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AUTHORITARIANISM AND THE CIVILIANIZATION OF FORCE: POLICE POWER IN  
MILITARIZED REGIMES

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## **DEDICATION**

To Ibrahim and Nafissa, who believed all along

To Amr, who shared the journey and supported lovingly throughout

To Nour and Laila, who provided pleasure and countless productive distractions

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## ABSTRACT

My dissertation investigates the rise of police powers in militarized regime by asking the following questions: How can we understand this change in militaries' political roles in systems where they traditionally held despotic and infrastructural power? What factors might prevent the civilianization of force when elites attempt to implement the shift? How do civilian institutions of force (police) support authoritarian regimes? And what are the limits of their support? I engage with these questions to produce a theoretically-informed analysis of the dynamics of leader-institutions of force relations and present a theory about leader survival and intra-authoritarian transitions. I identify the rise of police powers as a process of 'civilianization of force' where missions of domestic control are shifted away from the military and assigned primarily to the police. The dissertation aims to bring the police, as a civilian institution of force, into the study of civil-military relations and state-society dynamics. My enquiry into politics of domestic security arrangements is based on a thorough comparative historical investigation of Egyptian militarized regimes politics under Nasser, Sadat and Mubarak.

Chapter 1 introduces the 'Civilianization of Force' theory, underlining the gaps in our knowledge about leader survival in militarized regimes. Building on insights about the different levels of threats facing leaders, I argue that civilianizing force is a strategy that aims to contain threats from the military beyond just coups while maintaining the leaders' autocratic control. As a strategy that aims to make a shift in officers' preferences, it is qualitatively different from counter-balancing which focus on operational tactics for coup-proofing.

Chapter 2 examines the militarization of force under Nasser and how the salience of coup threats impacted the leader's choice of coup-proofing measures. The chapter also examines the impact of external threat on the militarization of the system. It traces the change in leader position within the regime to explain its impact on intra-junta rivalry and leader survival.

In chapters 3 and 4, I zoom in on non-coup threats from the military and the leader's shift to civilianize force and disengage the military from domestic control. I propose a broader lens that takes into account the multiple functions and nature of institutions of force in order to explain these shifts. I draw upon the empirical accounts of Sadat's success in displacing the military from domestic control to argue that "compensated displacement" is a crucial mechanism within the civilianizing process. Chapter 4 shows Mubarak's efforts to disengage the military and build-up the institutional capacity of the Ministry of Interior (MoI). The chapter also discusses the reasons for the regime's fall and the break-down of its civilianization of force process.

Chapters 5 and 6 investigate the MoI's practices under Mubarak by tracing the increase in political power of the MoI's police force and surveillance department (*Mabaheth Amn alDawla*). I adopt a post-Weberian analysis building on Joel Migdal's state-in-society approach to explain the impact of police practices on intra-state and state-society relations. Chapter 5 focuses on how the illegal, but regime-condoned, police practices produced tensions between the judiciary and the MoI especially with regards to the rigging of parliamentary elections. The legislature was not only controlled by the executive but became the battle ground over which the state fought the state. I argue that the deepening tension about state practices between the wielders of physical force and juridical capitals, whose powers should have harmoniously overlapped, had produced ultimately an incoherent disintegrating regime. In chapter 6, I turn to scholarship in organizational theory to discuss the violence of state agents against apolitical citizens. I probe the organizational structure of the MoI to show how the illegal coercive practices by non-commissioned officers reflect pervasive problems with professionalization and institutional inequalities within the force.

## ABBREVIATIONS

CPPA: Committee of Political Parties Affairs

CSF: Central Security Forces

EAF: Egyptian Armed Forces

FO: Free Officers

GI: General Intelligence

MB: Muslim Brotherhood

MoI: Ministry of Interior

KKS: *Kulena Khaled Said*

RCC: Revolution Command Council

SCAF: Supreme Council of the Armed Forces

SSC: Supreme Constitutional Court

SSI: State Security Investigation

# Chapter 1

## Introduction

### Introduction

In October 1973, the Egyptian military initiated a military offensive against Israeli occupying forces of Egypt's Sinai Peninsula. The war resulted in the liberation of parts of the occupied land and put into gear a peace process that ultimately facilitated the return of the Egyptian territory. In many ways, the war was a political victory for the military, restoring their image as a capable force after the humiliating defeat of the 1967 War, and opening venues for international professional and financial support. Despite the military's victory, Anwar Sadat, the Egyptian president at the time, was able to gradually disengage his generals from their once-held strong domain: the management of domestic dissent, while enhancing police powers. Only two years after the war, the Egyptian president appointed Minister of Interior Mamdouh Salem to be Egypt's prime minister. Not only was he the longest serving prime minister under Sadat, but also the country's first police officer to assume such high executive office since the founding of the republic in 1952. The rise of police powers registered a process of civilianization of force where the president shifted missions of domestic control away from the military and delegated them to the Ministry of Interior (MoI).

In militarized regimes, the state's armed forces enjoy extensive powers compared to other state institutions and societal groups because of their control over guns.<sup>1</sup> Armed forces have the ability to exert considerable political influence given their position as the state's primary

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<sup>1</sup> Nordlinger, *Soldiers in Politics*.

defenders against external threats in addition to their control over material resources needed to fulfill these responsibilities.<sup>2</sup> While many leaders in militarized regimes rely on militaries for domestic control, some are able to re-assign this responsibility to civilian institutions of force, such as ministries of interior (MoIs) or homeland secretaries. How can we understand this change in militaries' political roles in systems where they traditionally held despotic and infrastructural power? Why do ruling elites shift the responsibilities of domestic control from militaries to civilian institutions of force, when they do? And what factors might prevent the civilianization of force when elites attempt to implement the shift?

As I engage with the above questions, I aim to produce a theoretically-informed analysis of the dynamics of leader-institutions of force relations in militarized regimes. In that sense, this dissertation presents a theory about leader survival and intra-authoritarian transitions. It is also about institutional change and policies of domestic control. Political players be they individuals or institutions are at the heart of this analysis. I focus on presidents, militaries, police, the judiciary and parliament because they are important actors who control resources and therefore influence the competition for power.<sup>3</sup> Leaders in particular have deep influence over decisions related to foreign and domestic security arrangements.<sup>4</sup> Throughout the work, I refer to institutions as organizations not a set of rules.<sup>5</sup> While institutions can reflect a collective identity at times, I do not assume they act as unitary actors all the time. This lens allows analytic room to understand preference divergence and cleavages within and without. I also pay attention to structures because they can shape actors' incentives. However, the structures of institutions can

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<sup>2</sup> Nordlinger.

<sup>3</sup> Mainwaring and Pérez Liñan, *Democracies and Dictatorships in Latin America*, 5.

<sup>4</sup> Horowitz, Stam, and Ellis, *Why Leaders Fight*, 5.

<sup>5</sup> Douglas North defines institutions as set of rules, compliance procedures and moral and ethical behavioral norms designed to constrain the behavior of individuals in the interest of maximizing the wealth or utility of principals. North, *Institutions, Institutional Change and Economic Performance*.

also be remolded by practices of their inhabitants.<sup>6</sup> This symbiotic relationship between agency and structure makes adopting a theoretical lens that relies on only one of them a faulty endeavor as it produces less accurate theorization of the world around us - a practice that I aim to avoid in this work. The analysis produced in this dissertation is one of dynamic relations with a focus on processes of interaction. Studying interactions allows for an understanding to the changes in actors' positions, goals and preferences, and the rules they make or abandon.<sup>7</sup>

My inquiry into politics of domestic security arrangements is based on a thorough comparative historical investigation of Egyptian militarized regimes politics under Nasser, Sadat and Mubarak. I follow Barbara Geddes' definition of military regimes as those governed by an officer or retired officer, with the support of the military establishment and some routine mechanism for high level officers to influence policy choice and appointment.<sup>8</sup> More recent work by Geddes et al. distinguishes between two forms of military-led autocracy: one which espouses domination of decision making by a group of officers representing the military institution, which they label a military regime; and another which is a dictatorship controlled by a single officer absent elite constraints, which they call military strongman rule.<sup>9</sup> I pay attention to this distinction as it highlights the balance of power between the leader and the military as discussions of chapters 2- 4 will show, but also note that in either type the military continues to hold important position within the polity.

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<sup>6</sup> Hallett and Ventresca, "Inhabited Institutions."

<sup>7</sup> Migdal, *State in Society*, 23.

<sup>8</sup> Geddes, "What Do We Know About Democratization After Twenty Years?," 20.

<sup>9</sup> Geddes, Frantz, and Wright, "Military Rule."

## **What Extant Theories are Missing about Military Threats, Leader Survival and Police Violence**

To investigate the evolution of the relationship between leaders and their institutions of force, this study engages with a number of bodies of literature, in particular civil-military relations, authoritarian regimes, and organizations. Studies within the civil-military literature have paid attention to military professionalism, military retreat from politics and coup proofing strategies. The literature has produced valuable insights into our knowledge of military intervention in politics such as how external and domestic factors impact officers' domestic roles.<sup>10</sup> Studies examining military extrication from politics highlight two main trajectories; the first is militaries' delegation of some authorities to civilians without a full retreat from politics. According to this framework, the military rules indirectly by delegating some missions to other actors. The military delegate missions of law and order to institutions such as the police or other armed actors but continue to demarcate the overarching domestic control policies behind the scenes. Put differently, the military rule but do not govern.<sup>11</sup> The second trajectory associates military withdrawal with authoritarian breakdown, highlighting how splits within the military lead to a return to the barracks and ultimately a transition to democratic rule. Examining experiences of regime change in Latin America and Europe, these studies show how military juntas may consciously remove themselves from politics or relinquish power under popular

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<sup>10</sup> Finer, *The Man on Horseback*; Desch, *Civilian Control of the Military*; Weeks, *Dictators at War and Peace*; Staniland, "Explaining Civil-Military Relations in Complex Political Environments"; Singh, *Seizing Power*.

<sup>11</sup> The "Ruling but not Governing" argument posits that the military may delegate some of its powers with regards to the handling of the day-to-day governance to other institutions, yet continue to set the overarching policies behind closed doors. Danopoulos, "Military Dictatorships in Retreat: Problems and Perspectives"; Cook, *Ruling But Not Governing*.

pressure in transitions to democratic rule.<sup>12</sup> More recent scholarship, however, shows that militaries may extricate themselves temporarily from politics if the short-term costs of repression are high, and if future opportunities for their intervention are not foreclosed.<sup>13</sup> There is no doubt that these studies have increased our knowledge of militaries and their dynamics, however, absent from this literature is an examination of military withdrawal without authoritarian breakdown. The processes of minimizing military influence over decision-making and reliance on police for domestic control that took place, with varying degrees, in Egypt under Sadat and Mubarak reflect an important yet understudied phenomenon: the civilianization of authoritarian rule without democratization.

Studies concerned with coups and coup-proofing investigate sparsely the role of police and paramilitary forces. Donald Horowitz (1985) argues that leaders “balance outside the army” by forming new forces or revamping existing ones in order to thwart coup attempts.<sup>14</sup> Scholars note that counterbalancing forces need to enjoy some parity with national militaries, in terms of equipment and training, in order to protect threatened leaders.<sup>15</sup> Though this logic holds true in cases where militaries suffer from low levels of professionalism or where the military and the counter force enjoy parity as Quinlivan’s study of Iraq, Syria and Saudi Arabia shows,<sup>16</sup> this explanation cannot account for circumstances in which militaries continue to be well-equipped and well-organized. Nor can Horowitz’s theory explain leaders’ reliance on police and anti-riot that do not stand up to the coercive power of a professional well-equipped military, and therefore do not have the capacity to deter military coups.

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<sup>12</sup> Linz and Stepan, *The Breakdown of Democratic Regimes, Latin America*; O’Donnell, Schmitter, and Whitehead, *Transitions from Authoritarian Rule*; Stepan, *Rethinking Military Politics*; Geddes, “What Do We Know About Democratization After Twenty Years?”

<sup>13</sup> Hoffman, “Military Extrication and Temporary Democracy.”

<sup>14</sup> Horowitz, *Ethnic Groups in Conflict*.

<sup>15</sup> Enloe, *Ethnic Soldiers*, 1980; Quinlivan, “Coup-Proofing.”

<sup>16</sup> Quinlivan, “Coup-Proofing.”



The authoritarianism literature has produced valuable insights into regime typology and durability,<sup>17</sup> institutions and mechanisms,<sup>18</sup> regimes and coalitions,<sup>19</sup> and the impact of international linkages.<sup>20</sup> Several studies investigate autocrats' civilianization of power through the reliance on parties, elections and legislatures.<sup>21</sup> Most of these studies, however, have not paid adequate attention to the role of police in shoring up authoritarian regimes, even though a more accurate theory of authoritarian survival requires a better understanding of how different ruling elites employ institutions of force for mobilization and for repression. The focus on political parties and elections produces a faulty one-dimensional analysis by suggesting that regime longevity is the work of institutions of representation alone, despite the fact that many authoritarian party regimes rely extensively on police services to maintain themselves so that labeling them police-party regimes may be a more accurate description.<sup>22</sup> Authoritarian regimes rely on numerous institutions for their survival and I do not claim that institutions of force are the only institutions through which regimes sustain themselves, but I posit that ignoring the role of civilian institutions of force limit our understanding of authoritarian survival and breakdown. Levitsky and Way's study, although a valuable contribution given its attention to the impact of

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<sup>17</sup> Geddes, "What Do We Know About Democratization After Twenty Years?"; Hadenius and Teorell, "Pathways from Authoritarianism."

<sup>18</sup> Wedeen, *Ambiguities of Domination*; Slater, "Iron Cage in an Iron Fist"; Magaloni, *Voting for Autocracy*; Brownlee, *Authoritarianism in an Age of Democratization*; Gandhi, *Political Institutions under Dictatorship*; Wedeen, "Ideology and Humor in Dark Times."

<sup>19</sup> Bellin, *Stalled Democracy*; Slater, *Ordering Power*.

<sup>20</sup> Levitsky and Way, *Competitive Authoritarianism*; Brownlee, *Democracy Prevention*; Tansey, *International Politics of Authoritarian Rule*.

<sup>21</sup> Magaloni, *Voting for Autocracy*; Brownlee, *Authoritarianism in an Age of Democratization*; Gandhi and Przeworski, "Authoritarian Institutions and the Survival of Autocrats"; Gandhi, *Political Institutions under Dictatorship*; Boix and Svobik, "The Foundations of Limited Authoritarian Government"; Gandhi and Lust-Okar, "Elections Under Authoritarianism"; Svobik, "Power Sharing and Leadership Dynamics in Authoritarian Regimes"; Blaydes, *Elections and Distributive Politics in Mubarak's Egypt*.

<sup>22</sup> Slater notes the close association between the ruling party in Malaysia under Mahathir Mohamed and the Malaysian MoI, however his study does not discuss political powers of the MoI but focuses on institutionalization and the personalization of power in authoritarian regimes. Slater, "Iron Cage in an Iron Fist".

security arrangements on authoritarian durability, like those of Eva Bellin,<sup>23</sup> does not address the questions of how, when, and why different institutions of coercion (military, police, national or monarchical guards) are employed interchangeably or exclusively to shore up ruling elites.

Most studies examining police force tend to highlight their repressive roles; however police and MoI intelligence officers provide important services to authoritarian regimes beyond sheer repression. They restrict and direct activities of civil society organizations, monitor and evaluate performance of state employees, and control official discourse in public media, universities, and places of worship. Equally important is the role of ministries of interior in supporting institutions of mobilization, such as political parties, especially since electoral politics became the corner stone of the political game in most authoritarian regimes.

By focusing on everyday practices and by chronicling encounters between citizens and agents of the state, scholars have shed light on how the meanings of governance and the boundaries of the state are negotiated and recreated,<sup>24</sup> with some works examining the role of policing practices and violence in the making of order.<sup>25</sup> However these studies hardly explain the rise of police powers; the few studies that examine the impact of neoliberal economics on violence tend to attribute the political rise of the police to the work of the marketplace and pay less attention to how dynamics of elite survival impact security arrangements.<sup>26</sup> Most studies also fail to make notice of the different forms of state repression.<sup>27</sup> My analysis of the development of state violence in Egypt complicates this picture. As will be discussed in chapters

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<sup>23</sup> Bellin, “The Robustness of Authoritarianism in the Middle East”; Bellin, “Reconsidering the Robustness of Authoritarianism in the Middle East”; Levitsky and Way, *Competitive Authoritarianism*.

<sup>24</sup> Migdal, *State in Society*; Schlichte, *The Dynamics of States*; Morgan and Orloff, *The Many Hands of the State*.

<sup>25</sup> Feldman, *Police Encounters*; Jauregui, *Provisional Authority*.

<sup>26</sup> Volkov, *Violent Entrepreneurs*; Ismail, *Political Life in Cairo’s New Quarters*, 2006; Wacquant, *Punishing the Poor*.

<sup>27</sup> Unlike examinations of repression in authoritarian regimes, repression of social movements in democracies has received considerable attention from scholars as in the works of Porta and Reiter, *Policing Protest*; Porta, *Social Movements, Political Violence, and the State*; Hinton, *The State on the Streets*; Hinton, *Policing Developing Democracies*; Davenport, *State Repression and the Domestic Democratic Peace*.

5 and 6, society suffered from two levels of police repression that developed under Mubarak: repression from above, which is directed against political opposition, and repression from below which takes place in the daily encounters between citizens and lower-ranking police officers. I find that the violence from below, which is often studied in conjunction with neoliberal economic shifts and analytically detached from political elite rivalry, became prevalent because it grew under the protection of the first level of repression.

MoIs, despite the limited attention to them in the political science literature, do play a significant role in the political dynamics of authoritarian regimes. My research promises to shed more light on how these institutions organize repression and domestic control. In that regard, my work joins an emerging scholarly interest in political science and sociology on police-state relations.<sup>28</sup>

## **A Civilianization of Force Theory**

The main questions of this dissertation are:

1. Why do some authoritarian leaders shift the responsibilities of domestic control from militaries to civilian institutions of force?
2. What factors might prevent the civilianization of force when leaders attempt to implement the shift?
3. In what ways do civilian institutions of force support authoritarian regimes? And what are the limits of their support?

I argue that threats from militaries to leaders' policies prompt a shift to another coercive apparatus to control domestic dissent and minimize militaries' involvement in governance. My claims about the relationship between leaders and domestic security arrangements build on two

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<sup>28</sup> Davis, "Undermining the Rule of Law"; Khalili and Schwedler, *Policing and Prisons in the Middle East*; Greitens, *Dictators and Their Secret Police*.

main assumptions about threats facing leaders, their sources and nature. The first is that leaders in authoritarian regimes face two sources of threat: the public and strong allies in the ruling coalition.<sup>29</sup> The second assumption builds on insights regarding the nature of threats posed by militaries vis-à-vis their leaders. Taken together, these primary assumptions help explicate the logic of the civilianization of force process. Because the public differs from powerful allies in terms of composition, resources and ability to threaten leaders, the latter rely on different mechanisms to neutralize each source of threat. An autocrat relies on the police and MoI apparatus to repress dissenting public, while removing his generals from missions of domestic control to minimize their access to information and their grip over the political system. To make this change in security arrangement appealing, the leader needs to offer his generals some perks in return for their relinquished area of control. Military generals are offered better financial and/or institutional resources. I coin this mechanism “compensated displacement.”

To understand changes in domestic security arrangements and their logics, one needs to take into account the various threats militaries may pose to their leaders not simply coups,<sup>30</sup> and how initial institutional conditions may facilitate or impede leaders’ ability to overcome such threats. Militaries deliver different services to their leaders and therefore may pose different threats if such services are not withdrawn. Providing security for leaders is one important service and coups are an extreme case of its provision failure, as the guards become the assailants. Militaries may also withdraw their protection of leaders during times of mass civilian protests.<sup>31</sup>

In addition to providing security, militaries are often asked to use their infrastructural power to

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<sup>29</sup> Svolik, *The Politics of Authoritarian Rule*, 2012.

<sup>30</sup> Some militaries may not resort to coups even when they have the opportunity to do so as was the case with the Russian military non-coups political threats in the 1990s. Taylor, “Russia’s Passive Army Rethinking Military Coups.”

<sup>31</sup> The Indonesian military refused to provide protection to Suharto in the face of massive civilian protests in 1998. The Egyptian and Tunisian militaries played similar roles during the protests of 2011. Lee, “The Armed Forces and Transitions from Authoritarian Rule Explaining the Role of the Military in 1986 Philippines and 1998 Indonesia,” May 1, 2009; Barany, *How Armies Respond to Revolutions and Why*.

implement leaders' policies and decisions. When militaries fail to implement rulers' policies or condition their support on some specific demands, they pose threats to leaders' powers. Failure to implement leaders' policies may not necessarily be due to institutional incapacities, but may be the result of preference divergence between the two parties.<sup>32</sup> Militaries may not agree with leaders' decisions or desire policies that differ markedly with those of their leaders. Militaries in charge of domestic security control the flow of information to and from leaders, and therefore can impair leaders' abilities to make decisions by withholding important information. Armed forces may also interfere in defense politics (doctrine, budgets) or domestic political issues (economic policy or security policy). Whenever such interference is unsanctioned it presents threats to leaders' control.

Theorists studying violence and human development argue that violent conflict remains a distinct character of natural societies.<sup>33</sup> Douglass North, John Wallis and Barry Weingast note that armed actors do not disarm as there is a constant need to maintain their strength to balance one another and to overawe their respective clients. In that framework, changes in coalitions and their membership necessitate re-negotiating the distribution of rents and privileges according to the weight and contribution of old and new players. Disengaging the military from domestic control had to be negotiated through a delicate process in which the leader identifies and then guarantees the institution some perks for forgone influence. In other words, the leader needs to offer his generals some perks in return for their relinquished area of control to make this change

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<sup>32</sup> For more on the strategic assessment of services and preference divergence between militaries and their leaders see Brooks, *Shaping Strategy*.

<sup>33</sup> North et al. define natural societies as those espousing limited access social orders that were able to control violence, provide order, and allow greater production through specialization and exchange. Limited access orders provide order by using the political system to limit economic entry to create rents, and then using the rents to stabilize the political system and limit violence. North, Wallis, and Weingast, *Violence and Social Orders*.

in security arrangement appealing to them. Military generals are compensated for their displacement by boosting their material and/or institutional resources.

The preferences of militaries are equally important, especially at the initial stages before the shift to MoI takes place. Since one of the military's fundamental institutional interests is to prevent the creation of an independent armed force, militaries may resist the enhancement of another armed force.<sup>34</sup> Militaries will not surrender their power over domestic control unless the new arrangements promise to yield higher dividends for them. Benefits may include an improved political position and/or increase in material paybacks. In T<sub>1</sub> the ability of the leader to convince his generals that changes in security arrangement bring added benefits to them rather than a decline in their political power is crucial to the civilianization of force. Leaders may rely on formal or informal channels to negotiate such shifts with important players or power brokers in their militaries.<sup>35</sup>

Civilianizing force curtails the influence of militaries and limits their access to information about the domestic arena, without compromising leaders' authoritarian rule. By shifting responsibilities of domestic control to civilian institutions of force such as the police, the relative political weight of militaries declines and authoritarian leaders can better consolidate their power. *I argue that authoritarian leaders civilianize force to decrease their vulnerabilities to their militaries.*

### **The Civilianization of Force: Strategy and Mechanisms**

I define the "civilianization of force" as a process through which decisions and policies about how, when, and who to repress are made and implemented by civilian institutions of force

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<sup>34</sup> Nordlinger, *Soldiers in Politics*.

<sup>35</sup> Gretchen Helmke and Steven Levitsky define informal institutions as "socially shared rules, usually unwritten, that are created, communicated and enforced outside officially sanctioned channels." Helmke and Levitsky 2006, 5.

instead of the military. In this framework, the delegation of everyday policing to the police force, while the military continue to make the decisions about control of dissent within society, does not reflect a civilianization process. Rather, the process takes place when ruling elites enhance the capabilities of ministries of interior, homeland secretaries or other armed civilian institutions, and make them more independent from militaries. Ruling elites rely on these institutions as their primary repressive apparatus, while militaries are gradually disengaged from decision-making process regarding domestic control policies.

While authority is often delegated from leaders to several institutions in the state to carry out the various state missions,<sup>36</sup> the above reference to delegation is not concerned with delegative powers of the leaders which is a given in authoritarian regimes but the military's delegative powers with regards to security and law and order missions. In other words, civilianizing force refers to the disengagement of the military from and the parallel control of civilian institutions of force not only over everyday policing duties but also security sector missions to control anti-regime dissent.

Most writings on coup-proofing have focused on leaders' deterrence efforts and little attention is paid to policies that work on providing incentives to make a change into the preference of the junta to minimize their threats to leaders. James Quinlivan's definition is by far the most cited definition of coup-proofing. He defines the procedure as the set of actions a regime takes to prevent a military coup, and identifies the following actions as the means to coup-proof: 1) the effective exploitation of family, ethnic, and religious loyalties for coup-critical positions balanced with wider participation and less restrictive loyalty standards for the regime as a whole; 2) the creation of an armed force parallel to the regular military; 3) the development

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<sup>36</sup> Debates on the differences between civil-military relations in militarized vs. non-militarized systems deal with the extent of delegation from the leader to the military, and the latter's use or abuse of this delegation. For in-depth discussion of this security dilemma see Feaver, "The Civil-Military Problematique."

of multiple internal security agencies with overlapping jurisdiction that constantly monitor the loyalty of the military and one another with independent paths of communication to critical leaders; (4) the fostering of expertness in the regular military; and (5) the financing of such measures.<sup>37</sup> All threats require the availability of capacity and will for the threats to be credible. Peter Feaver notes that coups occur when officers have both the ability and disposition to stage them.<sup>38</sup> Yet, Quinlivan's operationalization of coup-proofing examines only the capacity aspect of the threat, and ignores the will or disposition of soldiers, which is an equally important component in military threats.<sup>39</sup> If we take this narrow operationalization as the only way to prevent coups then counter-balancing becomes *the* method of coup-proofing; simply because according to this view, counter-balancing is the means that makes the move against the leader more costly. My theory pays attention to this gap. Civilianizing force is about making a change into officers' disposition so that ousting the leader becomes a least likely endeavor. Therefore striking a bargain with the officers about future perks is crucial to the civilianization of force process. This involves some level of negotiations and understanding of the boundaries that mark areas of influence and reimagining of the new boundaries. The political imagination of the leader as well as her ability to find resources to support this bargain is crucial for a successful change. The civilianization of force works on re-orienting the preferences of rival members of the junta and therefore necessitates: the leader's ability to manipulate existing cleavages within the junta,

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<sup>37</sup> Quinlivan, "Coup-Proofing."

<sup>38</sup> Feaver, "Civil-Military Relations."

<sup>39</sup> Most writings on coup-proofing focus on the capacity/ability side of the counterbalancing force. See for example, Enloe, *Ethnic Soldiers*, 1980; Enloe, *Police, Military, and Ethnicity*; Horowitz, *Ethnic Groups in Conflict*; Kamrava, "Military Professionalization and Civil-Military Relations in the Middle East"; Bellin, "The Robustness of Authoritarianism in the Middle East"; Gaub, "The Libyan Armed Forces between Coup-Proofing and Repression"; Albrecht, "The Myth of Coup-Proofing." Erica De Bruin considers the incentives of some soldier to resist the coup, but she focuses on the incentive of the counterbalancing force, so her focus remains along the lines of the capacity argument. De Bruin, "Preventing Coups d'état."



or construct new ones, coupled with his ability to present perks in return for the relinquished power of the junta's domestic control.

Civilianizing force changes the political game rather than maximizing gains according to the old rules of the game. It aims to effect change in the preferences of the junta so that deterring threats is not about how costly a move against the leader is, but about making a change in the disposition of the officers that making such a move becomes undesirable for the rivals. Because this strategy is about changing the game, the leader would have to enjoy political imagination beyond traditional politics. This political imagination is even more crucial when resources are not readily available; the leader would have to make a new political game, not existent yet but tenable, a desirable game for the officers.

The civilianization of force aims to limit threats from the military to the leader's powers. In that sense it is a strategy to proof against threats from the military including coups but not limited to them. Writings have focused on the divide-and-rule strategy that leaders adopt to fragment the junta, the civilianization of force is another strategy that maintains the coherence of the officer corps while aiming to change their preference to oust the leader. In that sense, civilianizing force is not a counter-balancing measure because the military continues to maintain their superiority in terms of training and equipment when compared to the civilian institution of force. While civilianizing force can be identified as one form of coup-proofing, it is also a strategy that limits non-coups instances of military intervention in decision-making.

Two conditions are necessary for the civilianization of force to succeed if initiated: low external threat to the state (threat of war) and a leader-military balance of power that could be manipulated in favor of the leader. The presence of war or threat of it often help consolidate the generals' grip over domestic control and makes it harder for the leadership to displace them. The

civilianization also requires the leader's manipulation of cleavages inside the military to recruit sympathizers to the disengagement process. Since unified actors are more capable of exercising their veto powers,<sup>40</sup> manipulating cleavages within the targeted organization enables the leader to minimize the probability of using veto powers against his policies. With divided interests, the leader can offer perks to generals in lieu of their relinquished power.<sup>41</sup> To the extent that the leadership fails to exploit cleavages or provide incentives, generals often work to further increase their dominance over the political system.

A few conceptual points that are central to the proposed theory need to be laid out. First, the "civilianization of force" is usually part of a broader process of civilianizing power. Scholars argue that authoritarian leaders rely on parties and legislatures because they are effective survival strategies.<sup>42</sup> Although the process of civilianization of force is almost always accompanied by a parallel process of civilianization of power, the reverse is not true. Leaders may create or enhance institutions of representation without shifting the responsibilities of coercion and domestic control away from the military. Second, civilianizing force is not necessarily irreversible or permanent. Like the militarization of power, it is a political process and therefore is subject to reversals. In Egypt, the militarization of the political system started with the 1952 Free Officers' coup and reached its height during Nasser's rule, while Sadat started the shift towards civilianization. Mubarak made greater efforts to disengage the military until it re-intervened in the wake of the January 25<sup>th</sup> protests. Third, the depoliticization of militaries does

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<sup>40</sup> Tsebelis, *Veto Players*; Cox and McCubbins, "The Institutional Determinants of Economic Policy Outcomes."

<sup>41</sup> In few cases displacement without compensation takes place when militaries are weakened and could be readily replaced by other armed actors whose loyalty is guaranteed. This is often the case with revolutionary regimes. Iran post 1979 and Libya post 1969 are two examples. In both cases the revolutionary regimes of Ayatollahs and Qaddafi displaced the old traditional militaries without provision of perks to the generals. El-Khawass, *Qaddafi*; Vandewalle, *Qadhafi's Libya, 1969-1994*; Ward, *Immortal*; Cronin, *Armies and State-Building in the Modern Middle East*.

<sup>42</sup> Brownlee, *Authoritarianism in an Age of Democratization*; Gandhi, *Political Institutions under Dictatorship*; Gandhi and Przeworski, "Authoritarian Institutions and the Survival of Autocrats"; Blaydes, *Elections and Distributive Politics in Mubarak's Egypt*.

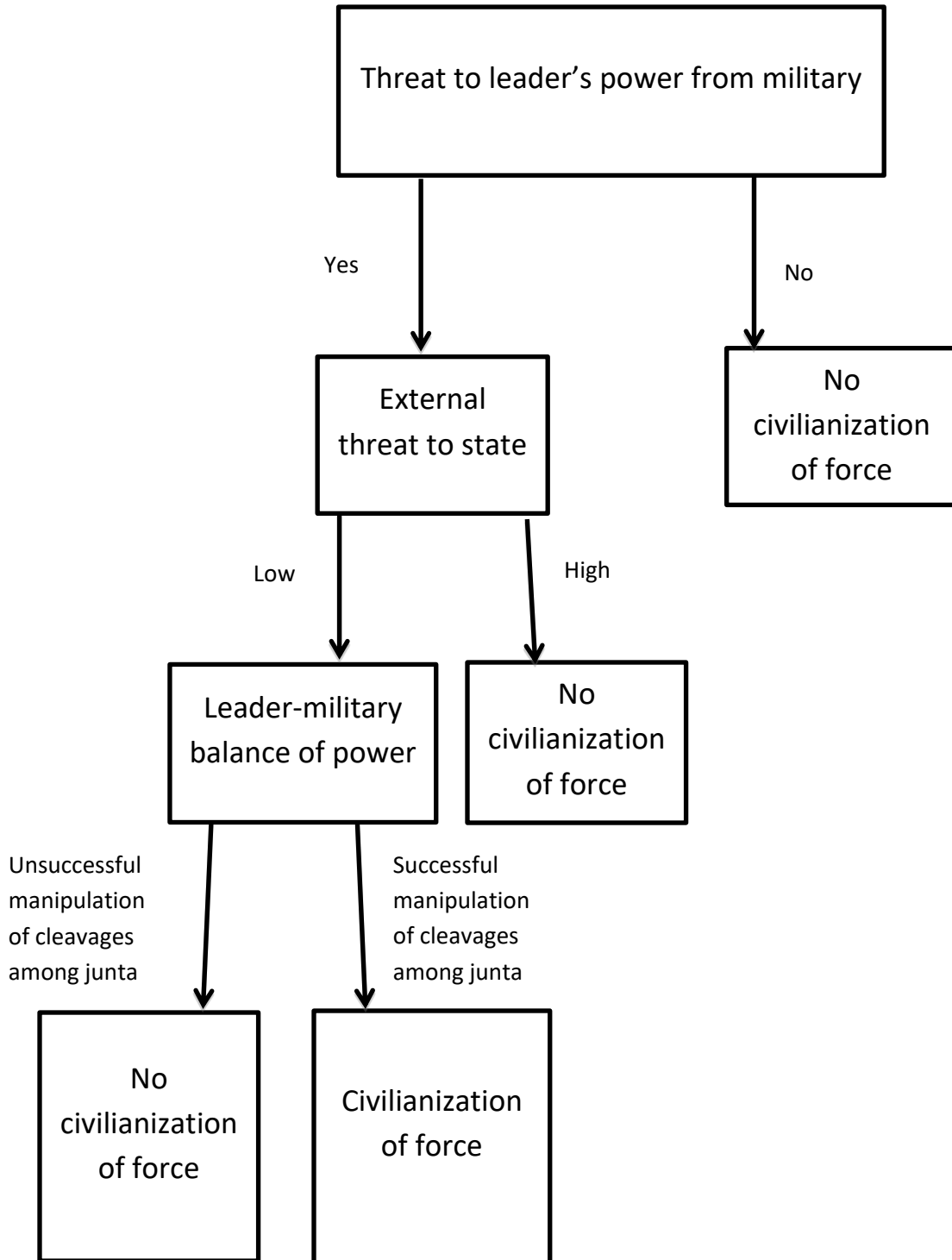
not necessarily mean the complete and total absence of militaries from the domestic arena. Conditions may arise prompting the leader to summon her military to carry out specific missions.<sup>43</sup> Yet, as long as such missions remain isolated, temporary and at the behest of the leader, the civilianization of force can be sustained.

The figure below shows the relationship between the civilianization of force as the independent variable (threats from the military), the dependent variable (the civilianization of force) and the mediating variables (existence of external war threat to the state and the leader-military balance of power). The two mediating variables are sufficient conditions to prevent the realization of the dependent variable. These variables are examined in-depth in chapters 2-3. The last two chapters of the dissertation, chapters 5 and 6, engage with the effects of the civilianization of force on intra-state and state-society relations.

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<sup>43</sup> Military units may be asked to engage in domestic humanitarian efforts and return to their barracks with the completion of their missions. As will be discussed in Chapter 4, the Egyptian government faced three crises that required the intervention of both the military and the MoI forces at the end of the 2010s. It is important to look at the manner in which the regime summoned the two institutions and in what capacity they were mobilized. While the MoI dealt with the alMahallah riots independently, the military was called upon to help to put down a fire that engulfed the historical building of the Shura Council, and to rescue the Dweiqa residents when parts of the Cairo Moqattam Mountain fell on their houses, killing at least 57 and displacing hundreds more. In the latter two crises, the military's role was relegated to one of providing logistical assistance and humanitarian aid.

Figure 1: The Civilianization of Force Process



## Alternative Explanation

What alternative explanations can account for the rise of police powers and the civilianization of force? It is sometimes suggested that the neo-liberal economic changes, and not threats to leaders' power, lead to an increase in the power of the police. Two sub-arguments are often mentioned by proponents of this economic explanation. The first argument posits that with the onset of the neoliberal project and the shift away from welfarism, rulers perceive a greater need for the expansion of the security project, and therefore a bigger role for the police force.<sup>44</sup> The second argument notes that neoliberal reforms bring more civilians into the ruling elite who often find themselves the subject of military contempt;<sup>45</sup> as a result they prefer to rely on civilian police instead of militaries for domestic control. These arguments fail to explain the civilianization of force process, as I conceptualized above, for a number of reasons. The first argument mistakenly conflates police as an institution with policing as a practice. Policing as a practice can be carried out in society through different institutions such as the military, the civilian police, cadres of the ruling party, vigilante members of tribes and families, as well as religious institutions. Exercising the practice itself does not tell us about relations of power. But it is how this practice is organized, divided among or competitively sought after by groups, that is more revealing about positions of power and rivalry among and within groups. An increase in levels of public policing does not necessarily translate to civilianization of force. The state may intensify levels of policing to control discontent associating with more urbanization or regime policies; however, as long as militaries are in charge of domestic control there is no civilianization of force. The argument also overlooks the fact that welfarist populist projects can parallel the depoliticization of militaries and the enhancement of civilian institutions of force. In

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<sup>44</sup> Ismail, *Political Life in Cairo's New Quarters*, 2006; Singerman, *Cairo Contested*; Wacquant, *Punishing the Poor*.

<sup>45</sup> Gandhi, *Political Institutions under Dictatorship*, 30.

Mexico, President Cardenas militarized the peasants and depoliticized the military while promoting statist welfarist economic policies in the 1930s. As for the second argument, it assumes unjustifiably a natural antagonism between business sectors and militaries. Yet, many experiences in Latin America show that military generals and capitalists can forge strong alliances, and that militaries do not hesitate to use their coercive machines to repress voices opposing these alliances. General Pinochet initiated neoliberal reforms in Chile and partnered successfully with the domestic business sector.<sup>46</sup> There is nothing that prevents the military's top brass from cooperating with private business. The military regime that returned to power in Egypt since 2013 espoused neoliberal policies as the ultimate panacea for the country's ailing economy.<sup>47</sup> Other militaries and state armed actors in the Middle East have enjoyed vast and expanding economic powers.<sup>48</sup>

### **Why study Presidents, Militaries and Police?**

The study aims to produce hypotheses about institutional change and armed actors that add to our knowledge on state building, civil-military relations in militarized regimes and authoritarian persistence. These insights cut across comparative politics and international relations in a number of ways. First, explaining change in militaries' roles within political systems produces important insights into scholarship on state building. State-formation studies inform us about the centrality of militaries and war in the making of states,<sup>49</sup> but little is said about how the once powerful militaries disengaged from political governance including the management of domestic dissent. Patterns of democratic civil-military relations where civilians

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<sup>46</sup> For more on market-oriented policies and military rulers in Latin America and in the Middle East, see Biglaiser, *Guardians of the Nation*; Abul-Magd and Grawert, *Businessmen in Arms*.

<sup>47</sup> Sayigh, "Above the State"; Abul-Magd, *Militarizing the Nation*.

<sup>48</sup> Golkar, *Captive Society*; Abul-Magd and Grawert, *Businessmen in Arms*.

<sup>49</sup> Tilly, *Coercion, Capital, and European States, A.D.990-1992*.

control militaries and politics of law and order that currently characterize Western states, have evolved out of militarized systems as historical accounts of some European countries show. At the end of the nineteenth and early twentieth century continental European countries adopted various policies for domestic control. Whereas the newly unified German state embarked upon a process of civilianization of force, the French authorities continued to rely on the military to control political and social dissent.<sup>50</sup> The Prussian experience of disengaging the powerful military commanders from policing did not emerge out of consideration for democratic governance,<sup>51</sup> but it was conflicts over policy-making and policy-implementation that pushed the civilian leaders to rely on their police and disengage the military forces from the management of dissent control.

Second, interactions between leaders and their institutions of force are particularly important for understanding levels of state and societal violence. The importance stems from the particular nature of institutions of force, which stand at the intersection of the two domains from which these threats emerge. On one level, militaries and police are often used to quell public dissent. On another level, they have the ability to check leaders' powers. This double role makes institutions of force a threat in and of themselves. These institutions, therefore, are heavily engaged in the leader's survival, politically and physically. Most works focus on coups as *the* threats from the military but the repertoire of military threats to leaders' power is much broader than coups. By shedding more light on how policy divergences as instances of non-coup threats, the civilianization of force theory adds to our knowledge on coalition building, institutional change and the processes through which political actors aim to redesign the institutional structure

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<sup>50</sup> Johansen, *Soldiers as Police*.

<sup>51</sup> Unlike in France where the republican regime was more accountable to the people, In Germany provincial civilian leaders and military commanders, who were loyal to the Wilhelm II, reacted with an iron fist towards social protests. Johansen.

of the state. Conversations within the civil-military relations literature would be enriched if we use a broader lens that pays attention to all institutions of force and their relationships with leaders.

Third, a fine-grained analysis of the historical legacies of ruling coalition relations is relevant to explanations of regime collapse and survival during mass upheaval, as in the Arab uprisings. What seemed surprising - to some analysts - with regards to the Egyptian military's position vis-à-vis the president during the protests of January 2011 is logically explicable if we understand how the military reacted to the 1977 "bread riots" and the presidential policies that triggered them. In many ways, the case broadens our knowledge on how and when disagreements about policies lead to actors' defection from unpopular ruling coalitions. In this regard, it helps theorize how, when, and why different institutions of coercion (military and police) are employed interchangeably or exclusively to shore up ruling elites, and how disagreements are managed, incentives identified and coalitions formed or deserted.

Fourth, the study underscores how changes in the regional and international context impact domestic politics and coalition formation. The intra-elite dynamics in states enjoying strategic geopolitical status are often tied to international opportunities of funding and support. The Egyptian cases help illuminate how presidents exploit networks of international support to control state and societal institutions, thereby shedding light on leader-society relations that can travel to other experiences.<sup>52</sup>

Finally, studying civilian institutions of force improves our understanding of the dynamics of violence in many parts of the world. In most authoritarian and some newly democratizing states, police are closely tied to networks of criminal violence. In their attempt to

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<sup>52</sup> In the Middle East and North Africa region, presidents were able to utilize international aid to control their societies as in the case of Yemen under Ali Abdullah Saleh.



provide security for authoritarian ruling elites, police sometimes use criminal networks against regimes' political opposition. The deployment of *baltagiyya* in Egypt and the *shabbiha* (thugs) in Syria against pro-democracy and opposition leaders in recent years are but some examples of the networks that bind some members of the security sector and criminal networks. More often than not, these networks, which flourish under authoritarian rule, continue to exist even after democratic transitions, as experiences in many parts of the Global South show.<sup>53</sup> By studying these practices, my goal is to bring to discussions of civil-military relations the important role of police forces in authoritarian regimes.

## **Methodology, Case Selection and Data Collection**

### **Methodology**

The study follows the comparative historical approach (CHA). CHA tradition enriches our knowledge of the workings of authoritarian regimes and identifies the ways in which some important political actors, such as the state, political institutions, and classes, sustain democratic or authoritarian rule.<sup>54</sup> While paying attention to slow but enduring historical development, I also highlight the particular episodes of institutional change. As Giovanni Capoccia and Daniel Ziblatt note history moves via crises or sharply punctuated episodes of change that have lasting consequences.<sup>55</sup> These episodes not only bring different strands that explain change but also captures critical junctures.

To answer the questions of this research, I investigate the political roles of institutions of force, the military and the MoI, and their relationships with the regimes of Nasser, Sadat and

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<sup>53</sup> Davis, "Undermining the Rule of Law"; Hinton, *The State on the Streets*; Comaroff and Comaroff, *Law and Disorder in the Postcolony*.

<sup>54</sup> Mahoney, "Knowledge Accumulation in Comparative Historical Research: The Case of Democracy and Authoritarianism," 163–64.

<sup>55</sup> Capoccia and Ziblatt, "The Historical Turn in Democratization Studies."

Mubarak. I study these experiences of president-institution of force relations as three cases. The three Egyptian presidents faced threats from their militaries but reacted differently. Whereas Nasser followed a divide-and-rule strategy, Sadat engineered a civilianization of force where the military was disengaged. Mubarak continued with Sadat's design and maintained a coherent military while relying like Sadat on the police force as the main domestic control apparatus.

Examining the dynamics of security arrangements in the three cases produces valuable insights into intra-authoritarian shifts. Egyptian presidents all faced serious threats from their militaries; however their ability to overcome such threats differed, in part due to their ability to manipulate cleavages, overcome inherited institutional constraints and adopt new institutional rules. Sadat's policies reflect gradual transformations that have unfolded incrementally. In the dual process of party building and police force strengthening, both Sadat and Mubarak followed a process of institutional displacement.<sup>56</sup>

## **Data Collection**

The empirical exploration of the Egyptian cases is based on archival research of available primary sources such as official and semi-official newspapers. I made several trips stretching over 24 months of field research in Egypt. In the Egyptian National Archives, I found specialized magazines and publications of the military and the MoI to be a great source. Editorials, investigative reports and photo coverage of ceremonies and official functions provided invaluable insights into the politics of institutions of force and the balance of power of the state's strong men.

I have also mined memoirs of public officials, journalists who were close to presidents, high officers from the military and the police. I agree with Archie Brown that selective recollections and reminiscences of politicians have their limitations but that they are revealing

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<sup>56</sup> Mahoney and Thelen, *Explaining Institutional Change*, 3.

and in many ways not in the way their authors intended.<sup>57</sup> My research was complimented by direct interviews with numerous activists and officials including retired officers, judges, journalists, and university professors. My interviews included open-ended as well as targeted questions in order to minimize personal bias. During the period between January 2011 and July 2013, officials, retired generals and security experts were more willing to comment on the political roles of the MoI.

## **Plan of the Dissertation**

The dissertation examines the process of civilianizing force in two ways. The first looks into the conditions that led to evolution of MoI powers. In chapters 2 – 4, I trace the development of security actors in the Egypt’s first republic and the changing international and regional environment under which Presidents Nasser, Sadat and Mubarak operated. In this part of the research the civilianization of force is examined as the dependent variable. Each chapter focuses on one presidential era and scrutinizes moments of friction between leaders and their generals. I examine how changes in external threats posed challenges or offered opportunities for the Egyptian presidency to reconfigure domestic security arrangements. Chapter 2 focuses on the militarization of force under Nasser and how the salience of coup threats affected his choice of coup-proofing strategy, as he opted for a divide-and-rule strategy to fragment his junta. Sadat skillfully manipulated the cleavages that already existed among the junta to convince them to withdraw from policies of domestic control while offering them higher level of professionalization. Mubarak continued and offered economic perks as he increasingly relied on the MoI and its police to weaken his rivals.

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<sup>57</sup> Brown, *The Myth of the Strong Leader, Political Leadership in the Modern Age*, xi.

In chapters 3 and 4, I zoom in on the mechanism that enables the civilianization of force, a mechanism that I label “compensated displacement.” Asking generals to forego some domain of power is not an easy task in militarized regimes, and only skillful leaders are capable of convincing the upper brass to let go of established power but in return for some perks. Chapter 3 shows how Sadat’s success in displacing the military from domestic control while compensating them with institutional as well as economic benefits. Chapter 4 shows Mubarak’s efforts to disengage the military and the institutional build-up of the MoI under his rule. It also discusses how the increasing personalization of power in Mubarak’s final years led to cracks in this bargain until it was ultimately broken under the pressure of the 2011 mass protests.

In the last two chapters of the dissertation, I turn to the second level of examination as I focus on the effect of civilianizing force on state institution’s power and coherence as well as state-society relations. Chapters 5 and 6 investigate the MoI’s practices under Mubarak. I trace the increase in political power of the MoI’s police force and surveillance department (Mabaheth Amn alDawla) vis-à-vis state. I adopt a post-Weberian analysis with regards to the state’s monopoly over violence, building on Joel Migdal’s state-in-society approach to understand how unchecked police powers had an impact on intra-state and state-society relations. Chapter 5 focuses on how the illegal, but regime-condoned, police practices produced tensions between the judiciary and the MoI. In its attempt to shore up the unpopular Mubarak regime, the police helped with the rigging of parliamentary elections and against judicial rulings to annul elections. In a sense, the legislature became the victim and the battle ground of illegal practices of police. I argue that the deepening tension about state practices between the wielders of physical force and juridical capitals, whose powers should have harmoniously overlapped, had produced ultimately the image of an incoherent disintegrating state.

In chapter 6, I turn to organizational theory to discuss the violence of state agents against apolitical citizens. Unwarranted violence by non-commissioned officers against citizens in poor neighborhoods is a second level of state violence that grew under the anti-opposition repressive policies of the police. I discuss how this violence from below reflects pervasive problems with professionalization and organizational corruption within the Egyptian Ministry of Interior.

In the final conclusion, I make some closing remarks about the role of economic development in Egypt, especially the turn to market economy that has been taking place since the mid-1970s. While I don't claim that economic models lead to changes in domestic security arrangements, I discuss briefly how a particular form of neoliberal economic shift has impacted institutions of force in Egypt, making possible certain ways of institutional enrichment and abuse. I, also, discuss venues for future research that can build on this dissertation and the extent to which my theory can help explain developments in other parts of the world.

## Chapter 2

### Nasser's Militarization of the Regime

#### Introduction

In 1949, Major Gamal AbdelNasser was subpoenaed for investigation by the Ministry of Interior (MoI). It was only few months after his return from the 1948 Arab-Israeli War and his political activism came under the radar of the MoI. Nasser had by then communicated with almost all anti-colonialist movements in Egypt. He had been engaging in the military training of nationalist insurgents including the Muslim Brotherhood youth against British and Zionist forces on the eastern border of the country. The then Prime Minister and Minister of Interior Ibrahim Abd elHadi Pasha interrogated him personally in the presence of the MoI's head of political policing, General Ahmed Taalat, and the military's the Chief of Staff, General Uthman alMahdi. The MoI's political police had found a military training manual signed by Nasser in a raid on a Muslim Brotherhood group. For four hours, Abd elHadi grilled the young major trying to get information about insurgents. Denying any connection to the MB, Nasser testified only to training youth for the 1948 War in Palestine which Egyptian authorities considered a nationalist struggle. Nasser was ultimately released without charges and escorted to his house by General alMahdi to collect arms that Nasser used in the training of the youth.<sup>1</sup> Three years later, Nasser was to mastermind a military coup which ultimately overthrew the Egyptian monarch and the civilian ruling elite. Under his rule, the relationship between the MoI and the military was

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<sup>1</sup> Sharaf, *Sanawat Wa-Ayyam Ma'a Jamal 'Abd Al-Nasir*; Abd al-Nassir, *Dhikrayati Ma'ahu*, 34–35; Beattie, *Egypt during the Nasser Years*, 50.

restructured.<sup>2</sup> With the militarization of force, Nasser guaranteed the hegemony of the military over domestic security.

Because all military regimes are the result of successful coups,<sup>3</sup> this chapter focuses on the post-coup evolution of the political system. The historical narrative of the Nasser case exposes the political dynamics in order to highlight three important points: i) the militarization of the system as the military assumed leadership over state institutions, ii) leaders' strategies when faced with the threat of coups,<sup>4</sup> and iii) the impact of war on intra-regime dynamics and the political power of institutions of force. A leader's relationship with institutions of force is shaped by various aspects including security threats, institutional interests of ruling parties, officers' professional training and personal traits, and historical interactions between the parties.

Following the Free Officers' coup, the military came to dominate the organization of state violence bringing under their wing all surveillance units and police forces. This was a sharp departure from policies of domestic control under the ousted monarch where the MoI and its police force maintained a strong grip over society. The case shows how military threats to a leader's power that emerge in the early years of his rule influence his choice of mechanisms to minimize these threats. Coup threats were clearly present from the early months following the July 1952 coup. As Nasser relied on the military's infrastructural power to consolidate his rule and erect major state-building projects, he adopted an intra-junta divide-and-rule strategy that produced a more politicized officer corps with emphasis on loyalty than meritocracy. The impact of war is then brought to this discussion as I investigate how it affected the organization of state

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<sup>2</sup> Egypt has enjoyed a centralized police force as part of the MoI apparatus. The development of the MoI and its different forces will be discussed at a later section of this chapter.

<sup>3</sup> Singh, *Seizing Power*.

<sup>4</sup> Militaries can also threaten leaders' powers by obstructing policies and when they deny their infrastructural power to implement leaders' plans. This other pattern of threat will be discussed in the next chapter.

violence under Nasser's militarized regime, and how regime type mediated the war results on intra-regime rivalry and therefore leader survival.

The chapter first engages with literature on military intervention in politics, coup threats and leaders' survival. I then turn to the empirical narrative of Nasser's presidency. I start with a brief review of the history of the relationship between the military and the police as the state's institutions of force and how the junta militarized force in light of old rivalry between the two institutions and the new challenges that emerged from within the military.

## **Understanding Threats and the Organization of Force in Militarized Regimes**

In authoritarian regimes, where an independent authority to enforce agreements among key political actors is absent, violence becomes ever present and often the ultimate arbiter of conflicts.<sup>5</sup> Officers may intervene in politics to protect their corporate interests especially their autonomy over officer corps appointments, budget allocation and the prevention of parallel unprofessional forces.<sup>6</sup> Generals may also intervene in collusion with other groups to preserve their economic privileges,<sup>7</sup> or in response to pressure from politicians to replace what they view as a failing government.<sup>8</sup> Military intervention in politics comes in multiple forms and degrees. Samuel Finer has argued that militaries intervene in politics through influence and blackmail, as much as through coups.<sup>9</sup>

Scholarly works provide a number of definitions for coups. Some studies define them as the infiltration of a small but critical segment of the state apparatus, which is then used to

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<sup>5</sup> North, Wallis, and Weingast, *Violence and Social Orders*; Svobik, *The Politics of Authoritarian Rule*, 2012.

<sup>6</sup> Nordlinger, *Soldiers in Politics*, 63–107; Desch, *Civilian Control of the Military*.

<sup>7</sup> O'Donnell, *Modernization and Bureaucratic-Authoritarianism*; Acemoglu and Robinson, *Economic Origins of Dictatorship and Democracy*.

<sup>8</sup> Stepan, *The Military in Politics*.

<sup>9</sup> Finer, *The Man on Horseback*.



displace the government from its control of the remainder. According to this definition, coups need not be conducted solely by military and may not even involve any significant portion of the military among the perpetrators.<sup>10</sup> Other definitions emphasize the role of armed forces in ousting leaders, identifying a coup as “an explicit action, involving some portion of the state military, police, or security forces undertaken with intent to overthrow the government,”<sup>11</sup> or “an attempt by regime elites to remove political leaders using unconstitutional means – typically via the threat or use of force. Thus, elites who have access to physical forces (military officers) have central roles in organizing coups”<sup>12</sup> In this study, I follow the latter set of definitions which underscore the role of military officers in organizing unconstitutional removal of leaders.<sup>13</sup>

Regimes that emerge out of successful coups are particularly vulnerable to the use of force against them. While the first coup sets new rules, making the political arena more accessible to officers and asserting their right in governance,<sup>14</sup> a coup also increases the security threats to the new regime. The security dilemma of coups is that they often set the stage for more forceful intervention by other armed groups. The swift and secretive movement of potential state armed actors makes the coup a credible challenge to post-coup military regimes.<sup>15</sup> Studies show that the after effects of successful coups are felt for many years in the form of a heightened risk for further forceful intervention.<sup>16</sup> A successful coup continues to elevate coup propensity for up

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<sup>10</sup> Luttwak, *Coup d'etat*, 3; Farcau, *The Coup*, 2–8.

<sup>11</sup> Singh, *Seizing Power*, 51.

<sup>12</sup> Sudduth, “Strategic Logic of Elite Purges in Dictatorships.”

<sup>13</sup> For a discussion on definition of coup-proofing, see chapter 1.

<sup>14</sup> Nordlinger, *Soldiers in Politics*, 6.

<sup>15</sup> Roessler, “The Enemy Within”; Albrecht, “The Myth of Coup-Proofing.”

<sup>16</sup> Londregan and Poole, “Poverty, the Coup Trap, and the Seizure of Executive Power.”

to six years,<sup>17</sup> with the first years of rule carrying the strongest hazards to leaders' power.<sup>18</sup> This means that each military government carries within itself the seeds of its own removal.<sup>19</sup>

While ruling elite members of all backgrounds pose threats to leader's rule, the ultimate power lies with those who possess rifles, machine guns, tanks and planes.<sup>20</sup> Threats from military associates are more real given the officers' readily access to force and therefore ability to act, often in small units,<sup>21</sup> with the hope that the rest of the officer corps will join them against the incumbent.<sup>22</sup> This particularity of ruling elite threats in post-coup military regimes is often overlooked in the general theories on authoritarian survival. Milan Svoblik argues that leaders in authoritarian regimes face threats from the ruling elite and threats from the masses. These threats create power-sharing and control challenges.<sup>23</sup> While his framework is insightful its application to leader-junta relationship in militarized regimes is lacking on several points. First the model is built on the assumption that the ruling elite are a unitary actor. This is problematic because members of ruling elites often have diverse institutional backgrounds and interests. Militarized regimes are no different even as the ruling junta belongs to the same institution. Junta members are far from being a unified whole. As Edward Luttwak notes, the modern army or security force is too large to be a coherent social unit bound by traditional loyalties.<sup>24</sup> More often coups are the result of coalition-building processes within the officer corps in which a hard anti-regime nucleus of officers gradually adds allies with a wide variety of motives.<sup>25</sup> Second, Svoblik's

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<sup>17</sup> Londregan and Poole.

<sup>18</sup> Bienen and Walle, "Time and Power in Africa."

<sup>19</sup> Londregan and Poole, "Poverty, the Coup Trap, and the Seizure of Executive Power"; Singh, *Seizing Power*, 3; Talmadge, *The Dictator's Army*, 22.

<sup>20</sup> Nordlinger, *Soldiers in Politics*, 5.

<sup>21</sup> Samuel Huntington notes that coups are characterized by small scale violence perpetrated by small number of people to replace illegally an existing government. Huntington, *Political Order in Changing Societies*, 218.

<sup>22</sup> Geddes, "What Do We Know About Democratization After Twenty Years?"; Singh, *Seizing Power*.

<sup>23</sup> Svoblik, *The Politics of Authoritarian Rule*, 2012.

<sup>24</sup> Luttwak, *Coup d'etat*, 63.

<sup>25</sup> Needler, "Political Development and Military Intervention in Latin America."

framework assumes the presence of established rules governing membership and jurisdiction, and therefore facilitate the exchange of information about decisions and members' opinions.

While some authoritarian regimes do enjoy high level of institutionalization of rules as in strong party systems, others experience high level of system fluidity where formal or informal rules are far from being institutionalized.<sup>26</sup> The state of political fluidity is more salient in the early years following a coup. Finally, Svolik notes that the ruling elite can prevent the leader from reneging on agreements to share-power as long as their threat of rebellion against the leader is credible. His analysis conflates the credibility of elite rebellion with the success to actually remove the leader. Yet, social scientific research on coups and their rates of success shows that they are staged but are not always successful when they lack support and coordination from the broader officer corps. In his study of 471 coup attempts worldwide, Singh finds that the success of military coups depends on the dynamics that take place within the officer corps after the first move is made against the leader.<sup>27</sup> I posit that failed coups are credible threats even if they do not accomplish their original goal: the leader's ouster. Simply because attempts to remove the leader are not successful doesn't mean that their threats are less credible. For instance, Saddam Hussein in Iraq, Mu'ammarr Ghadafi in Libya and King Hassan II in Morocco all faced multiple coup attempts but were able to overcome them.<sup>28</sup> If Svolik's model were to represent leaders' behavior, then the above-mentioned leaders should have shared more power with their elite after each coup attempt – which was not the case.

Svolik's model is elegant theoretically but its focus on the credibility of threats does not adequately explain how a leader can overcome challenges from the ruling elite. What is missing

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<sup>26</sup> Pion-Berlin, "Informal Civil-Military Relations in Latin America."

<sup>27</sup> Singh, *Seizing Power*.

<sup>28</sup> Quinlivan, "Coup-Proofing"; Woods, Lacey, and Murray, "Saddam's Delusions"; Sassoon, *Saddam Hussein's Ba'th Party*; Gaub, "The Libyan Armed Forces between Coup-Proofing and Repression"; Herb, *All in the Family*.

from his theory of authoritarian rule is the ability of a leader to manipulate cleavages among the ruling elite. Svoblik notes that luck plays an important part in the endogenous balance of power between leaders and their ruling elites.<sup>29</sup> I argue, however, that while luck may present some opportunities, leaders' survival depends to a great extent on their ability to seize these opportunities to fragment their opposition and craft policies that better shield them from their rivals. The adept manipulation of cleavages, rather than luck, helps change the relative power of leaders vis-à-vis their challengers. Manipulating cleavages works on two levels: on one level it intensifies the commitment problem among the opposition, especially those who are not yet committed to removing the leader. On another level, it deepens the coordination problem even among those who may share the desire to rid the system of the leader.

The junta's fears of coups are often exacerbated when the state faces an external threat, i.e. the threat of war. Studies focusing on regime type and war have looked into the propensity of authoritarian regimes to wage war,<sup>30</sup> and the effect of losing war on leader survival.<sup>31</sup> Other studies have focused on how war impacts the political power of militaries. Michael Desch highlights the impact of internal threats on military involvement in domestic politics,<sup>32</sup> however seminal civil-military relations studies have identified external threats, especially war, as the

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<sup>29</sup> Svoblik, *The Politics of Authoritarian Rule*, 2012, 62.

<sup>30</sup> Lai and Slater, "Institutions of the Offensive"; Pickering and Kisangani, "Diversionary Despots?"; Weeks, *Dictators at War and Peace*; Horowitz, McDermott, and Stam, "Leader Age, Regime Type, and Violent International Relations"; Way and Weeks, "Making It Personal."

<sup>31</sup> Debs and Goemans, "Regime Type, the Fate of Leaders, and War"; Weeks, *Dictators at War and Peace*; Goemans, "Fighting for Survival."

<sup>32</sup> Michael Desch argues that external threats increase civilian control over militaries, while internal threats produce internally oriented military doctrines which weaken the civilian control. Desch's theory, however, does not investigate the impact of external threat on already militarized regimes (my scope condition) and focuses on change in the power of civilians within civilian-controlled states. His study engages with a number of cases that vary along two variables: external and internal threats. Desch acknowledges that in at least half of the four different configurations of these two variables lead to inconclusive results as to whether the military will be externally or domestically oriented. The two cases that confirm his main theoretical claim (high external threat coupled with low internal threat) are the US and the USSR during the Cold War. That these confirming cases are nuclear powers that faced existential threats bring questions about the portability of the claim to other cases. Desch, *Civilian Control of the Military*.

dominant factor for militaries' heightened internal influence. Harold Lasswell has noted that war produces the garrison state.<sup>33</sup> Samuel Finer has argued that external wars increase the domestic political influence of militaries. Given that the need for protection is high, rulers and the public show more support and delegate more powers to their armed forces during times of war.<sup>34</sup> In-depth empirical examinations support the impact of war on heightened power of militaries within the system. The India-Pakistan conflict shows that the salience of external threat (in the case of Pakistan) has more impact on the militarization of politics than the internal threats (in the case of India).<sup>35</sup> Other accounts of armed actors' political behavior in Indonesia, Iraq and Iran show that external threats make states consolidate and centralize armed actors under the command of militaries, while lack of external threats may lead to devolution of violence.<sup>36</sup> I build on insights from this literature to examine the impact of war on leader-military balance of power. The development of Nasser-junta relationship showcases how changes in the power of the leader relative to that of the junta can mitigate the impact of war results on leader survival.

In the following section, I turn to the historical narrative of the Nasser era to show the militarization of the system and Nasser's strategy for survival.

### **Nasser's Coup, Coup Threats and the Fragile Intra-Junta Coalition**

In the wake of the 1948 Arab-Israeli War the Free Officers (FOs), a secret group of mid-ranking military officers, plotted to change the political system in Egypt. The officers were antagonized by the monarchy and the occupying British forces whom they believed were responsible for the loss of Arab territory in Palestine and the socio-economic backwardness of

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<sup>33</sup> Lasswell, "The Garrison State."

<sup>34</sup> Finer 2006, ch.6.

<sup>35</sup> Staniland, "Explaining Civil-Military Relations in Complex Political Environments."

<sup>36</sup> Ahram, *Proxy Warriors*.

Egyptian society.<sup>37</sup> Nasser was the central figure who recruited members while making contacts to almost all nationalist and anti-colonial movements in Egypt at the time.<sup>38</sup> Brigadier General Mohamed Naguib was approached by the FO to lead the coup only ten days prior to the operation. His distinct military record and opposition to the King's policies gained him the FO's respect and made him an eligible public face for the movement.<sup>39</sup> The coup took place on the eve of July 23<sup>rd</sup>, changing Egypt's political system for the following decades.

With the exile of King Farouq in July 26, 1952, the junta restructured governance, paying particular attention to the military. A 14-member Revolutionary Command Council (RCC) was established to lead the country.<sup>40</sup> General Naguib was made the general commander of the armed forces and under his command wide scale purges took place.<sup>41</sup> The purges first targeted those loyal to the monarchy and those espousing communist ideology. Some were fired and others were forced into early retirement.<sup>42</sup> Then officers who enjoyed popularity but were not part of the FO's core were transferred to non-military jobs. In a later stage officers with ties to the Muslim Brotherhood were also expunged from the officer corps.

The purges, however, did not provide security against challengers from within the junta. In the first years of the new regime, Nasser still faced two strong challenges from his military associates. The first challenge took place only 6 months after the coup, and was followed by a

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<sup>37</sup> Nasser, "The Egyptian Revolution."

<sup>38</sup> Estimates of the total number of FO ranged from 99 to 327 officers. Beattie, *Egypt during the Nasser Years*.

<sup>39</sup> Beattie, 66–69.

<sup>40</sup> The RCC included several members of the executive committee of the FO who represented the different service branches. Out of the 14 members, four were the infantry, three from the Cavalry (armored Corps), three from the air force, two from the artillery, one from the signal corps (military communications) and one from the border corps. Kandil, *Soldiers, Spies, and Statesmen*, 16.

<sup>41</sup> In many ways Naguib was what Farcau called a "swing man," a general whose seniority and popularity were used by the original plotters to garner support to their coup plan within the officer corps, but had little de facto power. Farcau, *The Coup*, 5.

<sup>42</sup> Beattie, *Egypt during the Nasser Years*, 86.

more acute crisis that exploded in March 1954. In both instances, the use of force by fellow officers was present and clearly threatened Nasser's power.

Early disagreements within the FO surfaced when a group of officers who participated in the coup but were on the outer rings of the ruling junta objected to the policies of the inner core. The protesting officers highlighted signs of corruption and misuse of authority by some of Nasser's close associates. In response, the RCC accused the rebelling officers, who belonged to the artillery forces, of communicating with civilians including leaders of political parties and the Muslim Brotherhood to destabilize the new regime. In January 1953, the protesting officers were rounded, tried in front of a military court presided over by the RCC and imprisoned.<sup>43</sup> These officers were later freed in March 1954 during the Cavalier Crisis to defend Nasser and his ruling junta.

The second challenge unfolded few months after; it revealed the real influence of Nasser vis-à-vis Naguib. The junta and their different followings within the military split over the restoration of the country's democratic liberal activities and the form of land reform that the FOs pushed for. By the second half of 1953, Nasser overcame opposition from Naguib and banned all political parties, creating a one-party system under the Liberation Rally, a loosely structured movement whose chief task was to organize pro-RCC rallies and lectures.<sup>44</sup> In June 1953 the RCC announced the termination of the monarchy and the inauguration of a republican system with General Naguib announced as the first President. Naguib also held the position of the prime minister, but the more critical positions of control were held by the younger junta members. Nasser was appointed Deputy of the Chair of the RCC and held the portfolio of the MoI. Members of the FO were put into leadership positions within the military to guarantee the

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<sup>43</sup> Naguib, *Kuntu ra 'īs li-Miṣr*, 181.

<sup>44</sup> Kandil, *Soldiers, Spies, and Statesmen*, 22.

support of the rank and file.<sup>45</sup> The Ministry of War was given to Abd alLatif alBaghdadi.<sup>46</sup> Nasser's closest friend and confidant Major Abd elHakim Amer was promoted to lieutenant general displacing Naguib as the commander-in-chief of the Armed Forces. Amer's meteoric rise offended a number of generals who resigned in response. Gradually, the young officers of the RCC started marginalizing Naguib,<sup>47</sup> who responded by leaning further towards the old system's political elite especially the Wafd Party and the MB.<sup>48</sup> On 25 February 1954, Naguib announced his resignation after the RCC held an official meeting without his presence two days prior. Nasser accepted the resignation and put him under house arrest and the RCC proclaimed Nasser as both RCC chairman and prime minister.<sup>49</sup> Officers loyal to Naguib protested showing force and asked for his immediate reinstatement and the RCC's dissolution. Nasser met with the protesting officers in the General Military Headquarters (GHQ) and initially accepted their demands to end their mutiny. In response, Nasser's supporting officers threatened to bomb the GHQ. The confrontation transformed from the barracks to the streets when pro-Naguib MB called for Naguib's return and Nasser's imprisonment. The situation intensified when officers from the Cavalier corps (armored corps) led by Khaled Mohie elDin, who had been calling for resuming constitutional democracy and the return of the military to the barracks, demanded Naguib's release and his return to the presidency. Nasser acquiesced, but delayed Naguib's reinstatement until March 4<sup>th</sup>, allowing him to promote Amer to Commander of the Armed

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<sup>45</sup> al-Baghdadi, *Mudhakkirat 'Abd al-Latif al-Baghdadi*, 64.

<sup>46</sup> Abdel-Malek, *Egypt: Military Society*, 93.

<sup>47</sup> The FO seemed less patient to accommodate de jure power of Naguib. Their meetings were held in his absence. They also made a number of political decisions without his deliberation, and communicated the new laws to newspapers without informing him. al-Baghdadi, *Mudhakkirat 'Abd al-Latif al-Baghdadi*; Naguib, *Kuntu ra'is li-Miṣr*; Beattie, *Egypt during the Nasser Years*; Kandil, *Soldiers, Spies, and Statesmen*.

<sup>48</sup> The Wafd Party was one of the strongest social forces in Egypt between 1919 and 1952 during the country's liberal democratic experience. It received mass support cutting across class and sectarian divide. Hinnebusch, "The Reemergence of the Wafd Party."

<sup>49</sup> Naguib, *Kuntu ra'is li-Miṣr*; Kandil, *Soldiers, Spies, and Statesmen*; Cook, *The Struggle for Egypt*.



Forces—a position formerly occupied by Naguib.<sup>50</sup> By March 5<sup>th</sup>, thousands of pro-Naguib supporters were arrested. In an attempt to rally opposition against a return to the pre-1952 order, the RCC decreed an end to restrictions on monarchy-era parties and announced the Free Officers' withdrawal from politics. The RCC's announcement succeeded in mobilizing the beneficiaries of land reform and wealth redistribution, namely the workers and peasants to oppose the decrees, leading to a mass protest by transport workers and thousands of peasants marching onto Cairo in protest in late March.<sup>51</sup> Naguib sought to crack down on the protesters, but his requests were rebuffed by the heads of the security forces. On March 29<sup>th</sup>, Nasser announced the decrees' revocation in response to the "impulse of the street". Between April and June, hundreds of Naguib's supporters in the military were either arrested or dismissed, and K. Mohie elDin was appointed to represent the RCC abroad and was sent to Switzerland.<sup>52</sup>

Nasser emerged victorious but remained wary of possible counter coups from the military. His most trusted friend Amer was to assume the responsibility of eliminating any such threats in the following years. Despite Amer's limited military experience and mismanagement of the military his powers were less and less checked especially after the Suez War. It was only after the Six Day War that Amer's power diminished. As Nasser removed him from the leadership of the military, the Field Marshal refused to relinquish his position and assume responsibility for the defeat. Nasser received reports that Amer resigned to stockpiling arms in his residence and was joined by the fired Minister of War Shams Badran. Few weeks of negotiations between Amer and Nasser failed to resolve the situation amicably. Amer was finally put under

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<sup>50</sup> Beattie, *Egypt during the Nasser Years*; Cook, *The Struggle for Egypt*; Kandil, *Soldiers, Spies, and Statesmen*; Muhyi al-Din, *Memories of a Revolution*.

<sup>51</sup> Muhyi al-Din, *Memories of a Revolution*.

<sup>52</sup> In a sense, Khaled Mohie elDin's mission abroad was a soft exile mandated by Nasser and accepted by him. Khaled's first cousin Zakaria, also a prominent founding member of the FO, continued to support Nasser's policies. Muhyi al-Din.

house arrest at the end of August 1967, and all his associates imprisoned.<sup>53</sup> Two weeks after, Amer took his life.

## **The Militarization of Force**

Juntas militarize force to protect their rule and project their power. The unconstitutional entry of junta into office through coups, make them fearful for their security and survival.<sup>54</sup> The dissemination of common information can facilitate collective action including rebelling against rulers, therefore controlling surveillance is one of the early steps that ruling juntas take to secure their rule. Because civilian police prior to the coup have access to in-depth information about the public, junta members often work to control the policing apparatus. Military officers either displace the police, co-share the responsibilities of political policing and/or carefully design policing strategies while closely monitoring their performance.<sup>55</sup> Surveillance is equally integral to the implementation of the new regime's goals. Surveillance, as Anthony Giddens notes, is the necessary condition of the administrative power of states.<sup>56</sup> To the extent that officers have solid information about individuals and group preferences, their plans to control society can be designed and implemented with higher levels of precision.

Juntas also militarize force when they distrust the police force. This lack of trust can be due to doubts about the capacity and/or the will of the police force. When coups are staged following political turbulence, military officers often feel a duty to restore order and at the same time have little faith in the capacity of the police to carry out security missions diligently.

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<sup>53</sup> Abdel-Malek, *Egypt: Military Society*; Beattie, *Egypt during the Nasser Years*; Cook, *The Struggle for Egypt*; Kandil, *Soldiers, Spies, and Statesmen*.

<sup>54</sup> Bienen and Walle, "Time and Power in Africa."

<sup>55</sup> I do not claim that the police or the military are the only policing apparatuses in society. In some societies, civilian groups can take over policing responsibilities. Party cadres in party-based regimes, tribal members in tribal regimes, or religious figures where the religious institution dominates the political sphere.

<sup>56</sup> Giddens, *The Nation-State and Violence*, 309.

Military officers would prefer to undertake these responsibilities themselves.<sup>57</sup> In other instances, junta members may doubt the loyalty of the police force because of their previous connection to the ousted regime. The ruling junta would not entrust them with domestic security. Military officers, in this case, would undergo massive purges of the police while keeping them under close scrutiny to prevent potential rebellion from the old guards.

Historical tensions, in addition to the above political and operational concerns, played into the relationship between Nasser's junta and the MoI. The Egyptian Ministry of Interior was established in 1857 and run by Ottomans and the help of Europeans.<sup>58</sup> With the fall of Egypt under British occupation in 1882, British forces took over the structuring of its MoI.<sup>59</sup> Although established as a civilian institution for law and order, the force soon witnessed the militarization of its poorly-trained personnel.<sup>60</sup> The MoI faced several problems, in particular their politicization and poor armament and training.<sup>61</sup> Following the 1919 Revolution and the 1922 Declaration of Independence, Egyptian nationalist governments attempted to distance the MoI from the influence of occupying British authorities but these efforts had limited results.<sup>62</sup> The MoI maintained its politicized outlook especially with the creation of the political policing units in the mid-1930s.

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<sup>57</sup> Nordlinger, *Soldiers in Politics*, 54–55.

<sup>58</sup> Ottomans and Europeans held the positions of inspectors, officers and constables, while Egyptians were relegated to lower ranks. Tollefson, *Policing Islam*.

<sup>59</sup> The MoI's police officers and the un-commissioned *ghafirs* (village police) came under the control of the British especially after the installation of a British adviser to the minister of interior in 1894. Tollefson, 180.

<sup>60</sup> Britain's own community policing model was ill-suited for its colonies because the model depended on community cooperation and public consensus; the British indirect rule was better served by the Royal Irish Constabulary (RIC) model which was more centralized, semi-militarized and coercive. In the early years of colonization, the militarization of the Egyptian police was delayed for fear of possible collusion between the Egyptian military and the police against the occupying forces. As the occupation consolidated, British rulers shifted to the militarized policing model. Tollefson, 148; Clayton and Killingray, *Khaki and Blue*.

<sup>61</sup> The source for MoI equipment was the Egyptian military's light arms. Except for a limited number of rifles, the military's out-dated arms were used to equip the police, Bakr, *al-Bulis al-Misri 1922-1952*, 257.

<sup>62</sup> Although anti-colonialist elected cabinets made purges to rid the police of the pro-British elements, the police were generally viewed as the ruling elite's coercive arm against nationalists. Bakr, 291–317.

The relationship between the Egyptian military and the police before 1952 was anything but cooperative. The Egyptian political system under the nascent liberal democracy during the period 1922-1952 was fluid witnessing a high rate of government turn-over and increase in activities of political movements.<sup>63</sup> The MoI's political police became indispensable to the British Commissioner, the Egyptian Monarch and Egyptian prime ministers in their attempt to identify and control their respective opposition.<sup>64</sup> Some members of the force working in the unit were even implicated in political assassinations.<sup>65</sup> The police gathered information about military officers' political activities and surveillance reports were submitted to the British embassy in Cairo.<sup>66</sup> The subpoena of Nasser was not an isolated incident; other high ranking officers were often called into the MoI for investigation. In 1947 Mohamed Naguib was interrogated by the Deputy Minister of Interior to investigate his political activism especially his close contacts with Sudanese politicians living in Egypt.<sup>67</sup> King Farouq's appointment of Mohamed Haydar Pasha, a police general, to head the Ministry of War in 1948 further fueled officers' resentment to both the monarchical rule and the MoI.<sup>68</sup>

The 1952 coup ushered in a qualitative change in the organization of state power. The young military officers brought under their direct supervision the state's institutions of force: the armed forces, the police, prisons, and to a lesser degree the courts.<sup>69</sup> Nasser became the first Minister of Interior from the military, before handing over the position to his trusted and fellow

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<sup>63</sup> Bishri, *al-Harakah al-siyasiyah fi Misr, 1945-1952*.

<sup>64</sup> Almost all anti-colonial activities were targeted by the MoI including nationalist and Communist movements as well as the Muslim Brotherhood. The MoI's repressive measures against nationalist movements dates back to Earl Kitchener who commanded the Egyptian police in 1890. Tollefson, *Policing Islam*.

<sup>65</sup> The assassination of Hassan elBanna, the Muslim Brotherhood's founder and its first guide in February 1949 was investigated by the FO's revolutionary court and found to be orchestrated by the MoI's political policing unit. Police officers were also implicated in other assassinations. Bakr, *al-Bulis al-Misri 1922-1952*, 305.

<sup>66</sup> Bakr, 321.

<sup>67</sup> Naguib, *Kuntu ra 'is li-Misr*, 68.

<sup>68</sup> To military officers the move reflected the King's disrespect for military traditions and their professionalization. Naguib, 70.

<sup>69</sup> Abdel-Malek, *Egypt: Military Society*, xxvi.

FO member Lieut. Colonel Zakaria Mohie elDin.<sup>70</sup> Many police officers were purged either through firing or early retirement. The Special Division which was assigned with political policing was renamed into General Investigation Directorate.<sup>71</sup> By 1957 a number of social control laws were issued including a new Police Authority Law, Citizenship Law, Traffic Law, Civil Defense Law, Political Participation Law and the ‘Umad Law (village mayors).<sup>72</sup> More resources were put into armament, criminal work, surveillance units of the police, as well as providing better pay and social services to members of the force.<sup>73</sup> As the MoI controlled the election process, the regime was able to manage to its favor the voting practices despite the official rhetoric about fairness of the process.<sup>74</sup>

Restructuring the MoI was one step towards building an expansive state intelligence network. Z. Mohie elDin headed the Military Intelligence in the early days of the coup, and by 1957 had built a vast network of intelligence apparatuses across the military, the MoI and the newly founded General Intelligence. What came to be known as the *Dawlat alMukhabarat* (the state of intelligence) was in full swing. He relied on American and East German expertise to build his network.<sup>75</sup> By the mid-1960s, Egypt’s extended network of surveillance and covert

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<sup>70</sup> Zakaria Mohie elDin was the most skilled member of the FOs in military and intelligence operations. He designed the operational plan for the 1952 coup with some assistance from Nasser and Amer. He was often consulted by Nasser on issues relating to security planning even as he moved to other political positions. When the MB plot was discovered in 1965 by the General Intelligence, Nasser named him Prime Minister and Minister of Interior to put back the MoI’s work in order. He also devised the plan to capture Amer after the fallout with Nasser in August 1967.

<sup>71</sup> The post 1952 political policing apparatus included divisions specializing in surveillance of foreigners, anti-Zionism, students and universities, newspapers, publishing houses, labor movements, political parties, anti-Communism, and archiving and civil servants. Bakr, *al-Bulis al-Misri 1922-1952*, 331–33.

<sup>72</sup> *Al-Bulis* July 1957.

<sup>73</sup> *Al-Bulis* July 1956.

<sup>74</sup> See statements by Z. Mohie elDin about the fairness of the process and his prediction of the results. *al-Bulis* May 1957 and July 1957.

<sup>75</sup> Abdel-Malek, *Egypt: Military Society*; Sirrs, *The Egyptian Intelligence Service*.

operations had reached Arab, African and European countries;<sup>76</sup> an effort that was supported by the president and implemented by Amer and other military officers.

The military's engagement with domestic control of social forces started only a month after the coup. In August 1952, a labor sit-in took place in cotton weaving factory in Kafr elDawar. The protests soon developed into clashes with the police that led to the killing of 9 people and the injury of 23. In few days the RCC held a military court on-site for what it viewed as the beginning of a Communist insurrection within the country's labor.<sup>77</sup> Members of the RCC, led at the time by General Naguib, agreed unanimously to the court's decision to execute the two workers whom it indicted. The event registered the beginning of a new level of state violence that was waged with impunity by the RCC in the face of the coup's enemies.<sup>78</sup> The RCC created the Republican Guard in June 1953 putting it under the leadership of Abd al-Muhsen Abu alNur, and later created the National Guard to train citizens loyal to the revolution. Law 505 of 1955 introduced mandatory conscription.<sup>79</sup> The Criminal Military Investigation, a unit within the armed forces, became an important apparatus in domestic control. It investigated the political activities of military officers and civilian state officials. Nasser also used it to control disruptions in civilian sectors including transportation and food rationing sectors.<sup>80</sup>

The militarization of the system continued beyond institutions of force. Like other experiences in developing countries, the military was viewed as the institution that can unite fragmented societies, uproot dysfunctional governments and lead both the state and society

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<sup>76</sup> Salah Nasr, a military officer and apprentice of Z. Mohie elDin, took the work of the Egyptian intelligence to another level targeting subversives and enemies of the Revolution outside the country. Sirrs, *The Egyptian Intelligence Service*, 53–73.

<sup>77</sup> al-Baghdadi, *Mudhakkirat 'Abd al-Latif al-Baghdadi*, 68.

<sup>78</sup> Accused of having ties to a Communist movement, the decision to execute the two workers Mostafa Khamis and Mohamed elBaqury was hastily deliberated and implemented. In Upper Egypt, similar revolutionary courts targeted members of the landed-elite giving them life sentences for crimes as little as firing their guns in the air, as in the case of Adly Lamoum, Naguib, *Kuntu ra'is li-Miṣr*, 173.

<sup>79</sup> Kandil, *Soldiers, Spies, and Statesmen*, 17.

<sup>80</sup> Hamrush, *Qissat thawrat 23 Yuliyu: Mojtama' 'Abd alNasser*.

towards modernization.<sup>81</sup> The militarization ensued as officers took control of the government.<sup>82</sup> It started with the formation of a three-member guardian council following King Farouq's abdication of the crown to his one-year-old son. The guardian council ruled in the name of the baby king for a short period of time. The council included Colonel Rashad Mehanna, who was not a member of the FO but supported the coup.<sup>83</sup> In the following months tens of officers overtook high civilian and diplomatic positions in the new junta government. General Mohamed Naguib became the first military officer to become the country's prime minister since the British colonization in the 1880s, and in 1953 he became the first President of the country, starting a tradition that continues till the day.

### **Divide-and-Rule: Nasser's Survival Strategy**

Nasser manipulated cleavages among the junta to minimize threats from the military. The purges of those officers loyal to ancient regime was a first step towards consolidating his power. Leaders entering power through extra-constitutional means suffer the highest risks of losing power rapidly, in part due to their lack of legitimacy. But studies show that engagement in anti-colonial liberation struggle may provide an exceptional level of legitimacy for coup plotters as the masses perceive them as the state's saviors or founding leaders.<sup>84</sup> These two conditions, high risk in the early days and legitimacy based on engagement with anti-colonial struggle make junta associates or brothers-in-arms most threatening to coup leaders. To brothers-in-arms the leader is only first among equals; junta members have similar roots to the revolutionary struggle and therefore can claim legitimacy as that of the leader. Nasser was quick to follow a divide-and-rule

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<sup>81</sup> Johnson, *The Role of the Military in Underdeveloped Countries.*; Janowitz, *The Professional Soldier*; Huntington, *Political Order in Changing Societies*; Janowitz, *Military Institutions and Coercion in the Developing Nations.*

<sup>82</sup> Nordlinger, *Soldiers in Politics*, 3.

<sup>83</sup> al-Baghdadi, *Mudhakkirat 'Abd al-Latif al-Baghdadi*; Naguib, *Kuntu ra'is li-Miṣr*, 156.

<sup>84</sup> Bienen and Walle, "Time and Power in Africa."

strategy to consolidate his power and overcome challengers. The case of Colonel Rashad Mehanna is a case in point. Mehanna played a significant role in guaranteeing the support of the artillery units stationed in Sinai to the coup,<sup>85</sup> but his seniority and popularity among the officer corps seemed threatening to the younger FOs. Distancing him from his loyal following unfolded along several calculated moves. With Farouq's abdication of the crown to his one-year-old Crown Prince Ahmed Fouad, Mehanna was asked to join a newly formed three-member Guardian Council which governed in the name of the baby king but was under the control of the junta. Only three months later, Mehanna was removed from this position and later arrested in January 1953 when he was accused with other artillery officers of agitating officers against Nasser and his coterie.

Over the following years, Nasser skillfully marginalized his partners and associates carefully manipulating their ideological and personal differences while preserving his place at the center of the junta. The imprisonment of artillery officers in 1953 was an early fracture followed by continuous marginalization of those officers who espoused political independence from Nasser's ideas or policies. At some point the marginalization extended to core members of the FO. Youssef Siddique, a member of the FO who mobilized his artillery unit in Cairo to the success of the coup, was the first to resign from the RCC. His strong leftist leanings and opposition of the militarization of the political system led to irreconcilable difference with Nasser and his camp within the RCC. Other resignations came from Anwar Sadat, then followed by Khaled Mohie elDin.<sup>86</sup>

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<sup>85</sup> Colonel Mehanna led artillery units in Sinai on the eve of the coup and instructed his units to follow the command of coup plotters. He headed to Cairo after the ouster of King Farouq on July 26<sup>th</sup>. The inner core of FO did not consider him an original member, though. al-Baghdadi, *Mudhakkirat 'Abd al-Latif al-Baghdadi*, 65.

<sup>86</sup> Sadat returned later to the RCC based on Nasser's request. Khaled Mohie elDin resigned in the aftermath of the Cavaliers Crisis in 1954, and stayed put in Switzerland for a year. His return to Egypt was granted with permission from Nasser but his political role was confined to supervising some of the state's leading newspapers. Sadat, *In Search of Identity*; Muhyi al-Din, *Memories of a Revolution*.



As major state-building projects were in progress with the military leading efforts for development, it was crucial that challenges from within the ranks get nipped in the bud. Amer's loyalty to Nasser and convergence of visions made him the right person to eliminate challengers. The selection of Amer to head the military despite his young age, lower rank and limited professional experience had a long-term impact towards alienating the more professional officers, in particular those who objected to the increasing intervention of the junta into politics. Most of the higher ranking officers resigned in objection to Amer's meteoric rise and Nasser's disregard for military hierarchy, education and professionalism.<sup>87</sup> Then Amer gradually distanced members of the RCC from their military units. Fellow coup plotters were asked to resign and given political positions. Amer justified the request for their resignations as a necessary means to control the rank and file to ensure the success of the revolution. With their departure from the military, patronage was used to cultivate the loyalty of their subordinates to Amer's circle.<sup>88</sup> On the divisional level, efforts to limit the cooperation among the different forces ensued. The leading generals of the Air Force and the Navy sought less cooperation with the Army, and the control of the General Command was weak.<sup>89</sup> The intelligence agencies multiplied within the military with each force having its own apparatus.<sup>90</sup> The military intelligence was directed towards domestic intelligence with its primary surveillance focused on

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<sup>87</sup> Upon hiring Amer to lead the military, Major General Hassan Mahmoud, the head of the Airforce submitted his resignation. Despite attempts by RCC members to keep the Airforce general, his position was unchanged. According to al-Baghdadi, General Mahmoud clearly distinguished between the ministership of War as a political position that can be assigned to a younger officer, and the General Command of the military which is purely technical and should be held in respect to the military hierarchy, al-Baghdadi, *Mudhakkirat 'Abd al-Latif al-Baghdadi*, 78.

<sup>88</sup> al-Baghdadi, 78–79.

<sup>89</sup> Jamasi, *Mudhakkirat al-Jamasi*, 74.

<sup>90</sup> The Air Force intelligence was the strongest apparatus of intelligence within the armed forces, with several of its reports sent directly to Nasser. Sharaf and Imam, *'Abd al-Nasir, hakadha kana yahkumu Misr*; Imam, *'Ali Sabri yatadhakkar*.

military officers and state officials. Promotions, training, retention and recruitment were directly tied to Amer to control the composition of the officer corps.<sup>91</sup>

I would like to turn here to an examination of war, coup-proofing and intra-regime rivalry. A number of studies in international relations shed light on the relationship between coup-proofing and military preparedness, noting that coup-proofing methods decrease battlefield effectiveness.<sup>92</sup> Caitlin Talmadge underscores how the same practices that generate battlefield effectiveness also improve the military's ability to launch or support a coup.<sup>93</sup> Regimes facing coup threats often adopt practices relating to promotions, training, command, and information that minimize the military's coherence and effectiveness. And while regimes may face external and internal threats, authoritarian regimes often prioritize proofing against coups over other kinds of threats.<sup>94</sup> The Nasser case seems to confirm these insights, but begs other questions such as: why do some war losses lead to a leader's political fall and some don't? And how do war results impact the balance of power between the leader and military? The impact of wars on the FO regime seems puzzling at first sight. In 1956 and 1967 Nasser and his junta fought two wars, but each had a different result on leader-junta dynamics. After the Suez War Amer's popularity soared but the 1967 Six Day war led to his fall from grace. If Amer gradually amassed political influence over the years, what explains his demise in the wake of the Six Day War? If both wars are cases of military loss, then the military result is not enough to explain the change in power dynamic. If a logical but simple answer becomes then that the regime suffered a massive blow to

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<sup>91</sup> Hamrush, *Qissat thawrat 23 Yuliyu: Mojtama' 'Abd alNasser.*; Jamasi, *Mudhakkirat al-Jamasi*, 75–76; Beattie, *Egypt during the Nasser Years*.

<sup>92</sup> Biddle and Zirkle, "Technology, Civil-military Relations, and Warfare in the Developing World"; Brooks, "An Autocracy at War"; Talmadge, *The Dictator's Army*.

<sup>93</sup> Talmadge, *The Dictator's Army*, 15.

<sup>94</sup> Talmadge, 16–20.

its ideology and legitimacy in the aftermath of 1967 given its inability to accomplish the very goals it advocated, then why didn't Nasser fall in 1967 as did Amer?

This puzzle can be answered by turning to social scientific research on leaders at war and coup-proofing timing while examining the shift in regime between 1956 and 1967. Studying leaders' survival and wars, Jessica Weeks finds that leaders in personalist regimes survive war losses compared to those who face powerful audiences and are accountable to their juntas or party cadres.<sup>95</sup> Leaders of personalist regimes presiding over a junta (strongmen) or party machine (bosses) are better able to escape domestic punishment than more constrained leaders.<sup>96</sup> Militarized regimes can be dynamic, evolving from one regime type to another. In 1956 the regime was still a junta regime but in 1967 it had metamorphosed into a personal rule where a strong man presided over a strong military. In 1956, Nasser faced credible coup threats; the memories of the 1953 and the March 1954 power struggle were still fresh and the support of his colleagues in the FO was much needed to maintain his power and implement his state-building projects. Most members of the Free Officers were still in high executive positions in 1956. Amer, in particular played an important role in securing the regime by vetting the officer corps and eliminating those officers who opposed Nasser's vision. By 1967, Nasser had managed to spread his personal rule over almost all institutions with the exception of the military where Amer continued to cast his influence but remained ultimately in service to Nasser rule.

In more ways, Amer was in and of himself a means for coup-proofing; a leader's loyalist who can be trusted to eliminate threats from within the military. After the Suez crisis of 1956 and

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<sup>95</sup> Weeks follow Barbara Geddes' definition of personalist regimes which identifies them as regimes where leaders dominate their political systems including parties, militaries and state bureaucracies. As Geddes notes, personalist regimes often evolve out of military or party-based regimes when leaders manage to eliminate powerful rivals and monopolizes power. Geddes, "What Do We Know About Democratization After Twenty Years?"; Weeks, *Dictators at War and Peace*, 172.

<sup>96</sup> Weeks, *Dictators at War and Peace*, 56.

with the regime's ability to dress a military defeat in the garb of political victory, at least domestically, Amer emerged as a powerful second in command to Nasser. The militarization of force meant that the MoI with its police force and surveillance apparatus had to come under the dominance of the military and Amer.<sup>97</sup> By the early 1960s, the Marshal's power extended to head several civilian organizations including the newly created Higher Council for Public Agencies, the Higher Council for the Liquidation of Feudalism and later the Higher Council for Youth and Sports.<sup>98</sup> Unlike with other members of the FO movement, Nasser tolerated Amer's rising power because he relied on him to eliminate pockets of dissent within the officer corps. Nasser was also aware of how Amer's influence stemmed from proximity to him, as memoirs of several FOs show.<sup>99</sup> With the exception of his desire to control officers' promotions, Amer rarely challenged Nasser's policies or political ideology.

The social, economic and political changes that took place over the decade that separated the two wars made their marks over the system's composition and balance of power. While in 1956, the regime was one of ruling juntas, by 1967 Nasser had consolidated a more centralized rule in the seat of the presidency, moving the political system from an authoritarian junta to an autocratic personal rule that enjoyed mass support. The mass mobilization that took place on June 8<sup>th</sup>-11<sup>th</sup>, bore testament to this shift. A shift that Amer refused to accept. The following excerpt from Anouar Abdel-Malek best describes it:

At 6 P.M on Friday, June 9, 1967, Gamal Abdel Nasser addressed the people of Egypt, and beyond them, the peoples of the whole Arab world. Egypt's armed forces had been severely hit; the Sinai occupied; the Suez Canal paralyzed; the air force practically wiped

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<sup>97</sup> Following the Suez war Amer's powers over the police increased. See the cover of *Majallat alBulis* in the December 1956 issue.

<sup>98</sup> Abdel-Malek, *Egypt: Military Society*.

<sup>99</sup> Hamrush, *Qissat thawrat 23 Yuliyu: Mojtama' 'Abd alNasser.*; Sharaf and Imam, *'Abd al-Nasir, hakadha kana yahkumu Misr*; al-Baghdadi, *Mudhakkirat 'Abd al-Latif al-Baghdadi*.

out as an operational unit; acts of treason, felony and conspiracy were open and rampant throughout the land; fifteen years of hard-won achievements were severely endangered; the military power elite had lost, at one stroke, all pretension of being recognized as a possible political leadership for Egypt; inflated hopes and real achievements were seriously called in question. The people of Egypt were awakening to a nightmare, by very far the worst in their tragic history. One man stood at the helm, a man who had held undisputed power – or so it seemed at the time – for fifteen years. This man had been reaping the glory and abuse in Egypt’s name from 1952 to 1967. As Egypt crumbled he frankly recognized the fact, admitted full responsibility and resigned from the presidency and all political offices....Egypt would have to pay for “Suez.” And the man at the helm would have to go, his myth shattered, his anti-imperialist national-radical course dismantled, his policies denied....Then things started moving. But this movement did not follow the prescribed course. After a few movements of hesitation the whole country swang into action: the streets of Cairo were flooded with more than two and a half million, the whole population of Tantah, the center of Delta was marching on the capital; the same in Port Said, where, however, the people were recalled in a desperate move not to empty the city; from every city, town and village, from Alexandria to Aswan, from the Western Desert to Suez, a whole nation marched. And its slogan could not be misunderstood: “*No imperialism! No dollar!*”; “*No leader but Gamal!*”<sup>100</sup>

A closer look at the post-defeat mass mobilization that Abdel-Malek’s words depict above, shows Nasser’s ability to project his leadership over large sectors within the state and society that shielded his downfall. Nasser skillfully consolidated his power and eliminated

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<sup>100</sup> Italics in original. Abdel-Malek, *Egypt: Military Society*, viii–ix.

threats from the ruling elite and the masses through two important mechanisms: i-) The manipulation of cleavages to sideline effectively influential officers especially the founding members of the FO. ii-) The building of a real popular support base that extended beyond the officer corps to include the majority of the lower and middle classes and the state apparatus. While Amer relied on personal patronage to cast his influence, Nasser personalized despotic power yet institutionalized the state's infrastructural power.<sup>101</sup> Ruling junta often bring in civil servants, technocrats and even politicians of the "correct" political color to help with governance.<sup>102</sup> In the process of building the state's mega projects, Nasser extended direct channels of communication with engineers, bureaucrats and experts to discuss the implementation of his vision. These interactions created venues to expand his charismatic leadership among state servants and professionals who shared his aspirations for independence and development.<sup>103</sup> This bond between Nasser and many social forces paid off in the early moments of the 1967 post-defeat crisis. While Nasser injected his close associates into leading positions in the state to guarantee loyalty to his visions, he continued to rely on civil servants to implement policies. The infiltration of military officers into the bureaucracy was orchestrated by Amer,<sup>104</sup> a practice that was designed to reward his clique. Later, it expanded to compensate officers returning from the unrewarding Yemen War.<sup>105</sup>

The military's defeat in 1967 made the disposal of Amer possible. Studies show that leaders are able to rid themselves of challengers within the ruling elite when challengers are

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<sup>101</sup> Slater, "Iron Cage in an Iron Fist."

<sup>102</sup> Nordlinger, *Soldiers in Politics*, 28.

<sup>103</sup> I am indebted to the late Judge Tarek elBishry for highlighting this point to me. elBishry noted that Nasser often came across as an avid reader of reports from civilian experts and an excellent listener to their views. Interview with ElBishry in July 2011.

<sup>104</sup> See the mandate authorizing Amer, the then First Vice President and Deputy of the Supreme Commander of the Armed Forces, to hire military officers in civilian positions in the state apparatus. *AlJamhurriyyah* February 13, 1966.

<sup>105</sup> Interview with a retired military general, winter 2013.

weak and their capacity to oust leaders is temporarily low.<sup>106</sup> The final chapter of the Nasser-Amer rivalry is most telling. In the aftermath of the devastating defeat of 1967, Amer refused to step down while Nasser continued to preside over the country's political system. Whereas Amer sought the support of his subordinates in the military and intelligence during the post-defeat crisis, Nasser managed to line up the original FOs to his side. A challenging Amer could not have mobilized similar support from civilians or even within the military. Despite heading several state civilian organizations, Amer's record escaped accomplishments in the grandeur of those of Nasser. The humiliating defeat of the Six Day War was the last straw in the Marshal's catastrophic performances that included the inability to prevent the Syrian coup that led to the collapse of the Egyptian-Syrian Union in 1961 and the long and unsuccessful intervention in Yemen.<sup>107</sup> Memoires of FOs, statesmen and politicians noted his kind nature and amicable character but inability to design or implement state projects. Despite having his clique within the military, his political influence stemmed from his proximity to Nasser. In the aftermath of the defeat, Amer had very little support within the military as resentment towards his leadership was widespread among the officer corps.<sup>108</sup> The long record of Amer's professional incapacity could not have mobilized any real challenge to Nasser's rule within the armed forces.

## Conclusion

Like other modernization experiences in developing countries, the officers in Egypt played a highly modernizing and progressive role in the 1950s. As Huntington describes, officers

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<sup>106</sup> Sudduth, "Strategic Logic of Elite Purges in Dictatorships"; Sudduth, "Coup Risk, Coup-Proofing and Leader Survival."

<sup>107</sup> Some of the Syrian officers who led the coup that ended the Egyptian-Syrian union worked under Amer's command in Syria. Hamrush, *Qissat thawrat 23 Yuliyu: Mojtama' 'Abd alNasser*. For more on the Egyptian-Syrian Union and its breakdown see Hassun, *al-Wahdah al-Suriyah-al-Misriyah*.

<sup>108</sup> Jamasi, *Mudhakkirat al-Jamasi*; Fawzi, *Al-I'dad Li-Ma'rakat Al-Tahrir*.

challenged the oligarchy and promoted social and economic reform. They fought corruption and backwardness and introduced into the middle class ideas of efficiency, honesty and national loyalty.<sup>109</sup> However, the militarization of the state was gradual. The first and most pressing task was the militarization of forces and organization of state violence to control dissent. The militarization of power extended from the diplomatic corps to the bureaucracy. The regime would rely on the military to provide the bureaucracy with the force and the discipline necessary to accomplish their tasks. Twenty-five percent of the corporate managers in the public sector during the 1960s, for example, were seconded from the military.<sup>110</sup> What started as reliance on the administrative and organizational skills of officers soon shifted into a system of patronage to placate officers' grievances as the regime engaged in several unsuccessful external endeavors.

Works examining contentious politics and wars show that wars lead to states of emergency. Across cases, ruling elites make policies that are characterized by executive centralization, militarization, inversion of speech protection, and lack of transparency. These efforts become as important as war-making itself.<sup>111</sup> Emergency powers often last well beyond the threat that called them into being.<sup>112</sup> The militarization of force under Nasser reflects all these characteristics. As the regime engaged in international conflicts, the state's infrastructural power was manipulated through the legitimation of war-making and allocation of benefits to those who supported the war.

The FOs faced instances of forceful intervention in the early days of their regime and this may have increased Nasser's reliance on divide-and-rule means to control the military while still relying on it as an engine for change. His skillful manipulation of cleavages, charismatic

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<sup>109</sup> Huntington, *Political Order in Changing Societies*, 203.

<sup>110</sup> Abdel-Malek, *Egypt: Military Society*; Hamrush, *Qissat thawrat 23 Yuliyu: Mojtama' 'Abd alNasser.*; Palmer, Leila, and Yassin, *The Egyptian Bureaucracy*, 5.

<sup>111</sup> Tarrow, *War, States, and Contention*, 22–23.

<sup>112</sup> Tarrow, 23.



character and political accomplishments enabled him to rule over a fragmented junta and shift the system from an oligarchy to an autocracy. The chapter shows how the nature of the threats facing a leader impacts the institutional design that regulates his relationship with institutions of force.

In the next chapter, I move to another form of proofing against military threats. Sadat lacked Nasser's charisma but was able to manipulate existing cleavages to initiate a civilianization of the system. His ability to neutralize threats from the military ultimately succeeded in disengaging the military from missions of domestic control.

## Chapter 3

### The Civilianization of Force under Sadat

*There is something that civilian effendis may not understand: the military have been intervening in politics. This means they won't get out of it for 30 years. When I think about a way to make political pluralism and institutions work, I am trying to balance civilian life with the military. This is reality that we have to reckon with, whether we like it or not.*  
Anwar Sadat<sup>1</sup>

#### Introduction

Minister of Interior Mamdouh Salem became Egypt's prime minister in 1975. He was the longest serving prime minister under Sadat, and more importantly the country's first and only police officer to assume such high executive office. Facing strong opposition from members of Nasser's junta, Sadat opted to minimize the involvement of the military in domestic affairs and broaden the powers of the MoI. Salem's appointment and the gradual enhancement of the MoI's organizational and institutional capacities were part of the civilianization of force process Sadat adopted. As a strategy for leader survival, civilianizing force differed markedly from the intra-junta divide-and-rule strategy that is more common for coup-proofing in militarized regimes.<sup>2</sup> In this chapter, I discuss how the MoI became a politically prominent and independent institution despite its previous subordination to a strong military under Nasser. This institutional shift was no easy task given the military's established dominance over significant state institutions such as the cabinet, the Arab Socialist Union (the regime's vehicle for mobilizing support), and

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<sup>1</sup> Anwar Sadat in an interview with journalist Ahmed Baha' alDin. Baha' al-Din, *Muhawarati Ma'a Al-Sadat*, 62.

<sup>2</sup> Chapter 2 discusses how Nasser adopted a divide-and-rule strategy to overcome threats from within the junta.

important posts within the presidential office.<sup>3</sup> The strategy also provided incentives for the military's upper brass to disengage from domestic control in return for future gains, in what I label a mechanism of "compensated displacement." By shifting the base of coercive power and limiting the military's access to information through domestic surveillance, the president aimed to minimize the military's despotic and infrastructural powers.

The chapter aims to make two main theoretical contributions: 1) Highlight the particularity of institutional change when dealing with institutions of force. 2) Formulate hypotheses for the civilianization of force theory. In the following sections, I first engage with the institutional change literature, putting it in conversation with the civil-military literature to explore the extent to which extant claims about institutional change can adequately explain shifts in domestic security arrangements. I highlight the theoretical shortfalls in the current literature and show how the civilianization of force theory provides a more nuanced explanation of institutional shifts of state armed actors. I then turn to the historical narrative of Sadat's presidency focusing on the friction between him and the powerful junta of his time. I zoom in on two crises: the "power centers" struggle of 1971 and the "bread riots" of 1977. The two crises underscore how generals' preferences put limits on the president's power when they threaten to withdraw support. I show how these threats can be overcome by the leader's skillful manipulation of intra-junta cleavages and identification of future perks for some generals to ultimately improve the balance of power in his favor. Through a close process tracing of historical accounts, I show how an end to hostilities between Egypt and Israel provided new political and economic opportunities that facilitated the generals' disengagement from domestic control. In the final section, I analyze the leader-military-police dynamics highlighting Sadat's

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<sup>3</sup> See chapter 2 for more on how the military junta enjoyed near monopoly over the highest political offices under Nasser.

policy to boost the institutional infrastructure of the MoI and his simultaneous efforts to improve the professionalization of the armed forces and the re-orientation of the military's responsibilities towards missions of external defense.

## **Institutional Change and Militaries**

Institutional changes are triggered by a myriad of circumstances and unfold with varying tempo. While some evolve in response to impending crises, others brew over a long period of time producing incremental but lasting impact. Be they rapid or slow, sudden or gradual, these changes tend to rearrange the position of players within political systems, shifting their relative status and power. More recent scholarship has turned to identifying critical junctures that trigger patterns of institutional instability, as well as slow moving processes that lead to change.<sup>4</sup> Using a power-distributional approach, James Mahoney and Kathleen Thelen explore the different kinds of transformations institutions experience, distinguishing among displacement, layering, convergence and drift.<sup>5</sup> They note that displacement of institutional rules is difficult to implement when agents enjoy veto possibilities, but that layering - which they define as the attachment of new institutions or rules onto or alongside existing ones - is a more viable option. They posit that convergence takes place when rules are ambiguous enough to permit different interpretations,<sup>6</sup> and that drift occurs when failure to adapt and update an institution in a changed environment.<sup>7</sup>

Mahoney and Thelen insightfully highlight the importance of veto powers in explaining institutional change especially when it comes to displacement; however some important

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<sup>4</sup> Clemens and Cook, "Politics and Institutionalism"; Mahoney and Thelen, *Explaining Institutional Change*.

<sup>5</sup> Mahoney and Thelen, *Explaining Institutional Change*.

<sup>6</sup> Convergence as a form of institutional transformation is similar to what Elisabeth Clemens and James Cook (1999) call "institutional mutability."

<sup>7</sup> Mahoney and Thelen, *Explaining Institutional Change*, 14–22.

questions remain unanswered by their framework including: what happens to actors engaged in the displaced organizations? And does the displacement process necessitate the abolition of the organizational actor invested in the institutional practice? The answer to these questions is central to any explanation of militaries' institutional change. This analytical oversight may explain why Mahoney and Thelen contested the possibility of institutional displacement in the presence of veto players. No doubt strong actors with veto-powers remain the most resistant to institutional change; however I posit that veto players, including armed actors, do not react uniformly to new challenges. Some show unwavering resistance while others bargain to get the best possible position in the new arrangement. Explaining this variation in behavior requires attention to the identity of actors, the nature of services they provide, and the post-transformation scenarios and how they may impact actors' interests including survival.

Veto power shapes the dynamics of political systems. George Tsebelis argues that political systems should be compared based on policy outcomes, which are influenced by veto players. He defines veto players as "individual or collective actors whose agreement is necessary for a change of the status quo."<sup>8</sup> These actors can be institutional or partisan, with the first group enjoying constitutionally-mandated veto powers, while the second practicing de facto powers through the system's informal rules. Although Tsebelis' acknowledges that outcomes are an important part of policy making, his theoretical discussion is confined to veto-players in the arena of agenda setting and inadequately examines the role of veto-players in the phase of policy implementation.<sup>9</sup> Agenda setting and policy implementation are reflections of the despotic and infrastructural powers political players enjoy. Putting more emphasis on policy-making or despotic power fails to capture the professional particularity of militaries because policy

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<sup>8</sup> Tsebelis, *Veto Players*, 19.

<sup>9</sup> Contrastingly, Tsebelis states "Politicians or parties are replaced in office when the policies they propose lead to undesirable outcomes or when they do not apply the policies they promised before an election." Tsebelis, 6.

enforcement remains a central component of their political roles reflecting their infrastructural powers.<sup>10</sup> Steven Levitsky and Maria Murillo insightfully captured this distinction between decision-making and implementation noting that those who write the rules do not always have the power to systematically enforce them.<sup>11</sup> A more useful theoretical framework to explaining institutional change in militaries would have to take into account their ability to block policies in their capacity as agenda setters and policy spoilers. While the first role enables them to veto the making of new policies, in their second role they can hinder the implementation of policies and even coerce the political leadership to roll back on new legislation or institutional arrangements.

Although a great number of comparative politics scholars have been interested in explaining threats to leaders' powers from militaries, most studies have focused on coups and failed to study other ways in which militaries can and may threaten their leaders. To focus on coups and coup-proofing is to neglect a whole host of political maneuvers that take place between leaders and militaries. Samuel Finer has argued that militaries intervene in politics through influence and blackmail, as much as through displacement and supplantment.<sup>12</sup> Militaries may influence governmental policies through lobbying, or blackmail them to effect change. Alfred Stepan lists 11 domains that a strong military assumes the right to control or at least the privilege to influence. These domains include the military's constitutionally sanctioned role in the political system, their relationship to the chief executive, the government, the legislature, their role in intelligence, police and state enterprises and the legal system.<sup>13</sup> Militaries deliver multiple services to their leaders and therefore may pose various threats if such services

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<sup>10</sup> Slater, "Altering Authoritarianism," 135.

<sup>11</sup> Levitsky and Murillo, "Variation in Institutional Strength."

<sup>12</sup> Finer, *The Man on Horseback*.

<sup>13</sup> Stepan, *Rethinking Military Politics*, 92–97.

are withdrawn.<sup>14</sup> Like other state institutions in authoritarian regimes, strong militaries are expected to provide the infrastructural power needed to implement leaders' policies.<sup>15</sup> When generals fail to implement rulers' policies or condition their support on specific demands, they limit leaders' powers. Failure to implement leaders' policies may not necessarily be due to institutional incapacities, but may be the result of preference divergence between the two parties.<sup>16</sup> Generals may not agree with leaders' decisions or desire policies that differ markedly with them. Generals may also object to changes in domestic political or economic policies. Whenever such interferences are unsanctioned, they present threats to leaders' powers.

### **Surviving Threats through the Civilianization of Force**

Militaries are not only veto players, but are armed actors with tendencies to dominate the field of force. As representatives of the state, more often than not soldiers identify with the state to the extent that they appropriate the state's right to monopolize legitimate force as their societal-given right. The characteristics of militaries as political actors and the nature of services they provide, make most transformations associated with them fall within the categories of layering and displacement. An example of the layering process can be found in what Donald Horowitz labels as "counterbalancing outside the military,"<sup>17</sup> where some units such as the monarchical or presidential guards or some special units are stationed close to the leader's quarters. These parallel forces are to provide protection for the leadership including fending

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<sup>14</sup> Providing security for leaders is one important service, and coups are an extreme case of its provision failure. Militaries may also withdraw their protection of leaders during times of mass civilian protests. Examples of military shirking in are abundant in Asia, Latin America and most recently during the Arab Uprisings. See Lee, "The Armed Forces and Transitions from Authoritarian Rule Explaining the Role of the Military in 1986 Philippines and 1998 Indonesia," 2009; Slater, *Ordering Power*; Owen, *The Rise and Fall of Arab Presidents for Life*; Pion-Berlin and Trinkunas, "Civilian Praetorianism and Military Shirking During Constitutional Crises in Latin America"; Albrecht, Croissant, and Lawson, *Armies and Insurgencies in the Arab Spring*.

<sup>15</sup> Slater, *Ordering Power*.

<sup>16</sup> Brooks, *Shaping Strategy*.

<sup>17</sup> Horowitz, *Ethnic Groups in Conflict*.

possible coup attempts from the military. Layering involves constant pitting of the different units against one another to prevent one from solidifying its grip over the armed forces. Syria under Assad and Iraq under Saddam Hussein both represent cases of layering.<sup>18</sup>

The civilianization of force is an instance of institutional displacement, and differs markedly from counterbalancing. While the counterbalancing is mainly about increasing the cost of rebellion for the leader's challenger, the civilianizing force aims to change the preference of the potential challenger that rebellion against the leader becomes an undesired endeavor. In other words, while counterbalancing enhances the position of the leader vis-à-vis challengers in the same game, civilianizing force brings in a new game to the political arena; one that targets both the despotic power and infrastructural power of the military. By assigning missions of domestic control to another security apparatus, the leader disengages the military from decision-making powers over which activities to repress or permit. This disengagement also means minimizing the military's surveillance over society and access to information. Security actors (including militaries in charge of domestic control) wield substantial power not only through their control over force, but also by managing the flow of information about society. Information boosts a political actor's power to set agendas and define alternatives when policies are disputed. In overseeing the various intelligence agencies, generals can easily hinder or distort the implementation of a president's plans. Control over information enables political actors to shape perceptions and present or foreclose the range of viable choices.<sup>19</sup>

The civilianization of force as a process through which decisions and policies about how, when, and who to repress are made and implemented by civilian institutions of force instead of

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<sup>18</sup> Scholars note that counterbalancing forces need to enjoy some parity with national militaries, in terms of equipment and training, in order to protect threatened leaders. See Enloe, *Ethnic Soldiers*, 1980; Quinlivan, "Coup-Proofing."

<sup>19</sup> Poguntke and Webb, *The Presidentialization of Politics*, 8.



the military help minimize reliance on generals whose obedience to leader's policies is in doubt. Civilianizing force requires that earlier military control over surveillance and even everyday policing is shifted to another institution that can report directly to the leader. This strategy gradually disengages the military and decreases the leader's reliance on their power to implement policies in particular domestic control of public dissent which essential for leader survival.

Two conditions are necessary for the civilianization of force to succeed if initiated: low external threat to the state (threat of war) and a successful manipulation of intra-junta cleavages to tip the leader-military balance of power in favor of the leader. The presence of war or threat of it often help consolidate the generals' grip over domestic control and makes it harder for the leadership to displace them. The civilianization also requires the leader's manipulation of cleavages inside the military to recruit sympathizers to the disengagement process. Since unified actors are more capable of exercising their veto powers,<sup>20</sup> manipulating cleavages within the targeted organization enables the leader to minimize the probability of using veto powers against his policies. With divided interests, the leader can offer perks to the generals in lieu of their relinquished power.<sup>21</sup> To the extent that the leadership fails to exploit cleavages or provide incentives, generals often work to further increase their dominance over the political system.

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<sup>20</sup> Tsebelis, *Veto Players*; Cox and McCubbins, "The Institutional Determinants of Economic Policy Outcomes."

<sup>21</sup> In few cases displacement without compensation takes place when militaries are weakened and could be readily replaced by other armed actors whose loyalty is guaranteed. This is often the case with revolutionary regimes. Iran post 1979 and Libya post 1969 are two examples. In both cases the revolutionary regimes of Ayatollahs and Qaddafi displaced the old traditional militaries without provision of perks to the generals. Gaub, "The Libyan Armed Forces between Coup-Proofing and Repression"; El-Kikhia, *Libya's Qaddafi*; Ward, *Immortal*.

## **Sadat and the Junta**

In this section, I turn to the empirics of the Sadat era. First, I overview the political circumstances that surrounded Sadat's ascendance to the presidency, and then discuss conflicts between him and powerful junta members over policy issues. I highlight two crises: the "power centers" struggle of 1971 and the "bread riots" of 1977. The two crises exemplify how military junta challenged the powers of the president by exercising veto powers as agenda setters and policy spoilers. As the following historical account shows following each crisis Sadat increasingly relied on, and enhanced, the organizational and institutional infrastructure of the MoI.

### **Sadat' Ascension to the Presidency and the Junta's Agenda Setting Powers**

Although an original member of the Free Officers movement (FO), Sadat failed to hold any of the state's high executive offices until his appointment as vice president in November 1969. He had relied, instead, on his friendly relationships with the regime's strong men to maintain his presence within the ruling elite.<sup>22</sup> Unlike most members of the FO, who eventually fell out of favor with Nasser, Sadat started far and ended nearest to him. As discussed in the previous chapter, the FO comprised a group of disharmonious officers, and Sadat chose a non-confrontational approach to resolve political discords that emerged as early as the first months after the coup.<sup>23</sup> He served as the speaker of the parliament of the United Arab Republic from

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<sup>22</sup> Sadat walked a fine line, maintaining friendship with Amer without antagonizing Nasser. In 1957 he authored a book titled "My Dear Son: This is Your Uncle Gamal," in which he put a collection of essays glorifying Nasser and his emotional and spiritual virtues. His acquiescence to Nasser was so unquestionable that he became known within the ruling elite as the "bikbashi sahh" or Nasser's "yes-man." Beattie, *Egypt during the Sadat Years*, 43; Sadat, *Ya Waladi Hadha 'ammuk Jamal*.

<sup>23</sup> Disagreeing with fellow officers, Sadat resigned from the Revolution Commanding Council (RCC) in 1953 and left to head the newly founded *al-Gumhurriyya*, a newspaper that served as a mouthpiece for the regime. He rejoined the RCC in 1954 when Nasser made him a minister of state without portfolio. Later the same year, Sadat, with Nasser's backing, headed the country's delegation to the newly-founded Organization of the Islamic Congress (OIC) and soon after became its secretary general.

July 1960 - September 1961,<sup>24</sup> and continued as the speaker of the Egyptian parliament when the union between Egypt and Syria dissolved.<sup>25</sup> Since the parliament was no more than a rubber stamper with no real legislative or oversight powers,<sup>26</sup> these positions failed to give him a strong power base.

Nasser's death brought to the fore not only the intra-junta rivalry that existed under his leadership but also the weak institutionalization of the presidency's political succession. Unlike democratic regimes where the chief executive's political succession rests on clear rules and some version of the popular will, in authoritarian regimes it depends on ruling elite members' support.<sup>27</sup> The first hurdle Nasser's ruling elite faced was implementing the constitutional rules of succession. The constitution stipulated that in the case of the president's death, the First Vice President was to rule for an interim period of no more than sixty days during which the Arab Socialist Union (ASU), the regime's ruling party, would nominate a presidential candidate.<sup>28</sup> The nomination was to be approved by the parliament and then voted upon in a public referendum. At the time of Nasser's death both Hussein al-Shaf'ei and Sadat were vice presidents but neither was given the title of the First VP.<sup>29</sup> Members of the Supreme Executive Committee (SEC) of the ASU had to overcome this constitutional hurdle and choose one of the two men to lead the interim period. Although Al-Shaf'ei had served intermittently as vice president for over six years and his loyalty to Nasser was undisputed, his commitment to the regime's economic ideology was in doubt. Sadat seemed more fitting for an interim president given his lack of a power base

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<sup>24</sup> Egypt and Syria formed a political union under the United Arab Republic from 1958 to 1961.

<sup>25</sup> <http://sadat.bibalex.org/sadatcv.html>

<sup>26</sup> Beattie, *Egypt during the Sadat Years*, 29.

<sup>27</sup> Gandhi, *Political Institutions under Dictatorship*; Svobik, "Power Sharing and Leadership Dynamics in Authoritarian Regimes."

<sup>28</sup> Ashour, *Al-Dassateer Al-Masriyah 'abr Al-Tareekh*.

<sup>29</sup> Only Amer held the position of the First Vice President under Nasser--and for a brief period of time.

and therefore limited independence the regime's junta who wanted to rule in the name of Nasser.<sup>30</sup>

The death of Nasser re-energized junta factions to influence the nomination of the next president. Two groups move to control the selection of the new leader. One group involved some of the original founders of the FO, including the once powerful Zakariyya Mohie al-Din, Abd al-Latif al-Boghdadi and Kamal al-Din Hussein.<sup>31</sup> The second group comprised the powerful officers who surrounded Nasser in the post-1967 period. Headed by Ali Sabri, the group included Sami Sharaf, Sha'rawi Gum'a, Muhammad Fawzi, Amin Huweidi among many other powerful members of the SEC.<sup>32</sup> Members of the second group were military men, who belonged to the second row of the FO but held fresh power within the Central Committee (CC) and the SEC of the ASU. The relationship between the two groups reflected a generational rivalry over the representation of the July revolution. Whereas the first group considered themselves the original guardians of the revolution, the second viewed themselves as the heirs to Nasser's legacy. A day after Nasser's death, Z. Mohie al-Din, al-Boghdadi and Hussein convened and drafted a proposal calling for major changes into the existing succession procedures. The proposal was addressed to the interim president but was sent to all members of the SEC. It called for the formation of a national committee to draft a permanent constitution to be followed by a public election of the president according to the new constitutional rules. The proposal suggested also that the interim president should adopt a "collective leadership" style with all decrees and decisions made

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<sup>30</sup> Beattie, *Egypt during the Sadat Years*, 40–41; Imam, *al-Tariq ila Kursi al-Ri'asah*; Hamrush, *Ghurub Yuliyu*.

<sup>31</sup> The three men had held prominent positions in the state prior to the 1967 war, but retired from politics in the aftermath of the defeat. Prior to the war, Z. Mohie al-Din held multiple influential positions including prime minister, vice president and minister of interior. Kamal al-Din Hussein held the positions of vice president and prime minister. Al-Boghdadi continued to hold the position of vice president even in the post-war period.

<sup>32</sup> Sabri's loyalty to Nasser earned him the positions of head of General Intelligence, prime minister and vice president. At the time of Nasser's death, he was minister of the state for air defense, the head of the ASU and the liaison between the Soviet Union and the Egyptian military. Gum'a was the minister of interior, Sharaf was the minister of state for presidential affairs, Fawzi was the minister of defense and general commander of the armed forces, and Huweidi was the minister of state and director of General Intelligence.

through a majority vote for a six-month period during which the constitution can be drafted.<sup>33</sup> It was clear that the three FO veterans wanted to limit presidential powers; in the final paragraph of their proposal they added that Nasser had assumed excessive powers and that his death ushered in a new era, in which more opportunities should be given to the people to engage in the political process, the judiciary to regain its independence, and the armed forces to focus on its original mission of defending the state.<sup>34</sup>

Suggestions for institutional change often trigger fears of privilege loss under the status quo. The Ali Sabri faction moved swiftly to kill the proposal and prevent the political resurrection of the original members of the FO. The group thus decided to nominate Sadat for a full-term presidency. Sadat's limited support base and non-confrontational character were favorable conditions that would facilitate a continuation of their already established powers.<sup>35</sup> Sabri and his associates moved quickly to confirm support for Sadat's candidacy. One of the earliest confirmations came from the Minister of Defense, General Mohammad Fawzi. Following Nasser's burial ceremony, Fawzi convened with his generals and discussed with them the need to ensure continuity and stability within the political leadership. He argued that given the critical military situation in occupied Sinai it would be better for the armed forces to continue with the Sadat presidency, and that a long transitional period could be disruptive. Professional officers were already uncomfortable with the military's involvement in the power struggle between Nasser and Amer, and favored the avoidance of another power struggle over Nasser's succession. The generals expressed their agreement to endorsing Sadat's nomination, as it would provide the political stability needed to rebuild their forces and prepare for a war with Israel.<sup>36</sup>

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<sup>33</sup> Imam, *al-Tariq ila Kursi al-Ri'asah*, 93–96; Hamrush, *Ghurub Yuliyu*, 19–20.

<sup>34</sup> Imam, *al-Tariq ila Kursi al-Ri'asah*, 96.

<sup>35</sup> Hinnebusch, *Egyptian Politics under Sadat*; Beattie, *Egypt during the Sadat Years*; Cook, *The Struggle for Egypt*.

<sup>36</sup> Shazly, *Harb October: Mudhakerat AlFareeq Saad Al-Shazly*.

With their approval in place, Fawzi sent a letter to Sadat expressing the military's support for his nomination. The letter stated that the armed forces respected and supported the legal legitimacy of Sadat's position and fully supported his nomination. The Sabri group ultimately prevailed and Fawzi's letter may have been the most decisive factor in ending the struggle in favor of Sadat.<sup>37</sup> Sadat's ascension to the presidency was official, but the consolidation of his power was still in doubt. The rivalry between old and new members of the ruling elite permitted the selection of a statesman with limited political backing and threatened to put limits on his presidential rule.

Influence over agenda-setting and policy making reveals the nature of authoritarian rule and the extent to which it can be characterized as oligarchic or autocratic.<sup>38</sup> Leaders facing strong demands to share power with members of the elite prefer to shift the system towards autocratic practices. Sadat inherited a state apparatus whose upper echelons were controlled by military officers and his efforts to craft policies that differed from Nasser's were often challenged. Sadat and the Ali Sabri group, despite the latter's initial support, were on a collision course, given the divergence in political orientations and visions. Sabri had strong socialist leanings that earned him the title of "the Soviet Union's man in Egypt."<sup>39</sup> Sadat seemed less enthusiastic for the Egyptian-Soviet alliance and preferred to explore opportunities of improving relations with the West. Given their role in confirming Sadat's presidency, members of the inner core of the SEC expected Sadat to defer to them on policy-making issues in a "collective leadership" governance mode.<sup>40</sup> The understanding was that members of the SEC, the CC, and the parliament were to

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<sup>37</sup> The nomination was discussed within the SEC on October 3<sup>rd</sup> and approved by all members with the exception of al-Shaf'ei. Two days later, the nomination was approved by the ASU's CC and sent to the parliament, which convened on October 7<sup>th</sup> and ratified the nomination. Sadat, who attended the session, addressed the MPs and vowed to continue in Nasser's footsteps. A week later, he won the referendum and addressed Egyptians as their elected president on October 18<sup>th</sup>, 1970. Imam, *al-Tariq ila Kursi al-Ri'asah*, 97.

<sup>38</sup> Svulik, "Power Sharing and Leadership Dynamics in Authoritarian Regimes."

<sup>39</sup> Hinnebusch, *Egyptian Politics under Sadat*; Beattie, *Egypt during the Sadat Years*; Imam, *al-Tariq ila Kursi al-Ri'asah*; Cook, *The Struggle for Egypt*.

<sup>40</sup> Baker, *Egypt's Uncertain Revolution under Nasser and Sadat*, 125; Hamrush, *Ghurub Yuliyu*.

study and vote on all issues; the president was not to assume the office of the prime minister; and ministers were to be given freedoms over their areas of expertise.<sup>41</sup> For the first nine months of Sadat's presidency, Sharaf, Gum'a and Fawzi retained their positions, and Sabri was appointed as vice president in addition to his other political posts.

The Arab-Israeli conflict became the first issue to expose the deep divergence over political visions. Sabri and Fawzi were convinced that the US administrations could not be trusted to help Egypt in its war with Israel, and negotiated with the Soviet Union to increase its military and financial aid to Egypt.<sup>42</sup> Sadat shared little of their position and started signaling to the US administration his desire to resolve the conflict peacefully.<sup>43</sup> He expressed his hopes that an opening in the US-Egyptian relationship would allow an extension of the Egyptian-Israeli ceasefire before the expiration date of February 5<sup>th</sup>. Knowing that his efforts would be opposed by the Sabri-led junta, the president took unilateral decisions without prior consultation with the SEC. In a meeting with the National Defense Council and SEC members on February 2, Sadat informed his audience of his decision to extend the ceasefire with Israel for another month. He justified his move as a political measure to politically embarrass Israel and the US, and to demonstrate Egypt's goodwill to the international community. Two days later, in a presidential address before the parliament, he announced that he was ready to clear the Suez Canal from war debris, open it for normal operation and extend the ceasefire for six months. He conditioned his proposal on Israel's agreement to withdraw its forces from the eastern side of the Canal and

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<sup>41</sup> Beattie, *Egypt during the Sadat Years*, 43.

<sup>42</sup> Heikal, *The Road To Ramadan*, 122–26.

<sup>43</sup> As early as November 1970, Sadat sent Nixon a message thanking him for sending an envoy to Nasser's funeral and expressing a desire for improving the relations with the US. He followed with another letter at the end of December conveying similar sentiments. But the US administration remained cautious in responding to his signals. At first the US officials doubted the ability of Sadat to survive the interim period. But even after he was voted into a full-term presidency, they doubted his ability to implement a change from Nasser's foreign policy given the "collective leadership" and the influence of the regime's strong men. For more see Kissinger, *White House Years*; Quandt, *Peace Process*; Cook, *The Struggle for Egypt*.

allow Egyptian troops to return to Sinai. Enraged by lack of prior consultation, Sabri and his associates grew more defiant to Sadat's policies.<sup>44</sup>

Regional policies further deepened the cleavage between the president and the ruling junta. Sadat had lobbied for a union between Egypt, Syria, and Libya and kept his communications with his Arab counterparts under wraps until the union was officially announced in Libya on April 17<sup>th</sup>, 1971. Standing in Tripoli, Sadat, Libyan President Mu'ammarr Qaddafi and Syrian President Hafiz al-Assad declared the creation of the Union of Arab Republics. Sabri, Gum'a, Sharaf and Fawzi, among others, objected vehemently to the initiative. In addition to viewing the confederation plan as a distraction from the fight with Israel, they expressed concern over substantive issues. For one, they had little faith in the feasibility of a real Arab unity project in light of the failed union with Syria. Second, they recognized that the formation of a new political entity meant reconfiguring the political institutions in all three states, which could lead to the dissolution of the ASU, the institution that embodied and enabled their political influence. Sadat on the other side argued that the war preparations required a strong Arab front, and that the confederation gave concrete assurances about the participation of Libya and Syria in the war and its preparation.<sup>45</sup> Fawzi and Sabri, who were informed of the union only hours before the announcement, criticized it staunchly in their circles of influence. Fawzi met with the Supreme Council of Armed Forces (SCAF) on April 18<sup>th</sup>, and informed his generals that he knew about the matter at 1 a.m., almost the same time the local newspapers were printing the story about the initiative. He noted that the union was unnecessary given that the Syrian-Egyptian relations were on good terms and asked the generals to express their opinions regarding the new initiative. As most agreed with Fawzi in rejecting the confederation, he

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<sup>44</sup> Sabri and the strong men of the regime knew about the initiative during the presidential address. Beattie, *Egypt during the Sadat Years*, 57.

<sup>45</sup> Shazly, *Harb October: Mudhakerat AlFareeq Saad Al-Shazly*, 158.



conveyed the generals' views to the political leadership.<sup>46</sup> Discussions about the declaration were harsher in the ASU. In a meeting on April 21<sup>st</sup>, Sadat tried to get approval for the initiative from SEC members but failed, thanks to Sabri's ability to stack his men ahead of time. Despite the strong opposition, Sadat insisted on taking the issue to the CC. The April 25<sup>th</sup> meeting with the CC was more embarrassing for Sadat; Sabri and his associates openly attacked and accused him of deviating from Nasser's path. The meeting ended with a decision to assign Sharaf to meet with Presidents Qaddafi and Assad to discuss some proposed amendments to the initiative. Members of the CC saw these amendments necessary to their approval of the confederation. Sharaf met with the Arab presidents who agreed to the changes. Against Sabri's wishes, the CC met again on April 29<sup>th</sup> and approved the revised confederation proposal. The CC's approval intensified the confrontation between Sadat and his rivals. Lacking a support base of his own, Sadat seemed to be in a weaker position as Sabri mobilized social forces, especially labor, against the president's policies. Sadat was met with demonstrations from workers while giving the annual May Day presidential address.<sup>47</sup> The unsuccessful meeting with labor alerted Sadat to Sabri's extensive influence that he stripped the latter from his vice president position the second day. On May 3<sup>rd</sup> Sabri resigned from the SEC of the ASU.

Sadat closely monitored his rival's communication. On the early hours of May 11<sup>th</sup>, a police officer in charge of wiretapping phone conversations of politicians presented to Sadat a recording of a phone conversation between two prominent members of the ASU. The speakers discussed the "readiness" of General Fawzi and his troops. Sadat shared the recording with Sharaf, claiming that plans for a coup were being made and expressing disappointment at

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<sup>46</sup> Shazly, 160.

<sup>47</sup> Sadat was received a hostile welcome from the Helwan Iron and Steel industrial complex . Workers occupying the front rows chanted pro-Nasser slogans and held pictures of the former president in what seemed to be an orchestrated protest to Sadat's presidency.

Gum'a's inability to discover the plot. Speaking in defense of Gum'a, Sharaf noted that the president misinterpreted the conversation, arguing that the exchange referred to the military's readiness to fight a war with Israel and that Gum'a was not at fault.

The manipulation of cleavages in a targeted institution requires preserving communication with its influential members to identify supporters and opposition. Sadat made two visits on May 10<sup>th</sup> and 11<sup>th</sup> to the armed forces, meeting with commanders of the forces. He discussed his regional initiative and communications with the US administration assuring the generals that no concessions would be made in any negotiations with the Americans. He stressed the strength of the Soviet-Egyptian relations and expressed his confidence in the ability of Egyptian soldiers to fight and win a war with Israel.<sup>48</sup> Although Sadat continued consulting with General Fawzi about the war plans and even setting May 20<sup>th</sup> as a tentative date for an offensive strike against Israel, he refrained from signing a military order to resume fighting. General Fawzi, however, remained doubtful of Sadat's intentions to go to war, and felt that the presidential visits to the military were only meant to appease the generals and prevent them from taking sides in Sadat's confrontation with Sabri.<sup>49</sup>

This detailed account of events in Egypt and the ones that follow are meant to capture the distinct dynamics of rule that prompt imperiled leaders to displace military generals as the primary guardians of order, relying increasingly on other armed actors - in this case the MoI. On May 13<sup>th</sup>, Sadat summoned Mamdouh Salem, then governor of Alexandria and a veteran police officer. As soon as Salem arrived in the presidential palace in Cairo, he was sworn in as the new minister of interior and ordered by Sadat to seize and secure all surveillance tapes housed in the

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<sup>48</sup> Shazly, *Harb October: Mudhakerat AlFareeq Saad Al-Shazly*, 162.

<sup>49</sup> In a meeting with Fawzi on May 12<sup>th</sup>, Sadat talked about the "power centers" and how they were pushing for the war to boost their domestic powers. Sadat stated bluntly in the same conversation that he would not give them such an opportunity. Beattie, *Egypt during the Sadat Years*, 67.

MoI. Sadat then ordered the dismissal of Gum'a. On the same day, General Fawzi convened with his senior generals and informed them that he intended to resign because Sadat was not serious about going to war and that he did not want to be part of his charade. The then chief of staff, General Mohamed Sadiq convinced General Fawzi to postpone his resignation.<sup>50</sup> But when news about Gum'a's dismissal made its way to members of the Sabri group, they decided to resign en masse. The group mobilized their allies to follow suit. And at 11 pm on May 13<sup>th</sup>, the national radio announced the resignations of over 70 officials and political cadres, including Sharaf and General Fawzi. The move seemed designed to create a political vacuum and expose Sadat's inability to govern. The resignations were an invaluable opportunity for Sadat to rid himself of his foes. After accepting them, He appointed General Sadiq as his defense minister and General al-Shazly as the chief of staff. Most importantly, Sadat ordered the commander of the Republican Guard to put all those who resigned and their collaborators under house arrest. On May 15<sup>th</sup>, the Guard, acting under orders from the president, took all plotters to the military prison.<sup>51</sup>

While the public may not play a direct role in policy-making in authoritarian regimes, skillful politicians play off their opponents' moves and public interests to their advantage. Sadat announced that he discovered a coup attempt by Sabri and General Fawzi and had to take measures necessary to stabilize the country. Sadat counted on popular disaffection with the authoritarian measures of Nasser's junta. Wire-tapping, imprisonment and torture were common practices by the security sector which the Sabri faction controlled. To shore up public support for his move against the "power centers", Sadat ordered the collection of some of the surveillance tapes and set them ablaze in the court yard of Cairo's main prison. The scene was broadcasted over national TV. Sadat then set all political prisoners free and established a revolutionary court

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<sup>50</sup> Heikal, *The Road To Ramadan*, 136.

<sup>51</sup> Imam, *al-Tariq ila Kursi al-Ri'asah*, 242.

to try the plotters. He called the May purge, the “Corrective Revolution.” In the prosecutor’s opening statement, General Fawzi was accused of:

an attempt to change the constitution of the state, its republican system and government by force by provoking some generals – across different periods of time – to oppose the Union of Arab Republics, to disobey the president, to oppose the state’s domestic and foreign policies. He also ordered some military units to be on alert in order to execute his conspiratorial goals.<sup>52</sup>

However, the revolutionary court, which Sadat consigned to try his rivals, found no evidence of a coup attempt.<sup>53</sup> Sabri, Gum’a, and Sharaf received life sentences for their participation in a plot to create what the court described as “constitutional vacuum”. Fawzi was tried before a military court and was found guilty of encouraging agitation against the president by objecting to his policies. The court sentence was based on General Fawzi’s meeting with his generals on April 18<sup>th</sup>, in which he discussed the confederation proposal. Although he was not guilty of orchestrating a coup, he was sentenced to life imprisonment.<sup>54</sup> Obviously resigning en masse is no indication of a coup planning. Sadat himself confined to his close associates that his rivals saved him the trouble of removing them through their uncalculated mass resignation.<sup>55</sup>

Presidents’ success in effecting shifts into the make-up of the states’ institutions of force depends in part on their ability to solicit support from within the military. A unified officer corps with little internal grievances or a functioning mechanism to rectify them often resists changes. But grievances can be manipulated by presidents as validations for change. Sadat’s purges were

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<sup>52</sup> *Majalat Al-Nasr*, November 1971, issue 393.

<sup>53</sup> Imam, *al-Tariq ila Kursi al-Ri’asah*, 355–58.

<sup>54</sup> Imam, 351–55.

<sup>55</sup> ‘Uthman, *Şafaḥāt min-- tajribatī*, 404.

welcomed by members of the officer corps who resented the military's involvement in elite-rivalry, and the inadequate attention to military missions. In the early 1970s, the deepest grievances within the Egyptian Armed Forces (EAF) had been the loss of land and the humiliating defeat of 1967, but they were not the only ones. For years, professional officers within the middle and high ranking positions were unhappy with the politicization of military missions of the Egyptian Armed Forces, in particular in Yemen.<sup>56</sup> They were also critical of the lack of accountability and meritocracy, and the orientation of the military intelligence to missions of domestic political security instead of external enemies and espionage under Amer's leadership.<sup>57</sup> At lower levels of the officer corps, complaints of ill-treatment towards junior officer and conscripts at the hands of military intelligence officers or those who engaged politically with the ASU were widespread.<sup>58</sup> Sadat capitalized on these internal grievances to put less politicized officers in charge of the military. General Sadeq's public statements could not but convey this sense of disdain to Nasser's junta's lack of military preparedness. "We didn't fight a real war in 1956, nor did we in 1967. But the next time we will fight a real war with honor and faith."<sup>59</sup>

### **The Junta as Policy Spoilers**

Six years after the 1967 War, the Egyptian military launched an attack on Israeli forces occupying the Sinai Peninsula. The Egyptian forces managed to achieve some military successes during the early days of the war, but they were limited in scope. The October War was meant to stir the waters and promote an international negotiation track for the Arab-Israeli conflict. As the war came to an end and negotiations ensued under the auspices of the US, Sadat emerged

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<sup>56</sup> Jamasi, *Mudhakkirat al-Jamasi*; al-Jallad, *Mushir Al-Nasr: Mudhakirrat Ahmed Ismail Wazir Al-Harbiyah Fi Ma'rakat Uktubar, 1973*.

<sup>57</sup> Jamasi, *Mudhakkirat al-Jamasi*, 121–33.

<sup>58</sup> Sadiq, *al-Nas wa al-Harb*.

<sup>59</sup> Interview with General Sadeq published in *Majalat al-Nasr*, October 1971, issue 392, pp. 2-6.

domestically as a war hero whose popularity was based on achievements in the battle field as well as earlier accomplishments on the civil liberties track. But the financial burdens of the wars left deep marks on the country's economy,<sup>60</sup> and Sadat looked to the free market economy for solutions.

Sadat opted to steer the economy away from Nasser's statism and towards neoliberal economic principles. His steps to re-orient the economic policy started with small steps in 1971 but were intensified after the war. In 1974 during celebrations of the first anniversary of the victory, he presented the 'October Paper,' a document that introduced *Infitah*, or the Open Door policy. The new economic vision promoted an amalgamation of Western technology, Arab and Western capital, and Egyptian labor. As Sadat noted the policy was to accelerate the country's developmental progress:

We fully realize that the burden of progress and construction falls primarily on the Egyptian people. Notwithstanding the domestic resources that we can mobilize, we are still in need of foreign resources, and the international environment today enables us to acquire such resources in a manner that will support our economy and accelerate development. Hence the call for economic opening; a call built on sound estimate of Egyptian economic needs and available opportunities for foreign financing.<sup>61</sup>

Over three years, the government made significant changes to state laws to attract private investments. Despite Sadat's emphasis on coupling peace and privatization with prosperity for the masses,<sup>62</sup> many of the economic policies lacked coordination and planning, weakening the performance of the productive sectors instead of enhancing it.<sup>63</sup> The winners of the introduced economic policies were members of a new bourgeoisie who bridged the state and private sector

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<sup>60</sup> According to Sadat's estimates, military expenditures in the post-1967 and until 1973 reached L.E. 10 billion. Sadat, *Waraqat Uktubar*, 35.

<sup>61</sup> Sadat, 39.

<sup>62</sup> Baha' al-Din, *Muhawarati Ma'a Al-Sadat*, 73.

<sup>63</sup> Some claim that *Infitah* did not represent a real commitment to neoliberal policy in which private enterprises become the vehicle for economic growth. John Waterbury argues that Sadat's *Infitah* policy was not an attempt to dismantle state sector or reduce the state's intervention in the economy but rather, a policy to liberalize the banking sector to allow the inflow of foreign funds and the operation of foreign commercial banks in Egypt. Waterbury, *The Egypt of Nasser and Sadat*, 62–63.

divide, which Sadat created and courted to build a power base of his own.<sup>64</sup> The losers were sectors of the middle and lower classes. Facing a deteriorating economy, Sadat sought the help of the International Monetary Fund (IMF) in 1976. The IMF asked for a reduction of the budget deficit through multiple steps including the devaluation of the local currency and minimizing subsidies. The president's orders to remove subsidies on several basic commodities including gas, flour, rice, sugar and pasta at the end of December 1976, were met with strong public opposition. The change in prices went into effect on January 17<sup>th</sup> of 1977, unleashing a massive wave of popular protests. The price hike was never discussed in the newly-elected parliament, so the political representatives who could have mediated with the masses were side-lined from the very beginning.<sup>65</sup> Riots broke out and several social forces took to the streets including labor and students, contesting what they perceived as the government's bias against the poor. Lootings and burning of state offices, police stations and some ministerial buildings proved beyond the control of police and the MoI's anti-riot forces (CSF). The president called upon the military to secure the streets of Cairo, Alexandria, and some other provinces. Field Marshal Abd al-Ghani al-Gamasy, then minister of war (Defense) and general commander of the Egyptian Armed Forces, reluctantly answered Sadat's calls but conditioned the military's involvement upon the reinstatement of subsidies. Sadat had to agree, as the violence had resulted in 79 deaths and 800 injured.<sup>66</sup> In the first few days, the MoI held 45 members of the banned Communist Labor Party incommunicado, and another 1200 were arrested for investigation.<sup>67</sup> Sadat viewed the riots as an

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<sup>64</sup> Hinnebusch, *Egyptian Politics under Sadat*, 50; Beattie, *Egypt during the Sadat Years*.

<sup>65</sup> Cooper, "The Demilitarization of the Egyptian Cabinet," 236.

<sup>66</sup> Waterbury, *The Egypt of Nasser and Sadat*, 226–29; Beattie, *Egypt during the Sadat Years*, 208.

<sup>67</sup> *Al-Ahram*, January 22, 1977.

orchestrated attack by leftists against his socio-economic policies. In speeches he often referred to the riots as “thieves’ revolts.”<sup>68</sup>

Although disengaging militaries from decision-making processes allows some level of autonomy for presidents, it runs the risk of withholding their infrastructural support during times of crises. Al-Gamasy and high-ranking generals expressed discomfort about asking military units to keep law and order given the credible grievances of the protesting public.<sup>69</sup> Some accounts show that the military leadership not only asked the president to rescind his fiscal measures, but made it clear to him that deployed units were not expected to shoot on the public.<sup>70</sup> While units mobilized to assure the public of the state’s capacity to regain law and order, the generals decided to deploy arms without ammunition.<sup>71</sup> The military’s use of non-lethal force reflected levels of discriminate violence when dealing with looters and law-offenders as opposed to peaceful protestors.<sup>72</sup>

The riots and their aftermath revealed the preference divergence between the military and the presidency over crafting domestic policies. In a communique to members of the officer corps, al-Gamasy distanced the military from the new economic policies as shown in following excerpt:

O Men of the Armed Forces,  
The days of January 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> witnessed some riots and destruction by some groups in Cairo, Alexandria, Suez and other cities, after announcing decisions to increase the price of some food items to overcome the ongoing economic crisis.  
These circumstances necessitated that the Armed Forces deploy to protect citizens and important state facilities, which the people built with their struggle and sweat. The Armed Forces managed to reestablish law and order smoothly, conveying a sense of security and comfort to the people. I, therefore, would like to take this opportunity to thank you and express thanks and appreciation for President Anwar Sadat, the Supreme Commander of the Armed Forces.

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<sup>68</sup> *Al-Ahram*, January 29, 1977.

<sup>69</sup> Abd al-Samee’, *Al-Harb*.

<sup>70</sup> Cooper, “The Demilitarization of the Egyptian Cabinet,” 272.

<sup>71</sup> Baha’ al-Din, *Muhawarati Ma’a Al-Sadat*, 122.

<sup>72</sup> *Al-Ahram*, January 24 - 27, 1977.



Securing the domestic front is securing the main pillar against which the Armed Forces rest in order to maintain their original mission. The homeland will always remember that the Armed Forces are her shield against all threatening dangers.<sup>73</sup>

The above statement, which was published in the specialized magazine of the Egyptian Armed Forces and was made available to the public in news stalls, sent clear messages to the president, the officers and the public. The statement expressed clearly the military's disinterest in engaging in authoritarian practices against a public alienated by the president's new economic policies. The reference to state facilities 'which the public built with their struggle and sweat' was meant to affirm the military's position in support of state enterprises and against Sadat's privatization policy. The carefully-worded message also acknowledged the military's support for Sadat's authority as the supreme commander of the military and put the record straight that his presidency was not contested by his soldiers. Counterintuitively and despite the failure of the MoI to handle street protests, Mamdouh Salem, Sadat's trusted police officer and then prime minister, continued to oversee efforts of domestic control. By February 3<sup>rd</sup>, Salem took back the Interior portfolio in conjunction with his premiership. After stabilizing the security situation, Salem appointed one of his close associates to head the institution.<sup>74</sup> As the new minister of interior, Ismail made sure that the MoI's armored vehicles surrounded the country's major cities,<sup>75</sup> a tradition that continues till the day.

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<sup>73</sup> My translation from excerpt published in *Majalat Al-Nasr*, February 1977.

<sup>74</sup> Al-Nabawi Ismail, a professional policeman and close aid of Salem, was promoted to vice minister of interior in February 1977, and then named minister of interior in October 1977.

<sup>75</sup> Beattie, *Egypt during the Sadat Years*, 222–23.

## Compensated Displacement

Theorists studying violence and human development argue that violent conflict remains a distinct character of natural societies.<sup>76</sup> North, Wallis and Weingast note that armed actors do not disarm as there is a constant need to maintain their strength to balance one another and to overawe their respective clients. In that framework, changes in coalitions and their membership necessitate re-negotiating the distribution of rents and privileges according to the weight and contribution of old and new players. The development of Egyptian political system under Sadat shows that it did not develop into an open access order that characterized democratic societies, despite political liberalization measures undertaken by Sadat. Disengaging the military from domestic control had to be negotiated through a delicate process in which the president identifies some perks and work to make them available to the institution for forgone influence. In the early years of Sadat's presidency, the military yearned for a stable political order that would enable them to regain their cohesion and increase military preparedness. In later stages, Sadat delivered improved economic benefits to the institution in return for its support to his peace process.

Alarmed by the power of generals over his policies, Sadat parted from Nasser's domestic security arrangement, preferring less political influence for the military over surveillance, control and law enforcement. As early as 1971, Sadat selected his ministers of interior from within the police force, thereby ending two decades of military hegemony over MoI leadership. Most importantly, he re-assigned the responsibility of domestic surveillance to the MoI's surveillance unit, the State Security Investigations (SSI),<sup>77</sup> and restricted activities of the Military Intelligence to the monitoring of military officers' political activities. He reinstated the original mission of the GI by confining its sphere of influence to espionage-related activities.

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<sup>76</sup> North, Wallis, and Weingast, *Violence and Social Orders*.

<sup>77</sup> Nasr, Crystal, and Brown, "Criminal Justice and Prosecution in the Arab World."

In 1972, Sadat started to alter the domestic security arrangements. He shifted the control of the anti-riot units, The Central Security Forces (CSF), away from the military and to the MoI. A presidential decree upgraded the anti-riot unit, Central Security Forces (CSF), from a Directorate to a General Directorate in 1974.<sup>78</sup> Its staff witnessed a threefold increase in less than a decade. The number of officers and enlisted personnel increased from 189 officers and 11,690 soldiers in 1969 to 577 officers and 35,576 soldiers in 1977. A new police academy was established in 1975. The same year witnessed an unparalleled boost in the political weight of the MoI when Minister of Interior Mamdouh Salem became the prime minister of the country. Salem became the longest serving prime minister under Sadat, enjoying the president's confidence even during the crisis of the bread riots.

The increasing reliance on the MoI paralleled Sadat's efforts to civilianize the executive. The level of cabinet militarization under Nasser was strikingly different compared to that under Sadat. Of the total ministers who served under Nasser 20.6 percent were officers and 14 percent officer technocrats compared to 4 percent officers and 9 percent officer technocrats under Sadat. As Mark Cooper notes, the military's presence in the cabinet was rooted out that by the end of Sadat's presidency military generals were in charge of only two sets of posts: transportation and communication, and defense and military production.<sup>79</sup> Changes in external threats facing the country were reflected in cabinet appointments, in particular the portfolio of the Ministry of Civil

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<sup>78</sup> The CSF unit was established through a ministerial decree in 1969 in the wake of the Students Demonstrations of 1968. University students had demonstrated in protest to the defeat of the military in the Six Day War, the regime formed CSF in anticipation of similar riots in the future.

<sup>79</sup> The 1973 cabinet that oversaw the October War, remains an exception with more appointed officers compared to other cabinets formed under Sadat. But it included less officers compared to those cabinets formed under Nasser. The Ministry of Transportation remained under the control of the military for a few years after the end of hostilities in 1973 due to the heavy use of railroads in transporting military personnel and equipment and to the two Egyptian armies stationed in Sinai and the Suez Canal areas. Cooper, "The Demilitarization of the Egyptian Cabinet."

Aviation which was tied to Tourism and assigned to a civilian minister in the first post-1973 war reshuffle.<sup>80</sup>

Discouraged by the officers' involvement in politics under Nasser and its impact on the performance of the military in 1967 war, Sadat preferred a more apolitical role for the state's institutions of force to sustain higher levels of professionalization. To further disengage officers from politics, Sadat issued a decree in 1976 preventing all in-service officers from participating in public elections through vote or nomination. The ban, which remains in effect since then, applies to active officers of all security institutions: the military, the MoI and the GI.

The president's disengagement of the military from domestic control was coupled by a policy that provided other benefits for the officer corps. With the end of hostilities and an improved relationship with the US, the first arms deal was financed by Saudi Arabia in 1978. But by early-1979, the US offered to give military aid to the two warring countries if they agree to sign a peace deal. Despite the internal and regional opposition to Sadat's peace talks, which left Arab partners outside the negotiating table, the military did not bloc the American proposal. High-ranking generals who disapproved of Sadat's unilateral approach remained committed to a level of military professionalism and preferred a more apolitical role for the officer corps compared to its direct political intervention under Nasser.<sup>81</sup> By the end of the 1978, Sadat had removed the most popular and decorated generals from service, in particular those who disapproved of his policies.<sup>82</sup> By the spring of 1979, the Egyptian-Israeli peace accord was

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<sup>80</sup> Cooper.

<sup>81</sup> In one conversation with American counterparts, Field Marshal al-Gamasi noted that he disapproved of Sadat's willingness to visit the Israeli Knesset in 1976, but added that as a professional soldier he could not object to the political views of his leader and would continue to support Sadat. Brownlee, *Democracy Prevention*, 28.

<sup>82</sup> General Saad Ma'amoon, the head of the second army was given the position of a provincial governor, a decision that he unhappily accepted. General Saad elShazly, the Chief-of-Staff was given the position of the Egyptian ambassador in the UK. General alGamasi was made personal adviser to the President, a position that was created for him and bore no executive powers. Baha' al-Din, *Muhawarati Ma'a Al-Sadat*, 91; Shazly, *Harb October: Mudhakerat AlFareeq Saad Al-Shazly*; Jamasi, *Mudhakkirat al-Jamasi*.

signed allowing a \$1.5 billion annual American military aid to Egyptian military that guaranteed the sales of air-to-air, air-to-surface missiles, armored carriers, air-defense batteries and fighter jets.<sup>83</sup>

Besides facilitating the flow of more technologically-advanced military equipment, the president opened channels for the military's engagement with the domestic market place. In 1979, presidential decree 32 launched the National Service Products Organization (NSPO), an umbrella organization that has overseen the military's industrial complex.<sup>84</sup> In the following decades NSPO's economic enterprises expanded beyond the manufacturing of arms to include contracting and housing projects, chains of grocery stores, resort complexes, and sporting clubs, all geared toward the improvement of the living conditions of both officers and enlisted personnel.<sup>85</sup>

## **Sadat and Institutions of Force**

I have argued that the civilianization of force theory provides a more fine grained analysis of leader-military conflicts beyond coups. Leaders civilianize force to decrease their vulnerabilities to and reliance on militaries. By shifting responsibilities of domestic control to MoIs, the relative political weight of militaries declines and authoritarian leaders can better consolidate their power. The above historical account shows that Sadat faced serious threats from influential officers within the ruling elite. Sadat consolidated his presidency after a fierce political battle with remnants of Nasser's junta who sought to limit his powers through their control over institutions of force, and information. In his struggle with the Sabri group, Sadat was concerned with its ability to block his policies through their control over the security forces,

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<sup>83</sup> Brownlee, *Democracy Prevention*, 36.

<sup>84</sup> <http://www.nspo.com.eg>

<sup>85</sup> Mitchell, *Rule of Experts*; Sayigh, "Above the State."

the ASU and intelligence apparatus. Sadat may have presented the power struggle to the public as a struggle over civil liberties and democracy, but his communication with close associates show that his real concern was the ability of the group to block the implementation of his policies.<sup>86</sup> Their strength emanated not only from their control over force, but from their control over the flow and production of information about society. Generals in charge of domestic security control the flow of information to and from leaders, and therefore can impair leaders' abilities to make policies or implement them by withholding important information. Sadat's appointment of Salem reflects his understanding of the importance of information gathering and monitoring for domestic control. Salem was a professional policeman with long experience in the surveillance unit of the MoI. And during his premiership, he appointed experienced surveillance officers to head the ministry.<sup>87</sup>

Explaining the boost in the capacity of police forces and other civilian institutions of force as a strategy to counter balance the military may prove faulty if we fail to evaluate the broader balance of power relations that bind the different security actors within the state. Enhancement is not a coup-proofing technique if the capacities of the military and the other force remain asymmetric, as the literature on coup-proofing tells us.<sup>88</sup> The Sadat case shows that the presidency maintained a balanced attention to the institutional capacities of both the military and the MoI. When armored vehicles were delivered from the Soviet Union in 1975, Sadat ordered their delivery to the MoI's CSF units instead of the military. Some scholars have misinterpreted

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<sup>86</sup> In his deliberations with Heikal on how to present the May 15<sup>th</sup> purges to the parliament, Sadat opted initially to frame the discord with Sabri and Fawzi over his foreign policy directions, in particular his communications with the US and the confederation with Arab countries. Heikal suggested, however, that the president frame the struggle as one over democracy, a more important and relevant issue to the people. Few hours before addressing the parliament, Sadat heeded Heikal's advice and presented the struggle as one over freedoms and civil liberties. Imam, *al-Tariq ila Kursi al-Ri'asah*, 358–59.

<sup>87</sup> Police General Sayyid Fahmi, who served as the minister of interior during the bread riots crisis, was also a surveillance officer and had headed the SSI unit of the MoI in Alexandria. Beattie, *Egypt during the Sadat Years*; Jawadi, *Quadat Al-Shurta Fi Al-Siassah Al-Masriyah: 1952-2000*.

<sup>88</sup> Quinlivan, "Coup-Proofing."

Sadat's decision as a counterbalancing mechanism.<sup>89</sup> Such interpretation is faulty because it fails to take into account that the Soviet equipment were outdated, and that Sadat was supplying the Egyptian military with more advanced equipment from the US. The enhancement of the MoI capacity was not meant to deter military coups if they arise, but to improve the civilian apparatus' capacity in an effort to limit reliance on the military for domestic control. The enhancement of the capabilities of both institutions was part of the broader strategy to re-orient distinctly their missions.

War intensifies the role of military officers especially in militarized regimes,<sup>90</sup> and decline in war threat generate conditions of possibility for civilianization of power. Although Sadat managed to capitalize on a golden opportunity that presented itself during his conflict with the "power centers," his ability to institutionalize changes into the domestic security structure was enhanced by the decline in external threat to the state. Leaders facing threats of external war are limited in their ability to depose their military rivals or segregate domestic and external security missions and redesign the arrangement of institutions of force within their political systems.<sup>91</sup> As discussed in the previous chapter, threat to the state exacerbated the Nasser- Amer power struggle and hindered the presidency's ability to trim Amer's clout.<sup>92</sup> The impending war with Israel put limits on Sadat's ability to make changes into the domestic security arrangements and provide resources needed for the enhancement of the capacity of the MoI. Only after the Sinai II Agreement was signed between the Egyptian and Israeli sides in 1974, did Sadat divert more resources to the MoI.<sup>93</sup>

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<sup>89</sup> Beattie's adopted the view that Sadat was trying to balance the MoI against the military. Beattie, *Egypt during the Sadat Years*, 223.

<sup>90</sup> Weeks, *Dictators at War and Peace*.

<sup>91</sup> Ahram, *Proxy Warriors*.

<sup>92</sup> See chapter 2.

<sup>93</sup> The Sinai II Agreement, a diplomatic agreement signed by the Egyptian and Israeli sides, stated that the conflicts between the countries "shall not be resolved by military force but by peaceful means."

Another important factor that enabled the disengagement of military and the reliance on the MoI from was the president's ability to exploit existing cleavages to his favor. In his effort to overcome pressures from powerful generals, Sadat exercised the constitutional authorities vested in the presidency relying on formal and informal rules channels to find allies within the officer corps. Sadat may have not enjoyed Nasser's charisma, but inherited a presidency that enjoyed vast constitutional powers, including the power to appoint and dismiss vice presidents, prime ministers, ministers and commanders of the armed forces at will. Though a new constitution was drafted at the behest of Sadat in 1971, it kept intact all presidential powers awarded to the president under Nasser. It stated that the President is the arbiter between the different authorities, presides over and forms the cabinet, and can dissolve the parliament.<sup>94</sup> Sadat utilized these constitutional authorities to resist encroachments from Nasser's junta. Sadat's demilitarization of the cabinet and other measures that aimed to disengage the military from domestic control coupled with his preservation of the constitutional and structural powers of the presidency show the limits of his political liberalization process. The liberalization process stopped short of transferring real powers to the people or their representatives in the parliament.

Sadat took several measures when dealing with opposition to his policy. Within the officer corps, Sadat highlighted professionalism, promoting officers based on meritocracy rather than on loyalty, but preferring to appoint those with limited power base when his policies received little support from his generals.<sup>95</sup> When his policies were controversial, Sadat followed a unilateral decision-making process, informing his generals after the fact. The expulsion of the Soviet military advisors in 1972 best illustrates this. The presidential order was issued without

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<sup>94</sup> Rab'ie, *Al-Requabah Al-Barlmaniah Fi Al-Nouzum Al-Siyassiah*; Hinnebusch, *Egyptian Politics under Sadat*.

<sup>95</sup> Brooks, *Shaping Strategy*, 129.



prior consultation with his military chiefs despite the extensive dependence of the Egyptian Armed Forces on Soviet equipment at the time.<sup>96</sup>

The investigation shows that preferences of militaries are equally important when effecting changes into domestic security arrangements, especially at the initial stages before the shift to MoI takes place. Since one of the military's fundamental institutional interests is to prevent the creation of an independent armed force, militaries may resist the enhancement of another armed force.<sup>97</sup> Militaries will not surrender their power over domestic control unless the new arrangements promise to yield higher dividends for them. Benefits may include an improved political position and/or increase in material paybacks. Sadat's decision to transfer surveillance responsibilities from the Military Intelligence to the MoI's State Security Investigation unit was welcomed by some of the military's upper brass as the move promised to insulate them from political volatilities. In T<sub>1</sub> the ability of the leader to convince his generals that changes in security arrangement bring added benefits to them rather than a decline in their political power is crucial to the civilianization of force.

## **Conclusion**

Changes in domestic security arrangement under Sadat are better explained through a lens that identifies the civilianization of force as a displacement rather than a counterbalancing strategy. The civilianization of force theory shows that the repertoire of military threats and strategies of leaders to avert them is too broad to be confined to coups and coup-proofing techniques. It also shows that levels of military extrication can be sustained without transitioning to democracy.

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<sup>96</sup> Karawan, "Egypt's Defense Policy"; Jamasi, *Mudhakkirat al-Jamasi*.

<sup>97</sup> Nordlinger, *Soldiers in Politics*.

Sadat deposed his rivals and later implemented long-term structural adjustments in an effort to limit his reliance on the military for domestic control. He civilianized force by relying on the MoI, the state's civilian coercive apparatus. The historical account shows that preparations for the war with Israel delayed his efforts to boost the organizational and institutional capacities of the MoI. Only after the Egyptian-Israeli conflict took a diplomatic turn after 1974, was Sadat able to divert more resources to both the MoI and open venues for military aggrandizement. The dynamics of the Sadat-Sabri power struggle shows, also, that the institutional strength of the presidency was crucial to the success of his endeavors. Although the bread riots presented a real security challenge to the regime and could have triggered a reversal of the civilianization of force, Sadat continued his strategy of disengaging the military from domestic control. Salem continued as prime minister until the end of 1978.

In the next chapter, I discuss the relationship between the presidency and institutions of force continue in Sadat's footsteps. Mubarak continued to rely on the MoI for missions of domestic control, while facilitating the provision of economic perks to the military through a stronger and more institutionalized relationship with the US.

## Chapter 4

# Mubarak's Era: Managing Coalitions and Deepening the Civilianization of Force

*We have no problem with the armed forces;  
Military men are respectable people. It is the  
police that have been crushing the opposition,  
especially with the advent of Gamal Mubarak and  
his NDP's Policies Secretariat.  
Mohamed Abd elKoudous,  
journalist, democracy activist and Muslim  
Brotherhood leader.<sup>1</sup>*

### Introduction

President Hosni Mubarak (r. 1981-2011) followed a similar strategy of civilianization of force like his predecessor, deepening the political influence of the MoI that at the time of his ouster most Egyptians identified the regime's repressive practices with the MoI not the military. Mubarak's attempts to depoliticize the upper brass paralleled his efforts to maintain an uninterrupted flow of US aid to the military. Under his rule, the military enjoyed extensive economic benefits and disengaged markedly from politics of repression.

Disengaging the military under Mubarak did not follow a linear path; the political influence of the military followed a trajectory that peaked by the end of the 1980s and retreated gradually. The decline in political influence had been affected, in part, by the rise and fall of the institution's strong man, Field Marshal Abd alHalim Abu Ghazala, Minister of Defense and the General Commander of Egyptian Armed Forces (EAF) between 1980 and 1989. The chapter shows how the consolidation of the civilianization process requires the provision of benefits to the military. While Sadat's restructuring of domestic security missions promised to insulate the

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<sup>1</sup> Personal Interview winter 2009.

military's leadership from political volatilities, Mubarak's deepening of the process was made possible by his efforts to maintain an uninterrupted flow of US aid to the military and enable the armed forces to exert influence within another field of power: the economy. The chapter also underscores the following points: 1-) the financial perks that military generals accrued as their institution increasingly disengaged from politics of domestic control. 2-) that the institutional build-up of civilian institutions of force under a civilianization of force strategy is not meant to balance against the military. I process-trace the development of the relationship between the president and the state's institutions of force, identifying moments of friction and cooperation and highlighting two episodes of violence that faced the Mubarak regime: the 1986 Central Security Forces (CSF) riots, and the 2008 April 6<sup>th</sup> strike. The change in security performance of the MoI during the period between the two episodes best captures the change that took place with regards to the institutional build-up of the MoI's coercive apparatus. However, the MoI's coercive apparatus was unable to protect the regime from the 2011 mass mobilization, and ultimately broke down under its pressures.

In the following sections of the chapter I first engage with the theorization of regime breakdown and transitions and then move to the empirical discussion of the rivalry between Mubarak and the military's commander during the 1980s. In the third section, I discuss briefly how the regime managed the security challenges between 1990s and 2011.<sup>2</sup> In the fourth section, I look at the institutional build-up of the military and the MoI in comparative terms, showing the continuous superiority of the EAF in terms of training and benefits. The aim of the comparison is to underscore that the institutional build-up of the police and other apparatus under the MoI was meant to control dissent from society rather than counter-balance against the military. In the final section, I analyze how the president's delicate balance towards the military

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<sup>2</sup> An in-depth examination of MoI's policing of the state and society will be discussed in chapter 5 and 6 and.

and the MoI collapsed under pressures caused by the president's hereditary personalization of power and heightened reliance on repression for survival.

## **Regime maintenance and Military Defection**

In non-democratic regimes, controlling violence and security depend on the structure and maintenance of relationships among powerful individuals and their coalitions. If coalitions help solve the coordination and commitment problems that are chronic in authoritarian regimes, securing order and managing dissent in society could be accomplished. North, Wallis and Weingast note, however, that authoritarian regimes experience change in dominant coalitions due to internal or external shocks. To the extent that the leader is capable of channeling resources to members of the coalition in return for support, that leader's survival is not threatened from within.<sup>3</sup> The leader's failure to maintain the support of coalition partners can lead to coalition breakdown and/or the leader's ouster. While elite factions can help form protection pacts,<sup>4</sup> these pacts may break down under pressure from protesting citizens. Regime change can be resisted as long as the ruling elite maintains the cohesion and capacity of its repressive machine,<sup>5</sup> especially during times of crisis. We now know that regime change varies according to the presence/absence of coalitions and popular mobilization.<sup>6</sup> Following Barbara Geddes' study on regime type and survival a research agenda emerged that focused on authoritarian survival and unfortunately paid little attention to militaries and institutions of force.<sup>7</sup> However, there is

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<sup>3</sup> Mesquita et al., *The Logic of Political Survival*, 26.

<sup>4</sup> Slater, *Ordering Power*, 17.

<sup>5</sup> O'Donnell and Schmitter, *Transitions from Authoritarian Rule: Tentative Conclusions*, 11; Bellin, "The Robustness of Authoritarianism in the Middle East."

<sup>6</sup> Bratton and Van de Walle, "Neopatrimonial Regimes and Political Transitions in Africa"; Bratton and Van de Walle, *Democratic Experiments in Africa*; McFaul, "The Fourth Wave of Democracy and Dictatorship"; Bunce, "Rethinking Recent Democratization."

<sup>7</sup> The literature on authoritarian survival is extensive the following are a sample of it. Geddes, "What Do We Know About Democratization After Twenty Years?"; Gandhi and Przeworski, "Authoritarian Institutions and the Survival

evidence that more leaders face unconstitutional exit in military regimes compared to other authoritarian regimes,<sup>8</sup> and thereby effecting new arrangements. These changes may affect the distribution of violent potential and require a renegotiation of the distribution of privileges and rents, as well as membership within the dominant coalition.<sup>9</sup>

Research on the role of militaries and police in mass uprisings has been rare,<sup>10</sup> but the Arab Uprisings spurred some civil-military scholars to pay attention to conditions of military defection.<sup>11</sup> Studying the early phases of the Arab Uprisings, David Pion-Berlin *et al.* found that military disobedience grew out of material grievances, stronger affiliation with public as opposed to government interests, rejection of internal public order roles, illegal orders to shoot at the public, and splits within the services. Zoltan Barany provides the most comprehensive study to date on military defection during revolutions. He identifies four domains that generals deliberate about before making their decision to stay or defect. Generals consider the interests of the military establishment, the relationship between their institution and the state, their relationship to society and the external environment.<sup>12</sup> This chapter aims to add to this research on military support/defection and leader survival by showing how hereditary personalization has impacted leader-military relations during times of mass protests. I show how the president management of

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of Autocrats”; Heydemann, “Upgrading Authoritarianism in the Arab World”; Magaloni, *Voting for Autocracy*; Brownlee, *Authoritarianism in an Age of Democratization*. Exceptions to this focus on parties, elections and legislatures can still be found, for example in Lisa Wedeen’s study on coercion through manipulation of symbols and Eva Bellin’s work on security apparatuses, Wedeen, *Ambiguities of Domination*; Bellin, “The Robustness of Authoritarianism in the Middle East.”

<sup>8</sup> Frantz and Ezrow, *The Politics of Dictatorship*; Gandhi, *Political Institutions under Dictatorship*; Singh, *Seizing Power*.

<sup>9</sup> North, Wallis, and Weingast, *Violence and Social Orders*, 21.

<sup>10</sup> Some area studies examined the role of military in contentious politics such as Alagappa, *Coercion and Governance*; Lee, “Military Cohesion and Regime Maintenance”; Lee, “The Armed Forces and Transitions from Authoritarian Rule Explaining the Role of the Military in 1986 Philippines and 1998 Indonesia,” 2009; Slater, *Ordering Power*.

<sup>11</sup> Bellin, “Reconsidering the Robustness of Authoritarianism in the Middle East”; Lutterbeck, “Arab Uprisings, Armed Forces, and Civil–Military Relations”; Pion-Berlin, Esparza, and Grisham, “Staying Quartered”; Barany, *How Armies Respond to Revolutions and Why*.

<sup>12</sup> Barany, *How Armies Respond to Revolutions and Why*, 24.

the ruling coalition went through two phases. In the early phase, the including new player, the MoI, was carefully managed. In a later phase, changes in coalition rules, in particular the issue of political succession, produced grievances from within the coalition as well as augmented those from society. I note that while the military had opportunities to intervene in politics, in particular during the 1986 rebellion of the riot-forces they refrained from doing so. However, the growing military disaffection with changes in rules of succession transformed to political action under the pressure of intense societal pressures.

## **Military Challenges to Mubarak's Presidential Rule: The Rise and Fall of the Field Marshal**

Military generals enjoying charismatic characters are more threatening to leaders than non-alluring generals as the social persona of powerful individuals intertwines inextricably with the organizations that they lead.<sup>13</sup> A close associate of Mubarak, Abu Ghazala became minister of defense in March of 1981, shortly before the assassination of President Anwar Sadat. In 1982, Mubarak promoted him to Field Marshal and Vice-Prime Minister. Abu Ghazala's leadership of the armed forces posed the greatest threat from the military to Mubarak's rule. Unable to reign in the general's ambition and encroachment over policy-making, Mubarak ultimately ousted the EAF's strong man in 1989. Mubarak's discomfort with Abu Ghazala's political influence stemmed as much from the latter's purportedly likeable character and his ability to forge relations with various groups internationally and domestically as from his popularity within the officer corps.

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<sup>13</sup> North, Wallis, and Weingast, *Violence and Social Orders*, 34.

Dominating important nodes of cooperation with patron states as well as domestic governance makes generals all the more threatening to leaders' power, and Abu Ghazala successfully managed to boost his international and domestic connections. The Field Marshal aimed to project his influence over four levels: US-Egyptian military cooperation, domestic governance, within the officer corps and with the political civil society. Falling back on the relations he cultivated during his tenure as Egypt's military attaché in Washington in the late 1970s, Abu Ghazala facilitated military cooperation between the two countries.<sup>14</sup> His anti-Soviet stances brought him closer to the higher echelons of Washington,<sup>15</sup> especially his openness to expand the American influence in the region.<sup>16</sup> Domestically, Abu Ghazala maintained good relations with the ruling elite. He had joined the Politburo of the NDP under Sadat in violation of a constitutional rule prohibiting military men from engaging in political activities. Pressure from Mubarak led to his resignation from the party in 1984, but did little to contain his political presence.<sup>17</sup> He managed to head a number of high-level policy-making committees that included ministers in charge of the housing and construction, land reclamations, economic affairs, investment and planning portfolios. Ceremonial openings of the military's economic and social

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<sup>14</sup> Abu Ghazala met with Afghan leaders in Cairo several times and it was reported that he oversaw Cairo's involvement in a covert network that shipped arms to the Afghan insurgents during the Soviet invasion in the 1980s. See *al-Nasr* February 1981, *Washington Post*, September 10, 2008.

<sup>15</sup> In some of his public statements, Abu Ghazala noted that the way to secure the Middle East and Africa is to eliminate the Soviet influence in the region. Springborg, *Mubarak's Egypt*, 100.

<sup>16</sup> The Abu Ghazala- Mubarak relation strained over disagreements about the extent to which Egyptian- American cooperation. More recent statements by Mubarak reveal that Abu Ghazala was in agreement of installing an American base in Egypt, a move that Mubarak resisted firmly. The 1985 Achille Lauro debacle is another case in point. Palestinian militants had hijacked the Achille Lauro cruise ship sailing in the Mediterranean. The hijackers who killed an American citizen, docked at an Egyptian port and negotiations about their surrender took place between Egypt and the US on one level, and Egypt and the Palestinian leadership on another. While stalling the American side, Mubarak decided to send the hijackers to Tunisia where the PLO was headquartered at the time. Abu Ghazala, on the other side opined that the Egyptian authorities detain them. His position was a middle ground between sending them to either the PLO or the US and may have been more accepted by the Reagan Administration. The American intelligence intercepted a call between Mubarak and his diplomats discussing the arrangement of the hijackers' secret transfer to Tunisia. En route to Tunisia, the Egyptian plane was intercepted by a US fighter aircraft and ordered to land in Sicily. Although this episode was embarrassing to the Egyptian regime, it showed Abu Ghazala as a more cooperative partner than the president.

<http://ara.reuters.com/article/topNews/idARACAE9B2VN720130619>; Springborg, 102.

<sup>17</sup> Abdalla, "The Armed Forces and the Democratic Process in Egypt," 1457.



projects were often attended by fellow cabinet members.<sup>18</sup> Under his leadership, the military managed to maintain its budget at high levels, despite the government's severe economic crises and change in levels of external threat to Egypt. The ensuing peaceful relations with Israel were expected to decrease military expenditures and direct more funds towards civilian projects. However, Abu Ghazala managed to convince cabinet members to maintain the budgetary allocations at high levels, overstressing the potential threats from Libya and the uncertainty of the Iran-Iraq conflict on Egyptian security.<sup>19</sup>

Militaries are often concerned with securing financial resources that guarantee the flow of funds needed for training and equipment.<sup>20</sup> Under Abu Ghazala, the military extended its influence over both military and civilian projects, increasing the financial resources under its disposal. He oversaw the expansion of military-industrial complex which supported Egyptian arms exports to Iraq during the Iraq- Iran war. By 1984, Egypt's military exports reached over \$1 billion.<sup>21</sup> Under his leadership the Ministry of Military Production oversaw thirty factories and employed thousands of workers. The Military produced and exported to markets in Africa and Asia fighter jets, missiles, radar systems, armor, and ammunition. By 1987, Abu Ghazala managed to press the US to sign an agreement to co-produce the then advanced tank M1A1. Despite reports by the US Department of Defense that such a partnership should be tabled for future discussions, the Field Marshall managed to convince the Reagan administration to agree to this joint-venture.<sup>22</sup>

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<sup>18</sup> Abu Ghazala's political power was registered by the increasing number of fellow cabinet members, including the prime minister, who lined up to greet him at Cairo Airport on his way back from international trips Springborg, *Mubarak's Egypt*.

<sup>19</sup> Ayubi, *Over-Stating the Arab State*, 271.

<sup>20</sup> Nordlinger, *Soldiers in Politics*.

<sup>21</sup> *Ahram Weekly*, 11 - 17 September 2008

<sup>22</sup> For more details on Egyptian military-industrial complex and the Egyptian-US negotiations on manufacture of arms, see Abul-Magd, *Militarizing the Nation*, 78–104.

In addition to building the arms industry, the military was able under the leadership of Abu Ghazala to have a stream inflow of US military aid. Between 1979 and 1985, the US financial assistance was in the form of loans with high interest rates. Egypt accrued debt to the US that reached \$4.55 billion in 1985. It was only on FY 1986 that the US aid stabilized at an annual \$1.3 billion in grants.<sup>23</sup> While these negotiations were approved by Mubarak, Abu Ghazala's direct connections and negotiations played a role in bringing them to fruition.

Meanwhile, the armed forces increasingly engaged in a variety of civilian projects including housing, manufacturing, public works and land reclamation.<sup>24</sup> Officers across ranks enjoyed the blessings of such an expansion at a time when the state seemed more intent on retracting its benefits from its employees. Despite the government's fiscal challenges, the military managed to provide subsidized housing, consumer goods, and access to recreational complexes to both officers and enlisted personnel. The expansion of the military-industrial complex reflected favorably on the Field Marshal's popularity within the military. In an attempt to distance him from his power base, Mubarak offered him the position of the vice-presidency.<sup>25</sup> Reluctant to leave his military post, Abu Ghazala often announced that he was a military man, not a politician. The US also expressed unease about Abu Ghazala being removed from the military.<sup>26</sup>

The 1980s witnessed some expansion of political liberties, an opportunity that was seized by the Field Marshal to build bridges with various civil society groups.<sup>27</sup> With the surge in political Islamism, Abu Ghazala showed more tolerance for the Islamist groups in his public statements, referring to them as an important component of Egyptian society and stressing the

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<sup>23</sup> Abul-Magd, 83–86.

<sup>24</sup> Mitchell, *Rule of Experts*, 240.

<sup>25</sup> Alan Cowell, "Mubarak Ousts Defense Chief, Making Him Aide," *New York Times*, April 16, 1989.

<sup>26</sup> Springborg, *Mubarak's Egypt*; Brooks, *Political-Military Relations and the Stability of Arab Regimes*, 61.

<sup>27</sup> Kienle, *A Grand Delusion*.

importance of religion in the life of fighting soldiers.<sup>28</sup> His communication with Afghani militants fighting against the Soviet invasion further assured his position towards Islamists.<sup>29</sup> The Field Marshal's ability to connect with different political forces made him all the more valuable to American policy-makers.<sup>30</sup>

### **Security Threat from Within: Rebellion of the Anti-Riot Forces**

An important episode in the presidency's relationship with the state's institutions of force had been the rebellion of anti-riot Central Security Forces (CSF) in February 1986.<sup>31</sup> On the 25<sup>th</sup> of February, some CSF units stationed in the south part of Metropolitan Cairo burst out of their barracks, destroying hotels, nightclubs and several tourist destinations around the Pyramids area. On the morning of 26<sup>th</sup> of February, units stationed in the governorates of Assuit, Sohag and Ismailiya witnessed similar riots. Rioters attacked both private and state properties. Damages were estimated at \$ US 197 million.<sup>32</sup> The casualties resulted in 36 deaths and the wounding of 321 civilian and military personnel.<sup>33</sup> Investigations of the riot showed that conscripts reacted to a rumor that the government would extend their conscription period.<sup>34</sup> As the rebellion spread to

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<sup>28</sup> Mohamed Abd alKodous, "Salute to the Field Marshal," *AlSh'ab*, October 14, 1986.

<sup>29</sup> The military's *alNasr* magazine dedicated considerable coverage to the meetings between Abu Ghazala and Afghani insurgency leaders, which took place in his Ministry of Defense' office in Cairo.

<sup>30</sup> During one of Abu Ghazala's visits to US in 1987, he was received not only by the US Secretary of Defense, but also by the Secretary of State, the National Security Advisor, and the then-Vice-President Bush. Springborg, *Mubarak's Egypt*, 118.

<sup>31</sup> The riots took place during the term of then Police General Ahmed Rushdi. Rushdi, showed an exemplary respect for the rule of law, and reoriented the work of the police towards providing criminal rather than political security. It was argued that he was selected to balance against Abu Ghazala Springborg, *Mubarak's Egypt*. However, given Rushdi's strong record and experience with the police criminal investigations, there is more reason to believe that he was chosen to declare a war on drugs. His tenure was cut short by the 1986 riots.

<sup>32</sup> Damaged properties included trains, public buses, private properties, police stations, casinos and five-star hotels. Jawadi, *Quadat Al-Shurta Fi Al-Siassah Al-Masriyah: 1952-2000*, 256-63.

<sup>33</sup> Reported numbers on the violence do not disaggregate the number of civilians, military or police casualties. Reports also list MoI conscripts as military personnel.

<sup>34</sup> The CSF forces are made up of mostly poor uneducated rejects of the military's conscription system. They are employed by the Ministry of Interior on a temporary basis for three years; their salaries are considered one of the lowest for government employees. See ch. 6 for further discussion.

other governorates, the military was called upon to quell the riots and restore order, which it did successfully.<sup>35</sup>

The crushing of the riots was a personal boost for Abu Ghazala's public image. In the aftermath, he emerged as the custodian of security and order. Although the national newspapers were filled with op-ed pieces by Egyptian intellectuals, affirming allegiance to Mubarak and condemning in the strongest terms the unruly behavior of the MoI forces, most writers simultaneously hailed the patriotic position of the military and its leadership. Displays of public gratitude for the military abound, Egypt's intellectuals were quick to highlight the officers' immediate return to their barracks upon completion of their mission, a move that they interpreted as a sign of heightened professionalism.

The military units may have returned to their barracks, but the Field Marshal remained in prime political light, seizing opportunities to stress his indispensability to the country's stability. Few months after the riots, he attended the NDP's national convention addressing its congress on the country's military and security affairs.<sup>36</sup> In his attempt to strengthen his direct connection with the general public, he wrote a series of articles about national security, its meaning during times of war and peace, the geostrategic importance of Egypt's foreign policy and the role of

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<sup>35</sup> Most media reports interpret the event as a protest over economic conditions; however Paul Amar argues that the riots were directed against the rule of law as embodied in General Rushdi's administration. He further argues that they were promoted and exploited by Abu Ghazala. Amar, "Arrested Democracy," 316. I was unable to find any sources that tied Abu Ghazala to the instigation of the event. Military generals I interviewed, including those who were in deep disagreement with some of his policies, denied outright the possibility of his involvement in instigating the incident. Despite their disagreements, they noted that he was a professional soldier and would not have participated in destabilizing the state or the regime by instigating the riots. Personal interviews Winter 2009. Carrie Wickham notes that the popular perception had been that the riots were the work of a network of drug dealers and corrupt police officers who were challenged by Rushdi. This was confirmed in my personal interviews with journalists, winter 2009. Wickham, *Mobilizing Islam*, 81–82.

<sup>36</sup> AlZahed, Medhat, "Comments on the Field Marshal's Address to NDP," *AlAhaly*, August 6, 1986.

armed forces in supporting the state. The articles were published in one of the most read governmental newspapers.<sup>37</sup>

More importantly, the riots reasserted the Field Marshal's power within the officer corps compared to that of the president. The representation of the riots in the monthly *alNasr* magazine, the official publication of the military, was most illustrative. In the April issue, which the editorial board dedicated to coverage of the riots, pictures of the Field Marshal were placed in the first section and most important sections of the magazine. The selected photos showed him in his military garb inspecting military units. In contrast, Mubarak's only picture in the issue was relegated to the very late pages of the sports section. The picture of a smiling Mubarak as a spectator while attending a national soccer match in Cairo Stadium was telling of how the images of the two men were projected to the military audience.<sup>38</sup>

The subtle power struggle between Mubarak and the field marshal came to an end in April 1989. Abu Ghazala was removed after the arrest of an Egyptian-American rocket scientist named Abdel-Qader Helmi in California, who was charged with attempting to export banned material to Egypt to be used in the military project *Badr 2000*. Helmi was said to be acting on Abu Ghazala's orders.<sup>39</sup> Abu Ghazala was dismissed after a US court asked to question him. An espionage case might have assured Mubarak that the American backing of the field marshal would be almost impossible, while at the same time providing a timely pretext for his removal. Domestically, any hope to save the political career of the field marshal was destroyed after news of his extra-marital affairs was made public.<sup>40</sup> Semi-officially, the move was justified as part of

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<sup>37</sup> The articles were published in *alMussawar* in February, October and November of 1988.

<sup>38</sup> *alNasr*, April 1986.

<sup>39</sup> For more on the case read Allan Cowell, "Cairo Aide's Ouster Tied to Effort to Get Missile Parts in U.S.," *New York Times*, April 18 1989, and Galal Nassar, "The Legendary Commander," *Ahram Weekly*, 11-17 September 2008.

<sup>40</sup> Brooks, *Political-Military Relations and the Stability of Arab Regimes*, 62; Abdul Aziz and Hussein, Youssef, "The President, the Son, and the Military."

bringing the military's financial spending under control, as had been advised by the IMF in light of the country's severe debt crisis.<sup>41</sup> Abu Ghazala's successor, General Yusuf Sabri Abu Talib stated upon taking office that he intended to introduce greater financial accountability into defense programs and to limit the military's involvement in economic activities that were not directly related to defense and which competed with the private sector.<sup>42</sup> Abu Ghazala was given a ceremonial post as a presidential assistant, from which he officially resigned in 1993.

### **The MoI's Management of dissent: Deepening the Civilianization of Force**

Mubarak assumed office at a turbulent moment in Egypt's political development. The assassination of his predecessor revealed the extent to which many of his socio-economic and political policies had polarized the society. In an attempt to bring in some level of social and political peace, Mubarak permitted the opposition forces, including the officially banned Muslim Brotherhood (MB), some political space to grow and compete. The MB ran in parliamentary and professional syndicate elections. They built alliances with social forces such as the New Wafd Party and Labor Party to contest officially. In the professional syndicates' elections, they won seats gradually and their ability to provide social services to many of the syndicates' members enabled them to control the governing boards in many of them. Despite the organization's illegal status, its leaders were allowed to meet, manage their extensive networks and even hold Ramadan social gatherings to which most of the top officials were invited.<sup>43</sup> During this phase

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<sup>41</sup> Brooks, *Political-Military Relations and the Stability of Arab Regimes*.

<sup>42</sup> Egypt- The Military in National Life <http://www.country-data.com/cgi-bin/query/r-4165.html>, accessed 9/13/2017.

<sup>43</sup> Despite the movement's illegal status, its leaders were allowed to hold meetings, manage their extensive networks from their main office located in Ramses street in the heart of Cairo. Its leaders even hold Ramadan *Iftars*, meals at the end of the day during the month of fasting. Some regime officials and close intellectuals often attended these social events, providing some level of tolerance to the MB's activities. 'Awadi, *In Pursuit of Legitimacy*; Zahid, *The Muslim Brotherhood and Egypt's Succession Crisis*.

of political liberalization, the most serious and immediate security threat came from militant Islamist movements, in particular *al-Jihad* and the *Jamaa' Islamiyya* organizations. By the end of the 1990s, the coercive machine of the MoI managed to control forcefully militant activities in southern Egypt, at the time when the regime's political machine became increasingly inept at mobilizing support for its domestic and foreign policies. The poor performance of the ruling National Democratic Party (NDP) in parliamentary elections clearly reflected this weakness.<sup>44</sup> The coercive machine of the MoI has been instrumental in sustaining the regime's control over the permitted margin of public contestation through elections.

The ailing regime gradually became less capable of mobilizing support and limit dissent as a result to restructuring of rules of the political game. The US invasion of Iraq in 2002 was a challenging moment for Mubarak. Outraged by the invasion of a strong Arab neighbor, some opposition leaders, intellectuals, activists and labor leaders coalesced to form the *Kefaya* movement. A secular movement that straddled the divide across class and ideological backgrounds. Despite its small size compared to Islamist movements, *Kefaya* made shock waves given its bold call for an end to Mubarak's rule.<sup>45</sup> As President Mubarak announced on February 26<sup>th</sup> 2005 the introduction of constitutional amendments to Article 76 of the country's Permanent Constitution, confrontations between the opposition and the MoI forces intensified. The proposed amendment to the article dealing with the process of popular selection of the president changed the decades-long structure of public voting through a restricted plebiscite to a direct multi-candidate election.<sup>46</sup> By early 2007, another wave of constitutional amendments renewed confrontations between protestors and the MoI. The 34 amendments gave the president the right to refer any "terrorist crime" to any of the judicial courts stated in the constitution or other

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<sup>44</sup> See Ch. 5 for further discussion of electoral politics and the role of the MoI in elections.

<sup>45</sup> Shorbagy, "The Egyptian Movement for Change--Kefaya"; Mansour, "Enough Is Not Enough."

<sup>46</sup> Approved by the parliament on May 10, a draft of the new article was put up for public referendum on May 25,

Egyptian laws more generally, which meant the president's unilateral decision to refer any crime to military or emergency courts, even if the state of emergency were to be lifted. The amendment also gave the MoI absolute authority over defining terrorism, as the article did not specify the nature of the crime.

The boost in the MoI's coercive capacity by the second half of the 2010s increased the president's confidence in the civilianization of force and the MoI's authoritarian control capabilities. Unlike its performance in the 1977 Bread riots,<sup>47</sup> the MoI had grown into a strong and reliable state force, as their operations during the 2008 alMahallah strike makes clear. Workers at the Misr Spinning and Weaving Company in the city of alMahallah alKubrah, one of the country's largest manufacturing hubs, had been negotiating with their management for wage increases. They declared in December 2007 that they would go on strike if their demands were not met by April 6, 2008. A few days before the deadline, civil society activists called for a nationwide peaceful strike, partly in support of the workers' demands but mainly to express growing general dissatisfaction with deteriorating political and economic conditions. Social media played an important role in carrying the call for a strike across a number of groups. Through Facebook, for example, the message had reached about 60,000 people. Alarmed by this virtual mobilization, the MoI issued a statement on April 5<sup>th</sup> threatening that it would take "immediate and firm measures against any attempt to demonstrate, to disrupt traffic or to disrupt the regular functioning of public offices, and against all attempts to incite such acts". The statement announced that all public institutions, including schools and state-run factories, would open for business as usual and accused "provocateurs and illegal movements" of spreading "false rumors." In an attempt to preempt the strike, the company's management agreed to the workers' demands, but the nationwide call for a peaceful strike was not be cancelled. On April 6<sup>th</sup>,

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<sup>47</sup> For more details on the Bread riots, see chapter 3.



workers and thousands of Mahallah residents took to the streets in demonstrations that continued until the following day. The MoI reacted with an iron fist; it deployed thousands of CSF fully equipped with live ammunition and armored vehicles. The CSF responded to protestors' stone and Molotov cocktails with rubber bullets. Two people were killed and more than 100 people wounded. Police detained several journalists trying to cover the protests. On April 9, SSI arrested George Ishak, the Kefaya's second man, in addition to an additional 50 members from the movement. The 27-year-old Israa Abd elFattah, who initiated the Stay-at-Home Facebook movement, was also detained for 18 days.<sup>48</sup>

Police impunity soared following the MoI's success in crushing the 2008 strike. In June 2010, a brutal attack by police on a young Egyptian man became a flashpoint for the online youth community. After emailing a video showing police officers dividing the products of a drug bust up amongst themselves, Khaled Said, a 28-year old cyber activist, was approached by officers at an Internet café in Alexandria. The officers dragged him to a nearby building and beat him to death. When some residents of the building became aware of the situation and tried to stop them from torturing Said, the two policemen threatened them with similar treatment if they dared to intervene. Said ultimately died in the hands of the policemen, who then tried to cover up for their crime by shoving a bag of marijuana down his throat. Battered beyond recognition, pictures of Said's disfigured face were an early spark of anti-Mubarak mobilization. The Facebook page of We are All Khaled Said (*Kulena Khaled Said*) attracted 36,000 people in the first day.<sup>49</sup>

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<sup>48</sup> Shaden Shehab, "Riding the Storm," *Ahram Weekly*, 10-16 April 2008, Mohamed ElSayed, "Virtual Politics," *Ahram Weekly*, 7-13 August 2008, Salonaz Sami, "A Virtual Utopia," *Ahram Weekly*, 22-28 January 2009, and Human Rights Watch, "Investigate Police Use of Force at Protests," <http://www.hrw.org/en/news/2008/04/10/egypt-investigate-police-use-force-protests>

<sup>49</sup> The first post by Wael Ghonim, the page administrator, was "Today they killed Khaled. If I don't act for his sake, tomorrow they kill me." Ghonim, *Revolution 2.0*, 60.

Over the months leading up to the protests of January 2011, the KKS Facebook page continued to grow exponentially. The campaign organized a number of silent stands in Alexandria and Cairo in the summer and fall of 2010.<sup>50</sup> When protests erupted in Tunisia, Ghonim and other activists in the KKS campaign found it an opportune moment to escalate their mobilization mechanisms; to move from silent stands to peaceful protests across Egypt's big cities. January 25<sup>th</sup> was chosen because it is the National Police Day; the perfect day to protest against police brutality. Mubarak was ousted after 18 days of mass protests, bringing back the military to the center of the political game.

### **Institutional Capacity of the Military and the MoI**

The coercive capacity of the MoI has been backed by an expanding bureaucratic apparatus since the early 1990s, putting extensive pressures on state resources at a time when the government was to follow neoliberal prescriptions to bring down its size and expenditures. The official statistics of employment and wages show the growth of the MoI since the mid-1990s.<sup>51</sup> According to governmental statistics, in 1993/94 the number of MoI employees stood at 554,623, with those employed as police and security making up 507,031 employees. The total number employed by the ministry jumped to 693,600 in 2001/2002 and to about 715,000 in 2002/2003, of which the number employed in police and security reached 622,687, and 643,114 respectively. Police and security personnel constitute about 90% of MoI employees on average. Of the remaining 10 %, about 51,224 (or 7.2%) are listed as civil servants within the ministry and about

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<sup>50</sup> Participants were advised to wear black, stand in silence for 30 minutes before sunset, read from the Quran or the Bible if possible, and mostly to pray for the soul of the murdered activists. Ghonim, *Revolution 2.0*.

<sup>51</sup> Statistics and figures in this section are based on the Egyptian government's reports published by the Central Agency for Public Mobilization and Statistics (CAPMAS) and Ministry of Administrative Development (Farouk, 2008). Abd elKhaleq Farouk is one of the few experts writing on state budgets and public accounting. He was arrested several times by the SSI; and interrogated by the military for writing about the privileges that the Armed Forces personnel receive from the bureaucracy. Interview with Farouk, winter 2009.

20,631 (or 2.9%) are listed as employees of the Prison Authority. The numbers of police forces do not include the CSF, whose membership stands at about 425,000 conscripts.

It is also worth looking at how the government opted to deal with employees of the MoI, both administratively and financially. The Egyptian government sets its employees' wages and benefits according to positions within the administrative hierarchy, but also makes use of another tool which enables it to privilege some employees over others. Employees of similar educational training may receive different benefits and privileges under the Special Cadre-General Cadre system. Those employed under the Special Cadre enjoy higher wages and bonuses compared to their peers under the General Cadre.<sup>52</sup> Since 1996/1997, those employed under the Special Cadre system constituted about 13% of state employees. Within this privileged 13 percent, the largest segment has been employees of the MoI, who make up about 85 percent.<sup>53</sup> The allocation of wages and salaries for MoI employees in state budget for the fiscal year 1993/1994 totaled L.E. 1,270 million. In fiscal year 2001/2002 the amount totaled L.E. 2,920 million, reflecting an increase of about 230%. In comparison, the number of employees of both the Ministry of Defense and the Ministry of Military Production stood at 50,923 employees in 1993/94 and declined to 50,905 employees in 2001/02 reflecting a negative increase of about (-0.03%). Over the same period the number of armed forces constantly stood at 450,000 soldiers. In terms of the budget, the military's budget increased from L.E. 6,121.7 million in 1993/94 and rose to L.E. 12,234.6 million in 2001/02, reflecting an increase of almost 200%.

The numbers reveal relative increases in terms of the size of the bureaucratic apparatus wages in favor of the MoI, and may suggest falsely that the MoI came to be on par with the

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<sup>52</sup> Some governments resort to the two-cadre system to compensate state employees for job expenses such as diplomats. Farouk, *Jezzor Al-Fassad Al-Idary Fi Masr*.

<sup>53</sup> Employees of MoI are followed by university professors and research scientists, who make about 11 percent and 1.9 percent, respectively.

military. However, a closer look into the resources available to military vs MoI shows that the former continued to maintain its superiority in terms of officers' training and benefits. Since Abu Ghazala, the military have institutionalized the extension of adequate benefits to the rank and file. A similar tradition was lacking within the MoI. Not only did the MoI fail to provide good healthcare or pension benefits,<sup>54</sup> police officers do not enjoy equal pay.<sup>55</sup>

Members of the two coercive apparatuses have enjoyed different levels of training and mission preparedness. The military has maintained high level of preparedness through the continuous training with American forces as exemplified by Operation Bright Star.<sup>56</sup> EAF officers are also exposed to Western military sciences through graduate studies at US military institutions.<sup>57</sup> Since Abu Ghazala, the informal rule of picking only literate and the most skilled conscripts to serve in the military has been institutionalized. Training for MoI's officers has been less uniform. Police officers rarely rub shoulders with advanced police forces in the West to enhance their detective skills. Furthermore, the less educated and trained non-commissioned officers remain a source of public complaints about police performance given the high level of impunity displayed in their policing practices. The only exception to the MoI's low level of

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<sup>54</sup> Several police officers across ranks and departments have stated to me that a plan to provide a retirement bonus to MoI officers was blocked by the military. According to their statements, in mid-1990s Minister of Interior Hassan alAlfi has suggested that the state pays LE 100,000 to retiring MoI officers, similar to that of the military. The request was denied after Field Marshal Tantawi objected to what seemed like providing some level of financial parity to members of the two forces. In response, Mubarak concluded deliberations over the initiative, and told his minister of interior to "forget about this issue." It is unclear to me whether this story is factual or a mere rumor circulating within the MoI. I could not corroborate this story from sources outside the MoI community. Personal interviews with police officers, winter 2013-2014.

<sup>55</sup> For an in-depth discussion of the chronic institutional inequalities within the MoI, see chapter 6.

<sup>56</sup> The Bright Star Operation is a biannual joint training exercise led by Egyptian and American troops. Troop deployments are centered at the Cairo West Air Base. The operations started in 1980 and gradually moved to include other countries. During the period following the liberation of [Kuwait \(Operation Desert Storm\)](#), these exercises have grown larger and have included as many as 11 countries and 70,000 personnel. Other allied nations joining Bright Star exercises in Egypt include the [United Kingdom](#), [France](#), [Germany](#), [Italy](#), [Greece](#), the [Netherlands](#), [Jordan](#), [Kuwait](#), the [United Arab Emirates](#). The 2014 Bright Star exercise was cancelled by U.S president Barak Obama in the wake of the ouster of President Mohamad Morsi and the violent dispersal of his supporters' sit-ins. "Operation Bright Star."

<sup>57</sup> Brownlee, *Democracy Prevention*.

professionalization has been the Special Forces (SF) which was formed in the mid-1990s as a counter-terrorism unit. Select officers are sent to train at the FBI headquarters in Maryland. They are often lectured by American and British terrorism experts.<sup>58</sup> When SF missions include the termination of militant leaders in hard to reach terrain, officers receive some logistical assistance from the EAF.<sup>59</sup>

I have argued that the civilianization of force process differs from the balancing against the military mechanisms.<sup>60</sup> The absolute disparity between the forces of the MoI and the military clearly shows that Mubarak's boosting of the coercive MoI apparatus was meant as mechanism of public control rather than as a coup-proofing mechanism. In the following section, I discuss how the president maintained a delicate balance between the state's institutions so force that broke ultimately under pressures caused by political nepotism and inefficient governance.

## **Coalition Maintenance and Defection under Mubarak**

As influential members of militarized regimes, generals can threaten state leaders on multiple levels. Aside from staging coups, militaries can exert influence and even blackmail to alter leaders' decisions and/or policies.<sup>61</sup> When asked to intervene during times of popular unrest, militaries could attribute the disorder to the regime that provoked it.<sup>62</sup> Leaders then prefer to rely on the police to handle disorder as this reduces militaries interference with decision-

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<sup>58</sup> Personal Interview with CSF lieutenant colonel, winter 2013.

<sup>59</sup> The EAF has provided some assistance to the SF regarding information on militants' camps in the south of Egypt. Military helicopters may escort the MoI officers to have access to aerial views of the geographic area. The logistical assistance is provided at the discretion of the military; helicopters are operated only by Air Force officers, who decide the extent and timing of the mission. Personal interview with CSF lieutenant colonel, winter 2013.

<sup>60</sup> Quinlivan, "Coup-Proofing."

<sup>61</sup> Finer, *The Man on Horseback*.

<sup>62</sup> Horowitz, *Ethnic Groups in Conflict*, 558.

making.<sup>63</sup> Taken together, these insights help us understand why a civilianization of force process takes place in some militarized regimes. Because the public differs from powerful allies in terms of composition, resources and ability to threaten leaders, the latter rely on different mechanisms to neutralize each source of threat. An autocrat relies on the police and MoI apparatus to repress dissenting public, while removing his generals from missions of domestic control to minimize their access to information and their grip over society. To effect change into security arrangement, leaders in militarized regimes need to offer their generals some perks in return for the relinquished area of control. Military generals are offered better financial and institutional resources.

Arrangements based on safeguarding the institutional interests of organizations are more durable than those tied to individual leaders. Mubarak deepened the civilianization of force process that ensued under Sadat by limiting personal influence of generals but not the institutional interests of the military. With the elimination of the officer corps' strong man, FM Abu Ghazala, Mubarak blocked the political influence of the military leadership while preserving their institutional interests. In his capacity as the supreme commander of the EAF, Mubarak screened the highest commanders and appointed the least politicized officers to the most sensitive positions in the military. To guarantee control of their armies, leaders reshuffle officers at the highest positions.<sup>64</sup> Unlike Nasser who gave 'Amer full control over the appointment of the military's leading positions, Mubarak never ceded his control over appointments of high-level military personnel to Abu Ghazala or to any other prominent figure in the regime and personally screened the EAF's highest commanders. Although Abu Ghazala managed to prevent the appointment of any rival to the office of Chief of Staff, he was not able

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<sup>63</sup> Enloe, *Ethnic Soldiers*, 1980b.

<sup>64</sup> Horowitz, *Ethnic Groups in Conflict*, 549.

to put his loyal elements in leading positions.<sup>65</sup> With the elimination of the military's strong man, Mubarak appointed much less ambitious and more loyal officers to the most sensitive positions in the armed forces. General Abu Talib, who replaced Abu Ghazala, was the governor of Cairo for six years before moving back to the military. He was replaced in 1991 by Field Marshal Muhammad Hussein Tantawi. Field Marshal Tantawi was the longest serving Minister of Defense under Mubarak,<sup>66</sup> and his loyalty to the president was unquestioned. Tantawi came to occupy after serving as the head of the Presidential Guard. In many ways, the presidential guard functioned as a Mubarak's long-term interview mechanism. Several high-level military commanders were promoted to this branch of the military before being channeled to higher positions in the EAF's hierarchy.<sup>67</sup> Mubarak also brought several of his subordinates from the Air Force, the branch of the military where he made his military career.<sup>68</sup> However, Mubarak did not manipulate or foment differences that exist within the upper brass that could have produced deep cleavages within the military. His appointment of less ambitious and more loyal officers did not necessarily mean that they were less qualified professionally, as there is no evidence to support that Mubarak's reshuffling of high-ranking positions has jeopardized the institutional professionalism or coherence of the military.

Mubarak preserved the military's economic resources, thereby eliminating one of the important sources of institutional grievance. He gave extensive tax cuts to military production,<sup>69</sup>

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<sup>65</sup> Springborg, *Mubarak's Egypt*.

<sup>66</sup> FM Tantawi held this position until he was removed by President Mohamad Morsi in August 2012.

<sup>67</sup> The position of the Chief of Staff was filled by two officers who previously headed the presidential guard: First General Magdi Hatata, and then General Hamdi Waheba.

<sup>68</sup> General Sami Anan, who served as Chief of Staff between 2005 and 2012, previously headed the branch of the military most loyal to Mubarak, the Air Force.

<sup>69</sup> Abul-Magd, *Militarizing the Nation*, 99.

and was careful to block demands to share their economic perks with other state institutions.<sup>70</sup> In the early phases of the state's adoption of market economics, it was suggested that the benefits of economic reform might create a large reserve of public support for the regime and help curb the military's influence.<sup>71</sup> However, Egypt's neoliberal have had the unintended consequence of identifying more perks for the military and thereby enabled the president to deepen the civilianization process. Throughout the 1980-2011, the military built a network of economic enterprises that has guaranteed an undisrupted source of revenue.<sup>72</sup> These economic perks were only made possible through the generous military aid received from the US which allowed the MoD to direct a substantial part of its budget to consumer goods without cutting allocation for training and equipment.<sup>73</sup>

To maintain authoritarian control over society while distancing the military, the police emerged as the powerful hand of the ruling elite.<sup>74</sup> The rapprochement between the regime and the opposition lasted only for the first two terms of Mubarak's presidency. Political violence against dissent metamorphosed from being directed against those working to dismantle the state to those working to affect regime change. Displays of political and economic nepotism pushed for new forms of dissent that directly challenged the president and not just his policies. And the

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<sup>70</sup> According to Farouk Hosni, Minister of Culture under Mubarak, Mubarak continuously denied his calls to reassign land owned by the military to be used for Ministry of Culture projects. *AlMasry alYoun*, November 30, 2016

<sup>71</sup> Brooks, *Political-Military Relations and the Stability of Arab Regimes*.

<sup>72</sup> *Al-Nasr* magazine, one of the leading publications by the EAF, ran extensive coverage of the military's economic projects. In the 1980s, the magazine covered Minister of Defense Abu Ghazala's inauguration of the military's civilian-oriented projects, see issues of *alNasr* April and June 1986 for example. The food production by military factories has been justified by the need to ensure supplies to the EAF and minimize reliance on a volatile domestic market especially as the Egyptian government faced a massive debt crises in early 1980s. Gradually, military-owned factories increased production and tapped into the domestic marketplace offering foods and other consumer products to the public. The military provided housing, chains of grocery stores, resort complexes, and sporting clubs, all geared toward the improvement of the living conditions of both officers and enlisted personnel. Sayigh, "Above the State"; Mitchell, *Rule of Experts*; Abul-Magd, *Militarizing the Nation*.

<sup>73</sup> For more on the US aid as a component of the peace agreement, see Brownlee, *Democracy Prevention*.

<sup>74</sup> According to the constitution, the police are a civil authority whose Supreme Chief is the president of the republic For a complete text of Egyptian constitution see

<http://www.sis.gov.eg/En/Politics/Constitution/Text/040703000000000001.htm>



MoI with its police, SSI and CSF forces resorted to anti-citizen violence in a vain attempt to stabilize an ailing regime. Meanwhile, the war against militant Islamists justified further inflation of MoI forces.

The highly visible public gestures of loyalty and appreciation between the MoI and the regime testify to the close relationship that developed between the president and the MoI. In 2005, the police academy was renamed as “The Mubarak Academy for Security.” In acknowledgment of its service and loyalty, President Mubarak declared in January 2009 during Police Day celebrations that Police Day would become a national holiday. Historically, no state institution other than the military had ever received such an honor; typically, Egypt’s national holidays are related to either religious celebrations or specific military achievements.

As the ruling National Democratic Party (NDP) failed to produce a coherent set of public policies to serve the masses, Mubarak’s ruling elite deepened its reliance on the MoI and enhanced its institutional capacity.<sup>75</sup> The state’s repressive practices were complicated by Mubarak’s personalization of power since the 2000s. The meteoric political rise of Gamal Mubarak, the president’s son, disrupted delicate balance that Mubarak preserved in his relationship with the state’s institutions of force over the 1980s and 1990s. Changes in the rules of game produced grievances on different levels.<sup>76</sup> On one level, the son’s political influence put more pressure on the MoI to suppress public dissent triggered by Mubarak’s nepotism, thereby increasing public disaffection with the regime. On another, it created resentment within the officer corps towards what seemed an unqualified presidential succession. The military’s

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<sup>75</sup> According to governmental statistics, in 1993/94 the number of MoI employees stood at 554,623. The number jumped to 693,600 in 2001/2002 and to about 715,000 in 2002/2003. Farouk 2008.

<sup>76</sup> In 2005 Mubarak amended Article 76 of the constitution to change the decades-old structure of presidential succession. Despite protests from opposition groups led by the Kefaya movement, the amendment was approved by the regime-controlled parliament, allowing for the first multi-candidate presidential elections Brownlee, *Authoritarianism in an Age of Democratization*; Brownlee, “The Heir Apparency of Gamal Mubarak.”

apprehension was due to the limited political credentials of Gamal Mubarak and his lack of commitment to the state apparatus,<sup>77</sup> of which the EAF is a central component. Some unofficial military objections aired as early as 2000,<sup>78</sup> and increased as influence of the younger Mubarak encroached on political appointments and economic policies.<sup>79</sup> However, the disapproval remained muted as the EAF's leadership preferred to refrain from direct intervention. It was only through the 2011 uprising that the military acted to oust the unpopular president.<sup>80</sup> The mass uprising was an opportune moment that enabled the military leadership to distance itself from Mubarak's political mistakes and maintain the good relations it espoused with influential social groups without risking the loss of its institutional interests. By early 2011 opposition leaders expressed great respect for the military and identified the MoI as the source of repression.<sup>81</sup>

The military's disengagement from dissent-control policies did not imply its total absence. The President relied on both institutions of force, with each performing differing functions. In 2008, the government faced three crises that required the intervention of both the military and the MoI forces. During the Mahallah events of 2008 - unlike the Bread Riots of 1977- the military was not called upon to back the CSF. The decision to rely solely on MoI forces reflects the regime's confidence in the ability of the coercive apparatus of the MoI to respond to serious security threats, coupled with a desire to minimize the military's influence over domestic politics. While the MoI dealt with the Mahallah riots independently, the military's

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<sup>77</sup> Abul-Magd, "The Egyptian Military in Politics and the Economy."

<sup>78</sup> Abdul Aziz and Hussein, Youssef, "The President, the Son, and the Military."

<sup>79</sup> In 2007, Field Marshall Hussein Tantawi disclosed to fellow cabinet members his disapproval of Gamal Mubarak's economic policies especially the privatization of state assets. For more on Tantawi's comments and its leak to opposition press see Bakri 2011.

<sup>80</sup> Bakri, *al-Jaysh wa al-Thawrah*.

<sup>81</sup> Comments from opposition leaders and activists reflected a level of trust in the military's role to move the country from the corrupt regime of Mubarak. Personal interviews winter 2011.

intervention in the Shura Council Fire and the Dweiqia crisis was limited to the provision of logistical and humanitarian assistance.<sup>82</sup>

## **Conclusion**

When the uprising erupted in January 2011 the masses mobilized on Police Day not to celebrate the country's institution of law and order, but to protest Mubarak's main repressive apparatus: the MoI. The military's disengagement from domestic control can help explain why most political forces that took to the streets during the uprising seemed content to see the generals back in governance especially in the first few months of the transitional period. Sidney Tarrow argues that cycles of antiwar protest are crucible in which new forms of collective action are cast;<sup>83</sup> the invasion of Iraq mobilized Kefaya as a kind of opposition to the president and paved the way for the civilian mass protests of 2011. The mobilization of non-political citizens coupled and threats of mass labor strikes invited the military to engage with the crisis and invited them into politics again.

Mubarak civilianization of force cracked as pressure from the public intensified putting more strain on his relationship with his generals. His attention to military needs and wants coupled by respect for the institution's coherence can help explain why the military reluctantly responded to popular calls to try him politically following his ouster. However, his hereditary personalization of presidential power put limits on the civilianization of force as a strategy of survival. While the Egyptian system witnessed levels of personalization of power under the

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<sup>82</sup> In the summer of 2008, residents of slums next to the Cairo Moqattam Mountain faced a terrible accident when parts of the mountain fell on their houses, killing at least 57 people and displacing hundreds.

<sup>83</sup> Tarrow, *War, States, and Contention*, 250.

earlier presidents, Mubarak deviated from his predecessors by invoking members of his family into the decision-making process.

In the following two chapters, I turn to a state-society discussion focusing on the impact of civilianizing force under Mubarak, in particular the rise of MoI and police power, on state coherence, coercive practices and regime durability.

## Chapter 5

### The State against the State: Policing Judges or Judging the Police

*In front of the gate, to my shock, someone snatched my phone out of my hand. Another came and held me from behind, and they dragged me across the road...I told them I was a judge, the head of a court, whack, they hit me," he said. "To my surprise they took my trousers off!  
Judge Mahmoud Hamza<sup>1</sup>*

#### Introduction

In 2006, Egypt's national Judges' Club mobilized against the rigging of the 2005 parliamentary elections. The mobilization came after two senior judges objected to fraudulent practices by the ruling National Democratic Party (NDP) during their supervision of voting booths. The regime responded by pressing the Ministry of Justice to prosecute them. As hundreds of judges across the country organized sit-ins in solidarity with the two judges, the MoI moved in support of the regime. Surrounding the buildings with armored vehicles and personnel, police officers used multiple tactics to harass members of the judiciary to prevent their gatherings. Judge Mahmoud Hamza was taking pictures of the sit-in on his cel phone when he was approached by plain-clothes policemen right in front of Cairo's famous Judges Club.

The 2006 events brought to limelight not only the Mubarak regime's inability to mobilize supporters during elections, but also how its policies were fragmenting the state apparatus. The police and judiciary, two state institutions assigned to uphold law and order and whose work should have harmoniously overlapped, adopted increasingly divergent views with regards to state

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<sup>1</sup> Judge Mahmoud Hamza commenting on how he was attacked by MoI agents.  
[http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/middle\\_east/4938810.stm](http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/middle_east/4938810.stm)

strength, rule of law and regime support. What explains this conflict between these state institutions? And how did this divergence impact regime persistence? This chapter aims to investigate these questions through a post-Weberian analytical lens. My investigation of these institutions illustrates how state power is hindered by the contradictions between the image and practices of various state agents. Under Mubarak's regime state apparatuses adopted opposing practices: on one hand, the judiciary highlighted an image of the state as impartial and autonomous. On the other, the security sector projected an image of a repressive state that was beholden to the regime. I argue that the regime's contradictory policies with regards to the rule of law invoked the judiciary into politics and ultimately led to judges' defection from Mubarak's authoritarian regime.

The chapter proceeds in four sections. In the first section I look at extant theories explaining the relationship between agents of the state and state power. I then overview briefly Egypt's judicial system. In the third section I move to discuss the empirics of the Egyptian case, focusing on elections and how the parliament became a battle ground between the Supreme Constitutional Court and reform judges and the MoI under Mubarak. Section four highlights the complexity of the case and how policing adds to our understanding of authoritarian dynamics.

## **State Power and Agents**

State power has been the focus of social and political thinkers. In his lecture "Politics as a Vocation" Max Weber defines the state as a human community that (successfully) claims the monopoly of the legitimate use of physical force within a given territory.<sup>2</sup> Public law is essential to the state as it is "the total body of those norms which regulate state-oriented action, that is,

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<sup>2</sup> Weber, *From Max Weber*.

those activities which serve the maintenance, development, and the direct pursuit of the objectives, of the state, objectives which must themselves be valid by virtue of enactment or consensus.”<sup>3</sup> The state does not only have monopoly over violence but also over rule-making, as Michael Mann notes. Mann however, distinguishes between the despotic power of the elite (rule-making) and infrastructural power to penetrate civil society to effect change (implementation).<sup>4</sup> Anthony Giddens makes a similar distinction as he differentiates rule-making from outcomes.<sup>5</sup>

The above distinctions between levels of state power -as insightful as they - do not tell us much about intra-state conflicts. The Weberian approach falls short of explaining the friction that takes place between state agencies because it views the state as a centralized unitary actor. Joel Migdal’s state-in-society approach enables a better exploration into apparatuses that make up the state.<sup>6</sup> Migdal posits that actual states are shaped by image and practices. The image is “of a dominant, integrated and autonomous entity that controls, in a given territory, all rule making, either directly through its own agencies or indirectly by sanctioning other authorized organizations to make certain circumscribed rules.”<sup>7</sup> The practices involve those routine performances of state actors and agencies. Their practices, as Migdal notes may reinforce the image or weaken it; may bolster the notion of the territorial and public-private boundaries or neutralize them.<sup>8</sup> His state-in-society approach has generated insightful research on the interaction between state agencies and social groups.<sup>9</sup> Yet despite his acknowledgement that modern states are made of multiple agencies and bureaus with widely different tasks and forces

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<sup>3</sup> Weber, *Economy and Society*, 641.

<sup>4</sup> Mann, “The Autonomous Power of the State.”

<sup>5</sup> Giddens, *The Nation-State and Violence*.

<sup>6</sup> Migdal, *Strong Societies and Weak States*; Migdal, *State in Society*.

<sup>7</sup> Migdal, *State in Society*, 16.

<sup>8</sup> Migdal, 18.

<sup>9</sup> See the works in the edited volumes Schlichte, *The Dynamics of States*; White, *The Everyday Life of the State*.

pulling them in different directions,<sup>10</sup> an examination into intra-state tensions is still wanting especially in authoritarian regimes.

Over the past two decades, social scientists started paying attention into courts' functions in non-democracies. The literature on courts tells us that autocrats rely on them to exercise state power vis-à-vis opposition, advance administrative discipline within state institutions, maintain cohesion among various factions within the ruling coalition, facilitate market transitions, contain majoritarian institutions through authoritarian enclaves, delegate controversial reforms, and bolster regime legitimacy.<sup>11</sup> The judiciary is not a unitary actor. Their performances fall within a wide spectrum with regards to citizens' rights. They can challenge religious authoritarianism to boost civil and social rights,<sup>12</sup> serve the ruling elite while still providing enclaves of rights protection to the public,<sup>13</sup> and defend the ruled against regime encroachments yet put limits on religious rights.<sup>14</sup>

In this chapter I explore intra-state practices and their impact on state and regime decay.<sup>15</sup> The relationship between laws that regulate and force is crucial for effective state functioning. One of the functions of the state is the maintenance of internal order which benefits all law-abiding subjects within its territory,<sup>16</sup> therefore officials' administration of laws needs to be backed by the threat of violence.<sup>17</sup> Through investigating the troubled relationship between the MoI and the judiciary under Mubarak, I aim to build on current theorization of this relationship while extending the state-in-society approach to underscore how weak authoritarian regimes

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<sup>10</sup> Migdal, *State in Society*, 239.

<sup>11</sup> Moustafa, "Law and Courts in Authoritarian Regimes."

<sup>12</sup> Woods, *Judicial Power and National Politics*.

<sup>13</sup> Brinks, *The Judicial Response to Police Killings in Latin America*.

<sup>14</sup> El-Ghobashy, "Constitutionalist Contention in Contemporary Egypt"; al-Sayyid, "Rule of Law, Ideology and Human Rights in Egyptian Courts"; Moustafa, *The Struggle for Constitutional Power*.

<sup>15</sup> In the following chapter I turn to the intra-institutional tensions within the Egyptian Ministry of Interior investigating problems of discipline, predation and politicization of the police as state agents.

<sup>16</sup> Mann, "The Autonomous Power of the State," 196.

<sup>17</sup> Giddens, *The Nation-State and Violence*, 16; Mann, "The Autonomous Power of the State," 188.



affect the modern state's limited success in producing uncontested conformity and obedience from society. In this sense, not only state-society interactions but also intra-state friction produces a fractured incoherent system. The conflict between two institutions of law and order in Mubarak's Egypt reflected a war of the state against the state. In their competition to assert their powers and draw the boundaries of state strength, the police and the judiciary transform the state from a Leviathan to a Greek mythology Hydra.

### **Egypt's Judicial System**

The judicial system in Egypt is comprised of several courts: the general court system, state courts and the military courts. The general court system includes three tiers: Courts of the First Degree (*Mahkmat El Daragah El Aoulah*), the Appellate Court (*Mahkmat El Esti'anaqf*), and the Court of Cassation (*Mahkmat El Naqd*). Established in 1946, the State Council has the right to nullify and repeal administrative decrees issued by the Council of Ministers, the Prime Minister, and the President. The Council consists of the Administrative Judicial Court and the Supreme Administrative Court. The Administrative Judicial Court has jurisdiction over administrative matters related to government contracts, tenders, and administrative decisions. The Supreme Administrative Court is an appellate court that sits at the top of the administrative judicial structure. The Supreme Constitutional Court was established in 1969. According to Law 48-1979, the court has the authority to determine the constitutionality of the laws passed by the People's Assembly, identify the jurisdiction of courts, and interpret laws and presidential decrees. The President of Egypt appoints the judges of the court, who serve until the mandatory retirement age.<sup>18</sup> The Military Courts have jurisdiction over military personnel and civilians

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<sup>18</sup> Moustafa, *The Struggle for Constitutional Power*.

implicated in crimes related to terrorism and national security. Unlike civilian courts, its verdicts can only be appealed through the High Military Appeals Court and only the President can overturn rulings rendered by it.<sup>19</sup> Under Mubarak, the Ministry of Justice, a branch of the executive, oversees the promotion and disciplining of judges. And the president appoints the members of the Supreme Constitutional Court. All constitutions governing Egypt since Nasser, mandated that the President is the Supreme Council of Judges and the Supreme Council of Police.

## **Electoral Politics between the Police and Judiciary**

Egyptian presidents aimed to contain the autonomy of the judiciary, however their control over judges varied. Nasser relied on Revolutionary Courts to mandate his decisions, preferring to avoid the civilian court system. Revolutionary Courts were headed by military officers with no training in the legal tradition; they were mostly members of his junta.<sup>20</sup> It was only after the 1967 defeat that Nasser turned to mobilize all state institutions to shore up his regime. In an attempt to domesticate Egyptian judges who were critical of many repressive policies, Nasser promulgated a number of laws in 1969, by which he reorganized judicial institutions disposing of 189 judges who did not agree to be members in the Arab Socialist Union, the state's then single-party institution.<sup>21</sup> He then dissolved the elected council of the Judges' Club and replaced it with an appointed council. The events became known as Nasser's 'Massacre of Judiciary' in 1969.<sup>22</sup>

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<sup>19</sup> <https://www.loc.gov/law/help/legal-research-guide/egypt.php>

<sup>20</sup> Mekky, "Al-Siddam Bayn Al-Nizam Al-Nassri Wa Al-Qudah."

<sup>21</sup> Imam, *Milaff 'Abd al-Nasir*.

<sup>22</sup> Fahmy, *The Politics of Egypt*, 52; Kassem, *Egyptian Politics*, 168.

Mubarak, like his predecessor, used the SCC court rulings in his attempt to legitimize their policies. With the ruling of the constitutionality of the state's economic shift to neoliberalism, the court gradually exercised its power over a number of other issues.<sup>23</sup> One side effect was bringing electoral politics into the judicial domain. Egypt abandoned Nasser's one-party system and returned to multi-party system by the mid-1970s. President Sadat then legalized political parties in 1977. However Law 33/1978 regulated the formation of political parties and in reality restricted the real spirit of political pluralism.<sup>24</sup> It mandated that political parties have programs that are clearly distinguishable from one other, and prohibited the formation of political parties based on gender, ethnic or religious orientation.<sup>25</sup> Petitions to form new parties were often rejected on the basis of similarity of programs and the religion clause prevented Islamists, especially the Muslim Brotherhood (MB), from being legalized as a political party. The law established the Committee of Political Parties' Affairs (CPPA) giving it the authority to approve new parties. The CPPA included the head of the Consultative Council, the Minister of Justice, the Minister of Interior, and the Minister of the People's Assembly in addition to three ex-Judges or their deputies who were chosen by the President. The committee acted as a gatekeeper especially as its powers were extended to ban parties' publications or activities if they were found to be endangering of the national interest.<sup>26</sup>

Mubarak tolerated a degree of political liberalization in his first decade before a process of de-liberalization ensued by the mid-1990s.<sup>27</sup> In an effort to reconcile the regime with some opposition factions and project an image of openness to appeal to international investors, The Supreme Constitutional Court (SCC) ruled in 1983 against the constitutionality of Law 33/1978.

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<sup>23</sup> Moustafa, *The Struggle for Constitutional Power*.

<sup>24</sup> Baaklini, Denoeux, and Springborg, *Legislative Politics in the Arab World*, 227.

<sup>25</sup> Fahmy, *The Politics of Egypt*, 67.

<sup>26</sup> Fahmy, 68.

<sup>27</sup> Kienle, *A Grand Delusion*.

As a result, the Wafd re-emerged legally as the New Wafd Party.<sup>28</sup> However, the regime attempted to control political participation via other means. Leftists and Islamists opposition groups suffered from the issuance of Law 114/1983 that regulated the parliamentary election process.<sup>29</sup> The law also required each party to nominate a number of candidates equivalent to the number of seats in each constituency and to name a similar number as a reserve list to be used in case of death or resignation, and changed the number of constituencies to 48 and the number of seats to 448.<sup>30</sup> Clearly this law played to institutionalize the monopoly of the ruling National Democratic Party (NDP) in the 1984 legislature.<sup>31</sup> As a result these rules prevented the Labor Party, the National Progressive Unionist Party (NPUP) and the Liberal Party from securing any parliamentary seats. The opposition was mainly composed of an alliance between the New Wafd and the Muslim Brothers.<sup>32</sup> In December 1986, the SCC ruled against the constitutionality of some articles of Law 114/1983 since they prevented independent candidates from contesting elections alongside parties.<sup>33</sup> The court also found that the transfer of surplus votes to the majority party violated principles of equal rights and equality of opportunity as embodied in the constitution.<sup>34</sup> The President used his constitutional right to dissolve the parliament by

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<sup>28</sup> Baaklini, Denoeux, and Springborg, *Legislative Politics in the Arab World*, 229.

<sup>29</sup> The law replaced the system of single-member candidacy with a party slate, thereby preventing independents from running. Fahmy, *The Politics of Egypt*, 69.

<sup>30</sup>The number of the constituencies and seats prior to changes in 1983 differs among sources. Fahmy (2002) and Springborg (1989) mention that the number of seats were 380 and the number of constituencies to be 176. Baaklini, Denoeux and Springborg (1999) cite the number of seats as 350 and that of the constituencies to be 175. Nevertheless the sources agree as to the new number of seats and the constituencies following the 1983 changes. This is in addition to the 10 appointed members by the President. Springborg, *Mubarak's Egypt*; Baaklini, Denoeux, and Springborg, *Legislative Politics in the Arab World*; Fahmy, *The Politics of Egypt*.

<sup>31</sup> The 73 % of votes received by the NDP translated to 87% or 390 seats, and the 27 percent of the opposition translated to 58 seats or only 13 percent. The 8 % requirement, coupled with the mandate to present two party lists, functioned primarily to prevent the victory of some opposition figures whose personal popularity surpassed that of their parties. These politicians were deeply rooted in their districts due to their long political careers or their familial ties despite the weakness of their parties across the country. Kassem, *In the Guise of Democracy*, 92–99.

<sup>32</sup> Baaklini, Denoeux, and Springborg, *Legislative Politics in the Arab World*, 230; Kassem, *In the Guise of Democracy*, 92–99.

<sup>33</sup> Baaklini, Denoeux, and Springborg, *Legislative Politics in the Arab World*, 230; Moustafa, *The Struggle for Constitutional Power*.

<sup>34</sup> Fahmy, *The Politics of Egypt*, 70.

referendum and called for new elections to be held in April 1987.<sup>35</sup> The election law was amended hastily before the dissolution of the parliament at the end of 1986. It allocated one seat for independents in each of the 48 districts, but the 8% rule was not abolished. Amendments were geared to circumvent objections raised by the SCC. The 1987 election results showed an increase in the size of the opposition to about 95 seats. In 1988, the SCC ruled again against the constitutionality of some articles of the 1986 election law.<sup>36</sup> In September 1990 Law 206 was passed in the legislature changing the party list to two-round majority vote. The new law abolished party slate system and reinstated the individual candidacy system. The number of parliamentary seats was changed to 444 instead of 448, and the number of constituencies was changed from 48 to 222. Mubarak issued a decree to hold a referendum on dissolving the parliament and calling for yet another early election in 1990.<sup>37</sup>

Frustrated by the continuous fraudulent practices of the NDP and the interference of the security forces against opposition candidates, the opposition forces that engaged in electoral politics demanded judicial supervision over the voting process, a demand that was denied by the regime. Under the NDP domination, the parliament was able to complete its five-year term and the government proposed and managed to pass a number of laws that were clearly bringing civil society under its strict control.<sup>38</sup>

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<sup>35</sup> Kasseem, *In the Guise of Democracy*, 99.

<sup>36</sup>The ruling stated that Law 1988/1986 was unconstitutional because of its heavy bias against independent candidates since it gave only one seat to them compared to a larger number of seats allotted to party slates in each constituency. Moustafa, *The Struggle for Constitutional Power*.

<sup>37</sup> One of the tactics the government consistently resorts to is manipulation of the time frame of implementing announced changes. A delay in implementation cripples the ability of the opposition to mobilize and organize for the parliamentary elections. As Kienle (2001, 52) mentions, the SCC delivered its ruling in May 1990, but the referendum needed to dissolve the legislature was only announced in September 26<sup>th</sup>, and was held on October 11<sup>th</sup>. Boundaries of the constituencies were drawn and published on October 2<sup>nd</sup>, and candidates were able to register from October 22<sup>nd</sup> to compete in the elections taking place on November 29<sup>th</sup>.

<sup>38</sup> Three laws stand out prominently in that sense; the first law was Law 100/1993 that regulated the elections within professional syndicates. Targeting active Islamists, this law was drafted with an attempt to limit their increasing influence in professional syndicates. The second was Law 26/1994 known as *Umad and Mashiekh* law (village mayors and chiefs). It changed the public election of the village mayors and chiefs to a system of government

By 1995, it was quite clear that the relative political liberalization that characterized the first decade of Mubarak's rule was being rolled back. After five years of tightly controlled political participation, the government was getting ready for another legislative election. Massive arrests of MB leaders took place in the few months preceding the elections, and an anti-terrorism law that was passed in 1992 legalized trying civilians in military courts. The practice steadily gained momentum until, two months before the election, virtually the entirety of the Muslim brotherhood leadership, including many candidates for parliament, was sent to military courts for offenses of considerably lesser magnitude than those on which alleged Islamist terrorists were being tried.<sup>39</sup> The 1995 elections results showed an increase in number of winning independents many of whom joined the ranks of the NDP in the parliament. The 1995 election witnessed an unprecedented increase in the level of violence used by the state apparatus against the opposition. Before the first round of elections, the MoI's security forces rounded up about a thousand citizens who were either candidates or supporters, preventing them from observing the ballots. Most of those arrested were affiliated with Islamists but were not confined to them.<sup>40</sup> Violent practices, predominantly by campaign managers of NDP candidates, were tolerated by

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appointment, therefore eliminating the last democratic practice on the most local level. It is important to highlight here that the government had passed earlier Law 96/1992 which re-organized the owner-tenant relations. It strongly affected rights over agricultural land, enabling owners to negotiate terms of leasing and payment, and giving them the ability to evict tenants. This came in stark contradiction to earlier socio-economic benefits granted by the state to the peasants during the socialist era. In light of these changes, village mayors and chiefs play an important role in implementing the new law and in keeping the social order according to the state's rules.

The third was Law 93/1995 was dubbed by the opposition as the 'Press Assassination Law'. The law, in dealing with what it called 'crimes of publication', restricted the power of the press to report on officials and their relatives on issues of corruption or misuse of power. It stipulated that reporters and editors-in chief of their respective publications could be sentenced to up to five years in prison and fined with LE 20,000 for naming officials in cases of corruption. It was hurriedly passed by the outgoing Assembly in May only few weeks before the summer break after which the new election was due. The law was tabled and voted on in a matter of hours in the presence of only 45 members of the 454 deputies. This law was passed at the time when privatization efforts of SoEs were underway. Prior to passing the law, several opposition newspapers alluded to the corruption involved in the selling of the public sector companies, especially that little information was disclosed to the public regarding the financial transactions.

Kienle, *A Grand Delusion*, 56.

<sup>39</sup> Baaklini, Denoeux, and Springborg, *Legislative Politics in the Arab World*, 233.

<sup>40</sup> Kienle, *A Grand Delusion*.

the security forces. This in turn lured some non-NDP candidates to resort to similar tactics to protect their campaigns.<sup>41</sup> Other irregularities such as fraudulent counting and stuffing of ballot boxes before arriving at election sites were also common, a practice inherited from earlier parliamentary elections.<sup>42</sup>

The 2000 election results showed a retreat in the popularity of the NDP in spite, or may be because, of the regime's tightened control over the society and its continuous exclusionary policies. For the first time the ruling party was unable to secure a majority in the Assembly through its original candidates. It won 172 seats and independents won 256. Of the 256 independents, 218 changed their independent status and joined the ranks of the NDP thereby enabling the ruling party to maintain its majority in the legislature. The party leadership, appalled by the weak performance, was more than welcoming of their return. The decline in popularity of the NDP had been going on for some time but was undetected in earlier parliamentary elections. The President's issuance of decree 167 of 2000 mandating complete and direct supervision of judges over voting and ballot counting in accordance with an earlier ruling by the SCC helped support the real support of the NDP. The judicial supervision made it harder for the regime to freely use its fraudulent measures but increased the level of violence. The presence of judges in election booths controlled to a great extent the fraudulent counts and the pre-stuffing of ballot boxes. However, their judicial supervision could not stop the harassment of opposition candidates and their supporters outside voting stations.

The emergence of the *Kefaya* (Enough) movement in 2004 ignited other pro-democracy movements including the Independent Judiciary movement, otherwise known as *Tayyar al-*

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<sup>41</sup> Kienle, 59; Baaklini, Denooux, and Springborg, *Legislative Politics in the Arab World*, 234.

<sup>42</sup> Ibrahim Shoukry, leader of the Labor Party, was defeated in the first round in his hometown in Daqhaliya, where he had won every election since 1950, with the exception of 1990 when his party boycotted the elections. Baaklini, Denooux, and Springborg, *Legislative Politics in the Arab World*, 234.

*Istiklal*.<sup>43</sup> The movement emerged out of the activism of a group of judges who led the Judges Club in the mid-2000s. The fraudulent practices of during the 2005 election and the regime's desire to punish judges for their supervision prompted judges to push for further judicial independence.<sup>44</sup> The battle was led by a number of prominent Cassation and Appellate court judges. Their movement attracted other opposition members including the MB who used the crisis to expose the violence and corruption of the regime. By 2007 the regime realized that the cost of judicial supervision was too high to tolerate; the 2007 constitutional amendments changed article 88 replacing the full supervision with the presence of members of the judicial bodies in main polling stations only.<sup>45</sup> Leaders of the reformist judicial movement were provoked by the increasing encroachment on the limited judicial independence of the 1980s, but were equally antagonized by the repressive and incompetent governance of the regime.<sup>46</sup>

## **From a Leviathan to a Hydra: Mubarak's Regime between State Capture and State Resistance**

The historical narrative discussed above shows how the parliament became an arena in which the police and the judiciary fought to consolidate their authority. As numerous notable judges sought to push further the boundaries of judicial independence vis-à-vis the executive, opposition forces as well as individuals reached out to the courts to voice their grievances and claim their rights. The regime not only tightened its control over the assembly preventing its oversight and monitoring powers, but managed to transform it into a tool for the production of

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<sup>43</sup> Mansour, "Enough Is Not Enough"; Shorbagy, "The Egyptian Movement for Change--Kefaya."

<sup>44</sup> Brown, "Egypt's Judges in a Revolutionary Age."

<sup>45</sup> Bernard-Maugiron, "Legal Reforms, the Rule of Law and Consolidation of State Authoritarianism under Mubarak."

<sup>46</sup> Personal Interview with Deputy Chair of the Judges Club and one of the leaders of the *Tayyar al-Istiklal*, judge Ahmed Mekky, Winter 2010.



government-tailored laws. At the same time the government used the legislature as a scapegoat to fend off any criticism against its policies, especially in curbing civil liberties and rights. By claiming that government policies were applications of laws accepted and passed through the People's Assembly, the regime shifted the blame on the legislature as the institution responsible for limiting civil liberties.<sup>47</sup>

While judges may have enjoyed some power to strike down what they saw as unconstitutional or illegal laws, this power was countered by their inability to enforce many of their rulings. Institutions may have the power to deploy a range of resources but their power to achieve outcomes is conditioned on their ability to secure the compliance of others.<sup>48</sup> Mubarak permitted a level of independence for the courts as long as the regime was able to circumvent them. Whereas the government complied with court rulings granting license to the new parties, it knew that such political parties would not be able to challenge its authority in light of the existing formal and informal electoral rules. In other cases where the rulings were threatening to the NDP's power in the parliament, officials simply ignored the verdicts. For example, in the 1984 elections several non-NDP candidates resorted to courts contesting incidents of fraud in ballot counting in several districts. The courts ruled against the purported victory of some NDP deputies and asked that they be unseated because of fraudulent voting practices. Yet the Speaker of the Assembly, who was a presidential appointee, refused to follow the court rulings and contested the authority of the judiciary over the legislature. Commenting on such rulings, he used upheld the mantra of "The Assembly is the master of its decision".<sup>49</sup> In a similar case, the Administrative Court, following the 1987 elections, nullified the results of 78 members who won

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<sup>47</sup> Rab'ie, *Al-Requabah Al-Barlmaniah Fi Al-Nouzum Al-Siyassiah*, 130.

<sup>48</sup> Giddens defines power as the transformative capacity or capability to intervene in a given set of events so as in some way alter them. Giddens, *The Nation-State and Violence*, 7.

<sup>49</sup> *alBadil* December 21, 2010.

by fraud, and called for the seating of 17 opposition members who won the elections but were replaced by NDP candidates. But the Minister of Interior refused to execute the ruling. The same scenario was repeated in 1996, where the Administrative Court nullified election results in some districts but again the Minister of Interior refused to execute. Incidents of the same nature occurred in the 1990 and the 1995 elections when the Court of Appeal nullified the membership of several NDP members who were either ineligible for parliamentary membership or whose success was attributed to fraud and violence. Again simply ignoring the court rulings, the Assembly publicly reiterated its position as the representative body of the people and claimed its independence from the judiciary.<sup>50</sup> These cases illustrate the relative independence of ordinary courts and also the autonomy of the ruling NDP vis-à-vis the judicial authority.

The executive found in the Emergency Law a perfect opportunity to further circumvent the rule of law.<sup>51</sup> Under the emergency laws, the limit to detain suspects for 45 days for questioning could be extended indefinitely without a formal court hearing. The penal code gave the judiciary little power over detention treatment. While the Ministry of Interior was assigned with the bulk of repression, Mubarak made use of an important clause in the Emergency Law which gave the president the right to refer suspects to military courts.<sup>52</sup> Members of the MB were often tried before military courts since their verdicts are final and cannot be repealed.<sup>53</sup>

The SCC's ability to challenge the regime in the electoral domain had a spill-over effect as other courts became more emboldened in checking regime abuses. Judges presiding over State Assembly courts were less exposed to the volatility of SCC membership and opposed the MoI

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<sup>50</sup> Fahmy, *The Politics of Egypt*, 55.

<sup>51</sup> The emergency law has been in effect from the assassination of Sadat on October 6<sup>th</sup>, 1981 till March 2011.

<sup>52</sup> Law 25/1966 Military Judiciary states that under emergency laws, the President has the right to refer to the military court any crime which is punishable under the Penal Code. <https://www.loc.gov/law/help/legal-research-guide/egypt.php>

<sup>53</sup> Those indicted by military courts were not incarcerated in military prisons and were housed in the MoI's prisons. Despite the prevalence of torture against Islamists in MoI prisons, most leaders of the MB were not subjected to torture. Personal Interview with MB leader Abd el-Monem Abu elFotoh, Winter 2012.

practices. The State Assembly's Administrative Court issued a number of verdicts that aimed to minimize the influence of the surveillance unit of the MoI, *Mabaheth Amn alDawla*, over state employment. This practice which dates back to 1950s was often used by the MoI not only to prevent those suspected of dissenting views but to project a sense of domination over other state institutions by curtailing their ability to hire. The State Assembly also ruled illegal the presence of MoI security offices in university campuses. In addition to striking down illegal coercive practices, an increasing number of judges used opposition newspapers to expose abuses, express discontent with the MoI's application of the Emergency Law, and their personal harassment by its agents. By 2008, there were 60,000 cases filed against the MoI at the Administrative Court.<sup>54</sup> The cases were based on complaints by aggrieved average citizens as well Non Commissioned Officers and low-ranking officers against their superiors in the MoI.

Increasingly, citizens subjected to torture found in the State Assembly's courts a venue to defend their rights. In many cases, State Assembly judges ruled that the Emergency Law was not applied according to its letter by MoI officers. Citizens, Islamists in particular, and their families managed to get reparations for illegal incarcerations. The MoI was fined over L.E. 10 million between the years 2006 and 2010.<sup>55</sup> Surprisingly, the MoI did not fight the rulings assigning monetary reparations; officials preferred to pay the reparations over engaging in a legal fight to repeal the Emergency Law or modify its terms.<sup>56</sup>

On the other side, judges especially those who were part of the "Independent Judiciary" movement, reported that they were subjected to verbal and physical harassment, their phones put under surveillance and listening devices planted into their offices and homes by the MoI. They

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<sup>54</sup> *alBadil* January 18, 2008.

<sup>55</sup> The number is an estimate by a judge working in the Reparations Circuit in the State Assembly. Personal Interview Winter 2013.

<sup>56</sup> Personal Interview with State Assembly judges, Winter 2013.

also faced threats to be falsely implicated in prostitution and/or espionage cases. Some ultimately were pushed to leave the country and seek work in some of the Arab Gulf countries. On a more institutional level, the courts faced the problem of implementation. Lacking their own mechanism to enforce their rulings, courts found the MoI to be increasingly reluctant to enforce rulings.

Studies that focus on electoral politics in authoritarian regimes without paying attention to institutions of force miss an important side of the picture.<sup>57</sup> Jason Brownlee has argued that the strength of the Mubarak regime lies in the ability of the NDP to contain cleavages within the ruling elite. However a closer look at the electoral dynamics during the period 1995 - 2011 shows the regime's declining public support and its increasing reliance on the use of coercive force.<sup>58</sup> As the ailing NDP lost much of its political appeal, a shift in its relation with the public impacts its ability to recruit and retain new and old members. When Sadat introduced measures of political openness in the mid-1970s, membership to the NDP was sought after by highest state officials. To many, the party membership provided an opportunity to reap extra benefits politically and economically. Observations of the 2000s political scene, however, show that there had been a reverse in direction. The NDP found it increasingly difficult to recruit to its ranks influential figures. While it managed to have some successful figures run on its list during election seasons, these figures were mostly not affiliated with the party before elections.<sup>59</sup> The party's inability to generate a program that appeals to the masses negatively impacted its

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<sup>57</sup> An example of how institutions of representation shore up autocrats include Lust-Okar, *Structuring Conflict in the Arab World*; Gandhi and Przeworski, "Authoritarian Institutions and the Survival of Autocrats"; Magaloni, *Voting for Autocracy*; Brownlee, "The Heir Apparent of Gamal Mubarak"; Greene, *Why Dominant Parties Lose*; Blaydes, *Elections and Distributive Politics in Mubarak's Egypt*.

<sup>58</sup> I am not claiming that MoI's violence was absent from Egyptian electoral dynamics in earlier periods. Minister of Interior Zaki Badr, known for his outright bully style, made several announcements in the late 1980s alluding publicly to the role of the ministry in tampering with election results. In 1990, Mubarak removed Badr from his cabinet for publicly threatening fellow cabinet members. Kassem, *In the Guise of Democracy*.

<sup>59</sup> Ibrahim Kamel is but one example. Kamel, a wealthy businessman was asked to join the party and run in the 1990 election. He accepted and won. But after only two years he left the party because of differences on political visions.

popularity and performance as was evident in the 1995, 2000, 2005 and 2010 elections.

Consequently, the regime depended on the services of the police and the Ministry of Interior to intimidate opposition and co-opt potential candidates in its mission to shore up the NDP. In Southern and Western parts of Egypt, where tribal politics still prevails, the police disarmed tribes supporting candidates running against the NDP. The confiscation of weapons which were officially argued as means to consolidate the state's monopoly over means of violence were hardly credible given that the same security forces permitted rival tribes to continue to hold on to their arms.<sup>60</sup>

While all regimes face a principal-agent dilemma, authoritarian regimes that lack popular support face a more acute problem with regards to disciplining its agents. While tolerance of illegal practices undermines regime legitimacy and the state's authority, disciplining can be costly when the government relies on its agents instead of electoral support to stay in power.<sup>61</sup> Regimes often have to balance between these two objectives to maintain its rule. The political power of the MoI which stemmed from the ruling elite's need for its service was registered in how state officials poured to show their support and appreciation of the regime's this institution of force. In the 2009 Police Day celebration, guests at the Police Academy included not only the President and his cabinet members, but also Sheikh Sayyid Tantawi the Grand Imam of al-Azhar Mosque, Amr Moussa the Secretary General of the Arab League, the upper brass of the military, and several of retired prime ministers.<sup>62</sup> Mubarak's regime may have aimed to maintain social stability. Reliance on illegal use of force and ruling by law rather than respecting the rule of law

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<sup>60</sup> NDP managed to bestow rewards on tribal leaders through different governmental favors as was the case with the leader of Awlad Ali (Sons of Ali) tribe in Matrouh who was thinking of joining NPUP. Tribes defiant of the NDP were intimidated by the police through the confiscation of their weapons while their rivals were not disarmed as in the case of Bani Ramad in Sohag province Springborg, *Mubarak's Egypt*, 190.

<sup>61</sup> Cai, *State and Agents in China*, 7.

<sup>62</sup> Middle East News Agency January 26, 2009.

coupled with the inability to build efficient institutions of mobilization fomented the 2011 uprising. Antagonized by the regime's incompetencies and abuses, reform judges played an important role in supporting the Egyptian Uprising and providing impetus for other state agents to defect from the Mubarak regime.

## **Conclusion**

Under the Mubarak regime citizens resorted to the judicial system to seek protection and exercise their political and civil rights. Court rulings became the means to empower constitutionally permitted forms of political participation. Between 1978 and 1992 all new political parties, and the majority of those formed during 1992-2010 were legalized through court rulings after failing to secure approval from the CPPA. Rulings of the SCC challenged faulty laws that the government managed to formulate and pass through the legislature. The Administrative Courts defended civil rights and brought some justice to those aggrieved by the repressive arm of the MoI

Internal cohesion and agents' accountability are essential element for preserving state authority - elements that gradually vanished under Mubarak's rule. States need to preserve its authority by punishing agents who violate its laws, rules or governmental policies.<sup>63</sup> Under Mubarak, intra-state accountability was relegated as a lower priority; the assessment of security seemed to trump other considerations to preserve state power. Authoritarian regimes face a challenge when state agents enjoy fragmented loyalties. While the literature on governance and ruling elite is replete with cases where state agents are loyal to different political figures within the ruling elite, the conflict between MoI officers and the judiciary illustrates a different case

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<sup>63</sup> Cai, *State and Agents in China*, 11.

where wielders of force are more loyal to the regime while judges prefer to maintain a state that is autonomous from the regime. As Steven Solnick notes, before any set of leaders can think of governing a population, it must first resolve the problem of governing this state apparatus.<sup>64</sup>

The judiciary and the police share some particularities. In addition to being agents of the state, they both have leverage over the application of the law. As agents of the state, judges generally do not administer the will of the regime; their interpretation of the law is colored by their identities, training and ideologies.<sup>65</sup> Neither are the police neutral transmitters of the demands of the state or the regime. In the process of controlling society, they apply their discretionary power over which groups to target, meetings to raid, demonstration to break up, houses to protect.<sup>66</sup>

Both institutions ultimately shape the image and practice of the state.

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<sup>64</sup> Solnick, *Stealing the State*.

<sup>65</sup> Slaughter, *A New World Order*.

<sup>66</sup> Marenin, "The Police and the Coercive Nature of the State."

## Chapter 6

### Violence From Below<sup>1</sup>

*Egyptian human rights activists have spent years searching for evidence of the torture of detainees in police stations, detention centers and prisons, but few were prepared for such evidence to begin arriving in the form of a graphic cell-phone video. Even more shocking was the fact that the graphic recording of a man writhing in agony, begging for mercy as he is sodomized with a cane and verbally abused by men identified in an official investigation as police officers, is believed to have been disseminated by those same officers in a bid to humiliate the victim and intimidate his colleagues.<sup>2</sup>*

*During the 18 days of the revolution, Egyptians witnessed unprecedented chaos break-out across the country. In a matter of hours, police stations were burnt, prisons opened, thugs prowled the streets and the country's vast police force vanished, leaving citizens to fend for themselves.<sup>3</sup>*

*At least half of those who attacked the police stations are not thugs. They are ordinary people whose daily lives had been disrupted by harassing police officers in their quarters. Most of them had to pay bribes to these officers to get on with their daily jobs.<sup>4</sup>*

Emad al-Kabir, 21, was a self-employed driver working in the Boulaq alDakrour, one of Cairo's multiple impoverished areas on the outskirts of the city. After becoming involved in an altercation between his cousin and the police, al-Kabir was taken to the local police station, tortured and humiliated. The video clip depicting the torture of 21-year old minibus driver Emad

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<sup>1</sup> An earlier version of the material in this chapter was published in Rashed, "Violence from Above, Violence from Below: The State and Policing Citizens in Mubarak's Egypt." ; reproduced here with permission from Springer.

<sup>2</sup> "Egypt's Torture Video Sparks Outrage." *Time Magazine* Tuesday, Jan 23<sup>rd</sup>, 2007. <http://content.time.com/time/world/article/0,8599,1581608,00.html>

<sup>3</sup> *Ahram Online* Friday March 11<sup>th</sup>, 2011. <http://english.ahram.org.eg/NewsContentm/1/64/7148.aspx>

<sup>4</sup> Personal Interview with psychiatrist Basma Abdul Aziz, July 2011. B. Abdul Aziz is a leading activist specializing in torture and post-traumatic disorders in Egypt.



al-Kabir was sent to the cell phones of fellow drivers to warn them that the same can happen to them if they refuse to do the bidding of security officers. As the case received wide media-coverage, the two officers he accused of leading the attack were detained by the authorities. But the driver himself was jailed after being convicted for resisting the authorities - the police accused him of wielding a broken bottle and injuring an officer.<sup>5</sup> The story of Emad al-Kabir represents how police violence in Egypt has not been confined to those who threatened the prevailing political, economic or social order.

While political analysts list multiple sources as the root causes of the Egyptian uprising, it is beyond doubt that the mass protests of January 25<sup>th</sup>, 2011 were triggered by the violent practices of MoI's security apparatus. In the first few days of the uprising a number of police stations were burnt down across multiple cities, especially in the more impoverished urban areas of the country. What is puzzling is that in other urban areas police stations remained untouched, even as such stations were in close proximity to the meeting points of the massive marches of the uprisings. What explains this variation in the people's rage against symbols of authority? More importantly, I ask, what was the nature of police repression under Mubarak? And what levels of violence were waged by representatives of the state, the police against the public? In this chapter, I zoom in onto these practices in an attempt to understand the different levels of illegitimate state violence in Mubarak's Egypt. The main purpose of this chapter is to produce a more disaggregated portrait of violence and examine the ways in which these levels related to state capacity and affected regime survival. Earlier in the dissertation, I have argued against a mono-causal analysis that attributes the rise of police violence to neoliberal changes as this lens

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<sup>5</sup> "Egypt: Bus Driver Raped by Police Faces New Risk of Torture | Human Rights Watch." 2007. January 13. <http://www.hrw.org/news/2007/01/12/egypt-bus-driver-raped-police-faces-new-risk-torture>.

fails to capture the various repertoires of violence that characterized authoritarianism in Egypt.<sup>6</sup> In this chapter I bring in the economic factor to examine more closely these repertoires. I put forth a more complex story that situates authoritarian policies as well as institutional inequalities in the age of neoliberal economic policies at the heart of MoI violence. While I don't argue that neoliberalism led to the rise in the power of the MoI and its forces, I investigate how neoliberal policies enabled the emergence of a particular kind of policing that was more predatory in nature. I posit that two levels of MoI repression existed under Mubarak: repression from above and repression from below. While the first was directed against political opposition, the second form of police violence was directed at non-politicized residents of impoverished areas. I posit that these two levels are distinct, but related. The violence from below, which flourished due to the unequal distribution of state resources that favored high-ranking state agents over low-ranking and noncommissioned officers, evolved under the protective umbrella of a regime-sanctioned anti-opposition repression.

The chapter first discusses how state repression is theorized between state-centered studies and police studies. I bring to this discussion insights from organizational theory to bridge the gaps in theorizing police behavior that are often overlooked in these two bodies of literature. Insights about bureaucratic behavior help me explicate the proliferation of violence from below and police culture in Mubarak's Egypt. I then provide a brief overview of the development anti-dissident violence, before examining in-depth the nature of second level of violence. In the third section, I examine the institutional inequalities existing within the MoI's administrative structure. I finally discuss the institutionalization of violence and police culture and their impact on the production of state violence.

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<sup>6</sup> See chapter 1.

## State Repression between Political and Predatory Policing

Works engaging with the study of state repression have examined the police as an instrument of the state and/or governing regimes to uphold law and order. They argue that the police, as an embodiment of the coercive nature of the state,<sup>7</sup> remain at the core of political policing by adopting harassment, surveillance/spying, arrests, torture and mass killing measures against particular subordinate groups within their territorial jurisdiction.<sup>8</sup> States repress to control or prevent direct and non-institutional challenges to social, cultural and/or political power.<sup>9</sup> What is problematic about these treatments of the police is that: i) they often consider the force a unitary actor, ii) they tend to portray the police as a non-agential actor and iii) they often pay attention to violence produced due to political disagreements between the state and groups within society as studies on Latin America show.<sup>10</sup>

Paying more attention to the internal dynamics of the police force, police studies tell us that officers do not function as neutral transmitters of state policies or governmental demands. By applying their discretionary power over which groups to target, meetings to raid, demonstration to break up, houses to protect, the police ultimately reshape the contours of state violence.<sup>11</sup> The police like other agencies of the state, have interests of their own which they seek to protect as they carry out their duties.<sup>12</sup> Besides safeguarding the force's institutional interests, individual officers may abuse the badge's power to procure personal gains. Lawrence Sherman's sociological study sheds light on police corruption by dis-aggregating its levels and highlighting how the nature of the job, work conditions and organizational characteristics may work towards

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<sup>7</sup> Waddington, *Policing Citizens*, 1999; Bayley, *Patterns of Policing*, 1990.

<sup>8</sup> Davenport, "State Repression and Political Order."

<sup>9</sup> Earl, "Political Repression."

<sup>10</sup> Rosenberg, *Children of Cain*; Huggins, Haritos-Fatouros, and Zimbardo, *Violence Workers*.

<sup>11</sup> Marenin, "The Police and the Coercive Nature of the State."

<sup>12</sup> Marenin.

the production of predatory behavior. Individual predatory policing develops when officers' violence is directed at members of society with the purpose of gaining personal, rather than organizational, enrichment.<sup>13</sup> Unlike political policing, predatory policing does not aim for the systematic repression of subordinate groups.<sup>14</sup> Violence from Below is a form of predatory policing that is different from the drug war's violent corruption where police and state officials collude with the drug cartel under life-threatening extreme conditions of violence.<sup>15</sup>

To understand how the state institution assigned to uphold law and order adopts predatory behavior, one needs to turn to insights from organizational theory. Scholars have shown that institutions structured on the Weberian legal-rational authority can develop a dark side when they deviate from prescribed goals, producing harmful, and sometimes destructive, social effects. Organizational sociologists argue that mistakes and misconduct are products of the organization's environment, characteristics and cognitive practices of its individuals.<sup>16</sup> Inter-organizational relations and social contexts construct the environment in which an organization survives. Internal characteristics such as structure and intra-organizational relations are equally important. The more rigid the organizational hierarchy is, the less opportunities are present for corrective feedback mechanisms within an institution.<sup>17</sup> Levels of trust between members of the institution impact the ability to control the behavior of lower units. To the extent that participants in the bottom units fail to recognize the legitimacy of power of their superiors or believe that sanctions will not be exercised, the ability to control behavior of individuals will be lost.<sup>18</sup> As an

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<sup>13</sup> Sherman, *Police Corruption*; Gerber and Mendelson, "Public Experiences of Police Violence and Corruption in Contemporary Russia."

<sup>14</sup> Gerber and Mendelson, "Public Experiences of Police Violence and Corruption in Contemporary Russia."

<sup>15</sup> Lessing, "Violent Corruption and Violent Lobbying."

<sup>16</sup> Vaughan, "The Dark Side of Organizations."

<sup>17</sup> Zald and Berger, "Social Movements in Organizations: Coup d'Etat, Insurgency, and Mass Movements."

<sup>18</sup> Mechanic, "Sources of Power of Lower Participants in Complex Organizations."

inhabited institution,<sup>19</sup> the police are bound to be influenced by the predominant cultural understandings of officers. Law-enforcers may fall on social understandings or expectations to legitimate deviant actions or reconstruct accounts to justify violence against citizens.<sup>20</sup>

Despite the fact that repressive practices of the state reflect a trend where police forces and non-military state security services are at the loci of power,<sup>21</sup> and increasing levels of predation in the global South,<sup>22</sup> police predatory behavior and institutional challenges have been under-theorized. This chapter aims to fill part of this void to enhance our knowledge on the dynamics of state violence on multiple levels. First, it enables us to understand how issues of low police professionalization produce predatory rather than service-oriented states. By bringing into the discussion how organizational inequalities and intra-institutional conflict within the security sector produce levels of state violence, this research problematizes state repression in non-democratic regimes and argues against a mono-causal explanation of anti-citizen violence that focuses mainly on authoritarianism. Second, the chapter sheds light on intra-police cleavages and their challenges to security and order, avoiding the analytic pitfalls of looking at this institution as a unitary actor.

## **Mubarak's Two Levels of Police Violence**

Police activities determine to a great extent the limits of freedom in organized society, thereby binding the nature of governments that authorize policing to that of the units that carry out orders and implement policies.<sup>23</sup> Regimes that depend on force in effecting citizens'

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<sup>19</sup> Hallett and Ventresca, "Inhabited Institutions."

<sup>20</sup> Vaughan, "The Dark Side of Organizations."

<sup>21</sup> Amar and Schneider, "The Rise of Crime, Disorder and Authoritarian Policing."

<sup>22</sup> Comaroff and Comaroff, *Law and Disorder in the Postcolony*.

<sup>23</sup> Bayley, *Patterns of Policing*, 1990, 5–8.

compliance try to overawe them through the prominent display of force through police.<sup>24</sup> As discussed in previous chapters,<sup>25</sup> for most of its history the MoI existed as a force serving the regime rather than the public, however under conditions of public financial austerity members of the force started to use the power of the badge for personal enrichment. The two levels of state violence targeted politicized and non-politicized members of society. While the first level emerged in response to challenges to the regime's diminishing political power, the second developed as a result of decline in state resources and distributional inequalities that regulated the MoI's labor force.

### **Thugs from Above: Maintaining the Regime's Political Security**

Although the regime showed more tolerance for political competitiveness during the 1980s,<sup>26</sup> the rise of religious militancy pushed towards an increase in the size of the MoI's coercive apparatus. Augmentation in the MoI forces paralleled an expansion in the scope of its activities. Its extensive penetration of society, as Salwa Ismail argues, approximated the police project of the state envisioned by eighteenth century European social thinkers.<sup>27</sup> Officers and informers infiltrated universities, mosques, professional syndicates as well as most state institutions.<sup>28</sup>

In his first two presidential terms, Mubarak aimed to alleviate levels of political congestion by permitting opposition forces, including the officially banned Muslim Brotherhood (MB), some political space to grow and compete.<sup>29</sup> Yet, the regime faced a serious and

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<sup>24</sup> Waddington, *Policing Citizens*, 1999, 24.

<sup>25</sup> The historical development of the MoI is discussed in chapter 2.

<sup>26</sup> Kienle, *A Grand Delusion*.

<sup>27</sup> Ismail, "The Egyptian Revolution Against the Police."

<sup>28</sup> For an in-depth account of how the MoI controlled elections and the parliament see chapter 5.

<sup>29</sup> Sadat freed most of the MB leaders who were imprisoned by Nasser, and encouraged those who fled the country to return hoping that they curb the influence of leftist and socialist groups. Under Mubarak, the MB was given more space to contest parliamentary, local and syndicate elections, invest in economic enterprises and form an extensive

immediate security threat from militant Islamist movements, in particular *alJihad* and *alJamaa'* *allIslamiya* organizations.<sup>30</sup> As the state attempted to assert its dominance over areas controlled by these non-state armed actors, confrontations between the government and militant Islamists shifted to a game of reciprocal violence and vendetta. Public concerns were raised about the MoI's coercive practices, in particular the detention of suspects' family members, as well as the police's first resort to shoot-to-kill tactics. Militants responded in kind, targeting specific high-ranked officers and their family members who served in the police force.<sup>31</sup> Assassination attempts were made on several ministers of interior including Zaki Badr, Hassan Abu Basha and Abd elHalim Moussa in 1987, 1989 and 1990. None of these attempts was successful, but the police did lose about 375 officers between 1991- 1997.<sup>32</sup> In the process of identifying militant cells, the SSI became the most powerful unit within the MoI. Suspects or potential suspects were often summoned to its offices for informal investigations, with many of its provincial offices becoming centers of detention and torture. In most cases detainees were held and then released without going through the prosecutor's office, erasing any official record of their detention or torture.<sup>33</sup>

By the end of the 1990s, the repressive machine of the state represented in the MoI managed to control militant activities in southern Egypt, at the time when the regime's political machine became increasingly inept at mobilizing support for its policies and the need to resort to the services of the MoI to effect citizen acquiescence increased. Journalists and activists were kidnapped and/or physically assaulted as in the case of Abdel Halim Kandil, an editor and

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network of charities that the movement mobilized to boost its political presence. Wickham, *Mobilizing Islam*; 'Awadi, *In Pursuit of Legitimacy*; Zahid, *The Muslim Brotherhood and Egypt's Succession Crisis*.

<sup>30</sup> 'Awadi, *In Pursuit of Legitimacy*, 2-3.

<sup>31</sup> Bakr, *Ahwal Al-Amn Fi Misr Al-Mu'asserah*, 191.

<sup>32</sup> Bakr, *Ahwal Al-Amn Fi Misr Al-Mu'asserah*.

<sup>33</sup> For more details on methods of torture and testimonies of detainees see Human Rights Watch's extensive report Human Rights Watch, *Behind Closed Doors*.

columnist at the opposition weekly *Al-Arabi*, Mohamed Abd ElKodous, the head of the Journalists Syndicate's Freedoms and Rights Committee and Abd al-Wahab al-Messeri, the then head of *Kefaya* movement.

The Police's use of violence intensified as the president amended the constitution in what seemed direct support for the succession of his son.<sup>34</sup> On the day of the 2005 referendum, thugs believed to be working for MoI violently attacked demonstrators who gathered on the front stairs of the Journalists' Syndicate in downtown Cairo. Peaceful protestors and journalists covering the protest were physically attacked. Female journalists, in particular, were targeted, beaten up and sexually assaulted in public. The crack down on opposition took place under the eyes of numerous high-ranking police officers and the CSF, which had surrounded the syndicate, allegedly to protect protestors.<sup>35</sup> The incident registered clearly how the MoI's long practice of reliance on thugs to intimidate the regime's opponents was taken to a new level. The practice that had been long used against rival politicians during election seasons especially in the country side was directed against intellectuals under the supervision of high police officers. By early 2007, another wave of constitutional amendments was proposed by the regime, renewing confrontations between the opposition and the MoI. The amendments gave the president the right to refer any "terrorist crime" to any of judicial court including military or emergency courts. They also gave the MoI absolute authority over defining "terrorists," as the article did not specify the nature of a terrorist crime.

The relative political liberalization that Mubarak tolerated lasted only for the first two terms of his presidency. Political violence against dissent metamorphosed from being directed against those working to dismantle the state to those working to affect regime change. Displays

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<sup>34</sup> Brownlee, "The Heir Apparency of Gamal Mubarak."

<sup>35</sup> Calls for Reform Met With Brutality. Human Rights Watch. May 25, 2005.  
<http://www.hrw.org/en/news/2005/05/25/egypt-calls-reform-met-brutality>



of political and economic nepotism pushed for new forms of dissent that directly challenged the president and not just his policies. And the MoI with its police, SSI and CSF forces resorted to anti-citizen violence in a vain attempt to stabilize an ailing regime.

### **Thugs from Below: Socio-Economic Changes and Citizen Security**

In 2004, a Human Rights Watch report on Egypt described the prevalence of police torture as epidemic. The report which appealed to the Arab League to make efforts to alleviate the deteriorating human rights situation, argued that although torture had been used typically against political dissidents, it has shifted to target ordinary citizens. It went on to note that it was affecting large numbers of ordinary citizens who find themselves in police custody as suspects or in connection with criminal investigations. The report also noted police's regularized incarceration and physical punishment of relatives of suspects, street children and low-income persons.<sup>36</sup> Cables that were streaming from the US embassy in Cairo, also showed that police repression is becoming more prevalent against ordinary people, criminal suspects and Islamists.<sup>37</sup>

The decline in the state's financial resources may have started prior to the presidency of Hosni Mubarak, but its impact on the quality of state services was mostly felt during his rule. Efforts to adopt efficient policies to revamp the state coffers bore limited results during his first two terms in office. The political leadership's oscillation between courting private businesses and adopting quasi-populist rhetoric, remnant of the Nasser era, came to halt by the early 1990s when it became clear that the state was unable to continue with its socialist welfarist programs. The first Gulf War provided the Egyptian state with an opportunity for external debt relief in return for substantial overhauling of economic policies. International Western donors were more

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<sup>36</sup> Human Rights Watch, "Egypt's Torture Epidemic."

<sup>37</sup> The cables revealed how middle-class residents stopped reporting incidents of burglary to the police for fear of the torture of doormen in their neighborhood during investigations. Harding, "US Reported 'Routine' Police Brutality in Egypt, WikiLeaks Cables Show."

adamant than before about the government's adoption of austerity measures. The measures aimed to reduce funds allocated to services, trim levels of state-employment and implement reforms pushing the economy towards the free market model.<sup>38</sup> Some of the 2007 constitutional amendments absolved the state of its previously-stated socialist responsibilities, replacing the term "socialist gains" with "private property" and "social justice." In a sense, the changes reflected the socio-economic realities of society, since by then there were little, if any, "socialist gains" left for the constitution to protect.

The shift to neoliberal policies took its toll on the performance of the MoI, providing conditions of possibility for predatory policing. The economic changes impacted domestic security in two directions. First, the state's retreat in the field of service provision broke networks of patronage that in the past bound the less impoverished sectors of the population to the regime.<sup>39</sup> Decline in the number of employment opportunities in the urban industrial sector has forced large numbers of residents to engage in informal and/or illegal economic activities. This change in the socio-economic conditions of the labor market has promoted violence from both state and non-state actors. Anticipating aggressive actions from the police, those employed in the informal sector sought the protection of private armed actors, physically and socially situating themselves in an illicit world of violence and impunity.<sup>40</sup> Second, limited fiscal resources deepened the institutional inequalities that regulated the MoI's labor force. Unlike the military or the judiciary, the two state institutions that provided adequate health care, financial remuneration and other services to their employees, the MoI could not provide similar services. While income differences existed among commissioned officers (COs) of the force according to

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<sup>38</sup> Momani, "American Politicization of the International Monetary Fund."

<sup>39</sup> Ismail, *Political Life in Cairo's New Quarters*, 2006.

<sup>40</sup> Davis, "Non-State Armed Actors, New Imagined Communities, and Shifting Patterns of Sovereignty and Insecurity in the Modern World," 231.

the department they served in, the widest gap existed between commissioned and non-commissioned officers (NCOs).

Occupying some of the bottom strata of the under-provided state bureaucracy and the MoI's coercive apparatus, the NCO (*Ameen alShurta*) is himself a resident of the impoverished areas and therefore a dual participant in its daily dynamics of poverty and authority. As a state agent who administers political policing, the NCO gradually gained power over local citizens and ultimately became the enforcer of predatory policing especially in poor quarters and shanty towns. The shanty towns (*'ashwa'iyyat*) were expansions on the peripheries of existing cities that swelled with migrants from the countryside who sought better services such as jobs or education, and hoped that the state eventually incorporate their neighborhoods into the boundaries of adjacent cities.<sup>41</sup>

Gradually, these areas were viewed as 'zones of relative freedoms.' The state had limited supervision over the social, economic and legal activities of their residents. On one level, the state could not provide the much needed services such as housing, medical services and education, prompting residents to provide for themselves by making illegal extensions of electric and water lines and constructing apartment buildings without permits. Residents relied mostly on religious charities' free health care and educational services.<sup>42</sup> On another level, these areas were free from the rule of law which should govern the state's policing practices, and therefore facilitating the exercise of discretionary powers with impunity by some members of the MoI over the livelihood of residents of these quarters. With the state's absence as a coherent rule-binding authority, the *Ameen alShurta* wielded influence through his ability to summon individuals for investigations or issue proper permits and official papers in this environment of illegality. The

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<sup>41</sup> By the mid-2000s, some 7 million Cairenes lived in the informal housing of the *'ashwa'iyyat* Singerman, *Cairo Contested..*

<sup>42</sup> Bayat, *Life as Politics*.

law gave the police the power to arrest citizens under suspicion and investigation (*ishtibah wa tahari*). The practice became a source of income for many NCOs suffering low pay.<sup>43</sup> Numerous NCOs coerced citizens to pay tributes to prevent their arrest.<sup>44</sup> NCOs also charged informal fees in return for performing simple administrative services such as issuing work permits, ID cards, passports or official papers that were under the jurisdiction of the MoI. By some estimates, the size of the hidden economy of these tributes has reached about L.E. 500 million.<sup>45</sup> Refusals to pay these tributes were often met with threats of criminalization or torture. Actual and threatened torture of ordinary politically non-active citizens became rampant, as police stations gradually became regular sites for anti-citizen violence. One study shows how distinctions between suspects and accused almost vanished in detention centers as the police liberally used various means of torture.<sup>46</sup> A nation-wide official sociological study of those labeled by the police as ‘registered as dangerous’ (*mussagal khatar*) showed that over 55 percent were beaten up in police stations, and that torture methods were equally applied to men and women.<sup>47</sup>

### **The MoI’s Good Thug Bad Thug Policy**

The MoI followed a convoluted policy towards acts of resistance and repression often invoking labels and practices associated with thugs and thuggery. On one hand, the government used the term ‘thuggery’ to negatively label and then incriminate some of the opposition groups. On the other, it relied on members of criminal networks and thugs to crack down on political opposition as previously discussed.<sup>48</sup> In 1998, the Egyptian parliament passed Law 6 on

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<sup>43</sup> Ismail, *Political Life in Cairo’s New Quarters*, 2006, 139.

<sup>44</sup> Ismail, 149.

<sup>45</sup> Farouk, *Al-Fassad Al-Idari Fi Masr*, 31.

<sup>46</sup> el-Borai, “Crime and Punishment: The Vision of Egyptian Lawyers on the Phenomenon of Torture and the Means to Fight It.”

<sup>47</sup> Magdoub, *Al-Mo’amalah Al-Jenai’iah Lil-Mossajaleen Al-Khatereen*, 402.

<sup>48</sup> For more on the role of police-hired thugs during the election season, see chapter 5.

thuggery (*baltagga*),<sup>49</sup> which gave police officers the power to detain citizens suspected of undermining public order through displays of aggression and physical strength, or even through the insinuation that they will cause harm to others. The government used this law as the legal basis for the arrest and imprisonment of whom it considered deviant members of society especially those residing in shanty towns. The ‘*ashwa ’iyyat*’ provided hospitable environments for low income militant Islamists to live and network. Self-employed residents who could easily be labelled a thug by the police who showed loyalty to the ‘state’ became informers, providing important information on Islamists. And as the regime lost much of its electoral power by the second half of the 1990s, thugs’ services were sought after during election seasons. Those with criminal records were easier to exploit, and those who showed resistance could be easily criminalized and then subjugated. Policing the poor quarters meant that almost everyone could be a “security threat” and therefore is a potential problem and source of suspicion.<sup>50</sup> The regime’s inability to provide for the residents of the poor quarters any modest level of services including security meant that resident’s participation in the policing project was based on suspicion and coercion rather than suspicion and consent.

Changes in the international system provided the regime with better justification for the incarceration of those who it considered deviant than what Law 6 provided. The terror attacks of 9/11 and the so called global “war on terrorism” facilitated the internment of active Islamists by authoritarian regimes in the Arab world, Egypt included. After 9/11, Law 6 was hardly used as the legal basis for arresting Islamists, who were then labeled as terrorists not *baltagia*.

Meanwhile, the police made little use of Law 6 to seriously eradicate drug dealers and thugs who

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<sup>49</sup> The word *baltaga* refers to the act of thuggery. *Baltagia* means those who carry axes in the Turkish language and has been widely used in Egyptian Arabic to refer to armed thugs. The singular form of thug is referred to as *Baltagi*.

<sup>50</sup> Feldman, *Police Encounters*, 15–16.

exploited the shanty towns to embed their illegal activities in the absence of the state's formal law and order.

An employee-employer relationship developed between the state and criminal networks. Drug dealers existed under the protection of some police officers to provide valuable information on average citizens and opposition alike.<sup>51</sup> As Ilana Feldman notes, surveillance of people's activities requires the police to be in proximity to them.<sup>52</sup> In some cases, low ranking officers, especially in the investigative department, negotiated the services with members of criminal networks, but it was mostly the NCOs who handled the communication on behalf of the regime and criminals. In impoverished quarters, the police even facilitated the employment of criminals, or those whom they criminalized.<sup>53</sup> As low-ranking policemen, the NCOs' tasks brought them into daily contact with citizens while enjoying extensive levels of discretion over the lives of their clients.<sup>54</sup>

### **Intra-Organizational Inequalities within the MoI**

The security challenges of political dissent to autocratic rule, religious militancy, and increased levels of urbanization and economic changes called for an increase in the size of the state's coercive machine. The regime's decision to augment the security sector through the induction of less-trained personnel into the coercive labor force came with a hefty price: decline in the quality of security service and increasing demands on the state to provide for the new employees.

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<sup>51</sup> Ismail, "The Egyptian Revolution Against the Police."

<sup>52</sup> Feldman, *Police Encounters*, 52.

<sup>53</sup> Police officers have relied on drivers of minivans, the main transportation means for low-income groups, to provide information on the movement of citizens. Personal interviews with journalists, winter 2012.

<sup>54</sup> Levi, *Bureaucratic Insurgency*, 1.

To expand the coercive apparatus, the regime relied on two institutions that were created in the final years of Nasser's rule to police society. Alarmed by the scope of demonstrations especially in universities and big cities in the post 1967 war,<sup>55</sup> two new apparatus were established to beef up the state's coercive machine. A new MoI institute for non-commissioned officers (*Ma'had Omana' alShurta*) was established in 1968 in an attempt to boost the investigative work in police stations. The other apparatus was the Central Security Forces (CSF). Established in 1969 as part of the Ministry of Defense, and later transferred by Sadat to the MoI, the purpose of this paramilitary force has been to contain potential spread of protests.

Though non-commissioned officers (NCOs) enjoyed relatively higher education compared to CSF soldiers,<sup>56</sup> members of both apparatus were less qualified in education and training than officers, and therefore received minimal wages and services. Compared to commissioned officers who receive a law degree as part of their study in Police Academy, NCOs lack secondary education, receive only 2 years of police training and are far less versed in criminology and legal sciences. The educational gap within the MoI's coercive labor force, translated into systemic built-in organizational and financial inequalities. While a CO can be reprimanded for violations through administrative means, an NCO could be punished by confinement in the barracks, trial before a military court and possible imprisonment, in addition to several other administrative penalties that impact his income and rank.<sup>57</sup>

In an attempt to improve the financial resources of its repressive arm, the regime opted to increase state remuneration provided for its security sector by including them in what it called the Special Cadre. In general, government employees receive wages and benefits based on their

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<sup>55</sup> Abdalla, *The Student Movement and National Politics in Egypt*.

<sup>56</sup> To be eligible to apply to the Institute of Non-Commissioned Officers, men need to have completed eight-years of school education. The anti-riot force is made predominantly of illiterate men, who serve as conscripts in the CSF for three years.

<sup>57</sup> Police Authority Law no. 109 for 1971 (and its 2006 amendments).

status in the administrative hierarchy, but the government has resorted to another technique to privilege some employees. Under the Special Cadre-General Cadre system, some employees enjoy higher wages and bonuses compared to those employed under the General Cadre.<sup>58</sup> Since 1996/1997, those employed under the Special Cadre system constituted about 13% of state employees. Within this privileged 13 percent, the largest segment has been employees of the MoI, making up about 85 percent.<sup>59</sup> This administrative tool accessed the NCOs to better pay compared to other employees of similar educational background in the state bureaucracy; however it could not bridge the financial and resource gap that existed within the MoI.

NCOs had limited access to two other sources that awarded better benefits and expansive sums of income for COs: special funds and protection service bonuses. Special funds (*al-Sanadeeq al-khassa*) are accounts that operate separately from the state's annual budget and are used to improve the service of, and provide revenue for, a specific sector or an institution. In 2000, two laws were issued to allow the MoI to establish its own special funds; laws 88/2000 and 95/2000 established separate accounts that were tied to civil police service, prison industries, and police hospitals.<sup>60</sup> The laws enabled the MoI to enjoy a bloated coffer that included 174 special funds with the largest having LE 15 billion according to some estimates.<sup>61</sup> While most of the revenue of these funds is supposed to improve services provided for members of the force, numerous officers complain that unequal distribution of generous bonuses from the special funds still favor those officers within the higher leadership of the MoI and their junior associates.<sup>62</sup>

Moreover, NCOs remain outside the benefits provided by the funds as they have no access to

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<sup>58</sup> Some governments resort to the two-cadre system to compensate state employees for job expenses such as diplomats. Farouk 2008.

<sup>59</sup> Employees of MoI are followed by university professors and research scientists, who make about 11 percent and 1.9 percent, respectively.

<sup>60</sup> Farouk, *Ma'zaque Al-Iqtissad Al-Massry*, 115–20.

<sup>61</sup> Interview with Ahmed alHelbawi, head of a newly-formed NCO union, in *alWatan*, May 15<sup>th</sup>, 2013. <http://www.elwatannews.com/news/details/182511>

<sup>62</sup> Personal interviews with mid and high-level police officers, 2013-2014.



COs' health care system, pension increases and the distributed bonuses. This may explain the contradiction between complaints by NCOs and junior officers for low wages and inflated payroll within the MoI budget.<sup>63</sup>

Although security provision is the primary service of the police, an informal rule has developed to provide extra bonuses for the team of officers securing important public sites. For example, the country's mosques that are under the supervision of the Ministry of Religious Endowment distribute part of their charity box revenue to those serving the mosque including the police protection team. The practice is widespread across production sectors and institutions that it became institutionalized within the normal law and order system under Mubarak. Banks, power stations,<sup>64</sup> universities as well as touristic locations all engage in raising another income for those officers in charge of the security of their facilities.<sup>65</sup> Bonuses are usually split between the protection team that provides the service on the ground and the high-ranking generals who constitute the inner circle of the minister of interior.<sup>66</sup> The practice privileges those working in the protection of well-endowed organizations and discriminates against those who serve in less-fortunate areas such as police stations in impoverished quarters or in MoI departments that are not tied to other facilities such as CSF units.

The distribution of resources within the MoI has been far from egalitarian. Formal and informal organizational rules favored the inner circle at the highest echelons of administration. Junior officers and NCOs received remuneration incommensurate to the demands of the job.

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<sup>63</sup> Interview with General Mahmoud Qoutri, *Sout alUma* October 24<sup>th</sup>, 2009.

<sup>64</sup> Reports showed that one public company in the power sector, paid LE 89 million to the police force for their protection services during the period July 2010 and March 2011. *alMasry alYoum*, January 2<sup>nd</sup>, 2015. <http://www.almasryalyoum.com/news/details/619092>

<sup>65</sup> Interviews with state officials whose institutions engaged in police-bonus practice, winter 2014.

<sup>66</sup> Interviews with police officers, 2013 - 2014.

These financial imbalances are further exacerbated by the culture that governs intra-MoI relations.

## **Institutionalized Violence and Police Culture**

Institutions can help structure political, economic and human social interaction,<sup>67</sup> but to focus on institutions as set paths that shape behavior is to neglect the cyclical relation that exists between organizations and their inhabitants. Institutions are not inert vessels of rules and regulations; they are inhabited by constituent members and their doings, who at times act in concert and at others in conflict.<sup>68</sup>

Waddington argues that what distinguishes British police' limited use of violence compared to the more militarized forms of constabulary force built by British colonialists is the central notion of citizenship. Citizenship was directly tied to the legitimate authority granted to state agents vis-à-vis citizens. The London "bobby" was the antithesis of the Royal Irish Constabulary; the distinction was based on how citizens and non-citizens are to be approached, dealt with and controlled.<sup>69</sup> Rooted in colonialist design, the Egyptian case illustrates how the relationship between the state and its citizens is based on service to the homeland and not legitimization of authority. State violence as reflected in behavior of MoI officers reminds citizens in daily encounters that the MoI and its forces rule rather than serve. In its interaction with the public, the MoI shifted gradually from the emphasis on providing service to the citizenry, to the citizenry's duty to serve the state. Its police abandoned the decades-long motto of "The Police is in the Service of the People" and adopting a new one in 1995 that stated "The Police and the People are in the service of the Homeland" reflecting the shift in the institutional culture of the

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<sup>67</sup> North, *Institutions, Institutional Change and Economic Performance*.

<sup>68</sup> Hallett and Ventresca, "Inhabited Institutions."

<sup>69</sup> Waddington, *Policing Citizens*, 1999, 20–30.

ministry, one that affirmed the non-subordinate relationship that bind the apparatus to the public. The change casts doubt on the state's acceptance that the people are presumably the source of all authorities.<sup>70</sup> Since MoI officers are state representatives and all social groups are asked to serve that state, the citizenry are at a disadvantage in their conflict with them. To officers, compliance with police-mandated measures is service to the state itself.

The two patterns of state violence that emerged in Mubarak's Egypt bring to the fore the disharmonious environment that characterized relations within the MoI coercive force. The intra-organizational relations within the MoI are not only based on hierarchy but also class. Most COs I have interviewed (high and medium-level rankings) have shown resentment towards *Omanaa' alShurta*.<sup>71</sup> Officers considered their NCOs the root cause of corruption and the reason behind the MoI's tarnished reputation. Their resentment centered on the NCOs' low education and poor training. Few, if any, acknowledged their investigative skills or contribution to good detective work. This resentment is equally felt on the other side but justified on different premise. NCOs have expressed that they have been unjustly treated by their ministry and the public. Dissenting NCOs have argued that they are often used as scape goats and made responsible for the institution's dirty linen while doing the COs' dirty work. Most NCOs defended their repressive or deviant practices as executions of the unofficial orders of their superiors.<sup>72</sup>

With their direct access to persons, information and instrumentalities, NCOs gradually gained discretionary powers,<sup>73</sup> but failed to gain respect of their superiors. Although the fraternal

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<sup>70</sup> See interview with General AlManawi.

<sup>71</sup> The term *Omanaa' alShurta* is plural of *Ameen alShurta*

<sup>72</sup> "10 Holes in the Ameen's Uniform." *ElTahrir*, September 15<sup>th</sup>, 2014.

<sup>73</sup> Mechanic, "Sources of Power of Lower Participants in Complex Organizations."

subculture that characterizes disciplined forces are often defended when facing public complaints,<sup>74</sup> it fails the test when challenged from within.

Scholars studying covert conflict in organizations have identified compensatory theft as the appropriation of property by aggrieved parties. They argue that it is often used as one of the prime strategies to right injustices when employees feel exploited by their company or superiors in organizations.<sup>75</sup> Theft compensates subordinates for wages and other material resources they believe superiors unjustly denied them.<sup>76</sup> Compensatory theft in the context of police misbehavior complicates these claims as NCOs adopted a predatory behavior towards the powerless public rather than their superiors. The case suggests new avenues to think critically about hierarchies and corruption. The NCOs' position at the lower end of organizational hierarchy put limits on their ability to challenge the organizational structure that allowed for what they considered material injustices. At the same time, the condoning of repressive measures by superior security officers as part of the state's efforts to fight terrorism made opportunities to prey over society part of the daily law and order practices.

The 2005 attack on journalists who opposed Mubarak's constitutional amendments is a case in point. The attack took place in broad day light on the front premise of the Journalists Syndicate and under the eyes of top tier generals of Cairo Police Department. In response to national and international outcry unleashed by the attack, particularly because of how women activists were treated, the government was forced to open an investigation into the events. The six-month long investigation was ultimately dismissed when the Prosecutor General announced that there was no basis for a criminal case, since the attackers could not be identified. Not only were the MoI officers absolved of any responsibility for permitting the violence, some officers

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<sup>74</sup> Sherman, *Police Corruption*.

<sup>75</sup> Morrill, Zald, and Rao, "Covert Political Conflict in Organizations."

<sup>76</sup> Gamal Essam El-Din, "Unanswered Questions." *Ahram Weekly*, January 19-25, 2006.

who were said to be implicated in the violence later received promotions.<sup>77</sup> The use of plainclothes policemen and/or thugs enabled the MoI to sanction illegal coercive practices against political dissent without having to answer to the public or the legal authorities about such practices.

## Conclusion

This chapter has focused on modes of institutional inequalities within the bureaucratic structure of the MoI and how they have impacted violence by state agents. My aim has been to present the complexity of anti-citizen violence and move our discussion beyond the focus on the MoI as a unified coherent apparatus of coercion. The relationship between top-tier management of the MoI and agents on the street reflected what Alvin Gouldner called “mock bureaucracy.” Broad-scale abuses were tolerated by the ministry’s leadership thereby institutionalizing a type of organizational relations where bureaucratic rules are in place but are largely ignored or inoperative.<sup>78</sup> The high-ranking officers often spoke about applying the law but looked the other way as low-ranking officers and NCOs abused their authority. In the process, junior officers re-defined the de-facto rules of law and order, especially in the less impoverished quarters.

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<sup>77</sup> Ibid.

<sup>78</sup> Gouldner, *Patterns of Industrial Bureaucracy*.

## Conclusion

### Leaders, Militaries and Police

Scholars have underscored the importance of non-coup threats to the understanding of civil-military relations. Huntington notes the problem in the modern state is not armed revolt but the relationship of the expert to the politician.<sup>1</sup> Similarly, Desch has underscored how a political system can have poor civil-military relations without the threat of a coup.<sup>2</sup> More recently Zoltan Barany has lamented that the range of institutional behavior that falls between the extremes of violent coups and the army's full compliance with its civilian masters, has proven to be more difficult to theorize, "even though it is perhaps the most important concern of civil-military relations scholars."<sup>3</sup> This dissertation sheds light on these instances of tension between presidents and their institutions of force in an attempt to fill part of the gap in our knowledge on non-coup threats from the military. I have argued that the civilianization of force is a strategy to eliminate threats from the military by targeting the disposition or will aspects of military intervention.

Military disengagement from domestic control or politics should not be conflated with subordination to civilians nor with democratic transition. Researchers have highlighted two distinct trajectories of disengagement; the first is militaries' delegation of some authorities to civilians without full retreat from politics. The second trajectory associates military withdrawal with authoritarian breakdown. The civilianization of force theory that I put forth in this study aims to shed more light on a third and under-theorized form of military withdrawal: compensated displacement. This partial disengagement differs markedly from trajectories of delegation of

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<sup>1</sup> Huntington, *The Soldier and the State*, 20.

<sup>2</sup> Desch, *Civilian Control of the Military*, 3.

<sup>3</sup> Barany, *The Soldier and the Changing State*, 23.

power and democratization. Changes in domestic security arrangements under Sadat and Mubarak, as discussed in the previous chapters demonstrate how the military retrenched from one sphere of power, particularly domestic control, while channeling more institutional energy into the economic sphere. Forsaking authority over domestic control is not a form of delegation, especially when decisions and policies about how, when, and who to repress are made by another state apparatus and independently from the military. Both Sadat and Mubarak extricated the EAF from repression of dissent and relied more on the apparatus of the Ministry of Interior (MoI).

Table 1 shows the evolution of domestic control apparatuses under the three presidents.

	<b>Domestic Surveillance</b>	<b>Control over Espionage/ General Intelligence</b>	<b>Control over Anti-Riot Police (Central Security Forces)</b>
<b>Nasser (1952 – 1970)</b>	-Military Intelligence -General Intelligence	Military	Military
<b>Sadat (1970 – 1981)</b>	MoI – SSI	Independent (reports directly to president)	MoI
<b>Mubarak (1981 – 2011)</b>	MoI – SSI	Independent (reports directly to president)	MoI

Table1: Domestic Surveillance and Control Apparatuses in Egypt (1952- 2011)

Disengaging the military from policies of domestic control does not necessarily mean the complete and total absence of militaries as institutions of force from domestic politics.

Conditions may arise that prompt leaders to summon their militaries to carry out specific missions as events of the 1977 Bread Riots and 1986 Central Security Forces attest. Yet, as long as such missions remain isolated and temporary, the disengagement of militaries can be

sustained. This partial disengagement from politics requires delicate balancing of the multiple roles of the different armed forces and the spheres through which they operate. The mass uprisings of the January 2011 broke down this balance and brought back the military into the heart of politics.

During the 2011 uprising, Mubarak faced a control crisis that the MoI, the main coercive arm of the state, was neither prepared nor able to deal with it. Talcott Parsons notes that coercion is like the reserves of a bank; so long as the demands on it are limited the reserves can be dispersed effectively. But when there is a run on the bank, the reserves run out quickly.<sup>4</sup> Writing on the development of Egyptian police under British occupation, Harold Tollefson posited that the development of the institution was negative factor as it reflected and reinforced the repressive character of the state. He notes that Egyptians were aggrieved by the police enforcement of martial law, which ultimately led to the 1919 revolt.<sup>5</sup> The similarity of the 1919 situation to that that led to another revolt almost a century later is stunning. Aggrieved by the MoI's enforcement of emergency laws, and encroachments over personal, political and social rights, Egyptian masses took to the streets in January 2011 calling for an end to Mubarak's rule.

The historical development of the MoI since 1952 reveals a long path of association with ruling elites and tendency towards policing through coercion rather than consent. Mubarak's regime failed to mobilize support to its policies and the MoI's coercive apparatus became integral to its survival. The Mubarak era witnessed the development of predatory policing in addition to political policing. Political and socio-economic changes provided the environment in which the MoI operated. Inadequate attention to the force's professionalization and resource disparities that characterized internal structure of the institution led to increased levels of state

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<sup>4</sup> Parsons, *Sociological Theory and Modern Society*. cited in Kurzman, *The Unthinkable Revolution in Iran*, 111.

<sup>5</sup> Tollefson, *Policing Islam*, 181.



violence. Organizational inequalities within the MoI facilitated the emergence of predatory policing in the impoverished quarters of Egyptian cities, while the regime's political failures and reliance on force to affect citizen compliance permitted abuses by the badge and tolerated destruction of law and order by the very agents who are assigned to uphold them.

Calls for reforming the Egyptian police have been put on the back burner given the increasing waves of anti-state militancy that engulf the MENA region. Meanwhile, demonstrations by NCOs have not stopped since their first protest started in February 13<sup>th</sup> 2011,<sup>6</sup> making them the longest professional-based protests since the uprising. As insurgent street level bureaucrats,<sup>7</sup> NCOs are capitalizing on their knowledge and connections of the local to ask for improvement in their working conditions. Their success to remedy what they consider institutional inequalities is bound to meet strong resistance from commissioned officers given the class-based culture that permeate the MoI apparatus, and the limited support they receive from the public.

It is worth noting the different effects of the neoliberal policies on state institutions. While the policy remained a state-directed project that shifted institutional power within the state towards agencies managing relations with capital,<sup>8</sup> it enabled the enrichment of the military as they engaged in numerous enterprises that were geared for civilian consumption. At the same time, the MoI lacked similar inroad into the economy. The service of policing was one among several state services that bore the negative burdens of this economic shift. The Egyptian case show how some segments of the state's police and security forces have been subjected to unjust treatment as much as they abused social groups. It is important to note though that police predation should not be viewed as pervasive misconduct within a lone state institution, but rather

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<sup>6</sup> *AlMasry alYoum*, February 13<sup>th</sup>, 2011.

<sup>7</sup> Levi, *Bureaucratic Insurgency*.

<sup>8</sup> Centeno and Cohen, "The Arc of Neoliberalism."

as part of a broader social phenomenon that developed under Mubarak, where under-paid state employees manipulated their professions for private gain. In a sense, officers' predation is not that far off from public school teachers who use the classroom to solicit private tutoring classes, or civil servants asking for bribes in return for processing citizens' paperwork. The neoliberal policies that put risk bearing onto private individuals and away from governments,<sup>9</sup> coupled with the fragmentation of the state apparatus enabled the emergence of norms that provided justifications for predation at a time of limited resources and minimal levels of public accountability.

This dissertation opens avenues for future research on civil-military relations and police powers beyond the Egyptian case. By looking at how and when presidencies succeed in neutralizing threats from militaries, this research highlights a number of important points that can be further theorized. The first is our understanding of disputes between the leaders and generals should not be confined to who wins the presidency. Officers in control over domestic policies threaten leaders' powers by blocking the implementation of specific undesired policies and may prefer to rule through a weak president so long as their policy preferences are being implemented. The second is to think in more novel ways about presidential power and the personalization of power. All three Egyptian presidents enjoyed personal rule, but Mubarak's move to invoke members of his families had a deeper impact on antagonizing not only the public but state institutions especially the military. This form of hereditary personal rule has been tolerated in other republics in the region such as Syria with the ascendance of Bashar alAssad in the aftermath of Hafez alAssad's death. But in states such as Egypt and Tunisia, such this pattern of authoritarianism did not endure. These differences beg important questions such as: under what conditions would hereditary personalization of power emerge, stabilize and consolidate?

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<sup>9</sup> Wedeen, "Ideology and Humor in Dark Times."

And what institutional design is less hospitable to such level of personalization of power?

Unlike presidential powers in democratic systems, which have received extensive attention to its limits, little attention has been given to the presidency in non-democratic settings as an institution. I am hoping that questions about patterns of personal rule, evolution and limitation in authoritarian regimes emerge on the research agendas of comparative politics specialists.

One question that the dissertation does not claim to answer is: why isn't the CoF more common than traditional methods of coup-proofing, methods that focus on increasing the costs for coup-stagers? One possible answer can be that civilianizing force requires political imagination and skills of the leader. The process also requires the presence of resources that are not utilized yet by the military junta but can be made available to them. But future quantitative research into instances of civilianizing force will add to our understanding of the scope of this phenomenon.

The evolution of institutions of force in Egypt can be enriched by further examination of other cases such as Mexico and Algeria. Mexico is an intriguing case to the theorization of the durability of the civilianization of force. Though Egypt's experience with civilianization of power lasted almost three decades, the Mexican experience lasted for almost six decades. President's Cardenas' efforts to depoliticize the military paralleled his effort to institutionalize term limit on presidential rule. In Egypt, Mubarak's efforts to further depoliticize the military coincided with an increase in hereditary personalization of power. One of the main grievances that mobilized mass protests in 2011 and have prompted the military to withdraw its support of Mubarak was the increasing power of his son Gamal Mubarak and the perception that he was

being groomed to succeed his father.<sup>10</sup> In the Mexican, however, the regime institutionalized term limits while sharpening the PRI's mobilization machine.

Second, a comparison between the Egyptian and Mexican cases can be valuable to our understanding of the relation between economic change and state violence. Egypt has one of the first experiences with neoliberalism in the Middle East, one which dates back to its early experimentation with market reforms in the 1970s. Conversely, the gradual depoliticization of the military that started in 1930s in Mexico paralleled a shift towards populist and socialist economic policies. Cardenas built his power base on strong coalitions with the peasant and labor sectors. The examination of these two contrasting experiences complicates arguments about the relationship between shifts to market economy and civilian policing, and promises to yield important insights into the relationship between institutions of force and the economy.

Algeria's political dynamics from the late 1980 – present is an interesting case for studying the failure to civilianize force. Despite efforts by Liamine Zeroual and Abdelaziz Bouteflika to shift some security responsibilities to the Algerian MoI and its police and away from the military, the military's generals managed to block successfully these presidential attempts.

The dissertation also provides important insights with regards to policing and authoritarian durability that can travel beyond Egyptian politics. Recent research on competitive authoritarianism highlights four informal practices through which the incumbent in competitive authoritarian regimes maintains power: vote-buying and manipulation of the vote count, blackmail and other illicit exchanges, repression, and the use of “privatized” violence to suppress

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<sup>10</sup> Accounts of the tension between Mubarak and the military regarding succession plans are now brought to light. For details on the Egyptian military's displeasure with Gamal Mubarak's political role see Mostafa Bakry, “The Military and the Revolution: from the Square to Victory,” *elAosboa*, 25 August 2011. <http://elaosboa.com/artsys00/ArticleDetails.aspx?AIId=7412>

opposition.<sup>11</sup> In Egypt, all these practices were employed to guarantee the NDP's majority position in the legislature, and all these practices were either performed by MoI officers or sanctioned by them.<sup>12</sup> These practices travel to most electoral politics in authoritarian regimes as in Russia, Jordan and Tunisia.

Another area that can benefit from this research's insights on the MoI and the police is social scientific explorations into political trust and armed actors. Whether due to their political repression or predatory policing, the police continue to enjoy little trust compared to the military even as both engage in domestic repression. The public's continued confidence in the military institutions is not an Egyptian phenomenon, but a widespread one as experiences in Latin American countries show.<sup>13</sup> What explains this variation in public trust towards state institutions of force? And how can this trust enable or foreclose opportunities for regime change?

These are some of the questions that can build on this dissertation towards better understanding of institutions of force, state violence and regime durability.

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<sup>11</sup> Levitsky and Way 2010, 27.

<sup>12</sup> Blaydes and ElTarouty 2009.

<sup>13</sup> Koonings and Kruijt, *Armed Actors*.

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