Warfalla, all of which were from the central and Western interior. In effect, this coalition counterbalanced the extent of the regional supremacy garnered by the former domains of the Senussi in the East. However, the People's Councils that existed in the Eastern interior and Benghazi were reflective of the authority structures that had dominated during the first decade and a half of independence. In 1993 the People's Councils were even altered in a direct

attempt to better harness the capacity of tribal elites to maintain stability, a move Frederic Wehrey (2013) explains as, “a tacit admission not only of the importance of tribes and traditional elites in Libyan politics but also that the regime’s longstanding instrument of state power—the despised revolutionary committees—had grown too corrupt and sclerotic to control the population.” (254).³³

Furthermore, as domestic tensions varied, internationally, Libya gradually became one of the most isolated countries in the Arab World. Qaddafi’s revolution was ideologically entwined with Nasser, and over time socialist tendencies began to foster a strengthened relationship with the Soviet Union. Put differently, Qaddafi’s regime maintained an important ideological coalition that would falter over time. Infitah, the Camp David Accords, and Sadat’s redirection of Egyptian diplomatic relations were indicative of the general trend throughout the Arab World of moving away from the socialism and Arab Nationalism that the Qaddafi regime embodied. The collapse of the Soviet Union, and the general global transition to neo-liberal paradigms simply served to further isolate the Libyan regime. Moreover, such ideational trends were also coupled by a series of direct provocations that severely strained or altogether destroyed its relationship with many Western countries. State sponsored terrorism for groups like the Basque ETA, the IRA in Ireland, anti-contra movements in Nicaragua, and most importantly the Palestinian Liberation Organization (PLO), the Libyan patrol boat confrontation with the US 6th fleet in 1985, and, the most polemic example, the Lockerbie bombing in 1988 all isolated Libya from separate actors (Harley 1984, Oakes 2011, chap. 9).

In addition, such antagonism began to have direct consequences for Libyan oil production, as following the American bombings of Benghazi and Tripoli in 1986, imports of Libyan oil were banned, Libyan assets were frozen, and all cooperation between the regime and American oil companies was ordered to cease (Oakes 2011). Hence, Libya’s isolation began to negatively impact its rentier dependencies, preventing potential transactions and stripping Libya of important sources of technical expertise. Furthermore, as the Libyan labor supply was largely unable to fill such technical gaps these trends increasingly presented a severe threat to regime stability. Put differently, at the turn of the century Libya’s economy was on the verge of collapse, international sanctions were becoming increasingly

destructive, and the necessity of reform was becoming more and more pronounced. As the Arab Spring approached the problematic financial position of the Libyan was largely unchanged, and discontent was growing rapidly.

In short, two principle factors are important to reiterate within the preceding discussion. First and foremost, the long term implications of Italian Colonialism, the establishment of the Senussi Monarchy, and the largely necessary use of oil rents as means of assuring political stability on the basis of tribal identity, have created largely geographically separated tribal groups that have not changed significantly over time, especially outside the major urban centers. As such, in the Libyan case tribalism largely mirrors the impact that sectarian and ethnic divisions exerted in other cases. Those tied to the three central tribes within Qaddafi's coalition, as well as smaller tribes such as the Tuareg and the Asabea were highly skeptical of regime change (Lacher 2011; Lobben and Dalton 2014, chap. 4).³⁴ Second, the combination of two central factors, the vast oil wealth contained in Libya's central interior and the fact that Qaddafi dragged Libya into what Oakes (2011) labels a "Pariah State", meant that Qaddafi maintained little to no external bases of support in a country with a strong incentive for intervention.

(6.2.2) Nonviolent Resistance and the Libyan Revolution

In terms of the Arab Spring, chronologically, on February 15th, 2011 the beginnings of the Libyan revolution emerged in Benghazi. Rumblings of planned protests in commemoration of demonstrations in 2006 intended to proceed on the 17th, forced the Qaddafi regime to jail two prominent activists, Fathi Terbil Salwa and Idris al-Mesmari. In response, several hundred people gathered in order to push for the release of the popular prisoners, and within a matter of hours police disbanded the demonstrations. While the protests on the 15th faltered, the arrests and violent repression, served to enhance the size of the actual protests on the 17th, and Qaddafi was forced to respond by sending his Interior Minister as well as his son Sa'adi in an attempt to subvert popular unrest. Police and military officers were also ordered to disperse the protests through violent measures, which combined both military action as well as Qaddafi's use of saboteurs and thugs intended to infiltrate the protests

themselves. In all, accounts suggest that roughly 14 people died on the 17th (Fresh Clashes with, Dead; How Libya's Second, Revolt).

In response, on the 18th, protests spread from Benghazi to several other Eastern cities such as al-Bayda (just East of Benghazi), Darnah, al-Zintan, and Jalu, and by the 22nd protests had spread further West to Sirte, Misrata, Khoms, Tobruk, Zawiya, Zouara, and Tarhounah (How Libya's Second, Revolt; Kessler 2011; Libyan Regime Collapsing). In virtually every case, the emergence of popular unrest was met with immediate regime repression, and within the first week of protests anywhere from 10 to 45 people were killed in clashes with regime forces each day (Preshad 2012, 38). As such, the protest movements themselves quickly resorted to defensive measures, and had largely resorted to organized military tactics by the time Benghazi was “liberated” on the 21st. Elite political figures fled, and troops that remained loyal were killed. On the 19th, military bases were captured in Darnah and al-Bayda, and as more and more cities within the Eastern province of Ajdabiya fell to rebel forces, the fragility of the Qaddafi regime became increasingly evident.

To be sure, throughout the period of resistance, the Eastern manifestations of the Libyan “movement” remained highly decentralized, and each city maintained largely independent authority structures determined by tribal leadership (How Libya's Second, Revolt; Gadhafi's Grip on Libya, Killed). Further, the degree of ideational variation across these protests is significant: It ranged from constitutional democrats, to constitutional monarchs, from neo-liberal secularists (as in many of the ex-patriots that returned to Benghazi following February 17th) to political Islamists and radical fundamentalists. However, a dichotomy eventually emerged which served to transcend the diversity of ideational trends, a dichotomy that effectively pitted Qaddafi loyalists against everybody else, and this almost completely occurred along tribal fault lines. This delineation became especially pronounced in certain instances, as rebel movements began to generate narratives of collective responsibility that will likely be highlighted in future accounts as examples of ethnic cleansing. For example, the predominantly immigrant town of Tawergha had long been a source of recruitment for Qaddafi's forces, and as harassment of the populations there increased he began to attempt to relocate the populations at risk to

rebel forces. Within the Tawergha example, rather than engaging with pockets of Qaddafi support, rebel forces simply attempted to eliminate it entirely, exercising organized collective violence, which saw entire neighborhoods targeted (Preshad 2012, chap. 3).

Moreover, as the oppositions control in Benghazi and the rest of the former territory of Cyrenaica became consolidated, protests rapidly spread across the country. Only two days after the liberation of Benghazi on the 22nd, mass protests occurred in the capital Tripoli, and a slew of elite and military defections occurred in response to reports of Jets and Helicopters firing on demonstrations (Libyan Regime Collapsing; Police Break Rank, City; Tripoli in Hands of, Flees). On the 24th the United States renewed its sanction regime on Qaddafi, and the European Union followed suit on the 28th (World Ratchets Up, ‘love me’). False reports of Qaddafi being extradited to Venezuela emerged amidst bellicose talk from Qaddafi’s inner circle about “fighting to the last drop” (Gadhafi’s Grip on Power, Killed; Tripoli in Hands of, Flees). However, the decentralized nature of the opposition, which throughout maintained a large degree of local autonomy and power, even if locales remained loyal to the Transitional National Council (TNC), eventually presented problems in terms of both organization and the cooperation of geographically stratified forces. By March 5th, the tide had turned back towards the Qaddafi regime, as he re-took cities in the Western part of the country, and began to amount a charge Eastward, eventually leading to massive amounts of casualties in Misrata and Ras Lanuf (Battle to Oust, Ban; Sobecki 2011a, 2011b).

In particular, the failure of the Eastern organized resistance to push farther Westward than Ras Lanuf presents an important set of insights in relation to the analysis under construction. For one, this period of setbacks for the opposition coincided with an increase in both their capacity for strategic decision making, as well as external pressure on the Qaddafi regime. Like the Assad regime in Syria, Qaddafi had shouldered a harsh Western sanction regime for the better part of three decades, and unlike Assad he had access to massive oil reserves to keep his coffers padded. In short, Western sanctions had little to no effect on how events unfolded, and once again the playbook available to external actors in order to place ancillary pressure on repressive regimes may be severely limited in many cases. The rebel

movements were also severely outgunned, and little evidence exists that Qaddafi would have simply allowed Benghazi to return to the pre-revolution status quo. For another, the geography of the failure to push past Ras Lanuf is also instructive. In particular, it borders on many of the cities in the central interior that make up the majority of regime support, and that became booming economic zones in the 1960's following the discovery of oil. Ras Lanuf is roughly 20 kilometers from Qaddafi's home town of Sirte, and effect these loyalist cities formed a road-block that presented protests in the former Cyrenaica to integrate with those in the Western part of the country.

Eventually, following Qaddafi's siege on Misrata the insertion of NATO and American aerial support once again turned the tide of the revolution back towards the opposition. For one, it served to insulate the rebels from aerial attacks, thereby destroying Qaddafi's greatest comparative advantage. For another, it actually played into the technology the rebels did possess; in particular, the rebel resistance began to use a type of cat-and-mouse technique, which entailed using converted Toyota trucks, far more mobile than the tanks and armed vehicles Qaddafi's regime utilized, to engage with Qaddafi forces in strategic locations, and then quickly disengage. Effectively drawing in Qaddafi's forces to be exploited by NATO airstrikes.³⁵ Eventually, on August 22nd, Tripoli fell to rebel control, and gradually Qaddafi's forces began to be pushed inwards towards Sirte, becoming increasingly outflanked on the East, West, and towards the North. On October 20th, Qaddafi himself was killed, effectively ushering in an unpredictable and contentious era of Libyan politics, which has yet to be entirely determined.

(6.2.3) Discussion

In short, as in the Syrian case, the confluence of three central factors, social heterogeneity, external influences—albeit anti-regime forces in the Libyan case—and brutal and persistent regime repression served to effectively limit the spread of nonviolence, and facilitate the escalation of violence. However, unlike the Syrian case, the transition to militarized resistance was essentially immediate, and within a month rebel forces were receiving armament and aerial support from N.A.T.O. The central reasons for the insertion of anti-Qaddafi external forces was the effective isolation Qaddafi had created

within international relations, as well as the absence of any large scale Shi'a populations, which could potentially lead to the emergence of problematic Iranian influences. The strategic importance of Libya's oil reserves likely was a point of interest as well.

Further, the central reasons for the escalation of violence were twofold. For one, Qaddafi, much like Assad, was extremely willing to repress, and thus the absence of militarized resistance presented the huge potential of a catastrophic regime siege on Benghazi in the vein of the one conducted on Misrata. For another, the historical differences created by the Senussi political hegemony in the East, Qaddafi's reliance on the trinity of tribes emanating from the central interior, and the relatively decentralized nature of Libyan governance mixed with a high degree of regional autonomy, all inhibited the cohesive nature and dissemination of protests throughout Libya. Such a conclusion, is even in part supported by the geography of Qaddafi's repression, which effectively focused entirely on the contentious cities of Benghazi and Misrata and left the capital Tripoli relatively untouched until deep into the rebel insurgency. Hence, Qaddafi's thought process was first and foremost focused on the necessary repression of the Eastern resistance, as both Qaddafi and the military elite thought that the resistance in Tripoli would essentially end once the repression succeeded.

Moreover, the lack of adequate conditions for both the internal cohesion and geographic expansion of nonviolent resistance, in confluence with the Qaddafi's willingness to violently repress any and all anti-regime resistance, leads to the potential conclusion of entirely rejecting primarily nonviolent strategies in the Libyan case. For one, following Qaddafi's push East, militarized resistance facilitated the protection of Benghazi from what could have been a humanitarian disaster, and also directed repression to sparsely populated locales or towards those populations most capable of effectively dealing with it. For another, it allowed for the effective insertion of external forces. Without rebel movements to effectively draw in Qaddafi's forces in non-populated areas, N.A.T.O aerial support would have likely been untenable at best, especially as Qaddafi began to embed himself into more densely populated regions (as was a central concern in Syria). Hence, the militarization of resistance likely supported the gradual

destruction of the regime's repressive capabilities and insulated the rebel groups in relation to the relative disadvantages they maintained vis-à-vis the regime.

In short, structural conditions severely limited the potential of nonviolent resistance, forced the transition to militarized resistance, and international forces did not enter based on the existence of nonviolent strategies. External involvement was based primarily on both humanitarian and strategic considerations, and as such violence may be just as likely to beget international supporters as nonviolence.

(6.3) Summary

In short, the Yemeni and Libyan cases highlight three important points in regards to strategic nonviolent action. First, both cases highlight the contingency that the agency of individuals and groups engaging in nonviolent action has on specific historical and structural conditions, as well as the ambiguity specific mechanisms through which nonviolent action can be successful may hold in relation to these conditions. In regards to the former point, the deep tribal fissures formed through historical and political processes, and the ethnic and sectarian fault lines existing in either case limited the dissemination of resistance across geography. The lack of a clear national identity, or conflict between conflicting national identities, also created divergent messages tied to regionally separated demonstrations, and played a significant role in reducing the longevity and resiliency of civil resistance. Further, in Yemen the problematic realities of a contested unification and two separate actively operating secessionist movements placed limitations on the cohesiveness with which political messaging could spread, and the insertion of external influences played an important role in facilitating increased resiliency in Libya and keeping Saleh inside the political dialogue in Yemen.

In terms of the second point, that specific mechanisms may be ambiguously related to nonviolent action, the insertion of external aerial and armament support in Libya represents a case in point. As Qaddafi regrouped beginning around February 29th, and began pushing Eastward through Misrata towards Benghazi, the extent to which international pressure could actively support nonviolent resistance had

essentially been exhausted. Beginning on the 21st Barack Obama placed harsh sanctions on the Libyan regime, and froze the majority of the countries access to Sovereign Wealth Funds. The European Union froze nearly 70 billion dollars in Libyan assets a day later, and on the 22nd Libya was effectively suspended from the Arab League (Libya Suspended from Arab 2011; Libyan regime collapsing 2011). However, within a week regime forces had effectively regained control over Western cities such as al-Zawiya and al-Zintan, and were beginning to March East across the country. At that point, given regime rhetoric such as “we will find you in your closets” in relation to Qaddafi’s planned siege on Benghazi and the evidence of repression up to that point, external assistance necessitated the transition to militarized resistance. In short, nonviolent resistance would have been unable to take advantage of the U.N. established no fly-zone, and N.A.T.O aerial support, and probably would have been unable to maintain effective levels of mobilization in the face of impending repression.

Second, in part related to the point made above, transitions to violence may be necessary components of resistance in highly unstable political environments with dictators with a history of brutal repression. In Yemen, the infusion of tribal actors acting in support of the protests played a central role in turning the tide in favor of the protest movement. The Hashem Tribal Confederation caused significant defections from the Saleh regime, and in many locales shifted the balance of coercive force in favor of the opposition. In Libya, the transition to militarized resistance put an end to the “massacres” associated with many of the early protests, and therefore increased mobilization and support and even, in part, eventually led to important regime defections. In short, in some instances violence and violent strategies may be strategically important to insert alongside strategies of civil resistance.

Third, as in all previous cases excluding Tunisia, the importance of the modularity of the Tunisian example cannot be understated, and therefore nonviolent resistance may be highly dependent on specific windows of opportunity. In Libya, largely peaceful civil resistance that began in Benghazi on the 16th and 17th of February, had spread to the Tunisian border by the 20th, and clashes in Tripoli, the center of Qaddafi’s control, by the 22nd. While these protests were not really linked to each other, maintained opposing regional tribal affiliations, and protests in the Western part of the country were typically quickly

dispersed as regime repression appeared, the geographic span of demonstrations highlights the unique mobilizing potential the Arab Spring possessed. Similarly, in Yemen, opposition movements in Sana'a and Ta'iz had been largely ineffectively operating for at least a decade, and the Yemeni movement, in reality, was an attempt by the JMP opposition coalition to capitalize on the unique mobilization opportunity the Arab Spring represented. In short, without the Tunisian revolution, the Yemeni and Libyan revolutions probably would not have occurred.

Endnote

²⁷ Here, it is important to note the complexity of the Zaydi identity. For example, Fatah (2014, 207-221) notes the gradual dissolution of visible sectarian differences between Zaydi's and Sha'afis (the predominant Sunni sect) over time. Zaydi's are Shi'a, but they are not Twelvers and thus have a complicated relationship with their Twelver, or Persian counterparts. Many actually refer to them as a fifth school of jurisprudence for Sunni Islam, as they differ little in terms of praxis, but do differ in their historical preference for the Fifth Caliph.

²⁸ For more information on Aden from a British perspective see for example the oral histories presented by Hinchecliffe et all (2006, 235-293). Boxberger (2002, 183, 240) provides an indispensable account of the violence and unrest endemic to the Hawdhramat, as well as its role in Southern Yemeni politics. Carapico (1998, chap. 2) also provides important insight into the vibrancy of civil society in Southern Yemen in the years directly leading up to and following independence from Britain.

²⁹ For a more detailed history of the Southern insurrection see Brehoney (2011, 1-30).

³⁰ This was particularly important in the South, as groups like ATUC that made up a relatively vibrant civil society in Aden, were surrounded by transient and unstable tribal relationships in the Hawdhramawt and the Easter Aden Protectorate. As such, the control exerted by the metropoles on the periphery was always relatively weak.

³¹ For a more detailed description of the degree of brutality and long-term impacts of Italian colonialism see for example Lobben and Dalton (2014, 37-51), Oakes (2011, chap. 4), and Vandewalle (2015, chaps. 2 and 3). The long-term impact of this period was also amplified by the fact that Libya was one of the few African countries to be colonized by an axis power, and thus became a major site of conflict during World War Two.

³² The extent of the revolutionary zeal of the RCC, as well as the actual influence of Qaddafi's ideological standpoints produces an interesting lens into the nature of the Qaddafi regime. Owen (2012, 96-102) and Vandewalle (2013, chap. 4) propose the idea of a possible "mirror state" where elites to a certain degree appeased Qaddafi, but acted on the basis of their own vested interests. Pargeter (2012, chaps. 3 and 4) also provides an interesting analysis of the radical nature of the political reforms implemented. On some level, Qaddafi likely genuinely attempted to implement a relatively unique system of popular democracy; however, these attempts ultimately failed, and forced increasingly authoritarian action.

³³ Here, in particular, Hweio (2012), Lacher (2011), and Vandawelle (1998, especially chap. 4) present essential narratives. Essentially, although initially Qaddafi and the RCC had attempted to foster a unified national identity, their failure to do so eventually forced the Libyan elites to revert to the use of tribal affiliations as a means of divide-and-rule. Qaddafi thus reverted to pitting privileged tribes over others, a process essentially identical to the governing strategies of Sayyid Idris, and therefore modernization paradoxically produced an intensification of tribalism in Libya (Hweio 2012, 117).

³⁴ See Lacher (2011) in particular for a more explicit description of what tribes remained loyalists, what tribes defected, and whom within these groups were especially important in terms of expanding mobilization. Essentially, in the East families historically connected to the Senussi Monarchy almost universally defected, whereas those in the central interior typically did not.

³⁵ For more information on the NATO air campaign see Bradley (2012, 115-133) and Lynch (2011, 167-177). Lobben and Dalton (2014, chap. 5) also provide an essential analysis of the innovation within the air campaign itself, as well as the degree of international cooperation required for it to be effective.

Chapter Seven- Discussion

As a point of departure, this project has highlighted three important issues associated with strategic nonviolent action literature in relation to the six primary cases of the Arab Spring. First, in every case the nonviolence of resistance was never total, and in terms of increased resiliency across cases, explanatory significance can be found within the interaction between forms of violent and nonviolent resistance. For one, in all cases the extent to which nonviolent resistance pervaded demonstrations was highly selective. In Tunisia and Egypt, selective violence against differing segments of the population, most notably wealthier neighborhoods and regime loyalists, quickly infiltrated resistance. In the other four cases, social heterogeneity derived in some sense or another from divisive sectarian, tribal, or ethnic fault-lines created selective individual level aggression targeting different segments of the population, which posed far greater difficulties for the maintenance of nonviolent resistance. Furthermore, in Bahrain and Syria, already divisive sectarian fault-lines were also exacerbated by the characteristics of regime repression, both the al-Khalifa and Assad regimes actively fomented internecine conflict, and utilized troops ethnically differentiated from protesters as a means to avoid defection. In Yemen, Saleh's carefully constructed patronage networks, intended to separate various tribes, led to inter-tribal conflict on the basis of the privileged relationships some tribal confederations had with the Saleh regime. Finally, in Libya, pro-regime and anti-regime conflict pervaded civil demonstrations after the first couple days of conflict, and demonstrations in the Eastern part of the country also targeted many immigrant populations, often because they had complicated relationships with the Qaddafi regime.

For another, nonviolence in every case was also highly limited. Even in the most nonviolent of contexts, for example Tahrir Square in Egypt, transitions to violence occurred within a week, and primarily nonviolent strategies were entirely absent from many other areas of the country. Similarly, in Tunisia, the initial protests in Sidi Boazid quickly turned violent, and as protests expanded to the urban centers reports of clashes, gun-battles, and chaos quickly ensued. Furthermore, in the other four cases, the extent of regime repression, the characteristics of the resistance, and the structural and historical

conditions of each case necessitated transitions to violence almost immediately. Even where nonviolent strategies existed, as in the Pearl Roundabout in Bahrain, they occupied a highly limited geographic space (essentially just the roundabout), and were eventually either effectively dispersed or lacked the resiliency to maintain meaningful resistance. For example, in Bahrain, clashes between Sunni and Shi'a demonstrations, occurred contemporaneously with the largely nonviolent demonstrations around the Pearl Roundabout in other parts of Manama, and the occupation of the Pearl Roundabout was interrupted five different times as a result of regime repression.

Moreover, in Libya, the militarization of resistance had two principle effects on the resiliency of civil resistance in the Eastern part of the country. First, it allowed resistance to direct engagement with regime forces in strategically chosen areas, which became especially important as N.A.T.O. aerial support ramped up. In short, nonviolent resistance seemingly requires typically urban, densely populated areas to be effective, while violent strategies can be successful across a more diverse array of terrain, as in deserts or forests for example, and therefore combining these strategies may hold important interactive effects for this reason. Trucks drew Qaddafi's forces into sparsely populated desert locations, and this both weakened Qaddafi's ability to direct his coercive capabilities on urban centers and made him vulnerable to drone warfare. Second, the militarization of resistance in Libya also helped create a visible delineation between combatants and noncombatants, which helped bolster the resiliency of civil action. Qaddafi's threats on Benghazi, and his actions in Misrata are both instructive in this regard. In Misrata, the loss of life was disproportionately associated with young to middle-aged males, which seems to indicate, given that most reports describe protests with much more diversity, that Qaddafi, at least on some level, did not revert to entirely indiscriminant killing in Misrata. Further, given the extent of Qaddafi's secret-security and intelligentsia, there was probably at least some capability of deciphering the combatants that Qaddafi needed to target and kill. As such, women, children, and older men could all engage in civil resistance with the freedom to leave the city center once the full force of Qaddafi's repression was imminent.

Collectively, these examples regarding the extent to which nonviolent and violent strategies pervaded resistance in each case had important ramifications for both the evolution of and the eventual

outcomes associated with each set of demonstrations. To begin, the selective nature of nonviolence had a dual effect on the key mechanism through which nonviolent resistance was successful, increased social mobilization. For one, in cases with stark degrees of social heterogeneity the threat of selective violence may have an initial negative impact on the maximum level of mobilization. In Damascus, such a threat, alongside other considerations tied to the relationship between the regime and various segments of the population, entirely prevented protests from reaching the capital city, and similar evidence exists in the Bahraini, Yemeni, and Libyan cases. For another, these fault-lines represent opportunities for regimes, and thus strategically organized repression, as in using sectarian minority troops in Bahrain and Syria, can exacerbate sectarian divisions and create mobilization problems over the long-run. Hence, resistance in cases with social heterogeneity may also have reduced resiliency, and may face difficulties in terms of maintaining significant levels of mobilization.

In addition, the limited nature of nonviolence, that is in terms of temporal and geographic scales, and the strategic interaction of violent and nonviolent strategies are both highly important factors to consider in many cases. In Bahrain, Tunisia, Egypt after the first week (the “battle of the camel” on February 2nd), Libya, and Yemen some centralized loci of resistance did maintain nonviolent resistance for a relatively short period of time in a tight geographic space (often times one square or monument); however, in all cases these examples of nonviolent strategies were simultaneously supported by fringe episodic violence. In other words, understanding how to incorporate strategic violence as a means to bolster the resiliency of nonviolent resistance may be an important innovation within future research.

Second, in every case the overall agency of individuals and groups engaging in resistance was contingent upon specific cultural and historical conditions. That is to say, that individuals and groups in Tunisia and Egypt were avowed greater amounts of agency as a result of the favorable conditions evident in each country than were individuals and groups in the other four cases, and this occurred for four primary reasons. First, both countries lacked the heterogeneity that was problematic in other contexts. The relatively extreme homogeneity of either population allowed protests to spread evenly and coherently across space, and also created the opportunity for inter-connected cotemporaneous protests to exist. In

short, little could separate the demands, messaging, and strategies implemented between either Tunis and Sfax or Alexandria and Cairo, and this cannot be said about any of the other cases. In Syria and Yemen, secessionist movements espoused different political messages than movements in other urban centers, even if they maintained some similarities. In Libya, while protests initially spread quickly across the country, geographically separate protests maintained different degrees of resiliency, and different levels of participation. In al-Zawiya (west of Tripoli) resistance essentially folded the second Qaddafi's coercive apparatus posed any threat to those in the city center, and did not maintain militarized resistance afterward. Continued resistance in the face of Qaddafi's full coercive capability was a primarily Eastern phenomenon, with some Fezzani tribes playing a role as well.

Second, the extent to which external actors supported or resisted regime change played a central role in determining how influential individual protest movements could be. In Bahrain, the sectarian divide, and the fact that Bahrain was a member of the GCC led to an invasion by GCC forces that destroyed the architecture of resistance and essentially curtailed further demonstrations by the Shi'a population. In Libya, external assistance followed the militarization of resistance, in and of itself highlighting the ambiguity of many of the mechanisms attributed to successful nonviolent action, and existed in large part because of the extent of Qaddafi's diplomatic isolation. In Syria, continued support from the Russians and other *Shi'a* regimes allowed the Assad regime to maintain its capacity in the face of oppressive Western sanctions, and provided important degrees of arms, financial, and logistical support. In Yemen, the continued presence of Saleh for another two years post resistance, and the strong drone presence of U.S. and N.A.T.O. forces, are both indicative of the extent of tribal division within the country, as well as the issues surrounding the continued presence of A.Q.A.P. in the Western Hawdhramat.

In short, in each case, the resiliency or lack of resiliency afforded to the regimes in power was highly dependent on the characteristics of external diplomatic and economic relations, and this meant that the influential potential of each set of demonstrations depended in large part on factors beyond their control. As such, the extent to which nonviolent resistance can effectively impact the relevant external

actors, and the extent to which those actors have the capacity to impact the regime in question represent highly important considerations for future examples of civil resistance. In Syria, for example, protesters were at a severe disadvantage because Russia, Iran, and Hezbollah, and this may potentially apply to many non-democratic regimes in general, were unwillingly to put financial and political pressure on the Assad regime. Further, the means through which the West could place pressure on Assad had already been exhausted, and had even been in place for the better part of two decades. Egypt, on the other hand, was in a far better position in this regard, given the extent to which the Egyptian government depends on Western assistance for financial solvency. However, Bahrain, also provides a counter-example to the over-generalization of the Egyptian case, as the al-Khalifa regime also maintained strong financial ties to the U.S.; however, other strategic considerations prevented *Shi'a* demonstrators from obtaining effective international pressure on the regime in power.

Third, the wave-like nature of the Arab Spring represents another factor that is important to consider. All subsequent cases drew heavily from both the modularity and the inspiration derived from the Tunisian example, and this effect only strengthened as protests spread throughout the region. In each case, years of political repression, economic stagnation, and rampant nepotism and inequality failed to produce any significant political movements for several decades in some cases; however, within a matter of weeks each of these countries, along with several others in the region, witnessed demonstrations on a national scale. As such, the existence of windows of opportunities tied to events in other parts of the region, or possibly even elsewhere in the world, may significantly bolster the agency of opposition movements. In short, waves may increase the ability to mobilize large amounts of people, and may provide successful and relatable examples to emulate and learn from. However, such a period of time is inevitably temporary, waves may not have a prolonged effect on long-term resiliency, and differing regimes can likely learn and adapt as quickly as protesters can.

Fourth, it is important to understand the dynamics of civil resistance in relation to the long-run agency of organizers and protesters to maintain strategic control over demonstrations. As shown previously, perhaps the central reason for regime change in Tunisia and Egypt, increasing levels of

mobilization, inevitably entailed a loss of centralized control by the initial organizers of resistance. Moreover, in all cases, as participation increased, the selective nature of violence became exacerbated, and this had differing effects on protest movements in differing situations. In Egypt and Tunisia, the problems associated with selective violence could be overcome, largely because they targeted very small minorities of the population. However, in Bahrain, Syria, Yemen, and Libya such violence posed huge problems in terms of both the coherence of geographically stratified demonstrations, and in terms of maintaining stable levels of mobilization. Furthermore, the degree of spontaneity present within most of these protest movements (Yemen being a possible exception), especially in relation to the Tunisian case, highlights the importance that unpredictability may have for maintaining both resilient and influential resistance. To be sure, acting unpredictably may be a specific strategy, but this may be harder to achieve in practice than in theory.

Finally, and cumulatively, this project highlights the reality that nonviolent resistance may not be generalizable across all cases, and may in fact apply to only a select few. To be sure, some degree of civil or nonviolent resistance occurs in every example of resistance, but so does some degree of violent resistance as well. More to the point, primarily nonviolent strategies may be ineffective in some cases, and finding factors that determine the adequate balance between violence and nonviolence should be a central concern for future research. Moreover, identifying and understanding the nature of the contingent agency demonstrations possess represents another strand of research with fruitful potential.

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