The Arab Military in the Arab Spring: Agent of Continuity of Change?

A Comparative Analysis of Tunisia, Egypt, Libya, and Syria

Daniel Silverman

The Ohio State University

Abstract:

This paper explains the divergent military behavior in the "Arab Spring" uprisings in Tunisia, Egypt, Libya, and Syria using thorough case studies that analyze five factors shaping military behavior: ethnic favoritism, regulated patronage, unregulated patronage, perceived legitimacy, and tactical control. Drawing on the divergence between Libya and Syria, as well as the nuanced nature of Egyptian military behavior, the paper underlines the need to embrace complexity and reject monocausal explanations, dichotomous outcomes, and unitary actors in the analysis of civil-military relations. Instead, the paper develops and advances a two-stage game tree in which the military leadership can attempt to retain, replace, or remove the authoritarian regime, and the military rank-and-file can then react to the leadership's decision in terms of its rate of defections or its acceptance of change. Additionally, the analysis highlights the importance of the regime's control of the military at the micro-level in determining the behavior of the military (which is so closely linked to transition outcomes) at the macro-level.

Introduction:

There is a growing scholarly consensus that, sans direct foreign military intervention, the survival of authoritarian regimes facing domestic uprisings depends decisively on the loyalty and cohesion of one institution: the military[1]. In the ongoing process known as the "Arab Spring" – the wave of popular uprisings that swept across the Middle East over a year ago – the behavior of the Arab militaries ordered to crush the rebellions has varied wildly, from ruthless repression with slow small-scale defections (Syria), to deep division with rapid large-scale defections (Libya), to efforts to replace as opposed to remove the regime (Egypt), to complete removal of the regime and support for the nascent revolution (Tunisia). Given the tremendous consequences of their decisions, we must seek to understand why these institutions took such different routes when presented with similar initial conditions. What incentives did both the officers and the rank-and-file face in each case? Which variables shaped their decision-making as the uprising unfolded? And through which mechanisms did they operate? In short, what can account for this unexplained variation?

With in-depth case studies of Tunisia, Egypt, Libya, and Syria, this paper seeks to answer these questions by evaluating five factors pervasive in the literature on Arab civil-military relations: ethnic favoritism, regulated patronage, unregulated patronage, perceived legitimacy, and tactical control. The paper is structured as follows: in Section I, I review the impoverished state of recent scholarship on Arab civil-military relations and military behavior in the Arab Spring. In

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[1] This notion pervades almost all the work on Middle Eastern civil-military relations cited in this paper, but for key examples outside of the regional context, see Geddes (2004), and Stephan and Chenoweth (2008),

Section II, I summarize the uprisings in the four cases with a particular focus on the behavior of the military in each case. In Section III, I explain the theoretical logics of each of these five factors and outline the evidence needed to support each one. In Section IV, I examine the evidence for each explanation, drawing on both the academic literature and the anecdotal empirical record, and summarize the most salient factors in each one. Finally, in Section V I conclude by highlighting which variables (or combinations thereof) best explain the variation in military behavior across cases and I discuss the implications of this research. Broadly speaking, I argue (1) that limited complexity must be embraced in civil-military relations, rejecting monocausal explanations, dichotomous outcomes, and unitary actors, and (2) that control often trumps preferences in civil-military relations.

Additionally, I would like to briefly comment on the case selection in the paper. I chose the four cases in this paper – Tunisia, Egypt, Libya, and Syria – for two reasons. First of all, the uprisings genuinely threatened the survival of the regime in these four countries, forcing the leader in each one to call upon the military to solve the "dictator's dilemma" (the notion that without military participation the leader is vulnerable to challenges from the masses, but with military participation the leader is vulnerable to challenges from within the military ranks[2]). In all of these cases, the threat posed by the uprising was such that leaders were forced to call upon their militaries for repression[3], as opposed to regimes that were able to prevent massive protests with their oil revenues (Saudi Arabia) or with their security services alone (Algeria).

Second of all, these cases contain considerable variation on both the dependent and the independent variables. Not only has military behavior, as outlined above, varied drastically in these cases, but the independent variables also vary drastically as well: the militaries have very

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[2] See Slovik (2011) for a more complete explanation of the "dictator's dilemma"
[3] The framework may be extended to the other Arab Spring uprisings with military participation, Yemen and Bahrain, in a subsequent study.

different ethnic compositions, official budgets, unofficial benefits, levels of legitimacy, and methods of civilian control. While this does present a multicollinearity problem, it can be addressed to some extent by carefully tracing the causal mechanisms and decomposing the dependent variable into more than one observation per case (i.e. initial reaction to orders for repression, subsequent behavior as conflict/transition unfolded). The independent variables also lend themselves nicely to two pairwise comparisons (Syria and Libya, Egypt and Tunisia) of cases with strong similarities and yet divergent outcomes, in addition to broader comparison across all four of the cases.

Finally, a brief comment on the time periods analyzed in each case: in Syria and Libya, my main focus is on the military's behavior in the first month of the conflict, because this is how long the Libyan uprising persisted before the NATO intervention started in mid-March. The allegiances of all actors can shift in the face of a NATO bombing campaign, something that only took place in one of the four cases, and in this sense the choice is an effort to control for the influence of foreign forces on military behavior during the uprisings. However, my analysis may be animated and informed by the subsequent behaviors of the military, especially in trying to discern the military's motives in Tunisia and Egypt, and evaluating its cohesion in Syria and Libya.

Section I – Literature Review:

As Oren Barak and Assaf David have repeatedly argued, civil-military relations in the Arab world have been scandalously understudied in recent years given both their domestic and international significance. Consider that from WWII to 1980, there were 55 coup attempts in Ar-

ab nations, about half of which succeeded[4]. Unsurprisingly, Middle Eastern civil-military relations and civil-military relations more broadly attracted its fair share of academic attention during this period, with even giants of comparative politics such as Samuel Huntington drawn to the topic. However, from 1980 onwards, the coup became a much rarer phenomenon in Middle Eastern politics and the successful coup a species nearing total extinction. Unfortunately, with few notable exceptions, scholars did not seek to understand the causes of this surely significant and qualitative change in Middle Eastern politics but instead generally turned their attention elsewhere, following the "hot topics" on the US foreign policy agenda: the ongoing Arab-Israeli conflict, the Iranian Revolution and the surge of Islamic fundamentalism, the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction (WMD), and the lip-service Arab leaders continued to pay to political and economic reform. While all of these topics undoubtedly merit academic attention of their own as well, this wholesale flight from civil-military relations yielded an entire generation of scholars with little knowledge of the topic and has drastically impoverished our understanding of the institutions that undergird authoritarianism in the Middle East, in particular.

Prior to the Arab Spring, there were only a few recent pieces of scholarship on civil-military relations in the Arab world, and they were clustered around four themes: (1) coup-proofing, (2) security sector reform, (3) military-society relations, and (4) informal military rule. Coup-proofing, coined by James Quinlivan in an influential *International Security* article in 1999, refers to the combinations of coercion and co-optation used by leaders to "proof" their rule against challenges from their militaries. Quinlivan illustrated the phenomenon's proliferation in the Middle East by documenting the Saudi, Iraqi, and Syrian use of ethnic favoritism, security force duplication, de-professionalization, and economic patronage. The other substantial study on the topic is by Risa Brooks, who detailed the Egyptian, Syrian, and Jordanian use of coalition

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[4] See Barak and David (2010) for a detailed analysis of the lack of articles on this topic in major regional journals

politics, economic patronage, ministerial appointments, and officer purges to proof their regimes against coups. Both of these studies remain two of the most comprehensive in Arab civil-military relations in terms of identifying the causal mechanisms shaping military decision-making. One purpose of my research in this paper is to connect (and to expand upon) their insights by analyzing military behavior in the Arab Spring and attempting to trace the mechanisms that shaped military decision-making in several carefully chosen cases.

Another strand of recent research on the topic is the security sector reform (SSR) literature. Policy oriented and often from Western think tanks, SSR literature explores some of the same trends in Arab civil-military relations, but focuses on policy prescriptions to achieve military professionalization. SSR literature is also interested in goals like military representativeness and effectiveness for their own sake as opposed to simply for their effects on authoritarian survivability. One of the most thorough studies of this type is by British scholar Yezid Sayigh, who stresses the need for local efforts to increase the control, capacity, and cooperation of security forces across the region. Another comprehensive study, by the US-based Stimson Center, evaluates the need for SSR in the Gulf States and the problems and prospects for reform in these states. This literature can add to our analysis in the most obvious sense by providing additional evidence about the coup-proofing efforts (the challenges for SSRers) that have dominated Arab civil-military relations in recent years. Additionally, it may also be helpful in assessing the effects of recent Western foreign policies towards Middle Eastern militaries.

Barak and David have promoted another type of Arab civil-military literature in several papers[5]: what they call "military-society relations". As noted above, Barak and David argue that Arab civil-military relations have either been ignored or biased towards strategically significant states in recent decades. In response, they advance a new research agenda that stresses military-

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[5] See any of the articles by Barak and David cited in this paper (2007, 2008, 2010)

society relations (how Arab militaries shape national identities and attitudes and how these might in turn influence their behavior) in addition to the traditional focus on military-state relations (regime stability and balance of power). To do so, they encourage scholars to analyze the discourses of relevant actors, such as major media outlets, opposition groups, and, of course, the militaries themselves. However, one must ask whether their approach offers any utility in an analysis of military behavior and not just perceptions? First of all, their exhaustive review of – and excellent work identifying gaps in – the literature on Arab civil-military relations must be commended as a significant contribution to the topic in its own right. Second of all, their contention that Arab militaries face a severe legitimacy deficit, to which they may have felt compelled to respond, must be taken seriously as a potential influence on military behavior in the Arab Spring.

The final notable piece of recent scholarship on the topic pre-Arab Spring is *Ruling But Not Governing: The Military and Political Development in Egypt, Algeria, and Turkey* by Stephen Cook. Attempting to explain the military's role in authoritarian stability and the inaccuracy of scholarly expectations of democratization, Cook explores how the military has dominated political life in these countries from behind a democratic façade that has legitimated and facilitated its informal rule. Cook argues that the militaries in such states seek to maintain four core interests: economic holdings, foreign policy, political manipulation, and monopolization of the nationalist narrative. His argument suggests a path dependency in these states in which the military has ruled informally since decolonization and can only be dislodged by powerful foreign forces. Cook's key theoretical innovation is to flip the classic principal-agent problem in civil-military relations on its head, revealing that – in places like Egypt, Algeria, and Turkey – the military (informally) controls the regime, not the other way around. Seen through this prism, the military leadership is not simply loyal or disloyal to the leader, but has at least three available strategies –

it can retain, replace, or remove the authoritarian regime. This trichotomy offers a more nuanced dependent variable for the behavior of the military leadership. This also redefines what constitutes continuity and change in informal military rule: the military can appear to "remove" the regime but simply replace it with another agent to do its bidding, while the real seat of power has not changed at all.

Since the Arab Spring began, there has been an emerging group of comparative explanations for military behavior during the uprisings, and while mainly descriptive and monocausal, these initial efforts provide a valuable foundation to build upon and a tremendous opportunity to conduct a more thorough multicausal investigation. Notably, the *International Journal of Middle East Studies* (IJMES) published a roundtable entitled "Rethinking the Study of Middle East Militaries" in July 2011 with memos by several scholars. However, only two of these offered any attempts at comparative explanation[6], while the others were descriptive. The pair of explanatory memos, though both basically monocausal, examined the role of ethnic representativeness (Droz-Vincent) and economic penetration (Springborg) on military behavior during the uprisings and should prove useful in the analysis of those two factors. More recently, there have been a few brief articles in policy-oriented publications, mainly focused on the comparison between Tunisia and Egypt[7], and these should also provide useful descriptive and theoretical building blocks for this broader investigation, albeit only in two of the cases.

The only full-length comparative journal article to surface is "The Role of the Military" by Zoltan Barany in the *Journal of Democracy* in October 2011. However, Barany essentially enumerates instead of adjudicating between alternative explanations in several cases, and explains the divergence between Libya and Syria by turning to the notoriously slippery category of

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[6] See Droz-Vincent (2011) and Springborg (2011)

[7] See, for example, Knickmeyer (2011); Yezid Sayigh, "The Tunisian Army" *(*2011); Henry and Springborg, "Army Guys" (2011), and Slovik (2011)

the regime's level of legitimacy. Again, Barany's article offers some useful descriptive and theoretical insights, but the purpose of this paper is precisely to integrate and expand upon the insights of all of these pieces with a systematic and multicausal explanation, one that draws upon multiple bodies of literature, collects and analyzes the information as thoroughly as possible, and attempts to pinpoint the specific factors (and mechanisms) that drove the militaries of Tunisia, Egypt, Libya, and Syria towards such different responses when ordered by their regimes to repress these uprisings.

Section II – Military Behavior

The story of the Arab Spring is quite well-trodden ground by now, but worth recounting with an eye to the military behavior in each case[8]: the phenomenon began in a small backwater Tunisian town when unemployed Mohamed Bouazizi set himself (and seemingly the rest of his country) ablaze due to police brutality on December 17, inspiring waves of protests that spread from his hometown, Sidi Bouzid, across the country. Over the course of the next month, the protests only increased in spite of repressive tactics by the Mukhabarat (state police) and the increasing concessions offered by President Zine El Abidine Ben Ali. However, when Ben Ali called upon the military to open fire on the unarmed protesters, Armed Forces Chief of Staff Rachid Ammar refused, and his military deployed onto the streets to protect protesters from the Mukhabarat. On January 14, Ben Ali then fled the country to Saudi Arabia, dissolving his government and declaring a state of emergency. However, the dust only settled after Prime Minister Mohamed Ghannouchi, who unconstitutionally seized control that day, handed over power the

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[8] In putting together this summary, I relied on reporting from the New York Times, CNN, BBC, Aljazeera and used The Guardian's interactive online timeline: <http://www.guardian.co.uk/world/interactive/2011/mar/22/middle-east-protest-interactive-timeline>

next day to the Speaker of Parliament Fouad Mebazaa. The military rapidly returned to its barracks and Mebazaa and the rest of the interim government began the process of organizing elections[9]. While the transition has not been completely free from contention (especially about defining the role of religion), the Tunisian military has returned to its barracks and remained outside of the political process.

On January 25, 2011, during an Egyptian holiday celebrating the national police force (one of the symbols of President Hosni Mubarak's repression), anti-regime protests erupted across the country and the "January 25 Revolution" was born. The Egyptian revolution mirrored its Tunisian predecessor, but on a larger scale, with massive protests in Cairo's Tahrir Square, a vicious crackdown by security forces, and increasing concessions on state television by a Mubarak desperately clinging to power. As in Tunisia, the military showed restraint towards protesters, announcing on January 31 that it would not use force against the "legitimate demands of the Egyptian people"[10]. Finally, after another two weeks of increasing protests, repression, and concessions, Mubarak stepped down and handed over control to the military leadership on February 14.

Ostensibly guiding the post-Mubarak transition process towards civilian democracy, the military leadership essentially ruled the country by decree through the Supreme Council of Armed Forces (SCAF) for over a year, earning plenty of criticism for its seemingly heavy-handed tactics and self-interested behavior. However, despite the SCAF's thinly veiled efforts to manipulate the transition outcome in its favor, the Muslim Brotherhood (MB) dominated the new political landscape, with a decisive victory in the parliamentary elections and their candidate

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[9] For a review of this dizzying period, see: "In Tunisia, Clashes Continue as Power Shifts a Second Time," David Kirkpatrick, New York Times, January 15 2011

[10] See "Mubarak Refuses to Step Down, Stoking Revolt's Fury and Resolve," Anthony Shadid and David Kirkpatrick, New York Times, February 10 2011

Mohammed Morsi ascending to the presidency in late June. The SCAF still appeared to dominate Egyptian politics throughout the summer, moving quickly to neuter Morsi's powers, but wielding his newfound legitimacy as the first freely elected leader in the Arab world, Morsi shockingly dismissed the two top military leaders and dislodged the SCAF from its seat of power in mid-August[11]. The behavior of the Egyptian military is probably the toughest to clearly characterize of any of the four cases, and will be revisited in more detail in the Egypt case study before analyzing the factors driving it.

Inspired by the success of the revolutions in Tunisia and Egyptian, the Libyan uprising began on February 15 when protests erupted in the Eastern city of Benghazi and quickly spread towards the capital city of Tripoli over the next few days. As the protesters overwhelmed security forces and seized control of Benghazi and other Eastern cities, Libya began to divide into primarily loyal areas in and around Tripoli, and primarily rebel areas in the East and peripheral parts of the country. However, the response from Libya's longtime dictator Col. Muammar Gaddafi was more brutal than either Ben Ali or Mubarak, with indiscriminate shootings, airstrikes, and even naval shelling used against areas of rebel control. The country quickly settled into a full-scale civil war as rebel militias clashed chiefly with loyal security forces, elite military units, and foreign mercenaries brought in to bolster Gaddafi's dwindling ranks. The combat was marked by an initial rebel advance that almost reached Tripoli, followed by a regime counteroffensive that threatened to regain Benghazi and extinguish the revolution, but was ultimately repelled with the help of NATO airpower starting on March 19.

Unlike the Tunisian and Egyptian armies, however, the 50,000-strong Libyan army did not maintain its cohesion and started to split early on in the conflict. The challenge in analyzing

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[11] For more on Morsi's power play, see: "In Upheaval for Egypt, Morsi Forces Out Military Chiefs," August 12 2012 http://www.nytimes.com/2012/08/13/world/middleeast/egyptian-leader-ousts-military-chiefs.html?pagewanted=all

Libyan (and Syrian) military behavior during the Arab Spring is to evaluate the extent, timing, and nature of the military defections. Multiple reports highlight the defections of three high-ranking officers, as well as one entire elite battalion (the "Thunderbolt" unit), within the first week[12]. Other than this, however, it appears that most of the top brass and the 10,000-strong elite units, which were led by Gaddafi's sons Khamis and Saif-al-Islam, generally remained loyal to the regime prior to the NATO intervention. However, quantitative estimates of the "rate of defections" in the rank-and-file remain scarce: rebel commanders estimated that the 50,000-strong force had lost 6,000 troops (12%) by February 21, about one week into the uprising, and 40,000 troops (80%) by May 30, about two months into the intervention[13]. Qualitative reporting also suggests that the rebels secured a steady stream of defections, as well as advanced weapons, vehicles, and aircraft, throughout the first month. One scholar characterized the defections as follows: "the Eastern part of his army melted away immediately, and over eight months the rest progressively disintegrated to leave a rump of loyal, family-led units."[14] While data limitations do not enable us to pinpoint the precise "rate of defections" prior to the intervention, a conservative estimate would be 10,000 (20% of the force), plus the aforementioned key assets in the form of vehicles, weapons, and officers, whereas as an optimistic estimate would be 20,000 (40% of the force, possible with a constant defection rate of 5,000/week). Since the regime's collapse last fall, the Libyan military has been struggling to consolidate the various rebel militias still clinging to power in the country and to replenish its ranks, which were depleted by nearly nine months of disintegration throughout the uprising. Despite the tough task it faces, the institution has been

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[12] For a summary of key early defections, see "Libya: Defections leave Muammar Gaddafi isolated in Tripoli bolt-hole," The Guardian, February 23 2011

[13] Estimates from "The battle for Libya: the Colonel fights back," The Economist, March 10 2011, and "Scores Defect From Gaddafi's army," Aljazeera, May 31 2011

[14] "Syria Analysis: Can Assad's army withstand growing pressure?" Shashank Joshi, BBC News, February 9 2012

slowly making progress (appointing new Chief of Staff, graduating new soldiers, and seizing weapons caches from militias[15]).

In Syria, modest protests percolated in January and February but failed to gain wide-spread traction until images of ruthlessly tortured children from the southern city of Daraa produced a sharp outcry across the country. After the circulation of these images, protests erupted in mid-March in several cities and quickly spread across the country in March, despite the now-familiar combination of repression and concessions used by President Bashar Al-Assad. Assad's response has been more vicious than any of his predecessors: he has literally laid siege to rebel cities across the country (including Daraa, Homs, Hama, and Aleppo), using artillery fire, air-strikes, and brutal militias as well as shutting off electricity, food, and water in civilian areas. Ultimately, the conflict is still ongoing after more than a year and a half of bloodshed, and an estimated death toll reaching 20,000[16]. While our purpose is not to review all of the events that have transpired, the conflict has been marked by several trends: a slowly increasing trickle of defections from the Syrian military, the ongoing transition to a violent insurgency and a full-scale civil war under the Free Syrian Army (FSA), the failure of several cease-fires and peace plans (due to their violation by the regime and the defiance of external allies such as Russia and Iran), and the continuing disorganization of the resistance under the much-criticized Syrian National Council (SNC).

As in Libya, the primary concern is to determine the extent, timing, and sectarian affiliations of all the defections. Also as in Libya, we have only a few quantitative estimates, all by rebel commanders (who have clear incentives to inflate such figures). According to FSA commander General Riad Al-Asaad the 300,000-strong army had lost 10-15,000 (3-5%) of its troops

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[15] For an example of this progress, see "Libya seizes tanks from pro-Gaddafi militia," BBC News, August 23 2012 http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-africa-19364536

[16] Estimate by Rami Abdul Rahman, director of Syrian Observatory for Human Rights, July 28 2012

by October and 60,000 (20%) by February, and General Mustafa Al-Sheikh estimated the total at 20,000 (13%) in January[17]. Even if we believe these statistics to be doubled, however, they still provide useful conservative estimates, especially for comparative purposes. Indeed, the relative bias of the Syrian statistics should be no more than that of the Libyan figures, which were also estimated by rebel commanders. So, it appears that what took the Libyan uprising only a week (12% defection rate) may have taken the Syrian uprising a year to achieve, putting the comparison in much sharper resolution. This raises the obvious question: why, despite the similarities between the two cases (which will be explored in more detail later), have the Syrian rebels been so much less successful in achieving defections from their military? The anticipation of imminent foreign intervention, a potential source of bias, was not really on the radar yet in the first week of the Libyan intervention, making the comparison even more compelling and the divergence even more difficult to explain away.

Section III – The Five Factors:

This section briefly explains the logics of each of the five factors identified previously and discusses their support in the literatures on Arab civil-military relations, civil-military relations more broadly, quantitative coup studies, and other relevant areas. Additionally, it identifies the causal mechanisms through which they each operate, and outlines the evidence needed to support each of these explanations in the four case studies.

(1) Ethnic favoritism:

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[17] See Joshi (2012), as well as "Syria suffers series of embarrassing defections," The Telegraph, January 16 2012, and "Before the bullets run out," Al-Ahram Weekly On-line, April 2012

As noted by both Quinlivan and Brooks in their studies on Middle Eastern coup-proofing, authoritarian leaders often stock their militaries (the officer corps and/or rank-and-file) with members of their own religion, tribe, or even the ruling family in order to ensure military loyalty. Quinlivan describes the special roles given to members of the royal family in Saudi Arabia, of Saddam Hussein's tribe and other Sunnis in Iraq, and of Hafez Al-Assad's family and other Alawites in Syria, while Brooks details the privileged positions of Alawites in the Syrian military and Jordanians (as opposed to Palestinians) in the Jordanian military. Other studies have documented similarly preferential treatment elsewhere in the Middle East, and in some Southeast Asian and African countries[18]. Moreover, this factor has been touched on in some recent analyses of military behavior in the Arab Spring (Droz-Vincent, Nepstad, Barany) but its effect has usually just been posited, and not analyzed theoretically or empirically[19]. Finally, in the literature on authoritarian stability, Lucan Way argues that shared ethnicity or ideology is the key source of elite loyalty needed for stable authoritarian rule. The variable, however, has been largely ignored in the quantitative coup literature due to the lack of data (obviously, biased militaries do not publish such figures), the ethnic composition of the country or, in some cases, the regime have been used for ethnic variables instead[20].

Ethnic favoritism may lead soldiers to remain loyal to the regime through at least three distinct mechanisms: (1) their desire to see the regime retain power due to ethnic affinity, (2) their ability to repress other ethnic groups with less sympathy and resulting desire to defect, and (3) their fear of ethnic reprisals targeting the privileged groups if the regime collapses, a concern that can easily be manipulated by framing the conflict in ethnic terms. In other words, support for ethnic rule, indifference towards other groups, and fear of reprisals provide three distinct path-

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[18] See, for example Lindemann (2011)
[19] Droz-Vincent (2011), Barany (2011), and Nepstad (2011)
[20] See, for example Collier and Hoeffler (2005)

ways through which ethnic favoritism can encourage loyalty among co-ethnic soldiers. This identification of mechanisms enables one to consider the effects of changing other variables on the ethnic incentives for military loyalty. Consider a regime's incentives to use foreign mercenaries instead of local groups for repression: the mercenaries should be less troubled by repressing local populations (with whom they share no national bonds) and less afraid of post-conflict ethnic reprisals (as they can return to their countries of origin). In the Arab Spring, mercenaries have been employed by several states (including Bahrain, Libya, and Syria)[21]. The expectation of ethnically biased militaries forced to repress is that they will divide along ethnic lines, that troops will try to defect when ordered to repress their co-ethnics, and that privileged ethnic groups will remain loyal to the regime, especially when their fear of ethnic reprisals is exploited.

(2) Regulated patronage:

Another way leaders cultivate military loyalty is by providing the military with regulated patronage, which essentially refers to corporate "goodies": budgets, salaries, arms, or equipment. This has, of course, long been noted in almost all of the literature on civil-military relations, both in the Middle East and otherwise. For example, Samuel Huntington argued that one method of achieving objective civilian control (the ideal in his theoretical framework) over the military was to pacify it with "toys"[22]. In the Arab civil-military literature, numerous scholars have noted the effect of large budgets, salaries, and arms deals on maintaining military loyalty. There has also been heated debate in the quantitative coup literature about whether boosting defense spending leads to a higher (by increasing the military's means) or lower (by decreasing its motives) proba-

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[21] See, on the Bahraini military Barany (2011)'
[22] Samuel Huntington (1991), as quoted in Powell (forthcoming)

bility of coups[23], while other studies have shown that arms transfers lower the probability of coups[24]. The causal mechanism here is pure profit maximization: the troops and officers accruing benefits should be likely to view the regime as a source of generous patronage that they want to continue. However, patronage may not be spread evenly through the military: for example, high officer salaries should boost their loyalty but may create resentment among the rank-and-file, while shiny new planes or ships may primarily increase the loyalty of the Air Force or of the Navy, respectively. To the extent that we have access to these data points, they provide us with clues about which levels or branches of the military will remain loyal. However, in most Middle Eastern regimes, the defense budget remains a "black box": there is no breakdown by services or even organizations, and many items remain completely off-budget.

(3) Unregulated patronage:

Scholars have also noted how many authoritarian regimes use unregulated patronage – personal "goodies" awarded to officers – in exchange for loyalty. These benefits, which range from private sector contracts, to the right to extort local businesses, to expensive cars and imported goods, usually flow towards the military leadership or what Cook refers to as the "military enclave": the network of current and retired high-ranking officers with the most power. As with regulated patronage, these corrupt interests often appear in the literature on Arab civil-military relations (Quinlivan, Brooks, Cook, Springborg). However, as with ethnic favoritism, due to the obvious unavailability of data, they have not been included in the quantitative coup literature. The one exception is a recent empirical study by two European scholars which found that the

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[23] See Collier and Hoeffler (2007)
[24] See Wang (1998)

level of corruption increases substantially after a coup[25]. Moreover, case studies, both in the Middle East and other regions, also document some of the extreme excesses awarded to officers in military dominated regimes[26]. The causal logic here is, once again, profit maximization: officers or troops who gain excessive personal benefits should view the regime as a source of generous patronage that they want to continue.

(4) Perceived legitimacy:

Another potential influence on military behavior in times of crisis is sensitivity to perceived legitimacy. Barak and David contend, for example, that the desire of Arab militaries to restore their legitimacy after the widespread disillusionment with them after the 2006 Lebanon War (in which Islamist groups fared better against Israel than Arab militaries ever have) may have shaped their behavior in some cases in the Arab Spring. While this explanation must be taken seriously, one would need to provide evidence that (1) Arab militaries suffered from a "legitimacy crisis", (2) that military behavior was sensitive to this crisis, and explain (3) why they suddenly awoke to this issue after decades of corruption, ineffectiveness, and seeming indifference (perhaps they have only done so in times of major upheaval). Additionally, it is unclear how this explanation can account for cross-case variation: why would the deficit have developed in and influenced military behavior in some cases but not others? Finally, to the extent that Arab militaries acted to restore legitimacy during the uprisings, we should expect their subsequent behaviors not to have seriously undermined this legitimacy (at least not by design). Even though the perceived legitimacy explanation has lots of questions to answer, it will be considered as an explanation and evaluated to the extent that it can be in each of the case studies.

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[25] See Majeed and MacDonald (2008)
[26] For a thorough case study, see Tangri and Mwenda (2003)

(5) Tactical control:

Finally, the behavior of the military may be affected by the "tactical control" of the regime – its instruments of surveillance, deterrence, and punishment of military defections. These tactics, which include regularly monitoring, separating, rotating, and purging elements of the military, target the means as opposed to the motives of the military. The distinction between the "disposition" and the "opportunity" of the military to intervene politically was initially popularized by Samuel Finer. In Arab civil-military relations, the work of Quinlivan and Brooks chronicles how Arab regimes have often created overlapping security institutions ordered to monitor one another and independently report to the regime, constantly rotated and purged military leadership, and impeded communication between different elements of the military. Additionally, the quantitative literature also features attempts to quantify the effects of having powerful paramilitary forces. The causal logic here is one of deterrence, both individually and collectively. Individually, soldiers fear defection because of their likelihood of being caught and what may happen to them (and their families). Collectively, these tactics also provide barriers to coordinated defection or collective action against the regime, because of Olson's famous collective action problem – that groups often fail to maximize their overall welfare because individuals each have incentives to act in their own interests. So these instruments of control – monitoring, separating, rotating, and purging the military – should be seen as barriers to collective action. The expectation of militaries tightly controlled by the regime is minimal defections (even among groups otherwise likely to defect), and defections occurring on a small, as opposed to a large, scale.

Section IV – Case Studies:

1) Tunisia:

Background:

By regional standards, the Tunisian military is seen as one of the most professional and apolitical in the region. Tunisia's first President, Habib Bourgiba, was a secular modernizer who ruled for 30 years after independence from French rule in 1956. After a failed coup attempt in 1962, Bourguiba deliberately kept the military out of the political sphere – barring soldiers from formal political association and using the paramilitary National Guard to monitor the military. However, in 1987, the aging Bourguiba was deposed in a bloodless "constitutional coup" by his Prime Minister Ben Ali[27]. Initially seen as a reformer, Ben Ali dismantled much of Bourguiba's repressive apparatus and gave the institutions of the multiparty democracy a makeover in his first year. However, the makeover proved only cosmetic, as he proceeded to clamp down on opposition parties (notably, the Islamist an-Nahdha), civil society groups, and individual liberties with a substantially-expanded Mukhabarat[28]. Like his predecessor, Ben Ali also marginalized the military: reducing its size, slashing its budget, freezing its promotions, and limiting its role to a border patrol, disaster relief, and peacekeeping force. In addition, in 1991 he charged several officers with a coup plot, which they contend was cooked up by the regime to remove them from power, and in 2001 a dozen military leaders mysteriously died in a helicopter crash that had the fingerprints of the regime[29]. Despite all of this, the military, led by Ammar, was still able to remove Ben Ali from power over a year ago. In an effort to explain why the military tossed aside

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[27] For a fascinating look at Tunisia right after Ben Ali's seizure of power, see Ware (1988)

[28] For an overview of the early Ben Ali years, see Alexander (1997)

[29] See: "Tunisian army chief dies in air crash", BBC News, May 1 2002. Especially mysterious was the regime's claim that the cause was "mechanical failure" despite the new helicopter fleet and no reports of bad weather. Ironically, the crash led to the promotion of Ammar to the military's top post.

the regime and then refused to seek power or extract any benefits, we now turn to examine each of the six factors.

Ethnic Favoritism:

With its essentially homogenous society, ethnic favoritism was not a factor in Tunisia: the nation is almost entirely Sunni Muslim with very weak tribal identities. In fact, Droz-Vincent emphasizes ethnic representativeness in the military as the dominant factor causing both the Tunisian and Egyptian militaries to reject repression[30]. However, Egyptian military behavior has diverged sharply from that of its Tunisian counterpart since their respective revolutions (as will be explored in the Egypt case study), revealing the serious shortcomings in this type of mono-causal explanation.

Regulated Patronage:

The Tunisian defense budget has remained quite small under both Bourguiba and Ben Ali, averaging only about $500 million (1.5% of GDP) annually over the past decade, and has never been supplemented with major US military aid or arms transfers. The modest force of only 50,000 has remained underfunded and underequipped for decades. Additionally, all of this occurred while the Mukhabarat and other security services were expanded and rewarded substantially under Ben Ali, a former interior minister himself. "We were always last," and "the regime did not like us," high-ranking officers complained in interviews[31]. Cook asserts that "had Ben Ali followed [Mubarak], who has always taken great care to make sure the Egyptian armed forces were well-resourced, General Ammar and his fellow officers may have thought twice about toss-

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[30] Droz-Vincent (2011): 394

[31] Hanlon (2012): 4

ing their sugar daddy overboard"[32]. Thus, the military had no incentives in this category to remain loyal to Ben Ali regime.

Unregulated Patronage:

Nowhere in the literature, or in journalistic accounts, was there any mention of the Tunisian military receiving any unregulated patronage or any personal benefits from the regime. Springborg, writing on military corruption across the region, contends that the Tunisian military had little access to sufficient equipment under Ben Ali, let alone personal benefits[33]. The Tunisian officers therefore had no incentives to remain loyal to the regime in order to maintain the flow of either regulated patronage, or of unregulated patronage and personalistic privileges.

Perceived Legitimacy:

While the Tunisian military was disgraced by a successful Israeli air-strike against the Palestinian Liberation Organization (PLO) on its soil in 1985, its low budget, benefits, and profile probably shielded it from being despised like Ben Ali's corrupt family and the Mukhabarat, its chief instrument of repression. However, accounts of soldiers rejoicing with protesters in the streets, and officers celebrating in US military institutions when the regime fell[34], plus General Ammar's refusal to seize power and statements supporting the revolution, suggest that the military was motivated by genuine nationalist zeal and sympathy for the revolution. It appears that the Tunisian military at multiple levels genuinely sympathized with the aims of the revolution and wanted to see the end of Ben Ali's corrupt autocratic rule, more than it acted simply to boost its perceived institutional legitimacy.

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[32] Steven Cook, "The calculations of Tunisia's military", Foreign Policy, 2011.
[33] Springborg (2011): 398
[34] See Springborg and Henry, "Army Guys" (2011)

Tactical Control:

While these tactics were used to some degree under Bourguiba and Ben Ali, they obviously did not prevent the military from ultimately removing the regime last year. Indeed, it appears that Bourguiba and Ben Ali were simply poor students of civil-military relations and had never read the literature on coup-proofing – while they may have monitored the military and did engage in some purges (Ben Ali in 1991 and 2001), it appears that their primary strategy was to simply sideline and to ignore the military, keeping it out of sight and out of mind. The failure of this strategy speaks to the importance of tactical control over the military.

Conclusion:

Ultimately, the Tunisian military had both the motives and the means to remove the Ben Ali regime: neither was it co-opted in any way (through ethnic favoritism, regulated patronage, or unregulated patronage) into loyalty, nor was it successfully coerced (through tactical control) into loyalty. Rather, it appears that the military under Ben Ali was for the most part neglected with minimal use of coercion. When Ben Ali, then, picked his poison in the "dictator's dilemma" by calling upon the military for repression last January, it should come as no surprise that it acted as it did: there were no incentives to retain him and no impediments to tossing him aside. Moreover, the Tunisian military at all levels appeared to genuinely sympathize with the revolution. The Tunisian case study illustrates two things: (1) that in the absence of any ethnic or economic incentives to do otherwise, national armies can be expected to sympathize with their populations during uprisings, and (2) that minimal coercion and marginalization is insufficient to retain military loyalty from the standpoint of the regime during a crisis.

2) Egypt:

Background:

Unlike the nonpolitical Tunisian military, the Egyptian military has controlled the country's political sphere ever since the 1952 nationalist "Free Officers" coup against a famously-corrupt and Western-controlled monarchy brought Gamal Abdel Nasser and his fellow officers to power. Nasser's rule, which lasted from 1956 to 1970, was marked by several trends: the military's privileged position both politically and economically, a pair of disastrous foreign policy failures in 1956 and 1967, and Egyptian entry into a 20-year arms agreement with the USSR. The defeat to Israel in 1967 was somewhat of a turning point in Egyptian civil-military relations – after this disastrous failure, Nasser purged his close ally Armed Forces Chief of Staff Abdel Hakim Amer and many of the other officers, beginning a process of removing the military to some extent from political visibility. Vice President and senior officer Anwar Sadat, who took over after Nasser's death in 1970, changed many of Nasser's core policies, introducing a multi-party parliament, opening up Egypt's economy with his Intifah economic policy, and of course signing his famous peace treaty with Israel in 1978. However, despite his victory over Israel in 1973, Sadat faced challenges from both the officers and the masses due to these policy changes – nearly losing his grip on power during the 1977 bread riots – and was finally assassinated in 1981 by Islamist junior officers over the Israeli peace deal[35]. Once again, the Vice President – this time ex-air force officer Hosni Mubarak – assumed power after the death of his predecessor. During his 30-year rule, Mubarak focused on combating Islamist influence in the military and in the society at large, with a brutal crackdown against Islamist insurgency in the 1990's. He also continued to de-politicize the military, removing popular Defense Minister Abu Ghazala, and

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[35] For a comprehensive historical overview of Egyptian civil-military relations, see Hashim (2011, 2011)

trading economic privileges for overt political control. Since the uprising, the ruling SCAF has, however, engaged in somewhat obvious and underhanded efforts to preserve its privileges, such as excluding constitutional clauses from revision, opposing political and economic reforms, repressing continued protests against military rule, arresting thousands of protesters using extrajudicial courts, barring numerous candidates from the presidential election on technicalities (through the Constitutional Courts) and even allegedly plotting an assassination of Morsi and a coup to retake control of the country before being dislodged from power in August. We must now examine each of the six factors in turn, so that we can evaluate the interests and incentives of the military during the Arab Spring.

Ethnic Favoritism:

Like Tunisia, Egypt is a highly homogenous society of Sunni Muslims with weak tribal identities (and a minority of Coptic Christians comprising about 10% of the population). As noted above, the lack of ethnic favoritism in the military has been held up by some as the reason it supported the revolution, but this analysis is lacking because the military did not support the revolution after the fall of Mubarak. This suggests that while ethnic representatives may preclude an all-out assault against the population (as in Syria and Libya), it is an insufficient motivation for actually supporting the popular uprising. In any case, what is clear is that the Egyptian military had no ethnic incentives to protect Mubarak and repress its population during the Arab Spring.

Regulated Patronage:

Overall, the Egyptian military has been well rewarded by the regime since it seized control of the political sphere in 1952, however the most lucrative benefits have been of the unregu-

lated, personalistic variety as opposed to regulated, institutional variety, creating a severe degree of inequality between the current and retired high-ranking officers and the low-ranking officers and rank-and-file. Official spending, though, has been reasonably high: the budget has generally been one of the highest in the region for decades (averaging about $4 billion annually over the past decade, almost triple the regional average of $1.5 billion). Personally, however, the official salaries of the bulk of the military were a repeated point of contention under Mubarak [36]. Specifically, high-ranking officers have received lucrative benefits and have generally been satisfied with the system, while low-ranking officers and the rank-and-file have often had serious grievances about not being rewarded in the way that their superiors have been (a split dating back at least as far as Egypt's involvement in Yemen in the 1960's, after which those who served in the Yemeni conflict were showered with tremendous benefits[37]).

Unregulated Patronage:

The Egyptian military is notorious for its huge economic empire, often estimated at 20%-40% of the economy. At the institutional level, Springborg describes "a sprawling economic empire that directly owns companies active in the industrial, agricultural, construction, telecommunications, and service sectors"[38]. Similarly, Cook describes the military as a powerful economic player in areas as diverse as "footwear, spring water, aviation services, travel services, ovens, and agribusiness"[39], some of which remain completely inaccessible to the private sector. Besides generating revenue on the institutional level, the economic empire also personally rewards high-

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[36] Brooks (1998): 63
[37] See Hashim, "Part One: From The Ottomans Through Sadat" (2011)
[38] Springborg (2011)L 397
[39] Cook, interviewed by Harry Kreisler on *University of California Berkeley, Conversations with History*: 17:45-18:10. Available online at <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=_CDUrHdWwh8 >. Appointment to cushy posts in national or local government is also a crucial piece of the patronage system.

ranking officers, who often capitalize "on their regime connections by gaining ownership of privatized state-owned enterprises [SOE's] or by forming companies that thrive on state contracts"[40]. Additionally, these officers often live in gated communities with a range of special goods and services unavailable to most Egyptians. Obviously, beneficiaries of the system have strong incentives to maintain the flow of this patronage. However, Mubarak's neoliberal economic programs in the 1990's created competition and challenged the military's privileged economic position. As one scholar argued in 1998, "Mubarak may be calculating that the gains from economic liberalization may help him to withstand potential resistance from the armed forces"[41]. Some have suggested that the military, for this reason, was looking for an excuse to toss aside Mubarak in order to defend and deepen its privileges. While this is unclear, it appears that the beneficiaries of the system, the high-ranking officers, still had economic incentives to retain Mubarak.

Perceived Legitimacy:

Like most other Egyptian institutions, the Egyptian military did suffer from low legitimacy under Mubarak, due to both corruption and ineffectiveness (in contrast to the success of Hamas and Hezbollah in resisting Israel in 2006), and it did indeed boost its legitimacy with its initial support for the revolution and the ouster of Mubarak. However, the institution's subsequent behaviors, already well-documented in this paper, have been completely inconsistent with this explanation as they have more than lost any legitimacy gained during this initial period. If the SCAF were truly trying to reclaim legitimacy, why would it have undermined its legitimacy so severely and predictably with its repression and manipulation since Mubarak's exit? Given its

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[40] Springborg (2011): 397
[41] Brooks (1998): 23

behavior, the goal throughout the last year and a half cannot have been legitimacy restoration. The military must have helped usher Mubarak out of power for other reasons (either out of necessity or dissatisfaction with his neoliberal policies).

Tactical Control:

While tactics to assert control over the military such as loyalty-based promotions and purges of insubordinate officers have been used commonly by the regime since 1952, including Mubarak's purge of the popular defense minister Abu Ghazala in the 1980's, none of the sources highlight monitoring of the military by the regime as a common practice or an impediment to independent military action[42]. It appears that the officers and other members of the military were not heavily monitored or threatened or otherwise prevented from acting independently during the revolution, as evidenced by the fact that they tossed aside Mubarak and have continued to dominate civilian politicians since then (with the exception of the recent "civilian coup" by Morsi).

Conclusion:

Explaining Egyptian military behavior over the past year and a half is no simple task – one must account for its initial ouster of Mubarak, yet its subsequent manipulation of the transition process, and finally its struggle with Morsi including its attempts to neuter his administration and its alleged coup attempt this past summer. However, this seemingly-complex series of actions can be easily reconciled by reasoning through which of the six factors could and could not have been motivating military behavior. Specifically, the military was not ethnically biased, was not controlled by the regime, and was not acting to restore its institutional legitimacy (given its subsequent behavior). Rather, it appears that the military has acted at each step of the way to

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[42] See Hashim, "Part Two: From Mubarak Onward" (2011)

protect its unregulated patronage, dethroning Mubarak because he represented a serious threat and challenge to its vast economic empire. Its ensuing manipulation of the transition process fits this storyline perfectly as well, as it was attempting to safeguard its economic empire with a variety of more or less subtle, political maneuvers. However, when the ineffectiveness of these became clear, and the Muslim Brotherhood's Mohammed Morsi ascended to the presidency, it took bolder actions this summer by stripping the new president of his powers and allegedly plotting a coup against him. Ultimately, little is currently known about Morsi's power play and just what kind of power-sharing arrangement he now has with the military, but the evidence suggests that throughout the last 18 months the military has acted to replace Mubarak with another arrangement favorable to the maintenance of the lucrative benefits it has enjoyed over the past several decades[43].

3) Libya:

Background:

Like Tunisia, Libya gained its independence in the wake of WWII as European powers continued their withdrawal from the Middle East. The three traditional regions of the country (Cyrenaica, Tripolitania, and Fezzan) were not united until 1952 when a central state coalesced around King Idris I, the head of the Islamic revivalist Senussi order and previously the Emir of Cyrenaica (the Eastern region of Libya). Idris, who ruled the country from its independence in 1952 until his overthrow by Col. Muammar Gaddafi in 1969, was a relatively conservative monarch who maintained close relationships with the West and focused resources in the Eastern region of the country. Taking his lead from Nasser's nationalist coup in Egypt, in 1969 a young

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[43] Some analysts have seen Morsi's actions as a true civilian takeover, while other observers have contended that he cut a deal with the military's second-tier leadership. Ultimately, the true balance of power between Morsi and the military, and Morsi's true intentions, remain unknown at this point.

officer named Muammar Gaddafi seized control of the state while the aging Idris was receiving medical treatment in Turkey. Gaddafi, who ruled the country for over four decades before being toppled last year, was a ruthless and eccentric dictator who cultivated an Arab nationalist-socialist ideology and was infamous for his brutal suppression of internal dissent as well as his aggressive foreign policy, which included interventions against his neighbors as well as support for terrorist attacks around the globe. While these foreign policy "adventures" often resulted in failure, defense spending remained high throughout his reign and various security services played a key role in underpinning his regime (despite attempted military coups in 1969, 1970, 1975, and 1993)[44]. So, how can the Libyan military's deep division during the uprising into loyal and rebel camps be explained?

Ethnic Favoritism:

Although the state is predominately Sunni Arab like its neighbors Tunisia and Egypt, tribal identities have been a powerful force in Libyan politics and society[45]. As noted above, Idris hailed from Cyrenaica and generally focused resources towards his native region throughout his nearly two decades in power. Gaddafi, on the other hand, was from the town of Sirte in Tripolitania and generally did just the opposite, favoring his own region, tribe, and hometown in the West at the expense of the Eastern areas. Like most of the institutions under Gaddafi, the military was disproportionately filled with Gaddafi's own tribesmen and led by his own family members. One scholar notes that leadership of the military fell into four broad (obviously overlapping) categories – blood relatives of Gaddafi, in-laws of the Gaddafi family, members of Gaddafi's tribe,

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[44] Mattes (2004): 26

[45] For an excellent overview of tribalism in Libya, especially under Gaddafi, see Mokhefi (2011)

and members of allied tribes of Gaddafi's tribe[46]. As such, much of the military leadership (commanders, officer corps, elite unit soldiers) had powerful ethnic incentives to remain loyal to the regime.

Regulated Patronage:

Unfortunately, Libya has never published précise defense budgets under Gaddafi – the funding of Gaddafi's Revolutionary Committees and the breakdown of defense spending across security services (military and paramilitary organizations) has never been specified. Despite this lack of transparency, the budgets reveal that defense spending was very high under Gaddafi, peaking in the 1980's at a staggering 14.5% of GDP prior to Libya's intervention into Chad in 1987. Though it dropped drastically since then, it still hovered around the regional average in Gaddafi's final years (averaging $1 billion or 3% of GDP over the last decade). However, Gaddafi's defense spending was disproportionately used to acquire advanced weaponry without the manpower, training, or communications needed to properly use them[47]. In that sense, Gaddafi certainly purchased plenty of "toys" for the military, although these purchases do not appear to have bought him any loyalty amongst his troops.

Unregulated Patronage:

In contrast to the Egyptian military, the Libyan military did not preside over any significant economic empire nor did its members benefit from any unregulated privileges under Gaddafi (above and beyond the benefits from being part of Gaddafi's family or tribe). Indeed, the Libyan military is strangely absent from discussions of the region's military economies, and journal-

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[46] Mattes (2004): 7-9

[47] See Cordesman and Nerguizian (2010), who estimated "Libya only [had] about 25-33% of the manpower needed to man its combat units, and total equipment pool."

istic accounts state that the military has not enjoyed economic penetration like its Egyptian neighbor[48]. Overall, based on the complete lack of evidence, we have to conclude that the military did not have unregulated incentives in any major way to maintain Gaddafi rule.

Perceived Legitimacy:

Like most institutions under Gaddafi, the military most likely suffered from low legitimacy in the majority of the country, although it was not Gaddafi's main instrument of internal repression. During the uprising, those who remained loyal to Gaddafi were obviously uninterested in boosting the legitimacy of the institution. As for those who defected, journalistic accounts suggest that they were motivated much more by nationalist sentiment than by any institutional (or tribal) considerations.

Tactical Control:

While Gaddafi used a variety of tactics to control his military throughout his 40-year reign – especially after coup attempts in the 1970's and 1990's – they were generally ineffective, if not counterproductive, and the resulting disorganization of the military was essential to the flood of defections during the uprising. Indeed, Gaddafi was concerned about a coup unseating him from power just as he had unseated Idris, and he engaged in a variety of coup-proofing tactics to prevent this from taking place: he frequently purged and rotated officers in order to prevent plotting, built up a variety of paramilitary organizations to counterbalance against the traditional army, and engaged in monitoring as well as weakening the military with poor training and

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[48] See, for example, Kevin G. Hall, "Who'll control Libya's oil economy if Gadhafi falls?" McClatchy Newspapers, 24 Feb 2011.

poor communications[49]. Indeed, high-ranking officers were only allowed to communicate with each other by letter![50] However, these efforts ultimately created a military that was poorly trained, disorganized, decentralized, and not monitored effectively by the regime, enabling soldiers and whole units to defect. While the paramilitary organizations and elite units were filled with privileged tribes and well-equipped, trained, and organized, other elements of the military – organized by tribe and were not effectively monitored, controlled, or coerced at the unit level – were unimpeded from switching sides and joining rebel forces. This lack of control at the lowest level was a crucial cause of the institution's disintegration during the uprising (especially in comparison with Syria, as will be seen in the following case study).

Conclusion:

Ultimately, the Libyan military's defections from the beginning of the fighting, prior to the NATO intervention, can be largely explained by a combination of ethnicity and opportunity: the fact that much of the military was filled with the non-privileged tribes who were not well-coerced by Gaddafi. However, it appears that opportunity was a stronger factor than ethnicity, as many members of Gaddafi's family and tribe also defected pre-NATO when the opportunities presented themselves (such as the pilots and top officers). With no economic incentives to protect, no sense of institutional legitimacy to reclaim, no clear sign of impending intervention, and most importantly in the absence of effective regime coercion, much of the military started seizing its opportunities for defection in the first few weeks. Only the elite, tribal units remained intact for very long, their ranks bolstered with unwilling and unprepared conscripts and foreign mercenaries. The Libyan case illustrates the importance of organization and coercion on the mi-

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[49] These themes run throughout Mattes (2004)
[50] See "Libya's De-Professionalized Army Needs Help," Ann Marlowe, World Affairs Journal, April 9 2012.

cro-level in retaining the loyalty of the military during a crisis – Gaddafi, like Ben Ali, simply did a poor job of planning on a tactical level for the "dictator's dilemma".

4) Syria:

Background:

After a 30-year French mandate established in the wake of WWI – one which favored the country's minorities over its Sunni majority – Syria gained its independence from French rule in 1946 with its Sunni majority inheriting control of the state. However, the two and a half decades after independence were marked by severe instability, with a series of coups and counter-coups and an increasing ethnification of politics culminating in the Alawite minority's consolidation of power in 1966 under the leadership of Hafez Al-Assad. The 30-year rule of Hafez Al-Assad was notable for the domination of the instruments of state control by the Alawite minority, a close security relationship with the Soviet Union that persists with post-Soviet Russia to this today, and brutal suppression of challenges to Alawite dominance including the massacre of 20,000 civilians in a 1982 uprising by the Syrian branch of the Muslim Brotherhood. After the death of Hafez in 2000, Bashar Al-Assad inherited control of the state from his father and was initially hailed as a reformer due to his background – a mild-mannered eye doctor in London only a few years prior – and the partial liberalization he allowed in his first few years in power popularly known as the "Damascus Spring"[51]. However, Bashar soon reversed the liberalization and clamped down on Syrian society when the liberal ideas progressed beyond the regime's tolerance, showing his resistance to any real reform in Syria. Despite this resistance to change, the viciousness of Bashar's crackdown on the uprising over the past year and a half – with the military and security services as his killing machines – has caught most observers by surprise. Our

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[51] For a closer look at the "Damascus Spring", see Ghadry (2005)

goal here is to explain the military's acceptance of its repressive role, with only a limited trickle of defections, throughout the Arab Spring.

Ethnic Favoritism:

Though Syrian history cannot be reduced entirely to the sectarian rivalries between the Sunni majority and Alawite, Christian, Druze, Kurd, and other minorities, they have long been the main fault line in Syrian politics[52]. The Alawites, who comprise about 12% of the population and mainly inhabit the mountainous region of Latakia, have a long history of oppression under Syrian as well as Ottoman rule due to their perceived perversion of the Islamic faith (which combines elements of Shia Islam with elements of Christianity and has a strict code of secrecy). The remarkable rise to power of this historically marginalized community began when it was given autonomous status and an elevated role in national governance – along with other minorities – during the French mandate period as the French sought to check the increasing influence of Arab nationalism. Indeed, the military – seen as a lower-class career by many Sunnis, but as one of the best opportunities available to minority groups – was filled with Alawites and other minorities under French rule. When Syria gained independence, the Sunni majority was given control of the political system, but the Alawites and other minorities continued to fill the lower ranks of the military. Alawite penetration into the military only increased in the tumultuous post-independence period from 1946-63, as Sunni in-fighting over defeats by Israel and the failed union with Egypt created opportunities for Alawites to advance as Sunni officers frequently purged each other from power. Finally, when Sunni leaders grew fearful of the growing Alawite power in the early 1960's, and attempted to purge many of them from their posts in the military, they

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[52] See Pipes (1989) and Fildis (2012)

responded with a preemptive coup of their own in 1966 and in 1970 united under the leadership of Hafez Al-Assad.

While Sunnis and others have been afforded some economic opportunities under Hafez and his son Bashar, their rule has overall represented Alawite domination over the other groups from the very beginning, especially in the security sector. Hafez consolidated power by purging other ethnicities from the military and the Ba'ath party, and violently repressing any challenges to Alawite rule, notably in the 1982 Hama Massacre predominately led by Sunnis. Observers frequently note how Alawites control the key positions in the security sector – one scholar states that while the military's rank-and-file is filled up with Sunnis and (disproportionately) the other minorities, "over 90% of the key commands in the armed forces and security apparatus are held by Alawis"[53]. In this context of Alawite control, the Alawite officer corps has had obvious ethnic incentives to remain loyal during the uprising, while the Sunni rank-and-file has had obvious incentives to defect instead of massacring their fellow Sunnis. One of the obvious questions, then, is why there have not been significantly more (Sunni) defections, given the expectation that ethnically divided militaries split along ethnic lines when ordered to repress their populations? Specifically, given that the 300,000-strong Syrian military is estimated to be 70% Sunni, why have the majority of these 210,000 Sunnis *still* not defected (estimated total defections range from 50,000-100,000) after 18 months of fighting?[54]

Regulated Patronage:

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[53] Brooks (1998): 32

[54] Estimated Sunni population in military from Retired Brigadier General Akil Hashem, interview with Middle East Voices, December 6 2011, available online: http://middleeastvoices.com/2011/12/ex-syrian-general-heres-how-to-overthrow-assad/

The Syrian military has benefitted under the Assad dynasty from reasonably high defense spending, averaging about $1.5 billion (5% of GDP) over the last decade. Additionally, while the US has refused to sell weapons to the Assads, the regime has secured a steady stream of arms deals for its military from the Russians (and the Soviets pre-1989)[55]. However, defense spending has dropped under Bashar's reign in terms of GDP: from 7% in 2003 to just above 4% in 2009. Overall, the military should be pleased with its relatively large budget and steady supply of Soviet and Russian arms under the Assads (in addition to weapons and support flowing from the Syrian relationship with Iran).

Unregulated Patronage:

On top of its relatively high defense spending and foreign arms deals, the Syrian military has also profited from penetration (though not as deep as the Egyptian military) in defense-related sectors of the national economy. One scholar, for example, describes Syria's military economy as "essentially [a] junior version of Egypt…concentrated in areas most directly related to military needs and capacities…including construction, agriculture, and food processing"[56], with officers also profiting off of personal assets and kickbacks in the private sector. Moreover, the regime also enriched the military with patently illegal activities in Lebanon – primarily widespread smuggling, drug trafficking, and looting – until its withdrawal as a result of the 2005 Cedar Revolution. Thus, the Syrian officer corps has had significant incentives to support the regime in order to protect its unregulated economic benefits, despite its withdrawal from Lebanon and the resulting loss of its smuggling privileges.

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[55] Brooks (1998): 43-44
[56] Springborg (2011): 397

Perceived Legitimacy:

The Syrian military definitely suffered from low (if any) legitimacy among the non-Alawite sectors of the population prior to the Arab Spring given its ethnic favoritism, its violent repression of Sunni unrest under Hafez Al-Assad, and its record of repeated failure against Israel (losing the Golan Heights). However, restoring military legitimacy was obviously not one of its objectives during the Arab Spring, given its ruthless repression over the last year and a half.

Tactical Control:

Since their rise to power, the Assads have used a variety of tactics to maintain tight control over their military down to the unit level. When Hafez came to power, he consolidated control of the security sector by purging non-Alawites from all key positions, and all promotions have continued to be based on ethnicity and loyalty alone. The Assads have also used extensive duplication and monitoring, with several overlapping organizations all tasked with monitoring one another and ensuring internal security. They also engage in extensive monitoring of the military, using Alawite "shadow commanders" (authorized to execute anyone suspected of defection, regardless of rank) assigned to all military units[57]. Not only has this factor been noted in several sources, journalistic and academic, but statements by high-ranking defected officers have pointed to this tight unit control as the crucial barrier to defection. Retired Brigadier General Akil Hashem, for example, explained the lack of defections as follows:

It's very obvious why. First of all, the security measures are very, very, very strong in the military and all over Syria. So every small unit, even a company of 20 soldiers, there is an - there is a person who is the security undercover person, OK? So while they are monitoring everybody. Everybody. And the loyal, before the people who are suspected by disloyalty. Now everybody - and these people, security people, have the authority to execute right away any high-ranked officer, not because he is defecting, because they think that he is going to defect, by the intention, if

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[57] Brooks (1998): 35-44

they believe, this small soldier who work in the security, if he believes that this officer (inaudible) is going to defect, he can execute him right away, on the spot, without any hesitation and no question will be asked[58].

Similarly, defected Col. Riad Al-Asaad estimated that there were "several thousand officers who wanted to desert but did not manage to as they were suspected and imprisoned,"[59] and recently defected General Manaf Tlass explained that "it would be very difficult for there to be a coup in Syria because the regime enjoys a special setup and systematic mechanism that makes the proposition of an internal coup extremely difficult."[60] Overall, these mechanisms have enabled the regime to control the military down to the unit level and to force the non-Alawites in the military (who comprise about 70% of the army) to do its bidding. Additionally, the air force is almost completely controlled by the Alawites as well. More than anything, this explains how the regime has limited defections to a slow trickle of desertions by individuals or small groups of ground forces throughout the uprising (without significant seizures of weapons, as the Alawites have maintained "control of the keys" unlike in Libya).

Conclusion:

In conclusion, the Syrian military's loyalty to the regime with only slow defections over the past 18 months has principally been a product of ethnicity and tactical control. Ethnically, the Alawite saturation of almost all key positions has severely minimized high-ranking defections, and, tactically, the control at the unit level of non-Alawite soldiers using extensive monitoring,

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[58] See the interview of retired Brigadier General Akil Hashem on CNN, May 29 2012, available online: http://cnnpressroom.blogs.cnn.com/2012/05/29/retired-syrian-general-explains-lack-of-defections-to-amanpour-also-says-this-is-not-the-army-of-the-people-anymore/
[59] See the interview of defected Col. Riad Al-Asaad in The Voice of Russia Radio, August 9 2012, available online: http://english.ruvr.ru/2012_08_09/Political-resolution-on-the-crisis-in-Syria-is-impossible/
[60] See the interview of recently-defected General Manaf Tlass in Asharq Al-Awsat, July 26 2012, available online: http://www.asharq-e.com/news.asp?section=3&id=30476

"shadow commanders", and a do-or-die coercion policy has forced Sunnis and other groups to do the bidding of the regime or suffer the consequences. Despite the clear preferences of these groups, which comprise much of the rank-and-file, to turn against the regime, the regime's control of the military at the unit level has determined their behavior. The Syrian case, then, illuminates the importance of control over preferences or coercion over co-optation in determining the behavior of the officers and the rank-and-file. The institution's continued effectiveness also underscores the ability of militaries to survive steady small-scale defections as long as large-scale defections and the capture of key assets can be avoided.

Section V – Cross-case analysis and Conclusion:

Figure 1: Summary of Case Studies of Tunisian, Egyptian, Libyan, and Syrian Militaries

Factors: *Cases*:	*Ethnic Favoritism*	*Regulated Patronage*	*Unregulated Patronage*	*Perceived Legitimacy*	*Tactical Control*	*Behavior:*
Tunisia:	None	Low	None	Possible	Low	Full removal of regime
Egypt:	None	Medium	**Very High**	Unlikely	Low	Failed attempt to replace regime
Libya:	**Very High**	Medium	None	Unlikely	Medium	Repression but flood of defections
Syria:	**Very High**	High	Medium	Unlikely	**Very High**	Repression and trickle of defections

Figure 1 summarizes the conclusions of each of the case studies in the paper: Tunisia, Egypt, Libya and Syria. Specifically, it displays each military's behavior in the Arab Spring (the dependent variable), its levels across each of five categories (the independent variables), and the dominant explanation for its behavior (the causal mechanisms). As indicated in the figure, (1) the Tunisian military removed Ben Ali because it had no ethnic or economic privileges and was not controlled by his regime, (2) the Egyptian military sought to replace Mubarak in order to protect its vast economic privileges, (3) the Libyan military repressed the uprising but suffered rapid large-scale defections because it was ethnically divided and not tightly controlled by the Gaddafi regime and (4) the Syrian military has repressed the uprising with only slow small-scale defections because, while it is also ethnically divided, it remains tightly controlled by the Assad regime at the unit level.

In terms of cross-case analysis, this paper lends itself to pairwise comparisons between Tunisia and Egypt as well as Libya and Syria because of their (albeit limited) similarities and yet their divergent outcomes. Tunisia and Egypt had some key similarities prior to the Arab Spring: they were both largely homogeneous North African states under the grip of aging, secular, corrupt police-state autocrats who were pushed out of power by national uprisings in early 2012. Their army establishments also shared key similarities pre-Arab Spring – both were largely homogeneous, autonomous armies who received Western training and had significantly closer official budgets that one would expect (the most recent figures pegged Egyptian defense spending at 2.2% of GDP and Tunisian at just over 1.2% of GDP). Yet while the Tunisian military completely removed the Ben Ali regime and has since then nurtured the country's nascent democracy, the Egyptian army tossed Mubarak out of power but subsequently tried to manipulate the transition through a variety of means (constitutional, electoral, judicial, etc.).

In comparative analysis, it is clear that the key difference between the two militaries is the massive economic empire – the "unregulated patronage" – that the Egyptian, but not Tunisian, organization has enjoyed over the past several decades. As described in detail in the case study, much of the Egyptian military has been showered with benefits such as residence in gated communities, access to a variety of special goods and services, and lucrative positions in business and government, supported by its control over a vast economic empire. The Tunisian army has enjoyed none of these privileges, and has on the contrary been economically marginalized throughout this time period. This difference points to the corrupting influence of the military receiving vast economic privileges on two institutions and regimes otherwise sharing strong similarities. It appears that this one fundamental difference – the deep economic penetration of the Egyptian military – has primarily been responsible for the divergence in behavior in the two cases, causing the Egyptian army to act as an agent of continuity by blocking a democratic transition, while the Tunisian military has acted as an agent of change by backing a democratic transition. Of course, it must be stated that the cases also differ in other respects, such as, crucially, the historical political role of the military (though this is almost inseparable from, and for our purposes even collapsible with, the economic empire) as well as the depth of Islamist penetration into the political sphere and its historical antagonism with the military.

Additionally, the Libyan and Syrian cases also share a number of key commonalities that enable a fruitful comparison between them. In particular, Libya and Syria were both authoritarian regimes with ethnically dominated politics and non-Western foreign policies, as well as relatively well-funded yet ethnically biased militaries. Indeed, both nations have been dominated by the push and pull of ethnic politics and both regimes were crafted with a strong ethnic foundation at around the same time. In Libya, the post-independence monarchy of King Idris I was seen by

many as Cyrenaican (Eastern tribes) rule, and Gaddafi's coup in the late 1960's as a Tripolitani-

an (Western tribes) takeover. Similarly, in Syria, the post-independence republic was dominated

by the Sunni majority, and the coups that catapulted the Assads to power in the late 1960's

marked the beginning of Alawite rule. The military leadership in both regimes has also been

dominated by the privileged ethnic group, while the rank-and-file of the military has been filled

primarily with the non-privileged groups. However, while the military leadership in both cases

generally accepted its repressive orders, the Libyan military began crumbling with rapid large-

scale defections and capture of key assets from the very beginning of the uprising while the Syri-

an military has essentially remained cohesive with only slow small-scale desertions.

With relatively similar levels of ethnic favoritism, advanced arms, brutal orders, and un-

certainty over Western intervention in the initial period of the uprising, the core difference be-

tween the two militaries lies in the regime's level of tactical control over them down to the low-

est level. To be sure, Gaddafi definitely distrusted his military, and engaged in serious coup-

proofing: he routinely purged and rotated his officers (publicly hanging those suspected of sub-

version), based all his promotions on loyalty, and prevented easy communications between dif-

ferent officers (who were forced to communicate by letter) and different units in an effort to con-

trol the institution. However, Gaddafi's purges may have raised the perceived costs of defection

if caught, but not the chances of being caught, and the military's disorganization and overcentral-

ization may actually have facilitated the successful defection of officers as well as whole units.

Gaddafi also placed non-privileged ethnic groups and disloyal units in charge of key assets such

as weapons as well as in the air force, leading to losses in both these areas.[61] In short, it appears

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[61] For early reports of the defection of planes, ships, and the seizure of arms by the rebels, see: "Libya defectors: Pilots told to bomb protesters flee to Malta", The Guardian, February 21 2011, http://www.guardian.co.uk/world/2011/feb/21/libya-pilots-flee-to-malta, Libyan Ship Spotted Off Malta Coast", Aljazeera, February 22 2011. http://www.aljazeera.com/NEWS/EUROPE/2011/02/2011222152359147622.html,

that Gaddafi's coup-proofing tactics were simply poorly chosen and ineffective – he did not have an effective system of monitoring and controlling his troops at the lowest level and he did not have effective control of his key assets. In contrast, the Syrian military's extensive monitoring of all elements of its military, use of Alawite "shadow commanders" with the authority to shoot even high-ranking generals, and control of key assets using loyal, Alawite personnel, has minimized the defections and loss of key assets throughout the (much-longer) uprising. It appears that the level of regime control and coercion over the military at the micro-level accounts for the difference between the flood of defections in Libya and the mere trickle of desertions in Syria.

An alternative variable that must be considered is the differing levels of intensity of ethnic loyalties and rivalries in Libya and Syria. Certainly, Libyan tribes have been crucial social forces in their territory for centuries, functioning as the channels for anti-colonial resistance to both the Ottomans and the Italians. They were also frequently exploited by Gaddafi, especially during the second half of his reign, as he co-opted certain tribes into the regime and security services while excluding and marginalizing others in order to maintain his rule. There were even very strong levels of resentment among the marginalized Eastern tribes as well as some of the tribes squeezed out of the security sector to make room for Gaddafi's own Gadhadhfa tribe[62]. Despite these tensions, there has never been any very significant or prolonged bloodshed between the tribes, and some observers have noted the diminution of tribal loyalties as Libya has modernized in recent decades.

In Syria, on the other hand, it is likely safe to say that ethnic rivalries have deeper, more ideological, and more contentious roots. For example, Sunni perception of Alawites as heretics and hostilities towards them date back over a thousand years: Alawites were repeatedly massa-

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and "Libya: Rebel forces hold huge armoury, ready for march on Tripoli" The Guardian, March 1 2011, http://www.guardian.co.uk/world/2011/mar/01/libya-rebels-weapons-store,
[62] Mokhefi (2011): 2-3

cred and marginalized, and forced to remain in the impoverished mountainous area of Latakia under both Syrian and Ottoman rule. During the French mandate, Alawites were complicit (perhaps even eager) in the French repression of Sunni uprisings driven by Arab nationalism, and petrified of their future fate in an independent Sunni-dominated Syria[63]. The antagonisms continued in the post-independence period, as have been described in the case study – the Assad regime has represented political domination by the Alawites and included ruthless repression of Sunnis in the 1982 Hama Massacre.

Overall, it is fair to say that the Syrian regime had a more explicitly ethnic as opposed to a personalist character and that the toxicity of the rivalry between Alawites and Sunnis in Syria was probably stronger than that between Western and Eastern tribes in Libya (due to its longer history, religious motivations, and memory of recent bloodshed). This should have created stronger fears of ethnic reprisals (one of the mechanisms for ethnic favoritism), and should also have made it easier to oppress "the other" in Syria as opposed to Libya without too much sympathy. However, once the ruthless repression by both regimes went into full gear, this gap should have been narrowed as both dominant groups had to fear ethnic reprisals due to their atrocities towards the dominated groups. Additionally, the "Sunni merchant class" was valuable in the Assad system as part of its economic and social base[64] and some have rejected the reductionist notion that Syrian politics were solely shaped by ethnic rivalries.

These two cross-case comparisons lead to three conclusions in the analysis of civil-military relations during crises: a rejection of monocausal explanations, a rejection of dichotomous behavior, and a rejection of militaries as principally unitary actors. In terms of monocausality, several of the analyses of military behavior published prior to the Arab Spring suffered

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[63] See the letters by Alawite leaders to the French begging for a continued French presence in Syria in Pipes (1989)
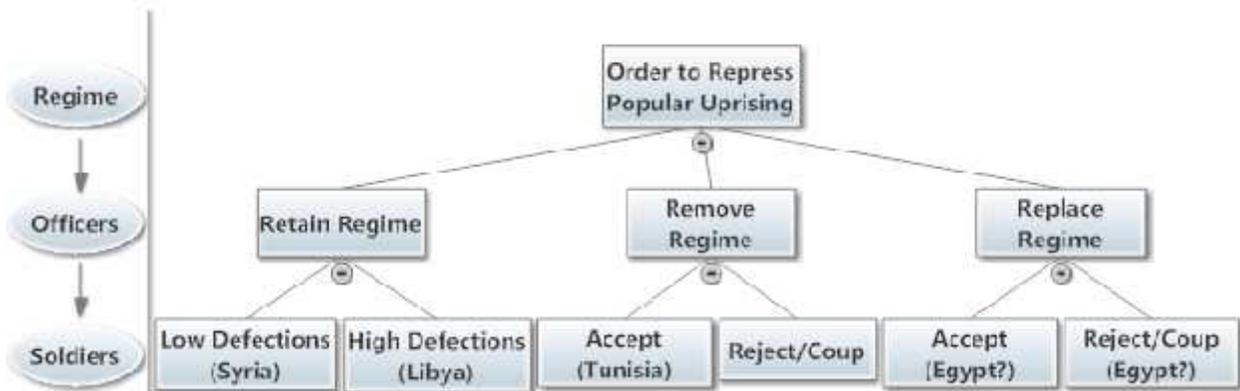[64] Brooks (1998): 35-44

from this issue, only analyzing differences in civil-military relations across one axis, whether economic, ethnic, or political. Similarly, other observers have in private conversations suggested monocausal explanations, such as "it's all about foreign control". Journalistic accounts of military behavior in a particular revolution, too, often suffer from a similar reductionism. By contrast, this analysis revealed how the convergence of multiple factors in most cases was necessary to produce certain outcomes. In Tunisia, the lack of ethnic *and* economic incentives *and* effective coercion were necessary for the full removal of the Ben Ali regime. In Egypt, the weak Western support for democracy (due to apprehension about the Muslim Brotherhood) *and* a SCAF that prioritized corporatist and personalist privileges over institutional legitimacy were probably necessary for the military's manipulation of the transition. Similarly, in Libya and Syria, the levels of ethnic saturation *as well as* tactical regime control over the military by Gaddafi and Assad were in all likelihood necessary for the divergent outcomes in those two uprisings. Moreover, while foreign forces have not been underscored as a powerful influence in any of the case studies, this is largely by design, as the cases and time periods were chosen in order to analyze the domestic influences shaping military behavior (i.e. with a prior understanding of the importance of foreign forces). Overall, this paper has attempted to illustrate the importance of thorough multi-causal investigation in analyzing military behavior.

Secondly, this paper rejects a dichotomous (or even purely trichotomous) independent variable as the outcome in all analyses (i.e. loyalty vs. disloyalty, or supporting the regime vs. supporting the revolution). Even a trichotomy (i.e. defend, defect, or split), this paper has sought to show, is too simple to capture the real decision making tree available to officers and rank-and-file during uprisings. This paper has attempted to illustrate the necessity for a more complex dependent variable in two ways: by developing a retain-replace-remove trichotomy of strategies

available to military leadership, and then allowing for variation in the cohesion of the military via the response of the rank-and-file to the leadership's decision. As such, the military's decision-making can be represented by a two-stage game, in which the military leadership first chooses whether to retain, replace, or remove the existing regime. Then, those below the leadership can choose their rate of defection (high or low) if the leadership opted to support the regime, or whether to accept or reject the leadership's choice to remove or replace. This two-stage game, and the six distinct outcomes it produces, can be represented by Figure 2. While still making several simplifying assumptions, the result offers greater variability and complexity than previous outcome variables, and should offer considerable leverage over military behavior during uprisings.

Figure 2: Two-Stage Game of Military Ordered to Repress Popular Uprising

Relatedly (and this position was probably clear by now), this paper also rejects the conceptualization of militaries as unitary actors, whether during uprisings or otherwise. The unitary actor assumption has unfortunately pervaded much of the literature, including many analyses of military behavior in the Arab Spring. However, as the case studies in this paper indicate, the military often does not act in a centralized, organized, unitary fashion. Conflicting interests often pervade a military establishment and various parts of the institution, including different ranks,

services, ethnicities (even, of course, different individuals) often act independently of one another, as in the case of the Libyan military's disintegration as well as the "civilian coup" by the second tier of the Egyptian military's leadership. While the military is a very complex organization, ultimately some simplifying assumptions must be made. However, this paper has merely been an effort to introduce some limited complexity to an equation that has been dominated by almost complete simplicity up to now. What is crucial for our purposes is that a regime can be toppled by either a rejection of repression by its officer corps or a flood of defections from its rank-and-file: both can be extremely consequential and should be included in models of civil-military relations, in an effort to understand military behavior and its effects on civilian regimes.

This paper has attempted to explain the divergent military behavior (so closely linked to the divergent outcomes) during the Arab Spring in Tunisia, Egypt, Libya, and Syria by analyzing five factors in each case thought to shape military decision-making: ethnic favoritism, regulated patronage, unregulated patronage, perceived legitimacy, and tactical control. The methods of the paper were quite simple –carefully reading all available work on Arab civil-military relations and on military behavior during the Arab Spring, past and present, academic and policy-oriented, and combing through newspaper articles in the New York Times, BBC, CNN, Aljazeera, and other outlets for key events and data about the uprisings. Briefly, the case studies concluded that the Tunisian military removed Ben Ali because of a lack of co-optation or coercion, the Egyptian military sought to replace Mubarak because of its economic privileges, the Libyan military repressed the uprising but suffered rapid large-scale defections because of its ethnic favoritism but weak tactical control, and the Syrian military has repressed the uprising with only slow small-scale defections because of its ethnic favoritism and strong tactical control. Meanwhile, the cross-case comparisons yielded an embrace of complexity and a rejection of monocausal expla-

nations, dichotomous outcomes, and unitary actors in civil-military relations. Instead, this paper developed and advanced a game tree that provides considerable coverage and leverage over the various forms of military behavior during uprisings. This analysis is not without its limitations – data limitations constrain the availability and precision of estimates necessary for analysis, and the framework must be applied to more cases in order to provide greater confidence about its hypotheses and conclusions – but the hope is that it offers some new leverage (perhaps even inching in the direction of predictive leverage) over the crucial question of how militaries might behave, and how they might crumble, during uprisings. To truly understand military behavior during uprisings – to anticipate when authoritarian militaries will be agents of continuity and when they will be agents of change, as was the case on January 14 2011 – we must to some extent embrace complexity. Only then can we begin to paint a more accurate portrait of the often informal, factional, corrupt, coercive, and messy nature of civil-military relations that still predominates in much of the developing world.

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