and working classes, the role and status of women, cultural values and practices, transnational solidarities, diffusion processes, the global environment, and international actors – shape the nature of prodemocracy protests and their outcomes. In our book, we provide a complementary but more focused set of explanatory variables, and we show how they interacted to produce the divergent outcomes of the 2011 Arab uprisings.

Were all the Arab countries prepared for a transition to a democratic order? We agree with Welzel's observation that modernization increases ordinary people's capabilities and willingness to struggle for democratic freedoms, as it places more resources into the hands of ordinary people, enhancing their capacity for collective action and for "effective democracy."[72] Successful democracies emerge from strong and healthy societies that include local authorities, political parties, trade unions, professional associations, and other CSOs with a commitment to citizen rights. This paves the way for the expansion and codification of rights to women, minorities, and other excluded social actors through a rights-based model of state-building. Prerequisites for democracy are societal conditions and collective action, but people must believe in freedoms. What we would add is that economic difficulties and wide inequalities, conflicts and war, and of course external intervention, threaten democracies as well as transitions. We now turn our attention to the factors and forces that enabled, or prevented, democratization and stability in seven countries that experienced the Arab uprisings.

[72] Welzel (2009): 75, 86.

3 States and Political Institutions

This chapter analyzes institutional development and variation across our seven country cases prior to and following the uprisings. Entrenched institutional and structural barriers to political participation and uneven socioeconomic development created the precise conditions that autocrats sought to control – mass societal mobilization. The 2011 Arab uprisings created a collective regional security dilemma for ruling autocrats as the unprecedented cascading effect of popular social movements spread rapidly across the region. Reflecting prolonged political decay, mass mobilization indicated a deep crisis of legitimacy for autocrats sustained largely by a repressive coercive apparatus and crony capitalism imbued in neoliberalization. As protesters adapted and learned from each other through the diffusion of informational, network, cultural, and behavioral links during the initial wave of the uprisings between late 2010 and early 2011, autocratic incumbents, too, adapted in response to changing dynamics and pressures.[1] As Heydemann and Leenders state, the parallel processes of social mobilization and the counterrevolutionary strategies of regimes were shaped by "processes of learning and diffusion among regime elites, especially among those in which protests began later in the sequence of events that constitute the Arab uprising."[2]

We examine macro- and meso-level variation in the institutional and structural conditions that galvanized popular mobilizations and map their trajectory a decade following the uprisings. The protests were a culmination of an enduring struggle for political liberalization and democratization.[3] As we have noted, only Tunisia succeeded in embarking on a path of political and democratic liberalization. However, as discussed in Chapter 2, political liberalization can stagnate in the face of economic and social crises. Tunisia's democratic

[1] Hale (2013): 333–4; Norris (2012): 56; Zubaida (2012).
[2] Heydemann and Leenders (2014): 76. [3] Brynen et al. (1995): 3.

transition received international accolades, but socioeconomic stagnation and years of stalled growth have generated citizen dissatisfaction and protests. A decade following the uprisings, unemployment and especially youth unemployment rates, as indicators of economic development and key drivers of mobilization, rose between 2008 and 2018 in most of our seven cases, as seen in Figure 3.1.

We posit that the strength or weakness of state institutions – military, political, juridical – shaped both the nature of the protests and the outcomes. At the same time, external intervention adversely affected three of our cases – Libya, Syria, and Yemen – leading to weakened states, terrorism, deprivation, and institutional failures. In only one case, Bahrain, did external military intervention strengthen the state – although it did nothing to help Bahrain transition to democracy. As is well known, MENA states historically have had high levels of military spending, with regimes generously funding their military sectors. This only increased in the years after the uprising (see Figure 3.2).

Before and After the Uprisings: Mapping State and Institutional Trajectories

Our focus here is on the state and political institutions. Our variable illuminates the nature of the political system, state ideology, and institutions, including the role and power of the military, state capacity, and center-periphery relations. We use state in the Weberian sense to denote "a human community that successfully claims the monopoly of the legitimate use of physical force within a given territory."[4] We define a regime as entailing "patterns of allocation, use, and abuse of power in a polity."[5] Despite differences in their political systems, all the states examined here shared authoritarian features at the time of the uprisings, suppressing or co-opting challengers.[6] Since the uprisings, states have oscillated between deeply autocratic and more hybrid systems, such as Morocco, with only Tunisia transitioning to democracy. Egypt became "partly free" during the initial transition in 2012 to "not free" following the 2013 *coup d'état* that ousted the Muslim Brotherhood (MB)-dominated government. States that experienced externally-aided coercive interventions – Bahrain, Libya, Syrian, and

[4] Weber (1991): 78. [5] Chehabi and Linz (1998): 10.
[6] Schlumberger (2007): 14. See also Gandhi (2008).

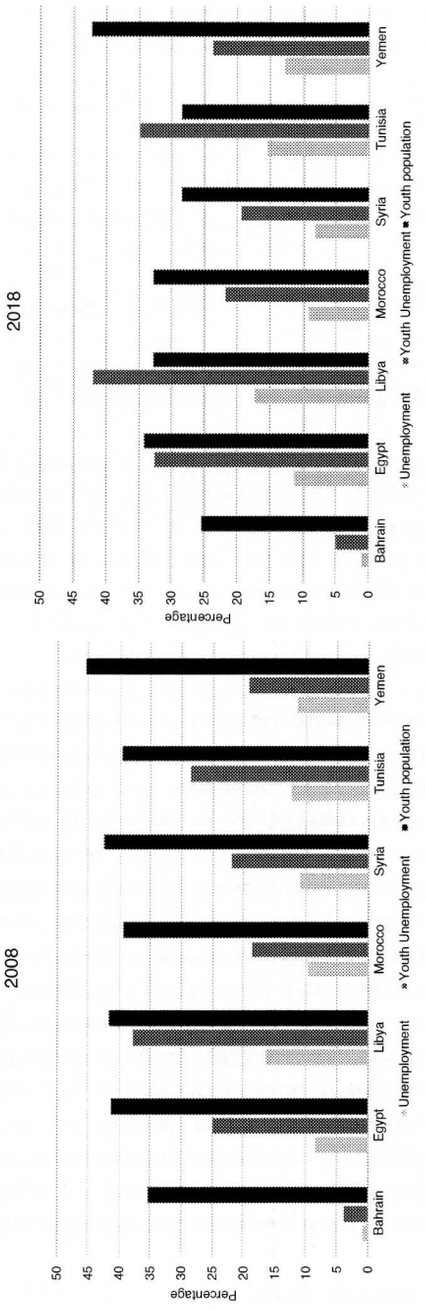

Figure 3.1 Unemployment, youth unemployment, and youth population.
Source: World Bank, World Development Indicators. Youth are sums of male and female percentage populations aged 15–24.

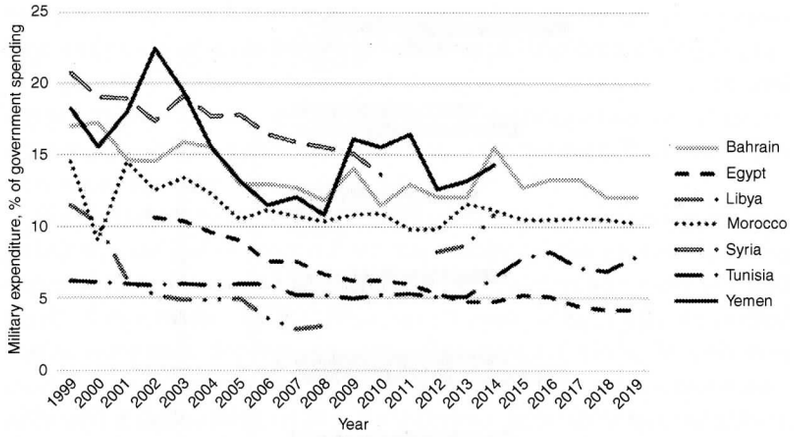

Figure 3.2 Military expenditure as % of government spending, 1999–2019. Note: Some Arab countries spend considerably more on the military than on health, although education spending tends to be high. Jordan and the GCC countries, and especially Saudi Arabia and the UAE, are the major spenders on armaments, largely from the USA (which is also the biggest military spender globally).

Yemen – produced violent outcomes, including prolonged and internationalized civil wars and a failed state. Table 3.1 illustrates regime type and autocracy and freedom rankings.

Mass mobilization poses two options for incumbent autocrats: repression and authoritarian control on the one hand, power-sharing on the other.[7] Cases that experienced more positive *initial* transitions – Tunisia, Egypt, and Morocco – opened up the political landscape as regimes were either ousted; in Morocco's case, the regime undertook constitutional amendments to placate protester demands. The 2013 coup in Egypt reinstated authoritarian control following the ouster of the country's only democratically elected government. In Yemen, President Saleh's ouster in the absence of a viable opposition failed to produce a pluralistic political order. The Saudi-led coalition that began its assault on Yemen in 2015 hampered any prospects for national reconciliation and produced an internationalized civil war and what the UN in 2019 called the world's worst humanitarian crisis.[8] Conversely, the Saudi intervention in Bahrain

[7] Svolik (2012): 2. [8] UNSMIL (2019).

Table 3.1 ***Regime classifications: autocracy and freedom scores***

Country	Regimes of the World (RoW)	Polity Score (2018)	Freedom House (2018)
Bahrain	Closed autocracy	-10	6.5/not free
Egypt	Electoral autocracy	-4	6/not free
Libya	Closed autocracy	-77 (interregnum)	6.5/not free
Morocco	Electoral autocracy	-4	5/partly free
Syria	Closed autocracy	-9	7/not free
Tunisia	Electoral democracy	7	2.5/free
Yemen	Closed autocracy	-77 (interregnum)	6.5/not free

Source: RoW operationalizes four regime types-closed autocracy, electoral autocracy, electoral democracy, and liberal democracy and has strong agreement with other regime classifications, see Lührmann et al. (2018). Autocracy scores were obtained from the Systemic Peace's Polity IV dataset. -10 denotes autocratic and 10 democratic. Freedom ranking obtained from Freedom House.

allowed the al-Khalifa monarchy to retain control through a violent crackdown on largely Shi'a protesters and dissidents. In Libya, the NATO-led intervention fractured the country's fragile political arena and fractionalized an already polarized opposition. In Syria, Assad's immediate suppression of the uprising and the subsequent regional and international interventions in support of warring groups, later joined by Russia and Iran in support of the Assad regime, enabled the latter to maintain control.

Understanding how autocracies respond to mass social mobilization illuminates the levels of control and cohesion, willingness to share power, or decision to acquiesce to or quell citizen demands. To capture variation in state and regime type, we examine change in the institutional and bureaucratic structures of the state to elucidate their effect on the prodemocracy movements that merged late 2010–11. We concur with Ellen Lust's observation that "institutions can structure the political environment, affecting both the likelihood that opposition groups can mobilize and their desire to do so."[9] Given that institutions define relations of power among contending groups in society by mediating the parameters of cooperation and conflict, they "structure

[9] Lust-Okar (2005): 30.

political situations and leave their own imprint on political outcome."[10] Thus, institutions not only structure the relationship between the ruler and the ruled, they also shape the motivations and opportunity costs of prodemocracy movements. Table 3.2 illuminates the governing and institutional composition of the states examined here.

As the regional anomaly, Tunisia remains the one Arab Spring country to have embarked on democratization, becoming the Arab world's only democracy. This is largely because of the institutional preconditions present in Tunisia (as discussed in Chapters 2, 4, and 5), which in turn enabled the formation of new political institutions (the "High Commissions") that helped shepherd the transitional year prior to the election for the Constituent Assembly. However, given that mass popular protests challenge the authoritarian status quo, such junctures often create a fissure in the power dynamics that previously structured the political, social, and economic configuration of the state. Democratic transitions then may "fail to provide any enduring or predictable solution to the problem of institutionalizing political power."[11] This observation seems to apply to Tunisia, which, as with many new democracies, continues to experience political factionalism and polarization despite the establishment of democratic institutions.

Across the countries that experienced mass protests in 2011, the development of the state and political institutions generally lagged behind the evolution of society. As scholars from Marx and Engels onwards (including Samuel Huntington) have noted, the disjuncture between political and societal development leads to protest movements and sometimes to fully-fledged revolutions.[12] The fraying of the "authoritarian bargain" and rising unemployment in the 1990s at a time of growing educational attainment led to the protest cycle of the new century, which in turn demonstrated the fragility of the autocratic incumbents across the region. While the global diffusion of communication networks and access to new media connected and mobilized citizens across the region, structural and institutional factors aid in explaining variation in outcomes, as they "specify what can be done, by and to whom, for what purposes, and when, but also what happens when the rules are breached and who decides when they are."[13] Such factors and forces thus prime collective action choices, shape

[10] Thelen and Steinmo (1992): 9. [11] O'Donnell and Schmitter (1986): 6.
[12] Huntington (1968): 11. [13] Levi et al. (2008): 2.

Table 3.2 *Government and constitutional composition, 2018*

Country	Government type	Constitution (date)	Executive	Legislature	Judiciary	Political parties
Bahrain	Constitutional monarchy	2002	Monarch head of government and cabinet	Bicameral, monarchy veto powers, 80 members, 40 appointed by King	Appointed	Prohibited, political societies legalized in 2005
Egypt	Presidential republic	Several, last amended 2014	Presidential, three six-year terms	Unicameral, 596 seats, 28 appointed by president	Upper and lower courts, appointed by president	Limited
Libya	Transitional	2017 (draft)	Prime minister	Unicameral House of Representative	N/A	N/A
Morocco	Parliamentary constitutional monarchy	Several, last 2011	Monarch head government, PM appointed by King from winning party	Bicameral, elected	Appointed	Legal
Syria	Presidential republic	Several, last 2012	Presidential	Unicameral, 250 seats, elected	Appointed	Limited, regime sanctioned
Tunisia	Parliamentary republic	Several, last 2014	Presidential	Unicameral, 217 seats, elected	Elected and appointed by higher court	Legal-free
Yemen	Transitional	1991, amended 2009	Presidential	Bicameral, appointed and elected	Appointed	Limited

Source: CIA, *World Factbook*.

mobilization calculations, and determine regime responses to social and political unrest.

Country Case Studies

We now turn to our seven country cases. In the absence of military interventions, the protests in Egypt, Morocco, and Tunisia initially produced successful outcomes. Tunisia's Ben Ali was ousted on January 14, 2011 after his twenty-four-year reign, Egypt's Hosni Mubarak was ousted on February 11, 2011 following three decades in office, and Morocco's King Mohammed IV quickly agreed to constitutional concessions that, in the short term, alleviated further pressure and escalation. Prior to the protests, Egypt, Morocco, and Tunisia were ostensibly multiparty polities, albeit with restrictions on independent political parties and elections. Earlier, the three regimes had made tactical concessions on issues at different moments, notably after the bread riots of the late 1970s and the 1980s,[14] but made no credible democratic reforms except for the opening in Morocco in 1998. The strategy of liberalizing just far enough to sustain dominance remained in place even as socioeconomic and political challenges undermined each regime's legitimacy. Of the three countries, Egypt had the most powerful military; indeed, Egypt's military was significantly more powerful than the ruling National Democratic Party (NDP). Operating as a state-within-the-state, the military owned and controlled many profitable enterprises.[15]

Egypt

Gamal Abdel Nasser's anti-imperialism and his role in the 1956 Bandung Conference cemented his status as a prominent Third World leader. The environment began to change after Egypt's defeat in the 1967 Six-Day War with Israel, and more rapidly following Nasser's death, when Anwar Sadat replaced the pro-Soviet foreign policy and socialistic economy with a pro-US foreign policy and a market-oriented economy (*infitah*), along with a peace treaty with Israel. Uprisings in

[14] According to Walton and Seddon (1994), Egypt's protests against structural adjustment and austerity took place in January 1977; Morocco had three such riots in June 1981, and Tunisia in January 1984. See also Table 1.1.

[15] Achcar (2013): 149–51.

1977 followed by repression, increases in military spending, and US influence in Egypt led to grievances, providing space for the MB to grow and halting progress in women's rights. Sadat was assassinated by an Islamist guard in 1982 and replaced by Hosni Mubarak, another military man.

Hazem Kandil's historical analysis of Egypt shows how Nasser tried but failed to marginalize the power of the army after the 1952 coup/revolution, and how Sadat accelerated the presidency's shift away from law and legality and toward increasing reliance on extra-legal police action and the Central Security Forces, creating a police state.[16] Under Mubarak, the police, military, and the NDP became the key institutional players. Assuming the presidency after Sadat's assassination, Mubarak accelerated his predecessor's political-economic shift while retaining key institutions such as the Muslim family law courts and the powerful Al-Azhar religious and educational institution. Coupled with the economic stagnation of the 1990s and into the new century, elite manipulations created enormous popular dissatisfaction. Under pressure to liberalize its economic and political system and contain dissent among contending social and political forces, most notably, the MB and the Kefaya (Enough!) movement, Mubarak opened the electoral playing field by allowing multicandidate elections in 2005. However, subsequent elections and referenda were meant to shore up regime loyalists to maintain the status quo by co-opting or limiting the opposition.

Although the MB was banned as a political entity per Egypt's 1977 Political Parties Law prohibiting religious parties, affiliated MB candidates were allowed to run as Independents in the 2005 election, winning eighty-eight parliamentary seats, the second largest party bloc after Mubarak's NDP.[17] Two years later, a national referendum was held in March 2007 to amend thirty-four articles of the constitution to reflect four key priorities: banning of political parties based on religious, ethnic, or racial grounds; increasing the powers of the president to enable him to dissolve parliament and judicial monitoring of elections; and adoption of new anti-terrorism to replace the state of emergency law which had been in effect for decades.[18] These amendments –

[16] Kandil (2012).

[17] IFES, Egypt Election Guide. See also Menjou and Elktasha (2007) for a critique.

[18] IFES.

particularly the banning of judicial oversight of elections – were instrumental in ushering the electoral crisis that unfolded in 2010 whereby Mubarak and the NDP manipulated the first round of the elections to obstruct the MB, the largest opposition bloc, leading to its boycott of the second-round of elections in December 2010. This move obviated any prospects for meaningful representation of opposition parties in parliament. As noted by Lust, this sequence of events contributed to the January 2011 protests in four ways. First, election manipulation increased regime antipathy; second, abolishing the MB from parliament motivated its willingness to join the opposition forces that led the 2011 protest movement; third, repression of the opposition galvanized coordination in the lead-up to the uprising; and fourth, downplaying their efforts heightened their opposition to the regime.[19]

Surveys showed that Egyptians desired political leaders with strong religious values, and they placed a high premium on the military.[20] Following Mubarak's downfall, the Supreme Council of the Armed Forces (SCAF) led Egypt until the first post-Mubarak elections in November 2011. A referendum was held in March 2011 to change the presidential term from six to four years, with a two-term limit, and to limit the use of emergency law; the referendum passed with a 77 percent approval. The November election had a 51.85 percent voter turnout – the highest in Egypt's history – and was won by the MB, as many observers had predicted. The MB's candidate, Mohamed Morsi, was elected president in June 2012. However, the Morsi government was unable to address people's socioeconomic grievances and demands for meaningful participation and instead sought to enhance the MB power and authority, in part through concessions to the military. Khattab notes, "The Muslim Brotherhood failed to see that the revolution was all about the economy, job creation, and poverty alleviation" rather than "the decriminalizing of FGM, abolishing women's rights, and banning toys they deem offensive over the more pressing social and economic reforms or the worsening security situation."[21] The MB's implementation and prioritization of policies reflected their ideal vision of an Islamic society and led to renewed protests. A pivotal moment of Morsi's presidency was the removal of senior SCAF members, including Field Marshal Mohamed Hussein Tantawi (who led Egypt during the post-Mubarak transition), the military chief of staff Sami Anan and

[19] Lust (2014): 227. [20] Moaddel (2013). [21] Khattab (2012).

the heads of Egypt's army, navy, and air force in August 2012. Morsi also unilaterally amended the March 2011 constitution, giving his office executive and legislative control.[22]

Under both the MB-dominated government and the military, protesters, Christians, and women fared badly. Egypt's SCAF perpetrated a massacre in October 2011 of Egyptian Christians who had been protesting outside the national TV company, an event that became known as the "Maspero massacre." Christians continued to suffer discrimination in the public sector and abuse from security services, courts, and fellow Egyptians. In April 2013, a deadly sectarian dispute led to clashes after a funeral at Cairo's Coptic cathedral, and riot police responding by joining in against the Christians.[23]

Although democratically elected, the MB-dominated government's attempt to consolidate power posed a threat to the military. Under the guise of responding to renewed mass protests, the military ousted the government in a coup in July 2013. The MB reacted with its own protests, but these were brutally put down by the army and police. In what became known as the Rabaa massacre, over 1,000 MB sympathizers were killed in August.[24] MB supporters retaliated in the following days by attacking, looting, and burning dozens of churches and other Christian facilities across Egypt. "Christian and civil society leaders viewed the wave of violence as the result of MB retaliation and incitement."[25] General Abdel Fattah al-Sisi, who took control after Morsi, then resigned from the military to run in the 2014 presidential election, which he won. If the 2012 Islamist-backed constitution had placed greater restrictions on individual freedoms and gave unprecedented powers to religious institutions, then the 2014 constitution grants enormous powers to the military.

In 2019, a referendum was passed with an 88 percent approval rate that reinstated the Mubarak-era six-year presidential term and allowed al-Sisi to run for another term. The referendum expanded the military's role in politics through anti-terrorism laws and bolstered presidential control of the judiciary. It also created an upper chamber in parliament (the Senate) with 180 members, 60 directly appointed by the president and 120 directly elected; reduced the number of parliamentary seats in

[22] Ross (2012). [23] Kingsley (2013). [24] Human Rights Watch (2014a).
[25] See Human Rights Watch, "Egypt: Mass Attacks on Churches," www.hrw.org/news/2013/08/21/egypt-mass-attacks-churches#

the People's Assembly from 596 to 450; and allocated a 25 percent gender quota.[26] In a speech during a youth summit in Sharm El-Sheikh, al-Sisi lamented that the revolutionary success of early 2011, while well intended, "opened the gates of hell" and that the actions of the military in 2013 and the subsequent crackdown on dissidents and journalists had saved Egypt from enduring a similar fate as Syria, Yemen and Libya.[27] In 2019, the Trump administration, despite consternation from some senior diplomats, heeded al-Sisi's advice to designate the MB a foreign terrorist organization.

Egypt's problematic transition and authoritarian reversal has subverted political dissent. The 2013 *coup d'état* and repression of the MB, now deemed an existential threat to the state, enabled the authorities to reconstitute securitization as "normal politics."[28] The 2014 constitutional referendum and the elections that followed gave al-Sisi the overwhelming victory needed to legitimize the coup through an electoral façade sustained by American military aid.[29] Moreover, Egypt's geostrategic importance for Western powers – and the United States in particular as the largest official development assistance contributor – shielded the regime from bottom-up pressures to democratize. This is hardly new. As Brownlee notes, US-Egyptian relations had bolstered autocracy since the signing of the Camp David Accords; after the 9/11 attacks and during the "global war on terror," Egypt became a prime Arab state included under the US security umbrella.[30]

Egypt's authoritarian reversal produced an even more repressive state. Since 2013, the Egyptian parliament has passed a series of stringent laws including a November 2013 law that essentially outlawed protests and demonstrations. A draconian non-governmental organization (NGO) law in 2017 effectively proscribes all non-governmental and civil society work that falls outside social development; it limits NGO funding sources without approval from the National Authority for Regulating International NGOs comprised of security, defense, and intelligence officials, and it allows courts to disband civil society organizations (CSOs) and NGOs without just cause.[31] Similarly, parliament passed Law 107 that severely limits public protests and allows security forces to use lethal force to disperse protesters.[32] Article 154 of the

[26] IFES, Egypt Election Guide. [27] Associated Press (2018).
[28] Pratt and Rezk (2019). [29] Grewal and Kureshi (2019): 1005.
[30] Brownlee (2012): 10–11. [31] Hamzawy (2016). [32] Ibid.

2014 constitution enables the president to declare a state of emergency – following parliamentary approval – for a period not exceeding three months, and al-Sisi extended its application multiple times in the aftermath of the 2017 bombing of two Coptic Christian churches.[33]

We conclude that Egypt's transition was limited and distorted because the military remained at the helm following Mubarak's downfall, and because Islamist and secular parties were divided during the critical 2011–12 transitional phase. Moreover, governing through referenda as an instrument of subverting parliament and the judiciary unraveled Egypt's transition. This tumultuous transition and subsequent reversion enabled al-Sisi to learn from and adapt to threats posed by social forces in society by proscribing civic engagement through legislative measures that grant sweeping powers to the military and security forces. The government's investment in spyware and surveillance technology enables the regime to penetrate the public and private spheres and sustain an arguably deeper state than under Mubarak's era.[34]

Tunisia

Tunisia's political landscape was always more diverse than Egypt's, given its long history of civic engagement, strong CSOs, and influential trade union. Tunisia's military was never as powerful and interventionist as Egypt's. The post-independence era led by President Habib Bourguiba introduced Western-inspired republican political and legal institutions, including a fairly liberal family law (see Chapter 5). Challengers were not tolerated, however, and both communists and Islamists were banned. Following Bourguiba's removal and Ben Ali's assumption of power, the 1990s saw advances in healthcare, educational attainment, welfare provisioning, civil society growth, and the expansion of political space. The façade of a multiparty system, however, ensured the dominance of Ben Ali's Rassemblement Constitutionel Démocratique (RCD) and multiple presidential terms for Ben Ali himself. Moreover, the authoritarian bargain began to fray in the new century, leading to economic decline, persistent unemployment, a wider income and development gap between the prosperous coastal regions and the interior, and increased cronyism. A rally against

[33] Egypt Today (2019). [34] Shea (2020).

another term for Ben Ali took place in October 2004, bloggers began to air grievances, and an anti-censorship protest convened in 2005. In 2006–07, the Communist Workers' Party coalesced with Ennahda and pan-Arabists around the *Collectif 18 October pour les droits et les liberties en Tunisie* against the Ben Ali regime, posting a declaration in 2007.[35] In 2008, workers, widows, and unemployed youth in the mining area of Gafsa clashed with police over jobs, working conditions, and exclusion. Finally, in December 2010, a tragedy involving an informally employed young man led to mass social protests in January 2011.

The Tunisian army did not interfere to suppress dissidents during the protest wave of protests. Professionalization, along with the distance between the ruling elite and the military made the armed forces less likely to use lethal force against peaceful protesters given the costs of doing so on the military's image and prestige.[36] The protests thus grew, leading to Ben's Ali's resignation and exile. Regime change was made possible by the resignation of key figures from Ben Ali's regime – including Prime Minister Mohamed Ghannouchi – following pressure from opposition groups, and by the decisive decision of Armed Forces Chief of Staff Rachid Ammar to defy Ben Ali's orders to shoot protesters.[37] Tunisia's largest opposition, the MB-affiliated Ennahda Party which had been banned and its leader, Rached Ghannouchi, sent into exile since the late 1980s, returned to play a crucial role in Tunisia's transition. While numerous parties were formed and legalized following the January revolution, the one party that was not permitted to run in the October 2011 elections for the Constituent Assembly was Ben Ali's ruling party, the RCD.

Much of the literature on political parties in the Arab world considers them mere functions of authoritarian manipulation. And yet, in some countries, parties not tied to the ruling elites – including the

[35] The declaration is available at https://drive.google.com/file/d/0B-hTPhszPJngNTdqdXd3TFBVRlZQWUtDazY2ZlFNdFFDUU5F/edit#page=43. Legalized in 2011, the Communist Workers' Party has been led by Hama al-Hammami, a long-time activist married to human rights lawyer Radhia Nasraoui, and is part of the Popular Front (*Front Populaire*, or *Jebha Shaabia*), a key player in Tunisian politics. Mohamed al-Brahmi and Chokri Belaid, both of whom helped build the Popular Front, were assassinated within six months of each other in 2013, presumably by jihadists. The *Collectif* evaporated in 2010, and after 2011, the Popular Front vociferously opposed Ennahda's agenda.

[36] Bellin (2012): 133–4. [37] Brownlee et al. (2015): 69, 126–8.

historic left-wing parties – were sustained over the years through networks of activists within the country and abroad. This was the case in Tunisia, where members of former communist and socialist parties, along with individuals tied to feminist, human rights, or liberal organizations, formed new parties and thus emerged as key organizers of or players within the new democratizing order. The transition phase developed organically, free from foreign interference and representative of CSOs, Islamists, and youth and women's groups. The historical presence and strength of civil society in Tunisia and its perseverance under the Bourguiba and Ben Ali regimes enabled a strong popular upsurge in 2011 (see Chapter 4). Akin to the transitions in Southern Europe and Latin America,[38] the history and strength of Tunisia's labor movement and the UGTT's professionalization, diversity, and links with wider CSOs made it a key player in the country's transition.

In the October 2011 elections for Tunisia's National Constituent Assembly, the Ennahda Party did not win a majority and thus had to rule in a coalition government with two secular parties, Ettakatol (Democratic Forum for Labor and Liberties) and the Congress for the Republic, an arrangement called the "troika." The Constituent Assembly represented nearly all political factions in Tunisian society, but deliberations were bogged down in wrangling between secularists (liberals, leftists, and feminists) and Islamists over key constitutional clauses. The assassinations of two left-wing political figures led to protests over the murders and continued socioeconomic problems, and the summer of 2013 was marked by considerable contention between government and a newly formed opposition bloc. Following mediation by a group of four CSOs, the government agreed in early October 2013 to resign and make way for a caretaker government and new elections. The Constituent Assembly completed its work in January 2014, when Tunisia's new constitution was adopted. The constitution defines the competence of the Constitutional Court to include the "constitutionality" of draft laws – laws referred to it by lower courts, and the rules of procedure of the parliament, as well as various other questions. The court is to have twelve members total; the president, parliament, and the Supreme Judicial Council (the governing board of the judiciary) each appoints four members.[39]

[38] See, e.g., O'Donnell and Schmitter (1986); Valenzuela (1989).

[39] Pickard (2015).

Unlike Egypt, the transition was smooth and devoid of military intervention. In the fall 2014 parliamentary and presidential elections, coalitions were formed to block another Ennahda victory, with left-wing and secular parties determined to intervene in institutional politics, assisted by some CSOs. Nidaa Tounes, a loose coalition of staunch secularists, took most of the parliamentary seats, and its leader, the veteran politician Beji Caid Essebsi, became Tunisia's first democratically elected president.

Essebsi's death in July 2019 led to an early election resulting in the victory of Kais Saied, a moderate constitutional law professor largely unknown to politics and with no political party affiliation; he became Tunisia's second democratically elected president, winning 73 percent of the votes with substantial support from young voters. Nidaa Tounes' 2014 political victory turned out to have been short-lived, as it won only four seats in parliament in 2019 while the Islamist Ennahda Party secured a majority 52 seats out of 217. Political disputes over government formation in 2014 and January 2020, along with continued economic difficulties, have increased citizens disillusionment with democracy, while the Islamist-secularist divide persists over key policy issues, including transitional justice, security sector reform, and coalition formation.[40]

Why did Tunisia's military not follow Ben Ali's directive to quell the uprising? While the historical legacy of the military's formation – in Tunisia's case, by the civilian government led by Habib Bourguiba – offers *an* explanation for military defections from Ben Ali, new research sheds light on the ideological and strategic motivations underpinning such defections during political ruptures. Grewal's novel survey of Tunisian military officers regarding the 2017 Tataouine protests demonstrates that defection decisions are motivated by two key strategic calculations: identity and corporate interests. First, given that most lower-ranked officers are from the neglected interior, they sympathized more with protesters, increasingly defection probability. Second, the decision by then president Essebsi to remove military representation from the National Security Council in January 2017 impeded the military's political influence in national security affairs and made officers less responsive to requests to quell dissidence.[41]

[40] Grewal and Hamid (2020): 2–3; 14. [41] Grewal (2019): 261.

Growing Pains or Stagnation?

A decade after it began its democratic transition, Tunisia faces serious challenges that could impede consolidation and durability. First, the socioeconomic conditions that fueled the uprising in 2010 remain unchanged, particularly as Tunisians experience inflation, high unemployment and even higher youth unemployment, weak economic growth and a downturn in its gas, tourism, and agricultural sectors.[42] EU bilateral agreements with Tunisia and its integration into the EU's free trade and neighborhood programs (see Table 6.3), do benefit certain Tunisian industries (such as vegetable oils, fruits, and vegetables), but Tunisia's agricultural and textile industries (the key trade industries) compete with EU products that are imported under low tariffs. Such asymmetric trade relations impact an emerging economy's growth capacity in the near and distant future.[43] Meanwhile, the government has been grappling with a growing external debt, estimated in 2019 at some 80 percent of GDP.

If Tunisians had expected a robust social democracy to emerge from their political revolution and democratic transition, that was not attainable, leading to citizen disillusionment. In a December 2019 survey of Tunisians, 67% of respondents believed that the country was moving in the wrong direction; 33% noted that the economy, cost of living, and high prices were the most important issues facing the country, second to unemployment (28%); while 23% felt that improving living standards and employment should be the top two priorities for government.[44] Tunisia's neglected peripheral regions in particular suffer what Sadiki calls "the layers of multiple marginalization," hampering trust in government and confidence in the future.[45]

Terrorist attacks on tourists and Tunisian soldiers after 2011, and the rise of jihadist organizations like Ansar al-Sharia in Tunisia (AST), have complicated legal and security sector reforms. Tunisia's anti-terrorism law of 2015 reinstated the death penalty for defendants found guilty of terrorism resulting in death or rape, defined terrorism in broad terms that can encompass disorder stemming from civic demonstrations, and expanded pre-charge detentions where suspects lack legal representation from six to fifteen days.[46] In 2019, the Truth

[42] World Bank in Tunisia (2019). [43] Grumiller et al. (2018).
[44] International Republican Institute (2019). [45] Sadiki (2019).
[46] Human Rights Watch (2015).

and Dignity Commission, established following the adoption of a Transitional Justice Law in 2013, concluded its investigation into human rights abuses spanning decades under Bourguiba and Ben Ali's rule. Members of the Commission complained that government authorities and the military had obstructed requests to review the archives of the presidency and that the Interior Ministry had failed to end impunity for rights perpetrators, leading Human Rights Watch to assert that "the culture of impunity is deeply entrenched in Tunisia and that the institutional and legal changes introduced after the revolution were insufficient to end torture and other egregious human rights violations."[47]

Morocco

Morocco's gradualist path toward reform and democratization began with the 1997 electoral victory of the *Union Socialistes des Forces Populaires* (USFP) and the 1998 appointment of Prime Minister Abderrahmane Youssoufi, whose center-left coalition government included a progressive cabinet.[48] Other landmarks include the family law reform of 2004 that women's rights groups had advocated for nearly a dozen years, and the adoption of quotas to enhance women's parliamentary participation.[49] In 2004, King Mohammed VI initiated the Arab world's first Equity and Reconciliation Commission to address human rights abuses under his father's decades-long reign. Initial increased government spending sought to alleviate poverty and unemployment and increase the country's socioeconomic and human development.[50] Moreover, unlike Egypt and Tunisia, the largest opposition, the Islamist Party for Justice and Development (*parti de justice et developpement,* or PJD), was not banned but rather participated in election rounds.

The emergence of the February 2011 protest movement spearheaded by the *mouvement 20 février* (M20F) led directly to constitutional amendments that were approved overwhelmingly in the July 2011 referendum. The amendments were intended to restrict the King's

[47] Human Rights Watch (2019).
[48] Rémy Leveau, "A democratic transition in Morocco?" *Le Monde Diplomatique* (December 1998), https://mondediplo.com/1998/12/06maroc
[49] Darhour and Dahlerup (2013); Moghadam and Gheytanchi (2010).
[50] Goldstein and Benchemsi (2013).

vast powers, although they fell far short of dissidents' goals to attain a political set-up that some called "the Spanish model." The amendments institutionalized the rights of women and the cultural rights of the Amazigh (Berber) ethnic group. The subsequent parliamentary election saw the participation of many political parties, including the historic ones such as Istiqlal, the USFP, and the Party of Progress and Socialism (PPS). The electoral Islamic party, PJD, won 23 percent of seats and the right to name a prime minister; that prime minister, however, appointed only one woman to his cabinet. Morocco's initial transition followed a path similar to Tunisia's with the institutionalization of political and cultural changes called for by the M20F, albeit with concerns about security following the collapse of Libya and the rise of Islamic State of Iraq and Syria (ISIS).[51]

Morocco's political landscape has changed considerably since the early 1990s, when political dissent was not tolerated. Yet political and institutional reforms since 1998, and especially after 2011, have not yet produced deep or extensive change. Unlike Tunisia's post-Ben Ali constitutional drafting commission that included broad stakeholders in society, including women, Islamists, trade union leaders, and CSOs, Morocco's constitutional drafting commission and accompanying mechanism were headed by Abdellatif Menouni and Mohammed Moatassim, both advisors to the King.[52] The new constitution did make progress by defining Morocco as a Muslim state, in comparison to other regional constitutions that enshrine Sharia law as the source of legislation. The King is mandated to nominate a prime minister from the largest winning party, who presides over cabinet meetings; and the legislative power of parliament is expanded. No party can win an outright majority as parties are required to form a governing coalition with other blocs. Such changes notwithstanding, the King retains vast powers, presiding over key institutions: the Superior Council of the Ulema (Article 41), the Council of Ministers (Article 48), Superior Council of Security (Article 54), the Superior Council of the Judicial Power (Article 56).[53] Article 96 allows the King to dissolve parliament following consultations with constitutional and legislative chambers of government. Moreover, the King's constitutional

[51] Maddy-Weitzman (2012); Ottaway (2011). [52] Ottaway (2011).
[53] Constitution Project, Morocco's Constitution of 2011.

power over foreign policy decisions "minimize the agency of the government and preserve the preponderance of the Palace and its close entourage in matters of foreign policy."[54] For better or for worse, the monarchy presents itself as a mediating force between the country's contending political and social forces – Islamist, secular, women's rights advocates, youth groups, CSOs.

Nor has there been progress in economic development: vast sections of the country and its population experience poverty, infrastructural underdevelopment, and uneven access to healthcare. A growing external debt – estimated at 65 percent of GDP in 2019 – hampers the government's ability to improve conditions. These problems generated the Hirak movement's mobilization in 2017 in the country's historically disenfranchised Rif region, as well as protests by teachers and health workers for increased investments in public services.[55] If Egypt reversed its democratic transition and returned to authoritarianism and Morocco's democratization has stalled, Tunisia's democratic transition continues with regular presidential and parliamentary elections, special commissions staffed by members of civil society and political society, and laws that enshrine women's rights. Yet, as noted, socioeconomic stagnation evinced by rising youth unemployment, poor economic performance, and a growing external debt poses a challenge to democratic stability and sustainability.

Bahrain

Bahrain's political and institutional development is embedded in al-Khalifa's Sunni-patronage network. Following its independence in 1971 from Britain, as Lawson explains, Sheikh Isa embarked upon political reforms that led to the formation of a draft constitution in 1972 which defined the terms for the country's first elections for a national assembly in 1973. Although the December 1973 election drew wide support from various sociopolitical groups, including Islamists, liberals, and independent leftists, the National Assembly was strictly tasked with advising and consenting to laws initiated in the unelected cabinet rather than proposing legislation, and the constitution allotted the King veto powers to dissolve parliament through a royal decree. The election produced three main

[54] Abouzzohour and Tomé-Alonso (2019): 446.
[55] Salime (2019); Wolf (2019).

coalitions: the People's Bloc advocated for traditional labor and unionization, participation in economic policymaking and higher wages; the Religious Bloc likewise supported labor reforms but advocated for religious restrictions on the licensing of youth clubs and organizations, sale of alcohol, and gender relations in public spaces; and the Independents advocated for an unregulated market economy, drawing support from Bahrain's various social classes. Breaching its constitutional mandate, the National Assembly began debating two key public policy issues – the creation of a general labor law to allow trade unions to organize and implement quotas on foreign workers, and public security ordinances which resulted in political deadlocks between key coalition blocs and the dissolution of the assembly by the Emir in 1975.[56] The dismantling of the legislature from 1975 until King Isa's death in 1999 produced a period of absolute rule governed by emergency law, resulting in mass uprisings mostly by the country's excluded Shi'a majority from 1994–9.

In line with hereditary succession, King Isa's son Hamad bin Isa al-Khalifa succeeded his father upon his death in 1999. Promising reforms and reconciliation with the Shi'a community, King Hamad promulgated the National Action Charter in 2001 to address political grievances and institute reforms by reinstating the National Assembly, devising a new constitution, and amending the repressive State Security Law to disband the country's State Security Courts. Political prisoners who had been arrested during the uprisings of the 1990s were released and a general amnesty for political exiles was issued.[57] Bahrain became a constitutional monarchy with a bicameral legislature comprised of a forty-person elected Council of Representatives (*majlis al-nuwab*) and a forty-person Consultative Council (*majlis al-shura)* appointed by the King. The equal distribution of elected and appointed members of parliament reflected the King's unconstrained power. The constitution was presented unilaterally by the King without public consultation and was approved in a national reform by 98 percent. The constitution gives the King unrestricted powers to form government and overrule legislation and constitutional amendments.[58] Article 33 gives the King absolute powers to appoint and dissolve ministers and government by royal decree, to chair the judicial council and appoint judges. Article 35 allows the King to unilaterally amend the constitution and propose and ratify laws. Article 42 stipulates that the King orders elections, convenes the National Assembly by a royal order,

[56] See Lawson (1989): 89–91. [57] Gengler (2015): 43. [58] Katzman (2014).

and has the absolute power to dissolve the Assembly by a decree so long as he provides a justification.[59]

Political parties are formally banned but political associations can exist as per Law No. 14 of 2002 on the Exercise of Political Rights. Since then, laws and royal decrees curtail political participation by banning and limiting opposition movements and organizations. Such laws and decrees appear to be targeted mainly at the Shi'a political associations, such as the al-Wefaq Party, founded in 2001 by exiled Bahraini Shi'as upon their return following the general amnesty. As Gengler explains, electoral districts were altered in 2002, creating 40 highly gerrymandered districts with 500–17,000 registered voters to widen the electoral distribution in Sunni areas while minimizing Shi'a districts. Consequently, whereas 6 members of parliament represented 16,000 voters in the Sunni-dominated southern provinces, the predominantly Shi'a northern provinces were allocated nine representatives for 79,000 voters.[60]

As with previous anti-regime protests, institutional constraints galvanized group mobilization against the state prior to and following the signing of the National Action Charter. The selective reforms of the early 2000s produced subsequent electoral victories for the country's largest political party and opposition bloc,[61] the Shi'a al-Wefaq party in the 2006 and 2010 general elections to the National Assembly. The predominance of the al-Wefaq in parliament posed a political and national security dilemma for the monarchy and Sunni political parties.

Stalled reforms and the absence of legislative independence coupled with social and economic decline, particularly among the country's Shi'a majority, fueled mass mobilization against the regime culminating in Bahrain's Day of Rage on February 14, 2011. The uprising was led by the Shi'a majority, but they were joined by Bahraini Sunnis, particularly those from the lower socioeconomic strata, and the slogans reflected cross-sectarian solidarity.[62] The regime, however, branded it as Iran-influenced. A dialogue initiative proposed by the crown prince ended after three days, when the Saudi-led Peninsula Shield Forces deployed under the Gulf Cooperation Council Joint Defense Treaties entered Bahrain on March 14, 2011, violently repressing the protest. As Fadel observes: "GCC security and military intervention [worked] in favor of

[59] Constitution Project, Bahrain's Constitution of 2002.
[60] Gengler (2015): 44. [61] Wikileaks (2008). [62] Kerr and Jones (2011).

the regime, and the crisis became a regional issue, with internal forces overlapping with external actors in determining the path of change."[63]

Assisted by neighboring Saudi Arabia, the regime's violent crackdown on the protesters ended its façade of political reform. Nonetheless, to assuage grievances, the monarchy announced a grant of $2,650 for each Bahraini family on the occasion of the tenth anniversary of the National Action Charter of 2001. It also promised increased social spending, the release of Shi'a political prisoners, and the establishment of the National Dialogue and Bahrain's Independent Commission of Inquiry.[64] However, the failure to establish legislative independence, end regime interference and electoral gerrymandering, and ensure free and fair elections and a competitive electoral field led to Shi'a and other opposition boycotts of the 2014 elections.[65] To marginalize certain dissidents and challengers and prevent them from running for office, the 2002 Electoral Law No. 14 was amended in 2018. It bars from office anyone with a criminal record or with a history of serving jail time for more than six months, even if a pardon was issued; the ban extends to any members of a banned political society or organization. Again, this appears to be targeted primarily at Shi'a dissidents.[66] Like several other GCC countries, Bahrain amended its nationality and anti-terrorism laws to make it much easier to revoke nationality, targeting dissidents. As Zahra Babar writes, such a move embraces the idea that citizenship should be contingent on political beliefs and on the state's security calculations, effectively "securitizing" citizenship.[67] In the run-up to the 2018 election, the government banned all opposition political parties, including the al-Wefaq and the secular-left National Democratic Action Society (Wa'ad), and forcibly closed the country's only independent newspaper, al-Wasat, in 2017.[68] This move demonstrates the consistent and systematic constriction of political rights and freedoms since the uprising in 2011.

The Bahraini regime's lack of legitimacy among the majority Shi'a population could have made it collapse in the face of the mass protests of

[63] Fadel (2019): 28. [64] Al Jazeera (2011a). [65] Gengler (2014).
[66] Kingdom of Bahrain. "Qanoon rqam (٢٥) al-sana ٢٠١٨: beita'del al-mada al-thalitha min al-marsoom b'qanoon rqam (١٤) al-sana (٢٠٠٢) b'sha'n m'bashra al-huqooq al-syasa" (Law No. [25] year 2018: Amending Article 3 of Law No. [14] year [2002] Regarding the Political Rights Directive).
[67] Babar (2017); see also *The* Economist (2016, 2018).
[68] Human Rights Watch (2018a).

2011. Crucial to the regime's survival, however, is its position in the regional and international system. While we concur with analyses that stress Bahrain's natural resources as *a factor* in sustaining the ruling monarchy's Sunni-patronage networks, we posit that regime survival markedly rests with its geopolitical and geostrategic significance for neighboring GCC states and the USA as host to the Navy's Fifth Fleet. In revisiting data cited in Brownlee et al. regarding Bahrain's arms imports in comparison to wealthier GCC states, and the study by Grimmett, we see that Bahrain's arms import values are relatively modest, with arms transfer figure agreements totaling $400 million from 2002–05 and $400 million from 2006–09.[69] A closer comparative scrutiny of data on oil and gas rents, GDP per capita, and arms imports (as seen in Table 3.3) reveals that Bahrain lags behind all GCC states in oil and gas rents and arms imports but ranks higher on GDP per capita in comparison to Oman and Saudi Arabia given Bahrain's smaller population size. Figures 3.3 and 3.4 show that while Bahrain lags behind other GCC states in arms import values from 2000–18, it is the largest recipient of US military aid, indicating the strategic and stabilizing force that is provided by the US. Lower rents, scant oil wealth, and lower arms imports should have made the regime more vulnerable to domestic shocks such as mass protests – were it not for the Saudi intervention and US support for the ruling monarchy (see also Chapter 6).

Table 3.3 *GCC military expenditure and sources of rents, 2017*

Country	Oil rents	Gas rents	Military expenditure	GDP per capita
Bahrain	2.0	1.5	4.389	$23,715
Kuwait	36.6	0.5	5.635	$29,759
Oman	21.8	1.6	9.56	$15,130
Qatar	14.2	3.7	1.5 (2010)	$61,264
Saudi Arabia	23.1	0.6	10.251	$20,803
United Arab Emirates	13.1	0.6	5.076 (2014)	$39,811

Note: Oil rents, gas rents, and military expenditure are % GDP.
Source: World Bank.

[69] Grimmett (2010): 43–4. See also Brownlee et al. (2014): 54.

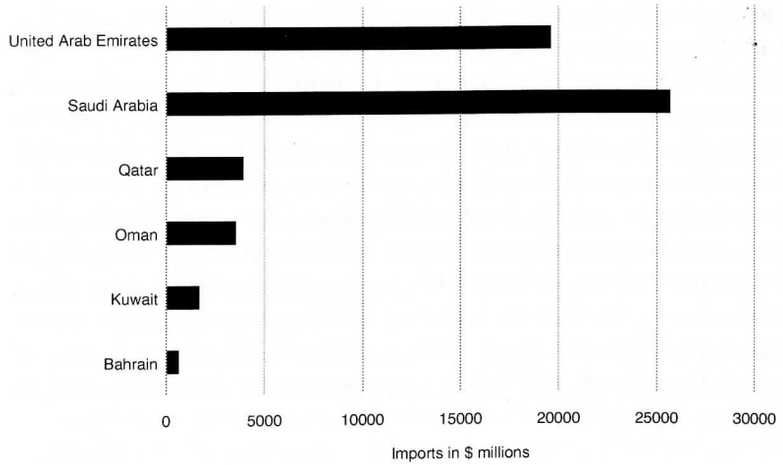

Figure 3.3 Arms imports of GCC states, 2000–18.
Source: SIPRI. Arms imports are Trend Value Indicators measured in $ millions.

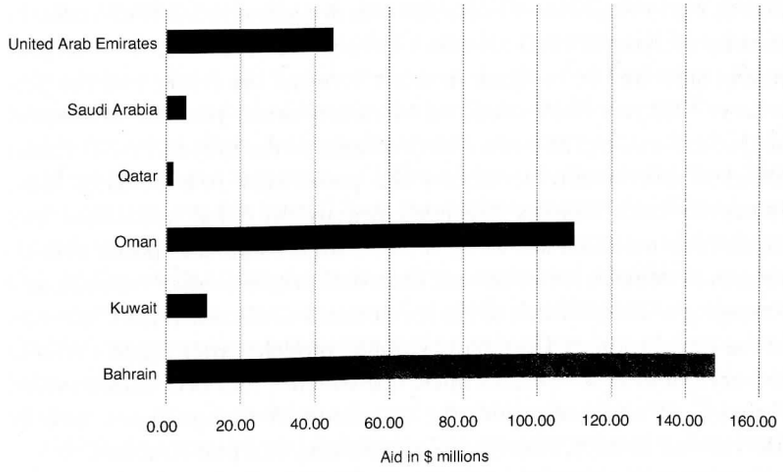

Figure 3.4 US military aid to GCC states, 2008–18.
Source: USAID.

Oil revenues do shape the regime's allocation and distribution of rents among its cadre of Sunni tribal elites. We agree with Gengler who notes that the practice "favors alliances based on outwardly

observable, ascriptive social categories" manifested by political, economic, and military support that helps sustains its selective rentier model.[70] However, this does not fully explain the Bahraini regime's survival given its more modest capabilities when compared with the financial and coercive capabilities of its wealthier Arab Gulf neighbors. What sustains the regime's survival amid declining oil wealth is its geostrategic relevance for neighboring states as a bulwark against presumed Iranian expansion in the Gulf and the USA as its largest international backer. Shielded by the coercive capabilities of its neighbors and the military capacity of its international patron by the presence of the Fifth Fleet, the Bahraini monarchical regime is protected from disaffected citizens and prevented from reforming its political institutions.

Libya

Following Libya's independence, the banning of political parties by King Idris coupled with the discovery of oil in 1959 consolidated the regime's grip on power. Federalism was abolished in favor of a unitary state by the King in 1963 to bolster territorial control over the emergent rentier state and to mitigate tensions between the center and the periphery.[71] Libya's 1969 coup, led by twenty-seven-year-old Muammar al-Qaddafi and a group of military officers of the Libyan Free Unionist Officers' Movement, overthrew the personalist rule of King Idris. However, both regimes depended heavily on tribal affiliations and loyalties to maintain authority rather than on state and political institutions as vehicles for economic distribution and conflict resolution.[72] Emerging as the guardian of the revolution and elected as the Chairman of the Revolutionary Command Council modeled after Egypt's revolutionary command, Qaddafi quelled dissidence and centralized power through oil nationalization, the expulsion of foreign bases, and an ideology combining Islam, anti-imperialism, and pan-Arabism.[73]

Restructuring the political system, Qaddafi instituted "the state of the masses," or the *Great Socialist People's Libyan Arab Jamahiriya,* ostensibly a truer version of democracy. Following an attempted coup

[70] Gengler (2015): 30–2. See also Human Rights Watch (2013a).
[71] Vandewalle (2006): 61. [72] Anderson (1990): 288–9.
[73] Hinnebusch (1984): 62; Vandewalle (2006): 61.

in August 1975, Qaddafi sought to remake the Libyan state by subverting the power of the Revolutionary Command Council that had brought him to power. Eschewing representative democracy, Qaddafi penned *The Green Book* in 1975 outlining his vision of a society governed by an ostensibly direct democracy of a loosely structured mass assembly known as the General People's Congress; this was ruled by committees and was devoid of any coherent or cohesive formal institutional structures other than that of "people managing their own affairs without state institutions."[74] From 1977 to 2011, the country was governed by a four-tiered assembly system of "popular" or "people's" assemblies, though in fact the regime controlled candidate selection and decision-making at every level. Such control may have led to the decline in attendance rates in the Basic Popular Committee, from their highest at 70 percent in 1982 to 27 percent in 1989 and just 10 percent in 1997.[75]

By the new century, Libya was devoid of representative political institutions and governed largely through 40,000 members of the Revolutionary Committees and another 40,000 soldiers and guards of the *jamahiriya.*[76] As the largest oil-producing state in North Africa, oil rents sustained Qaddafi's patronage network. Not unlike Libya under King Idris, oil and its strategic distribution enabled Qaddafi to buy tribal alliances and contain dissidence producing a highly fragmented and hollowed-out state structure built around four overlapping power structures: Qaddafi's family, his inner circle, the tribal system, and the formal "structure of the masses."[77] Effectively, the erosion of the bureaucratic and institutional structures of the state, and of the technocrats governing them, sustained Qaddafi's unconstrained access to state power. Oil and its distribution allowed Qaddafi to maintain a patronage system reliant on kin, regional, and tribal alliances that fractured state and society and prevented political alliances, economic associations, and national organizations.[78]

Inspired by events in neighboring Tunisia, protests erupted in Benghazi, Libya's second largest city, where citizens harbored deep animosity toward the central government in Tripoli owing to unemployment and underdevelopment. Mobilizing elite units commanded by Qaddafi's sons and loyal forces, including the 2,500-man Islamic Pan-African Brigade

[74] Vandewalle (1998): 98. [75] Al-Werfalli (2011). [76] Kadlec (2014).
[77] Paoletti (2011): 316. [78] Anderson (2011).

made of fighters from Chad, Sudan, and Niger, Libya's security forces used live ammunition on protesters.[79] Because of the decades-long underfunding of the national armed forces as a coup-proofing tactic, however, the Libyan army splintered into pro-protester and pro-regime camps.[80] Under the guise of a humanitarian intervention to prevent mass atrocities against the Libyan people, the UN Security Council invoked the newly crafted Responsibility to Protect (R2P) doctrine. This resulted in Qaddafi's toppling in October of 2011 by various rebel factions who received aerial and ground military support from regional and international powers. The National Transitional Council (NTC) governed for a period of ten months and was dismantled following elections in 2012, replaced with the General National Congress (GNC) as the parliamentary body. Under international pressure, NTC agreed to include women and ethnic minorities in the sixty-member Constitutional Drafting Assembly but stagnation followed due to the weakness of the central government relative to the strength of armed militia.[81]

Qaddafi's state capture and his dismantling of institutions and bureaucratic structures in favor of highly personalized rule sustained by patronage and co-optation posed a critical challenge for post-2011 state-building. This deficient institutional reality was not considered by the Western and regional forces who were bent on regime change. From the onset, disagreements over the nature of government, federalism, the role of Islam, and militia integration and disarmament within the NTC fractured nascent attempts at post-Qaddafi state-building.[82] Two key elections held in 2012 and 2014 failed to create a unified Libyan government. The 2012 election produced a highly competitive political arena featuring 142 registered political parties boasting 1,206 eligible candidates with another 2,501 independent candidates divided along Islamist and national-secularist lines vying for the 200 member assembly.[83] The secular National Forces Alliance coalition – comprised of 58 political organizations, 236 NGOs and 280 Independents – won the majority with 39 seats followed by the MB-aligned Justice and Development Party winning 19 seats out of the 80 seats assigned to political parties with another 120 seats for Independent candidates with a 60 percent voter turnout.[84]

[79] Gelvin (2012): 101. [80] ICG (2011).
[81] Human Rights Watch, Libya, (2014b). [82] Chivvis (2014): 170–1.
[83] Wehrey (2012). [84] The Carter Center (2012).

The 2014 election sought to replace the GNC with the House of Representatives (HoR) as the main legislative body tasked with government formation and drafting a new constitution. Marred by violence and the proliferation of militias, the election produced a turnout of just 18 percent, where candidates were allowed to run as Independents only, as stipulated in Libya's Law No. 10 of 2014.[85] The election gave secular and federalist candidates a lead over Islamists and an agreement to move the legislative body from Tripoli to Benghazi to placate regional divisions in the lead-up to the formation of a unity government. After Islamists contested the electoral results, the Libyan Supreme Court, by some observers under duress from militants, ruled in favor of Islamist groups and reinstated the GNC in July 2014, which further fractured an already fragile political environment. In August 2014, the head of the UN Special Representative and head of the UN Support Mission in Libya (UNSMIL) ruled in favor of the HoR (which had been operating in Tobruk due to mounting insecurity in Benghazi) as the sole legitimate legislative body in Libya and warned against "the dangers of creating parallel political institutions and processes, which can only contribute to further division and polarization."[86]

Amid escalating violence, the UNSMIL's political dialogue negotiations in 2015 with the HoR and members of the GNC led to the signing of the Libyan Political Agreement on December 17, 2015 in Skhirat, Morocco resulting in the creation of the Government of National Accord (GNA).[87] The GNA constituted the first attempt to devise the basic structures and institutions of the state. However, continued fighting, the proliferation of militias, contention over control of the country's oil reserves, tribal and regional divisions, and foreign interference impeded government formation. In December 2017, renegade General Khalifa Haftar operating in the East declared the UN-recognized and backed GNA in Tripoli null and void, producing two centers of power. In January 2019, Haftar's Libyan National Army began advancing westward in an attempt to take over Tripoli and abolish the UN backed government, producing a civil war supported by foreign powers with Italy, Turkey, Qatar, the USA, UN, and EU lending support to the internationally recognized government in

[85] Al-mutamar al-watani al-'am al-Libya (2014). [86] UNSMIL (2014).
[87] UNSMIL (2015).

Tripoli led by Fayez Sarraj and the UAE, Saudi Arabia, Jordan, Egypt, France, and Russia backing Field Marshall Haftar and his Libyan National Army.[88]

As Africa's largest oil producer with the highest GDP per capita prior to 2011, Libya has experienced a civil war that has devastated its oil infrastructure and production capacity, fractured its central bank due to disputes over the distribution of state revenues from oil sales, and impeded the central government's ability to pay state employees.[89] Attempts to broker a ceasefire by the UN and EU powers – including the promising January 2020 Berlin Conference on Libya – led to a commitment by foreign actors to refrain from intervening in Libya's civil war. The following month, the UN Security Council agreed, with fourteen members in favor and Russia abstaining.[90]

In summary, Libya's historically weak state and political institutions prevented post-Qaddafi attempts at state-building. Increased insecurity stemming from regional and tribal divisions, Islamism, the proliferation of militias, and external intervention prevented a smooth and peaceful transition to democracy. Instead, Libya became a divided and lawless state and a conduit for people-smuggling.

Syria

Syria's institutional development experienced various phases prior to and following the French Mandate; an example is the 1950 constitution which sought to limit and regulate the exercise of executive power.[91] In some ways, the strength of Syria's institutional and bureaucratic composition since the twentieth century mirrors that of Egypt, Morocco, and Tunisia examined in this book. In 1963, a group of revolutionary army officers led a coup inspired by the left-leaning Arab nationalist and socialist ideology of Ba'thism. Various intraparty coups between 1963 and 1970 culminated in the rise to power of Hafez al-Assad, whose election as president of the Revolutionary Command Council in 1971 consolidated the Ba'th Party.[92] To control a divided society with competing bases of power, Hafez al-Assad relied on a decentralized political system dependent on the strategic incorporation of communal elites into key institutions – the military, ruling party, and

[88] Weise (2020). [89] ICG (2019). [90] UN Security Council (2020).
[91] Atassi (2018): 6–7. [92] Hinnebusch (2014).

security services, which gave elites a say in the ruling coalition.[93] As Heydemann notes, Ba'thist state capture and regime survival depended on the deployment of populist authoritarianism through state structures, institutions, and choices of political actors to transform social interactions and shape regime consolidation.[94] By cementing institutional and structural control of the state and its governing apparatuses, the regime produced what Wedeen calls the "rituals of obedience" that infused regime rhetoric to enforce compliance.[95] Hafez al-Assad's intraparty coup enabled him to construct a "presidential monarchy," allowing the regime to transfer power through hereditary succession, making Syria the only non-monarchical system in the MENA to have succeeded in doing so.[96] Secularization and co-optation of elites belonging to various social, economic, religious, and political bases guaranteed the regime's survival.[97]

Although registered political parties theoretically existed, they had to be members of the National Progressive Front, led by the Ba'th Party, thus obviating political competition.[98] The largest threat to the regime came from Sunni Islamists culminating in an armed insurrection between 1979 and 1982 led by the MB-dominated Fighting Vanguard. Its crushing defeat in Hama in 1982 and the massacre of an estimated ten thousand to twenty thousand people made it a watershed moment seared in the historic memory of anti-regime Syrians, especially Islamists.

Bashar al-Assad assumed power following his father's death in 2000 and launched reform and political liberalization attempts through the short-lived Damascus Spring – a political opening which saw a brief liberalization of civil society and limited political contestation. The subsequent clampdown may have been precipitated by US preparations for the invasion of Iraq. Like political parties, NGOs are prohibited or strictly monitored for any potential foreign influence through funding. Laws 93/1958 and 1330/1958 permit associations that do not engage in political activity, but such associations act as conduits for the

[93] Stacher (2012): 13. [94] Heydemann (1999): 8. [95] Wedeen (2015): 6.
[96] Pierret (2017): 51. Hosni Mubarak, Muammar Qaddafi, and Saddam Hussein likewise had intended to transfer power to their sons, but never succeeded in doing so. Syria is thus the only non-hereditary monarchy in the MENA to have successfully pursued hereditary succession.
[97] Leverett (2005): 25. [98] UNDPADM (2004): 9–10.

regime's distribution of patronage and influence of elites within the state's ruling coalition.[99] The Damascus Declaration (DD) of 2005, signed by more than 250 major opposition groups, including Islamists, secular groups, Arabs, and Kurds, called for political liberalization given that the party had become an "authoritarian, totalitarian, and cliquish regime" that fractured the country's social fabric, noting that "the present moment calls for a courageous and responsible national stand" with reforms that are "peaceful, gradual, founded on accord, and based on dialogue and recognition of the other."[100] The regime's suppression of the DD and activists led to an exodus of political dissidents from the country, some of whom began operating in exile, increasingly lobbying their respective foreign governments on behalf of their members in Syria.[101]

Inspired by the prodemocracy protests in Tunisia and Egypt and fueled by economic stagnation, Syrians dissidents took to the streets in March 2011 demanding economic and political reform. Beginning in the southern city of Daraa, the protests spread quickly to the city of Hama and Aleppo. DD members aided in the formation of a Syrian opposition in 2011, including the Syrian National Council (Ankara), the National Salvation Council (Istanbul), the National Transition Council (Ankara and Syria), and the Damascus Declaration for National Democratic Change.[102] The regime's response oscillated between repression and concessions, and violence also was used by protesters, leading to estimates of some 5,000 deaths by December 2011 and the Arab League's unprecedented move to formally suspend Syria's membership. The Arab League tried to mediate between the regime and the armed rebels but did not succeed. By this time, numerous Western and regional states were supporting the rebels, convinced that the regime would fall, and various mediation and peace plans failed because the Syrian side would not accept the condition that Assad leave the scene and because the opposition was convinced of victory. The Syrian regime's domestic base and patronage networks, however, proved more resilient, especially after external support from Russia, Iran, and Lebanon's Hezbollah.

The splintering of the Free Syrian Army (FSA) and the growing influence of Islamists, including al-Qaeda aligned groups within the

[99] Stacher (2012): 136–7. [100] Landis (2005). [101] Pace and Landis (2009).
[102] Wikileaks (2011d).

Sunni-Arab opposition, along with external support for the largely Kurdish Syrian Democratic Forces (SDF), fractured the opposition and drastically altered the uprising's trajectory. Syria's historically divided opposition failed to coalesce into a cohesive political movement. Whereas the National Coordination Committee was open to negotiating with the regime if Syrian security forces retreated from the towns they were occupying, the Europe- and Turkey-based Syrian National Council rejected any discussions with Assad.[103] This opened the door to the occupation of parts of Syria by the so-called Islamic State of Iraq and Syria (ISIS/ISIL/IS/Daesh), with many foreign fighters arriving through the border with Turkey.

The regime's crackdown on violent opposition accompanied an attempt at political and institutional reforms. The regime lifted the 1963 emergency law and made constitutional amendments that set presidential limits to two seven-year terms and allowed contested presidential elections. Article 8 of the 2012 constitution permitted licensed political parties to contest elections and removed the Ba'th Party as the leading party of the state, and banned discrimination based on gender, race, or color. It also prohibited political parties formed on the basis of religion, sect, tribe, region, class, or profession, intended to subvert Islamist and Kurdish parties from dominating the opposition.[104] Moreover, although Article 13 restructured the Ba'thist socialist economy to one based on public and private enterprises, the Ba'th party remained a gatekeeper of the country's socioeconomic development. In the 2014 election, the Supreme Constitutional Court approved three candidates, with Assad eventually securing 88.7 percent of the vote, while Hassan al-Nouri, who previously served as Minister of State for Administrative Development Affairs from 2000–02, won 4.3 percent and Maher Abdul-Hafiz Hajjar, a member of the Syrian Communist Party, secured 3.2 percent of the vote.[105] In 2019, President al-Assad promised a competitive electoral field in the 2021 election.[106] This would appear difficult to achieve, however, given the continued battle against remaining ISIS fighters, and given that some 10 million Syrians have been displaced internally or fled to neighboring countries and Europe.

[103] Brownlee et al. (2014): 93.
[104] Constitutional Project, Syrian Arab Republic's Constitution of 2012.
[105] IFES, Syria Election Guide. [106] Reuters (2019).

The deteriorating security situation in Syria led to the passage of anti-terrorism laws. Counterterrorism Laws No. 19 of July 2012 and No. 22 establishing the new Counterterrorism Court give the regime sweeping powers to prosecute anyone suspected of terrorist activity against the state, including political dissidents.[107] As with Decree 66 of 2012, Law No. 10 of April 2018 enables the government to confiscate vacant property in anti-government territories.[108]

The strength of the state notwithstanding, Syria lacked the institutional, societal, and economic preconditions necessary for democratization, but major political reforms arguably could have been implemented in the absence of significant external intervention. A fragmented opposition and external meddling, both regional and international, fueled regime repression, fractured the 2011 uprising, opened the way for ISIS consolidation, generated the massive Syrian migration wave, and produced a protracted and internationalized civil war.

Yemen

As the poorest MENA country, Yemen emerged in 1990 following the merger of the secular and socialist South Yemen (People's Democratic Republic of Yemen, PDRY) with the conservative and Saudi-backed North Yemen (the Yemen Arab Republic, YAR) and with Field Marshal Ali Abdullah Saleh, president of YAR since 1978, staying on as president of the unified republic. The 1993 elections gave Saleh's party, the General People's Congress, substantial seats in parliament but fell short of winning a majority while the northern-based Islamist Yemeni Reform Gathering (*Islah)* narrowly beat the southern-based Yemeni Socialist Party (YSP), all of which created a three-party government divided along ideational and territorial lines.[109] In the 1994 civil war, northern troops attacked southern territories, which weakened the YSP as a contending political force. Consequently, Saleh's Congress and *Islah* formed a new coalition government without the socialists; they amended the constitution to introduce Sharia law as the principal source of legislation and expanded the powers of the executive. Saleh's regime relied on the co-optation of tribal and political elites and Saudi aid. Subsequent elections in 1999 and 2006 reinstituted Saleh's rule and expanded the neopatrimonial system to

[107] Human Rights Watch (2013b). [108] Human Rights Watch (2018b).
[109] Dresch (2000); Phillips (2017).

maintain control of key financial and military sectors of the state by family and tribal associates.[110] As seen in Figure 3.2 (see also Chapter 6), Yemen's significance for the global war on terror compelled it to allocate a higher percentage of government spending on the military than on socio-economic development, given that it was, and remains, the poorest country in the region. Indeed, as Corstange notes, state development lagged markedly in tribal regions, and most notably, in the Zaydi Shi'a tribal areas which are the poorest, least developed and most lawless in the country. The absence of development and political integration of the Zaydi Shi'as, along with reduction of patronage payoffs due to the decline of oil resources, propelled tribal leaders to revolt against the state in 2011.[111] Thus, as in Libya following Qaddafi's overthrow, Saleh's ouster created a political vacuum as various factions competed for control supported by regional actors seeking influence in Yemen's transition.

As was seen in Figure 1.2, since 1990 Yemen has experienced some of the largest protest movements in the MENA stemming from regional and political conflict prior and following unification. In line with this historical trajectory, Yemenis took to the streets in early 2011 calling for the removal of President Saleh and his regime, resulting in the violent suppression of protesters by state security forces. From the onset, youth activists voiced concerns about the hijacking of the uprising by rival rebel groups and militia.[112] The March 18, 2011 killing of fifty unarmed demonstrators in Sana'a by Saleh supporters led to military defections of notable Saleh allies such as Ali Mohsen (driven out due to Saleh's intentions to elevate his son, Ahmed Saleh, to governance). Such allies then joined a peculiar coalition of prominent Salafists and the Joint Meeting Parties, which was a five party alliance between Islah, the YSP, the Nasserist Popular Union Party, and two Zaydi parties.[113] In November 2011, Saleh agreed to resign in a negotiated settlement brokered by the GCC and UN Security Council

[110] Phillips (2017).
[111] Corstange (2016): 3. The Houthi movement, also known as *Ansar Allah* (Partisans of God), is a Zaydi Shi'a revivalist insurgent movement and followers of Zayd ibn Ali, the grandson of Hussein, son of Ali (the cousin and son-in-law of the Prophet Mohammed). A Zaydi imamate/state was founded in Northern Yemen in 893 AD, lasting until the republican revolution of 1962. The Houthi movement was founded in northern Yemen in 2004 producing six wars until 2010 including Saudi interventions in support of Saleh to contain what it perceived a Shi'a and Iranian threat within Yemen. See Sharp (2019): 3.
[112] Al Jazeera (2011b); Lynch (2012): 155. [113] Alley (2013): 74.

Resolution 2051 that gave him immunity from prosecution and relinquished power to vice president Abd Rabbo Mansour Hadi during a transitional period prior to elections in February 2012. Hadi's sole candidacy was supported by the ruling party and the Yemeni opposition but opposed by the Houthis. Saleh's ouster represented the third case of the Arab uprisings in which the autocrat was toppled following mass protests. (We exclude the foreign-imposed regime change in Libya which secured rebel victory.) Unlike Tunisia and Egypt, however, Yemen's transition failed to produce a change in leadership as members of the *ancien régime* commanded the critical transition phase.

A National Dialogue Conference attended by 565 Yemeni delegates representing different social groups took place throughout 2013 for a period of ten months, concluding in late January 2014.[114] But deep-seated issues, particularly over southern Yemen, affected its efficacy as a peacebuilding mechanism.[115] Within months of its conclusion, unresolved economic, political, and constitutional issues between Yemen's Houthis, and lack of support from southern secessionists who had been battling growing Islamic extremists and MB factions in the north, resulted in new protests demanding reform from Hadi's government amid political, institutional, and economic stagnation. In late 2014, Houthi militants took over the capital Sana'a, and in early 2015 Aden in the south, leading to Hadi's capture and subsequent escape to Saudi Arabia, prompting the latter to launch a coalition that ignited the 2015 civil war. The Houthis' capture of the strategic port city of Houdaida prompted Saudi Arabia and the UAE to launch "Operation Golden Victory" in 2018, producing a dire humanitarian crisis and siege of the city. Attempts by the UN to broker a peace deal culminated in the Stockholm Agreement in December 2018 in Sweden with three core mandates: a cease-fire, a prisoner swap, and a statement of understanding to form a committee to discuss the war-torn city of Taiz.[116] As of 2020, the Agreement had yet to lead to conflict cessation or a durable transition process.

Given Yemen's historically weak and underdeveloped state mired in regional, tribal, and geopolitical divisions, the 2011 uprising failed to consolidate into a cohesive national movement for change. Moreover, Saudi intervention to broker Saleh's exit at the onset of the uprising secured its position as a key stakeholder in the Yemeni uprising, with destructive consequences. As in Libya, Yemen's fractured political arena

[114] Alley (2013): 81. [115] Gaston (2014). [116] Sharp (2019): 10.

and weak state capacity, both prior to and following the uprising, hallowed out the state and its monopoly on the use of force, producing a protracted civil conflict and proxy warfare. In Yemen, the result was the world's worst humanitarian crisis, made worse by the 2020 pandemic.[117]

Progress and Stagnation in Economic and Political Performance

Mapping change and stagnation aids in explaining trends in governance – the political, social, economic, and institutional factors that shape and influence individual and organizational behavior and performance.[118] Given the importance of socioeconomic grievances underpinning mass mobilization in the lead-up to the uprisings, an assessment of progress and stagnation must account for economic performance. Figure 3.5 illuminates pervasive economic stagnation seven years after the uprisings evinced by negative budget deficits and high public debt across all the seven case studies. Bahrain, Morocco, and Tunisia sustained lower inflation rates but remain vulnerable due to large debts and deficits.

Our seven country cases include resource-rich and resource-poor countries. To what extent does oil wealth account for state resilience? Figure 3.6 shows that while oil is a key source of rent for Libya and to a lesser extent, Bahrain, the latter has experienced a drop in its natural

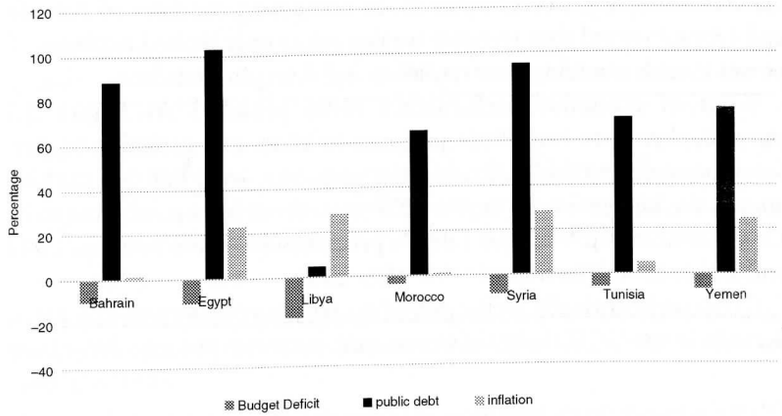

Figure 3.5 Cross-national economic performance, 2017.
Source: CIA World Factbook.

[117] UN News (2020). [118] Cammett et al. (2015): 77.

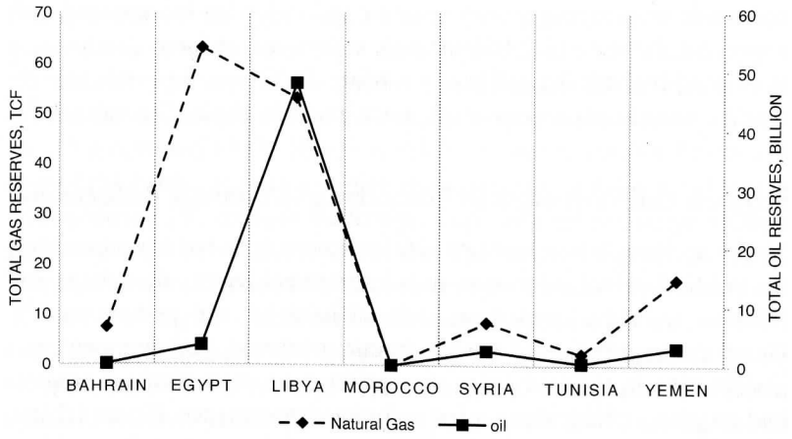

Figure 3.6 Oil and gas reserves, 2019.
Source: US Energy Information Administration.

resources and is one of the least resource-rich of the GCC states, along with Oman. Syria and Yemen both possess oil reserves but are low-producing states. Oil played a crucial factor in one case – Libya, with the largest proven reserves in Africa and the sixth largest in the MENA region. The scramble for Libya's resources by regional and Western powers dictated the modes and levels of intervention in the conflict prior to and after Qaddafi's toppling (see Chapter 6). In comparing the fates of Bahrain and Libya, we find that resource wealth offers only limited explanatory power in understanding state resilience and divergent outcomes.

What of economic performance more broadly? As Figure 3.5 showed, there has been little progress in economic growth and performance prior to and following the uprisings, with Bahrain ranking among the highest in per capita GDP growth, at least partly due to its GCC membership.[119] Note Libya's precipitous decline between 2012 and 2016, as well as that of Syria after 2011.

Given its historically well-established rentier economy and its membership in the GCC, Bahrain's economic performance may have been

[119] We acknowledge the limitations of relying on GDP as a measure of economic performance and growth and concur with Cammett et al., that its usage here reflects orders of magnitude rather than exact "truths" particularly given that for countries experiencing instability, figures are often best guesses, and other dimensions of conflicts, particularly in Libya, Syria, and Yemen, have stifled economic performance. Cammett et al. (2015): 36–7.

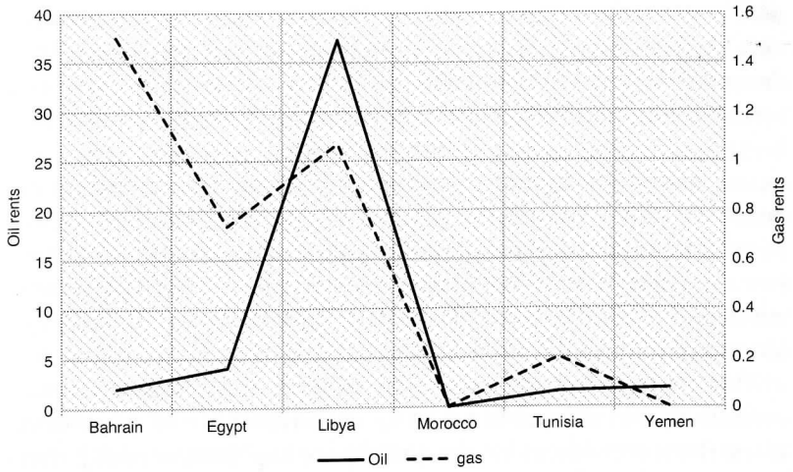

Figure 3.7 Oil and gas rents (% of GDP), 2017.
Source: World Bank. Syria is excluded due to absence of data for the given year.

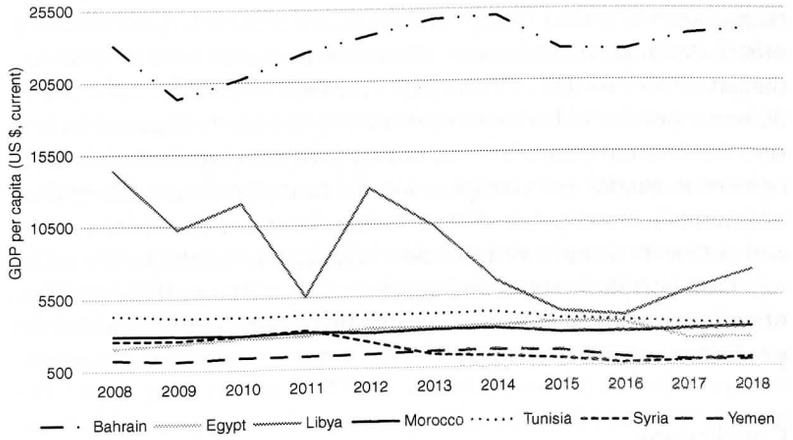

Figure 3.8 GDP growth per capita, 2008–18.
Source: World Bank, World Development Indicators. Data for Syria obtained from UNCTAD.

enhanced by diversification toward tourism and banking and finance, especially in the area of "Islamic financing." Although it saw a slight uptick in 2017–18, its trajectory has varied only slightly over the past

decade. Our other resource-rich case, Libya, saw its economic performance decline sharply following the uprisings, with per capita GDP dropping from $14, 382 in 2008 to $7,241 in 2018. Egypt, Morocco, Syria, Tunisia, and Yemen have seen slight variations, the most notable being Syria's drop post 2012, but their overall trajectory reflects economic stagnation. Tunisia's democratic political transformation has positively shifted toward free and competitive elections, the proliferation of free and independent media outlets, and a robust civil society, but the realization of the socioeconomic demands of the protests remains unfinished business, particularly for the country's youth population and those in the neglected interior regions.

This chapter has highlighted the role of the military as a key state institution, and the variations in its deployment across our country cases. Resources devoted to the military are indicative of both government priorities and international influences. As seen in Figure 3.2, although Morocco outspends Egypt on the military as percentage of government spending, Egypt receives more military aid from the USA, with $1.3 billion in estimated annual allocations, making it also the largest arms importer. Egypt and Morocco receive large amounts of official development assistance, the former primarily from the USA and the latter from the EU, which shapes the level of external influence on domestic politics in both countries as they constitute regional security sites for Western states. Tunisia has received comparatively less development assistance and foreign economic and military aid. The absence of external intervention may have helped Tunisia weather the protests and pursue its democratic transition organically, but the state's coffers will need outside financial and development assistance if the problems of high unemployment and citizen dissatisfaction are to be tackled in a productive manner.

Conclusions

In 2011, Egypt, Tunisia, and Morocco appeared most likely to embark on a path of democratization. Tunisia's Ben Ali and Egypt's Mubarak had lost control of key security sectors of the state when their armed forces defected from the prior alliances with the autocrats and sided with protesters. The strength of political parties and CSOs in Tunisia enabled the opposition to make more demands on the state and the ruling elite than in Egypt, where both political parties and civil society

groups were weaker (see also Chapter 4). In Morocco, King Mohammed VI had to cooperate with political parties and CSOs given the state's inability to fully co-opt opposition groups. However, Morocco's political and institutional development is limited by the ruling monarchy's capture of state institutions.

Egypt's turning point in 2013, following the ouster of the country's only democratically elected government and the return of authoritarian rule, epitomizes the vagaries of predicting and mapping protest trajectories and transition outcomes. Unlike Egypt, the army's role in Tunisia was limited and the transition phase diverse with Islamists, secular parties and members of Ben Ali's ruling elite making concessions. As such, Tunisia has fared far better than Egypt, but both cases confirm the observation by O'Donnell and Schmitter that democratic transitions often "fail to provide any enduring or predictable solution to the problem of institutionalizing political power." O'Donnell and Schmitter continue: "Transitions can also develop into widespread, violent confrontations, eventually giving way to revolutionary regimes which promote changes going far beyond the political realm."[120] If none of our seven cases so far has developed into a thoroughgoing *social* revolution, only Tunisia has had a genuinely *political* revolution, and nowhere does there appear to be either the appetite or the opportunity for a revolutionary regime or for extensive change that goes "far beyond the political realm."

What Egypt, Morocco, and Tunisia shared were largely nonviolent protests (although *unarmed* violent protest did occur in Egypt). This was true of the protesters in Bahrain but not of protesters in Libya, Syria, and Yemen, yet in all four cases, states responded with considerable force and repression. Charles Tripp argues that state violence was a necessary, but not sufficient, cause of the turn to violent revolt in Syria and Libya (also in the 1990s in Algeria, and in Palestine against Israel).[121] We agree, and we concur that regional and international intervention played an important part, as we will elaborate in Chapter 6. We would add that the absence of a modern civil society and significant women's participation and rights was a key feature in the turn to violence in those countries, as we argue in Chapters 4 and 5.

Domestic, regional, and international dynamics and processes calibrated regime responses to popular protest movements. Libya, Syria,

[120] O'Donnell and Schmitter (1986): 6. [121] Tripp (2013).

and Yemen experienced considerable external intervention. Bahrain's integration into the GCC alliance and the presence of the American Fifth Fleet in the country sustained the al-Khalifa monarchy's importance for regional and international actors as a bulwark against perceived Iranian expansion in the Persian Gulf. Egypt's historic alliance with the USA manifested through foreign military commitments and the importance of the Sinai Peninsula and Suez Canal bolsters the power of the ruling elite and the army. The Obama administration's reticence to call the events in 2013 a coup, and President Trump's penchant for al-Sisi, whom he referred to as a "fantastic guy," illuminate the linkages between autocrats and Western powers.[122] Egypt, Morocco, and Tunisia benefit from official development assistance (ODA) as well as bilateral assistance from the USA and EU.

Some scholars have attributed Tunisia's success to its homogeneity and longstanding embrace of a moderate Arab-Muslim identity. We attribute Tunisia's relative success with democratization to its institutional legacy, the strength of civil society, the determination of feminist groups, and the absence of international interference. The following chapter (Chapter 4) examines the salience of civil society to the uprising and outcomes in Tunisia and in our other country cases.

[122] Lima (2016).

4 *Civil Society*

Since at least the early 1980s, studies and debates have revolved around the nature of civil society, its relationship to the state and to democracy, and its utility as an analytical tool. Here we focus on two approaches to civil society. In one, civil society is a separate and autonomous sphere essential to democracy; it protects individuals and groups and gives them voice vis-à-vis the power of the state and, in some interpretations, the market. This view goes back to some extent to Alexis de Tocqueville's nineteenth century observations about the quality of American democracy, which he attributed in large measure to its many associations serving as "schools for civic virtue."[1] The other approach is a more skeptical one, positing that civil society is either an extension of the state apparatus or a sphere that provides legitimacy to the status quo and thus helps to reproduce it. In this Marxist-inflected view, civil society may be able to compel the ruling elite to enact some reforms, but it has neither the capacity nor the will to produce large-scale systemic change.

We argue here that both arguments have merit and that each is context specific. Civil society's relative autonomy and its capacity to challenge the state and effect social or political change is variable and thus an empirical question, dependent on the nature of a country's historical development and social structure. We also distinguish civil society in advanced capitalist democracies from civil society in authoritarian settings. Where associational growth is possible in an

[1] *Democracy in America* is available in many forms, including an on-line version supported by the University of Virginia: http://xroads.virginia.edu/~HYPER/DETOC/ch2_07.htm. See especially Vol. 2 (completed in 1840) chapter on "Relation of Civil to Political Associations." This lover of America and its democracy – especially when compared with the monarchies and aristocracies of France and Britain – is often astute in his characterizations but is sometimes given to odd observations or exaggerations, such as: "In democracies servants are not only equal among themselves, but it may be said that they are, in some sort, the equals of their masters."

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